

“GET REAL”

by

Kevin Fegan

Commissioned and produced by Blackpool Grand
Theatre 2003

© Kevin Fegan 2002

e-mail: kev@kevinfegan.co.uk

website: www.kevinfegan.co.uk

35 West Hill Drive, Mansfield, Notts NG18 1PL

mobile: 07904111671

“GET REAL” by Kevin Fegan ©

CHARACTERS

Garstang

Wyre

Revoe

Car 1

Car 2

Car 3

Car 4

Hardhorn

Hawes

Hoohill

P.C.Trunnah

P.C.Stanah

Squires

Staining

Skippool

Ballam/ D.I.Ballam

Pig 1

Pig 2

Pig 3

Pig 4

Pig 5

Pig 6

Cow 1

Cow 2

Cow 3

Cow 4

Cow 5

Cow 6

Sheep 1

Sheep 2

Sheep 3

Sheep 4

Sheep 5

Sheep 6

Chicken 1

Chicken 2

Chicken 3

Chicken 4

Chicken 5

Chicken 6

Rinkton

Warbreck

Police Artist

Chimera 1

Chimera 2

Chimera 3

Chimera 4

Police 1

Police 2

“GET REAL” BY KEVIN FEGAN

SCENE 1

PRE-SET IS AN EMPTY SHELL OF A CAR WITH FOUR SEATS AND A BOOT. THE CAR IS BRICKED UP WITH ITS WHEELS MISSING. ALSO PRE-SET IS A VIDEO PROJECTOR SCREEN.

MUSIC. FROM A HIGH VANTAGE POINT, A SECURITY GUARD, GARSTANG (WYRE’S DAD), IS OPERATING A LIVE CCTV CAMERA. HE IS PICKING UP THE AUDIENCE AS THEY TAKE THEIR SEATS. THE PICTURE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN. THE CAMERA IS LOOKING FOR SOMEONE. WHEN THE AUDIENCE IS SEATED, THE CAMERA PICKS OUT WYRE WHO IS IN THE AUDITORIUM. CAMERA ZOOMS IN SO HER FACE APPEARS LARGE ON THE SCREEN. WHEN SHE SEES HER FACE SHE REACTS WITH A “WHO, ME?” EXPRESSION. THE CAMERA NODS UP AND DOWN IN A “YES” MOTION. WYRE NODS “NO”. CAMERA NODS “YES” AGAIN AND WYRE MAKES HER WAY ONTO THE STAGE AS THE HOUSE LIGHTS GO OUT AND THE CCTV IS SWITCHED OFF.

WYRE

(TO GARSTANG)

I’m sorry you’ve been looking for me for so long.

What have I done wrong?

ON SCREEN APPEARS A PICTURE OF A BRAND
NEW BMW MINI, GIFT-WRAPPED WITH A HUGE
BOW.

WYRE

Oh, daddy – for me?

It’s a dream,

it’s the best birthday present ever,

I’m just going to love being seventeen.

Thank you, daddy.

IMAGE CHANGES TO A SET OF CAR KEYS.

GARSTANG THROWS HER THE SAME SET OF
KEYS AND EXITS. SCREEN CLOSES DOWN.

WYRE

(TO AUDIENCE) Hi, they call me Wyre

‘cause I’m one live chick -

you’d better believe it.

SHE STEPS FORWARD WITH HER KEYS.

I just love getting my keys out in a pub

and teasing some pre-pubescent boy:

“Do you wanna lift?”

Watching his face melt

when he realises this is my machine.

“As if – “ comes the reply.
Metallic racing green,
tinted windows, fuck-off fog-lights,
the horniest sounding horn ever,
top sound system – quad speakers
with a cute little d.j. stick,
engine purring like a pet tiger,
a bit-of-a-goer and, like me,
this car is all personality.
I’ve dressed the inside carefully
with artefacts to make me seem interesting:
an American novel,
a bandaged teddy bear stuck to the dash,
a European road atlas,
cd’s scattered carelessly
around a pot-pourri
and tissues for an emergency –
reclining seats, know what I mean?
Rizlas and roaches hidden under the seat –
mummy hardly knows I smoke ciggies,
let alone weed. I glance
over at the traffic lights,
smile and whisper, “Eat mud”,

‘cause I’m a tearaway, tuning
into my sounds, I dance
to the rhythm of driving,
the trance of traveling fast
without moving, like standing
still on a speeding planet Earth.

And in this trance
I look through my windscreen
and it’s as if I am creating
the world as I drive along.

It’s a technological trick,
nothing short of magic.

WYRE PUTS ON A CAR HALF-MASK,
PERSONIFYING HER AS A BMW MINI.

ENTER REVOE IN AN ALFA ROMEO HALF-MASK.
IMAGE OF AN ALFA ROMEO APPEARS ON
SCREEN.

REVOE

(TO AUDIENCE) The name’s Revoe.

If I was a car,
I’d be a top of the range T-Spark
Alfa Romeo – GTV
3 litre, 24 valve, V6, 2 door coupe.
Momo leather seats, heated,

wooden steering wheel,
super Lusso features:
electric everything.
17 inch boy-racer alloys,
factory-fitted aerodynamic pack,
side airbags and side impact bars,
body-colour bumpers,
specially lowered suspension,
climate control
and cd autochanger,
this car has real soul.
Superior handling, thrillsville,
with one of those sexy little grills
and, hey girls, rain-sensitive wipers,
anti-slip system
and a cute little stainless steel tailpipe.
Not exactly built to last,
more for show; but seriously fast,
lots of get-up-and-go.

WYRE

Hiya, Revoe.

REVOE

Hi Wyre – high-wire, get it?

WYRE

Heard it before – every time we meet.

REVOE

Nice wheels.

WYRE Wanna come for a spin?

REVOE Do I? Check out that sound system.

WYRE Hop in.

REVOE (TO AUDIENCE) We're best mates, me and Wyre,
we've known each other since we were kids,
like brother and sister.

(CONVINCING HIMSELF) I don't fancy her,
I'm not in love,
she's a mate, that's enough.
When I'm older I don't want a wife,
that's not the lifestyle for me.
I want a gorgeous ex
who's given me a beautiful son
who respects me as his dad.
We'll do boys' stuff together
and I'll buy him all the latest toys.
I'll see him at weekends;
but not at night
so I can still go out with friends.
I want to be a part-time dad
with a bachelor pad in town.

WYRE (TO AUDIENCE) I've thought about it, you know,
a one-to-one with Revoe,

but he’s such a boy.

It’s his age, he can’t help being sixteen.

Girls grow up much faster

if you know what I mean?

I want a man who wants to marry me;

but I won’t let him until we start a family.

We’ll be lovers and we’ll live separately

‘cause lads are great fun;

but, if you live with them,

they’re really smelly and untidy.

I need my nights out with the girls

and I need my privacy.

(TO REVOE) I’m meeting the possee on the circuit,

we’re going down the prom,

show off the new motor.

Not that I’m one to gloat,

I don’t know where you get that from.

THEY ARE JOINED BY A CHORUS OF CARS,

INCLUDING HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL.

CARS CHORUS

The lights in our eyes,

the music in our ears,

the power in our hands,

the fuel on our tongues.

CAR1 We're doing the circuit,
 speeding 'round town,
CAR2 drum 'n' bass in yer face,
CAR3 windows down, surround-sound,
CAR4 wheel-spinning,
 handbrake-skidding,
 headlights flashing,
 "honk if you wanna bonk",
CAR3 watching
CAR 4 for the cops,
CAR3 cruising
CAR 4 for the chicks,
CAR 1 for the lads,
CAR3 see and be seen,
 super-charged,
CAR2 putting it out,
 having it large.
CARS The lights in our eyes,
 the music in our ears,
 the power in our hands,
 the fuel on our tongues.
HARDHORN STEPS FORWARD. IMAGE OF
SHOGUN ON SCREEN.

HARDHORN

Mitsubishi Shogun,
four-by-four, 200 brake-horse-power,
“Windsurfers do it standing up”,
“If you’re not fast, you’re last”.
3.5 V6 Gdi under the hood,
ABS, PAS, EBD,
cruise-control, rock ‘n’ roll.
Aerofoils and spoilers –
back, front, on top, underneath, inside –
I’m spoiling for a fight,
wraparound bumpers and bullbars,
I’m an armoured car,
no one gets in my way.
I’m like a gym on wheels,
working out, pumping away,
extended wheelarches like muscular thighs
and forearms, bench seats and anti-roll bar,
impossible to push over,
and a chunky raised suspension
with a red light on the rear axle,
exposing the whole operation
like open-heart surgery.
And finally, my favourite bit:

a full spray job on the bonnet
with the words “I’m alright Jack”
and a tasty picture of a unicorn
with a naked tart on its back.

