

REPRESENTATION:
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Took Kool
To DJ

... its subsidiary company, control law provided for up to
Euroways, applied for and received authorisation. possession of illegal guns for 15 years of imprisonment for

A Rotten reputation pays dividends

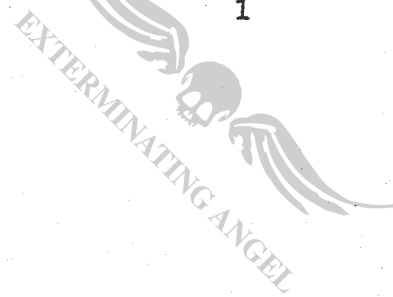
A FORMER Sex Pistol was limited and in recent months let off lightly by a court after his lawyer had had a lot of publicity. He said: "I venture to submit that the controversial nature and image of his profession and in particular the punk rock movement may have had something to do with the interest displayed by police at his house."

JOHN LYDON was in bed when a dawn raid by drugs police at his Lydon had had no intention of Chelsea home turned up an using the spray but had illegal anti-mugging tear gas accepted it from a fan in spray, a Horseferry Road court offence. He forgot all about tip and legal in France it until the police raid on a and America for self-defence. Lydon, 24, was conditionally causes irritation to the eyes, admitting having the gas Mr CYRIL FOSTER, prosecuting, capister at his house in Gunter nose and throat if used, said on Feb 15 without Mr was found in a drawer in authority of the Secretary of Lydon's bedroom. State.

PC JULIAN LLOYD admitted to Mr EDWARD McDERMOTT, the Lydon's the magistrate, told Lydon: "To my mind you are a very foolish young musician to have forgotten that this was in your possession, but I don't think there was anything sinister about it."

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1980

ALEX COX 653-7130



VENICE CALIFORNIA DAY

Two size fifteen spectator shoes kick up the dust in an alley littered with abandoned autos and machine parts.

In front of the approaching boots, a white cane swishes back and forth.

BUNGALOW YARD DAY

Against a backdrop of towering Marina fortresses, a SORRY SCENE is taking place.

BOLIVAR, an ancient chicano in a beret, is being evicted by SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES under the supervision of "KID" SAMEDI, the celebrity realtor. "KID" SAMEDI is a pallid blond, five foot one, clad in a white velour jogging suit.

BOLIVAR's refrigerator lands in the alley with a crash.

BOLIVAR
What are you throwing that out for? It's yours.

SAMEDI
The hell with all that stuff!
"Kid" Samedí's going solar!

SAMEDI extracts a slim panatella. Instantly several DEPUTIES drop BOLIVAR's belongings and offer him a light...

INEZ
Mariposa! Pendejo!

INEZ is nineteen years old and has green hair. A small crowd of watching locals applauds her boldness.

SAMEDI
(thin-lipped)
Watch that tongue, chiquita.
I hold indentured tenure on the old man's latifundio.

The crowd gasps. INEZ snorts derision.

A SHOT rings out and SAMEDI's panatella splits in two.



DEPUTIES

What the - ?

ATOP THE REFRIGERATOR stands an unforeseen participant. His back against the sun, a tall thick-set fellow in a shabby trenchcoat and a shapeless hat, wearing spectator shoes and shades and packing a WHITE STICK and a .45...

SAMEDI

Trade! Damn your eyes!

INEZ

(to Bolivar)

Quien es?

BOLIVAR

(hushed tones)

Esta el "Rik" Trade, the blind private eye!

Consternation among the onlookers.

Alarm among the cops.

RIK TRADE acknowledges their knowledge with a nod.

TRADE

You're too late, Samedi.

I have here a writ of Caveat Magnificat enjoining you to nary evict the old dude Bolivar, Sibi Numquam.

BOLIVAR and INEZ form a little trinity with TRADE. BOLIVAR bites his thumb at SAMEDI, INEZ flips him off.

SAMEDI

That may be so, Trade.

But I'm the one that has the uniforms and guns.

(cracking the whip)

Back to work, boys!

TRADE takes a breath. We hear his shirt rip.

TRADE

If your muchachos touch another can of menudo, Samedi, it'll be on your head.

Again the COPS freeze in the act of junking BOLIVAR's belongings. They cast sidelong glances at SAMEDI.

SAMEDI
Do you know whom you're threatening,
Trade? I'm Andy Samedi, the
Marina realtor.

TRADE
(impassive)
Check out the menudo, Samedi.

- and sure enough, a foot from SAMEDI's alligator boots
lies an evicted can of Perez' Menudito Brand Hominy Tripes.

SAMEDI sees it, turns a shade paler.

DEPUTY 1
Go for it, boss.
We're here to back you up.

DEPUTY 2
You think he's serious?
The guy's blind!

SAMEDI
It's a great feeling...
Knowing you can do anything
you want.

SAMEDI picks up the can and shies it at the old man.

TRADE puts a bullet right between the "KID"s eyes.

SAMEDI and the DEPUTIES are quite surprised.
SAMEDI's surprise is short-lived.

DEPUTY 2
You got a license for that
piece, Trade?

TRADE
Sure.

DEPUTY 1
Well...
Keep your nose clean, that's all.

The DEPUTIES dump BOLIVAR's stuff and shuffle off,
keeping a watchful eye on the BLIND PRIVATE EYE with
the unerring aim.

BOLIVAR shakes TRADE by the hand. INEZ' eyes are pools
of frozen liquid admiration. The crowd applauds.
A TV CREW appears and films the body.



TRADE
Hey officer!
(as the COPS duck behind
their cars)
How about a ride?

BUS STOP

TRADE sits on a bench advertising funeral arrangements.
Several buses that he doesn't notice slide by.

A limousine with tinted windows pulls up next to him.

VOICE
Mr Trade.

TRADE stiffens, feels for the car with his white stick.

TRADE
Who wants to know?

The rear window slithers out of sight.
TRADE's cane scrapes paint off the door.

SAUROPALOS
My name is Aristide Sauropalos.
Perhaps you've heard of me.

TRADE
You're the richest man in the
world, aren't you?

SAUROPALOS
These things fluctuate... but yes.
Looking for work?

CASH REGISTERS reflected in TRADE's empty lenses -

TRADE
(nonchalantly)
Mebbe...

THE SAUROPALOS MANSION NIGHT

TRADE and SAUROPALOS smoke cigars and witness a SLIDE SHOW
in ARISTIDE's private media center. Both wear tuxedos.
SAUROPALOS' wife BECKY-LU is the projectionist.

They've left the lights on because TRADE is blind.

SAUROPALOS

Our daughter's tenth birthday,
Mr Trade. Ah, she was such
a lovely child...

TRADE

Give her a party, did you?

SAUROPALOS

Just a small affair.

A slide depicting the MUNICH OLYMPICS disappears,
and is replaced by one of a KILLER WHALE leaping thru
a hoop of flames.

BECKY-LU

And ther she is with Dolly.
Dear little Dolly...
JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!

BECKY-LU begins to sob. ARISTIDE rings a bell and instantly
GRADE the butler is in the doorway -

GRADE

Sir?

SAUROPALOS

The mistress is upset, Grade.
Put your arm around her shoulder.

GRADE does so, a deft mix of diplomacy and deference.

BECKY-LU

Thank you, Aristide.

Another slide appears.

SAUROPALOS

I envy you your blindness, Mr Trade.
Oh, the indescribable horror!

TRADE

Describe it to me.

The slide is of the dance floor at the Starwood - packed
with multicolored hairdo's shaven heads and engineer's
boots frozen in MID-POGO.

BECKY-LU blubbers. ARISTIDE turns his head away.

SAUROPALOS

This is our last picture of
Adele, Mr Trade.
It's...
You could call it...
A dance hall...

BECKY-LU cranks in on one frozen bouncing body -
ADELE - a pale antiseptic girl with platinum hair -
is sticking her elbow in another dancer's eye.
Witches at a Goya sabat.

SAUROPALOS

I don't know what happened to
her after this. Someone at the
club suggested that she went
to England with the "group"...

BECKY-LU

She was stolen from us, Mr Trade!

SAUROPALOS

Certainly not in control of her
actions.

GRADE sidles up to TRADE with a silver platter.

GRADE

Brandy, sir?

TRADE nods and puts his hand out, knocking all the glasses
on the floor.

ARISTIDE and BECKY-LU fall on their knees before him
in the puddle of liqueurs.

A & B

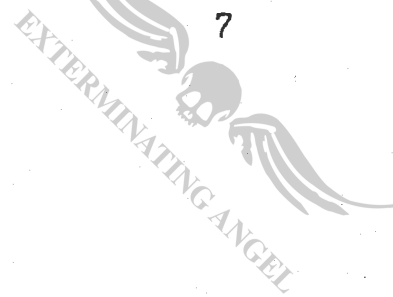
Find our daughter Mr Trade!

"THE DIRTY DUCK" INTERIOR DAY

Plastic-oak beams, chrome-plated horse-brasses.
English office workers getting drunk for lunch.
A street market outside.

ADELE SAUROPALOS sits in a corner wearing a plastic dress.
With her is an anemic limey punker, JOHNY ASHTRAY.
They don't like each other.

SPAZ RAZER, another punk, arrives with drinkies.



ADELE

Why don'tcha put a record on,
Spaz?

SPAZ

Nothing I like.

ADELE

Put the Epileptics on.
Get us some Marlboros as well.

SPAZ takes her coin and weaves through the drinkers to
the juke box. He selects songs by the Captain & Tenille.

JOHNY hunches lower in his coat.

JOHNY

Anybody looking our way is there?

ADELE

Uh-uh. Nobody knows who you
are, Johny Famous.

JOHNY

The Landlord. Little bald cunt
with a squint. See him?
He banned us two years ago.

ADELE

Why?

JOHNY

I can't remember.

ADELE

You're paranoid.

JOHNY

I AM NOT PARANOID!
It's a real consideration.

SPAZ sits down again. He finds his reflection in a hunk
of chrome and sets about teasing his hair into points.

ADELE

Is this place typical?
Are they all like this?

SPAZ

What?

ADELE

Pubs.

SPAZ

No way. Some of them have dart boards and some of them have tellys and some of them even sell beer -

JOHNY

They all have pasties, though. Nice plastic pasties.

ADELE

You've spent a lot of time here.

SPAZ

No more than any other lout.

JOHNY

The playgrounds of the dispossessed these places. Dole checks in hand, they flee in lemming droves to hoffbrau houses all across the land, don't they?

SPAZ

What's a lemming?

ADELE

It's a kind of plant.

ADELE's boyfriend ERK arrives. ERK is American and not a punk. Long yellow hair and aviator glasses and LAPD moustache. Flared trousers. Snaps fingers and wishes he was black.

ERK

How's it hanging?

SPAZ

Fuck off.

JOHNY

Go home.

ERK grins at them, cause he-knows-how-to-take-this-jive. He gives ADELE a playful punch. She hits him back real hard.

ERK

Let me have some money, Adele. I've got to go to work.

ADELE

You have to pay to play?

ERK

I want to get a bottle.

SPAZ

Go to the off license, Erk.
It's cheaper.

ERK

(ignoring him)

Hey, come on kid.
Don't hang me up.

He tries to catch her with a kiss.
She ducks under the table.

ERK

Adele -

JOHNY

Girlfriend financing you these
days, Erk?

ERK

I got no pockets in my pants...

SPAZ starts to moan and groan emphatically.
ADELE has not emerged.

And with a kung fu yell ERK kicks the table over.
The pint mugs shatter on the tiles.

Everybody in the bar shuts up and stares.

LANDLORD

(storming up & squinting)
You fucking punks!
I've called the pleece!
You'd better get out fast and
not-come-back!

JOHNY

Remember me?

LANDLORD

(deaf)
Eh?

JOHNY

(shouting in his ear)
You banned us and I come back to
ask you if you changed your mind!

TV MONITOR

RENEE MANANA, toughly exotic businesswoman of indeterminate age, is interviewed in her designer apartment overlooking Central Park...

RENEE

My name is Renee Manana.
In 1970 I dropped out of dental school to become an alcoholic singer-songwriter. In 1976 I received a masters degree in Rock&roll Promotion Techniques from Stanford University. The TEEN BASTARDS were my first clients.

INTERVIEWER

(off screen)

It must have been a tough assignment.

RENEE

They misbehaved consistently and constantly. They were very rude and liked to be considered violent. They made the best copy you could dream of.

A GANG OF TEENAGERS

wanders listlessly down a refuse-littered street. Some are punk, and others drunk. One of the Lawless Ones breaks a beer bottle.

Instantly sirens wail. FREEZE FRAME.

TITLE: TEENAGE VIOLENCE

CORRUGATED METAL HUT INTERIOR

NIX MERDY, rock promoter and fast food entrepreneur, stands before a blackboard in an RAF flight instructor's uniform, circa 1941.

Several would-be rock musicians sit in school desks facing him. Among them, JOHNY ASHTRAY. Bright eyes and pencils rampant. They're dressed as Battle of Britain airmen, French Foreign Legionnaires, samurai...

NIX's pointer hits the blackboard.

NIX

Key words, gennelmen.

HONESTNESS

VULGARITY

SELF-DETERMINISM.

If you can remember these words,
or even two of them, then you will
be the master of every situation
the media is going to lay on you.

JOHNY

(airman)

It seems you expect us to be
pretty Bad Boys, Group Captain.

NIX

Bad Boys such as the bollockin'
world has never copped a glimmer
of. I want you lads to be the...
the... the...

LEN, a drummer in a Roman Legionary's outfit, raises his
sticks.

LEN

Hitlers.

NIX

Top marks for brain use, Len.
THE HITLERS OF ROCK & ROLL!

And via a catchy disco-Wagner beat we are transported to:

A TV "HOSPITALITY ROOM" NIGHT

A bare alcove with a plate-glass wall. Black anonymous
urban Englishness beyond. A nuclear power station.

The powers-that-be have provided a refrigerator full of
drink, and a keg of beer. Twenty noisy people are getting
quickly plastered.

VOICE

(ignored)

Five minutes, please.

The centerpiece of the evening is a quartet of popular
musicians, the TEEN BASTARDS.

It's 1977 and you know what these boys look like.

(their names are JOHNY ASHTRAY, RINGO SHIV, LEN AIMLESS and JUST RON).

TV EXEC

(pinstriped dungarees)
Working with Calamares was another
kick entirely. You know his work?

JOHNY

(yawning)
See yer later.

TV EXEC

(hastily)
Oh I say - want to do some more
snort?

Across the room RENEE accosts LEN and RINGO, who are supporting RON.

RENEE

You're on after the lone yachtsman
... what's with Ron?

LEN

It's his shoes. Too tight.

RINGO

They gonna play the record?

RENEE

This is a talk show, Ringo.
I'm afraid you have to talk.

RON belches threateningly.

A harrassed STUDIO MANAGER arrives.

He has in tow the DRUNKEST PERSON IN THE ROOM.

STUDIO MANAGER

Ms Manana, this is Ivor Biggern.
Ivor would like a quick word with
the - ah - before we go live.

IVOR is a personality-plus type with jowls and Grecian 9000 sideburns. He focuses blearily on RINGO, extends a hand.

IVOR

Ivor Biggern.

RINGO

Ha ha ha.

IVOR
What's so funny.

RINGO
How big is it?

IVOR
(boiling over)
FUCKING WATCH OUT!!!

He waits to be restrained by the STUDIO MANAGER.

VOICE -
Two minutes...

TV MONITOR (CONTROL ROOM)

Transpennine Television logo DISSOLVES into a snazzy montage featuring IVOR BIGGERN talking to the common man - hiking Hadrian's Wall - launching a Polaris submarine -

TITLE: STRAIGHT TALK - WITH IVOR BIGGERN

STUDIO INTERIOR

The TEEN BASTARDS sit in four chairs crowded around IVOR. IVOR's chair revolves. Theirs don't.

IVOR
What's that in your ear?
(JUMP CUT)
Who's your barber?
(JUMP CUT)
What do your parents think?
(JUMP CUT)
Ever hear about the War?
(JUMP CUT)
Where's your Shiv gone, Ringo?
(JUMP CUT)
Same place as Johny's Ashtray?
(JUMP CUT)
What are you rebelling against?

RINGO
Fuck off.

IVOR runs out of breath.

JOHNY
Oh shit. Ringo swore.

IVOR

You're not impressing anyone,
you know. Nobody but yourselves.

CONTROL ROOM INTERIOR

The two producers, JULES and SANDY, are delerous.

SANDY

Go for a tight shot, One.
Tight on Ivor.

JULES

In closer, Three.
How much time have we got?

SANDY

Depends who's monitoring upstairs.
Tighter, One -

STUDIO INTERIOR

Great Beads of Sweat run down IVOR's ruddy cheeks.
He knows he's overstepped the bounds of good TV taste -
but he's too drunk and principled to back down.

IVOR

Anyone can fucking swear, you
know! When I was your age -

LEN

He can't remember.

