

## **THE SINBIN**

By

Ray Mooney (1999 - rewritten 2001)

First performed at The Carlton Courthouse 1999, Director: Peter Oyston.

The play is set in the clubrooms of St Joey's, a knockabout suburban football club. It requires an entertainment room with bar, an office and an off-stage changing room/toilets. The impression should be created that there are more people than in the cast. The play encourages extras to participate on stage.

### CHARACTERS

TWO-BOB	President of St Joey's football Club and Secretary of The Garbos' Union.
GRUB	Captain of St Joey's and shop steward of Garbos' Union.
COACH (Makka)	Coach of St Joey's and a Garbo.
SHAKY HARRY	St Joey's barman. Ex-Garbo.
RODENT	Player and Garbo.
TENT-POLE	Player and Garbo.
COLOMBO	Player and Policeman.
SHIRL	Two-Bob's wife.
DOREEN	Tent-Pole's girlfriend.
SIR ARTHUR	President of The Football League and a corporate giant.
JULIAN	A community theatre actor.
THE WHIP	Opposition cheer squad leader (played by Grub)

It is the last training night of St Joey's Football Club before the grandfinal. The Sinbin explores male aggression, sexuality and chauvinism through comic realism. It used working class humour to show what happens in the thousand of sporting clubs that have created their own social milieu throughout Australia.

The themes reveal the detailed behaviour of mateship in the often all-male club with its intense hidden rules; values that can be traced back to the convict-military-goldfield tradition, often ignored but important signposts in analysing the way we are today.

SHAKY, cigarette in gob, opens the door to ST JOEY'S.

Afternoon sunlight filters through steel-mesh covered windows illuminating the frugal clubrooms consisting of entertainment room, office and (off-stage) changerooms and toilets.

In the entertainment room, is a billiard table, chairs, benches, jukebox, pinball machine, pie warmer and color telly bracketed to the wall. Sporting posters, newspaper clippings and business cards adorn laminated walls. Dart board, team photos and football memorabilia add a genuine sporting atmosphere. On the back wall, either side of the cheaply-stocked bar, are mahogany polished honor boards.

Dozens of photos of near-naked players and girls having a good time are stuck on the wall.

SHAKY closes the door and leans against it. He breathes in the atmosphere, closes his eyes. A loud squawk shatters his peace.

JOEY

Hallo, Cocky.

He whistles the club song as he removes the cover off a cocky cage on the bar. JOEY, the club mascot (cocky or galah), squawks (S/FX created by actors). SHAKY takes a wrapped muffin from his pocket.

SHAKY

What d'yer say? What d'yer say?

JOEY

Pretty boy. Pretty boy.

SHAKY gives JOEY part of the muffin then pours a brandy and tops it with port wine. JOEY squawks. SHIRL enters cautiously looking around. SHAKY hurriedly skoals the drink.

SHAKY

Shirl, what're you doing here?

SHIRL

Bob's not here is he?

SHAKY

You're kidding, aren't you?

SHIRL

Good.

SHAKY

What's up?

GRUB enters snibbing the door.

GRUB

Shaky.

SHIRL and GRUB enter the office. SHIRL and SHAKY follow.

SHAKY

Grub! Now what's going on?

SHIRL

We're worried about Bob. He's been acting strange, almost secretive.

SHAKY

So what's new?

The desk is messy and girlie calendars of past years adorn the walls along with a poster of PAMELA ANDERSON and the club flag. GRUB searches the papers on the desk.

GRUB

He doesn't want the strike to end.

SHAKY shakes his head.

SHIRL

He doesn't, Shaky. I can tell.

SHAKY

That wouldn't make sense.

GRUB

Might be trying to cut himself a deal.

SHAKY

Ar, come on, Grub.

GRUB

The Council agreed to the pay rise.

SHAKY

When?

SHIRL

It's in today's paper.

SHAKY

Never buy them. I pick them up from the side of the road once a month. Saves me a fortune.

GRUB

For five weeks Council refused to budge. Suddenly they give in to all our demands.

SHAKY

Then what's the problem? How do you know he doesn't want to go back?

SHIRL

Women's intuition.

SHAKY

You're only married to him. I've worked with him for twenty years. I'd know.

GRUB

If we refuse to go back immediately we could all lose our jobs, Shaky, permanent.

SHAKY

Bob wouldn't let that happen.

GRUB

I'm not about to chance it.

SHAKY

The men have got to vote. Hold a meeting after training. You'll have everyone here.

GRUB

I intend to.  
(winking at SHAKY)  
Great minds stink alike.

SHIRL looks through the drawers.

SHAKY

What're you looking for?

GRUB

Anything with Townsend's name on it.

SHAKY

Who?

SHIRL

Maurie Townsend.

GRUB

He owns Waste Disposals.

SHAKY

Bob wouldn't be involved with them.

SHIRL

Shaky, he's been on the phone every day to Arthur Synott.

GRUB

Synott's Townsend's best friend.

SHAKY

Synott runs the League.

GRUB

Since when has the head of the League been interested in St Joey's?

There's a loud bang on the door.

TWO-BOB (O.S.)  
You there, Shaky? Open the bloody door!

GRUB  
Shit!

SHIRL  
He mustn't know we're here.

SHAKY  
Quick, through the back window.

GRUB  
(hurrying with SHIRL into the change  
rooms)  
Thanks, mate.

SHAKY  
You'd better be bloody wrong, for everyone's sake.  
  
The phone in the office rings.

JOEY  
Phone. Answer the bloody phone!

SHAKY puts the empty glass in the sink before hurrying  
towards the office.

TWO-BOB (O.S.)  
Why's the bloody lock snibbed?

TWO-BOB pounds the door. SHAKY hurries to the door.

SHAKY  
Hang on.

TWO-BOB (O.S.)  
Don't worry about hang on! Open the bloody thing!  
(The phone continues ringing)  
Answer the bloody phone for christ sake!

JOEY  
Phone. Answer the bloody phone!

SHAKY  
I'm trying to open the door.

The snib releases. TWO-BOB angrily pushes past SHAKY towards  
his office. He is dressed in overalls but carries a suit,  
shirt, tie and local newspaper. The phone stops. He slams  
the newspaper on the desk before carefully hanging his  
clothes on the wall.

TWO-BOB  
You know we've on strike. I've got a thousand  
things to do. I'm doing the work of ten men. All I  
ask is you answer the bloody phones.....

SHAKY

You're always telling me not to go in there.

TWO-BOB

Not when the bloody phone's ringing! Have there been other calls?

SHAKY

(SHAKY accidentally burps in TWO-BOB'S face)

No.

TWO-BOB

You're pissed! Look at this place! You want the Health Department closing us down?

TWO-BOB brushes away imaginary dirt, sees ash from SHAKY'S fag and shakes his head.

SHAKY

I just got here.

TWO-BOB

(Moving chairs and benches)

We don't pay you to stand around doing nothing you know.

SHAKY

You don't pay me anything.

TWO-BOB

If you don't want the job I'll get someone who does.

SHAKY

I didn't say that.

TWO-BOB

I put my head on the chopping block for you. For years I carried you. By the time it took you to get the lid off a bin we were in the next street.

Watch what happens when I retire. Nice knowing you, Two-Bob, now on your bike. But when you retired, oh no, I got the entire Municipal Council to chip in.

(indicating Shaky's sports coat)

That coat's from Dimmey's you know.

The phone rings.

JOEY

Phone. Answer the bloody phone!

SHAKY moves to answer it and accidentally bumps TWO-BOB who pushes him away.

TWO-BOB

I've told you a dozen times. The bird shouldn't be on the counter. If you can't look after it I'll give it to the cat!

(TWO-BOB sits at his desk)

Bloody cockatoo! Least you can put pigeons in pies.

(picking up the phone)

Hallo, Two-Bob here, President of St Joey's Football Club...Murray.....I've been here for hours. How else d'you reckon the work gets done around here? How's the missus?

SHAKY carries empty bottles out the back. TWO-BOB removes a part written letter from his suit. He puts it in the typewriter and types while listening to the phone. He slams the phone down.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

(loud for Shaky's benefit)

Bloody milk-sop generation. The last training session for the year, we're in the grandfinal and his missus decides to have a baby. When I was playing you'd of got the quack to induce the bloody thing earlier in the week.

TWO-BOB continues typing. SHAKY sweeps the floor.

SHAKY

(quietly to Joey)

He never played a game.

JOEY

Never played a game.

TWO-BOB leaves his office.

TWO-BOB

Leave that. Set the room up.

SHAKY

What for?

TWO-BOB

There's a union meeting.

SHAKY

Here? What, now?

TWO-BOB

What did I just say?

SHAKY

Does Grub know about it?

TWO-BOB

What's that got to do with you?

SHAKY

Are you voting to go back?

TWO-BOB

Just bloody do it!

SHAKY angrily throws his broom down. TWO-BOB returns to his typing and dials the phone

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Bubbles Massage Parlour?...Two-Bob, St Joey's...the footy club. Just confirming for tonight...Good. I don't want anything going wrong, not like the last time...That sheila was old enough to be Methuselah's mother...Come on, she signed her name in Sanskrit.

Shirl enters carrying flowers, plates of biscuits and home-made chutney.

SHIRL

Hallo, Shaky. Bob in?

SHAKY

(pointing to the office)  
Afternoon, Shirl.

SHIRL puts everything on the bar and goes straight into TWO-BOB'S office.

TWO-BOB

We want someone young. Have you got any schoolgirls...? Shirl! We could put them in the nativity scene for the local Christmas fete. Got to go, Sister. See you at Church.

hangs up, removes the paper from the typewriter and puts it in a drawer

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Bloody nuns. Always trying to snip us. What're you doing here?

SHIRL

Um...

She looks at an article in the newspaper on the desk.

SHIRL (CONT'D)

...you know how you said that when the strike was over we'd start doing it again?

TWO-BOB

The strike's not over! What're you getting at? You can see I'm up to my eyeballs...

SHIRL unbuttons her dress.

SHIRL  
Well I came to celebrate.

TWO-BOB  
Celebrate what? We don't play until Saturday....

SHIRL lies across the desk.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
What're you doing?

SHIRL  
I'm ovulating.

TWO-BOB  
Are you off your rocker? For heaven's sake, Shirl, Shaky's in the next room. What d'you think I am, a pervert?

He buttons her dress and indicating an old photo on the wall.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
What would your old man say?

SHIRL  
He's dead.

TWO-BOB  
Exactly. He'd roll over in his grave.

SHIRL  
(pointing at the paper)  
See, the Council's agreed to all your demands.

TWO-BOB  
This bastard's a mouthpiece for the Council!

SHIRL  
I thought you'd be pleased now you can go back to work.

TWO-BOB  
It's not over. I decide when it's over.

SHIRL  
Six weeks without pay, Bob, is too hard on those families.

TWO-BOB  
Shirl, I know your father was a unionist, and his father before that...

SHIRL  
Secretary of the Painters and Dockers.

TWO-BOB

Right, and if he was alive today he's be an old man. I'm running this Union. When I want advice I'll phone a friend.

SHIRL

To ask if you should return to work when the Council have met all your demands?

TWO-BOB

It's not as simple as that. Anyway who says we're not going back? It'll be up to the men.

SHIRL

(referring to the photo on the wall)  
Jock would have had them back a month ago.

TWO-BOB

That's why he died a pauper.

SHIRL

Just because you can't get it up, there's no need to take it out on me.

TWO-BOB

(ushering her from the office)  
Have a nice night, Shirl, at home.

SHIRL

I'm staying to help out.

TWO-BOB

Oh no you're not!

Shirl puts the flowers in a pot and gives the chutney to

SHAKY

SHIRL

This is to put on the pies.

TWO-BOB

Shirl, tonight a special night, no sheilas. Everyone knows that.

SHIRL

Pretend I'm not here.

TWO-BOB

I want their minds on the job, not on other things.

SHIRL

What other things, darling?

TWO-BOB

(ushering her out the front door)  
You know what I mean. It wasn't my idea. The boys voted on it.

(MORE)

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
 (she doesn't believe him)  
 Ask Shaky.

SHIRL  
 Did the boys vote on it, Shaky?

TWO-BOB nods to SHAKY behind SHIRL'S back.

SHAKY  
 Um...

SHIRL  
 I knew it!

TWO-BOB glares at Shaky. TENT-POLE appears in the doorway,  
 grins at SHIRL.

TENT-POLE  
 Sweet-pea.

TWO-BOB  
 Tent-Pole, you're nearly on time. What happened?  
 Couldn't find anything to do for another half hour?

TENT-POLE  
 That powerpoint you want fixed?

TWO-BOB points to the powerpoint used for the pie warmer then  
 rearranges the benches.

SHIRL  
 I left my bag.

SHIRL returns to the office. She hits the redial button on  
 the phone to check the last number.

TWO-BOB  
 I told you to set up!

SHAKY  
 Old Jock never used to talk to me like that.

TWO-BOB  
 Old Jock never talked to anyone!

TWO-BOB enters the changerooms. TENT-POLE stands at the  
 office doorway watching SHIRL bending over the desk as she  
 checks through TWO-BOB'S drawers for the letter he was  
 writing. TENT-POLE lies on the floor pretending he's  
 checking the powerpoint but is actually trying to look up  
 SHIRL'S dress. SHIRL, realising, gets the fright of her life.  
 She hides the letter as she backs away.

SHIRL  
 Gawd, Tent-Pole, you scared the life outa me.

TENT-POLE  
Got any powerpoints you need fixing?

SHIRL  
Pardon?

TENT-POLE  
I could drop round.

SHIRL  
I'll check with Bob.

TENT-POLE  
Pick a number.

SHIRL  
What for?

TENT-POLE  
Between one and fourteen.

SHIRL  
Oh, six.

TENT-POLE  
Add eight inches.

SHIRL  
Fourteen?

TENT-POLE  
Right on. It's all your's.

SHIRL  
What is?

TENT-POLE  
The beef bayonet.

SHIRL  
Pardon?

TENT-POLE  
You know, a male socket into a female, like. I could slip away, later.

SHIRL  
Slip away from what?

TENT-POLE  
Nothing. Just the teams. It's as boring as shit.

SHIRL  
And what else would you be missing while we were demonstrating the power of the male socket?

TENT-POLE  
What d'you mean?

SHIRL

You know exactly what I mean, Tent-Pole.

TWO-BOB returns carrying a bench.

TENT-POLE

Right-on, Sweet-pea. Anytime.

TENT-POLE checks the power point, but it's obvious he hasn't the faintest. SHIRL puts the letter in her bag before leaving the office.

SHIRL

I'm leaving.

TWO-BOB

I'll make it up to you. I promise. And don't put the nappies in the rubbish bin.

SHIRL

I never do. Oh, there was a message from Arthur whatisname...

TWO-BOB

Sir Arthur. His name's Sir Arthur. I know, he's coming tonight, seven-thirty. Now I'm busy, Shirl.

SHIRL

You can buy those things, you know.

TWO-BOB

What things?

SHIRL

Knighthoods. I saw it on Jana.

TWO-BOB

Bye.

(rubbing his hands)

Nothing is impossible for the man who doesn't have to do it himself.

The sounds of gears crunching can be heard. TWO-BOB rushes to the door.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Oh, no, Shirl. Not the rubbish bins!

A car takes off, followed by the horrific screech of brakes. TWO-BOB literally freezes. A collision is heard. The car screeches off.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Don't just stand there. Go and check the damage.

SHAKY hurries out. TWO-BOB pours himself a whisky which he quickly skoals before threatening JOEY.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

One word out of you and I'll ring your neck.

TENT-POLE plugs the pie warmer lead into the powerpoint. There is an electrical flash and explosion. Blackout.

VOICES

Open the door! Police! Open up! We know you're in there!

Lights return. TENT-POLE, uninjured, is dumfounded. A group of GARBOS, also players for St Joey's, including RODENT who has a permanent limp, enter. RODENT points the local newspaper as a pretend gun. They erupt into a send-up of the Worker's Internationale in mock-rap style. TENT-POLE joins in. TWO-BOB ignores them and arranges benches.

RODENT

(waving the paper)

We stuck it up them.

TENT-POLE

We didn't win. We shit in.

GARBOS

(singing)

And we'll hang their balls on the weeping willow tree...and may they all hang merrily, merrily...

TWO-BOB

Don't believe everything you read.

The COACH hurriedly enters.

TENT-POLE

Coach.

THE COACH

Who've we got?

(pointing)

Rodent, Dunny-Brush, Titch, Smithy, Half-Shot..

RODENT

Where's Grub?

TWO-BOB

Exactly!

SHAKY

Did he know about the meeting?

TWO-BOB

I left a message. Now get back to work!

TENT-POLE

(winking to the COACH)

Grub said something had come up.

TWO-BOB

And we all know what that is. Murray can't make it.

COACH

How come?

TWO-BOB

His missus is having a baby.

RODENT

So what?

TWO-BOB

I gave him the night off.

THE COACH

What!

TWO-BOB

He'll be right for Saturday. Anyway if Grub's not here!

THE COACH

Grub'll be here. You can rely upon him. Not like some people I could mention.

TWO-BOB

(waving a handful of mail)

I've been here for two hours.

(the COACH scoffs)

How else d'you reckon the work gets done?

THE COACH

(winking to the others)

Any union boss who gets to work early so he can open his own mail must have something to hide.

TWO-BOB

If the Melbourne Cup was a race for arseholes, Makka, you'd be top weight.

THE COACH

If it was for hypocrites you wouldn't even need to train.

RODENT

Come on, I've got a piano lesson to get to!

COACH

Get the show on the road so we can all get back to work.

TWO-BOB

I declare this an official meeting of the Municipal Council Workers.

SHAKEY

Shouldn't your Shop Steward be here?

TWO-BOB

I'm warning you!

COACH

It's not like Grub. I was talking to him an hour ago Just before you phoned. You definitely told him?

TWO-BOB

The meeting is now open.

SHAKY reads from the local paper.

