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# THRELFALL'S BOULDER:
# An investigation into the relationship between accent, dialect and identity.

by

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# Abstract

**Title:**
*Threlfall's Boulder: An Investigation into the Relationship between Accent, Dialect and Identity.*

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**Text of the Abstract:**
In this thesis I have assessed the links between accent, dialect and identity, positing the conceit that 'we wear our cultural identity on our tongues'. I assess and demonstrate how language (dialect) and intonation (accent) can be indicative of an identity. This thesis is presented in two parts: the creative component (a play) and the critical component (its exegesis). The creative component is a site-specific play to be performed in a room of an actual pub and written almost entirely in Lancashire dialect. The play deals with themes of identity, insularity and fear of the outside world. The play uses expectations of identity though speech and seeks to both subvert and reaffirm these expectations. Further to this, the play highlights the issue of how the local pub and its loss affects local society, as the pub used to be the hub of the community. The play will illustrate 'pub behaviour' and the differences between the rules of the pub and the rules of the outside world. The play demonstrates the human condition and uses the setting as a microcosm to be indicative of the intolerance of contemporary British society. Though a comedy, the play makes a serious comment on the state of the nation. By utilising realism the play represents pub and insular life, as I have witnessed it first-hand. In my accompanying exegesis I critically assess my final play, the writing process and the ongoing nature of creative art. It demonstrates how accent, dialect and speech are indicative of one's identity and the implications of that. I conclude that accent is not a reliable indicator of identity anymore, except in certain closed or insular communities, groups and locations such as the local pub, where accent and dialect can often operate as an exclusive and secret language.

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# INTRODUCTION TO
# THRELFALL'S BOULDER: An investigation into the relationship between accent, dialect and identity.

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In this introduction, I will attempt to give the thesis a grounding in ideas as to the nature of group identity and how that identity can or cannot be demonstrated through speech. I will discuss the 'performative' nature of the setting for my play (the pub) and explain why I have written the script in dialect. I will then discuss the research methodologies I have utilised and will contextualise my script within the contemporary canon, both in regards to the existing literature and the genre of realistic regional comedy, concentrating on four contemporary plays set in pubs.

The thesis, as a whole, explores, principally through artistic practice, how identity might be implied through speech – language being one of the indicators of identity available to us. The thesis will be made up of an introduction, a creative component (a play) and a critical analysis of the creative component. The play is written to be site-specific and entirely in dialect – not dialect words within a Standard English script. I wish to analyse how different elements of identity and identities themselves can be represented through a character's speech and behaviour. Also, I want to attempt to represent realistic pub life and behaviour within this script.

Firstly, for the purposes of this introduction, it is important to differentiate between accent and dialect. Martyn F. Wakelin states that 'dialect refers to all the linguistic elements in one form of a language – phonological, grammatical and lexical, while accent refers only to pronunciation. Accent is thus, the phonetic or phonological aspect of dialect' (*English Dialects An Introduction*. 1977, 1). It should also be

pointed out, that dialect doesn't just refer to regional, or traditional dialects, but all ways of speaking. Peter Trudgill suggests that even Received Pronunciation can be classed as a dialect (*Dialects*. 2010, 5). In the main, traditional dialect lexicon is made up of older words, which have not been replaced by modern ones - it is an older way of discussing and describing things (Wakelin, 1977, 3). It is important to point out here, that traditional dialect refers to older regional/historic forms of dialect, mainstream dialect refers to more Standard English and modern urban dialects refers to dialects such as the Black British/London.

For this traditional dialect lexicon to remain, Standard English must have less influence, which is, perhaps, why traditional dialects seem to be more likely to be found in rural and remote areas. Trudgill writes, 'it is certainly true that traditional dialects are much more prevalent in rural areas than urban ones', he goes on to say; 'traditional dialects are mostly, but not exclusively, spoken by older people and are clearly disappearing, being replaced by mainstream dialects' (2010, 17). Accent, however, is much more widespread, and Wakelin suggests the reason for this to be that 'old words may drop out of use, but old pronunciations tend to stick and be handed down' (1977, 84).

At one time, one's accent and dialect could be a great signifier of both one's geographical origin and more importantly, one's social standing – accent and dialect being heavily embroiled in notions of class. In modern times, where you come from is no longer as good an indicator of class as it once was, but the relationship between place of origin and accent, dialect and class still prevails, to some degree. Wakelin writes, 'Received Pronunciation is in general use today by the upper and upper-

middle classes, while regional dialects are still largely used by the working-class and lower-middle classes', going on to say 'sharp divisions between classes in England are disappearing, and with them the sharp divisions between Standard English and Non-Standard English' (1977, 154). Today, those divisions are even more blurred than they were when he was writing in 1977. An acceptance of regional accents and dialects has developed in the media where many more Non-Standard English voices can be heard, and RP, known as the 'BBC voice', is used to a much lesser extent by continuity announcers and presenters.

In theatrical terms, this popularity and acceptance of 'regional voices', to some extent, is due to the repertory theatre movement. Thanks to government subsidy, repertory theatres became non-commercial in approach, being based in, and serving, specific communities and regions (Rowell. *The Repertory Movement*. 2001, 2). Aleks Sierz suggests that it was because of these state subsidies that theatre didn't have to depend on tried and tested successful plays, but could encourage new writing (*Rewriting The Nation*. 2011, 23). In the early 1900s this freedom enabled a large body of original work to be encouraged. In the case of Lancashire drama, Stanley Houghton's *Hindle Wakes* and Harold Brighouse's *Hobson's Choice* enjoyed great success, these plays being heavily involved with Lancashire folk and in the Lancashire idiom (Rowell. 2001, 42-43). Although these plays gained some success elsewhere, like Glasgow, they only really reached the audiences of the region that the Gaiety Theatre served – Lancashire (Rowell. 2001, 43). Perhaps, the most notable play to bring a regional accent to London audiences, and nationwide audiences (in that excerpts of the play were televised), was John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger*. In *English Drama Since*

1940, David Ian Rabey writes, ‘Osborne dared to associate a non-BBC accent with articulate intelligence’, going on to point out that

> The 1944 Education Act had provided Osborne’s generation with free education; a regional accent no longer automatically implied a lack of education, and the slackening of the pressure on younger people to hide behind ‘public school’ accents was indicated and intensified by Osborne’s protagonist (2003, 30).

After the ground-breaking success of *Look Back In Anger*, other members of the ‘Angry Young Men’ movement played on this use of regional speech. Arnold Wesker, for example, ‘developed *Look Back’s* theatrical discovery of feisty lower-class vernacular into sympathetic presentations of a family who are unashamed of their working-class socialism’ (Rabey. 2003, 37). From then on, modern and contemporary drama has utilised regional accents. Contemporary drama, in its pursuit of representing modern Britain, even moves beyond the traditional dialect towards modern urban dialects, such as the Anglo/West Indian dialect used in the works of Kwame Kwei-Armah.

Stuart Hall suggests that ‘identities are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity – an identity in its traditional meaning being inclusive sameness, seamless, without internal difference’. Hall goes on to say that, ‘throughout their careers, identities can function as points of identification and attachment only because of their capacity to exclude, to leave out, to render outside’ (*Who needs Identity?* 2000, 17-18). This struck me as a very interesting idea, when I was considering the issues raised by my play and the themes addressed by my thesis as a whole. The idea that identity is a unity born out of

opposition to other groups is demonstrated in my play by the characters' fear of encroaching modernity and what they see as a potential loss of their traditions, culture and ultimately their identity to these 'outside' forces. In many ways, the play is about the obsolescence of the traditional dialect as a straightforward identity signifier. My protagonist, to some extent, has the ability to adopt different registers and dialects that suit him, whilst there are others who cannot, or rather, will not. They all come into conflict with modern 'dialects', which are representative of the hard-nosed commercialism that sees them as out-dated and expendable.

I could suggest that speakers of traditional dialects might be more inclined to see dialect and accent usage as a way of demonstrating group identity. They may also be more inclined to use their traditional dialect speech to reinforce the 'us' and 'them' group mentality, demonstrating an insularity and lack of curiosity. As Jeff Siegel suggests, 'in many cases, the use of a particular dialect may be seen as one of the main distinguishing characteristics of belonging to a social group' *(Second Dialect Acquisition*. 2010, 146). Siegel goes on to say, 'there is a feeling among people that to modify one's accent is indicative of some kind of in-authenticity and a lack of loyalty' 2010, 151). This attitude is demonstrated in my play with the line 'spake proper lad', when Richard is chastised for speaking in RP. I would, however, suggest that, though a dialect may be retained, it may not be used all the time and in every situation. Even traditional dialect speakers might use dialect in the pub or at home, but may temper or alter their speech in other situations. Wakelin proposes that 'dialect is [now] reserved for intimate or family circles and that people have become bi-lingual (using both standard and non-standard forms of English)' (1977, 155). This notion creates a

problem, if people are speaking differently in different situations, then accent and dialect ceases to be a realistic indicator of identity.

The idea that identity is 'performative', in the senses which Judith Butler has given to that word, will be of use here. 'Judith Butler develops the assertion of French existentialist writer Simone de Beauvoir that one is not born, but, rather, becomes a woman. That is, one's biological sex is raw material shaped through practice into socially constructed performance that is gender' (Schechner, *Performance Studies.* 2010, 151). Butler uses the word 'performativity' to suggest similarities with the idea of performance, that normative gender behaviour is a rehearsed role, with its own 'script'. 'The effect of gender is produced through the way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self' (*Gender Trouble*. 1999, 179), though Butler is keen to point out,

> In no sense can it be concluded that the part of gender that is performed is therefore the truth of gender; performance as bounded 'act' is distinguished from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of norms which precede, constrain and exceed the performer and cannot be taken as the fabrication of the performer's 'will' or 'choice' […] The reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake (*Critically Queer*. 2000, 111-112).

In more recent times, 'performativity' has also come to refer to the different versions of oneself that one portrays in different situations and with different social groups. As Kath Woodward states, 'because of our social lives, in everyday life we are required

to present different selves. The self is created in the context of different social circumstances, which require different responses' (*Understanding Identity*. 2002, 9).

It could be suggested that initially one's identity is shaped by outside influences. One's parents teach one how to behave and speak in a manner befitting their own identity, social position and so forth. Philip Riley suggests that 'parents not only wish to ensure the physical survival of their offspring, they also hope to ensure their 'social survival' by providing them with the culture and skills meeting local definitions of what it is to be an acceptable member of the society in question' (*Language, Culture and Identity*. 2007, 134). He goes on to say that 'children's selves and their social identities are shaped in and through discourse: we tell them who they are, and how to behave in ways appropriate to their position in society' (2007, 139).

As one matures, however, those behaviours and idioms may no longer be indicative of what one feels is one's identity. Identity, it seems, has components that may be more fixed and elements which can be readily changed. One might find oneself educated out of the class one was born into, by being the first in the family to go to university. One might find one no longer shares the same political or religious views as one's parents, if one ever did – perhaps, having certain beliefs inculcated by one's parents from an early age. Even the social groups with which one affiliates and the situations one finds oneself in, may also require the shedding or heightening of identity indicators and expected behaviours. The notion of 'performativity' comes into play here. If one presents different versions of oneself, then one's identity becomes more and more fluid, either returning to, or distancing itself, from the identity one learned

in childhood. The fluid and ‘performative’ nature of identity could, potentially, make identity and identity indicators much harder to pin down.

Accent and dialect, though not the great identity indicator it once was, could still be an element that people wish to retain or change. Some people may acquire a new way of speaking, if they feel that the idiom they grew up speaking no longer represents who they are, or that they wish to avoid a perceived stigma associated with that accent/dialect. That is not to suggest that the new dialect may in any way be more representative of one’s identity, more that it could be a way of shedding a dialect that is no longer indicative of one’s identity. In my play, the protagonist Richard rarely uses dialect and often slips into RP. This is to demonstrate, not that he sees himself as upper class, but that he doesn’t see himself as one of the locals and has little regard for his Lancashire heritage.

It may be that it has nothing to do with identity, merely that one’s accent/dialect in some way makes one feel like an outsider, or prevents one from being understood. Out of practicality one might temper or change one’s dialect, because one is constantly having to repeat oneself in order to be understood. One might be conscious of one’s accent/dialect having some stigma attached to it. I don’t mean that people keep saying ‘you talk funny, where you from?’ I refer to certain connotations that certain accents have, even to this day. In the past, one’s dialect could be very indicative of one’s education (or lack of it) and social status, precipitating George Bernard Shaw’s famous quote; ‘it is impossible for an Englishman to open his mouth without making some other Englishman hate or despise him’ (*Pygmalion*. 1938, 195). This is less true nowadays, but I do feel that there are still some remnants of this

attitude in Britain today. Siegel suggests that modern stigmatised features of a dialect 'are often rooted in stereotypes that are imitated or mimicked in joking or making fun of a dialect' (2010, 120-121). As a result one might replace one's accent/dialect with something closer to Standard English, in an attempt to avoid these stigmas. Siegel predicts that 'a variant in the D2 (second dialect) would be more likely to be acquired when the corresponding variant in the D1 (first dialect), is stigmatised' (2010, 121). Second dialect acquisition can be both intentional and unintentional,

> learning a new dialect most often occurs when people who speak a particular dialect migrate to another part of the country where a different dialect is spoken […] migrants to a new dialect area may unconsciously 'pick up' or acquire some features of the D2 and use them in their speech (Siegel. 2010, 5).

If the nature of identity is so fluid and identity indicators are now less reliable, I could have found the representation of identity in my play very difficult. I have, however, used traditional dialect speakers, who might adhere more to the notion of identity through 'difference' and dialect to be a legitimate group identity signifier. I have also put them in a place where dialect may be much more prevalent and acceptable, in the hope that I can represent those types of identity and attitudes to identity through language and behaviour.

The pub is one place where one can be a different version of oneself, which may be somewhat contrary to the identities one portrays in the 'real' world. The pub, in many ways, is a kind of performance space, or at least lends itself to the idea of 'performativity'. These pub roles have their own character names (pub nicknames),

which aren't necessarily used in the outside world, they have their own scripts (coded pub talk and banter) and their own behaviours (pub rituals like round buying). In the pub one can be someone one is not, one can present an identity that isn't necessarily true. The Social Issue Research Centre conducted a survey on the nature of pub life. One of the focus group participants of this survey suggested that people didn't necessarily know you and thus the pub was an opportunity 'to be just a little bit different from our everyday roles' (*The Enduring Appeal Of The Local*. 2008, 12). Kate Fox picked up on this notion in her conclusion to this survey saying, '[the pub] is a safe haven to which we can escape, as one of the focus group participants clearly articulated. We need such opportunities – to be, perhaps, a little larger than life on occasions, to leave behind the pressures of work' (2008, 34). I have found some evidence of this in my experiences in the pub. One fellow puts on a raucous and unnatural laugh, but when with his wife he doesn't laugh in the same way; and if he did, she would chastise him for it. Similarly so, another fellow was a considerable misogynist, constantly moaning about his useless 'gudfernouwt' wife, but when with her, he was a very attentive and loving husband. Clearly their pub personas were contrary to their 'real life' personas, this is a heightening of the fact that we are different versions of ourselves when we are in different social situations. The pub, it seems, allows us to further this and even be someone we would like to be, rather than the person we actually are.

Another element of the performativity of the pub is banter and storytelling. As Pierre Bourdieu writes in *The Biographical Illusion*, 'The autobiographical narrative is always at least partially motivated by a concern to give meaning, to rationalise, to show inherent logic, both for the past and the future' (2000, 298). The idea that

storytelling, be it ghost stories, as in Conor McPherson's *The Weir* and in David Greig's *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart,* or anecdotal stories, which seem to be a more modern take on the story telling in the pub, not only serve as entertainment but help to create unity and solidarity within the social group. Story telling helps us make sense of the world, to exchange experiences and even imply things about ourselves to others.

As well as the story telling there is what Kate Fox calls 'coded pub talk'. She writes that 'many pub conversations could be described as 'choreographed', in the sense that they follow a prescribed pattern, and are conducted in accordance with strict rules' (*Watching The English*. 2004, 99). She goes on to suggest that coded pub talk facilitates social bonding and reinforces egalitarian values, and that pub talk has identifiably English aspects; a celebration of eccentricity, an undercurrent of humour and elements of wit and linguistic inventiveness (2004, 101).

The third element of pub performativity is our behaviour, what Kate Fox calls 'the silent pantomime', which in itself suggests a performative element. 'The rules of English pub talk regulate non-verbal as well as verbal communication – in fact, some of them actively prohibit use of the verbal medium, such as the pantomime rule' (Fox. 2004, 92). Essentially, the pantomime rule is a way to catch the barperson's eye and indicate that they (the customer) would like to purchase a drink, but without any real vocal exchange (2004, 92-93).

It is with these performative and performance elements in mind that I have set my play in the pub. As I have suggested, the pub is already a performance space, so I am

merely attempting to place a performance, about the performance of the self, in that performance space. Throughout history, pubs and inns have been sites where touring players might perform, also the pub setting has been used through history as setting that ‘provides a convenient background for introducing and bringing together a wider mix of people than might otherwise be possible’ (Steven Earnshaw. *The Pub In Literature*. 2000, 18). Earnshaw goes on to mention that Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part 1*and *The Taming of the Shrew* both use action situated in the inn ‘as a way for harmony to be restored after a day of misrule and the suspension of accepted social codes’ (2000, 83).

By having the performance site specific, I am attempting to enhance the feeling of participation in the live event. One of theatre’s great strengths is that it deals with the live event and this is, perhaps, why it has endured for so long, even with the growing popularity of film, television and other media. The choice to write the play to be performed in an actual pub was also, to some degree, a practical and financial consideration - in that the set is already there, as are props etc. However, it is also to aid the audience’s enjoyment of any subsequent performance of my play, the sights, the smells; the whole atmosphere is given a realism, which I want to play upon.

Another reason for setting a play in a pub is that it is a microcosm, which has its own rules and behaviours and which can be used to comment on the outside world. The pub has its own conversational codes and has a rich undercurrent of humour, which can be utilised in a script. Philip Fisher comments on this notion in his review of *The Green Man*, ‘there has been a long tradition of examining life through the bottom of a beer glass […] writers have used this medium as an easy way of providing their

audiences with provocative chatter' (*British Theatre Guide*. 2003). Earnshaw also comments on this use of the pub setting, saying, 'drinking places have been used by writers to bring together different levels of society, either to highlight existing tensions in society or project some idea of social harmony, or both – the drinking place becomes a microcosm' (2000, 13).

I have decided to write the script entirely in dialect, rather than to deposit dialect words within Standard English. More than anything, this was out of practicality, the characters 'spoke' to me in dialect and I felt that to transpose from Standard English into dialect, I might lose something in the translation. The nature of Lancashire dialect means that, to represent the dialect one must write phonetically (or at least phonetically accurate to my ear), omit certain letters, or use compound words – this could only be done if I wrote entirely in dialect. The other element is to aid the actors' delivery of the lines, in that it gives a guide to the sounds of the words and the rhythm in which they should be orated. Essentially, to represent realistic dialect speech, the script must be written in this way, as the rules of language change when dealing with dialect – in that dialect often has nuances that can differ from Standard English.

The main research methodology that I have utilised for this thesis, is practice-based research. However, within practice-based research, many other methodologies are drawn upon. As Robin Nelson suggests, 'practice based research is likely to be interdisciplinary and to draw upon a range of sources in several fields' (*Practice As Research In The Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances*. 2013, 34).

During the course of my MA, I have secured different jobs in several local pubs, so that I may observe behaviours and the workings of pubs. I have also frequented several local pubs, as a patron, again to observe behaviours and to listen to conversations, some of which have varying degrees of dialect. The purpose of conducting research in this way, is so as to be able to listen in and observe the action relatively unnoticed. This is to avoid what dialectologists call 'observer's paradox', where the subject being observed could potentially alter their speech and behaviours because they've become conscious they are being watched (Trudgill. 2010, 23). As a patron, one can be a passive observer and listen to conversations, whilst observing behaviour at a distance – so as to be more objective. However, as the passive observer one can be somewhat limited. One can't sit at the bar, which is the centre of the action, because one is inviting interaction and one is not in a position to make any notes, without drawing attention to one's motives – which could create the observer paradox. The role of employee also has its pros and cons. As the employee one can observe the action relatively unnoticed - even as the passive observer, people are aware of you, they may even temper their usual pub behaviour due to your presence. However, as an employee one soon becomes a kind of non-entity, where people are relaxed and forget you're there, or at least presume you are too busy to hear what is being said. One can even take copious notes because patrons presume one is writing something work-related. The downside to being an employee is that one is at work and one has certain duties to perform, which one can't neglect because something interesting is happening – or one finds one is too busy to notice. On the other hand one is well and truly part of that world, so the rituals of the pub become second nature – one becomes a participant.

Along with these other elements, there is the practical side to practice-based research itself. Practice-based research encourages the researcher to bring all of their experiences, skills and interests to bear - whereas other, more scientific, methodologies might encourage the researcher to be impartial. In her introduction to *Practice As Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, Estelle Barrett writes,

> since creative arts research is often motivated by emotional, personal and subjective concerns, it operates not only on the basis of explicit and exact knowledge, but also on that of tacit knowledge […] A general feature of practice-based research projects is that personal interest and experience, rather than objective 'disinterestedness' motivates the research process (2012, 4-5).

One of the attractive features, to me, of practice-based research is that this creative approach to research could 'generate knowledge and understanding that may not have been revealed through other research approaches' (Barrett. 2012, 1). Barrett goes on to propose that practice-based research is 'artistic practice that can be viewed as the production of knowledge or philosophy in action […] our exploration of artistic research demonstrates that knowledge is derived from doing and the senses' (2012, 1).

Applying this notion to my writing, I believe I have developed a greater understanding of the Fylde/Wyre Lancashire dialect and its usage through my writing. I did not write the script in Standard English and then translate it into Lancashire dialect, but wrote in dialect to begin with. This gave me a greater insight than I might have gained from reading (dictionaries and guides) or just from listening to dialect speakers. By having my characters use the dialect I became aware of its nuances and

idiosyncrasies. I became more accustomed to the loss of letters, the truncated and compound nature of the spoken dialect – the oral nature of the dialect being a large part of understanding how the rhythm of dialect speech could be represented. This insight, I believe, might not have been obtained, had I used a more traditional methodology – especially since I have little background in linguistics and dialectology.

