

SWITCHING ON
By Joe Gordon

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INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A dimly lit teenager's bedroom. Voice-over and credits rolling. We pan around slowly, drifting from place to place. An 18-year old boy is tossing and turning in his bed. This is JACK. Although he sounds on edge, he is content and amused by his own thoughts. One of the objects we linger on as we pan around his room is an ambiguous cylindrical object silhouetted at the foot of his bed.

JACK (V.O.)

Got to stop the monologue. Shhh. Shhh. Shut up Jack. Seriously, shut up. Stop thinking. Stop. Sleep. Am I asleep? Why won't my heart shut up? It's pounding my whole body. Shut up! I've got to get rid of this bloody internal monologue. It keeps me awake. It's a waste of time. Two people talking together share ideas: that's communication. You build. You don't stagnate. One person just stagnates, gets caught in an infinite spiralling... diverging... what's the term? I don't care. Shut up. Sleep's more important, I don't care about the term... Regress. Something to do with regress. Iterative regress. People weren't meant to sleep. Yes they were. Shut up. Snore. Snore. Snore. Do I snore?

(fading out)

When I heard my own snoring. It was terrible. Not as bad as waking up and not being able to feel my arm. It was just a lump of meat. Terrifying. Shut up. Worse thing is it makes me seem crazy when in actual fact I'm happy. But I take 20 minutes to get to sleep instead of 10. That's over an hour a week...

Title: Switching On.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Bleary eyed Jack staggers to his feet in his pyjamas. He is startled by a ray of dawn light creeping around the curtains.

JACK (V.O.)

Today... shit... wait... it's *the* day.

Jack checks his calendar. One day is highlighted in 4 different colours.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My birthday. 19. I can't believe I nearly forgot it. I nearly forgot my own birthday. No,

I can believe it. In fact I kept saying to myself - one day, one day Jack, you'll forget your own birthday. 19. Yay. I would've forgotten if it weren't for the holiday. Still, I've got to turn off this internal monologue somehow. Can that be done? Is there a switch? I'll try it. I'm going to be around people. Well, my father at least.

Jack picks up some airplane tickets. We zoom up to some of the destinations: Russia, Mongolia, Japan.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'm... no. No more. Stop thinking. Let's try it. Dad says he's got me the greatest birthday present. How can he give me a birthday present? I've-

(sigh)

This is useless. 19 and I've lost it. I can't even tolerate my own mind. Shhh. It'll be cool. No more thinking.

INT. JACK'S CAR - LATER

Jack is driving. In the passenger seat is his father, who happens to take the form of a brain in a vat. This is the ambiguous shape from the first scene: 40cm high, consisting of a black base supporting a darkly translucent domed glass cylinder. The outline of the brain is visible. The occupant of the brain is WOOSTRUSS. His voice - which emanates from the base of the vat - is bold and well-to-do, but still full of mischief.

WOOSTRUSS

It all started with a knob.

JACK

It did.

WOOSTRUSS

You came running to me. When was that?

JACK

A month ago.

WOOSTRUSS

And you said you had a knob at the back of your head and you were worried it was a tumour or a broken bone or maybe even a trapped bumble-bee.

JACK

I had a nightmare that it was an ant that was going to devour my brain, bit by bit.

WOOSTRUSS

But you also thought it might be your soul, didn't you Jack? So you came to me and I said... son... let me touch your knob.

JACK

Dad.

WOOSTRUSS

Jack, it's timeless comedy. But I couldn't touch your knob.

JACK

No.

WOOSTRUSS

Still, straightaway I said, Jack, I said, it's nothing but your common-or-garden external occipital protuberance.

Jack feels the protuberance at the back of his skull.

WOOSTRUSS

The little knobule... little knob. See it's most noticeable in men - the protrusion lumping out from the cranium, halfway between the upper border of the occipital bone and the foramen magnum. Perfectly natural. But it always feels like it shouldn't really be there. It helps the neck muscles, so they say.

JACK

Dad, you know what it's there for. You've retired but you haven't forgotten anything. You're as eminent a neuroscientist as you always were.

WOOSTRUSS

Eminent? Well I wouldn't say-

JACK

The pre-eminent neuroscientist.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes, perhaps that. Maybe I've been successful. Maybe I've been eminent.

Jack is parking the car.

JACK

Well you made *me* didn't you? You're always marvelling about how I'm the most beautiful creature ever made. You show me off to everybody. Every parent does. But don't forget that you realised the dreams of every philosopher, psychologist and nerd when you actually created the legendary "brain in a vat."

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CONTINUOUS

This is rich, safe suburbia: wide pavements, dog walkers, budding spring flowers. Jack gets out of the car, picks Wostruss up and gets a small trolley from the back seat. He places Wostruss on the trolley and pushes him along. He looks at Wostruss as he walks and talks.

JACK

Brain in a vat - philosopher's wank-mag stuff, you always said. Artificial stimulation, artificial interaction, artificial experience, but real intelligence, real thoughts... a real life.

WOOSTRUSS

That's my son.

INT. NEW YORK AIRPORT DEPARTURE LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

A quiet departure lounge in New York JFK airport. Wostruss is now in the flesh, alongside an identical brain in a vat which is, from Wostruss's perspective, Jack. Wostruss is a moustachioed 50-something with an air of elegance, casually wearing a silk bow tie. Jack (in a vat) is on a seat next to him and on the other side of Jack is a 10-year-old girl - LUCY - who listens attentively as Wostruss talks proudly about his son.

WOOSTRUSS

It was *the* ridiculous hypothesis, passed on through the generations, from Rene Descartes to Keanu Reeves... who would have thought that all it took was your typical mad scientist-

JACK

(correcting)

- One brilliant man. Sometimes I don't know what you're more proud of, dad - me or your brains in vats. I've got to go, dad.

WOOSTRUSS

(laughing)

That's OK son, I've got a plane to catch.

We follow Wostruss's gaze to an information screen titled 'New York JFK', on which a flight to Moscow flashes. Wostruss flicks a switch on Jack's vat - there are two switches which will be used: one that controls sound going into the vat and one that controls sound coming out. Wostruss now addresses only Lucy. Lucy finds both Wostruss and Jack intriguing, even though she obviously doesn't understand half the words Wostruss uses.

WOOSTRUSS

He doesn't know he's-

(indicating)

-what he is, see? He thinks I'm -

LUCY

-like... one of those thingies? A... a-

WOOSTRUSS

Brain in a vat. You can use that term, that's alright. Or you can call it a triple-C if you want: a computer controlled cerebrum.

LUCY

(trying)

Computer... controlled... cerre...

WOOSTRUSS

But I like the word 'vat'. Yeah, he thinks I'm a brain in a vat...

(shakes head)

... the craziest neuroscientist to ever experiment on himself. But alas, I was worse than that, I experimented on my own son.

LUCY

I saw a show on this, this one time. So he's living in a videogame?

WOOSTRUSS

No, don't say that! He's living in a world. Not our world - granted - one programmed in by four Chinese programmers who could type faster than I thought God allowed. It's an immaculately crafted reality - as perfect and seamless, if not more so, than our very own. So he has everything he'd ever want: friends, love, pickled eggs. But here, well, he doesn't even have a knob - doesn't

even have an external occipital protuberance.
Doesn't even have a cranium.

Lucy stares quizzically at Jack and then proceeds to pat the top of the vat.

LUCY

He talks... make him talk again... doesn't he talk to you?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes: the only contact he has with the real world. He thinks he's talking to old pa-in-a-vat. He flicks a switch, much like this one, and he switches on daddy and we have a good old yarn.

LUCY

You're weird.

WOOSTRUSS

No, my name's Woostruss. Did I just sneeze? No. My name's Woostruss.

LUCY

Well my name's Lucy and I'm not weird at all.

WOOSTRUSS

And that, little Lucy, is absolutely fine.

EXT. JACK'S FRIEND'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jack arrives at his friend's house. His friends - ALEX, JIM and DAMIEN - are all packing bags into a car, preparing to leave for a road-trip. They are the same age as Jack but are acerbically childish.

ALEX

Come on, Jack, don't be such a cocking bastard, he won't notice or care if you leave him anywhere... just leave him on top of the washing machine. This is going to be the best bloody road trip we're ever going to have.

JIM

And you're going to miss it because you have to cart your fat dad around.

JACK

He's not fat. He weighs 450 grams.

JIM

He's a maniac! When he was turned into a fucking psychological experiment someone should've thought about who'd have to polish his fucking vat.

JACK

I don't have to polish the vat. It's self-maintaining. It's my dad. He's going on the adventure of his life and he wants me to be with him.

JIM

He can't tell where you are, duh.

JACK

But I want to be there.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

First-class seating on airplane to Moscow. Jack's vat is sat between Wostruss and a lanky black basketball player - SIMON - who listens politely to Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

So you see it was all about the knob. Because my own son said to me, "Wostruss" - or maybe he called me "dad" - "dad, if this knob was a tumour, that'd be it." And I said "son" - or "Jack" -

(patting Jack)

- my son's name is Jack - "Son, I've noticed 72 knobs, lumps, smudges or otherwise unsettling miscellaneous features on my body; you've got nothing to worry about." But that got me thinking - what if the 73rd was the killer knob? What if that one spelt the end of Wostruss? So I retired and decided to go on the adventure of my life.

(wistfully)

To voyage across Asia. Miles upon miles of boyhood dreams. I've always longed for it. So I'm going. With my son by my side. Now, how many fathers do you think get to do that?

Simon grunts with approval. The plane begins to take off, fast, pushing them back into their seats. Wostruss switches on Jack, having trouble because of the shaky velocity of the plane.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

Now, how do you ensure that your eardrums are suitably pressured, son?

EXT. JACK'S FRIEND'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack listens to his dad, looks at his friends, sighs and replies.

JACK

You yawn indefinitely.

WOOSTRUSS

That's right.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss has his mouth set open in a constant yawn. Simon's eyes flick curiously across at him a few times. Finally Simon mimics the yawn.

INT. JACK'S FRIEND'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jack's friends are finished packing the car. Jim slams the boot shut.

JIM

OK Jack, it turns out that there's space. For *it*.

JACK

So... my dad can come on the road trip?

JIM

Yes. But he has to realise that he's going to get stoned and fucked every day because that's what this is *all* about.

JACK

OK.

INT. ROAD-TRIP CAR - LATER

We are inside the worn and lived-in car. Cheesy heavy rock metal is playing. Jack is in on a back window seat with Wostruss next to him, belted onto the middle seat. Everyone - apart from Wostruss - is whooping and cheering. Alex is driving and Jim is in the front passenger seat. They do not look round as they talk to Jack.

ALEX

Is he tied in? Has he got a seatbelt on?

JACK

Who?

JIM

The Aquarium Man!

JACK

It's my dad! Guys, this man raised me single-handedly for the whole of my li-

JIM

But he doesn't have a-

JACK

Don't say he doesn't have any hands!

JIM

Hey, I wasn't going to, I was going to say he doesn't have a fucking clue. Or any hands, now you mention it.

ALEX

Seriously, make sure he's got a belt on.

JIM

Yeah that's illegal.

ALEX

I don't want him smashing through my windshield, hands or no hands.

JIM

Hey can we talk to your dad? Can we pump out your dad? Can we turn up his bass? Can he rap? Can he-

JACK

I don't do this about your dads! Guys, you joke too far. You can't pump out my dad. Let me out of the car.

