

DANNY'S WAKE

by
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Scene One *BILLY is standing and looking into a coffin at the unseen corpse inside.. The coffin is laid out on a table. PATRICK is sitting on a chair beside a smaller table. He has a holdall bag beside him. A slightly uncomfortable silence.*

Billy
(looking into coffin)
He doesn't actually look that ill.

If you didn't know he was dead - you'd never know. Apart from the coffin, I suppose. But if he wasn't in the coffin. If he was sitting next to you with a drink in his hand, chatting away, having a laugh - you'd never know he was dead.

I couldn't believe it when his Mum rang. I thought it was him mucking about - the voice didn't sound right. It was too high. Too Monty Python. So when the Voice said, " I've got some bad news. I'm afraid Danny's dead " I pretended to cry. Softly at first. Then louder and louder until I was wailing down the phone
screaming
" Oh God, take me instead. "

It was only when the Voice started crying too that I realised that it really was Danny's mum. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't suddenly stop crying and start talking normally. I had to keep going.

I think she was quite moved. She was on the phone for an hour trying to calm me down.

A pause

Do you want a drink ?

Patrick
No, thank you.

Billy
Are you sure you won't have a vodka or....well there's only vodka

Patrick
Really. I'm fine.

A pause

Billy
I didn't know what to get, you see? Didn't know what you'd like.

Patrick
Right..

A pause

Billy
I was going to get beer but I didn't know what kind. Lager, bitter,
Guinness, you know?

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Billy
I don't know anything about Whisky or Brandy or any of that lot. Gin smells like
perfume and Rum's a complete mystery to me.

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Billy
And as for wine. Well, that's a minefield, isn't it? White or red? Sweet or dry?
Spanish or French? I thought that's best left well alone.

A pause

Billy
No. Vodka seemed a safe bet. Do you drink vodka?

Patrick
Sometimes.

Billy
There you are. then.

A pause

Billy
I've got some sherry. I bought a bottle for Dainty's Mum but she only had a
glass so there's plenty there.

Patrick
No, thank you.

Billy
Well, if you change your mind - shout out. The vodka's got lemon in it and the sherry's just normal sherry.

Patrick
Right.

A pause

Billy
The lift's broken in her block.

Patrick
Sorry?

Billy
Danny's Mum. The lift's broken in her block. That's why he's here.

Patrick
Oh...I see.

Billy
Ifs no way to start a funeral, is it ? Trying to manhandle a coffin down twenty flights of stairs.. Sets the wrong tone, doesn't it ?

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Billy
You don't have that problem on the ground floor, see?

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Billy
Mind you, he had to come in through the window.

Patrick
Really?

Billy

Oh yeah. It's only a narrow passage, see? Coming in was alright but they couldn't do the left turn into here.....not without turning him on his side and standing him upright and you don't want that. So we opened up the window and pulled him through. Anyway, he's here now.

A pause

Billy

You got here alright, then ?

Patrick.

Yes. Very.....er....easy.

Billy

Good.

Patrick

Yes. No.....no traffic to speak of..

Billy

Right.

Patrick

...roadwork's or.....any thing like that.

Billy

Right.

A pause

Patrick

Yes. Very good journey.

Billy

Right.

Patrick

And quick.

Billy

Yeah?

Patrick

Yes. Much quicker than I'd expected.

Billy
Good.

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Patrick
Yes. Very quick.

A pause

Patrick
Yes. Everywhere's closer these days.

Billy
I suppose it is.

Patrick
Yes. Much closer than it used to be.

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Patrick
I mean.....the Channel Tunnel.

Billy
Yeah..

Patrick
Breakfast in England. Lunch in France.

Billy
What's it like?

Patrick
Sorry?

Billy
Going through the Tunnel..

Patrick
Oh...I don't know.

Billy
You haven't done it, then?

Patrick
Not personally, no.

Billy
Right.

Patrick
But I hear it's good.

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Patrick
Yes. Very good.

A pause

Billy
You haven't changed much.

Patrick
Neither have you.

Billy
Long time, eh ?

Patrick
Yes, it is.

A pause

Billy
Did you get your "A" levels ?

Patrick
Uh...yes I got....

Billy
Of course you did...stupid thing to ask. You can't be a teacher without A levels, can you ?

Patrick
Well....

Billy
What do you teach ?

Patrick
English.

Billy
Yeah, of course. You were always good at English.

Patrick
Was I ?

Billy
Mind you, I always liked that "reading aloud." I was good at that. But you can't get an A level in reading aloud, can you ?

Patrick
No.

Billy
Not that it would be much use if you could.

Patrick
No.

Billy
..unless you wanted to be a news reader.

A pause

Patrick
Two A's and a B.

Billy
Eh?

Patrick
A levels. I got two A's and a B.

Billy
Oh brilliant. Well done.

Patrick
Thank you. How about you?

Billy
I didn't finish the sixth form, did I?

Patrick
Didn't you?

Billy
No. I left at the end of the first year.

Patrick
Oh. Right.

Billy
Yeah. It seemed fairly obvious to all concerned that I was crap. I was falling behind in everything. In the end, I had this long talk with my Dad. I told him how I was feeling - how it was all getting on top of me. He listened and then he said, "I feel that your future lies elsewhere." It was a bit like Obi - Wan -Kenobi, really

Patrick
Right.

Billy
So I went to work with him.

Patrick
Really ?

Billy
Yeah, I know, I know. What was it I always used to say?

BILLY waits. PATRICK clearly doesn't know.

Billy
"I'd rather be a prostitute than do what my Dad does"

PATRICK still doesn 't remember.

Patrick
Oh yes.

Billy
...but I had no choice. You know what my old man could be like.

Patrick
(bluffing)
Yes.

Billy
Remember that day when he caught us up on the garage roof with that old radiator and the bangers ?

Patrick
(bluffing)
Yes

Billy
Him chasing Danny 'round the Square with that length of pipe.

Patrick
(remembering)
Plumber! He was a plumber.

Billy
Yeah

Patrick
Sorry. It's been a long time. How is he?

Billy
Like Danny.

Patrick
Sorry?

Billy
Dead.

Patrick
Sorry.

A pause

Patrick
How are things in..... plumbing?

Billy
There's plenty of work out there. As my old man used to say, " People will always need to wash.."

Patrick
Very true.

Billy
These days it's mainly central heating and kitchen appliances.

Patrick
I see.

Billy
It would turn your stomach to see some of the muck I've fished out of people's dishwashers.

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
Are you hungry at all?

Patrick
No...I'm fine.

Billy
Well, when you are, I've got all the leaflets. Chinese, Indian, Pizza, that Japanese muck....

Patrick
Sushi ?

Billy
Bless you.

Patrick
No.....no I meant it's called.....

Billy
I know. It was a joke.

Patrick
Sorry.

Billy
It's alright. Anyway, they all deliver apart from the Indian but he's just next door so it's only a walk,

A pause

Patrick
You never married, then ?

Billy
Yeah..we're divorced.

Patrick
Right. Sorry.

Billy
It's alright. Remember Danny's sister, Moira ?

Patrick
Danny was your brother in law?

Billy
Eh?

