“On the Road Again” by Canned Heat mixes into traffic passing on the motorway.

Scene One; Lights up on MICK staring out the window. Night / Early morning. Motorway services. Everything closed except the toilets. PHIL is at a white plastic table. There are four white plastic chairs around it. One of those big plastic litterbins filled with fat food boxes and cups. PHIL is doing the Guardian crossword. DAVE is stretched out on the floor, jacket round him like a blanket, dark glasses on, head resting on his bag.

MICK
Maybe one of us should go out there in case he forgets.

PHIL
Forgets what?

MICK
Forgets why he’s out there.

PHIL
Why would he do that?

MICK
He’s been rolling up all day.

PHIL
Isn’t that what people who smoke roll ups do?.

MICK
Nobody still smokes roll ups.

PHIL
He does...

MICK
Ah. But does he?

PHIL
Does he what?

MICK
Smoke roll ups?

PHIL
You just said he did.
MICK
No. I said he’d been rolling up all day.

BILLY
...and aren’t roll ups the product of rolling up all day

MICK
They weren’t just roll ups though, were they??

BILLY
What?

MICK
Did they smell like roll ups smell?

PHIL
I don’t know. I don’t smoke.

MICK
No, they reeked of wacky baccy. The whole van does.

PHIL
Are you sure?

MICK
Look at him. He can barely stand. He’s leaning up against the van all weak and floppy and shovelling down handfuls of peanuts.

PHIL
Somebody had to keep a look out for the AA man.

MICK
That’s not the point.

PHIL
What is the point?

MICK
The point is we should have a rule.

PHIL
About what?

MICK
About driving the van.

PHIL
What rule?

MICK
You can skin up when we’ve got there but not before we’ve left..
But we're on the way back.

MICK
What?

PHIL
We're on the way back.

MICK
So?

PHIL
So, in a way, we did get there and now we've left.

(beat)

MICK
He shouldn't be driving.

PHIL
He's alright.

MICK
No, he isn't. Our contact with the fourth emergency service is clearly off his face. When the AA do arrive, they'll be confronted by him, standing there with a mouthful of peanuts and a look of utter amazement on his face, unable to believe his good fortune at their arrival because he'll have forgotten that he's the one who called them out in the first place.

PHIL
He's harmless.

MICK
He's driving a van. How's that harmless?

PHIL
It is his van.

MICK
One of us should drive

PHIL
It's his van.

MICK
.. and what's he doing smoking grass anyway? I thought kids only did the chemical gear. Shouldn't he be snorting coke or something?

PHIL
We'd get home a lot quicker if he was.

MICK
One of us should drive.
PHIL
It’s his van.

MICK looks at the dormant DAVE.

MICK
He’s no better.

PHIL
At what?

MICK
Behaving responsibly. You’d think the two of them were joined at the hip. I had to drag them away from the bar or we’d never have left.

(pause)

MICK
I might bring the car next time. Straight there and straight back. Be much quicker.

(beat)

MICK
Do you want to do that? If I bring the car?

PHIL
We’ll never get all the gear in.

MICK
No. Just you and me. They can both go in the van with the gear.

PHIL
Not all together?

DAVE doesn’t stir.

MICK
Us two in the car. Those two in the van.

PHIL
No. It’d be weird.

MICK
It’d be quicker.

PHIL
Yeah but we always went together.

MICK
When?

PHIL
Before.

MICK
You had no choice then. We’re grown-ups now.

PHIL
Even so. We should travel together.

(pause)

MICK
The Stones don’t travel together.

PHIL
The Stones don’t play the Starlight rooms in Chorley.

MICK
One of us should drive.

(pause)

PHIL
How’s your Michael?

MICK
My Michael?

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
He’s fine.

PHIL
How old is he now?

MICK
18.

PHIL
18?

MICK
Yes.

PHIL
No.

MICK
Yes.

PHIL
18
MICK
Off to University in September.

PHIL
Michael?

MICK
Yes.

PHIL
No.

MICK.
Yes.

PHIL
Is he looking forward to it?

MICK
University.

PHIL
Yes.

MICK
Yes. I think so.

PHIL
It must be exciting being a student. All that cheap beer.

MICK
And living away from home.

PHIL
Of course. The last one to leave the nest.

MICK
Yes.

PHIL
So it'll be just you and Jane?

MICK
Yes. First time since before the kids were born. Just us again.

PHIL
That'll be nice. I can't imagine what it would be like to watch my kids setting off to start their own lives.

MICK
You haven't got any kids.
PHIL
That’d be why I can’t imagine it, then.

MICK
One of us should drive.

(beat)

PHIL
Where’d he get the peanuts from?

MICK
There must be a shop up by the petrol.

PHIL
I used to love chocolate peanuts..

MICK
I could do with something. I’m starving. All I’ve had is those bananas. God knows how long they’d been there. They were practically black.

PHIL
..and chocolate raisins.

MICK
You’d think they’d have kept something open in here. The place is lit up like Disneyland.

PHIL
The toilet’s open..

MICK
...apart from the toilet..

PHIL
Well, it’s late.

MICK
How late?

PHIL
One o’ clock.

MICK
That’s not late.

PHIL
It is one o’ clock.

MICK
That’s not late in the rest of Europe, is it?
PHIL
Yes but that’s the clocks, isn’t it?

MICK
No – it’s a different life. One o’ clock in the morning? People in Paris are only just going out for dinner..

PHIL
Yeah but Europe’s different, isn’t it? They’re all used to staying up late and having a nap in the afternoons.

MICK
Yes but the point is - it’s not late.

PHIL
It is if you’ve been up on your feet all day sloshing out teas and coffees. They’ve got to go home sometime.

MICK
It’s not the same person all day. They change them. They could get people who only work at night.

PHIL
Like mini cab drivers?

MICK
What?

PHIL
The ones who only work at night.

MICK
Exactly. The ones who only work at night.

(beat)

PHIL
They’re all a bit mental though, aren’t they?

MICK
Who?

PHIL
The ones who only work at night.

MICK
Yeah……

(beat)

PHIL
Actually a cup of tea would be nice.

MICK
There's a machine.

PHIL
No. That’s not tea. It looks like tea. It’s smells like tea. But it’s not tea. It’s the methadone of the beverage world..

MICK
There’s coffee.

PHIL
Same as the tea only it’s coffee.

MICK
There’s beer and stuff in the bag there..

PHIL
No. I’m alright…
(beat))

MICK
He’s taking all the gear out and putting it back in again now …

PHIL
Maybe he’s looking for something.

MICK
He’s off with the fairies.

PHIL
He did well tonight.

MICK
Tom?

PHIL
Yeah. He did well..

MICK
Really? Do you think so?

PHIL
Yeah. No rehearsal. He did well.

MICK
I thought he was a bit –

PHIL
No, he did well..

MICK
Well…..maybe…

PHIL
We were lucky to get hold of him. It was a good idea of Dave’s. We’d have been well stuck otherwise.

(pause)

MICK
You think we got away with it tonight, then?

PHIL
Yeah.

(beat)

MICK
I didn’t feel I was on top of it.

PHIL
No. You were great.