I did gain a great amount of understanding of what constitutes identity through reading, but I do, however, believe that I gained more insights into the nature of identity through constructing the fictional identities of my characters and finding ways for them to demonstrate these identities. The same could be said of the insights into the anthropology of the pub and pub behaviours. I learned from my experiences in the pub and learned what to look for from the literary elements of my research. However, it was out of necessity, wanting to realistically represent these elements in my play that I even gave any thought to these areas, let alone studied them so forensically.

Perhaps the most important element of furthering understanding through practice-based research, is the understanding of the writing process, my own writing and ultimately a greater understanding of myself. As Robin Nelson writes, ‘the reflexive defines a position where the researcher can refer and reflect upon themselves […] Reflexivity concerns not only reflecting on what is being achieved, but also where you stand’ (2013, 44). This development of the self, one’s own writing and an understanding of the writing process, is perhaps, one of the greatest strengths of

practice-based research. Nelson goes on to quote Clark Moustakas, who, when outlining heuristic research, suggests it is,

> a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis. The self of the researcher is present throughout the process and, while understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge (2013, 66).

Another key area of interest to me is that of the drafting process as research. The journey one goes on as a writer, from initial ideas to bringing that idea to fruition is a fascinating one. ‘Techniques and skills may be developed in training but the creative process involves gestation, allowing time for the spark of an idea to be fired, and the process in which it is wrought into realisation’ (Nelson. 2013, 28). As one writes and re-writes, one is able to determine what ‘works’ or does not – either accidentally or more consciously. Nelson suggests that the ‘know-what’ of practice-based research ‘resides in the knowing what ‘works’, in teasing out the methods by which ‘what works’ is achieved and the compositional principles involved’ (2013, 44).

For all of this methodology’s strengths there are a few limitations. For example there is an issue with how objective one can be about one’s own work. Barrett writes, ’It can be difficult to discuss work objectively given the intrinsically emotional and subjective dimensions of the creative process’ (2012, 135). Another problem with practice-based research, is to what degree one might find solutions to the research questions and what solid outcomes may be achieved. Nelson suggests, ‘practice-based

research typically affords substantial insights rather than coming to such definite conclusions as to constitute answers' (2013, 30). I believe that in my own research I have developed some small insights, rather than any great conclusions, but still feel there is some value in those small insights. Certainly, the knowledge I have gained in relation to dialect writing has been very useful for my writing and worthwhile, in that I am documenting a diminishing dialect. The insights I have gained into the writing process and, more importantly, my own writing process has undoubtedly improved me as a writer. The uniqueness of creative writing is that the art and the process (reflection and analysis) are all done in the same medium.

For the literature review I will concentrate on four contemporary plays all set in pubs, but will refer to others where pertinent. These four plays are *The Green Man* by Doug Lucie, *Christmas* by Simon Stephens, *The Weir* by Conor McPherson and *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* by David Greig.

I will first give a brief précis of the plots of each play. In *The Green Man*, the action takes place in a south-west London pub (The Green Man) and sees a team of builders, along with the landlord of the pub, waiting after hours for Barry to turn up so they can embark on a fishing trip. While they wait for Barry, the builders and the landlord drink and talk into the early hours. The banter soon begins to turn sour as Barry fails to turn up and tempers fray, resulting in revelations of unfaithfulness, the sale of the pub and its inevitable demise from a 'back street boozer' into a theme pub. In *Christmas*, the action takes place over the course of one evening in an east London pub. The landlord and his regulars sit around lamenting their lives, until a stranger enters and jolts them out of their reverie, calling them to account for their resistance to

change and their lax attitude to bettering themselves. *The Weir* is set in a small rural pub in Ireland, the regulars along with the landlord exchange ghost stories to entertain a young woman, who is new to the area, until she tells her own unnerving story of her child's death. *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* sees a reserved academic attending a conference in Kelso in the Scottish Borders. The snow begins to fall heavily, and so, unable to go home, she finds refuge in a local pub. After being taunted by three banshees dressed as crows, she attempts to find a B & B, which turns out to be run by the devil. The play then follows her time in hell (the B & B) and her attempts to escape.

All four of these plays use accent and dialect to place their plays geographically. This is a tool used by the writers to imply elements of class and location to the audience from the very outset. Most of the plays utilise only one accent and dialect, whilst Stephens uses several accents/dialects (Irish, Italian, Northern and London), perhaps to represent accurately the multicultural nature of London. Another purpose of accent and dialect usage is the requirement for realistic representation: these are working class environments, and therefore, it would be expected that the characters speak in a certain way.

Though accent is widely used in these plays, dialect seems to have been used more sparingly, and presumably this is due to the issue of audience comprehension. *The Weir* and *Prudencia Hart* are the plays that use most dialect and I believe the reason for this is that these plays are more aimed at specific types of regional audiences, audiences who will, presumably, have a greater understanding of that dialect, so comprehension is less of a worry. In the case of *Prudencia Hart*, I believe the use of

dialect is also to further reference the sources it draws upon for influence – Scots Border ballads and mythical legends.

All four plays also use accent and dialect as identity indicators, at the level of the individual, but also to imply the dynamics of the group identity. Lucie even alludes to this group language in *The Green Man*, when the characters are discussing fishing. Mitch says, 'Bernie, carp fishing's like a club, an exclusive club. And all clubs have their special language' (22). All four plays touch on the idea of group identity as 'difference', the 'fucking northerners' (142) line in *Christmas*, the line 'just cause I don't talk like Jeremy Paxman […]'(63) in *The Green Man*, the fact that Valerie is from Dublin in *The Weir* and the taunt 'are you from Edinburgh, Prudencia […] People from Edinburgh are famous for being shy' (32-33) in *Prudencia Hart* all play on the 'us' and 'them' mentality. I believe that all four writers have used this to play on the audiences' own attitudes to 'difference' and to create tension and drama. McPherson even uses the stranger in the community as a device for introducing his characters to the audience, whilst the characters are being introduced to Valerie onstage.

Just like accent and dialect, the elements of pub talk and pub behaviour have all been used by the writers to ground their plays in reality, with the exception of *Prudencia Hart*, though it does attempt to create a realistic starting point before taking the audience on a magical journey. By pub talk, I refer to the nature of pub conversations, which have their own codes and nuances. Pub talk relies on the use of profanity, a large element of humour (generally base or scatological), specific subject matter and some use of nicknames, which all help to suggest solidarity within the group. Pub

behaviour refers to certain etiquettes and behavioural codes that exist in the pub, such as round buying, which again, aids group solidarity and familiarity. This buying others a drink is also used as a way to 'buy into' the group – as Anderson does in *Christmas* (116)

In my creative component, I concentrated heavily on pub talk, the play in many ways being about the characters, the way they speak to one another and how they relate to each other. *The Weir*, *Christmas* and *The Green Man* all utilise pub talk to represent realism. *Prudencia Hart*, I believe, uses more of a pub talk 'tone', and by that I mean that the play uses humour and profanity, it has a pub talk elements, in that it could fit within the conversational codes of the pub.

In the case of *The Weir*, *Christmas* and *The Green Man*, humour and round buying are used by the writers to allow their characters to diffuse tensions when things become a little too heated. Lucie uses this device several times, for example when Bernie feels he might have gone a little too far by suggesting that Lou is emotionally open (something one might consider to be inappropriate in the pub). Bernie suggest that 'every conversation [with Lou] is like emotional open-heart surgery', he then attempts to make a peace offering by offering Lou a drink (8). On another occasion, when the conversation seems to be turning a little philosophical and maudlin, Bernie uses humour to lighten the mood and divert the conversation. He does this by replying 'not since Tommy Cooper died', when Lou says, 'there's no magic in your life, is there, Bernie?' (9). Stephens also uses this device, even almost drawing it to the audiences' attention with the line, 'does anyone know any good jokes' (107) after Anderson probes too deeply into Macgraw's personal life. In the case of *The Weir*, McPherson

not only uses humour to defuse tensions, but he also uses humour to help break up large monologues. He does this by having Jack, as he sets the scene, break off from his tale and bring everyone momentarily back to 'reality', 'Am I setting the scene for you? […] Finbar's looking a bit edgy. You want to finish that small one, I think.' (36).

Round buying is often used when humour has failed to diffuse the situation. For example, in *The Green Man*, when Lou has already used humour to back-track from saying Greg uses too much all-over body spray, Greg then pursues a work-related conversation and actually stops it himself by getting another drink, before starting up again (13-15). Lucie has used this to draw out the conversation with digressions, as a natural conversation would do, also showing Greg's hesitation to broach these subjects. In *Christmas*, humour and round buying are used together to lighten the mood. After a depressing conversation about being on your own at Christmas, the conversation comes to a strange end and is left hanging, so Macgraw tells a joke and after the punch line says, 'My round I think' (118). Stephens uses this to get the conversation going again after this oddly ended exchange. In *The Weir*, drinks are bought as peace offerings when the men call each other to account for potentially scaring Valerie with their ghost stories, Jack then saying, 'We'll say no more about it. We might tell a few jokes when she gets back.' (55). McPherson uses this to dissolve the tension, but, also, to slow the pace before Valerie begins her own story.

The drinks that people drink are often used to indicate elements of character and standing within the group. In all four plays, the main characters drink what one might expect them to drink. In *The Weir*, Guinness, Harp and whiskey are drunk, all drinks

associated with Ireland. In *Prudencia Hart*, malt whisky is drunk, again a drink one might easily associate with Scotland. In *The Green Man*, the characters are all drinking shorts, something one might expect people to drink late on in the evening or after hours, the same can be said for *Christmas*, along with lager and bitter. However, it is the, what one might call, non-standard drinks that are used to demonstrate elements of character and group standing. I believe that the writers have deliberately assigned certain drinks to certain characters in order to imply something about them. For example, in *The Weir*, Valerie tentatively asks for white wine and Brendan has to go to the house to get some (25). The suggestion, I think, is to show her as an outsider and to demonstrate that there is little call for that type of drink in those parts, Jack saying as much, 'It's not too often the… the…wine does be flowing in here.' (26). This could be to suggest the higher social class that Valerie comes from, in relation to the lower class locals.

Steven Earnshaw draws attention to the associations that drink has in literature. He points out that drink might be a sign of social rank, literary tradition, political alignment, religious sympathy and patriotism. Wine has connotations with the higher end of the social scale (due to its expense pre 20th century) and its associations with religion; the blood of Christ and wine's intimate links with Bacchus - wine is both a physical reality and a spiritual embodiment of inspiration. Whereas beer and ale are English, down-to-earth, staunch and correspond to the traditional English virtues of practical, no-nonsense goodness (2000, 28-30).

In *Christmas*, Rossi drinks Drambuie, but this is not to show he is an outsider (he's clearly a member of the group); it is perhaps to display his European origins. It is this

use of an ‘exotic’ drink that suggests a different, more ‘foreign’ attitude to drinking (he sips his drink) and, perhaps, a more refined European palate. Also, Macgraw has a bottle of poteen, again perhaps a reference to his own Irish origin. In the case of *The Green Man*, it is the fact that Greg is not drinking anything that is used to show his slightly more peripheral status within the group and that he can’t keep up with the others (62). In *Prudencia Hart*, the corbies reference Sambuca as the drink of choice when embroiled in a debauched session. Sambuca, or any high alcohol shot, might be associated with binge drinking and wilful excess, which shows them to be the bacchanalian harpies that they are. In my play I have done a similar thing: Nancy imbibes a variety of drinks, to demonstrate that she is a woman who is influenced by modern media and modern trends. Tabitha Wolfe drinks pints, which is contrary to what the locals expect a ‘lady’ to drink and it is used to show the encroaching modernity that she represents.

I would suggest that there are certain ‘safe’ topics of conversation in the pub, which are generally rooted in shared interests or common ground and aid the bonding process. The purpose of these subjects is to have topics that one could converse on, without fear of intruding too much into the private lives of the people to whom one is talking. Also, the people one is conversing with might well be people you only talk to in the pub, not seeing them outside of that setting and therefore one might be limited to what one might talk about. In the case of *The Green Man* and *Christmas*, it could be suggested that the characters are just ‘pub friends’, though in *The Green Man*, they are also workmates. In the case of *The Weir*, they are not just pub friends (they seem closer and talk about a wider range of subjects), but this could be down to the isolated rural nature of the setting. In these three plays, there are common safe subjects that

are used by the writers for both colourful dialogue and a way to change subject/diffuse tensions when things get too personal or heated. These subjects include the weather, gambling, football, fishing, mothers and (ex) wives. When humour and round buying have failed to lighten the mood or dissipate tension, then the writers have used safe subject matter to allow their characters to do this. In *The Green Man*, Lou on two occasions tries to steer the conversation to fishing in an attempt to stop Greg talking about his fears at work and that Mitch is having an affair with Barry's wife (15-16). In *Christmas*, when Rossi oversteps the line with a perverse comment and is chastised for it, he changes the subject to the weather and how cold it is (102). A similar thing can be seen in *The Weir*, when, after things get a little heated over the detrimental effect of their storytelling, drinks are bought and Finbar enquires after the health of Jim's 'mammy' (55).

Pub banter and the pub argument also appear in the plays, with the exception of Prudencia Hart – though the taunts from 'the corbies' (32-33) could be considered to be slightly like pub banter. Kate Fox suggests that 'the pub argument allows people to achieve intimacy under the macho camouflage of competition' (2004, 104), which I believe is also true of pub banter. Banter often relies on 'piss-taking' and humorous insults as a veiled way of bonding. This is not specific to just the pub however, it can be seen amongst work mates, team members and so on. Lucie, McPherson and Stephens all use pub banter in their plays mainly for comic effect. In *The Weir*, there are comments made about Jack's big head (32) and when Finbar calls a Ouija board a Luigi board, everyone pounces on his mistake (41), which is very funny and in the case of the latter this comes when he's telling a ghost story and therefore comes when tensions are heightened, making it funnier – humour can often seem funnier when

placed within a tense moment. In *Christmas*, two good examples of banter are when Russell comes back from the toilet, Rossi having been in there before him, and he says, '[…] What have you been fucking eating mate? It smells like a fucking horse in there.' (124). Also when MacGraw tells of a postcard he sent while on holiday in Southend, all mock him, suggesting that Southend is not a holiday destination, but a day trip not warranting a postcard (105). Both these exchanges, through humour, demonstrate the bond between the men and their jibes are a way to imply familiarity and friendship – even if they are just pub friends.

The pub argument is used to great effect in both *The Green Man* and *Christmas*, but in the pursuit of drama, the arguments get much more heated and personal than they might in real life. In *The Green Man*, banter is used extensively and so too the pub argument. Given the nature of the characters (workmen and workmates), one would expect there to be a large element of 'piss-taking' and a level of insult that might be higher than in other social groups, by which I mean, laddish, locker room humour that seems much more personal, though still understood to be just 'banter' and not actually aimed at someone personally at all. However, the arguments in *The Green Man* do get out of control, which is something the pub argument should never do. It is not that Lucie has misunderstood the pub argument, but that he has used it in order to create tension in his play. Also, I feel that the friendship between Mitch and Lou is somewhat tenuous, almost as though they don't really know why they are friends, other than having a shared past, and certainly wouldn't be friends if they met now. Lucie demonstrates this veiled animosity by constantly having it boil over during the pub arguments in the play, as they try to vie for top dog status and gain one-upmanship over each other. In *Christmas*, there is also an element of the pub

argument going too far. Stephens uses the character Anderson to probe deeply into the other characters' lives and attitudes to create drama and tension, using the pub argument as a vehicle to do this. One could perhaps draw a parallel with Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*, in that Anderson is like Hickey and has come to challenge the regulars' resistance to change and shatter their illusions as regards their un-fulfilled 'pipedreams'. Stephens does draw attention to the fact that the pub rules have been broken though, when Russell says, 'Don't you think he went a bit fucking mad? I mean, a bit too fucking far […] You don't do that do you? You can't just come into a fucking pub and start spouting shite like that […]' (139).

All four of the plays rely heavily on oral storytelling, either in the form of myths, legends and ghost stories (*The Weir*/*Prudencia Hart*), or more anecdotal stories (*Christmas*/*The Green Man*). Storytelling and exchanging stories in pubs is a deep-seated tradition, serving as a form of entertainment, a way to aid group bonding and, in the case of legends, a way of creating a bond with people and their surrounding area. People may not set out to tell a story, it can often be precipitated by the conversation coming onto a subject that inspires, or reminds one of a story, as is demonstrated in *The Weir*, when Finbar suggests that offering him a cigarette and him having given up was what made him think of the fairy road story (53). In the case of anecdotal stories, this is also true, but they are, in addition, a way of revealing elements of character and one's attitudes to life. The fact that oral storytelling is a large element of pub conversation could well be one consideration for the authors having set their plays in pubs. Anecdotal storytelling can reference recent events or events that happened many years ago. They can reference a shared experience (do you remember the time when…) or reference one's own personal experience (I remember

once I…) and in many ways, serve the same purpose as the mythical ghost stories, but generally speaking, have much more humorous overtones. In many ways, the long rambling joke, as opposed to the quick one-liner, could be considered a more modern form of storytelling.

In the case of *The Green Man* and *Christmas*, the anecdotal storytelling enables the authors to reveal elements of character, or reasons why certain characters are the way they are. For example in *Christmas*, Russell's despair is down to having been told, by his mother, about his father and the fact that he killed himself on Christmas Eve (84-87). Stephens also uses the anecdotal story as a way for Rossi to comfort Russell, when Russell is upset about the football (102-103). Stephens makes this story funnier by Rossi's turn of phrase, 'Fucking sit down your big arsehole or my hands will slip and cut your fucking big head off [sic]' (102). In both *The Green Man* and *Christmas*, the storytelling does tend to be a bit more serious and depressing than, perhaps, most real pub stories would be. This is to create pathos, as all the characters are lamenting their lives to some degree and have found themselves in somewhat of a rut.

In *Prudencia Hart* and *The Weir*, the storytelling is of a more traditional variety, very much the 'round the campfire' type. With these mythical types of stories, they are much more tied to the surrounding area and have an element of heritage, tradition and nostalgia about them. In *Prudencia Hart*, the play is one big story that is acted out for the audience, which is a heightened version of someone 'holding court' in a pub and telling a story to other regulars. If one posits the idea of the pub as a performance space, then the telling of stories, which have an element of performance, is well suited to the pub setting.

One of the main themes running through all four plays is that of nostalgia. The pub itself is a very nostalgic place, shared experiences in the pub are often relived for both the participants and are recounted for those who were not there. Nostalgia is a common pub subject, where people talk of the good old days and moan about the state of the world today. All four authors use music as a prompt for nostalgia. In *The Green Man*, the music from Lou's youth is referenced, Lou saying those old records remind him of good times (58). In *Christmas*, Stephens uses a Frank Sinatra theme throughout to represent more halcyon days. This is demonstrated in the first scene, where Stephens uses music and sounds of laughter to suggest a nostalgic time when the pub was busy and full of life (77). However, music is also shown not to be a comfort, in the case of Anderson, whose cello has become a metaphor for the loss of his wife and a totem for his grief (134-135). *Prudencia Hart*, is steeped in music, from the more traditional songs '*Black waterside*' (43-44) and '*My Love is Like a Red Red Rose*' (55-56 & 60), to more modern songs by Bob Dylan (19) and Kylie Minogue (22 & 83). In some ways the whole play has a musicality about it, in that it is in ballad form and therefore rhythmic. The use of the traditional songs is a way of referencing the heritage and traditions (of Scotland), which are important themes throughout the play and might help to draw the audience into the magical world that Greig has created. *The Weir* doesn't use music to suggest nostalgia, aside from a small reference to old sixties songs (73), instead photographs, references to local landmarks and past inhabitants are used to the same end.

It might be suggested that this idea of tradition and heritage can be seen in that parallels can be made between these plays and older plays. *The Weir* bears some

similarities with Synge's *Playboy of The Western World*, and draws on Irish dramatic traditions, such as the portrayal of working class farmers and bleak existence. It could be suggested that *Prudencia Hart* uses techniques one might see in the works of John Godber, with actors playing multiple roles and lines being split between several actors (39-42). *Christmas* could be paralleled with *The Iceman Cometh*, in that the play deals with desperate down and outs who never realise their dreams.

This notion of nostalgia precipitates another element which is found to some degree in all four plays, the resistance to change. The pub setting is a controllable and practical arena for the action, but it also allows the authors (in the case of *Christmas* and T*he Green Man*) to create a microcosm in which they can comment on the real world. Linda's tirade about 'girls today' (51-53) in *The Green Man* allows Lucie to comment, through his characters, about attitudes to modern society. In *Christmas*, the mad world outside is slowly encroaching on those in the relative safety of the pub, and is demonstrated by Stephens having a collection of strange people briefly come into the pub (89 & 101). It could be suggested that the attitudes of the characters towards modern society are affirmed, or represented, by this selection of strange folk who appear briefly through the play.

Resistance to change can be seen, to some extent, in characters from the four plays, and I believe this is a way for the authors to inject pathos into their characters and to balance the comedy. In *The Green Man*, Lou is very set in his ways and resists the opportunity to contact his daughter. In *Christmas*, all the characters are reluctant to change their lives for the better, which is what Anderson calls them to account for and MacGraw stuffing the letters into the cupboard is a metaphor that Stephens has used

to indicate their attitudes to life – out of sight, out of mind. *The Weir* sees Jack lament his missed opportunity to marry and move to Dublin (66-69) and Brendan moans about 'The Germans', even though they are what is keeping his pub going (72-73). Even *Prudencia Hart* has some undertones of resistance to modernity, in the form of Prudencia's attitudes to the other academics' modern ideas about the analysis of ballads (7-9). It is this reluctance to change that has, perhaps, precipitated the ending to *The Green Man* and *Christmas*, in both cases it is the forced change of pub closure that brings the play to an end. This ending ties in with the notion of nostalgia, in that it is an end of an era moment and leaves the question of what will happen now unanswered.