ALEX

Why?

JACK

Seriously. No, I'm not coming. I told my dad we'd do this together, alone.

Alex stops the car and turns the music off immediately.
Everyone in the car is suddenly very sombre and regretful.

ALEX

I'm sorry, Jack. I'm really sorry.
I've never understood what it's like to not have
a father-

JACK

But I do-

ALEX

- Let me finish. What's it's like to not have a
father who can play football with me and smile at
me and chuck me up and down on his bed and-and...
we called it Boogaloo... I know it must be hard.
It must be hard to have a dad... who's in a vat...
who's wired into a horrible machine, who just
bubbles now and again.

JACK

He doesn't bubble.

ALEX

But you know what I mean. I can't understand
what it's like. It's ignorance, that's all.

JACK

Thanks Alex. But it hasn't been hard for us.
It's just hard when you take the piss out of him.
We'll be OK together.

Jack gets out of the car, unbuckling Woostruss and taking him
out.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Jack closes the door and talks through the window.

JACK

Have fun. I would've loved to join you.

ALEX

How are you going to get home? Shall we take
you-

JACK

My dad will know a way.

ALEX

Goodbye Jack.

JIM

Goodbye friend.

The car zooms off and within moments the heavy metal, whooping and cheering resume. Jack is now left by himself on a winding country road.

JACK (V.O)

Great. Now I have to carry a vat around.

(realising his internal thoughts)

Shhh! Remember!

(pause)

Jesus, I haven't talked to my dad properly for over a year. Isn't that worth thinking about? I owe this to him. We used to talk all the time.

(pause)

I'm lost. Why can't I remember the way to anywhere? It's because I'm always thinking when I'm in cars. I don't look outside, I stay inside. Inside with my-

(laughs to self)

Damnit. I want to be like a robot for a bit. I just want to *do*. I don't want to over-think everything. At 19. Why did my dad have to be so...

(sigh)

...well.

Jack switches on Wostruss and begins to move.

JACK

Dad? How do you get back from...

(checks street sign)

Crowe Farm Down?

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss has a few empty miniature whiskey bottles in front of him, and one in his hand.

WOOSTRUSS

How do you get back from *so far down*? Do you mean... where did it all go wrong?

JACK

No, I-

WOOSTRUSS

Ah, well when God created light he also thought it'd be pretty clever to invent dark too.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

JACK

Look-

WOOSTRUSS

And then bullets and Nazis. I saw a Nazi once. No, I know what you're saying. When it all went wrong. It was the day you were born.

JACK

Thanks.

WOOSTRUSS

You know what I mean. It was the day your mother died.

JACK

I know.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

And we've been stuck with each other ever since. Like a couple of gays.

JACK

Dad, you're my dad.

WOOSTRUSS

And you're my sunlight and my joy.

JACK

Dad, how do I get home from *Crowe Farm Down*?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes, save yourself. The whole place has been overrun by miniature whiskey bottles. I've got it covered.

(pause)

It was today.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

JACK

I know. It's my birthday. All my friends remembered it better than me, but I've said

goodbye to them. And we can't really have a party, can we?

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

You treat me sometimes as if I'm some pathetic invalid.

JACK

You know, I used to think everyone else was crazy, just because I was brought up by you.

WOOSTRUSS

I know. Then you were disappointed... when you realised the horror of normality.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

JACK

Dad, I can't get into one of these. I need to get to the airport and I'm at Crowe Farm Down.

WOOSTRUSS

What? Crowe Farm Down? Ah, then you're fine. You know I decoded all of your bizarre euphemisms over the years. If you say that you've got 'algebra revision' then you're lying in bed, thinking about girls and playing loud, sexy rock music.

JACK

No-

DAD

'Bits and pieces'... that means you write histrionic, angstolescent poetry... and you mumble it sometimes... as if I wanted to hear it.

JACK

(laughing)
Dad, seriously.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

An AIR HOSTESS approaches Woostross.

AIR HOSTESS

Is that a phone?

Woostruss switches Jack off for a moment.

WOOSTUSS

No, it's an electronically sustained centre of consciousness suspended in an electrolytic liquid, which experiences a coherent set of alternative dimensions. And it's my son. And he's a paying customer.

Woostruss switches Jack back on.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

JACK

I do remember it though! 'Wandering down Crowe Farm Down' -

WOOSTRUS

Weeping over unrequited love.

JACK

I do know where I am then... yeah, I remember! It wasn't a euphemism, I used to come here to cry about that girl Deborah, who never loved me.

Jack speeds up, realising where he has to go.

WOOSTRUS

'Phoning Deborah'... indulging in a masturbatory act. Your average wank takes -

JACK

OK, stop.

WOOSTRUS

You used to say it was sad that the other boys didn't really *know* their fathers.

JACK

You always knew me *too* well and you always said *too* much.

WOOSTRUSS

That's right, Jack. Moscow - 4 hours.

(a pause)

You don't even want to know about *my* euphemisms. Reading the newspapers... please.

JACK

Bye Dad.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

Wait! Do you know what mother always used to say? Anyone who ever looks at you for more than two and a half seconds - talk to them. They must be thinking about you. That's how I met her. Unrequited love... the greatest waste of human resources.

JACK

OK Dad. I promise.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Jack is walking in a slightly more built up area.

JACK (V.O.)

Walking home. In silence. Brain silence.

(a pause)

Everyone has an internal monologue, right? It's not a problem. Is it? You're thinking bollocks, Jack. Jack, Jack, Jack. No, the only problem you have is chronic hypochondria. That, and a slightly overgrown external occipital protuberance.

Jack crosses a road at some traffic lights.

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I can drop it. I'm down on words per minute, I think. Don't think. Just feel and calculate. Raw cognition! All along, that's-

A car is nearby at the lights. An enchantingly beautiful young lady stares at him from the driver's seat for approximately 2.6 seconds. This is SUZANNA. Jack gets caught in the moment and halts in the middle of the road, his mind speechless. All of a sudden Suzanna whips out a gun and aims it at Jack.

SUZANNA

Get in the car!

JACK

Why?!

SUZANNA

Just do it!

Jack looks around and then, terrified and carrying Woostross, gets into Suzanna's car. Suzanna screeches off.

INT. SUZANNA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jack is in the back seat, next to some grocery shopping.

SUZANNA

Why were you staring at me? What did you see?

JACK

Nothing.

SUZANNA

Good. Because there's nothing to see. I didn't do anything.

JACK

Really?

SUZANNA

Yes. And this is just a toy gun. It's for protection.

JACK

Then why did you use it to scare the shit out of me?

SUZANNA

I'm a little paranoid. And I'm not a girl. I'm a man dressed up as a girl. So don't rape me.

JACK

I'm not going to rape you!

SUZANNA

Well what's that?

Suzanna points at Woostruss.

JACK

Nothing. Just a science project. It's a lump of clay in a load of raspberry jelly. I got second prize. Can I go now?

SUZANNA

Yes. Aren't I attractive?

JACK

It's not that. It's just I don't know you. And you pointed a toy gun at me and scared the shit out of me and accused me of planning to rape you. You are attractive.

SUZANNA

I want to leave the country. I need a new life.
Everybody here is out to get me.

JACK

(considering it)
Come to Russia with me.

SUZANNA

When?

JACK

Today. I've got two tickets. I was meant to go
on the greatest holidaying adventure ever, with
my father, but I was going to pretend to be there
and actually hang out with my friends.

SUZANNA

How could you pretend to be in Russia?

JACK

There are ways. It's a long story. But now I've
got two tickets. Do you want to come with us?
We're going to Russia and Mongolia and Japan.

SUZANNA

But I haven't got any visas.

JACK

You can use my father's. We can put him in a
rucksack.

(off her reaction)

That's part of the long story.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS

Woostruss has obviously been talking to Simon about Jack.

SIMON

So how did you do it?

WOOSTRUSS

(drunk)

Oh, there are ways. You put a hundred geeks and
a million wires together and.. well you don't wrap
the geeks up with the wire, but you let them go
wild. The world's quite simple, really. And it
was the 80s, you know? Everything was up for
grabs.

INT. SUZANNA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

JACK

It's not actually that long a story.

(patting the vat)

This is my dad. He's a... I mean... you can see what he is.

SUZANNA

(not surprised)

That's OK; my cousin's a brain in a vat. It's no big deal. When you got in the car I thought, oh, what's that? Must be a brain in a vat. Must be his dad or something.

JACK

When was your aunt born?

SUZANNA

80s.

JACK

I thought so. Nobody thinks anything happened in the 80s but... *stuff happened*. My dad got severe amnesia - before I was born. And my mum thought the best thing to do was to make him a happy brain in vat. He thinks he's a genius neuroscientist who worked out how to make brains in vats. Which is somewhat ironic. Well maybe it's not ironic, maybe it's just confusing. But he didn't make brains in vats of course - he used to be a juggler.

SUZANNA

But it was the 80s.

JACK

Yeah, it was a fad.

SUZANNA

Just a fad. Look-

Suzanna nods out of the window and Jack looks at two brains in vats sitting side-by-side on a bench.

SUZANNA (CONT'D)

- there are two of them there.

JACK

80s hang-offs.

(a pause)

So when he talks to me he thinks I'm seeing him as a brain in a vat, but he believes that really I'm the brain in a vat.

SUZANNA

Doesn't that make you paranoid? I get paranoid about it and I only have a cousin who's a brain in a vat.

JACK

Nah. I'm used to it. He raised me. I look after him. But he's clearly just a brain in a vat. You can tell the difference.

Suzanna glances over at Woostruss.

SUZANNA

You have the same frontal lobes.

JACK

I know. Thanks.

(pause, then looks at watch)

Quickly, we've got to get on that plane, we've still got time to meet him at the station in Moscow.

SUZANNA

What station? How can we meet him?

JACK

We're going on this adventure together. Most people with dads who are brains in vats... they just leave them to it. They abandon them to their artificial realms and they live their own lives. They don't switch their dads on, they can't be bothered. They could appear as any kind of character in the vat world and they could see their fathers grow. But they don't. I never wanted that. Recently we've been slipping apart but... I love my dad.

SUZANNA

But-

JACK

They gave him Real Atlas, Version 7.0, top of the range at the time. He can go to Russia, he can go *anywhere*. And we can go with him. Sort of. I was going to just pretend. But to really do it... wow.

SUZANNA

This is fantastic! All I was meant to do was pick up some fresh fruit. But I was tired of doing the same thing, day-in day-out: eating, working, sleeping, showering. I thought fresh fruit made my life better. But it didn't. I've been seeking something else for a long time - for my whole life.

JACK

That's great. I'm glad we met. But I'm afraid you still might have to eat and sleep and shower where we're going.

SUZANNA

I can do that. What's your name?

JACK

Jack.

SUZANNA

Suzanna.

JACK

And over there... that's Wostruss.

SUZANNA

Bless you.

INT. WOOSTRUS'S PLANE TO MOSCOW - CONTINUOUS.

WOOSTRUS

My son thinks he's flying over from England.

SIMON

But why did you do it? To your own flesh and blood?

WOOSTRUS

For science. Certainly I loved the idea of having a real, gurgling, spluttering, heads and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes kind of son. But I also quite liked the notion of progressing the scientific knowledge of humanity. It was a toss-up. You know, I'll look a little out of place in Russia, carting my son around like this, but you'll look more out of place. They don't get many black guys in Russia.