Patrick
You married Danny's sister.

Billy
No. I was just asking if you remembered her.

Patrick
Oh, right.

Billy
Moved to Australia. Doing really well out there apparently.

A pause

Billy
Yeah. Seventeen years now.

Patrick
Really? Well, apparently it's a great life out there.

Billy
No, I've been divorced for seventeen years.

Patrick
Oh right. I'm sorry.

Billy
Don't be. Best decision we ever made, getting divorced. We're much happier now than we ever were together. You remember Frances?

Patrick
Frances?

Billy
Yeah. Moira's best friend.

Patrick
Moira?

Billy
Danny's sister.

Patrick
Oh yes. Yes.

Billy
Well, Frances was her best mate.

Patrick
Right.

A pause

Billy
Red loons? Cheese cloth blouse thing? Loads of beads? She used to wear that all the time.

Patrick
Oh right.

Billy
Not any more, obviously, or she'd look a right state.....

A pause

Billy
You married. ?

Patrick
Yes. Fifteen years....sorry. To Charlotte.

Billy
Kids?

Patrick

Yes. Sarah and Simon. Girl and a boy. Ten and twelve, next birthday.

Billy

And your wife ?

Patrick

Thirty seven.

Billy

I mean, what does she do ? Is she a teacher too?

Patrick No. She's in charge of a Management Consultancy Firm.

Billy

Oh yeah ? What do they do, then ?

Patrick

Well, if the management of a large company are having difficulties, they.....you know...consult her.

Billy

..and she sorts it out.

Patrick

Yes.

Billy

She must be worth a few bob.

Patrick

Well, yes...

Billy

That must be nice. Takes the pressure of you, doesn't it ?

Patrick

Yes.

Billy

..'cos you teachers get paid fuck all, don't you ?

Patrick

Yes.

A pause

Billy
Is that why you have to wear elbow patches ?

Patrick
Who?

Billy
Teachers.

Patrick
We don't.....not in real life.

Billy
Begley did.

Patrick
Begley ? God,..Mr. Begley!

Billy
He had elbow patches.

Patrick
Yes, he did, didn't he.

Billy
He wore the same jacket every day. Summer, Winter....

Patrick
..but he got a new one in year 11. Fifth year.

Billy
That's right.

Patrick
A new jacket that was exactly the same as the old one.

Billy
..with brand new elbow patches.

Patrick
..and when he put it on the back of the chair - it went.

They both do bent elbow stance. They laugh.

Patrick
Begley. He was a right bully, wasn't he ?

Billy

Teachers are, aren't they ? It's the nature of the job. They come out of college full of enthusiasm. They really believe that they can make a difference. On that first day in the classroom, it's all still possible. The lesson begins. But the kids....they're not used to being treated with respect. They can't handle it so they start taking the piss. The student - wanting to show he's on their side - goes along with it. His first mistake. The kids get louder. The student starts to lose it, The kids smell the fear. The noise level rises. Suddenly, the bastard Maths teacher comes in from next door to see what the noise is all about. He silences the class with a single shout. Order is restored. The student, shaken and embarrassed, continues the lesson.

Somebody sniggers - the student shouts.

The kids, who only recognise teachers who shout, switch off their brains and behave. The student has given up on them all. His spirit broken - he becomes a bullying bastard like the rest of them.

A pause

Patrick

Yes....but there's always the teacher that you really like and respect, isn't there?

BILLY thinks for a moment.

Patrick

Mr. Gibb.

Billy

Johnny Gibb. Yeah, fair point.

Patrick

Well, I'm trying to be a Johnny Gibb to my class.

Billy

What...fat and Welsh ?

They laugh

Patrick

Go on. I'll have a vodka.

BILLY exits, returning with a tumbler and an unopened bottle of Absolut Citroen..

He puts them down on the table.

Billy
Cheers

PATRICK opens bottle

Patrick
Do you see anything of Andrew Jackson ?

Billy
Who?

Patrick
Andrew Jackson. Tall kid, glasses, they always made him play in goal.

Billy
You mean Andrew Butler..

Patrick
Who?

Billy
Andrew Butler. Tall kid, glasses, we always made him play in goal.

Patrick
That's Andrew Jackson.

Billy
No. That's Andrew Butler but we called him Gordon Jackson, because Gordon Jackson played A Butler in " Upstairs Downstairs."

PATRICK takes a beat to work it out.

Patrick
God, that's brilliant. A. Butler.

Billy
Mazda?

Patrick
(trying to remember)

Mazda...mazda...

Billy

He used to sit in front of Les McKeowen....

Patrick

Les McKeowen ? From the Bay City Rollers ?

Billy

Yeah.

Patrick

He wasn't in our class, was he ?

Billy

No..he was Micky Candler but Danny called him Les McKeowen because...

Patrick

...because his trousers finished halfway up his leg!

He laughs.

Billy

That's him. Well, Mazda used to sit in front of him.

Patrick

(remembering)

Yes, yes...what was his name ?

Billy

Tony Walker.

Patrick

Tony Walker!

Billy

..and we called him Mazda because...?

Patrick

..because...because...no..I can't remember.

Billy

We called him Mazda because Danny reckoned his head was shaped like a light bulb.

They both laugh

Patrick

He did have a head like a light bulb. Mazda. Brilliant.

Billy
Samson.

Patrick
That was ...er....Trevor Jones.

Billy
Trevor Jones.

Patrick
Why Samson ?

Billy
Because his Dad's name was Sam.

Patrick
..so he was Sam's son.

Billy
Chris Pearson was Delilah because he used to hang around with Trevor.

Patrick
Samson and Delilah.

Both lost in thought and memories for a moment.

Billy
Ramp.

Patrick
Ramp ?

Billy
Ramp.

Patrick
Paddy Thornton.

Billy
That's right.

Patrick
Ramp.

A pause

Patrick
Why did we call.....?

Billy
.....no idea.

A pause.
Billy
You were Nick Nack Paddy Mac., I was Billy the Kid and Danny was
Book - 'em.

Patrick
Book - 'em?

Billy
Book-em Danno.

Patrick
Oh yes. But together - of course - we were the Three Musketeers.

Billy
Who?

Patrick
You, Danny and me. We called ourselves the Three Musketeers.

Billy
No, we didn't

Patrick
Yes, we did.

Billy
No, we didn't.

Patrick
Yes, we did.

Billy
No, you did. We only went along with it when we were at your house.

Patrick
What ?

Billy
We only let you call us the Three Musketeers when we were at your house.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Yeah

Patrick
No. We were always the Three Musketeers.

Billy
No.

Patrick
We were.

Billy
No.

A pause

Patrick
We bought those big hats.

Billy
You bought a big hat.

Patrick
What about the sword fights ?

Billy
..only at your house.

Patrick
No. We'd fight the King's men and then go riding off around the garden.

A pause

Patrick
You're right. It was only at my house.

Billy
Be fair. If you walk around calling yourselves the Three Musketeers - you're looking for a kicking.

Patrick

Didn't we ever play it at your house ?

Billy
Flat.

Patrick
What?

Billy
Flat. I lived in a flat. This flat.