JOHNY

TOO MUCH WANKING!

IVOR

(can't remember)
Never you mind!
(he grabs JOHNY's lapels,
which break off)
If you want to shock me, son,
you'll have to try a damn sight
harder! I've seen things -

CONTROL ROOM INTERIOR

JULES and SANDY play enthusiastically with the console.
A timorous PA is on the phone -

PA
It's the Senior Comptroller
of Programming. He says you
have to pull the plug.

SANDY
Jules, tell him it's no go.

JULES
I can't tell the Senior
Comptroller that!

IVOR'S VOICE booms over the speakers as SANDY reaches
for the phone.

IVOR
- trampling on the bloody flag?
Why, coloured immigrants!

SANDY
(into phone)
Comptroller.
How nice to hear from you...

IN A DANK LOFT

a tangle of tubes and pulsing valves;
wires wind around retort dishes and chemistry sets
leading to the COMPTROLLER OF PROGRAMMING.

A huge human brain in a bell jar, smoking a pipe.

COMPTROLLER
(mellow, mechanical)
I'm telling you to call it quits,
old boy. They're getting restless
out there. Some of them are
picking up their telephones...

CONTROL ROOM

JULES and SANDY cling to the console, which has begun
to shake and smoke.

SANDY
But sir...
This is reality al dente!

ON SCREEN

IVOR loses it entirely, pulling off his jacket.
He gets stuck in the sleeves.

IVOR
You young pups!
I'll take you on outside!
All at once or -

Ad lib spirited responses.
RON throws up.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM

red lights flash - smoke pours from the machines -

COMPTROLLER'S VOICE
You dare defy me??

Sparks fly - the console explodes - the monitors burn out
and JULES and SANDY are electrocuted.

IN THE STUDIO

the sprinklers go on and the room fills up with smoke.

IVOR
And furthermore...

PA
Take five, everyone.

BLACK OUT

ENGLISH RADIO REP VOICE
Dorking, Snipe.
Dear "Any Answers"
It seems commesurate with the
general decline in what were once
called "standards" of "moraltude"
that the public airwaves should
become a hotbed of lavatorial
depravity...
OUR IVOR SHOULD KNOW BETTER!

THE DOCKS AT DAWN

IVOR BIGGERN squints into a new day.
The last that he will ever see.

Two burly DOCKERS carry him towards the water.
They make slow progress because his feet are sunk into
a block of concrete.

IVOR
I did my bit.
I'm not ashamed.

DOCKER 1
Dead right, mate.

IVOR
When I was their age I was
forty-nine. Know what I mean?

The DOCKERS nod and lift him over the black water -

DOCKER 2
No hard feelings.

They drop him in the river.

A jumbo jet passes overhead.

GATWICK AIRPORT MIDNIGHT

NIX MERDY crosses the wet tarmac with a CUSTOMS INSPECTOR.
NIX wears pinstripes, furred umbrella, bowler hat, and
copy of the times.

NIX
Obviously some misunderstanding...

CUSTOMS OFFICER
Obviously, sir.

Another JET careens past them with its engines blazing.
They enter the DETENTION HANGAR.

DETENTION BAY # 33 INTERIOR

NIX inspects a variety of speakers, guitars, amps and
drums spread out under the spotlights. Within a roped
enclosure the TEEN BASTARDS wait glumly, manacled and
under guard.

NIX
It's all a mystery to me.
What did you - ahem - find?

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Ten grams of Substance A were found in this guitar case, Mr Merdy. Eleven grains of Substance B inside the snare drum there. An ounce of -

NIX brightens, beaming with evident malice at the disheveled BAND.

NIX

That explains it, then. This isn't our equipment.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

Eh..?

NIX

I never fly the band and the equipment on the same plane. Asking for trouble.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

(indicating LEN)

That young man clearly identified the drum set as his own.

NIX

What does he know? He only learnt to play the things last week. Besides, this is a Japanese guitar! Do you honestly believe British musicians would settle for anything less than a Vincent?

The CUSTOMS OFFICER is dumbfounded. He plays his last card.

CUSTOMS OFFICER

These instruments will be impounded and destroyed.

NIX

Good show. RIGHT LADS?

TEEN BASTARDS

Absolutely right!

A LONELY MOTORWAY AT NIGHT

NIX and LEN and RINGO wait beneath an overpass in NIX's Rover. RENEE is at the wheel.

RENEE
(a monologue)
- dumb fucking bastards who'd
lose their instruments on the eve
of their great European Tour.
You really don't believe in paying
your dues do you?

RINGO
No.

LEN
Here he comes.

RENEE shuts up as a SIXTEEN-WHEELER hurtles past them.
She throws the car in gear and puts her foot down.

NIX
Easy on the clutch, Renee.

RENEE
What clutch.

RENEE slides past the TRUCK. The sides of the container
wagon read INTERMEDIA BLOWOUT TRANSIT CO. and underneath
that "FLEETWOOD MAC ON TOUR"

LEN
I think we're sort of noticable.
It's not as if we'd bin stoned...

Just past the truck RENEE swings a drastic left into the
same lane - causing the truck to howl and flash its battery
of spotlights - slowing down -

RINGO
He's trying to pass us.

NIX
The dirty bugger.

RENEE accelerates and slides into the other lane, blocking
the truck's path once again - the truck hoots and swings
back - and RENEE slows and does the same - weaving like
she's drunk...

Again the truck tries to pass them - again she speeds up
and obstructs the lanes - RINGO sticks his head out and
gives the TRUCKER the V.

NIX
That's the way...

The truck brakes - stops - almost jackknifing - on the hard shoulder. RENEE stops too, a few yards up ahead.

LEN

Hey up.
He's getting out.

The sixteen-wheeler and the Rover lie dormant at the roadside. The TRUCKER leaps down from his cab and marches towards them, rolling up his sleeves.

RENEE

Nice tatoos.

When he's six feet away, NIX throws the door wide and maces him. The TRUCKER collapses gasping in the ditch.

Immediately they steal his truck.

NIX'S VOICE

Gibson Les Pauls, eight.
Fender Basses, five.
Chappell Organs, three.
Romeo Aloha drumkits, seventeen -

CLUB TROPICANCER HAMBURG

An EMCEE in a tied-up plastic bag is tossed onto the stage.

EMCEE

(auctioneer-pace)

Ladyshneckerundermannendecker
ichbinproudenderpresententoyer
derlegendinglanderpunkers
DER TEEEEEEN BASTAAAAARDS!!!

Agitation on the tiny dancefloor as the BASTARDS bump on stage in total darkness. Matches flare and shouts and spit and showers of beer.

JOHNY

Onetwothreefour
Onetwothreefour

And they're off.

Fast catatonic rock & roll.

The lights blaze and the floor is a collision zone as it takes off as well.

JOHNY's legs are strapped together at the knees.
He wrigles like a spastic with st vitus dance.

RINGO SHIV stands stock still with his head bowed and no shirt on.

None of the band can really play, but they are very energetic. Naturally we can't hear the words.

NIX MERDY's at the bar. Staring intently at his beer. MASSIVE CU of his eye...

FLASHBACK - NIX

THE SEAFRONT AT MARGATE, CIRCA 1956.

A gang of TEDDY BOYS from London baits the local YOBBOS on the pier. The YOBS are dirty, uniformly ugly. The TEDS wear brylcreem and drape jackets and have an heroic air.

NIX is a ted aged twenty with a footlong cowlick and bright yellow socks. He swipes at one of the YOBS with a straightedge razor. We do not see it land.

The two sides clash. Police whistles.

NIX'S VOICE

I was in on the original DON'T
KNOCK THE ROCK RIOTS. It was
expresso bongo all the way.
A copper at the end of every row
and we still tore all the seats out.

AT THE GIG

JOHNY stalks the stage and sticks his tongue out. More like an old man with convulsions now. RINGO hasn't moved an inch. The bassist. RON is trying to do the splits but can't. LEN is pretty sweaty.

Thenderous waves of noise engulf RENEE and two REPORTERS, both of whom are trying to pick her up.

RENEE

- an old hand at streetfighting,
Ringo. He's chainwhipped
motorcycle gangs.

REPORTER

How old, please?

RENEE

Oh... eighteen.

A wild-eyed WOMAN clad in shreds of lino linked with pins pushes her way between them. She's slashing at her wrists with razor blades and laughing.

BOUNCERS move in moodily. The song ends.

RENEE

You were saying..?

CLUB EXTERIOR NIGHT

The show is over. We TRACK through the departing crowd. This might be Germany - it might be England or LA -

We turn a corner, up an alley - where waiting COPS shine flashlights in our faces - and we're at the

STAGE DOOR

where the TEEN BASTARDS are sizing up the action. A haggared bunch of hard-line punks - the fattest girls, spottiest guys - more conventionally attractive types wait demurely for the Main Band to appear. A lot of hungry eyes...

TEEN BASTARDS

Her.

Him.

Her.

As the MUSICIANS make their choice, a ROADIE extends a long hooked pole and reels the chosen in. OOHS and AAHS and sighs of disappointment. RINGO points out a pair of chubby girls in chains and catholic school blazers.

RINGO

Them two.

Half a housebrick hits him on the head.

RINGO

Who the fuck threw that?

He reels and flails his fists. The crowd - delighted - parts. A blonde girl in a plastic mac and mirror shades steps forward. ADELE.

ADELE

Sorry about that.
It was meant for Johnny.

He hits her very hard.
She hits him back.

TITLE: LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

RAILWAY CUTTINGS HOTEL NIGHT

RINGO and ADELE lie on crumpled sheets.
She wears a black bra and plays with matches.

ADELE

I've been bad, Ringo.
Worse than you'll ever know.

RINGO

Yer what?

BLACK OUT

ADELE prepares to shoot up.
RINGO watches her preparations in intense detail.
Everything is intensely clean and gleaming.

ADELE

- so I went to this audition in
Chelsea and he asked me, Can you
sing like Debby Harry? The shithead.
It's a bad trip looking like a
rock star, let me tell you.

She searches for a vein.
Her arm is very thin. No veins are visible.

RINGO

How much do you do?

ADELE

Not enough. That bitch.
She's got no business lousing
up my career.

RINGO

How much smack I mean.

ADELE

As much as I can get of course.
(she stares at him)
You?

RINGO
Oh yeah. Same here.

BLACK OUT

ADELE leans against the bed.
RINGO sits at the dressing table, fiddling with junk makings.

ADELE
You're making a mess.
I ought to help you.

RINGO
Fuck off.

ADELE
It's no trouble.

She drifts off again.
RINGO fills the hypo from the shaking spoon.

RINGO
What's your name?

ADELE
Solonge.

RINGO
Bollocks.

Drops of blood spatter the carpet.

ADELE
Make sure you hit the vein.

BLACK OUT

RINGO convulses on the bathroom floor.
ADELE bends over him, wipes vomit from his mouth.

OUTSIDE the clattering rumble of trains on a railway
bridge. Yellow coachlights strobe across them endlessly -

BLACK OUT

ADELE sits with RINGO under the washbasin.
The shower is running. RINGO shivers.
ADELE puts her arm around his thin shoulders.

ADELE
My name's Adele.
What's yours?

RINGO
Harold.

ADELE
You should stick to Ringo.
RINGO SHIV - it's savage.
♥ (deadpan)
Are you savage, Ringo?

RINGO leans his head against the wet wall.
Another train is coming.

RINGO
Feh. I'm a vicious bastard,
aren't I?

ADELE
Show me.

RINGO shuts his eyes.

BLACK OUT

TRADE'S VOICE
I knew all I had to do was wait.

SAUROPALOS' BASEMENT NIGHT

ARISTIDE SAUROPALOS takes an exquisitely-fashioned duelling
pistol from a velvet case. He aims the gun and fires it -

- extinguishing a candle balanced on the BUTLER's head.

The other SERVANTS applaud. TRADE stands on the sidelines,
toying with a cat o'nine tails.

TRADE
Little did I know that my first
clue would come in several
loosely-packed boxes of WET EARTH...

RECORDING STUDIO INTERIOR

The TEEN BASTARDS make a valiant effort to put one of
their more together offerings down on tape.

It is a slow process - made all the slower by the large crowd of ADMIRERS, ADVISERS, HANGERS-ON and BRAIN FOOD MERCHANTS which has occupied the studio and control room.

RON'S VOICE
(over the speakers)
What do you mean OUT OF TUNE?

The BASTARDS' producer NORMO - a dreadlocked rastaman in a tailcoat - enters the booth pursued by JOHNY.

JOHNY
It's the wrong mike, Normo.
Makes me sound like a fucking
dalek.

In after JOHNY flutters DENNY, an Image Consultant and ex-Mormon pop idol. DENNY clutches a large and silly hat covered with the feathers of endangered birds.

DENNY
Try this one.

JOHNNY dons the chapeau. NORMO sinks into a chair.

NORMO
We're not ready for a take yet
are we?

STUDIO VOICES
(unison)
No way!!

NORMO
Just asking...

NORMO puts his feet up and prepares to go to sleep.

DENNY
(holding a mirror up
for JOHNY)
It's just like the one Rock Head
wore at the Music Massacre.
Styled by Ygor de Paris...

JOHNY
Like me chapeau, Normo?

Before NORMO can say no, the door bursts open and two bowler-hatted BAILIFFS burst in wielding cricket bats.

BAILIFF 1
Everybody out!

BAILIFF 2
Yer contract's terminated.
Piss off.

IN THE BACK OF A BENTLEY

NIX MERDY sits with a wigged and begowned BARRISTER.
They're driving through the Inns of Court.

BARRISTER
Mr Rounds appreciates a favour.

NIX
I appreciate being left alone.
Right now I've problems of me
own.

BARRISTER
Oh, Ernie is a terror when he's
crossed, Nix. Especially when
the punter owes him five big
ones...

NIX
(reluctantly)
Well - how big is this dog?

The bentley narrowly misses several pedestrians on a
zebra crossing. The BARRISTER laughs at this.

HOLIDAY INN INTERIOR

A riot in progress on TV. Blacks fighting white policemen
at the Notting Hill Carnival. There is no sound.

WE PULL BACK to reveal RINGO and ADELE systematically
demolishing their room.

RINGO
(pulling lamp brackets
off the wall)
You're crazy.

ADELE
(tearing sheets)
All for one and one for all eh?
Whyncha go and fuck your boyfriend
Johny, Ringo?

RINGO

We was out the pub, that's all.
This ain't no poofter band.
I don't go for that stuff, see.
I can pull all the fuckin' tarts
I want to - and I do!

ADELE

You say the sweetest things.

RINGO smashes bedside lamps. Sparks.

RINGO

I've laid three women at the same
time. I've had four girls in one
night. And all that in the same
week. Pissed up too.
(triumphantly)
How about that?

ADELE

(quieter)

You don't have to tell me that
shit.

RINGO

Then don't lay trips on me.

Religiously she tears the pages out of the gideon bible.
She's crying. Static explosion in the center of the room.

RINGO

Hey, look.
I didn't - you know -
It's just -
SUNNOVERBITCH!!

He kicks the TV over. Through speakers a recorded message
plays -

VOICE

Do not attempt to remove this
television from your room.
Its serial number is on file
with the local police and any
attempt to defraud Sunshine Inns
Incorporated will -

RINGO rips the speakers off the wall.
Stares at ADELE across the wrecked room.
All that's left untouched is them...

COMMERCIAL BREAK

A gaggle of PUNKS pose outside a store on Melrose or the Kings Road. (preferably both) They wear Elizabethan drag. The shop is called RAT BOY.

GIRL PUNK

Bugger me!
Yon Reena is the fabbest of them all.

BOY PUNK

How so, Else?

GIRL PUNK

Can't not see the brace of safety pins she weareth through EACH CHEEK? Wouldst that thou were half so Kool, O shit-for-brains.

She kicks the BOY PUNK in the goolies. Their FRIENDS toss him into traffic.

GIRL PUNK

Ey, Reena! What's yer secret?

REENA turns and smiles bewitchingly. She has a dozen sharp objects imbedded in her face.

SALESMAN'S VOICE

How does Reena do it?
Ice packs? Yoga? Mandies?
None of these!

REENA winks and removes a sample safety-pin. It does not leave a mark.

REENA

Simple.
I use ATROCE.

SALESMAN'S VOICE

ATROCE -
clip-on facial disfigurements from Fiorelli. The smart girl's road to mutilation!

TITLE

SEE THE COMPLETE RANGE OF ATROCE ACCESSORIES AT BOOTS THE CHEMIST

TV SCREEN

RENEE in gucci punk attire, replete with Atroce accessories.
In her cheeks, her nose, her eyelids...

RENEE

We couldn't have lost the EMU
contract at a better time.
It made the national press in
fourteen countries.

(she thinks for a moment)
But it did make us feel a little
tenuous. Here was a band that
was world-famous, but that nobody
had ever heard...

