

pignight  
snoo wilson

PIGNIGHT was toured by Portable Theatre, directed by the author and playing at The Traverse Theatre, The Young Vic Studio, and the Kings Head Theatre, Islington, with the following cast:

ROLLAND MULLEN	Darryl Kavann
RAYMOND GIBBS	Darryl Kavann
JASMINE MARCHANT	Paul Freeman
MRS MULLEN	Paul Freeman
SMITTY	Peter Brenner
VOICE OF BRAVNGTON	Darryl Kavann

The dog Robby was created by Supadogs of Islington

NOTE: It is important that the parts of JASMINE and MRS MULLEN be played by a man.

*A hat and coat rack, the sort which can lie flat against the wall, is set behind a box wide enough for three at the back of the stage. The audience should be on three sides. There is a simple wooden table up front. The clothes for the various characters are hung on the coat rack. The various props are behind or inside the box, which should be accesible from the back.*

*The characeters playing RAY and JASMINE enter slowly, wuth conspiratorially furtive pleasure. The are wearing pigmasks which cover the top half only of their*

faces. RAY is carrying a DOG and wearing the riding coat which he wears as MR MULLEN. JASMINE is carrying a large multistriped golfing umbrella.

*This is the signal for the start of the play.*

*She sits down under the umbrella on the box with an air of expectancy. RAY takes the DOG with one paw up and tapdances with it assiduously. He invites JASMINE to join him. At first she refuses, then joins in the dance.*

*They dance in a line facing the audience, each holding a paw. RAY attempts a turn and the DOG drops to the floor. This accident suddenly ends the dance. They pick up the DOG and RAY offers it to the front row of the audience to stroke, a random two or three. JASMINE watches approvingly. On the last offer, JASMINE takes the DOG, strokes it, offers it to one of the audience to stroke. As he reaches for it, RAY kicks it out of her hands.*

*SMITTY enters from the back. He is wearing jeans, a leather coat, dispatch riders boots and a German forage cap which he holds in his hand. He exhibits nervousness. There is a copy of a Superman comic or similar sticking out of his cat pocket.*

*RAY and JASMINE take the DOG and put it on the ground. They then push it in a slow arc across the floor towards SMITTY, both of them building up with low growls and snarls to an hysterical crescendo of yapping. The DOG stops about two foot short of SMITTY. They stand back and continue to yap hideously.*

*SMITTY seizes a hayfork from the back of the stage and pitchforks the DOG. RAY and JASMINE make suitable dying noises, briefly. Very shaken, SMITTY sits down on the bench.*

*RAY gets out a small sack which is under the table at the front. RAY and JASMINE hold it out for SMITTY and with great distaste he puts the DOG in on the end of the fork. He sits down, immediately passive again.*

*RAY and JASMINE go and sit on the small table at the front of the stage. A long pause. RAY feels his teeth diffidently. Pause. He speaks almost as if to himself.*

RAY: I got something stuck

*(Pause)*

in my teeth.

*(JASMINE pulls him round to look in his mouth, then turns him away again)*

JASMINE: *(Disdainfully)* Wallpaper.

RAY: I can't stand it.

(JASMINE pulls his mouth over and fiddles about in it. She stops, wipes her finger and clucks her tongue. Without turning around, she raises her voice to speak to SMITTY)

JASMINE: Tell us about yourself.

RAY: *(Hopefully)* What did you have for breakfast?

JASMINE: Bubble and squeak?

*(They laugh covertly, then get off the chest and go and sit down, one each side of SMITTY on the box. SMITTY speaks with unnatural precision. The correctness of the schizophrenic)*

SMITTY: No thanks, I don't eat breakfast. I have a packed lunch which I make up myself of Spam and soft white bread and margarine. Afterwards I peel and eat an orange or apple. In the evening I bicycle to the village and enjoy a steak and kidney pie in the public bar with half a pint of shandy. I give the orange and apple peel to the pigs. I cut my apple into quarters and take out the pips with the tip of the knife. I eat the rest of the core. For my room I have the use of a potting shed which has chintz curtains, made for me by Mrs. Mullen. I am very much afraid of chintz dogs.

JASMINE: *(Vindictively)* Murderer.

*(JASMINE and SMITTY go to the table and put a bucket of kidneys from underneath. They eat some of them. RAY takes one from JASMINE as she is about to put it dripping, into her mouth. (Pear halves in red and blue dye for actors not hooked on raw offal))*

RAY: *(Hideous interest)* That's a nice one.

*(He eats it instead. Pause)*

SMITTY: Are you from Mr. Kruschev?

*(They do not respond. Continue eating slowly)*

From Mr Macmillan

*(pause)*

From Mr Kennedy

*(pause)*

RAY: *(Elaborately casual)* He's dead, isn't he?  
*(They tidy away the bowl and stand up straight. Facing audience again)*

RAY: *(Terrible nonchalance)* This is such a big thought, Smitty, that it's going to burst your head open. It's been decided that the pigs are going to take over from

the humen race.

*(Blackout. In the dark, the BRAVINGTON actor takes a loud hailer which he swings throughout the speech the arc of the audience. The voice is a heavy Yorkshire accent, fat; he speaks in almost epiglottal whispers)*

BRAVINGTON: Yes, officer. I'm Mr Bravington.

*(Pause)*

I bought the farm out of the kindness of my 'eart. I don't like to speak disrespectfully of the dead.

*(Pause)*

Mr Mullen was a rotten farmer. You could tell. Three wagonloads of dead sherry bottles my men cleared out the back. I can't see what possible use they would be in evidence.

*(Pause)*

Yes, officer, I did employ Raymond Gibbs. I'm afraid I can't tell you anything though, about Jasmine Marchant. Now would you kindly stepaside, I would like to speak to – my solicitor.

*(Pause)*

Er...yes. That is – a photograph of Mr Mullen.