Although the pub setting is very easy to control, it does have some limitations, in that the action could become very static. In my own play I had to think of ways of creating movement to avoid this, so I had them dance, smoke and collapse. One way of creating movement is the use of pub business, by this I refer to the day-to-day tasks of a publican/barperson. The plays (with the exclusion of *Prudencia Hart*, which has much more movement, in that it transports itself out of the pub) use pub business to varying degrees, this is, I believe, down to the writers' own experience. By the writers' own experience I refer to experience of pub work - though the writers might have frequented many pubs, they may not be familiar with the background workings of a pub. I believe Simon Stephens has definitely worked in a pub, because his use of pub business is more specialist than the others, for example, glass cleaning and restocking are used by all, but the use of line-cleaning in *Christmas* (91) belies a good working knowledge. Stephens, as with the other writers, uses this pub business to move characters in and out of the action, as well as giving the actors something to do

while they are delivering their lines. By removing characters from the action, others are able to confide in each other, or talk more conspiratorially in certain characters' absences. Stephens also uses pub business to demonstrate Macgraw's nervousness, or reluctance, to discuss his son (104-105), using his pub duties as a way of fiddling and as a way to potentially get out of the conversation if it gets too much for him. Another way the authors have combated the static nature of the pub setting, is to have characters go to the toilet, or have them smoke. This allows entrances and exits and also gives the actors something to do whilst talking. The exchange of cigarettes, which appears in *Christmas* and *The Weir*, also shows group familiarity and solidarity, 'crashing' cigarettes being like the round buying ritual and serving the same purpose.

To conclude, I believe I have argued that identity is less likely to be demonstrated by speech and that certain identity indicators have become less telling. Though I have used traditional dialect speakers in my play, people who are more likely to inclined towards dialect speech as a mark of 'difference'. I feel I have shown how people might alter their accent/dialect and what reasons people might have for doing so, either due to a perceived stigma, to be better understood or even just accidentally.

I have attempted to analyse the research methodologies that I have utilised, discussing their strengths and weaknesses, whilst applying these issues to my own experience as a research student. I have discussed what outcomes I have gained from this research methodology - small insights as opposed to any great conclusions.

I have demonstrated how the pub could be considered a performance space and that setting a play in that location could play upon the ‘performative’ nature of that location. I have also shown how certain writing techniques could be used in a play set in a pub, to demonstrate group identity, fulfil the requirements of realistic representation, use storytelling to imply character and attitude, apply themes of nostalgia and resistance to change and avoid the static nature of a pub setting, all of which were issues within my own creative component.

# THRELFALL'S BOULDER

## BY

## DAVID A. MIDDLETON

# NOTE ON PERFORMANCE

The stage should be dressed (or sparsely suggested) as the saloon bar with the outside area on, or offstage.

Alternatively, the play could be staged in the function room or separate bar room (so only the audience are in there – no one walking through) of an existing pub/club – the room must have a bar however. Some of the actors could even serve the audience prior to the performance if suitable. Further to this, the performing ensemble could use varying degrees of audience participation – are the audience in the pub, or are they just voyeuristic nonentities?

It should be noted that all beer pumps could be put on water, so no beer is pulled during performance, but the hand pumps etc. can still be used as props. Pre-poured drinks (either actual beer, or fruit juice dummy drinks) should be kept behind the bar so as to keep the illusion of drinking booze. Similarly so, all bottles of spirits should be replaced with dummy spirits (water etc.) and put on optics.
N.B.
There must be several guest ale badges produced for the pump heads, which reflects the changing guest ales.

If in a pub, then the staging should be altered to fit the geography of the performance space, whilst using the directions where possible.

With the guest ale changes, the characters can either change the board, or write the new ales on it. This will work best in the intimacy of a pub performance, but may be lost if performed in a large venue – though there is mention of them in the script body.

House Bitter can be any generic ‘smooth’ bitter, or a pump marked House Bitter.

The television can be mime viewed, or have actual racing on – no sound can be heard though.

The front door doesn’t have to be actually locked, but just mimed with a scraping of a key.

Due to the amount of liquid the actors will consume over the duration of the play, if it is needed, the actors can say they are going to the toilet and leave the other actors to ad lib, or interact with the audience until their return.

Note also that these characters are in the pub, and so, they are performing a pub version of themselves. This performativity should be kept in mind when portraying these roles – it is a performance within a performance, which is coupled with moments of more genuine emotion.

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

RICHARD THRELFALL: 30 year old live in barman. Richard is the only 'local' who speaks without much dialect and often tempers his accent. He has dreams of travelling and being a writer. He is keen to distance himself from the dialect, as he doesn't see it as representing his identity, though on occasion he slips into dialect, when it seems necessary to him – chatting Nancy up and fitting in with the locals.

ALAN ARKWRIGHT: Early 50. A greedy man who runs the local shop and post office with his wife and daughter Nancy. A miserly and miserable man, who is very protective over his daughter and the village.

JOHN 'JACK' FARRIER: Late 40. A nice enough guy, who regularly attends church and is always happy to spend money on others. He is a gluttonous man who is always 'keeping up with the Jones'.

MICHAEL LANCASTER: A mid 40s lustful man, who is landlord of the village pub. Not originally from the village, he is still considered one of the locals. Despite this he is a man who finds it hard to allow emotional relationships to develop, due to his past. Further to this he is a cuckold, henpecked by his wife (Rose), but defiant when she's out of earshot in an attempt to gain 'little victories'.

AUWD ARTHUR: Late 70s. The elder statesman of the locals, well respected and liked by all. He speaks with the thickest dialect due to his age and he sees his dialect to be a big part of his identity.

NANCY ARKWRIGHT: Late 20s. A strong willed northern girl, who speaks with less dialect; this is due to her generation. She is quite lazy and quite free with her affections, but is proud of her heritage and has some sense of propriety.

ROSE LANCASTER: Mid 40s. A formidable and typically strong northern woman. A woman who has been 'Reet threw mill', but these shared experiences are what have cemented her relationship with her husband, whom she loves despite his failings.

WOMAN/TABITHA WOLFE: Mid to late 30s. A delicate and timid soul, who is empowered by her job and is willing to be hard if necessary. She speaks with RP, which she sees to be a professional necessity.

All the action takes place in one room of a small local pub (The Worthington Arms) in Lancashire. The saloon bar is cluttered with round tables, chairs and stools. There is the main front door, which leads to the outside and a door behind the bar (depending on the geography of the performance area), which leads down to the cellar and up to the living area upstairs. Next to the bar is a sign where the new 'guest ales' are advertised.

# ACT 1

## SCENE ONE. EVENING

The guest Ales board reads;

SHAKESHAFT'S
GET BARD 4%
PA'S STOUT 5%

*The saloon bar is deserted.*

*ALAN ARKWRIGHT and his daughter NANCY ARKWRIGHT enter through the front door and proceed straight to the bar. ALAN has the beginnings of a moustache.*

**ALAN:** Wheer is yon bone idle likkle sod? (Shouting) Ista thur? Ello?

*NANCY peers over the bar, seeing if anyone is there.*

**NANCY:** Raps ee's idin.

**ALAN:** Why't fuck wudee be idin, ye bulb!

*ALAN notices a piece of paper on the bar. He picks it up and quickly skims it, before putting it back down.*

**ALAN:** Worra load-o-rubbish.

*RICHARD THRELFALL enters from the door behind the bar.*

**RICHARD:** (In RP/dramatic accent) Ah good evening Alan.

**ALAN:** Spake proper lad!

**RICHARD:** Oh hi Nancy.

**NANCY:** Hiya Rich.

**RICHARD:** Are ye well?

**NANCY:** Ah'm feelin a bit rough.

**ALAN:** Er's ad t'shits.

**NANCY:** DAD!

**ALAN:** Well, ye-av.

**NANCY:** Richard dun't need fert know that. Ah've a bit-o-an angover, is all.

**ALAN:** Ne'er mind all that, ah'm gaggin ere.

**RICHARD:** Sorry, have you bin waiting long?

*ALAN picks up the piece of paper from the bar.*

**ALAN:** Long enuff. Woss allt wrahtin ere?

*RICHARD snatches the paper from Alan and puts it in his pocket.*

**RICHARD:** Poetry. Private poetry.

**ALAN:** Wossta want fert be wrahtin poetry fower?

**RICHARD:** I don't expect you to understand.

**NANCY:** Oh, lerrus avva sken Rich.

**RICHARD:** It's not really finished yet.

**ALAN:** Poetry indeed. Thas a reet queer beggar tharris.

**RICHARD:** Are you growing a moustache?

**ALAN:** Naylad. Me eyebrows av cum deawn ferra drink. An spekkin-o-drinks, shift thas carcass and pouwr us one, common ah'm a very busy mon.

**RICHARD:** Well which one do ye want?

**ALAN:** Well woss on.

**RICHARD:** Shakeshaft's Get Bard, or Pa's Stout.

**ALAN:** Ah'll av strongest.

**RICHARD:** Stout it is.

*RICHARD pours Alan's drink and sets it on the bar in front of him.*

That's two eighty please.

**ALAN:** Ow much? Even Dick Turpin wore a mask.

**RICHARD:** It's always that price.

**ALAN:** Aye well, tis always temuch. Wos ta avvin Nance?

**NANCY:** Deye know, ah fancy a glass-o-wine. Asta getten any Liebrafinch, Rich?

**ALAN:** Wine? Thas gerrin as bad as Likkle Lord Fauntleroy ere. Bloody wine. Why canst tha avva aff lahke normal girls.

**NANCY:** Oh get wi-programme Dad, lots-o-women is drinkin wine nowadays.

**RICHARD:** We erm, only have some Chardonnay I'm afraid.

**NANCY:** Aye, ah'll avva crack at that.

**ALAN:** Bloody Chardonnay, ow much is that gonna set meback?

**RICHARD:** It's three pounds for a large glass.

**ALAN:** Fuckinell. Ye best mek that last lass. Three pound a glass.

*RICHARD pours a glass of wine and sets it on the bar. ALAN begrudgingly pays with the correct change. RICHARD tills it up etc.*

**NANCY:** Cheers Rich. Cheers dad.

*ALAN and NANCY clink glasses – top and bottom in an obviously well used routine.*

**NANCY:** So ow are ye Rich?

**RICHARD:** I am bored out of my mind.

**ALAN:** Ah'm nay surprised. Ye never dee nouwt, save wander abouwt wi yer ed int clouwds.

**RICHARD:** I wander about with my head in the clouds, as you put it, because it's the only way to cope with this boring non existence. It's the same day in, day out. This boring Sartre like hell, the same place and the same bloody people.

**NANCY:** Oow's this Sartre?

**RICHARD:** He's a playwright that wrote a play called No Exit. It's about hell being trapped in a room with people that you're so mismatched with, they drive you mad. Hell is other people.

**NANCY:** Bit lahke cum dine wi-me.

**RICHARD:** Yeah, I suppose.

*AUWD ARTHUR enters through the main door and makes his laboured way to the bar.*

**RICHARD:** Ah the oracle.

*ALAN and NANCY turn round to greet Arthur. RICHARD starts to pull a pint of Mild for Arthur.*

**ALAN:** Nathen Arthur, ow arta?

**ARTHUR:** Aye, furtemiddlin.

*ARTHUR places the exact money on the counter. RICHARD sets the pint in front of ARTHUR, who takes it to a table nearest the bar and sits down. ARTHUR takes out a paper and a pen and begins the crossword.*

**NANCY:** Ista reet Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Ow do lass.

**ALAN:** Dick ere, as jus bin telling us ow ee's bored-o-us all.

**RICHARD:** I didn't say that. I just said, I was sick of the situation.

**ARTHUR:** Appen tis wot lahf is all abouwt. Ye suffer, then yer deed, an tis either roastin mon, or eaven.

**RICHARD:** I just wish summat'd appen, is all.

*A smartly dressed WOMAN enters timidly through the main door. ALL turn to see who it is.*

**WOMAN:** (Upper class accent) Sorry, I'm looking for The Hillcrest Bed and Breakfast.

**RICHARD:** If you go to the end of the roahd, turn right at the post office, it's about three hundred yards up that roahd.

**WOMAN:** Oh thank you.

**ALAN:** Mind ye stay on tet main roahds, an off tet moowrs after dark.

**WOMAN:** Oh really? Why is that?

**ALAN:** Cause-o-beast as roams arouwnd at neet.

**NANCY:** Oh shurrup Dad. Ignore im luv, thae daren't let im ouwt much. Jus follow Richard's directions an tharral get theer.

**WOMAN:** Well thanks again. Bye.

*The WOMAN exits.*

**NANCY:** Wot did tha dee that fowr?

**ALAN:** Ah'm jus tryin fert mek lahf a likkle mowre intrestin fur The Big Dick ere. Er wurra bloody off-cummer anyroahd.

**RICHARD:** What's this beast yer on abouwt?

**ALAN:** Auwd Arthur ere, after ee's adda few. (PAUSE) Well Arth, wossta know, ouwt or nowt?

**ARTHUR:** A damn sight morena thee, asis beggerall.

**ALAN:** (Flippant, but friendly) Gerrin yer courner, ye auwd bastard.

*There is a pause as ALL the patrons drink their drinks, aside from RICHARD who fusses about straightening glasses, beer mats and bar runners.*

**NANCY:** Well, ah might nip ouwt ferra smoke, dusta want one Rich?

**RICHARD:** Erm, aye, go on then.

**ALAN:** Tha wants fert pack them up lass.

**NANCY:** Yes Dad.

*RICHARD and NANCY exit through the main door.*

**ALAN:** Bantlins eh, Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Aye.

*MICHAEL LANCASTER enters from the upstairs door. He has a mug of tea in his hand.*

**MICHAEL:** Ow do fettlers?

**ARTHUR:** Ahreet.

**ALAN:** Nathen Mike.

**MICHAEL:** Wheer's Rich?

**ALAN:** Appen ee's gone ferra smook.

**MICHAEL:** Oh. Well avva sken at this. Ah getten it tother dee. Plain white mug, but ont base, sez Ah'm a twat. But eh, daren't let on te Rich, see if ee notices, eh.

**ALAN:** Aye ahreet.

**MICHAEL:** Eh, sin thas lass int post office tedee Al. Very tasty, very tasty.

**ALAN:** Ah've teld thee afore Mike. Tha canst tek it, but if tha teks it, tha keeps it.

*We hear the voice of ROSE LANCASTER from upstairs.*

**ROSE:** (Shouting from upstairs) Michael. MICHAEL? Ow long dustit tek fert gi-somemon a brew?

**MICHAEL:** (Shouting back up) Jus bein ospitable tet patrons, me likkle stittleback. Tis worra landlord does. (*Then Quieter, attempting to save face with the customers)* Ye daft bitch.

**ROSE:** (From upstairs) Ow wud yew know, ye useless sod?

**MICHAEL:** Well thass another beatin furme. (Sheepishly) Well ah better go back up. Ah'll leave this tae fur Rich ere.

*MICHAEL sets the mug on the bar and exits through the upstairs door.*

**ALAN:** Cor, strike a light. Magin bein wed te-er. Mindjew, ah reckon er's wild int sack. Ah reckon er cud sukka tennis ball through a racket. Ye'd be red raw.

**ARTHUR:** Aye, ah've appen noticed Mike walkin funny now anagin.

*BOTH laugh.*

*RICHARD and NANCY re-enter through the front door and proceed to the places at and behind the bar.*

**NANCY:** Wot are yew two chuttlin abouwt.

**ALAN:** Mike. Ee left a cuppa tae furthee Rich.

*RICHARD picks up the mug and drinks from it.*

**RICHARD:** Ah cheers Al.

**ALAN:** Aye reet. Ye on while finish, Dick?

**RICHARD:** Aye.

**ALAN:** No wonder thas bored, ye want fert git ouwt courtin, or summat.

**RICHARD:** Well there's someone I've got me eye on.

*RICHARD casts a cheeky glance at NANCY, who reacts giggling slightly. ALAN notices this.*

**ALAN:** (Disapprovingly) Oh aye? (Then changing subject) Ah bet thas adafew birds in thas time, eh Arth? Durint war lahke.

**ARTHUR:** Aye.

**NANCY:** Reet dollybirds, wurthee Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Ah've ne'er bin tebed wi-an ugly woman… Ah've wekkened up wi-a few mind.

*ALL laugh.*

*ROSE enters from upstairs.*

**ROSE:** Everythin ah reet Rich?

**RICHARD:** Fine thanks Rose. You?

**ROSE:** Grand. Evenin lads.

**AL/ARTH:** Rose.

**ROSE:** Eyup Nance.

**NANCY:** Ello Rose.

*ROSE walks from behind the bar and sits on a stool at one end of the bar.*

*RICHARD pours her a gin and orange and sets it on the bar in front of her, there is no charge.*

**ROSE:** Ow's yer mum, Nance?

**NANCY:** Oh usual tha knows. Us're goin fert get wi-hurr dun in town temorra… Oh that reminds me. Dad, canna lend thirty quid.

**ALAN:** Thirty quid! Wot fowr?

**NANCY:** Fert get me hurrdun.

**ALAN:** Christ, thas as bad as yer mother. Er does mowre tappin than a blindmon's stick. Ere

*ALAN takes out thirty pounds and hands it to NANCY, who tucks the money into her bra.*

Wosstha putting it thur fowr? Why daren't ye puttit in yer bag, lahke normal foaks?

**NANCY:** Summon cud steal mebag, but no one's gettin at these.

*NANCY does a shimmy accentuating her breasts.*

**ALAN:** (Suggesting he believes everyone in the village has) Nay, ah'll bet.

**NANCY:** Woss that s'post mean?

*JACK FARRIER enters through the main door and immediately shouts to address Alan.*

**JACK:** Eyup, ye ball bag!

*ALAN turns to reply.*

**ALAN:** Jack, gud fert sithee, ye bastard!

*JACK makes his way to the bar.*

**JACK:** Nathen Arth.

**ARTHUR:** Jack.

**JACK:** Reet! Ah'll av me usual and pay one on fur these two. Arth, ista suppin wi-ouwt thur, or wot?

**ARTHUR:** Nay, ah'm reet ta.

**JACK:** Rubbish! Gerra doins fert auwd sod. Wot abouwt thissen Rose?

**ROSE:** Nay thanks Jack, ah've only jus getten one ere.

**JACK:** Fairdos. Tek tharrown Rich.

**RICHARD:** Thanks Jack.

*RICHARD takes a note from JACK and pours all the drinks ordered – a doins in this case is a whiskey with a small dash of lemonade. JACK drinks lager.*

*MICHAEL enters from the upstairs door.*

**MICHAEL:** Nathen fettlers. Is that fur Arth, Rich?

**RICHARD:** Yep.

*MICHAEL takes the doins over to Arthur's table, sets it down and returns to the behind the bar.*

**JACK:** Dusta want a pint Mike?

*MICHAEL looks unsure.*

**MICHAEL:** Well… Ah daren't know… Av't cash up yet an…

*MICHAEL looks over at Rose for permission. ROSE nods in assent.*

Well, mebbe jus one Jack, aye.

**JACK:** Gudlad. Asta enuff thur Rich?

**RICHARD:** Aye.

**JACK:** Souwndaffurr, keep wos left cocker.

**RICHARD:** Oh thanks Jack.

*MICHAEL pulls himself a pint of guest ale and takes a sip.*

**MICHAEL:** Aye, tis grand tattle that. Best pint-o-bitter in whole-o Vale-o-Worthington. Anna damn sight better than the shite ee serves o'ert Plough. Ah wur in thur on mondee, ee ad nay bitter on, so ah getten a pint-o-lager. Well, it wur sum brand ah'd ne'er eard-o, an it cum ouwt as flat assa witch's tit! Ohey, that minds me Al, ye won football card tother neet, ye know, arras match aginst Ploughers.

**ARTHUR:** Oh shit!

**MICHAEL:** Bloodyell, ye fritten me tedeath. Are ye still wi-us Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Aye, loowks that way.

**MICHAEL:** Aye well, thurs time yet. Ah'll jus goo-an get yer winnins Al.

*MICHAEL exits upstairs with his pint.*

**RICHARD:** Corr blimey Al. You're the luckiest bugger that I've ever met.

**ALAN:** Tisn't luck lad, tis skill. (To Jack) Well ye delusional bastard, ow's tricks?

**JACK:** Aye, reet ho.

**ALAN:** Ow'd ye do at boowkies?

**JACK:** Load-o-balls. Ah cuddn't score in a brothel wi-a diamond studded cock! Thissen?

**ALAN:** Fifty quid up, not three bad.

**JACK:** Ye ball bag. Oow'd ye fancy temorra?

*JACK pulls out a copy of The Racing Post. JACK and ALAN go over to a separate table to examine the listings. They should speak amoungst themselves audibly occasionally, but should whisper or mime during others' dialogue, so as not to obscure it – or at least limit the disruption.*

**NANCY:** Ohey Rose, ye'll ne'er guess. Ah sin Enid Crabtree int Butcher's tedee.

**ROSE:** Er's a terrible gossip, yon Enid.

**NANCY:** Oh aye.

(PAUSE)

**ROSE:** Wot didder say?

**NANCY:** (*Taking a deep breath*) Well…

***RICHARD** lets out a brief laugh. ROSE and NANCY cast sharp glances at him.*

**ROSE:** Yes, Richard?

**RICHARD:** Sorry, no nothing.

**ALAN:** Tharral ne'er win, ye delusional bastard.

**JACK:** Nay, hangfire ere. Loowke at its last cuppla races.

**NANCY:** Any'ow. Er rekons as thurs a family movin inte Ditchfield Cottage.

**ROSE:** Oh aye? Ow's er know that?

**NANCY:** Er sinna furniture van, an two fellers movin stuff in.

**ROSE:** Oow wurthae?

**NANCY:** Didn't know em. Sum fellers fray town, reet coarse brutes, always swearin, er sed.

**ALAN:** Fuck off ye ball bag. Yer throwin yer brass away on that!

**NANCY:** Dad!

**ALAN:** Sorry luv.

**ROSE:** Tis a shame that. Fletcher family must be ard up, if thaes sellin off thez land.

**NANCY:** Two acres with the cottage, Dad sez.

*MICHAEL enters from the upstairs door.*

**MICHAEL:** Ere wi go. Ball bag, thas thee intit? Thur tha goes, ten pouwnd.

*MICHAEL sets the winnings down on the bar next to Alan's drink.*

**ALAN:** Sixty up Mister Farrier.

**JACK:** Congratulations Mister Arkwright, ye bastard.

**ALAN:** Fuck off ye ball bag.

*BOTH laugh as they return to the bar.*

**JACK:** By-gum, tis a mad world.

**ARTHUR:** Tis wi-thee gobbins init.

*ALL chuckle.*

**ROSE:** Nancy wur jus telling me, a new family as moved inte Ditchfield Cottage.

**ALAN:** Bloody off-cummers. Tizn't reet, lerrin strangers intet village. Afore tha knows it, us'll be o'er run wi black bastards, Pakis, the lot.