SIMON

That is entirely true.

INT. HEATHROW AIRPORT CHECK-IN DESK - LATER

A standard check-in desk at Heathrow airport. Jack and Suzanna are handing tickets and passports over to a check-in ASSISTANT at a desk as she inspects their bags. She is interested in Woostruss.

ASSISTANT

Sir, did you pack your hand luggage yourself?

JACK

Yes.

ASSISTANT

You sure? It's not one of those 80s things, what was it, where you had people grow up in artificial worlds?

JACK

Oh, brain in a vat? No, it's just a replica, it was a science project. Clay and raspberry jelly. Second prize.

ASSISTANT

(convinced)

OK, that's fine. Because you need another seat for them, I think, but it's not, so that's cool.

(looking in Suzanna's bag)

Hey lady, what about this gun?

SUZANNA

Oh it's just a toy.

ASSISTANT

That's cool.

INT. CORRIDOR LEADING ONTO THE PLANE - MINUTES LATER

Jack and Suzanna are nearly onto the plane. Suzanna is still jittery.

SUZANNA

I'm scared of everything. I love everything too. But I'm very scared. Will we crash? I love flying. I always wanted to be a bird-

JACK

It'll be fine!

INT. PLANE HAVING LANDED IN MOSCOW - LATER

Wostruss walks off the plane in Moscow airport. There is light snow and Wostruss enjoys breathing in the crisp Russian air.

INT. RUSSIAN PASSPORT CONTROL - MINUTES LATER

Wostruss reaches the passport control booth unflustered. A SURLY RUSSIAN officer takes his passport and looks from it to Wostruss and back again a number of times.

SURLY RUSSIAN

New York?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes, good man.

SURLY RUSSIAN

Tokyo?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes. My final destination is Tokyo.

SURLY RUSSIAN

(pointing to his feet)

Moscow.

The surly Russian officer catches the attention of a BURLY RUSSIAN officer. He speaks to him in Russian and we see subtitles.

SURLY RUSSIAN

(subtitles)

This wide-boy thinks he's in Tokyo!

BURLY RUSSIAN

(looking Wostruss up and down)

He'll never make it out of the motherland.

SURLY RUSSIAN

(in bad Japanese, to Wostruss)

Kon-eetch-i-wa!

Wostruss takes his passport and leaves with a smile on his face. The burly Russian officer now glares at the surly Russian officer and although they remain silent and expressionless we see subtitles.

SURLY RUSSIAN

(silent, subtitles)

Ha ha ha ha ha!

BURLY RUSSIAN
(silent, subtitles)
In time everything here will be ours.

INT. JACK'S PLANE TO RUSSIA - LATER

Jack and Suzanna's plane is taking off fast. Wostruss is on Jack's lap.

SUZANNA
(yawning)
Just keep yawning?

JACK
(yawning)
Yeah! My dad taught me it! He can't really yawn! It's just vestibular and somatosensory stimulation! But it works!

INT. RUSSIAN TAXI CAB - DUSK

Wostruss is in the backseat of a cab passing through snow-covered fields on a motorway. The cars, the fields and everything else outside is either covered in snow, mud, or a combination of the two.

WOOSTRUSS
Jack?

JACK
Yes, dad?

WOOSTRUSS
Everything in Moscow is covered in mud. And if it's not - which it is - then it's covered in snow. It's just like how I imagined.

JACK
That's great, dad. I'm still on the plane.

WOOSTRUSS
Of course you are son... of course you are.

INT. MOSCOW AIRPORT - NIGHT

Jack and Suzanna are running through the exit doors of Moscow airport. The airport is in most respects the same as it was for Wostruss, but there are subtle differences. For example the adverts on the billboards are different, the layout is changed, and the airport assistants wear different uniforms. These more short-term elements are the types of things that are

different in all the locations that both Jack and Wostruss visit.

JACK

Quickly!

SUZANNA

Where are we going?

JACK

To the train station! The trans-Siberian leaves at 11:45.

SUZANNA

What's the time now? By body clock and my wristwatch are both as confused as each other...

JACK

It's just gone 11:00! Quick.

EXT. YAROSLAVSKY TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Wostruss calmly arrives at the train station where the trans-Siberian will depart from. He consults his tickets, we see the words 'Trans-Siberian', and he looks up at a monster of a train. He approaches his carriage. A middle-aged Russian CARRIAGE HOSTESS greets him in moderately good English.

CARRIAGE HOSTESS

Hello.

(checking his tickets)

Ticket for two?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes! Thank God we're doing this together.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss enters the train and finds his compartment. Everything is quite compact and there are really just two beds and one small central table. In here is OMA - a bright-eyed 80-year-old Jewish lady - who is wearing chunky headphones and privately dancing in silence. After observing this for a few seconds, Wostruss taps Oma on the shoulder and she takes off her headphones.

WOOSTRUSS

Wostruss.

OMA

No, they call me Oma, but nice try. Put these headphones on, my grandson told me it's some "hefty funk".

WOOSTRUSS

Madam, I have never danced in my life.

OMA

I insist.

Woostruss sits down on the bed, puts the headphones on and tries to resist the urge to dance, but fails. After dancing for a little while he takes the headphones off.

WOOSTRUSS

Would you mind terribly if I gave my son a listen?

OMA

Not at all, where is he?

WOOSTRUSS

Right here.

Woostruss places the headphones over Jack.

OMA

I think we'll have a great deal to talk about.

WOOSTRUSS

I think we will.

INT. RUSSIAN BUS - NIGHT, CONTINUOUS

Jack and Suzanna are standing up and swaying on a crowded Russian bus. Everyone is silent. Suddenly hefty funk music starts playing from Woostruss. All the Russians look at the vat and then at Jack, and frown. Soon however, they cannot help but tap their feet and bop along.

SUZANNA

What's that?

JACK

He just tries to make me happy, it's probably just something he likes. I'm his only connection to the real world.

SUZANNA

That's sad.

JACK

Not really. He's the happiest guy I know.

EXT. YAROSLAVSKY TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Jack and Suzanna arrive hurriedly at the same station as Wostruss was at, although again there are subtle differences. They approach the train in a rush.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Jack and Suzanna settle into their compartment - decorated slightly differently to Wostruss and Oma's - and Jack switches on communication to Wostruss.

JACK

I'm on the train, Dad.

WOOSTRUSS

So am I, son. Say hello to Oma.

JACK

Hello Oma.

OMA

Hello...

(whispering)

what's its name?

Jack smiles.

WOOSTRUSS

His name is Jack.

OMA

Hello Jack.

JACK

I'm with someone too. Her name is Suzanna.

OMA

Well hello Suzanna.

WOOSTRUSS

Suzanna! Has Jack told you that it's his birthday?

Oma and Wostruss sing Happy Birthday to Jack. Jack is embarrassed but happy. Suzanna thinks it's charming.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Oma and Wostruss are both smiling.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

As another chorus kicks in, Jack switches Wostruss off.

SUZANNE

So the people in his world, like Oma - are they people or programs?

JACK

They're just programs. But if you buy into the philosophy that a good program is a good machine is a person... well then they're people too.

SUZANNA

(pause)

They're just programs.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - LATER

We come in mid-conversation.

WOOSTRUSS

- and I guess I've been a mad-scientist since I was a child. At the age of 17 I invented a new temperature that wasn't hot and wasn't cold, and you bet it wasn't anything in-between.

They both smile.

OMA

It must've been difficult though, not being able to see him grow up.

WOOSTRUSS

Oh it was. But I heard his first word. I told him bed-time stories. Sometimes I even think I can see his thoughts just by looking at his brain.

OMA

So does he stop living when you turn that switch off?

WOOSTRUSS

Not at all, he keeps going. But it's just computer code. I'm the only *real* input he gets.

OMA

You've lived an extraordinary life, Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

Well enough about me. What are you in town for?

OMA

(proudly)

I am voyaging for the sole purpose of setting sight on the most majestic of geographical features: Lake Baikal, which I have read about since I was a girl of ten years.

WOOSTRUSS

Lake Baikal. What's so spectacular about this lake? It's just water, right?

OMA

(proudly still)

It consists of over 23,000 cubic kilometres of freshwater. If all other water bodies dried up over night, we could all survive on that water for 40 years. The water basin covers-

WOOSTRUSS

That's a lot of water.

OMA

I've read 4 books on that water. My grandchildren tease me about it. It's like a dreamworld to me.

WOOSTRUSS

Well soon... soon you'll wake up there. Until then, we're locked up in a fast box of rust for four days.

OMA

Peculiar how it's snowing outside yet here it is - if you don't mind me speaking frankly - as hot as shit. Do you mind if I strip down to my undergarments?

WOOSTRUSS

Not in the least, you must be 30 years my senior, there will be no sexual attraction whatsoever.

Woostruss switches on Jack.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

Son? Can you feel the heat?

JACK

Dad, it's as hot as shit.

Wostruss switches Jack off for a brief moment.

WOOSTRUSS

That code's so *damn* good.

He switches Jack back on.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JACK-CLOSE: hot and topless.

JACK

But I'm kind of in the middle of something.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

I understand son.

(winks to Oma)

Goodnight.

WOOSTRUSS

You have a choice see, when you're constructing the world of any sort of sentient vat-inhabiting being. Well, you have three main choices. One: do you give them the real world? Do you code for London and Russia, all the genera of flora and fauna? And I thought, yes, I would like my son to live in a world like mine. To see what I see. Two: do you make *them* like us? Do you code their reactions to be like ours, their thoughts - the firing patterns in their brains - to be like ours? I thought, yes, I wanted my son to remain human. Then there's question three: what about everyone else in this world? That's where you have the most fun.

OMA

So you didn't program the people in his world to be normal?

WOOSTRUSS

It depresses me, what people do with their lives.

OMA

What do people do with their lives?

WOOSTRUSS

Exactly. Exactly. But we did something special for Jack. The people in his world... they're nearly right... but we sharpened their edges. We dabbled in fantasy. So things happen. And now, oh I think something very special is happening.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JACK

I'm scared.

SUZANNA (O.S)

That's OK, that's normal.

We pan up Suzanna's body. She is wearing only her silky black underwear. Then we realise that she is holding her gun directly at Jack.

JACK

But why?

SUZANNA

I've been following you for the last six months, Jack Bromley.

JACK

Is that a real gun?

SUZANNA

Of course.

JACK

What do you want with me?

SUZANNA

It's not you I want, Jack. It's your father. What you've been carting around is something very precious.

JACK

I don't understand - he's just like all the others. I mean it's an expensive piece of hardware but...

SUZANNA

I need him. Think about the relationship you've always had with him, Jack. He brought you up, he loved you. He's still with you. Jack, I need him because... I never had a father. All I ever wanted was a father.

JACK

It doesn't work like that.

SUZANNA

It does when I'm holding a gun.

JACK

I'm not letting you take my father. He'll never believe that you're-

SUZANNA

All he hears is your voice. He believes that you're a brain in a vat. That's why you've got to teach me, Jack. You've got to teach me how to talk like you and how to think like you. Teach me how to be a father's son.

JACK

You're a woman.

SUZANNA

I'm a lesbian.

JACK

You're insane. And you're still a woman. Even if you are a lesbian.

