

“THE GHOSTS OF CRIME LAKE”

by

Kevin Fegan

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LIST OF CHARACTERS

VILLAGERS

Farmer Kasken
Villagers Chorus
Wolfie
Samuel
Noodle
Switherbloom
Hatters’ Chorus
Cow 1
Cow 2
Cow 3
Cow 4
Vicar
Mrs. Noodle

SLEEPOVERS

Catrin
Sholver
Derker
Deepa) sister &
Tig) brother
Skunk
Snake

Jag – female youth worker
Leo – Male youth worker
Alison Doolittle – Charity Sleepover worker for The Animal Sanctuary

CATRIN’S STORY

Catrin’s Chorus
Gran
Mam
Dad
Sister
Parish Priest

DEEPA & TIG'S STORY

Deepa & Tig's Chorus

Uncle

Auntie

Mum

Dad

Sister

LIST OF CHARACTERS (CONTINUED)

SHOLVER'S STORY

Sholver's Chorus

Moorside

Moorside's dad (a security guard)

Girl 1

Girl 2

Boy 1

Boy 2

Boy 3

Boy 4

Shoplifters

DERKER'S STORY

Derker's Chorus

Sarah Moor

Mr.Moor

Mrs.Moor

Derker's Mum

Mumps

Girl 1

Girl 2

Girl 3

Boy 1

Boy 2

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SCENE 1

CIRCA 1800 AD. LIME FARM. THE VILLAGERS OF
KASKEN MOOR ARE PREPARING A FEAST.

“THE BALLAD OF LIME FARM”

VILLAGERS CHORUS

Our story dates from the Summer
Of 1794
And tells the tale, a gruesome tale
Of the ghosts of Kasken Moor.

Close your eyes and cover your ears,
Peg your nose and hold your tongue
But never ignore the warning
Contained in this old song.

Travellers along the Roman Road
Heading towards Daisy Nook,
Take heed, take care, be sharp, beware
And never chance your luck.

There is a lake, a beauty spot,
The locals call “The Crime”,
What secret lies behind its name
Is lost in the mists of time.

The lake was formed when Hollinwood Canal
Was driven through this land,
Two cottages were drowned that day,
Things didn’t go as planned.

A brook to the River Medlock
Was severed and latter damned,
A farm in the middle of the lake
Was cut-off like an island.

The farmer built an iron bridge
For his animals to cross,
There was one way in, one way out,
And a gate so none were lost.

They say the shock turned the farmer strange,
Marooned upon The Crime,
Farmer Kasken was his name,
His farm was called The Lime.

Every year he celebrated
His farm survived the flood
And invited all the villagers
From nearby Hollinwood.

Now Kasken ran a slaughterhouse
So no expense was spared,
There was food enough for everyone
And all the fun of the fair.

Races in sacks, climbing poles for a hat,
Botanical competitions,
Flower shows and shooting sparrows,
Tea and ale and church missions.

Bull-baiting and cock-fighting,
Or custard-pie a friend,
Hobby horses and acrobats,
A Wakes for the whole weekend.

The farmer served a special dish,
Always a big surprise,
A brand new recipe every time,
The famous Kasken Pies.

But there was something rather sinister
Beneath the drunken bliss,
For every year someone disappeared
Yet no one seemed to notice.

So if you're travelling along Roman Road
Heading towards Daisy Nook,
Take heed, take care, be sharp, beware
And never chance your luck.

They say the victims rise up from The Crime
To search for their bones on the shore,
And will not rest 'til they've found them all,
Those ghosts of Kasken Moor.

If you see a farmer covered in blood,
Run to your nearest neighbourhood
And remember this, remember good,
Never eat pies in Hollinwood.

EXIT ALL VILLAGERS EXCEPT FOR WOLFIE, SAMUEL,
NOODLE AND SWITHERBLOOM.

SCENE 2

TWILIGHT. BY A FROZEN CRIME LAKE. WOLFIE,
SAMUEL, NOODLE AND SWITHERBLOOM ARE STALKING
LIME FARM.

WOLFIE

Go on, I dare you.

SAMUEL

You do it, Wolfie.

WOLFIE

You said.

SAMUEL

I did not say.

WOLFIE

You said, “Let’s go and watch”.

SAMUEL

Yeah, us, not me on my own.

WOLFIE

You’ll go with him, won’t you Switherbloom?

SAMUEL

She can’t go, she’s a girl, even if she don’t look like one.

Noodle can go.

NOODLE

I ain’t going nowhere near Lime Farm at night. Not when
Farmer Kasken’s busy with his meat-cleaver.

SWITHERBLOOM

So what if I am a girl? I’m not ‘feared.

WOLFIE

(TEASING NOODLE)

Don’t you want to see him cut a beast’s throat and watch it
bleed into a bucket?

NOODLE

Stop it.

WOLFIE

Then watch him chop off its head, strip the flesh, then cut it
into tiny pieces?

SAMUEL

I don’t notice you being so squeamish at The Feast?

NOODLE

That’s different. It’s all cooked in pies.

SWITHERBLOOM

What do you think he does with the eyeballs?

SAMUEL

Plays marbles, I shouldn’t wonder.

SWITHERBLOOM

Only I heard they was good for seeing the future, the eyes of
a dead cow.

SAMUEL

You can’t see the future.

SWITHERBLOOM

Yes I can, Samuel. My mam has the power, she’s a soothsayer, so I must have it too.

SAMUEL

Go on then.

SWITHERBLOOM

What?

SAMUEL

Tell us what’ll happen tomorrow at The Feast?

NOODLE

That’s easy. Same as every year. Fun and dancing and feasting.

WOLFIE GRABS NOODLE’S CAP AND THROWS IT ONTO THE ICY LAKE.

Noodle

What did you do that for?

WOLFIE

I felt like it.

NOODLE

How am I gonna get that back?

WOLFIE

Easy. The Lake’s all iced.

NOODLE

What if I fall in?

SAMUEL

You'll get wet.

NOODLE

That's not fair, I could drown out there.

SAMUEL

Don't be stupid.

NOODLE TIPTOES ONTO THE ICE, THEN DECIDES TO LIE DOWN AND SPREAD HIS WEIGHT. HE CRAWLS TOWARDS HIS CAP.

SWITHERBLOOM

Watch your step, Noodle. I've got a bad feeling about this.

WOLFIE

What can you see, Swithers? Noodle thrashing about like a lobster in a pot?

SWITHERBLOOM

Come back, Noodle. Leave your cap.

NOODLE

I can't, my mam'll kill me if I lose that cap.

NOODLE GRABS THE CAP AT FULL STRETCH. THERE IS A CRACK. HE FREEZES.

SWITHERBLOOM

Don't move, Noodle.

SWITHERS LAYS DOWN ON THE ICE AND GRABS NOODLE BY THE LEGS AND PULLS HIM BACK TO SAFETY.

SWITHERBLOOM

(TO SAMUEL AND WOLFIE)

Don't bother yourselves, will you?

WOLFIE AND SAMUEL LAUGH.

NOODLE

Thanks, Swithers.

SWITHERBLOOM

I had a premonition.

NOODLE

What did you see?

SWITHERBLOOM

No matter. Just be sure and keep off the ice, I tell you.

NOODLE

I'm not going anywhere near the ice, not ever again.

WOLFIE

Come on then, you lot. S'pose I have to lead the way as usual.

SAMUEL

Where we going, Wolfie?

WOLFIE

Over the bridge, of course. To Lime Farm.

THEY CROSS THE BRIDGE. UP AHEAD THEY SEE THE SILLOUHETTE OF A FIGURE BEHIND A WINDOW, LIT BY CANDLELIGHT. THE FIGURE IS CHOPPING WITH A CLEAVER.

WOLFIE

See there, that’s his abattoir. He only ever slaughters by
candlelight and always behind locked doors.

THEY HEAR A CRY AND FREEZE.

SAMUEL

What was that?

WOLFIE

Just an animal screaming.

SAMUEL

Animals don’t scream.

SWITHERBLOOM

Yes they do.

SAMUEL

Not like that, they don’t.

NOODLE

I want to go back.

WOLFIE

You stay put or I’ll bite a big hole in your cap.

Let’s get a bit closer. See if it’s true old Kasken eats horses.

AS THEY APPROACH THE WINDOW, FARMER KASKEN
SUDDENLY APPEARS BEHIND THEM, BRANDISHING A
MEAT-CLEAVER. HIS APRON IS COVERED IN BLOOD.

KASKEN

See anything interesting, boys?

THEY SCREAM AND LEG IT OFF STAGE.

KASKEN

(CALLING AFTER)

Feast your eyes tomorrow, boys, as much as you can eat!

HE LAUGHS.

(TO HIMSELF)

Hmm. Methinks a sprinkling of noodles in this year’s pies

might do the trick?

EXIT.

SCENE 3

PRESENT DAY. AN OLD FORMER SCHOOL HALL/GYM
(WHICH HAS BEEN BUILT ON THE SITE OF LIME FARM).
THE GIRLS ARE ARRIVING FOR A CHARITY SLEEPOVER.
THE BOYS ARE ELSEWHERE IN THE BUILDING, PIGGING
OUT ON POP AND CRISPS.

CATRIN

Is this it?

SHOLVER

I'm not sleeping here, it's a dump.

DERKER

Yes, you are.

CATRIN

Where is everyone?

SHOLVER

Remind me again, Catrin, why we're doing this?

CATRIN

Charity, innit? So don't look so miserable.

SHOLVER

You talked me into this.

CATRIN

You liar, Sholver.

DEEPA

Bit spooky at night, innit?

DERKER

I could tell you a few stories about this place.

DEEPA

What kind of stories?

DERKER

You don't wanna know, Deepa.

DEEPA

Ghost stories? Tell me, Derker?

SHOLVER

I forgot my sleeping bag.

CATRIN

Durrr, Sholver, how do you expect to do a sleepover without a sleeping bag?

SHOLVER

Can I get in with you, Catrin?

CATRIN

No, you cannot.

DERKER

They'll have some spares, I bet.

SHOLVER

Hey, where d'you think the boys are sleeping?

DERKER

With us.

