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# JOHN GODBER

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PLAYS: 1

BOUNCERS • HAPPY FAMILIES • SHAKERS



Introduced by the author

B L O O M S B U R Y

# John Godber

## Plays: 1

### Bouncers, Happy Families, Shakers

*Bouncers*: ‘Simply spellbinding. This is partly because of John Godber’s writing with its meticulous social observation that invokes whole life styles with a few lines of dialogue. There’s also an unusual insight into the darker, closed world of the bouncers themselves . . . A show that’s worth braving any front of house, however formidable.’ *Guardian*

‘The imagination of author John Godber, his talent for observation and the caricaturing of tricks of behaviour are given ideal form . . . No zoologist could have observed his quarry with greater care or with a greater sense of the grotesque . . . highly satisfying and amusing.’ *Scotsman*

‘Godber’s nightmarish, scatological vision of working-class urban nightlife has developed into a phenomenon . . . and it may well be the most performed work by a living British playwright.’ *Daily Telegraph*

*Happy Families*: ‘Demonstrates how at the hands of a skilled playwright, the emotional concentration of family life is always material for energetic drama. John Godber is skilled in many things – writing, directing, making people laugh – but perhaps his greatest talent is for simplicity. There is not a gesture, a line or a lighting change out of place in *Happy Families*, which achieves so much by demanding so little.’ *Yorkshire Post*

*Shakers*: ‘Manages accurately to convey the language and style of today’s party-goers . . . This is one of those slices of life that everyone can recognise and laugh at.’ *Liverpool Daily Post*

**John Godber** was born in Upton, near Pontefract, in 1956. He trained as a teacher at Bretton Hall College, Wakefield, did an MA in Drama and an MPhil/PhD in Drama at Leeds University. Since 1984 he has been Artistic Director of Hull Truck Theatre Company. His plays include: *Happy Jack*, *September in the Rain*, *Bouncers* (winner of seven Los Angeles Critics Circle awards), *Up ’n’ Under* (Olivier Comedy of the Year Award, 1984), *Shakers* and *Shakers Restired* (both with Jane Thornton), *Up ’n’ Under 2*, *Blood, Sweat and Tears*, *Teachers*, *Salt of the Earth*, *On the Piste*, *Happy Families* (commissioned by British Telecom for the Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain and premiered by 49 amateur companies on the same night in 1991, the biggest ever theatrical opening), *The Office Party*, *April in Paris*, *Passion Killers* and *Lucky Sods*. Television and film work includes: *The Ritz*, *The Continental*, *My Kingdom for a Horse*, *Chalkface* (all BBC2), episodes of *Crown Court*, *Grange Hill* and *Brookside* and screenplays for *On the Piste* and *Up ’n’ Under*. He is an honorary lecturer at Bretton Hall College and a DLitt. of Hull University.

*by the same author*

JOHN GODBER PLAYS: 2\*

(Teachers, Happy Jack, September in the Rain,  
Salt of the Earth)

JOHN GODBER PLAYS: 3\*

(April in Paris, Up 'n' Under, Perfect Pitch)

Big Trouble in the Little Bedroom

Blood, Sweat and Tears

Dracula (*with Jane Thornton*)

Gym and Tonic

It Started with a Kiss

Lucky Sods & Passion Killers\*

Office Party

On the Piste

Seasons in the Sun

Thick as a Brick

Unleashed

Weekend Breaks

\*published by Methuen Drama

JOHN GODBER

**Plays: 1**

Bouncers  
1990s Remix

Happy Families

Shakers  
Restirred  
*(with Jane Thornton)*

*introduced by the author*

B L O O M S B U R Y  
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*We gratefully acknowledge the help of John Bennett and Liverpool Hope University College in the preparation of this chronology. Further information can be found on [www.johngodber.co.uk](http://www.johngodber.co.uk).*

## Introduction

Before I try to make some sense of this collection of plays, I have to set the record straight with regard to *Shakers*. The play is often attributed to me, but in truth it was in every way a collaboration between myself and Jane Thornton. Jane is an actress, a writer in her own right and more latterly my wife. Since now I have admitted the rightful owners of these plays I will proceed to explain why they represent a kind of scope in my theatrical work.