SUZANNA

Is it insane to want a father who cares about you?

JACK

I'm not doing it.

SUZANNA

You have no choice.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Wostruss is lying in striped pyjamas in his bed. The lights are off. Oma enters, having gone to the toilet, and tries to quietly sneak into her bed. After a tense pause:

OMA

(hushed voice)

The sanitation services here...

WOOSTRUSS

It's quite an ordeal, isn't it?

OMA

Yes.

(pause)

I must admit that I sat on the toilet seat. I said that I would never do it but I did.

WOOSTRUSS

(chuckles)

Oh.

OMA

Good night.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - NEXT MORNING

Woostruss and Oma are gazing out of the windows. A never-ending expanse of snow-covered tundra flows past outside.

OMA

How many time zones did we pass in the night?

WOOSTRUSS

God knows. But we don't seem to have passed a lot else. It's wondrous.

(switches on JACK)

Good morning, son.

SUZANNA

(imitating Jack's voice)

Good morning, dad.

WOOSTRUSS

You sound different. You must have had a good night. Are you currently galloping through the vaguely inhabited and vaguely post-apocalyptic Siberian wilderness?

SUZANNA

Yes. It's-

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is speaking to Woostruss but finds herself speechless. In a fluster she pushes Woostruss over to Jack and indicates that he is to take over from here - she is not a qualified Jack yet. Jack appears mildly agonised by the situation but attempts to converse normally.

JACK

It's Thursday, isn't it? What do they call it here?

WOOSTRUSS
Thursday? Chitvyairk?

JACK
Chitvyairk?

OMA
Chitvyairk!

WOOSTRUSS
Shit V. Egg

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

OMA
(in a ladylike voice)
Shit V. Egg.

Oma laughs hysterically at her own enunciation. She has a tremendous laugh, like that of a great hen clucking. In the neighbouring compartment a Dutch man imitates this laugh in a way which sounds even more like a hen clucking. This parody only fuels Oma's laugh.

WOOSTRUSS
Don't worry about them, they're Dutch. You have quite a laugh.

JACK
You do.

WOOSTRUSS
If I was in the business, I'd market it. Did you sleep well, Jack?

JACK
Sort of. I've got to go. Sorry dad.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jack cannot go on like this with a gun trained at him. Suzanna, holding the gun, is wildly enthusiastic and seems pleased with how this first practice exercise went.

SUZANNA
I'll get there.

JACK
This is terrible.

SUZANNA

I need your memories. I need to know what it was like to have this father. I need *everything*. He didn't look after you when you were a child, did he? Didn't your mother-

JACK

My mother died giving birth to me. He did look after me. You've got to remember that he thought I was a brain in a vat and he thought he'd programmed in assistants and carers and... he still wanted to have a presence, but of course the only presence he could be tricked into thinking he had was as a brain in a vat.

SUZANNA

Because that's all he is.

JACK

To me, it was normal. That was just what my father looked like. I was born into it. He'd make all sorts of noises at me - he'd quack and buzz like a bee and ribbet-ribbet like a frog. His favourite was the quack. He was always there for me. I can sort of remember that. I can't remember much about being a baby though, and nor can anyone else. Infantile amnesia.

SUZANNA

Yeah. I can't remember my father. Both of my parents died when I was 6-months old.

There is a pause as it seems they are sharing an emotional moment. Jack moves cautiously towards Suzanna to comfort her.

JACK

(advancing)
Look-

Suzanna jerks back and squeezes her gun.

SUZANNA

Watch it!

JACK

We nearly had a moment.

SUZANNA

You nearly got shot in the head.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - LATER IN DAY

Oma and Wostruss are playing cards with the Dutchman from the neighbouring compartment - STEPHOS. Wostruss is teaching the other two how to play the card game 'Cheat'.

WOOSTRUSS

And that's why it's called *Cheat*, you see?
You're trying to cheat to get rid of all your
cards.

STEPHOS

Oo-kay oo-kay so I have 3 Queens and you put down
1 King then I say 4 Queens and I get rid of more
and get toward win?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes.

OMA

I'll warn you now, I'm a frightfully bad liar,
cheater, and gambler, so I don't fancy my
chances.

STEPHOS

And if I think someone else cheats, I say
'Cheat!' and whoever it is has to pick up cards?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes. It's a piece of piss. Right... two sevens.

Wostruss places two cards face-down. This process of
placing the number of cards declared continues for the
rest of the scene.

OMA

Four eights.

STEPHOS

Cheat!

OMA

Check the cards, I was not cheating.

STEPHOS

Oh.

Stephos checks the cards, realises he is in error and
incorporates them into his hand.

OMA

So now I go? One nine.

One eight. STEPHOS

Two nines. WOOSTRUSS

Three tens. OMA

Two jacks. STEPHOS

Two jacks WOOSTRUSS

 OMA
(raising an eyebrow)
Two jacks.

 WOOSTRUSS
(cautiously)
Two jacks.

 STEPHOS
(giggles)
Two jacks.

 OMA
This is ridi-

Two jacks. WOOSTRUSS

They now place their cards very nonchalantly, keeping perfect poker faces.

 OMA
Two jacks.

 WOOSTRUSS
Two jacks.

 STEPHOS
Two jacks.

 OMA
(placing last cards)
Two jacks.

 WOOSTRUSS

Cheat.

Woostruss inspects the pile of cards and sees that the last ones are indeed two jacks.

WOOSTRUSS

You hustling little vixen.

SUZANNA

(in her best Jack voice)

Hi dad.

Stephos looks around to the vat and is impressed but not shocked.

WOOSTRUSS

Jack! I just played a game of *Cheat* with a pack of cards containing over 30 Jacks!

SUZANNA

That's great! Er, dad, this is a little strange-

WOOSTRUSS

You sound different still.

SUZANNA

I've got a cold. I think I picked it up in third class.

(waits to see if he buys this; he does)

Dad, going on this trip's made me very nostalgic and I keep remembering about when I was young. Do you remember... when you used to quack for me? When you made noises like quacking?

WOOSTRUSS

(chuckling)

Your mother liked that quack too.

SUZANNA

Quack for me now, dad. Like you did.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is talking to Wostruss and holding the gun up to Jack. Jack is holding his head in frustration.

WOOSTRUSS

Well I've got company at the moment so-

SUZANNA

(demanding)
Quack for me! Please.

BACK TO WOOSTRUSS

WOOSTRUSS
(defiantly)
I'm not going to *quack* for you now son.
(pause, sigh, then:)
Quack.

SUZANNA
Thanks dad.

WOOSTRUSS
Anytime Jack. Hey, there's a Dutchman here who
does a fantastic cluck. Maybe we can join
together and-

SUZANNA
(uninterested)
I heard him this morning.

WOOSTRUSS
So you did.

EXT. OMSK STATION - NIGHT

Oma and Wostruss - both covered head-to-toe in warm, fluffy
clothes - jump off the train and stretch their legs on an Omsk
station platform. Wostruss is holding Jack. It is snowing
heavily

WOOSTRUSS
It's snowing, Jack.

SUZANNA
I know.

WOOSTRUSS
And I'm going hagggle for some crabsticks.

OMA
If you survive *this!*

Wostruss turns and is hit in the face by a snowball. He
carefully places Jack on the floor, packing a snowball while he
is down there, and then runs after Oma. They snowball fight for
a little while but are soon exhausted.

WOOSTRUSS

Snow would be the best thing in the world if only it weren't so cold.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna and Jack are also both exhausted after a long day of tutoring.

SUZANNA

(slurring words slightly)

That's good. More. More. You went to the zoo. He loves polar bears because when they're sleeping all you can see is their nose. He believes that animals can teach animals, but only certain kinds can teach certain kinds. So when people are making movies and need to teach a dog how to act, first they need to teach a parrot, who can teach a cow, who can teach a monkey... and then the monkey teaches the dog. And dogs could be just as clever as humans, if only we sent them to schools... run by monkeys. And...

(micro-sleep)

...cheese is your... favourite... fruit.

JACK

We need sleep.

SUZANNA

You need sleep!

JACK

Yes. So do you.

SUZANNA

I can't let you sleep.

Suzanna waves the gun at Jack, but it's too lethargic to be really threatening. She puts her feet up and rests her head.

SUZANNA (CONT'D)

I can't let you sleep.

Suzanna dozes off, her gun falling loosely in her hand. Jack builds up courage and then tiptoes towards Wostruss. He switches Wostruss on.

EXT. OMSK STATION - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss and Oma are sitting in the snow munching on crabsticks. A whisper escapes from the vat.

JACK

(whisper)

Dad! Dad! I've been kidnapped and-and-

Woostruss and Oma face each other, startled.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

In a flash Suzanna wakes and jostles Jack from Woostruss, flicking the switch off whilst keeping the gun pointed at Jack.

SUZANNA

(still disorientated)

Get away from my dad!

WOOSTRUSS

Jack? Jack I-

Suzanna switches Woostruss completely off so that they can no longer hear him.

JACK

He's not your-

SUZANNA

I'm going to go to sleep in here, with my daddy, and I'm going to lock you out. You will have to sleep in the toilet. You shouldn't mind that, since you've slept in toilets at parties on at least three occasions. You-

JACK

Yes.

SUZANNA

If you try anything I will shoot him right in the brain.

JACK

Don't do this.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Suzanna directs Jack out of the compartment and locks the door. Jack walks away forlornly. Fade out.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Oma and Woostruss board the train and as it pulls away from Omsk station they take Jack back to their compartment.

OMA

We've got to do something!

WOOSTRUSS

We can't do a thing. He thinks he's been kidnapped. Well, he *has* been kidnapped.

OMA

Gracious! Can't you, you know, fiddle with-

WOOSTRUSS

No, I can't change the code. And I can't turn it off because, well, that'd kill him. I can't do anything. To him I'm just a brain in a vat.

OMA

This is agonising. We're *right here* and-

SUZANNA

(confidently)

Dad, I think it's OK. Suzanna overpowered them - it was two tiny South Americans.

WOOSTRUSS

Goons. But you're fine?

SUZANNA

Yes. I need to sleep now.

WOOSTRUSS

I'm always with you, you know.

SUZANNA

Yes dad. Good night.

WOOSTRUSS

Night, son.

(to Oma)

All's well that ends well.

Oma and Wostruss both change into the nightwear and prepare for bed.

OMA

I will be able to sleep much easier now.

(pause)

What day has it been today?

WOOSTRUSS

Pyatnitsa. Friday. If I had a daughter I wanted to call her Pyatnitsa. But I had a son so I called him... Jack.

Oma hisses out a suppressed laugh.

WOOSTRUSS

Sounds like the kettle's boiled. Good night Oma.

OMA

Woostruss.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: TOILET - NEXT MORNING

Jack wakes up in the tiny, grubby toilet. He massages his neck and rubs his eyes as he thinks to himself.

JACK (V.O.)

Alone in a 100 mph toilet. How did it come to this? Oh yeah, that insane lesbian. I wonder if she's actually lesbian or just bisexual. Or maybe the other way round - just lesbian. Wait.

(a long pause, testing himself)

So I can do it. I can stop subvocally articulating my thoughts. But I *can't* -

A fired up Russian man bangs on the toilet door and shouts at Jack in rapid-fire Russian.