PICADILLY CIRCUS DAWN

The familiar statue is sheathed in wooden planking.

JOHNY steps out of the Tube. He wears a brown
travelling-salesman suit and yellow string tie.

Among the stalls displaying porn and regal souvenirs,
the ARCHES have been plastered with posters which read -

LONDON FLOODING -
WILL YOU BE AFFECTED?

JOHNY stumbles in the archway - bangs his nose against
a poster.

RENEE'S VOICE

And out of this sense of tenuousness
came Johny's - ah - apocalyptic vision.
I hate to use the words the papers
did, but...

Out past the postered arches, red buses flash by brilliantly
and the city sounds rise in pitch and intensity

and in dreamlike slow motion

the Thames bursts its banks.

Six siren bursts at 15-second intervals, as the tidal
wave engulfs the City and carries off the Houses of Parliament,
Windsor Palace, the South Bank and the financial district.

The buildings are not real.
Instead, intricate models fashioned out of matchsticks,
cornflake packets, soap boxes...

Above the roar of water and the tumbling of walls -

RADIO VOICE

Bus, underground and rail services
will be reduced about two hours
after the early warning and will
cease after the sirens sound.

LONG SHOT OF THE DROWNED CITY

Protruding wreckage at odd angles in the hard sunlight.
Steam rises off the water.

LOS ANGELES

seen from a high angle. Visibility minimal.
The smog is like the smoking sea...

JOHNY'S VOICE

It's dead rough right now.

RINGO'S VOICE

Let's hear it.

STUDIO INTERIOR

JOHNY hits the ampex play. LEN and RINGO listen.

A hiss and then the studio is swamped with waves of dub
and overdub guitars - an abstraction pretty similar to
WHITE NOISE.

JOHNY takes the microphone and sings.

JOHNY

Napalm raid on Leicester Square
More fun than the electric chair
Burning babies boil the air
Don't you wish that you'd been there
(REPEAT)

LEN tries to listen studiously.
RINGO puts his leather jacket on and walks out.
As he shuts the door -

JOHNY

Why don't you slam it, Ringo?

RINGO slams it.

IN THE BOOTH.

ADELE plays with the console till JOHNY's overdubs sound like musical porridge.

NORMO enters with the Wall Street Journal.

JOHNY
(into mike)
What you say, Normal?

NORMO
What's this, man?
Something wrong with the system?

IN THE STUDIO

LEN cracks up. JOHNY stares at NORMO through two sheets of toughened glass and narrowed eyes.

JOHNY
I hear you got the sack.

A DOWNTOWN HOTEL ROOFTOP AFTERNOON

ADELE is blowing RINGO beneath a rusty iron water tower. TV and traffic noise waft up around them.

RINGO
This time...
You have to swallow.

ADELE
(between beats)
Fuck off.
You don't drink mine.

RINGO
Yeah I do.

ADELE
Well I won't.
Yours is uuuuuggghhkky.

RINGO
Then I want to come on your face.
I want you with me jizz all over
you. I want you going to suave
soirees with me spunk all over
your face, got it?

She shakes her head. He twists with her.

RINGO

I want you -
 Lick your lips -
 at parties -
 And if anybody asks you what
 the game is, you reply
 HIS COCK IS MINE YER BASTARDS
 WHADDYER SAY TER THAT!!!

He expires. She spits and kisses him.

ADELE

Foot.

RINGO

Say it.

ADELE HANGS FROM THE PARAPET with RINGO holding her ankles.
 She laughs at the distance and declaims -

NANCY

... is mine yer bastards
 whaddyer say ...

Several elevators disappear into the bowels of a chrome
 and glass hotel.

BLACK OUT

NIX MERDY'S OFFICE INTERIOR

Overlooking piles of uncollected rubbish in an unlit street.
 Two dogs are fighting over hunks of meat.

WE PULL BACK as RON and JOHNY enter. NIX is on the phone.
 The walls are testimony to his double life - stills of NIX
 and showbiz types and ads for Taste MerdyBurgers...

NIX is very tired. His desk is covered with coffee cups.
 The coffee cups are full of butts.

NIX

(to phone)

He what the dog? Shot it?

No, no. That can't be right.

Does Ernie know yet?

(to RON and JOHNY)

Be right with you boys.

NIX lights another cigarette.
He already has three burning.

NIX
(into phone)
Maybe it did the trick.
You think we scared him off?
I see. I see.
(uncertainly)
He'll never be believed.

NIX puts the receiver down. He rubs his eyes mercilessly,
digging the knuckles in. Smiles blearily.

NIX
Well well well.
And how are we?

JOHNY
We came to see the new contract.

NIX
Did Renee send you? Jean-Jacques?

JOHNY
We weren't sent, Nix.
We just thought we'd come.

NIX
You did, eh? Right enough.
(- intercom -)
Send in three coffees, Rita.
And Mr Yoseloff.

RITA enters through a secret door.
In one hand she carries a dripping tray with coffee and
several packs of cigarettes. With the other she pulls
MR YOSELOFF's wheelchair.

RON
What's that?

NIX
That's Mr Yoseloff, Ron.
Say hello.

MR YOSELOFF - a wispy, ghostlike octogenarian in a celluloid
collar - unfurls a lengthy document and starts to read...

YOSELOFF
(wheezing)

Agreement made this 7th day of August 1978 between Nix B. Merdy of Merdysongs Associates (hereinafter called "the Author") and Lord Lew Watney's MOR Music Corp. (hereinafter called "the Publisher")...

JOHNY pulls out a pad and starts taking attentive notes.
RON is stupefied.

RON
It sounds just like the last one.

JOHNY/NIX/RITA
Ssshhhh!

MR YOSELOFF glowers like a priest interrupted in mid-mass.
RON helps himself to cigarettes.

YOSELOFF
(pressing on)
Whereas...

RON
Got any comics?

A 747 flies over, drowns the droning out.

JOHNY'S VOICE
It's no crime to understand these things.

RON'S VOICE
Yes it is.

JOHNY'S VOICE
Bollocks. You have to see things in the long term.

RON'S VOICE
Balls to you. You don't.

SOUND OF CATS FIGHTING IN A DUSTBIN.

YE OLDE PUBBE AND DISCO SANTA MONICA

Several varieties of the worst of British beer on draft.
Dart boards and pictures of the royals on every wall.

Expatriate limeys make loud fools of themselves, while in a discreet corner RIK TRADE nurses a diet pepsi and listens very hard.

REX

I was that bitch's keeper, man.
They paid me fifty smackeroonies
every time I brought her back...

REX is an urban cowpoke with blond sideburns and a pot belly. Every word he says interests TRADE a little more. REX's audience is a gaggle of anglo-american BUSINESSWOMEN drinking Bass daquiris.

REX

That's the Bel Air mentality, dig?
I drove her two miles to high school
in a fucking limo and we'd do it
maybe six or eight times on the way!

The BUSINESSWOMEN smirk appreciatively.

LADY EXEC

Another shandy, Rex?

REX

Don't mind if I do - OOPS!
(she's pinched him)

TRADE nods sagely to himself.

TRADE'S VOICE

Sometimes these things just come
your way. I was waiting in this
semi-limey bar Ye Old Pubbe for
a young punker that was going
to fill me in.

REX points at his cock. The WOMEN laugh and nod agreement.

TRADE'S VOICE

I needed to know more.

PUB BATHROOM INTERIOR

REX zips up his pants. Removes a silver fountain pen and starts writing on the wall - ALL WOMEN WHO...

TRADE's white stick lands with a CRUNCH! on his head.

TRADE'S VOICE

I knew instinctively that I
could trust this guy.

TRADE bounces REX around the bathroom.
The urban cowboy ain't much of a wrasslin' man.

FLASHBACK - ADELE

THE DINING ROOM OF THE SAUROPALOS MANSION

Bedecked with Remington originals - the centerpiece of
the chamber being a stuffed longhorn.

ARISTIDE SAUROPALOS is struggling into his polo outfit
- assisted by the selfsame REX.

BECKY-LU, glad in ankle-length pink polyester camiknickers,
surveys the contents of an enormous picnic hamper.
She looks displeased.

BECKY-LU

I can't believe it!
Aristide, you'll have to speak
to Gasconne.

ARISTIDE

(having trouble with
his kneelength boots)
Pourquoi, mein liebschen?

She pulls a piece of red meat from the hamper.

BECKY-LU

What does this look like to you?

ARISTIDE

Jambon alfresco.

BECKY-LU

It's a ham slice, Aristide.

(- ? -)

Ari, the Kahn is Kosher!

ARISTIDE

So what?

He can eat something else.

She flings the slice at him. It hits REX.

BECKY-LU

Idiot! His secular Imrat is
a maniac about that sort of thing.
You want to get your hands cut off?

ARISTIDE

(sulking)

We're not his subjects, dear.

BECKY-LU

Not yet. You know he's moved his
nephews into Crestfall Drive.

ARISTIDE

Crestfall? I thought the Rothsblatts -

BECKY-LU

Disappeared.

(she throws the rest of
the ham to her schnauzers)

In any case, we don't want to be rude.

REX hands ARISTIDE a lariat and he begins lasooing the
longhorn.

The batwing doors into the wetbar part and ADELE enters.
She looks a little plumper and domesticity clings to her
like dead snakeskin. She has a sleeping bag and huge
radio cassette player.

ADELE

Well, I'm off.

(a pause)

Just looking in to say ciao.

(a pause)

There's nothing you can do
to keep me here, you know.

(a pause)

Right then.

She walks into the grounds, leaving the french windows open.
Looks back several times. ARISTIDE and BECKY-LU haven't moved.

BECKY-LU

She's yours, not mine.

ARISTIDE

Hmmm. Rex.

REX adjusts his stetson, squares his shoulders, strides into
the sun. ARISTIDE resumes his lasocing.

IN THE BACK OF ARISTIDE'S ROADMEISTER

REX and ADELE are "making love."
Odd limbs make brief contacts with the instrument panel
- windows slide and wipers wipe and orange lights flash
on and off.

REX gives a strangled cowboy yell.
The flickerings and wipings cease.

REX

How was I?

ADELE

reallyfabulousnobodydoes
ittomethewayyouolover.

REX

(lighting a cigarette)
You ought to check out Europe
for a year or two, Adele.
Get your head straight, pick up
a few new tricks...

ADELE

What do you mean?

REX

No offence, bunch. I just tell
it like it is. That's the kind
of hombre I am.

ADELE

(getting up)
Go fuck yourself -

REX

Want to shoot some smack, cakes?

ADELE

I'll be late for citizenship.

REX

C'mon, kid. You're still kinda
square, y'know...

She slugs him. He laughs and gets her in an armlock.
They wrestle - ADELE's serious and REX pretends he's not -
they kick the radio on -
a TEEN BASTARDS song is playing - loud and raucous and
mixed so you can hear the words -

RADIO

Don't get me wrong man
I've got nowt against the queen
Even though she's been to places
I have never been
Cause I can still walk home at night
If I miss the bus
You wouldn't catch them doing that
They're too afraid of us!

AT THE AIRPORT (ANY AIRPORT)

NIX sits in the departure lounge surrounded by a corral of luggage trolleys filled with instrument and PA cases.

He's being pestered by a burly demented-looking English exterminist, ERNIE ROUNDS, whose red-white-and-blue rosette reads ROUNDS FOR BOSS IN '78. ERNIE is NIX's half-brother.

NIX

You're out of order, Ernie.
There's no chance.

ERNIE

I've heard those words so many times - "no way" - "no chance" - know what they do to me?
They inspire me!

RENEE arrives wheeling MR YOSELOFF. Several hefty ERNIE ROUNDS SUPPORTERS in track suits stitched with union jacks eye her suspiciously.

NIX

This is Ernie Rounds, Renee.
Me half-brother.

RENEE

I saw your face on TV didn't I?
You're a politician.

ERNIE

A public servant, yes.

RENEE wheedles between the trolleys - she can't get MR YOSELOFF's wheelchair through the gap.

ERNIE

Look at it this way, Nix.
It's a golden opportunity to get yourselves noticed and make peace with those above you.

NIX

No one's above me, Ernie.

ERNIE

(hushed respectful tones)

I mean Her Majesty.

You read the words to their songs
have you? The Express printed
them, for all to see. Fucking
obscene it was -

NIX

I'll make no amends, Ern.
You're wasting your time.

ERNIE fixes his eye on MR YOSELOFF, dozing in his chair
amid a sea of legal briefs.

ERNIE

Looks a little peaky, the old
geezer. Why don't you take him
for a walk, Perce?

The attendant PERCE starts wheeling MR YOSELOFF away.

RENEE

I don't understand what's going
on. Is Mr Rounds making us some
kind of offer?

NIX

He wants the Bastards to play at
the queen's birthday party.

ERNIE

Jubilee, Nix. Jubilee.

RENEE

For money?

ERNIE

Name your price.

NIX

Shove off.

ERNIE's ASSOCIATES are visibly apalled.

ASSOCIATES

'ere! Shut yer 'ole!
Kick 'is 'ead in!

ERNIE
 (patting NIX's shoulder)
 Now look here, Nix.
 It's a funny old world, this.
 Sometimes you're up, sometimes
 you're down. -

RENEE
 NIX!
 What's that man doing with
 Mr Yoseloff..??

ERNIE
 - but as long as you stick by
 the family, you'll never get a
 broken neck.

RENEE screams and starts running for the escalator,
 but it's too late. The grinning PERCE has pushed MR
 YOSELOFF over the edge.

It's a 100-foot up-escalator and it takes the old man
 a long time to bounce to the bottom.

ERNIE
 Don't miss your plane.

ABOARD THE DC-10

NIX and RENEE watch a heartwarming Benjy movie.
 Neither of them has got a lot to say.

NIX'S VOICE
 (over)
 We fly to Germany and bill ourselves
 as the toast of England, even though
 we've never played a gig.
 Then we do the US, call ourselves
 the toast of Hamburg.
 Then maybe we'll play London...

JOHNNY'S HEAD bursts through a paper hoop.
 He wears a tamashanter and his teeth are blacked out.

JOHNNY
 Yer Cowboy Cunts!!!

The TEEN BASTARDS' first - and final - US tour is under way.

NIX'S VOICE
 The perfect plan.

THE ROY ROGERS ROOMS

The BASTARDS play a tight set in the crowded hottest nitespot in Shinbone, Arizona.

JOHNY wears a dress shirt and several bunches of bananas. He is more assured and acquiring a lot of presence. RINGO still stays put - but now he's perched at the very edge of the stage, glowering and spitting back.

He wears an Iron Cross.
A thin tracery of scars across his naked chest.

JOHNY -

England out of Everywhere
Charley out of town
I wouldn't be in Burningham
When all that shit comes down

RINGO

Future suture
How's it suit yer?

JOHNY

Going cheap these rotten apples
Try some afore ye go
The President skipped town my friends
29 minutes ago.

RINGO

One two three okay
Let's blow!

CATATONIC FINALE

The audience is not amused. Boos and beer bottles fly. RON fields one with his guitar, breaking both. RINGO spits into the crowd. GUNSHOTS.

ADELE watches from the "VIP gallery" - two tables with a rope around them. She's nodding off.

TRADE'S VOICE

I knew now who she'd gone to
Europe with. I left the States
the same day. The net was
closing fast. Or so I thought.

BACK-PROJECTION of an airline commercial sunset sky.
INTO FRAME slides RIK TRADE, flying a biplane blind.

TITLE

HE'S GOING THE WRONG WAY



TV SCREEN

RENEE interviewed at the Zoo.

RENEE

The terrors of the road... they're real - adrenaline plus - whether it's sex or dope or stamp collecting, there has to be a pressure valve...

INTERVIEWER

Stamp collecting?

RENEE

You'd be amazed. I toured with the New Barbarians in '79 and to a man they were enthusiastic stamp collectors -

A WESTERN SALOON CIRCA 1880

Roughly as authentic as Ye Olde Pubbe... RINGO and ADELE contemplate a very American breakfast of pancakes, eggs, ham, sausages, potatoes, grits, pineapple chunks and wonder toast.

Two gas station MECHANICS sit beside them at the counter. Their names are BUDDY BOB and ELVIS.

RINGO tries to drink his coffee. His hand shakes so much that he spills it. BUDDY BOB takes stock of this and RINGO's chains.

BUDDY BOB

Smoke cigarettes?

RINGO ignores him. BUDDY BOB sticks the packet under RINGO's nose.

AT THE POOL TABLE

RENEE and NIX negotiate with three VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS from Ethiopia. The Ethiopians wear graceful bright jalebbas and have BBC accents.

DOCUMENTARIAN 1

No special set-ups, no deliberate dramatisation. We'll pick up what we can, exactly as it happens.

RENEE

We'll need some lien on the material.

DOCUMENTARIAN 2

Naturally.

AT THE COUNTER

BUDDY BOB's cigarette pack hovers under RINGO's nostril. Exasperated, ADELE takes one. BUDDY BOB leans round RINGO to offer her a light.