It certainly could be said that two of the plays included here, *Bouncers* and *Shakers*, are from a similar school of theatrical thought. Indeed the genesis of the collaboration was an attempt to produce a play for women which had the same sense of excitement, the same visceral energy and calls upon the audience's engaged imagination as its bigger brother *Bouncers*. There were certainly times when *Bouncers* was enjoying huge success that any number of actresses approached us for something similar for women: in a way *Shakers* – however different – was an answer to those kinds of demands.

So if *Bouncers* and *Shakers* share a common theatrical philosophy, what is that philosophy? To answer this question we need to scroll back over the years, to my first engagement with the theatre as an art form. We may even have to investigate some biographical details, which could throw light on why the form of *Bouncers* was chosen, and why the same writer came to write something as different as *Happy Families*, a wholly autobiographical piece.

It has to be said from the start that there was little or no history of theatrical interest in my family. I was born into a mining family, and consequently the notion of my finding employment as a miner was not out of the question. Indeed this became more of a reality when I failed my eleven-plus and was consigned to Upton Secondary Modern School. Upton Secondary Modern was 'secondary and not very modern', as I later wrote in

*Happy Families*. But on reflection this is rather a glib picture, for as I recall it now, the English teacher in the school encouraged the performance of plays, and at the age of twelve I had already written a short sketch which appeared to make the audience laugh. A year later, I was rescued from the tripartite system by the adoption in West Yorkshire of the comprehensive system, and discovered drama for real during the six years I spent at Minsthorpe High School.

While at Minsthorpe I continually felt I had to justify the interest I found in this new subject. Even though the school was forward-thinking in that every child had to study drama, art and music, I always felt that my fascination with acting was frowned upon by friends and family. Indeed when I eventually opted to train as a drama teacher, my mother wondered long and hard why I didn't want to study to be a history teacher – clearly something which appeared more 'real' to her than 'farting about in plays'.

During the early seventies I trained as a teacher of Drama at Bretton Hall College near Wakefield. It was during this time that a great many of my beliefs and ideas about theatre began to emerge. Indeed the first-ever version of *Bouncers* appeared in 1977 with two un-named Bouncers, Tall and Short, fronting up a disco. The show was taken to the Edinburgh Festival and on the first performance an audience of two made light work of the play. One, a drunk, came on stage and started chatting with us; the second, a critic from the *Scotsman*, left when we started chatting to the drunk and we never saw a review. However on the second night of the play, the actor Brian Glover and a number of his friends from Nottingham Playhouse sought out our less than perfect venue, watched the play, and gave a few words of encouragement. It was enough for me to continue my interest in drama and plays, and even though we didn't attract another single punter for the rest of our week at the Festival, we returned to Wakefield flushed with success.

Several years later when I had left Leeds University's Workshop Theatre and the MA course there I began teaching back at my former school, Minsthorpe. I have to admit that I still felt I had to justify my subject to friends and colleagues, despite having spent five years in full-time study and having secured a place to study for a PhD part-time. This insecurity I attribute to failing my eleven-plus.

Now throughout all this time, it has to be noted that I had more than a passing interest in sport. I had played football, table tennis and rugby at school. I had continued to play rugby at college and university, and had become involved with body-builders and weight-lifters during my early twenties. It was a bizarre mix for many, but I took some comfort from Brecht's relationship with boxers, and the massive German actor Oscar Homolka. Literature and Sport could interface and the West Yorkshire coalfields seemed to be the perfect place. At that time I used to joke that I was any disruptive kid's nightmare, I was a seventeen-stone drama teacher with a PhD.

I was so fascinated by plays at this time that I would read a play each weekend before turning out to play rugby for Hemsworth Rugby Club. By the early eighties there wasn't a play in the Penguin series that I hadn't read; drama was my life!

In 1981, a number of actor friends set up a company, Yorkshire Actors. They asked me if I would like to re-visit *Bouncers* and present it as a four-hander. It was the opportunity I needed to bring a number of strands together.