MICK
No. I was shakey…

PHIL
You were fine.

MICK
No. Not 100%

PHIL
Yeah…

MICK
No. I can do better.

PHIL
You did well

MICK
No.

(beat)

MICK
Really?

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
I didn’t look…

PHIL
You were fine.
MICK
Thanks

(beat)

MICK
As long as we were good – that’s all that matters.

PHIL
Doesn’t really matter if we’re good or not, does it? They’re not bothered, are they?

MICK
I think they are..

PHIL
As long as they can drink too much and get off with someone who’s drunk as much as they have.

MICK
Some of them were listening.

PHIL
Well…

MICK
There’s always someone listening.

(beat)

MICK
I bet Pink Floyd wouldn’t tour in a transit

PHIL
Pink Floyd don’ tour.

MICK
I know they don’t. But if they did – they wouldn’t.

PHIL
Those big tour buses cost money.

MICK
Be worth it.

PHIL
For three gigs?

MICK
Well…

PHIL
.....and we’d need a proper driver.

MICK
...exactly.

(beat)

MICK
..and it wasn’t as if we’d broken down. We were still moving. I don’t think we needed to stop and call out the AA at all. We could have kept going.

PHIL
There was a little light flashing on the dashboard.

MICK
There’s always a little light flashing on the dashboard.

PHIL
It’s his van.

DAVE stirs and suddenly sits up.

DAVE
Anything happening?

PHIL
No

DAVE
Right. Was I asleep?

PHIL
Yeah.

DAVE
I wasn’t snoring, was I?

PHIL
No

DAVE
Good. I hate it when I snore.

PHIL
Don’t you wake yourself up?

DAVE
Not if I’m asleep already.

PHIL
Right.
DAVE
Where’s Tom?

PHIL
He’s with the van.

DAVE
Right. What time is it?

PHIL
Just gone one.

DAVE
It’s late.

PHIL
Not in Paris.

DAVE
What?

PHIL
Nothing

DAVE
Right. Don’t let me snore.

DAVE settles himself back down.

PHIL
Did it have hot chocolate?

MICK
What?

PHIL
The machine.

MICK
I don’t know. I didn’t really look.

PHIL
Hot chocolate from a machine’s alright. You don’t expect too much from it.

MICK
Do you want me to have a look?

PHIL
No. Not for me..

MICK
There’s beer and stuff in the bag there.
PHIL
No. I’m alright.

DAVE
I’ll have a chocolate if you’re going.

MICK
I’m not going.

DAVE
I know you’re not but if you were – I would.

(pause)

MICK
Go on then.

PHIL
Go on then what?

MICK
Give us a clue.

PHIL
OK....here we are. “Barred mendicants from the vote. There’s no alternative” Seven – four – two –eight.

MICK
(slowly)
Barred ..mendicants ...

PHIL
....from the vote. There is..

MICK
..no alternative. Seven - two-

PHIL
Seven - four – two – eight.

MICK
Seven – four – two – eight.

PHIL
Yeah

MICK
Right.

(beat)

MICK
Barred mendicants from the vote.

PHIL
There is no alternative

MICK
There is no alternative.

PHIL
Seven – four – two – eight.

MICK
Seven – four – two – eight.

(pause)

MICK
Barred mendicants from the vote.

PHIL
Do you know what mendicants means?

MICK
Mendicants?

PHIL
Yes.

MICK
No.

PHIL
Me neither.

MICK
Then why did you give me that clue?

PHIL
Because I didn’t know what mendicants meant.

MICK
Neither do I.

PHIL
Yeah but I didn’t know that when I asked you

MICK
Haven’t you got any other clues?

PHIL
No. It’s the last one.

MICK
MICK
Did the manager bloke talk to you?

PHIL
At the gig?

MICK
Yeah.

PHIL
No.

(beat)

PHIL
Which one was he?

MICK
The one with the shirt.

PHIL
Oh yeah. No he didn’t.

MICK
How old do you think he was?

PHIL
The manager bloke?

MICK
Yeah. How old do you think he was?

PHIL
About our age.

MICK
Yes. Dave told you.

PHIL
No

MICK
Because he didn’t look it, did he?

PHIL
Well…

MICK
He looked much older.
PHIL
Than us?

NICK
Yes.

PHIL
Not really.

MICK
Yeah, he did. Up close.

PHIL
Oh...

(beat)

MICK
He thought I was in my thirties.

PHIL
The manger bloke?

MICK
Yeah.

PHIL
You?

MICK
Yeah.

PHIL
Really?

MICK
Late thirties.

PHIL
Oh...

MICK
..and guess what he wanted us to do.

PHIL
What?

MICK.
He came up during the raffle and asked if we’d play “21st Century Schizoid Man”

PHIL
21st Century Schizoid man?
MICK
Yeah.

PHIL
A Crimson fan, eh?

MICK
I thought, “What do you think we are? Performing poodles doing tricks? We decide our set list – not you. You come up to me in your ill fitting suit, reeking of beer and expect us to play some song that will remind you of your glorious youth before you sold your soul to the corporate Devil. Dozey prat.”

PHIL
You didn’t?

MICK
Didn’t what?

PHIL
Say that to him.

MICK
Not out loud, no.

PHIL
Oh.
(beat)

PHIL
We might have managed it.

MICK
What?

PHIL
21st Century Schizoid man.

MICK
Us?

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
No.

PHIL
I reckon. If we’d had a minute to sort ourselves out.

MICK
What about Tom?
PHIL
Tom? He’d have no problems.

MICK
The song’s older than he is.

PHIL
All the songs are older than he is.

MICK
I told him we didn’t do requests.

PHIL
Tom could have handled it.

(beat)

MICK
But...yeah..same age as us.

PHIL
The manager bloke?.

MICK
Yeah. He didn’t look it.... and I don’t know what he was on, thinking I was only in my thirties.

PHIL
Well, he’d had a drink..

MICK
Yeah. (beat) Although, I wouldn’t say he was drunk. He was...merry but not drunk. He wasn’t slurring or anything. He seemed very coherent.

PHIL
Right.

(beat)

MICK
Imagine having to be him, eh?

PHIL
The manager bloke?

MICK
Yeah. Middle aged. In a business full of young people who you know are going to fly past you on their way for the top. Defensive, scared, bitter. Sitting there –out of place - at the company do. Drinking too much and...

PHIL
...Listening to us.
MICK
Yeah. Listening to us. Bet we made him think.

(beat)

PHIL
Waiting to retire.

MICK
What?

PHIL
He’s probably waiting to retire.

MICK
Exactly. Just killing time. Waiting for it all to end.

PHIL
It’s fair enough. You’ve spent all your life working. You’ve had enough. No reason why you shouldn’t look forward to the day when you can stop worrying and just relax.

MICK
Well, that’s the world of the proper job, isn’t it?

PHIL
What do you mean?

MICK
If all you’ve got is a proper job – you’ve got nothing to look forward to but the end.

PHIL
I have got a proper job.

MICK
Yeah but is it proper peoper?

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
Not really.

PHIL
I think so.

MICK
Well, you would. It’s your job.

PHIL
Exactly.
MICK
But looking at it objectively – I wouldn’t say it was a proper job.

