

A TREE GROWS IN KILBURN

SCENE ONE KIT/DINER EVENING

CATHY IS LAYING THE TABLE. EVERYTHING HAS A WASHED-OUT LOOK TO IT. SHE SETS DOWN THE YELLOW HANDLED CUTLERY, LEANS ON THE UNSTEADY BACK OF ONE OF THE MISMATCHED CHAIRS AND LOOKS BEMUSEDLY ROUND THE SKIMPILY FURNISHED ROOM.

CATHY:

Sometimes I wish we'd never won the lottery.

SHE MOVES TOWARDS THE BEDROOM, AS SHE PASSES THE FRONT DOOR IT OPENS AND ALAN ROGERS STEPS IN.

ALAN:
(CALLING)

Rob?

CATHY:
(BEHIND HIM - STARTLES HIM)

It's Cathy. I'm the one who wears a dress all the time. Rob isn't here, he's not back from work yet.

ALAN:

Those slave drivers, they get their money's worth out of old Rob, don't they. Every day. Works his fingers to the bone and what does he get?

CATHY:

Sore fingers.
Alan, he's a doorman at a hotel. He spends most of the day sitting on the edge of a plant pot in the lobby. Believe me, it won't be his fingers he works to the bone. Anyway, he's gone to the doctors. He's been a bit down lately.

ALAN:

Well, if anyone can cheer him up, Rob can...but...

CATHY:

(PUTS HER HAND UP TO STOP THIS DRIVEL)

Rob has gone to the doctor because Rob is not feeling well. **(ALAN GETS IT)** You must've noticed. He's been flying off the handle at the slightest little thing lately.

ALAN:

Lately? He's been like that since he was born. He puts it down to the whack the midwife gave him.

CATHY:

Why should a midwife's slap bother him now?

ALAN:

Well, for one thing she should've slapped him on the bottom.

CATHY:

Rob Camden with a grudge is like a pit bull with an ankle.

ALAN:

Don't remind me. **(HE SHAKES ONE LEG, LIKE FREEING A TROUSER END FROM A BOOT.)**

CATHY:

He'd never admit this but I think Rob is suffering from stress. When he's irritable he gets nervous. I suggested something to calm him down.

THE DOOR OPENS AND A BEAMING ROB CAMDEN ENTERS. HE IS IN DOORMAN'S UNIFORM AND HIS PEAKED CAP IS AT A JAUNTY ANGLE. HE CARRIES UNDER HIS ARM A SMALL BOX OF CHOCOLATES OF THE TYPE HOTELS PUT ON YOUR PILLOW.

HE GOES TO CATHY AND GIVES HER A LONG
KISS ON THE CHEEK.

ROB:

Hello, my darling.

CATHY:
(SUSPICIOUS)

Robert?

ROB:
(HANDING HER THE CHOCOLATES)

Sweets for my sweet (AND PULLING A SACHET
OF SWEET "N" LOW FROM HIS POCKET) Sugar
for my honey.

ALAN:

I'm going upstairs to make a cup of tea
for my bag.

ROB:

Alan, my dearest friend, you are not
going anywhere until I have given you a
great big hug.

ALAN SHRINKS AS ROB MOVES IN AND CRUSHES
HIM IN A BEAR HUG.

ALAN:

(OVER ROB'S SHOULDER) Get him off, get
him off.

CATHY:

What did the doctor say, Rob?

ROB ABRUPTLY LETS GO OF ALAN WHO CRUMPLES
TO THE FLOOR, STOPPING HIMSELF JUST IN
TIME.

ROB:

Doctor? Doctor? No doctor could help
me with my troubles.

CATHY:

So where have you been?

ROB:

I met this bloke. A healer, Cathy. On the underground train to Theydon Bois I run into a healer of minds.

CATHY:

Why were you going to Theydon Bois?

ROB:

He was going to Theydon Bois. Look, I had a problem at the ticket barrier, sometimes my ticket is the one they pick to reject... **(THEY'RE STARING)** Come on, you know they have these machines rigged. Just to prove they're working. Anyway, Dave sees I'm having trouble, he came over, helped the ticket inspector to his feet and told me my problem.

