

Milked

Simon Longman

Characters

Paul Twenties. Thin. Wears glasses.

Snowy Twenties. A little stocky. Fair hair.

The play is set entirely in rural Herefordshire. Present day.

A radio plays from somewhere.

Radio A very good morning to you all on this cold and frosty Herefordshire morning. Hope you've got the curtains open wide and letting that winter sun stream into your bedroom. It might be Monday but we here to guide you through your morning with the best tunes from the nineties as well as some countryside shout outs. You're listening to Wyvern FM, Herefordshire's favourite station. Don't go away.

...

Paul, alone. *He has a phone and a list in front of him. He also has a glass of milk.*

He is speaking on the phone.

Paul I was just calling to see...Sorry...My name?...Paul...Paul Roberts...Yeah like Robert, just with and s, like loads of someone called Robert. Anyway. I was just wondering if you had any jobs at all?...Yeah...like...media. Something to do with media stuff...Where am I based? Well, currently Herefordshire but...sorry...that's too far away...too far away from what?...Oh..ok. Thanks anyway. Bye.

He puts the phone down. Crosses off something on the list.

Picks up the phone. Dials.

Paul Hi. How- Oh um sorry...media jobs. Any jobs in media...Well currently in Herefordshire but I am...Oh ok. Thanks.

He puts down the phone. Sighs. Crosses off a list.

Dials.

Paul Hello. How are you?...Sorry...I'm Paul Roberts and I'm looking for work in media...You only recruit for engineering jobs? Oh ok...Any of them going? Ok no worries bye.

Hangs up quickly. Drinks.

Dials.

Paul Hello my name is Paul Roberts and I am looking for a job in media or something similar....You haven't got anything? What anything at all? Marketing Manager? That sounds interesting...I need ten years marketing experience? Oh ok. I don't have that...I have two weeks retail experience in a farmer's supply warehouse...Well I went to University...History...No good?...Herefordshire...Ok bye.

Hangs up. Sighs. Drinks a little more. Crosses off something

Dials.

Paul Hi. Hi...Yes...Paul Roberts...Looking for media jobs and experience...Anything really...What's development?..Oh right...and you get paid to do that?...What experience do I need?..Four years development experience and what sorry?..A degree in Development?..Oh...Is that even a degree?...Oh right...Anything else?..Yes please do call me back if anything comes up...Er...London...Central London...You know Oxford Street...Yeah I live on that...Ok call me back. 01531 620 717. Thanks. Bye.

Hangs up. Sighs. Checks his watch. Drinks some more. Puts his head in his hands and drags them down over his face.

Exhales loudly.

Phone rings. He stares at it.

Paul Hello? Oh. Hey. I'm not doing anything..You found what?

...

Snowy A cow. A big fucking cow. Just lying there Paul. Just lying near the bush over in the Bromyard Field. It's alive Paul, but like, just breathing heavily. I walked right up to it and it tried to get up but it can't. A cow Paul. This thing is fucking massive. Absolutely massive. Like the fucking King of Cows. You know?

Paul Cow's are female Snow.

Snowy What?

Paul Wouldn't be a King. Would be a Queen.

Snowy Whatever. I found it.

Paul So?

Snowy So? It's not moving. It's poorly.

Paul So?

Snowy What do you mean so? I poked it and everything. You ever poke a cow?

Paul No.

Snowy That's because you normally can't go near them. They run away.

Paul Not really.

Snowy Yes really. This one's not well Paul. I'll show you. I need to show you. It's massive.

Paul Now?

Snowy Yeah now. Come on.

Paul I can't.

Snowy Why? What else have you got to do?

Paul I have to-

Snowy Don't say apply for jobs.

Paul Yes.

Snowy No you've done enough for the day. Come look at a cow with me. It's like, massive. It won't be shit. It'll be amazing.

Paul How big is it?

...

Paul Well that's a really big cow.

Snowy Told you.

Paul What's it doing?

Snowy I don't know.

Paul It does look ill.

Snowy Yeah really ill.

Paul Should we tell your Dad?

Snowy No don't tell him.

Paul Why not?

Snowy Why'd you think? It'll push him over the edge. He's still getting over that sheep that died four weeks ago.

Paul What? Actually?

Snowy Yeah you know him. He's like that. Poor little sheep.

Paul Was that the one that drowned?

Snowy No. Shit. Forgot about that. No this one caught fire.

Paul What?

Snowy Yeah. My Dad was trying to fix a fence.

Paul So how did a sheep catch fire?

Snowy Have I not told you about this?

Paul No.

Snowy That's weird. Was a pretty big deal.

Paul Sounds like it.

Snowy Yeah it was.

Pause.

Paul So how did a sheep catch fire when your Dad was fixing a fence?

Snowy Oh. Sorry. It's a bit stupid really. At the same time a tragedy.

Paul Ok.

Snowy You know that storm a while back?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Well it blew a tree on the fence and crushed it so all the sheep were getting out. But the tree was too big to move so for some reason my Dad thought it would be a good idea to, like, burn it.

Paul Right...

Snowy So he threw a load of petrol all over the tree and lit it. Then a sheep decided to panic and run at my Dad. So it knocked my Dad over and the petrol can must have gone up in the air and soaked the sheep a little. Then the sheep caught fire. It was horrible.

Beat.

Paul That's not true.

Snowy Completely is.

Paul Oh my god.

Snowy Yeah.

Paul But none of that makes any sense.

Snowy Again. True. So he's not over it at all. And now this cow.

Paul Ok.

Snowy What about your parents?

Paul What would my parents do?

Snowy I don't know. Do they not care about animals?

Paul Not really.

Snowy Oh. So what do we do?

Paul About what?

Snowy The cow.

Paul I don't know. Just leave it.

Snowy What? To die?

Paul Yeah?

Snowy But it's in pain.

Paul I know but...

Snowy But it looks so sad.

Paul Nothing we can do.

Snowy Oh right. I'm going to go have another look.

Paul Ok.

Snowy You coming?

Paul I would but...

Snowy Sure. Good luck.

Paul Thanks.

...

Snowy on the phone. He holds it to his ear. No one answers.

Dials again.

No one answers again.

Types a text.

Hesitates. Sends it.

...

Snowy It's not moved.

Paul At all?

Snowy No. Still in the same place. Still looks sad.

Paul Are you sure it's not dead?

Snowy No it's breathing. And it's eyes are open. It's big sad looking eyes. We have to do something about it.

Paul Like what?

...

Snowy So I was reading on the internet and there is this medicine you can give to a cow to get it going again.

Paul Get it going?

Snowy Yeah. Get it moving you know? Get it doing. Um. Whatever the fuck cows do.

Paul OK. And what do you do?

Snowy You just have to give it to it.

Paul Why don't we just call a vet?

Snowy A vet? No way. This is my project. I want to cure it. I found it.

Paul What? How old are you? Found it?

Snowy Yeah found it. So that means I have to help it. It's my job.

Paul No it isn't.

Snowy Yeah it is. I found it. And it's not in an obvious place is it? So why did I find it?

Beat.

Paul What?

Snowy Why did I find it?

Paul I don't know.

Snowy I'll tell you why. Fate.

Paul Fate?

Snowy Yeah. Fate. Destiny. All that shit. I was bored right. So went for a walk for something to do. And found it. That's fate. Destiny. Fucking cow destiny.

Paul Are you actually serious?

Snowy Yes. Completely. What else have I got to do?

Paul I don't know? Maybe look for a job?

Snowy Look for a job? Who are you? A Dad?

Paul Don't be a dick. Just saying. We've been here for ages now and you haven't done anything.

Snowy Except find a sad cow.

Paul That's not something. That's a coincidence.

Snowy Yes it is something. I want to help it.

Paul Why?

Snowy Why not? Got nothing better to do.