**NANCY:** Dad!

**RICHARD:** Ye can't talk like that nowadays.

**ALAN:** Why not, tis true. Am ah reet Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Ah've ne'er met a black mon. Met a few Ghurkas durint war mind, bloodygud feighters them lads.

**JACK:** Still, is a cryin shame. Fletcher family av bin working that land furra undred years.

**ALAN:** Aye. An then us'll end up wi ouwse prices, so igh, us airn kids wern't be able fert afford telive in thez airn village.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, tizza bad business this. Worra thae doin ere anyow, ah mean why ere?

**RICHARD:** I quite agree. I mean there's nowt ere.

**ALAN:** Shuttit Rich. Tizza gradley village, is this.

**RICHARD:** Well there's yer answer.

**ALAN:** Nomon lahks a clevvir-dick, Rich.

*ARTHUR finishes his drink.*

**MICHAEL:** Ista avvin another, Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Naylad, thass me.

**JACK:** Is thee nashin, Mucker? Ah 'll get thee another, if ye fancy it?

**ARTHUR:** Ta Jacklad, but ah away. Ah've ad me quota. Ah'll sithee.

*ARTHUR agonisingly gets to his feet and slowly makes his way to the front door.*

**ALL:** (Some at staggered times, characters saying one or the other) Alt best Arth/Sithee Arthur.

*ARTHUR exits through front door.*

**ALAN:** Thur ee goes. Off te roam moowrs.

**JACK:** Reet, common then, gerrem in.

**ALAN:** Fuck off ye nadsack. Tis thissen int chur.

**JACK:** Tis thee. Christ, thas tighter thanna submarine atch, thee.

**ALAN:** Ye steamin turd. Oow's rouwnd is it Rich?

**RICHARD:** Yours.

**JACK:** Ah hahha.

**ALAN:** Oh shite. Reet, git one fur this bulls bollock, ere. Will thee avva sup Rose?

**ROSE:** Oh ta Al.

**ALAN:** One fert lady-o-thouwse. Wot abouwt thissen, Mike?

*MICHAEL glances at ROSE, who shakes her head.*

**MICHAEL:** Erm, nay, ah won't. Avte dee thorder yet, an if ah git that wrong, ah'll ne'er ear end-o-it.

**ALAN:** Furrdos. Us'll av wi-usual. (To Nancy) Unless yer wantin another *wine*?

**NANCY:** Nah, ah'll avvan aff.

**RICHARD:** Don't forget you've got one paid on from before.

**ALAN:** Ahahha. Souwndaffurr, souwndaffurr.

*RICHARD and MICHAEL pour the drinks. ALAN pushes the ten pound note (his football card winnings) closer to Richard's side of the bar, which, when all the drinks are poured, RICHARD takes it as payment. RICHARD tills it in and sets the change on the bar in front of ALAN, who puts it in his pocket.*

**JACK:** (Raising his glass in a cheers) Well, ere we go Mister Arkwright. May thas ball bag fester in-ell.

**ALAN:** Aye. An up yours an-all…

**AL/JACK:** Ye bastard!

*BOTH laugh heartily. ALAN clinks glasses with NANCY in the 'ritual'.*

**ROSE:** Cheers Alan.

**ALAN:** Guddealth Rose.

**MICHAEL:** Well, ah better go an dee thorder. Hadn't ah dear?

**ROSE:** (Dismissively) Yes Michael.

**MICHAEL:** Well gudneet all. Thar'll be ahreet on tharown, will thee, me likkle pikelet?

**ROSE:** Bye Michael.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, bye dear.

*MICHAEL exits upstairs quickly.*

**JACK:** Well, ow's business int shop?

**ALAN:** Aye, not three bad. Mindjew, post office side's reet onits arse. Tis this internet lark, no beggar sends letters any more.

**JACK:** Nay wonder they're privatisin job.

**ALAN:** Yer not wrong.

**ROSE:** Dusta use t'internet Nance?

**NANCY:** Nah. Ah'm not really mithered. All me mates are local.

**ROSE:** Worrabouwt thas Anty in Blackwold?

**NANCY:** Yer jowkin. She can't ardly use the mobile phone Dad getten er fur Christmas. She phoned me from Blackpoo a fortneet ago, an didn't ang up. Ah'm shouwtin deawn phone "ANTY ANGELA, ANG UP THE PHONE" an ah can ear er chattin away to some auwd biddy.

**JACK:** Er wur always a few pence short-o-shillin thas Angela.

**ALAN:** Aye.

**JACK:** Gie-us a bag-o-cris, will thee, Rich?

**RICHARD:** What flavour?

**JACK:** Ah daren't know. Summatt meaty.

*RICHARD gets a bag of crisps for JACK, who pays for them with a pound coin.*

**JACK:** Yer reet wi-that Rich.

**RICHARD:** Cheers.

*JACK opens the crisps and offers them round.*

**JACK:** Dusta want a cris Al?

**ALAN:** Nay, ah daren't. Yer always bloody scoffin, ye gannet. Loowke at that gut. Ah tellthee, if that belly wurron ouwre lass, er'd be pregnant.

**JACK:** Tas bin, an er is!

*ALL laugh.*

**NANCY:** Well, ah'm agate oam, ah think. Ah'm reet powfagged. An daren't fergetten thas getten papers te dee int mornin, Dad.

**ALAN:** Aye, ahreet, stop yer moitherin.

**JACK:** Eh, did tha sken that int local rag?

**ALAN:** Wot? Bouwt yon farmer as getten trampled be his airn cattle?

**JACK:** Nay, ye dick. Bouwt them pinched puppies.

**RICHARD:** Oh, I read that. Two fellers, one fat and one described as unfed (*Laughs*).

**ALAN:** Tis nay laughin matter. Them dogs'r worth alotta brass.

**RICHARD:** No, I know. It's jus the way they were described, unfed, malnourished, emaciated.

**ALAN:** Yew read temuch, yew dee lad. Cummon then lass, lerrus gerrus oam. Neet all.

*ALAN downs a large amount of his drink, NANCY leaves hers.*

**JACK:** Aff-a-minute, ah'll walk wi-thee. Ah've getten an early start missen.

*JACK, ALAN and NANCY start to leave.*

**ROSE:** Bye all.

**ALAN:** Aye, sithee.

**NANCY:** Bye Rose. Sithee soon Rich.

*RICHARD waves self-consciously.*

**JACK:** Seeya Rose, bye Rich.

*As the three reach the front door ALAN stops and turns round.*

**ALAN:** Bye Rich, ye twat (*laughs*).

*NANCY strikes her father on the arm.*

**NANCY:** Dad be nice.

**ALAN:** Argh me arm.

*NANCY, ALAN and JACK exit through the front door.*

**RICHARD:** Wot wur all that abouwt.

**ROSE:** Oh daren't worry Rich, it's one-o-Mike's silly jokes. Avva loowke at bottom-o-yer mug.

*RICHARD turns his white mug over and reads the writing.*

**RICHARD:** I am a twat, clearly.

**ROSE:** Get yersen a proper drink, Rich.

**RICHARD:** Cheers Rose.

**ROSE:** Best get me another, an-all.

*RICHARD pours the drinks, Rose's as before and he has a half pint of guest ale. He sets Rose's drink in front of her.*

**RICHARD:** There ye go Rose.

**ROSE:** Ta Rich. So ye fancy Nancy then?

**RICHARD:** No.

**ROSE:** Daren't gie-me that Rich, ah can tell.

**RICHARD:** Well all right, yeah, I do. De ye think she'd be interested.

**ROSE:** From wot ah saw, ah'd say er-wur reet interested.

**RICHARD:** I don't think Alan'd be too keen.

**ROSE:** Ye daren't fancy im an-all, de ye?

**RICHARD:** (Laughs slightly) Ye know what I mean.

**ROSE:** Ah shuddn't fret bouwt im. Yon Nancy issa very ead-strong lass. Ee'll cum rouwnd.

**RICHARD:** Or not.

**ROSE:** Worrav ye getten te lose?

**RICHARD:** Aye, ah s'pose.

*ROSE finishes her drink in one.*

**ROSE:** Well, tha may as well put sneck on Richey. Ah daren't think us'll av anyone else teneet.

*RICHARD goes to lock the front door. Meanwhile ROSE refills her glass from the optic, with neat spirit.*

**ROSE:** Oh, ah meant fert ask, Rich. Canst tha work Bank olidee? Only tis Arthur's birthdee an av allt butties fert mek.

**RICHARD:** Yeah sure.

**ROSE:** Gudlad. Reet ah'm goin up, turnt leets off willta. Tha can leave this lot fur Mike temorra. Neet Rich.

**RICHARD:** Sweet dreams Rose.

*ROSE exits upstairs with her drink.*

*RICHARD returns to the bar, finishes his drink and exits.*

LIGHTS OUT.

**<u>SCENE TWO.</u> EVENING, ARTHUR'S BIRTHDAY.**

*RICHARD puts up the new guest ale board signs. It reads:*

*KNOB HEAD*
*NUTTY NUTTLE BUTTY 6.3%*
*NORTHERN NINJA 5.3%*

*RICHARD sits at the bar and stares into space for a time. He then remembers the front door, so he gets up and goes to unlock it. He then returns to behind the bar.*

*AUWD ARTHUR enters slowly and unsteadily, he then sits in his usual seat.*

**RICHARD:** Usual Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Naylad. As tis me birthdee, ah'll appen avva dooins.

**RICHARD:** Oh many happy returns of the day.

**ARTHUR:** Tarlad. Ah feel as gay assa Layrock.

*RICHARD pours a shot of whisky from the optic into a tumbler and fills it up with lemonade.*

**RICHARD:** Erm… Arthur. Yer flies are undone.

**ARTHUR:** Daren't worry fettler. Thas ne'er sin a babby bird tumble ouwtta nest, asta?

**RICHARD:** Well, yes actually.

**ARTHUR:** Bereet.

*MICHAEL enters from upstairs.*

**MICHAEL:** Appy birthdee Arth. Tis onthouwse that Rich.

*MICHAEL takes the drink from RICHARD and carries it over to Arthur.*

*ARTHUR accepts the drink and shakes MICHAEL's hand.*

**ARTHUR:** Thassa grandlad Mike.

**MICHAEL:** My pleasure gradleylad. Ow auwd are ye then?

**ARTHUR:** Seventy-seven tedee.

**MICHAEL:** By-gum. Tha musta sin sum sights in thas time.

**ARTHUR:** Aye. Ah've sinstuff as-ud turn thas urr curled.

**MICHAEL:** Ah'll bet tharras, ye dirty dog!

*ALL chuckle.*

**ARTHUR:** Onyer bahke. Orah'll gie-thee a nuttle butty.

*ARTHUR shakes his fist, in mock threat.*

*MICHAEL returns to behind the bar.*

**MICHAEL:** Ah'll avva pint-o-Nutty Nuttle Butty, if Arth's gettin-it, Rich.

*RICHARD pours the drink, there's no payment. MICHAEL takes the drink and begins to sip it.*

**MICHAEL:** Oh aye. Tis grand-as-ouwt tharris. Dusta fancy one Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Naylad. Ah've getten me dooins.

**MICHAEL:** Ista kettled Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Aye, ah've addafew.

**RICHARD:** Well, it is his birthday.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, furrdoos. Git yersen a pint Rich. Alt best Arth.

*RICHARD pulls himself half a guest bitter and raises his glass to Arthur.*

**ROSE:** (Shouting from upstairs) Michael!

**MICHAEL:** Ere Rich, ye better ring em in. Else Rose'll ave me balls fur earrins.

*MICHAEL gives Richard some money. RICHARD tills the drinks up and puts the money in the till draw, giving Michael the change.*

Affa minute Arth.

*MICHAEL exits upstairs.*

**ARTHUR:** De ye know. Ah'm gonna putit in me will, that when ah'm deed. Ah wont me coffin put in that corner o'er yonder. Wi-a little winder so alt foaks can see me decompose.

*ALAN and NANCY enter through the front door. They are attempting, in vain, to disguise hysterics. BOTH make their way to the bar.*

**ALAN:** Us'll avva pint-o-yer finest and aff-o-yer cheapest, please Rich.

*RICHARD pours their drinks, the conversation continues whilst he does this, he takes payment from ALAN also.*

**RICHARD:** You two seem reet appy. What's appened?

**NANCY:** Us've bin ouwt furra sally, wi Jack an 'elen.

**RICHARD:** Oh, very nice.

**ALAN:** Well, tha knows as Jack's bought a new car. Well, yesterdee, ee noticed ee ad nobbutta full tank-o-juice. Ee sez, "Ah'm beggard if ah'm gonna trade yon car in, wi-a full tank. Lerrus gee ouwt furra drive on mondee." So us did. We adda cruise rouwnd. Stopped furrus dinner at this pub in Yealand Redvers… Wot wurrit called Nance?

**NANCY:** Erm. Wheatsheaf, or summmat. Ye shudda sin wot Jack ad.

**ALAN:** Twur served on a plate the size-o-a estins lid.

**NANCY:** Ee-ettit all though, dint ee.

**ALAN:** Aye. Anyow, us giton main roahd, so ee can put is foowt deawn, an brun off sum mowre juice. An after bouwt ten minutes, yon bloody petrol leet cums on. Well, ee's effin an jeffin, tha knows wotee's lahke int car. Ee decides as ee'll stick a likkle bit in, fert gerrus oam ant fert gettim tet garage temorra. So, us pulls intet petrol station, but coz tis sunny, yonmon can't sken the pump gauge. So ee sez tee-is lass 'elen, me an Nance, "Keep thas eens on me petrol gauge, an gie-usa shouwt when tis quatter full."

**NANCY:** Well, us getten chattin, daren't wi. Ye know wot er's lahke.

**ALAN:** Well, after a stint. Jack's wonderin why tet pump keeps cuttin ouwt. Ee skens deawn at is feet and thurs petrol all o'er is clogs. Seventy-two pouwnd fifty. Ee's only filled the bloody tank!

*ALL laugh out loud.*

Well ee's reet frosty ont way back. An us're all laffin us eds off, which only irks im moowre. Is lass ad fert turn away, an ee growls, "Ah know yer still laffin 'elen, ah can sithee shouw'ders shekkin!" Ah wur skrikin.

**NANCY:** Ye know when yer shudn't laff, it meks it worse? Dad wur dabbin is eyes wi-a tissue, an then ee pretends fert wring yon tissue ouwt.

**ALAN:** Thurs now mower petrol int car, than thur wur when us set ouwt this mornin!

**NANCY:** Wot medit worse still, is, 'elens leeter stops werkin, an er sez "Ah think it's ouwtta gas." Well, ee getten proper blazin at that.

**ALAN:** Christ, ah though ee wur gonna crash.

**RICHARD:** I'll tell ye what. She's a good looking woman that Helen.

**NANCY:** Oh, she's very pretty, int she? Well, furrer age, anyow.

**ALAN:** Aye. Ow that fat bastard snared a bonny lass like er, ah'll ne'er know.

**NANCY:** Ee's not that fat, is Jack.

**ALAN:** Ee is, ee jus wurs it well. (*Noticing Arthur*) Eh up auwdlad, ah didn't sithee thur. Rich tek a drink o'er tet auwd bugger.

*RICHARD pours another dooins and takes it over to Arhur's table, setting it down and returning to behind the bar to take payment from ALAN.*

**NANCY:** Ye adda guddun, Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Ayelass, ah've that.

**ALAN:** Oh bugger. Ah've fergetten is card. Ah daren't know, ah'd fergetten meballs if they wurn't inna bag.

**NANCY:** Oh, ball bags again.

**ALAN:** Sorry luv. Ah'll jus nip an gerrit.

*ALAN exits through the front door.*

**NANCY:** Ye ahreet Rich?

**RICHARD:** Fine thank you Nancy.

*MICHAEL enters from upstairs. He has a birthday card for Arthur. MICHAEL goes over to ARTHUR and hands it to him. ARTHUR opens it.*

**MICHAEL:** Thur thas goes Arth. Thass fray me an Rose… Oh an Rich. (*Noticing Nancy*) Aye, aye Nance. Ah didn't sithee thur.

**NANCY:** Ello Mike.

**MICHAEL:** Ista on yer own? Wheer's Al?

**NANCY:** Ee's jus nipped back tet shop.

*The WOMAN enters through the main door and gingerly approaches the bar. She has her handbag and a laptop bag slung over one shoulder.*

**RICHARD:** Oh hello again.

**WOMAN:** Hello. Could I have a pint of bitter please?

**RICHARD:** Certainly, which one would you like? Nutty Nuttle Butty, or Northern Ninja?

**WOMAN:** Oh, I think I'll try the Northern Ninja, please.

*RICHARD pulls the pint.*

**RICHARD:** Two Eighty, please.

*The WOMAN roots in her purse and hands RICHARD the money.*

**WOMAN:** Thank you. Erm, ye don't happen to have wi-fi here do you?

*RICHARD takes the payment.*

**RICHARD:** Erm, no, sorry.

*RICHARD tills it up and gives change.*

*The WOMAN goes to a far off table and sits down. She gets her lap top out and starts typing etc.*

*ALAN and JACK enter through the main door. They proceed to the bar, pausing briefly as they notice the Woman.*

**ALAN:** Thur thas goes, ye auwd bastard, avva card. Ye avvin a sup Jack?

**JACK:** Aye, ah'll getem. Lager, please Rich.

**RICHARD:** Regular, or unleaded?

**JACK:** Thae've teld ye ave thae. Shitouwses.

**NANCY:** Thas getten te admit, Jack. Twas quite funny.

**JACK:** Ah s'pose. Ye avvin a dooins Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Aye. Rekkon tis telate fert g'woam early.

**JACK:** Willta avva sup Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Ah've getten one cheers.

**JACK:** Better get one fur these two an-all.

*RICHARD and MICHAEL start pouring the drinks. JACK sets a bank note on the bar.*

**JACK:** Keep change.

**RICHARD:** Cheers Jack. So, are ye well?

*RICHARD takes the money and tills it up, putting the change in his tip jar.*

**JACK:** Nay, not really. Ah reckon ah'm cumin deawn wi-summat.

**ALAN:** T'll be swine flu.

**JACK:** Ah'd lahke fert get old-o-swine as gie-it me!

*ALL laugh and drink.*

**NANCY:** Soon be thas weddin anniversary, won'tit Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Daren't worry ah've not fergetten, this year.

**NANCY:** Ow long's it bin?

**ALAN:** It gets upte four inches when ee's excited.

**NANCY:** Dad, really.

**MICHAEL:** T's bin abouwt eight or nine year. Ah'm minded-o-when, one day, we addan't bin wed long. Anyroahd, ah'd jus nipped ouwt ferra local rag,

an ah met an auwd pal-o-mine, be the name-o-Tom Jones. So us getten chattin, an ended up gooin ferra sup. When ah getten oam, ah sez te Rose, "Sorry bouwt that luv, ah met a pal-o-mine, Tom Jones. An us went furra sup". Anyow, next day, ah popped ouwt ferra sally rouwnd, an when ah getten back, er sez, "Oow've ye bin ouwt wi this time, Rod Stewart?" Well, it went reet o'er my ed!

*ALL laugh, MICHAEL raises his glass.*

Cheers all. Cheers Arth, ye still wi-us?

**ARTHUR:** Aye. An since tis me birthdee, ah'm gonna mekka charitable gesture. Theer tha goes Jack.

*ARTHUR takes a silver cigarette case from his pocket and offers it to JACK, who moves and takes it.*

**JACK:** Woss all this Arth.

**ARTHUR:** Furt church jumble.

**JACK:** Thass reet gud-o-thee.

**ARTHUR:** De ye know, gie-in ye that, ah'm minded-o- ne'er avvin a smook fur thirty year or mowre.

**JACK:** Ah didn't know ye lahked a smook Arth.

**ARTHUR:** Aye, at one time.

**ALAN:** Goon't climb ont roof, gerra blast fray chimbley.

**ARTHUR:** If thewit wurshit, tha'd be constipated!

*ALL laugh.*

**JACK:** Ee is. Well ee's full-o-shit anyow!

*ALL laugh more.*

**ALAN:** Fuck off, ye shithouwses. An eh Jack, thurs an orse in Fallowfield, as wontsis teeth back!

**JACK:** Ye festerin snotgobbler.

**ALAN:** Shurrup ye pisstank. (PAUSE) As ta bin ouwt gallavantin, then Arth?

**ARTHUR:** Naylad. Ah've bin doin nouwt morna sittin at-oam inme thrashers an listnin tet wireless. Then appen ah getten sick-o-sturrin at allt kelter an attercops, so ah put me best westcot on, ancum ferra ramble deawn

thaleouwse furra slurrupp.Tet roastin mon be beggard, as ahssa feelin eighteen agin.

**NANCY:** Well ah'll jus nip ferra smoke mesen, ye fancy one Rich?.

**RICHARD:** Aye, I do indeed.

*NANCY and RICHARD exit out the front door.*

**ALAN:** (Once she's gone) Ere y'ar, whilst er's away.

**MICHAEL:** (Excited) Oh aye?

**ALAN:** Well. Tween me, thee ant gatepost. Nance as bin onabouwt gerrin a boob job.

**MICHAEL:** What? Fert boost er…

*MICHAEL mimes small breasts to large.*

**ALAN:** Aye.

*JACK smirks knowingly (knowing it's a joke), whilst MICHAEL believes every word.*

**MICHAEL:** Tharral cost a fortune, won't it? Ow's tha gonna cum up wi that sort-o-brass?

**ALAN:** Exactly. So ah sez-te-er, "Tha wonts fert rub a bit-o-bogroll tween em".

*MICHAEL looks puzzled.*

Er sez "Wot gudd'll that dee?", an ah sez "Well it med thas mother's arse bigger"!