Patrick
Oh yes. *(looking around)*

Billy
You had a garden, see. Brilliant. We'd play whatever you wanted.

Patrick
I don't remember coming here

Billy
No. You never did.

Patrick
Why not?

Billy
You had a garden.

A pause

Patrick
I've been in Danny's flat.

Billy
His Mum's still there. It's just over the back.

Patrick
He lived quite high up, didn't he?

Billy
Twenty flights.

Patrick
Yes. I went to a party there.....

Billy

Ah! Napoleon Solo.

Patrick
What?

Billy
Napoleon Solo. Danny's 11th Birthday party. It was fancy dress.

Patrick
The fancy dress party. Yes. Danny went as the Man from Uncle, didn't he?
He just wore a suit.

Billy
That's right.

Patrick
I went as..... a Musketeer.

Billy
Well, you had the hat, didn't you?

Patrick
Were you there?

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
What did you go as ?

Billy
A plumber.

Patrick
That's right. You had a plunger and a bucket.

Billy
Yeah. It was my Dad's idea. He reckoned that nobody else would go as a plumber so I was bound to win the competition.

Patrick
I don't remember a competition.

Billy
No. There wasn't one.

Patrick

God, I've forgotten so much.

Billy
I haven't. I remember everything.

Patrick
Do you?

Billy
Bright, Butler, Chandler, Donnelly, Farrel, Ferranti, Foudy, Friend, Harkin,
Hughes, Janucheski, Jones, Justinsky, McCann, MacDonald, Mascheranas,
Moynihan, Nee, O'Shea. Pearson, Piercece, Richardson, Rozwadowski,
Secombe, Sekula, Sztolcz, Thornton, Walker, Whyman, Williams.

Patrick
Good God.

Billy
Told you I remembered everything.

Patrick
How many of them are coming ?

Billy
What?

Patrick
How many of them are coining ?

Billy
None of them.

A pause

Patrick
Who is coming?

Billy
Nobody.

Patrick
Nobody.

Billy
I didn't know how to get hold of anyone. After the 'A' levels everyone just
disappeared - except me and Danny. If it wasn't for your Christmas cards -
I'd be here on my own.

A pause

Patrick
Family ?

Billy
Moiras in Australia and his Mum's already been.
Patrick
Work?

Billy
He never stayed in a job long enough to get to know anyone. Labouring, mini -
cabbings, decorating. Anything that paid cash. Last few months he'd
been managing this band.

Patrick
Really?

Billy
Yeah. They were awful. One of those "lookalike" bands. Dreadful. I don't
think anyone liked the original Rubettes - let alone his lot. They didn't sound the
same and they looked nothing like them. I reckon he only did it
'cos he fancied the guitarist.

Patrick
Danny was gay?

Billy
No. She's a woman. Anyway, they're on a tour of Belgium with Disco Tex and
the Sex - O - Lettes. So they won't be here.

Patrick
No girlfriend....children ?

Billy
No. You know what Danny was like.

Patrick
Well, no. I haven't seen him since school.

Billy
Oh yeah. Of course.

Patrick
I haven't seen him for over twenty years.

Billy
Right.

Patrick
I wouldn't recognise him if I passed him in the street. I've no idea what he looks like.

BILLY looks at PATRICK then towards the open coffin and then back to PATRICK.

Patrick
I'm not sure about this.

Billy
Go on. He's dead. Pretend you're Quincy.

PATRICK doesn't move.

Billy
Go on. It's not like he's going to leap up and go boo, is he ?
PATRICK stands up and makes his way to the coffin.. He looks in.

Patrick
Oh yes. Yes. That's Danny.

Billy
Thank God for that.

BILLY joins PATRICK

Patrick
(looking at corpse)
Nice suit.

PATRICK eases forward slightly for a closer look

Billy
(loud)
Boo.

PATRICK jumps in genuine surprise and shock.

Patrick
(catching his breath)

Jesus Christ!

Billy
No. Quincy wouldn't have done that.

PATRICK moves back to the table.

Patrick
(drains glass)
What time is the funeral?

He refills his glass.

Billy
Ten o' clock. They're picking him up from here at nine thirty.

Patrick
And we're all leaving from here?

Billy
(slightly confused)
Yeah.

Patrick
Right. I'll get here for nine fifteen.

Billy
From where?

Patrick
From the hotel.

Billy
What hotel?

Patrick
Sorry-. I'll leave you the number,

He reaches in his pocket for a pen.

Billy
But we're meant to stay with him all night.

Patrick
What ?

Billy

We're supposed to stay with him all night.

Patrick
No....

Billy
Yeah. It's Danny's Mum. Some old Catholic tradition and you can't argue with a fundamentalist like her. She makes the Pope look like Che Guevera. We have to protect the body from the Devil. Although, if the Devil did turn up - it wouldn't be much of a fight, would it? The Dread Lord of Darkness and Prince of all things Evil versus a Plumber and a Teacher.

A pause.

Patrick
All night?

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
But I've booked a room.

Billy
It'll be alright.

Patrick
But they've got my credit card number. They'll charge me for it.

Billy
Call them. Tell them that there's been an unexpected death in the family.

A pause.

Billy
It's only one night.

BLACKOUT.

(....and " Sugar Baby Love " by the Rubettes)

Scene Two Some time later. Both are sitting at the table. They each have a glass in front of them, BILLY'S is full. The vodka bottle is half full. They are not pissed but the atmosphere is more relaxed.

Patrick

...it's alright for her....that's fine and I have no problem with that. That's her way and that's fine. But I have a responsibility to my career as well and that should be fine too. But it isn't and that's why we have to look at where we are. We have to look at where we are, recognises that that *is* where we are and say," OK. This is where we are. Where do we want to be? " and the answer is that we want to be somewhere else....

Billy
Right.

Patrick

..but somewhere else together. Not separate places. You have to work at it...not just pack up when things aren't going so well and say." Oh no. I can't cope. Let's get divorced. " That's just being a coward and not facing the difficulties that may exist between you.

Billy
Right.

Patrick

You can't just bail out when things aren't going your way. With Charlotte and me, I'll be honest. It's a bit shaky at the moment...

Billy
Right.

Patrick

..but we keep trying. Because if you don't - that's it.

Billy
Right.

Patrick
It's over. All gone.

Billy
Right. So. Do you want a pizza?

Patrick

Oh yes. (*picks up leaflet*) Sorry. Yes. I'll have a large, deep pan Hawaiian with extra pineapple.

Billy

(picks up cordless and dials)

Yeah two pizzas for home delivery.....Hello Dave. They've got you working nights, then?.....yeah.,,.....yeah....*(laugh's)*... that'll teach them to order garlic bread.....yeah....oh well.....yeah, the usualthat's it...and I'd like one large deep pan Hawaiian with extra pineapple...yes I have.....no, a man.....*(laughs)*.... alrightlovely....bye. *(switches off phone)*

It'll be about half an hour.

Patrick

Look. I didn't mean anything about you getting divorced. I was just talking about Charlotte and me - not you., it's us.. I wasn't...you know...

Billy

Don't worry. I wasn't really listening.

Patrick

Oh good. *(raising glass)* To Danny.