Paul Yeah you do.

Snowy No I don't. Now are you going to help? Or are you going to call some more fucking "media" recruitment agents?

...

Paul So what do we do with this?

Snowy We have to give it to the cow.

Paul Where did you even get this?

Snowy The Withers' Farm.

Paul What they give it to you?

Snowy Sure.

Paul Did they?

Snowy Not really.

Paul How'd you get it.

Snowy I stole it.

Paul What?

Snowy It's for a good cause. I'm like Mother Teresa. For cows.

Paul She didn't steal cow medicine.

Snowy Alright Robin Hood. I'm cow fucking Robin Hood Mother Teresa. I rob the rich and give to the...cow.

Paul How noble of you.

Snowy Yeah. Really noble. Anyway. Shut up. We have to give this to Sandy.
Paul You've named the cow?
Snowy Yeah.
Paul Ok.
Snowy So we have to give this to Sandy.
Paul How?
Snowy Well. That's the thing.
Paul What?
Snowy I thought we could just, like, feed it to it.
Paul We can't do that?
Snowy No.
Paul So what do we do?

He pulls out a rubber glove.

Paul You fucking joking?
Snowy No.
Paul You are.
Snowy No I'm not.
Paul You have to shove your hand up a cow's arse?
Snowy Well I don't have to.

Beat.

Paul No fucking way. Why me? This is your shit idea.
Snowy You said you would help.
Paul So?
Snowy So we are in this fifty fifty.
Paul No we're not.
Snowy Oh go on.
Paul No.
Snowy Please.
Paul No.
Snowy For Sandy.
Paul No you do it.

Snowy I can't.
Paul Why not?
Snowy Because it's horrid.
Paul Yeah it fucking is.
Snowy We'll flip for it.
Paul What?
Snowy Go on.
Paul No.
Snowy I've got a coin.
Paul Don't fucking care.
Snowy Please.
Paul No.
Snowy Please.
Paul No.
Snowy Please Paul.
Paul No.
Snowy Please.
Paul Fuck off.
Snowy Please.
Paul No.
Snowy Please.
Paul No!
Snowy Please.
Paul No!
Snowy Please. Please please-
Paul Ok ok! Just shut the fuck up.
Snowy Cool. Ready?
Paul Yeah.
Snowy Your call.

Snowy flips.

Paul Tails.

The coin lands. They look.

Paul Fuck.

...

Snowy Well done there mate. You ok? You want a tea? You did very well. I'm really impressed. I think we've cured it. See what happens now. You want a tea? Tea? Beer? Tea? Tea in beer?

Pause.

Snowy I'll make you a tea. That was kind of gross when all that poo came out. Did it fill up your glove? We should have got a big one. You know the ones that go all the way up to your shoulder? You know? Should have nicked one. My bad. Sorry Paul. You did good. Sandy probably enjoyed it. And she might be better now.

Pause.

Snowy I'll get you a tea.

...

Paul is drinking a glass of squash. He is on the phone.

Paul Well I don't have any experience in that area really. But I did work at a nice bar at Uni...I was required to recommend which larger was the cheapest so my sales experience is pretty dynamic...Well, I also advised on crisp flavours...Ready salted, prawn cocktail...I even sold a lot of Worcestershire Sauce flavour...Worcester is quite near me...I was born there...Hello?

He hangs up.

He checks the time and takes a sip of squash. Phone rings.

Paul What? Yeah come round. What's happened?

...

Snowy It hasn't worked.
Paul The medicine?
Snowy Yeah. It hasn't worked. She is still lying there. Is really upsetting.
Paul Maybe it takes a little time.
Snowy It's been three days.
Paul Yeah but it's a big cow.
Snowy I think she needs more.
Paul We haven't got anymore.
Snowy Yeah I do. I got some more last night.
Paul What the fuck Snowy?
Snowy What?
Paul You nick more medicine?
Snowy Yeah. She needs it.
Paul It might not even be the right stuff.
Snowy It is I checked on the internet.
Paul Stop stealing for fucks sake.
Snowy It's for a good cause. You going to help again?
Paul No.
Snowy Go on. You know what you're doing.
Paul No!
Snowy Give you fifty quid.
Paul Fifty? You haven't got fifty quid.
Snowy Yeah.
Paul Show me.

He pulls out a fifty pound note.

Paul Where'd you get that?
Snowy Dad.
Paul He gave you fifty quid?
Snowy Yeah.
Paul Why?
Snowy Does it matter? I've got it.

Paul Fifty quid if I do it again?

Snowy Deal.

...

Snowy That glove worked better.

Paul It sure did.

Snowy Shame it cost twenty quid.

Paul Shut up.

Snowy What are you going to do with the rest of the money?

Paul Save it?

Snowy What? Boring. We could go to the Oak.

Paul No.

Snowy Why not?

Paul Because I need to do some more job stuff.

Snowy Oh go on. Mick might be there.

Paul That guy's mental.

Snowy No he isn't. He's funny.

Paul He's a waste of time. He doesn't do anything except sit there and drink cider.

Snowy So? He's cool.

Paul No he isn't. He's going nowhere.

Snowy And you are?

Paul Yeah. I am. I applying for loads of jobs.

Snowy What in London?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Why do you want to go there?

Paul Because I want to work in media.

Snowy What even is media?

Paul It's an area of work.

Snowy I know that but what exactly is it?

Paul It's what I want to do.

Snowy Since when? I thought you wanted to work in a museum?

Paul I did.

Snowy So what now?

Paul No jobs in museums.

Snowy But you did History.
Paul Yeah but it's got transferable skill potential.
Snowy You sound like a penis.
Paul Fuck off. At least I'm trying. What are you doing?
Snowy I'm healing a cow.
Paul Healing a cow? Seriously what is wrong with you?
Snowy What's wrong with me? What's wrong with you? You spend all your time crying about not having a job.
Paul I am trying.
Snowy Yeah? Well I'm trying to heal a cow.

...

Snowy Paul it hasn't worked again.
Paul Sandy?
Snowy Yeah she's worse.
Paul Really?
Snowy Yeah and she's...kind of...bleeding.
Paul Where from?
Snowy From her eyes?
Paul What?
Snowy Like blood coming out of her eyes. I thought she was crying. But when I looked it was blood. Just, like, falling out of her eyes. Not a lot. But enough. It's really horrible. There's flies and stuff around her head.
Paul Is she not dead?
Snowy No. She's still breathing. You can hear it. It sounds horrible. Sounds like cracking. Like, lots of little cracks . And then the blood coming out of her eyes. I don't know what to do.
Paul We need to call someone.
Snowy No.
Paul Yeah we do. It's not fair.
Snowy No.
Paul Snowy come on this is mental. We've tried and it hasn't worked. Let's call someone alright? Let's just call someone and we can-
Snowy No.
Paul Snow come-

Snowy I'm not fucking calling anyone ok? I'm not. We can do this. We can. Together. We can make a difference here. Imagine that? Imagine that feeling when we help her? When we see her walking away across the field in the sunset or something like that. Just. Trotting off to all her mates. They'll all be like 'Sandy! Where've you been?' and she'll be like "Girls. I've been through something. But a couple of absolute heroes saved me. Here's some advice. If you see a human, don't run away. Because you know why? They're fucking brilliant". Imagine that? Be amazing. That's got to be better than just. Just.

Beat.

Snowy Just feeling fucking nothing.

Paul What?

Snowy I want to save her. Ok? I do. It's my job and I want to save her. I want to Paul. Really fucking do. I want to save something. I can do this. I can. Please. It's giving me. Like. I don't know. Just feel responsible you know? Never. Never really felt like that before and. I just want to help it and see if I can actually do this. And if I can then. Well. Fuck. I'll. We'll. We'll be a geniuses. Or geniusi. Or geniusises. Or whatever the plural fucking is.