CATHY:

You knock a ticket inspector down and you need someone to tell you you've got a problem? What did he say?

ROB

You won't believe it, it's so simple. She says the reason I get stressed is because I'm under stress and when I'm under stress I get stressed. It's so simple.

ALAN:

Why didn't I think of it?

CATHY:

Did he suggest a cure?

ROB:

Yes and a natural one at that. Organic, you might say. Every time I feel stressed I have to go '1 - 2, 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 4 - 5, 5 - 6, 6 - 7, 7 - 8, 8 - 9, 9 - 10.' And all my stress and strain will be lifted magically from my shoulders and I'll be fine.

CATHY:

So this genius, this shaman, this Dave the prophet told you to count to ten before you lose your temper.

ROB:

Yes.

CATHY:

How much did you give him?

ROB:

You can't value the teaching of a mystic against mere currency.

CATHY:

How much did you give him?

ROB:

Fifty quid. But it works, Cathy. I am so relaxed and you have to admit I've changed.

CATHY:

You're right. You're like a new man. I've got your favourite meal cooking - go and get ready.

ROB:

Favourite meal? How do you know what your new man eats?

HE GOES OFF INTO THE BEDROOM, TAKING OFF THE HEAVY GREATCOAT AND CHORTLING.

CATHY:

What do you think, Alan?

ALAN:

I think that '1 - 2, 2 - 3' thing is going to make a difference to all our lives.

CATHY:

Will you use it?

ALAN:

No, but I'm going to teach it to my wife.

CATHY:

Where is Geri? I haven't seen her all week.

ALAN:

She's working temporary, she's doing three days at Boots. To pay for Christmas. We don't want that sneaking up on us again.

THERE'S A KNOCK AT THE DOOR. CATHY GOES. IT'S GARRY LEVITT, THE TOO TALL, LANKY SON THE LATE OWNER OF THE BUILDING. HE WEARS A GREY PIN-STRIPED SUIT, A WASHED OUT SHIRT AND GREY LEATHER SLIP-ON SHOES. HE'S GREY TOO. AND HE'S GOT SOME A4 SHEETS IN HIS HAND.

CATHY:

Hello, Mr. Levitt. Come in ...

LEVITT:

(COMING IN) Thank you, madam, er Mrs. Camden, er C...Cathy. **(HE'S SLIGHTLY STARTLED WHEN HE NOTICES ALAN)** Good evening, Mr. Rogers.

ALAN:

Hello, Garry. You're early this month, the rent's not due for another two weeks.

LEVITT:

I'm not here for the rent. I've got these information updates to hand out.

HE HANDS A SHEET TO CATHY WHO STARTS TO READ IT TO HERSELF. ALAN LOOKS OVER HER SHOULDER.

ALAN:

What's it say?

LEVITT:

I've got one for you, too.

ALAN STARTS TO READ HIS.

CATHY:

Mr. Levitt, this says you're raising the rent.

ALAN:

(READING HARDER) So does mine.

LEVITT:

Er, well, I went to the rent tribunal and they gave me permission for an increase of fifteen per cent. But, I will be making improvements ... it's all in the update.

ALAN:

(FINISHED READING) Yeah, my rent's going up, too. Fifteen per cent. Fifteen per cent. The old fifteen percenterinos. How much is that?

LEVITT:

Well, its fifteen per cent of £525.

ALAN:

How much is that?

LEVITT:

It works out to £78.75

ALAN:

Do you know how much that is?

LEVITT:

Well er ye-

ALAN:

That's uhm £78...you might as well say £80 pounds.

LEVITT:

(WRITING IN HIS BOOK) That's very decent of you, Mr Rogers. Well, I've got to go and see the other tenants now. Give Mr Camden my regards and tell him I'm sorry I missed him.