PHIL
I work nine to five.

MICK
Ah yes but not like in a bank nine to five. Or an office nine to five.

PHIL
Same hours.

MICK
But different thing. It’s not what you do, is it?

PHIL
Well….yes..

MICK
No. This is what you do. Your shop just gives you the money to do this.

PHIL
I suppose so.

MICK
Same as me. I’m not an accountant. I’m a musician.

PHIL
Right.

MICK
The job gives me the money but what I want to do is music.

PHIL
But it doesn’t pay the bills.

MICK
But that’s not why we do it, is it?

PHIL
Isn’t it?

MICK
No. I’m not in this for the money.

PHIL
Not even tonight?

MICK
No..

PHIL
No?

MICK
No. I did it for the gig..

PHIL
Can I have yours, then?

(beat)

MICK
That’s why I want to get it right. Tonight – for a second gig – was fine. But there is always room for improvement. Tom is a nice lad but is he good enough?

PHIL
Yes.

MICK
Well, you say that but..

PHIL
I say that because he is good enough.

MICK
I’m just not sure that he’s a front man...

PHIL
He’ll get better.

MICK
Maybe.

PHIL
I know he’s not Geoff...

MICK
Damn right.

PHIL
But then Geoff’s not Geoff anymore, is he?

MICK
No.

PHIL
Unless you’d like to dig him up and prop him up against the speakers.

MICK
Alright.

PHIL
He’s good. He’s got a voice. He can play.
MICK
I don’t know if...

PHIL
It’s just a couple of little office party gigs, Mick. It’s not the Rainbow.. It’s us or a disco. As long as they can stumble round the dance floor trying to impress Debbie from accounts – they’re happy..

MICK
We are better than that.

PHIL
I know but these are just crap gigs. They don’t matter.

MICK
Then from now on we should only do gigs that matter.

PHIL
Where?

MICK
What?

PHIL
Where?

MICK
Everywhere.

PHIL
Where everywhere?

MICK
Where everywhere?

PHIL
Yes.

MICK
Everywhere.

PHIL
Everywhere?

MICK
Yes. Everywhere.

PHIL
And again I ask you – where everywhere?
MICK
Where everywhere>

PHIL
Yes.

(beat)

MICK
I don’t know what you mean.

PHIL
Where are we going to pick up these gigs that matter? Where? Pubs? Colleges? Hammersmith Apollo?

MICK
Apollo. That still doesn’t sound right.

PHIL
And if it’s not money – what makes them matter? The punters? Venue? Smash Hits Awards?

MICK
No.......Melody Maker..

PHIL
But where, Mick?

MICK
I don’t know. But we’re better than this. We deserve better. We could be doing better gigs.

(pause)

DAVE
Beggars can’t be choosers.

DAVE doesn’t move or take off his glasses..

(beat)

MICK
What?

DAVE
Beggars can’t be choosers.

MICK
Beggars can’t be choosers? I’m no beggar, Dave. I know I haven’t got the experience that you two have. I haven’t played with all the people you two have. I let you down back then. I know that.
PHIL
Mick….

MICK
But what if it had all fallen through? What would I have done? Yes – I stayed on at Uni and left you in the lurch. I thought once the degree was out of the way…. but then Geoff dying. I thought that was it. Then after all those years - this came up and I said, “Yes” This time “Yes.” A second bite. This means everything to me. Getting back with you two has filled that hole in my soul. So I think I deserve better than “Beggars can’t be choosers.”

(pause)

DAVE
The crossword

PHIL
What.

DAVE gets up and takes off his glasses.

DAVE

PHIL checks the crossword.

PHIL
Oh yeah.

(pause)

DAVE
So there’s a hole in your soul, eh?

MICK
Shut up.

DAVE
Must be a huge hole if it takes both of us to fill it.

MICK
Hilarious.

DAVE
Did you put us in side-by-side or all scrunched up in a ball?

MICK
Alright.
PHIL
That’s good. It helps with some of the others.

MICK
Others?

PHIL
Yeah. There’s five or six running off that clue.

MICK
You said it was the last one.

PHIL
I lied.

MICK
Lied?

PHIL
Yes.

MICK
Why?

PHIL
People who don’t do crosswords watch people who do do crosswords, feel left out and say, “Give us a clue?” So you give them a clue and they say “No. I don’t know that one. Give us another” So you give them another – same thing happens “Don’t know. Give me another” And another and another – they don’t make the effort. They won’t do the brainwork and figure it out for themselves. They’re just killing time. So I told you it was the last clue so that you wouldn’t pester me for another.

MICK
But I didn’t know what mendicant meant.

PHIL
Neither did I. That’s why I gave you it.

DAVE
It means beggars.

MICK
I know now.

(beat)

DAVE
Micky Farley used to do crosswords, didn’t he?

PHIL
Sill does. It was him who turned me on to them.
DAVE
What a character.

PHIL
Demon guitarist.

DAVE
Tequila and grapefruit.

PHIL
...and walnut whips.

DAVE
He got so out of it in Amsterdam once we had to carry him on stage and prop him up against the speakers. Almost comatose but he didn't drop a note. Played a blinding set and, at the end, we carried him off again.

(beat)

PHIL
Wasn't blinding...

DAVE
Oh it was..

PHIL
No. It was passable

DAVE
Given what he'd had...

PHIL
Given what he'd had – it was passable.

DAVE
It was a great gig anyway

PHIL
No. It was sloppy.

DAVE
No we were good.

PHIL
Sloppy.

DAVE
We were great. Nicky wasn't that bad....

PHIL
...he was tripping....

DAVE
He wasn’t the only one, was he?

PHIL
I know. But he came in late on everything, for most of the set he was playing different songs to the rest of us and for the last twenty minutes he wasn’t even plugged in.

DAVE
What a character.

PHIL
It was a sloppy gig. We don’t get paid to be sloppy.

(beat)

MICK
We were just saying that we got away with it tonight.

(beat)

DAVE
Sorry?

MICK
Tonight. The gig. We got away with it.

DAVE
Oh. Yeah. I suppose so.

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
Yeah.

(beat)

DAVE
Tom did well. Last minute, no rehearsal and all that.

PHIL
Yeah he did. Very well. Didn’t he, Mick.

MICK
Yes.

DAVE
What’s he up to out there?

Gets up and goes over to the window.

PHIL
He said he’d give us a beep when it’s all done.

DAVE
Right. Bags I the front seat on the way back.

MICK
You can’t bags I the front seat.

DAVE
I just have.

MICK
It might be good to chart about the gig when we’re off again, any problems or questions …

PHIL
Whatever…

MICK
I’ve had a few thoughts about the set list and..

DAVE
Where’d he park up?

PHIL
Just outside.
DAVE
I don’t think so.

PHIL and MICK get up and join MICK by the window. They look everywhere.

PHIL
Where’s the van?

BLACKOUT.
...and “21st Century Schizoid Man” by King Crimson.

Scene Two ; Night. PHIL, MICK and DAVE sitting at table. MICK and DAVID are arguing. DAVID is holding his mobile

DAVE
Of course it’s your fault.