*(Asthmatic breathing of ROLAND. Culminates in groan. A flash of light shows ROLAND mounted on JASMINE who still has the pigmask on. JASMINE is crouched on the table. ROLAND is wearing a dirty riding mac, a flat cap and a pink eyepatch.*

*A second flash. He has his hands up to shield his face.*

*Sounds of walking on gravel in the dark. A small fruit box wich is kept under the table.*

*ROLAND is walking in it. The steps cease. ROLAND speaks. It takes him time to get under way: he is numb drunk)*

ROLAND: Would the honourable member for Sleaford stand up, and give his maiden speech. In 1951 the polls were miscounted and Roland Mullen has been given a seat. After all.

*(Pause. Dully)*

Hooray.

*(Pause)*

A burst of excitement as he rises to speak.

*(Pants. Then quite straight)*

He's only got one eye. One bullet lodged in the thorax and one in the cerebellum. He plugs his ioniser into the mains and takes a breath of fresh air.

*(Inhales)*

I should like to tell you about the farming. In farming we're up to our necks in shit and I should like to ask you to cooperate.

*(Pause)*

By not making waves.

*(Pause)*

I feel that an old soldier like myself is entitled to a couple of jokes. How does a Frenchwoman hold her liquor?

*(Pause)*

How?

*(Pause)*

By the ears.

*(Pause)*

The ears.

*(Pause, then morosely)*

Oh-alright.

*(A slow dim up starts. ROLAND treads on something nasty and grunts in disgust. He puts the box away. Low an savage)*

My wife and I cannot stand the country. Barbed wire fences, a sea of chopped mud tarmaced in strips, drainage ditches with cum on them, a few small orchards ripping pesticides and the fen creeks rancid with ammonium nitrate. Thistles, nettles and blackthorn hedges to be abolished. Also, long and winding roads, cowpats, horse dung, dog shit and all stools. Rain. Sleet. Snow. Wind over four MPH. Weather of all kinds. Horses, donkeys, cows, all animals of the cloven hoof with the exception of the pig. The human race to be fed upon synthesised vitamins, hydrolysed starch, and monosodium glutamate.

*(Pause. Reasonable)*

To show you what a miserable life it is I shall now read from my wife's diary.

*(Deadpan hatred. He pulls out the diary. The light is now at half)*

"I confide in my secret heart that R for Roland has started drinking again...Blah blah farm in debt.

*(He skims through)*

Deep shock...despair...a feeling of chilling peace. Mumble mumble...Please burn this before...

*(Pause)*

Effort and pain...wur...wur...

*(A new page)*

Bach...Schopenhauer prone my identity submit coarsened so little time and I be so little time and I life is hell.

*(Pause. Feelingly)*

Life is hell.

*(Rallies)*

Here I am. Spavined with asthma. A one eyed sclerotic living on a damp plain. Drunk. With memories of Vera Lynn. Sometimes sinking as low as British Ruby types port. Peach wine.

*(Pause. A terrible confession)*

Plum cordial.

*(Pause. The pity floods out)*

The pigs in desperation, gnawing each other's curly tails going hungry for days.

*(Switches to anger)*

Because it is not otherwise!

*(Pause)*

I can't get the labour. The German boy, the ex-prisoner of war my wife kept on started killing the animals. Put him inside. Off his head. And my wife. Not now

Roland not now.

*(Fiercely)*

Never  
*(Pause)*

So I went to the pigs for company. I had my favourites. Whispered sweet nothings in their ears. The boy didn't do anything for me. I went to the doctor and told him about my...

*(Pause)*

...trouble. He gave me a little book on technique and told me not to let it get out of hand. The boy saw me doing it. He found out. Started killing the animals. Had him put away.

*(Pause)*

Not that we didn't do anything for him. He was like a son to us. My wife taught him to read. She said,

*(An expansive gesture of the arm. The light is now at full)*

"Smitty, the whole of European literature now is at your command."

*(A fit of coughing)*

I would kindly like to finish before the honourable member pulls the plug of my ionizer out of the wall. You shall hear me. I shall come before you again and you shall hear me!

*(Shouts)*

Silence!

*(Pause. Ominous)*

Read your horoscope for the day. Touch wood. Debate seriously about entry into Europe. My horoscope predicted difficulties and a long sea voyage.

*(Throwaway)*

A reference to a floating liver.

*(Pause)*

I have been talking to the pigs and they know. The pigs are going to take over the earth.

*(Blackout.*

*In the dark, the voice of SMITTY. Heroic, precise)*

SMITTY: Schnell, fort aus den Waldern und in den Fluss hinein. Zhukove gewinnt immer Tankschlachten und diese wird keine Ausnahme. Leutnant, ich kann nicht weiter, ich bin der Sohn eines Artisten.

*(Pause. Then with difficulty, as if reading. Unaccented)*

Ac-tually, you are coming into a patch of good luck as your sign in Gem-ini is at a beautiful angle to the planat Uranus in your personal chart. This puts you in a roman-tic mood.

ROLAN: Sellout! Sold a rotten old farm to a man called Bravington, who brought ten thousand pounds along in a suitcase. Going to Australia with Mrs Mullen to start a new life.

*(Curiously)*

Kangaroos...

*(Immediately, RAY fires a swan off shot gun in the dark. JASMINE lights a match close to her face. She is standing on the table)*

JASMINE: Oh, there you are.

*(RAY fires again. JASMINE drops the match)*

JASMINE: Did you hit it?

RAY: I can't see a fucking thing.

JASMINE: You might of hit it –

RAY: I was blind. You blinded me. I'll fucking cripple you-

JASMINE: Oh, sorry.

RAY: *(At a loss)* I fired up in the air – I think.

JASMINE: - Perhaps it was a flying one –

RAY: - A flying what? –

JASMINE: - It can't be deaf – you must of frightened it. Can you see the dog anywhere?

RAY: *(Acid)* I had forgotten your dog was gun-shy.

JASMINE: I can't hear him barking anywhere –

RAY: Perhaps he isn't barking, then.

JASMINE: He usually does if he's excited.

*(Lights. JASMINE is standing on the table. RAY is at the back with the sawn off shotgun. JASMINE takes fright at the light)*

JASMINE: Ray – it might be coming back!

RAY: *(At the end of tether)* What did you see? In the pen?

JASMINE: I saw its eyes. Little red ones – hundreds of them in the flashlight.