ELVIS

Cigarette?

And ELVIS's pack of Luckies is under RINGO's nose. RINGO puts out his Woodbine and takes one of ELVIS's. He puts it in his mouth and chews.

AT THE POOL TABLE

RENEE

What do you say, Nix?
Great potential opportunity!

NIX

Great potential headache.

RENEE

These people are ethnographic documentarians, for Christ's sake. They've won prizes.

AT THE COUNTER

RINGO swallows the last of the Luckies. The others watch in silence. He eats the packet too.

RINGO

Want one of mine?

ELVIS accepts the Woodbine. Lights up, draws hard and gets a good glow -

- and stubs it out on the back of his own hand. RINGO sniffs and picks up BUDDY BOB's steak knife. Without a thought he draws it fast across the palm of his hand. A deep white line which rapidly begins to bleed in beats...

RINGO lets the blood drip into his cornflakes.

RENEE

You'll have to keep your eyes open at all times. They're a volatile ensemble.

DOCUMENTARIAN 3

I understand entirely.
I think you'll find we don't
miss many opportunities -

NIX shoots and rips the felt.

AT THE COUNTER

RINGO spoons up the bloody conrflakes with an appetite.
It's the first time we have seen him enjoy his food.
ADELE kisses his ear.

The HORNRIM WAITRESS looks aghast -

WAITRESS' VOICE

I seen the Teen B's on TV, yes
sir, and what they showed, it
made a Christian's hackles rise!
Now Elvis and Buddy Bob are
good boys...

RE-RUN OF THE SAME EVENTS
(THE HORNRIM WAITRESS' VERSION)

ELVIS and BUDDY BOB are eating a hearty breakfast when
a tousel-headed URCHIN rushes in.

URCHIN

(appealingly)

He's a-comin!

He's a-comin!

The juke box breaks. The sun disappears.
And RINGO SHIV throws back the batwing doors - catching
the appealing URCHIN in the spine.
He storms in, snarling like a rabid animal.
ADELE slouches after him, dressed as a Parisian apache.

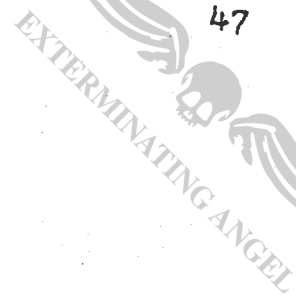
WAITRESS' VOICE

That Ringo was the meanest of the
bunch. He'd chainwhipped motorcycle
gangs. If he'd of bin a critter
you'd of shot him.

Women scream and children cry. A MANGY DOG limps for the
door. RINGO kicks it.

BUDDY BOB

Now hol' on, pard.
No call to kick ol' Shep like that.



RINGO's face twists awfully. His chains rattle.

RINGO
 OH NO? How should I kick him
 then? Like THIS?
 (he boots the dog)
 Or THIS!
 (he punts the dog out of
 the cafe like a football)
 Gimme some grits, old hen.

ELVIS gets down off his stool. Approaches RINGO.

ELVIS
 Waaal see here now...

RINGO whirls around and pulls a knife - ELVIS raises his
 dukes - the WAITRESS puts her hands over her hornrims.

WAITRESS' VOICE
 I couldn't rightly say what
 happened next.

BLACK OUT. CRASH.

SHE TAKES HER HANDS AWAY.

RINGO lies on the floor amid a score of broken ketchup
 bottles. BUDDY BOB is shaking.

BUDDY BOB
 An accident.
 I didn't mean no harm.

A white-haired JUDGE appears. JUDGE SANDERS.

JUDGE
 You'll never be convicted in
 my court, Buddy Bob.

BUDDY BOB
 Gee, thanks Uncle Ray.

ADELE takes aim from the balcony with a 6.5mm Mannlicher-
 Carcano and blows the bunch of them away. THE DREAM ENDS.

ANOTHER DC-10 INTERIOR NIGHT

RINGO and ADELE sit side by side trying to sleep.
 His head is on her shoulder and their mouths are open.

Tobacco smoke drifts over them from the seat behind - where NIX and RENEE and her current BOYFRIEND are sitting pale and wide awake.

NIX

I made a list.
I worked out every single way they could possibly blow the tour. You want to know how many ways I found?

RENEE

Every time you say something like that, Nix, it seems to me you're making an implicit criticism of me and my function here. I'd be obliged -

NIX

All I said was -

Behind them LEN and RON are laughing. A REPORTER crouches by them in the aisle, juggling his microphone. He has a haircut like a toilet brush.

REPORTER

What's this about the Jubilee?

LEN

Dunno. I hear they're looking for one of those "new wave" upcoming bands, like.

REPORTER

But aren't the Teen Bastards the - um - epicenter of the new wave?

LEN

No sir. We're a bunch of punks.

REPORTER

Playing the Joob would be, in any case, a violation of the ethos wouldn't it?

RON

What ethos is that?

LEN

What's an ethos?

RON

You'd better ask Johny.

The REPORTER frowns sincerely, moved by the portentousness of his own question. LEN and RON crack up laughing again.

LEN

Hey Johnny! Wanna beer?

JOHNY doesn't reply.

His eyes are wide open - pupils dilated - staring at the tiny TV set on the seat beside him...

WHITE OUT

BACKSTAGE NIGHT

Country&western over the speakers.
RON is being treated for a cut over his eye.
RINGO is on the phone.

RINGO

(into phone)

No, I didn't.

Yes, I do.

It's just that - well, I'm at the fucking gig aren't I?

No, that's not your fault.

Will you listen to me?

I didn't say it was your fucking fault, did I?

Well then.

It's just we got another set in twenty minutes and -

What do you mean, choose?

I shouldn't have to choose, Adele.

I mean, a gig's a fucking gig -

JOHNY enters, leading LEN. LEN has donned a blindfold and is chain-eating Macdonalds fries.

The three VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS follow, filming them.

RINGO

(into phone)

I'll see you in a sec.

JOHNY

(as RINGO puts the phone down)

Stick around, man. Sweeties.

RINGO

I'll be right back.

JOHNY

We're on soon, Ringo -

RINGO pushes past him, bumps into RENEE in the corridor.

RENEE

Good set, kid. Every time we
play these cowboy bars I feel
we're making converts -
Know what I mean?

She falls into step beside him, down a long brick hallway
beneath lights in wire cages.

RINGO

Making enemies, more like.

RENEE

That's part of it as well - or
hadn't you noticed?
You okay, Ringo?

RINGO

Fucked up.
I'm off the hotel to get straight.

RENEE

You shouldn't split this late.
Hey, Willy's scoring us some parrot.

RINGO

Not for me, thanks.

RENEE

(catching his arm)
Listen, will you stay put?
You can't afford to flake off every
time your girlfriend's on the rag -

RINGO

What's it got to do with her, man?
You're the one that's making me late.
(she holds on)
GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME RENEE!!

He swings his arm loose violently - scratching it open
on his chains - makes as if to clout her -

- a BOUNCER detaches himself from the wall and pinions
RINGO by the wrists.

RENEE

Show him the door.

MOTEL ROOM MID-AFTERNOON

TV on. No sound. The curtains are drawn and the shower is running. Pale bodies lie at random behind sofas and among the empty bottles on the floor.

The door opens. RENEE sticks her head in. Looks around and goes away again.

One of the bodies - a skinny girl maybe fifteen - crawls across the floor looking for clothes.

RINGO enters from another room. He's wrecked.

RINGO

What room is this?

GIRL

I don't know. Got anything for the head?

He shakes his head. Picks up the phone.

RINGO

(into phone)

Send us some coffee over will you?
I don't know what room this is.
Don't you know?

He gives up and goes into the bathroom.
Tips up the toilet lid, extracts a folded paper square in plastic...

The shower stops. RON and another skinny GIRL emerge.

RON ignores RINGO. RINGO ignores RON.

RAS NORMO'S PAD INTERIOR

Impressive emptiness of white walls and chromium railings. Framed pictures of C. Parker and C. Mingus. Skylights and studio speakers.

RON sits on a white couch smoking yellow powder in a wooden pipe.

Beside him on the carpet a lithe, sharp-featured black WOMAN is committing a line drawing to a sketch pad - a drawing of a maze -

RON offers her a smoke. She shakes her head.

A SONG BEGINS over the system - poppy reggae with a female vocalist - RON isn't sure if he should like it or not.

LEN'S VOICE
My Boy Lollipop, right?

LEN and RAS NORMO enter from another wing of the penthouse.

NORMO
That's a dead example, Len.
Remember Desmond Dekker - ?

RON leaps up and starts to bop like a speed skater - singing out the corner of his mouth -

RON
Wake up every morning
Bake beans for breakfast
Just so that every mouth can
Be fed!

RON & LEN
Ooooo-eee-oooo-eee-ooooo
The ISRAELIYITES!:

NORMO fills the pipe. Unimpressed, the WOMAN takes her book into another room.

RON
(instantly)
Ey, who's the bird, Ras?

NORMO
Friend of mine.
What about these tunes, Ron?

RON
Ska, innit!
Skinhead music.

LEN
You should know, mate. He he he.

The tape ends. A hiss before the next song begins.
LEN takes the pipe from NORMO. Draws -

- this song has no words. The unseen vocalist coasts through a sea of alien expressive sounds.

NORMO
She isn't really trying here...

LEN
Are you kidding?

The WOMAN moves back across the room - looking for something in the space where she was working - moving like a prowling animal - the focus of six eyes -

LEN
What are they called.

NORMO
Interrogators.
An opinion, Len.

LEN
She's really out there, man.
She's ace. The band... I don't know. You want nutcases in there, just to do her justice...

NORMO
(pointedly)
Exactly.

RON
We want you to produce us again.
Did Len tell you? The two of us don't get along with Jean-Jacques.

NORMO
I'm offering you something else instead.

RON
But we're the Bastards.

NORMO
Sure you're the Bastards, brother.
You're the Bastards for as long as punky rock is news.
Then what?

LEN.
End of the world, of course.
They make us join the army.

NORMO
I'm talking transcendence.
Fuck the fashion.

LEN
It's spade music, Normo.
We're not spades.

NORMO

Pretend that you're the Stones.

RON

Who wants to do that?

LEN

I don't think I could manage it.
I don't reckon I'm... old enough.

NORMO

(sadly)
You never will be, then.
Go play the Joob instead.

TV SCREEN

RON and an INDIAN GURU at the Hilton.

GURU

How great is the divide between us?

RON

How many donkeys have you got?

GURU

Physical possession is irrelevant,
my son.

RON

Give 'em to me, then.

LIMO INTERIOR NIGHT

The TEEN BASTARDS minus JOHNY lounge in the back seat in
a miasma of smoke. RENEE rides in front with ADELE.

RENEE

(leaning back)

We'll be on the air for twenty
minutes, then we have to start
back -

ADELE

How long??
We've been driving for two
fucking hours!

RENEE

It's not my fault the only cool
radio station in LA is in
El Monte, Adele...

LEN

How come we have to do this
and not Johnny?

THE POLO LOUNGE NIGHT

The Santa Anas blow hot dirt into the suave surroundings. Crowded in behind a half-effective SCREEN is a tight enclave consisting of NIX MERDY, ERNIE ROUNDS, a grey-templed IMPRESSARIO, a liveried ROYAL CHAMBERLAIN, two Vegas MAFIOSI, a KLANSMAN, and our JOHNY...

IMPRESSARIO

(fixed smile throughout)

It's settled then.
According to this contract you
will play one set of some forty
minutes duration commencing at
3 p.m. on the 31st of the inst.
presumptive in the grounds of
Windsor Palace.

NIX nods several times, JOHNY only once.

IMPRESSARIO

In return for said consideration,
the Royal Chamberlain will deliver
to Nix Merdysongs Incorporated
the sum, in Krugerands, of -

KNUT RADIO EL MONTE

A tiny room festooned with posters and drug pin-ups from High Times. A glass partition. Behind it, ADELE, RENEE and a sleeping ENGINEER.

At the studio table sit RON, LEN and RINGO - facing popular DEEJAY SLIM BURT O'HOOLIGAN. BURT is not slim and not much of a hooligan.

RON is animated. LEN blindfold. RINGO catatonic.

BURT

But Queen are pretty popular
in England, aren't they?

RON

I wouldn't know.
I'm a tax exile, see?

BURT

Ron the Ripper's only kidding,
of course. One of the - uh - big
things about the New Wave is how
it, like, rejects the big-bizniz
money-oriented lifestyle, right?

RON

(baffled)

Oh, right.

BURT

This is Slim Burt O'Hooligan
on KNUT El Monte, 66.6 FM.
We'll be right back after these
exceedingly important words...

COMMERCIAL BREAK

A CENTURY CITY BOARDROOM

The longest board-table west of Wall St.
A surface of polished marble which reflects THE MEL-LOS -
- three well-scrubbed popular saviors in satin suits,
gold chains, immaculately backlit hair-do's. They have
red eyes and runny noses, and speak with New Zealand accents.

MELLO 1

Hi, I'm Bill.

MELLO 2

I'm Bob.

MELLO 3

And I'm the cute one, Benny.

FLASH screaming teenies, disco-ing tootsies in the dance
halls of the nation.

MELLO 1

We just dig making our music.

MELLO 2

And making you feel good.

MELLO 3

(intimately)

And you. Especially you.

MELLO 1

Hi.

MELLO 2
(almost boldly)
We're not here to give you any
"B.S." message.

MELLO 3
We just want to let it flow...

MELLO 1
Hi.

MELLO 2
Flow with the Mel-Los.
On OPEN HAND RECORDS AND TAPES.

Vast OPEN HAND corporate logo is slapped across the screen.
A SUBDIVISION OF INTERMEDIA BLOWOUT HUMAN RESOURCES INC.

MELLO 1
And by the way, do remember that
all unauthorised reproduction of
your records - by any means -

MELLO 2
And that includes singing along
with them.

MELLO 1
- is punishable with a fifteen
thousand dollar fine -

MELLO 2
And on subsequent conviction,
five to ten.

MELLO 3
(intimately)
Be smart. Don't get into unauthorised
reproduction. It's a bummer in the
end. And if you know anyone who does,
give me a call at this number.
(a PHONE # appears)
It's toll free.

BACK IN THE STUDIO

SLIM BURT is staring at RINGO's forearms, which are covered
with scars. Cigarette burns pock the backs of his hands.
The GREEN LIGHT flashes repeatedly -

BURT
 (hastily)
 Ah - where's Johnny tonight?

LEN
 Couldn't tell you.

RON
 Doin' something else.

BURT
 Perhaps Ringo can enlighten us...

RINGO
 (stirring)
 Whaaaa - ?

BURT
 Well. Um.
 If any of you would like to call
 in and ask Ron, or Len, or Ringo
 of the Teen Bastards a question,
 well, I'd love to hear from you.
 So call in, huh?
 Okay?

TAXI INTERIOR NIGHT

NIX and JOHNNY sit at opposite corners of the seat,
 not talking. NIX is huge and smoking desperately.
 JOHNNY small and wan, electric.

LEN'S VOICE
 (on the radio)
 Yer daft fart, Ringo! He's bust
 the ring pull off!

RON'S VOICE
 Give 'im another can -

NIX
 Quite a night, eh?
 Quite a night.
 What say we stop off at some
 dive, eh? Pull a couple of tarts?

No answer.

IN THE STUDIO

RINGO's trembling fingers manage to open the second can
 of beer. The bubbling brew covers the tabletop.

BURT

We've got ourselves a caller
here. Who's this, please?

VOICE

Hey, this is Ronny, man.

BURT

Ronny, okay, arrright!
This is Slim Burt O'Hooligan.
What's your favorite radio show?
Hello?
Hello?

The line is dead.

LEN shakes up another can and drenches the whole room.
RINGO chucks the dead one at the wall and it explodes.

BACKSTAGE ANOTHER GIG

The TEEN BASTARDS are gathered in full regalia in a dressing
room which has more individual naked light bulbs than the
marquee outside.

NIX MERDY paces the floor in a long yellow duster, dripping
wet. RENEE chops medicine up on a mirror.

Raw hostility is as naked as the light bulbs.

RINGO

I won't do it.
You've gone too fucking far.

LEN

He's right, Nix.
We should have been consulted.

RON

Hang about. I thought so too
at first - I really did - but I
don't know now - maybe he's right.

RINGO

No he isn't.
He's entirely out of order.
(scornfully)
You ought to sack him, Johnny.

JOHNY

Fuck off.

RON

*Listen - it doesn't have to be
a cop-out, not if we do it right.

JOHNY

Bleeding AUDACIOUS is what it's
going to be.

LEN

It's just a fucking piss-take,
isn't? Same as everything else.

RINGO sits on the dressing table, dangling his legs.
He's more coherent than he's been in quite a while.
He stares at his white feet.

RINGO

If that's the way you see it,
go ahead.
I'm taking my toys home.