The name’s Hardhorn,
from the North shore
and this is my chick, Hawes.

HAWES JOINS HIM. IMAGE OF TIGRA ON
SCREEN.

HAWES

Hi, Vauxhall Tigra, that’s me.

That’s like “tiger”,
only at 1.4 litre I purr
rather than growl. It’s okay
for boys to growl, they’re born that way.

That’s why I’m with Hardhorn
‘cause he growls real good
like a Shogun should.

Do you like the paint-job?
It’s terracotta,
my favourite colour –
means “earthy”, you know, like clay.

“Down to earth”, that’s me,
but in a classy kind of way.

Tinted windows, like a popstar –
my manager says with a body
like mine, I could go far.

A six speaker system –
I’ve got a great pair of subwoofers,
if I say so myself.

Electric sunroof –
I find it helps with the tan.
Heated mirrors so I can
check my make-up
in Summer or Winter.

In fact, now I think about it,
I’m totally made-up.

HOOHILL JOINS THEM. THEY ALL RECOIL FROM
HIS PRESENCE. IMAGE OF SKODA ON SCREEN.

HOOHILL

Skoda – Favorit Forum Plus.

Okay, bit of a rustbucket;
but hey, I’m a regular passionwagon,
that’s me – don’t laugh,
your daughter could be in the back.

You need a sense of humour,
that’s why I have these stickers:

“Make love not war – see driver for details”.

Looks aren't everything,
some things don't want to happen quick.
No alloys but shiny wheel trims,
Recent respray – hand-painted,
sunroof – homemade,
FM radio – I'll have it working soon,
the wipers play a nice tune.
I always park on a hill
in case I have to bump-start,
a thrill a minute, this car,
best ride on the south coast.
Cheap insurance but no tax yet,
it's in the post.
I've written to Swansea,
but they say I'm not listed under cars.
Apparently, I'm quite famous
down at DVLC ,
they've created a new group
just for me, called Miscellaneous.
Oh, watch out for electric shocks
off the door handles
and, in a traffic jam, open the windows –
carbon monoxide in the cab, sorry.

Bit of a deathtrap, really:
have to book the brakes in advance,
overheats over fifty,
regular steambath.
You know what they say,
if looks could kill –
by the way, the name’s Hoohill.

CARS

The lights in our eyes,
the music in our ears,
the power in our hands,
the fuel on our tongues.

CAR3

Coppers – scatter.

ANIMATION CAR CHASE APPEARS ON SCREEN.
CARS EXIT. WYRE SITS IN THE DRIVER’S SEAT
OF THE OLD CAR. REVOE SITS NEXT TO HER.
HARDHORN AND HAWES SIT IN THE BACK
SEATS WHILE HOOHILL HIDES IN THE BOOT.
AS ANIMATION FINISHES, LIGHTS UP ON THE
CAR AND ENTER TWO POLICE CONSTABLES:
ONE FEMALE (STANAH), ONE MALE (TRUNNAH).

P.C.TRUNNAH

What d’you reckon, P.C.Stanah?

P.C.STANAH

I dunno P.C.Trunnah?

THEY APPROACH THE CAR.

TRUNNAH What’s going on here then?

REVOE Nothing.

TRUNNAH Who’s is it?

WYRE It’s my neighbour’s. She lets us sit in it as long as we don’t wreck it.

TRUNNAH A bit late for that, isn’t it? Now why do you think, P.C.Stanah, these kids would want to sit in old shed like this, if they weren’t up to no good?

STANAH I can’t imagine, P.C.Trunnah?

WYRE ‘Cause it’s warmer than the bus shelter, that’s why.

STANAH P.C.Trunnah, (POINTING) no tax disc.

TRUNNAH Good observation, P.C.Stanah.

WYRE It doesn’t go.

TRUNNAH It doesn’t matter. If it’s on the road, it’s supposed to have a tax disc.

REVOE It’s not on the road, it’s bricked up.

WYRE I don’t suppose you’ve observed that?

TRUNNAH Don’t get smart, young lady. What were you doing charging about like lunatics when we arrived on the scene?

REVOE Pretending to be cars.

TRUNNAH More like nicking cars.

WYRE What? You gonna do us for using our imaginations?

WYRE’S NEIGHBOUR, SQUIRES, POPS HER
HEAD OUT OF A WINDOW.

SQUIRES Is there a problem, officers?

TRUNNAH These your kids, madam?

SQUIRES Not exactly, no.

STANAH She doesn’t seem to know if they’re her kids or not,
P.C.Trunnah?

TRUNNAH I’m onto it, P.C.Stanah. This your car?

SQUIRES You could say that.

STANAH She doesn’t seem to know if it’s hers or not,
P.C.Trunnah.

TRUNNAH I said I’m on it, P.C.Stanah. You don’t mind them
sitting in it then?

SQUIRES Keeps them off the streets, I thought you’d be
pleased?

TRUNNAH Could be seen as encouraging them to rob cars,
madam?

SQUIRES They’re bored, look at them.

STANAH They do look bored, P.C.Trunnah?

TRUNNAH I can see that, thanks. I’m P.C.Trunnah, this here is
P.C.Stanah, we’re what you might call “community
policemen, er, persons” – in fact, we’re very p.c., if
you know what I mean?

NO REPLY.

P.C.TRUNNAH

Yes, well, if you have any trouble with these little hooligans, you just let us know.

(LEAVING) Come on Stanah, we can't stand around here gassing all day like washerwomen.

WYRE

(TO AUDIENCE) That's Squires: she's like a youth worker 'round here, only she don't get paid for it.

(CALLING) Thanks, Squires.

SQUIRES DISAPPEARS INSIDE.

WYRE

(TO AUDIENCE) Truth is, this is the closest we come to joyriding. Hawes has got her provisional; but the rest of us aren't even seventeen yet.

HARDHORN

We showed them, didn't we, eh?

HAWES

Yeah, we stood up to the fascist pigs.

REVOE

I didn't hear you say anything, hardman Hardhorn?

HARDHORN

I was ready.

WYRE

What do you mean, "ready"?

HARDHORN PRODUCES A GUN.

HARDHORN

Good job they didn't see this.

WYRE

What? Get that thing out of here now.

REVOE

Hardhorn, you'll get us all sent down.

HARDHORN

Keep your hair on, it's only a replica.

HAWES

It's not real, it just looks real.

HAWES I'd love to be a popstar and have to dress up in disguise to go to the shops. I'd like to see myself on telly in a shop-window as I was walking down the high street and I'd like my mum to be with me to see how famous I was. I'd like to meet Prince Charles and he could dance in the street with me to my latest record.

HOOHILL I'd be one of them people who live with the gorillas in the jungle. I'd like the biggest gorilla, the leader, to sit next to me, picking nits out of my hair and eating them. And I'd like to swing through the trees like Tarzan, asking the gorillas to bend some huge tree so I can help myself to bananas.

REVOE (TO HOOHILL) Have you farted?

HARDHORN You dirty little git – get him back in the boot and throw away the key.

HOOHILL I haven't, honest, it wasn't me.

REVOE No, I suppose it was the gorillas?

HOOHILL I can't help it. When I think about living in the jungle, my body goes all loose.

WYRE Come on Revoe, let's go to mine, I've got this amazing new computer game I want you to see.

HOOHILL Oh great, can I come?

WYRE&REVOE No.

WYRE AND REVOE MOVE DOWNSTAGE.

HARDHORN Catch you later.

HAWES Later.

HOOHILL Later.

HARDHORN AND HAWES CHASE HOOHILL AWAY
AND EXIT.

REVOE What would you be, Wyre? You know, if you could be
anything?

WYRE I'd be a river. Clear blue. Really calm and gentle in
places and really fast and turbulent in others, you
know, like those white-water rapids. I'd always be on
the move, changing course, this way, that way.
Sometimes I'd rise up and wash away everything
in my path, just to remind people how powerful I can
be. People would love me and be scared of me at the
same time. They'd want to have fun with me,
splashing about on a sunny day; but they'd have to
respect me as well.

REVOE I think I'd be a detective. I'd wear an old green
raincoat and a trilby and I'd smell like
freshly-cut grass on a sunny day. I'd always be
looking for clues and finding bits of scrap paper that
only I realised were significant. I'd get to grill anyone I

want and find out all about their private life. I could walk into any building ‘cause I’d got a warrant to search wherever I liked. And if I got stopped for speeding, I’d just produce my i.d. card and they’d let me off. And people would come to me with their most difficult problems and ask me to solve them. I’d be like a cross between a psychologist, a mathematician and a prophet.

WYRE

If you wanna be a detective, Revoe, you’ll love this game, come on.

EXIT WYRE AND REVOE. STRIKE THE CAR.

END OF SCENE ONE.