I had become increasingly bored by the conventions of modern drama. Most of the plays I had read were set in realistic locations, and therefore fairly limiting in terms of how they could represent themselves to an audience. In some respects these plays amounted to nothing more than 'big telly' – true they had good stories and incisive characterisation, but in terms of their theatrical scope, the four walls of the box set seemed to limit their vision. Of course I was not the first to recognise this: Berkoff,

Edward Gordon Craig, Brecht, Artaud and sundry others had all identified this limitation, and had done work to counter the spread of this particular theatrical virus.

And so it was, with all the above in mind, that I set out to re-draw *Bouncers*. I wanted to tell of a nightmarish night in the discos of England from the bouncers' point of view. I had the restrictions of a four-actor budget, something I was very much used to in school productions, and since there was equally no budget for a set, I thought it perhaps best not to have one.

The emphasis would be on the actors/bouncers; they would play all the characters in a roller-coaster of an evening. The play would be funny, but it would also attempt to tell the truth. Like the best of lessons it would be entertaining and thoughtful at one and the same time. The actors/bouncers would play women by the aid of a handbag, they would play the lads on the town, and as well as playing the bouncers they would be standing at the door of the theatre even before the play began. There was nothing much new in this however. Charles Marowitz had done similar things at the Open Space in London with *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, set in a Canadian reformatory.

What was perhaps different was the way in which the actors playing the bouncers admitted the illusion of the theatrical experience. Even before the play gets under way they tell the audience they will 'try to illustrate the sort of things that happen late'. They are almost apologising for the fact that they are only bouncers and not adept in the skills of the theatre. It is of course a false conceit but it creates a tension in the audience, the lines of reality are somewhat blurred, especially after we have seen the bouncers showing members of the public to their seats and taking tickets.

Later, when one actor/bouncer changes character in front of the audience, another actor/bouncer says to the audience 'I thought he was the barber?'. It is still as if the play is trundling along with the actors/bouncers not in control of the illusion, which of course they clearly are.

On other occasions Lucky Eric, the wise old owl of the bouncers, has a number of speeches. Each speech is acknowledged as a speech, with no attempt to ask the audience to buy into the concept of monologue. 'Lucky Eric's first speech . . . Lucky Eric's fourth and final speech.' In fact throughout the play the actors play with the duality of performance. At one moment they are threatening bouncers and a moment later they are mincing young girls, but throughout this they are aware of the game they are playing with the audience.

It is a dangerous game, they do not have the bric-à-brac of realism to fall back on. They do not have a set or cups and saucers to rely on, they cannot be contextualised by 'flapping canvas scenery'. They simply have physical precision, energy, muscular control, and they have the audience's imagination: they are naked save for their skills as performers.

This style of presentation which mixes the broadly popular with the gauche game of theatrical paradox keeps an audience on its toes. As the play changes genre and direction from moment to moment, the audience cannot relax intellectually since they are unsure where the next moment will come from and what their response will be. There is a narrative, but it is slight, there are observations, but they are cartoon, there is social commentary but it is peppered with outrageous humour. When the whole thing works there is a pure state of theatrical engagement.

I suppose it was through an attempt to reach a wider audience that I settled for this particular form. Since the lack of interest in the theatre I had experienced from friends and school kids, I wanted to make a piece of theatre that couldn't be ignored. A piece of theatre where the audience couldn't switch off momentarily and look at the set; a piece of theatre that was robust and vigorous, shocking and humorous. I wanted to create a piece of theatre that spoke to a generation of clubbers rather than theatregoers, and spoke to them in a language which they understood. The pace had to be fast, it had to be slick,

and it had to be funny. It had to be worth going out to see!

I also wanted to make something that showed actors working hard, sweating with their efforts. In some ways, maybe I was craving acceptance from a working-class audience, who had perhaps been working hard and sweating all day. In some respects then, I wanted to create a piece of work that would stand up and justify its place in a working-man's world! No, I wanted to create a piece of theatre that would justify its existence in any world!

Of course the subject matter was of prime importance. In many ways the content informed the form. The boredom of the men on the door spills over into grotesque violence and fantasy. The antics of the girls and boys out for a night on the town hardly need developing to make them dramatic. The conflict between those wanting a good time and those stopping a good time from being had is a basic dramatic premise. In some ways I simply recorded what I saw every Friday and Saturday night, in and around Pontefract and Wakefield. Perhaps the skill is in how the story is told, rather than the story itself.