Pause.

Paul looks at Snowy. He stares back, determined.

Paul Ok. What do we do?

Snowy I'm not sure. But you going to help?

Paul Fine.

...

Snowy on the phone.

Snowy Hello? You there?...No I can't hear you that well. No. No. Move around a bit...No...Yeah that's alright. Hi. How you?...You've gone again...Just go back to where you were...No...No...No...No...No still nothing...Just...Just go back to where you were...No...Just...It's not fucking hard...Oh you heard that...Sorry...No it's just I haven't spoken to you...Ok...Yeah fine...Fine...Bye.

Hangs up.

...

Snowy What do you think?

Paul She doesn't look well.

Snowy Not at all.

Paul Why hasn't, like, a fox got to her or something.

Snowy I don't know. That would be horrible though.

Paul Yeah it would.

Beat.

Snowy Her eyes look sad.

Paul I know. Is there more blood than last time?

Snowy I think so. Shouldn't we wipe it off or something. Give her something to eat.

Paul Maybe.

Snowy Like, give her some nice grass or something. Some oats.

Paul I don't think that'll help.

Snowy Me either.

Paul What do we do?

Snowy I don't know.

Pause.

Paul Put her down?

...

Snowy You got it?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Took me ages.

Paul I know. It's really hard.

Snowy Ok. So.

Paul I'll go.

Snowy Ok.

Paul So, first. Shoot it.

Snowy I got that.

Paul Yeah. But what with?

Snowy We've only got an air rifle.

Paul You haven't got a shotgun?

Snowy Why would we have a shotgun? My Dad's a farmer.

Paul I thought all farmers had a shotgun somewhere.

Snowy What for?

Paul To shoot things?

Snowy What things?

Paul Dunno. Rabbits? Moles?

Snowy Moles? Like tiny little blind moles?

Paul I thought everyone killed moles?

Snowy Why would anyone want to kill a mole?

Paul They dig up gardens and stuff. My Dad kills them.

Snowy Does he?

Paul Yeah I've seen him do it. When my granddad last stayed. Both of them were, like, waiting in the garden not moving, kind of like two countryside ninjas or something and then when they saw a mole coming up they would leg it over and, like, ram a spade in its face.

Pause.

Snowy What the fuck?

Paul What?

Snowy That's so messed up.

Paul I haven't done it.

Snowy I don't think anyone has. That's fucked up. My Dad definitely hasn't done that.

Paul Could if he had a shotgun.

Snowy Shoot a mole with a fucking shotgun?

Paul I suppose. Would explode though wouldn't it? And would make a bigger hole in the grass really. Bits of mole to. All over the place.

Snowy You're upsetting. My Dad hasn't got a shotgun. Neither has he assaulted a mole with a spade because he's not a psychopath.

Paul Has he got anything at all?

Snowy Only an air rifle.

Paul Ok.

Snowy It's got a scope thing.

Paul Why would that be useful? We can stand next to the cow. And it can't move. Don't have to snipe it do we?

Snowy Good point.

Paul Still. Shooting it in the head with an air rifle. Would that even work?

Snowy Not sure. Might. If you get the right bit.

Paul Which bit?

Snowy The temple or something. If you get shot there you're whole face falls off.

Paul Fucking hell. What else you got?

Snowy Drown it?

Paul We would need a river, which we don't have. And the ability to move it there. Which we don't have.

Snowy Alright. Your turn.

Paul Overdose?

Snowy Overdose?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Overdose on what? It's a cow.

Paul Didn't get that far. Must be something we could get right? And for cheap.

Snowy Paracetamol?

Paul To kill a cow?

Snowy Yeah that won't work.

Paul Next.

Snowy Set it alight?

Paul Jesus! That's awful.

Snowy But doable?

Paul Let's keep that as plan b.

Snowy What else you got?

Paul Nothing.

Snowy No me either. Killing a cow is hard.

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Shall we try the first option?

Paul Might as well.

Snowy I'll get the rifle.

...

Snowy So just put the pellet in, aim and shoot.

Paul Let's try it.

Paul does.

Paul Is that it?

Snowy What were you expecting?

Paul Don't know. A bang maybe. Doesn't sound very powerful.

Snowy It can kill a rabbit.

Paul What the same size as a cow?

Snowy Yeah but we'll be standing next to it.

Paul True.

Snowy And we can always reload it and try again if that doesn't work.

Paul What, like shoot it loads of times?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul That's really upsetting.

Snowy Well what else are we going to do?

Paul Don't know. Alright. Fine. But if we have to do that then we take it in turns.

Snowy Deal.

Paul Who's going first?

...

Paul stands with the rifle.

Snowy Go on.

Paul I can't.

Snowy Really?

Paul No. Look at it. It's so sad.

Snowy But she's in pain.

Paul Yeah but...

Snowy Got to do something.

Paul You try?

Snowy Fine.

Snowy takes the rifle. Aims it.

Paul Go on.

Snowy I can't either. It's her eyes. She's looks so fucking sad. Like she's looking at me.

Paul I know.

Snowy Could blindfold her?

Paul We can't do that. Would feel like a member of the SS or something.

Snowy drops the rifle.

Snowy This is hard.

Paul Yeah.

...

Snowy stands holding a large plastic bag

Snowy So we put this over her head. And then, like, tie it round her neck and, well, she'll suffocate. Right?

Paul That might work.

Snowy Would take a while thought right?

Paul I guess so. Not sure.

Snowy I wish we could just, like, put a pillow over her face.

Paul Smother a cow?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Need a massive pillow.

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Got one?

Snowy No. Could use a duvet?

Paul That won't work.

Snowy Well...

Pause.

Snowy What do you think?

Paul I don't know.

Snowy No me either.

Beat.

Snowy You still got that money?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy Sure you don't want to go to the pub?

Paul I'm sure.

...

By a field somewhere. Anywhere silent. It's night. They are both drunk. They have beers.

Snowy So he's just watching the sheep run around the field right. And he's, like, rooted to the spot. Just watching this sheep leg it around on fire. Like totally on fire. And I'm shouting at him going, what are we going to do? And he doesn't say anything. We just stare in silence at this sheep running around the field on fire. And then Dad says, She's going for the others. And we watch this sheep, like a fucking fireball, run after all its friends. And they start running and this sheep, the one on fire, won't stop chasing them and now they're running fucking everywhere and I just start laughing and my Dad is just not saying anything at all still. Just staring. And then he just runs. Runs to the water trough and grabs a bucket of water. So now he's running after this sheep on fire, who's chasing about fifty other sheep. He's actually pretty fast. And catches up a little and chucks this bucket but misses, drops the bucket and lands his head in it and now he's stuck. He gets up, but he's walking around the field with a bucket stuck on his head, while this sheep is on fire and all the others are running around still.

Paul You're joking?

Snowy Not at all.

Paul What happened then?

Snowy Well this sheep gets slower and slower and then kind of falls over and burns to death. My Dad manages to get the bucket off his head and starts crying and all the other sheep just start fucking eating grass again.

Paul Oh my god.

Snowy I know.

Paul That's amazing.

Snowy I know. But poor sheep though.

Paul Well yeah. Poor sheep. But you know. Kind of funny.

Snowy True.

Pause. Paul laughs a little. Takes a moment. Looks around. Listens. Nothing makes a noise.

Paul Jesus we have to get out of here. So fucking silent. Listen.

Snowy Yeah...

Paul Like. Completely get away. You ever think everyone else is doing things? People from school and that. Or just. Anyone.

Snowy It's not that bad.

Paul Serious?

Snowy Yeah. Some nice bits.

Paul Where?

Snowy Well. That hill we used to roll down when we were small. That was fun.

Paul Isn't now is it?

Snowy Could be. Haven't tried.