SHAKY

"Rubbish has been collecting in the streets for six weeks and tempers are running high. A spokes person for local Council said..."

TWO-BOB

Forget that crap.

TWO-BOB snatches the paper and throws it away. The COACH retrieves it.

THE COACH

"The Council have agreed to all the Union's demands..." All our demands.

TWO-BOB

(to SHAKY)

Get back to work! Have you turned the boilers on?

SHAKY

You usually do that!

TWO-BOB

Do it.

(SHAKY reluctantly exits)

No wonder the showers are always cold. It isn't over yet. There's more to come.

RODENT

We got what we wanted, an extra ten bucks a week. We go back.

COACH

Course we go back!

TENT-POLE

It says so.

TWO-BOB

Papers, ha, ha...Who d'you think fed them that rubbish?

TENT-POLE

Who?

RODENT

They haven't agreed?

TWO-BOB

The old pincer technique, boys. Get someone to attack from the front and I come round and bite 'em on the arse. You boys should read Churchill's war diaries.

THE COACH

I'm confused. Have they agreed or haven't they?

TWO-BOB

By the time I'm finished with them, boys, they'll be loading the rubbish into the trucks for us. Now we've got them where we want them we put the screws on...

THE COACH

Have they agreed or bloody haven't they?

TWO-BOB

...for an extra fifty a week.

COACH

An extra fifty?

TENT-POLE/RODENT

Fifty?

TWO-BOB

Hang out for another week and it's guaranteed.

TENT-POLE

We get an extra fifty a week?

TWO-BOB

That's just for openers. We want extra overalls, gloves...

COACH

We could be left with nothing.

TWO-BOB

That's bullshit, Makka!

THE COACH

Ask Grub. He said the Council want us to stay out so they can sack us and bring in private contractors.

TWO-BOB

Why would they want to do that?

THE COACH

To introduce wheelie bins...

RODENT

Wheelie bins!

TENT-POLE

What, one bloke to a truck instead of three!

THE COACH

...charge by the kilo because they can make an extra ten million a year. But Grub says they can't sack us without due cause. We stay on strike another week and we give them due cause.

RODENT

(screaming)

Bloody dogs! We'll give them due cause! We'll smash the bastards!

TENT-POLE

(frenzied)

Smash the bastards!

THE COACH

No! We go back to work and stick it up them.

RODENT

Bloody oath! Stick it right up 'em!

TWO-BOB

Settle down!

TENT-POLE

If they're gonna bring in bloody wheelie bins!

TWO-BOB

They'll bring in wheelie bins over my dead body.

TENT-POLE

Every other Council has!

TWO-BOB

If they did no one would lose their job.

COACH

None of those other blokes has got a job!

TWO-BOB

These conspiracy theories give me the shits!

COACH

It's what Grub says.

RODENT

Go back to work and stick it up 'em!

TENT-POLE

Then they can't sack us. Stick it right up 'em!

TWO-BOB

That's what they want us to do. We return now and they'll think we're weak. That when the crunch came we rolled over. It will give them the confidence to sack us.

RODENT

But if they want us to stay out so they can sack us!

TWO-BOB

That's bullshit!

COACH

Check with the Grub.

RODENT

Yeah, I'm not voting till Grub's here.

TENT-POLE

Me neither.

TWO-BOB

Let me tell you a story about the Grub.

TENT-POLE

Tell us a story about the Grub, Bob.

TWO-BOB

It's last Christmas. Grub's selling turkeys from the back of his ute. Shirl wants one so he brings a bird in but it only weighs three and a half pounds. Don't ask me to tell you what that is in kilos.

(they all give a different conversion)

I tell him I want a bigger one. He takes it away. But he ain't got a bigger one, has he? He comes back with the same bird. "I've got this one here that's almost four pounds." he says dryly.

They laugh at the GRUB'S cunning.

TENT-POLE

He got you there, Bobbie.

TWO-BOB

Well I'll take them both, I says.

It takes a moment before the PLAYERS smile appreciatively.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

That's how smart Grub is when it comes to matters like this. Take it from me, we stay out and we're in the box seat. Now are we on strike or are we on strike?

GARBOS

(meekly)  
We're on strike, Bob.

TWO-BOB

I said are we on strike, or are we on strike?

GARBOS

(screaming)  
We're on strike.

However the COACH is still upset.

TWO-BOB

It's resolved we stay on strike another week. I declare this meeting closed. And let's not forget we've got a grandfinal to win on Saturday, eh, Coach?

(singing)  
Adieu, adieu, adieu, adieu....

PLAYERS

(singing as they exit to the change rooms)  
St Joey's are gonna stick it up you....and we'll hang their balls on the weeping willow tree.....and may they all hang merrily, merrily.....

The COACH slams the local paper into the bin.

THE COACH

My mortgage is more important than your bloody games.

TWO-BOB indicates for the COACH to follow him into his office. TWO-BOB sits behind his desk.

THE COACH (CONT'D)

If you're up to something!

TWO-BOB

(the COACH remains standing)  
How long have you been Coach?  
(the COACH shakes his head)  
Your first year and we're already in a grandfinal. Last time we were in a grandfinal was back in the sixties when we were slaughtered by a team from the Abattoirs.

(referring to the painting of old Jock)  
Old Jock was coach then. He turned vegetarian overnight. You know, when I started here Old Jock wouldn't give me the time of day. I was just a kid handing out oranges at half-time.

THE COACH

Didn't you marry his daughter?

TWO-BOB

Hah, that's another story. But when I became Secretary of the Union, "Bob," he said, "I'm gonna give you some advice. It's better to put ten men to work than do the work of ten men yourself." And that's coming from a rank and file union leader. So I took his advice, Makka and that's why we're in the grandfinal Saturday.

(The COACH raises an eyebrow)

Remember it was me who recruited you.

THE COACH

Grub recruited me.

TWO-BOB

With my approval. That's the trouble with this place. I've been honorary president, treasurer and auditor for fifteen years and do you think I get any thanks? Not on your nellie. I've gotta do everything myself. Take that bloody power point. How long's it been busted? Tent-Pole's supposed to know electrics...

THE COACH

What, hot wiring cars?

TWO-BOB

...but is it fixed? Remember the good old days when we were all proud to be garbos. When reputation was earned. And shirking an issue meant letting your team mates down. I played it hard, Makka.

THE COACH

You never played a game in your life, Bob.

TWO-BOB

In my heart I played. And I fought with my bare knuckles and if anyone had a go at a mate they were having a go at me. You never did the wrong thing by a mate, Makka. And you never sold out. Never. They were the good old days, Makka. And when I first took over I had to do it all myself. I had to flog the guts outa them, fire them up before a game, pull them off the ground if they didn't perform and expect them to back up for more the next week. And they did. You know why?

THE COACH

They like playing footy.

TWO-BOB

They did it for me, Makka. Because they had this unique sense of sharing, of facing the odds and giving their all. That's what leadership's all about, Makka.

THE COACH

What's your point?

TWO-BOB

Forget your mortgage. You're on my team now.

We'll be back at work by the end of next week, but that's all secondary to the big one, Saturday. Now there's something I want you to keep to yourself. You know I've organised strippers?

COACH

They'd want to be better than the last lot. They had more crow's feet than the Adelaide zoo.

TWO-BOB

That was Shaky's fault. I left the bookings to him.

COACH

Didn't stop you though.

TWO-BOB

Forget all that. I've got something bigger than the strippers. I've got Sir Arthur coming.

COACH

Synott? The bloke who runs the League?

TWO-BOB

And just about everything else in this State. You fire them up on the track, strippers to get the blood pumping, then we top it off with a rip-roaring roaring speech from Sir Arthur. There'll be no stopping us. You and me together, Makka.

COACH

Sir Arthur, geeze, hope they behave themselves.

TWO-BOB

That's why I'm telling you. Get into them about discipline. It's the key.

Suddenly RODENT and TENT-POLE, wrestling, crash into the entertainment room.

COACH

Take it serious, you blokes.

RODENT

Get stuffed!

PLAYERS who have changed enter.

TWO-BOB

See what I mean about discipline. Blokes like Rodent are never at peace except when they're fighting.

TENT-POLE bends over as he adjusts a lace. RODENT dates him. TENT-POLE nearly tears a hamstring.

RODENT

Yer liked that eh, Tent-Pole?

TENT-POLE turns his back to the wall. SHAKY brings in two footies. RODENT grabs one.

TENT-POLE

How d'yer get a nun pregnant, Shaky?

(SHAKY doesn't answer)

Dress her up as a choir boy.

(ALL except SHAKY laugh)

Coach.

As the COACH turns RODENT feigns a throw with the football at his face. The COACH instinctively covers his face.

TENT-POLE (CONT'D)

Never know when someone's gonna sneak go yer,  
Coach.

The COACH opens his locker and empty beer cans tumble out. The COACH gives RODENT a filthy look.

TENT-POLE (CONT'D)

Don't blame me.

SHAKY

That's bloody stupid...

SHAKY picks them up. COLOMBO, in police uniform, enters.

RODENT

(send-up)  
Colombo!

COLOMBO

(indicating the cans)  
That's stupid.

RODENT

Verbal anyone today, Colombo?

COLOMBO

That doesn't happen and you know it!

RODENT

Yeah, right.

COLOMBO

When're you dickheads gonna do the right thing?

The streets are like miniature tips.

TENT-POLE

Ough, dickheads.

(send-up rapping)

Get in the van, man. I'll give you violent. You want to be a dickhead, Ted, Fred.

(MORE)

TENT-POLE (CONT'D)

Crash in the back, Jack. Straight to the tip, hip, hip holster. Bang! Bang! Clean streets, mean streets, show in the tourists...

The PLAYERS join in with exaggerated rap arm gestures. COLOMBO enters the changerooms.

COACH

Let's get our mind on the job. I want a big effort tonight.

The sole of RODENT'S boot has come unstuck. He flings it across the room.

RODENT

Stuff it!

TWO-BOB picks up the boot.

RODENT (CONT'D)

Football gives me the shits!

COACH

That's great, that is. Our last training session!

RODENT

Thank Christ for that!

TWO-BOB

(giving SHAKY the boot)  
Fix this!

COACH

It's important we all pull together. It all comes down to tonight. What we do on the training track'll determine how we play on Saturday. And it's character and discipline that's got us there, boys. So I want your best effort, okay boys? Stay focused. Quality's what we're after.

TWO-BOB writes on a blackboard: COMPULSORY MEETING AFTER TRAINING.

RODENT

What's this compulsory crap?

TWO-BOB

(putting his arm round RODENT)  
Rodent my boy, let me give you some advice. I'm no different than the rest of you. Just a number. Only difference is I'm number one

THE COACH

Concentrate, Rodent! No slackers. Discipline's what we're after.

COLOMBO  
 (returning, changed)  
 Let's get into it.

COACH  
 I want you to start with four laps.

COLOMBO  
 Good one.

RODENT  
 What!

COACH  
 Do the last one hard.

RODENT  
 We only ever do two!

COACH  
 Then straight into runthroughs.

COLOMBO  
 Ripper. How many?

COACH  
 Eight.

RODENT  
 What!

COACH  
 Build up for seventy, sprint flat out for thirty,  
 taper off for thirty...

RODENT  
 The length of the oval?

COACH  
 ...half jog, half walk recovery. Colombo'll put you  
 in groups of five.

COLOMBO  
 Come on, boys.

RODENT  
 We're a football team, not a bloody harrier's club!

COACH  
 It's the bloody grandfinal! Don't you wanta win?

COLOMBO  
 Course we do.

TENT-POLE  
 Bloody oath!

COACH

Then let's put the bit between our teeth and...

RODENT

(punching an imaginary head)  
We'll win it with this! Not running up and down  
like sheilas.

TENT-POLE

(simulating RODENT punching heads)  
That's right, a bit of knuckle.

RODENT

You've gotta terrorise 'em!

TENT-POLE

(screaming)  
You've gotta terrorise 'em!

COACH

I'm asking for a commitment. If you're  
fairdinkum...!

RODENT

I'm more fairdinkum than you'll ever be. Ask these  
blokes who they'd rather be pinched with.

COACH

Some of you blokes are the most courageous blokes  
I've ever known. On the field, Rodent, there's no  
one tougher.

(face to face)

But on the training track you're a bloody disgrace!

The COACH runs outside with the PLAYERS.

RODENT

You havin' a fucken go, are yer?

RODENT limps off after the players. A window smashing in the  
changerooms can be heard. TWO-BOB is stunned. THE WHIP,  
Leader of St Ignatius's Cheer Squad, appears. He pushes the  
locker over and upturns benches before climbing onto the bar.  
His face is painted in St Ignatius's colours. He sings their  
club song. (Notre Dame - Sydney Swans)

THE WHIP

(singing)

Whether the odds be great or be small, Old St  
Ignatius will win all the more, and her sons go  
marching, marching, onward to victory.

TWO-BOB

(yelling to the players)

It's the idiot freak from St Ignatius.

The PLAYERS hurriedly return.

TENT-POLE

The Whip?

TWO-BOB

Shaky, get rid of it.

SHAKY

Why's it always my bloody job?

THE WHIP

Where's that fleabag of a thing you call a mascot?  
I'll wring it's neck

SHAKY

Get out!

THE WHIP

All it'll be good for is cockatoo pie.

SHAKY

Get out, you idiot!

THE WHIP

St Ignatius is gonna wipe the floor with you  
sheilas.

RODENT

Piss off!

THE WHIP

Is your dress back from the dry cleaners yet,  
Rodent?

RODENT

I'll smash the mongrel.

The COACH restrains RODENT.

COACH

That's what they want.

(yelling to THE WHIP)

You'll find out if it's back from the cleaners on  
Saturday.

THE WHIP

Hey, Rodent, are yer still running around in  
women's underwear, you gimp?

THE COACH

(to his PLAYERS)

Stay focused, boys. We don't let 'em tumble us.

THE WHIP

I heard you got picked up for snow dropping  
panty hose from the commission flats.

RODENT is becoming agitated.

RODENT

G'on, yer sucks!

TENT-POLE

Yeah, piss off, you asshole!

RODENT

When I get you you're dead!

THE WHIP

(THE WHIP gyrates his hips.)  
That's not what you said the other night, Gimp,  
when I was chock-a-block up ya.

The PLAYERS look at RODENT suspiciously.

RODENT

I'll smash your face in, you maggot!

THE WHIP jumps from the bar and shapes up to the players.  
SHAKY pushes him off stage.

SHAKY

Get out! Go on, get out!

THE WHIP

Put yourself on mushrooms, Granddad.

SHAKY

Bloody idiot!

PLAYERS

You're the one, Shaky.  
Put him on from both ends.  
Put Shaky in the ruck on Saturday.

TENT-POLE

Get up him while he's still warm, Shaky.

PLAYERS

You should be Coach, Shaky.  
You're the real thing, Shaky.

SHAKY eyeballs the players.

SHAKY

Rush up to your opponent. Stare him straight in  
the eyes. Let him know you mean business. Let him  
know he's in for the greatest battle of his life.  
That's the secret of winning, boys. Put your  
body...

THE COACH

(stepping in front of SHAKY)  
Forget the sprints, Boys. Boys, we can do anything  
we put our minds to. I want fierce contesting, hard  
clashes. Show these arseholes what to expect on  
Saturday.

(MORE)

THE COACH (CONT'D)

If they wanta carry on, we'll accommodate them after the game. Start with Kamikaze handball.

The PLAYERS, all fired up, race outside. RODENT remains.

SHAKY

Put your body in front. That's the secret of life.

TWO-BOB

Get back to work!

The COACH returns.

COACH

I'm asking you as a friend.

RODENT

What for? I'm only a reserve?

COACH

We haven't picked the team yet.

RODENT

I've been a reserve every other bloody game!

COACH

A team's only as good as it's reserves, mate.

RODENT

That's shit and you know it!

RODENT ambles out. The COACH follows. SHAKY pours himself a stiff brandy. The PLAYERS can be heard training.

TWO-BOB

Hope you're paying for that.

DOREEN enters. Although distressed, she's dressed provocatively. She carries a handbag.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Doreen...What in the...? What are you doing here?

DOREEN

I want to speak to Tent-Pole.

TWO-BOB

No no, no. Tonight's men only.

DOREEN

I need to speak to him.

TWO-BOB

Not now. You can't disrupt training. Look at the stink you caused last time. Not tonight. It's too important.

DOREEN

(sobbing)  
Something terrible's happened.

TWO-BOB ushers her into his office.

TWO-BOB

What is it? You're not pregnant are you?  
(she cries)  
I knew it! I bloody knew it!

DOREEN

I want to see Tent-Pole.

TWO-BOB

I don't think that'd be a wise move right now. We don't want to do anything that might put him off his training. You know what he's like when he's upset. He's like a virus. No, that's not what I mean. You haven't told anyone have you?  
Good. I know somebody who might be able to help...

She opens her bag which she drops. TWO-BOB has a good look as she bends to pick it up.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Look, um, why don't you drop round here tomorrow, say lunch time. I used to do counselling for the local church, you know. You're all tense, you know. Just need to loosen up.

She hands TWO-BOB a dog collar.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

What's that?

DOREEN

Fofi's dead.

TWO-BOB

Who's Fofi, his mother?  
(she shakes her head)  
Your mother?

DOREEN

Our dog.

TWO-BOB

Is that all? Look, here's five bucks. You know that shop in the Mall? Tell them I sent you. They'll probably throw in some pet food.

DOREEN runs out crying.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

I'll tell Tent-Pole you called in.  
(yelling to DOREEN)  
(MORE)

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Wasn't a greyhound was it? Bloody thing's better off dead then.

COACH (O.S.)

Stay together. And someone tell that idiot to get off the oval!

JULIAN, colourfully dressed and carrying a theatrical suitcase, appears in the doorway.

TWO-BOB

Not allowed on the oval during training.

JULIAN

Sorry.

TWO-BOB

Play footy d'you?

JULIAN

(entering)  
I'm an actor.

TWO-BOB

Oh. We're used to scabs spying on us at training.