RAY: About this high?

*(Indicates JASMINE)*

JASMINE: Yes, and they were moving –

RAY: Pigs.

*(Pause)*

You say pigs' eyes in the pigs' pen.

JASMINE: Ooh...

RAY: *(Savagely)*. Yeah, Oh.

*(Pause)*

Look, I really don't think you can stay. I don't think that country life suits you.

*(Pause)*

JASMINE: *(Upset)* Ray, can you please call Robby.

RAY. There's only pigs outside. It's your dog.

*(JASMINE turns away suddenly. Pointing in the direction she was looking, she screams)*

JASMINE: Aaaah! There-there it is! Through there! I saw it! It went past on two legs- two legs not four-it's a man!

RAY: *(Surlly)* I can't see anything.

JASMINE: Is it in the pens?

*(RAY has had enough. He goes over and takes the gun barrel and pokes it*

*through JASMINE's legs; then, still holding it. Starts to move round the table. JASMINE flusters even more)*

JASMINE: No – Ray – look don't – stop! Ray! Me tights!

*(SMITTY stands up from the box at th back holding his cap. As he stands up)*

SMITTY: Hello, Mrs Mullen. Hello, Mr Mullen. I've been seeing friends in Sleaford.

*(Pause. They both turn, caught completely off guard)*

Hello

*(Pause)*

I've been seeing friends.

*(Pause)*

I'm sorry I'm late back.

*(He goes to the bucket of water by the table and takes off his jacket and T-shirt. He starts to wash. JASMINE and RAY, appalled, back away. Long pause)*

RAY: *(Nervous, aggressive)* Come to see Mr and Mrs Mullen?

*(Pause)*

They've left the property and gone to Australia. Where d'you live?

SMITTY: *(Simply)* In the house at the bottom of the garden.

RAY: The property and the animals have been bought by Mr Bravington. D'you get what I'm driving at?

*(Pause)*

I mean that things have changed a bit since you went on holiday.

*(Pause)*

You went on holiday to Sleaford, you said.

*(Pause)*

JASMINE: Have you seen a little dog?

SMITTY: *(Rattled)* No, Mrs Mullen.

RAY: Mrs Mullen's gone now. I mean she isn't here any more. Like Mr Mullen. They both – goes off to Australia. It's Mr Bravington's farm now.

*(Pause)*

Something wrong? Were you asked to come? By Mr. Bravington?

*(Pause. RAY has regained the ascendancy. During the following speech he takes the gun apart, lock stock and barrel, cleans it, and puts it back together again)*

RAY: Mr Bravington invests in farms. He has a pig breeding scheme and this farm is now becoming part of it. The investors buy a sow and the litter is the dividend. It's a compound interest rate of four per cent per annum with a ceiling for the original dividend holders of forty-eight per cent after twelve years. You heard of it?

*(Pause)*

It's a scheme which is multiplying in other fields as well as pig-breeding. I mean, there's a limit to the amount of pork you can take. But there's always the leather industry, which leads into clothes and shoes, fancy goods: and battery poulterers buy the bone for chicken meal. Geatine gives you a lead into the sweet industry. With the fat and the lard you get a strong arm in the catering trade. Undercut someone else's lard, make good with the frozen chicken, and you're into foods, which is all packaging, really.

*(Pause)*

You know what goes inside the packages?

*(Pause)*

Pork chops, vacuum sealed hams, black pudding reintroduced at luxury prices. Freeze-dried giblets. British Home Stores, Marks and Spencers, Tesco's, they're all negotiating for our sausages. They're beautiful sausages as well. You wouldn't be surprised to learn if he exported pigshit. It's a bust business – farming.

*(Pause)*

Come for your things then?

*(Pause)*

You see, it's the stock Mr Bravington's interested in. He can't afford to keep on casual labourers.

*(SMITTY finishes washing and stands up)*

SMITTY: Thank you.

RAY: Er – What's your name?-

SMITTY: Smitty.

RAY: Smitty. Yeah. You could gie us a few useful tips like how the pigs are fed up and that. What do pigs eat - nowadays? Most of the swill seems to be ham sandwiches.

SMITTY: Yes

RAY: That's a bit kinky, isn't it? Don't they get a taste for it?

SMITTY: It comes from the construction camp.

RAY: Where they send the ham? Oh. Thanks. You been with Mr and Mrs Mullen long?

SMITTY: Since I was very young.

RAY: And Mr and Mrs Mullen didn't tell you they was going away?

SMITTY: They didn't tell me.

JASMINE: You haven't seen a little dog anywhere?

RAY: (Evenly) Shut up about that fucking dog.

*(Blackout.*

*Then a spot on forestage as RAY and JASMINE sit down at the back. SMITTY walks into the spot on the table and sits down. He takes the DOG half out of the sack and, sticking his fingers through the collar, dangles it like a ventriloquist's dummy. The DOG has a mouth into which sweets can be thrust and removed. JASMINE and RAY put on pigmasks in the background. One of them should provide the DOG's voice. Comic, epiglottal.*

*SMITTY settles himself with the DOG)*

DOG: I like sweeties.

*(Pause. It sniffs one of SMITTY's pockets)*

You got some aniseed balls in your pocket. Can I have some?

*(SMITTY takes some out of his pocket and offers them to the DOG. He puts a few in the DOG's mouth then)*

DOG: More aniseed balls? I like Maltezers really. Quality Street. Milk Chocolate Flake.

*(SMITTY is rattled)*

SMITTY: I've only got aniseed balls.

DOG: *(Disappointed)* Oooogh – alright –

*(SMITTY continues to stuff them down his throat. The action gradually starts to become hysterical)*

DOG: Hang on a bit. I'll get indigestions –

*( A threat)*

I'll get sick! I've changed my mind. I don't like aniseed balls. I like – er – Swiss Chocolate – Fruit 'n Nut – Battenberg Cake – Mars bars – Nuttal's Mintoes – jelly babies – Treets, Rimmer's Milk Chocolate Buttons – marzipan – sherbert licks – Nougat – Refreshers –

*(SMITTY starts to strangle it)*

But I don't...like...aniseed...