HE GOES TO THE DOOR AND HE'S ALMOST MADE IT WHEN ROB COMES OUT OF THE BEDROOM. HE'S WEARING KARATE TYPE PYJAMAS. HE'S HOLDING THE TROUSERS UP WITH ONE HAND. HE'S THE NEW IMPROVED ALWAYS SMILING ROB AND HE GREET'S LEVITT CHEERFULLY.

ROB:

Cathy, do you know where the sash is for my pyjam-Levitt...you're out of the coffin early this month. Short of money, eh? Give him the rent, Cathy..
(HE PUTS AN ARM ROUND GARRY AND LEADS HIM BACK INTO THE CENTRE OF THE ROOM) ...you're just the man I want to see.

LEVITT:

I've got a lot to do, Mr. Camden, I'm very busy.

ROB:

I've noticed. And when you're busy that old stress and strain piles up on top of you. I've seen that. Every time you come here to speak to me you end up getting all nervous and uptight. Well I can change all that for you.

LEVITT:

I should be going ...

CATHY:

Dinner, Rob!

ROB:

Keep it warm. This will just take a minute. Levitt... what's your first name? Larry, isn't it?

LEVITT:

Garry.

ROB:

Are you sure? I thought it was Larry. Oh well, you can call me Bob. Running a company like yours is a stress filled job. Next time you get into a fraught situation do this: "1 - 2, 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 4 - 5, 5 - 6, 6 - 7, 7 - 8, 8 - 9, 9 - 10.". You'll feel like a new man.

LEVITT:

(WITH A SICKLY SMILE STILL IN PLACE REACHES FOR THE DOOR AGAIN) How fascinating...er, Bob.

ROB:

(LOOKING ROUND HIM).

IF there was something upsetting me now I could show you exactly how it works.

ALAN:

(GIVES ROB THE INFORMATION UPDATE)

Try this.

ROB:

Right, Garry now watch this. You know how much drivel they print in circulars ..(He starts to read) "Dear Friend"..I hate that.. it's an old trick to soften up the poor idiot.

HE CONTINUES TO READ WITH ALAN LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER. HIS EXPRESSION CHANGES GRADUALLY UNTIL WE SEE HIS SHOULDERS TENSE.

ROB:

(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH)

"1 - 2, 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 4 - 5, 5 - 6, 6 - 7, 7 - 8, 8 - 9, 9 - 10."

ROB SETS A HUGE, FALSE GRIN ON HIS FACE

ALAN:

Look at that smile, Garry ...that's the key to the whole thing. Keep watching that smile.

ROB:

"Now what am I angry about?"

HE GOES INTO THE BEDROOM. SLAMS THE DOOR.

CATHY:

Don't worry, Mr. Levitt, he'll be fine.

**SHE TURNS TO THE DOOR WITH LEVITT
THEY ARE STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS BY THE
SOUND FROM THE BEDROOM.**

ROB:

(OOV: TOP OF HIS VOICE) "1 - 2, 2 - 3, 3
- 4, 4 - 5 (KUNG FU TYPE YELL) Yaka
tackiiiiiy!!

**WE HEAR A SWIPING HAND THEN THE SOUND OF
BREAKING FURNITURE.
THE BEDROOM DOOR BURSTS OPEN AND ROB
STORMS OUT AND UP TO LEVITT.**

ROB:

(PRODDING LEVITT'S CHEST) You're not
getting one extra penny out of me,
Levitt".

ALAN:

Rob, Rob ..."1 2 3 2 2 3"

ROB:

Aw shut up. (TO LEVITT) You've got a
cheek coming in here trying to put our
rent up. You should be knocking money
off. Your Dad was just as bad. We paid
extra to subsidise his fancy woman.

LEVITT:

My dad's...fancy woman?

ROB:

Didn't you know? Miss Favershamham in
flat 1b

LEVITT:

(STUNNED) With the blonde wig? And the
the the...

ROB:

Lipstick nowhere near the mouth...

LEVITT:

And the wedding dress, yes. That's her.
Your old man installed her here, rent
free, to be his plaything.