Certainly when I first thought of *Bouncers*, I could hardly have imagined the kind of life it would have, or its influence on other generations. I certainly didn't think of it as a classic, but then I suppose everyone will be eighteen at least once in their life and despite ever-changing music styles, House, Garage, Garbage, Muck, Rubbish, call it what you will, the central theme of *Bouncers* is universal: men after beer after women, and the beat goes on.

So it was with the same kind of desire and philosophy that Jane and I put *Shakers* together. The tone here, however, is altogether softer. The play was originally written at a time when old pubs were changing into cocktail bars almost overnight. It seems that fashion is changing so frequently that the cocktail bars have been replaced by theme pubs, which in turn are being re-fitted as coffee-houses. Essentially, however, the plight of the waitresses is the same, and it was a deliberate desire to

attempt to draw the characters of the women with more detail that perhaps results in the pace being more realistic and much less nightmarish than its model. Nevertheless *Shakers* remains as much an exercise for actresses – asking for precision in role-playing and definition in characterisation – as *Bouncers* does.

Given the emphasis on the physical, on cartoon sketches, on speed and an MTV style of theatre, one would be forgiven for wondering where on earth *Happy Families* came from. This is a much more lyrical play than either *Bouncers* or *Shakers*. It is autobiographical, sentimental, domestic and insular, and yet it is quite theatrical at the same time. The narrator John speaks directly to the audience, arranging his/my life in a series of vignettes. The influences on this style of writing seem to be a cross-fertilisation between the trilogy of Neil Simon's rites-of-passage plays and the work of the famous Polish director Tadeusz Kantor. John takes us through the play from his eleven-plus failure to his graduation day as a drama teacher.

It is a memory play, and with memory not all things are prepared in an orderly fashion. Early parts of the narrative jump backwards and forwards in time, in the same way that a conversation might do. When his grandparents die, they do not leave the action, as they would do in a wholly realistic drama; they remain on stage commenting on the action, as they would have done were they still alive. This is another theatrical conceit, a game played with the audience and with the cast, and a source of a good deal of humour. But like *Bouncers* and *Shakers* the humour is not slapstick, it is felt, human and tinged with sadness. As I think someone once said of Ben Jonson, 'comedy can exaggerate but it can never lie'. For me, there has to be pain or there is no comedy, comedy without release or without counterpoint to this absurd journey called living is just froth.

Of course *Happy Families* comes much later than the previous two plays. I think it is fair to say that as I have

got older I have taken more pleasure in the prolonged scene, in a character's development, in the psychology of the drama, in peeling back the layers of the onion. Of course subject matter has a huge influence on how a piece may come together. The form of *Bouncers* is wholly unsuitable for a memory play about my development as a teenager, and perhaps I am less desperate to impress those whom I wanted to impress with *Bouncers*. And yet I still have that ache which reminds me that theatre should be relevant, that it should speak directly and vividly to the audience.

So if there is a theme running between these three plays maybe it is simply a celebration of the diversity of theatre writing. For my own part I appear to swing between the two poles of visceral writing and lyrical writing with each new play I begin. And having written some forty or so theatrical pieces I continually ask myself why I would want to write another one; the answer is simple, to write a better play, in all respects!

John Godber  
Hull  
July 2000

**Bouncers**  
**1990s Remix**

*Bouncers* was first presented by Hull Truck Theatre Company at the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe on 11 August 1984, transferring to the Donmar Warehouse Theatre, London, in September. The cast was as follows:

<b>Lucky Eric</b>	Peter Geeves
<b>Judd</b>	Richard Ridings
<b>Ralph</b>	Richard May
<b>Les</b>	Andrew Dunn

*Directed by* John Godber

This version of *Bouncers* first performed in 1991, directed by John Godber for Hull Truck, with the following cast:

<b>Lucky Eric</b>	Charlie Dickinson
<b>Judd</b>	Adrian Hood
<b>Ralph</b>	Ian Rogerson
<b>Les</b>	Mick Callaghan

# Act One

**Eric** and the bouncers have been parading the auditorium. As the music plays they enter the stage. An open space. **Les, Judd** and **Ralph** stand upstage. **Eric** addresses the audience. There is a sense of menace throughout.