RENEE

I don't dig the contention, you
know? When all is said and done
it's just a GIG.
And you need gigs.

NIX

(turning on her - the
safest target)

It isn't "just a gig" Renee.
It's her fucking majesty's Silver
Jubilee and my beloved brother Ern
has wangled long and hard to get
us on the bill and score us heaps
of bread now some fucking snot-nose
apology for an anarchist -

RINGO

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO
BE YOU FUCKING CUNT!

NIX

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A MUSICIAN
- LEARN TO PLAY YOUR FUCKING
INSTRUMENT!

FLASHBACK

to NIX as a small boy in voluminous shorts, selling union
jacks to tourists at a seaside town parade...

TOO KOOL TO DIE

A STORY OF UNNATURAL LOVE

by ALEX COX

SOMEHOW, THIS
REPLACED PG. 61
IN THE "OFFICIAL"
VERSION...

© 1980

ADELE

When I was fourteen I was
kidnapped by the Weather Underground.
They made me rob post offices in
Marin County. It was them that
turned me on to junk. I was
hypnotised.

RINGO

(listlessly)

Me too.

Robbed Tesco's in Stoke Poges.

ADELE -

I've killed babies.

(silence)

Your turn.

RINGO lays the fix aside and stretches out on the bed.
ADELE lies down beside him.

ADELE

You've done the right thing.
You're the only one that really
believes in what we're doing,
Ringo. That's worth something.

RINGO

Who gives a fuck.

She starts to tease his matted hair back into spikes.
He turns his back on her.

RINGO

Leave it out for now, okay?
Don't hassle me about it.

Her hands trace the marks of fingernails down his back.

ADELE

They're so full of shit it makes
me sick. After fucking OBE's
the lot of them.
Ringo - don't get mad with me
because of them...

RINGO leaps up and slams into the bedside table -
knocks it over smashing lamps -

RINGO

I AM NOT FUCKING MAD AT YOU
YOU STUPID COW!

She's on her feet as well - instantly as wired and angry
as he is -

RINGO
Lay off provoking me okay.

She throws a chair at him. He's too slowed-down to duck.

ADELE
Well go to hell you prat!
Whyncha stick your face in the
fire you're fucking with the
only friend you got -

RINGO
Get the fuck out then!

ADELE pivots, grabs her clothes and marches for the door.
RINGO dives and tackles her - they fall down scratching
and fighting -

RINGO
(grinning)
... only kidding ...

ADELE untenses - PAN TO a TV screen depicting CUTE CARTOON
ANIMALS marching off to war.

FADE IN the sound of many voices CHANTING -

VOICES
BASTARDS BASTARDS BASTARDS
BASTARDS BASTARDS

AWOL 80 CLUB NYC NIGHT

A swollen mass of SERIOUS PUNKS waits on the debris floor.
Shaven heads, leather and fixed expressions of grim anticipation.
The house lights are still up.

PUNKS
BASTARDS BASTARDS BASTARDS
BASTARDS BASTARDS BASTARDS

WE SLIDE into the crowd - odd faces that we recognise -
RENEE with her familiar contingent of reporters - SLIM BURT
O'HOOLIGAN and NIX competing for the nymphets - ADELE perched
on the edge of the stage -

- and RIK TRADE, the blind private eye.

TRADE canes his way into the auditorium accompanied by SPAZ RAZER - whose newly-waxed cranium glisters like a lightbulb. SPAZ grabs TRADE by the gannex-enfolded arm.

SPAZ

She's over there, man.
Sitting on the stage.

TRADE

(grimly)
Point thine arrow straight and true.

SPAZ angles TRADE in the right direction.
Electricity begins to tingle in the air.
The lights are going down.

SPAZ

Hey, dad. Better wait till
the the lights come back...

TRADE

What difference does that make?

SPAZ

No - you don't understand -

But TRADE, his goal almost attained, isn't going to let a little PUNK SOIREE stand in his way.

Clik-clik-clik- he's easing himself a path across the dance floor.

The lights are out. Screams. Shouts.
The TEEN BASTARDS pad onstage in the gloom.
Clik-clik-clik-

PA VOICE

(distorted)

-- last night in new york city -
- ladiesungennelmen -
- the TEEEEEEN BAAAASTAAAARDS!

JOHNY

Onetwothreefour!

The dance area erupts instantly into THREE CONCENTRIC HUMAN CIRCLES -

THE OUTERMOST - the largest - consists of rock critics, sensation-seekers, table-sitters and other pussies -

THE INTERMEDIARY is a tighter DMZ of parasites who come to push the boys and feel the girls' behinds. Occasionally one of these types is bollocked or dragged into

THE INNER CIRCLE - where all is sliding swirling intertwining mania - a morass of crashing and colliding bodies that makes perfect sense where you can't hear the music any more and all that matters is to stay on your feet -

RIK TRADE is caught in the dead center of the inner circle. In his homburg hat and shades and dirty coat he is the epitome of punk. And hence the most attractive target in the room.

JOHNY sings through showers of spit.
RINGO plays and doesn't move.
The band is hot tonight.

JOHNY

Gimme gimme gimme

Gimme stuff I never seen
Gimme an insane machine
Makes me what I want to be
Junk that ain't no good for me

Gimme gimme gimme -

Switchblade knives
Readers' wives
Christian values in our daily lives

Swimming pools
Charm schools
Lots and lots of brand new rules

High chlorestorol
Alcohol
Lookin' for a piece of 'ole
(a bottle hits him in the face)
YOU CUNTS!

Amazingly TRADE seems to be holding his own against the frenzied mob - he lays about him with his stick and cuts a trail towards ADELE -

- who sits, unknowing, eyes wired to RINGO.

JOHNY

*You know what I wanna be
I wanna be the BBC
I'm the Man and I am Jesus
Go out and gerrus some believers

Beauty queens
M-16s
Acid patches on me jeans

Pretty things
Penis rings
Weekly checks the postman brings

Dole queues
Who's Who's
Rip the locks off public loos

Almost within reach of ADELE, TRADE collides with a
FAT PUNK who shoves him back into the fray. TRADE reels
and nearly falls - belabours the PUNK with his stick -

JOHNY

Brand new needles
Safety pins
Six consecutive bingo wins

Half crowns
Melt downs
How many roubles to the pound?
(shouting)

YOU GOT IT YET/YET/YET/YET/YET/YET/YET/YET/YET/YE

The crowd is frantic. People jump on stage and RON
enthusiastically throws them off. The air is thick with
spit and beer.

Several BOUNCERS propel TRADE empty-handed to the exit -

- and in the break between the songs ADELE and RINGO gob
spitballs at each other. They're very much in love.

RENEE'S VOICE

He isn't going to change his mind.

NIX'S VOICE

He has to. Fuckin' punk.

TEN SECONDS AFTER THEIR ENCORE

the TEEN BASTARDS are running down an endless brick-walled
corridor that's jammed with people. RON and RINGO carry
their guitars - zonked - elated - rushed - worn out -

- and very POPULAR. Hands reach out to grab and pat and punch them from all sides. The BASTARDS run faster. NOISE.

In the nighttime street outside CAR HEADLIGHTS beckon them.

NIX
(running)
Not the first car.
That's the decoy.
Take the second one.

As they run -

LEN'S VOICE
(over)
That's what's so great about
the States. Everything's the
fucking same, from coast to coast.
There's no surprises.

RON'S VOICE
(over)
Is Rio in the States, Nix?
What say we go to Rio?

JOHNY'S VOICE
(over)
What exactly did you mean about
the DONKEYS, Ron?

They're almost out the door.
A punkish KID in Saigon mirror shades grabs JOHNY by the coat. JOHNY shakes him off and piles into the limo.

Undeterred, the KID grabs RINGO's hand - extends a bundle -

RINGO
(stopping)
That for me?

KID
Sure is.

The KID shoots him.

BLACK OUT

TV SCREEN

A fat nervous DETECTIVE talks to reporters on the hospital forecourt. A traffic jam of ambulances behind a picket line.

DETECTIVE

It's a gang-related incident.
We've had a number of same lately.
Public figures - mostly basketball
players - shot by adolescent kids.
(proudly)
This is our first rock star...

REPORTER

You have a suspect, Chief?

DETECTIVE

We have several suspects -

HOSPITAL ROOM INTERIOR NIGHT

Private, expansive, plateglass Manhattan night.
RINGO's bed is hidden by a screen.

RINGO

What if someone comes?

ADELE

Do you want to or not?

RINGO

Course I do.

WE TRACK PAST artifacts - dog collar, leather trousers,
chains and studs and a large can of brylcreem -

- and come to rest on ADELE and RINGO. She's dressed
in white like Florence Nightingale. He has a huge wad
of dressings round his throat.

They're shooting up.

ADELE

You ought to ask 'em for this.

RINGO

(surprised)
Tell em I'm an addict?

ADELE

Sure. Aren't you?

RINGO

I hadn't thought about it.

ADELE
You really should, you know.
They'll give you meth at least.

RINGO lays back as the junk spreads out across his body.
More peaceful moment into moment...

RINGO
I never thought you'd come.

ADELE
Why?

RINGO
I thought you'd had enough.
You must be fucking crazy, then...

The smack flows.

ADLE
Crazy fucking.

She kisses him. Angular frames against the skyline.
She puts the light out -

- and the door flies open.
JOHNY and two striking Voguesque MODELS burst in.
A bottle glitters.

JOHNY
Ringo - baby!

He puts the lights back on.
RINGO and ADELE are frozen in an incompleated act of
sixty-eight-and-seven-eighths. Dope-lethargic...

ADELE
Who is it?

RINGO
My mate John. Who else.

LATER

JOHNY sits beside the bed drinking his Jack Daniels.
The MODELS snort ADELE's dope in semi-darkness, poised
and uncomfortable.

RINGO watches JOHNY. ADELE pretends to sleep.

RINGO
Brought us a tape have you?

JOHNY
It's not ready yet.
Anyway, you haven't got a
tape player.

RINGO
You could have brought that too.

JOHNY
Sorry dear. Want a drink?
(RINGO shakes his head)
You want to hear it over a good
system in any case. I'll get Nix
to send you some speakers.

RINGO
The system don't matter -

JOHNY
Did I tell you I ditched Jean-Jacques?
Fucking pretender that one. Couldn't
produce his way out of a paper bag.

MODEL 1
Are we staying here or what?

JOHNY
No, we're off to Number One's, girls.
(to RINGO)
Anything you want?

RINGO is laughing to himself - a thought he's had -

JOHNY
What's up, mate?
Pretty funny hmmm?

RINGO
I just thought -
(stonily)
No Jubilee for Johnny now.

JOHNY gets up - uncomfortable - starts to walk around
and look at things -

JOHNY
You got a great place, man.
You ought to see if you can
move in here.

(CONTINUED -)

JOHNY
(mega-casual)

We - ah -
We asked Spaz if he wanted to
do bass. Just this once.
He hasn't worked much since the
Space Cretins, but he's - all there -
you know? It's only temporary -
till you're well again, like.
What do you think?

RINGO doesn't think a thing.

HOTEL QUANSETT EXTERIOR ALMOST DAWN

A yellow cab pulls up with JOHNY and the MODELS in the back.

JOHNY
Wait here, driver.
(to the girls)
Continue.

MODEL 1
But if it doesn't happen, how
can I not experience it?

MODEL 2
You've got your premise wrong.
Just because a tree falls in
the forest -

MODEL 1
I'm hip to that, but it doesn't
prove your point. It's just
routine reductivism -

MODEL 2
Only if you take a narrow view.
Empirically speaking -

JOHNY's eyes water, dart from one MODEL to the other.
He's sitting opposite them on the jump seat, masturbating.
He comes.

JOHNY
Okay thanks girls.
See you tomorrow night.

He hands them envelopes and gets out of the taxi.

THUNDER.

COMMERCIAL BREAK

A TRAVELOGUE. Its title is:

LEAVE YOUR CARES BEHIND YOU!
SUNNY PUERTO PUTÓN BECKONS YOU!

Over the inevitable swaying palms and multistorey tower-blocks by the beach, a sincerely hearty VOICE intones -

VOICE
It's a FACT that for the PREMIER VACATION of your ENTIRE LIFE you cannot do better than COME to sunny PUERTO PUTÓN (that's native for "Have a Long and Happy Sex Life!")

Now HAPPY TOURISTS in gas-guzzling convertibles stream down the Aeropuerto Superhighway through a desolate wasteland of earthquake-ruins and endless wooden huts.

Cheerful starving NATIVES doff their hats.

VOICE
You won't see an unhappy face in PUERTO PUTÓN - that's because unhappiness has been OUTLAWED!

HAPPY CHILDREN beg in freeway traffic pile-ups
HAPPY PEASANT WOMEN gang-raped by the ARMY
HAPPY CORPSES buried by bulldozer in a common grave

VOICE
And INTERNATIONAL CELEBRITIES seem to agree with Presidente Colon who said recently that DOURNESS IS WORSE THAN DEATH!

HAPPY INTERNATIONAL CELEBRITIES in a variety of Rio poses.

VOICE
Among recent arrivals are DONA ADELITA O'HIGGINS, a society hostess whose passions include Proust and social welfare -

DONA O'HIGGINS at the airport.

VOICE
Italian prelate CARDINAL FRANCO FARELLI, whom local police have been trying to interview in connection with the murders of leading communists -

CARDINAL FARELLI at the airport.

VOICE

And two members of the popular
Teen B---BLEEP---ds singing group,
here to absorb EL SOL and get
their -

RON and LEN at the airport. THE FILM BREAKS.

THE VAULTED HALLS OF ARISTIDE SAUROPALOS' MANSION

Encroaching dawn illuminates the Woolworths Art on every
wall. ARISTIDE and RIK TRADE amble down the aisle.

ARISTIDE

I say again, sir, you astound me.
You refuse to accept a penny more
than your scale Welfare Detective
Minimum, and promise me my daughter
in time for my wife's birthday!

TRADE

That is my way, Mr Sauropalos.

They pause in the hall while ARISTIDE goads a sleepy
servant into opening the oaken door.

SUNRISE OVER BEL-AIR.

ARISTIDE grips TRADE's hand.

ARISTIDE

You are a remarkable man, Mr. Trade.

TRADE

I was an astronaut.

ARISTIDE

An astronaut - ?

TRADE

I lost that which was most precious
to me in the Venus Landing.

FLASHBACK

to the younger, bright-eyed TRADE trussed into a combo
space-suit and cradle hammock as the VENUSIAN EXCURSION
MODULE burns its retrojets towards the hard glass surface
of the alien world.

Young TRADE exchanges thumbs-up with his fellow ASTRONAUTS
and punches a new clip into his automatic.

AND TWENTY FEET ABOVE THE PLANET one of the retrojets cuts out -

- the craft begins to tumble -

- it hits the dirt off-balance and collapses in upon itself. The fuel tanks explode.

INSIDE THE CRAFT blue nitrous flames consume the space suits and their contents -

YELLOW OUT

ARISTIDE'S DOORSTEP, DAWN

ARISTIDE
The... Venus landing?
When was this?

TRADE
(impassive)
1963.

ARISTIDE knows better than to ask further questions. They shake hands again.

ARISTIDE
What's this?

There is a small brown envelope in his hand. TRADE sniffs the morning air.

TRADE
My expenses.

ARISTIDE
But of course.

TRADE crunches down the path, briskly swishing his cane. ARISTIDE goes back inside and opens the envelope. He reads it walking and his knees go soft -

TRADE'S VOICE
(sepulchral, over)
To establish rapport with informant,
ten kilos of heroin, \$1,750,000.
To expedite swift pursuit, one Lear
Jet rental with option to buy...

A sleepy SERF appears with cocktails on a platinum tray.

SERF

Your marina swingers, sir.

ARISTIDE beats the poor fellow mercilessly.

LANGAN'S BRASSERIE PICCADILLY DAY

RINGO toys with an elaborate meal involving shellfish and peach slices. ADELE picks at a plate of oysters.

RINGO's neck is in a brace which totally engulfs his none-too-prominent chin.

RINGO

Wish I was on me holidays.

(no response)

I wonder what Ron and Len are up to. Bet they're having a few laughs.

(ADELE looks at him like he's an idiot)

Heard from your people have you?

ADELE

No.

Mandy at the Masque told me a funny thing. She said my old man hired a detective...

RINGO

What for?

ADELE

To keep my name out of the papers.

RINGO

Fuck that shit. You believe her?

ADELE

Not really. They're too cheap.

RINGO

I thought your folks were rolling in it.

ADELE

Not where Adele's involved. What's this we're drinking?

(he picks up the bottle)

Don't throw it.

RINGO

I'm reading.
"COGNAC RESERVE ESPECIAL
FORMIDABLE CINQ ETOILES"
So now you know.

ADELE

Let's split.
I want to get healthy.

RINGO helps himself to oysters.

RINGO

In a minute.