MICK
How? I didn’t leave my keyboard at the gig, did I?

DAVE
More’s the pity.

PHIL
Settle.

MICK
How could you forget your own guitar?

DAVE
Because you kept hassling me and Tom to leave.
(posh voice) “Come on. Let’s pack the van and go. I want to get home”

MICK
I do not sound like that.

DAVE
In my head you do

PHIL
Look the AA will meet him back at the hotel. It’s only 10 minutes away. He’ll get the guitar and pick us up on the way back. It’ll take no longer. What’s the difference?

MICK
I told you the van was alright.

DAVE
There was a little light flashing on the dashboard..

MICK
There’s always a little light flashing on the dashboard.

PHIL
He thought he’d risk it back to the gig. He’s trying to save us time.

MICK
Well....

PHIL
I’ll leave my phone switched on this time. OK?

(beat)

...during which DAVE opens the beer bag. Takes out the tequila and three shot glasses.

MICK
I’ve been thinking about the set list.

DAVE
Here we go...

PHIL
What about it, Mick?

MICK
We could do a couple of our old songs.

(beat)

DAVE
You are not serious?

MICK
Why not?

DAVE
Tell him, Phil.

PHIL
What songs?

DAVE
Phil?

MICK
“ My Lady’s Smile”

DAVE
No!

MICK
It should be in the set.

DAVE
Absolutely not.

MICK
Why not?

DAVE
We're not booked as us we're booked as any old band.

MICK
So?

DAVE
They want hits from the 70’s.

MICK
It was a hit in the 70’s..

DAVE
It was turgid hippy crap.

MICK
Do you mind?

DAVE
I'm sorry. It was one of your best songs.

MICK
It was a love song for a generation.

DAVE
......cliché ridden, valentine's day card prose, sentimental ..... 

MICK
Then why did it make the chart?

DAVE
Because it was cliché ridden, Valentine’s Day card prose, sentimental...

MICK
It made the chart.

DAVE

MICK
Doesn't matter. It still counts.

DAVE
Phil.

MICK
Yes Phil

PHIL
Dave. Mick.

DAVE
Be honest.

MICK
Yes. Say what you feel.

DAVE
What did you think of it?

PHIL
Of what?

MICK
“ My Lady’s Smile”

PHIL
Ah. “ My Lady’s Smile”

DAVE
Utter crap.
MICK
Great song.

PHIL
B side?

DAVE
B side?

MICK
“Lothlorien Lament”

PHIL
Lothlorien Lament.

MICK
That’s right.

DAVE
That was even worse. All mellotron and recorders.

MICK
Atmospheric, haunting.

DAVE
Pretentious, crap.

MICK
It reflected the times.

DAVID
It reflected your arse.

PHIL
Mine, too.

DAVE
What?

PHIL
I wrote it with Mick.

MICK
Oh yeah.

PHIL
And I agree with Mick. Lothlorien Lament was a haunting, atmospheric evocation of childhood dreams.

MICK
Hear Hear.
PHIL
On the other hand, “My Lady’s Smile” was turgid, hippy crap.

DAVE
Hear hear.

MICK
How can you say that?

PHIL
You wrote that on your own..

MICK
I wrote most of Lotlorien Lament on my own?

PHIL
But not all of it. I wrote half a verse.

MICK
Half a verse.” Gandalf’s hand will lead you through/The misty mountains’
      morning dew”

PHIL
Genius.

DAVE
(to Phil)
You should know better.

PHIL
I was young.

MICK
Half a verse – that’s all.

PHIL
..and the wind chimes.

MICK
..and the wind chimes.

DAVE
Anyway they won’t know it.

MICK
They might.

DAVE
They won’t.

PHIL
He’s right, Mick.
MICKEY
They might.

PHIL
Most of the punters won't have been born in 1976.

MICKEY
Then why are we doing these gigs for kids?

DAVE
Kids?

PHIL
Because they pay.

MICKEY
Is that all it is? The money? Is that really all it is?

DAVE and PHIL
Yes.

MICKEY
Well, not for me, it isn’t.

PHIL
I’ll have a tequila, Dave.

DAVE
I thought you were watching your …..

PHIL
Yeah but you’ve got to draw the line somewhere. There’s no dairy or red meat in it, is there?

DAVE
No

PHIL
Then my arteries are safe. Slosh it out.

DAVE pours himself and PHIL tequila.

MICKEY
I’m not doing this for the money.

DAVE
You don’t have to. You’ve got a job. Cheers.

PHIL
Cheers.

MICKEY
So has Phil

*Down in one. React.*

DAVE
Somebody should ban this stuff.

MICK
You’ve got your shop.

*DAVE refills the glasses.*

PHIL
The gigs are a nice little bonus.

MICK
What about me?

DAVE
Do me a favour. Accountant? You make a fortune. You’re a partner, aren’t you? You do alright for money. You’ve got a huge house, all your kids went to university, you drive a BMW. Don’t give me that hard done by crap.

MICK
No. I meant what about me with the tequila?

DAVE
Oh right.

*DAVE refills the glass.*

PHIL
A toast.

*They raise their glasses.*

PHIL
To us

DAVE PHIL MICK
To us

*Clink glasses and down in one. React.*

MICK
Then – now that we’re up and running - why don’t we get some proper gigs where we can be us and not any old band?

DAVE
Proper gigs?

MICK
Yeah. Like when we started...
PHIL
Could be a problem.

MICK
What?

PHIL
We’re a quarter of a century older.

*It sinks in, DAVE pours three more shots, they down in one. React.*

DAVE
Where would we play?

MICK
Everywhere.

DAVE
Where everywhere?

MICK
Don’t you start.

PHIL
Who’s going to book a bunch of old man that nobody’s heard of?

MICK
Old isn’t old anymore...

PHIL
What is it, then? The new puberty?

MICK
You can keep going longer nowadays.

PHIL
Better batteries?

DAVE
Go back to travelling round the country in a draughty old transit?.

PHIL
Not at our age.

MICK
What age? We look alright.

PHIL
Not in a room full of twenty year olds we don’t.

DAVE
No. We look like their mini cabs turned up.

MICK
The manger bloke tonight thought I was in my thirties.

DAVE
Did he?

MICK
Yes.

DAVE
That would be your hair.

MICK
What?

DAVE
The dye job fooled him.

MICK
It’s not dyed – it’s highlighted.

DAVE
Whatever. Mutton dressed as lamb.

MICK
At least if you travel north of my eyebrows you eventually hit hair.

*DAVE stand as if to fight. PHIL puts his hand on his shoulder and pushed them back to their seats.*

PHIL
Settle

MICK
Universities.

PHIL
No.

MICK
They’ll book anything.

PHIL
We’ve done all those fresher’s week nightmare gigs.

DAVE
Great fun.

MICK
I haven’t.
PHIL
No. You haven't, have you?

MICK
No.

PHIL
You didn't miss anything.

DAVE
What? They were great gigs.

PHIL
They were not.

DAVE
Tumorous Beastie's finest hour..

MICK
Who?

DAVE
When the definitive history of punk is written, right up there with the Pistols and the rest will be Tumourous Beastie.