Billy

(raises glass)

To Danny.

PATRICK drain his glasses. BILLY puts his glass on the table untouched. PATRICK does the alcohol shudder. He gets up and walks over to the coffin. BILLY refills his glass.

Billy

Is he still there?

Patrick

Yes.

Billy

Good.

BILLY brings refilled glass to PATRICK. They dink glasses. For a moment they both look into the coffin in silence.

Patrick

That is a really nice suit.

Billy

He bought it as a treat for himself because he'd signed this big deal with some holiday camp. It would have kept the Rarebits working right through the summer.

Patrick
The Rarebits?

Billy
That's what the band are called. Y'know ,The Rubettes - The Rarebits.

Patrick
The Rarebits?

Billy
They're Welsh.

Patrick
(*disbelief*)
No

Billy
It's true. It was Danny's idea.

Patrick
It's awful.

Billy
I know but then - so are they.

Patrick
The Welsh Rarebits.

Billy
Anyway, he got this big deal and bought the suit. A week later - he's dead.

Patrick
Terrible, isn't it?

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
He's only young.

Billy
Same age as us.

Patrick
Well, that's young, isn't it?

Billy
Depends how old you are.

Patrick
What does?

Billy
Whether we're young or not.

Patrick
What do you mean?

Billy
To kids - we're old. To teenagers - we're old. To kids in their twenties - we're old....and to the thirtysomethings - we're terrifying.

Patrick
Why?

Billy
Because they know that they'll soon be our age and that means they're old.

Patrick
We're not old. We're just.....older.

A pause

Patrick
Your Dad.....

Billy
Yeah?

Patrick
How old was he when he.....you know....passed over..

Billy
Died, you mean?

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
I'm not sure. 69? 70?

Patrick
That's no age, is it?

Billy
Do what?

Patrick
That's no age is it?

Billy
Depends how old you are.

Patrick
You know what I mean..

Billy
He smoked thirty a day and got drunk every night He did alright.

Patrick
Was it a long illness?

Billy
No. Out of the blue. Three years ago. I got back from work one evening and he said he'd had a headache all day. I said it was probably just a hangover. He told me he never had a hangover in his life and a drink would sort him out. I gave him a tenner and he went down the pub. A couple of hours later - he's dead.

Patrick
God! Heart attack ?

Billy
No. He got hit by a bus coming out of the Dog and Ferret. Killed instantly.
Daft old bugger.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
No. It's a joke.

Billy
It is not a joke. It may sound funny but that's what happened.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Yeah.

A pause

Patrick
No.

Billy
Yes. Ask Frances. Shell be there tomorrow..

Patrick
That's terrible.

Billy
No it's not. What better way to go? You've had a laugh with your mates, you're on your way home - out of your skull with a fag on At the moment that bus hit - he was really happy. You can't ask for more than that can you?

Patrick
I suppose so.

Billy
You can't live forever, Nick Nack.

Patrick
I'd just like a little more warning. That's all.

Billy
What for?

Patrick
I don't know. There might be things that I want to do.

Billy
Why wait until you're going to die?

Patrick
I'm not saying that. I just mean that I would like to know ahead so I could do all the things that I hadn't got round to.

Billy
Like what?

Patrick
I don't know. Maybe I'd like to..... take acid.

Billy
You could do that now.

Patrick
No I couldn't. I'm married.

Billy
So what?

Patrick
So.....so.....I couldn't.

Billy
Yes, you could.

Patrick
No. I couldn't.

Billy
Think about it. You're not a kid who doesn't know what he's doing. You're a mature man in his Forties...

Patrick
..early Forties...

Billy
..early Forties, You'd know what was going on. You'd know how to handle it. You'd be able to take care of yourself. Why not give it a go now - while you're still young enough to enjoy it?

Patrick
Because I am the deputy head of the English Department. My wife is a very successful businesswoman. We live in a large house in a quiet residential street. It wouldn't do to have me standing naked in the front garden/ covered in wode shouting, "The daffodils are our friends."

Billy
..pretend you're being sponsored.

Patrick
I'm serious. I have to set an example to my children and the children that I teach.

Billy
Oh, come on. The kids you teach don't give a toss about you.

Patrick
They do.

Billy
We didn't. Why should your lot be any different?

Patrick
It's all changed. It's not like it was when we were at school. For a start, you can't hit them.

Billy
Oh shame.

Patrick
If you had children- you'd see the difference.

Billy
Yeah...yeah...

Patrick
You would. Parent's evenings. We don't just palm them off with a couple of collages and some recorder music - we actually talk to them.

Billy
Now there's a thought...

Patrick
What ?

Billy
Parent's evening. Drop a tab in the staff room then watch Mr. and Mrs. Johnson turn into multi coloured flamingos while you discuss their little Geoffrey's progress...

Patrick
I don't need drugs. I've got kids. It's different for you.

Billy
How?

Patrick
There's only you.

Billy
So?

Patrick
So..you might need a little something to get you through life sometimes.

Billy
Why?

Patrick
Well, it must get lonely. Being here on your own.

Billy
No. I'm used to it.

Patrick
Yes but even so...

Billy
What?

Patrick
There must be times when you feel...alone.

Billy
Why?

Patrick
No why. I just thought that...you know... I've got my family . I'm never alone.
There's always someone there. Morning, evening, noon and night.
It's lovely

Billy
I've spent most of my life on my own and, apart from when me and Frances
lived together, I've always lived here.

Patrick
But when you were married - it must have been nice to know there was
someone there?

Billy
No. It was the worst two months of my life.

Patrick
Two months!

Billy
Yeah....I know, I know. But we learned a lot in that time.

Patrick
Oh yes?

Billy
Yeah. We learned that we should never have got married, in the first place.
We're much better now. We can tell each other anything which is more
than we did when we were married. By the last few weeks we weren't even
speaking.

Patrick
Not speaking for a few weeks? That's normal, for God's sake.

Billy
We knew that the right thing to do was to end it. No point in going through
the motions for years and years. Feeling the hatred grow inside you. Trapped in
a silent, lonely, desperate relationship for the rest of your life.

Patrick
No. No of course not.

A pause

Billy
How long has it been on the slide, then?

Patrick
What ?

Billy
Your marriage..

Patrick
It's not on the slide.

Billy
You said it was..

Patrick
I thought you said you weren't really listening?

Billy
I wasn't.

Patrick
I said shaky not on the slide..

A pause

Patrick

Once Sarah started school, Charlotte was free to start the business. You have to put the hours in to get something like that off the ground.. So she'd work later and later and I would.....

Billy

Five years.

Patrick

No. Not that long.

Billy

You said your Sarah was ten next birthday / you start school when you're five so it's been five years.

Patrick

We're fine. We still....talk.

Billy

About what?

Patrick

What do you mean?

Billy

What do you talk about?

Patrick

Anything. Everything. The kidshouse stuff,

Billy

Do you still have sex?

Patrick

What?

Billy

Do you still have sex?

Patrick

Yes, we do (*Beat*) Anyway, sex isn't the most important part of a marriage....

Billy

See? You don't

Patrick
We do..

Billy
Don't.

Patrick
Do...