*ALL laugh, MICHAEL most, realising he's been 'had'.*

**MICHAEL:** Ye shitouwse! Ah proper believed tha then.

*ALL drink and chuckle.*

*NANCY and RICHARD enter through the front door and return to their places at and behind the bar..*

**NANCY:** Woss allt chuttlin abouwt? As ee bin telling that toilet roll joke again.

**JACK:** Naylass, wi wur chattin abouwt landlord fray Boar'sed, in Beckben.

**MICHAEL:** Ye know, auwd Dick Sharples?

**NANCY:** Oh aye, ah luv Dick.

**MICHAEL:** (Attempting to stifle laughter) Av eard!

*ALL burst out laughing.*

**NANCY:** Ye daft apeths. Ye know worra meant.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, tha luvs dick.

**NANCY:** Gie-o'er, bastard ball bags.

*Further laughter from ALL.*

**ALAN:** Thass me girl!

**MICHAEL:** By ek. Ah've never sin auwd Sharpie, fur mustbe a year or mowre.

*ROSE enters from upstairs with a tray of sandwiches and pork pies.*

**ROSE:** Theer tha goes. Tuck in. Thurs am an Lancashire Crumbly, fur kiesty divvils lahke Richey.

*MICHAEL goes to grab a sandwich.*

**ROSE:** Eh yew, wait yer turn. Tis Arthur's birthday, ee shud av first pick.

*ROSE takes the tray over to ARTHUR, who takes a pork pie. She then takes the tray round everyone (even the audience, if it's suitable to the production) JACK takes a fist full.*

(To Woman) De ye fancy a butty luv?

**WOMAN:** (Jarred from her laptop) Oh, no. No thank you, I've already eaten.

*ALL are quiet whilst they eat.*

**JACK:** Bloodygud these, Rose.

**ROSE:** Reet clemmed, ista jack?

*The WOMAN exits through front door, NO ONE notices.*

**JACK:** Always Rose, yew know me.

**ALAN:** Aye, yerra fat bastard.

**JACK:** (With a mouthful) Loowke oow's talkin.

**ALAN:** That's easy fur thee te say. Dusta fancy anotherun Nance?

**NANCY:** Not furme Dad. Ah think ah'm gonna go.

**ALAN:** Stay an avva sup, wi-yer auwd dad. Tis Arthur's birthdee.

**NANCY:** Nah Dad. I'm tired. Wilst tha walk us oam, Rich?

**RICHARD:** If that's all right, Rose?

**ROSE:** Aye, off ye pop, Rich. Mike can work the bar, ferra change.

**MICHAEL:** Oh, pickin on me again, Rose.

*NANCY and RICHARD go to leave.*

**NANCY:** Bye, Dad. Sithee at oam. Bye Arth, appy birthdee again.

**ARTHUR:** Tarlass.

**RICHARD:** I won't be long.

**ROSE:** Tek as long as tha lahkes.

**ALAN:** Ne'ermind all that. Yew rush back ere, lad.

*RICHARD and NANCY exit through the front door.*

**JACK:** Well, common Arth. Ista dooin a speech.

**ARTHUR:** Nay.

**ROSE:** Cummon Arth.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, common Arth. Speech, speech.

*ARTHUR gets to his feet.*

**ARTHUR:** Ah'd jus lahke te thank…

*ARTHUR appears to have taken a turn for the worst.*

**ARTHUR:** Ah'd jus…

**ROSE:** Ista ahreet Arth?

*AUWD ARTHUR collapses.*

*ALL rush to his aid.*

**ROSE:** Phone an ambulance Michael, quick!

*MICHAEL runs behind the bar and phones an ambulance.*

**ALAN:** Ah'll get district nurse.

*ALAN rushes out the front door.*

**MICHAEL:** Aye, can ah avva ambulance please?

*ROSE lays AUWD ARTHUR's unconscious form on his back and lifts his head back, so as to clear the airways.*

**ROSE:** Cummon Arthur. Can ye ear-me love?

**MICHAEL:** An ambulance. Tar.

**ROSE:** Can ye see if ee's breathin theer Jack?

**JACK:** Aye, ah think so. Ah think ee's pissed imsen though.

**MICHAEL:** Ello. Can ah ave an ambulance tet Worthington Arms in Troutbeck…. Troutbeck. Near Beckben. Nay, not Blackburn. Beckben. B…E…C…K. Aye Beck-burn. Tis pronounced Beckben… Is ee breathin? Ah can't see fray ere. Is ee breathin Rose?

**ROSE:** Aye.

**MICHAEL:** (Into the phone) Aye, ee is.

(PAUSE)

(To Rose) As ee getten any sick in is mouwth?

**ROSE:** No.

**MICHAEL:** (Into the phone) No.

(PAUSE)

Look, instead-o-gie-in me third degree, de ye want fert send one? Tis a bloody murgency…Oh ave ye? Sorry lass. Ah'm mean tis lovely chattin wi-ye.

**ROSE:** MICHAEL!

**MICHAEL:** Sorry love, ow long did ye say? Forty minutes, minimum.

**ROSE:** Oh soddit. Us'll tekkim int van. Ah think ee's cumin rouwnd-a-bit now.

**MICHAEL:** Nay feggettenit love, us'll fetch im us-sen. Appen ee's cum rouwnd Aye, us've sent fert distrct nurse. Nay, ye daren't need fert send an ambulance. Bye love.

*MICHAEL puts the phone down.*

Well she wurnt fray rouwnd ere. Nice voice though**.**

*MICHAEL mimes grabbing a pair of breasts.*

**ROSE:** MICHAEL, ye tit! Bring a glass-o-watter o'er ere.

*ARTHUR coughs and splutters. ROSE sits him up with the assistance of JACK.*

*MICHAEL gets a glass of water and brings it to ARTHUR, who drinks from it.*

**JACK:** Cummon then. Lerrus gerrim int van.

*ROSE. MICHAEL and JACK get ARTHUR to his feet and walk him to the front door.*

**ROSE:** Get yon leets and lock doo-wer Michael.

*ROSE and JACK exit with ARTHUR. MICHAEL returns to the bar and grabs his keys. He then exits also.*

**LIGHTS OUT.**

**<u>SCENE THREE</u> – ARTHUR'S FUNERAL WAKE, AFTERNOON.**

All the characters are wearing either a black arm band, black tie or suitably dark clothing.

*RICHARD enters from the upstairs door. He changes the signs on the guest ales board, it now reads;*

*TWO COCKS*
*PARSON'S NOSE 3.5%*
*THRESHER'S WRIST 4%*

*RICHARD then goes behind the bar puts the new pump badges on the hand pumps and 'potters'.*

*NANCY enters from the upstairs door.*

**RICHARD:** Hiya Nancy. You okay?

**NANCY:** Yeah, jus sick-o-mekkin butties. Yew ahreet?

**RICHARD:** Yeah… listen Nance, I know this isn't the best time, but. De ye fancy goin ouwt sometime?

**NANCY:** Wot? Lahke onna date.

**RICHARD:** Yeah.

**NANCY:** Aye, can do.

*The voices of Michael and Rose can be heard arguing upstairs.*

*NANCY and RICHARD react, smirking etc.*

**ROSE:** (Off) Yerra useless and lazy bastard. And yer drunk!

**MICHAEL:** (Off) No dear Ah'm not.

**ROSE:** (Off) Yew are.

**MICHAEL:** (Off) Well it's a funeral.

**ROSE:** (Off) Yes Michael, tis also ouwr anniversary and ah'd appreciate sum elp int pub.

**MICHAEL:** (Off) Yes, dear. I know dear. Ah'll go deawn now, an ah won't avva-nother.

**ROSE:** (Off) Oh do wot ye lahke, tha always does.

*MICHAEL enters through the upstairs door. He notices that the other two have clearly heard the argument.*

**MICHAEL:** Well, that teld er.

**RICHARD:** I've jus put the new guests on, that Thresher's Wrist is still a bit lively.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, bereet. Jus turn pump badge rouwnd an gie-it a bit-o-time te sekkle.

*RICHARD turns the appropriate badge to face behind the bar.*

*JACK and ALAN enter through the front door. They walk to the bar, casting a glance at 'Arthur's table'.*

**JACK:** Us'll av two pints please Rich. Dusta want a sup Nance?

**NANCY:** Tar Jack, ah'll avva… (To Richard) Asta getten any Malibu?

*MICHAEL pulls the two pints.*

**RICHARD:** No, sorry.

**MICHAEL:** Avewe not? Gerrit ont list Rich.

*RICHARD writes on a piece of paper.*

**JACK:** Do us a pint-o-mild an-all, willta Mike?

*MICHAEL glances at Arthur's empty chair.*

**MICHAEL:** Ayelad.

*MICHAEL, having pulled the other two pints, now pulls a mild and sets it on the bar.*

**JACK:** Asta decided wot thas suppin yet, Nance?

**NANCY:** Ah'll avva vodka and lemonade, please.

*RICHARD pours Nancy's drink and sets it on the bar in front of her.*

**JACK:** Dusta fancy one Mike.

*MICHAEL glances aloft.*

**MICHAEL:** Erm, aye. Ah'll jus avva quick whiskey.

*MICHAEL pours himself a double whiskey from the optic.*

**JACK:** Worra-bouwt thee Rich?

**RICHARD:** Aye cheers.

*RICHARD pulls himself a pint of guest bitter.*

*JACK goes to pay.*

**MICHAEL:** Ah'll get these Jack, yerreet.

**JACK:** (*Raising his* glass) Well. To Arthur.

*ALL raise their glasses.*

**ALL:** Te Arthur.

*MICHAEL downs the whiskey in one and swiftly puts the glass away. Whilst this happens, JACK takes the pint of mild over to Arthur's table and sets it down.*

**JACK:** Theer tha goes Arth. Av one last drink on me.

*JACK returns to the bar.*

**RICHARD:** Should I do me poem now?

**ALAN:** As ta written it?

*NANCY softly hits her father.*

**NANCY:** Dad be nice.

**MICHAEL:** Lerrus jus get Rose.

*MICHAEL goes to the upstairs door and shouts.*

Rose. Rich is doin is poem.

*After a moment ROSE enters and goes to sit at her place at the bar. MICHAEL pours her a drink and sets it in front of her on the bar.*

**ROSE:** Sorry Rich. On yer go.

*RICHARD takes out a piece of paper and reads his poem.*

**RICHARD:** Last orders…

Last orders has been rung
The doors are all locked
"Time gentlemen please
The clock's not wrong."

The crosswords have all been solved
No need for correction fluid
The ink is dry
The words etched in our minds.

All the ale has been drunk
Yet our cups overflow
With moist memories
"Tis telate fert g'woam early."

Last orders has been called
The doors are all locked.
I just hope God's drinks cabinet
Is very, well stocked.

*ALL react favourably, but there's no applause.*

**ROSE:** Oh that wur reet grand, that Rich.

**NANCY:** (Obviously in slight awe) Oh yes Rich, that wur wonderful.

**ROSE:** Michael, go an get butties fray upsturrs. Rich get everyone, except Michael, a drink on me willta.

*MICHAEL goes upstairs and Richard pours the drinks, setting them in front of each person. As he gets to Alan's drink…*

**ALAN:** Not bad that speech Rich, not three bad.

**RICHARD:** Tar Al.

**JACK;** Gud auwd Arth, eh? Ah'm minded-o-a tale ee teld me once. Ee'd bin graftin fur sum feller, an once ee'd fettled job, yon mon sez,"Well izit bob-on?" So Arth sez, "Well tis near enuff". An mon sez "That weren't dee, near enough, ah wonts it reet!" Arth sez,"Aye, tiz reet!". So mon sez, "Well, that's near enuff!"

*ALL laugh.*

*MICHAEL enters with the sandwiches, which he shares round.*

**MICHAEL:** Dusta fancy a butty Al?

**ALAN:** Av yew medem?

**MICHAEL:** No, Rose an Nance did.

**ALAN:** Well, go on then.

**MICHAEL:** Eh, daren't joke bouwt tit. They asked us at ospital, wot Arth ad etten.

**ROSE:** Oh, Michael. Av teld thee afowre, we didn't poison Arthur. Ee died-o-art attack.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, as cudda bin brought on be food poisoning.

**ROSE:** Yer bloody paranoid.

**MICHAEL:** Ah tell thee, us'll av food hygiene inspectors snoopin rouwnd ere.

**ROSE:** Gie-o'er, yer daft-eypeth.

**JACK:** Byek Mike, yer as delusional as this bastard ere.

**ALAN:** (To Jack) Fuck off, ye ball bag.

**NANCY:** Oow-ey. Ye know Mury's usband died mondee fortneet? Well er phoned local paper, fert put a notice in. So papermon sez wot's it te sey. So Mary sez, "Put, Manny's deed." An papermon sez, "Well tha gets up to five words, ye may as well use em, get thas money's worth." So Mury assa think an sez, "Manny's deed, Volvo fur sale."

*ALL chuckle.*

**ROSE:** Oh thass terrible.

**RICHARD:** How's your new car, Jack?

**JACK:** Aye, lahke shit offa chrome shovel.

**MICHAEL:** Wur yew lot ahreet after them sandwiches?

**ROSE:** Michael. Willta jus leave it alone.

**NANCY:** Anyroahd. Ah'd lahke fert propose another toast.

*ALL raise their glasses in expectation, MICHAEL picks up an empty glass and raises it.*

Te Rose and Mike, appy anniversary.

**ALL:** Rose and Mike.

*ROSE and MICHAEL exchange a look.*

**ROSE:** Thanks everyone. Get yersen a pint Michael, ye can't cheers wi-a empty glass.

*MICHAEL pulls himself a pint of bitter.*

**NANCY:** Tis just a shame, tis such a …summatt occasion… Woss tet word Rich?

**RICHARD:** Such a sombre occasion.

**NANCY:** Aye.

**MICHAEL:** Not to worry. Rose an me av ne'er really celebrated ouwr anniversary.

**NANCY:** Why's that?

**MICHAEL:** Sadly, Rose's fa-ther died on ouwr weddin dee, so tissn't really a day we celebrate.

**NANCY:** Oh god.

**RICHARD:** Well I must say, aside from that tragedy, I'm reet envious of the connection you and Mike have. I hope to find that kind of connection one day.

**ROSE:** Yew will Rich lad. Daren't worry.

**NANCY:** Dusta fancy a fag, Rich?

**RICHARD:** Aye.

*RICHARD and NANCY exit through the front door.*

**ALAN:** Thur always sloh-pin off, them two.

**ROSE:** Ye can't stand in the way of love, Al.

**ALAN:** Ah bloody can.

**ROSE:** Wotsta worried abouwt.

**ALAN:** Ah'm worried yon Richard'll tek me Nance away, is wot ah worried abouwt. Im wi-all is igh falutin ideas-o-travellint world.

**MICHAEL:** Well ee might stay ere, luv can change yer mind.

**ALAN:** Luv? Thass not love. Kids nowadays daren't know wot luv is.

**JACK:** Ah daren't know Al. Yon Threlfall's getten a bit-o-cash.

**ALAN:** Assee?

**JACK:** Aye. Inheritance fray when is mum and dad wur killed in that ouwse fire. Rekkon is nan left im a fur bit an-all.

**ALAN:** Oh.

**MICHAEL:** Ey, ah sin Farmer John yesterdee.

**JACK:** Oh aye?

**MICHAEL:** Aye. Appen is wahf's cat pissed in is slippers. So ee gets old-o-moggy an teks it behind thouwse, an blows its bloody ed off wi-twelve bore! But then, er catches im puttin it int incinerator. Rekkon tis reet frosty up theer at moment.

**ALAN:** Ah'd a shot missus an-all, me.

**ROSE:** Gie-o'er Al.

**ALAN:** Ah bloody wud, er's gud-fur-nouwt.

**MICHAEL:** Bloodyell, Al.

*NANCY and RICHARD enter through the front door, they are giggling slightly. They take their places at the bar.*

**ALAN:** Ahreet Rich?

**RICHARD:** Yeah thanks Alan.

**ALAN:** Aye gud, jus checkin.

**JACK:** Well, ah think ah'll go an avva sken rouwnd church jumble.

**ALAN:** Aye, appen us'll cum withee, afore we go oam an see wot ouwr lass as ruined for tea.

**NANCY:** Yew cumin Rich?

**RICHARD:** I'll catch you up. I've got a few jobs te do ere first.

**JACK:** Rettoh. We'll appy anniversary both. Sithee toneet.

**ALAN:** Aye sithee.

*ALAN, JACK and NANCY go to leave.*

**NANCY:** Sithee inna bit Rich. See ya Rose, Mike.

*RICHARD raises his hand in a wave.*

**RL/ML:** See ya.

**MICHAEL:** Drive carefully.

*NANCY, ALAN and JACK exit through front door.*

**ROSE:** Ah'll jus nip upsturrs ferra mo, s'cuse me.

*ROSE exits through upstairs door.*

**MICHAEL:** (Once she's gone) Ere-yar Rich, giz ye pint pot, Ah'll fillit up furthee.

*RICHARD picks up his pint glass.*

**RICHARD:** Oh cheers Mike.

**MICHAEL:** Bit-o-bribery and corruption. Canst tha dee me shift on thursdee? Ah know tis yer day off, but…

**RICHARD:** I'm sorry, I can't. I'm goin ouwt wi Nancy on Thursday. We've just arranged it.

**MICHAEL:** Oh well, furdos. Ere forgetten abouwt yer pint. Yew gerroff tet jumble. Gie-er one furme.

**RICHARD:** Michael, really. Cheers mate. Seeya inna bit.

**MICHAEL:** Asta getten yer keys?

**RICHARD:** Aye.

**MICHAEL:** An ey. Ah lahked thas poem Rich.

**RICHARD:** Thanks Mike.

*RICHARD exits through the front door.*

*ROSE enters through the upstairs door with a letter in her hand.*

**ROSE:** Wheers Richard gone, now?

**MICHAEL:** Ah lettim go early, so ee cud catch up wi-Nancy.

**ROSE:** Oh yew old romantic.

**MICHAEL:** Can ah avva kiss then?

**ROSE:** No ye can't.

**MICHAEL:** Can ah avva drink then?

**ROSE:** If tha must.

*MICHAEL helps himself to a double whiskey from the optic.*

**MICHAEL:** (*Raising his glass*) Well appy anniversary luv.

*MICHAEL downs the whiskey in one.*

**ROSE:** Michael look. Ah've getten a letter fray brewery ere. It sez, they're reviewing all their premises for streamlining.

**MICHAEL:** Woss tha mean, when it's at oam.

**ROSE:** It means, if us'r not mekkin enuff money, they're gonna close tet pub deawn an move us somewheer else.

**MICHAEL:** Well, us'll be reet. We're mekkin enuff, aren't we?

**ROSE:** Well no, not really. An ah know tis awful fert say, but wi Arthur gone, us'll mek even less.

**MICHAEL:** Ah daren't want fert lose this place.

**ROSE:** Tissn't up te thee though. Ah mean, we cud always ask te transfer nearer memum.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, that's true. Er's getting on abit now.

**ROSE:** Ah mean, we discussed movin er in ere, once Richey went. This is jus same, mebbee even better fur-er.

**MICHAEL:** Well lerrus not get too previous, us'll see wot appens. It might jus be one-o-them phases thae go through, like puttin pool tables in. De ye remember that? Tis still in thur gatherin dust, nay body as ever played onit.

**ROSE:** Aye, mebbee yer reet. Cummon lerrus go upsturrs, leave this lot till later.

*ROSE makes her way behind the bar, collecting the pint of mild from Arthur's table and setting it on the bar.*

**MICHAEL:** Dus that mean ah might get sum?

**ROSE:** I shuddn't think so Michael.

*ROSE pauses at the upstairs door.*

But ye never know.

*ROSE exits.*

*MICHAEL quickly rushes to the front door to lock it, he then rushes back towards the bar.*

*MICHAEL stumbles and drops the keys. He regains his footing and quickly scoops the keys up.*

**MICHAEL:** Fur fuck's sake.

*MICHAEL goes behind the bar and exits through upstairs door.*

LIGHTS OUT.

**<u>SCENE FOUR</u> RICHARD'S DAY OFF, AFTERNOON.**

*MICHAEL enters through the upstairs door. He puts the new guest ales signs up, they read:*

*GORDON BENNET'S*
*WOBBLY WEASEL 4.5%*
*SOZZLED STOAT 4%*

*MICHAEL returns to behind the bar, puts the new pump badges on and then lounges reading a local paper.*

*JACK and ALAN enter through the main door.*

**ALAN:** Nathen fettler. Ow's tricks?

**MICHAEL:** Aye, souwndaffurr. Thissen?

**ALAN:** Aye, not three bad.

**JACK:** Ne'er mind allt bloody prattling. Git em in ye bastard. Christ, yer so tight, ye only skrike outta one een, thee.

**ALAN:** Bloodyell. Funny ow ye can tek aginst summon, intit?

**MICHAEL:** Which ale dusta fancy Al? Wobbly Weasel, or Sozzled Stoat?

**ALAN:** Strongest.

*MICHAEL pulls two pints and sets them in front of Jack and Alan.*

*ALAN begrudgingly goes to pay.*

**MICHAEL:** Nay, ah'll gettem.

**JACK:** Oh cheers Mike. Right lerrus avva sken at this.

*JACK takes out the Racing Post from his pocket and smoothes it out on the bar.*

**ALAN:** Well cheers, ye ball bag.

**JACK:** Aye, allt best, ye bastard.

*JACK and ALAN take large draughts from their pints and then turn their attention to the Racing Post.*

**ALAN:** So oow ave we getten fert first race?

**JACK:** Thissun ere int pink.

**ALAN:** Ah, thas favourite colour.

**JACK:** Ah fuckin ate thee, at times.

**ALAN:** Ah fuckin ate thee, allt time!

*BOTH laugh.*

**JACK:** Eh, ah didn't tellthee, did ah Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Wossthat?

**JACK:** Vicar cum rouwnd me ouwse tedee.

**MICHAEL:** Father Phil? Wot wuree afte?

**JACK:** Ah oppens doo-wer and ee sez, "Ah wur wonderin if yer'd be willin fert let Jesus inte yer oam?" So ah sez, "Ee can cummin, but tha can fuck off!"