*(SMITTY strangles it, then makes the DOG disgorge the aniseed balls with one move. They splatter on the floor. He then gently places the DOG on the table, kneels down and whispers to it)*

SMITTY: Schnell, fort aus den Waldern und in den Fluss hinein. Zhukove gewinnt immer Tankschlachten und diese wird keine Ausnahme. Leutnant, ich kann nicht weiter, ich bin der Sohn eines Artisten.

*(He leaves the DOG and goes to sit between the other two on the bench. The lights go on to the back)*

RAY: *(A different voice)* In the eighth dimension of the metatonic age, to the star cluster Tactar near Galaxy Aurax nine to the power of sixty three light years from the solar system containing the plante earth, Galactic Knight Kaarg telepaths his report. He has taken as his medium the body of Rudolf Van Vollenhoven, a human, the preent doinant species, risen from and now observed to be retrogressing to the apes. Galactic Knight Kaarg reports through the eyes of his medium that the most suitable animal to take over the dominance of the earth under our supervision in the pig. Brave, resourceful, gregarious, intelligent and humble, their period of dominance shall be – indefinite.

*(RAY and JASMINE hum the opening bars of Thus Said Zarathustra. SMITTY is agitated)*

JASMINE: *(A different voice)* Galactic Knight Kaarg has something to say.

RAY: There is nothing more to say. In twelve weeks the trap will be sprung and the pigs will rise as the men rose, suddenly and inexplicably. Dominance has nothing to do with the opposed thumb, or walking on two legs.

SMITTY: *(Desperate)* Mr and Mrs Mullen have sold the farm. They've gone away. Someone calld Mr Bravington is going to take the pigs away and sel them for meat.

*(Pause. A gesture of introduction to the audience from JASMINE)*

JASMINE: Bravington.

*(Blackout. BRAVINGTON's voice as before. This time he's teasing)*

BRAVINGTON: Hey hey hee hee. Come out from under that bed, y'll get yer arse fluffy.

*(Chuckles. Pause)*

I can't turn the light's on. I told you before. It's a power cut.

*(Pause)*

'Ave some more bubbly. It's fizzin all over your lap.

*(Pause)*

How about that. I've asked for some angels on horseback to be sent up. That's prunes wraped in bacon.

*(Pause)*

It's a cocktail delicacy.

*(Pause)*

They're called angels on horseback because the prunes do a lot o' gallopin. Hey hee hee.

*(A spot on the JASMINE actor midstage, as JASMINE. She is holding the DOG under one arm)*

JASMINE: I got to be at work in the morning.

BRAVINGTON: Take it off.

JASMINE: *(Quick as a flash)* What?

BRAVINGTON: *(Drawls)* This morning.

*(Pause)*

I can't see what's the matter with you.

JASMINE. I can't see what's the matter with you.

BRAVINGTON: There's nowt the matter with me.

JASMINE: You know bloody well.

BRAVINGTON: Oooh aye.

*(Pause. He is counting notes)*

One, two, three, four. In tens.

*(Pause)*

'Ang on, telephone. Bravington here. 'Oo is it?

*(Pause)*

No, I don't take advice on how to run my business.

*(Pause)*

What's yer name?

*(Pause)*

I don't sell my stock. I said I don't sel my stock.

*(Pause)*

I asked the switchboard not to put any calls through. I'm not discussing anything tonight. Goodnight.

*(Pause)*

You'll do what?

*(Pause)*

You're straight out of a loony bin. Listen – one finger on my swine and they'll be mixing you up in the swill inside of a week. I've got a whole line of lumpy lads just dying to straighten you out. You won't be the first to go. I'm not a violent man – just don't try to blackmail me.

*(The conversation finishes)*

I've been threatened. Told what to do. I can hardly believe my ears.

*(Pause)*

One, two, three, four. In tens.

JASMINE: You want to do buisness?

BRAVINGTON: Aye.

JASMINE: Forty pounds!

BRAVINGTON: (*Taken aback*) I cud've 'ad Lord Derby for not much more.

JASMINE: That's not a week's wages to you.

BRAVINGTON: I don't see what that's got to do with it.

JASMINE: Two fifty. And then not till I'm properly pissed.

BRAVINGTON: (*At large*) Everyone's gone mad.

(*Pause*)

'Ere, 'ang on. I got a proposition.

JASMINE: I'm turning it down.

BRAVINGTON: I got this farm.

JASMINE: (*Does a little dance as she sings:*)

Old McDonald had a farm –ei aye ei aye oh –  
Two fifty –  
And on this farm he had some pigs-  
Is it a roll in the hay?

BRAVINGTON: You know Ray Gibbs. He's going down to the farm to look after some stock there till I can get it slaughtered on the quiet. He's an 'ard man but I look after 'im. You keep him happy for the week, and you'll get your money.

JASMINE: He's a raving GBH man, He'll open me up with the kitchen scissors.

BRAVINGTON: He's on the other side of the fence.

(*Pause*)

Mostly.

JASMINE: Suppose he goes for me with the breadknife?

BRAVINGTON: I'll talk to him about it. Two fifty.

JASMINE: (*Suspicious*) What's on this farm then?

BRAVINGTON: Swine.

JASMINE: They shitting ten bob bits then?

BRAVINGTON: There's two thousand of them in pens. I know a lot of interested parties. I got to 'ave an 'ard man there, make sure he stays there for the week.

JASMINE: I'll take Rob I think.

BRAVINGTON: No –

JASMINE: He's the dog.

*(Blackout. The spot)*

BRAVINGTON: Oh, all right. The dog. I see. Hey hee hee. The dog. Have some bubbly. Good old Rob.

*(Pause)*

There was this man, took 'is false teeth out to put them in Steradent one night. 'Ere, 'e said to 'is wife, what's that there stuck between me molars? That's 'am she said. 'Am, 'e said, 'am? 'Am? 'Aven't 'ad 'am for a fortnight.

*(Laughs)*

*Lights up to show JASMINE, RAY, SMITTY on the bench with JASMINE and RAY in pigmasks, as before)*

SMITTY: Mr Bravington you would now kill?