Paul Not kids anymore.

Snowy You're just scared. Remember when you rolled into that cow pat? That was fucking funny. Went all over your face. Was a wet one. All fresh and soggy. So funny. I was actually thinking about that the other day washing the dishes and laughed out loud and Dad was like 'what's up with you?' and I said 'oh just thinking about when Paul rolled into a poo and got it all over his face'. So funny. Went in your mouth a bit didn't it?

Paul Yeah a bit.

Snowy laughs a lot.

Snowy You were in the shower for about three hours. So funny.

Paul Was fucking horrible.

Snowy And on your glasses. You couldn't see. Just wandering around with shit all over your face. You nearly walked into a tree!

Paul Still laughing?

Snowy It was the funniest thing I have ever seen. So good.

Snowy is still laughing. Calms down a bit.

Snowy You can't do that in London.

Paul What roll in shit? Pretty sure you can.

Snowy No! Find a hill and stuff. Piss around in the fields. No one around. No one laughing at you. Or, like, judging.

Paul You're laughing at me.

Snowy I'm allowed to! I meant strangers. Strangers judging you and stuff.

Paul The fuck are you talking about? People in London are doing things.

Snowy Like what?

Paul Like, you know, doing things. Living. Jobs. Earning money. Living in a flat not with their parents. That's what we should be doing. You know? That's what we should be aiming for. Instead of rolling down a hill into some cow shit. That's just fucking lame.

Snowy's phone starts to ring.

Snowy I guess.

Paul looks at the phone then at Snowy.

Paul You know your phone's ringing right?

Snowy Yeah.

Pause.

Paul Not going to answer it?

Snowy Nah.

Paul Who is it?

Snowy My Mum.

Paul Should probably answer.

Snowy I'm busy.
Paul I don't mind.
Snowy It's cool. She always does this. Been trying to ring her all week. She hasn't answered.
Paul Talk now. I don't care.
Snowy No. No it's fine. I'll call her back.
Paul Yeah?

Pause.

Paul I'm getting through that game.
Snowy Yeah? The one you bought off-

Snowy's phone rings again.

Paul Seriously man answer it.
Snowy Nah.
Paul Really?
Snowy She. She won't say anything interesting.
Paul Oh. She alright anyway?
Snowy She's ok I think. Dunno really.
Paul She's not...?
Snowy No. No don't think so. Hope not.
Paul That's good right.
Snowy Yeah definitely.

Beat.

It stops ringing.

Snowy Definitely.

Pause. Paul nods. Looks around.

Paul Snow why aren't we...?
Snowy Why aren't we what?

Paul Doing anything Snow.
Snowy We are.
Paul What are we doing?
Snowy Trying to put down a cow.
Paul No I don't mean that. I mean...
Snowy I know.
Paul Feels empty doesn't it?
Snowy Sometimes. Don't know.
Paul Feels like I'm just here. Turning with the world. Didn't know it was going to be like this. Everyone else seems to be doing so much fucking better.

Pause. Paul drinks.

Paul Snowy?
Snowy Yeah.

Pause.

Paul Let's set her alight.

...

Snowy is holding a can of petrol. And some matches.

Snowy So we just soak her with petrol and light it.
Paul Ok.
Snowy And then she'll just burn away and. Well. All good. No more pain.
Paul Except the burning bit.
Snowy Yeah but. Won't be for long right? If we use all the petrol. So it burns really quickly.
Paul It might make her explode.
Snowy I don't think so. Would have to be from inside wouldn't it?
Paul I guess.
Snowy Right. So. We soak her and then light it. Just like this/

Snowy lights a match.

Snowy /and then just throw-/
Paul /Snowy! What the fuck?!
Snowy What?
Paul The petrol! Put the fucking light out.
Snowy Oh don't cry. It's fine.
Paul Put it out!

Snowy starts waving the match, laughs.

Snowy Don't be a pussy.
Paul Fuck off. Stop it!

Snowy is laughing and waving the match.

Paul Snowy seriously stop-

Snowy accidentally drops the match near the can.

Paul Fuckfuckfuck.
Snowy Fuck!

Snowy scrambles to the match and stamps on it, then runs.

Pause.

Snowy starts laughing.

Paul You fucking dick Snowy.
Snowy Oh it's fine.
Paul You absolute dick.
Snowy Nothing went wrong.
Paul You could have blown us up you bellend.
Snowy Yeah but nothing happened.
Paul You fucking dick. Why are you such a fucking dick?

Snowy Hey come on? Nothing happened.

Paul You fucking...

Paul starts crying quietly.

Snowy Paul?

Pause.

Snowy Paul?

Pause.

Snowy Hey don't cry man. Look I'm sorry. I was just being stupid.

Pause.

Snowy Paul?

Pause.

Snowy Don't cry mate. It's fine. Look we're fine. Your house is fine. All fine.

Silence. Paul cries. Snowy watches. Paul takes a deep breath. Wipes his eyes.

Paul Let's go burn this fucking cow.

...

Paul is holding a lit match.

Paul Ready?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Ok.

Snowy On three?

Paul You count.

Snowy Ok. Ready?

Paul nods.

Snowy One.

Beat.

Snowy Two.

Beat.

Snowy Three.

Paul stands holding the match.

Snowy Paul?

Paul I can't Snow.

Snowy Ok.

Paul It's not fair is it. We don't even know what's wrong with her.

Snowy She's dying.

Paul Yeah but.

Snowy She needs to be put down.

Paul Yeah but we can't put a cow down by setting it alight. Needs to be done properly.

Snowy I'll do it. Give me the matches.

Paul hands Snowy the matches. He lights one.

Snowy You count.

Beat.

Paul One.

Beat.

Paul Two.

Beat.

Paul Three.

Snowy doesn't drop the match.

Snowy Count again.

Beat.

Paul One.

Beat.

Paul Two.

Beat.

Paul Three.

Snowy burns his fingers. Throws the match away.

Snowy Fucking hell that hurt.

Paul Why didn't you do it?

Snowy Because I burnt my fingers.

Paul So?

Snowy So what?

Paul Why do you care? We're about to burn a fucking cow.

Snowy Just hurt my fingers. I need to be completely calm before I do this.

Paul You don't want to do you?

Beat.

Snowy No. Look at her face. She's so sad. Those bloody eyes. I just want her to be ok.

Paul Yeah.

Snowy I don't think we should burn her.

Paul No. Me either.

...

Paul alone. He is on the phone.

Paul Hi there....How are you?...Ok....I was just calling about the job on your website...Production Assistant...Well, I was just wondering what it entailed...I realise the description is on the website but I was wondering if you had any more information...It's all on the website...Ok. Is there nothing at all you can tell me?...It's all on the website...Ok cool...It's just that I thought I would call to express interest, you know? Just to show my willing...So just apply through the website?...Ok its just that my Mum suggested I ring you and ask and well, I thought you could...Ok...I will apply that way...Thanks. By-

Hangs up. Dials.

Paul Hi...Sorry I just spoke to you about the Production Assistant job and well...I just need some help. Like any help at all. Just anything you could tell me. Just a little more...Ok...HR policy?...Oh really?...All on the website. Ok. Thanks.

Hangs up.

Dials.

Paul Hi I'm sorry I just...Please...I'm begging...I don't know what I am doing. Everything looks so confusing and all these jobs look the same. Just any advice at all. Anything. Please. I'm begging..Ok. Thanks. Bye.

Hangs up.

Dials

Paul Look I don't know what HR policy is. I really don't What is it? But please. Just tell me something. Anything. What degree is best? I did History. Is that ok? I wrote a dissertation. Should I put English? Should I have done English or something-...Please just-...Yeah I realise that you have HR policy but please...No don't hang up. Don't. Please. Just tell me something. Any fucking thing. Sorry. So sorry. I didn't mean to swear. That's not. Please. Please. Just. Help. Don't-

He is cut off. Looks at the phone.