*ALL laugh.*

**ALAN:** Wur ahreet at Plougher's return match. Deye rekon Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Aye, shame us lost.

**JACK:** Twere that useless bastard Brian, as lostit ferrus.

**ALAN:** Christ, ee's a tight bastard. Deye know, ah watched im sit wi that much in his pintpot furra quatter-o-an ouwr, afore Mike got us all one in. Ah tellthee that beggar'd die-o-thirst, afore ee puttis and innis pocket.

(PAUSE)

**JACK:** Anyow, wot time we on ere?

**MICHAEL:** Jus cumin upte aff-past.

**JACK:** Bloodyell. Us'd better gerrus skates on.

*ALL peer at the Racing Post listings.*

**ALAN:** Fuckinell!

**JACK:** Wot?

**ALAN:** Loowke at this. Bag-o-balls. Us've getten fert ave a crack at that.

**JACK:** Oh aye, tis a sign.

*ALAN takes a betting slip out of his pocket and writes down the horses name etc.*

**MICHAEL:** Wottabouwt thatun, Moon Monkey?

**ALAN:** Gie o'er lad. Tis fifty te one!

**JACK:** Aye. The only chance that orse as-o-winnin, is if alt tother orses drop deed int furst furlong. Naylad, fur that race, ye wants fert back that likkle beauwty.

*JACK points out a horse in the paper.*

**MICHAEL:** Oh aye? Wossit called, creosote? An tis gud o'er fences.

*MICHAEL leans over the bar to get a better look at the paper.*

(*Reading*) Crazy… Man… Michael? Ye cheeky sod!

**JACK:** Nay, fursfur. Tis a crackin nag that.

**MICHAEL:** Aye, g'won then. Put a likkle bet on fur me willya? Each way.

*MICHAEL hands over a five-pound note. JACK writes down the horses name on Alan's betting slip.*

**ALAN:** Reet. Lerrus get deawn boowkies. Keep thas beady likkle eens on wi-pints, willye Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Aye.

*ALAN picks up the betting slip and both he and JACK go to leave via the front door.*

*They are met by RICHARD, who enters through the main door. His hair is wild and unkempt.*

**JACK:** Nathen Rich.

**RICHARD:** Nathen.

**ALAN:** Woss appened te thas hurr? Asta adda lectric shock?

**RICHARD:** It's windy ouwt thur.

**JACK:** Ye loowke lahke yev sinna ghost.

**ALAN:** Is us agate tet boowkies, or wot?

**JACK:** Aye ah reet! Sithee inna bit Rich.

*JACK and ALAN exit through the main door.*

*RICHARD walks to the bar.*

**MICHAEL:** Eyup Rich, adda gudun?

**RICHARD:** Yeah, not bad. I've jus got this engraved.

*RICHARD gets a silver cigarette case out of his pocket.*

**MICHAEL:** Wossta getten theer?

**RICHARD:** It's Arthur's cigarette case, I bought it at the church jumble. I'm goin te give it te Nancy. Deye think it sends the right message?

**MICHAEL:** Depends wot thas tryin te sey. But ah think that'll go deawn reet well, then mebee she will. Eh? Eh?

**RICHARD:** Mike! Can I have a pint of Weasel, please?

**MICHAEL:** Aye

*MICHAEL pulls the pint. RICHARD goes to pay.*

**MICHAEL:** Staff drink lad. Bribery and corruption, eh?

**RICHARD:** Oh thanks.

**MICHAEL:** Deye fancy doin me shift temorra? Usual rates, tenner an ouwr.

**RICHARD:** Yeah okay.

*RICHARD takes a big gulp of his drink.*

That's not too bad that, is it?

*ALAN and JACK enter through the front door and walk to the bar.*

**ALAN:** Reet ho Mike. Getten racin ont tellybox wilt-ta.

**JACK:** (*Waving the betting slips*) Aye, us've getten yon winners reet ere.

**MICHAEL:** Stick telly on, willta Rich?

*MICHAEL hands RICHARD the remote for the television. RICHARD points the remote at the (imaginary) telly and then returns the remote to the bar.*

**ALAN:** Line us a cuppla mowre pints up please Mike.

**JACK:** Anda coupla bags-o-cris.

**ALAN:** Jus one bag Mike. Ah ad a big dinner.

**JACK:** Oh aye?

**ALAN:** Aye, ah'm as full assa Bishop's ball bag!

*ALAN and JACK laugh raucously, whilst MICHAEL pulls two pints and takes payment from JACK.*

**JACK:** Ista suppin wi-ouwt thur Rich?

**RICHARD:** No thanks, I've getten one here. Thanks though.

*ALAN turns his attention to the listings.*

**ALAN:** Reet. Now oow've we getten next? Egri… Egrig… Summat steed. Ere yar Rich, yer gudat words. Wot's thisun?

*RICHARD moves closer to look at the betting slip.*

**RICHARD:** Egregious Steed.

*RICHARD begins to chuckle slightly.*

**ALAN:** Well. Wossit mean?

**JACK:** Ye delusional bastard. Orse names daren't mean nowt. Thez jus names.

**RICHARD:** Well I hope so. Because that means outstandingly…

**ALAN:** (Interrupting) Ye see…

**RICHARD:** Please let me finish. Outstandingly bad horse.

**ALAN:** Fur fucks sake.

**JACK:** Yew delusional bastard.

*JACK looks up at the television.*

Ere we go Mister Arkwright, anthuroff.

*ALL turn to watch the television. JACK and ALAN fidget and jeer at the horses, as they watch them race.*

**JACK:** Cummon ye bastard.

**ALAN:** Whipit, whipit arder ye bastard.

(PAUSE)

Yours is in front, ye bastard.

**JACK:** Nah, mines in yeller.

**ALAN:** Aye, ant yellerun is in front, ye daft nackerbag.

**JACK:** All right, ye bastard.

**ALAN:** Gie-it a gud thrutchin, common… Oh yew fuckin bastard! (Disappointed) Well, that wurra load-o-shite.

**JACK:** Avva wun Mister Arkwright? Avvah?

*JACK does a strange little jig and sings a generic/unrecognisable tune.*

Diddly-dit dee. Diddly-dee. Diddly-diddly dee.

**ALAN:** Git fucked.

*ALAN turns back to the paper and the betting slips. Jack stops jigging and does the same.*

*JACK, ALAN and RICHARD all drink from their pints. MICHAEL pulls himself a pint and drinks from it - he doesn't pay for it.*

**ALAN:** So, owarta Rich?

**RICHARD:** I've got a bit-o-ed ache.

**JACK:** Be allt thinkin ye dee Rich.

**ALAN:** Yer off ouwt wi ouwr Nance later, eh?

**RICHARD:** Yep.

**ALAN:** Well, mind ye behave yersen.

**RICHARD:** Yes sir.

**ALAN:** Ne'ermind this sir business, jus arken te wot ah'm seyin.

*JACK looks at his watch, then up at the television.*

**JACK:** Eyup, ere wi go. Thas orse is in thissun Mike.

*ALL turn to watch the next race.*

**MICHAEL:** Wot colour am ah in?

*JACK looks down at the paper.*

**JACK:** Wot wur yer-orse?

**MICHAEL:** Crazy Man Michael.

**JACK:** Oh aye.

*JACK looks back to the television.*

(Absently) Yur in red… Wi-a pink strip (*Smirks*). (To the telly) Cummon lad.

**ALAN:** Oow've us getten in thisun Jack?

**JACK:** Tenner each way on Bag-o-Balls, anna cheeky fiver ont same orse as Big Mike ere.

**ALAN:** Souwndaffurr. Cummon Bag-o-Balls, ye ball bag.

*JACK and ALAN laugh raucously. MICHAEL and RICHARD laugh slightly, more at the other two than what's been said.*

**MICHAEL:** (Getting involved) Cummon ye tiny Irishman, whip thorse.

**JACK:** Steady on Mike, daren't get too carried away.

**MICHAEL:** (Slightly deflated and awkward) Aye, reet.

**ALAN:** Eyup now, ere wi go. Thatsit, thatsit.

**JACK:** Git up thur, ye bastard.

**ALAN:** Oh aye, oh aye. (*Writhing with excitement*) OH YEW BASTARD!

*JACK and ALAN start to jig, linking opposite arms and then twirling around.*

**JACK/AL:** Diddly dee, diddly-diddly dee, diddly dee.

**RICHARD:** You not win Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Cum second Rich, but addit each way. Nice likkle earner that Rich, very nice.

*NANCY enters through the front door and proceeds to the bar. JACK and ALAN notice her arrival and stop their jigging.*

**NANCY:** Oh my God. Woss goin on ere?

**ALAN:** Eyup Nance. Me an this bastard av jus backed another winner.

**NANCY:** Thas not gamblin an-all, ista Rich?

**RICHARD:** No, I never gamble. Even a raffle, I think twice.

***NANCY** chuckles.*

**RICHARD:** I've enough vices.

**ALAN:** Naylad. Tis vices as meks-a-man. Ye can't beat the odd…Erm.

**RICHARD:** I think you mean peccadillo.

**ALAN:** Do ah? Well thassa-nother rintle inme arse.

**RICHARD:** Can I have another pint please Mike? Would you like a drink Nancy?

**NANCY:** Aye, ta Rich. Ah'll avvan aff.

**RICHARD:** What about you Al, Jack?

**ALAN:** Nay wur-reet, ta lad.

**JACK:** Ye can gerrus a bag-o-nuts, if ye lahke.

**ALAN:** Daren't get yer nuts ouwt in ere, ye bastard.

*ALAN and JACK laugh.*

**MICHAEL:** Reet ye-are.

*MICHAEL pours the drinks, gets the nuts for Jack and takes payment from RICHARD-who pays with a singed note.*

Bloodyell Rich, wur've ye getten thissun fray? Tis brunt tebuggary, loowks lahke tis ouwtta roastin mon's back pocket.

**RICHARD:** It's me change from shop in town. Yon mon said he accidentally put his wallet down on the aga.

**ALAN:** Oow wur this? Ee sounds a reet oller-spud teme.

**JACK:** Ey, that minds me. Ah saw Stee Ramsbottom earlier, an ee never gormed me, the seely beggar.

**ALAN:** Now ee *is* an oller-spud! Deye remember when ye getten imin fert fettle tet bogs, Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Oh Christ aye.

**JACK:** Why did tha ever ire im, Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Every other bugger wur busy.

**RICHARD:** What happened?

**ALAN:** Twur ages ago now. Mike getten Steve in te fix shitouwse. So us're all sat avvin a pint, an suddenly, thurs this bloody big crash, an a skrike-o-agony fray bogs. Mike, goes rushin in te see woss occurred. Tet sistern ad fallen on Steve's ed, an is pissin blood.

**RICHARD:** Oh Christ.

**MICHAEL:** So, ah toowke im tet district nurses ouwse, fert get im patched up. Anyow, us're cumin back tet pub, Steve's getten this bloody big bandage rouwnd is noggin. Then, jus as us've reached the pub, ee sets is bloody bandages on fire, tryin fert leet is fag! Ah ad fert run in ere and git a pintpot fulla watter, fert put tet daft beggar ouwt.

*ALL laugh.*

**NANCY:** Reet are wi-agate ouwt, Rich.

**RICHARD:** Aye.

*RICHARD takes a large draught of his pint, but leaves most of it.*

*RICHARD and NANCY go to exit.*

Bye all.

**ALAN:** Aye, mind ye remember wot ah've sed.

**NANCY:** Wossee on abouwt, Rich?

**RICHARD:** Just a bit of fatherly advice.

**NANCY:** Oh. Well seeya.

**ALAN:** Aye, avva gud time lass.

**NANCY:** Ah will.

*NANCY and RICHARD exit through the front door.*

**MICHAEL:** Ey, ee'll soon be callin thee Dad.

**ALAN:** Aye, ahreet Mike. Stop thi tollerin.

*ROSE enters from upstairs.*

**ROSE:** Michael, wots tha playin at? Tis gone a quatter past.

**MICHAEL:** Sorry luv, time getten away fray us.

**ROSE:** Ah'll gie-ye morna getten away fray ye.

**MICHAEL:** Ey? Woss that mean.

**ROSE:** Sorry lads, us'll av fert shut. Tis well past time.

**JACK:** Aye, us're off anyroahd. Cummon ye bastard, sup up.

**ALAN:** Aye ahreet.

*JACK and ALAN drink as much as they can from their pints. JACK puts his nuts in his pocket.*

**JACK:** Well, sithee.

**ALAN:** Aye, terrah.

*ALAN and JACK go to leave.*

**MICHAEL:** Sithee toneet lads.

**AL/JACK:** Aye.

*JACK and ALAN exit through front door.*

*ROSE goes to lock the door and returns to the bar.*

**MICHAEL:** Can ah avva flier, Rose?

**ROSE:** No ye can't. Now get up them sturrs, an get tae ready, ah'm gonna avva bath.

*MICHAEL, followed by Rose exit through the upstairs door.*

LIGHTS OUT.

**<u>SCENE FIVE</u> JUST PRIOR TO OPENING EVENING.**

*ROSE and MICHAEL are setting the bar up, tidying and so forth.*

*MICHAEL puts the new guest ales signs up, the board reads;*

*ROBERT JOHNSON'S*
*PORTENTOUS PORTER 5%*

*CROSSROADS PALE ALE 4.5%*

*There's a knocking at the front door.*

**ROSE:** Oow the ell is that? Daren't they know wur closed.

*Further knocking.*

**ROSE:** Oh Michael, go an see oow that is.

*MICHAEL walks to the front door to see who it is. He opens the door.*

**MICHAEL:** Alan, is that thee? Us're not oppen yet, ye drunken bastard. (Surprised) Oh ello luv.

*The WOMAN stands in the doorway.*

**WOMAN:** Good evening. I'm Tabitha Wolfe, from Septimus Leisure.

**MICHAEL:** Is it abouwt pool table.

**TABITHA:** No, I'm afraid not.

**ROSE:** Michael. Oow isit?

**MICHAEL:** Woman fray brewery.

**ROSE:** Well lerrer in.

*MICHAEL allows TABITHA in and they both walk to the bar.*

Ello luv.

**TABITHA:** Hello. Rose isn't it? And Michael?

**MICHAEL:** Aye. Loowke, tisit abouwt tet sandwiches, isit?

**TABITHA:** What sandwiches?

**ROSE:** Michael!

**TABITHA:** Could we sit down?

*TABITHA sits down at Arthur's table.*

**MICHAEL:** But thass Arthur's table.

**TABITHA:** Well, he's not here at the moment is he?

**MICHAEL:** Ee's deed.

**TABITHA:** Well he won't be needing it anymore, will he?

**ROSE:** Michael, jus siddeawn.

*After a moment, MICHAEL and ROSE reluctantly also sit down at the table.*

**TABITHA:** Now, I've been evaluating the viability of this pub, and I'm sorry to say, that it is my recommendation that you be transferred and this establishment be closed and sold. That is unless you can present me with a viable business plan that will get this place turning a profit?

**MICHAEL:** Wi-cud turn it inte one-o-them Gastra pubs?

**TABITHA:** With the greatest of respect, how do you propose to do that? You've no kitchen, limited space and there simply isn't a market for something of that nature here.

**MICHAEL:** We cud avva quiz one neet a week.

**TABITHA:** I'm afraid you'll have to do more than that. For example, how many people will a quiz night attract?

**MICHAEL:** Erm… Well at least ten.

**TABITHA:** I'm afraid you're clutching at straws a little here.

**MICHAEL:** We cud put a turn on.

**TABITHA:** A what, sorry?

**MICHAEL:** A singer…Karaoke even.

**TABITHA:** Erm

**MICHAEL:** Wellie throwin, toe wrestling, shin kickin, pie eatin, nude racing!

**ROSE:** Oh shurrup Michael.

**MICHAEL:** Well ah'm tryin me best. Yew think-o-summat, then.

**TABITHA:** Look, I've listened to your ideas, and frankly, none of them would work in this location.

**MICHAEL:** Worabouwt tet village? This place is tet ub-o-community.

**TABITHA:** I only wish that were true. You're sales figures have dropped consistently over the last two years. I appreciate your sentiments, but

we are running a business, not a charity. There are other pubs in the area.

**MICHAEL:** (Losing it slightly) Wot yon Plough? But… Is ale's shit!

**ROSE:** Michael! Sorry Tabitha.

**TABITHA:** Don't worry. Your passion for this place is very laudable. Well, I'm truly sorry about this, it's a lovely little pub and the locals seem nice enough. However, it is a sign of the times.

*TABITHA stands up, preparing to leave.*

*MICHAEL remains sat, but ROSE stands also.*

**ROSE:** Ow long de wi av?

**TABITHA:** I'll be in touch with a definite date, but it should be within a month or so. We already have several developers interested.

**MICHAEL:** Is thur nay way, tha canst turn a blind een, ye know, mebbee a bit-o-bribery and corruption?

**TABITHA:** (Laughs a little) I'm sorry, it doesn't work that way. I'm afraid the figures speak for themselves.

*TABITHA offers her hand to MICHAEL, who reluctantly shakes it. TABITHA then shakes ROSE's hand.*

**ROSE:** Well, tar anyroahd, luv.

**TABITHA:** Sorry again.

*TABITHA exits through the front door.*

*NANCY and RICHARD enter through the main door.*

**NANCY:** Oow wur that?

**ROSE:** A woman fray brewery.

**MICHAEL:** Thez shuttin place deawn, Rich.

**RICHARD:** Fuckinell!

**NANCY:** Thae can't dee that, can thae?

**MICHAEL:** Thae can, an thae av.

**ROSE:** Canst ah leave thee in charge, Rich? Mike an ah av stuff fert sort ouwt.

**RICHARD:** Of coarse, aye.

**ROSE:** Cummon Michael.

**MICHAEL:** Dunt seem fert matter now, but cud thee put pump badges on Rich?

**RICHARD:** Sure.

*MICHAEL and ROSE exit through the upstairs door.*

**NANCY:** Well, thisissa a reet te do. Dustit mean Mike and Rose as bin fired?

**RICHARD:** Nay. They'll be moved to another pub, somewhere else.

**NANCY:** An worrabouwt thee, willta go wi-em?

**RICHARD:** Well, I don't know. Ah could ah s'pose. Mindjew, this might be a good excuse to go travellin. Hey, why don't ye come with me? We could go anywhere, I've got the money.

**NANCY:** Oh, Ah daren't know bouwt that Rich. I can't leave medad.

**RICHARD:** Can't, or won't?

**NANCY:** Daren't be lahke that Rich. Ah lahke ye, tha knows, but ah'm not suwre bouwt goin gallavantin.

**RICHARD:** Yer just like the rest, what's the problem. Ye should broaden yer horizons. Why de ye want to stay in this wasteland?

**NANCY:** Ah'm not lahke yew Rich, ah'm prouwd-o-this village. Ah am lahke the others, an ah daren't appreciate, bein talked te lahke that.

*NANCY goes to leave.*

**NANCY:** An ere, stick this up yer arse, an-all.

*NANCY slams the silver cigarette case on the bar and walks away.*

**RICHARD:** Nance, please I'm sorry. Ah didn't mean it lahke that.

*NANCY exits through front door.*

Oh shit!

*RICHARD picks up the cigarette case and puts it in his pocket. He then goes about putting the pump badges on the pumps.*

*ALAN and JACK enter through the front door. They make their way to the bar, taking their usual places.*

**ALAN:** Oi, Threlfall! Woss bin appenin wi thee an ouwr lass?

**RICHARD:** That's the least-o-yer worries.

**ALAN:** Thurs nowt more important teme, than me family.

**RICHARD:** They're closing the pub deawn.

**JACK:** Fuckinell!

**RICHARD:** Thass wot I said.

**ALAN:** Ang on ere. Oow's shuttin pub deawn?

**RICHARD:** The brewery. That woman, who's bin coming in ere, was from the brewery. She's just told Mike and Rose that they're shuttin place deawn.

**ALAN:** Nay, ah canst sithat appenin.

**JACK:** Ye delusional bastard. Ee's jus sed, tis appenin.

**ALAN:** Well, wheer am ah gonna sup?

**RICHARD:** Plough?

**ALAN:** Fuck that.

**RICHARD:** Well the Boar'sed, then.

**JACK:** Boar'sed? Tis fuckin miles away.

**ALAN:** Best do us a cuppla pints.

**RICHARD:** Wot guest deye want? There's Portentous Porter, or Crossroads Pale Ale.

**ALAN:** Ah'll go fert Porter.

*RICHARD pulls the pints, sets them in front of the patrons and takes payment from ALAN, giving change.*

**JACK:** Cheers Al.

**ALAN:** Cheers. Well wot are wi gonna dee? Ah've a mind te avva word wi-yon brewery woman.

**JACK:** Ye delusional bastard. It'll dee nay-gud. Tis appenin alt o'er place. Pubs shutting deawn, turned inte olidee-oams.

**RICHARD:** Sign of the times.

**ALAN:** Well, tissn't bloody reet. Alt change, ah feel as we're loosin everythin. Arth's gone, pubs gone. Woss gonna be next? Ah'll tellthee. T'll be me post office. Then thas getten auwd foaks goin miles, jus fert get thae pensions.

**RICHARD:** The pub's closing down, yer not losing yer identity.

**ALAN:** Wots tha know bouwt identity, ye daren't even spake proper.

*MICHAEL enters from upstairs.*

**MICHAEL:** Eyup lads. Ah s'pose thas eard?

**JACK:** Aye.

**ALAN:** Aye wi-av. Tis thur nowt tha canst dee?

**MICHAEL:** Nay, not really. We work fert brewery, not fert pub.

**JACK:** Wheer will thi go, Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Well, us're opin fert move nearer Rose's mum, in Short Shrifton. Er's gerrin on abit now.