DEEPA

No way. I can't stay if there's boys here.

CATRIN

She’s teasing you, Deepa. The boys are off limits.

(WINKING AT DERKER) Isn’t that right, Derker?

DERKER

I thought your brother was here?

DEEPA

He is; that’s the only reason I’ve been allowed.

DERKER

So what’s the problem with teaming up with the boys?

SHOLVER

I’m starving. I thought they were laying on supper for us?

YOUTH WORKER, JAG, ARRIVES CARRYING A
BOX OF GOODIES. SHE IS ACCOMPANIED BY
ALISON DOOLITTLE FROM THE CHARITY.

JAG

Hear we are, girls, a few munchies to help you through the
night.

SHOLVER TAKES CHARGE OF THE BOX.

JAG

Don’t panic, there’s plenty to go ‘round. Girls, I’d like you to
meet Alison Doolittle. Doolittle’s from the charity, The Animal
Sanctuary.

DOOLITTLE

I want you to know, girls, I’m deeply touched by your concern
for the animals.

DERKER

I thought we were doing it for a laugh.

SHOLVER

Get away from home, innit? A bit of peace and quiet
for a change.

DOOLITTLE

I’m sure the animals at The Sanctuary would like to join me in
saying a big thank you for your efforts.

DERKER

Woof, woof.

SHOLVER

Quack, quack.

CATRIN

Meow.

THE GIRLS LOOK FOR DEEPA TO FINISH OFF.

DEEPA

What?

THEY LAUGH.

JAG

(TO DOOLITTLE)

They’re still a bit giddy.

CATRIN

Jag? Sholver’s forgot her sleeping bag.

JAG

I'll see what I can do.

Settle down now, girls, I'll be back shortly.

EXIT JAG AND DOOLITTLE.

SCENE 4

THE BOYS HAVE ALREADY DEVoured THEIR BOX OF GOODIES. TIG HAS BROUGHT HIS CRICKET BAT AND IS PLAYING CRICKET WITH THE DEBRIS.

SKUNK

Pig out time is officially over.

TIG

What we gonna eat for the rest of the night, Skunk?

SNAKE

We'll raid the girls' stash later.

SKUNK

Good idea, Snake.

SNAKE

Well, they won't eat it, will they? Too busy watching their figure, innit?

TIG

I wouldn't mind watching their figures for them.

THEY LAUGH.

SNAKE

What? Even your sister's?

TIG

Wash your mouth, you dirty Snake.

SKUNK

What you brought that for, Tig?

TIG

It's cricket, innit?

SKUNK

I know what it is. I want to know why you brought it?

SNAKE

You know he's totally mad on cricket, Skunk.

TIG

(HOLDING IT LIKE A WEAPON)

You never know when you might need protection.

YOUTH WORKER, LEO, ARRIVES.

LEO

Look at this mess already.

SNAKE

It were him – Tig. He done it.

TIG

Swivel, Snake.

LEO

You're not going anywhere in the morning until you've tidied up.

TIG

I have to go early, mum's picking me up.

SKUNK

My taxi's ordered.

SNAKE

Yeah, right.

LEO

I don't care if you've got a limousine waiting, nobody leaves until it's cleaned up.

SKUNK

Yeah.

SNAKE

Right.

TIG

Whatever.

LEO

I've come to tuck you in and say goodnight.

SNAKE

Like we're going to bed before midnight.

LEO

Don't go to bed at all for me. As long as you stay put and behave. Otherwise, I'll have to tell your sponsors you failed the sleepover and then you won't raise any money for the poor little animals and you'll have that on your conscience for the rest of your natural.

BOYS PRETEND TO CRY.

SCENE 5

BACK IN THE HALL, JAG RETURNS WITH A
SLEEPING BAG FOR SHOLVER.

JAG

That should do the trick.

SHOLVER

Thanks, Jag.

THE REST OF THE SCENE IS PLAYED IN PARALLEL AS
JAG AND LEO GO THROUGH THEIR HEALTH &
SAFETY ROUTINE. THE BOYS AND GIRLS ARE STILL
SEPARATED ON STAGE. THEY CAN'T SEE EACH OTHER
BUT THEY ANSWER AS IF THEY ARE LISTENING TO THE
SAME LECTURE.

LEO

Right, listen up you lot.

JAG

(DEMANDING THEIR ATTENTION)

Girls?

LEO

I'm going now.

JAG

I need you to behave yourselves tonight.

LEO

I don't want any problems.

JAG

The reputation of our Youth Club is at stake.

LEO

The fire exits – are you listening?

JAG

(POINTING)

Are there...

LEO

(POINTING)

And there.

JAG

I won't be far away. In an emergency...

LEO

And I mean, an emergency...

JAG

There's an alarm button on the wall.

LEO POINTS.

LEO

Any questions?

JAG

Remember, you are not to leave the building...

LEO

Under any circumstances...

JAG

Except a fire.

LEO

Do not go near the lake.

If I don't get you, the ghost will.

GIRLS & BOYS

What ghost?

LEO & JAG

Not ghost, ghosts.

LEO AND JAG LOOK ACROSS AT EACH OTHER
AND SMILE. THEY WALK TOWARDS EACH OTHER,
MEET, HOLD HANDS AND EXIT.

SNAKE

I bet Leo is trapping off with Jag.

DEEPA

Nobody said anything about ghosts. Me mam'll kill me if she
finds out.

SKUNK

Rubbish. She's too cute for him.

SNAKE

Bet they'll be having a proper sleepover.

DERKER

Didn't you know? This place used to be a slaughterhouse.

SHOLVER

You're kidding?

DERKER

I swear. Lime Farm, a couple of hundred years ago, the
farmer went mental, chopping people up.

DEEPA

How am I going to get to sleep now?

DERKER

They say, Crime Lake’s full of dead bodies.

SUDDENLY, A DISTANT CHOPPING SOUND.

SKUNK

Listen!

CATRIN

What’s that?

TIG

What’s what?

CHOPPING SOUND RETURNS.

DEEPA

That.

SNAKE

Sounds like a window banging.

DERKER

Or someone chop, chop, chopping?

SNAKE

Safe.

DEEPA

Don’t.

SHOLVER

Can you smell minced meat?

DEEPA

I'm frightened.

SKUNK

Doesn't bother me.

TIG

Go and have a look then.

DERKER & SKUNK

All right, I will.

CATRIN

Don't go.

DERKER & SKUNK

I'm not scared.

THE GIRLS LINE UP BEHIND DERKER. THE BOYS LINE UP BEHIND SKUNK. BOTH GROUPS INCH TOWARDS EACH OTHER IN REVERSE UNTIL THEY BUMP INTO EACH OTHER. THEY ALL SCREAM AND EXIT IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.

SCENE 6

THE SLEEPOVERS RETURN GINGERLY TO THE STAGE
AS ONE GROUP. THEY SNUGGLE UP TO THEIR
SLEEPING BAGS.

CATRIN

I think we should all stick together.

SHOLVER

I'm not scared. I don't believe in ghosts.

TIG

I do.

CATRIN

All right, all those who believe in ghosts, this side of the room.

All those who don't believe in ghosts, the other side.

THEY DIVIDE INTO TWO GROUPS, BELIEVERS (CATRIN,
DEEPA, TIG AND DERKER) AND NON-BELIEVERS
(SKUNK AND SHOLVER), LEAVING SNAKE UNDECIDED
IN THE MIDDLE.

SNAKE

I dunno, do I? When I was little, my brother dressed up the
hoover as a witch - gave me nightmares for years.

“TESTIFY” GOSPEL SONG – BY SLEEPOVERS

BELIEVERS

If you all think spirits are the living dead, sing

Amen, Amen, Amen

NON-BELIEVERS

If you all think spirits are a state of mind, sing

Amen, Amen, Amen

TIG

I want to testify, I want to testify!

I died when I was three weeks old, they had to bring me back
to life in the hospital. I believe, yes, I believe!

BELIEVERS

(SUPPORTING TIG’S TESTIMONY)

If you all think spirits are the living dead, sing

Amen, Amen, Amen.

SHOLVER

I want to testify, I want to testify!

I used to have an imaginary friend. He didn’t really exist, I
made him up in my head. I do not believe, no, I do not
believe!

NON-BELIEVERS

(SUPPORTING SHOLVER)

If you all think spirits are a state of mind, sing

Amen, Amen, Amen.

DERKER

I want to testify, I want to testify!

I had meningitis.

SKUNK

I was run over by a car.

SNAKE

I ate a slug!

CATRIN

But do you believe in ghosts? Have you ever had anyone die
on you?

DEEPA

Yeah, my cat.

SHOLVER

My dog.

SNAKE

My mum fell down the stairs.

THEY ALL LOOK AT HIM, CONFUSED.

SNAKE

(JUSTIFYING HIS TESTIMONY) Well, she could have died.

CATRIN

My gran died. She still visits me. I want to testify about my
Gran.

SCENE 7

CATRIN'S STORY.

CATRIN'S FAMILY HOME. CATRIN AND THE GHOST OF
HER IRISH GRAN ARE PLAYING POOL.

CATRIN

Your shot, Gran.

GRAN

Bless you, Catrin, you've left me with the easy pot.

CATRIN

Gran? You're snookered.

GRAN

No matter. I warned you before, I'm a genius at the snooker.

CATRIN

It's pool, Gran.

GRAN

Then how can I be snookered if it's pool we're playing?

CATRIN

Just play, will you.

GRAN ESCAPES THE SNOOKER AND POTS A BALL.

CATRIN

How did you do that?

GRAN

I must have supernatural powers, for sure.

GRAN POTS ANOTHER.

CATRIN

Are you cheating?

GRAN

Not at all.

GRAN NOTICES A CROSS & CHAIN CATRIN IS WEARING.

Where did you get the cross and chain?

CATRIN

(CONFUSED)

From you.

GRAN

I thought it looked familiar. Give it back.

CATRIN

But you left it me in your Will?

GRAN

Did I?

CATRIN

I've told you before.

GRAN

Fair play.

GRAN POTS ANOTHER.

GRAN

There now, not a bad shot for a dead woman!