Pause.

Dials again.

Someone answers. He goes to speak. Hangs up. Throws the phone against the wall.

...

A field somewhere. Anywhere. They are drinking cider. It's a large bottle. Passing it to each other.

Paul Nothing again.

Snowy No?

Paul No. Nothing.

Snowy How many's that now?

Paul For this week? Thirty two.

Snowy You did thirty two application forms?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy What for?

Paul All kinds of stuff.

Snowy There are thirty two jobs you are suitable for?

Paul Possibly.

Snowy So how many have you done overall?

Paul Well. Don't know. Five hundred maybe.

Snowy Five hundred?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy And still nothing?
Paul Nope.
Snowy Fucking hell. Glad I'm not doing that.
Paul You should be.
Snowy I know...
Paul What are you going to do?
Snowy I don't know. Shit isn't it?
Paul Sure is.

Pause.

Paul You spoke to your Mum?

Snowy takes a drink and shakes his head.

Paul That's a bit weird.
Snowy Used to it.
Paul My Mum's always ringing me. Fucking annoying.
Snowy Yeah.
Paul 'Any luck?' No. 'Anything come up?' No. 'Any girl's texted you?' No. 'What's that lad up to? Dave?' He's an accountant. 'Do you want to be an accountant?' No. 'Why not?' Because it sounds shit. 'Beggars can't be choosers' Thanks Mum that's helpful and reassuring. 'You can always be a teacher' Yep and I can always kill myself.
Snowy Doesn't sound fun.
Paul Nope. So you're lucky.
Snowy I guess.
Paul Not have anyone pushing you.

Silence. Snowy stares at the bottle. Paul doesn't really notice.

Paul Right. You want to check?

...

Paul Well?

Snowy She's still breathing.
Paul Seriously?
Snowy Yeah I can see the bag moving up and down.
Paul Jesus. How long's it been?
Snowy Four days.
Paul Four days. With a bag on her head and she's still alive?
Snowy Yeah.
Paul Why can't we do this? We're just making it worse. Aren't we?
Snowy I know.
Paul What do we do?
Snowy Don't know.

Beat.

Paul Take it off her. It's not fair if it isn't working.
Snowy Ok.

Snowy takes the bag off. It is covered in blood. Some drips on the floor.

Snowy Shit.
Paul Where's all that from?
Snowy Her eyes I think.
Paul Are they bad?

Snowy looks.

Snowy Yeah. I can't see them really. Too much blood.
Paul No flies though?
Snowy No.
Paul That's weird.
Snowy Yeah. Have a look.

Paul does.

Paul Fucking hell. She's not happy is she?

Snowy No.
Paul Doesn't help having a bag on her head for four days. Why didn't that work?
Snowy Wasn't tight enough?
Paul Maybe. Shall we put it back on?
Snowy Really?
Paul What else can we do?
Snowy Think of something else. This isn't working. And I've been thinking. Dying in a plastic bag isn't really a way to go is it.
Paul No.

Paul sits down. Head in hands.

Paul Can't even do this right.

...

Snowy alone. He is holding a letter. Reads it. Sits down. Sighs. Gets his phone out. Dials. No answer.

...

Paul is holding a chainsaw.

Snowy Jesus.
Paul What?
Snowy That.
Paul What about it?
Snowy You going to saw her up?
Paul No I was-
Snowy We can't saw her head off.
Paul I'm not-
Snowy We can do that Paul. No fucking way. No-
Paul Shut up Snow. I'm not going to cut her head off. I've got a plan.
Snowy Yeah?
Paul Yeah. So, I was thinking. There's that tree nearby.
Snowy Yeah...?

Paul So we could, like, cut the tree and make sure it falls on Sandy. Would be quick.
And kind of a burial too.

Pause.

Snowy Squash her with a tree?

Paul Worth a try?

Snowy What happens if the tree isn't heavy enough? That would just hurt. Hurt a whole fucking lot.

Paul True. But it is a big one. And if we plan it right, so it falls on her head then. Well. Could work?

Snowy I'm not sure.

Paul Come on. Give it a go.

Snowy What do we need?

Paul Some rope probably. I kind of know what I'm doing. Read a how-to on the internet.

Snowy To make a tree fall in the right direction?

Paul Yeah.

Beat.

Snowy Show me.

...

Paul Ready?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul starts the chainsaw.

Paul Got the rope?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Ok.

Paul cuts.

Paul Still ok?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul cuts some more.

Paul It's going! Hold it. Nearly...

Cuts some more.

Snowy Fucking hell Paul. Stop!

Paul ignores Snowy.

Snowy Stop for fucks sake!

Paul keeps cutting

Snowy STOP PAUL FOR FUCKS SAKE!

The tree falls entirely the wrong way.

Paul stops the chainsaw.

Paul Fucking hell.

...

Snowy on the phone.

Snowy So what do I need?...Ok...And nothing else?...Just me?...My Dad'll drop me off probably...No that's fine...Yes...I understand...Just wondering if I could...Maybe start later in the year...This is my allocated date? And there's no way to change it?...No, no I'm still committed...Ok...Thanks...Yep...Fine...Bye.

Hangs up. Sighs heavily.

Shouts upstairs.

Snowy Dad?

...

Paul is holding a basket of wood.

Paul Cut this up. From the tree. Pretty good right?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Going to give it to Mum. Will be good in the wood burner. Nice and warm.
Loads of it too.

Snowy holds up a piece.

Snowy This is really good cutting.

Paul Thanks.

Snowy No. Like really good.

Paul Really?

Snowy Yeah. So you can cut perfectly formed firewood but you can't make a tree fall the right way?

Paul Shut up.

Snowy Did you see Sandy?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy What's she doing?

Paul Same thing. Just lying there. Think she was looking at me chopping the wood.

Snowy You can see her eyes now?

Paul Well. No. Still lots of blood. But. Just a feeling.

Snowy Yeah. This is really nice. I'm genuinely impressed. Far too nice for firewood though. Could make something out of this. Furniture. Be lovely.

Paul Thanks.

Snowy You should be a carpenter.

Paul Maybe.

Snowy No really. Fuck this media stuff. You can carve wood!

Paul Not really carving.

Snowy You can carve. You can carve wood!

Paul Well.

Snowy You can! You're like Jesus.

Paul How am I-

Snowy He was a good carpenter too.

Paul Jesus might've been a shit carpenter. No evidence he made a good sideboard is there?

Snowy Mate Jesus was not a shit carpenter. He was mint. The best. Bet his chair's were so fucking comfy its not true.

Paul Yeah maybe.

Snowy So be a carpenter!

Paul I can't.

Snowy Why not? This is so nice. Worth a go.

Paul Not really a job is it?

Snowy What? Yeah it is. Carpentry is a job.

Paul I can't do it though.

Snowy Yeah you can. Get an apprenticeship thing or something. Got to be something over in Hereford. Right? Ludlow or somewhere. Fucking mad for all that arts and crafts shit over there.

Paul Never thought about it.

Snowy Well think about it. Could be cool.

Paul Don't think so. Plus I want to move to a bigger city.

Snowy Fuck that. Do this! It's good.

Paul I don't have a degree or any experience.

Snowy You don't have a degree or any experience in Media but you're going for that bullshit.

Paul Because it's what I want to do.

Snowy Why?

Paul What do you mean why?

Snowy Why do you want to?

Paul Because I do.

Snowy Why?

Paul Because.

Snowy Because what? Fucking hell mate do something else.

Paul What're you talking about? What the fuck are you doing?

Snowy Don't worry about me. You're the one doing five hundred applications for jobs you don't even know what they are.

Paul At least I'm fucking trying.

