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SF PERUSALS

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me

Frank McGuinness

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME was first performed at the Hampstead Theatre, on 10 July 1992. The cast was as follows:

MICHAEL.....Alec McCowen

ADAM .....Hugh Quarshie

EDWARD ..... Stephen Rea

Director: Robin Lefèvre

Designer: Robin Don

Lighting Designer: Nick Chelton

SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME premiered in New York City on November 23, 1992 at The Booth Theatre. The cast was as follows:

MICHAEL.....Alec McCowen

ADAM .....James McDaniel

EDWARD ..... Stephen Rea

Director: Robin Lefèvre

Designer: Robin Don

Lighting Designer: Natasha Katz

Sound: T. Richard Fitzgerald

SETTING: A cell

TIME: Now

PROLOGUE

In DARKNESS ADAM's voice is heard humming lowly, "Someone To Watch Over Me." His voice grows slightly louder as LIGHT slowly rises. HE stops singing. The LIGHT now just about picks out his shape.

Scene 1

Complete LIGHT. Ella Fitzgerald sings "Someone To Watch Over Me." EDWARD and ADAM are together in the cell. THEY are separately chained to the walls. EDWARD is center stage; ADAM is stage right. The chains are of sufficient length to allow freedom of movement for both men to exercise.

EDWARD is dressed in a loose blue T-shirt and white football shorts. ADAM is dressed in black T-shirt and grey shorts. THEY exercise in silence. ADAM's exercises are rigorous. EDWARD moves through his paces more sluggishly.

EDWARD. That was Ella Fitzgerald singing, "Someone To Watch Over Me."

ADAM. What was?

EDWARD. My eighth and final record for "Desert Island Discs." It is also my single choice of record. Good old Ella. Did you have "Desert Island Discs" in America?

ADAM. No. What is it?

EDWARD. You pick eight records and your favourite among the eight. Then you choose a luxury. Then a book, apart from the Bible and Shakespeare. They're already on the desert island. My book is a guide to home-brewing beer, and my luxury is a beer-making kit. And Ella Fitzgerald would sing to me. I'd be happy on a desert island. Easy pleased, that's me. An easy-going man. (*Silence.*) Jesus, the boredom, the boredom, the bloody boredom. And they're coming up the hill at Cheltenham and Dawn Run is fading, she is fading, the great Irish mare will not complete the unique double of the Cheltenham Hurdle and the Gold Cup, she's tiring and she jumps the fence, she's gaining strength in the air, she's wearing them down, she passes one, she passes two, a third she passes and the winning post's in sight, she's done it, she's won. Dawn Run for Ireland, mighty woman. She's won the Gold Cup. (*Silence.*) Jesus, it was a real pity I didn't have money riding on her. Dawn Run. Did I ever tell you about Dawn Run?

ADAM. She was your favourite horse. She won both her great races. She was magnificent. You loved her and would have married her, but it couldn't have worked out. She was a horse and you were human. Besides, she was Protestant, you were Catholic, and you were already married. You've told me about Dawn Run.

EDWARD. Sarcastic yankee. She was a hero, that horse.

ADAM. So were Glasgow Celtic when they won the European Cup, and I don't want to hear about them, either. (*Silence. ADAM exercises strenuously.*) How many push-ups did you do?

EDWARD. Didn't count.

ADAM. How many?

EDWARD. Twenty.

ADAM. You did not.

EDWARD. Fifteen.

ADAM. You did not.

EDWARD. Twelve.

ADAM. Eleven. One more than yesterday. Come on, Edward, we've got to keep going. I got to get you into condition. You know that, you agreed to it. We can have competitions when you're in condition.

EDWARD. I don't care about competitions or about my condition.

(Silence.)

ADAM. Yea, yea, I know what you mean. Who am I fooling? Who the hell am I fooling? Me. That's who. No, no brooding. No blaming myself. That way I go under. I will not go under.

(Silence.)

EDWARD. The boredom, the boredom, Jesus, the boredom. (*Silence.*) I'm going to start to brood.

ADAM. I will not brood.

EDWARD. I'm going to start to blame myself.

ADAM. Don't.

EDWARD. I'm imagining where I would be, if I hadn't come to this country.