ADELE

You're real skinny, Ringo.

RINGO

I love you too.

ADELE

Hey, it's kool.

A man in a dirty white linen suit approaches them.
MARIO, a suave American gigolo of forty-nine.
He sniffs a lot.

MARIO

It's been a long time, Ringo.

He gives RINGO the Revolutionary Handshake.
Sits down at their table. Gazes intently into their
respective eyes. Neither RINGO nor ADELE has ever met
this guy before.

MARIO

Adele, you look the same as ever.
I'm Mario. We met at Figaro's.
Of course Adele remembers.

He kisses her hand.

RINGO

Oh, right enough.
We was just off actually -

MARIO

(cocking his head)
Sambuca for the road?

RINGO

Yer what?

MARIO

Just out of interest, Ringo,
who's handling you these days?

A WAITER coughs - a deft intrusion.

MARIO

Tercente sambuscado penitente!

WAITER

I'm sorry.
You all have to leave.

MARIO

(freaking out)
What do you mean!
These people are my guests -
personal friends of "Il Mario" -
I demand to speak to Gasconne!

WAITER

You don't understand m'sieu.
It's a small matter of a -
(mumbles)
- bomb scare.

MARIO

Oh for heaven's sake!

WAITER

Undoubtedly a hoax, but...

THE BOMB EXPLODES.

Furniture and semi-evacuated DINERS are thrown across
the room. The bistro fills with smoke and the ceiling
collapses. Smoke and dust and maimed screams.

ADELE

I can't find my shoes!

A HOTEL ROOM ABOVE THE CITY

Very crisp and pristine.

MARIO is in the bathroom with the blow dryer.
RINGO and ADELE shoot dilaudid in bed. Their charred
clothes are disintegrating on the sheets.

MARIO

Of course what I'm suggesting would involve a fuller sound - it's not for nothing that I've been called the Phil Spector of the New Wave - but that's not something you would have to deal with personally - you'd be a whole lot freer than you've been with the bastards, speaking artisticwise...

RINGO and ADELE look at each other and laugh. They laugh so quietly we can hardly hear them. Grinning RINGO cuffs her in the face -

RINGO

You love me?

IL CAMPESINO NIGHTCLUB PUERTO PUTÓN NIGHT

Mirror balls, stuffed animals, three dancefloors paved with banknotes.

Deafening disco music and middleaged sedated feet.

RON and LEN are judges in a disco-dancing contest. Beside them sit CARDINAL FARELLI and DONA O'HIGGINS.

Applause. It's scorecard time.

LEN

Ey, Ron.
Which one's supposed to win?

RON

Number nine.

FARELLI

(overhearing)
Is number ten, no?

LEN

Uh-oh.

The "judges" raise their scorcards randomly. The canned applause falters.

EMCEE

And the winners of the Gran Disco-Dancing Contestad -

The EMCEE darts a black glance at the judges and ignores them.

EMCEE

*Police Chief Juan Bananas and
his lovely partner Rosy!

Cheers and instant disco music.

LEN

This really sucks.

RON

(philosophically)
It's a part of life, Len.
Same as cripples.

ACROSS THE ROOM

RENEE MANANA, en safari-suit, is arguing with two uniformed
GUARDIAS MUNICIPALES. She carries an Aerificagos Putón
travelling-bag.

GUARDIA 1

No one to approach the judges'
table. Thank you please.

RENEE

Listen to me, will you?
Those two judges over there
are musicians and they have a gig
tomorrow. A gig, you dig?
(the GUARDIA shrugs)
I'm their managero. Agente.
I have to put them on a plane -

GUARDIA 1

They play for money?
They will not forget.

GUARDIA 2 laughs and GUARDIA 1 looks pleased with himself.
RENEE tries to push past them -

RENEE

You don't understand!

GUARDIA 2

Is you don't understand.
Sit down please.

She snorts and slips between them.
GUARDIA 1 draws his revolver.
GUARDIA 2 humanely fells her with his baton.

RENEE hits the money-plastered floor in a coma.

WINDSOR CASTLE BARRACKS NIGHT

JOHNY and SPAZ RAZER are being briefed by a LADY CAPTAIN OF DRAGOONS, in red braid and busby. A map of the Castle grounds adorns the walls.

MEDIA TYPES, ENTERTAINERS and ARMED SOLDIERS mingle getting in each other's way -

CAPTAIN

(pointing to the map)

... holding your positions until ordered to advance to Ginger/Baker/One. (she points)

At approximately twelve-ought-seven you will proceed to Badger/Delta/Zero for a sound check.

(she points)

At thirteen-thirty hours retreat to Gamma/Neddy/Ding Dong for press photographs with the Royal Family and their pets...

Nearby an AIR FORCE LIEUTENANT advises a VENTRILOQUIST -

LIEUTENANT

We don't expect trouble but naturally we have to be on our guard...

VENTRILOQUIST

(hugging his dummy)

I still don't see why you should have to search Maurice!

NIX arrives with a POLICE ESCORT, looking like his pants are on fire.

SPAZ

What's up, Nix?
Trousers on fire?

NIX walks right through him - gets a heavy grip on JOHNY's shoulder - spirits him away -

CASA DE LAS PUTAS PUERTO PUTÓN MORNING

RON and LEN are in bed together. Female feet extend from underneath the covers. The bed rails drip with handcuffs and silk scarves...

One of LEN's eyes opens.
It is very bloodshot.

LEN

Ey, Ron...
Wasn't we supposed to be
somewhere today..?

IN THE GROUNDS OF WINDSOR CASTLE NIGHT

Gangs of workmen labour over son-et-lumière.
NIX smokes cigarettes while JOHNY throws a fit.

JOHNY -

Is they wanna walk out on me
well FUCKING LET 'EM! I don't
give a shit, got it? They can
go their own sweet fucking way
from now on, all three of them!

SPAZ

You weren't counting on Ringo,
Johnny. He made his position clear.

JOHNY

I don't give a shit about Ringo's
POSITION man! Ditto for Len and
what's-his-name. They LET THE
BAND DOWN and that's all that
matters - the FUCKING BASTARDS LET
THE BASTARDS DOWN!!

Etcetera.

NIX lights another cigarette and listens for a while.
He flicks the ash away -

PUERTO PUTÓN JAIL MUNICIPAL LONG NIGHT

Snores and screams and sounds of vomiting and shitting.
RENEE sits on the stone floor, back against the wet stone
wall, knees drawn up beneath her chin.

Cigarette ash lands at her feet.
She picks it up and sniffs it, wistfully.

NIX'S VOICE

(via transatlantic phone)
Give me the number for the Hilton.
And the Gran Metropolis. And the
Gusano del Sol. How many other
five-stars are there..?

ANOTHER HOTEL ROOM

Daylight pokes in through venetian blinds.
 RINGO is asleep.
 The TV is on - a news programme which ADELE's watching idly.

TV ANNOUNCER

-would inevitably lead to the
 destruction of all life on earth.
 (reassuring smile)
 Today in Windsor, England, the
 balladeers of three decades paid
 musical tribute to her Royal Highness
 on the occasion of her Silver
 Jubilee as Majesty...

ADELE shakes RINGO - trying to wake him -

ADELE

Ringo!
 It's the bastards!

RINGO doesn't stir. She slaps him - no response -
 looks around for something stronger - finds a razor blade -

ON SCREEN

the TEEN BASTARDS appear, playing amid a swathe of union
 jacks and mylar danglers.

The BASTARDS' line-up is JOHNY, SPAZ, and a SYNTHETICS
 EXPERT with long frizzy hair and a beard. The song is
 mostly instrumental. Synthetic organ and a drum machine.

They are another band entirely.

JOHNY

We vote Tory in this town
 Live above the Underground
 Have a pint and wipe our feet
 Beat the wife and go to sleep -

IN THE HOTEL ROOM

ADELE works desperately to wake up RINGO.
 She draws the blade across his chest.
 A slow beadwork of blood appears.

ADELE

Jesus, Ringo! Check it out -
 that dude's got a BEARD!

The news item ends.
ADELE watches the blood spread. She's so fascinated that she draws another line across his chest - forming an X -

She turns over, goes to sleep.

WINDSOR CASTLE INTERIOR

SPAZ and JOHNY tiptoe down a winding stone staircase. They carry several items of booty - tiaras, a coronet, two oil paintings - they're looking for the back door.

SPAZ
Which way now?

JOHNY
Down again, I suppose.

SPAZ
I'm not going near the fuckin' dungeons, man -

They turn a corner and collide with a drunken LORD, asleep on his haunches. He stirs and seems about to wake. FOOTSTEPS on the stairs above them.

JOHNY
In here quick!

BANQUET ROOM INTERIOR

SPAZ and JOHNY pile in and slam the door. They flatten up against it, turn around, and find

CROWN PRINCESS PENELOPE fucking THE SHAH OF PERSIA and the LADY CAPTAIN OF DRAGOONS on the banqueting table.

SPAZ
(choking)
Princess Penelope!

An embarrassed silence. The SHAH attempts to adjust his dress. The CAPTAIN shields Her Royal Highness. JOHNY and SPAZ attempt to hide the stuff they've stolen.

PENELOPE
We won't say nothing if youse don't.

JOHNY

Fair dooz.
Where's the back door?

ANOTHER HOTEL ROOM

RINGO and ADELE alone and naked with the curtains drawn.

RINGO

What did you do it for?

ADELE

I don't know.
He was kinda cute.

RINGO

I don't want to lose you.

ADELE

Nobody said -

RINGO

I'll give you everything you
want, Adele.
You're the only friend I've got.

ADELE

Don't talk like that.
It's fucking disgusting.

RINGO

I don't want to l -

ADELE

Do something about it then.
Fucking make me want to stay.

LATER

Still in bed. ADELE's tightening RINGO's dog-collar,
one notch at a time.

ADELE

Can you breathe?

He shakes his head.
She slides on top of him.
They fuck quickly.

IN A BOARDROOM

high above the ripe LA air, NIX sits surrounded by TOPFLIGHT EXECUTIVES gaping in rank alarm.

EXEC 1

They signed a contract...

NIX

They don't like each other any more.

At the far end of the table, a venerable MASS of white hair, foot-long fingernails and portable life-support systems. It stirs in its cradle. The CHIEF.

CHIEF

What about the record.

NIX

The Bastards laid down ten tracks. Four of them are actually finished. Then there's the demo single - it's quite a collector's item - and Johnny has a lot more numbers up his sleeve.

EXEC 2

Enough material for an album?

NIX

I think so. Yes. Especially if we let Ringo do a couple of songs.

CHIEF

In time for Christmas.

NIX

Well - ah -

CHIEF

Let us give thanks.

He pushes a button on his console and the EXEC'S' heads all bow in unison. SHEEP MAY SAFELY GRAZE begins to play.

NORMO'S VOICE

(over)

Separate studios is the only way to do it. Johnny can sing the words in London, Ringo can lay the bass down in New York -

(CONTINUED)

NORMO'S VOICE
(CONTINUED)

Len and Ron can stay in Tokyo
or wherever they are - that way
they never have to see each other!

NIX'S VOICE
In time for Christmas...

NORMO'S VOICE
You said that... Not me.

RECORDING STUDIO INTERIOR DAY

Lots of potted palms. Bored session men and engineers
on overtime. SPAZ and RAS NORMO in the control room.

The NARCOTICS SQUAD wanders through searching for illicit
substances. The cops have red eyes and are uncoordinated.
Snow on their boots.

In the booth a black DETECTIVE chats to NORMO.

DETECTIVE
Quite a set-up you got here.

NORMO
Know how much longer you're
going to be?

DETECTIVE
No. The Man moves in mysterious ways.

NORMO
Somebody gotta pay for this place
while you're doing your thing.

DETECTIVE
Don't shit me.
If we weren't here you dudes'd
be smoking or sniffing or having
yourselves some fucking orgy.
Ain't that the way it is?

NORMO
I guess so...
(to SPAZ)
Is "he" still in there?

SPAZ
I'll go take a look.

SPAZ pushes the door into the studio and is almost stifled by a wave of tropical heat.

POLICEMEN poke around among the potted plants and palm trees. You cannot see the walls.

SPAZ

Ringo?

GUITAR NOTES guide him through the jungle.
A tape loop of crickets starts to play.

And SPAZ encounters RINGO sitting underneath a banyan tree. Nearby jacuzzi water bubbles softly.

RINGO

How you doing, Spaz.

RINGO tunes his guitar. Thinner than ever.
Like a praying mantis sitting on a stick.

SPAZ

Sounds good.

RINGO

(concentrating)

It's not ready yet...

SPAZ

Must be pretty near, Ringo.
You've been tuning it all day.

RINGO grunts. Tightens another string. It breaks.
A high electric disappearing scream.

SPAZ

I'll get you another.

RINGO

It doesn't matter.
I don't use that one too much.

SPAZ shrugs and climbs into the jacuzzi.

RINGO

Why don't you stop by, mate?
See me and her.

SPAZ

Where are you at now Ringo?

RINGO
The Kon-Tiki.
It's a motel on La Bamba.

SPAZ nods, submerges.

IN THE BOOTH

the DETECTIVES are gathering. They haven't found a thing.

DETECTIVE
(to NORMO)
Listen bro - ah - next time
you have one of those ORGIES...

The phone rings. NORMO gets it.
Listens for a moment, then throws the talkback switch -
the crickets disappear -

NORMO
(urgently)
Ringo - telephone -

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR NIGHT

Two INTERNS push an unconscious ADELE on a trolley
through a series of doors. Every time they're alone
in the hall the INTERNS take big hits of NO₂ and laugh
a lot and ADELE's trolley hits the wall.

AT THE RECEPTION DESK

NIX argues with a woman DOCTOR in a wide-open expanse
of seats and rubber plants. Glass walls and night outside.

DOCTOR
Antihistamine with thephorin
and fluoride. After her next
transfusion she'll be well
enough to go home.

NIX
And be back again within two weeks.

DOCTOR
I dare say. You know the patient's
make-up better than I.
Is she your girlfriend?

NIX
 WHY DON'T YOU HANG HER OUT
 TO DRY? When I was in Aden -

FLASH SHOT -

RINGO and ADELE and a bunch of junkie soldiers convulsing
 in strait jackets in a padded cell - NIX leering thru
 the window -

DOCTOR
 (entering the elevator)
 I assume you're joking.
 You certainly won't find that
 kind of treatment practised
 at La Retraite.

The lift doors close - malfunction - open again -

NIX
 What about side effects?

DOCTOR
 ... side effects ...?

The doors close for good.

COMMERCIAL BREAK

The INTERIOR of RAT BOY. Pre-slashed t-shirts hang on
 racks. Scores of identically-battered leather jackets,
 crudely-stencilled "SLAVE."

In a fitting-room sits an extremely beautiful RUDE BOY.
 He has bright yellow hair and contemplates a hypo.

RUDE BOY
 (to camera)
 It's not that I don't want to.
 It's just - oooh - needles!

He throws the syringe away.

SALES VOICE
 No-Med could be the answer!

RUDE BOY
 Eh?

SALES VOICE

Why fool around with an expensive drug habit? You too can achieve that gaunt, addicted look today - simply by switching to No-Med!

CLOSE UP of the NO-MED range of products. Packaged like pimple cream.

SALES VOICE

And - for the sincerest simulation - try No-Med's non-doctor scars'n'scabs pak. Guaranteed to turn soft supple flesh into rock-hard scar tissue in just one application.

CUT TO JUNKIES UNDER A RAILWAY BRIDGE.

Among them is the RUDE BOY, skeletally wasted and awash with running sores. He beams at camera.

RUDE BOY

Thank you, No-Med.

TITLE

NO-MED. YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE.

UPMARKET BAR THE AFTERNOON RUSH HOUR

NIX and RINGO at the counter, into several beers. The customers are decorous and well behaved, keep sneaking glances at RINGO, who wears a rubber raincoat hanging to his ankles.

RINGO

You might as well say it.

NIX

Having to look after a cunt like you is bad enough, Ringo. I can't handle babysitting her as well. Adele's... She's going to kill herself one of these days.

RINGO

So fuck off then.

NIX

I plan to.

RINGO

Good.

NIX gets up and pulls on his jacket.
RINGO finishes his beer.

RINGO

You gonna pay for these?
(NIX puts money on the bar)
'bye Nix.

NIX

Yeah. Goodbye. -

NIX goes.

WALL STREET DAY

SPAZ RAZOR brisks it through the lunchtime crowd.
He's brushed his spikes into a silly-looking fringe
and carries an expensive mohair briefcase.

He doesn't see the BEEFY HAND until it's clenched around
his shoulder, dragging him into the alley -

IN THE ALLEY

SPAZ tries to throw the case away, forgetting it's
chained to his wrist...

SPAZ

I never saw the thing before!
You can't pin nothing on me!

RIK TRADE bumps SPAZ against the wall.
He grins coldly beneath the empty shades.