**Eric** Ladies and gentlemen, we present the Bouncers Remix.

**Judd/Ralph/Les** Bouncers! (*Elongating the 'S'*)

**Eric**

We welcome you to a vision  
Of the nineties urban night-life  
To stag nights and hen-do's  
To drunken crying girls and gallons of booze.

**Judd/Ralph/Les** (*singing*)

Celebration time, come on!

**Eric**

It's always frustrating  
For the oldest swingers in town  
Yes all human life is inevitably here  
In a midnight circus  
And I must make it clear  
That the beer is pricey, the music pulsating  
The atmosphere is intoxicating  
We four will try to illustrate  
The sort of things that happen late  
At night in every town  
When the pubs are shut  
And the beer's been downed . . .

Now down at the disco is the place to be  
The lights are so bright  
Like a colour TV  
The music is loud  
And the beer flows free

#### 4 Bouncers

It's a disco place for you and me  
Now on the door, you pay your money  
The place is packed, the place is funny  
Look at the girls . . .

**All** Mmmmmmmmm . . .

**Eric**

Smell their honey  
Come to the place  
Where the beat pulsates  
In the heat of the night  
The walls gyrate  
In the bowels of hell  
The scent is strong  
There's sex in the air  
And the hunt is on  
And the children of England  
Sing their song

**All** (*slowly*)

Here we go, here we go, here we go . . .

*A pause.*

**Les/Judd**

Well you finish work

**Ralph/Eric**

Well it's Friday night

**Les/Judd**

So you've got your pay . . .

**Ralph/Eric**

And you feel alright

**All**

Pump up the bitter  
Pump up the bitter  
Pump up the bitter  
Down eight pints  
You don't ca-care care

You don't ca-care care  
You don't ca-care care  
'Cos it's Friday night

**Eric**

I said hip-hippy

**Judd**

Gip-gippy

**All**

Hip gip hop bop  
Drink that slop and don't you stop

**Eric**

Get down get up get in get out

**Judd/Eric**

Get down get up get in get out

**Les/Judd/Eric**

Get down get up get in get out

**All**

Get down get up get in get out

**Eric**

The bouncers are mean  
In their black and white  
The fellas are pissed  
But their fists are tight  
But the chicks are loose

**All** (*as women*)

'Cos it's Friday niiiight . . .

**Eric**

We got soul

**All**

Rap

**Eric**

We got soul

## 6 Bouncers

### **All**

House rap

### **Eric**

We play a lot of other stuff

### **Judd**

That sounds like crap

### **All** (*building*)

Get down get up

Get in get out

Get down get up

Get in get out

Get down get up

Get in get out

### **Eric**

If you come down here

Wearing jeans

### **Judd**

You can't get in

### **All**

Know what he means?

Gotta have a tie, gotta have a suit

Gotta look cute or you'll get the boot

Gotta have a tie, gotta have a suit

Gotta look cute or you'll get the boot

*They are stage centre. A spotlight picks them out.*

**Les** You're listening to Radio Bollocks. 'Hello Steve, it's Gervaise here, keep your tongue out and I'll call you right back.'

**All** Ten fifty-three. Ten eighty-nine. Radio One FM.

**Ralph** (*as Bowie*) Tell me what the time is, tell me what the temperature is.

**Les** Yes that was the Bouncers, strange name for a group that.

**Ralph** Yes yes yesh boy yesh boy get a pen . . . get a pen . . .

**Judd** Fillet o' fish, fillet o' fish, give me a fish to fillet.

**Les** Yes. That record is going down very well in the discos so I shall certainly be playing it tonight at my gig in Littlehampton.

**Ralph** Yes indeed.

**All** Yes we do.

**Judd** Let's have that off.

*Suddenly the scene changes and the bouncers become female customers in a ladies' hairdresser. Ralph sits under a hairdryer, reading a magazine. Eric (Maureen) is having his hair washed by Judd (Cheryl). Les is offstage.*

**Judd** That Steve Wright gets up my ring . . . and he's so popular because people keep ringing him up. Do you listen to it, Maureen?