*(Pause. RAY nods. JASMINE shakes head)*

The lady and gentleman?

*(Pause. No response)*

The lady who sells sweets?

*(Pause)*

Mr and Mrs Mullen?

JASMINE: There will be no violence. There will be no struggles. There will be no more wars. We want you to stop the pigs being taken away from the farm. All we need is three days.

*(RAY and JASMINE take off their pigmasks and hang them on the stand. They walk away from SMITTY. (Note: If for any reason the play has to be played with an interval, this is the place to have it. It's not advisable, though)*

*RAY and JASMINE are now themselves again)*

RAY: You off then?

*(Pause)*

I mean you're not employed by Mr Bravington, are you?

*(Pause)*

Not employed to help on the farm.

*(Helpfully)*

Mr Bravington has not asked you to help on the farm.

SMITTY: No

RAY: But you'd like to help.

*(Pause)*

If you want to stay on and help, that's your business. I mean, I can't promise you any money. Farm labourers don't get very much anyway, do they? You on Schedule D? PAYE?

SMITTY: Mrs Mullen used to give me pay.

RAY: And she paid your stamps. Insurance stamps. Eighty three and fourpence a week – she paid that, did she? You're going to have to fend for yourself a bit now. Mr Bravington can't afford – loss leaders. How much did Mrs Mullen give you a week then?

SMITTY: Twenty –

*(RAY whistles)*

RAY: That's a lot of money.

SMITTY: - Shillings. Sometimes thirty.

RAY: One pound ten a week? What a screw.

*(He slaps SMITTY on the back and walks away again)*

You'll be better off in the city, Smitty. Twenty-five pound a week as a labourer.

*(Pause)*

Single, are you? Wise. I mean, it's not wise to get married. I mean, it's a mistake. Promise me you won't try it. Supporting a wife, when you're in the city. Kids sopping up your pay, with milk and orange juice. Babyfood. Bawling for fish and chips. Nappies at breakfast.

*(Pause)*

You know much about slaughtering?

*(Pause)*

I don't like the sight of blood. Brings me out in a rash. Fur and feathers. Coverings and what's inside. Like dogs. The way they walk with tendons at the back of their legs.

*(Confidential)*

She wants to know what I did with the dog. Thinks I had it.

*(Working himself up)*

Dig it up, slip it in a graveyard with a little cross saying FIDO.

*(Tantrum)*

Women are like that about animals! They can't leave them alone!

*(Pause. Quizzical)*

Not English, are you? German. I'm not getting at you mind. It's not – normal, to have foreigners in the country. Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leeds – they're full of Micks and Darkies. But in the country...

SMITTY: I am fond of the country. I am fond of the farm.

RAY: I don't know how you can stand it when the wind changes. Two thousand animals standing up to their bellies in shit waiting for the next hopper of ham sandwiches. I went into one of those hangers and I came out again. I had to. I was sick in the swill bucket.

*(Pause)*

So you don't mind slaughtering.

*(JASMINE catches hold of the tail end of the conversation and comes forward. Alarmed)*

JASMINE: Mr Bravington didn't say anything about you doing that.

RAY: Shut up.

JASMINE: He just wanted us to stay for the week.

RAY: He changed his mind.

JASMINE: He never told me.

RAY: It was when you were out.

JASMINE: I haven't been out.

RAY: He didn't tell you, That's all.

JASMINE: What about my money?

RAY: What about your money?

JASMINE: I'm going to phone Mr Bravinton and find out.

RAY: No you are not.

JASMINE: I am.

RAY: *(Having lost it)* Want me to loose my fucking temper?

*(JASMINE gets up and thrusts RAY out of the way clumsily. He picks up the DOG sack and hits her on the face with it hard. She slowly puts her hand to her cheek. Pause)*

JASMINE: *(Shocked. The first thing she can think of:)*

It's all wet.

*(Looks at her hand)*

Pig

*(Tension relaxes. She goes and looks in the bag which RAY has put down on the table)*

RAY: As I was saying, Mr Bravington rang –

JASMINE: *(A voice of icy calm)* look what you hit me with.

*(She pulls the DOG out of the sack.*

*Pause)*

RAY: ('Sa dog, isn't it?

JASMINE: *(Lips quivering)* You hit me with Robby.

RAY: *(Retreating)* That's not Robby. He was a fat little doggy. That one's all flat –

*(Pause. JASMINE looks at ROBBY, heartbroken)*

JASMINE: Robby...

RAY: *(To SMITTY)* Found him run over in the road, did you?

*(To JASMINE)*

He found him run over in the road. Now – put it back in the sack.

JASMINE: *(Advances on RAY with the sack outstretched)* You did it.

RAY: Look, he found him run over in the road. I didn't have nothing to do with it. Don't come near me.

*(JASMINE advances)*

Put that dog down, or I'll bottle you. It's nothing to do with me.

*(RAY is near the table with JASMINE bearing down on him. He snatches a beer bottle from underneath, and tries to break it on the table. Fails. He takes JASMINE and they have a messy scuffle on and round the table.)*

*They stop. RAY is panting with excitement.*

*SMITTY has a fit. The works. Goosesteps with arms at side, lying on the floor. Rolls to and fro rigidly. Froths at the mouth)*

SMITTY: *(Screams and grunts)* Sturmtruppe Kommandant Truppführer Hinelitzer, und die Jungen, ich meine die Männer, and der Frontbreite, wir werden diesen Juden schweine was lehren und ihre Vorhaute in ihre Arshlocher Stecken, ihnen zeigen, wie es eigentlich gemacht wird. So ist's ja richtig ganz prima-

*(RAY and JASMINE are helpless with laughter.)*

*They have abandoned their fight.*

*Blackout.*

*Pause.*

*The voice of MRS MULLEN, Genteel North Riding)*

MRS MULLEN: Holderlin...

*(Pause)*

...was a true romantic project. He went mad. He fell in love with the wife of the family he tutored in Bordeaux. He was so young.

*(Pause)*

His novel is about Ancient Greece. Although he had never been there, it is said that he recreated the landscape – perfectly. It is about the love of two young men...