ADAM. Where would you be if you hadn't come here?

EDWARD. At home wondering what it would be like to be here.

ADAM. Yea.

EDWARD. (*Laughs.*) There's some that cannot stay at home, and our Eddie, he is one of them. My father's words, proved right, proved right. Time and time again. He has to be the big man, this boy, never getting stale, never being safe. And look where he's landed today. Far across the sea. Not in Amerikay nor even in Australia, but in the land of the fucking Lebanon. Jesus, could I have found it on the map before I came here? I leave one kip at home to come to this kip here—oh Christ, look at this place. The dirt of it. Chained to a wall. No women. Food's fit for pigs. You don't know if it's morning or night. You don't know who belonging to you is alive or dead. You can't even go to the shithouse without one of them handcuffed to you, watching your very bowels move. The heat, the dust, the smell. It's a bad hole. But I will say one thing. It's better than being in Strabane.

ADAM. What's wrong with Strabane?

EDWARD. If you ever want proof there's no God, go to Strabane. Hell on a stick, sweet Strabane. It's not as bad as Omagh. Omagh, Omagh, God protect us all from Omagh. Omagh has a cathedral and a hospital in it. The hospital is slightly more reminiscent of Chartres. I screwed this woman in Omagh one night. When I looked at her in the sober light of morning, I thought she was a man.

ADAM. Were you married at the time you screwed her?

EDWARD. Don't remember. Why do you ask?

ADAM. Making conversation.

EDWARD. You're making judgements.

ADAM. I don't make judgements.

EDWARD. No, you just listen. Let me ramble on, you store it all up, then you size it up. Well, after two months sizing it up, what kind of specimen do you make of me? What kind of childhood would you say I had?

ADAM. Remarkably happy, I'd guess. You don't mention your mother. That's unusual. Something else is unusual. You barely talk about your own kids.

EDWARD. Barely.

ADAM. Why? (*Silence.*) After two months, can't you tell me?

EDWARD. I.don't know them. Working too hard, playing too hard, me. Like father, like son in that respect. I didn't know him until it was too late. I don't know them. Now I never will. Because we're going to be in here for a long time. They could be grown men and women by the time I next see them. If I next see them.

ADAM. You're an Irishman. You're from a neutral country. They'll let you go.

EDWARD. Didn't I think that? Wasn't it me waving the green passport in their faces, roaring, "Ireland, Ireland"? They still stuck the gun up my arse and dragged me in here. Green passport, neutral country? What's that to these boys? Save your breath, Adam. We'll be old men by the time we get out of here. We're stuck here. (*Silence.*) We're stuck here. (*ADAM begins to exercise again.*) For the love of God, will you give it a rest? Do yous Americans ever stand still?

ADAM. Would you prefer I were an Arab?

EDWARD. I don't go for Arabs that much. The sand blows up their skirts and they're not allowed to scratch themselves. The itch has them the way they are, excitable.

ADAM. You're pretty excitable yourself today.

EDWARD. And you never are?

ADAM. I don't take it out on you if I am.

EDWARD. You should. It might give me something to fight against.

ADAM. I dislike fighting.

EDWARD. Do you really dislike it? I thought the fighting was our business, in our own ways. I report it, you—what do you do about the fighting? When we were covering the Northern bother, the boys we really hated were the Italians. I remember why. Their big interest was in photographing kids. Kids crying, kids cut to pieces, preferably dead kids.

ADAM. I am not interested in dead kids. I am not a journalist.

EDWARD. No, you're—what? Someone that makes the fighting all nice and clean and scientific. You stand back and examine the effects of war on innocent young minds. How very kind, doctor. Disturbed young minds. You want them disturbed, don't you, doctor? Research, publish, profit, as I said. Make your money. Like myself, Adam. Doing a job. Very professional, Adam. Very profitable. Very American.

ADAM. You piece of shit.

EDWARD. Money, Adam, you were in it for the money.

ADAM. And what the hell were you in it for? By your own dirty admission —

EDWARD. It was my dirty admission. I say I came here for the money. You don't, but you did. So, who's the piece of shit? You are.

ADAM. I want to crack your fucking face open. I'm going to fucking kill you. If I've to listen to you much longer, I will kill you.