JACK

Yeah. Sorry! Sorry! I was... asleep.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Jack opens the sticky door and the man continues babbling to him in Russian as he walks back to his compartment.

JACK

(as if the Russian will understand him)

I'm sorry. There's this lady - she's just an insane lesbian, and she's impersonating me so that she can steal my father.

(walking away)

You've probably seen my father around. He gets about. Oh no, wait, he doesn't, he's bunch of cells drowned in computers - my mistake.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Oma and Woostruss barge into their compartment laughing and out of breath.

OMA

Right, now I shall resume my search for the Russian bear.

Oma sits down near the window and gazes out attentively.

WOOSTRUSS

There were plenty in the bar. Did you see, when I was trying to communicate to the chef that I didn't want onion in my bread?

OMA

Why must they put onion in their bread? But the way he reacted... you would've thought you insulted his children! And that toilet. I don't care what you say. It's still The Horror to me.

WOOSTRUSS

Ah, no. I will truly miss the experience. Russia whizzing below you as her icy fingers tickle your pampered European genitalia, ahh.

OMA

Well, when you put it like that.

SUZANNA

Dad?

WOOSTRUSS

Jack! I've just taken Oma to the other end of the train and back. It's approximately 8.5 minutes and forty-two doors away.

OMA

And they are all very *grim*. Very grim. The third class was reminiscent of the worst tenements in London.

SUZANNA

That's great. I fell asleep really easily, rockabied by this great hulking steel snake and its chugga-chugga lullaby. I don't feel claustrophobic, the train feels like... a friend, don't you think?

WOOSTRUSS

Absolutely. Son, I'll be honest with you, I love you. I thought that we've been moving on from each other these last few years. I thought you were bored of me. I thought you'd moved onto

better things. Sex. Sex. Sex. But no. We're still together, son.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jack is staring hatefully at Suzanna.

JACK (V.O)

Why can't you just die? Can I poison you? I don't have any poison.

SUZANNA

I can't wait to see what present you've got for me in Tokyo.

WOOSTRUSS

I'll give you some clues: it's big, it's grey, it has a massive trunk... and it goes... how do elephants go?

SUZANNA

Oh dad.

We hear Oma's penetrating laugh coming from the Wostruss vat.

JACK (V.O)

She's ugly. I always thought she was ugly.
(pause)
She'd make a bad son.

SUZANNA

(referring to Oma's laugh)
What's that noise?

WOOSTRUSS

Don't worry, that's just mechanical failure.

Oma laughs once more. Everyone joins in with the laughter except for Jack.

JACK (V.O.)

I should've gone to Europe. Should've tricked my fucking dad. Put him on the washing machine. Then he wouldn't have been stolen. But still... shut up Jack. I can do this without a monologue. I can do this without internal thoughts. I've got to try something. Shhh. Go into raw cognitive power mode.

(a pause)

Am I there yet?

WOOSTRUSS

Son, I have found a new love on this train.
Crabsticks.

SUZANNA

They'll never let you down like womenfolk.

JACK (V.O)

I could've said that! I would've... damnit... she's
good. Shut up Jack! Do! Don't think. Do!

There is a brief pause, then Jack makes a leap for Suzanna. Reacting quickly, Suzanna fires off a round. The bullet glides through Jack's hair and flies cleanly hole in the window. Suzanna switches Woostruss off and in a panic draws Jack to her, the gun to his head. She rips off his t-shirt and takes of all of her own clothes. Then she forces Jack down onto the bed and lies on top of him, hiding the gun behind the pillow. A few random Russian shouts are heard from outside, ending with that of the CARRIAGE HOSTESS.

CARRIAGE HOSTESS (O.S.)

(with a terrible accent)

What the blooming 'eck?

The carriage hostess opens the door and Suzanna kisses Jack passionately.

CARRIAGE HOSTESS

What was the noise?

Suzanna feigns embarrassment as she stops thrusting against Jack. She draws a sheet over herself. The carriage hostess turns apologetic and makes to leave the room.

CARRIAGE HOSTESS (CONT'D)

So sorry!

SUZANNA

(as carriage hostess leaves)

I think it's bear hunters. We saw some bear
hunters.

The carriage hostess exts. After a while Suzanna forces Jack back onto his feet and puts her puts her clothes back on.

JACK

I thought you were a lesbian.

SUZANNA

I thought you liked your brains.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

OMA

But what was it?

WOOSTRUSS

(inspecting the vat)
Perhaps there was something wrong with the
program. It sounded like-

SUZANNA

Sorry dad. That really was mechanical failure!
The train's main... anyway it's sorted now.

WOOSTRUSS

Crikey.

OMA

Double crikey.

EXT. RUSSIAN LANDSCAPE: COLLECTION - SUNSET

A few choice shots of the train cutting its way through the
vast and noble Siberian tundra as the sun sets behind it.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: TOILET - NIGHT

Jack is once more alone in the toilet, silent and dejected.
Fade out.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: TOILET - MORNING

Jack is woken up by a banging on the toilet door.

CARRIAGE HOSTESS

Destination final! Irkutsk! You leave now sir,
puzarlooysta.

JACK

OK! OK!

Jack leaves the toilet.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-SIBERIAN: COMPARTMENT - MORNING

Woostruss is sitting down and inspecting an odd Russian toy,
while Oma is standing up and packing on the same bed.

OMA

Irkutsk.

WOOSTRUSS

Your Lake Baikal isn't far now.

OMA

(excited)
636 km long and 80 km wide. 20% of the world's
fresh water.

WOOSTRUSS

The top trumps of lakes.

OMA

Bigger than all the great lakes of the United
States of America put together. Its own unique
ecosystem.

Oma tries to put an object into her bag, but she can't quite
seem to pick it up. She tries again and she still can't pick
it up. She tries once more.

WOOSTRUSS

Excuse me, Oma... you appear to be packing my foot.

OMA

What?

WOOSTRUSS

My... foot.

Oma releases his foot, quite perplexed. She sits down on the
other bed and considers the situation. Resultantly she wails
with laughter.

EXT. IRKUTSK STATION - MINUTES LATER

Suzanna follows Jack off the train, concealing her gun. Jack
stops - something on his mind.

JACK

Just let me see Lake Baikal with him. We're both
booked into a homestay in a village that's just
by the lake.

SUZANNA

Fine. Then I'll leave you in the lake.

JACK

OK... I mean... on second thoughts... I can say goodbye
to him here but-

SUZANNA

No, it was a good idea. You're coming.

INT. TAXI ON IRKUTSK ROAD - LATER

Wostruss and Oma are on the backseats of a taxi taking them from Irkutsk station to Lake Baikal. The DRIVER is listening to Britney Spears and bopping along, travelling very fast but enjoying himself. It is snowing outside and the flow of snowflakes on the road in front resembles gushing water. Oma is excited. She looks out of the window and sees a wide river.

OMA

(to driver)
That's the... the

DRIVER

Angara.

OMA

(in awe)
Angara. Yes. There is only one river that flows from Lake Baikal: the great Angara.

(a tear in her eye)
I never thought I'd see it. I never thought I'd reach 80 or see my Lake Baikal. Is it possible, do you know, to sail on the Baikal?

DRIVER

Sail? Ha!

The driver laughs maniacally and then sighs with satisfaction. A pause, then:

WOOSTRUS

Well what's so queer about that?

DRIVER

You will see.
(shaking his head)
Sail!

The breath-taking spectacle of Lake Baikal opens up in front of them. There is a distinct curved border where the Angara freezes and becomes an immense snow-covered plain. This is Lake Baikal. Oma is amazed by it all - especially how the river appears to completely freeze.

OMA

Look at that. This is - this is...

DRIVER and OMA (TOGETHER)
Lake Baikal.

WOOSTRUS
But it's-

OMA
How stupid I was! I've read 4 books on Lake Baikal. I've dreamed about it. But never did I expect to see it as ice.

DRIVER
-15 degrees out here.

OMA
Of course it is! Of course this is still the time of year when it's frozen.

WOOSTRUS
There are few naturally occurring geographical landmarks in the universe which humble me.
(a pause)
It's majestic.

DRIVER
Sail on it? Friend you can walk on it!

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - DAY

Wide shot of Lake Baikal under blue skies. 30 km away huge mountains are only faintly visible, covered by a snowy haze. Jack and Suzanna come into shot, jumping down from a distinctive stairway. This part of the lake is surrounded by a high wall. We follow them closer. Jack pushes Wostruss across the ice as Suzanna points the gun at his head. Jack spots something by the wall: a shovel. He keeps walking. Soon they both stop and look around.

JACK
Can I make a snowman?

SUZANNA
Yes. Make yourself a new father.

Jack shrugs and starts on the job.

EXT. WOOSTRUS'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

We see two mere dots blotting the sheer white of the lake. It is no longer snowing and the clouds are parting. We zoom in and see that the dots are Oma and Wostruss, quite a way into the lake. Wostruss has his hands over his eyes and Oma is crouching down in a futile attempt to hide herself.

WOOSTRUSS

Ready or not, here I come.

Wostruss turns around and pretends to look off into the distance, unable to see Oma. Soon Oma rises.

OMA

I'll race you to the mountains.

WOOSTRUSS

(pointing)
Those mountains?

OMA

Yes. They're 48 kilometres away.

WOOSTRUSS

You're on. You first.

OMA

(sighs, a free spirit)
My dear Wostruss, may I please have just ten minutes to myself here. This place... it means so much to me. I want to be alone with it.

WOOSTRUSS

Of course.

Wostruss walks Jack 20 metres away, halts and looks at him. Wostruss too is feeling deeply emotional. Wostruss surveys the scene before him.

WOOSTRUSS

Son. Tell me what you see.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

Jack looks up from his snowman building, but he can't talk to his father. Suzanna looks out at the same scene as Wostruss.

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss is so happy to be sharing this moment with (who he thinks is) his son.

SUZANNA

I see... white... everywhere. The most beautiful white I've ever seen. Billions upon billions of snowflakes... all unique and unmiserably alone. And tiny, tiny mountains that are fading away.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna still looking at the same view, emotional.

SUZANNA (CONT'D)

The mountains... they're nothing compared to the snowflakes.

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

(tender)
Do you feel the wind?

SUZANNA

(as Wostruss feels it)
Yes. The coldest wind. It'd kill you in a few hours but it makes you feel so alive.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

SUZANNA

What do you see, dad?

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

(tear in his eye)
I see what you see. I see it all.
(closing his eyes)
And I see you, Jack.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is squeezing her hands tightly, deeply affected by the moment. She also has a tear in her eye. Struggling against herself she turns off Wostruss.

SUZANNA

(whispering)
I can't do this.

Suddenly Jack (off-screen) takes a swing at Suzanna's head with the shovel. Suzanna ducks. For a brief moment Jack is unsure of whether he hit her. Answering this, Suzanna rises and

punches Jack strongly in the face causing him to drop the shovel.

SUZANNA

(immorality refound)
Or maybe I can. Move.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - LATER

They are now over a mile into the lake and Jack is wearing only his boxers. Suzanna has Wostruss and is about to leave.

JACK

You must be used to seeing me in my underwear.
If you marry me, you'll have a father-in-law.
Isn't that-

SUZANNA

I've got your passport, your tickets, your money,
and your clothes. But I'm being merciful: I'm
not taking your life. You must run to *that*
village.