**Eric** No, Cheryl love. It gets on my bloody nerves. I like that Bruno Brooks and Gaz-za-za Davies.

**Judd** This new Alberto Balsam should do wonders for your hair, Maureen.

**Eric** Do you think so?

**Judd** Oh yeah.

**Eric** I want to look nice for tonight.

**Judd** Going anywhere special?

**Eric** It's Rosie's twenty-first. It should be a good do.

**Judd** I hope it is, love.

**Eric** You know her. She comes in here. She works at our place. Four of us are going down to Mr Cinders.

**Judd** Oh, I've heard some good reports about that place.

**Eric** Yes. It's alright.

**All** Yes. It's alright.

**Eric** It's the best place round here.

**Judd** It's all plush, isn't it?

**Eric** Yeah. You've got to get there early to get in. It gets packed out. Like the Black Hole of bloody Calcutta.

**Les** *enters the hairdresser's, out of breath. He has become Rosie.*

**Les** Hiya.

**All** Hiya.

**Les** Chuffin' hell. Talk about being rushed off your feet. Look at the time and I've only just finished.

**Eric** What've you been up to, Rosie?

**Les** An order came in at ten to four.

**Eric** Chuffin' cheek.

**Les** Friday and all. And my bleeding birthday.

**All** Cheeky getts.

**Les** Can you fit me in, Cheryl?

**Judd** I can't, I'm afraid, love. I'm chock-a-block till seven.

**Ralph** I told her to book.

**Judd** I'm going out myself . . . Dagonara Casino.

**Eric** Gambling?

**Judd** Well . . .

**All** Bloody 'ell.

**Les** I'll just have to be late, that's all. I'll nip over to

Barbara's. She might be able to fit me in. I'll see you down here later, Maureen.

**Eric** Alright, luv.

**Les** Tara, luvs.

**All** Tara.

**Les** (*to audience*) Tara everyone.

**Eric** She's a dizzy sod, that Rosie.

**Ralph** (*getting uncomfortable under the hairdryer*) How much longer, Cheryl?

**Judd** Bloody hell. She's on fire!

**Eric** Cheryl.

**Judd** Bloody hell. I wish you'd get your hair cut.

**Eric** I've got a new sort of skirt thing. It's nice, a bit tight, but so what? Ski pants as well.

**Judd** C&A?

**Eric** No.

**Judd** Top Shop?

**Eric** No chance. Got it from Chelsea Girl.

**Judd/Ralph** Chelsea Girl.

**Judd** Oh yeah. They're lovely. I've got one in a sort of maroon.

**Eric/Ralph** Maroon.

**Judd** I got them in the sale.

**Eric** How much were they?

**All** Barbers!

*Although the scene remains exactly the same we are now in a barber's. Judd is a brusque barber. Eric is in the chair. Ralph reads a dirty magazine.*

**Judd** Come and get your hair cut if you dare.

**Ralph** Jesus Christ! Where is he?

**Eric** I can't see him.

**Judd** I'm over here, lads. Right. Who wants what? You young lads want a proper haircut. Well, for three fifty you can have the Vinnie Jones look. Very popular with the thugs. Or for three fifty you can have the Elephant Man cut.

**Eric** What's the Elephant Man cut?

**Judd** It makes one side of your head look bigger than the other.

**Ralph** Funny barber.

**Judd** You said it.

**Ralph** I wouldn't let him near me.

**Eric** Why?

**Ralph** Look at his own hair.

**Judd** (*ignoring them*) Or you can have the Tony Curtis haircut look.

**Eric** Hey, what's the Tony Curtis haircut look?

**Judd** All off. Totally bald. Egghead cut.

**Eric** Tony Curtis doesn't have his hair cut like that . . .

**Judd** He does if he comes in here. Funny, eh? Funny, lads, eh?

**Eric** Just cut it, will yer and cut the gags.

**Eric** *gets in the chair and* **Judd** *begins to cut his hair.*

**Judd** Going somewhere, are we?

**Eric** Disco.

**Judd** How old are you?

**Ralph** (*looking at a magazine*) Juddy hell! Look at the body on that.

**Eric** I'm nineteen.

**Judd** Got a woman?

**Ralph** I hope that she's down there tonight.

**Eric** I might have at two o'clock.

**Judd** Make sure that you don't get an ugly one.

**Ralph** There's only ugly ones left at two o'clock.

**Eric** Bollocks, Jerry.

**Judd** Watch the language, you.

**Ralph** What are you doing to his hair? He can't go out like that . . . hey you can keep away from me, you bleeding maniac.