Snowy Trying too hard.

Paul Well what else can I do? Snow? What else?

Snowy Dunno. Anything. Just. Relax maybe? Take it easy a little? Go for a walk? It's fucking beautiful out there sometimes. You know? All the fields and the trees and birds and stuff. It's lovely sometimes.

Paul You sound like a dick.

Snowy Whatever Paul. It is though. It is fucking beautiful. Went for a walk the other day. Really early like. Down the old canal. All dried up and the path next to it. The trees, like, were all bent over so it was like being in a tunnel. And it was just me. And no one else. So quiet. The frost and stuff. Could see my breath floating into the trees. Was lovely. Seriously. You'll fucking miss that. It's nice here sometimes. Just stop being a little whiney bitch about it and look out the window. Won't be fucking long until all you're looking at is some damp pavement and a streetlight or something wishing you could sleep over the noise of fucking buses.

Paul What?

Snowy I'm right.

Paul Are you serious?

Snowy About what? Walking and not whining all the time. Yeah. It's lovely outside Paul. You'll miss it. I will too. Just go and have a-

Paul What the fuck are you talking about Snowy? It's not beautiful. At all. It feels like a prison. Prison with no fucking walls. That's the worst. Feeling like you're trapped when the entire world is open on your doorstep. Walking down a dried up canal? How the fuck is that going to help me hey? How the fuck is that going to help anyone?

...

Paul on the phone.

Paul Oh Hi Mr Ford... Yeah I'm ok. How are you?... That's good you're better... Yeah I did hear about the sheep... Sounds horrible... I know... I know it burnt to death... Is Snowy there?... Oh ok... When's he back?... What good news?... What?... When... Oh... Right... No he

didn't tell me...When did he hear?...Right...Ok...Yeah that is good news I guess...No don't worry. I'll speak to him another time....Thanks...Bye.

Hangs up. Stares at the phone.

...

Paul *alone with the cow.*

He looks at it.

Looks around.

Bends over and stares into one of its eyes.

Stands up.

Crouches down and puts his hand near its nose. Feels for something.

Stands up.

Takes off his glasses.

Holds them by the cow's nose.

Some steam forms on the lens.

He wipes his glasses and puts them back on.

Picks some grass and offers it to the cow.

...

Snowy It ate some grass?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy What? Like ate some?
Paul Yeah.
Snowy Out of your hand?
Paul Yeah. I offered it to her and she just took it.
Snowy What with her mouth?
Paul No with her fucking hooves. Then proceeded to feed herself.
Snowy Alright! So what does this mean? She's getting better?
Paul Don't know.

Beat.

Paul I'll show you.
Snowy I can't now mate I've-
Paul Come on Snow this is massive.
Snowy Paul I-
Paul Snowy please come with me. I'll prove it. I promise it will eat some grass.

...

Paul is offering the cow some grass.

Paul Come on.

Pause.

Snowy Anything?
Paul No.
Snowy Come on Sandy. Eat something. Eat some grass.

Pause.

Snowy Nothing?
Paul No...

Paul keeps holding the grass.

Paul Come on.

Paul holds it closer.

Paul Come on Sandy eat up.

Paul holds it even closer.

Snowy Don't think she wants any.

Paul She will.

Snowy Paul-

Paul Come on.

Snowy Paul?

Paul What?

Snowy Leave it.

Paul No. She ate some.

Snowy She can't even see.

Paul She can smell it. She did the other day. Come on. Eat.

Snowy Paul leave it mate.

Paul pushes the grass onto the cow's mouth.

Paul Here you go.

Snowy Paul come on.

Paul Here. Eat.

Snowy Paul.

Paul Shut up you're distracting her.

Snowy Paul just-

Paul Shut the fuck up Snowy!

Silence.

Paul holds the grass on the cow's mouth.

Paul Come on Sandy. Eat the grass.

Paul forces the grass deeper.

Paul Eat it Sandy. Eat up.

Snowy Paul-

Paul Shut the fuck up Snowy.

Paul pushes his hand into the cow's mouth.

Snowy Fucking hell Paul.

Paul Eat the fucking grass Sandy. Eat the fucking grass.

Snowy Paul stop it-

Paul Fuck off.

Snowy Paul-

Paul Shut up!

Snowy Pau-

Paul Eat the fucking grass Sandy you fucking dick. Eat it. Eat it.

Paul pushes his arm into the cow's mouth.

Snowy Paul for fucks sake.

Paul Fucking eat it! Fucking it the grass!

Snowy Paul stop-

Paul Fuck you! Fuck you cow! Fuck you Sandy! Why don't you just fucking-

Paul pulls his hand out violently. Blood falls out.

He begins punching the cow.

Paul Why don't you just fucking die? Why can't you just die!? Why can't I just-

Paul is punching the cow harder.

Paul Just just just fucking die!

Paul smacks the cow one last time and falls over it crying. He hugs it. He is sobbing.

Paul Why can't I even do this? Why can't I even make a cow better? I can't fucking do anything Snowy. I can't fucking do anything at all.

Paul screams violently. He is crying heavily. Eyes closed. Hugging the cow. Blood everywhere. Snowy just watches.

Long silence.

Snowy Come on mate. It's ok.

Paul Leave me alone. Please.

...

Paul drinking cider. He is listening to the radio.

Radio Wyvern Travel update. All the roads are running smoothly this frosty morning. Some ice around so please be careful. We've had some texts about black ice, especially on the Ledbury Bypass and on the A417 through Parkway so drivers are being advised to drive with caution. M50 is looking good in both directions. Not as good news for the trains. We are getting heavy reports of delays caused by leaves on the track. So if you can, avoid taking the train this morning. I repeat, leaves on the track is causing delays, however hard that is to believe.

Paul stares ahead.

...

Paul I've got it.

Snowy Paul-

Paul I've got a way.

Snowy Paul listen-

Paul It's perfect.

Snowy Look mate-

Paul Please. Just listen.

Beat.

Snowy Alright.

Paul The railway tracks.

Snowy What?

Paul The railway tracks.

Snowy What about them?

Paul We put her on them.

Snowy You joking?

Paul No. We put her on them. Do it really late at night. Like three in the morning.

When no trains are running. Then, first train of the day comes past - it's the big one - the one to London. My Dad gets it sometimes. That comes and she's gone. It will be quick. And we can face her away from the train so she doesn't see it coming. And then we don't have to be there when it happens. Then we're done.

Pause.

Snowy You serious?

Paul Yes.

Snowy The train would see her and stop. She's massive.

Paul Not if we put her just on the tracks, like out of the undergrowth or something. Just leave her head on the rail. That's all. Her head's not that big.

Beat.

Snowy I don't want to.

Paul What? Why?

Snowy Because its a fucking stupid idea.

Paul No it isn't.

Snowy Yeah it is.

Paul No it'll work we just have to get her there.

Snowy Exactly. And how are you going to do that?

Paul We. We are going to borrow a JCB.

Snowy What?

Paul The Pringles' are having some drains sorted. You know. Like, four fields over from the North Gate. We could drive it down to Sandy then onto the tracks. It's not far. You can hear the trains from a couple of fields over. Can't be that far.

Snowy Rob a JCB?

Paul Yeah.

Snowy No.

Paul Why not?

Snowy Because we can't steal it.

Paul What and it wasn't a problem when you were nicking medicine?

Snowy That was different.

Paul How?

Snowy Because...Because it was. Alright? It was. It was ages ago. And I am not really sure we should still be doing this?

Paul Why?

Snowy Because.

Paul Because what?

Snowy Because of what happened the last week.

Paul Don't worry about that.

Snowy I am worried. What the fuck happened? I haven't seen you since then. Why didn't you return my calls? What you did Paul. That's not right.

Paul It doesn't matter.

Snowy Yeah it does.