SCENE 2

SET CAFÉ TABLE AND CHAIR.

ENTER DOWNSTAGE STAINING, CARRYING A LAPTOP. HE SEEMS TO BE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE BUT NO ONE IS AROUND. HE CHECKS HIS WATCH. HE IS CLEARLY ANXIOUS. HE RECEIVES A TEXT MESSAGE ON HIS MOBILE. THE FOLLOWING MESSAGES ALL SCROLL DOWN THE BIG SCREEN (USE AN APPROPRIATE SF/X FOR THE MESSAGES – LIKE TYPEWRITER KEYS OR SIMILAR).

“do u have the program?”

STAINING TYPES HIS REPLY:

“yes. where r u?”

“go 2 café behind u & wait”

STAINING REPLIES:

“bring the money”

STAINING GOES TO THE CAFÉ AND SITS ON THE CHAIR. A WAITRESS, SKIPPOOL APPEARS.

SKIPPOOL

Can I take your order, sir?

STAINING

No. I’m not staying.

SKIPPOOL

I’m sorry, sir; but you’ll have to order if you want to use the facilities.

STAINING I'll have a black coffee – three sugars.

SKIPPOOL Meals only until after 2pm, I'm afraid.

STAINING What?

SKIPPOOL You have to order a dinner with your drink between
12 noon and 2pm.

STAINING All right, I'll have a dinner.

SKIPPOOL What would you like?

STAINING Anything - you choose.

SKIPPOOL I can recommend the lasagne.

STAINING Fine.

SKIPPOOL Is that vegetarian or meat?

STAINING What?

SKIPPOOL The lasagne? Would you like meat or not?

STAINING Vegetarian. Now go away.

SKIPPOOL Chips or salad?

STAINING I don't care. Bring me anything you like – sheep's
eyeballs or shark's intestines, I don't give a damn, I'm
not going to eat it whatever it is.

SKIPPOOL Yes, sir. Right away, sir.

(DOUBLE-TAKE AS SHE LEAVES) Would you like
your coffee with your meal, sir, or before?

STAINING Aaargh!

SHE LEGS IT.

HE OPENS THE LAPTOP, TAKES OUT A CD AND CAREFULLY INSERTS IT. ON THE BIG SCREEN HIS CD OPENS WITH THE TITLE “PROJECT CHIMERA – CLASSIFIED”. AS SKIPPOOL RETURNS WITH A COFFEE AN ARMED GANG APPEAR, DRESSED IN ANIMAL HALF-MASKS: A PIG, A COW, A SHEEP AND A CHICKEN. ONE OF THEM, THE PIG, PULLS OUT A GUN AND SHOOTS STAINING. SKIPPOOL SCREAMS, THE KILLER TAKES THE CD FROM THE LAPTOP, CHECKS IT AND THE GANG LEAVE.

DETECTIVE BALLAM APPEARS IMMEDIATELY ON THE SCENE. HE IS IN A WHEELCHAIR, WEARING A RAINCOAT AND TRILBY. BALLAM IS ACCOMPANIED BY 2 OTHER UNIFORMED POLICE WHO SEE TO THE BODY AND THE EVIDENCE . BALLAM SEES TO SKIPPOOL.

BALLAM (TO AUDIENCE) It’s a tough life being a detective, I can tell you. Everyone’s looking to you for answers. Truth is, I’m better at the questions.

(TO SKIPPOOL) So you’ve no idea who he is?

SKIPPOOL Never seen him before in my life.

BALLAM And you’re sure he’s not been in the café before?

SKIPPOOL Black coffee, three sugars – that’s not the sort of order you forget. I mean, white coffee, three sugars, we get plenty of those but –

BALLAM I get the picture. What about the assassins?

SKIPPOOL They were all wearing masks – animal masks. He was murdered by a pig.

BALLAM Interesting. The other animals, what were they?

SKIPPOOL There was a cow and a sheep and a chicken.

BALLAM Livestock.

SKIPPOOL Pardon?

BALLAM Animals bred for human consumption.

SKIPPOOL You think the animals were out for revenge?

BALLAM Extremists – animal rights.

SKIPPOOL But that can’t be – he ordered vegetarian?

CAST FREEZE APART FROM BALLAM.

MUSIC. WYRE’S FACE APPEARS LIVE ON THE BIG SCREEN DURING BALLAM’S NEXT SPEECH. SHE IS WATCHING HIM BUT HE DOESN’T NOTICE HER YET.

BALLAM (TO AUDIENCE) Do you ever get that déjà vu feeling? Like you’ve been here before? I could swear that everyone I meet, I’ve met before? I feel as though I’m re-running my life; yet I still don’t know how to do

it, even second time around.

WYRE That’s because you have been here before.

BALLAM What the hell – who are you?

WYRE I’m the player – it’s my game.

BALLAM What you talking about – “game”?

WYRE I’m the one playing the game – “Project Chimera”.

You’re one of the characters.

BALLAM I am?

WYRE Sure. You’ve got a genetic condition which has confined you to a wheelchair.

BALLAM It doesn’t take a clairvoyant to guess that.

WYRE Okay, try this: you’re not really a man, you’re a woman. It’s a man’s world, so you decided to pass yourself off as a man.

BALLAM How could you have known that?

WYRE Relax, take your trilby off, be yourself for a while.

BALLAM No one knows Detective Ballam is a woman except me?

WYRE I told you, you’re in a game. Detective Ballam is a virtual character in cyberspace.

BALLAM You mean I’m not even real?

WYRE You’re virtually real.

Tell him, Revoe.

REVOE’S FACE SQUASHES IN BESIDE WYRE’S,
LIVE ON THE BIG SCREEN.

REVOE It’s true.

BALLAM Aargh! Who’s that?

REVOE This is my friend, Revoe.

BALLAM Boy, is he ugly? You could do better than that for
yourself, couldn’t you?

REVOE Hey, I resent that.

WYRE I’m showing him the game. The waitress, she’s called
Skippool, and the dead guy, his name’s Staining.

BALLAM Why aren’t they moving?

REVOE We froze them for a while so we could study you. I
wish we’d frozen you now.

STAINING GETS UP.

STAINING What do you mean, we’re not real?

WYRE If you were real, you’d be dead.

STAINING Oh yeah, I suppose that’s true? Hey, virtual’s much
better. I can live to die again another day.

THE ASSASSINS RETURN IN ANIMAL MASKS,
COMPLAINING.

SKIPPOOL It’s them, it’s the killers, arrest them.

CHICKEN 1 We want a bigger part next time.

SHEEP 1 I want to be the one who pulls the trigger.

COW 1 I don't want to be a cow. I want to be something delicate and beautiful, like a kingfisher or something.

PIG 1 Do we get caught? Only I'm not going to jail, see, I've got a fear of confined spaces.

REVOE Face it, you're inside a computer, you can't get much more confined than that.

WYRE Get real, I've got my own life to deal with, without sorting you guys.

SKIPPOOL This used to be such a normal café.

BALLAM You heard her - “get real”. Whatever that means. Whose reality is it? So we're just a bunch of binary numbers in cyberspace, made up of ones and zeros, existing in a mathematical universe. Feels real to me. Look at them: they're nothing more than carbon and water in a universe of energy and matter. That's their reality, so what? Ask the medium in a trance how it feels to be living someone else's reality, not even their own, in a universe of spirits and souls. Ask the unicorn how it feels to be surreal, made up entirely of imagination, living in a fictional universe of stories and dramas. Trying to suss reality is like looking into a clear river:

you can only see what’s reflected. What’s real
depends on where you are and when? Each time you
look, it’s different.

SKIPPOOL

I’m not really a waitress,
well, not all the time.
I can sing and I can dance.
In another life I’m on the stage,
I’m a performer of great romances,
is that so strange?

PIG 1

I’m not really so bad,
I’ve helped a few people in my time.
If you saw me with my family,
you’d say, ‘what a nice guy’.

STAINING

I might be the victim today
but I could still be a villain.
I’ve done some pretty bad things,
how do you know I’m not a killer?

THE COMPUTER CHARACTERS FORM A
CYBER-CHORUS.

COW 1

When you come home from the pub,
and you’ve had more than enough,
and the room starts to spin
and you think you must be dying –

be yourself in every way –

CYBER-CHORUS

get real

and deal with it.

BALLAM

Get real

like a river

and deal with it.

WYRE AND REVOE ON THE BIG SCREEN ARE

SWITCHED OFF AND THE CAST EXIT.

END OF SCENE 2.

SCENE 3

A SECURITY SURVEILLANCE ROOM WHERE GARSTANG WORKS. HE IS HIGH UP AS IN SCENE ONE. THE IMAGE ON THE BIG SCREEN IS DIVIDED INTO SMALLER MONITOR IMAGES. THESE ARE MEANT TO BE THE LIVE CCTV IMAGES HE IS WATCHING; BUT WILL NEED TO BE PRE-RECORDED.