ALAN/ROB/LEVITT:

Yeughhh.

LEVITT:

Miss Faversham...that was her name. I
thought it meant she was a beauty queen.
(COMES TO HIS SENSES)
I'm sorry, Bob **(ROB GLARES AT HIM)**...er,
Mr. Camden. That doesn't change
anything. I didn't reach this decision
easily, nor did the rent tribunal. I had
to prove hardship.

ROB:

Hardship? How did you do that. Show them
a picture of this dump?

CATHY:

Rob, it's not worth getting yourself
upset, it's only another £18 odd a week.

RALPH:

(STOPS AND ADVANCES ON CATHY)

Only £18 odd a week, oh well that's all
right then. Mrs Lloyd-Webber says it's
only £18, that's fine. I'll just go into
my music room and knock off a couple of
tuneful little ditties, that'll cover it.
Cathy, I'm a doorman at a hotel ... how can
I make an extra 12 quid a week? I've
worn a dent in the peak of my cap already
(SALUTES WITH ONE FINGER) trying to get
tips. Do you have any idea how many taxi
doors I'd have to open to make an extra
£18 a month?

ALAN:

How many, Rob?

ROB:

Phwaa, phwaa a lot - who cares. I'm not paying, any more money for this place, and that's it.

CATHY:

Rob, I don't see how we can refuse.

LEVITT:

I'd hate to have to throw you out, Mr. Camden.

ALAN:

I'd hate to have to dig his grave.

BEAT

ROB:

Throw me out? Throw me out? I've lived in this place for 19 years. I've slaved to make it what it is - a palace for my Cathy. Every stick of furniture, roll of wallpaper, lick of paint and square metre of carpet is paid for and it's mine. I paid for it with the sweat off my back.

CATHY:

(NOT SHARING HIS GLOWING DESCRIPTION)

We'd've got better stuff if we'd paid cash.

ROB:

We may be in the all-new, modernising 21st century, Levitt, but an Englishman's home is still his castle. You try and throw me out.

LEVITT:

I have a right to institute proceedings to evict you.

ROB:

From this rat hole! Fine.

LEVITT AND ROB ARE CHIN TO CHIN, ALMOST

LEVITT:

F..fine.

CATHY:

Look, I'm sure if we could sit down and discuss this like rational people (**ALAN SITS, NO PAUSE**) where do you think you're going?

ALAN:

You said.

CATHY:

Out. (**DRAGGING ROB TO SIT DOWN**) Mr. Levitt, you mentioned improvements.

LEVITT:

Yes, I have planning permission to build a two storey extension on the back and I intend to make the top floor an extra dwelling .. but the ground floor would be a recreation area with a pool table, cable tv and a free laundry room for the use of all tenants.

CATHY:

A laundry room? Plumbed in?

LEVITT:

Of course.

CATHY:

Did you hear that, Rob? A laundry? We spend £20 a week at the launderette now.

ROB:
(NOT SWAYED)

Mmmmm

LEVITT:

I'd be rewiring all the flats and, of course, redecorating and making good wherever we have to.

CATHY:

I think it sounds well worth the extra rent.

ROB:

Listen to yourself. "I think it sounds well worth the extra rent". It's £78.78 this year. In ten years time it'll be another £78.75, and ten years after that hell come round looking for another £78.75. Does it sound worth it now?

CATHY:

Put like that, no it doesn't. Don't pay the increase, Rob. I had no idea you intended to live here for another 20 years. I'd rather starve to death right now.

LEVITT:

If you look at the information update you'll see it says the rent will stay at the new level for three years, then increases will be applied only with the express consent of all tenants.

ROB:

(HAS A LOOK)

Oh, right. And the improvements are all mentioned in here too, Cathy. I don't know why you're making such a fuss. Get my pen. Here, Larry let me get you a drink. Tell me about this pool table - **(ROB GOES TO HIS DRINKS CUPBOARD. IT'S BARE)**

Well, it's early yet. For a minute I was annoyed, I don't mind telling you, Still, a good argument never harmed a friendship in my view. **(HE TAKES LEVITT TO THE WINDOW AND THEY LOOK OUT AT THE BACK OF THE HOUSE)** This new extension won't cut out my light will it?