Paul Do you want to help?

Snowy No.

Paul Fine. I'll go myself.

Snowy Paul-

Paul Don't worry. I'll finish this. Since you don't care about Sandy anymore. You can fucking leave it. I'll do it. I'll put her out of her misery. Me. I can do this. I can control this. You can just fuck off and leave and join the fucking army.

Snowy What?

Paul I know what you're doing. Fucking army. You serious?

Snowy How did you know?

Paul Your Dad told me. On the phone. He was really happy.

Pause.

Paul Fucking dick. Leave me here. Like everyone else.

...

Paul is walking with a torch. He is dressed in black. Wearing a beanie.

Snowy catches him up, carrying a torch.

Snowy Hey.

Paul jumps, drops his torch, turns around, he is holding a hammer.

Snowy It's me it's me it's me Snowy.

Paul Snowy?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Fucking hell. Why'd you do that?

Snowy What are you doing?

Paul What does it look like I'm doing?

Snowy You're not going to steal a JCB.

Paul Why not?

Snowy Because it's stupid.

Paul No it isn't. And anyway I'm not going to steal one.

Snowy Really?

Paul Not tonight. This is a skirmish.

Snowy Fucking hell...

Paul The real mission is planned for next week.

Snowy What?

Paul I've been watching them. Know their work rota. They don't work Thursdays for some reason. So I figured that Wednesday night is the best time. So don't have to panic about getting it back for them starting.

Snowy Paul mate please.

Paul Snowy I am going to do this. I am. I need this to happen.

Snowy Why?

Paul Because it's something good. This things dying and I want to help it. You said it yourself. It's our responsibility. It's for us to finish.

Snowy You really don't have to do this.

Paul Yes I do. You going to help?

Silence.

Paul Fine. I'll do it myself.

Paul walks away. Stops.

Paul Snowy?

Snowy Yeah?

Paul You can't even kill a cow mate. How the fuck are you going to manage to shoot some poor Afghan in the head?

...

Snowy stands with the air rifle. He is by the cow.

He loads the gun.

Aims.

Stops.

He puts the rifle down.

Looks around.

Picks up the rifle and shoots into the air.

Reloads.

Aims at the cow.

Drops the rifle to his side.

Looks around.

Picks it up aims and shoots the cow in the head.

Exhales loudly. Grimaces.

Reloads the rifle.

Aims.

Shoots the cow in the head again.

Reloads.

Shoots again.

And again.

And again.

Again.

...

Paul *with the cow. He's a little drunk.*

Paul I read my history dissertation the other day. Just because I was bored. Found it in my room. It's about Henry VII. His domestic policy. Specifically about how he dealt with his court. It wasn't very interesting. But you know. I was kind of proud. Spent ages writing the thing. Got a first. You know. That's the highest you can get. Completely useless now though. Only me that's read it. And the person that marked it. Only two people. Two for fucksake. Why did I bother? Hey? Why did I bother?

Beat.

He strokes the cow's head.

Paul We'll get-

Stops.

Notices something.

Looks at his hand. Blood.

He checks for more blood.

Stares at his hand. Covered in blood.

Takes his glasses off.

Checks the cow's breathing.

...

Paul You shot her?

Pause.

Paul Didn't you?

Pause.

Paul Didn't you?

Beat.

Paul Tell me.

Pause.

Paul You did didn't you?

Pause.

Snowy Yeah.

Paul Why?

Snowy Why'd you think.

Paul To stop me stealing a JCB?

Snowy Just to get you to stop Paul. Just to-

Paul You started it.

Snowy I know.

Paul You started it and now you're leaving.

Snowy Paul-

Paul It didn't work.

Beat.

Snowy What?

Paul She's still alive. I checked earlier. She's breathing still. That gun's a piece of shit.

Snowy She isn't.

Paul She is. Sandy's alive. I checked. She's breathing still. Loads of blood. Thanks to you.

But she's alive. 52

Snowy Look. Paul just-

Paul What?

Silence. Snowy stares at Paul.

Paul What?

Snowy Stop it.

Paul Stop staring at me.

Snowy Just stop it.

Paul You stop it.

Snowy Just stop alright. Please.

Paul You fucking stop.

Snowy Please. Just stop.

Paul No.

Snowy Please.

Paul No.

Snowy Stop.

Paul Fuck you Snow.

Snowy Stop.

Paul Or what?

Snowy Paul-

Paul What?

Snowy Paul seriously-

Paul No fuck you Snowy. Fucking army-

Snowy Shut up.

Paul Army man/

Snowy /Paul/

Paul /Think you're fucking hard now you because you/

Snowy /Paul shut the fuck up/

Paul /shot a fucking cow/

Snowy /Paul listen this is-/

Paul /in the head?/

Snowy Paul I'm serious.

Paul Oh you're serious? What you gonna do? Get your fucking army buddies after me?

Snowy Just-

Paul Out on the town. Fucking squaddie.

Snowy Shut up.

Paul Out on the fucking town? Hey? Private fucking Snowy reporting for duty. Where's the Afghans? Let me at them. I don't know what I'm doing but I know I've got to shoot this fucking child in the head. Yeah? Come home a hero or some shit? Go out with the fucking squaddies./

Paul is animated. Very desperate.

Paul /All the fucking lads together just going around some fucking market town behaving like cunts and fucking harassing a load of girls Snow yeah? That's you? That what you're going to be? That's your fucking life? Getting pissed. Shooting some poor cunt in the head. Coming home and getting more pissed? Hey why not go to fucking Cyprus? Go and fuck some fifteen year old Snow. Why not that? Do that. Go on Snowy you fucking dick. Private fucking bellend. That's what they'll call you. Private. Fucking. Bellend.

Snowy Paul just stop it-

Paul Private fucking bellend.

Snowy Paul-

Paul You want to know something?

Beat.

Snowy What?

Paul I'll tell you something.

Snowy What?

Paul You'll end up just like your Dad you know.

Snowy Paul seriously-

Paul I'm being fucking serious. You'll be like him. Lonely and angry.

Snowy Shut the fuck up or-

Paul Or what? Or what Snow? Or what? Hey? What? What? What? Wha-

Paul pushes Snowy a little.

Paul Or what?

Snowy Fucking stop it!

Paul No.

Pushes him again.

Snowy Paul-

Paul No!

Snowy Paul please-

Paul Just fucking stop.

Snowy Paul-

Paul You're the one leaving Snowy. You're the one leaving me.

Snowy Mate please just-

Paul Fucking prick Snowy you fucking-

Paul pushes Snowy. Snowy pushes back. They grab each other. Both fall. Paul kicks Snowy. Snowy grabs Paul's head and holds it firmly against the ground. Snowy is really fucking strong. Paul tries to get free. Can't.

Paul Get the fuck off me Snowy. Get the fuck. Off me. Get. Get off. FUCKING GET OFF ME!

Paul gives up. Just lies there.

They remain like this. Paul just has his eyes closed.

Long silence. Snowy doesn't move.

Paul lies under Snowy's grip. He is quiet.

He starts to cry a little. Not hysterical. Just quietly.

Snowy lets him go.

They sit next to each other.

Paul's breathing is shaky.

Snowy puts his hand on his shoulder.

...

Snowy on the phone.

Snowy Yeah it should be good...Looking forward to it...Yeah...Leaving next week...I know...Yeah...Dad's taking me down...You learn about ironing and stuff like that...Yeah I know I'm screwed...Well...Thanks...Paul?...He's ok...No still not found anything...No...I don't

know...Media or something like that...I said he should be a carpenter. He cut some really nice firewood...No I don't think so...Anyway...Where've you been for the past couple of weeks? Been trying to call...Right...Did you get my texts?...That's odd. No my phone's not broken....Been working-...How's work?...Really....You what?...Accidentally cut someone's ear?...You were what?...Hungover?...Oh...Well...Everyone needs a hairdresser right? Something will come up...But Mum come on that's...No don't go I need to-...Ok...Will do...See you in a few weeks... Yeah...Bye...Bye Mum...Bye.