GARSTANG

(TO AUDIENCE) I love my line of work. You know how good it feels when you're noseying out of your bedroom window at people passing by, without them noticing you're there? Well, in this job, I get to watch thousands of people without them suspecting a thing. I don't actually do much, I sit around most of the time; but my imagination's on overtime. You'd be surprised how embarrassing people are when they think no one's looking. I see all sorts. Some of them are so crafty and devious when it comes to thieving. They always deny it when I confront them. It's only in court when they see themselves on video, caught in the act, that they'll admit it. Best thing ever happened to this country, c.c.t.v. Okay, so most of it's petty crime in this town; but these cameras make the

streets a safer place. I don't see what all the fuss is about privacy. It's only the likes of me watching and I'm no perve. If you're not doing anything you shouldn't, you've nothing to worry about, have you?

(NOTICING AN ESPECIALLY ATTRACTIVE WOMAN ON CAMERA) Phwoor, she's nice – let's get a close-up on that one.

ENTER WYRE AS CAMERA ZOOMS IN.

WYRE Hi, dad.

GARSTANG (EMBARASSED) Oh, it's you.

Where have you been, I was looking for you earlier?

WYRE What you watching?

GARSTANG No one. This woman's been acting a bit suspicious.

WYRE Can we watch?

GARSTANG It's not a peep show, you know? Some people look very innocent, but you can't be too sure.

WYRE Go on, dad, let us watch.

GARSTANG Who's 'us'?

WYRE IS JOINED BY REVOE, HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL.

WYRE I've brought the usual crew with me.

HOOHILL Hello, Mr.Garstang.

GARSTANG Haven't you lot got anything better to do?

PICKS UP STAINING, EXACTLY AS IN SCENE TWO, CHECKING HIS WATCH, ANXIOUSLY LOOKING FOR SOMEONE. REVOE DRAWS CLOSER. HE CAN'T QUITE BELIEVE HIS EYES.

WYRE I'll tell them I've done work experience with you. How many hours a week would I have to work to run a car?

GARSTANG I never said I was getting you a car.

REVOE (CALLING) Wyre? Wyre, come and take a look at this? Look, it's him.

WYRE Who? What are you on about?

REVOE It's him, Staining. It is him, look he's on his mobile.

WYRE Certainly looks like him. It can't be, he's a computer character.

REVOE It is him. Look, he's going to the café.

WYRE Dad, are these pictures live?

GARSTANG 'Course they are. What do you think I do all day, watch videos?

REVOE There's the waitress.

WYRE That's Skippool.

REVOE What did I tell you?

WYRE Haven't you got sound on this dad?

GARSTANG Pictures only – what's going on?

WYRE It can't be real?

SCENE 4

THE CRIME SCENE RE-VISITED.

AS GARSTANG ENTERS, HE CROSSES
STAINING’S BODY BEING STRETCHERED AWAY.

D.I. BALLAM, BLACKPOOL C.I.D. (WHO IS NOT IN
A WHEELCHAIR THIS TIME, NOR IS SHE
DRESSED AS A MAN), IS INTERVIEWING
SKIPPOOL.

GARSTANG Don’t worry, it’s all on camera.

D.I.BALLAM Who are you?

GARSTANG Sorry, Garstang – security. I’ve caught the whole
incident on camera.

D.I.BALLAM That could be useful.

GARSTANG What do you mean ‘could be’? You can use it as
evidence to identify the killers.

D.I.BALLAM They were wearing masks.

GARSTANG Oh yeah, I didn’t think about that. Well, I’m sure it’s
still vital evidence.

D.I.BALLAM Fetch me all your tapes for the last 24 hours; it might
be they appear elsewhere.

GARSTANG Good point. I’ve got this entire precinct covered. I’ll
fetch them right away.

EXIT GARSTANG.

D.I.BALLAM (TO SKIPPOOL) Everybody’s a detective.
ENTER WYRE AND REVOE.

REVOE (TO D.I.BALLAM) Where’s your wheelchair?

D.I.BALLAM I beg your pardon?

WYRE Never mind, Revoe.

REVOE But it’s her.

WYRE I know.

REVOE You’re not a man?

D.I.BALLAM Teenage boys are so observant these days, don’t you find?

REVOE (TO SKIPPOOL) Are you wearing a wig?

SKIPPOOL There are some things you don’t ask a woman.

WYRE Forget it, Revoe.
(TO D.I.BALLAM & SKIPPOOL) I’m sorry, he’s been stressed out a lot recently, it’s his age. Saturated in testosterone, you see; arms and legs growing faster than the rest of the body, the heart can’t keep up, not enough oxygen to the brain.

D.I.BALLAM Just keep out of my way, will you? This is a murder investigation.

WYRE There’s something you should know about the crime.

D.I.BALLAM Really?

WYRE It’s a ‘copycat’ murder.

D.I.BALLAM What are you saying?

WYRE Project Chimera, it's a new computer game; I've got it at home.

D.I.BALLAM Look, a serious crime has been committed. If you've anything to say, take it to your local police station.

WYRE You don't understand? The dead man, his name's Staining. You're Ballam and she's Skippool. Don't you see? I've met you all before.

D.I.BALLAM Obviously, if you know our names. Now keep away from the crime scene. (CALLING) Officers?

OFFICERS LEAD WYRE AND REVOE AWAY.

WYRE She won't listen.

REVOE No.

WYRE You didn't help. You made us sound like a rightcouple of nutters.

REVOE I did? What about all that 'lack of oxygen to the brain' stuff?

(AFTERTHOUGHT) I thought testosterone was to do with feeling horny?

WYRE Revoe?

REVOE Sorry. What do we do now?

WYRE I dunno. We'll have to find out what we can ourselves, I suppose.

SCENE 5

BACK AT WYRE’S HOUSE.

REVOE It’s no use, I can’t access his moby without the PIN code.

WYRE What did you expect?

REVOE Let’s ask Ballam.

WYRE It’s a game.

REVOE You said “get real” – well, that’s exactly what they’ve done. Look, if the murder’s been copied, maybe the answer lies in the game?

WYRE I dunno. I think someone’s playing games with us.

WYRE SWITCHES ON THE GAME. BALLAM APPEARS ON THE BIG SCREEN.

WYRE Hello Ballam, it’s us again.

BALLAM Hello Wyre, Revoe.

REVOE You remember our names?

BALLAM Of course. You don’t have to tell a computer anything twice.

WYRE There’s been a copycat murder in our world – just like in “Project Chimera”.

BALLAM Staining’s dead?

WYRE Yes.

BALLAM Oh dear, I can’t help feeling responsible. It reflects the

BALLAM I don't know. I thought you might be able to help me?

REVOE We've found Staining's mobile phone; but we can't access any information. If I connect it to you, could you have a go?

BALLAM How many numbers in the PIN code?

REVOE Four.

BALLAM Easy. I'll just try every possible combination.

REVOE CONNECTS THE MOBY TO THE COMPUTER.

REVOE How long will that take?

BALLAM About 30 seconds.

NUMBERS FLASH AT GREAT SPEED ON THE BIG SCREEN AND SETTLE ON 2003.

BALLAM Not very original.

REVOE Amazing. Thanks, Ballam. Find the last incoming call. 'NUMBER WITHHELD' APPEARS ON SCREEN.

REVOE I thought as much. Search the memory for missed calls, calls received and sent, outgoing and incoming messages. Flash up any information you think might be relevant.

BALLAM SEARCHES.

WYRE We need to find out where this animal rights group meet?

A PHONE NUMBER WITH THE NAME RINKTON
APPEARS ON SCREEN.

BALLAM

Finished.

WYRE

Is it a contact for this animal rights group?

BALLAM

No, Rinkton is Staining’s ex.

REVOE

Is that it? It’s not much of a lead.

BALLAM

Not until you realise that it’s also the number for
Blaze.

REVOE

Who are Blaze?

WYRE

Only the software company who created this game,
“Project Chimera”.

BALLAM

Check the box.

REVOE DOES.

REVOE

You’re right. That can’t be a coincidence. We’ll have
to go and see her.

BALLAM

Tomorrow morning, 10 o’clock. I’ve already made you
an appointment.

WYRE

You have? Fast work.

BALLAM

I told her secretary you were games designers, okay?

REVOE

How did you do that?

BALLAM

I have a phone now, remember? A direct line to your
world. You go and see her, in the meantime I’ll make
a few enquiries of my own.

REVOE You are one cool detective.

BALLAM By the way, if there’s a Staining in your world, I
assume there’s a Detective Ballam too?

WYRE Yes, why?

BALLAM Is she as cute as me?