COACH (O.S.)

Well done, Rodent.

COLOMBO (O.S.)

That was good, Rodent.

RODENT (O.S.)

Who asked you, Pickle?

JULIAN

(watching training through the door)  
Wasn't that a little dangerous?

TWO-BOB

Gawd, you should've seen what we did when I was playing. You obviously don't play football.

THE COACH (O.S.)

Tent-Pole, look out.

A loud thud is heard. JULIAN winces.

JULIAN

I'm Julian. The Actor? From Down Under. The Theatre Company?

JULIAN eagerly shakes TWO-BOB'S hand.

TWO-BOB

Oh, yeah, right.

JULIAN

Can I check the venue now?

TWO-BOB

Am I missing something here?

JULIAN

I always check the venue before I put on a show.

TWO-BOB

You think you're putting on a show, here tonight?

JULIAN

My Agency was contacted only half an hour ago through a Two-Bob.

TWO-BOB

Shaky! Get here! Nobody's spoken to me. Are you a female impersonator or something? With Bubbles?

(to SHAKY)

Did you arrange some bloody drag show or something?

SHAKY

No.

TWO-BOB

Get back to work!

SHAKY hurries off mumbling obscenities. TENT-POLE, half-dead staggers in.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

You'll be okay. It's all in the mind.

TENT-POLE

What'd I score, Boss?

JULIAN

Shouldn't you take him to the doctors?

TENT-POLE

(smiling at JULIAN)

Pretty Boy. Give's a kiss.

(chasing sea gulls)

Squawk, squawk...There's one...Bang...Bang...Get your guns, Boys...

TWO-BOB

He'll be alright. Jog a couple of laps.

TENT-POLE jogs around the stage, shooting everything in sight.

COACH (O.S.)

Join in, Tent-Pole.

TENT-POLE  
 (singing and running off)  
 I'm the bloke...that never lets you down....

TWO-BOB  
 That's what this club's all about, dedication and discipline.

JULIAN  
 There seems to be some awful mistake.

TWO-BOB  
 We've already got a show and anyway Sir Arthur's coming. He's a patron of the arts you know.

JULIAN  
 Arthur Synott? He's a friend of Sir Maurie Townsend.

TWO-BOB  
 You know Sir Maurice?

JULIAN  
 (crossing his fingers)  
 We're like this.

TWO-BOB  
 A man of principles, Sir Maurice.

JULIAN  
 You know what Maurie says about principles?

TWO-BOB  
 What?

JULIAN  
 The moment you give your principles away you never had any in the first place.

TWO-BOB  
 I like that. Come into my office? We'll sort this out.

TENT-POLE re-appears at the door and touches his nose with his finger.

TENT-POLE  
 Bob, that power-point, mate. Sweet meat.  
 (breaking into rap to impress JULIAN)  
 Tent-Pole in the par-king-lot, mole-king-pole.  
 What's the point? Birds go tweet-tweet to the beat, meat. Leads Tent-Pole to the joint power-point...

COACH (O.S.)  
 Tent-Pole!

TENT-POLE

(facing JULIAN as he backs out)  
 Check out the plug, Slug. Back to the track, Mac.  
 Bring on the gin, Lin. Ride, hide the beef  
 bayonet, Dip-stick. Ain't it fun with the gun? Tent-  
 Pole's on the dole, Moll. Where's the ball,  
 Paul...?

JULIAN leaves the suitcase on the bar and follows TWO-BOB into his office. TWO-BOB sits at his desk and orders some of the mess.

TWO-BOB

When I took over the club there were none of the  
 mod cons you see around you...  
 (he points to a small first-aid kit)  
 Look at that. Any hospital'd be proud of that. All  
 a result of personal discipline and bloody hard  
 yakka.

JULIAN

My show's about personal discipline and hard yakka.  
 You're absolutely sure you couldn't fit me in? I've  
 performed at Edinburgh.

TWO-BOB

You play soccer?

GRUB bursts in, leans on the desk. JULIAN jumps back.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Grub!

GRUB

You're a dead-set arsehole! I know what you and  
 your friends are on about, arsehole!

TWO-BOB

What friends?

GRUB

You and your bloody back-room deals. You twined  
 the blokes into staying on strike so your council  
 mates can white-ant them with scum like Synott!  
 You'd sell your own kid for two-bob, you swine!

TWO-BOB

(explaining to JULIAN)  
 The men voted to stay out, not me.

GRUB

You've got your rotten mate Synott coming here  
 tonight, haven't you?

TWO-BOB

How'd you know that?

GRUB  
 (to JULIAN)  
 Synott's linked up with Waste Disposal.

TWO-BOB  
 He is not!

GRUB  
 He wants to take their jobs and bring in his own lot...

TWO-BOB  
 Don't come barging into my club implying.....

GRUB  
 Is Synott coming or not?

TWO-BOB  
 Why aren't you out training?

GRUB  
 Is he or isn't he?

GRUB leaves.

TWO-BOB  
 That's right, shut the door from the outside. He's a psychopath, you know. He used to wear brown crocodile shoes.

GRUB reappears. TWO-BOB freaks.

GRUB  
 This is your club, is it? We'll see about that!

The GRUB leaves.

TWO-BOB  
 If it'd of gotten out of hand I'd have sorted him out quick smart. Don't you just love it when they turn out to be all bark and no bite? Some of the stories I could tell you about that lunatic.

JULIAN  
 Fascinating.

TWO-BOB  
 Where were we? Excuse me while I get changed.

TWO-BOB removes his overalls.

JULIAN  
 I was telling you my show is an impersonation manifesto. I watch your club train then I impersonate them humorously. It's the biggest thing on the club circuit. I could show you how to put that Grub fellow in his place.

JULIAN removes a Groucho moustache and cigar from his suitcase.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Stick 'em up you dirty dog.

TWO-Bob, in undies and t-shirt, freaks as JULIAN points the gun at him.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Opps. I mean..  
(mimicking CAGNEY)  
...yer dirty rat. What d'yer mean bustin' in here like that and threatenin' me? Or  
(mimicking BOGART)  
I told yer, Doll, that Grub's nothing but heartache.

TWO-BOB  
(escaping with his trousers)  
Ah, good, yeah ah, unfortunately we're all booked up.

JULIAN  
(following)  
I can do anyone. Pick someone. G'on pick the world's best actor.

TWO-BOB  
Some other time. Now if you'll excuse me...

JULIAN  
Who's your favorite actor? Male or female.

TWO-BOB  
Pamela Anderson, but I haven't got the time...

JULIAN  
Right.

JULIAN grabs a footy and stuffs it up his jumper to imitate Pamela Anderson. TWO-BOB, horrified, is momentarily frozen. JULIAN clasps him round the arms and shoulders.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
You've been busted, Sixpence. Admit you were in the rort and I'll be gentle with you.

TWO-BOB  
You idiot!

JULIAN  
Don't sweet talk me. This show goes on or I'm outa here.

TWO-BOB  
I'll have you arrested you fool!

JULIAN  
But, Bobbie, I love youse. I love youse all.

TWO-BOB  
You're not an actor's asshole. Now get out!

JULIAN attempts to kiss TWO-BOB, who struggles dragging them both to the floor. SHIRL, dressed to kill in a low-cut evening gown, floats in.

JULIAN  
Does that mean you don't love me any more?

TWO-BOB  
Shirl!

JULIAN  
(crying and grabbing him round the legs)  
How could you do this to me? After all we've been through together.

TWO-BOB  
Shut-up you imbecile and get out!  
(JULIAN sobs on the floor)  
We're, ah. This is, ah....

SHIRL  
No need to explain, Bob. I always had my suspicions.

TWO-BOB  
You're not sucked in by this idiot, are you? He's only an actor. Men-at-Work or something. Get-up!

JULIAN  
(grabbing TWO-BOB round the legs again)  
Down Under. You know who I am, darling.

SHIRL  
Oh yes, I did speak to one of your people.

TWO-BOB  
What! When?

TWO-BOB extracts himself from JULIAN who throws himself on the floor.

SHIRL  
Somebody from a soap company rang.

TWO-BOB attempts to cover SHIRL'S breasts.

TWO-BOB  
A what company? Cover yourself up. I don't know any soap company.

SHIRL

(pulling away)  
Bubbles I think she said. Sounded very young.

Said she had too much homework tonight and couldn't make it.

TWO-BOB

Couldn't make what? You're not making any sense!

SHIRL

(shrugging her shoulders)  
Who was she?

TWO-BOB

Probably one of Tent-Pole's groupies.

SHIRL

Oh, see I thought it might've been a show you'd organised for the boys. I knew you wouldn't want to disappoint them so I rang Rent-A-Show and they put me on to...Have I upset the apple cart, darling?

TWO-BOB grabs SHIRL by the shoulders, turns her and marches her to the door.

TWO-BOB

(to JULIAN)  
If you're not gone in five minutes I'll have you arrested.

JULIAN

Don't leave me. I love you.

SHIRL

Interesting person, Bob.

TWO-BOB

What're you doing dressed like a...a...?

SHIRL

Tart? That is what you men call them, isn't it...

TWO-BOB

Have you been drinking?

SHIRL

...when the wives aren't around? If I didn't know better, Bob, I'd get very suspicious. Suit, your best shirt and after shave.

TWO-BOB

It's Sir Arthur. You know that.

SHIRL

Into after shave is he? Messages from schoolgirls...

TWO-BOB

If you thought I could even look at another woman...

(putting an arm round her)

Is that what you thought? When would I have the time? I mean I'm up to my eyeballs trying to save the men's jobs. I'm slaving my guts out for Saturday.

SHIRL

Why are there no women allowed tonight?

TWO-BOB

Look, alright, I'll tell you the truth. It was a surprise for the boys. Something to take the pressure off. She was supposed to be just one of those, what are they, comic-grams or whatever you call them.

SHIRL

Stripper grams.

TWO-BOB

They're not actually strippers. They pop in, flash a bit of leg, embarrass someone and that's it, off.

SHIRL

Oh, Bob, ha, ha...

TWO-BOB

The only reason I didn't want sheila is you know what they can be like. How jealous they get. If the boys saw you dressed like that...

JULIAN, who has put his props in his suitcase, enters the change rooms.

SHIRL

Oh, Bob you really didn't think I was coming here, did you?

TWO-BOB

Where's the baby?

SHIRL

That'll depend.

TWO-BOB

You have been drinking!

SHAKY

Can I get you something to eat, Shirl, a nice pie?

SHIRL

I'm eating somewhere special tonight, Shaky.

TWO-BOB

Where?

SHIRL

Oh, yes, now I remember, the other message, from whatisname's secretary...

TWO-BOB

Sir Arthur?

SHIRL

Let's see. She said...sorry if I sound forgetful. I've got so many decisions on my mind, like what restaurant to go to. Should I drink and drive...?

TWO-BOB

Was it bloody Sir Arthur?

SHIRL

She said she didn't think Sir Galahad or whatever his name is...

TWO-BOB

Sir Arthur!

SHIRL

...would be able to make it tonight.

TWO-BOB

But..but you said...he'd meet me at seven-thirty

SHIRL

No, that's what you said. I was trying to tell you he had a meeting at seven-thirty.

TWO-BOB

Why did you tell me he was coming?

SHIRL

I was confused about other things, darling...Like where I'm not supposed to be on a Thursday night. I'm sure you understand. Bye, must run. Don't wait up. Oh and if you get home first will you put out the rubbish?

TWO-BOB angrily hurries into the change rooms. As SHIRL is leaving a sweat-dripping TENT-POLE appears, grinning.

TENT-POLE

Where's that power-point, Bob? Sweet-pea.

SHIRL

Don't call me that.

TENT-POLE

Danielle in the lion's den.

SHIRL

What?

TENT-POLE

Tell me about yourself, Danielle.

SHIRL

You've got a lovely girlfriend.

TENT-POLE

I have? Who?

SHIRL

You need to take better care of Doreen.

TENT-POLE

Oh, right, Doreen. I lose track of them , you know, that many.

SHIRL

You're very lucky to have her.

TENT-POLE gently brushes the back of his arm down her groin. She backs. He grins. SHIRL angrily walks to the door.

TENT-POLE

You should be here when we put the chicks on.

SHIRL

What chicks?

TENT-POLE

Ah, mate, top shelf. Though the last lot were in their forties, for the second time round.

SHIRL

Oh. Tell me about them.

TENT-POLE

Golden showers, fruit salads, double dildos...

SHIRL

Double what?

TENT-POLE

Like two vibrators. You've got a vibrator, haven't you? Join them together. A handle in the middle...

SHIRL

The mind boggles. And what about Bob? Is he into that sort of thing?

TENT-POLE

Mate, he foots the bill, doesn't he? What d'you reckon?

(advancing)

You deserve a young gun.

SHIRL

I really should be going.

TENT-POLE

What's say I take you out the back and show you these great exercises I invented?

SHIRL

I'm not really one for...People with muscles aren't my type.

TENT-POLE

I developed them so you don't end up with muscles.

SHIRL

Oh.

TENT-POLE

They're the ones you do before a lash.

SHIRL

A what?

TENT-POLE

A gash-slash, a lash. Hoe down into the low down. A root. You know what that is don't you?

SHIRL

I'm married!

TENT-POLE

Suppose an affair's out of the question?

The COACH appears at the door.

THE COACH

Tent-Pole, get out here.

TENT-POLE

Check out the doll, Moll, back to the track Mac...

TENT-POLE returns to training. SHIRL hurries off. TWO-BOB, now dressed, and JULIAN enter from the changerooms.

TWO-BOB

Tell me about this show of yours. A man's only as good as his word. And we did give our word, although not me. It's definitely about discipline?

JULIAN

Yep.

TWO-BOB

How much?

JULIAN

Most of it.

TWO-BOB

I mean what's it gonna cost us? We usually just pass the hat around.

JULIAN

But you have another booking.

TWO-BOB

Principle's more important. I can ring up and cancel them.

The COACH bursts in.

COACH

I want you out here, immediately!

TWO-BOB

Not now.

COACH

Now!

TWO-BOB

I'll be right back. Make yourself a coffee. Don't spill the sugar.

TWO-BOB and the COACH enter. JULIAN returns to the changerooms.

COACH

What did you do to the Grub?

TWO-BOB

What'd I do? I'm in the middle of negotiations I've been setting up for weeks. He barges in like a bloody terrorist on metho. Why?

The PLAYERS and GRUB enter.

GRUB

You've been twined to stay on strike by this arsehole.

TWO-BOB

Rubbish! That's an insult to these blokes. They made up their own mind.

GRUB

Yeah!

TWO-BOB

Ask them.

RODENT

We did, Grub.

TWO-BOB

You didn't turn up to the meeting!

GRUB  
You didn't tell me!

TWO-BOB  
I left a message.

GRUB  
Bullshit!

TWO-BOB  
So get changed!

GRUB  
This arsehole's in cahoots with Synott!

RODENT  
Synott who?

TENT-POLE  
The League bloke.

GRUB  
Arthur Synott.

TENT-POLE  
He's always on that footy show.

GRUB  
He and his mate Townsend control all waste disposal.

TWO-BOB  
Rubbish!

GRUB  
They want the Council to sack us and bring in their own people.

RODENT  
Is it true? You're in cahoots with Synott?

TWO-BOB  
Course not!

COLOMBO  
Good. Let's get on with training.

GRUB  
Bullshit! You've got him coming tonight.

TWO-BOB angrily glances at the COACH who shrugs his shoulders.

RODENT  
Is Synott coming here tonight?

TWO-BOB  
No.

GRUB  
Why're you all dolled up?

RODENT  
Is he or isn't he?

TWO-BOB  
I can categorically say no he isn't.

RODENT  
What's all this crap about a compulsory meeting?

TWO-BOB  
As a matter of fact I've gone to considerable trouble to personally arrange a show for you boys tonight. About football. So get changed, Grub!

COLOMBO  
Let's get on with training.

TWO-BOB  
You know the rules, Grub. You don't train Thursday, you don't play Saturday.

COACH  
Since when?

GRUB  
I'll be playing Saturday no matter what you say!

TENT-POLE  
I'm not playing unless Grub's playing

TWO-BOB  
You barge in here disrupting training. You don't turn up to the bloody meeting. No excuse. No apology. You accuse the players, your mates, of being twined! You tell blatant lies about me and Sir Arthur all so you can disrupt tonight's training. You're a typical bourgeois shit stirrer! I thought we were all bloody mates, that we backed one an other up...

RODENT  
I'm still not playing unless Grub's playing!

TENT-POLE  
Me neither.

GRUB  
Hang on. Can't you see how easy it is to be twined?

RODENT  
What d'you mean?

GRUB  
You wanta play Saturday...

RODENT

Course we do.

GRUB

...but here you are ready to strike. You reckon you voted to stay on strike because you made up your own mind. I've just demonstrated to you how easy it is to be twined into doing something you don't want to do.

(to the COACH)

Something important's come up, mate. But I'll be right Saturday.

GRUB casually walks away leaving everyone flabbergasted.

GRUB (CONT'D)

By the way, arsehole, if that turd mate of your's ever shows his head around here I'll blow it off. And that's a promise.

The PLAYERS return to training.

COACH

What was all that bullshit about arranging Sir Arthur?

TWO-BOB

A needle to get you fired up.

COACH

Thanks a lot!

TWO-BOB

And thanks for telling the Grub!

COACH

I didn't tell him anything!

TWO-BOB

You were the only one who knew besides me.

COACH

Then have a long hard look in the mirror.

The COACH leaves. JULIAN emerges from the changerooms.

TWO-BOB

Not bad for a small club, eh? I rewired the place myself you know.

SHAKY enters with a bag of ice.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

What's that for? I'm not paying for that.

SHAKY

Fridge isn't working. The beer's hot. You were supposed to fix the powerpoint. Have to use bloody bottles!

TWO-BOB

Don't get your nickers in a knot!

JULIAN

Two-Bob, I won't be able to do it.

TWO-BOB

What!