Billy
Don't.....

Patrick
Do...

Billy
If you've both stopped fiddling with each other's bits - you're well past
shaky...

Patrick
At least we're still married, Mister.. (*tries to think of witty response*) not -
married - anymore.

Billy
Tosser.

Patrick
Wanker.

Billy
Fuck face.

Patrick
Spunk bubble.

They are both surprised. BILLY is amused. PATRICK is mortified.

Patrick
I apologise unreservedly.

Billy
I haven't been called a spunk bubble since school.

Patrick
Really. I didn't mean it. I've had a bit too much to drink.

Billy
No, don't worry. In a strange way it's quite.....comforting.

Patrick
I don't know why I said it.

Billy
Probably me calling you fuck face helped.

Patrick
..and wanker! I never use that word.

Billy
You used to. We all did. All the time. In fact, your favourite word was bollocks.
You were always " bollocks this" and " bollocks that".

Patrick
No.

Billy
Yes

A beat

Patrick
I should call Charlotte really.

BILLY gives him the cordless phone. PATRICK dials. BILLY refills Patrick's glass.

Patrick
(to Billy)
Just to let her know that I'm here not at the..
(He breaks off) Hello? Hello. Yes, I'm fine. How are you? Good. Yes, please. Thank you. *(He waits)* Hello? I see. Yes, please. Could you tell her that I'm staying at my friend's house tonight - not the hotel - and I'll call her in the morning. Yes. Thank you. Bye
(He puts the phone on the table).

Billy
I thought you were calling home.

Patrick
I was. That was my son, Simon.

Billy
...and he's twelve next birthday?

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
He sounds very.....efficient.

Patrick
Efficient? Yes, that's a good word for him.

Billy
You must be very proud of him.

Patrick
Why? I mean - yes! Yes, I am. Both of them. They're lovely.

Billy
We didn't have kids. You're a lucky man. Having someone who looks up to you, always coming up for hugs, falls asleep on your lap, asks for stories...It must be wonderful.

Patrick
Yes, it must be - is!

A pause

Billy
You know what we should do now.

Patrick
What?

Billy
Take Danny down the pub.

Patrick
(laughs)
Yes. *(Beat)* You're serious.

Billy
Bloody right.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Why not?

Patrick
We can't.

Billy
Why not?

Patrick
Because.... it's—illegal!

Billy
Is it?

Patrick
It must be - otherwise everyone would be doing it.

Billy
Come on.

Patrick ;
Oh, I don't know about this.....

Billy
What? Are you scared?

Patrick
No.

Billy
You are.

Patrick
I'm not.

Billy
Same with the radiator.

Patrick
What?

Billy
You weren't on the roof with me and Danny and the bangers. You went home.

Patrick
It was probably tea time.

Billy
No. You were scared.

Patrick
I wasn't.

Billy
You were. You were always scared.

Patrick
I wasn't. Tosser.

Billy
Wanker.

Patrick
Fuck face.

Billy
Brick shitter..

Patrick
Alright then. Let's go.

Billy
It'll be a laugh.

Patrick
Yes...see if anyone notices.

Billy
I bet nobody does.

Patrick
We could sit at a table in the back and cover his....

Billy
We'll have to stand at the bar because we can't bend his legs.

Patrick
Then how will we get him to the bar?

Billy
We'll have to half carry him as if he was drunk.

Patrick
But if they think he's drunk - they won't serve him.

Billy
We don't want them to serve him or they'll find out he's dead.

Patrick
But if they won't serve him what's the point of taking him to the pub?

Billy
The point is - he's dead. We know. They don't.

Patrick
(*understanding*)
I see.

Billy
So, one of us will get the drinks....

Patrick
....and the other one will pretend to be talking to Danny

Billy
People might be listening.

Patrick
The walls have ears.

Billy
What will you talk to him about?

Patrick
Me?

Billy
I'm getting the drinks.

Patrick
Oh right.

Billy
So what will you talk about?

Patrick
Something that I can talk about at length.

Billy
Something that will hold his attention.

Patrick
Something that he will listen to in stony silence.

Billy
Like a dead man.

Patrick
Exactly. But what?

Billy
Religion?

Patrick
.....or Politics?

Billy
.....or sport?

Patrick
....or the extension that you are having built so that your wife can have a proper office space at home even though she already has a perfectly good office where she spends all the hours God gives while Muggins here looks after the kids. No she's got to have another office at home in case "Debbie" needs to get hold of her or "Jeremy" has to speak to her from New York. Doesn't matter that I might want to have a little room where I could shut the door on the world and watch "Countdown" No. That's not important because I'm just a teacher and she's the arsey boss of a pissy management consultancy toss pot firm.

A pause

Patrick
....or gardening?

Billy
The extension will be perfect.

Patrick
That's what Charlotte says.

Billy
No wonder his eyes are glazed.

Patrick
But...

Billy
But what?

Patrick
But what happens if someone comes up and talks to him?

Billy
Ah...

Patrick
Ah...

Billy
What do they want to talk about?

Patrick
They fancy Danny?

Billy
They fancy a dead man?

Patrick
They don't know he's dead.

Billy
Of course.

Patrick
So?

Billy
Tell them he's engaged.

Patrick
To whom.?.

Billy
To who?

Patrick
To whom?

Billy
Do they need to know?

Patrick
They might ask.

Billy
They have a right to know.

Patrick
They do indeed.

Billy
They must be told.

Patrick
Told what?

Billy
That he is engaged.....to Clodagh Rogers.

Patrick
Oh, lucky man.. Clodagh Rogers is gorgeous.

Billy
What if they fancy you?

Patrick
They won't fancy me.

Billy
They do fancy you!

Patrick
They do?

Billy
They do.

Patrick
But I'm married with children

Billy
They don't care.

Patrick
They don't?

Billy
No.

Patrick
Then neither do I.

Billy
What about me?

Patrick
What about you.

Billy
Do they fancy me?

Patrick
How could they resist?

Billy
At last.

Patrick
They fancy both of us.

Billy
They do?

Patrick
They do.

Billy
I'll buy them a drink.

Patrick
What about Danny?

Billy
He's had enough. He can barely stand.

Patrick
We should get him home.

Billy
But Alison want's to know what you teach.

Patrick
Alison?

Billy
Alison and Moira. I've got a table. They're waiting.

Patrick
(*suggesting*)
Abigail and Moira?

Billy
(*in agreement*) Abigail and Moira.

Patrick
Moira. That's the name of Danny's sister.

Billy
So?

Patrick
Did you fancy Danny's sister?

Billy
Leave it.

Patrick
OK.

Billy
Are you coming over?

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
We're having a great time. They really like us.

Patrick
Do they? This is fantastic.

Billy
Abigail wants to know what you teach.

Patrick
I teach English.

Billy
She's impressed.

Patrick
Moira wants to know if she's Danny's sister?

Billy
Leave it.

Patrick
OK.

Billy
Moira wants to go for something to eat.

Patrick
(unsure)
So does Abigail?

Billy
Yes.

Patrick
(definite)
So does Abigail.

Billy
Chinese?

Patrick
Pizza?

Billy
Indian?