WYRE She’s a bit of a bitch actually. I hope you’re not
thinking of impersonating a member of the C.I.D.?

BALLAM How do you know she’s not impersonating me?

SCREEN OFF.

END OF SCENE 5

SCENE 6

NEXT MORNING AT BLAZE.

RINKTON So you work for yourselves?

WYRE & REVOE Yeah.

RINKTON Your own business and still so young? Very impressive.

WYRE Well, we haven't exactly made much -

REVOE (INTERRUPTING BEFORE WYRE SAYS TOO MUCH) That's games software for you, driven by us youngsters.

RINKTON Yes. It makes one feel old before one's time.

This game you've designed, tell me about it?

WYRE It's called "Get Real".

RINKTON I'd like to see it. Do you have a copy with you?

WYRE I'm not sure about that, you know what this business is like? Everyone copying everyone else's ideas.

RINKTON I'm afraid I couldn't do a deal until I've seen the product.

WYRE To tell you the truth, it's not quite finished; but we're happy to talk about it in general terms.

REVOE We were inspired by a game of yours, actually.

RINKTON Really? Which one?

REVOE Project Chimera.

RINKTON I see.

WYRE We were sad to hear about your husband.

RINKTON Ex-husband. He divorced me some time ago;
but thank you, yes, it is tragic.

WYRE I'm sorry.

REVOE He was obviously a big influence on your work?

RINKTON Why do you say that?

REVOE Project Chimera – his death. It's a bit freaky the way
the game became so real? Almost déjà vu?

RINKTON Staining was consistently threatened by so-called
animal rights protestors, it's a risk he took.

WYRE Do you think they killed him?

RINKTON You've played the game – they'll do anything to
destroy Project Chimera.

WYRE What is Project Chimera?

RINKTON It's an invention of sorts; Staining was involved with
animal experiments.

REVOE You know who they are, don't you?

WYRE Why don't you tell the police?

RINKTON I have my suspicions. I can't prove anything.

REVOE We could ask around for you, if you tell us who they
are?

RINKTON Would you do that for me? I'm happy to pay you for anything that might lead to bringing Staining's killers to justice.

REVOE It's a deal.

RINKTON You don't really have a game to sell, do you?

WYRE We do; but it's still in development. We'll give you first refusal as soon as we have a prototype.

RINKTON I'll look forward to it.

 SHE WRITES DOWN A NAME AND ADDRESS.

 Here, that's all I know. Be careful, these people are dangerous.

 WYRE AND REVOE LEAVE.

 RINKTON IMMEDIATELY MAKES A WEBCAM LINK TO WARBRECK WHO APPEARS ON THE BIG SCREEN.

WARBRECK What is it, Rinkton?

RINKTON They fell for it, Warbreck. I've sent them off, sniffing after the animal rights people.

WARBRECK Good work. When they take the rap for it, we're in the clear.

RINKTON How is Project Chimera coming along?

WARBRECK The application's been approved by the patent office. It's only a matter of time, now that Transgenics are no

longer in the frame.

RINKTON

And Warbrecks will become a household name.

WARBRECK

By then, you will be a Warbreck, my dear.

RINKTON

But first, let me grieve a while, my lover, for my poor
dead husband.

WICKED LAUGH.

SCREEN OFF. EXIT RINKTON.

END OF SCENE 6

SCENE 7

MEETING OF ANIMAL RIGHTS GROUP. AS THEY ENTER, EACH PERSON COLLECTS A HALF-MASK. THEY DIVIDE INTO PIGS, COWS, SHEEP AND CHICKENS.

“ANIMAL RITES” POEM – PART ONE

PIG 1 All living things, old or new,
share the same genetic blueprint.
These arms could be petals or wings,
these legs could be fins,
COW 1 this mouth and nose could be gills’
SHEEP 1 these lips a beak,
CHICKEN 1 these hands could be leaves,
PIG 2 these fingers feathers,
COW 2 these nails claws.
SHEEP 2 I could have evolved with a tail,
CHICKEN 2 my back could be covered in scales,
PIG 3 I could have bumps like a camel or a llama,
COW 3 my tongue could be as long as an iguana,
SHEEP 3 my neck like a giraffe,
CHICKEN 3 I might laugh like a hyena,
PIG 4 my teeth could be as sharp as a shark’s,
COW 4 I might have been able to see in the dark,

SHEEP 4 I could have had a thousand eyes
like a domestic fly,
CHICKEN 4 a hundred legs like a centipede
PIG 5 or a million spores like a dandelion seed.
COW 5 Instead of growing into a human,
SHEEP 5 I could easily have become a puma,
CHICKEN 5 or a juicy Satsuma tree,
PIG 6 a frog or a dog,
COW 6 a gorilla or a cincilla,
SHEEP 6 rhinoceros or hippopotamus,
CHICKEN 6 mandrill, krill, duck-billed platypus,
PIGS pink flamingo or tropical mango,
elephant or cormorant,
black widow or armadillo,
rotweiller or crocodile,
arctic tern or tree fern,
cheetah, ant-eater, hyena,
COWS yucca or zebra,
lark or shark,
fire-bellied toad or giant redwood,
moth or sloth,
flea or honeybee,
koala, cicada, boa constrictor,

SHEEP albatross or common moss,
 turtle or myrtle,
 electric eel or chameleon,
 scorpion or lion,
 locust or crocus,
 dolphin, penguin, lupin,

CHICKENS manta ray or prey mantis,
 salmon or python,
 sidewinder or porcupine,
 chimpanzee, Japanese macaque,
 humpback whale, swallow-tail,
 kangaroo, shrew, cuckoo...

ANIMALS CHORUS When you next squash an ant
 or pull the head off a flower,
 remember,
 they are your mother and father,
 sister and brother,
 your children,
 descendants of tomorrow,
 ancestors from yesterday
 and all distant cousins of D.N.A.
 So hug a tree,
 stroke a cat,

EXIT REVOE.

HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL MINGLE
WITH THE GROUP BUT THEY ARE THE ONLY
ONES NOT WEARING MASKS.

“ANIMAL RITES” POEM – PART TWO.

CHICKEN 2 Is it right to give rabbits cancer?

SHEEP 2 To force monkeys to smoke?

COW 2 Inject mice with diseases?

PIG 2 The joke is on us
and it's sick,

CHICKEN 3 we're destroying our planet double-quick.

SHEEP 3 Why? For perfume

COW 3 so we don't smell like animals?

PIG 3 For biological weapons
so we can wipe out homo sapien?

CHICKEN 4 We all want to live longer,

SHEEP 4 enjoy better health;

COW 4 but this isn't about life,

PIG 4 this is about wealth.

ANIMALS CHORUS Our power over flowers and animals
makes gods of us all –
can we live up to that call?

BY THE END OF THE POEM, THE GROUP HAS

CIRCLED THE NEWCOMERS TO QUESTION THEM.

HOOHILL They're all pigs, Hardhorn, or cows or sheep or – what are we going to do?

HARDHORN Shut it, Hoohill. Keep your nerve.

PIG 1 Where are your masks?

HAWES Oh, we don't have any, we're new.

HARDHORN We're interested in joining your group; but only if you're militant enough for us.

COW 1 Really? And what was your last direct action?

HARDHORN We raided a pet shop in Lytham and liberated an electric eel.

HAWES And one of those cuddly little koalas.

HOOHILL Yeah and a skunk.

EVERYONE WINCES.

SHEEP 1 We never heard about that?

HARDHORN Well, it wasn't Lytham St.Annes, it was a Lytham in, er, France – we do most of our liberating in Europe.

CHICKEN 1 What did you do with the animals?

HOOHILL We took them to the zoo.

ANIMALS (HORRIFIED) The zoo?

HARDHORN (DIGGING HOOHILL IN THE RIBS) Only to get food supplies. And to liberate some of the zoo animals.

PIG 1 Which ones?

HOOHILL A mountain gorilla – they’re my favourite.

COW 1 You set a gorilla free?

SHEEP 1 How did you control it?

HOOHILL Bananas. It was a really hungry gorilla. The poor thing
had been half-starved.

CHICKEN 1 What did you do with it?

HOOHILL We returned it.

PIG 1 Returned it? Where?

HOOHILL Erm, erm?

HAWES To David Attenborough. He knows what to do with
gorillas. He was in France, making a programme
about the French and how much they love animals.

HOOHILL Right. He’s my hero.

HARDHORN So what was the last direct action you guys took?

COW 1 We leafletted all the butchers shops in town.

HAWES Good for you, I hate meat.

HOOHILL I love turkey at Christmas.

HARDHORN He means “saving the turkeys”, don’t you Hoohill?

HOOHILL Do I?

HARDHORN Tell us about your latest hit on Transgenics?

SHEEP 1 What do you mean?