MICK
Tumourous Beastie.

DAVE
Me, Dave Hartley, Andy Thornton and, of course, the wonderful Charlie Moore on trombone..

MICK
Trombone?

DAVE
We were different.

PHIL
.... they were awful..

DAVE
Stormed the colleges and universities. Hundreds of dunk kids, pogoing and gobbing at us. Golden days. There was a riot in Sheffield, two fires at Brunei and the police escorted us out of Newcastle. We'd open with Charlie, stripped to the waist from thee feet up giving it Land of Hope and Glory full pelt on the trombone and then – wallop – straight into Bastard Priest.

MICK
I've never heard of you.
DAVE
We were big in Germany.

PHIL
David Hasselhof’s big in Grmany-------

MICK
What about us?

DAVE
Us?

MICK
Well…you.

PHIL
We did alright. It was a bit odd at first without you and Geoff there. Danny Taylor an.....

DAVE
......Billy Jacks.

PHIL
Billy Jacks depped for you. Looked good but with the best will in the world, they were no musicians.

DAVE
No. They were bedroom mirror boys.

PHIL
Made no odds anyway. We were too late.

MICK
What do you mean?

PHIL
The Pistols had hit. We were dead in the water. Four long haired gits singing songs about universal love and..

MICK
...My Lady's Smile...

PHIL
Exactly. They didn’t want to know.

DAVE
You can’t pogo to a mellotron.

(beat)

MICK
It must have been exciting though... 

DAVE
What?

MICK
Being in a band.

PHIL
Yeah. I suppose it was. I didn't think about it at the time.

DAVE
Well, you don't, do you?

MICK
I wonder how Tom feels about these gigs.

DAVE
Tom?

MICK
Yeah. I know they're only office parties but even so - must give him a buzz. Travelling round. Playing in a real band.

DAVE
Tom?

MICK
Yeah.

DAVE
Tom's just come back from a stadium tour in the States with a band called Gridlock. He had an album of his stuff out last year.

(beat)

MICK
Tom?

DAVE
Tom.

MICK
An album?

PHIL
A very good album.

MICK
Tom Tom?

DAVE
Yeah.

MICK
How?

DAVE
By playing his guitar..

MICK
But stadium tours and an album...

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
Tom?

DAVE
Yeah.

MICK
I mean...all due respect but...

DAVE
But what?

MICK
He’s alright but he’s no Alvin Lee.

PHIL
Thank God.....

DAVE
That’s the esteemed opinion of an accountant, is it?

MICK
I’m not just –

DAVE
Don’t give me that “I’m not just an accountant - I’m a musician” crap. You’re an accountant who dabbles. Plays a few tunes on the piano to impress the dinner guests. The gentleman amateur.

MICK
I didn’t mean to...

DAVE
You opted out. You chose a straight job. That’s fine. But don’t sit in judgement of professional musicians who do this for a living..

(beat)
MICK
Phil’s got a shop.

DAVE
Phil’s the drummer.

PHIL
What?

DAVE
...and a professional musician......

PHIL
Thank you.

DAVE
.... who dabbles in his shop not his music.

(beat)

MICK
I apologise.

DAVE
So you bloody well should..

MICK
He just looks so young.

PHIL
Compared to us – he is.

MICK
How young?

DAVE
Twenty.

MICK
Twenty?

DAVE
Twenty.

MICK
He’s younger now than we were then.

PHIL
Only just.....

DAVE
..and he puts the hours in on practice. Just like Charlie.

43
MICK
Charlie?

DAVE
His mum. Charlie.

MICK
Mum?

DAVE
Yes.

PHIL
Tumourous Beastie trombone Charlie

MICK
Oh. I see.

DAVE
Yes.. Brought him up all on her own.

MICK
Right.

DAVE
Like mother like son.

MICK
So people know who Tom is?

DAVE
He's got that really classy kind of fame where his fans *really* like what he does. There's only a handful of them but they can't get enough of him.

MICK
And he's made an LP.

PHIL
CD

MICK
CD

DAVE
But that's not what he plays guitar for.

MICK
Well, what does he play guitar for?

DAVE
Just to play?.


(beat)

MICK
Same as me.

PHIL
What?

MICK
That's why I play. Just to play.

DAVE
He's a professional – you're not.

MICK
On the contrary, I turn up on time, my suit is always pressed, I've never left my keyboard behind, I always...

DAVE
Apart from these last couple of gigs we've done – when did you last get paid as a musician?

MICK
What - money?

DAVE
Yes.

MICK
Well. It has been some time...

DAVE
When was the last time you were employed by someone – anyone – because of your skills as a keyboard player?

MICK
That doesn't mean...

DAVE
When were you last in a studio?

(beat)

MICK
So – to you – a professional is just someone who gets paid for doing what they do..

DAVE
Yes.

MICK
Well, according to your limited definition – yes, I am not a professional.

DAVE
Correct.

MICK
However, in a broader perspective....

DAVE
I can barely remember us getting started. I remember our first proper paid gig.

PHIL  MICK
The Greyhound in Fulham.

DAVE
The Greyhound in Fulham but after that – it all blurs into one event. I can’t even remember what Geoff really looked like. I’d be hard pushed to sing any of “My Lady’s Smile.” It was twenty-five years ago, Mick. I’ve done a lifetime of gigs since then.

(pause)

MICK
I saw you at the Nashville Rooms once..

PHIL
You saw us play?

MICK
Not you. Just Dave.

DAVE
Me?

MICK
I was on my way home from work. I saw you unloading the van..

PHIL
No....

DAVE
Not Tumerous Beastie?

MICK
The name on the side was Berlin Boys.

PHIL and DAVE
_Berliner_ Boys

MICK
Berlin Boys.
DAVE
Dreadful, new romantic, crap

MICK
You had big hair.

DAVE
It was that Flock of Seagulls look

PHIL
More like a mumuration of starlings..

DAVE
A what?

PHIL
Tuesday’s Guardian.

MICK
You were all wearing make up.

DAVE
What did we look like?

MICK
You looked….. like a band.

DAVE
You should have come up and said hello.

MICK
I was wearing a work suit.

PHIL
You didn’t go to the gig?

MICK
No. I had to be up early.

DAVE
Right.

(beat)

PHIL
A toast.

DAVE refills glasses.

DAVE
A toast.
MICK
To what?

PHIL
To Flock of Seagulls. What was the point?

DAVE PHIL MICK
What was the point?.

Down in one. React.

PHIL
Where's the next one?

MICK
Harrogate.

DAVE
Harrogate. That's going to be a drive...

PHIL
Yeah..

MICK
We can stay over.

DAVE
Yeah? That might be good. Few beers and a bit of a flirt.

PHIL
I'd rather get back.

DAVE
Ok. Well, me and Tom will stay over..

MICK
It's all stay or no stay.

DAVE
Why?

MICK
I don't know. They just said all stay or no stay.

PHIL
Because if we all stay then they can use the cost of the extra hotel rooms as emotional blackmail to keep us playing into the night

MICK
Clever.

DAVE
Devious
PHIL
Corporate.

PHIL returns to his crossword

DAVE
Well, if we are coming back we'll all have to take a turn with the driving. I don't want Tomm getting too tired.