SCENE 8

ELSEWHERE IN THE HOUSE. THE PARISH PRIEST HAS ARRIVED. CATRIN'S MAM AND DAD TAKE HIS COAT.

MAM

You'll stay for tea, Father?

PRIEST

Don't go to any trouble on my behalf.

DAD

We thought it would be a chance for you to see Catrin, erm, informally.

PRIEST

Ah well, in that case, I'm happy to oblige. Milk, four sugars.

SCENE 9

BACK IN THE POOL ROOM, CATRIN'S YOUNGER SISTER HAS JOINED THEM. SHE CAN'T SEE GRAN'S GHOST WHO IS STILL PLAYING POOL. GRAN ENJOYS HER INVISIBILITY.

SISTER

What you doin'?

CATRIN

What does it look like?

SISTER

You shouldn't be in here.

CATRIN

Why not?

SISTER

It's granny's flat.

CATRIN

Was granny's.

SISTER

She left *me* her pool table.

CATRIN

She did not.

SISTER

Dad said I could have it.

CATRIN

I used to play with her, not you.

SISTER

So?

CATRIN

You can have her sewing machine.

SISTER

Get lost.

I heard you talking.

CATRIN

And?

SISTER

Talking to yourself.

CATRIN

If you say so.

SISTER

First sign of madness.

CATRIN RAISES HER CUE AS A WEAPON

CATRIN

Do you wanna know what the second sign is?

SISTER LEGS IT.

SCENE 10

CATRIN JOINS HER MAM & DAD, SISTER AND
THE PRIEST.

CATRIN

Hi, Father.

PRIEST

Hello, Catrin, how are you today?

CATRIN

Great.

PRIEST

Still playing chess?

CATRIN

I'm Year Champion.

PRIEST

Good for you.

CATRIN

It's all thanks to you.

SISTER

Will you teach me, Father?

PRIEST

Certainly, then you can challenge your big sister.

SISTER

I'll beat her easy.

MAM

Don't start.

DAD

Hey, you, time for bed.

SISTER

Orrr! I want to learn chess.

MAM

Father'll teach you another day.

DAD

Bath and bed. Say goodnight.

SISTER

Night.

PRIEST

Good night, young lady.

CATRIN

(TEASING)

Sleep tight, sis, don't let the spooks bite.

SISTER LEAVES WITH DAD.

PRIEST

The thing I like about chess is that's it's completely logical.

CATRIN

What? Like religion, you mean?

MAM

Catrin!

PRIEST

(TO MAM)

It's all right, really.

PRIEST

(TO CATRIN)

Maybe that is why I like it – bit of a change from the day job.

CATRIN

If you want to beat a computer at chess, you have to use a bit of intuition. Logic’s not enough on its own.

PRIEST

You have a vivid imagination, don’t you, Catrin?

CATRIN

You mean gran? Is that what this is about?

GRAN APPEARS, BUT CAN ONLY BE SEEN BY CATRIN.

PRIEST

Do you remember when you were little and your rabbit died?

CATRIN

Ocean. The rabbit was called Ocean. Gran named it ‘cause it had such deep blue eyes.

PRIEST

Your grandma helped you bury it, didn’t she?

CATRIN

(TO GRAN)

Did you, gran?

GRAN NODS YES

CATRIN

Yeah, she did.

PRIEST

Is she here? Now?

CATRIN

She comes and goes.

PRIEST

Is she kind to you, Catrin?

CATRIN

‘Course she is, she’s me gran.

MAM

Catrin, love, she was my mum. I think about her just as much as you, why can’t I see her?

GRAN LEAVES.

CATRIN

I dunno.

Is that it now? Can I go?

PRIEST

Off you go, child. Good night.

MAM

I love you, Catrin, you know that, don’t you?

CATRIN

Love you, mam. Don’t look so worried, I’m fine.

CATRIN LEAVES.

PRIEST

I don’t think there’s anything to worry about. She’ll grow out of it.

MAM

I suppose.

PRIEST

I find it's best to keep an open mind on these matters.

SCENE 11

ELSEWHERE IN THE HOUSE. CATRIN IS WITH HER
GRAN.

CATRIN

What’s it like, being a ghost?

GRAN

I’m not complaining, I have more attention paid to me now
than when I was alive.

CATRIN

Why aren’t you there all the time?

GRAN

I am – as far as I know.

CATRIN

You only seem to appear to me.

GRAN

Do I? People can be there for you, even if you don’t see much
of them. Like your extended family.

CATRIN

I don’t know what you mean.

CATRIN'S CHORUS STARTS TO GATHER INTO AN
EXTENDED FAMILY.

GRAN

It’s like this. I had 15 children for my sins. Your mammy was
number 13.

CATRIN

I didn't know that.

GRAN & CHORUS

My eldest daughter, Marie, went to the States and had 12 children.

CATRIN'S CHORUS 1

Bernadette went to Australia and had 10.

CC2

Lizzie went to London and had 9.

CC3

Michael went back home, married Connie and had 17 children.

GRAN & CHORUS

And so on. Your mother and father had 2.

CC4

Your Auntie Ellen had no kids at all – her own choice, I believe.

GRAN & CHORUS

In short, I had 15 children who had 75 of their own and, no doubt, many of those grandchildren have already had their own kids.

CATRIN

Wow.

GRAN

Now, let me ask you: how many of your 73 cousins did you meet in my lifetime?

CATRIN

About 6? In Preston, I think?

GRAN

But they're still your family?

CATRIN

I suppose.

GRAN & CHORUS

I had a dozen brothers and sisters – all dead, I was the last to go.

CC5

My mother, God bless her, was one of 20 children.

CC6

And her mother, I believe, roughly the same.

CC7

Now, all of these people are relatives as long as someone remembers them.

CC8

When they're forgotten, they become your ancestors.

CATRIN

What's your point, Gran?

GRAN

My point is, maybe, just maybe, I’m allowed to be a ghost until
I become an ancestor. That’s how I see it.

CATRIN’S CHORUS JOINS GRAN, CATRIN, HER SISTER,
MAM, DAD AND PRIEST IN “THE FAMILY GAME” SONG

“THE FAMILY GAME” – AN IRISH COME-ALL-YOU BY
CATRIN’S CHORUS, GRAN, CATRIN. SISTER, MAM, DAD
AND PRIEST (BASED ON THE TUNE OF AN IRISH
REBEL SONG, “THE PATRIOT GAME”).

Come all you young people,
Come listen while we sing,
The extended family
Is a wonderful thing.

They’ll cause you some heartache,
Both pleasure and pain
And make you a part of
The family game.

We’ve brothers in London
And sisters in Cork,
We’ve cousins in Sydney
And cousins, New York.

They’re nothing but trouble,
The worry and doubt,
It’s hard to live with them,
Hard to live without.

You're sure of a welcome

All over the world

From aunties and uncles,

You boys and girls.

They'll cause you some heartache,

Both pleasure and pain

And make you a part of

The family game.

EXIT ALL EXCEPT FOR CATRIN.

SCENE 12

PRESENT DAY. HALL. THE SLEEPOVERS JOIN CATRIN.

SHOLVER

You made that up, just to get attention.

CATRIN

Think what you like.

DERKER

I believe her.

SHOLVER

Well, I still don't believe in ghosts.

DEEPA

Can we change the subject, please?

SKUNK

What should we talk about?

DEEPA

Let's play a game.

TIG

(SWINGING HIS BAT)

Cricket!

DERKER

Not cricket.

DEEPA

I know, let's have a sack race.

SNAKE

Sack race? What with?

DEEPA

Sleeping bags – look.

DEEPA GETS IN HER SLEEPING BAG TO
DEMONSTRATE.

ALL

Yes!

THEY PREPARE FOR THE RACE.

SNAKE

Prepare for a showdown, Skunk

SKUNK

In your dreams, Snake.

TIG

We'll soon see whose is the fastest sack in town.

DEEPA

Line up everybody. I'm the judge.

TIG

Says who, sister?

DEEPA

Says me, little brother.

THEY LINE UP READY TO RACE.

DEEPA

I'm going to count 1,2,3, Go! Anybody jumps before Go,
they're disqualified.

NOODLE APPEARS IN A SACK IN SILOUHETTE BEHIND A
WINDOW, UNSEEN BY THE SLEEPOVERS. OVER A P.A.,

A CHANT STARTS, SUPPORTING NOODLE.

SWITHERS, SAMUEL & WOLFIE

(OFF-STAGE)

Noodle! Noodle! Noodle!

DERKER

Who's that?

CATRIN

Where's it coming from?

SHOLVER

That's freaking me out.

DEEPA

(FRIGHTENED)

Ignore it. It'll go away. Come on. Ready? 1,2,3, Go!

CHANTING GETS LOUDER. THE SILOUHETTE OF
FARMER KASKEN CHOPPING APPEARS AGAIN. THE
RACERS ALL COLLAPSE WITH FRIGHT. CHANTING
STOPS. SILOUHETTES DISAPPEAR. THE SLEEPOVERS
CRAWL OUT FROM THEIR SLEEPING BAGS AND LEG IT.

SCENE 13

LIME FARM. THE FEAST.

KASKEN

Welcome to all, both man and beast,
it's a glorious day for a feast.
One big happy village,
everyone getting along,
sharing our *lives* with each other,
a place where we all belong.

VILLAGERS CHORUS

Shopkeepers and farm labourers,
cooks and cleaners, miners and servants,
dog breeders and washerwomen,
handloom weavers, millers and merchants.
Heavy drinkers from the “Crown and Cushion”,
stable-boys, horses and grooms,
holy people from the churches,
enjoying the afternoon.
Incomers and passing strangers,
visitors, family and friends,
villagers of every description
are welcome to attend.

KASKEN

Kasken's pies are on their way,
this season a lean and youthful dish
with special *noodley* bits in crusty pastry
topped with a schoolboy relish.

Welcome to all, both man and beast,

It's a glorious day for a feast.

SCENE 14

LIME FARM. THE FEAST. SWITHERBLOOM, SAMUEL AND WOLFIE ARE PREPARING FOR THE SACK RACE.

KASKEN LOOKS ON.

SWITHERBLOOM

Where’s Noodle?