Patrick
That Japanese muck

Billy
Sushi?

Patrick
Bless you.

They do a high five over the table.

Patrick
If only Charlotte could see me now.

Billy
She'd be amazed?

Patrick.
She'd be amazed.

Billy
She'd be so jealous. She'd be begging you to come home.

A Beat

Patrick
She'd be amazed.

Billy
Come on, ladies. Let's go eat.

Patrick
In was in the early hours of the morning May 2nd 1997.

Billy
(To Abigail and Moira) Excuse me,. What was?

Patrick
The last time that Charlotte and I had sex.

Billy
(disbelief)
No.

Patrick
Oh yes. I remember. Believe me, I remember. We'd stayed up all night watching the results come in. It was fantastic. Drinking champagne, cheering each time a Tory lost his seat - when Mellor and Portillo went I thought I was going to die of happiness. It was like a dream. We were both so excited. Next thing I know we're having sex in front of the telly while David Dimbleby introduced us to some of the new faces in Parliament.

Billy
Blimey.

A pause

Billy
...and since then? No sex?

Patrick
No. No sex..

A pause

Billy
They're both need to freshen up.

Patrick
Who?

Billy
Abigail and Moira!. They've gone to the loo.

Patrick
Oh right.

Billy
They won't belong.

Patrick
Great

Billy
Do you want a cigar?

Patrick
I don't smoke.

Billy
Neither do I.

Patrick
I'll get two.

Billy
Big fat ones like rich people smoke.

Patrick
..and champagne!

Billy
Champagne!

Patrick
A bottle?

Billy
A magnum?

Patrick
A jereboam?

Billy
A.....fucking big one.

PATRICK pretends to open a bottle, does the "pop" as the cork flies out and fills their imaginary glasses.

Patrick
Cheers.

Billy
Cheers.

They dink imaginary glasses.

Patrick
What about Danny?

Billy
He's dead to the world.

Patrick
Sex isn't everything, anyway.

Billy
No. But it is something.

Patrick
..and we do talk.

Billy
Good.

Patrick
I think we've just forgotten that we fancy each other.

Billy
That is one thing that Frances and I never forgot. Never have forgot

Patrick
But you divorced?

Billy
. . Sex isn't everything.

Patrick
No. No of course not.

Billy
Don't get me wrong. We couldn't stand each other when we were married. But
that never stopped the passion...the lust.

Both are lost in thought for a moment.

Billy
I remember once when we were in Tosco's and.....

Patrick
I don't want to know.

Billy
Fair enough..

Patrick
More champagne?

Billy
Why not?

Patrick
Game of darts?

Billy
Do you play?

Patrick
No.

Billy
Neither do I.

Patrick
I'll go first.

PATRICK pretends to throw three darts.

Billy
One hundred and eighty! My go.

BILLY pretends to throw three darts.

Patrick
One hundred and eighty, too.

Billy
You can't score one hundred and eighty two.

Patrick
No....I meant "as well"

Billy
As well as what?

Patrick
As well as me.

Billy
I don't understand.

Patrick
Let's not play darts.

Billy
Danny used to play darts.

Patrick
Was he any good?

Billy
No. He looked like he was good. He had his own darts, he could add up really quickly. But he was crap. He was like that with everything.

Patrick
I just remember him being good at everything.

Billy
That's what I mean. Everybody thought he was good at everything but I knew he was good at nothing. And Moira. She always said he was crap.

Patrick
Moira? *Moira* Moira ? Or....you know....the other one.

Billy
Moira Moira.

Patrick
Right (Beat) Which one's that?

Billy
I don't know. You started it.

Patrick
Is Moira in the loo Danny's sister Moira or is she just a Moira.....full stop.

A pause

Patrick
Oh, come on. I told you that I haven't had sex for two years.

A pause

Patrick
It is his sister, isn't it?

A pause

Billy
It was alright when we were little. She was just a boy with a dress on. But when puberty hit - wham! - overnight she turned intoAlexadra Bastedo.

Patrick
(to coffin)
Oh, lucky man. Alexandra Bastedo is gorgeous.....

Billy
It was torture going round to his house. If she was there -I had to pretend not to notice her. If she wasn't there -I had to pretend not to notice that she wasn't there. One summer, , me and Danny were mucking around in his front room - trying to fit all his clothes into a tiny suitcase when she came back from shopping with her mates. I can see her now. She was wearing this purple hot pants suit. I took one look at her and I forgot how to speak English. She asked me what I thought of her new outfit and all that came out of my mouth was vowel sounds. Danny's mum thought I had heatstroke and I had to come home early.

Patrick
Didn't you ever tell her?

Billy
The night before she left for Australia. She had a big leaving do. We were all a bit pissed. As she was about to leave, I pulled her into the kitchen and blurted it all out. Everything I felt. I told her that I had always loved her and would always love her. When I'd finished, she looked at me for a moment and her eyes started to fill up. Then, very gently, she put her hands on my face, smiled and said." Oh, Billy." She gave me a pack on the cheek, a hug, her address in Australia and left.

Patrick
What about Danny?

Billy
He was too busy trying to get off with my Frances.

Patrick
You were still married?

Billy
No. We'd been divorced about a year. She was the one who told me to tell Moira. She was right.

Patrick
..even so.

Billy
...even so what?

Patrick
I wouldn't have stood for it.

Billy
..stood for what?

Patrick
Danny trying it on with your ex - wife.

Billy
Frances could take care of herself. She thought Danny was a tosser anyway.

Patrick
Well, I would have sorted him out.

Billy
Oh yeah?

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
How?

Patrick
I'd have hit him.

Billy
(dismissively)
Yeah, yeah....

Patrick
I would.

Billy
You never hit anyone.

Patrick
I did.

Billy
You didn't.

Patrick
I did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Who?

Patrick
Who?

Billy
Who ?

A pause

Patrick
Micky Chandler.

Billy
Micky Chandler!

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
Micky Chandler!

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
You hit Les McKeowen!

Patrick
Yes.

A pause

Billy
You did not.

Patrick
I did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
When?

Patrick
He'd taken my pencil case...

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
..so I asked him for it back...

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
...and he wouldn't..

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
..so I waited for him after school...

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
I asked him again and he said he wouldn't.

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
..so I hit him.

A pause.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
How come I didn't know?

Patrick
Because I didn't tell anyone.

Billy
Why?

Patrick
Because....I don't know.

Billy
Because it didn't happen.

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Didn't

Patrick
Did.

Billy
Didn't.

Patrick
Father Delahunty ! I told Father Delahunty.

Billy
Father Delahunty.! Confession. Every Wednesday afternoon.

Patrick
..and you'd always go because it got you out of whatever lesson you were
supposed to be doing.

Billy
...and you'd always make sure you didn't follow Danny into the
confessional.

Patrick
Why?

Billy
Because before he'd leave the confessional, Danny would fart and quickly
close the door to trap it in there.

Patrick
But that would have invalidated his absolution and left him in a state of mortal
sin because he had deliberately ridiculed God in his house of
worship.

A pause

Billy
You're still a Catholic, then ?

Patrick
No, not really, just Christmas and Easter.

Billy
Yeah,..yeah...