TRADE

Long time no see, Spazola.

SWISH PAN UP THE WORLD TRADE CENTER.

Grunts and groans.

RE-RECORDING STUDIO NIGHT

RAS NORMO sits before a bank of tape decks.
He's listening to a couple of bars from one of JOHNY's
less-apocalyptic offerings, I LOVE MY GARBAGE.

JOHNY'S VOICE
 All the rubbish in the world
 Cannot compare
 With the way I feel about
 My dustbin over there
 I love my -

He stops the tape and plays with bass and treble.
 Rewinds -

JOHNY'S VOICE
 - the way I feel about -

He stops the tape and makes further adjustments.
 A GREEN LIGHT illuminates above the door.
 Pressurised air hiss as RENEE enters.

She is as thin as a rake and has a quarter-inch convict's
 haircut. She's wearing a kimono.

NORMO
 Renee. What happened to you?
 Been on a diet - ?

RENEE
 I was in jail, Ras.
 (she sits down)
 In South America.

NORMO
 How was that?

RENEE
 Oh, lots of fun.
 What's going on.

NORMO
 Graveyard shift.
 I'm the grave robber. Ripping
 off the corpse before I bury it.

He plays with the tape some more.
 Runs it again, listens and makes corrections.

RENEE
 A man who loves his work.
 Want to go to a party?

RAS
 Who's gonna be there.

RENEE

The Shitheads, Television,
Creeping Jesus, Johny...

NORMO

I don't think so.

RENEE watches him work. The GREEN LIGHT flickers and
a small PUNK enters. In full dress, aged about fourteen.

PUNK

Fuck this shit. Let's go!

RENEE-

In a minute, babe.

(to NORMO)

We WILL make it, won't we?

NORMO

If Ringo pulls his finger out
we will.

RENEE

How do you mean?

NORMO

He hasn't made me any tapes yet.
I'm trying to mix this bugger
without a bass line. Cute heh?

RENEE

I'll talk to him. He's got his
own gig soon, I hear. At Norad's.
(shifting gear)

I-appreciate-you're-under-a-lot
-of-pressure-right-now-

NORMO turns up the volume, drowns her out.

SUNSET STRIP AFTERNOON

An open top Eldorado slides into frame.

JOHNY is in the front seat, his bodyguard ROLF at the wheel.

In the back sit SEVERAL RECORD MOGULS - screaming to be
let out as ROLF takes a corner on two wheels...

NIX'S VOICE

I can't handle him at all.

He's as obstinate as Ringo and
ten times as arrogant. It's like
- he doesn't value - my advice!

The Eldorado swings onto the Freeway.

NIX'S VOICE

I hope to god I'm wrong...

INTERVIEWER

We all do sir.

Traffic is inordinately heavy and the Eldorado slows down to a crawl. They pull alongside a Cadillac whose occupants are weeping - a rust-encrusted Chevrolet creeps past them blowing its horn - the MEXICANS inside the furlined car are laughing passing round a joint...

JOHNY'S VOICE

We hit the Hollywood Freeway
after the first alarms.
Hoping to make it up Mullholland
and hide out till the thing
blew over...
Everyone else, it turned out,
had the same idea.

The cars are almost at a standstill.
The Eldorado is hemmed in by fat American station wagons -
clean panicked faces in windows bristling with guns.

With a hollow earripping roar a fleet of motorcycles
flashes between the lanes. Narrow-eyed blacks on
Kawasaki 900s whipping towards the hills...

A MUSHROOM CLOUD rises above the city.

GAS STATION PHONE BOOTH DAY

ADELE feeds a dozen quarters into the machine.
Taps her fingers on the glass waiting for her connection.

ADELE

Hello? Dad?
This is Adele.
Hello? No. No, I'm not.
I'm just calling -
I'm calling to say -

SAUROPALOS' DEN INTERIOR

A concrete bunker with no windows. Model airplanes
hanging from the rafters. ARISTIDE is on the phone at
a carpentry bench.

ARISTIDE's upper lip is sweating. He wipes it with a rag.

ARISTIDE

(into phone)

I want you back here, Adele.
I don't care what it takes.
I have plans for you, d'you hear?
Your mother and I -

As he speaks he goes on planing with his free hand - planing at a bulky wooden object that occupies the whole of his bench.

IN THE PHONE BOOTH

ADELE

I'm nineteen, dad.
There's nothing you can do.
I'm just calling to tell you I'm
all right. That's all.

IN THE BUNKER

ARISTIDE planes and planes vindictively - trapping the phone between his shoulder and his ear -

ARISTIDE

You're coming back.
You hear me, Adele?
You're coming back real soon.
I've plans for you my dear -
AND THEY WON'T WAIT!
(dead tone)
DON'T YOU DARE HANG UP ON ME YOU
LITTLE SLOVEN - I'LL - I'LL -

BESIDE THE PHONE BOOTH

ADELE gets into an anonymous black car.
RINGO's at the wheel.

RINGO

How much is he going to send you?

ADELE

Nothing.
I didn't even get to ask him.
The grossero bastard.
He certainly is getting WIERD.
(as RINGO puts the car in gear)
I should have called collect...

IN THE BUNKER

ARISTIDE planes deep into the wood.
He's bright red and streams with sweat.

"RIK" TRADE turns off a tape recorder, consults his
compass and a mighty complex chart.

TRADE
So she's still in New York...

ARISTIDE goes right on planing.
Tears are flowing down his cheek.

ARISTIDE
For you, Adele. All for you!!!

For the first time we see what he's working on.

IT IS AN ENORMOUS CROSS.

TRADE
What do you... propose to do
with that thing, Mr Sauropalos?

ARISTIDE SAUROPALOS stops digging at the wood and peers
up at him with his shoulders bent. He is quite mad.

ARISTIDE
THIS THING, Mr Trade?
Why... what do you think?

FLASH SHOT of ADELE being crucified.
ARISTIDE officiates clad as a Roman Soldier.

TRADE
(quickly)
I have no idea.

TIMES SQUARE THEATER INTERIOR

ADELE sits all alone.
She's talking softly to herself.

ADELE
Too many things to do - much too
much paranoia - got to slow down
- that's it - got to slow down -
I don't know how - I don't like
sleeping - I'm afraid when I'm
asleep - I ought to call again -

RENEE comes and sits behind her.
The seat immediately on her left.

ADELE

- but what if they're not there -
- what if they are there and they
don't answer - he wouldn't do that
- yes he would - I do that all the
time -

RENEE

Adele.

ADELE jumps about a foot. She starts to get up but
RENEE restraining her - strokes her arm -

RENEE

It's okay.
It's me, Renee. Remember?

A VOICE

(in the darkness)

ShutthefuckupwannawatchtheMOVIE!

RENEE

Ahyeahfuckyourself!

(to ADELE)

Everyone's been looking for you.

ADELE

My dad - my dad - I know -

RENEE

No, not your dad.
Just me and Ringo and Ron.
The boys are back from Tokyo, Adele.
They'd like to see you.

ADELE

No they wouldn't - what d'you say
that for - they can't stand me -
none of them - not even Ringo -
he said -

RENEE

He's been looking for you since
this morning. He's been real
worried.

ADELE turns round and stares RENE in the face.
Suddenly she's very calm and lucid.

ADELE

We used to have one lock on
our door. Now look at this.

ADELE produces a massive bunch of keys.
RENEE takes stock of them and pats her shoulder.

RENEE

He's waiting for you, Adele.

ADELE believes her.
They rise and walk towards the exit.

ANOTHER HOTEL ROOM

RINGO and ADELE in each other's arms on the floor.
They're weak and mauled, surrounded by rubbish.
ADELE is shooting up. They don't have any needles
so she's using a straightened safety-pin and eye-dropper.

ADELE

Do you love me?

RINGO

Yeah.

ADELE

Prove it.

He takes a razor blade and cuts himself across the chest,
reopening an old scar.

ADELE

Prove it.

He cuts himself again.

ADELE

Prove it.

TIMES SQUARE EARLY EVENING

RINGO meets a friend of his, ROCK HEAD, under a marquee.
ROCK is almost as emaciated as he is. Several CRUISERS
eye the pair as chickens - which they're not - quite -

ROCK

I don't know, you know?
The pair of you get through
the stuff like it was boring.

RINGO
I've got the bread right now.

ROCK
We'll have to make a run.

RINGO
TAXI!

FADE TO WHITE

A telephone is ringing - bedclothes rustle.

RINGO'S VOICE
Where you going?

ADELE'S VOICE
To answer the phone.

RINGO'S VOICE
ADELE?

ADELE'S VOICE
I'll be right back.

Clapping hands and stamping feet begin to build
- the crowd at NORAD'S -

CLUB NORAD NYC NIGHT

Smoke rises through the shifting spotlights.
A cheap cassette recorder is on every table, RENEE'S
included.

The lights dim and the tense crowd crystallizes.
RINGO's band begins to play.

RINGO strides on stage - an instant frenzy of unearned
adulation - he wears skintight leather pants and t-shirt
- no guitar - he freezes like a startled insect inches
from the mike and starts to sing.

The PA is appalling and we can't hear the words.
This doesn't really matter since RINGO can't remember them.

PUNK VOICE
It was - like - fucking -
INTENSE - you know - he was
THE OUTER LIMITS - words can't
- you just - oh wow!

RINGO's band is competent, professional, practised,
totally lacking in electricity...

LEN stands on the pogo floor. He isn't bopping.
RON sits with RENEE. He turns her tape recorder off.

RENEE

He's warming up, Ron.
Maybe the late show...

RON

Yeah.

RINGO missteps and falls heavily - hands grab him, some
pulling him up, some holding on - the BOUNCERS wrench
him loose and set him on his feet again - demented applause.

He walks off stage. The band maintains.

BEHIND THE STACKS

RINGO consumes large quantities of energiser.
The band plays on - is someone jeering? -

RINGO

Hand us that snot rag will yer?

A delighted ROADIE hands RINGO the cloth - he wipes his
nose with it - gives it back to the ROADIE.

RINGO

(magnanimous)

You can keep it if you want.

He looks around for ADELE.
She isn't there.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE NIGHT

ADELE's rented limo leaves the island.
At a discreet distance, a checker cab follows.

KON-TIKI MOTEL ROOM NIGHT

RINGO tears the sheets of the disheveled bed.
He splashes Chivas Regal on the walls.
Smashes the ether bottle on the bloodstained bathroom
floor.

Battling with sweatsoaked matches
RINGO SETS THE PLACE ON FIRE.

MOTEL EXTERIOR NIGHT

The blazing building is reflected in the bright eyes of an elated TEENIE PUNK. She's being interviewed by the VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS who are late as usual.

TEENIE

It's really Kool, you know,
that he did what he did.
I mean, I'm sorry for her and
all that but well its just so
Neat that Ringo killed his
girlfriend and she's dead!

OUTSIDE THE WHISKEY-A-GO-GO NIGHT

Half a dozen INDIVIDUALS in bright yellow jumpsuits and consumer shades hang out on the corner. SLIM BURT O'HOOLIGAN wields his microphone -

INDIVIDUAL

I hear she was dead for days
before they found her. The cops
broke down the door and - get this -
she had these poodles see and
of course they hadn't been fed...

INTERVIEW ROOM

in everybody's favorite place.
THREE BALD DETECTIVES, male and female, clad in leather car coats, interrogate RINGO.
Two way mirrors, finger print utensils, no decor.

DETECTIVE 1

You set the place on fire.

RINGO

... yes ...

DETECTIVE 2

You don't sound very sure.

RINGO

Sometimes things aren't really
real. Know what I mean?

DETECTIVE 2

No I don't.

DETECTIVE 3

Was this before or after you
killed her?

RINGO

I don't remember.

STILLS

RINGO - amid LAWYERS NIX MERDY and RENEE - shelters behind
newspapers and umbrellas from the press - stops off at
the Statue of Liberty for publicity photos on his way to
RIKERS ISLAND.

NIX'S VOICE

They don't do a thing for you.
Just stick you in a cage and
LEAVE YOU TO SWEAT IT OUT!

RENEE'S VOICE

A pity Adele's not alive really.
We could stick her in there as
well, eh Nix??

NIX'S VOICE

That's a pretty sick thought.

THE SAUROPALOS MAUSOLIUM

Hushed whispers reverberate eternally along cold marble
halls. A place the size of the VIP Vault at forest lawn.

ARISTIDE and BECKY-LU and TRADE all wear mourning black
with the exception of TRADE's red and yellow socks.

ARISTIDE grips TRADE's firm hand firmly.

ARISTIDE

Don't blame yourself, Mr Trade.
We certainly do not.

TRADE

You mustn't blame yourselves,
either.

BECKY-LU

Oh, we won't. Guilt is the
least meaningful of our emotions,
I always think.

ARISTIDE

You did all you could, "Rik."
I shall be forever in your debt.

TRADE

I know that.

Finally the two GREAT MEN embrace.
TRADE slips a small brown envelope into ARISTIDE's hand
and smiles a crooked smile.

TRADE

Be seeing you.

He pivots and clik-slik-cliks up the corridor of funeral
gear. Turns round sniggering at something -

TRADE

Hey Ari!
What's a Grecian Urn these days?

ARISTIDE laughs obligingly and raises a hand.
He's flipping up the aerial of a WALKIE-TALKIE...

ARISTIDE

(into the mike)
Tall blind man in a trenchcoat.
Leaving the building now.

OUTSIDE THE CREMATORIUM

two APACHES with bandannas and HUNTING RIFLES sitting in
a grey station wagon look up as TRADE emerges.

BESIDE A DUSTY ROAD

shreds of cotton hang from barbed wire and a CHAIN GANG
labors in the blistering heat. Striped uniforms and
manacles, picks stacked like rifles cast no shadow.

The PRISONERS are all WOMEN.

Two VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS interview a cigar-chomping female
CONVICT while the third buys off the GUARDS.

CONVICT

Ringo was a good boy and always
gave me money. Often anyway.
And never enough. I know that
time will VINDICATE my son.

FREEZE FRAME as she spits tobacco juice.

TITLE RINGO'S MUM
657399

DOCUMENTARIAN 2
(prompting)
Now the letter.

CONVICT
Oh yerright...

She pulls a crumpled paper from her uniform.

CONVICT
(reading)
Dear mum
How's tricks.
Stuck in Alberkirk waiting for a
bleeding flight to New York. On strike
aren't they it is just like England.
Nix says he will send you five hundred.
Please do not give any more interviews.
I hate writing letters so will stop
here. Get the phone put back OK.

Love Harold.

DOCUMENTARIAN 1
That was very moving.
Thank you.

DOCUMENTARIAN 2
Let's do it again and get a close
up of her hands.
Could you make them tremble a bit?

CONVICT
Like this?

DOCUMENTARIAN 2
FANTASTIC!

TIMES SQUARE NIGHT

Brilliant oversaturated color - horns bleat and an EXCITED
CROWD points heavenward as high above between the buildings

THE SKY FILLS WITH FLYING SAUCERS

However everyone is looking at a news printout which reads

(CONTINUED)

DEC 22 DATELINE NYC
 COCK STAR RINGO SHIK CHARTED
 WITH NTH DEGREE MURDEB OF
 ADELE SAUROPAPAL HEIRESS
 RELEASED ON \$@X,XXX BAIL
 MORE TI SWALLOW
 BIG SALE ON WATERDEBS AT MAX'S

The CROWD laughs and applauds as the mistakes appear.

A COUNCIL HOUSE IN LEWISHAM

RON sits with his wife SHANSTA and their eleven-month old baby ENO in the living room of their modest home.

Incredibly mismatched decor china ducks and a giant TELLY.

RON
 (blankly)
 I don't see them any more.
 I found may way you see -

RON and SHASTA raise religious tracts printed on recycled blotting paper. BABY ENO coughs rackingly.

INTERVIEWER
 (hastily)
 Did - um - anybody see him?
 Anybody from the band I mean.
 After - the thing with Adele.

RON
 Johny.
 It was one of Len's funerals
 that brought the pair of them
 together. I was already -

INTERVIEWER
 Funerals?

HIGHGATE CEMETERY DUSK

A group of elite PUNKS and PRESSMEN fake a funeral scene.
 An actorish PRIEST intones above the grave.
 It's snowing.

PRIEST
 But see - amid the mimic route
 A crawling shape intrude!
 A blood-red thing - it writhes! it writhes!
 The mimes become its food.

LEN's coffin is lowered with due severity into the grave. Through the thick glass window his waxen, powdered face is visible. He plays dead right until the first earth hits the pane - and then his eyes open and he starts to scream in silence - banging on the glass -

The burial continues.

JOHNY and RINGO look up simultaneously - by accident - and catch each other's eye - and JOHNY grins -

LEN'S LOFT EVENING

Black paint on almost all the windows. Through the gaps snow can be seen, falling through amber streetlight. The walls are white, with beams of golden afternoon light painted on them.