**JACK:** Ah s'pose. Ye daren't fancy tekkin ont Plough, dusta?

**MICHAEL:** Nay fear. Ah cuddn't dee nouwt wi-place. Yon mon's runnit intet grouwnd.

**ALAN:** Well, thass us fucked.

**MICHAEL:** Tha can get deawn Dick Sharple's, ee dussa gud pint in thur.

**JACK:** Bit-o-trek that though, Mike.

**MICHAEL:** Tharral be reet, wi-auwd ale overcoat on.

**JACK:** Well, will be sad te sithee go, Mike.

**MICHAEL:** Cheers Jack. Gettem both a short on me, Rich. Loowke, ah've getten te go back up, but us'll avva a reet gud slurrup ont last neet, eh?

*RICHARD pours two whiskeys from the optics and sets them in front of them both.*

**ALAN:** When's that gonna be?

**MICHAEL:** Be abouwt a month or so, wos wot yon lass sed.

**ALAN:** Bloodyell, they daren't angabouwt, dethae?

**JACK:** Wot'll thae dee wi-buildin, Mike?

**MICHAEL:** Sed summat bouwt contractors. Probably use tet land, or turn place inte olidee flats.

**ALAN:** Well thass all wi-need, mowre bloody off-cummers.

**MICHAEL:** Think-o-business, though Al. All them postcards, an yours tis only shop int village.

**ALAN:** Aye, thass true enuff. Well…

*ALAN raises his glass, JACK does also.*

Cheers Mike.

**JACK:** Aye cheers.

LIGHTS OUT.

**<u>SCENE SIX</u> LAST NIGHT, EVENING.**

*MICHAEL, RICHARD, JACK and ALAN are in the same places as the end of scene five.*

**ALAN:** (*Raising his pint* glass) Well cheers Mike.

**JACK:** (*Also raising his pint glass*) Aye, cheers cocker. Is Rose cumin deawn, teneet?

*RICHARD takes down the guest ale signs, but doesn't replace them. MICHAEL starts to take the bottles down from the optics and sets the bottles on the bar.*

**MICHAEL:** Aye, er'll be deawn soon enuff. Ere elp yersens te-a short, pourem free and, everythin must go, as thaesay.

*MICHAEL helps himself to a large whiskey, he then hands the bottle to ALAN, who pours a double. ALAN then hands the bottle to JACK, who also pours a large measure.*

Dusta want a short, Rich?

**RICHARD:** Aye, cheers.

*JACK hands the bottle to RICHARD, who gets a glass and pours himself a large whiskey also.*

*ROSE enters from upstairs.*

**ROSE:** Nathen lads.

**MICHAEL:** Oh, jus in time luv. Ah wur abouwt fert propose a toast. Gerrer a drink, wilta Rich?

*RICHARD pours Rose a gin and orange and hands it to her. ROSE then takes her place at the bar.*

Well, Rose and ah, av adda reet gradley time ere o'ert years. Ah'd jus lahke fert thank ye all and wish everyone allt best fert future.

*ALL raise their glasses.*

**ALL:** The future.

**ALAN:** Ere cannah av this bar towel, as a reminder lahke?

**ROSE:** Aye, elp thassen.

*ALAN takes a bar towel and puts it in his pocket.*

**ALAN:** Cheers.

**MICHAEL:** Eh, mebbe us shud avva go ont pool table, fur auwd times sake, t'as ne'er bin played on.

**ALAN:** Worse thing thae ever did, purrin pool tables in pubs.

**JACK:** Asta decided wheer thas gooin on olidee, Rich.

**RICHARD:** It's not an olidee. I'm goin travellin. And yes, I'm goin te Paris first, all great artists have spent time in Paris.

**ALAN:** Why yew goin then?

**RICHARD:** Yurra rum snig, Al. Av yew never fancied going anywhere?

**ALAN:** Nay, ah'm reet wheer ah am.

**RICHARD:** Even Awd Arthur travelled abit.

*ALL look over to Arthur's table.*

**JACK:** Cor, bloody Auwd Arthur, eh? Ah wonder wot ee'd a med-o-all this.

**ROSE:** Your Nance not cumin in, Al?

**ALAN:** Aye, er'll be in soon. Cummon then Rich, ye cob beggar. One fur everyone, ah'll gerrum.

**JACK:** Bloodyell! Yew gerrin a rouwnd in? Check news Rich, appen ell's frozzen o'er.

*RICHARD starts to pour shorts for everyone, setting them in front of each person.*

**ALAN:** Get fucked, ye bastard. Ah stand me corner.

**JACK:** Yew stand int corner, tryin fert avoid buyin a drink.

**ALAN:** Get one yersen, Rich.

**JACK:** Fuckinell, must beet shock-o-pub closin deawn.

*NANCY enters through the main door.*

**NANCY:** Evenin everybody.

**RICHARD:** Hello Nancy.

*NANCY takes her place at the bar.*

**ALAN:** Thass bloody time-in.

**NANCY:** Aye, ah've bin watchin thru't winder, till ye getten yer and in yer pocket.

**JACK:** Ye cudda bin ouwt theer all neet!

*ALL laugh.*

**ALAN:** Wot'll ye av?

**NANCY:** Oh jus a lemonade, please.

**ALAN:** Eh?

**NANCY:** Ah jus daren't fancy a drink, is all.

**ALAN:** Bloodyell. Best gerrer a lemonade, Rich.

*RICHARD pours a glass of lemonade and sets it in front of Nancy. RICHARD then takes payment from ALAN, giving change.*

**JACK:** Tha dun allt packin, Rose?

**ROSE:** Aye, most-o-it. Tis a bit burr up theer, now.

**JACK:** Dusta know, ah've ne'er bin up theer, woss it lahke?

**ROSE:** Ah'll gie-ye touwr, if tha lahkes?

**JACK:** Aye, go-on.

**ROSE:** Yew cumin Al?

**ALAN:** Aye, go-on.

**MICHAEL:** Nance?

**NANCY:** Nah, ah've sinnit.

*MICHAEL, JACK, ALAN and ROSE exit upstairs.*

**RICHARD:** (Once they've gone) Look Nance, I'm really sorry abouwt the way I spoke to ye. Ere…

*RICHARD gets the silver cigarette case from his pocket and sets it on the bar in front of Nancy.*

Ah wont ye te avvit, summat te remember me by.

**NANCY:** So thas definitely leavin then?

**RICHARD:** Well, thurs nouwt ere, there's no reason to stay.

**NANCY:** Ah might avva reason fur thee, Rich.

LIGHTS OUT

END OF PLAY.

GLOSSARY

Though I believe it would be better if the play didn't have a glossary, I have for my thesis created one, to aid the reader, due to the fact that the script is not being performed and therefore the reader may find the play a little more challenging to understand. Further to this, I wish to illustrate that I understand the dialect and demonstrate certain aspects of the dialect, which is something that I can't really do in my exegesis.

N.B
Some words and phrases are duplicated (sometimes many times) throughout the script; they will only be translated once. Further to this, the more obvious words will not be translated either. Also the translations here are approximate, as not all words and phrases have a direct translation.

T', Tet and Th all are where the words 'to the' has been truncated and either stands alone or is attached to the subsequent word. Similarly so, Tis is a condensed version of it is, so too 'Allt' meaning 'all the'. Also please note that the letter 'H' is omitted at the beginning of all words beginning in H. Where letters are missing there is no use of apostrophe as the apostrophe in this script is used either to break up words (for clearer understanding) or to denote emphasis. In the case of 'of', the word become part of a combination, as in Vale-o-Worthington.

ACT 1
SCENE ONE
P4
Wheer – Where.
Likkle – It is confusing as to whether this is purely pronunciation or whether this is a word. Little becomes likkle, bottle becomes bokkle, but also bicycle become bi-sittle and testicle become testittle etc.
Worra – What a …
Spake proper – Speak properly.

P5
Ah'm gaggin ere – I am very thirsty.
Sken – Look/glance, scan or skim.
Reet – Very or right.

P6
Never dee nouwt – Never do anything. This is indicative of the double negative, which is prevalent in the dialect.

P7
Nathen – Now then. Which can be used in the Standard English sense, but also as a greeting.
Ow arta – How are you.
Furtemiddlin – Fair to middling. Meaning not too bad, so-so, okay.
Appen - has several meanings/uses. It can mean maybe/perhaps, I believe/reckon and occasionally (as in this case) serves to emphasise the statement.
Deed – Dead.

Roastin mon – The devil.
Is all – That's all, but used to reiterate the previous statement.
Shurrup – Shut up.
Daren't – Don't
Tharral – You will
Theer – There.
Dee – (in this case) Do and also can mean 'day'.

P8
Off-cummer – Outsider, someone who isn't local.
Anyroahd – Any way.
Morena thee – More than you.
Dusta – Do you.
Bantlins – Babies.
Fettlers/Fettle – Is an extremely complex word. In the case of 'Fettler(s)' it means friend(s), but 'Fettle' it can mean to fix or to finish, but also come as in 'wheer dusta fettle fray/' meaning where do you come from.
Getten – Got.

P9
Ah've teld thee afore – I've told you before.
Ye on while finish – Are you on until the end of the night.
Courtin – Romancing, going out with a possible suitor.

P10
Dollybird – Attractive woman.
Wekkened – Wakened/awoke.
Tha knows – Again like 'appen', 'Lahke' and 'Rekon', these are all words/phrases that appear later on in the sentence (than in Standard English) and usually are inflections, or emphasis.

P11
S'post – Supposed to.
Sithee – This can be used as a greeting or goodbye, as in 'See you', but also an exclamation, a bit like 'now hang on'.
Ista suppin wi-ouwt – Don't you have a drink, would you like a drink.

P12
Souwndaffurr – There is no direct translation for this. It basically means something close to 'good stuff' or 'Well that's all right'.
Fritten – Frighten or frightened.
Ah cuddn't score in a brothel wi-a diamond studded cock – A Lancashire phrase, which is self-explanatory, basically meaning 'I have no luck/ I'm consistently unlucky'.

P13
Hangfire – Hang on.
Brass – Money.

P14

Gobbin(s) – Fools, idiots or clowns.
Feighters – Fighters.

P15
Gradley – Good, very good or very.
Nashin – Going/leaving (A word I have found to be predominantly Preston dialect).
Int chur – In the chair. A phrase referring to whose round it is.

P17
Mithered – Bothered.
A few pence short-o-a shillin – Not all there, a bit slow etc.
Agate – Going (to do something).
Powfagged – Tired or exhausted.
Fergetten – Forget.
Moitherin – Mithering, bothering.

P18
Aff-a-minute – Hang on, wait a moment.
Missen – Myself.

P19
Sneck – Latch/lock on door.
Leets – Lights.

SCENE TWO
P20
Layrock – Sky lark or Lark.
Babby – Again this could be pronunciation or a proper work meaning 'baby'.
Bereet – It will be okay/Don't worry.
Onthouwse – Another combination word, which means 'It is on the house', meaning that is free.
As-ud – That would, 'as' meaning that or which, but also would.
On yer bahke – Get off with you/get lost, go away (Often meant in mock threat).
Nuttle butty – Knuckle butty (Knuckle sandwhich), a threat (often meant in jest) meaning 'I'll give you a thump (punch).
Grand as ouwt – Literally Good as anything, basically meaning 'This is very good/unsurpassed.
Kettled – Drunk.

P22
Sally – To go out on a pub crawl, jaunt or wander. To go out and about.
Nobbutta – 'Nothing but a', a perfect example of Lancashire syntax/phrasing, which in many ways serves only to emphasise the statement.
Estins lid – Bin lid.
Brun – Burn, another example of how in the dialect some letter become jumbled.
Een(s) – Eyes.
Quatter – Quarter.

P23
Sithee shouw'ders shekkin – See your shoulders shaking.

Skrikin – Crying.

P25
Sup – (Alcoholic) Drink.
Rekkon tis telate fert g'woam early. – Lancashire phrase, but also demonstrating the use of reckon.
Minded – Reminded, put in mind of when…
Local rag – Local Paper.

P26
Smook – Smoke.
Chimbley – Chimney.
If thewit wur shit, tha'd be constipated – Lancashire phrase meaning 'You aren't funny'.
Gallavantin – A word that refers to being out and about, but also to 'carry on', or be up to no good.
Thrashers – Underwear.
Kelter – Clutter.
Attercops – Spiders' webs.
Westcot – Waistcoat.
Ramble – A more archaic word for pub crawl (Also see 'Sally').

P27
Slurrupp – Heavy drinking session.
As ahssa – As I am.
Chuttlin – Chuckling, again pronunciation vs word.

P28
Daft apeths – 'Daft halfpence', a Lancashire phrase meaning you idiots/clowns (Also see 'Gobbin')
Never sin – A more Preston phrase meaning 'Haven't seen', which sees the word never in its full form, rather than ne'er.
Kiesty – A fussy eater.
Clemmed – Hungry.

P31
Watter – Water.
Doo-wer – Door.

SCENE THREE
P32
Sekkle – Settle.
Teld – Told.

P35
Graftin – Working/Hard work.
Weren't – Won't.
Etten – Eaten.

P36

Mondee fortneet – Monday fortnight, meaning a fortnight ago on Monday.

P37
Igh-falutin – A phrase referring to delusions of grandeur, or ideas above one's station.
Gud-fur-nouwt – Good for nothing/useless.

P40
Well lerrus not get too previous – A Lancashire phrase best translated as, 'Let us not get ahead of ourselves'.

SCENE FOUR
P41
Thissen – Yourself.
Prattle/prattling – To talk unnecessarily, to gossip.

P46
Thrutchin – To strain, but also to give it some real effort.

P48
Thassa-nother rintle inme arse – Well that's news to me. Similar to the phrase 'Well Ah'll go te the foot of ouwr sturs', essentially meaning that is new information. It also demonstrates the pronunciation of wrinkle to rintle.
Brunt to buggary – Burnt to a large extent.
Roastin mon's back pocket – There's a little poetic licence here, in that it's not a genuine Lancashire phrase, but one I've made up. Translated it is legitimate enough. Meaning it's out of the devil's back pocket.
Yon mon – Yonder man/that man/the man.
Oller-spud – Hollow spud (potato). An oller-spud is someone who has nothing going on inside an extreme form of 'gobbin' and 'daft-appeth'.
Gorm(ed) – Acknowledge/understand, Gorm is the root word that is found in gormless.
Seely – Weak of body and/or mind (See oller-spud, goobbin and daft-appeth).

P49
Noggin – Not predominantly Lancashire, but meaning head.
Tollerin – Taking the piss, mocking and in some cases showing off at another's expense.

P50
Flier – Quick drink. This can be a 'quick pint', but more often refers to a short, which is quicker to drink.

SCENE FIVE
P51
Oppen – Open.

P52
Siddeawn – Sit down.

P54

A reet te do – An incredible situation/quite a state of affairs.

P56
Tis thur nowt tha canst dee – Is there nothing you can do.
Ah cuddn't dee nouwt wi-place – I couldn't do anything with the place. Again we see the double negative in the syntax.
Ale overcoat – A phrase that references the numbness that large quantities of alcohol gives one.

SCENE SIX
P58
Rum - Strange, but this is a word that is used in a friendly way and can mean amusing or off the wall.
Snig – Eel
Rum snig – I have presented the literal translation prior to this, but in the phrase a 'rum snig', is a strange person, but one who is entertaining in their strangeness.

P59
Cob (Cob beggar) – A strange person, but unlike rum snig, this is more insulting and refers to someone who isn't amusing in their strangeness.
Frozzen o'er – Frozen over.
Winder – Window.

P60
Burr – Bare.

# EXEGESIS TO
# THRELFALL'S BOULDER
# BY
# DAVID A. MIDDLETON

In this exegesis I will offer an explanation and defence of my creative component. First I will discuss the writing process, the journey and development of the idea from its initial seed to its present form and why I made the creative decisions that I did. I have included the second draft of my play (in the appendix), to enable a comparison of the early version of the piece to its present form. I will then illustrate how the play deals with its representation of pub behaviour/group identity. I will then evaluate how I have demonstrated identity through accent and dialect in my play. Finally, I will sum up the strengths and failings of the play as a whole.

Initially, the play was to be a loose adaptation of *In The Miso Soup* by Ryu Murakami. The book follows a sex-tour guide in Japan, who guides an American tourist around and believes it is this tourist that is responsible for several gruesome murders. The story concludes with the revelation that the tourist is responsible and is a serial killer, and the guide is made party to his last murder. I expected the guide to kill the killer and many ways was disappointed with the resolution. So I decided that I would use this novel as an inspiration for a different story, where the 'tourist' was not responsible for any murders and that the 'guide' would kill the 'tourist' for fear of being killed himself. I re-set the idea in an insular community in Lancashire and had the 'guide' as a troubled outcast, who had dreams of being a writer and ultimately leaving the village. The development of the plot, and the setting, began the move away from *Miso Soup*. In tandem with the development of the initial idea, came the development of the research question. As soon as I decided to write the play in

dialect, I became interested in the links between identity and how you speak. I also considered if it would be possible to write a play in dialect and how one might do that.

I decided to set the play entirely in the pub, the pub still being (though not as much as it once was) the hub of a rural community. This setting precipitated the idea that the performance space could be a room in an actual pub - initially this was purely a feasibility of performance and financial consideration. Prior to this, I had envisioned a stage in two parts, the pub, where things were discussed as a group and an area (outside the main doors of the pub) where people could go for a cigarette and talk more frankly amongst themselves. The play then began to move towards bearing similarities with *Strawdogs* and *The Wicker Man*, as I made the 'tourist' a visiting writer, who had come to the village for research and needed a 'guide' to show him round the area and run some errands for him. This was to prove an attraction to the aspiring Richard Threlfall (Protagonist), who is the only villager that would take the job on – the locals being intolerant and somewhat fearful of strangers. It was in the first test writes that I realised that dialect speech had to be written phonetically in an attempt to imitate the intonation – initially there was however, still a lot of Standard English within the body of the test scripts.

Quite early on, I made the decision to make the piece a play rooted in realism, I felt that making the play naturalistic would aid the believability and initially wanted the play to be very existentialist, even slightly boring, in order to demonstrate Richard's mundane existence (even get the audience to feel his ennui). This is where the title comes from; it refers to Richard being Sisyphus, but instead of a boulder, Richard must work in this humdrum pub. I also wanted to show pub life, which in itself is

relatively routine. It took me a long time to find any real direction and I floundered around for some time in the search of what I wanted to do. Finally, I began the first draft, which I wrote chronologically and in many ways, it was just a way of getting all my ideas down. I constantly noted down funny stories I heard in the pub and based most of the characters on real people. I often use real people as an initial template for a character, safe in the knowledge that the character will develop into something/someone else entirely as the writing goes on. I had an idea how the plot would develop, but only a very loose one, as I hoped the idea would come to fruition organically. The result was a very confused and laboured script, also, I found I had written myself into a corner, the play felt like it was set in The Eldon (a pub where I had worked and had gained much of my experience of pub life) and I just didn't know where to go with the writing. As result of this, I started writing a little later on in the plot. This had the desired effect, I was able to write again and felt the pub in which it was set, was no longer The Eldon. I finished the first draft soon after that, coming onto the idea that the characters would represent the seven sins – this was something that a few characters lent themselves to already. The seven sins theme is not uncommon in literature. Steven Earnshaw, in his book *The Pub In Literature*, suggests that the pub (or alehouse) is often considered the Devil's alternative to the church (2000, 21). He goes on to reference John Skelton's *The Tunnyng of Elynour Rummyng* as a piece of literature that has combined the notion of the alehouse as the Devil's church and the theme of the seven sins. 'Skelton divides the work into seven parts, suggesting the seven deadly sins. The idea of the alehouse as the Devil's church is reinforced through its inversion of the rituals associated with mass' (2000, 23).

I also considered the potential subsequent performance, I realised that an intimate space would enable me to make the play more filmic, that I could use smaller details (such as the 'I'm a Twat' cup and the joke guest ales) that wouldn't be possible in a large space. However, envisioning it to be performed in this manner meant that I was limited to where I could go with the script. I felt to have scenes set elsewhere, but performed in the same space as the pub scenes, would be detrimental to the idea that the pub scenes (played in the pub) were aided in their naturalism, by being in that location. This meant I couldn't go out of the pub and that everything that happened outside had to be reported.

In the second draft I began to hone the ideas set down in the first draft. I was quite ruthless, culling many of the jokes and anecdotes, several characters too. One consideration (again to do with practicality/feasibility of performance and finance) was that the characters could be doubled up (one actor playing two parts), so a limited ensemble could perform the piece. Also, I felt that the characters that were to be cut, were really just versions of other characters and if they were amalgamated, it would create more rounded and believable characters - I also had to adapt some characters to fit the seven sins characterisation. I also gave consideration to how Richard's character would go from a generally clever and meek person into a killer. I put in indicators to underlying mental health issues (O. C. D. symptoms and past 'issues'), I also looked at how Richard would go from an outsider to being taken into the fold of the community and how he might turn against the visiting writer and why. I became very aware that the pub setting also made the play very static, although I had tried to inject some movement with the horseracing scene. By this point I had developed both my knowledge of dialect and also my skills of writing in that dialect, so the second

draft was entirely retyped, not cut and pasted. The other issue with cutting and pasting is that changes to the script meant that small details might be overlooked, if not typed out.

Just prior to the third draft, I met with my supervisory team. My fears were realised, the plot of the play simply didn't work and Richard's character arc didn't work either. The fact that everything happened away from the pub and we, the audience, only heard people report what happened – only having their word for it being the truth. Nancy Arkwright's character didn't work either, in that she didn't really have a character, she was somewhat of a non-entity. It was at this point that I planned a large re-write. I decided that if the play was rooted in the pub, the plot should involve the pub – in this case its closure. By this point the play had become more influenced by Stanley Houghton's *Hindle Wakes* and Harold Brighouse's *Hobson's Choice*, the two Lancashire dialect plays that I had discovered. The characters had to go through some changes, the seven sins theme remained, but was never to be alluded to, and I hoped the audience might pick up on the subtleties of this. Nancy was made a stronger character, so that it would show her age and give her 'the right' to be in the pub – in that she had to be comfortable and know how to act within the male dominated situation. Richard's character also needed some changes, he was to remain a dreamer, but no longer needed to be so 'troubled'. In many ways he was to be the link between the audience and the other characters, that he had aspirations and was bored in this Sartrean hell. I wanted the audience to feel an empathy with Richard, that he might be their guide, or way into this world. The stranger (or 'Tourist') was also changed massively, as the character now served a different purpose. I also decided that I would make the character a woman, this was to balance out the male dominance, but also

that it would be a further insult to the regulars, that a woman not only infringed on their space, but had come to close it down and also that it was representative of the changing equality of the outside world that was seeping into their little microcosm.