MICK
We'll all be tired.

DAVE
Yes but we're not all hypoglycaemic.

MICK
What?

DAVE
Hypoglycaemic.

PHIL
Just repeating the word doesn't make it any clearer.

DAVE
If he gets tired or stressed or doesn't eat properly his blood sugar level drops and he becomes faint and weak.

MICK
Can't they do anything about it? Isn't there a drug?

DAVE
Drug? No and even if there was he wouldn't touch it. He won't even take neurofen.

MICK
Just his roll ups, eh?

DAVE
Ah, his herbal roll ups.

MICK
Yes. His “herbal roll ups”

DAVE
His one weakness. Stink to high heaven but at least they're harmless.

MICK
Cannabis is carcinogenic though.

PHIL
Cannabis is but not herbal tobacco.
MICK
Herbal tobacco?

DAVE
Yes.

(beat)

MICK
Of course not because he is just smoking herbal tobacco, isn’t he?

DAVE
Yes

MICK
Faint and weak.

DAVE
Yes. He’s alright as long as he eats properly. That’s the most important thing. That’s why we were trying to order some food at the hotel but I know you were keen to get away…

MICK
I was just concerned about the…

PHIL
Will he be alright?

DAVE
Yes. If he gets hungry – he always keeps some fruit in the van.

MICK
Like…..bananas?

DAVE
Yes.

MICK
No.

DAVE
Yes.

MICK
I mean no there are no bananas.

DAVE
How do you know?

MICK
I ate them.

DAVE
You ate Tom’s bananas?

MICK
It wasn't deliberate.

DAVE
You accidentally ate Tom’s bananas.

MICK
Yes.

DAVE
What did you mistake them for?

MICK
Nothing. I knew they were bananas.

DAVE
The how was it an accident?

MICK
I didn’t know they were his.

DAVE
But you knew they weren't yours?

MICK
Yes.

(beat)

DAVE
How did he look?

MICK
Well...

DAVE
Yes?

MICK
He looked stoned.

DAVE
Stoned?

MICK
Yes.

DAVE
How could he be stoned?

MICK
I know that now.

DAVE
He’s a drug free zone.

MICK
The roll ups fooled me.

DAVE
How?

MICK
How what?

DAVE
How did the roll ups fool you?

MICK
They smelled like joints.

DAVE
Joints.

MICK
Yes.

DAVE
But he was driving?

MICK
I know.

DAVE
Why would he smoke and drive?

MICK
I thought he was being young.

(beat)

MICK
It smelt like dope, Dave.

(beat)

DAVE
If he phoned you – he must be alright.

PHIL
Exactly. And he’s big enough to take care of himself.

DAVE
Yes. If he needs us – he’ll call.
PHIL
Yes.

DAVE
And he can get food at the hotel.

MICK
Yes. And I'll go to the shop and try to replace the bananas.

PHIL
Replace them with what?

MICK
Other bananas.

(beat)

MICK
I'm really sorry.

PHIL
It was an easy mistake for a paranoid person to make.

MICK
Sorry Dave.

DAVE
No, it's not your fault. You didn't know.

PHIL
Neither did I.

DAVE
I know. He keeps quiet about it.

MICK
I don't even like bananas.....

PHIL
You're not helping.

MICK
Right.

DAVE
Takes after Charlie. Keeps himself to himself.

PHIL
What about his Dad?

DAVE
Eh?

PHIL
His Dad. Is he in the business?

DAVE
Tom’s?

PHIL
Yes.

DAVE
She never talked about him. She said it wasn’t planned so it was down to her – not him.

PHIL
It wasn’t that patronising prat with the beard, was it?

DAVE
Ah! The revolutionary socialist who lived in Hampstead. Gavin.

PHIL
Gavin....

DAVE
He was hanging around with TB in Germany..

MICK
TB?

PHIL
Tumourous Beatie.

MICK
Right.

DAVE
He dumped her in Dusseldorf. *He* dumped her. What an idiot. She took it bad. Shaved all her hair off. The lot. She still looked fantastic. Made Sinead O’Connor look like Telly Savalas.

PHIL
She was a lovely looking woman.

DAVE
She is..

PHIL
You can see her in Ton’s eyes.

DAVE
You can, can’t you?
MICK
So this Gavin is the Dad?

DAVE
She never said. I hope not because I hated him.

PHIL
He was a prat...

DAVE
He was, wasn't he? She was so upset when he left. Lot of drinking. I kept an eye on her. You know, made sure she got back to the hotel safe. Kept the German boys at bay. Sat up with her talking ‘til the morning and stuff. Didn’t leave her on her own in case got all depressed. You know. It was… nice.

We got back – she disappeared. Nobody knew where she’d gone. Couldn’t get hold of her anywhere. Turned up a year later with little Tom in her arms. Changed her life. No more drinking. No more whiff or sniff. Stopped eating stuff that could move. All for Tom. Yeah. Very strong. Very independent.

MICK
Well, he’s a bastard whoever he is.

DAVE
Who?

MICK
This so called father. You’ve got to be there for your son. You’ve got to take responsibility. Doesn’t matter what you want. You have to suppress all your hopes, dreams and ambitions and just be a father.. You’ve got to give your stuff up for your kid... or kids.

DAVE
Maybe he didn’t know.

MICK
Maybe he didn’t know? Of course he knew. You’d know, wouldn’t you?

DAVE
Yes.

PHIL
It must be hard for Tom.

MICK
Very hard. A son needs his father.

PHIL
No I mean it must be hard having to watch your diet all the time...

MICK
Oh right....

PHIL
That hyperclockenspiel thing...

DAVE
Hypoglycimic..

PHIL
Yeah. That. It must be a right pain.

DAVE
You have to watch your diet.

PHIL
Yeah but I had all those years of glorious abuse. He’s only young, isn’t he?

MICK
Makes you think though doesn’t it?

DAVE
Think what?

MICK
That the older you get – the more care you have to take with your body.

PHIL
Yeah...

DAVE
Yeah.

(beat |)

DAVE
Tequila?

PHIL
Why not?

DAVE does the honours.

DAVE
Mick?

MICK
What?

DAVE
Tequila.

MICK
I don’t know. I don’t want to get too drunk.
DAVE
Tequila doesn’t make you drunk.

MICK
Really?

DAVE
No.

MICK
OK.

PHIL
A toast this time?

DAVE
No. Let’s cut to the chase..

DAVE refills glasses.

PHIL
After Harrogate, there’s one more, yeah?

MICK
Birmingham again..

PHIL
And that’s it?

MICK
Yeah.

DAVE
Well, thanks for the gigs.

PHIL
To Mick for the he gigs.

DAVE
I thought we weren’t doing a toast?

PHIL
Well I’ve started now.

DAVE
True.

PHIL DAVE
The gigs.

MICK
The gigs.

DAVE
(reacting to the tequila)
Oh..it doesn’t get easier, does it?

MICK
Don’t thank me. Thank Jane. She had a client over for dinner. He was looking for something for the company do. She was a big fan of ours so I played a few things and here we are.

PHIL
Right.