The only furniture is a drumkit, a refrigerator, and several sacks of potatoes that serve as chairs.

JOHNY and RINGO sit on the potatoes drinking FOSTERS LAGER.

JOHNY

Here's to wankers.

RINGO

Cheers.

JOHNY

Here's to those that push it till it breaks off.

RINGO

Cheers.

JOHNY

Here's to the KING PUNK. Congratulations.

RINGO

(softly)

Me jar's empty, Johnny.

JOHNY walks to the fridge and gets RINGO and himself another beer. The bathroom door parts and steam pours out of the shower. JOHNY's current date VERONICA - lots of arms and legs and cheekbones - stares at the two BASTARDS in their dripping clothes.

VERONICA
You coming in?

JOHNY
In a minute.
(the door closes)
Stopping long?

RINGO
I've got to go back by the tenth.
Court shit.

JOHNY -
I hear you're going to get off.
No trouble.

RINGO
If me responsibility's diminished.
I been to see a lot of croakers.

JOHNY
You a nutcase, Ringo?

RINGO
Same as you are.

JOHNY
I never lost control.

RINGO
You never had it.

JOHNY walks across to the window and throws it open.
Snow streams slowly in. RINGO plays with a guitar.

JOHNY
The winter of '79.
Powder three foot deep on the M-1.
The trains don't run because the
rails have frozen. The airports
closed down.
(he smiles wolfishly)
We're losing our grip.

RINGO watches JOHNY with tired familiar eyes.
JOHNY finds the drumsticks and taps a random pattern
on the skins.

JOHNY
(singing)
Church police came round this morning
And the army's on our track
Took away my books and papers
Only just got out the back -

RINGO

Why don't you give that fucking stuff a rest.

JOHNY stops singing and leans across the drums.

JOHNY

What's the problem?

RINGO

Don't you ever get sick of WANTING IT? The fucking end of the world - you just can't wait, can you?

JOHNY

It's something I see coming. It makes me so afraid I can't shut up about it. That all right with you?

RINGO

It's got to be your only act, mate. What if it doesn't happen? Won't you feel silly then.

JOHNY

No.

RINGO

Yes, you will.

Traffic hoots below them in the road.
A man's voice shouting - accident?

JOHNY

I was flying out of LA last week.

RINGO

Hey kool man I can relate to that.

JOHNY

It was a night flight and over Phoenix we ran into an electrical storm. We watched it from above. Lightning across a cloud bank that was bigger than the whole fucking city...

RINGO

So what.

JOHNY

We're not as big and powerful
as we think we are. We're
in for some surprises.

RINGO

I read your interview, okay.

JOHNY

(interested)

Which one?

RINGO snorts and tunes the guitar.

RINGO

You ought to find yerself a woman.

JOHNY

WHATTTT?

RINGO

A full-time woman, Johnny.
Someone you're in love with.
Can't include yourself now -

JOHNY

Oh yes?
And what should I do with her?

RINGO

Find out.
Whatever you want.
Whatever she wants.
Have a bunch of kids.
Make something out of something.

JOHNY

Are you on acid, Ringo?

RINGO

Fuck off.
You're the smart one, Johnny -
I read that in the NME.
Do yourself a favour and deal
with something real.

A silence.

JOHNY slowly closes his mouth, which has fallen open.

JOHNY

I can't believe you said all that.
Thanks Ringo - henceforth I'll be
a different man - especially when
the planets all line up...

RINGO throws his beer over JOHNY - JOHNY jumps him and they fight - not very hard since neither one is very strong or into fighting -

LEN walks in. He's shivering and even wetter than they are - covered with graveyard dirt and snow.

LEN
Run us a bath you bastards.

RINGO and JOHNY lay off wrestling to watch him.
LEN deposits a muddy trail across the loft.

R & J
Good funeral, Len.

LEN
Thanks, men.

He enters the bathroom and encounters VERONICA.
Shuts the door.

RINGO looks at the guitar. They've smashed it fighting.

JOHNY
Too bad eh?

RINGO
No.

He gets up and walks out the door.
JOHNY taps the drums with wire brushes...

AND WITH A BOOTED CRASH; RINGO BOUNCES BACK INTO THE ROOM.

RINGO
BOOOOOOOM!!!

This scares the pants of JOHNY.
RINGO exits laughing.

IN THE STREET

RINGO lingers on the corner, laughing still.
His feet sink in the snow.

Across the road stands ERNIE ROUNDS - draped in a british legion flag bespecked with jubilee regalia. He holds a wilting cardboard sign which says

VOTE BOTTCHEER FOR A WHITE TOMORROW.

Two PARATROOPERS guard him. They wear steel helmets combat gear and carry perspex riot shields.

Nobody takes a blind bit of notice.

RINGO walks away into the amber blizzard, disappears. JOHNY watches from the attic window.

JOHNY'S VOICE

"Have a bunch of kids" indeed.
Of course he was on acid.
I never really knew him.

SLOW FADE TO AMBER

LEN'S VOICE

We went back to Norad's one night.

RENEE'S VOICE

Ringo was there. He hung out
with a new crowd now. Real charmers.

CLUB NORAD NIGHT

RINGO enters flanked by several TOUGH PUNKS. They have bald heads, severed ears, eye patches - fugitives from an Italian Western.

The rest of the clientele are RADIANT CELEBRITIES. Young clean upwardly-mobile types in pre-torn t-shirts, plastic pants and trendy skinny ties.

WHISPERED VOICES

That's Ringo - did you see the
sketch they did on Saturday Night
Live - "I done it aaaaarrgghh" -
ha ha ha - he looked taller...

RINGO freezes opposite a YOUNG EXEC in a chic t-shirt reading "LET RINGO GO - KILL ME INSTEAD"

RINGO

Shall I?

YOUNG EXEC

It's just a t-shirt...

RINGO nods sympathetically. He takes the EXEC's glass and smashes it in his face.

Instantly SIRENS SOUND.

RED SPOTLIGHTS center on RINGO as he ascends the stage.
 He scars the audience - they're all there, NIX, RENEE,
 the BASTARDS, the VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS from Ethiopia...

He plucks the mike from its stand.
 Pin-drop city.

Smoke generators start up noisily.
 A BATHROOM SET descends from the flies.
 An UNSEEN BAND begins to crank.

RINGO
 (singing)
 Some people are easily pleased.
 I'm not. I'm a disease.
 When I get my gun, man
 (You bet I keep it loaded!)
 Some people gonna find themselves deceased.

The RED SPOTLIGHTS circle over the uneasy crowd.

RINGO
 I used to have a couple friends
 They stuck with me until the end
 The end was last week
 They left me a note
 They said they found themselves another trend.
 Tell you a joke?

Me uncle Bill went out last night
 They brought him back in a bag
 I thought about it - it's all right
 He was a fuckin' drag.

The BAND is cooking now. And RINGO is performing -
 sliding like a cat across the tiled floor - the AUDIENCE
 and spotlights reflected in the bathroom mirror at the
 KON TIKI MOTEL...

RINGO
 Somewhere else is bound to be
 a better bet than here
 Next year is gonna be a better,
 wetter year
 I'm gonna get myself a better pad
 fill it with better girls
 Go to night school twice a week
 and make peace with the world.

ADELE is in the bathroom now - in a Fiorelli nightie -
 brushing her teeth and removing Atroce Accessories...

RINGO

The trouble is too much went down
 too fast too far too slick
 Too easy too convenient too obvious
 too quick
 I know how Mr Oswald felt and Mr Ruby
 too
 And all the animals that blinked
 and got put in the zoo
 It wasn't me. I wasn't there.
 I'm really not that thick
 Cause when the dogs began to bark
 Ringo was being sick.

KON TIKI MOTEL EXTERIOR NIGHT

The motel still stands - unscarred by flames - a FLASHBACK.
 RINGO vomits in the road outside.

INSIDE THE MOTEL

the door swings open and a WHITE CANE swishes its way
 through the steam from the bathroom...

ADELE

Ringo?

No reply. Suspicious, she reaches for RINGO's straight-
 edge shiv...

ADELE

If you're here to rip us off
 you're two months too late -

She steps into the bedroom -
 and RIK TRADE's iron hand closes around her wrist.

TRADE

Show's over, little lady.
 You and I are going home.

ADELE

FUCK YOU!!

She stabs him in the arm with RINGO's knife.
 TRADE recoils - astounded - and she sprints for the door.

She wrestles with the chain - TRADE's coming after her
 like Frankenstein - she darts towards the bathroom -
 he tries to cut her off -

They fight like panthers in the bathroom - she claws blood out of his cheeks - screaming -

- and TRADE wrangles the blade out of her hand and stabs her. White trenchcoat, skin, walls washed with red blood - the rising steam turns pink -

ADELE'S VOICE

Before the gig we slept for several days. We copped that morning - good stuff - Ringo always claimed he never had dreams. I don't believe that. We'd planned to move out of there the next day. It was getting too heavy.

TRADE finishes the job of killing ADELE. Clutching his bleeding wrist he hurries out -

- bumping into RINGO in the hall.

TRADE

'Scuse me.

ADELE'S VOICE

There were seedy types at the Kon Tiki, see. Junkies and thieves. Degenerates...

RINGO discovers ADELE's body on the bathroom floor. Rips up the sheets and tears the doors off cupboards. Spills scotch and ether. Sets the place on fire.

TV SCREEN

ADELE in heaven, interviewed by the VIDEO DOCUMENTARIANS. She wears a black bra and a pair of fluffy wings. Fondles a doped-out LAMB. Pink candyfloss clouds. Attendant ANGELS yawn.

ADELE

It's pretty neat up here. But... I feel kind of LONELY, you know? If Ringo's listening - I guess I shouldn't say it, should I?

She shrugs and waves at camera. CHANNEL CHANGE.

IN THE BATHROOM SET

RINGO embraces ADELE's body on the floor.
Her blood is all over him. His knife glints at his
feet. Flames eat up the STAGE.

APPLAUSE.

GIRL'S VOICE

I think it's Kool he killed her.
After all...

JAIL HOUSE MORNING

Constant traffic thru the green-walled Admissions Room.
Two COPS, one OLD AND WISE, one YOUNG AND KEEN, return
RINGO's possessions.

YOUNG COP

(planting things on counter)

A candy bar.
A piece of string.
A piece of paper.

OLD COP

(rehearsed)

Look, kid. Why don't you give
yourself a break? I know you've
been in trouble. I know you
think you're kinda tough...

(he searches for RINGO's
name on his rosta)

Rodriguez. There's a lot of guys
tougher than you that wishes they
were right where you are now.

YOUNG COP

Six books of matches.
One pack of Woodbines.
One safety-pin.

OLD COP

Once you're out that door you
can stay out for good or you can
turn around and walk right back in.

YOUNG COP

A stick of gum.
Sixty-seven cents in change.
(he takes a breath)
And \$542.00 cash.
Sign here please.

RINGO signs and stuffs his pockets.
He hasn't heard a word.

OLD COP
A man can walk as far as he wants
to, Rodriguez. I don't see no
braces on your legs.

RINGO nods to the cop and starts to limp away
- as if he had a wooden leg.

The COPS nod sagely to each other - draw their index
fingers 'cross their throats -

In the DOORWAY RINGO turns around.

RINGO
Oh yeah.
There was one thing...

OLD COP
What, son?

RINGO
Where can I get a pizza?

He grins manically. FREEZE FRAME

TITLE TWO HOURS LATER HE WAS DEAD

An ANATOMICAL DIAGRAM of RINGO's digestive system is
superimposed over his frozen grinning frame.

ZERO IN on his respiratory system showing ANCHOVY
lodged in his throat causing fatal blockage.

ARROWED TITLE ANCHOVY

OUTSIDE NIX MERDY'S OFFICE

"IL" MARIO and a crew of CRONIES wade through uncollected
rubbish with cameras and viewfinders and tripods.
MARIO brainstorms in a palm beach shirt.

MARIO
... star-crossed, kinky lovers -
we'll need to trade-off on the
ambiance for popular appeal -
he's JAH RINGO - a calypso artist
fresh from Jamaica - ADELE's an
English Rose...

MOVIE MOGUL

Of course he can't die in the end.

MARIO

Naturally! In fact that's what we'll call it - TOO KOOL TO DIE - Kool, with a K, the way the Kidz spell it...

MARIO parades in the road.
NIX MERDY watches from his window.

Across the street he sees a BLIND DETECTIVE run over by a grey Cortina. TWO APACHES in the front seat.

BLACK OUT

COLOUR BARS

TV SCREEN

A FAT TEENAGER in quasi-punk attire mimes to her record.

SALES VOICE

Presenting SUZI NASTI, the latest fab New Wave sensation!

SUZI

Eff off, you S.O.B.s!

Fast K-Tel MONTAGE of SUZI miming to her hits.

SALES VOICE

From her Gucci "Gamine" desert boots to her spiky-top Sasson hairdo in day-glo Aquamarine, SUZI is Punk Rock PERSONIFIED!

SUZI

(bogus English accent)

I don't dig the old jive, no way.
Me an' my gang groove to a different boogaloo, gorblimey!

SALES VOICE

Catch SUZI's killer debut album
CUT THEIR 'EADS OFF DISCO PARTY
on Scabies Records & Tapes -

SUZI

And don't forget to join me
Fan Club, too!

SALES VOICE
Do it today!!!

TITLE

SUZI NASTI - PRODUCED BY "IL" MARIO -
ON SCABIES - A SUBSIDIARY OF INTERMEDIA
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COLOUR BARS

BLACK OUT

END

TOO KOOL TO DIE

by Alex Cox

PARIS FRANCE

Teenage heiress NANCY SAUROPOLOS is kicked out of finishing school and joins the entourage of fading rock idol TOM PRETTY, bound for --

LONDON ENGLAND

where she meets JOHNNY RUBBISH, founder of the controversial punk band THE TEEN BASTARDS, whose first single GOD SAVE HER MAJESTY has just gone gold despite being banned by the BBC.

TORREMOLINOS SPAIN

SID RINGO, JOHNNY's old school chum, busts out of jail where he is incarcerated on a charge of Soccer Vandalism and journeys to London to demand a role in JOHNNY's up-and-coming band.

Sad for SID, JOHNNY and CO. have already left for the USA.

NEW YORK XMAS

The TEEN BASTARDS play isolated gigs in N.Y. and New Jersey.

SID steps off the Yugoslav tramp steamer on which he has stowed away. In transit, he has taught himself to play bass.

On Xmas eve, SID joins the TEEN BASTARDS and NANCY throws a bottle at his head. They fall in love.

TEXAS

SID and NANCY tour with the TEEN BASTARDS. A succession of

TOO KOOL TO DIE

cowboy bars and tense redneck encounters. NANCY introduces SID to drugs. SID is impressed. On board a private jet bound for Amarillo, SID overdoses and is hospitalized in --

TAOS NEW MEXICO

NANCY's WEALTHY PARENTS attempt a reconciliation with her at their private clinic. When this fails they attempt to kidnap her. NANCY is saved by SID and taken to --

LIVERPOOL ENGLAND

place of SID's birth. NANCY pronounces LIVERPOOL uncool. They burn the Beatles Centre and split up. SID flies to --

RIO DE JANEIRO

to record another album but the band is now in disarray. JOHNNY has become a megalomaniac would-be visionary. The other band members are aspirant jet-setters. Stoned and still madly in love, SID flies back to --

NEW YORK

to be with NANCY. He plays a solo gig at Max's and returns to their seedy digs to discover NANCY dead and the place ablaze. SID is so wrecked he doesn't know if he killed her or not. Released from Rikers Island, SID orders a pizza and chokes on an anchovy. BUT THIS IS NOT THE END. On the autopsy table, SID returns to life. He has been clinically dead for seven days. A changed person, SID sets aside his drugging, drinking and carousing. On nationwide TV, SID

TOO KOOL TO DIE

turns DAVID LETTERMAN's coffee to Grand Marnier and cures a LADY CELEBRITY of herpes. He is flown in close secrecy to

VATICAN CITY, ROME

where he has several in-depth conferences with the HOLY FATHER. Determined to redeem his fellow men as he has been redeemed, SID sets to work to bring about a WORLD WITHOUT WAR.

With the aid of SYRUS COPEMAN, a rock promoter with ties to the C.I.A., SID organizes the world's largest-ever rock concert, a simulcast from the PYRAMIDS and the GREAT WALL OF CHINA.

To a stunned world, SID announces that he will be at both gigs simultaneously.

EGYPT/CHINA

On the eve of the monster show, SID's C.I.A. sponsors discover the awful truth. SID is going to announce to the entire world that there is no difference between true Christianity and Communism. They are, in fact, the same system. Such a revelation cannot be permitted: it will destroy the profit basis of the Western World and open the floodgates to a lot of second-rate Eastern European rock'n'roll bands. The die is cast. SID's greatest show will be his last. He will be bumped off by a jealous ex-associate. JOHNNY RUBBISH waits in the wings...