SAMUEL

Not seen him since last night by The Crime.

WOLFIE

The race will have to start without him.

SWITHERBLOOM

If I know Noodle, he’ll be around somewhere.

WOLFIE

He wouldn’t win anyway.

SAMUEL

You don’t think you’re going to win, do you?

WOLFIE

‘Course.

SAMUEL

Eat dirt.

WOLFIE

Prepare to die, Samuel.

THEY ARE IN THEIR SACKS AND READY TO RACE.

SCENE 15

LIME FARM. THE FEAST.

FARMER KASKEN WELCOMES A CHORUS OF HATTERS.

KASKEN

Ah, ladies and gentlemen Hatters of Hollinwood,
how is trade since they opened the new Manchester Road?

HATTERS CHORUS

Trade is splendid, as our latest figures show.

We might be as mad as hatters;

but we've certainly got it made.

There'll always be a need for hats

and hatting is our trade.

The hat determines the man:

from the ordinary to the grand.

Take Mr. Kasken, a decent sort

who wouldn't harm a fly,

he wears a functional hat as a farmer

to keep the sun from out of his eyes.

Take your average common labourer,

a simple fellow, honest sort of chap,

flat head, small brain,

tailor-made for a cap.

Take this fine lady

of elegance and fine breeding,

something suitably ostentatious for her

is clearly what she is needing.

Take this important business man,

his status needs to be read

by the bowler that he’s wearing,

perched upon his head.

Take this common fishwife,

all she needs is a scarf

to wipe the sweat from her brow

while she’s cooking by the hearth.

Take the teacher in her bonnet,

prim and proper, an earnest heart,

take the dancer in her feather hat,

the sign of a common tart.

Take the hat to beat all hats,

a mighty show-stopper,

the one we all aspire to,

the smooth and silky topper.

When you see a top-hat on the street,

you know there’s a gentleman passing by,

the sort of fellow who doesn’t need to work,

whose wealth reaches up to the sky. (Suits you, sir).

We might be as mad as hatters;

but we’ve certainly got it made.

There’ll always be a need for hats

and hatting is our trade.

SCENE 16

LIME FARM. THE FEAST.

A GROUP OF COWS ARE CHILLING, EXCEPT FOR ONE WHO IS PACING UP AND DOWN.

COW 1

Chill, dude, nobody's after us today.

COW 2

Lie down, man, you're making me nervous.

COW 3

How can you be so sure?

COW 1

It's like this, dude. The farmer always kills at night, when you're asleep. If you were for the chop, man, you'd know it by now, believe me.

COW 2

He's right, man. Today is the day of the pies. Every cow knows it's a holiday for us on the day of the pies.

COW 3

And tomorrow?

COW 4

Tomorrow is tomorrow, man. Back to normal. Give milk until it's your turn for the chop.

COW 3

This is no way to live for a cow.

COW 2

Hey, man, don't knock it; tradition is tradition.

COW 3

Yeah, well, tradition sucks. Why should I live for the chop?

COW 2

You're missing the point, man.

COW 3

So remind me?

COW 1

Let me tell you, dude, our ancestors knew a thing or two.

When the old cows decided to latch on to humans, that was a smart move, man.

COW 3

What's so smart about being a slave?

COW 4

Who's the slave, dude? These farmers wait on us hand and hoof, every day of our lives.

COW 3

They take our milk.

COW 4

I say, fair swop, dude.

COW 3

Then it's the chop.

COW 1

How else we gonna live such a cushy number? What you gonna do? Become a predator overnight?

COW 2

Grrrr! Look at the fierce cow, man.

COW 1

This is the best way ever. We get to eat as much grass as we like, laze around in the sun, rumpy-pumpy with the bull every now and again, man, this is the life.

COW 4

So don't you go spoiling it now, dude.

COW 2

We belong here, man, it's like the farmer says.

SCENE 17

LIME FARM. THE FEAST.

WOLFIE, SAMUEL AND SWITHERBLOOM ARE ALL IN THE
SACK RACE. A STARTING PISTOL FIRES AND THEY’RE
OFF. THEY ALL COLLAPSE IN A HEAP AT THE END OF
THE RACE.

EXIT ALL VILLAGERS.

SCENE 18

PRESENT DAY. HALL.

DEEPA

I am so scared.

TIG

Me too.

DEEPA

Let's go.

TIG

Go where?

DEEPA

Home, dummy.

SNAKE

You can't.

DEEPA

Why not?

SNAKE

We're locked in.

SKUNK

What? Who locked us in?

SNAKE

Jag and Leo. I watched them slope off, holding hands.

SKUNK

They can't do that.

SNAKE

It's in your contract – small print.

DEEPA

We could burn to death or anything.

SHOLVER

Don't be daft.

DEEPA

I'm pressing the alarm.

DERKER STANDS IN HER WAY.

DERKER

Woe! Hang on, we're not giving up.

SHOLVER

Sit down, Deepa, you're making me nervous.

CATRIN

It's your turn.

DEEPA

What?

CATRIN

To tell us a story.

DEEPA

No.

DERKER

Why not?

CATRIN

Go on, it'll take your mind off things.

TIG

Let's do it together, sis.

DEEPA

I don't know any stories.

TIG

Yes, we do.

TIG WHISPERS IN HER EAR.

SCENE 19

DEEPA & TIG’S STORY

“THE LEGEND OF THE GREAT COW”

DEEPA & TIG

Many thousands of moons ago, long before the great flood, when there was no East and West, no North and South; long before numbers and letters were first carved into stone, before Sanskrit was even spoken; when people roamed the known earth, hunting boar and gathering berries, the storytellers would sit around the fire and speak of great adventurers. One such story told of a wanderer, called Shaman, who built himself a boat and sailed the great waters. Shaman’s journeys took him to many strange and wonderful lands; but none as strange and wonderful as the land of the great cow. The whole land was said to rest upon the back of a giant cow whose legs stretched across the seas. The cow was sky blue in colour and had four hundred horns upon its head. When the ice melted and the seas flooded and the earth changed its shape for the last time, the waters separated the lands and split the earth into East and West, North and South. For years, the waters kept on rising. The great cow was brought to its knees and eventually disappeared from view. The waters flooded the land for the first time. Every year the land floods and drains, floods and drains. The cow that once supported the land has faded from

memory, like the embankments along the rivers erode and crumble. Now the people build their houses on legs to raise them up above the water as the giant cow once supported the land.

Legend has it that, one day, the great cow will rise up again and the floods will cease and the land will dry in the sun.

SCENE 20

DEEPA

A couple of years ago, we went with our family to celebrate Eid in Bangladesh.

TIG

We'd never been to Bangladesh before. Apart from day-trips to Blackpool, we'd never really been outside of Oldham.

DEEPA & TIG

It was a bit of a shock.

DEEPA

The bamboo is very green and beautiful. It's so hot. I have to cover myself in cream to go out in the sun.

TIG

There are buffalos in the street. Our cousins chase them just for fun.

DEEPA

Stray dogs chase me. I have to kick a puppy to stop it biting my ankles.

TIG

The houses are made of mud. They are built on stilts to raise them above the muddy roads.

DEEPA

Uncle's house is made of brick. It's like a mansion, but there are so many people living there.

TIG

There is a massive pond, with fish, at the back of the house.

DEEPA AND TIG ARE JOINED BY THEIR MUM, DAD,
LITTLE SISTER AND CHORUS.

DEEPA

We go through the door and the whole family is waiting
for us.

UNCLE, AUNTIE AND CHORUS GREET THEM.

DEEPA

My little sister starts to cry because she doesn't recognise
anyone.

MUM

Don't be frightened, little one. These people are your family.

SISTER

All of them?

MUM

(LAUGHING)

Yes, all of them.

AUNTIE

This is only half of them. The rest you will meet at the
feasting.

UNCLE

We are blessed with a large family.

AUNTIE

Mohammed himself was raised by his extended family.

SISTER

We're not going to live here, are we?

MUM

Don't worry, we're just visiting.

SISTER

Good, because I can't speak Bengali.

DAD

You'll have to excuse the children with their Oldham ways.

UNCLE

I know what it's like, it must be a shock for them coming here.

CHORUS PREPARE SACKS FULL OF CROPS AND
FRUITS TO TAKE TO THE MARKET.

DEEPA & TIG'S CHORUS 1

We have dates for breakfast.

TIG

Mmm, I love dates.

DTC 2

And mangoes. And pineapples.

DTC 3

We pick sugar cane and eat it raw.

DEEPA

I can't wait 'til tomorrow.

TIG

An end to the fasting, a beginning to the feasting.

DEEPA

People don't stay indoors like they do in Oldham. I'm more free to move around and I feel much safer.

TIG

We go with our cousins into the village.

DEEPA

To the market.

DTC 4

We call our markets, “hats” – like something you'd wear on your head.

DEEPA

There are monkeys roaming around.

TIG

There aren't many old people in the village, most are young like us.

DTC 5

Most kids our age don't go to school.

DTC 6

We pick bananas.

DTC 7

Or grow rice.

DTC 8

Or jute - to make sacks and things.

DEEPA

Every day there is singing and dancing in the village.

TIG

People sit in the market and play music. There’s no electrical
Instruments.

DTC 9

No point, there’s always power-cuts.

TIG

One of the instruments has only one string, but it’s amazing
what they can play on it.

DEEPA

We play traditional games with our cousins.

DTC 10

One of us is king and the others are servants. The servants
have to try and catch the king and kill him. Whoever kills the
king becomes king.

DEEPA

I wander off for a while. The game is a bit gory because Tig
likes to come up with new ways to kill the king. I walk down
the main street.

There’s a cow. One minute, it’s waddling along the road, quite
happily; the next minute 5 or 6 boys have thrown these ropes
around its head and legs. They’re pulling on the ropes. The
cow is struggling and mooing. Its front legs give way and they
drag it to the ground. The cow can’t move. Its head is twisted
back to reveal its neck. Its eyes are really large and they are
looking straight at me. There is fear in its eyes. It knows what

is about to happen. There is some kind of ritual killing. One of the boys says a quick prayer, another sprinkles something over the cow's head. Another boy takes a big sharp knife and cuts its throat. The cow is bleeding to death, right there in the street, in front of me, and they are collecting its blood in a bucket. Its eyes become smaller as the fear turns to acceptance. The cow gives a few violent shudders and it's dead. They load the carcass onto a cart pulled by an old buffalo and they take it away to prepare it for the festival tomorrow.