(JULIAN shakes his head)

I've gone to a lot of trouble convincing the players to give you a chance at the last minute. And this is your attitude. I don't work that way. I've got friends in that Equity joint...

JULIAN

I don't belong to that Equity joint.

TWO-BOB

You don't even belong to your own bloody union?

JULIAN

It's the dressing rooms. They're unsuitable.

TWO-BOB

If they're good enough for us!

JULIAN

I perform the play in the dressing rooms...

TWO-BOB

It's not one of them poofter things is it?

JULIAN

...and I can't do it in here  
(pointing to the billiard table)  
because of that.

TWO-BOB

Consider it moved.

JULIAN

It's a bad omen when the bookings get mixed up.

TWO-BOB

(taking money from his wallet)

How would a lazy twenty sound...?

(JULIAN shakes his head)

Twenty-five? Thirty and I can't go any higher. It's coming out of my own kick.

JULIAN

(taking the money)

And you'll still pass around the hat?

TWO-BOB

No wonder you're not in the bloody union. And there'd better not be anything missing.

JULIAN

See you at seven-thirty.

As JULIAN leaves the PLAYERS enter. They jeer JULIAN and make their way to the changerooms. DOREEN angrily enters.

She's been crying. TWO-BOB blocks her.

DOREEN

I want to see Tent-Pole

RODENT (O.S.)

Bloody showers are cold..

(screaming)

...again!

TWO-BOB

(loud whisper)

Doreen, now's not a good time. Tomorrow, about lunchtime...

DOREEN

I need to see Tent-Pole.

TWO-BOB

I don't know where he is.

TENT-POLE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Bob. Hey, Bob.

DOREEN looks through TWO-BOB.

TWO-BOB

He's in one of those stupid moods again. Look, go home. He won't be long.

TENT-POLE (O.S.)

Bob, get in here!

DOREEN

I want to see him.

TWO-BOB

Normally I would but tonight it's players only.

DOREEN

You've got strippers coming, haven't you?

TWO-BOB

Hah, ha who told you that?

DOREEN

You have. I know you have.

TWO-BOB

I haven't.

DOREEN

Then why are you dressed up?

TWO-BOB

I've arranged a show; a community awareness show...

DOREEN

Then why aren't there any women?

TWO-BOB

...for men. They want a focus for Saturday. It's a bonding thing. It wasn't my idea. I love having women around. Now g'on, I'll see you tomorrow.

DOREEN

I'm not leaving.

TWO-BOB reluctantly goes to the door of the changerooms.

RODENT (O.S.)

Hallo, the phantom slug-slewer.

TWO-BOB

Um, Tent-Pole...

Suddenly a hand jerks him into the changerooms. There is a commotion as TWO-BOB can be heard struggling. He reappears dripping wet.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

You blokes are really childish sometimes! You can't see him and that's that.

DOREEN

Right.

DOREEN marches into the changerooms. Again there is a commotion. COLOMBO, towel around his waist and carrying his clothes, hurries out and discretely changes in a corner.

RODENT (O.S.)

Doreen, Spunk.

TENT-POLE, holding a towel round his waist, marches DOREEN into the entertainment room. The PLAYERS cat-call for her to return.

TENT-POLE

That was real smart. You know what those bloke are like. They're half-pye seckos.

DOREEN

(angrily pulling away)

Right, it's alright for you to perve on strippers.

TENT-POLE

What strippers?

DOREEN

Don't give me that shit!

They glare at each other.

TENT-POLE

Bob, have we got strippers?

TWO-BOB

Definitely not. Tonight's a family night.

TENT-POLE

Is it?

TWO-BOB

A family night for blokes. Nothing more.

TENT-POLE

See.

DOREEN

Fofi's dead.

TENT-POLE

Yeah, good one, Doreen.

DOREEN

She's dead!

TENT-POLE

You fair dinkum? How?

DOREEN

What would you care?

TENT-POLE

Was it that mongrel Pit Bull?

DOREEN

It doesn't matter.

TENT-POLE

It was that fucken pit bull! I'll kill the thing. I'll gut it with the chainsaw then stick it up that sheila's arsehole. I will. The mongrel! Kill my dog, the bitch!

DOREEN

It was my dog. I just wanta talk to you.

TENT-POLE

Go on.

DOREEN

Not here. I want you to come home.

TENT-POLE

What, now?

(she glares, disappointed)

They need me to pick the team.

(she walks out)

Ask Bob.

(following)

We'll get another mutt. Not like that poncy thing we had. A fucken rottweiler. Let's see how tough the pit bull is then. It'll chew its fucken neck through like spaghetti!

RODENT

Where's the chick?

RODENT attempts to pull the towel from TENT-POLE, who runs around the billiard table, smack-bang into SHAKY carrying a plate of pies which go everywhere. TENT-POLE disappears into the changerooms. TWO-BOB enters his office where the COACH has been writing the team on a white board.

TWO-BOB

(rubbing GRUB'S name from the board)

We have to drop the Grub.

COACH

What!

TWO-BOB

He wasn't at training.

COACH

He's our best player. Murray River wasn't at training!

TWO-BOB

We're talking about principle. You can't win without principles. The moment you give your principles away you never had any in the first place.

RODENT stands in the office doorway.

RODENT

I'm sick of being a bloody reserve! You've been put on notice!

RODENT angrily leaves and sits on a bench.

TWO-BOB

You never worked on the trucks in the old days did you?

(The COACH defiantly folds his arms)

Every christmas you'd expect a present...a pudding from Mrs Smith, a dozen bottles from old Hazzard. And if a dog tipped a bin over you cleaned it up. Your garbo was someone with a bit of standing in the community.

COACH

We've only ever been one step up from the nightman.

TWO-BOB

But he had principles. Then along comes your commie shitstirrer. He's gonna raise the standard of living. Give everyone centrally heated trucks, sanitation gloves. You name it.

COACH

That's what you've been promising.

TWO-BOB

Next minute we're all back in the bloody dark ages.

COACH

What's this got to do with principles?

TWO-BOB

Because bloody arseholes like Grub have their own political agenda.

(thumping the table)

They don't have bloody principles!

COACH

I may not be the smartest...

TWO-BOB

Why wasn't he at the meeting? Answer me that.

COACH

Shut-up!

(TWO-BOB, stunned, listens)

I don't know why he wasn't at the bloody meeting but I'm telling you if he's not in the team you can kiss your grand final goodbye.

TWO-BOB

It's the bloody principle...

COACH

If I could guarantee we'd win with the Grub in, but lose without him, would you pick him?

TWO-BOB

In all honesty, if he's done the wrong thing, I couldn't pick him.

COACH

You're the one that should be bloody out!

TWO-BOB

There's no good panicking. We'll put him on the bench....

COACH

He's in or that's it!

TWO-BOB

That way the club knows we're got principles.  
Saturday we wack someone else on the bench and Grub  
goes straight in.

COACH

This is bloody stupid!

TWO-BOB

No it's not. The club must come first.

(SHAKY enters)

Who's looking after the bloody bar?

SHAKY

There's a...a...

TWO-BOB

I'm not a bloody mind reader!

SHAKY

Mather or someone at the door.

TWO-BOB

I told you no bloody sheilas!

(SHAKY hurries off)

Probably one of the mothers. Another job I don't  
get paid for. Wet nurse.

TWO-BOB stops in the doorway and surveys his empire. The  
PLAYERS play billiards. COLOMBO enters the changerooms.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

(to the COACH who ignores him and enters  
the toilets)

Have a look...They might be a den of social  
outcasts but Genghis Khan couldn't have done a  
better job. What club would want Shaky? And if it  
wasn't for me Tent-Pole'd be in the loony bin,  
half the club in prison and Rodent probably  
attempting the world record in serial killing. I've  
taken a rabble of miscreants and put meaning into  
their lives. I oughta be in politics.

TENT-POLE

(to RODENT)

Colombo's having an Edgar.

As TWO-BOB goes to the door RODENT takes a bucket of slops  
from behind the bar into the toilets.

COACH (O.S.)

What the bloody...!

RODENT leaves the bucket and races to the billiard table.

COLOMBO returns from the changerooms. RODENT mouths  
obscenities at TENT-POLE before displaying cultivated  
innocence.

TWO-BOB opens the door to a smiling SIR ARTHUR, half pissed an expensive suit. TWO-BOB is momentarily stunned.

TWO-BOB

Sir Arthur!

SIR ARTHUR

(clasping TWO-BOB'S hand)  
Not late am I?

TWO-BOB

Um...No, Sir Arthur...Just in time...

A whisper of excitement passes among the players.

SIR ARTHUR

(walking past TWO-BOB)  
Can't stand being late.

TWO-BOB

Good, ah, didn't you have a meeting? Your secretary said you were tied up.

SIR ARTHUR

I'd like to tie her up. Must introduce you to her.

TWO-BOB

Probably got our wires crossed. We've all been waiting...No, actually I thought if you arrived as a surprise like, they'd get a real thrill...

SIR ARTHUR

You're in the driver's seat, Bob.

(SIR ARTHUR surveys the surroundings)  
So this is the famous club, Bob. I love these places.

(shadow boxing)

Takes me back to me grass roots.

TWO-BOB

I'm thinking of extending it. Knocking that wall out...

RODENT

(checking the warmth of a pie)  
Bloody things!

RODENT slams the pie warmer. TWO-BOB, unseen by SIR ARTHUR, pushes RODENT.

SIR ARTHUR

Good for you, Bob. Good for you.

TWO-BOB

Carpet all through here...

SIR ARTHUR

Great idea.

SHAKY gives SIR ARTHUR a beer. It's taken without acknowledgment.

TWO-BOB

I'm having negotiations with local council.

The COACH, pants around his ankles, races into the entertainment room to throw the remains of the slops bucket over RODENT, who ducks behind SIR ARTHUR. The COACH pulls up just in time.

COACH

(pulling his pants up)

Sorry, mate.

(mouthing to RODENT)

You'll keep!

SIR ARTHUR

No harm done. I didn't come down in the last shower.

TWO-BOB

Ah, this is our Coach, Makka. Sir Arthur.

COACH

Arthur Synott?

TWO-BOB

I mentioned he'd be coming. Remember?

The COACH holds his hand out. SIR ARTHUR cautiously shakes it.

SIR ARTHUR

A real pleasure, Son.

SIR ARTHUR dismisses the COACH and leads TWO-BOB into the office. The COACH shrugs his shoulders to the PLAYERS who are in awe of SIR ARTHUR.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Getting money out of council is as hard as getting strikers back to work.

(touching the tip of his nose)

Your boys are still on strike?

TWO-BOB

Of course. Course they are...

SIR ARTHUR

Hmmmmmmmm.

TWO-BOB

I thought that's what you said, another week.

SIR ARTHUR

You and I must have a serious chat about funding. Quite by accident, I had lunch today with Maurie Townsend.

TWO-BOB

Sir Maurice?

SIR ARTHUR

You know him?

TWO-BOB

Haven't actually met him. I was planning on writing to him.

SIR ARTHUR

No. No. Never put anything in writing.

TWO-BOB

(checking for the letter)

No, I wouldn't.

SIR ARTHUR

You'd like him, Bob. One of us. Straight as a die. Does all that charity stuff. It's all a front.

TWO-BOB

Yeah?

SIR ARTHUR

You should come to dinner with us. I'll get my secretary onto it. Might even invite her along. Unless...?

TWO-BOB

No, no. It'd be great. My missus isn't into fancy parties. She doesn't like going out. More the stay at home type, you know.

SIR ARTHUR

You'd like him, Bob. Anyway we got talking about this strike. "Maurie," I said. "I know the bloke who pulls the strings. Bob. He's one of us." Now between you me and the four walls..

(They move further away from PLAYERS)

..he's looking for a good back-up. Someone he can trust. Someone to pull the strings for him, with the wheelie bin fiasco.

TWO-BOB

I could organise his whole work force for him.

SIR ARTHUR

"I know just the man," I said. "He runs the famous St Ignatius Football Club."

TWO-BOB

St Joey's. We're playing St Ignatius.

SIR ARTHUR

His eyes lit up, Bob. Impressed. But if this bloody strike continues...

TWO-BOB

I was under the impression that's what...

SIR ARTHUR

That was the idea but the shit's hit the fan with the media. Now it looks like it's all been contrived.

TWO-BOB

The bloody Grub. I think he's on a kickback from some of the workers if they go back. The bastard leaked that bullshit to the media.

SIR ARTHUR

We don't want a long drawn out court case. Some of those union arseholes, not you of course, use the courts to take fairdinkum businessmen to the wall.

TWO-BOB

I can get them back first thing in the morning.

SIR ARTHUR

Monday'd be better. A few documents still need signing.

TWO-BOB

Monday, you've got it.

SIR ARTHUR

That would be a break-through, Bob.

TWO-BOB

What about the men, you know, later on?

SIR ARTHUR

They'll be looked after in the restructure. That's a promise. Maurie's like that. We get them back to work then move them sideways.

(watching the players from the door)

Into Home Help or Drug Counselling, something where they'll feel valued.

TWO-BOB

You wouldn't believe the trouble I've had with some of my own people. Swimming pool communists disguised as shop stewards cum bloody greenies. There may be some recriminations, a bit of physical stuff. But that's my bag. Tell Maurie that's the type of bloke I am.

SIR ARTHUR

Done. Now have you gotta know someone to get a another drink in this joint?

SIR ARTHUR goes to the bar. TWO-BOB follows.

COACH

Ahem!

TWO-BOB

Just a minute. What would you like?

SIR ARTHUR

Chivers, Royal Salute. Long glass, straight, one small cube of ice.

SHAKY

What?

TWO-BOB

I think we might be out of Chivers, Sir Arthur.

SIR ARTHUR

What're the boys drinking?

TWO-BOB

I'll send someone across to the Local. Shaky.

SIR ARTHUR

I'll have whatever the boys are drinking.

TWO-BOB

A beer for Sir Arthur.

SHAKY

For who?

TWO-BOB

Just get it.

SHAKY hits the glass with the bottle, breaking the glass  
Get another!

SIR ARTHUR

Don't bother washing that one, eh.

TWO-BOB laughs. RODENT, who's eating a crumbling pie, backs into SIR ARTHUR.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Something smells good.

TWO-BOB

Can I get you a pie, Sir Arthur?

RODENT

(putting it back in the pie warmer)  
Bloody things are cold!

SIR ARTHUR

Fortunately I've eaten.

SHAKY

I'm putting that on your tab, Rodent.

TWO-BOB

Boy's I want you to meet someone who needs no introduction. This is Sir Arthur. You've probably seen him on that footy show.

RODENT

That's a top show.

TENT-POLE

My brother was in the audience two weeks ago.

SIR ARTHUR

Really? What's his name?

RODENT

Sperm Donor.

SIR ARTHUR

Sperm Donor?

RODENT

(gyrating his hips)

As like, in yer daughter.

The PLAYERS roar laughing.

SIR ARTHUR

Don't talk to me about daughters. My own bloody daughter's into one of those subterranean graffiti gangs.

(The PLAYERS are uncertain how to take his comment.)

Up yours with a spray can. When the bloody social worker with her candy-eyes and latte breath introduced her to a graffiti workshop she became one of those brats our mothers warned us about.

TENT-POLE

(elbowing RODENT)

Her boyfriend's not called Rodent is he?

SIR ARTHUR

Anyway, call me Arthur.

RODENT

Yeah, Arthur, we didn't think you were coming.

TWO-BOB

Well...he wasn't at that stage.

TENT-POLE

(winking to RODENT)

Not a mate of the Grub's by any chance?

SIR ARTHUR  
Should I know this Grub?

TWO-BOB  
He's the shop steward I was mentioning.

THE COACH  
Aren't you tied up with Waste Disposals and wheelie bins?

SIR ARTHUR  
Shit no!

RODENT  
They're trying to take our jobs!

SIR ARTHUR  
Who are?

RODENT  
Waste Disposals.

TENT-POLE  
Bastards!

SIR ARTHUR  
You sure?

TWO-BOB  
But we're on top of it.

SIR ARTHUR  
If I thought that was the case I'd be in boots and all.

RODENT  
Yeah?

SIR ARTHUR  
You've gotta fight for what you believe in, Son.

RODENT  
Grub said.....

SIR ARTHUR  
I must meet this Grub.

RODENT  
He thought you were in with Maurie whatismane...

SIR ARTHUR  
Townsend?

RODENT  
That's him.

COACH  
Doesn't he own Waste Disposals?

SIR ARTHUR

He might have some shares in it.

RODENT

And you were gonna take our jobs.

TENT-POLE

Bring in wheelie-bins.

SIR ARTHUR

Hold your horses. I can't stand the bloody things. For starters, they only hold four dozen empty cans.

RODENT

Bloody oath!

TENT-POLE

My brother turned one of 'em into a compost bin.

SIR ARTHUR

Yeah? How?

TENT-POLE

Pinched the bloke over the road's, cut the wheels off, turned it upside down.

SIR ARTHUR

Never thought of that.

RODENT

His brother's a genius.

SIR ARTHUR

Could he get me a couple?

TENT-POLE

I'll see. Should be sweet.

SIR ARTHUR

Good. Let me tell you a story about Townsend. The stupid bastard's drinking up the Windsor...

The COACH enters the office and writes the team on paper.

TENT-POLE

Windsor Castle?

RODENT

It's in Prahran, you idiot!

SIR ARTHUR

And there's one of these lunatic salesman. Cabbage we call him. Always flashing a roll of notes in front of the sheila, but it's just a few notes wrapped around a roll of cabbage leaves. Scores every time.

RODENT

Good one.

SIR ARTHUR

Anyway, he's got these lives ones...

TENT-POLE

Live what?

SIR ARTHUR

Clients that he's trying to flog insurance to.

TENT-POLE

(winking to RODENT)

Oh.