(points)

I am exiling you to Siberia, as was done in the
past. If I ever see you again I will kill my
father.

JACK

My-

SUZANNA

Goodbye Jack.

Suzanna turns and leaves.

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S LAKE BAIKAL - DAY

Wostruss and Oma are walking up the steps and leaving the lake. In front of them is a small village. Wostruss spies a snowmobile stand looks to Oma.

WOOSTRUSS

Oma. Are you still a goer?

OMA

Sir, I have never snowmobiled in my life.

WOOSTRUSS

I insist.

OMA

I'll have a heart attack.

WOOSTRUSS

Oma, you do not strike me as the sort of woman who fears death. You are, after all, traipsing around the coldest place in the world, a place where an ear can snap off from frost bite if left exposed for 40 minutes. All you'll have to do is hold on.

EXT. SNOWY WOODLAND - LATER

Oma and Wostruss are whizzing through the snow-topped trees on a snowmobile, following a guide. Oma is gripping onto Wostruss for all her life. The engine roar and their helmets make it impossible for them to hear each other's shouts, but they shout nonetheless.

OMA

You have done this before, right?!

WOOSTRUSS

(pause)

You won't be able to hear me! But I'll talk regardless!

OMA

If you weren't a quarter of a century younger than I, I would assume you were trying to woo me!

WOOSTRUSS

I wanted to do this since I was ten years old! I never got round to it!

On a slow stretch they lose their balance and comically tumble onto the side of the road, both flattened by the snowmobile. The guide comes to help them out while Oma is laughing. They are soon going again.

OMA

You cannot hear me! I think you are the second greatest fool I have ever met!

From the woodlands they break out onto:

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

They drive by mesmerising ice-flow crystals.

OMA

My hands are frozen to you - not with frost but with fear. Yet I have never felt so free in all of my 80 years.

WOOSTRUSS

Yaaaaahooo! I feel like a fucking king.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - CONTINUOUS

Jack is walking slowly and despondently, alone on the lake. He is shivering

JACK (V.O.)

(cough, pause, another cough)

I've lost everything. I didn't even need to come. Shhh. I don't want to waste energy on my monologue. Bugger, I nearly had the monologue gone. I'll never be able to do it.

(pause)

I'll die out here.

(looking around)

I'm going the right way, right?

(quickly)

Shut up!

(pause)

Wait. I've lost my father. I need to find my father. I need to save him. I need all the help I can get. I need to-

(breaks into a run)

-need to keep thinking. Faster, faster, come on. Wait, what have I been doing, trying to get rid of my monologue power - my thoughts have been my best friend! I'd get lonely if I didn't have my own thoughts. My normal voice, it's a mumble, but my silent voice... this never mumbles! God, even if I had a monologue button, I'd switch it on! I'd always leave it on! Think!

(rapid, confident)

I've got to catch up with her. She's got a ticket to Mongolia and she'll go there because she wants to be with my father. My father. Am I getting pneumonia? Would I know? Shit, I'm not even being a hypochondriac out here, I'm actually in the arctic. Well, it's colder than the arctic. I can't feel my balls. Can I ever feel my balls?

(in frustration)

Useful thoughts!.. Run! How can I get out of Siberia? I need to phone somebody, but who? God, I wish my mother wasn't dead and my father wasn't kidnapped and bodiless. I need to phone

Jack. They're on a road trip. They'll still help me. They might be stoned. They'll still help me. How will they help me? They'll know. I need a phone. Where were we going to stay? 24... 24... then... it was a Russian name. Of course it was a Russian name! Sounded like an Eastenders character. And a panda. Pfandabianca! That was it!

Jack runs on and sees children on a swing in the distance. He stares on in disbelief.

EXT. JACK'S LAKE BAIKAL - MINUTES LATER

Jack arrives at the swings and stops, running on the spot to keep himself cold. There are two eight-year-old Russian children who look at him very curiously.

JACK (V.O. CONT'D)

Ask them. I can't ask them! I'm intruding. I'm too shy. God... I have to...

(aloud)

Strasvoytyay!

(V.O.)

That was a terrible accent. Shut up, it doesn't matter.

(aloud)

Hello! Where... 24... dvah-chitory... Pfandabianca?

One CHILD of the two talks Russian very fast but ends with:

CHILD

Vladavyanka?

JACK

Yes.

The children hop off the swings and gesture to Jack to follow.

EXT. VLADAVYANKA - MINUTES LATER

The children are leading him through the village as he runs in his boxers. They find the house, number 24, and ring the doorbell. Their father sees them, shouts at them, and they wave goodbye to Jack. A wary old Russian lady - RITA - opens the door.

JACK

I, er... booked... through 'What a Way to Holiday... Ltd.' Umm.

There is an awkward pause, followed by a Russian voice-over from Rita that is subtitled in English under the title 'INT. MONO.'

RITA (V.O., SUBTITLED)

He is a handsome man. But maybe he could have done with a shirt.

(ENGLISH, ALOUD)

Welcome! Please! Jack?

JACK

Yes!

RITA

What happen?

JACK

I will try to explain...

Rita beckons Jack in. The house is plain but beautiful.

INT. CHEZ RITA - CONTINUOUS

RITA (V.O., SUBTITLED)

I better hear him out. But I can't forget what I was going to tell him. The last person who was here - Matthew Kelly - from British television - he'll be so impressed. Mathew Kelly. I can't believe he was taller even than Brolshmy.

(ENGLISH, ALOUD)

We must towel you.

INT. WOOSTRUS'S HOMESTAY - NIGHT

At the dinner table in a quaintly decorated Russian house. The host is SPALKO - a Russian fluent in English who seems so extraordinarily content and relaxed he seems stoned. They are eating many sweet pancakes. Jack has a seat.

SPALKO

(gazing at Jack)

Well that is... delightful. That technology can support human life in so unrecognisable a form. Yes, I believe I saw it on the news once-

WOOSTRUS

Well-

OMA

Do not flatter him, Spalko, he is just-

SPALKO

A well-crafted piece of machinery himself?

OMA

(nostalgic)

A fool with brains. A fool with brains. That is always how I referred to my Josef - my husband. Opa. I'm sorry, I don't want to-

WOOSTRUSS

It is alright.

OMA

No, I didn't want to sour the mood -
(brightly)
- may I have another pancake?

SPALKO

Naturally.

OMA

9 pancakes!

(serious)

I'm not ashamed of him. It's not that. You must understand that. But I... I have always aimed to be happy and never to complain. I can't think of Josef without... a fool with brains. He was so proud of being a father, a grandfather, an architect... a husband.

SPALKO

And you two were... German?

OMA

Jewish. Jewish German. He fought for England and he rescued me. I don't have the accent now. I - I don't want to-

WOOSTRUSS

On the train you never talked about your past. 80 years of stories kept to yourself.

OMA

I like to live... in the present.

SPALKO

You are a true rock star, Oma.

OMA

(smiles, pause)

He never lost his German accent. But he never liked it. It reminded him of weakness when really he was so proud. But towards the end... I knew something was wrong when he started talking in German. He would just slip into it and I would have to remind him he was talking in German. I learnt that it meant something was preying on his mind. Illness, worries... he was reverting to his weaker state... he suffered so much as a German. Sie haben eine Menge auf dem Gewissen, die Scheißkerls.

(pause)

But anyway, these pancakes really are delicious, Spalko.

SPALKO

It sounds like you should be proud of your husband.

WOOSTRUSS

Indeed.

OMA

And indeed I am. But enough about that. Wostruss, how is Jack? Don't you want to show him off to Spalko?

WOOSTRUSS

Let us enquire.

Wostruss switches Jack on proudly.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

Jack my lad, how are you finding Irkutsk?

SUZANNA

Dad! It is like England but with the clocks turned back and the heating turned down.

SPALKO

The heating is well and truly off.

SUZANNA

Who's that?

WOOSTRUSS

This is Spalko, our host. He is by far the least grim Russian I have ever met, and he has gorged us with pancakes of the highest order. What have you been up to?

SUZANNA

I walked on water. This frozen lake - it's-

OMA

Isn't it?

WOOSTRUSS

It is.

SUZANNA

And I bought the loveliest souvenir that ever cost 50p. A little smiling bear, holding a fish, with a hole in his buttocks where you blow to play a note.

Oma laughs.

SPALKO

They are good omens... we call them... Bears with Fish! A bear full with fish will never attack.

OMA

But do they really have blowholes in their *buttocks*?

SPALKO

Only... in legend.

SUZANNA

We're getting the train to Mongolia tomorrow, aren't we?

WOOSTRUSS

Oh yes. Oma is coming a day later, you will have to say goodbye for a while. She will meet us at the camp. I'm so excited about Japan, son, you have *such* a present waiting for you.

SPALKO

You are going to *Japan*?

OMA

They are even more adventurous than *Oma*.

SUZANNA

I have to go now dad. Love you.

WOOSTRUSS

(proudly)
Love you.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A cosy hotel room. Suzanna is lying in her bed. She kisses the Woostruss vat and closes her eyes, happy.

INT. CHEZ RITA - CONTINUOUS

Jack is wrapped up in towels looking cold and morose. We realise he has a phone to his ear.

JACK
Jim! Jim!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAYTIME, CONTINUOUS

Jack's friends are speeding down an open Italian highway, soaring with their hands out of the windows, rock music turned up.

INT. ALEX'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jim holds the phone to his ear with his shoulder, his arms still out of the car.

JIM
It's Jack! It's fucking Jack! Wooo! Jack - do you feel that?

Jim holds the phone outside the window, letting it rush against the wind.

JIM
That's Italy, baby! We just swam in Lake Garda! This pervert guy stared at us as we changed! So Alex just said-

Alex grabs the phone even though he's driving.

ALEX
(grabbing the phone)
I said - Fuck you!

JIM
(taking phone back)
And then we just ran and now we're making our way to Monte Carlo - we're going to get there tonight and we're going to get those rich French bitches to say ooh-la-la and-

JACK
Jim. Can you listen to me?

JIM
(trying to get a rise)
How's your dad?

JACK
Jim! This is serious!

JIM
Shush, guys, he's trying to be serious.

Jim turns the music off, everyone takes their hands into the car and slowly wind up the windows.

JIM (CONT'D)
OK. I'm listening.

JACK
Someone stole my dad.

JIM
Are you being serious?

ALEX
What was he being serious about?

JIM
Someone stole his dad.

ALEX
Is he being serious?

DAMIEN
(from the back)
What's that?

ALEX
Apparently someone stole Jack's dad.

DAMIEN
(laughs, then:)
You're kidding.

JACK
I'm being serious. She stole my passport, my tickets, my clothes. She nearly killed me. Jim, your dad, he works in Russia, doesn't he-

JIM
Yeah. Guys. Stop the car. This is serious.

Alex pulls the car to a stop on the hard shoulder.

JIM

Monte Carlo can wait. Jack's in trouble. Yeah, my dad works in Russia. He works for the British Consulate, whatever *that* is.

JACK

He works for the British Consulate in Russia? In Moscow?

JIM

Yeah. No, wait, he's in some place called Irkutsk, in deepest, dullest Siberia.

JACK

That's great!

JIM

It's not *that* great. I never see him. And it's cold as hell over there.

JACK

But it's great for me. I'm here. That's great!

JIM

Oh, yeah, there's that, I guess.

JACK

Give me his number.