EDWARD. You can't, Adam. Even if you could, you haven't got that in you.

ADAM. Shut up.

EDWARD. You're not a killer. Isn't that a good thing, doctor?

ADAM. They haven't broken me yet.

EDWARD. The Arabs? No, but I've broken you, Adam. Haven't I?

ADAM. Nearly. Why?

EDWARD. About time, I've broken you. You think you've all the answers. You don't. I got through to something in you that you don't have an answer for. Whatever that cool head is hiding, I do not know, but I do know that cool's going to crack, it has to, and we'd better both be prepared for when it does. Whatever else about this place, we're in it together, we have to stick it out together. We'll come out of this alive. One favour—let me be able to do my worst to you, and you be able to do your worst to me. Is that agreed? That way, as you say, they won't break us, for we'll be too used to fighting for our lives.

ADAM. Will we get out alive? (*Silence.*) I do get scared. I miss my home.

EDWARD. That's all I wanted to hear you say.

ADAM. I've said it. All right?

EDWARD. One step nearer home, saying it.

ADAM. Ed, don't break me. Don't let me go mad. Say you want to go home as well.

(Silence.)

EDWARD. I want to go home.
ADAM. Say it again.
EDWARD. I want to go home.
ADAM. It's all right, Edward.
EDWARD. I want my wife.
ADAM. She's all right.
EDWARD. My kids, I want to see them.
ADAM. You will.
EDWARD. My wife, my kids, please, let me see them. God, please. Let me talk to them. Let me go home.
ADAM. No.
EDWARD. I want to go home. Arabs, Arabs—
ADAM. No!

(Silence.)

EDWARD. We're going mad.
ADAM. We're in Lebanon.
EDWARD. Yes.
ADAM. I'm in Lebanon.
EDWARD. So am I. "Won't you tell them please, to put on some speed, follow my lead, oh how I need..."

(EDWARD sings "Someone To Watch Over Me." His voice fades as the MUSIC of the song plays. LIGHTS fade.)

Scene 2

The MUSIC of the song continues to play as the LIGHT rises. MICHAEL has joined them in the cell. HE too is bare-footed, wearing a white T-shirt and black shorts. HE is chained to the wall, stage left.

MICHAEL sleeps. ADAM reads the Bible, the Koran sits open beside it. EDWARD lies slumped, watching Michael.

EDWARD. Still no sign of life out of the new boy. How long do you think he'll be conked out for?

ADAM. He should be awake soon.

EDWARD. Poor bollocks. He's in for a bit of a shock if he expects daylight. He must be out cold for the best part of twelve hours. Yea, I'd say he'd soon come to.

ADAM. Yea, he should.

EDWARD. A bit of new company would liven this place up. I hope he speaks English. Jesus, I hope this isn't the start of a rush hour as well. How many of us do you think they could stick in the one room?

ADAM. I don't know, Edward.

EDWARD. As least they've left him his bottle of water. If he wakens with a thirst on him he can drown it. Drown your sorrows, boy, dry your tears. Mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.

ADAM. Biblical.

EDWARD. What?

ADAM. Valley of tears.

EDWARD. Is that what you are reading? The Bible?

ADAM. Yea.

EDWARD. It's nice of them to leave us the Bible and the Koran.

ADAM. They pass the time.

EDWARD. For you.

ADAM. If you want to read either they're here for you.

EDWARD. Not a chance. I hate religion. All religion. Bad for you.

ADAM. It passes the time.

EDWARD. Religion?

ADAM. Reading.

EDWARD. Why are the Irish so religious?

ADAM. Why?

EDWARD. I've asked the question.

ADAM. I suppose because they're always thanking God.

EDWARD. What for?

ADAM. That they're not Belgian.

EDWARD. I think your man looks a bit Belgian. Maybe he's German. I hope he's not. (*Silence.*) The Germans and the Dutch, they're buying up the whole West of Ireland. "No Trespassing" notices everywhere. (*Silence.*) It would be rough for him if he couldn't speak English.

ADAM. I speak German. A little German.

EDWARD. Good for you.

ADAM. You find it objectionable that I speak German?

EDWARD. A little, shitehead.

ADAM. I am not a shithead.