HARDHORN (PULLING OUT HIS REPLICA GUN) Come on guys, you can tell me, we’re all assassins together.

CHICKEN 1 Look, we don’t want no trouble. You’re too radical for us.

HARDHORN Too radical? But you guys shoot people?

PIG 1 Like who?

COW 1 No, we don’t.

HARDHORN You assassinated Staining, the mad Transgenics professor.

SHEEP 1 Not us. We don’t approve of Transgenics; but we wouldn’t hurt anybody.

HARDHORN Don’t lie to me. One of you pigs shot him, we saw you. There was a gang of you, all wearing those stupid masks.

CHICKEN 1 Are you sure?

HARDHORN We’ve got the whole thing on video – or the police have.

PIG 1 Someone’s set us up, we’ve been framed.

POLICE BURST IN ON A RAID. EVERYONE SCATTERS EXCEPT FOR HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL.

D.I.BALLAM Put the gun down, put the gun down.

HARDHORN (WAVING HIS REPLICA GUN INNOCENTLY) What gun? Oh, you mean this?

D.I.BALLAM Drop the gun now or we'll open fire.

HARDHORN It's not a real gun, look, it's a –

AS THEY COCK THEIR TRIGGERS, HE REALISES THEY ARE ABOUT TO SHOOT HIM AND DROPS HIS GUN PRONTO.

D.I.BALLAM Take them away and lock them up.

EXIT POLICE WITH HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL.

END OF SCENE 7.

SQUIRES There must be some mistake. I mean, they're just a bunch of kids.

GARSTANG Old enough to carry guns. They caught Hardhorn red-handed.

SQUIRES He's no murderer.

WYRE They've accused him of being the pig.

REVOE This is all my fault. I should have known they'd blow it.

WYRE How can they possibly believe Hardhorn killed Staining?

D.I.BALLAM (TO SKIPPOOL) This is our police artist. He'd like to ask you a few questions to try and compile a photofit impression of the killer.

AS SKIPPOOL DESCRIBES HIM, THE IMAGE TAKES SHAPE ON THE BIG SCREEN.

POLICE ARTIST What kind of shape was his face?

SKIPPOOL Kind of round, I suppose.

ARTIST Good. What colour skin and complexion?

SKIPPOOL Pink, definitely pink, a bit rough looking.

ARTIST Any prominent features?

SKIPPOOL Yeah, long snout, big nostrils.

ARTIST Like this?

SKIPPOOL Yeah.

WARBRECK The world will never be the same again.

 WYRE’S MOBILE RINGS WITH A TEXT MESSAGE.

 WYRE CHECKS IT.

WYRE It’s Ballam.

REVOE Cool. Nice moves, Ballam.

 MESSAGE SCROLLS DOWN ON THE BIG

 SCREEN:

 “SAME DAY TRANSGENICS APPLIED TO PATENT

 PROJECT CHIMERA, ANOTHER COMPANY,

 WARBRECKS, ALSO APPLIED FOR SAME

 PATENT. SUGGEST YOU VISIT PATENT OFFICE,

 SEE WHAT YOU CAN FIND OUT? TELL THEM

 D.I.BALLAM SENT YOU, I’VE ARRANGED A

 WARRANT FOR YOU.”

REVOE She’s passing herself off as the real Inspector Ballam.

 That cyberchick has totally wired herself into our

 world.

 WYRE REPLIES:

 “U R A GENIUS, BALLAM. C U L8R”

WYRE Let’s go.

 EXIT WYRE AND REVOE.

 ALL THE SUSPECTS IN THE I.D. PARADE PUT ON

 PIG MASKS.

D.I.BALLAM

We’ve lined up an identity parade for you. Take your time and have a good look at all the suspects. If you see our pig, I want you to tap him on the shoulder. Don’t worry, they can’t hurt you.

SKIPPOOL WALKS THE LINE, HESITATING AT HARDHORN, BUT COMES AWAY WITHOUT IDENTIFYING ANYONE.

SKIPPOOL

Sorry.

SQUIRES

(TO D.I.BALLAM) You can’t hold them any longer, you’ve no real evidence.

D.I.BALLAM

(TO OFFICERS) Let them go for now.

(TO SQUIRES) I’m holding you personally responsible for their bail.

(TO HARDHORN, HAWES & HOOHILL) Don’t think you’re in the clear, we’ll be watching you.

HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL ARE GREETED LIKE HEROES WHEN THEY EMERGE INTO THE CROWD. EXIT ALL.

END OF SCENE 8

SCENE 9

THE PATENTS' OFFICE. WYRE & REVOE ARE RIFLING THROUGH FILES.

REVOE Did you see the look on that receptionist's face when we said C.I.D.?

WYRE She knows she's getting old when the police are as young as us.

REVOE I've always wanted to do that.
I don't know how Ballam fixed it; but – did you see our photos on the warrant?

WYRE I do appreciate you helping me like this, you know?

REVOE Any chance to play detective, I'm there, you know me.

WYRE You're a good mate.

REVOE Yeah, we're best mates.
Funny word, “mate”, innit?

WYRE Is it?

REVOE Well, with other animals it means something a bit different, doesn't it?

WYRE What you saying?

REVCOE You know? When creatures become mates, it means, like, more than just friends, doesn't it? Like on the Discovery Channel.

WYRE I don't think it even means friends for a lot of them
Creatures, do you? It's just "wham, bam, thank you
evolution".

REVOE Not like us, eh?

WYRE No.

REVOE No.

WYRE What are you getting at?

REVOE Nothing.
(CHANGING THE SUBJECT) What are we looking for
again?

WYRE Dunno 'til we find it.
Here we are:
(READING) "Application to Patent Project Chimera".
Project Chimera will release into the environment a
brand new form of genetically engineered livestock for
mass consumption across the world. This patent
could provide entire populations with improved
quality, risk-free meat while at the same time
substantially reducing the costs of production.

REVOE (READING) The chimera is a genetically modified
farm animal which is low maintenance with high yield.
It can be reared indoors or outdoors. The chimera
lays eggs, provides milk and its coat can be sheared

annually to make the finest quality garments. It can be slaughtered at any age and yields superior quality meat. It comes immunized against Foot-and-Mouth and B.S.E. and a lifetime guarantee against infection of any known kind.

WYRE

No wonder it’s been a secret for so long.

(READING) Warbrecks is a multi-national company with a proven history in the field. In the light of recent tragic events, namely the death of Professor Staining, the application by Transgenics has been withdrawn and, therefore, it is recommended that Warbrecks should be awarded the patent to proceed with the creation of Project Chimera.

REVOE

Look at the list of companies Warbrecks own.

WYRE

Nothing more about Transgenics?

REVOE

No; but guess who is owned by Warbrecks? Only Blaze.

WYRE

Rinkton?

REVOE

She’s teamed up with Staining’s rival.

WYRE

All those crocodile tears about her poor dead ex-husband. All the time, she’s been in league with Warbrecks.

REVOE

But why?

WYRE It’s obvious she hated him. Treating the whole thing as a game and making a tidy little earner for herself into the bargain.

REVOE What if it wasn’t the animal rights activists who killed Staining?

WYRE She’s used us. To draw attention away from Warbrecks.

REVOE And herself.

WYRE You don’t think she killed Staining, do you?

REVOE You can see for yourself how much is at stake?

WYRE’S MOBILE RINGS WITH ANOTHER TEXT MESSAGE. SHE CHECKS HER PHONE.

WYRE It’s Ballam.

A MESSAGE SCROLLS DOWN THE BIG SCREEN:
“DO ONE PRONTO, D.I.BALLAM IS ON HER WAY”.

WYRE Maybe we should stay and tell the police everything we know?

REVOE Bad idea, Wyre. You heard the cyberchick, let’s leg it before we end up inside with the other guys.

EXIT.

END OF SCENE 9

SCENE 10

ANIMAL RIGHTS MEETING.

HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL ARE GETTING THE FULL HERO TREATMENT FROM THE ACTIVISTS. HARDHORN HAS TAKEN TO WEARING A CAMOUFLAGED COMBAT OUTFIT. THE ACTIVISTS ARE ATTENDING TO THEIR EVERY NEED. HARDHORN RISES TO MAKE A SPEECH. REVOE IS HOVERING, TRYING TO CATCH HARDHORN'S ATTENTION.

HARDHORN Now that you've elected me your new leader, there'll be some changes made around here. This organisation needs military discipline if it is to survive. Hawes here will be my right-hand man. From now on, she will be our very own spin-doctor, in charge of P.R.

HAWES Spin doctor? How cool is that? Do I get to become a big celebrity on television?

HARDHORN You're our public image, babe, so I expect you to look your best at all times.

HAWES Don't worry, I never go anywhere without my extra firm hold hairspray – guaranteed to withstand force 10 gales and small hurricanes.