SIR ARTHUR

Cabbage sees Maurie talking with his cronies, slips over. "Sorry to disturb you, Sir Maurice, but could you do a battler a favour like?" "What is it you want, Boy?" asks Maurie. "I'm trying to impress these clients and I was wondering if you'd drop by and just say something like, "Gedday, Cabbage"? Maurie's like that. Give you the shirt off his back. Anyway Cabbage returns to his clients. Later, Maurie's passing Cabbage, stops, holds his hand out. "Gedday, Cabbage, I didn't know you were here." Cabbage slowly looks up at Maurie. "Piss off, Townsend!" he says. "Can't you see I'm busy?"

The PLAYERS roar laughing.

TENT-POLE

Piss off, Townsend, hah, ha, ha...Rodent, tell him the one about the salesman with two cocks.

RODENT

Later.

SIR ARTHUR

Townsend and wheelie bins, gawd. I'm forever amazed how these rumors start.

TENT-POLE

See, there's this salesman, like...

SIR ARTHUR

This is my night off. Just treat me as one of the boys.

TENT-POLE

(clutching his arm in pain)

Ah, shit. Shit!

SIR ARTHUR

What's wrong?

TENT-POLE

How d'you cure yaws?

SIR ARTHUR

(reacting as if TENT-POLE could have the  
plague)

Yaws? What's yours?

TENT-POLE

(handing SIR ARTHUR his glass)

Six beers, mate.

SIR ARTHUR roars laughing. The PLAYERS hand SIR ARTHUR their empty glasses and slap him on the back.

SIR ARTHUR

I like that. I do. Tent-Pole, isn't it?

TENT-POLE

(winking at RODENT)

With a hyphen.

SIR ARTHUR

I'm standing for mayor next month. I need a couple of stand-up blokes to hand out how-to-vote cards. Three hundred bucks a day, each.

TENT-POLE

Yeah? I'll be inta that.

RODENT

Same here.

SIR ARTHUR

You'll be working alongside my daughter.

RODENT

Good one.

TENT-POLE

What's her name? I probably know her.

SIR ARTHUR

I doubt it.

RODENT

If she's into graffiti, Tent-Pole probably got her started.

SIR ARTHUR

On a quite night she terrorises King St, just to give the suburban set a bit of havoc.

TENT-POLE

Bit of a handful, eh? Want me to have a word to her?

RODENT gyrates his hips behind SIR ARTHUR.

SIR ARTHUR

And why wouldn't she, eh? With louts masquerading as human beings, with nothing better to do than wantonly destroying property, overweight western suburbs no-hopers clogging dole queues, labor politicians putting rock concerts in every park, turning criminals loose, unionists recruiting Asian serial killers and on top of all that you now have fat-cat garbos holding the community to ransom.

COACH

Easy.

SIR ARTHUR has worked himself into a frenzy. The PLAYERS give each other dubious glances.

SIR ARTHUR

For what? So you can pander to your right hemisphere, demonstrate your artistic talents to the world; nature strip art, pyramids of garbage bags?

TENT-POLE

Um, look, I just remembered, Saturdays I take the dog to obedience school.

SIR ARTHUR

We need men with steel in their backbone, fair dinkum Leadership.

TENT-POLE

Won't be able to make it. Sorry.

RODENT

Me neither.

SIR ARTHUR

Six hundred?

TENT-POLE

Can't.

SIR ARTHUR

A thousand?

TENT-POLE

A thousand?

SIR ARTHUR

Cash in hand.

TENT-POLE

Um, what time did you say?

SIR ARTHUR

Gottcha, ha, ha. I haven't even got a daughter, you nitwit, ha, ha. But if I did she'd know how to bloody cure yaws. Ha, ha, Tent-Pole's shout.

SIR ARTHUR plonks his glass on the counter. The PLAYERS laugh. SIR ARTHUR, grinning broadly, turns towards the audience.

RODENT

You're the one, Arthur.

TWO-BOB enters the office.

TWO-BOB

Now that Sir Arthur's here you'd better tell that actor the show's cancelled.

COACH

You're the President. You do it.

SIR ARTHUR appears in the doorway.

SIR ARTHUR

A problem?

TWO-BOB

Just have to cancel a show some idiot arranged.

SIR ARTHUR

A show, eh? Bit of the old table-top stuff?

TWO-BOB

Not quite.

SIR ARTHUR

Lady Grace advises the Art's Minister you know. It's the sort of thing football needs today, Bob. Culture.

TWO-BOB

Yeah?

SIT

Opens windows to the mind.

TWO-BOB

You think so?

SIR ARTHUR

Bring a few blacks down. Let them do a corroboree or a bit of ballet at half time. A speech from Hamlet, an aria of opera.

(sings some opera)

Imagine Dame Joan at the grand final singing Butterfly. You'd need armed guards to stop the fans invading the oval.

TWO-BOB

What's say we announce the team, you talk to the boys and if we have time we try and run this show?

SIR ARTHUR  
You're the engine driver, Bob.

TWO-BOB  
It was my original idea but some idiot stuffed up  
the times.

(taking the COACH aside)  
Sir Arthur will read out the teams.

COACH  
I'd better do it.

TWO-BOB  
Don't be silly.

COACH  
I don't want Rodent getting upset.

TWO-BOB  
I think Sir Arthur can cope with Rodent, Makka.

The COACH continues with the team. TWO-BOB searches his  
drawers for the letter. SIR ARTHUR sits on a bench. SHAKY  
indicates a tray of sausages and mince on lettuce.

SHAKY  
How many, tickets, Sir Arthur?

SIR ARTHUR  
(holding out fifty dollars)  
I'll take twenty. Put the change in the Kiddie's  
tin.

SHAKY sits next to SIR ARTHUR while he writes the tickets.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)  
Oh, hang on. I'll need to tip the cabbie. Better  
give's the change. I might try one of your special  
Kentucky's, Shaky. Long glass, one cube of ice.

SHAKY  
There's no ice left. Can I get you a pie?

SIR ARTHUR  
I'm on a special diet. I only eat when there's  
good news. It's very effective. Actually I tell a  
lie. I had a superb buffet snack before coming.  
The Peacock's Lair. You go there?

SHAKY  
Oh every second night.

SIR ARTHUR  
So you should. Decor's marvelous. Wonderful  
atmosphere. On a par with this place.

SHAKY

I eat at Charlie Chan's. They make their own dim sims. Rice and cabbage.

The PLAYERS laugh.

SIR ARTHUR

I eat Chinese once a month. Lady Grace lets me eat all I can with one chopstick.

The PLAYERS laugh.

COLOMBO

I've always said a diet is for people who are thick and tired of it.

Nobody laughs.

SIR ARTHUR

Every club needs the services of a good copper.

COLOMBO

Really?

SIR ARTHUR

To protect the team in case it gets arrested. Which was more than likely the case in my day.

COLOMBO

I know what you mean.

SIR ARTHUR

And a good lawyer to bail you out.

RODENT

Last time I was arrested I was inside for a week, wasn't I Colombo?

COLOMBO

You wanta run round biffing umpires you suffer the consequences!

SIR ARTHUR

Did you biff an umpire? Now that's something I've always wanted to do.

RODENT

I was no where near him!

COLOMBO

Come on, Rodent. He identified you!

RODENT

Course he would! He was an umpire, wasn't he?

TENT-POLE

Bloody arsehole!

COLOMBO

Without umpires we wouldn't have a game.

RODENT

Bullshit!

TENT-POLE

They're a pack of mongrel dogs!

SIR ARTHUR

(explaining to RODENT who turns his back)  
I agree, but no matter how much we dislike them society would be one mad scramble without some semblance of order.

(taking a parking ticket from his pocket)  
I've been on the receiving end of many a bad decision. Today, five minutes in a no standing zone! Wack! But like everyone else, I have to cop it on the chin, to use a pun.

TENT-POLE

That's where he copped it, eh, Rodent?

RODENT

Well I don't!

COLOMBO

Course you do. Without someone to enforce the law you'd all revert to the caveman.

SIR ARTHUR

Colombo's right. The measure of society is in the respect we show for law and order. And at the heart of law and order is the umpire. You agree, Rodent?

COLOMBO

That's right, Sir Arthur.

RODENT

What about when there's no where else to park or they give the other pickle a free kick when you haven't done a thing?

SIR ARTHUR

Ah hah, now Rodent's hit the nail right on the head. That's what distinguishes our system from the rest. Even if the umpire makes a mistake we have to accept it. It's the unwritten contract we live life by.

RODENT

Bullshit, it's a con to keep blokes like us in our place.

COLOMBO

Hang on, Rodent!

SIR ARTHUR

I admire a man who speaks his mind.

RODENT

See, bosses rort the rules to make sure umpires always come down on their side. And if they don't like the decision they change the rules.

COLOMBO

You're talking crap, Rodent!

SIR ARTHUR

He's got a right to his view.

COLOMBO

Society won't function unless we abide by the rules.

SIR ARTHUR

Beneath the skin, Son, we all have the same color blood.

RODENT

Meaning?

SIR ARTHUR

Meaning when it's all boiled down I'm no different than any of you.

RODENT

Yeah, right!

SIR ARTHUR

Otherwise the world would be one big tinderbox. And my experience has been the tougher the situation the more important the umpire.

TENT-POLE

(slapping SIR ARTHUR hard on the back)  
Arthur's right, Laddie. He's just one of us.

SIR ARTHUR

(aside to COLOMBO)  
Any chance of fixing this ticket for me?

COLOMBO

Um, look I'd like to, but once it's in the system there's not much I can do. Sorry.

SIR ARTHUR

I was only kidding. I would've been disappointed if you said yes.

TWO-BOB and the COACH return.

TWO-BOB

Everything alright?

SIR ARTHUR

The Rodent and I have been discussing the politics of umpires. Like most left-wing politicians the Rodent has the presence of mind but the absence of thought.

TWO-BOB

Ha, ha, I like a political joke, unless they get elected.

RODENT

And like all bosses this bloke's five foot ten but six foot up himself.

SIR ARTHUR

Hah, ha. Must tell that one to my Board of Directors.

(putting his arm round RODENT)

I admire a bloke with a bit of dash.

(putting his empty glass on the counter)

Rodent's shout.

The PLAYERS put their empty glasses on the counter. RODENT reluctantly pays.

TENT-POLE

Where's the strippers?

TWO-BOB

What strippers!

TENT-POLE

The Coach said you'd lined up strippers.

TWO-BOB glares at the COACH who smiles and shrugs his shoulders. There is a loud knock at the door.

TWO-BOB

We've got something better than strippers.

SIR ARTHUR

If that's Lady Grace I'm not here. Okay?

VOICES

(screaming)

Open the fucken door or I'll smash it in!

### INTERVAL

TWO-BOB opens the door to JULIAN carrying his suitcase.

JULIAN

Jeeves, my good man, kindly announce me.

He hands TWO-BOB his suitcase.

TWO-BOB

Have to start a little later. It's Sir Arthur. Rolled up pissed as a newt. You know what Knights of the Realm are like. I've told him to keep it short. Shaky, get the lad a beer.

JULIAN

I won't say no to that.

SHAKY puts a beer on the counter.

SHAKY

Two dollars, please.

JULIAN

But...

SIR ARTHUR

I'll pay for that.

JULIAN

Thanks, mate.

SIR ARTHUR

(holding his hand out for Julian to shake)  
Arthur Synott. Have we met before? You look familiar. You're on Neighbours, aren't you?

JULIAN

No.

SIR ARTHUR

Bloody good show that. I might know someone who can help you.

JULIAN

Yeah?

COACH

What's this show all about?

JULIAN

It works on a few levels. It's scripted but mainly improvised. I check out a place and respond to the inner vibes....

TENT-POLE

What happens?

JULIAN

Happens is not the right word. Too restrictive.

TENT-POLE

What?

JULIAN

My show reveals the conflict inherent in and underlying football through what I call observational role play.

COACH

(raising his eyes at TWO-BOB)  
Just the thing we need.

TWO-BOB

I thought you said it was about discipline?

JULIAN

It is...in a metaphysical sense.

TENT-POLE

Are there any chicks in it?

JULIAN

Depends on your point of view. See, through observation, it treats ego and non-ego as equal imposters by raising one's subtextual awareness of the premise that without feminine influence, discipline and self restraint a football club is really only a half-developed mutation...

TWO-BOB

A what?

JULIAN

Mutation looking for an answer. One small thing. Would it be possible to turn the beer off during the performance?

TWO-BOB

What!

COACH

It'd be hard to turn the beer off if everybody's getting served!

JULIAN

It's just they'll have to walk through where I'll be performing.

COACH

(taking JULIAN aside)  
Let me give you a word of advice. I'd forget the bit about the mutation stuff.

JULIAN

Why's that, mate?

COACH

Might press the wrong button, you know, subtextually speaking.

JULIAN  
 Gottcha. Of course. Yes, yes. That's right.  
 (going to the pool table)  
 We need to shift the table, warlords.

RODENT  
 Says who?

JULIAN  
 I'll be performing in this space.

RODENT  
 We're playing a bloody game!

JULIAN  
 Can't you finish it later?

RODENT  
 How can we finish it later? The balls'll be moved!

COLOMBO  
 Grow up, Rodent?

RODENT  
 Don't threaten me, pig!

JULIAN  
 Alright, alright, I'll move it later when the stars  
 are aligned with Uranus.

JULIAN commences a series of exaggerated warm-up exercises  
 which bemuse the PLAYERS. Later he disappears under the  
 billiard table without them noticing.

SIR ARTHUR  
 (taking TWO-BOB aside)  
 I'm glad I came tonight, Bob. It's reinforced my  
 belief that strategy and planning is what sets us  
 apart from the others. You see, some people, like  
 the Rodents of the world, need us to plan their  
 destiny for them. Darwin got it right. He  
 understood about superior development and natural  
 selection. Take Hitler, Bob. What d'you think was  
 his one big mistake?

TWO-BOB  
 Killing the Jews?

SIR ARTHUR  
 Aside from that.

TWO-BOB  
 He under estimated Churchill?

SIR ARTHUR  
 (shaking his head)  
 He underestimated the Russian winter. That's what  
 beat the Germans.

(MORE)

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If you're gonna be a great tactician, Bob, always prepare for a winter of discontent.

TWO-BOB

Planning's my strong suit. I plan everything...

SIR ARTHUR

Now I've gotta dash.

TWO-BOB

What, so soon? What about the show?

SIR ARTHUR

I need to put Maurie in the picture.

TWO-BOB

Right. Yep, of course.

The door opens and SHIRL enters, dressed in revealing Middle Eastern costume, with her face covered. She swirls around the entertainment room, dancing erotically among the PLAYERS. Nobody recognises her as SHIRL. The PLAYERS cheer wildly.

SIR ARTHUR

Now that's more like it.

SHIRL

(exaggerated Middle Eastern accent)

WHICH ONE OF YOU GORGEOUS HUNKS IS THE FAMOUS TWO-

Bob?

All the PLAYERS eagerly raise their hands.

TENT-POLE

Hey, Bob, put her in the sinbin.

TWO-BOB

I'm Two-Bob.

SHIRL

I'm Mistress Vanessa.

TENT-POLE

Vanessa the Undresser.

RODENT

The mattress actress.

SHIRL

(playing up to SIR ARTHUR)

And I just love married men.

SIR ARTHUR

Aren't you going to introduce me to this night frangipani?

TWO-BOB  
Of course. Ah, this is. Who are you?

SHIRL  
You must be Sir Arthur?

SIR ARTHUR  
You know me?

SHIRL  
Only by reputation.

SIR ARTHUR  
I'm certainly glad my reputation has preceded me.

SHIRL  
In my country we have a saying: reputation is something you have until you begin to rely upon it.

SIR ARTHUR  
(eagerly shaking her hand)  
I myself married for better and for worse. She couldn't do any worse and I couldn't do any better.

SHIRL  
Sounds like a marriage made in heaven. Allah be praised.

SIR ARTHUR  
I proposed to her in the garage. She couldn't back out.

SHIRL roars laughing.

SHIRL  
Which one of you entrepreneurs makes those wheelie bins?

SIR ARTHUR is about to put his hand up.

TWO-BOB  
Let's go into my office.

The PLAYERS boo.

SHIRL  
Um....sure..

TWO-BOB  
To work out the finer details.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
(to SIR ARTHUR)  
So, if you're about to go....

SIR ARTHUR  
(smiling at SHIRL)  
That can wait.  
(MORE)

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

It's more important for the boys to get to know me.  
Make the transition easier, if you get my drift.

TWO-BOB leads SHIRL into the office to the cheers and whistles of the PLAYERS.

TENT-POLE

You've got seven minutes, Bobbie.

SHIRL acts as if it's the first time she's been in the office. TWO-BOB attempts to unmask her but she avoids him.

TWO-BOB

What made you mention wheelie bins?

SHIRL

Um....

TWO-BOB

Someone put you up to it, didn't they?

SHIRL

No. Haven't you ever made love in one?

TWO-BOB

What! Course not!

SHIRL

Fill a new bin with bubble bath. Attach an air hose and...You sure you haven't?

TWO-BOB

So, which one are you?

SHIRL

Have a guess.

TWO-BOB

Cindy?

(she shakes her head)

Michelle?

(shakes her head)

You're new, aren't you?

SHIRL

How'd you guess?

TWO-BOB

You get to know all the girls after a while.

SHIRL

And you know them all do you?

TWO-BOB

One of the perks of running a union and a football club. The other girls coming?

SHIRL

There's a Liberal Party Conference in town.

TWO-BOB

Oh well, lucky you're here. I didn't think anyone was coming. My wife...

SHIRL

(putting her arms round his neck)  
Don't tell me you're married, big boy.

TWO-BOB

Yeah, worst luck.

SHIRL

Is she pretty?

TWO-BOB

She used to be.

SHIRL

What's she like in the sack?

TWO-BOB

Forget her. I'm more interested in you.

SHIRL

The girls at Bubbles reckon you're one of our best clients.

TWO-BOB

I wouldn't say that.

SHIRL

But you do use the girls a lot?

TWO-BOB

Forget all that. We've got to impress Sir Arthur.

SHIRL

Why's that?