LEVITT:

No, most of your light comes in from the side anyway and I'll put French windows in to maximise that.

ROB CONTINUES TO LOOK OUT AND DAYDREAM.

CATHY:

I can't wait for it all to happen...when will they start?

LEVITT:

Next month. They'll lay the foundations and start to landscape the garden...that big old oak tree will take about a week to fell and cut for transportation.

ROB:

(HIS SHOULDERS TENSE)

No one is touching that tree.

LEVITT:

(CONT'D)... but most of the preparation will be completed in the first -

ROB:

That tree goes over my dead body.

CATHY:

"1 - 2, 2 - 3, 3 - 4, 4 - 5,....."

END OF PART.

SCENE TWO. KITCHEN TABLE IN THE FLAT.
EVENING.

CATHY SITS THERE WITH GERI, ALANS WIFE,
OVER A CUP OF TEA.

CATHY:

You know, ~Geri, I envy you your job.
You have independence, a purpose to your
life.

GERI:

Don't. The purpose in my life is to earn
money that's already been spent. Where's
the fun in that?

CATHY:

Yes but at least you're out there all day
meeting people.

GERI

Cathy, I'm selling corn plasters, odour
eaters and verruca creams - you don't
want to meet the sort of people I'm
meeting.

PAUSE

Have you heard anything from Levitt?

CATHY:

We had a letter from his solicitor.

GERI

What did it say?

CATHY:

I don't know, we had to send it to our
solicitor for a translation.

GERI:

And?

CATHY:

We've entered our solicitor's reply in the Campaign For Clear English's Christmas draw. Oh, I don't know. I just think Rob has really done it this time. The work on the new extension is two months late in starting .. I think there's going to be trouble.

GERI:

All over a tree. Still, your was always good at getting himself in trouble.

**THEY SIT, CHINS ON HANDS AND DAYDREAM US
BACK IN TIME.**

SCENE THREE.

IT'S 1976 AND WE'RE IN A DANCEHALL, GOT UP TO LOOK LIKE A DISCO. MUSIC - TUNES TO BE SELECTED - PLAYS BRASHLY AND DANCERS DISCO AWAY. WE FIND GERRY AND CATHY AT A TABLE WITH THEIR CHINS ON THEIR HANDS, IN THE SAME MANNER WE LEFT THEM. (THESE ARE LOOKALIKE CATHY, GERRY, ROB AND ALAN - BUT 18 YEARS OLD).

YOUNG ROB AND ALAN APPROACH THE TABLE.

YOUNG ALAN:
(TO GERRY)

Hey, good lookin' may I have the pleasure?

YOUNG GERRY:

Of course you may - but let's have a dance first.

SHE GETS UP TO GO WITH HIM AND FLIPS A BIG WINK AT CATHY WITH A NOD IN THE DIRECTION OF YOUNG ROB.

YOUNG ROB:
(TONGUE TIED TO CATHY)

Phnaaa phnaa, woooooooooa.

YOUNG CATHY:

I'd love to dance, thank you.

THEY GO ON THE FLOOR AND ROB IS, AS WE WOULD EXPECT, COMPLETELY UNCO-ORDINATED AND LOUSY. HE BUMPS IN TO EVERY OTHER DANCER, HIS JOHN TRAVOLTA MOVES KNOCK PEOPLE OVER.

YOUNG ROB:

I need a drink.

WE MIX TO THE BAR WHERE YOUNG ROB IS TURNING TO YOUNG CATHY WITH TWO COKES IN BOTTLES WITH STRAWS. THEY WANDER OUT TO THE TERRACE ... REALLY A BALCONY OVERLOOKING A BUSY URBAN THOROUGHFARE. HE SLIPS HIS ARM OVER HER SHOULDER...SHE SHRUGS AWAY.

YOUNG CATHY:

I'm not that kind of a girl.