EDWARD. I said "shitehead," not "shithead," shitehead. (*Silence. ADAM returns to reading.*) Great expression that. "Shitehead." I like it. (*Silence.*) You should quit reading in

this light. It'll blind your eyes. (*Silence.*) It's funny, you rarely see an Arab wearing glasses.

ADAM. They don't masturbate.

EDWARD. How do they manage?

ADAM. Do you? Masturbate?

EDWARD. Never.

ADAM. Me neither.

EDWARD. Well, not before six o'clock in the morning. You have to have some morality.

ADAM. My record is fifteen times in one night, and I made no complaints against myself.

EDWARD. Any Arab women?

ADAM. Just American girls. I like American girls.

EDWARD. I had a fantasy about an Arab woman. She was only wearing a yashmak. I was wearing a grass skirt.

ADAM. Why?

EDWARD. She was kinky. I like that. It makes a woman unique. It was a good fantasy.

ADAM. I like a little foreplay in mine.

EDWARD. Foreplay? In a fantasy.

ADAM. Don't the Irish like foreplay?

EDWARD. We invented it. We call it drink.

ADAM. What turns your wife on?

EDWARD. A bottle of vodka. What about your woman?

ADAM. She likes to imagine she's sleeping with God. She's Californian. This would turn her on. The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine ... Whither is my beloved turned aside? My beloved's I am, and my beloved is mine ... Make haste, my beloved, and be

thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountain of spices."

EDWARD. Not bad. I could see some women going for that.

ADAM. I could turn her on, then she can turn me on.

EDWARD. How?

ADAM. She tells me I've a dick that could choke a donkey.

EDWARD. Jesus, some dick.

ADAM. Some donkey.

MICHAEL. I'm terribly sorry, but where am I?

EDWARD. So it's yourself, is it?

MICHAEL. Pardon?

EDWARD. Do you not recognize me? We were at school together.

MICHAEL. I don't think so.

EDWARD. Eton, wasn't it? Or Harrow?

MICHAEL. No, I don't —where am I?

EDWARD. In the officer's mess, Brit Boy. A bit rough and ready, but you'll get used to it. We have. So, how's the outside world?

MICHAEL. Who are you? Why am I here?

EDWARD. To see a movie. Maybe if you're lucky there'll be a meal afterwards.

ADAM. Let it rest, Edward. Are you ok, guy?

MICHAEL. (*Half hysterical.*) I simply wish to know where I am and who you are.

EDWARD. Lower your voice, bollocks, you want us to get a hiding?

MICHAEL. I was on my way to the market and I was looking for fruit, for pears, for I had invited a few people

from the university for dinner and for dessert I wanted to make a pear flan, I was walking to the market—

EDWARD. A pear flan?

MICHAEL. For dessert. I have people invited for dinner.

EDWARD. Then they're going to go hungry, sweetheart.

MICHAEL. Why am I chained to a wall?

ADAM. You've been taken hostage!

MICHAEL. Kidnapped?

EDWARD. Yes.

ADAM. My name's Adam Canning. I'm an American.

EDWARD. Edward Sheridan. Irish.

MICHAEL. I'm an Englishman.

EDWARD. Of course you are.

MICHAEL. Who has kidnapped me?

ADAM. We don't know for sure.

EDWARD. They're not terribly chatty.

MICHAEL. Why have they kidnapped me?

EDWARD. Because you're an Englishman. How dreadfully unfair. Not cricket.

MICHAEL. Why have they taken away all my clothes?

ADAM. They want to make double sure you stay.

MICHAEL. Oh my God, I am chained to a wall.

EDWARD. So you are. So are fucking we. So you better enjoy it.

MICHAEL. What do you mean, "enjoy it"?

EDWARD. It's a laugh, isn't it, Adam? That's how we get by. Laughing at it all. Do you not enjoy a laugh? Have you no sense of humour?

ADAM. Stop freezing the guy out.

MICHAEL. How long have you been here?

ADAM. Four months.

EDWARD. Two months.

MICHAEL. My name is Michael. Michael Watters.

EDWARD. So what's up in the outside world, Mick? Do you mind me calling you Mick? Is there much word about us?

MICHAEL. I'm sorry?

EDWARD. Do people talk about us? Have you heard anything about our people? What are they doing to release us?

MICHAEL. I don't know.