SCENE 21

UNCLE AND TIG ARE BY THE POND. TWILIGHT.

UNCLE

So, do you like it here in Bangladesh?

TIG

I love it, Uncle.

But I like Oldham too.

UNCLE

That's okay, you can cheer for both.

TIG

Why does no one come to the pond at night? It's so quiet and beautiful.

UNCLE

They say if you walk past the pond at night, the *jinni* will grab your legs and pull you in.

TIG

Has that ever happened?

UNCLE

Oh yes, grown men have disappeared by the pond.

TIG

What are the jinni?

UNCLE

Spirits who inhabit this world. Some are good, but others are evil.

TIG

I don't know if I believe in that sort of thing.

UNCLE

It's not up to you, these things happen, that's all there is to it.

TIG

I'm looking forward to Eid tomorrow.

UNCLE

You mean you're hungry.

TIG

Starving.

UNCLE

Not starving, believe me. In this country we understand starving.

TIG

Sorry, Uncle.

UNCLE

No apology needed. Tomorrow we feed the poor. Ramadan is good for the soul, it teaches self-control, remember that.

TIG

Yes, uncle.

UNCLE

And take a good look at the girls tomorrow, you might be back one day to marry one of them.

TIG

No way, I'm not getting married; not 'til I'm at least thirty.

UNCLE LAUGHS.

UNCLE

There is a new moon. The Eid is upon us. Let the feasting
begin.

SCENE 22

THE NEXT DAY. EID CELEBRATION.

DEEPA SITS BY THE COW ON A SPIT, LOOKING VERY SOLEMN.

“FEED THE POOR”, A BHANGRA STYLE RAP.

DEEP&TIG'S CHORUS

We gotta even the score

Between rich and poor,

Stop the wars,

We gotta feed the poor.

There's a limit to what we can endure,

This is the last straw,

This cannot go on forever more,

We gonna lay down the law.

Don't tell me it's a luxury we can't afford,

I don't wanna hear about import/export,

Don't make the people implore,

Don't tell me you're busy filing a report.

We gotta feed the poor

From shore to shore,

They've been shaken to the core,

Their wounds are raw,

Where there's illness, disease,
We have to find a cure,
We gotta help them feel secure,
We gotta feed the poor.

Don't tell me you're bored behind closed doors,
Driving around in your four by fours,
Stocking up at your local store,
Pretending the problem is not really yours.

Let me hear you shout, like a lion roar,
We gotta feed the poor,
Let me see you getting busy on the dance floor,
We gotta feed the poor

We gotta even the score
Between rich and poor,
Stop the wars,
We gotta feed the poor.

SCENE 23

EID CELEBRATION.

DAD

What’s the matter, Deepa?

DEEPA

Nothing.

DAD

Why aren’t you enjoying yourself with the others?

DEEPA

I saw the cow slaughtered yesterday in the street.

DAD

Things are different here. Not like it is at home, eh?

Everything hidden away from view. But the principle is still the same, Deepa: eat of what Allah has given you for food.

DEEPA

I can’t.

DAD

It’s Halal.

DEEPA

I know, but you didn’t see its eyes.

TIG APPROACHES. HE HAS THE COWS EYES HIDDEN IN HIS HANDS.

TIG

They say you can see the future in the eyes of a dead cow.

TIG HOLDS THE EYES UP TO HIS OWN. DEEPA SHRIEKS
AND RUNS AWAY.

SCENE 24

D & T CHORUS 1

When Tig looked through the eyes of the cow, he did not foresee the sudden death of his uncle, months later.

DTC 2

His uncle had invited him back to Bangladesh later in the year, to watch the cricket: Bangladesh v England, for the first ever test series, at the Bangabandhu Stadium in Dhaka.

TIG

I was so excited, I couldn't wait.

DTC 3

Just one week before the test, uncle died suddenly in his sleep. The family flew to Bangladesh for the funeral.

DEEPA AND TIG'S FAMILY GATHER FOR THE FUNERAL.

DEEPA

Everyone is crying.

TIG

I've never seen my mother cry.

DTC 4

I remember Uncle telling us about the swamplands in the North, the Sundarbans, where the Bengal Tiger lives in the marshes with the crocodiles.

DEEPA

I remember uncle telling us how, during the monsoon season, snakes slithered into the house to escape the flood waters.

TIG

It makes me cry. It is the unhappiest day of my life.

DTC 5

The next day, the men and boys go to the cricket.

MUM

It's what uncle would have wanted.

DTC 6

On the way to Dhaka, on the train, we see the devastation of the floods earlier that Summer.

DTC 7

Most of Bangladesh lies in the broad delta formed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers. The land is very flat and low-lying. Every year the delta floods and drains. The monsoons and the cyclones come and go and the people cling to their homes.

DTC 8

There are thousands homeless. Everywhere, there are makeshift rope bridges and anything that will serve as a boat.

TIG

The windows of the train are open. We can smell the dead.

DTC 9

In 1970, before the Bengal was called Bangladesh, half a million people died from cyclones and floods. It was one of the worst natural disasters of the last century.

DTC 10

Bangladesh lost the first test by seven wickets.

TIG

I remember standing with my dad and uncles and cousins in the Bangabandhu Stadium, not knowing whether to shout for England or Bangladesh. I thought of Uncle, by the pond, and I heard him say -

UNCLE

It's okay, you can cheer for both.

TIG

It was the happiest day of my life.

SCENE 25

LIME FARM. MUSIC. NIGHT-TIME.

NOODLE IS ALONE BY CRIME LAKE.

FARMER KASKEN CREEPS UP BEHIND HIM, THROWS A

SACK OVER HIS HEAD AND TIES HIM UP. KASKEN

CARRIES HIM OFF, OVER HIS SHOULDER, LAUGHING.

INTERVAL.

SCENE 26

PRESENT DAY. HALL.

JAG AND LEO RETURN WITH MEAT PIES FOR
EVERYONE.

JAG & LEO

The pies have come.

SHOLVER

What pies?

SKUNK

You're an angel, miss.

LEO

Meat pies. There's one for everybody.

CATRIN

I don't eat meat.

DERKER

Since when?

SHOLVER

I'll have hers.

CATRIN

Since that last story. It's put me right off.

TIG

We can't.

SHOLVER

I'll have theirs as well.

SKUNK

No, you won't.

JAG

(TO TIG & DEEPA)

It's all right, it's Halal.

SNAKE

Urgh, tastes weird, what's in it?

DERKER

Where'd you get them? The abattoir?

TIG

You sure?

JAG

I swear.

LEO NODS IN AGREEMENT.

SHOLVER

Mine's spicy.

DEEPA

You've got to get us out of here.

JAG

Why? What's happened?

DEEPA

Unnatural things.

DERKER

Ghosts.

LEO

What have I said about going near that lake?

DEEPA

How could we? You locked us in.

LEO

I did what?

DEEPA

Snake said, you and Jag locked us in.

JAG

We did no such thing.

LEO

Snake?

SNAKE

I didn't say nothing.

DEEPA

I'll kill him.

TIG

I'll help.

DEEPA

Tell Jag and Leo, everyone, what's been happening.

SILENCE

DEEPA

They're embarrassed.

JAG

No one's locked in; but you can't leave until the morning,
that's the rules.

DEEPA

Then you stay with us.

LEO

We can't. We've got to, erm –

JAG

Supervise the rest of the building.

LEO

That's right.

JAG AND LEO TRY TO MAKE A QUICK EXIT.

JAG

We'll keep an eye out for you.

LEO

Later, guys.

JAG

(LEAVING)

You've always got the alarm.

SNAKE

Told you they was at it.

SHOLVER

It's not the dead you should be bothered about, it's the living.

My dad's like a ghost: he's never really there. He appears
occasionally, when it suits him.

SCENE 27

SHOLVER’S STORY.

A BUS SHELTER. GIRLS ON ONE SIDE, BOYS ON THE OTHER. SHOLVER IS ON HER OWN FOR A MOMENT, AWAY FROM THE GIRLS. MOORSIDE IS ON HIS OWN, AWAY FROM THE BOYS. SHOLVER AND MOORSIDE MAKE EYE-CONTACT.

GIRL 1

(TO GIRLS)

Anyway, this lad was picking on my little brother. So I told Sholver,

(CALLING TO SHOLVER)

didn’t I, Sholve?

(TO THE GIRLS AGAIN)

I told her he was calling me. So Sholver went over and battered him for me. It felt good, that.

SHOLVER JOINS THEM.

GIRL 1

You’all right?

SHOLVER

Yeah. That lad I had the fight with, his mam came round our house to get me so me mam battered her. Police have been and everything. I’m staying out the way. Me mam’ll batter me when she comes back from the station.

MOORSIDE APPROACHES THE BOYS.

BOY 1

Hey, new kid on the block, innit?

BOY2

What’s your name, kid? How old are you?

MOORSIDE

Moorside, I’m 14.

BOY 2

(MIMMICKING HIM)

“Moorside, I’m 14”.

MOORSIDE

Can I hang out with you guys?

BOY 3

I don’t think so.

BOY 4

14 going on 40, where’d you get them clothes, Age Concern?

BOY 1

Let’s give the kid a chance.

THE OTHER BOYS LOOK AT BOY 1 IN DISBELIEF.

MOORSIDE

Thanks.

BOY 1

If you wanna hang out with the boys, you gotta pass the initiation, right?

OTHER BOYS

(REALISING WHAT BOY 1 IS UP TO)

Right.

MOORSIDE

What do I have to do?

BOY 1

(POINTING AT SHOLVER)

See that girl over there.

MOORSIDE

Yeah?

BOY 1

Well, all you have to do is trap off with her, innit.

MOORSIDE

She might not like me.

BOY 1

Don't be daft, man, she's gagging for it.

Go on, if you dare.