Patrick
..it's not like I go to church every Sunday.

Billy
No. 'Course not.

Patrick
I haven't had communion for years...

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
Look, I am not a Catholic.

A pause

Patrick
Well, what if I am.

Billy
I knew it.

Patrick
Tosser.

Billy
Wanker.

Patrick
Fuck face.

Billy
Altar boy. Heads up. They're back.

Patrick
Who?

Billy
Abigail and Moira.

Patrick
They were in the loo for ages.

Billy
They were probably talking about us.

Patrick
Shall I get some more drinks?

Billy
Why not?

Patrick
What'll it be?

Billy Moira wants another Vodka and lime.

Patrick
(*remembering*)
Oh yes....

Billy
What?

Patrick
What what?

Billy
You said "Oh yes"

Patrick
So?

Billy
So why?

Patrick
Why?

Billy
Yes. Why?

Patrick
I'd forgotten that Moira drank Vodka and lime..

A pause

Billy
How did you know?

Patrick
What?

Billy
How did you know that she drank Vodka and lime?

Patrick
Because that's what she was drinking at the party.

Billy
What party?

Patrick
The party at Danny's flat.

Billy
The fancy dress? Don't be daft. She was only 12.

Patrick
Not the fancy dress - the 18th.

Billy
Danny didn't have an 18th Birthday Party. For his 18th, I took Danny to the pub. Then, we had a Chinese. Then we sat in his front room drinking Pomagne and listening to Tubular Bells.

Patrick
So?

Billy
So how did you know that Moira drank Vodka and lime?

Patrick
Well, how did you know?

Billy

Her favourite colour - purple. Her favourite book - The Hobbit. Her favourite author - Dennis Wheatley. Her favourite food - Vesta Chicken Curry. Her favourite animal - Koala Bears. Her favourite football team - Chelsea. Her favourite player - Alan Hudson. Her favourite group - Early teens - Monkees. Mid - teens - T. Rex Late teens /early twenties - Bowie. Her favourite actor - Alan Bates, Her favourite actress - Julie Christie Her favourite film - " A Matter of Life and Death " by Michael Powell. Starring David Niven. Her favourite drink - Vodka and lime

Patrick
Right

A pause

Patrick
You do know that's a little bit scary. don't you?

Billy
How did you know?

Patrick
It was her 18th.

Billy
You mean her 21st and you weren't there

Patrick
No, I mean her 18th and you weren't there

Billy
(stunned)
No.

Patrick
Yes.

Billy
Moira's 18th Birthday party - July 30th 1970

Patrick
Yes. I met her in town - she was out shopping with her mates..

Billy
The purple hot pants suit.

Patrick
Yes. It was her birthday suit.

Billy
..and?

Patrick
She said she was having her 18th Birthday party and did I want to come.

Billy
Yes?

Patrick
She said it would be fun. She had the flat to herself,. *(remembering)* Apparently, Danny was going away for the weekend with his parents.

Billy
..a getaway, family - fun weekend at Butlins with me and my Dad.

Patrick
That's right. So I went and she was drinking vodka and lime. That's how I know.

A pause

Billy
What was it like?

Patrick
Usual sniff. Everybody trying to get off with everybody else.

Billy
Did youget off withanyone?

Patrick
Me? I was younger than the others. I might as well have had the plague.

Billy
and Moira?.

Patrick
She was really nice to me.

Billy
Oh?

Patrick
She kept an eye on me all the way through the party

Billy
Nothing else?

Patrick
No.

Billy
Good.

Patrick
We had a slow dance and a bit of a snog at the end.

Billy
What?

Patrick
We had a slow dance...

Billy
and a bit of a snog.

Patrick
Yes. Nothing really.

Billy
Nothing really! It was dreams like that got me through puberty.

Patrick
Shall I get the drinks in, then?

Billy
Not now.

Patrick
Why not?

Billy
Because you had a slow dance and a bit of a snog with Moira.

Patrick
Come on.

Billy
No. You've ruined it. now.

Patrick
I'll get some crisps and we..

Billy
(sulky)
No.

A pause

Patrick
We could get a taxi and go...

Billy
(sulky)
NO!

A pause

Patrick
What are we going to do, then?

Billy
(sulky)
I think you better go home.

Patrick
What!

Billy
(sulky)
I'll call a cab.

Patrick
To take me where?

Billy
(sulky)
Your stupid hotel.

Patrick
I cancelled my stupid hotel.

Billy
(sulky)
They've probably got another room. It's a crap hotel. Nobody ever stays there.

Patrick
Then why do you want me to stay there??

Billy
(sulky)
Because I don't really like you.

Patrick
I don't really like you either....

Billy
(in phone)
Hello? Trusty Cabs?

PATRICK grabs the phone and switches it off.

Billy
Give me my phone.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Give me my phone.

Patrick
No.

A pause

Billy
Please give me my phone.

Patrick
No.

Billy
Please can I have my phone?

Patrick
NO

A pause

Billy
Please can I have my phone, please.

Patrick
No.

Billy
I'll tell your wife.

Patrick
I don't care.

A pause

Billy
Give me back my phone or I'll hit you.

Patrick
Oh and that's the answer, is it? Violence is the answer, is it?

Billy
Yeah.

PATRICK gives BILLY the phone.

Patrick
Alright. There's your precious phone. Your precious, priceless phone. You call your precious cab company and order a cab. But, I'm telling you. that I'm not going anywhere, No Mister - I've - got - a- phone. No. I'm staying here to watch over the body of a friend and if that means you have to hit me then so be it.

PATRICK puts the phone on the table. As BILLY reaches across and picks up the phone -PATRICK jumps. BILLY puts the phone back on the table. PATRICK regains his composure.

Billy
He was my friend - not yours.

Patrick
Your friend! You haven't had a good word to say about him all night.

Billy
I said he was my friend. I didn't say I liked him.

Patrick
Alright. If you're such a good friend - when did you last see him ?

Billy
The day he bought the suit.

Patrick
What date?

Billy
I don't know.

Patrick
Alright. What did you do ?

Billy
He came round, showed off the suit, took the piss and left.

Patrick
What time was it?

Billy
I don't know. Afternoon.....some time

Patrick
Day ?

Billy
Tuesday or Wednesday.

Patrick
So your " friend" comes to see you just before he dies and you can't remember anything about it.

Billy
does it matter if I.

Patrick
I last saw Danny on Wednesday August 26th 1970. At about 10.30 am. He was standing in the street outside my house waving goodbye as we drove to Devon to see Granddad Tom.

A pause

Billy
You're making it up.

Patrick

It's true. Danny had managed to get two tickets for the Isle of Wight festival. He asked me if I wanted to buy one. The Isle of Wight festival. Hendrix's final gig. The last chance to see the greatest guitarist of all time and my parents said I could go! They even gave me the money to buy the ticket. I was so excited. I was going to a rock festival. You know what you are like at fifteen - you're just a swarm of hormones. All the possibilities. Girls, tents and Hendrix. We were going to meet on the Thursday morning at Waterloo, down to Portsmouth and over on the ferry.

