

# SICK TRANSIT

by Jim Sweeney

“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..

PHIL

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

Pity.

(pause)

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 "21<sup>st</sup> Century Schizoid  
Man"

PHIL  
21<sup>st</sup> 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  
21<sup>st</sup> 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 manger 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.

(beat)

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  
Mendicant means beggar. Barred mendicants from the vote. Sven – four – two – eight. Beggars can’t be choosers.

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 "21<sup>st</sup> Century Schizoid Man" by King Crimson.

**Scene Two ;** *Night. PHIL, MICK and DACE 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

..in at 48. Highest position 48. Weeks in chart - two.

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.

MICK  
They might.

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

MICK  
Then why are we doing these gigs for kids?

DAVE  
Kids?

PHIL  
Because they pay.

MICK  
Is that all it is? The mone? Is that really all it is?

DAVE and PHIL  
Yes.

MICK  
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.*

MICK  
I'm not doing this for the money.

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

PHIL  
Cheers.

MICK

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 Tumorous Beastie.

MICK  
Tumorous 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 Germany.....

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 '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.

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  
Berliner Boys.

DAVE  
Dreadful, new romantic, crap

MICK  
You had big hair.

DAVE  
It was that Flock of Seagulls look

PHIL  
More like a murmuration 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  
Hypoglycemic..

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  
One. Twenty six years ago. Number 48. No follow up. No album. Nothing. A  
one hit wonder that wasn't even a hit.

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.....

PHIL

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.

DAVE

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  
Make 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