MOORSIDE INCHES TOWARDS THE GIRLS

BOY 2

She'll eat him for breakfast.

BOY 3

She's like a female stallion, totally wild, innit?

GIRLS SPOT MOORSIDE COMING OVER.

GIRL 2

Watchya, they're sending a runner.

MOORSIDE

Excuse me, erm, I hope you don't mind, erm –

GIRL 1

Spit it out.

GIRL 2

He's blushing.

GIRL 1

Get on with it, we can't wait around all night for your voice to break.

MOORSIDE

(TO SHOLVER)

My mate says you fancy him.

SHOLVER

Yeah, right, whatever.

GIRL 1

Which one?

MOORSIDE INDICATES BOY 1.

BOY 1

(TO OTHER BOYS)

What's he telling her?

MOORSIDE

He says you punched him in the arm in the chippy so you must fancy him.

SHOLVER

The liar.

MOORSIDE

He wants to know if you go all the way on a first date?

SHOLVER

I'll kill him.

SHOLVER STICKS A SINGLE “SWIVEL” FINGER UP AT
BOY 1.

BOY 1

(TO OTHER BOYS)

What was that for?

MOORSIDE

Would you pretend to go out with me, just to get back at him?

SHOLVER

Good idea.

SHOLVER TAKES MOORSIDE BY THE ARM AND WALKS
DELIBERATELY PAST THE BOYS, WHO ARE
GOBSMACKED.

SHOLVER

(TO BOY 1)

You're like a dog chasing a car, you've got no chance.

SCENE 28

MOORSIDE

I've not seen you at school?

SHOLVER

I don't go to school.

MOORSIDE

What's the difference between a teacher and a supermarket trolley?

(PAUSE)

A trolley has a mind of its own.

SHOLVER TRIES NOT TO LAUGH BUT FINDS IT FUNNY.

SHOLVER

That's a crap joke.

MOORSIDE

Sorry.

SHOLVER

Where'd you get it from? A Christmas cracker?

MOORSIDE

My dad told it me.

SHOLVER

A little tip: don't use jokes by parents. Or teachers. Or any adults for that matter.

MOORSIDE

Sorry.

SHOLVER

And stop saying “sorry” all the time.

MOORSIDE

Sor- okay.

Why are parents and seagulls like each other?

(PAUSE)

You should never look up to either of them.

SHOLVER LAUGHS.

SHOLVER

I thought you said you get on well with your dad?

MOORSIDE

He’s really sensible, my dad.

SHOLVER

Telling you these crappy jokes?

MOORSIDE

He’s opened a savings account for me.

SHOLVER

What is there to save for?

MOORSIDE

Dunno. He says I can have the money when I’m 20, ‘cause then I won’t be a teenager any more and I’ll know what to do with it.

What’s your dad like?

SHOLVER

Why?

MOORSIDE

No reason.

SHOLVER

(LYING)

My dad’s amazing. He’s, like, always there for me.

MOORSIDE

Do you know how to tell a girl from a boy?

SHOLVER

Is this another one of your jokes?

MOORSIDE

No, it’s science this. Give me your hand.

SHOLVER

Get lost.

MOORSIDE

Come on, give me your hand.

HE TAKES HER HAND.

Look at your index finger. Now look at your ring finger. Which one’s longest?

SHOLVER

Index finger.

MOORSIDE

Now look at mine. See how my ring finger is longer than my index finger.

SHOLVER

It’s the same on both hands.

MOORSIDE

That’s how you tell girls from boys.

SHOLVER PUNCHES HIM ON THE ARM.

MOORSIDE

Does that mean you like me?

SHE PUNCHES HIM AGAIN.

MOORSIDE

Ouch! Why are you so aggressive?

SHOLVER

I’m not.

(PAUSE)

I don’t know why.

MOORSIDE

Have you always been like this?

SHOLVER

When I was little, I threw my step-brother’s hamster at the wall. It was bleeding so I washed it; but it drowned. I broke its leg trying to bring it back to life.

MOORSIDE

Little kids can be so cruel to animals, they don’t realise what they’re doing.

SHOLVER

I kicked the cat downstairs. Then I asked me mam if I could do it again.

MOORSIDE

Now that is sadistic.

SHOLVER

I hung the dog on the radiator. It choked to death.

MOORSIDE

Not much fun being a pet in your house, is it? I'm surprised your mam and dad let you have any.

SHOLVER

Me mam didn't want them. Me dad kept buying them for us. After he left home.

MOORSIDE

I thought you said you got on with your dad?

SHOLVER

I was three.

I don't know if I like him, I never see him.

MOORSIDE

Sorry.

THIS TIME SHE DOESN'T TELL HIM OFF FOR SAYING

SORRY.

SCENE 29

OUTSIDE TESCOS. SHOLVER MEETS UP WITH HER FRIENDS.

GIRL 1

Are you coming with us?

GIRL 2

Doin' a little *business*.

GIRL 1

Cruisin'.

GIRL 2

Pick and choosin'.

GIRL 1

Havin' a laugh.

GIRL 2

Graftin'.

GIRL 1

I need some new clothes.

GIRL 2

So we're goin' shoplifting down Tesco's.

Come on!

SHOLVER'S CHORUS JOINS THE GIRLS. THEY TAKE UP THEIR TROLLIES FOR THE SHOPLIFTERS' DANCE.

SHOLVER IS DRAWN INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES. A

SECURITY GUARD (MOORSIDE'S DAD) IS ON PATROL

BUT FAILS TO SEE THEM STEALING ALL AROUND HIM.

“THE SHOPLIFTERS’ DANCE”

SHOLVER’S CHORUS

1st SHOPLIFTER

To pay for your goods is the height of folly,
Life as a thief is terribly jolly,

2ND SHOPLIFTER

Drifting down aisles with our shopping trollies,
Filling them up with sweets and ice-lollies.

CHORUS

No time to stop
‘Cause it’s shop til we drop,
Everything’s free
For the career thief.
Why pay for your gifts?
It’s much easier to shoplift.

3rd SHOPLIFTER

Rows and rows of goodies and clothes,
All for the taking at your local Tesco’s,

4th SHOPLIFTER

Push your luck as far as it goes,
I think I’ll have these,
No, I think I’ll have those.

SECURITY GUARD

I stand by the door
Guarding the store,
Watching for trouble,
Upholding the law.
As everyone knows,
There are people at Tesco's
Who prefer not to pay
Their own way in the world,
There are those who will steal
Anything they can,
Girl or boy, woman or man,
Well, it's my job to catch them.

5TH SHOPLIFTER

Biscuits and tea, cheese puffs and kiwi
All taste nicer when you get them for free,
Egg fried rice, leg of lamb cut-price,

6TH SHOPLIFTER

No need to worry which flavour curry,
We're all in a hurry
For faster foods, pasta and pot-noodles,
Diet coke and artichokes,

7TH SHOPLIFTER

A right turn here for chicken tikka masala,
Then a left at the cakes to the ice-cream parlour,

8TH SHOPLIFTER

Everything's within reach so grab one of each,

Toys and clothes, music and videos,

9th SHOPLIFTER

Custard and mustard,

Tissues and booze –

SHOLVER

And mobile phones,

No need for a bank loan –

I'll take this one please.

CHORUS

No time to stop

'Cause it's shop til we drop,

Everything's free

For the career thief.

Why pay for your gifts?

It's much easier to shoplift.

SECURITY GUARD

I stand by the door

Guarding the store,

Watching for trouble,

Upholding the law.

As everyone knows,

There are people at Tescos

Who prefer not to pay

Their own way in the world,
There are those who will steal
Anything they can,
Girl or boy, woman or man,
Well, it's my job to catch them.

HE SPOTS SHOLVER PUTTING THE MOBILE PHONE
INTO HER BAG AND HEADING FOR THE EXIT.

SECURITY GUARD

Oi! You!

SHOLVER LEGS IT BUT RUNS INTO MOORSIDE AND
DROPS HER BAG.

MOORSIDE

Sholver?

SHOLVER

Why don't you look where you're going!

SECURITY GUARD COLLARS SHOLVER.

SECURITY GUARD

You're nicked!

SHOLVER

I haven't done anything.

MOORSIDE

Dad?

SHOLVER

He's your dad?

MOORSIDE

There must be some mistake.

SECURITY GUARD PICKS HER BAG UP AND TAKES THE
STOLEN MOBY OUT.

SECURITY GUARD

I saw you with me own two eyes.

MOORSIDE

You can't nick her, dad.

SECURITY GUARD

Why not?

MOORSIDE

'Cause, 'cause, erm, 'cause she's my girlfriend.

SHOLVER

I am? Yes, I am.

SECURITY GUARD

No son of mine is going out with a thief.

MOORSIDE

Please, dad, she's not a thief, I know she's not.

SHOLVER

Sorry.

SECURITY GUARD

See, she's admitted it.

SHOLVER

I don't know why I did it.

MOORSIDE

Please, dad, just this once.

SECURITY GUARD

(TO SHOLVER)

I don't want to see you in here, ever again. You're barred for life.

(TO MOORSIDE)

And as for you, you're not to see her again, d'you hear me?

MOORSIDE

You can't make me.

SHOLVER

Stay away from me, Moorside, I'm bad news.

SCENE 30

SHOLVER IS LOOKING THROUGH THE WINDOW OF HER
DAD’S HOUSE. SHE SEES ONLY HIS SILOUHETTE.
MOORSIDE IS LOOKING ON WITH THE SHOLVER
CHORUS.

SHOLVER’S SONG: “THE GHOST”

MOORSIDE & SHOLVER CHORUS

That’s your dad in there,
sitting in his armchair
with a new family, a new wife,
getting on with his life,
he’s moved on a chapter,
lost the plot,
you are the child he forgot.

SHOLVER & CHORUS

Do you snap at the least little thing?
Like I do?
I don’t know you.
Do you share the same sense of humour?
I wonder?
I don’t know you.

MOORSIDE

Does your father feel like a ghost?

SHOLVER

I don’t believe in ghosts.

MOORSIDE & CHORUS

That's your dad in there,
completely unaware,
answering his children's questions,
listening to their requests,
he helps them when they're in trouble,
stops the rot,
you are the child he forgot.