**Judd** Anything on?

**Eric** No thanks.

**Judd** Anything for the weekend?

**Ralph** Yeah, I'll have a gross.

**Eric** What time are we starting?

**Ralph** Time they do open.

**Les** *enters.*

**Les** I'm here, you dreamers.

**All** Kev.

**Eric** Kev, ready for the big night.

**Les** Ready as I'll ever be.

**Ralph** Hey. I am dying for it. I've starved myself all week.

**Eric** He's a dirty sod.

**Les** Seven o'clock in the Taverners, right?

**Eric/Ralph** Right.

**Les** Alright.

**Eric/Ralph** Alright.

**Les** Where's Terry?

**Judd** I'm here.

**Judd** *switches from playing the barber to playing Terry. The scene changes to a street corner where they all wait for Terry.*

**All** I thought he was the barber.

**Judd** Just finished a mindless day of wood stackin', talking about the races at Chepstow, the dogs at White City and the chances of England winning the World Cup . . .

**All** (*chanting*) Engla-and.

**Judd** . . . ready for the night-time. Mindless girl-watching and a chance perhaps of the old sniff of perfume and feel of inside thigh; milky-white thighs and bloodshot eyes. It's no surprise that I'm dying for it.

**All** See you down there at seven.

**All** Terry-Jerry-Kev-Baz -

**Judd** Be young -

**Eric** Be foolish -

**Les** But be happy -

**All** Be da da da da da da da . . .

**Ralph** And be careful not to catch it!

**All** Bollocks!

*The actors now become the lads getting ready for the big night out.*

**Eric** Baz, that is it. Friday night, fit for a fight. Get down there. Have a skinful. Might have a Chinese, or a chicken-in-the-basket. Maybe a hot-dog. Might risk it. Got my dole money saved up. Try and pull some skirt. Give her a pup.

**Ralph** I'm looking cool. I'm looking great. Wish I didn't have that spot. (*He squeezes an imaginary spot.*) Gotcha! Blackheads. Slap some Clearasil on my face. Not bad, Jerry. Not bad at all, mate.

**Eric** Hope I don't get stabbed again.

**Judd** Time is it?

**Les** Jesus Christ . . .

**Ralph** Ten to seven.

**Les** Gonna be late.

**Ralph** Time for another quick check.

*They all stand in a row and check the various parts of their bodies.*

**Eric** Hair?

**All** Check.

**Judd** Tie?

**All** Check.

**Eric** Aftershave? Jason Donovan uses this.

**All** (*sing*)  
Sealed With a Kiss . . . Check.

**Eric** Talc on genitals?

**All** Check.

**Eric** Clean underpants?

**Ralph** Well . . .

**Les** They'll do.

**Eric** Money?

**All** Double check.

**Les** Condoms?

**All** Checkaroonie.

**Judd** Breath?

*They all breathe out and try and smell their own breath.*

**All** Ugh! Beer should drown that.

**Judd** Right. That's it then. We're ready. Catch the bus at the end of our street.

**Ralph** Ding ding.

**Les** Fares please.

**Eric** Bollocks.

**Judd** Get downtown to start the pub crawl. When we get there it's packed already. I see me mates. Baz, Jerry an' Kev an' me into the Taverners.

*During the following sequence the lads attempt to get served. Their actions should convey the bustling, pushy atmosphere of a pub.*

**Judd** Four pints, please!

**All** (*as they down the first pint of the evening*) ONE!

**Les** 'Course I'm eighteen.

**Eric** Get some crisps.

**Judd** Four bags of beef.

**Ralph** Look at tits on that.

**All** (*to audience*) Social comment.