*(Pause)*

...that was too perfect too last.

*(Pause)*

Somewhere...

*(Pause)*

...in France, there was a colonnade of reproductions of the great statues in a garden. One night, people looked out and saw a person fondling them. They went out, but he ran away.

*(Pause)*

I am sure it was Holderlin.

*(Lights*

*MR MULLEN and MRS MULLEN in Mullen costume. They have linked arms. They hold the umbrella above them. They sway from side to side.*

*ROLAND toots like a departing steamer. They wave stiffly to the audience. They drop their hands.*

*MRS MULLEN leans forward to speak)*

MRS MULLEN: We taught the boy all we could. He loved the open life. He came to the farm, quite late, in 1945. Roland had been invalided out and was busy with landgirls. We had terrible trouble with the Americans on the Aifield. Twice they landed Flying Fortress in the fields, and damaged the stock.

*(Pause)*

We always farmed pigs, even in the difficult years. We didn't have many prisoners working on the farm, so they became...

*(A flashing smile)*

...quite like friends. It was only natural that Smitty should stay. He was so young, he can't have been more than twelve or thirteen when he came to us.

*(Pause. Confidential)*

I think it was terrible, the way Hitler sent them out to fight so young, at the end. We were very busy in those early years but I always set aside half an hour – when I

could – to reach nine to read. I don't think Roland ever forgave him for being quite so...

*(Pause)*

...German. Roland was never the same after his lobotomy, became morose and didn't talk very much. One day he found the boy killing a pig. It was then that we had to commit him to a mental institution. When he came out a month later he was at it again. We had to put him in care for good.

*(Pause)*

A Mr Bravington rang up and offered us a ridiculous price for the farm. I accepted, on Roland's behalf, and decided to go to Australia for his sake as much as my own.

*(Pause)*

Smitty was educationally severely subnormal. He had forgotten all his German, and really learnt very little English, although he spoke it well enough.

*(Pause)*

After we crossed the line, Roland was drunk at breakfast and said he heard grunts all day...

ROLAND: *(Still numb drunk)* Flying fishes...

*(Pause. Lyrical)*

...up and down in the water. Thought the phosphorescence was a herd of swine, following the boat,

*(Pause)*

Fell off the stern.

*(Pause. Pleasure)*

Residual lead from bullets lodged in thorax and cranium, poisoned sharks fin soup served up in Hong Kong, leading to war with Chinese.

*(ROLAND goes and gets the straitjacket and starts to put it on the unprotesting SMITTY at the back)*

MRS MULLEN: Smitty was very sweet. I mean, he was almost doglike in his affection. But you can't go on like that.

*(Pause)*

He was ill.

*(Pause. Emphatic)*

He wasn't like other people.

*(ROLAND to SMITTY in a low voice)*

ROLAND: How does a Frenchwoman hold her liquor? Mmm?

MRS MULLEN: I got married in Australia to the vice-chairman of a soup company.

*(Disappointed)*

We were divorced after six months.

*(Bravely)*

I took a small flat in Melbourne.

*(She folds the umbrella as she says the last sentence)*

The gas cooker exploded.

*(ROLAND and MRS MULLEN sit each side of SMITTY on the bench)*

SMITTY: *(Neutrally)* Van Vollenhoven, Rudolf Willem Kristian de Broek. Born Zorst, near Cologne. Five years primary school, failed entrance to gymnasium. Educationally subnormal. One year infantry division Eastern front. Deserted. Recaptured. Six weeks suicide squad. Deserted. Came home. Semitic population of Zorst killed in Dachau, antisemitic by high explosives manufactured in Essen, Coventry, and Tuscan, Arizona. Lived in Zorst through winter, off roots and people. Captured by English.

*(Tone changes slightly)*

Now I have a packed lunch which I make myself of Thursday, bread and Spam. Mr Mullen is very kind and gives me war books. Mrs Mullen is very kind and gives me poetry. Oh to be in England now that spring is here. Du Liebe Gott here I am stinking sweat and hot. Also in the shop Mr Mullen buys the Adventures of the Incredible Hulk, fighting on the side of the right.

*(During the following speech, ROLAND puts a pigmask on SMITTY and pulls his trousers down, then leads him forward to the table)*

MRS MULLEN: I think the European tradition of Culture is – terribly important. I have a Belgian aunt. We could have retired to France or Portugal, but Roland would have had difficulties with the language.

*(Pause. She ignores what is going on with ROLAND and SMITTY)*

And is there honey still for tea.

*(Pause)*

On Poppy Day, I always used to take Smitty with me, collecting for the Haig fund for the disabled.

*(ROLAND bends SMITTY over the table. Bows over from behind. They freeze looking straight ahead)*

During the war, American officers used to come to tea. How cue, they used to say. I was very friendly with one young officer. We shared a love of Dvorak's New World Symphony.

*(She tries to hum a few bars from the beginning of The Emperor Concerto. Fails)*

Anyway. He was a terribly sensitive young man, although deeply patriotic. One night, he broke down and told me hw was a homosexual. Roland couldn't stand him. Roland and I were never compatible.

*(Pause)*

We never had - any children.

*(Pause)*

It was so unfortunate, that Smitty should turn out so strange.

*(Despair)*

We had no alternative, but to put him in a home

*(Blackout)*

**BRAVINGTON** *in the middle of an argument)*

**BRAVINGTON:** I know it's an 'ard world. I'm no soft. Feel my stomach. You may think that's fat.

*(Grunts)*

I told yer. It's like punching a tank turret.

*(Pause)*

I were a wrestler in Blackpool before I were rich, and famous. You got to look after yourself, because no-one's going to do it for you. Either do it yourself, or bend over, and get your own membranes stretched.

*(Pause)*

My own father taught me that when I were twelve. Piss off. He said.

*(Pause)*

I respect him for that.

*(In the dark, RAY and JASMINE sing the opening bars of "Thus Said Zarathustra" banging their feet on the floor for the Drums.*

*Lights.*

*They have the pigmasks on. They are seated each side of SMITTY who still has his straitjacket on)*

SMITTY: In the eighth dimension of the metatonic age, to the star cluster Tactar near galaxy Aurax, galactic knight Kaarg telepaths his report.