EDWARD. What do you mean, you don't know?

MICHAEL. I had barely arrived in Beirut, I really wasn't well acquainted with anyone—

EDWARD. People must have been talking about us—

MICHAEL. People would mention in passing—

EDWARD. "Mention in passing"? Do they know what we're going through?

ADAM. Are we forgotten?

MICHAEL. They get on with their lives. If they thought too much about it, about you, they'd—they'd—

ADAM. What? (*Silence.*) They'd what?

MICHAEL. I don't know. I really don't know anything about the political situation in Lebanon. I came here to teach English. I lecture in English. That's all. That's why I was asking people round to dinner. To learn the ropes a little. I was going to the market. I wanted to buy pears for dessert. They stopped me. They had guns. I was so frightened. I told them I was simply a teacher of English at the university. I was so frightened. God, where am I? Please, let me go. Let me go.

ADAM. That's enough. You mustn't let them hear you cry. They're listening to you as you speak. They want you to weep. Don't ever do that in here. I'm warning you, don't weep. That's what they want. So don't cry. Laugh. Do you hear me? Laugh.

MICHAEL. I can't.

ADAM. Laugh, damn you.

MICHAEL. No.

(EDWARD starts to laugh loudly. HE stops. ADAM laughs loudly, EDWARD joining in. THEY stop.)

ADAM. Go, Michael. Laugh. (*Silence.*) Laugh. (*MICHAEL laughs.*) More.

(MICHAEL laughs more loudly. ADAM and EDWARD join in his laughter. THEY stop. ADAM signals Michael to continue laughing. HE does so.)

ADAM. Good guy. That's what you got to do. They've heard you laughing.

MICHAEL. What will they do now?

ADAM. Wait and see. (*Silence.*) They're in a peaceful mood tonight.

EDWARD. They're not even laughing back.

ADAM. Mission accomplished, Michael. Stage one.

MICHAEL. Who are they?

EDWARD. The enemy.

ADAM. The food's ok. We are given a bottle of water each day. They let us use the bathroom, but they go with us. We are never alone. We've managed so far. We are always in these chains. That is so degrading. We are given

the Bible and the Koran to read. But the worst of all is that we have no way of knowing what is going on in the outside world.

EDWARD. That goes about its business.

ADAM. That's the way it is in Chinatown.

(Silence.)

EDWARD. Are you a married man?

MICHAEL. Widowed, I'm afraid, some years ago. No children.

EDWARD. Any dogs?

MICHAEL. A cocker spaniel and a golden retriever. They're at my mother's home. Near Peterborough. She lives—(*Silence.*) She lives there. Near Peterborough.

(Silence.)

ADAM. I was a doctor.

EDWARD. You still are. Journalist, me.

MICHAEL. I lost my university post. They're not teaching much Old and Middle English these days. A dying concern. Rationalization of resources. They say. So when I could only get employment here, I came here. I absolutely need to work. I was warned about the danger. I was worried. But I refused to be afraid. So I came here.

ADAM. And got caught.

MICHAEL. Yes

EDWARD. Yes. (*Silence.*) Are you all right?

ADAM. You'll get used to it. In time.

(Silence.)

EDWARD. Who was coming to dinner?

MICHAEL. I'm making a pear flan. (*Silence.*) I thought everything was going very well, very well indeed, but just when I'm about to pop it into the oven, gas mark 7, I discover I can't find the pears. The pears. I'd forgotten the pears.

(LIGHTS fade.)

Scene 3

EDWARD browses through the Koran. MICHAEL sits with his eyes closed. ADAM is running on the spot.

ADAM. I wish we could go to see a movie.

EDWARD. Uum.

ADAM. Jeez, I'd enjoy a good movie.

MICHAEL. Yes.

EDWARD. Do you like pictures?

MICHAEL. I do.

EDWARD. You might have struck me more as a book man.

(Silence.)

MICHAEL. I do enjoy a good book as well. *(Silence.)* I would prefer at the moment to see a movie.

EDWARD. Why are you calling them movies? Do the English not call them films?

MICHAEL. I just called it a movie. Why do you object?

EDWARD. It just sounded strange.

MICHAEL. Oh, sorry.

EDWARD. Why are you sorry?