YOUNG ROB:
(FLUSTERED AGAIN)

No, neither am I...!!!!

**THERE'S A GIGGLING FROM BEHIND SOME
SHRUBBERY AND WE SEE ALAN AND GERRY
RESUME SNOGGING.**

YOUNG ROB:

I've got big ideas, Cathy. One day I'm
gonna be someone. I'm gonna be sombebody
big.

YOUNG CATHY:

What do you do now?

YOUNG ROB:

I'm er er I'm front of house manager in
one of the big Park Lane Hotels. The
Madeira.

YOUNG CATHY:

Sound important.

Young Rob:

I am. I mean, it is. It's a big job.
There's so much that can go wrong and I'm
responsible.

SCENE FOUR

NOW WE MIX TO CATHY ON A BUS ... IT'S THE
NEXT DAY.

YOUNG CATHY:

I hope you like surprises, Mr. Robert
Camden, Front of House manager of the
Madeira Hotel.

THE BUS PULLS AWAY REVEALING THE YOUNG
CATHY WAITING TO CROSS THE ROAD TO THE
MADEIRA HOTEL ... WHERE THE YOUNG ROB, WITH
BELLBOY'S UNIFORM AND LITTLE CAP ON, IS
UNLOADING A HUGE BARROW OF LUGGAGE AND
FORCING IT INTO THE BOOT OF A BENTLEY.
THE CHAUFFEUR TURNS TO GO, YOUNG ROB
COUGHS, SHOWING PALM. THE CHAUFFEUR
SHAKES HIS HAND AND WALKS TO THE DRIVER'S
DOOR.

CATHY TURNS AWAY SO ROB DOESN'T SEE HER.

WE SHAKE BACK TO REALITY.

SCENE FIVE:

BACK IN THE FLAT WHERE WE LEFT CATHY AND GERRY.

GERRY:

All over a tree.

CATHY:

Well, it's not just any tree. It's been there for almost the whole century, it must stand for something.

Gerry:

It stands because it's a tree. If it were to lay down it would be a log.

A LITTLE RED EGG TIMER THING ON THE TABLE GOES OFF.

CATHY GETS UP AND GOES TO THE STOVE AND POURS WATER INTO A HOT WATER BOTTLE ..AND SOME INTO A MUG. SHE PUTS A STRAW IN THE MUG.

AT THE SAME TIME GERRY LIFTS OPEN THE SASH WINDOW AND REELS IN AN ELABORATE PULLEY EFFECT.

SHE DETACHES THE HOT WATER BOTTLE AND COFFEE MUG FROM THE STRING LOOPS.

AS CATHY ATTACHES THE FRESH HOT WATER BOTTLE AND FRESH COFFEE MUG, GERRY ATTACHES A SLICE OF BREAD AND JAM IN AN EMPTY LOOP.

TOGETHER THEY PULL THEIR END OF THE PULLEY AND WE WATCH OUT THE WINDOW AS THE STUFF GOES ON ITS JOURNEY.

WE SEE ROB IS LASHED BY HEAVY ROPES TO THE BASE OF THE TREE TRUNK AND AS THE ROPE REACHES HIM HE REMOVES THE HOT WATER BOTTLE AND STUFFS IT DOWN HIS TROUSERS, TRIES TO GRAB WITH HIS LIPS AT THE STRAW IN THE MUG AND REACHES TO BITE THE BREAD.

THE GIRLS CLOSE THE WINDOW AND RESUME THEIR PLACES AT THE TABLE. WE STAY OUTSIDE WITH ROB.

ROB:
(YELLING) I hate blackcurrant. Thanks for your support, girls. That's it, close the window, don't let any of that expensive heat out. (STOPS SHOUTING) I don't know why I'm doing this. All my life I've let my heart lead me .. but you're worth it, mate. You're worth saving.

CAM PANS UP AND WE SEE ALAN ROGERS IS TIED ON TO THE TRUNK AT A HIGHER LEVEL AND HIS FEET ARE BALANCING ON TWO BRANCHES.