*(A strain)*

Great difficulties.

*(Back to normal)*

Galactic Knight Kaarg reports transference out of Sunny Acres Farm to Slaford Hospital for the Mentally Disabled. Severe depression of medium and low cerebral activity. In ward for permanent residents containing numerous catatonic cases, four deteriorated schizophrenics, five cases of premature senility and incontinence, a paralysed mongol, a manic depressive paralysed from the waist down by a suicide jump, a 22-year-old male psycopath who holds conversations with the smile he has painted on his penis. In the ward also teo thirteen-year-old twins committed indefinately for the planned death of a neighbour's infant.

On the right bed eighteen inches away is an Irish labourer with delirium tremens who thinks he is Parnell. On the left bed eighteen inches away, a human cabbage in the middle of a brainstorm.

Rudolf Van Vollenhoven, educationally sbnormal, committed indefinitely for repeated random atacks on animals. The patient is subject to fits and is under heavy sedation.

JASMINE: Uppa uppa uppa uppa uppa

RAY: *(Simultaneously)* Found in bed with Kitty O'Shea. The reination of Ireland and my political career. Threw my life away.

SMITTY: There are still thousands of them left. They're all over the country. They're going to take over the world. We'll be put in slaughter houses. Hung up by a hook through the Achilles tendon. Gutted. Headless.

JASMINE: *(Cosily)* We're only here on a visit. Down there in the locked wards are the real patients. They feed them through a hatch with gauntlets. It's a curious sort of creature. Vicious. Unpredictable.

*(Pause)*

Mr and Mrs Mullen have gone to Australia. You'll never see them again. There are two other people on the farm. They're going to sell the pigs to be slaughtered. We don't want that. We want you to stop them.

SMITTY: Mr and Mrs Mullen have not gone away.

RAY: *(Stifles a laugh)* They thought you were – off your head –

*(Laughs)*

They rang for someone to take you away. You'd killed eight pigs.

SMITTY: You were going to kill Mr and Mrs Mullen.

RAY: There's no question of that now. They've gone away. The people you deal with will be strangers. Not like us. You won't have to do anything to them if they go away.

*(He fiddles with his mask and produces with great apparent agony a complete set of false teeth from his mouth)*

See!

*(Holds them up. The triumphant conjuror)*

My teeth!

*(He snaps them)*

See my incisors? See my molars? We're omnivorous, like humans. Good for fruit off trees, rotten apples and acorns. Grubbing up the earth for trace minerals.

*(Pitiful)*

We suffer from iron shortages too. Also sold and heat, are neurotic when overcrowded.

*(Pause)*

When our heads are boiled, the cartilage goes to gelatine and the rest makes brawn. Just like yours. The brain is impervious to cold and heat. Saw a hole in your cranium, stub my fag out on it, and you wouldn't feel a thing.

*(Puts the teeth in SMITTY's cap and puts it on his head. They start to take the strait-jacket off)*

Now we'll help you to get out of here. If you help us. And if you don't help us

*(The straitjacket is off. They hang it up)*

You won't know it's happening. But in three minutes, we'll eat your brain.

*(Blackout)*

*In the dark, JASMINE and BRAVINGTON)*

JASMINE: I'll tell your fortune.

BRAVINGTON: Don't be so soft. Hey hee hee.

JASMINE: *(Sotto Voce)* Christ, you got bad breath.

*(Pause, Clearly)*

You'll come to a bad end. You'll have four wives.

BRAVINGTON: Three down and one to go.

JASMINE; You'll die of cancer. The throat and the genitals are particularly vulnerable.

BRAVINGTON: Cock and Balls. Aye. Have to lok after them.

*(Pause)*

I got everything I want. The conversation of friends and the enjoyment of lovely objects. The last touch of a personal valet. I have become a patron of the arts. Large, anonymous donations to the Library Theatre in Manchester, The Liverpool Everyman, and the North Riding and Durham Fund for the Dependants of Crippled Miners.

*(Pause Luxuriously)*

And I 'aven't got bad breath.

*(Lights)*

RAY and JASMINE back as themselves. RAY is standing. So is SMITTY)

SMITTY: Has Mr Bravington rung?

*(Pause)*

RAY: *(Hostile)* He has.

JASMINE: No, he hasn't.

*(Pause)*

When did he ring then?

RAY: When you were out.

JASMINE: I haven't been out.

RAY: Looking for the dog.

JASMINE: You were out as well then –

RAY: - I came back –

JASMINE: You can't have been out for very long. I didn't hear the phone go. Why didn't you look for the dog a bit longer?

RAY: It wasn't a very long conversation that we had.

JASMINE: Did you ask him?

RAY: I did –

JASMINE: About Smitty – what did he say?

*(Pause)*

RAY: *(To SMITTY)* Come for your things then?

JASMINE: Did he say he could stay?

RAY: He did not –

JASMINE: You told him all about it and he said no? You told him he had nowhere to go?

*(Pause)*

I think that's awful. I think he might have given him a chance. You didn't tell him the full story.

*(Bitingly)*

I mean he hasn't got a wife and kids or anything. I bet you made it up out of spite.

*(RAY takes JASMINE and twists her arm in a half nelson over the offal bucket. Forces her on her hands and knees. Then takes her by the hair)*

RAY: Shut your fucking hole or I'll get violent.

JASMINE: (*Panicking*) No don't do this. Don't. Ouch. I'll do anything. I can do things for you – I'm not an amateur –

(*Screams*)

I'll dress up like Smitty –

(*RAY is horrified. He releases and stands back*)

RAY: You'll do what?

JASMINE: (*Gets up and tidies herself*) That's all he wants. All this hard man stuff doesn't mean a thing. He's a bumfucker, a nance. He carries pictures in his wallet of Pricks I Have Known. A man's man. You'd like it with Alsation dogs and boys with boots on. Why d'you have to break him down first? 'Cos you're a fucking psycho who can only get a hard on when you've scared the other person shitless.