MICHAEL. That I didn't call it a film, if it offended you.

EDWARD. It didn't.

MICHAEL. Then why did you bring it up?

EDWARD. Something to say.

ADAM. (*Stops running.*) I wish we could go to see a movie.

EDWARD. You've said that. We've heard you.

ADAM. Yea.

(Silence.)

MICHAEL. I don't think I'd like to be a film star.

EDWARD. Why not?

MICHAEL. I imagine being an actor is quite a boring life.

EDWARD. Yea.

ADAM. Yea.

(Silence.)

EDWARD. Yes, boring.

ADAM. Yea.

MICHAEL. Yes.

EDWARD. No.

MICHAEL. No.

EDWARD. What do you mean, "no"? You've just said yes.

MICHAEL. I was agreeing with you. I thought you were agreeing with me. So I said no.

EDWARD. You say no when you're agreeing with someone?

MICHAEL. If they've said no, yes.

EDWARD. Yes or no, what is it?

MICHAEL. What?

EDWARD. Shut up. (*Silence.*) Let's see a movie. Shoot the movie. An Englishman comes to Lebanon.

ADAM. Being well trained in the social graces, he invites people to dinner. He does not necessarily like these people, but they speak English, and they would seem to know the ropes about this place, so they may help him to endure his time here. He will feed them. There is only one problem. Food. He will take his courage in both hands and walk through the city of Beirut looking for food to cook. To his surprise he sees at some distance from him the very same people he has invited to dinner. He calls to them, but they don't answer. He calls again, he follows them, and they are going into districts of Beirut he does not know. He follows him, he finds himself trapped, he sees them ahead of him, still he calls out. They look back. They leave him. The movie ends. (*Silence.*) Hitchcock. That's who made that movie.

EDWARD. I can't stick Hitchcock.

ADAM. Why?

EDWARD. His endings.

ADAM. Yea. (*Silence.*) Shoot another movie.

EDWARD. A nun comes to Beirut. She has come to do her Christian duty to the orphans of that troubled city. She

first befriends a goat wandering through this war-torn town. She greets the goat as a long-lost ally, singing to it on her guitar. Little children hear her song and join in, miraculously learning English. Our happy band join forces, they fight the cruel foe, they convert the whole of Lebanon to the great task at hand—love thy neighbour. Not everyone is pleased with Sister's success. She is shot, as is her guitar. One of the little children presses the bullet-strewn instrument to her body as they carry away the corpse of the dear nun.

ADAM. Played by Madonna.

EDWARD. As they carry off the corpse, vultures gather. They eye the dead nun hungrily.

ADAM. They swoop in their throng down on the dead body. They start to tear her flesh. A band of macho Arabs arrive on white steeds. The horses' flesh contrasts in their beauty with the shattered flesh of the dead virgin. They draw their guns. They shoot off the vultures' heads. Pow, pow, pow, pow, pow.

EDWARD. Sam Peckinpah Productions.

MICHAEL. In the midst of this horror music is heard. A man preaching peace moves through this macho crowd. He is dressed in a loincloth. He speaks against violence. He speaks of civilization. He is a man of peace.

ADAM. Richard Fucking Attenborough movie.

EDWARD. Fortunately at that moment a crowd of peasants dance on to the scene, waving scythes. Immaculately photographed, they win the hearts of the cruel Arabs, for among the peasants there is one disabled who has a dream—to be an artist. With the help of his mother, and his own determination, he finally wins an Oscar, which he collects with his ear—

ADAM. Oh Jesus, not an Irish movie, please—

EDWARD. And they all live happily ever after. *(Silence.)* We're fucked.

MICHAEL. So it seems.

EDWARD. How are you feeling? *(Silence.)* Come on, give us a dose of the stiff upper lip. Raise our morale, old boy. Tell us all about the war. So many chappies went through what we're going through. Fine example to us all. Let's hear it for the British! *(Silence.)* Miserable git, aren't you? There's not much life in you. Is there?

(Silence.)

MICHAEL. I'm no more afraid of you than I am of them.

EDWARD. Stiff upper lip, let's hear it for—

MICHAEL. I mean it. I'm not afraid of you.

ADAM. He's not afraid of you, Edward.