He hangs up. Sighs.

...

Paul Snowy I'm.

Snowy It's ok.

Paul But I'm sorry. I don't know what. What. I just. I'm just so sorry. I really fucking am-

Snowy It's fine. Seriously. Just. I know.

Paul Ok.

Snowy Please don't worry about it.

Paul But-

Snowy Paul. Don't worry. I know how you feel. It's ok. Just. It's fine.

Paul nods.

Paul When did you get so strong?

Snowy What?

Paul So strong.

Snowy Dunno.

Beat.

Snowy Been doing push ups.

Paul Really?

Snowy Yeah.

Paul How many?

Snowy Two hundred a day.

Paul Two hundred?

Snowy nods.

Paul Why?

Snowy Dad.

Paul Oh.

Snowy I have to do a hundred in the morning then another hundred before I go to sleep.

Paul Right.

Snowy Really hurts after a while. Dad won't leave me alone till I've done it. Get's really in my face. You know? Like in an army film or something. Shouting. Just shouting 'ten more' 'ten more come on'.

Paul Intense.

Beat.

Snowy He gave me that fifty quid because I did five hundred once.

Paul Really?

Snowy Yeah. He wouldn't fucking shut up. Kept saying real men worked for money.

Paul I guess.

Snowy shrugs.

Paul Well it's worked. Like fucking superman.

Snowy Thanks.

Paul Serious. You'll be a supersoldier or something. They'll need kryponite to stop you.

Beat.

Snowy Suppose its something to do isn't it?

Paul What push ups?

Snowy nods.

Paul Maybe I'll do some.

Snowy If you like.
Paul Don't think I could do ten.
Snowy Yeah you're a pussy.
Paul Fuck you.

Snowy smiles a little. As does Paul.

Paul Do you do sit ups too?
Snowy Some. But not as much.

Paul nods. Looks at Snowy. Goes to say something but then doesn't.

Pause.

Paul I finished that game.
Snowy Yeah?
Paul Yeah. Took ages. Well. It didn't really because I kept turning it off before it saved.
Snowy Why?
Paul Just so I could play it again. Boring once you've finished it properly.
Snowy I guess.
Paul Last level was pretty good. You have to shoot this alien-boss thing in the head. Once you've shot it enough its eyes like fall out. Then you have to shoot his eyes which are swinging from its face and then he's blind and then you get a rocket launcher and fire it in the eye socket and then its whole head blows up.
Snowy Sounds cool.
Paul Yeah it is. Pretty easy too.

Beat.

Paul Nice to have something I can actually control. Feels like I am in charge a bit.

Snowy nods.

Long pause.

Snowy Paul?

Paul Yeah?

Snowy You know I don't want to join the army right? It's the fucking last thing I want to do. So don't think I want to go. I really really fucking don't. It's going to be terrible. But my Dad's making me. Like really making me.

Pause

Snowy You know he used to be in the army too. Don't you?

Paul nods.

Snowy All his friends were round the other day. They were talking about some army game. Something to do with a knife and your dick. I didn't want to listen. Dad was laughing. He wanted me to laugh too but I didn't know what to do. I'm really fucking scared. I wish Mum was around more. Even if she is a bit of a fuck up. I don't care. Just think she would. Sort us out a bit maybe. I spoke to her the other day. She's so far away. I told her about the sheep and Dad being in bed for two weeks because of it. She said that doesn't surprise her. Apparently he came back from one tour and didn't get out of bed for six months. Now he's making me go. I don't know why. But I can't really argue. I haven't even tried. He's really fucking scary when he wants to be.

Beat.

Snowy Just keeps saying 'I want to be proud of you'. 'I want you to be proud of me'. 'I want you to respect me'. All that stuff. 'I want to respect you'.

Silence.

Paul I don't want you to go.

Snowy I know.

Paul Then I've really got no one.

Snowy At least your parents are nice.

Paul I guess.

Pause.

Paul I'm sorry Snowy.

Snowy That's ok.

Paul I am.

Snowy I know.

Pause.

Paul You want to go for a walk?

Snowy To see Sandy?

Paul No. No. Just. A walk. Fresh air. See the trees and. Well. You know.

Snowy Sure.

Beat.

Paul I'll try not to get cow shit on my face.

...

Paul on the phone.

Paul Yes...No I kind of understand...That makes sense. What about the other role?...Marketing Assistant?...That's just an internship?...Oh ok...For how long?...Six months....No that does sound interesting....Is it paid?...No?...Six months unpaid?...Well...No I don't have any experience...Ok...Thanks. Bye.

Hangs up.

Dials.

Paul Hey Mum...I'm alright...Are you going to Tesco's after work?...Can you get me a chocolate milkshake?...Thanks....That would be nice.

...

Paul All packed?
Snowy Yeah. Dad's taking me tomorrow morning.
Paul What time?
Snowy Four.
Paul In the morning?
Snowy Yeah.
Paul What? Why?
Snowy I don't know. So we're punctual apparently. Army thing.
Paul That won't be fun.

Pause.

Snowy I went to see Sandy.
Paul Did you?
Snowy Yeah. To say goodbye and stuff. How is she still alive?
Paul No idea.

Beat.

Paul I was thinking about her last night.

Beat.

Paul Nearly went out to see her. I think I would quite like to be an animal. You know. Something like that. I think. I think.

Beat.

Paul I think so much fucking stuff Snow. Like. Just spend most of my time daydreaming about my life. And what I want it to be. And what I want to do and stuff. But its so fucking far away. You know? It all feels so far away. Just don't know how to. How to fucking live you know? Feels like everything has come grinding to a halt. They should teach this feeling at school and stuff. Teach you how to fucking deal with feeling. Hopeless and. Anxious and. Instead of just. Just. Don't know.

Pause.

Sometimes I think if someone had asked my soul what it wanted to be born into, you know, before I was actually really born into this, I would have said a mouse or something like that. Something that sleeps for ages. Something that means you don't have to face life so completely. Something that is happy on its own. That's what I would do.

Pause.

Paul Anyway. Stupid right? You can't really think like that. Spend your entire life thinking like that wouldn't you? Just didn't. Just. Didn't.

Snowy Didn't expect it to get so fucking real so quick?

Paul I guess. Yeah. I'll be alright though. Something will come up. Right?

Snowy Fingers crossed man.

Paul And my fucking toes.

Pause.

Paul Speak soon?

Snowy Sure. Don't know when I will be able to. You know?

Paul Yeah just. Whenever you can. Give me a bell.

Snowy Will do.

Beat.

Paul Bye.

Snowy Take it easy.

Paul I'll try. And good luck.

Snowy Thanks.

...

Paul is at the kitchen table.

The radio is on.

As he is listening he is carving a small piece of wood.

He continues chipping.

It looks something like a small cow - nearly finished. It's not bad at all.

As he's doing this the radio plays.

Radio And now for a travel update. The roads are moving nicely. Some congestion around Worcester up to the Hospital Roundabout so best to avoid that if you can. All other routes are running fine. Less good news on the trains though. There has been some major disruption this morning due to a cow being hit by the first train of the day. You will be pleased to know no one was injured, except the cow. Who, what with a train running over its head, died. Obviously. The owner of the cow is unknown but farmers are encouraged to check livestock numbers and get in touch with the local authorities if indeed it was one of theirs to identify the body, or something similar. Not sure what happens with cows and. Um. Anyway, the accident is still having knock on effects on services so do check online or by phone before you travel. That's all from me. Back to you.

He puts the wooden cow on the table and stares at it.

End.