(*RAY wants to strangle her but containing himself he picks up a kidney and shoves it down the back of her neck. Strides to the box and sits down facing away*)

(*Pause*)

(*JASMINE speaks in a conversational tone*)

JASMINE: It's cold. What was it, Smitty, did you see what it was? It wasn't a rat, was it? He *knows* I can't stand rats-

(*Pause; then suddenly screams*)

Get it out-

(*Jumps up and down. The kidney falls through. She continues. SMITTY picks it up and throws it in the rubbish tray under the table.*)

(*Pause*)

JASMINE: Oh. It was one of them. Ta

(*Pause*)

He's a walking suppository.

(*Screams at RAY's back*)

Stuff it in! Pull it out!

(*She tries to reach the back of her dress with her hand to unzip it*)

JASMINE: Fuck. Look, can you do it.

*(SMITTY does it and she shoves the sponge into his hand. He makes no attempt to wash her. She leads him to the table)*

JASMINE: Here, I'll lie on the table, it'll be easier.

*(Quite calmly SMITTY washes her back)*

Take my advice. Get out now. He gets violent when he's had his whack.

*(Pause)*

That's lovely.

*(Pause)*

Doesn't like to think of it. Him and his wife and kids.

*(Pause)*

Three more days. Then I'm back to hairdressing.

*(Pause)*

I think I'll move down to London.

SMITTY: Why are you staying?

JASMINE: I bin paid. Half before and half after. It wasn't my idea. I mean the way Ray feels about it. We'd all be much safer if he had a nice clean pig.

*(Pause)*

But he really fancies himself. That thing with the bottle – he saw that on the telly once.

SMITTY: You're staying.

JASMINE: I'll have to. I mean, I'm a freelancer, I'm not his wife.

SMITTY: You are not his wife?

JASMINE: No! I'm on the game...

*(Pause)*

Mr Bravington pays for me to be here to keep him happy. You didn't know that?

*(Pause)*

Are you going now? He'll calm down in a bit. I wouldn't mind having somebody else around. I don't mind all that stuff with raspberry jam and that, but what if he turned?

*(Pause)*

I get scared in the dark too. Rats and things. I can't think why people live in the country. Ray doesn't mind it. He doesn't mind where he is. He spends half his time inside.

*(Anecdotal)*

The last time he was sent down the judge said he was an "incorrigible ruffian". Ray said he farted then and the judge added two years to his sentence.

*(Laughs)*

Two years for farting!

*(Subdued)*

And five for GBH. He just decided one day that he was going to be a hard man.

*(Pause)*

If you hear me yelling in the night, rush in and shove a broomstick up his arse. That'll divide his loyalties.

*(Pause)*

The Mullens alright to you, were they? I mean they didn't tie you to the wall and make you perform with teddy bears or anything?

SMITTY: Mrs Mullen was kind to me, Mr Mullen asked me once, but I said no.

JASMINE: And you got up the lady of the house?

*(SMITTY shakes his head)*

Nothing? No spinoff from thirty bob a week and the use of the potting shed? Never mind. I started with a rotten bloody lot. Buisness was two pounds reduced to thirty bob. But you don't have to stop at that. With a bit of effort, you can make yourself independent.

*(Pause. The washing has finished)*

You off then?

*(SMITTY picks up the sack and holds it out to JASMINE)*

It's alright. You go and see your friends in Sleaford. I'll kick him in the balls, or something.

SMITTY: This your dog?

JASMINE: Robby in the sack? Yeah.

SMITTY: I killed it.

*(Pause)*

With a fork.

*(JASMINE takes the sack and ferrets in it)*

JASMINE: Ray –

*(RAY comes back from the box. Pause)*

RAY: That's your dog.

JASMINE: Smitty says he killed it.

RAY: You did what with it?

SMITTY: It was asking for chocolates.

JASMINE: Hang on a bit.

*(Pause)*

It's not Robby

RAY: So it's not your dog. I told you.

JASMINE: Robby was plump.

RAY: So it's not your dog.

JASMINE: No – Robby had a different expression...

*(Pause)*

He may still be alive. Lost...Ray, do you think you could phone the police?

*(RAY is shocked)*

RAY: Could I? Ring the men in blue? You must be off your head girl.

JASMINE: We haven't done anything wrong –

RAY: *(Definitively)* I'm wanted.

JASMINE: *(Pleadingly)* Not really –

RAY: What do you know about it?

JASMINE: Ray –

RAY: I'm hungry.

*(Goes and sits on the table, facing audience)*

JASMINE: There are some kidneys – Ray –

RAY: *(Shouts)* I can't stand fucking kidneys!

*(JASMINE puts the DOG back in the sack. Lull. RAY picks his nose, humming Strangers in the Night.*

*Behind them, ignored, SMITTY goes and loads the gun at the box. He closes the breech)*

RAY: *(Jocular, facing away)*

So Smitty killed the little dog, did he? Perhaps Smitty would like to go out and do in a pig, for supper.

*(Pause)*

My uncle was a master butcher. A craftsman with the poleaxe. Used to drop it – right here.

*(Touches the back of his neck with his hand quickly.)*

*Blackout*

*In the dark)*

But it's dicy with pigs. They got so much fat on them.

*(The gun fires twice in the dark. A brief wordless scuffle in between. SMITTY lights a portable gas ring which he takes out of the box on the table. By this light, and the spot at barest minimum, he cuts out the kidneys of the other two actors who are lying in the shadow of the table. He puts butter in the pan and drops a kidney in, when the smell of cooking has spread out from the stage he turns the gas fire off and the actors exit)*

BRAVINGTON: *(In the dark)* There's a limit o the amount of pork you can take. But

there's always the leather industry, which leads into clothes and shoes, luxury goods, battery poulterers buy the bone for chicken meal, gelatine gives you a lead in the sweet industry. With the fat and the chicken you got a strong arm into catering. Undercut someone else's lard, make good and you're into frozen foods which is mostly packaging. And you know what goes inside the packages. Pork. Ham. Bacon. Tripe. Trotters in jelly. Black pudding and freeze-dried giblets, reintroduced at the top of the range for fancy prices.