EDWARD. He's not afraid of you, Adam.

ADAM. He's not afraid of anything.

EDWARD. No, he's not.

MICHAEL. In this dreadful situation—

EDWARD. In this dreadful situation—

MICHAEL. Where we have found ourselves—

EDWARD. Where we have found ourselves—

MICHAEL. I fail to see how tormenting me—

EDWARD. I fail to see—

MICHAEL. Will in any way alleviate—

EDWARD. Alleviate—alleviate—alleviate—alleviate—alleviate.

MICHAEL. Do you wish me to admit I'm afraid of you? *(Silence.)* Is that what you wish me to do? *(Silence.)*

Would that in some perverse way help you to be less afraid yourselves, because you are both very afraid, and I find it distinctly repulsive that you turn together against me for the sole reason of backing each other up in your fight against them. We are in this together. Don't forget that. If I go under, so do you.

(Silence.)

ADAM. Shoot the movie.

EDWARD. There were three bollocks in a cell in Lebanon. An Englishman, an Irishman, and an American. Why they were in that cell was anybody's guess, and why they were in Lebanon was their own guess.

ADAM. The American was the first to be caught. While he was on his own, he was frightened of going mad.

EDWARD. The Irishman was second to be caught. He would have went mad without the American. They were joined, these two bolloxes, by a third bollocks, an Englishman.

MICHAEL. The Englishman did not know if being in the cell in Lebanon had driven the other two mad. What has happened to him in being kidnapped strikes him as being madness, so he has attempted not to lose his head in the face of extreme provocation—

EDWARD. In not being afraid of them he's convinced them they have not gone mad.

ADAM. And in their way, in so far as is possible, they thank him for that conviction. *(Silence.)*

MICHAEL. You both scare the shit out of me.

EDWARD. English people always scare the shit out of me as well. As for fucking Americans—

MICHAEL. Yes, they are all quite mad—

EDWARD. Can you imagine what it was like to land in here with that yankee—

MICHAEL. Yes, it must have been worrying—

ADAM. What the fuck is this?

MICHAEL. I do wish we could stop swearing. My language has gone to pot since meeting you both. I really do feel that we are giving in to them if we allow ourselves to descend to vulgarity—no, I'm being a sanctimonious prig. I apologize. (*Silence.*) I'd also just like to say that I think Richard Attenborough's films are quite good. He spent over twenty years trying to make *Gandhi*, and it's a testimony to his decent, well-crafted and honourable political views—

EDWARD. Michael?

MICHAEL. What?

ADAM. Shite.

MICHAEL. Well, it was a bit long, the film of *Gandhi*.

(Silence.)

ADAM. I wonder what Sam Peckinpah would have done with the life of Gandhi.

EDWARD. Gandhi would have been shot in the first reel.

MICHAEL. Actually, Gandhi is shot in the first reel of Richard Attenborough's film.

EDWARD. Is that a fact?

MICHAEL. Yes. *(Silence.)* Are they any vultures in Lebanon?

ADAM. What do you mean?

MICHAEL. Well, in the film where Madonna is eaten by vultures, would that be realistic in Lebanon? (*Silence.*) That was meant to be a joke. (*Silence.*) Vultures are much maligned creatures, you know. I'm not an expert myself on their dietary habits, but I did once hear on *Round Britain Quiz* a fascinating description—

ADAM. Michael, I am Sam Peckinpah. This is a gun. (*HE points his finger at Michael.*) You are dead. (*HE shoots Michael.*)

EDWARD. What a senseless waste of human life.

MICHAEL. Do you think we'll ever get out of here? (*Silence.*) What can they possibly gain by holding us hostage? (*Silence.*) My mother isn't terribly well. She'll be very worried about me. Do you think they will have at least let her know I'm alive? I know it may not sound very sensible to be worried about one's mother when we're in the position that we're in, but I do worry, I worry so much—I was just wondering if they would have told her not to worry—

ADAM. I'm sure they have.

EDWARD. Yes.

MICHAEL. Yes. (*Silence.*) It is quite worrying, isn't it?

EDWARD. Yes.

MICHAEL. Yes.

ADAM. It's just as well you're not afraid.

(Silence.)

MICHAEL. We could be here a long time, couldn't we?

(Silence.)

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