ALAN:
Thanks, Rob, so are you. Look, I don't want to sound like a wimp or anything, but I'm hungry.

ROB:
Here, have this bread and jam.

HE SENDS THE BREAD UP TO ALAN.

ALAN:
Bread and Jam. Isn't there anything else?

ROB:
What's wrong with bread and jam? It was good enough for us when we were schoolboys ...schoolboys. I bet Miss Russell our Botany mistress would be proud of us. Giving our lives to save a tree. She was the one who instilled in me my love of nature ...she opened a young boy's mind to the splendid wonders of fauna and flora.

ALAN:

You fancied her.

ROB:

I did not.

ALAN:

You did, If you didn't, why did you never take the mickey out of her like the rest of us.

ROB:

Because it was childish. The whole school said she talked to her plants ... well I stood outside her window for half an hour one day and she didn't say a word.

ALAN:

That's because she was listening to them. I'm hungry ..this bread and jam isn't what I had in mind.

ROB:

But it's not bread and jam ...it's a nice thick piece of steak with juices flowing from it.

ALAN:

Good idea. MMmmm this is nice, my compliments to the chef. You know, Rob, this is probably the most succulent piece of meat I've ever eaten.

ROB:

That's the idea.

**ALAN CONTINUES IN HIS TRIBUTE TO STEAK
AND WE WATCH ROB AS HIS FACIAL
EXPRESSIONS CHANGE FROM CRAVING TO
DESPERATE HUNGER.**

ALAN:

Mmmmm..**LIP SMACKING** this is done to a turn, just how I like it .. pink and juicy under a firm well done exterior mmmmm, oooh this mushroom gravy is delicious and these crunchy onion rings on the side.

ROB:

Aw shut up. It's bread and jam. Now finish it and let us all get to sleep.

IT GETS DARKER AND WE HOME IN ON THE SLEEPING FACE OF ROB. HIS RIGHT EYE OPENS SUDDENLY AND HE LOOKS AROUND AS FAR AS THAT ALLOWS HIM TO. HE OPENS THE OTHER EYE AND STUDIES THE SURROUNDINGS. A THIRD EYE OPENS, WHICH HE LOOKS INTO AND SCREAMS.

ROB:

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaarghhhhhhhh. Alan.

ALAN:

(WAKING UP) What is it?

ROB:

What's this on my shoulder.

ALAN:

(STRAINING TO LOOK DOWN) It's just a wise old owl. We're in his tree.

ROB:

Oh he's very wise, isn't he? I mean he's out in the cold on a tree just like us. How wise is that?

THE OWL STARES THEN FLAPS ITS WINGS AND FLIES OFF.

PAUSE.

ROB:

I can't sleep. I hate that. If I can't sleep it means I'll be grumpy in the morning. What's a good way to get to sleep?

SCENE SIX.

THIS TIME IT'S THE GIRLS WHO ENTER. THEY WALK TO THE END OF THE HALL WHERE A HUGE CROWD IS GATHERED.

THEY GO THROUGH THE CROWD WHERE THEY FIND YOUNG ROB THE CENTRE OF ATTRACTION DANCING UP A STORM.

THE MUSIC STOPS AND YOUNG ROB, SURROUNDED BY GIRLS LEAVES THE FLOOR. HE SITS AT A TABLE, A DRINK APPEARS IN HIS HAND, SOME NUTS ARE PASSED TO HIM, HE'S OFFERED A CIGARETTE AND A DOZEN LIGHTERS FLASH TO LIGHT IT.

YOUNG CATHY MAKES HER WAY OVER.

YOUNG ROB:

Hey - fresh meat. Hell, darling', come and sit with me. Drink.

YOUNG CATHY:

Phnaa Phnaaa Phwaa.

YOUNG ROB:

Coke for my girl.

A BOTTLE IS HANDED TO CATHY.

YOUNG ROB:

Right, first I have very few rules but those I have I stick to. No smoking. No alcohol. And I never ever go to bed on the first date. So let's consider this our second date.