But, at 7.00am on the morning of Wednesday August 26th, 1970 Granddad Tom called to tell us that Granny Mary had died in her sleep. So we had to drive down to be with him. I wouldn't have minded but she was the granny I didn't like. So I phoned Danny.

He came over and I told him that I couldn't go. And do you know what he said? He said, "If you can't go - I won't go either"

And that was the last time I saw him, waving goodbye. It was the O level summer. Danny didn't come back to do the sixth form, did he? I spoke to him on the phone a couple of times. We were supposed to meet up for a drink but....you make new friends, don't you?

But I've never forgotten that sacrifice he made for me. I never will,

A pause

Billy

Actually, he sold your ticket and went anyway.

Patrick

What?.

Billy

He said it was silly to waste it.

Patrick

What do you mean he sold it. I paid for that ticket. Who did he sell it to?

A pause

Patrick

You bastard.

Billy

Oh, come on.

Patrick
You complete bastard.

Billy
Don't blame me - blame Danny.

Patrick
Oh yes, blame a dead man.

Billy
He wasn't dead then, was he?

Patrick
Why didn't you tell me?

Billy
Danny told me not to tell anyone.

A pause

Patrick
What was he like?

Billy
Who?

Patrick
Hendrix.

Billy
I spent the afternoon drinking cider with this hippy bloke who called himself Gandalf. The last thing I remember is taking a lug on a joint. Apparently, I made it back to our tent, crawled in and slept through until lunchtime the next day.

Patrick
You slept through Hendrix?

Billy
We were so far back from the stage that you couldn't see or hear anything anyway.

A pause

Patrick
I've told my children that story as an example of true friendship.

Billy
It was a long time ago.

Patrick
I've told class loads of children that story in the hope it might inspire them to similar acts of selfless generosity.

Billy
I didn't even like Hendrix

Patrick
It had become, in many ways, a solid foundation upon which I ...what do you mean you didn't like Hendrix?

Billy
I mean I didn't like Hendrix.

Patrick
But we all loved Hendrix.

Billy
Musketees.

Patrick
What?

Billy
You liked Hendrix. I didn't.

Patrick
You didn't?

Billy
No.

Patrick
Are you sure?

Billy
Yes

Patrick
Who did you like, then?

Billy
T. Rex....David Bowie..

Patrick
What about Danny?

Billy
He wasn't really into music. Well, look at the Rarebits.

Patrick
(getting angry)
Not into music.

Billy
(getting angry)
No.

Patrick
(angry)
Then what did he go for?

Billy
(angry)
I don't know. Maybe he liked camping.

Patrick
(angry)
Hendrix's last gig and you got stoned.

Billy
(angry)
Oh what - and he wasn't?

Patrick
(angry)
Don't you understand ? You missed Hendrix.

Billy
(angry)
I know. I was there.

A pause

Billy
(gently)
It was a dump. It was muddy, smelly, surrounded by corrugated iron that people kept trying to break down. There were security guards with their dogs and, worst of all, Joan Baez. It really wasn't all that.

A pause

Patrick
It wasn't so much of a slow dance as a slow* - hold - each - other - up- as -you -
drunkenly - stumble - round - in - a - circular - lurch.

Billy
..and the snog?

A pause

Patrick
She kept her mouth closed and I ended up licking her lips.

Billy
Oh well.

Patrick
I didn't really hit Micky Chandler.

Billy
I know

A pause

Billy
I didn't really go to the Isle of Wight.

Patrick
Yes, you did.

Billy
Yeah, I did.

They both look down at DANNY

Patrick
At least we're still up and walking around.

Billy
Yeah. Let's not forget why we're here.

Patrick
(raises glass)
To Danny. A selfish, two faced, lyingspunk bubble.

Billy
Amen.

Very loud door bell rings..

Billy
Ah! Pizza!

BLACKOUT (.....and " Good Morning " by the Beatles)

Scene Three *Next morning. Vodka bottle almost empty. Two pizza boxes lying around.. PATRICK enters. Looking frail. He has a glass of water in his hand.. The lid is on the coffin. He makes his way to the coffin. As puts his hand on the lid, BILLY enters.*

Billy
(loud)
Boo!

PATRICK jumps.

Patrick
Jesus Christ!

Billy
..and a good morning to you too. Sleep alright?

Patrick
I've no idea. . What time is it?

Billy
9.15.

Patrick
9.15 ! They'll be here soon.

Billy
Don't worry. They'll wait. Can't start without Danny. Do you want a paracetamol?

Patrick
No, thanks. This is beyond paracetamol.

Billy
Fry up?

Patrick
Very funny. How come you're so bright and breezy ?

Billy
I didn't drink anything.

Patrick
Nothing at all?

Billy
Nothing at all. I don't drink anymore

Patrick
So...everything you said last night....you were sober.

Billy
Yeah.

Patrick
You can't say that it was the drink talking and you didn't really mean it

Billy
No. I don't have to do that.

Patrick
Have you seen my watch?

Billy
You gave it to me last night....

Patrick
(head in hands)
Oh no...

Billy
..with the promise that" Whenever you look at that watch, you'll...

Patrick
..always remember the time we spent together.". Every time I get drunk – it's the same. There are hundreds of complete strangers walking round this planet with my watch on their wrist.

Billy
I put it in your bag.

Patrick
Thanks.

PATRICK goes to his bag, unzips it and takes out the watch. He looks in the bag, looks at BILLY and pulls out a suit jacket.

Patrick
What's this?

Billy
You said you liked it.

Patrick
You're not serious?

Billy
Why not? It's only going to get burnt.

Patrick
When did you get this?

Billy
After you passed out. Try it on.

Patrick
No! It's a dead man's suit. A suit that until very recently was actually being worn by a dead man.

Billy
Look. What difference is it going to make to him?

A pause

Patrick
He's not naked in there, is he?

Billy
No. I gave him one of my old suits.

PATRICK goes to the coffin and lifts the lid. He looks in.

Patrick
A boiler suit?

Billy
It seemed appropriate.

Patrick
Look, Billy, I can't take this.

Billy
Why not? He's dead.

Patrick
What if his mother sees me in it?

Billy
She lives here - you live in Bournemouth, You're hardly likely to bump into each other on the way to bingo, are you?

Patrick
We've got to put it back.

Billy
No way. It took hours to get the bloody thing off. Keep it.

Patrick
I can't.

Billy
You can.

Patrick
I can't.

Billy
(sings softly)
Billy rapped all night about his suicide, How he'd kick it in the head when he was twenty five,
Speed jive,
Don't want to stay alive when you're twenty five.

Patrick
I know I said it was a nice suit but it was the drink talking. I didn't really mean it.

Billy
(sings softly)
And Wendy's stealing clothes from Marks and Sparks
And Freddie's s got spots from ripping off the stars,
On his face,
Funky little boat race.

PATRICK joins in.

Television man is crazy,
saying we're juvenile delinquent wrecks,
Oh man,
I need TV when I've got T.Rex.

The doorbell rings loudly. They stop singing. PATRICK looks at the suit and then looks to BILLY.

Patrick
Oh bollocks. Why not?.

BLACKOUT
(...and "AU the Young Dudes " by Mott the Hoople.)

The End