MICK
You know how it is after dinner. Couple of brandies and everyone is up round the piano for a sing song.

PHIL
Not in my house.

MICK
Haven’t you got a piano?

PHIL
No and - unless you’re on the right drugs - you can’t get everyone up for a sing song round the drum kit.

MICK
There must be a Phil Collins song you could bang along to…

PHIL
Bang along to?

DAVE
I have never been in your house.

PHIL
What?

DACE
In all the years I’ve known you – I have never been in your house.

PHIL
Correct.

DAVE
You’ve never had me round for dinner or...

PHIL
Have you?

DAVE
What?

PHIL
Had me round for dinner?

DAVE
Yes.

PHIL
No.

DAVE
You have been to my flat.

PHIL
Yes but not for dinner.

DAVE
You’ve had something to eat at my place.

PHIL
Take away or toast.

DAVE
No…

PHIL
Yes. Dave - I’ve only ever been in your flat, late at night at the end of a drinking session or after a gig

(beat)

DAVE
Well, that counts, doesn’t it?

MICK
You’ll both have to come to mine. All three of you.

DAVE
Yes.

PHIL
No

MICK
Why not?

PHIL
Why?

MICK
We often have friends and colleagues round for dinner.
PHIL
Why?

MICK
Get to know people better. Find out more about each other.

PHIL
I don’t know how many times I’ve watched him vomit. I’ve shared hotel rooms with him. We’ve had to share a bed when the bookings gone wrong. I’ve eaten breakfast, lunch, dinner and late night curries with him. I’ve seen him naked. Heard him fart. Stood beside him on a thousand motorway verges pissing into the darkness. What more is there to find out?

(beat)

PHIL
Away from work – that is my life. Nothing to do with this. Just Barbara and me. We potter around the antiques fairs looking for that priceless treasure, walk the dogs along the beach, have our tea in front of the telly. That’s my life. I’ll bash the crap out of my kit for anyone that pays so long as it doesn’t get in the way of that.

(beat)

DAVE
I haven’t seen Barbara for years.

PHIL
Glastonbury ‘81

DAVE
No!

PHIL
Yes.

DAVE
That’s twenty-one years.

PHIL
It certainly is.

DAVE
Well, there you are.

PHIL
Where am I?

DAVE
Be nice to see her.

PHIL
It hasn’t bothered you before.

DAVE
I forgot. It’d be nice to meet up.

PHIL
What for?

DAVE
I don’t know. To say hello.

PHIL
Why?

MICK
That’s what people do.

PHIL
..and it’s meaningless.

DAVE
It isn’t.

PHIL
It is.

MICK
Why doesn’t she come along to the next gig. I could ask Jane to come too and we could all...

PHIL
Why? Do you really think your Jane wants to travel up the motorway in a beaten up transit to watch a bunch of old men playing time warp music to a room full of suits?

(pause)

MICK
I’d just want her to see me play again. Now all the kids have gone, you know? Me - playing in a band..

(pause)

PHIL
You wrote a single that made it into the charts.

MICK

DAVE
Doesn’t matter. It still counts.
PHIL
It made the chart.

MICK
Butt missing the Fabulous Poodles tour.

PHIL
No big tour bus. Up and down the country in a leaky old transit.

DAVE
..but the gigs went well..

PHIL
...no they didn’t. The Poodles fans weren’t interested in us..

DAVE
No but we gave as good as we got.

PHIL
We got away with it. Each night we played to a handful of not very interested Poodles fans..

MICK
But at least you played. What if I hadn’t pulled out? If I had stayed and done the tour like you two did –where would I be now?

PHIL
With us two sitting in a deserted motorway services waiting for the van..

(beat)

MICK
We did do alright tonight though, didn’t we?

DAVE
We did. Didn’t we, Phil?

PHIL
We did. You weren’t jumping around as much.

DAVE
With these knees – who would?

PHIL
You made all the right expressions of pained concentration when you did the twiddly bits.

MICK
I wasn’t putting that on I was.........
It doesn’t matter. It was just an office party gig, Mick. They didn’t even know we were there.

(beat)

PHIL
You did alright. You’ve got a 45 that made the chart with your name on it. That’s a result. Not everyone gets to the Brits, Mick. Some of us are happy just to be working.

(pause)

MICK
She saw that gig at the Greyhound.

PHIL
Jane?

MICK
Yes.

PHIL
Then she’s seen your best gig.

MICK
No. There could have been others.

DAVE
Never as good.

PHIL
He’s right.

(pause)

DAVE
We got there at five for the sound check. Borrowed

DAVE MICK PHIL
..Geoff’s uncle’s van.

DAVE
He picked us up at the station.

MICK
..drove like a maniac to the Greyhound...

MICK PHIL
...didn’t want to be late...
PHIL
..didn’t know where to go. When we got there.. The

DAVE PHIL MICK
...front doors were locked.

MICK
So we went round the back. Banging on the..

DAVE MICK
..fire exit doors ...

DAVE
And the sound guy..

PHIL
Terry..

DAVE MICK
Terry...

DAVE
...came out. Little podgy bloke with long greasy black hair and a beard..

DAVE PHIL MICK
Leather waistcoat..

PHIL
..smoked Sobranie cocktail cigarettes...

DAVE
..pitch black inside ...stank of stale beer....

MICK
And he offered us a drink and..

DAVE PHIL MICK
We all had shandy.

PHIL
..didn’t want to get drunk – didn’t want to look like kids...

MICK
We’d never done a proper sound check, had we?

DAVE PHIL
No..

PHIL
It sounded incredible, didn’t it?

MICK
Amazing. So loud and …

DAVE  MICK
..solid. Really solid...

DAVE
Fantastic

PHIL
Incredible.

MICK
Waiting for the gig.

DAVE
Oh..waiting for the gig.

PHIL
Sitting in that Wimpy

DAVE PHIL MICK
Not talking.

MICK
..you ordered that big mixed grill and…

MICK  DAVE  PHIL
..you couldn’t finish it...

DAVE
..I barely started it...

PHIL
..sitting in that pokey dressing room...

MICK
......listening to the punters turn up....

PHIL  MICK DAVE
...I was so nervous..

MICK
.... Geoff threw up....

DAVE
......I threw up...

PHIL
..when he announced us it sounded a million miles away....

DAVE
...walking on stage with all the lights...
PHIL
..the stool wasn’t the right height for the kit – I had to squat...

MICK
..plugged in and there was that feedback whine...

DAVE
...me too – same thing...

PHIL
..looked a right prune hovering above the stool....

MICK
....Geoff looked bad..

DAVE  PHIL
...Geoff looked bad...

PHIL
..he fluffed the intro...

DAVE
...he did....

MICK
..he said...

DAVE  MICK  PHIL
..Love Doctor not Love Surgeon...

DAVE
He fluffed loads of stuff....

PHIL
..and his voice ..

DAVE  MICK  PHIL
....Train to Oblivion...

DAVE
He sounded flat...

PHIL
...he was always flat...

MICK
...he was, wasn’t he?....

DAVE
...we sounded good...
PHIL
..very tight....

DAVE
...fantastic response....

MICK
.... Jane was standing by the doors...