YOUNG CATHY SPILLS HER COKE ON YOUNG ROB'S LEG.

SCENE SEVEN.

**WE MIX THROUGH TO ROB TIED TO THE TREE.
IT'S MORNING NOW. AND ROB IS SHAKING HIS
LEG.**

ROB:

If that dog does that one more time I'll
kill him.
He's marking out his territory.
I'll mark out my territory on his jacksy
if he does that again. It's disgusting.
Have they never heard of building a wall?
It's not natural.

LEVITT APPROACHES.

LEVITT:

Good morning, Mr. Camden.

ROB:

Ah, Levitt. Come to your senses, eh?
Okay untie me so I can shake your hand.

LEVITT:

**(STUFFING LEGAL DOCUMENTS DOWN ROB'S
ROPE)**

These are documents confirming my right
to remove my tree from my Property.
County Court Judgment. High Court
Judgment. Court of Appeal Judgment. Anne
and Nick Phone-in. The European Court of
Human Rights Judgement. In 14 difference
languages all saying the same thing. "Oh
no, not him again". The tree is coming
down today.

ROB:

Over my dead body.

LEVITT:

Probably.

ROB:

Have you no heart? Do you have any idea
how long this tree has stood rooted to
this spot? How many years?

LEVITT:

No. But I can count the rings when I've chopped it down.
Do you know who these men are?

HE'S REFERRING TO TWO QUITE SHORT MEN IN BOWLER HATS.

ROB:

Homepride Flour Graders?

LEVITT:

They're bailiffs. This is your last chance. Are you going to give up your protest or not?

ROB:

Do your worst.

TWO OTHER MEN ENTER AND START UP A PETROL DRIVEN CHAINSAW.

SCENE EIGHT.

GERRY AND CATHY ARE TALKING TO THE BOYS WHO ARE STILL FIRMLY TIED TO THE TREE. (WE CAN'T SEE THE GIRLS AND BOYS TOGETHER).

GERRY:

Alan, when will it be over?

ALAN:

It's coming to an end now, Ger. I don't think even Rob can carry this one on another minute.

CATHY:

Rob, it's no failure. You should be proud you stuck to your guns.

ROB:

I did it for you, Cathy. For you, for our home.

CATHY:

(LOOKS BACK AT THE HOUSE)
DEADPAN. Thanks.

ROB:

He didn't win, did he, Cathy?

CATHY:

Only on a technicality. We're paying the rent increase, we haven't got our laundry or pool room yet. Let him think he won.

LEVITT ENTERS. (WE CAN'T SEE HIM AND THE TREE BOYS TOGETHER, EITHER)

ROB:

I suppose you've come to cut the rope, Levitt.

LEVITT:

I might have done ... but I have just realised it's my washing line.

CATHY:

What horrific treatment of a man of principals, Garry. Your father will be spinning in his grave.

LEVITT:

There are many reasons why that statement isn't true, Mrs. Camden. He won't be spinning in his grave because he had many principals, too, and the pursuit of fair play was one of them. He won't be spinning in his grave because he had respect for the law. He won't be spinning in his grave because we knew Mr. Camden was trouble the minute he saw him. But the main reason he won't be spinning in his grave is he was cremated.

A MOTOR ENGINE STARTS UP.

ALAN:

Bye, Gerry. Don't let your Mum touch my train set.

ROB:

Goodbye, Cathy.

THE CAMERA ANGLE STRAIGHTENS TO REVEAL THAT FAR FROM BEING TIED TO AN UPRIGHT TREE ALAN AND ROB ARE BEING TAKEN AWAY ON THE BACK OF A TRUCK, STILL ATTACHED TO THE CHOPPED DOWN TREE.

AS THE LIGHTS OF THE TRUCK GROW SMALLER WE HEAR

ROB/ALAN:

"Pins and needles, needles and pins..."

FADE FOR CREDITS.

OVER DARK AT END OF CREDITS, ENDS.

ROB:

Now what am I angry about?