TWO-BOB

He and I have this business arrangement. What's your fee?

SHIRL

What sort of business arrangement?

TWO-BOB

Later. How much?

SHIRL

Depends what you expect.

TWO-BOB

What you're offering?

SHIRL  
Well, what do you want?

TWO-BOB  
Make Sir Arthur happy.

SHIRL  
That'll be triple the normal fee.

TWO-BOB  
Triple!

SHIRL  
He's old enough to have sold peanuts on the ark!

TWO-BOB  
For that amount I'd have to check the merchandise.

TWO-BOB attempts to remove her veil.

SHIRL  
Uh ah, naughty. Vanessa'll spank.

TWO-BOB  
Promise?

SHIRL  
Only if you tell me more about this business arrangement.

TWO-BOB  
Why?

SHIRL  
I just like to know what I'm getting myself into.

TWO-BOB  
All I can say is you do the right thing with Sir Arthur and things go according to plan then you'll be looked after.

SHIRL  
I need to know what's going on between you and Sir Arthur.

The PLAYERS are becoming boisterous. TWO-BOB leads her out by the arm.

TWO-BOB  
You reveal all I'll tell you anything you want to know.

The PLAYERS erupt into Middle Eastern music. JULIAN, unseen appears from under the billiard table. SHIRL erotically dances, removing her dress to reveal scarfs and flimsy underwear. She playfully taunts everyone with the scarfs.

TWO-BOB pushes her towards SIR ARTHUR.

TENT-POLE

Get it off.

PLAYERS

Get it off. Get it off.....

TENT-POLE

Take your bra off.

SHIRL

I've got a headache.

PLAYERS

No!

TWO-BOB unclips her bra but she manages to hold it across her breasts and continue dancing. However, it's obvious she doesn't want to fully strip. The COACH blows his whistle.

TENT-POLE

Umpire's rules. If you don't get it off in time...

PLAYERS

Into the sinbin.

COACH

Play on.

TENT-POLE

With me. Time's up.

The PLAYERS cheer.

TWO-BOB

With Sir Arthur.

TENT-POLE

Hey!

TWO-BOB

You get seven minutes with Sir Arthur in my office.

SIR ARTHUR

Seven minutes!

TWO-BOB attempts to push a reluctant SHIRL towards SIR ARTHUR, who's more than willing to enter the spirit of the moment. TWO-BOB pulls at her bra. The PLAYERS cheer. SHIRL lowers her veil so only TWO-BOB can recognise her. TWO-BOB nearly has a heart attack.

SHIRL

Since the President is so insistent.

SHIRL provocatively pulls SIR ARTHUR towards the office to the cheers of the PLAYERS.

TENT-POLE

I'm next. I'm next.

The PLAYERS line up. TWO-BOB forces himself between SIR ARTHUR and SHIRL.

TWO-BOB

There's been a mistake....

The PLAYERS boo.

SHIRL

Isn't this that what you want?

SIR ARTHUR

Now now, Bob!

TWO-BOB

Um, she doesn't have a licence.

SHIRL

Yes I do.

SIR ARTHUR

I'll be doing the driving.

TWO-BOB

She's illegally in the country.

SHIRL

What!

TWO-BOB

She hasn't got a passport.

SIR ARTHUR

Bob, remember that proposal we were talking about? Wouldn't want to put a spanner in the spokes would you?

SHIRL

Course he wouldn't.

(SHIRL drapes herself over SIR ARTHUR.)

Tell me all about this proposal.

SIR ARTHUR

In the office then.

TWO-BOB

It's Shirl, my missus, just having a bit of a joke.

TWO-BOB removes her veil. The PLAYERS are shocked.

TENT-POLE

Sweetpea.

SIR ARTHUR  
 I thought something was up.  
 (smiling at SHIRL)  
 That's why I went along with it.

TWO-BOB  
 Same here.

SHIRL  
 You're a bastard, Bob. You know that, a dead set  
 bastard.

TWO-BOB  
 Hah, ha, I knew it was you all along.

SHIRL  
 You did not.

TWO-BOB  
 We did so.

TENT-POLE  
 I didn't.

TWO-BOB  
 I knew the moment you walked in.

SHIRL  
 You're a liar.

TWO-BOB  
 You reckon a bloke can't tell his own missus? I  
 was stringing you along. The same as you were  
 doing to me. Fell into your own trap. Good try  
 though.

SHIRL  
 (putting her clothes back on)  
 You're up to no good, Bob.

TWO-BOB  
 Let's get the fairdinkum dinkum show on the road.

TWO-BOB indicates to JULIAN who immediately enters the  
 changerooms, leaving TWO-BOB unsure of what's happening.

SHIRL  
 A beer, Shaky.  
 (to TWO-BOB)  
 What's this proposal between you and whatisname?

TWO-BOB  
 (putting his arm round her shoulder)  
 Shirl...

SHIRL  
 Don't!

SHAKY pours SHIRL a beer.

SIR ARTHUR  
Let me pay for that.

SHIRL  
(to TWO-BOB)  
Well?

TENT-POLE  
Get some more strippers, Bobbie.

TWO-BOB hops on a chair. SHIRL skoals her beer. SHAKY gives her another.

TWO-BOB  
Um. Could I have everyone's attention? Quiet, please!

SHAKY  
(screaming in SIR ARTHUR'S ear)  
Shutup!

There's instant silence.

TWO-BOB  
Moving right along. First let me repeat there aren't any strippers.

TENT-POLE  
What!

There is a genuine moan from the PLAYERS.

TWO-BOB  
We need to focus for Saturday. We've got some fairdinkum entertainment, I hope. Now it'd be a great honour if our distinguished guest read the team out.

COLOMBO claps. TWO-BOB hops down and offers SIR ARTHUR the chair. SIR ARTHUR smiles at SHIRL before moving to the chair. However the COACH moves SIR ARTHUR aside and hops on the chair. SHIRL stares daggers at TWO-BOB before entering the changerooms.

COACH  
I wanta say something. It was no easy task selecting the team.

TENT-POLE  
It's the same every week.

COACH  
I want you to trust me. There's a few things that mightn't make sense but it'll be all worked out Saturday.

(MORE)

COACH (CONT'D)

I want you to know, no matter what the outcome Saturday, I'm proud of what you've achieved. Boys, everyone wrote us off at the beginning of the year, even our supporters...

SHAKY

Hey!

COACH

I don't mean you, Shaky. You're what the club's all about.

(SHAKY beams with pride. SIR ARTHUR smiles at SHAKY)

You're as good a bunch of blokes you'd find anywhere. Now Sir Arthur Synott'll do the honours.

The PLAYERS roar their agreement. The COACH hops down. SIR ARTHUR energetically jumps up. He waits for silence.

SIR ARTHUR

Gentlemen...I'm a moderately successful man... because...Not because I've cut my competitors down...

(he finishes his drink, hands the glass to TWO-BOB)

But because I'm in there...and because...because I follow through. To win you've gotta be in there and you've gotta follow through.

(fisting the air)

Now you're in there but are you going to follow through?

Most of the PLAYERS cheer. SIR ARTHUR smiles like a returned war hero.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Good. Let's see..

He looks at the team sheet. TWO-BOB assists by pointing to the first line but Sir Arthur pulls the sheet away.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

From the back-line, Robinson, Colombo. Well done, Son. Half-backs, The Maggot, Fruit-fly and Tent-Pole. Centre-line, Dunny-Brush. Just like a muster for a rock and roll concert. This is more like it. Smith, and S11?

(shakes his head)

Half-forwards, Half-Shot, Bottle-Top and Virus. Forwards, Bucko, Gunner, and Murray River.

RODENT smashes his fist into the wall. Everyone pretends nothing happened.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

I might add every team needs good back-ups...

TENT-POLE

What about the Grub?

SIR ARTHUR

That brings us to the reserves...

COACH

What about me?

COLOMBO

And the Coach?

TWO-BOB points to more names.

SIR ARTHUR

Right. Followers, Yonnie, Nu and the Coach. And now to the reserves. Is this, Rodent? Yep, Rodent and Grub.

RODENT

A bloke's a fucken mug playing for this team!

COACH

Don't worry, mate.

RODENT

I was at fucken training! I'm in there. I follow through. Where's the principle in that?

COLOMBO

The Grub a reserve?

COACH

Don't worry.

RODENT

You get more chance of getting a bloody game if you don't turn up for training!

COACH

Come on, we agreed Grub has to be in the team.

TWO-BOB

He is.

RODENT

Bugger 'em! It's always the bloody same. Pick their mates every bloody time.

COLOMBO

At least you're on the bench.

RODENT

Who asked you, gherkin?

TENT-POLE

The Grub's a reserve too. That's ri-dic-u-li-ous!

RODENT

What about Murray River? Didn't even train, but still gets a game!

TWO-BOB

I gave him permission. Come on, boys, now we've got a special incentive entertainment show to put on tonight.

RODENT

Stick the show up yer arse!

SIR ARTHUR

Let me tell you a little story...

RODENT

You can stick your story too!

TWO-BOB

Rodent!

RODENT

(limping towards the door)  
Get fucked!

SIR ARTHUR

About a boy who was born with polio.

(Rodent stops)

He could barely walk and all he wanted to do was make the Under Eleven's footy team.

(SIR ARTHUR pauses. RODENT snarls under his breath. TENT-POLE rolls his eyes)

That boy hobbled around the oval night after night in calipers, often when the others had gone home. He couldn't kick or mark...

RODENT

So why didn't they piss him off too?

SIR ARTHUR

Because they could see in that little boy the determination and courage they aspired to themselves. He represented the epitome of what sport is all about. The struggle for self determination, to face the unbelievable odds, to overcome and achieve the best you're capable of. And that team made the grand final, boys. But when it came to choosing the players, did they put him in the team? No, they didn't put him in the team.

RODENT

Course they bloody wouldn't!

SIR ARTHUR

Because the real world, boys, is not based upon sentimentality. To select someone who's not good enough because you feel sorry for him, would have ridiculed what that little boy was all about.

(MORE)

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

They didn't select him. They put him on the bench as a reserve. They showed that little boy they believed in him, that the just rewards are there for those prepared to put in.

RODENT

Am I supposed to be a cripple, am I?

COLOMBO

An emotional cripple.

SIR ARTHUR

Boys, I'd like to tell you that that little boy played in the grand final. But he never, boys.

(pause)

I never got the opportunity to take the field. That's right, boys...

He lifts one foot revealing a caliper.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

You may think I was a loser, but watching my team mates win was the greatest joy of my life. And I say this to you...one and all, player to player, friend to friend...Strive for excellence. Make the most of your opportunities, boys, as I did, for therein lies the meaning of life itself.

TWO-BOB claps loud and nods to the COACH. Half the PLAYERS cheer. SIR ARTHUR tentatively steps down. TWO-BOB hurries to assist. SIR ARTHUR limps to RODENT, holds his hand out, but RODENT brushes past. SHIRL and JULIAN, wearing only a towel and dripping wet, enter from the changerooms.

JULIAN

D'you think we could move the table now? A few more hands over here.

PLAYERS help. RODENT, leaning against the wall, snarls. JULIAN directs the move.

TWO-BOB

Careful, that table's worth a fortune.

SHIRL

My father donated it.

The billiard table is moved revealing porno magazines, Wet Stuff and a dirty hanky.

COACH

Hallo, what's this, Bob? And this?

The COACH lifts the hanky with the tips of his fingers, pretending it's just been used.

TWO-BOB

What's this...Where'd this come from? Shaky?!

SHAKY is horrified at the suggestion.

COACH  
You like a cotton wool on the side, Bob?

SHIRL  
Oh, Bob, you really are something.

The PLAYERS whistle and jeer, none more excited than TENT-POLE who opens a centerfold.

TENT-POLE  
Hey, Coach, has she got a loose groin or what?  
(realising they're his and accusing TWO-BOB)  
You took them from my bag!

COACH  
(throwing the hanky in the air)  
Shit! It has been bloody used!

TWO-BOB  
Don't look at me.

JULIAN shrieks laughing. TENT-POLE collects the magazines and takes them into the changerooms.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
Shaky!

COACH  
Don't blame Shaky.

SHIRL  
I think he's having a mid-life crisis.

TWO-BOB  
I'll get you for this!

SHAKY  
You should see a doctor.

TWO-BOB kicks the Wet Stuff and hanky towards a bin.

TWO-BOB  
One of their practical jokes.  
(SHIRL gives TWO-BOB a disgusting look)  
It's not mine.

SHIRL  
You need help, Bob.

TENT-POLE  
Use your own next time.

TWO-BOB  
Gawd I gave that kinda thing away when I was at school.

JULIAN

(to the COACH)

That's my example of masturbation, opps, sorry, mutation theory.

The Coach smiles.

SIR ARTHUR

(to SHIRL)

Many's the time I've flirted with the imagination of a beautiful woman.

SHIRL

Really? What about your wife?

SIR ARTHUR

Oh, Lady Grace, we're two peas in a pod. She sends me out on the town with my conscience while she stays at home flirting with her imagination.

SHIRL

We need to talk, Bob and I mean talk while your so-called friend's still here.

TWO-BOB

Now now! Get this show on the road.

JULIAN

I'm ready.

TWO-BOB

If it's not up to scratch I'll stop it. I mean it, I will. Show's starting.

(No one takes notice)

Shaky, turn the beer off.

SHAKY

Why should I have to turn it off?

TENT-POLE

What's wrong with having a beer?

TWO-BOB

It's what he wants.

JULIAN

Alright to use your office for a tick?

JULIAN hurries into the office and immediately uses the phone.

TWO-BOB

It's for your own good.

RODENT

Bullshit!

TENT-POLE

What's a bloke supposed to drink?

TWO-BOB

Water.

TENT-POLE

I want a drink, not a wash! Stuff this. If you can't have a beer I'm outa here!

TWO-BOB

Alright, fill your glasses.

The PLAYERS rush the bar. JULIAN returns to check if they're ready.

TENT-POLE

(slapping JULIAN on the back)  
If this Julie's any good he can take Rodent's place.

TENT-POLE playfully pushes RODENT.

RODENT

Piss off, you fool. I wouldn't play with yer stinken team for anything!

COACH

Carn, mate.

RODENT

Don't mate me. I'm not yer mate. Yer mates are these...dogs who suck up yer arse. Mates don't...just bloody dogs, the lot of yer!

TENT-POLE

Carn, mate. I'm not a dog.

RODENT

Dogs...Dogs...

COLOMBO

Settle down, Rodent.

RODENT rips COLOMBO to the midriff sending him to his knees.

SHIRL

Rodent!

TWO-BOB

There's no need for this. Calm down. We'll forget it.

The COACH helps COLOMBO to a chair. TWO-BOB brings a cushion for SIR ARTHUR who sits next to SHIRL. PLAYERS bring three and four beers each. SHAKY stands shot-gun against the closed bar. Everybody's ready. JULIAN centers himself with a theatrical 'hah'.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

What's the hold-up?

JULIAN

(pause)

If I could just say something first? I want to make the point that we're all guinea pigs in the experimental theatre of life.

RODENT

Who're you calling a pig?

COLOMBO

Shut-up, Rodent!

RODENT

He's not coming in here calling us pigs.

SHIRL

Rodent, act your age.

COLOMBO

Don't take any notice of him, mate.

JULIAN

I'm not.

RODENT

What'd you say, Kactus?

JULIAN

I said, I'm not.

RODENT

You having a go are yer?

JULIAN

No I'm not.

RODENT

Because if you were...

JULIAN

You'd what?

RODENT pushes JULIAN hard in the chest sending him towards the door. JULIAN opens the door, looks outside.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Hey, that's my bloody car, you bastard.

(running off)

Come back here, you bastard!

There is an awkward silence.

TENT-POLE

Is that it?

SHAKY

What about the raffle?

TWO-BOB

Alright, where's the tickets?

SHAKY holds a plastic bucket of tickets. TWO-BOB grabs the bucket, indicates for SIR ARTHUR to draw the raffle but he's preoccupied with checking his own tickets.

TENT-POLE

Get the chick to draw it.

The PLAYERS roar their approval. SHIRL quickly removes a ticket from the bucket but has difficulty reading it.

TENT-POLE (CONT'D)

Get it off.

The PLAYERS cheer. TWO-BOB angrily attempts to grab the ticket. She playfully keeps it from him.

TWO-BOB

That's why I didn't want sheilas here tonight.  
Now give's the ticket.

Instead of handing TWO-BOB the ticket she reads it.

SHIRL

Rodent.

SIR ARTHUR

Bugger!

RODENT

Stick it up your arse!

TWO-BOB

Draw it again.

SIR ARTHUR

Yes.

SHIRL

No. He won it. It's his.

TENT-POLE

Get the gear off, Sweet-pea. Get it off.

The PLAYERS and SIR ARTHUR clap. TENT-POLE removes his top. SHIRL ignores them. JULIAN stumbles in, giving the impression he's been assaulted. COLOMBO hurries to him.

COLOMBO

What happened?

JULIAN

Outside...three of them.

COLOMBO races outside. JULIAN groans, sinking to the floor.  
SHIRL assists him.

JULIAN (CONT'D)  
Flaky...Flaky...

TWO-BOB  
(to SHAKY)  
Get the first aid kit.

JULIAN  
Flaky?

SHAKY  
What d'you want, Son?

COACH  
He wants a beer.

SHAKY  
(pointing at TWO-BOB)  
See him. He turned it off!

TWO-BOB  
Get the bloody kit!

TENT-POLE  
It was that arsehole from St Ignatius. I know where  
he lives.

RODENT  
If he got a bash he would've deserved it.

COLOMBO returns indicating he couldn't see anyone.

JULIAN  
Other side of the oval.

COLOMBO  
Oh. Right.

TENT-POLE  
Let's go round and burn his house down!

COLOMBO runs off. JULIAN winks to the PLAYERS.

JULIAN  
That's one way to get rid of the coppers, eh?  
The PLAYERS laugh.

SIR ARTHUR  
I thought so.