HOOHILL What can I be in charge of?

HARDHORN Hoohill is in charge of intelligence. It is vital we keep a lookout for informers at all times. We must not be infiltrated.

HOOHILL I think we should all start wearing name badges so I know who's who? That way I can spot any infidels.

HARDHORN Infiltrators.

HOOHILL Yeah, right, the traitors.

REVOE Hurry up, will you, Hardhorn? I need a word.

HARDHORN Major Hardhorn.

REVOE What you doing in that ridiculous outfit?

HARDHORN Please. You're looking at our glorious new leader.

REVOE Whatever. I need you to have a word with your activists for me. The police are trying to make you take the rap for Staining, right?

HARDHORN They'll turn me into a martyr – I'll be famous.

REVOE We think Warbrecks are behind it; but we don't have any evidence.

HARDHORN Warbrecks? I knew it. Who are Warbrecks?

REVOE Never mind. Some of your groupies have lots of experience of breaking into these kind of places. Do you think you could persuade them to help us break into Warbrecks?

HARDHORN Tricky. Last operation I was on –

REVOE “Operation”? What operation? You mean the time you had your tonsils out and cried for a week?

HARDHORN When I was wrongfully arrested for murder and possession of firearms, I learned a thing or two about breaking –

REVOE Hardhorn, can you get them to help us or not?

HARDHORN Leave it with me. We have no shortage of volunteers willing to die for the cause.

REVOE It’s burglary, it’s not a holy war.

EXIT REVOE. THE OTHERS GATHER ROUND

HARDHORN UPSTAGE.

DOWNSTAGE, WYRE IS TRYING TO FIND OUT IF

BALLAM HAS ANY MORE INFORMATION FOR

THEM. BALLAM APPEARS ON THE BIG SCREEN.

BALLAM So, you see, as soon as I hacked into the police computer, courtesy of my carbon-based counterpart, I was able to access Staining’s laptop. They’ve been holding it at the station, waiting for a computer expert to get into the memory.

WYRE Where did you learn to be ironic?

BALLAM Irony? I thought it was a joke.

WYRE So you’re cracking jokes now?

BALLAM I spend a lot of time on my own. I have to amuse myself somehow.

WYRE What did you find out?

BALLAM I opened Staining’s history to see who he’d contacted during the entire lifetime of his computer. He was a bit of a sad-case really.

WYRE Oh?

BALLAM Men and their computers.

WYRE What do you mean?

BALLAM You know? Pornography. It’s all men seem to use their computers for.

WYRE Listen to you, talking about right and wrong.

BALLAM Put it this way: I can see why men never pass on their old computers. I always wondered why men would rather take a sledgehammer to their c.p.u. than donate it to a local charity.

WYRE Never mind the rude stuff, did you find out any more about Project Chimera?

BALLAM Transgenics were developing the project faster than Warbrecks, even though they both applied to patent the same idea. Warbrecks tried to buy them out – they refused. So they bought Staining instead. It was largely his research, he was the key figure. He had

the disc with him to sell – Warbrecks must have decided to kill Staining and steal the disc. With Transgenics out of the race, Warbrecks can go it alone and cash in.

WYRE Rinkton designed the game to point the finger at animal rights groups.

BALLAM The police are convinced it’s them, just like you were. It gives computers a bad name.

WYRE Do you think the chimera exists?

BALLAM Difficult word “exists” – begs the question, what is “real”?

WYRE If we break into Warbrecks, will we find the creature?

BALLAM There’s only one way to find out.

WYRE Where’s the lab?

BALLAM It’s a farm. In the grounds of the zoo. Top secret – not even the people who work at the zoo know it’s there. I’ve printed you off a site plan so you can find your way around.

WYRE Ballam, you’re a star.

ENTER SQUIRES. BALLAM DISAPPEARS FROM THE SCREEN.

SQUIRES Who are you talking to?

WYRE No one. Just my computer.

SQUIRES You're up to something, aren't you?

WYRE Yeah.

SQUIRES You can tell me.

WYRE I want to tell you everything, but none of it is a reality
yet.

ENTER REVOE.

REVOE Oh? Hiya Squires.

SQUIRES I don't see any of yous sitting in the old car any more?

WYRE I miss the old shed.

SQUIRES It's still there. Let me know if you need me. And
watch out for your dad, he's on the warpath.

EXIT SQUIRES.

WYRE Are we doing the right thing?

REVOE I dunno.

WYRE Do you think we should tell Squires?

REVOE We can't.

WYRE Can we leave her a note, explaining everything; you
know, just in case –

REVOE We don't come back?

WYRE There's only Ballam knows where we're going – and
she can hardly testify?

REVOE Okay, all right, we'll leave Squires an e-mail. Tell
Ballam not to send it unless we fail to log in for 24

hours.

WYRE

Thanks, Revoe. Are you scared?

REVOE

I'm bricking it.

EXIT WYRE AND REVOE.

END OF SCENE 10.

SCENE 11

MUSIC. AT WARBRECKS. ON THE SCREEN A NIGHT-TIME CAMERA IS PICKING UP IMAGES OF WYRE, REVOE, PIG1, COW1, SHEEP1 AND CHICKEN1 CUTTING THROUGH WIRE FENCING, BREAKING INTO THE COMPOUND.

ON STAGE, IN DARKNESS, WARBRECK IS WATCHING EVENTS UNFOLD.

WARBRECK

The fools. Do they really imagine I'm going to let them sabotage my greatest project ever?

HE STEPS FORWARD INTO DIM LIGHT AND SWITCHES OFF THE SCREEN.

I'm sure the police will be pleased if I capture the intruders red-handed.

EXIT WARBRECK.

ENTER WYRE WITH A MAP AND REVOE WITH A FLASHLIGHT, FOLLOWED BY PIG1, COW1, SHEEP1 AND CHICKEN1.

REVOE

Are you sure you've got the right place?

WYRE

According to Ballam's map this is where it should be.

A SUDDEN STRANGE ANIMAL NOISE SCARES THEM.

REVOE

What the hell's that?

CHIMERA 1 I feel as though my limbs don't fit,
CHIMERA 2 I don't know what to do with my hair,
CHIMERA 3 my feet are too big,
CHIMERA 4 I can't decide what clothes to wear,
1 my arms are too long for my body,
2 my skeleton's out-growing my skin,
3 I keep bumping into the furniture
4 and I'm addicted to adrenalin.
1 I want fairground rides to go faster,
2 I'm inexplicably drawn to shoplifting,
3 I get these strange sensations in the groin
4 and love rolling around on the floor, wrestling,
1 I have these mad crushes on teachers
2 and feel the need to spit all the time,
3 I love scaring myself with stories
4 about the supernatural and gruesome crimes.
1 I never take a bath,
2 I have no desire to tidy my room,
3 I could eat for England,
4 I'm programmed to consume.
1 I get angry if I'm asked to wash up,
2 cut the grass or get up in the morning
3 or anything else

4 I don't see the point in.
1 I cry suddenly over photographs
2 of me as a baby,
3 I get all sentimental
4 about my favourite cuddly,
1 I go wild
2 if someone refers to me as a child
3 and I come over all emotional
4 about Xmas songs that are normally vile.
1 I must have alcohol, and chocolate,
2 and anything else that makes me sick,
3 you see, I'm learning to mix it with adults,
4 which shouldn't be a very difficult trick.

LIGHTS UP AS WARBRECK ENTERS WITH HIS
HENCHMEN.

WARBRECK So nice of you to join us. I see you've met the latest
addition to the family.

A NET DROPS ON WYRE AND REVOE, TRAPPING
THEM. THE ANIMALS SCATTER, INCLUDING THE
CHIMERA, AS THE HENCHMEN CHASE THEM
OFF-STAGE.

WYRE Let us go.

REVOE You can't keep us here.

We know you killed Staining.

WARBRECK What do you take me for? I'm a respectable
businessman.

REVOE You might not have pulled the trigger, but –

ENTER RINKTON

RINKTON No, he didn't the pull the trigger – I did.

SHE EMBRACES WARBRECK.

WYRE I might have known. You two deserve each other.

WARBRECK I just wanted the disc.

RINKTON But that wasn't enough for me.

WYRE You'd do anything for money.

RINKTON I didn't do it for the money. He left me.

After everything I'd done for him. Me, who supported
him all those years while he was researching the
Chimera. Who paid the bills while he was a poor lowly
researcher? Me, that's who. I had as much right to the
Chimera as anyone. I've invested my life in it too. I
buried him alive, in one of my games, so everyone
could enjoy his death.

WYRE Wasn't that enough? You'd humiliated him, you'd
joined forces with Warbreck to ruin him, he was
willing to sell the disc. You'd won already.

RINKTON No. It wasn't enough. I wanted the pleasure of seeing him die.