PHIL
...she looked gorgeous...

MICK
...she did, didn’t she?....

DAVE
...Terry on the desk was well into it...

PHIL
..all I could see in the darkness was the lit end of his Sobranie...

DAVE MICK PHIL
..bobbing up and down in time to us...

DAVE
..those blokes at the front...

DAVE MICK PHIL
...Statler and Waldorf...

PHIL
...they were going mental...

MICK
...the whole place was going mental...

PHIL
“ Dawn Rides the Sunrise”

DAVE MICK
Oh yes..

MICK
“ Terminal Lover”

PHIL
Never better....never better...

(beat)

DAVE MICK PHIL
“ Empathy Breakdown”
DAVE
Fantastic...

MICK
...took the roof off...

PHIL
..unbelievable....

MICK
..and we finished with...

DAVE  MICK  PHIL
“ My Lady’s Smile “

DAVE
..they loved it...

PHIL
...they did...

MICK
...yeah....they did...

PHIL
...they kept cheering...

DAVE
...the whistles...

MICK
..and we had no encore...

PHIL  DAVE
...no encore...

PHIL
..Geoff panicking “ We can’t go back on. We can’t go back on “...

DAVE
..and you said...

PHIL  DAVE  MICK
...“ If they liked Love Surgeon once – they’ll love it twice”...

PHIL
..and they did...

(beat)

MICK
I couldn’t sleep…

DAVE  PHIL
...me neither...

DAVE
...sat up all night in the kitchen...

PHIL
..didn’t play any records or anything...

MICK
...just sat there and wallowed in it...

DAVE  PHIL
Yeah...

(beat)

DAVE
You were on top form that night.

PHIL
Yeah. You were.

MICK
We all were

PHIL
Best gig ever...

DAVE
Never been another gig like it.

PHIL
Yeah. Our best ever gig.

MICK
Yeah. It was, wasn’t it?

(beat)

DAVE
Tequila?

MICK  PHIL
Yeah.

Dave does the honours.

MICK
Why don’t I drive us up to Harrogate?
PHIL
It's Tom's van.

MICK
No. In my car.

PHIL
We should all travel together.

MICK
Yes. In my car.

DAVE
What about the gear? And the van?

MICK
I'll get my Michael and one of his mates to take the gear in the van. He could use the money.

PHIL
But how will...

MICK
I'll take care of it. He's my son.

PHIL
Be like having roadies.

DAVE
Yeah. Like a proper gig.

MICK
Yeah

DAVE
Travelling in luxury. I fancy that.

PHIL
..be like the Stones.

DAVE MICK
Yeah

MICK
The Stones...

They take their glasses. A beat. They are all thinking the same thing. But DAVE is quickest.
Bags I Keith Richards...

PHIL
Ronnie Wood.

(beat)

MICK
Brian Jones.

Down in one

BLACKOUT
And "Anarchy in the UK" by the Sex Pistols

Scene Three ; 1976. Street corner. Waiting for Geoff and the van. No jackets. Looking anxiously for the van. MICK reading Lord of the Rings

DAVE
It’s nearly a quarter past. Did he know what time we were meeting?

PHIL
Yes. Quarter past at the station.

DAVE
The where is he?

MICK
Geoff’s always late.

DAVE
He is such a tosser.

MICK
We’re alright for time.

DAVE
We should have brought our gear with us.

PHIL
Then what was the point of borrowing the van?

DAVE
What if he hasn’t packed everything? If my Fender’s not there – I’ll kill him. It never leaves my side.

MICK
If anything’s missing – we’ve got plenty of time before the gig to nip back and get it. Relax.
(beat)

DAVE
His uncle’s a butcher. Did you know that? A butcher. We’re going to stink of meat.

MICK
We’ll keep the windows open.

(beat)

DAVE
He useless up front.

MICK
He’s alright.

DAVE
One of us should introduce the songs…

MICK
They’re his amps…

DAVE
One of us should do it.

(beat)

PHIL
Are we still opening with Love Surgeon?

DAVE
Yeah. We are, aren’t’ we Mick?

MICK
Aren’t we what?

DAVE
Opening with Love Surgeon?

MICK
We always open with Love Surgeon.

PHIL
That’s what I said.

DAVE
No you didn’t.

PHIL
I didn’t say it but it’s what I meant.
MICK
I think we should drop “My Lady’s Smile” though

(beat)

DAVE
You’re kidding.

PHIL
No way.

MICK
It’s too soppy.

DAVE
No it isn’t. It’s the best you’ve ever written, Mick.

PHIL
Yeah. We’ve got to play it.

MICK
No. It’s slow and maudlin.

PHIL
I don’t know what maudlin means but it isn’t it.

DAVE
It is our best song, Mick.

MICK
No. I’m not sure.

DAVE
It always storms.

PHIL
We’ve got to do it...

MICK
Yeah?

DAVE PHIL
Yeah

MICK
Alright then.

(beat)

DAVE
Wouldn’t it be great if there was a bloke in from the Old Grey Whistle Test and we didn’t know and he thought we were brilliant and booked us on the show.
PHIL
Yeah. And there might be because you never know who is out there listening.

(beat)

DAVE
Doesn’t Robert Fripp live in Fulham?

PHIL
King Crimson Robert Fripp?

DAVE
Yeah. I think so.

PHIL
He might pop in for a pint and stay and listen for a bit.

DAVE
Maybe the whole set.

PHIL
Maybe.

DAVE
That would be brilliant, wouldn’t it?

PHIL
Robert Fripp hearing our stuff.

DAVE
He might, you know?

PHIL
He might.

(beat)

DAVE
If tonight goes OK – do you reckon we could do this all the time?

PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
No.

PHIL
No?

MICK
No.

DAVE
Why not?

MICK
Nake a living doing this?

DAVE PHIL
Yeah.

MICK
No.

DAVE
Why not?

MICK
Every band can't make it, can it?

PHIL
So?

MICK
So what would happen if we didn’t? If we didn’t take off. If we didn’t start making money.

PHIL
It’s not about making a living.

DAVE
That’s right.

PHIL
I’d play tonight if we got paid or not.

DAVE
Me too.

MICK
But you’ve got to live.

DAVE
I’m at home. What’s to pay?

PHIL
Same here.

DAVE
Mum and Dad work. I don’t need to

PHIL
Exactly. And they love me being at home. They don’t want me to leave.
MICK
How do you know?

PHIL
Because they haven’t asked me to...

DAVE
My parents are the same. Without me there – they’d have no one to talk to but each other and they never talk to each other so they need me there.

PHIL
Everything’s paid for. I can just concentrate on the music.

MICK
What about ten years time?

PHIL
I want to do this forever.

MICK
Yeah?

PHIL
Yeah.

DAVE
I don’t know.

PHIL
What?

DAVE
Ten year time?

PHIL
Yeah.

DAVE
I can’t see us still doing this when we’re 31

PHIL
No. I guess not.

(beat)

The beep of a van’s horn.

MICK
Be good though, wouldn’t it?
PHIL  DAVE  MICK
Yeah.

BLACKPUT

“My Lady’s Smile”

(Sweeney/Vranch