INT. CHEZ RITA - CONTINUOUS

Jack scrawls down a number, full of hope.

JACK

Thanks Jim, you guys have fun in Monte Carlo. Put everything on red. I've got to go.

JIM

Bye. And Jack...

JACK

Yeah?

JIM

Good luck. Go save him.

JACK

I will. I mean... I can't now, because it's night,
so I've got to go to sleep, but... thanks Jim.
Thanks guys.

Jack gets into bed, still fragile with the cold but warm with
enthusiasm.

JACK (V.O.)

I knew we could do it. What a team: Jack and his
monologue. We should start a band. Then we'll
do it. We'll get dad back. We'll get that
insane cow... we'll... wait... I've got to go to sleep
now... quiet now... shut up... silence...

(fading out)

The human condition... condemned to idle solitary
chatter... condemned to put up with yourself...
condemned to...

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S HOMESTAY - NEXT MORNING

A beautiful early dawn, the sun low across the lake. Wostruss
is standing outside the porch, Oma and Spalko are inside. A
taxi waits for Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

Goodbye Oma, goodbye Spalko.

SPALKO

Embrace the world and it will embrace you back.
Goodbye, Wostruss.

OMA

I will see you soon. But haven't you forgotten to
say goodbye to someone...

Wostruss looks around himself.

OMA

The lake.

WOOSTRUSS

Of course!

(bowing)

Goodbye, Baikal...

Wostruss gets into the taxi.

OMA

(to Spalko)

Can one climb mountains in this region?

INT. CHEZ RITA - MORNING

Jack and Rita are in the hallway, Jack dressed up in rough Russian clothes and ready to leave.

RITA

I wish you all the luck the best. May you dream of your girlfriend and smile!

JACK

I don't have a girlfriend. But thanks. I'm going to go to the British Consulate - he's a father of a friend. Thanks for everything, Rita.

RITA

That is OK OK, Jack from England!

(RUSSIAN V.O., SUBTITLED)

Maybe now is a good time to tell him. Matthew Kelly... will he understand?

(ENGLISH, ALOUD)

Wait! The Matthew Kelly here! Last week he here! The Matthew Kelly! Joined with the BBC! He was be... a magical man to us!

JACK

Matthew Kelly?! Stars in Their Eyes?

RITA

Yes! He like to talk about the Stars in Their Eyes! Never shush, be quiet, always about the Stars in Their Eyes! But the Matthew Kelly... he was robbed too! Like Jack. They think it was the fish man - the man who smokes the fish!

(RUSIAN V.O., SUBTITLED)

How can I express this to him? The man who smokes fish for a living, who also sells those little bears with fish in their mouths and holes in their bottoms that you blow through to make a whistling noise - because times are hard. He would love to just smoke fish.

(ENGLISH, ALOUD)

He went the Consulate! But... the Consulate... no cannot help! The Matthew Kelly... had to go home. No more 'What a way to holiday Ltd.!'

JACK

He went home? What, do you mean the Consulate didn't help him? They didn't help Matthew Kelly?

RITA

(shaking head)

Not even the Matthew Kelly.

JACK

(woeful)

Then they won't be able to help me. I still better tell them but...

RITA

You lucky.

JACK

(confused)

No. I...

RITA

You lucky. Not the man who smokes the fish who stole the Matthew Kelly passport and tickets... was the me.

Rita guiltily produces a whole load of Matthew Kelly's possessions.

JACK

But-

RITA

I am lonely! The Matthew Kelly... was good to me. I am sorry.

JACK

But this is... great! I can be Matthew Kelly!

RITA

Yes. Yes. I would like you be the Matthew Kelly. Find your father.

JACK

It's a ticket for the same train as I was going to be on! The same train that Suzanna will be on! Thank you so much, Rita!

Jack hastily hugs Rita and takes all the necessary documents.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S IRKUTSK STATION: CENTRAL CONCOURSE - EARLY MORNING

Large, high-ceilinged station concourse supported by great grey concrete pillars. There are only a few people, waiting with their bags and looking up at an old-fashioned electronic

information display. One of these people is Wostruss with Jack.

WOOSTRUSS

Look Jack, it says it's noon.

**INT. JACK'S IRKUTSK STATION: CENTRAL CONCOURSE -
CONTINUOUS**

Suzanna is propped against the wall in the same - but subtly different, as always - station. Wostruss is by her feet and she is still tired. She courts some curious glances from passing Russians who see her putting on a male voice and talking to a brain in a vat.

SUZANNA

Moscow time.

WOOSTRUSS

Moscow Time - that was a song by My Mate's Band.

SUZANNA

Your mate's band?

WOOSTRUSS

No, My Mate's Band.

SUZANNA

My mate's band?

**INT. WOOSTRUSS'S IRKUTSK STATION: CENTRAL CONCOURSE -
CONTINUOUS**

WOOSTRUSS

Yes, that was their name. They changed it from The Low Fat Dwarves.

SUZANNA

The Low Fat Dwarves?

WOOSTRUSS

Yes. They were all diminutive and obese. But they could play.

SUZANNA

Are you making this up, dad?

**INT. JACK'S IRKUTSK STATION: CENTRAL CONCOURSE -
CONTINUOUS**

WOOSTRUS

(laughing)
You know me better than that, son.

SUZANNA

(unsure)
Yeah. Yeah, I do.
(pause, looking up)
There's the train.

Suzanna sets off.

**INT. JACK'S IRKUTSK STATION: DOORWAY TO CENTRAL CONCOURSE
- MOMENTS LATER**

Jack bursts into the central concourse, fumbling with his tickets and doctoring his passport by gluing a picture of his face over a picture of Matthew Kelly. He looks up at the screen and sprints to where Suzanna was headed.

EXT. IRKUTSK STATION PLATFORM - MOMENTS LATER

Suzanna boards the train, into:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The corridor of the trans-Mongolian train - which is almost identical to that of the trans-Siberian (it is simply an older model). It is a hive of activity. Suzanna is not sure what's happening. She pushes her way to her compartment. There is a young Mongolian with an American baseball cap standing in the doorway, smiling. This is DJ HARRY. His face is always beaming.

DJ HARRY

Hey! Are you going to Mongolia?

SUZANNA

Er, yes.

YOUNG TRADER

OK.

(a pause)
Do you want some boots?

DJ Harry picks up some boots and proffers them to Suzanna. She is a little wary.

SUZANNA

No... thanks...

YOUNG TRADER

OK. No *problem!* Do you want some... lino?

SUZANNA

Linoleum?

YOUNG TRADER

Lino.

(presenting a roll of linoleum)
10 dollars. No problem.

SUZANNA

Not right now. Thanks.

YOUNG TRADER

(still with beaming smile)
No *problem!*

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - DAY

Wostruss finds his compartment. Inside is a Dutchman with a colourful accent - PATRIK - exercising against his bed. He politely stops to shake Wostruss's hand but pulls his hand back, recollecting something.

PATRIK

(a shill cry)
Shit V. Egg!

Wostruss takes a step back.

WOOSTRUSS

What?
(a beat)
Oh! Shit V. Egg!

Patrik shakes Wostruss's hand.

PATRIK

Patrik. You played Cheat with my friend, Stepnos.

WOOSTRUSS

The name's Wostruss.

PATRIK

Cheat!

WOOSTRUSS

No, it really is Wostruss.

PATRIK

OK but you could have been lying! Stephos said that you were... quite a card! But you're nothing compared to these Mongolian guys - oh my! - the whole train, I've only been here for ten minutes, but it's full of characters. They're all traders.

WOOSTRUSS

Traders?

PATRIK

Oh yeah! They pick up all kinds of junk in Moscow and smuggle it into Mongolia and trade all the way, it's something else! They've got everything: boots, linoleum... Everything!

WOOSTRUSS

Do you think they play cheat?

PATRIK

No! They play *money*! Some of them - oh my! - they make a packet! Oh sure. - it's all nushka-nushka-nushka, sell-sell-sell.

WOOSTRUSS

I see.

Woostruss begins to unpack but is soon seized by an idea.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

Patrik, what's your schedule for the next day and a half?

PATRIK

I don't know, sit down, do nothing... look out the window for cows?

WOOSTRUSS

Do you wager?

PATRIK

Oh sure!

WOOSTRUSS

How's to this - to spice up this voyage - if we start off with 10 dollars each, I wager I can make more money than you.

PATRIK

Ahh! Interesting - more interesting than Cheat!
But I warn you, Mr. Wostruss, I'm a natural born
businessman. I will wager you... half of your
luggage. Oo-kay?

WOOSTRUSS

Half of my...! Well... I warn you, Patrik, that I
would never lose a wager of this sort. Are you
sure you want to wager half of *your* luggage?

PATRIK

I have completed three-quarters of my trip. One
half of my luggage would be ample. Yeah, *ample!*

WOOSTRUSS

Would this half be of the victor's choosing?

PATRIK

Of course.

WOOSTRUSS

Then good luck, ebullient Dutchman, you can look
forward to going home with less burdensome cases.
This, by the way... is my son.

PATRIK

Oh, sure.

WOOSTRUSS

(expecting more astonishment)
He's a brain in a vat.

PATRIK

Sure.

(a pause)

We will say hi one day!

(a pause)

You bet with precious things, Mr. Wostruss!

WOOSTRUSS

Wait... no... my son's not up for-

PATRIK

(chuckling)

He is in your possession, no?

WOOSTRUSS

He's free-

PATRIK

Pah, Mr. Wostruss looky-looky! he is in a vat!

WOOSTRUSS

I pioneered-

PATRIK

But it is OK... here is my son, Von Kurt.

Patrik proudly presents his son: a small brain in a vat in a cradle.

PATRIK

I seemed to have overlook it too! Don't worry... it will all boil down to the mercy of the victor! It will be fine, Mr. Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

(concerned)

Well alright... well... I better get to it... I have never waghered my son before. It may have to be my little secret.

EXT. IRKUTSK STATION PLATFORM - MOMENTS LATER

Jack rushes onto the train, showing his Matthew Kelly tickets and passport.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Jack furtively walks a short way to his room, glancing this way and that for Suzanna. He appears to be sharing with the young Mongolian trader DJ Harry. DJ Harry's half of the room is stocked full of goods: boots, linoleum, everything. Jack gets in and closes the door behind him quickly. Throughout the following exchange Jack smiles a lot because of DJ Harry's contagious enthusiasm.

DJ HARRY

Hey! You want cigagettes? Boots? Piece of lino?

JACK

I think I'm...
(checks ticket)
... staying here.

YOUNG TRADER

Sure! No problem!
(a pause)
So... do you want boots? Piece of... lino?

JACK

Not right now.

The train pulls away.

DJ HARRY

So *sorry*. Hey, my name is DJ Harry!

JACK

DJ Harry?

DJ HARRY

Yeah!

JACK

Are you a DJ?

DJ HARRY

(pause)

Hey mate, you want to store cigagettes for me?
Under bed?

JACK

Store... cigarettes... do you mean... no, I don't want
to *smuggle*.

DJ HARRY

No, no *problem*. Just cigagettes. Officers no
mind *some* cigagettes. Everyone does it. Just
some. Sure! No *problem*!

JACK

No thanks.

DJ HARRY

(pause)

Twenty boxes, no *problem*!

**INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT -
CONTINUOUS**

Woostruss takes in Patrik's information.