SHOLVER & CHORUS

Do you feel alone at night?
Like I do?
I don't know you.
Do you need me to belong to you?
I wonder?
I don't know you.

MOORSIDE

Does your father feel like a ghost?

SHOLVER

I don't believe in ghosts.

MOORSIDE AND CHORUS EXIT.

SCENE 31

PRESENT DAY. HALL.

SLEEPOVERS RETURN AND COMFORT SHOLVER.

CATRIN

Come on, Sholver.

DERKER

He don't deserve you.

CATRIN

It's his loss.

DEEPA

You've always got your mum.

CATRIN

And us.

SHOLVER

Yeah.

SCENE 32

LIME FARM. THE FEAST. VILLAGERS BRING ON THE
PIES.

“KASKEN’S PIES”

VILLAGERS’ CHORUS

The pies have come!

The pies have come!

Time to feast so stop your fun.

The pies have come!

The pies have come!

Steaming hot, don’t burn your tongue.

The pies have come!

The pies have come!

Pastry crisp and meat well done.

The pies have come!

The pies have come!

Form a queue, we’ll all have some.

The pies have come!

The pies have come!

Take a plate and dip your thumb.

Yeah, the pies have come!

THE VILLAGERS TUCK IN.

KASKEN

Eat of what God has given you for food.

Isn’t that right, Vicar?

VICAR

Eat while you can, that’s my motto. I hear a war with France is looming.

KASKEN

I say, war is a wanton waste of life, Vicar.

VICAR

We could put the bodies to better use on our farms, eh Kasken?

KASKEN

Indeed we could, Vicar, indeed we could.

MRS.NOODLE

Mighty fine pies, Kasken. You’ve excelled yourself this year.

KASKEN

Why thank you, Mrs. Noodle. I couldn’t do it without the support of the villagers. And how is trade at the Top Waggon? Are you selling much beer?

MRS.NOODLE

Trade has doubled with this new Manchester Road. I have a bowling green at the back of the pub and a Coroner’s Court above. It’s the greatest development this area has seen since the Roman’s XXth Legion marched through these parts.

KASKEN

Mostly passing trade, is it Mrs. Noodle?

MRS.NOODLE

Indeed it is. And I'm as happy taking a stranger's money as a friend's.

KASKEN

Lots of strangers, you say? Folk should be wary of the footpads on the Moor, who'd slit your throat for a farthing.

MRS. NOODLE

Never a truer word, Kasken. There's enough villagers gone missing as it is. Speaking of which, you haven't seen that vacant boy of mine, have you?

MRS.NOODLE TAKES A BITE OF HER PIE.

KASKEN

I'm sure he'll pop up right in front of your eyes, before you know it, Mrs. Noodle.

MRS.NOODLE

He's in trouble when I get hold of him, I know that much. Have you ever thought of moving into pub grub?

KASKEN

At the Top Waggon?

MRS.NOODLE

If you could supply me daily with these wonderful pies, we could make ourselves a killing.

KASKEN

Is there the demand, Mrs. Noodle?

MRS.NOODLE

There's a demand all right. I need supplies and I need them fast. I've coined a phrase for it, Farmer Kasken: "Fast Food". I can see the advertisements: "Kasken Pies – fast food for busy lives!"

KASKEN

I'll have to think about the logistics, Mrs. Noodle, and get back to you. I'd need help, it would involve a lot more bodies at the farm.

SCENE 33

DERKER’S STORY.

DERKER & CHORUS

What is it with some dads? They either don’t want to know you at all, like Sholver, or they’re obsessed with you.

DERKER

My mate, Sarah Moor, when her parents’ split up, her dad kidnapped her.

ENTER SARAH MOOR AND HER DAD AT A FERRY PORT.

THEY ARE STANDING NEXT TO THE BOOT OF HIS CAR.

MR. MOOR IS TRYING TO PERSUADE HIS DAUGHTER TO GET INTO A HUGE SACK.

BACK HOME, MRS.MOOR AND DERKER’S MUM ARE WAITING FOR NEWS.

DERKER & CHORUS LOOK ON.

MR.MOOR

Get in the sack.

SARAH MOOR

Dad, it’s horrible, it smells of potatoes.

MR.MOOR

I haven’t got time to argue, Sarah, just do it.

SARAH

Tip it up first, in case there’s any spiders.

HE CHECKS.

MR.MOOR

There.

SARAH

Do I have to?

MR.MOOR

Just ‘til we get through customs.

SARAH

You’ll let me out straight away?

MR.MOOR

I swear.

SARAH

Dad, I’m scared.

MR.MOOR

I would never, ever let you come to any harm.

SHE GETS IN. HE TIES THE CORD AT THE NECK OF THE
SACK.

MR.MOOR

I’m not tying it tight. You can breath through the sack, it’s
natural fibres, they grow it in Bangladesh or somewhere.

SARAH

It’s dark.

MR.MOOR

I’m sorry, Sarah, I don’t have any choice. I’m going to lift you
into the boot of the car. Don’t make a sound until I undo the
sack, right?

SARAH

It's hot.

MR.MOOR

It's not for long, I promise, we'll be on the ferry before you know it. I'll buy you a nice, cool ice-cream.

MEANWHILE, AT SARAH'S HOUSE.

MRS.MOOR

The police won't find her.

DERKER'S MUM

How could he do this to his own flesh and blood?

MRS.MOOR

I just want her back.

DERKER'S MUM

Have they no idea where they've gone?

MRS.MOOR

I think they've gone to Ireland.

DERKER'S MUM

Has he still got relatives over there?

MRS.MOOR

No, but he's always said that's where he belongs.

I might never see my Sarah again. What am I going to do?

DERKER'S MUM

We'll hear something, soon.

MRS.MOOR

Fetch your Derker.

DERKER’S MUM

She can’t.

MRS.MOOR

Yes, she can, I’ve seen her do it.

DERKER’S MUM

It only works within the family.

MRS.MOOR

Come on, she’s got the gift, you said so yourself.

DERKER’S MUM

Don’t get your hopes up, she’s psychic, that’s all.

DERKER STEPS INTO THE SCENE.

DERKER

I thought you didn’t believe in “all that rubbish”?

MRS.MOOR

I’m desperate.

DERKER’S MUM

Please, Derker? Give it a try?

DERKER TAKES OUT HER COWS’ EYES, WRAPPED IN A

HANKERCHIEF, AND ROLLS THEM IN HER HANDS.

THERE IS THE SOUND OF THE SEA IN THE DISTANCE.

DERKER & CHORUS

It’s very dark. There’s a cord.

MRS.MOOR

When she was born, the cord wrapped around her neck, she nearly died.

DERKER & CHORUS

She’s inside a bag of some kind. She’s not in any immediate danger.

MRS.MOOR

Thank God for that.

DERKER & CHORUS

I can hear water. The sea.

MRS.MOOR

I knew it.

DERKER & CHORUS

They’re on a ferry.

SARAH BURSTS OUT OF THE SACK, SPLUTTERING.

SARAH

That was disgusting. I thought you said I wouldn’t be in there long?

MR.MOOR

You weren’t.

SARAH

Felt like forever. I’m not doing that again.

MR.MOOR

You want to be with me, don’t you?

SARAH

I want to be with mum as well. You should phone her.

MR.MOOR

I will, I promise, when we’ve settled.

SARAH

Where we're going, dad, is it anything like Oldham?

DERKER'S CHORUS COLLECTS SARAH AND CARRIES

HER BACK TO HER MUM.

DERKER'S CHORUS 1

The police found the girl.

DC2

Derker told them the name of the ferry, where it was going, all sorts.

DC 3

How could she possibly know?

DC 4

She has magic powers.

DC 5

Can you heal my bad leg, Derker?

DC 6

Can you find my cat?

DC 7

Can you tell me who'll win the Grand National?

DC 8

Can you talk to God?

DC 9

We'd like to run your story in our magazine?

SCENE 34

AT SCHOOL. SARAH AND GIRLS ARE TALKING ABOUT DERKER BEHIND HER BACK. AT FIRST, SARAH IS DEFENDING HER. THE BULLY, MUMPS, IS HOVERING.

DERKER’S CHORUS

After that, Derker becomes the weirdo at school. She went from being Derker the friendly to Derker the freak.

SARAH

Nothing better to do than pick on people like her, you bunch of saddoes?

GIRL 1

Yeah, I feel dead sorry for her.

GIRL 2

She doesn’t know how to fight, Mumps’ll kill her.

GIRL 3

Mumps is gonna get her sooner or later, she might as well get it over with.

MUMPS JOINS IN.

MUMPS

I say, she’s got it coming. We should teach her a lesson, innit?

THE GIRLS FEEL UNDER PRESSURE TO AGREE.

GIRL 3

Right, Mumps, whatever you say, Mumps.

GIRL 2

Right.

GIRL 1

Right.

MUMPS

(TO SARAH)

She’s your mate, isn’t she Sarah?

SARAH

(SCARED)

She used to hang ‘round with me, Mumps. Not any more.

MUMPS

Are you sure?

SARAH LOOKS AT THE OTHERS WHO OFFER NO
SUPPORT.

SARAH

I told you, she’s not my mate.

THE GIRLS SURROUND DERKER. SARAH TRIES TO
HANG BACK BUT THE PEER PRESSURE IS TOO MUCH
FOR HER.

DERKER & CHORUS

I don’t want to be battered, I haven’t got the complexion for it,
I bruise easily. It’s my face I’m worried about, it’s my best
feature, it’s my only feature. I hate the sight of blood,
especially my own. What if they knock my teeth out? Or break
my lovely nose and make it all crooked?

CHORUS & DERKER SING “WHY ME?”

Is it my face?

Or the clothes I wear?

Is it my voice?

Or the colour of my hair?

Why me?

What have I ever done

To deserve this?

I've never dis'd anyone.

I'm running scared,

No one cares.

Is it my name?

Or the colour of my skin?

Where is the shame?

Is it my religion?

Why me?

I never get angry

at school,

I'm not a cruel girl.

I'm so tired,

Can't go on.

Am I too proud?

Do I support the wrong team?