TENT-POLE  
Dickhead!

JULIAN

(to TENT-POLE)

That's a lovely nose you've got there, Schaffer Snout.

COACH

(shrieking with laughter)

Schaffer Snout. It's not his nose that's big.

JULIAN mimes starting a chainsaw, complete with sound effects. Suddenly the chainsaw goes berserk, aggressively chopping TENT-POLE between the legs and groin. TENT-POLE nearly hits the roof. The PLAYERS are totally bemused by JULIAN.

JULIAN

(to TENT-POLE)

Aahhhh, possum, never mind. I knew a bloke once who got his whole head blown off and never said a word.

(PLAYERS groan)

Except...

(mimes orgasm)

...ooooough...ooooough...It's only the pain that's hurting. It'll be right when the pain goes.

(JULIAN exaggeratedly climaxes, then suddenly turns on RODENT)

You havin' a go, are yer? Eh? Are yer?

(RODENT, caught unawares, is speechless)

Because if yer are...Hey, Coach?

(as the COACH)

What d'you want, Ratsak?

TENT-POLE

(shrieking with laughter)

Ratsak!

JULIAN

(as RODENT)

I'm stuffed, mate. I'm calling it a night.

COACH

That'd be right.

JULIAN

(as the COACH)

What about the sprints, Ratsak?

(as RODENT)

Stuff the sprints!

(as the COACH)

Listen, Ratsak, I'm gonna tell yer something only yer mother'd tell yer.

TENT-POLE

Ratsak hasn't got a mother. He sold her to the Chows for a dollar-fifty a kilo, didn't yer, mate?

TENT-POLE deftly evades RODENT'S backhander.

JULIAN

(as RODENT)  
I've got more dash than you'll ever have. Ask these knuckle heads who they'd rather do a bust with.

The phone rings.

JOEY/JULIAN

Phone. Answer the bloody phone!

TWO-BOB

(to SHAKY)  
Answer the bloody thing.

SHAKY ignores him. TWO-BOB hurries to the phone and answers it.

JULIAN

Answer the phone. Who dat? Who dat dere?

TENT-POLE

Someone throw it a peanut.

JULIAN

I wish I knew you when I was twenty-one, Schaffer Snout.

TENT-POLE

Why's that, Dickhead?

JULIAN

Because then I could've held me twenty-first up your nose.

The AUDIENCE laugh. JULIAN erupts into Nick Cave's *Big Black Cloud* accompanied by a maniacal improvised dance that could have been choreographed by Michael Jackson on crack. TWO-BOB returns and is nearly bowled over by JULIAN who deftly removes TWO-BOB'S wallet without TWO-BOB noticing. Suddenly the front door opens and DOREEN, mobile phone in hand, bursts in. JULIAN melodramatically recoils at her entrance and goes into a strait jacket impersonation of a madman.

DOREEN

(to TENT-POLE)  
Bastard! I wanta see you. Now!  
(to TWO-BOB)  
You liar!

RODENT

Doreen. What's doing, spunk?  
(She ignores RODENT and glares at TENT-POLE)  
Get yer gear off, spunk.

DOREEN

Shut yer trap, Ratface. Tent-Pole, I wanta see you! I mean it!

(TENT-POLE refuses to budge)

You don't and I'll stack on the best blue you've ever seen!

TWO-BOB

You'd better see what she wants.

TENT-POLE reluctantly follows DOREEN outside.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Shaky, shut the bloody door.

(SHAKY doesn't move)

Shut the bloody door!

SHAKY

(reluctantly closing the door)

Why's it always my fault?

JULIAN

Guess who? There's a prize for the first to get it right.

(as TWO-BOB)

The day I started on the trucks Flaky took me under his wing. When I was struggling to keep up it was Flaky who told me, "Son, Being out in the cold means you've gotta move twice as fast to keep warm." So I moved as fast as I could, off the bloody streets and into a cushy job, with my own personal slave.

JULIAN sits and puts his feet on the pie warmer.

SHAKY

I wonder who, Bob.

THE COACH

Right on.

TWO-BOB angrily shakes his head.

JULIAN

First prize goes to Flaky.

(to SHAKY, as TWO-BOB)

Every organisation has a Flaky. He's the boots, the bloke who does the jobs nobody wants to do.

Sweep the streets, clean the dunnies, hoses down the trucks.

RODENT

What d'you reckon we do?

JULIAN

As a measure of the true appreciation we hold you in and at no great expense to the nation, I want you to accept this on behalf of me, myself and I.

JULIAN removes one hundred bucks from TWO-BOB'S wallet and gives it to SHAKY. The PLAYERS clap.

SHAKY  
Drinks on me, after the show.

The PLAYERS cheer.

TWO-BOB  
(to JULIAN)  
Don't think you're getting reimbursed, because you're not.

JULIAN  
(tossing TWO-BOB his wallet)  
No worries, Boss.

TENT-POLE returns, DOREEN follows. JULIAN plays the 'straight jacket'. TWO-BOB, realising the money was his, angrily goes to SHAKY.

TWO-BOB  
Give's it!

SHAKY  
(pointing to JULIAN)  
See him. Not me.

TWO-BOB  
(to JULIAN)  
That's my money, you idiot!

SHIRL  
Sit down, Bob!

DOREEN  
I never ask for much. You could at least come home. You think more of your bloody mates than me! Anyone'd think yer were bloody on with them.  
(Glaring at JULIAN)  
Perverts the lot of you. Aren't you ashamed of yourselves?  
(TENT-POLE touches her arm. She jerks away)  
No I won't shut-up! I don't give a stuff what they think. They're all treacherous snakes.  
(TENT-POLE implores her to stop)  
Why should I?

TENT-POLE  
(whispering)  
Please...

COLOMBO returns.

DOREEN  
Am I embarrassing you am I? They're not your mates.

(MORE)

DOREEN (CONT'D)

Why d'you think I don't wanta come up here after matches? Because I'm sick of them trying to get up me behind your back! That's changed your attitude, hasn't it? Oh I could tell you some stories, couldn't I, Ratface?

(to SHIRL)

Are you the next act, are you?

TWO-BOB

Now that's enough!

DOREEN

Boy, are you in for a surprise.

SHIRL

Let her speak.

DOREEN

Have you ever had your boyfriend's so-called mates trying to put the hard word on you? Have you?

RODENT

Fucken bullshit!

DOREEN

(to COLOMBO)

And I've got the scars to prove it, haven't I?

She attempts to show her scars but TENT-POLE prevents her.

TWO-BOB

I think you've said enough, Doreen.

DOREEN

And you! You sick lizard! Drop by my office for some counselling. As if.

TWO-BOB

Is that the phone?

JULIAN

Phone, answer the phone.

TWO-BOB quickly enters his office.

DOREEN

I could tell you a few things about that bastard! If you only knew what he was really like!

TENT-POLE grabs her round the waist and drags her out.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

Let me go! Let me bloody go!

SHIRL glares at COLOMBO.

COLOMBO

It's a domestic. If we got involved in every domestic that's all we'd be doing.

JULIAN continues the Nick Cave song and dance.

DOREEN (O.S.)

Don't go back, Tent-Pole. Please.

TENT-POLE returns, followed by DOREEN. TENT-POLE calmly takes his seat and skoals a beer. DOREEN throws her cigarettes at TENT-POLE.

DOREEN (CONT'D)

You bastards! You're all bloody back-doorers. Back-door your own mates!

DOREEN runs off.

JULIAN

The famous Aussie backdoorer. Every club has their own champion.

(grabs a full garbage bag from outside the door)

And tonight we have a special door prize for the first one to guess who the great St Joey's backdoorer is. Okay? Clue number one. It's 1975 and there's this bloke. We'll call him Truth. He runs a rubbish tip in Canberra. Only he doesn't charge people to dump their rubbish. Clue number two. This gets up the nose of the Big Man. He's a devious hoon, cunning as the bandicoot on the burnt ridge. He want to undermine Truth, get access to his tip and charge everyone. But Truth's not interested. Clue number three. So the Big Man has a nag to Truth's best mate, The Liar. "Liar, this Truth coote's really a wolf in sheeps' clothes. Deep down he wants to be one of us. You reveal him for the hypocrite he is and I'll make it worth your wile." Next day Truth and Liar go swimming in the river. Liar gets out first and dresses in Truth's clothes. This is what the Big Man wants because it means Truth'll have to put on Liar's clothes. But when Truth gets out and sees what Liar's done he's unwilling to become a hypocrite by putting on Liar's clothes.

JULIAN puts the garbage bag in front of SIR ARTHUR.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

So, Sir Arthur, you get the first go. For the contents of this bag who is St Joey's number one back doorer?

SIR ARTHUR

What's your point?

JULIAN

Well, Sir Arthur, the point is Liar betrayed his mate, didn't he?

SIR ARTHUR

So? What's the point?

JULIAN

The point is, Sir Arthur, there are so many people in false clothes these days, so many bloody hypocrites, you don't know who to trust anymore. Like you!

JULIAN whips his towel off revealing pink jocks with BACKDOOR written on the bum. He throws the towel in SIR ARTHUR's face.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

Sometimes you've got to be naked to make your point. Don't you, Sixpence?

JULIAN erupts into his mad dance in front of TWO-BOB.

COACH

Good one.

SIR ARTHUR

(standing and confronting JULIAN)  
Solution's simple, Son. When you're dealing with hypocrites you do what we did in seventy-five. You leave it in the hands of the umpire. In 1975, Son, Sir John Kerr made the decision and the whole nation cheered.

JULIAN

Let me tell you the five most worthless things in the world, Arthur. The Pope's knackers and three cheers for the umpires.

TWO-BOB

((pushing JULIAN violently towards the door)  
Right, that's it! We're not putting up with this smut! The show's over!

JULIAN

We haven't solved the riddle yet, Sixpence.

TWO-BOB

Get out? G'on, get out! Out now!

SHIRL

Oh, Bob, it's only a show. It's satire.

TENT-POLE

And you're not getting paid one cent, you shit stirrer!

JULIAN evades TWO-BOB, grabs the garbage bag and scons TWO-BOB with it. The AUDIENCE is suspended between disbelief and amazement as TWO-BOB hits the deck. JULIAN empties the garbage over him.

JULIAN  
The great Aussi back-doorer. Aussi, Aussi, Aussi.

COACH  
Oi, oi, oi.

TWO-BOB  
(staggering up)  
If you wanta get out of here alive you'll clean every bit of this up, you commie bastard!

JULIAN  
I'm on strike, Sixpence.

SIR ARTHUR  
(hurrying to the toilet)  
I think I've got food poisoning.

JULIAN  
Arthur, don't forget to wash your hands.

TWO-BOB  
(shaping up to JULIAN)  
Let's give it to this bastard!

RODENT  
Good one!

JULIAN  
The show's not over till the fat lady sings.

JULIAN adopts an exaggerated karate stance. Suddenly the door opens. The GRUB enters and stands between JULIAN and TWO-BOB.

TWO-BOB  
(checking for SIR ARTHUR)  
We don't want any trouble, Grub. We've had a good night, except for this idiot.

GRUB rummages his foot through the rubbish.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
(to JULIAN)  
You're gone!

JULIAN  
Anytime, Sixpence.

JULIAN does a series of kick-boxing exercises. TWO-BOB backs away.

GRUB  
Expensive tastes.

TWO-BOB  
I mean it, Grub.  
(SHAKY brings Grub a beer)  
You'd better of paid for that!

GRUB winks at SHAKY who returns to the bar. He toe-pokes a soiled nappy partly wrapped in plastic.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
Typical! The bloody me-generation. Get rid of this mess!

SHAKY  
You're the garbo.

GRUB  
Amazing what you find in people's rubbish.

TWO-BOB looks closer, realises it's his.

TWO-BOB  
What...! How did this...?  
(to JULIAN)  
I'll get you for this! You broke in, didn't you, you bastard?

TWO-BOB lunges towards JULIAN but GRUB pushes TWO-BOB away.

GRUB  
He didn't break in, Bob.

TWO-BOB  
Who did? You did?

SHIRL picks up an empty packet of condoms.

SHIRL  
Where'd these come from?

TWO-BOB  
I don't use those!  
(GRUB smiles)  
Hah! If you reckon...Hah! Bullshit! She'd never.  
(to JULIAN)  
Where did they come from?  
(to GRUB)  
Where were the two of you this afternoon? I'll kill you!

TWO-BOB goes for GRUB. The COACH grabs him.

COACH  
Settle down, mate.

TWO-BOB

(to GRUB)

I will you bastard! That's a promise!

(GRUB picks up a crumpled letter)

That wasn't in..! You took that from my desk, you bastard.

TWO-BOB attempts to grab the letter but GRUB side-steps. GRUB unfolds the letter.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

You bloody conspirators. I'll kill you both! You and the so-called actor!

SHIRL

Act your age, Bob!

GRUB

What would you be doing writing confidential letters to Sir Maurice Townsend?

TWO-BOB attempts to manoeuvre GRUB into his office but GRUB refuses to budge.

TWO-BOB

I can explain everything.

GRUB

If they knew you were conniving behind their backs they'd string you up.

TWO-BOB

You had no right breaking into my office.

SHIRL

He didn't break into your office, Bob. I gave it to Julian.

(TWO-BOB looks at her disbelievingly)

These're your friends, Bob. Your only friends. They'd do anything for you...because they trust you. I've known these boys all their lives and while some of them may be a little troublesome they're basically decent. If I was in trouble, Bob I'd only have to ask and they'd be there. Can you say the same thing about the people who're now trying to take their jobs?

TWO-BOB

You've got it all wrong.

GRUB

Does your mate Synott know about this?

TWO-BOB

He wouldn't know if you were up him. That letter was just a ploy. Any fool can see that.

GRUB

A ploy?

(reading the letter)

It's safe to assume the workers will strike indefinitely...Sir Arthur Synott has outlined your position to me....Blah, blah, blah...You can look forward to my total cooperation...

(the PLAYERS murmur their disapproval)

This looks more like a job application to me.

COACH

Did you write that?

TWO-BOB

I never intended sending it.

COACH

Did you write it?

TWO-BOB

It was a contingency plan. A drawing board strategy.

The COACH exits to the changerooms.

GRUB

Bullshit!

TWO-BOB

Churchill did it all the time. If it'd been anything else it would of been sent.

GRUB

You haven't finished it.

The PLAYERS, one by one, exit to the changerooms. JULIAN sits meditating in the lotus position. SHIRL drinks at the bar.

TWO-BOB

I can prove it. I can. Listen. I've been setting Synott up for the twine. After you stormed off I said to myself, Grub's no fool. I got on the blower and conned Synott into coming down. He thinks I don't know who Maurie, Sir Maurice is. That's how stupid he is. I got him here so I can snip him to use his influence on the Council to rebuild the clubrooms. That's dead set. Someone had to do something. Look at the money I've put in out of my own kick. Gawd on powerpoints alone. The letter was part of a sting on the capitalist swines so the Council'll think we've got powerful industrialists on side then they'll do anything to get us back to work. I learned that from a bloke called Machiavelli. You should read him, Grub.

GRUB

If you weren't so dangerous you'd be funny.

TWO-BOB

You reckon I want us to stay on strike?

(GRUB just laughs and shakes his head)

You're wrong, Grub. I didn't tell anybody because I didn't know who to trust.

(speaking so the others can't hear)

I thought we had a mole. I planned everything from the start. I let them think they had us over a barrel. Then bang, we surprise the bastards by returning to work first thing Monday.

GRUB

Why not tomorrow?

TWO-BOB

Um,

(quietly, so SHIRL can't hear)

I've got medical tests tomorrow. Keep it to yourself. It could be Jimmy Dancer. Even Shirl doesn't know. Anyway, that way we stick it up the fat cats. Synott, I mean Maurie, Maurice or whatever his name is. He'll be caught with his pants down. I couldn't let the boys know. You know what Rodent and Tent-Pole're like. They're walking ulcers.

GRUB

I don't trust you.

TWO-BOB

I swear on my kid's life.

(to SHIRL)

It is my kid isn't it? Just kidding.

GRUB

(handing TWO-BOB a form)

Sign it.

TWO-BOB

I'm not resigning!

SHIRL

Oh yes you are.

GRUB

(waving the letter)

Then this goes to the press.

TWO-BOB

I'll deny it. Say you fabricated it.

SHIRL

If you don't resign, Bob, you'd better hope your mate Arthur's got a spare room because you certainly won't be coming home with me.

TWO-BOB

You're a dead set swine, Grub.

He signs the document but GRUB refuses to release the letter.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

I want that letter.

GRUB snatches the document.

GRUB

(to JULIAN)

You witnessed this too, Julian.

JULIAN smiles and nods.

TWO-BOB

What's that ratbag got to do with it?

GRUB

Didn't you know? Julian works for the ACTU.

JULIAN

(still in the lotus position)

Writer-in-Residence. I'm on an Australia Council grant. I reckon we're on to a winner here, Bob, with this after training stuff. You get Arthur to put in a good work. I'll have a nag to Maurie. They'll throw money at us. Do the club circuit. We can call it Backdoor Theatre.

TWO-BOB

Piss off!

JULIAN grabs his bag of tricks and enters the changerooms. SHIRL enters the toilets.

GRUB

A little birdie told me I was on the bench Saturday.

TWO-BOB

We only put you on the bench so  
(quietly)

Rodent wouldn't spit the dummy. You know what a sook he is. Come into the office.

(GRUB follows TWO-BOB into the office)

I told the Coach it was stupid. But he's the boss, so to speak. Naturally you're in. The Coach is weak as piss. If you're interested in the coaching job for next year...

GRUB

A couple of years ago, Bob, you'd never of done this.

TENT-POLE enters the toilets.

TWO-BOB

It's a different ball game now, Grub. No one's got principles anymore.