WARBRECK It's no good calling the police now, they know too much.

RINKTON We'll arrange a tragic accident. These things happen when intruders are naïve enough to think they can break into a top security establishment.

The electric fence we use to keep the animals in – they must have been messing with the voltage and... flash! Fried themselves like flies on an electrocutor.

WARBRECK We'll contact the police, tell them we suspect someone has broken into the compound and let the police find them.

RINKTON A tragic warning to do-gooders everywhere.

WARBRECK We'll take your mobile phones if you don't mind?

WYRE AND REVOE HAND OVER THEIR PHONES.

RINKTON We'll be back shortly, leave you a little time to reflect on your mistakes before you die.

RINKTON AND WARBRECK LEAVE. WYRE AND REVOE STRUGGLE IN THE NET BUT THEY CAN'T FREE THEMSELVES.

WYRE I'm sorry, Revoe, for getting you into this, it's all my fault.

BALLAM No. Look the opposite way. That's it. Up a bit. Bit more. Bingo.

BALLAM'S IMAGE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN.

REVOE Bingo? Where does she learn these words?

WYRE Revoe, we have a bit of an emergency situation going on here, if you hadn't noticed?

BALLAM I've accessed the computer that control's Warbreck's security cameras; I know what room I'm in, but I don't know where?

REVOE You're above the door.

BALLAM Am I?

WYRE Ballam, you've got to get help, they're going to kill us and make it look like an accident. Tell Squires, tell my dad, tell everyone you can. Dial 999 -

BALLAM D.I.Ballam's on her way.

REVOE That was quick.

BALLAM Computers are nothing if not quick. I can chew gum and whistle at the same time. I'll have a root through all the surveillance tapes, see if I can find anything incriminating.

THEY HEAR FOOTSTEPS.

WYRE They're coming back, quick, hide.

BALLAM I am hidden. I'll watch.

REVOE Wait.

RINKTON What now?

REVOE Can you hear a police siren?

WARBRECK What?

RINKTON He’s winding you up.

RINKTON HITS REVOE WITH THE BACK OF THE REVOLVER AND HE FALLS DOWN WOUNDED.

I’m the expert when it comes to playing games, remember? Now put these jackets on.

RINKTON TAKES THE JACKETS FROM WARBRECK AND THROWS THEM AT WYRE.

WYRE Why?

RINKTON Because it’s easier to cook the Sunday roast when it’s wrapped in foil.

SUDDENLY BALLAM BROADCASTS RECORDED EXTRACTS OF RINKTON’S CONFESSION: ...“HE DIDN’T PULL THE TRIGGER – I DID”...“I WANTED THE PLEASURE OF SEEING HIM DIE”...“WE’LL ARRANGE A TRAGIC ACCIDENT”...

WARBRECK They’ve recorded everything.

RINKTON Give me those tapes – where are they? How did you get hold of them?

WARBRECK They must have an accomplice.

RINKTON AND WARBRECK ARE DISTRACTED,
TRYING TO TELL WHERE THE VOICES ARE
COMING FROM.

REVOE RUSHES AT RINKTON AND, IN THE
STRUGGLE, THE GUN GOES OFF. THE CHIMERA
FLIES IN AND KNOCKS WARBRECK TO THE
GROUND. RINKTON SHRUGS OFF REVOE AND
TAKES AIM TO SHOOT HIM WHEN THE CHIMERA
FLIES AT HER. RINKTON FIRES AS THE CHIMERA
FALLS ON TOP OF HER AND THE GUN FALLS TO
THE FLOOR. REVOE GRABS THE GUN. THE
CHIMERA HAS BEEN SHOT DEAD BUT ITS
WEIGHT PINS RINKTON TO THE FLOOR.

RINKTON

Get this monster off me.

WARBRECK RUSHES TO NURSE THE CHIMERA
NOT RINKTON.

WARBRECK

You’ve killed it. My poor baby. Look what you’ve
done, you murderer.

D.I.BALLAM AND POLICE ARRIVE JUST IN TIME
TO ARREST EVERYONE. EXIT ALL EXCEPT FOR
WYRE, REVOE AND D.I.BALLAM.

BALLAM APPEARS ON THE SCREEN. SHE IS
LOOKING PLEASED WITH HERSELF. THIS NEEDS

TO APPEAR LIVE BUT HAS TO BE
PRE-RECORDED. D.I.BALLAM HAS THE FEELING
SHE IS BEING WATCHED AND IS LOOKING
AROUND THE ROOM.

D.I.BALLAM I suppose congratulations are in order? I was
obviously wrong about you kids, wasn't I? Perhaps if
I'd have listened to you in the first place?

REVOE (TO WYRE) Is she apologising?

D.I.BALLAM Please, accept my apologies.

WYRE (TO REVOE) Yeah.

D.I.BALLAM Your message said you'd got a full confession on
tape?

WYRE I sure hope so.

D.I.BALLAM How did you get a message to us when you were
being held at gunpoint?

WYRE Ah, erm, our accomplice.

D.I.BALLAM Who?

REVOE Not 'who', 'where'?

WYRE Secret camera.

(POINTING) Over there.

D.I.BALLAM LOOKS AROUND PUZZLED. AS WYRE
AND REVOE EXIT, D.I.BALLAM APPROACHES
WHERE THE CAMERA IS HIDDEN AND PEERS

INTO IT.

BALLAM Smile, please.

D.I.BALLAM Who said that?

D.I.BALLAM BACKS OFF, NOTICES EVERYONE
HAS GONE AND EXITS.

BALLAM (GIVING A CHEEKY WINK TO THE AUDIENCE) Not
as impressive as the real thing, is she?

You real people make me laugh. You don't seem to
know who you are? Your life is like one long identity
crisis. You're all born and you all die; yet you seem
shocked by it, every time it happens. You all fall in
love and you all fall out of love; yet every time is a
surprise. You don't know what to do with your life and
you question why you exist, instead of just getting on
with it. I wouldn't swop with you guys, no way; give
me virtual every time.

SCREEN GOES BLANK.

END OF SCENE 11.

SCENE 12

UPSTAGE, THE OLD CAR FROM SCENE 1 HAS BEEN RENOVATED WITH SHINY NEW WHEELS ETC. HARDHORN, HAWES AND HOOHILL ARE PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO IT WHILE GARSTANG AND SQUIRES ARE WRAPPING A GIANT BIRTHDAY PRESENT BOW AROUND IT.

HARDHORN This is one cool car, Mr.G.

GARSTANG I hope she likes it.

HAWES Can this really be the same shed we used to sit in?

HARDHORN AND HAWES CLIMB INTO THE BACK SEAT.

SQUIRES There you are, you see, with a little bit of imagination and a lot of hard work.

HOOHILL INSPECTS THE BOOT.

HOOHILL This boot is wicked: fully carpeted, interior light, air vent, this is a must-have experience, man.

HOOHILL CLIMBS INTO THE BOOT.

SQUIRES She’s coming, quick, everybody hide.

LIGHTS OUT UPSTAGE.

ENTER WYRE AND REVOE, HAND-IN-HAND.

WYRE Okay, so what’s on your wish-list now?

REVOE I’ll tell you, if you tell me.

WYRE I want us to go out with each other, properly, you know, like boyfriend and girlfriend.

REVOE I want us to get married and I want you to have my babies – lots of them.

WYRE Woe, let’s go out together first.

REVOE We’ll have a big house and a garden and we’ll roll around in the grass – I love the smell of freshly-cut grass, don’t you?

WYRE And a heated swimming pool, indoors, so we can keep clean all year round.

REVOE GIVES HER A ‘STRANGE GIRL’ LOOK AS LIGHTS UP ON THE CAR.

ALL Surprise!

GARSTANG Happy birthday, Wyre.

WYRE Oh, dad, it’s beautiful.

GARSTANG I’m proud of you, girl.

WYRE AND REVOE JUMP IN.

FULL CAST JOIN THEM FOR FINAL

REPRISE OF CAR POEM FROM SCENE 1. THEY

PUSH THE CAR DOWNSTAGE TO FACE

AUDIENCE.

CARS The lights in our eyes,
the music in our ears,

the power in our hands,
the fuel on our tongues.

CAR1 We're doing the circuit,
speeding 'round town,

CAR2 drum 'n' bass in yer face,

CAR3 windows down, surround-sound,

CAR4 wheel-spinning,
handbrake-skidding,
headlights flashing,
“honk if you wanna bonk”,

CAR3 watching

CAR 4 for the cops,

CAR3 cruising

CAR 4 for the chicks,

CAR 1 for the lads,

CAR3 see and be seen,
super-charged,

CAR2 putting it out,
having it large.

CARS The lights in our eyes,
the music in our ears,
the power in our hands,
the fuel on our tongues. (PLAY ENDS)