I also became mindful of the pace of the play; it had to peak and trough, as audience psychology cannot take a constantly escalating pace. I decided on a wake (Sc 3) this would enable me to slow the pace down and have some pathos to the play. It was also indicative of the death of dialect and the old ways – demonstrating the terrifying changes that were befalling the characters. What really helped at this stage, was that I had a solid understanding of my research question and felt that the play and characters had developed their own identity. I decided to return to the idea of existentialist boredom, that nothing would happen in the play and that the play would be a brief insight into the character's lives, with no great conflicts, but would ultimately be rooted in reality. I used some of the 'episodes' that had appeared in earlier drafts, but re-wrote large sections of the play. I also used some intertextuality, this was just to add further depth to the piece. There is a reference to *An American Werewolf In London* with the line 'Mind ye stay on tet roahds an off tet moowres after dark' (42). It could also be said that there is a similarity between Michael Lancaster's desperate tirade of ideas to re-invigorate the trade of the pub (87) and Alan Partridge's attempts to get a series commissioned in Steve Coogan's I'm *Alan Partridge* (Episode 1) – though this wasn't really a conscious consideration. This intertextuality is a device that I use in all my writing and could be considered part of my style, my identity through writing.

In terms of characterisation, I have touched briefly on this, but feel that some further explanation is relevant. All the 'regulars' have been given classically English or Lancashire first names and surnames that refer to occupations – Arkwright (wheel maker), Threlfall (tree feller) and Farrier (someone who shoes horses). The only two who have a different source surname are the Lancasters. The idea behind this was that the regulars were from families that had been in the area for generations (hence their names refer to work and industry), but the Lancasters have moved to the area (therefore their surname refers to where they have come from) – although all the characters' names still harked to a Lancashire identity. Aside from those, is the etymology of the name Tabitha Wolfe. Tabitha means gazelle-like, whilst Wolfe can refer to a wolf, the idea was that her name referred to the duality of her character, in that she was both meek (as a person) and strong (through the empowerment of her job) – it also ties in with the werewolf idea, which precipitated the homage to *American Werewolf* and the idea of duality of the lycanthrope. Auwd Arthur's surname is never referenced, this was more to do with pub nicknames, in that there is a younger Arthur who lives in the village and that the epithet refers to his older statesman role within the community. This is also demonstrated in Jack Farrier being called Jack (even though his name is John). The idea of this is that there are several 'Johns' that need to be differentiated, there's Jack, farmer John etc. In many ways I wanted their names to be indicative of either a Lancashire identity or of their personal identity, even though they don't do the jobs the names reference (or necessarily come from where the name suggested), it is still indicative of a hard work ethic and an industry that is synonymous with places like Lancashire. For the most part the characters are based in real life and real people. The landlord and landlady are a version of the managers of The Eldon Hotel and the regulars are amalgams of regulars

from the pubs where I've worked, but they are heightened versions for the purpose of drama. However, the way they talk (leaving dialect for a moment) is an illustration of how anyone might talk in the pub, although the calling of each other 'ball bag', 'festering snot-gobbler' and 'ye bastard' is taken from two actual regulars from the pub (it was too good not to use) and is indicative of the pub version of oneself.

As this thesis is deeply involved with language, I will discuss the journey I went on regarding the development of my dialect writing. From the outset I had some grounding knowledge of Lancashire dialect, but was very naive, still thinking of it as 'the' Lancashire dialect. I ploughed through as many guides as I could find and often found myself crowbarring words into my script, unaware that there were so many differing dialects within 'the' dialect. It was around the second draft that I discovered just how geographically specific I would have to be, or could be, to write realistic dialect speech. At this point I moved more towards sourcing my dialect words from real people/dialect speakers (rather than the guides and dictionaries), as they proved to be a more reliable source in geographic and usage terms. The problem I had, which I only realised later on, was that I was sourcing dialect from two different areas – Preston and the Fylde/Wyre. By draft three I had decided on Fylde/Wyre with some smatterings of Preston, the conceit being that since the setting was fictitious the dialect would place the village on the boundaries of the Fylde and Preston. If I had been doing a PhD I would have been more specific, but felt for the purposes of this thesis it would be specific enough – aside from that, there were many similar words and phrases shared by the two dialects. Having decided to lean more towards the Fylde/Wyre dialect I constantly asked the landlady of The Eldon Hotel for guidance (and referred to Jack Benson's work a lot) , as she is from Inskip and was a native

dialect speaker. An example of this would be the phrase ‘our peg’, which in Preston means my wife or girlfriend. I asked the landlady if this was used in the Inskip dialect, she said that it was not and the phrase would be ‘ouwr lass’. It was through this process that the dialect changed in my script, removing Preston dialect and replacing it with Fylde dialect where possible, though some phrases remained that I felt added colour and character to the dialogue, imagining (or using a little poetic licence) that certain Preston words might have found their way into the village lexicon.

Another consideration, aside from the dialect, is the representation of pub speech and pub behaviour. These rules and rituals are necessary for the solidarity of the group and the group identity. The rules are followed out of instinct and are not taught, so my research (both literary and empirical) enabled me to recognise what I, and everyone else, was doing and why. It was important to demonstrate pub behaviour and be mindful of pub speech in the pursuit of representing realism, since the setting was so integral to the play, the pub had to feel real. It also threw up the idea of group identity and how that would be demonstrated through speech, the pub being a place where dialect might be used more and be considered by the (traditional dialect) users as a strong indicator of a group identity. This can sometimes be seen, for example, in North Wales (and elsewhere), where some inhabitants have a tendency to slip into Welsh when an Englishman is identified in their midst.

I am also very interested in the performativity of the pub, one is a version of oneself, relying on banter and bravado to disguise one’s need for interaction and intimacy with others. In many ways the play is a performance of a performance and it was quite a task to imply elements of character whilst the character was showing a version of

his/herself. In some ways (not excluding pace) that was why I chose to have a wake scene, it enabled me to show a different side to the characters, that I wouldn't be able to in the normal pub atmosphere – in that some of the pub rules and rituals are suspended on sombre occasions such as wakes.

I felt it important to get some pub behaviour like 'round buying' and 'tipping' into the script. These details might be overlooked in the pursuit of broader pub behaviours, such as the banter and faux arguments – as I've illustrated in my literature review. Though I understand the rituals and the reasons for them, others might not know the whys, but most people should at least be familiar with the behaviours and would notice their absence. These behaviours are again there to aid the solidarity of the group, the fact that there are expected behaviours and to transgress these rules shows you to be an outsider.

So, what of the links between accent, dialect and identity? I have touched on them slightly, in an attempt to demonstrate that certain decisions were made to facilitate and demonstrate how these elements are linked. As I expressed in my introduction, speech is no longer a reliable indicator for identity, but can be useful when implying identity to a theatrical audience and dealing with traditional dialect speakers. I will go through each character and discuss how I have demonstrated their identity in the play.

Richard Threlfall rarely uses dialect, although he does retain something of an accent – slipping into Received Pronunciation occasionally. This demonstrates his confused identity, in that he wishes to distance himself from that heritage, he doesn't see the way the other locals speak as indicative of who he is – even though, like Nancy, he

still is in search of his identity (personal/group). He avoids adhering to the group identity, unless it is necessary, or it is to impress Nancy Arkwright. This again shows him to be a loner and, in some ways, a chosen exile from his own community – he hasn't found a group to which he wishes to belong. In many ways, he is the most naïve character in the play, he's not worldly wise (although that is what he seeks) and lives life through others, especially through literature. Richard is the most autobiographical character and it is his (and my) aspirations that I would hope would strike a chord with the audience – hoping to offer the question 'What would you want if you lived in Richard's world?' There is a suggestion, at the end of the play, that Nancy is pregnant with Richard's child, this would certainly prevent him from fulfilling his dreams of travel and could mean he ends up stuck in the village after all. The question is, would Richard be the soft of person to honour his responsibilities? I have purposefully left the ending open as to whether or not he would, so as to avoid a 'tidy' ending and to encourage the audience to consider how they feel this issue might be resolved.

Nancy Arkwright uses dialect, but not as much as the others. Again, this is used to suggest that outside influences have sculpted part of her identity – though she's not as confused as Richard. The other conceit, is that her age is indicated by the level of dialect she uses, dialect usage seems to lessen from generation to generation. This is possibly to do with these outside influences, social media, mass media and a wish to distance oneself from ones' parents. Nancy clearly shows an interest in the 'outside world', though perhaps, not to the extent Richard does, and is swayed by her peer group – asking for 'Leibrafinch' (40) as an indication of her attempts at modernity and 'refinement'. The question is whether her want to escape rural life for 'the city',

will dissipate as she gets older, or her circumstances change. Is she truly proud of her heritage, or has she inherited this from her parents? Her use of dialect is also down to the location we see her in – the pub. She speaks with dialect in an attempt to fit into that male world, but I feel she might temper her dialect when 'out with the girls in town', or that she would supplement one dialect for another – using youth slang, influenced by *TOWIE* or some such contemporary TV show.

Alan Arkwright uses dialect and in many ways is more precious about it than even Auwd Arthur – he tries too hard and over asserts (what he sees as) his rights. This is demonstrated when he calls Richard to account for talking in RP, 'Spake proper lad' (39) and later on when he says 'Wots tha know bouwt identity, ye daren't even spake proper' (91). Alan is very misogynistic, and yet, he allows his daughter to accompany him to the pub – though this might not be entirely his choice, but he would never (or maybe just on special occasions) allow his wife to attend. He does however, constantly assert his authority over his daughter, commenting on her choice of drinks and seems to disapprove of her life style, referring to her putting money in her bra (45); that said you do get the feeling he likes the opportunity to bond with her. Both Alan and John use elements of idiosyncratic speech, which is rooted in their pub personas. Alan only seems to look for acceptance from his peers, hence the pub speech, but he does vehemently adhere to the group (pub and village) identity also – this could be indicative of his insecurity as regards his identity, that he overdoes it. There is a point in the play where he looks to Arthur for reassurance as to his racist views (49), which Arthur doesn't actually give him. This is indicative of his (Alan's) intolerance through ignorance, an intolerance born out of naivety that he most probably learnt from his father. Whereas Arthur has travelled and lived life outside

the village (during the war), demonstrating his pride without being as blinkered as Alan.

Jack Farrier, is perhaps, the character whose identity isn't really indicated by speech, other than his Lancashire heritage and adherence to the group identity. His actions and interaction with others are the indicators I have used for this character. He is successful in his life outside the pub, but seeks acceptance within the pub – this being one of the rules of the pub, that everyone is treated equally in the pub, irrespective of what and who they are out of it. He is overly generous (tipping and buying people drinks) and in some ways has to vie for attention over the others, especially Alan. He is the most accepting male character, this could be down to his wish to be accepted as well as an element of his personal identity. He is a character who adheres to the group identity and finds himself agreeing with someone or something that he possibly wouldn't in the outside world. For example, he doesn't join in with the racist conversation, but he doesn't call Alan to account either; bearing in mind that he is a practicing Christian, he shouldn't really suffer from this bystander apathy. He does use some 60s Lancashire dialect, this is to denote that he is of a similar age to Alan and one of his peers. In the pub he is very mild mannered, but there are mentions of him losing his temper on the day out (57-58). Also, he is far from perfect, in that, he is a gluttonous man, who is always trying to prove his status away from the pub – the new car and his unwillingness to trade it in with a full tank of petrol.

Auwd Arthur is the character where his traditional dialect usage is the most important indicator of his identity. Not only does he use the most dialect, but, we get a sense that his dialect is an older form – using words like 'Morena' and 'Ramble', which the

others never use. This is used to indicate his age, but also I have used it to demonstrate his pride for his heritage and his attitude to life - this hard work ethic and attitude to life is shown in his line ‘Appen tis wot lahf is all abouwt. Ye suffer, then yer deed, an tis either roastin mon, or eaven’ (42). Arthur is happy to enter into the banter of the pub, but doesn’t feel the need to adhere to the pub group identity to prove himself, as others do. In some ways this attempt by people to prove themselves annoys him, these attempts in some ways are a slight transgression of the pub rules. Arthur is a man who, at his time of life, is prone to lamenting his life – as can be seen in is gift of a cigarette case (61). He enjoys that he’s respected, but sees himself as the last of a dying breed. His personal identity is rarely demonstrated, he being a private person, but it is shown in Scene Two, when he’s drunk on his birthday – his dialect is thicker when he is drunk also. This personal identity is probably only shown, because he has let his guard down to that degree (his birthday being one of the few occasions when this would happen), he is very ‘Victorian’, in that he rarely voices his opinion, or speaks his mind to others. He is strong and silent, adhering to a very old-fashioned attitude and way of behaving. He is happy in himself, something that none of the other characters are, he has an established identity; doubtless from having spent his whole life in this search for self-discovery – he has travelled, experienced new things and lived life, which is something the others really haven’t done.

Rose Lancaster is what I would like to think of as an archetypal character, rather than, perhaps, a clichéd character. Earnshaw argues that ‘women have always been involved in some way with drinking places, but usually in a position without economic or political power, and without social status’ (2000, 11). In the case of Rose, she allows the patrons of her pub to believe they are superior to her, but she is

really in charge. In early literature (1300-1600), the alewife's power, hold on society and threat to male dominance has often been utilised (Earnshaw. 2000, 25). Also, the alewife is often represented as a woman who cuckolds her husband, because of the complicated gender issues that it evokes (Earnshaw. 2000, 23). I have used this cuckoldry in my play more for comedic effect, but also to utilise this complication of expected gender roles.

In my play Rose uses the most dialect of the female characters, but this is due to her age and certain necessities of her life. She is in charge, but aside from her husband, lets others believe to the contrary. She is a strong woman who knows who she is, due to having lived a lot of life (death of father on wedding day etc.) in a relatively short amount of time, not as much as Arthur, but more than the others and she therefore doesn't feel the need to prove herself. Her identity as a woman, and a Lancashire woman at that, is demonstrated by how she carries herself, and maybe, one reason she uses dialect. She is the hard-working matriarch, who expects no acknowledgement of her toil. Like Arthur, she doesn't give much away in front of the group, perhaps, not because she's got Victorian values, but because she is performing a role in which she must be relatively detached. She understands the rules and rituals of the pub and panders to the male dominance aspect, even though she's in charge, she acts in a way that facilitates this misapprehension. She adheres to the group identity amongst women, gossiping and so forth, and demonstrates the expected female roles of loving (and nagging) wife, along with the mother role, when with Richard, which can be seen illustrated in the exchange with Richard in scene one (53-54). She does drop her façade when in these other roles, even demonstrating a playful sense of humour, with the line 'ye daren't fancy im an-all, de ye?' (54). Another reason for her use of dialect

is to fit into this group identity of the supposedly ‘man’s world of the pub’. Although she must distance herself somewhat, she must still adhere to and be able to fit into the group, so as to make the customers relaxed and therefore make a success of her business. She may have had to consciously, or unconsciously ‘picked up’ certain dialect words and phrases to aid this – as she’s not native to the village, and although it is never referred to, might not even be from that part of Lancashire.

Michael Lancaster uses intonation, with an element of dialect, this is to denote he is an accepted outsider. His use of dialect is for similar reasons to Rose, as regards fitting in, although he has different roles to play than his wife. Like his wife, he adheres to the group identity (and occasionally demonstrates his personal identity) and group speech to facilitate the relaxation of the patrons in order to do his job as landlord, but also to be one of the lads. The role of the landlord can be a ‘front of house’ or ‘customer service’ role, where the landlady is more ‘backstage’ and ‘business’ type of practical role. The interaction with the patrons is an important role for the landlord – this is said by Michael in his line ‘Jus bein ospitable tet patrons, me likkle stittleback. Tis worra landlord does’ (44). However, one should also bear in mind that the Lancasters have moved to the village, so have had to try harder to be accepted. Michael appears to be highly sexed, which is surprising, since one feels Rose rarely lets him near her. He represents lust, but also sees this subject matter to be a way of gaining acceptance within the group of men. He is emotionally naïve, and it is this boyish obsession with sex that, although this is part of his personality, it is heightened for effect. His adolescent character trait is furthered by his penchant for pranks (the cup etc.) and jokes, this is demonstrated in the way he speaks. For example, his greeting ‘Nathen fettlers’ is supposed to be reminiscent of the

Lancashire comedian Wandering Walter Horram's greeting – he could be purposefully mimicking him, or not. Michael tries to glean little victories over his wife, but mainly just attempts to save face in front of the regulars. This is demonstrated in his pet names for her, which are slightly Basil Fawlty-esque. They are tied to Lancashire in that they refer to the fauna of the area, Sparra-ork (sparrow hawk), Pikelett (in this case a baby pike, not a crumpet) and stittleback (stickleback). Due to the intonation these seem more endearing than they are actually meant to be, in that they sound affectionate, but they refer to creatures that are ugly or dangerous.

Tabitha Wolfe is the other side of the coin. From the moment she enters (initially called Woman) and speaks, her accent immediately makes her recognisable as a stranger/outsider, as throughout we've only really heard Lancashire accents. Her RP accent is noticeable straight away and indicates a sophistication and education, which are true of the character. This accent implies either, or both of her main character traits, those of meekness (or genteelness) and of power (through education or position); she is of a different class. Her meekness is illustrated by her polite enquiries and lack of interaction and her power is shown later with her use of business vocabulary. Tabitha, though a character, is also an embodiment or metaphor for the encroaching outside world. She represents modernity and equality that is the opposite of the values or expectations of the majority of people in the pub. Just as Arthur's death heralded the death of things they hold dear, Tabitha's arrival is indicative of irreversible change knocking on their door. She drinks pints, she uses modern technology; all these things have been mentioned earlier in the play, as things that are not good. She probably struggles on occasion to understand all of what's being said ('What's a turn' 87), but doesn't draw attention to the clash of language; this is also

seen when Michael phones an ambulance after Arthur collapses (Sc 2. 65-66) and Michael struggles to pass information to the operator, finally saying 'Well she wurn't fray rouwnd ere' (66). I had originally thought about giving Tabitha a mild Lancashire accent, in that it would be even more of an insult that 'one of their own' (albeit not a villager) that had come to shut the pub down, but I felt since my thesis was about the reception of accent and dialect as possible identity indicators, I would need something that was close to the antithesis of the Lancashire accent, and RP was probably the best.

To conclude this thesis I will now discuss the strengths and weaknesses of my play. I think one of the biggest failings of my script, in dramatic terms, is that it isn't a very good drama – there is little conflict. It has no plot to speak of and no character arcs and in many ways is closer to a sit-com Christmas special than a good piece of dramatic theatre. However, in terms of a vehicle to investigate the links and representation of identity through dialect and accent, it is successful. This is down, in many ways, to the restrictive nature of the setting and suggested performance space, although I believe the idea of performing it in a pub is a good one. As well as this being a good vehicle, I do believe that in its representation of real life, the play is successful. In real life huge things rarely happen, there are few massive catastrophes that befall you, people rarely go through massive changes of character and life rarely has tidy little endings where everything, if anything is resolved. The play does represent a boring existence, but I would like to think that this mundanity is part of its appeal and isn't so boring that it would make people walk out.

Another smaller failure is that I have failed to represent truly realistic dialect, in that I was unable to be as geographically specific as I wanted. This is down to a lack of sources and an inability to be more in-depth, interviewing people from rural villages in the Fylde and Wyre area, or being able to have a dialogue with someone in the Lancashire Dialect Society – this was purely down to running out of time. This failing is detrimental to my play, in that the majority (I would think) of people who would come to see the play, would be dialect speakers, or those who were familiar with dialect and would notice these inconsistencies, which might damage their enjoyment of the piece.

I have become very aware of the complications that writing in phonetic dialect can create; this was, perhaps, why Brighouse and Houghton decided not to do so. In the rehearsed read-through, all the actors said it was one of the hardest scripts they'd ever had to read. However, I do feel that with sufficient rehearsal time, an ensemble could get to grips with the script and that the subsequent performance wouldn't need a Lancashire audience to be a success – the other concern that doubtless Brighouse and Houghton had with writing a play in dialect. It is with this in mind that I have supplied a glossary. I have put this off for some time, believing it would be better without one, but since the reader cannot see and hear it being performed, I have provided one to aid the comprehension of the piece.

Had I had more time, I would have liked to get to the bottom of why women don't use dialect in the same way and to the same extent that men do. I would also have liked to try to find out if words like 'little' and 'bottle' are pronounced 'likkle' and 'bokkle' in

Lancashire intonation, or whether this is just people's personal intonation – though I have no evidence, I personally believe it is Lancashire pronunciation.

I believe I have demonstrated how identity can be implied by differing levels of dialect and accent. I further believe that I have demonstrated the links and relationships between dialect, accent and different identities. That the way you speak can be indicative of age, gender, class, personal identity, group identity and even insularity, in that insular communities have little input from the outside world, and therefore have fewer new words entering their lexicon, thus preserving their dialect. This is, perhaps, more relevant to traditional dialect speakers, than speakers of modern dialects and those in insular communities.

The greatest strength of this piece however, is that I feel that my characters, the dialect and pub behaviour/speech is very well drawn and highly believable. I am of the belief that I have used speech as an indicator to great effect, although I have also purposefully written characters whose identity is not just implied by speech. I feel that I have discovered more about speech and identity through the process of writing a script than I would have done if I had just steeped myself in literature.

Finally, in the future, I intend to approach several theatres and theatre companies (I have already sent it to The Dukes Theatre in Lancaster), in the hope that they might be interested in helping develop the script into a performable play.

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# APPENDIX