(MORE)

## TWO-BOB (CONT'D)

Everyone's trying to keep one step ahead. You know for one moment there you and that actor had me worried. I know it happens to other blokes, Grub, but I can honestly say I trust Shirl with my life. Some people's missus get up to anything. Their old man's left for work and their best mate's straight in the back door. Gawd the number of times I've turned it down. Not Shirl. Keep this to yourself, Grub but I've had a bit of trouble lately, you know, getting it up, you know. Pressure of the strike likely. Accounts probably for some of the silly things I've done. We never had a chance to talk. Really talk. Do you ever dream, Grub? Of what it could be like? I do. All the time. I create this wonderful oasis where there's no garbage, no corrupt Council to deal with. You'd love it there, Grub. You would. But in the real world, in the traffic of everybody's nightmare, it doesn't matter what I do. I always end up carrying the can. I do, Grub. You've no idea what it's like. What no one knows or even cares about are the little things people chuck in the can. I'm not complaining. That's my burden. Is that what you wanta end up doing, Grub? Carrying the can? Because it's a lonely journey, cleaning up after people.

GRUB hands TWO-BOB the letter. He tears it into little pieces.

## GRUB

The condoms, Bob, they weren't Shirl's. I haven't been up her. Nobody has.

## TWO-BOB

One small favour? Sir Arthur, don't have a go at him? I might need him when it comes to rebuilding the clubrooms.

TENT-POLE SHIRL exit the toilets. The PLAYERS exit the changerooms.

## SHIRL

Tent-Pole, I'm not interested.

## TENT-POLE

What's say I take you home?

## SHIRL

I'm married.

## TENT-POLE

I can cope with that if you can. Give's your phone number. I'll give you a ring.

## SHIRL

Over here.

TENT-POLE eagerly follows he to a corner of the room. She whispers seductively.

SHIRL (CONT'D)  
Promise you won't tell anyone.

TENT-POLE  
My lips are sealed, Danielle.

SHIRL  
This is for you.

TENT-POLE  
What is?

SHIRL  
It's called the Fitzroy Knockout.

TENT-POLE  
What's that?

SHIRL kicks TENT-POLE in the shins and as he doubles over she hits him under the chin with the butt of her hand. TENT-POLE hits the deck and remains face down, bum up, as SHIRL walks away.

SHIRL  
A beer thankyou, Shaky.

The PLAYERS cheer. SIR ARTHUR enters tucking his trousers in and heads for the bar. TWO-BOB hurries to him.

TWO-BOB  
Sir Arthur, I thought you'd gone.

SIR ARTHUR  
Just straining the potatoes, my boy.

GRUB  
So you're Synott?

SIR ARTHUR ignores the GRUB, orders over the top of him.

SIR ARTHUR  
A large Kentucky and give the lovely Shirly whatever she wants.

SHIRL  
I'm right.

SIR ARTHUR  
(aside to SHIRL)  
What's say we sneak up to the Windsor for a quite liqueur?

SHIRL  
And what about Lady Grace?

SIR ARTHUR  
Off somewhere floating in the Bahamas.

TWO-BOB  
I was just about to introduce you two. Sir Arthur,  
this here's the Grub, our Shop Steward.

SIR ARTHUR moves his neck from side to side as would a  
fighter preparing to fight.

TWO-BOB (CONT'D)  
Grub, this is Sir Arthur who...

GRUB  
I know who he is!

TWO-BOB  
Grub and I have just negotiated an amicable  
agreement...

GRUB  
You've got shares in Waste Management Incorporated,  
haven't you? You and Townsend.

SIR ARTHUR  
Ah yes, Slug, the swimming pool communist, isn't  
it?

TWO-BOB  
...an amicable agreement that will benefit us all.

SIR ARTHUR clutches his chest. TWO-BOB grabs him but SIR  
ARTHUR pushes him away.

SIR ARTHUR  
It's just an old war wound.

TWO-BOB gives him his drink. SIR ARTHUR downs it and clicks  
his fingers for another. GRUB laughs.

GRUB  
You're not in the members bar now, Pop.

SIR ARTHUR  
And who're you, China? The self-appointed tribunal  
in all it's glory?

GRUB  
Your mate, Townsend, once had a file on me.  
Called it, Shovel One.

SIR ARTHUR  
Oh yeah, you're the codger who thinks it's always  
his free kick.

GRUB  
I could bury you.

SIR ARTHUR

I've been to clubrooms like these before, China. I know the difference between the back bar and the member's bar. While it may be your territory, China, it's only a back bar to me.

GRUB

You wanta try the common sense bar, Pop.

SIR ARTHUR

(breasting the GRUB)

I've dealt with your type all my life. Typical trouble maker. Never solved a problem and wouldn't know how to. You hold your friends and community to ransom. You disorder your own game so our members say come and play with us. Because that's what you want, isn't it? You really want to be one of us. Well that's not how it is in the big world, China. In that world I'm the bloke who calls the shots and you and all your manifestos'll never change that. In that world you're a nobody. You're the one who wants to watch himself, China.

GRUB

In my world, Pop, we're all one big team.

TWO-BOB tugs SIR ARTHUR'S coat but SIR ARTHUR pulls away.

SIR ARTHUR

Dynamic atrophy I call it. Iron indecision in the commie outer. You can't accept the umpire's decision so your self-serving antics become a blueprint for anarchy.

GRUB

The only time I don't accept the umpire's decision is when he's in the pocket of arseholes like you. It's idiots who blindly accept it that keep you arseholes in power.

SIR ARTHUR

I couldn't put it better myself, China.

GRUB

I have a solution for arseholes like you, Pop. We replace him and if the replacement's no good we replace him. Pretty soon no one wants to be an arsehole.

SIR ARTHUR

Fascism.

GRUB

Democracy. Pass it on to Townsend.

GRUB hits SIR ARTHUR hard in the chest. It causes SIR ARTHUR to spasm. SIR ARTHUR steps back and retucks his shirt into his pants.

SIR ARTHUR

Ha, ha, China. Even at your age you remind me of my first boss, Clarrie. He was a commie upstart who spent his life preaching to empty rooms too....But he was a good man. He was, Bob. And he'd been a shop steward.

GRUB

Undermine him too, did you?

SIR ARTHUR

He was going to change the world. Come on, he said. We'll confront the bosses head on. He led a group of us scruffy dockers who were on strike into the Windsor.

GRUB

You, a docker? Hah.

SIR ARTHUR

That's right, China. I started on the docks.

That's made you think, hasn't it?

(TO TWO-BOB)

What we weren't going to do to the bosses was no one's business.

(SIR ARTHUR relishes the moment)

Clarrie was going to show us we were no different from the bosses. Pot of tea, my good man, he ordered loudly. The Head Waiter laughed at him in the ill-fitting suit he wore to funerals and baptisms. "Don't just stand there, Waiter," he proudly demanded. "Bring forth the caviar." But you see, comrade, the silly old bastard, in his haste to lead the charge, had lead us into the back bar instead of the member's bar. And in the back bar, China...

(SIR ARTHUR looks around to make his point)

...you don't get caviar. In the back bar you get cold pies.

(SIR ARTHUR slaps the bar with an open hand)

From that day forward I decided to learn all the routes to the front bars and if I intended ordering something I sure as hell made certain it was on the bloody menu. So don't waste your time giving me directions to the back bar. Spend your time on something worthwhile like studying the blueprint before you start smashing the building.

GRUB watches SIR ARTHUR tremble as he tilts the glass to finish his drink. GRUB turns to leave.

SIR ARTHUR

And another thing, China. When it comes to getting rid of someone let me give you some advice.

(MORE)

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

If we're going to do it we don't talk about it. We do it. That's the difference between you and us. Now if you'll excuse me I have to check the score.

The COACH prevents GRUB from reacting. SIR ARTHUR puts his glass on the counter for a refill.

RODENT

Where's the party?

TENT-POLE

Don't forget them exercises, Danielle.

RODENT

(to SHIRL)

Let's go to a party.

SHIRL

Who'll be there?

RODENT

(winking to TENT-POLE)

About fourteen.

SHIRL

Who, you me and a dozen bottles?

RODENT moves behind SHIRL. He sexually gestures his hips. TENT-POLE grins.

SIR ARTHUR

Rodent, isn't it?

(RODENT grins)

My advice to anyone who wants to succeed, Rodent and that includes with women, is arse glue.

(RODENT and the others look confused)

Glue your arse to the job.

They laugh at RODENT. TENT-POLE, who's mouth is in perpetual motion, nods agreement to SHIRL.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

But it might be difficult if your tail keeps getting in the way.

RODENT

What'd you say?

SIR ARTHUR

I said how do you expect to beat your opponent if you play from behind?

COACH

He's got you there, Ratsak.

TENT-POLE

(slapping SIR ARTHUR hard on the back)

Good one, Arthur.

GRUB  
 (handing SHIRL a pill)  
 Slip this into Bob's beer.

SHIRL  
 What is it?

GRUB  
 Viagra.

SHIRL shrieks laughing and puts it in TWO-BOB's beer at the first opportunity. JULIAN enters from the changerooms, ready to leave.

SHAKY  
 Sorry, but there was nothing in the hat.

JULIAN  
 That's show biz.

RODENT  
 Right wack!

SHAKY puts some coins in the hat from his pocket.

SHAKY  
 What would you know about putting in, Rodent?  
 You're nothing more than a winger. Being part of a team's what it's all about.

RODENT  
 Get stuffed!

COACH  
 Don't tell Shaky to get stuffed!

RODENT  
 I'll tell whoever I like to get stuffed!

COACH  
 You tell Shaky to get stuffed and you're telling me to get stuffed!

RODENT  
 Then you can both get stuffed!

Suddenly SHAKY pushes RODENT in the back crashing him into TWO-BOB.

SHAKY  
 What'd you hit me for?

RODENT  
 Right, asshole!

SHAKY shapes up to RODENT.

SHAKY

I'm not scared of you.

Before RODENT can attack SHAKY, the COACH lunges at RODENT. They fall to the ground wrestling. JULIAN erupts into a theatrical one-man fighting show. PLAYERS scatter. COLOMBO grabs RODENT. TENT-POLE holds the COACH. GRUB continues drinking at the bar.

RODENT

Let go, arseholes!

The COACH breaks free and smashes RODENT in the face. TENT-POLE grabs the COACH. RODENT struggles with COLOMBO.

RODENT (CONT'D)

Don't hold me in a fight yer dogs!

RODENT pulls free and hits COLOMBO in the guts, sending him to the floor.

TWO-BOB

Settle down. Come on. There's no need for this.  
It's stupid.

RODENT charges the COACH and accidentally crashes SIR ARTHUR arse over tit. The COACH clocks RODENT with a perfect straight left, putting him down. RODENT jumps up, pulls a knife. Everyone scatters. GRUB calmly watches from the bar.

RODENT

Come on, big man. Let's see how much go you've got now.

THE COACH

(stalking RODENT who continually jabs the knife)

Come on, Rat-Face.

SIR ARTHUR

Stiffen the little rat!

RODENT

You're next!

(turning on SIR ARTHUR)

In fact I'll give it to you first!

RODENT lunges at SIR ARTHUR who, terrified, looks for TWO-BOB then backs along the wall. TWO-BOB moves to RODENT but instantly retreats when RODENT points the knife at him. TENT-POLE swings frenzied fresh-air punches everywhere.

TENT-POLE

I'm with you, Rodent. We'll smash them all.

JULIAN jabs TENT-POLE in the solar plexus. Winded, RODENT drops to the floor.

COLOMBO  
 (staggering up)  
 I'm calling for back-up.

RODENT advances on SIR ARTHUR who immediately steps behind COLOMBO.

SIR ARTHUR  
 Arrest him! I want him arrested.

COLOMBO  
 What for?

SIR ARTHUR  
 Attempted murder!

COLOMBO, about to vomit, races into the toilets.

RODENT  
 (advancing on SIR ARTHUR)  
 Right.

GRUB jumps between them.

GRUB  
 You oughta be saving this for the opposition. You can do this to each other any time.

RODENT  
 Piss off, Grub.

GRUB  
 It's no victory to stab someone.

RODENT  
 Stop trying to big note, Grub. It's not your blue.

SIR ARTHUR  
 Why don't you wake up to yourself?

RODENT  
 You're gone, Granddad!

GRUB  
 Your're frustrated. We've been on strike too long.

RODENT  
 Bullshit! Fuck him!

TENT-POLE  
 (still spluttering on the floor)  
 Fuck him..!

GRUB  
 You stab him, then what? Spend the rest of your life in prison.

RODENT  
I'm not scared of prison.

GRUB  
He's an old man who everyone despises.

RODENT  
He just stuck it up you, didn't he?

GRUB  
You disappoint me, Rodent. You had more credibility when you smashed that umpire.

RODENT  
I told you. I never touched the bastard.

GRUB  
I was there, mate. Put it away. Saturday's too important.

RODENT  
Fuck the game! Now get out of the way!

SHAKY moves GRUB aside.

SHAKY  
Only squibs and idiots play from behind, Rodent. If you've got that in your make-up then piss off now and we'll go out there with one less and still win. No one's indispensable. This is a team game. Work out what you wanta be, Rodent  
(turning his back on RODENT)  
and it'd better not be a squib. Now I haven't got much money.

SHAKY takes all the money from his pocket, including TWO-BOB's hundred, and wacks it on the bar in front of TWO-BOB.

SHAKY (CONT'D)  
In fact this is everything I own in the world. But come Saturday I want you to bet every cent of it on you lads to win.

There is silence as RODENT puts the knife away. SHAKY pats GRUB on the back.

SHAKY (CONT'D)  
You're a good man, Grub.

TWO-BOB pockets the money.

GRUB  
Now Two-Bob's got an announcement. Haven't you, Bob?

TWO-BOB looks at SIR ARTHUR.

TWO-BOB  
 (shaking his head)  
 I don't think so. I've reconsidered.

SHIRL  
 This'll be the most important decision you ever  
 make, Bob.

TWO-BOB  
 What I meant was I don't think I can continue as  
 Union Secretary so I'm resigning and handing it  
 over to Grub.

SHIRL  
 Good.

GRUB  
 All in favour?  
 (the GARBOS put their hands up)  
 Then I move we return to work tomorrow morning.

TENT-POLE  
 (attempting to put his hand up)  
 B...bloody oath.

TWO-BOB  
 Monday.

GRUB  
 Tomorrow. All those in favour?

TWO-BOB  
 Hang on!

SHIRL elbows TWO-BOB. The GARBOS put their hands up.

GRUB  
 Unanimous.  
 (GRUB turns on SIR ARTHUR)  
 I want your guarantee if a merger eventuates no one  
 here loses their job.

SIR ARTHUR  
 You must be joking! Employ this rabble!

GRUB  
 He's all yours, Ratsak.

RODENT pulls his knife. DOREEN enters and screams. RODENT  
 howls like a wolf and charges SIR ARTHUR who jumps behind  
 GRUB.

SIR ARTHUR  
 Okay, okay. You have my word. If there's a merger,  
 which is now highly unlikely, I promise you'll keep  
 your jobs, even Ratsak.

RODENT puts the knife away.

GRUB  
You all witnessed that.

DOREEN stands alone, sombre. SIR ARTHUR holds his hand out to her.

SIR ARTHUR  
Sir Arthur.  
(DOREEN doesn't respond)  
Can I get you a drink?

JOEY  
The P..resident's a prick. The P...President's a  
prick.

SIR ARTHUR  
I love that bird, Bob. I want it for my board  
room. How much?

TWO-BOB hesitates. The PLAYERS are concerned.

TWO-BOB  
It's not for sale.

SHIRL hugs TWO-BOB.

COACH  
Come on, boys. We've gotta stick together.

COLOMBO  
That's right.

TENT-POLE  
(to DOREEN)  
We've gotta stick together, okay?

SIR ARTHUR skoals his drink. TENT-POLE slaps him on the back.

TENT-POLE (CONT'D)  
You're alright, Arthur.

SIR ARTHUR  
And what about you, Snout? You gonna be there?

TENT-POLE  
Where?

SIR ARTHUR  
Saturday, Snout.  
(thumping his chest)  
Are you gonna be there?

TENT-POLE  
Course I am. Are you?

SIR ARTHUR  
Are you gonna rip into them like the ANZAC's?

TENT-POLE

The who?

SIR ARTHUR

Are you, Snout? Are you gonna bloody rip into them?  
Or are you just a big bag of wind?

Suddenly TENT-POLE charges, head butting the locker. SIR ARTHUR gulps. TENT-POLE staggers round semi-conscious. DOREEN runs to him.

SIR ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Good, that was good, Snout.

(to the others)

Have a hard look at yourselves. Some of you lads haven't even had your first bloody root!

COACH

Take it easy, Pop.

SIR ARTHUR

I want you to think you're chasing your first root on Saturday.

TENT-POLE

(mumbling)

First root...

TWO-BOB

(SHIRL and TWO-BOB exit, arm in arm)

Bloody oath. First root.

SIR ARTHUR

That's what football'll do for you, make a man of you. Are you gonna show them you're men on Saturday?

(on one answers)

Course you are.

TENT-POLE

We're gonna chase our first root?

SIR ARTHUR

I never gave an inch when I was playing. That's what you've gotta do. Because on Saturday you're all bosses. What're you?

TENT-POLE

Bloody bosses...

SIR ARTHUR

(to the COACH)

Why? Why are you bosses? Do you know?

TENT-POLE

Why are we bosses?

SIR ARTHUR  
Because you give them nothing. Absolutely nothing.

TENT-POLE  
Nothing...Give 'em nothing.

SIR ARTHUR  
(screaming to the audience)  
Give 'em fucken nothing!

PLAYERS  
Bloody oath!

The PLAYERS scream, 'give 'em nothing'. SHAKY gestures skyward with his broom.

SHAKY  
Give 'em nothing!  
(singing)  
And we'll hang their balls on the weeping willow  
tree...

The PLAYERS and SIR ARTHUR link arms and sing the club song.

PLAYERS  
And may they all hang merrily. Adieu, adieu, adieu,  
adieu, St Joe's will stick it right up you. And  
we'll hang their balls on the weeping willow tree.  
And may they all hang merrily, merrily...

THE END