Am I too loud?

Is my vanity obscene?

Why me?

I'll hide no more,

Not me.

I will not run from this bully,

Not me.

No, not me.

MUMPS CLOSES IN.

MUMPS

Let's have a look at your magic balls, Derker.

THEY LAUGH.

MUMPS

Get her!

THEY PIN HER DOWN (LIKE THE COW IN DEEPA'S
STORY). MUMPS STEALS HER COWS' EYEBALLS AND
THEY RUN OFF.

DERKER

No! Give them back! I'll get you for this!

SCENE 35

DERKER IS PICKING HERSELF UP FROM THE FLOOR.

SKUNK AND SNAKE HELP HER.

SKUNK

What’s up, Derker?

DERKER

They were past down to me.

SNAKE

What’s happened?

DERKER

From generation to generation.

SNAKE

What?

DERKER

On my mum’s side, the Switherblooms.

SNAKE

I think, she means her sheep’s eyeballs.

DERKER

They can’t be replaced.

SKUNK

Cow’s.

SNAKE

What?

SKUNK

I think, you’ll find, they’re cows eyeballs.

DERKER

I'll put a curse on them.

SNAKE

You're not a witch as well, are you?

SKUNK

She's upset.

DERKER

What am I gonna do?

SKUNK

Hang 'round with us, if you want. We'll hatch a plan.

SNAKE

We're going down the sea-cadets, d' you wanna come?

SKUNK

Shooting. It's great fun.

CHORUS JOIN SNAKE, SKUNK, DERKER

AND BOY 1 AND BOY 2 SHOOTING AT THE RIFLE

RANGE.

BOY 1

Who's the girl?

BOY 2

Dunno; but she's hit the V-bull.

SNAKE

Nice one, Derker! Bet you can't do that again?

DERKER SHOOTS.

DERKER

You were saying?

SKUNK

She’s a natural.

DERKER

The L81 is my favourite. A target rifle, single fire, 3.6mm.

It’s nearly as big as me. I have to wear a sling and
elbow-pads and a shooting glove. If it kicks back, it’ll dislocate

your shoulder. It’s an old model but it works for me. You put
the rounds in as you fire, no safety drill, nice and simple.

Adjust the rear sites, keep perfectly still and fire.

CHORUS

They’re a man short for the annual competition. They put

Derker in for it and she wins. Before you know it, she’s the
youngest champion shooting for Britain.

SCENE 36

AT SCHOOL. DERKER IS STILL ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE GIRLS.

DERKER’S CHORUS

The rumours spread at school: the weirdo has a gun.

GIRL 1 APPROACHES DERKER.

GIRL 1

Is it right, you’ve got a gun?

DERKER PUTS HER HAND IN HER COAT POCKET AND THE GIRL RECOILS IN FEAR. DERKER SEIZES THE MOMENT AND POINTS THROUGH HER COAT POCKET AT GIRL 1 AS IF SHE HAS A GUN.

GIRL 1 RUNS BACK TO THE OTHERS.

GIRL 1

She has, Derker’s got a gun, honest, I saw it.

DERKER APPROACHES THEM.

GIRL 2

She’s coming over.

GIRL 3

What we gonna do?

GIRL 1

She’s my mate.

GIRL 2

Mine too.

GIRL 3

And me.

SARAH

She was my mate first, remember?

MUMPS

She's no mate of mine.

DERKER

I want my eyeballs back, Mumps.

MUMPS LOOKS AT THE GIRLS FOR SUPPORT. DERKER

POINTS THE GUN AT THEM. THEY LINE UP BEHIND

DERKER. MUMPS PANICS.

MUMPS

I haven't got them, Derker, I swear.

DERKER

Where are they?

MUMPS

They don't work. I tried.

DERKER

Are you a Switherbloom?

MUMPS

No.

DERKER

Then why should they work for you?

Where are they?

MUMPS

I threw them in the lake.

DERKER

(THREATENING)

I ought to -

MUMPS

Please, don't shoot, Derker, I'm sorry.

MUMPS LEGS IT, FOLLOWED BY REST OF THE GIRLS.

SCENE 37

PRESENT DAY. HALL

CATRIN

Can you really see things, Derker?

DERKER

I could – until I lost my eyes.

SKUNK

She can hypnotise people.

CATRIN

Seriously?

DERKER

I can regress you if you want?

TIG

What does that mean?

DERKER

I can take you back to a previous life.

SHOLVER

I don't believe you.

DERKER

Fine, don't believe me.

SHOLVER

Prove it.

DERKER

Any volunteers?

PAUSE.

I thought not.

SKUNK RAISES SNAKE’S HAND.

SKUNK

Snake’ll do it.

SNAKE

No way.

SKUNK

Coward.

SNAKE

So? You do it.

SKUNK

Go on then.

DEEPA

Don’t, Skunk.

DERKER

It might not work. I’ve only ever done it a few times.

SHOLVER

She’s backing out.

DERKER

I am not.

DEEPA

You shouldn’t mess with things like that.

DERKER

Sit here.

SHE PLACES A CHAIR DOWNSTAGE FACING THE
AUDIENCE. SKUNK SITS ON IT.

DERKER

You lot stand behind him so you don't put him off.

SKUNK

She won't hypnotise me, man, my will power is too strong.

SNAKE

She won't be able to do it 'cause he's got no brain.

DERKER

Fix your eyes on one thing in the room. Concentrate.

(TO THE OTHERS)

Quiet!

(TO SKUNK)

Have you done that for me?

SKUNK

Yeah.

SOUND OF THE SEA IN THE DISTANCE.

DERKER

Now close your eyes. I want you to imagine you're by the sea
at Blackpool. You're on the beach. It's Winter and there's no
else there. The tide's coming in. The waves are lapping at
your feet. You're enjoying the sound of the waves and the
rhythm: in and out, in and out, in and out. It's making you feel

sleepy. Like you're a baby again, being rocked in your cot.
You're slipping back through time, long before you're a baby,
to a time when you were someone else.

NOODLE IS A VOICE-OVER, AT FIRST, THEN APPEARS.

NOODLE & SKUNK

I'm lost.

CATRIN

She's done it.

NOODLE & SKUNK

I'm lost.

SHOLVER

He's pretending.

DERKER

Shush!

(TO SKUNK)

Can we help?

NOODLE

They're looking for me.

DERKER

Who's looking for you?

NOODLE

My friends. The sack race is starting any minute now.

TIG

It's him, that lad.

NOODLE

I don't want to miss it, I'm best at the sack race.

TIG

The ghost in the sack.

DERKER

Are you the ghost of Crime Lake?

NOODLE

I'm lost.

DERKER

What's your name?

NOODLE

They call me Noodle.

DERKER

Where are you, Noodle?

NOODLE APPEARS, FOLLOWED BY SOME OF THE
VILLAGERS.

SHOLVER

Whoa, hang on, what's happening here?

DEEPA

I'm going to press the alarm.

SHE KEEPS PRESSING IT BUT NOTHING HAPPENS.

NOODLE

It's the annual Feast. Up at Lime Farm.

Follow me.

DERKER

Come on, you lot.

THEY FOLLOW NOODLE, APART FROM SKUNK WHO
REMAINS SEATED THROUGHOUT. THE VILLAGERS
CAN'T SEE THEM. THEY WANDER AROUND THE FEAST.

CATRIN

They can't see us.

TIG

Who are these people?

DEEPA

Are we ghosts? Or them?

SNAKE

Does that mean we're dead?

NOODLE

There's my mum. And the Vicar. And my friends:

(CALLING)

Wolfie? Samuel? Switherbloom?

NO RESPONSE.

DERKER

Which one's Switherbloom?

NOODLE

She's my best friend.

NOODLE SPOTS FARMER KASKEN.

That's him, the farmer, Kasken.

DERKER

It's the one we saw first, the one with the meat cleaver.

NOODLE

It was Farmer Kasken. He threw a sack over my head. It smelled of potatoes. That's the last thing I remember.

DERKER

What are you saying, noodle? Did the farmer murder you?
Is that what you're trying to tell us?

THE VILLAGERS DISAPPEAR, EXCEPT FOR FARMER
KASKEN.

NOODLE

(SHIVERING)

I'm cold. The lake's frozen. The Feast is over. Everyone's gone home. Kasken's walking to the bridge to close the gate.

KASKEN PLAYS OUT THE STORY.

He slips and falls on the icy lake. The ice cracks. He falls through the ice. It's just like Switherbloom said, only it wasn't me on the ice this time, it was Kasken. He tries to pull himself out. But there are hands groping beneath the ice. The hands hold onto Kasken's legs and drag him down to join his victims at the bottom of the lake.

KASKEN DISAPPEARS.

That's it. My bones are in Crime Lake. With the others. At long last, I know where I am laid to rest. I'm with the dead. That's where I belong.

NOODLE DISAPPEARS, LEAVING BEHIND DERKER'S
COW'S EYEBALLS. SKUNK WAKES UP. DERKER PICKS
UP THE EYES.

SKUNK

I'm freezing. What have you done to me? What are you lot
looking at?

DERKER

He's left my eyes - look.

SKUNK

You what?

DERKER

Noodle must have found them in the lake. He's give me them
back.

SKUNK

Who's Noodle?

SNAKE

You, you plonker. Do you not remember?

SCENE 38

PRESENT DAY. HALL. LEO, JAG AND DOOLITTLE

ARRIVE.

LEO

Haven't you guys been to sleep?

SNAKE

Is it morning already?

DEEPA

That's a big relief, I can tell you.

JAG

Listen up, the charity have got a special treat lined up for you.

DOOLITTLE

As a token of our appreciation, The Animal Sanctuary would like to buy you all breakfast.

ALL

Yeah, man.

SNAKE

Where we going?

DOOLITTLE

Apparently, there's a brand new fast-food restaurant opening today, near the new M60 motorway, presumably to catch the passing trade. It's called "McKasken's" and I'm told they do the most fantastic pies.

ALL

No way!

PLAY ENDS.

ENCORE

EVERYONE ON STAGE FOR A REPRISE OF “KASKEN’S
PIES”; BUT THIS TIME DONE AS A RAP.