PATRIK

There are these quotas for the border - you can
only take a certain amount of anything yourself,
so these guys all trade, of course! So they not
arrested! Oo-kay? When we cross border, the
Mongolian customs police board, oh check the
whole train, you know? Sure, but that's that's
all I'm telling you. I need to keep a little
advantage for myself! One thing that I don't

have to tell you is that these Mongolians here...
they have a... very... *entrepreneurial* spirit.

EXT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is walking to the toilet. She is stopped by a 5-year-old Mongolian boy who seems to be working. This is GENGHIS.

GENGHIS

(perfunctorily)
One dollar. Please. Missus.

SUZANNA

One dol- this is a public toilet!

GENGHIS' FATHER (O.S.)

Genghis!!

Genghis's face breaks into a crazy smile and he runs off, fly kicking as he goes, to the compartment between Suzanna's and Jack's. Suzanna shakes her head and enters the toilet.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

DJ HARRY

I give you dollar! Jus' storing boxes under bed!

JACK

(laughing)
No - DJ Harry - it's not for me. But... look, can I ask you a favour? There's someone on this train who I know but who I'm trying to hide away from. I can't see them. Do you understand?

DJ HARRY

Oh!
(pause)
Yes. Sure!

JACK

Can you please find out where they are on the train for me?

DJ HARRY

Sure!

DJ HARRY picks up some cigarette boxes and toys with them suggestively.

JACK

(smiling)

5 boxes.

DJ HARRY

10.

JACK

Deal. She's an attractive woman, about my age,
dark brown hair, a freckle *here*.

DJ HARRY

Oh she jus' down two room!

JACK

What??

DJ HARRY

Yeah jus' down here. Room 6-2.

JACK

OK. She *can't* see me or know I'm here, OK?

DJ HARRY

OK. Ten boxes.
(off Jack's reaction)
No *problem!*

JACK

(gesturing)
Who is between us?

DJ HARRY

Wha? Here? Jus' man Carrynata and son Genghis.
No problem.

DJ Harry gives Jack ten boxes of cigarettes and Jack sits
down, pondering.

JACK (V.O.)

What are we going to do? What the hell am I
going to do?

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: THIRD CLASS - LATER

The third-class is an open-plan sprawl of bodies, luggage, food
and traded goods. Wostruss is negotiating with two traders.
They obviously can't understand his language but can translate
his intentions perfectly. Meanwhile the train is slowing down.

WOOSTRUSS

Come on, we both know these kippers are worth
more than that. 20 dollars. No less.

MONGOLIAN TRADER 1

Fif...teen

WOOSTRUSS

(to Mongolian trader 1)
Are you going to see him get them for that joke
of a price?

MONGOLIAN TRADER 2

20 dollar!

WOOSTRUSS

Sold.

Wostruss hands over the kippers and takes the money. They stop at a station. Wostruss looks out of the window and sees that Patrik is already running off to someone selling things from a suitcase.

WOOSTRUSS

He's good!

Wostruss nods to the traders and runs off himself.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S ROOM - DAY

Jack is pacing and talking to little Genghis and DJ Harry. Genghis is punching and kicking the air.

JACK

So we've got it, right?

DJ HARRY

No problem!

JACK

You, Genghis, you do all that fighting stuff that you love to do, in the corridor, and catch her attention, right?

DJ HARRY

(patting boy's head)
No problem!

JACK

And you, Harry, creep in and take this big black jar, OK?

DJ HARRY

Sure!

JACK
And I'll store 50 more boxes of cigarettes.

DJ HARRY
So happy!

JACK
But *whatever you do*, if you think she's onto you,
then *stop it*. And when you come back here don't
let her see you come in.

DJ Harry just smiles inanely.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Genghis and DJ Harry are walking down the corridor. Genghis is kicking and punching everything as he goes.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna looks bored. Her door is open.

SUZANNA
Dad-

Genghis walks down the corridor and hangs around outside, slumped against the wall cooly.

WOOSTRUSS
Jack! I'm sorry son, I can't talk at the moment. There's a girl down the train who really wants a silver necklace, and luckily they're selling one at the other end, but they're only talking in boots so I've got to find myself some boots. Luckily the train guard is on the payroll of the boot cartel so-

SUZANNA
Dad, it's OK, go and make the girl happy.

WOOSTRUSS
The girl? Who cares about the girl - it's all about catering for specific demands. Her father's offering 25 dollars!

SUZANNA
I didn't know you were a trader, dad.

WOOSTRUSS

That surprises me Jack because you know very well
Jack that I'm a Jack of all trades. Bye for now.

Genghis catches Suzanna's eye and starts his martial arts routine. Suzanna smiles encouragingly and Genghis responds by entering her room. Suzanna doesn't really know how to act around him. Genghis makes as if there is an enemy outside the compartment - the opposite direction from Jack's room. Suzanna follows lively Genghis. DJ Harry creeps into the compartment and makes for the vat. He is caught by confusion when he sets eyes on it. He looks at it from all angles. Soon he notices the gun and inhales sharply. Suddenly we see Genghis running back. DJ Harry - inferring that Suzanna is returning - rushes to the doorway, trembling and holding a box of cigarettes.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

DJ HARRY

(turning)
Cigarettes! Do you-
(he realises that SUZANNA isn't there)
Genghis!

Genghis comes out of his room. DJ Harry tells him off in Mongolian, but Genghis just puts his hands up to his head to communicate a need for sleep. DJ Harry sighs and Genghis returns to his room. Now Suzanna appears.

DJ HARRY

Cigarettes! Store them? For me?

SUZANNA

No thanks.

DJ HARRY

So sorry!

**INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - MINUTES
LATER**

Jack looking anxious. DJ Harry walks in and Jack quickly closes the door behind him. DJ Harry also looks quite anxious.

DJ HARRY

Gun?

JACK

Oh. Yeah. I forgot to- so you didn't get it?

DJ HARRY

(shakes head)
What...?

DJ Harry tries to outline the shape of the vat in the air.

JACK
I told you - it's something she stole from me.
It's mine. It's a... computer.

DJ HARRY
Ohhhh.

JACK
OK. We won't do that again. We'll try some
other way...

DJ HARRY
100 boxes.

JACK
I can't smuggle that...
(sighs)
OK. Now...

FADE OUT.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

WOOSTRUSS
I'm 45 up. How are you faring?

PATRIK
65 up! Hee-hee! And only 8 hours left! You
better prepare A farewell for your son, Mr.
Woostruss! It's been good day, yes?

WOOSTRUSS
Somewhat. Would it be gentlemanly to call a
ceasefire to allow us 6 hours of sleep?

PATRIK
Of course! That just brings my victory closer
even! Oh boy, I never thought I'd work so hard
on holiday!

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Jack finishing brushing his teeth. DJ Harry enters and shrugs.
Only the sink light is on. Jack shrugs and shakes DJ Harry's
hand. He turns the light off. They both go to sleep in beds
piled high with cigarettes, boots and linoleum.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - NIGHT

Suzanna is in bed, Wostruss to her side. Lights are off.

WOOSTRUSS

Shall I lullaby you, Jack? As I used to do?

SUZANNA

I'm 19 now dad!

WOOSTRUSS

You're only too old for a lullaby when you're dead. Even then, it won't hurt.

SUZANNA

OK dad.

WOOSTRUSS

No, in fact, I will tell you a story.

SUZANNA

OK.

WOOSTRUSS

This is The Story of the Son Who Fell Asleep
Almost Instantaneously. It begins in a soft...

(pause)

...son?

**INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT -
CONTINUOUS**

Wostruss and Patrik are in bed. Wostruss switches off
Suzanna, in bed, to Patrik.

WOOSTRUSS

Works every time.

We hear Suzanna snoring.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

JACK (V.O.)

I mean how many people have had their fathers
stolen? The worst thing is... I really fucking
miss him. And I'm 19. I need a girlfriend.
Man, I really thought Suzanna fancied me. But
she just wanted me for my dad. Typical. Maybe
she does still fancy me... maybe it was hard for

her... who am I kidding? I've got to wake up early. Sort things out. Early. Early! I can do that, can't I? Natural alarm... set... 7:00... Mongolian time... do natural alarms synchronise with time bands? I hope they do. I need to get to sleep. Maybe I should drink a pint of water.

(a pause)

I'd piss myself. When I was young... what was that story dad used to tell me... I never got very far... I never remember what it was about... it was called something silly like The Story of the Son Who Fell Asleep Almost Instantaneously. It began in a soft...

FADE OUT

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: DINING CARRIAGE - NEXT MORNING

Woostruss is frantically trading in the dining carriage. He's negotiating between four different parties. Some of them are yawning, but Woostruss is wide-eyed and energetic.

WOOSTRUSS

(to various parties)

20 for waistcoats! No? 15. 15 for waistcoats, put in 10 for these belts... we've got...

Woostruss looks at his watch, panicked.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is packing and preparing to leave, humming a chirpy tune to herself.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Jack is deep asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: TOILETS - MINUTES LATER

Woostruss is in the toilets, holding his head and banging it against the wall. We hear his voice-over for the first time.

WOOSTRUSS (V.O.)

What a dumb, contemptible act... using my own son as a stake. You hit some peaks Woostie - for

certain you hit some of the peakiest peaks - but sometimes you get too carried away and you smash down to the lows. Patrik won't take my son, he's a trusty character... but... fuck... what an idiot.

(pause)

Woostie Woostie Woostie... what would I do without this voice in my head, to confess to, to tell all truths to, to be me to? Me too. God I hope the Woostruss out there isn't just a façade. Is he? I don't know...

(pause)

One thing nobody can take away from Jack is this - his thoughts to self - his monologue. You can't take that away from him.

(pause, then unbelievable:)

I betted him.

(pause)

I'm a bad father.

(pause)

And I'm a lousy trader.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - MINUTES LATER

Suzanna has packed all her bags and seems ready to leave.

WOOSTRUSS

Son, you know how you told me once, that you were worried about your internal monologue?

SUZANNA

(unsure and unsettled)

Er...

WOOSTRUSS

You know what I mean. I just wanted to reassure you again, son. It's perfectly normal.

Suzanna is silent for a while. She makes the mistake of following this up.

SUZANNA

Remind me dad, what are you talking about?

WOOSTRUSS

(confused)

What? You know - the way you can't stop that voice - that stream of consciousness, you know? Jesus, how old were you when you first came up to me, trembling with anxious curiosity, saying you

were scared of the voices that were like own but
wouldn't go away when you shut your mouth?

SUZANNA

Umm... I don't know... I can't remember. 14?

CUT TO:

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Woostruss is alone in the room with Suzanna.

WOOSTRUSS

14?? Jack, what are you talking about? Are you
listening to me? We've gone over this before,
Jack. We've got drunk and nostalgic about this
before.

(V.O.)

Am I losing my mind? No... it's still here...
somewhere...

(ALoud)

You were 6 or 7.

SUZANNA

(floundering)

It's early, I can't remember. I'm not sure-

CUT TO:

**INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT -
CONTINUOUS**

WOOSTRUSS

What, Jack? Jack, you're a morning man... like
your father... don't use that as an excuse.

SUZANNA

(agitated, slipping back to her normal voice)

I'm er-

(regaining masculinity)

It's this train and the cold. My body clock's
playing up.

WOOSTRUSS

Son.

SUZANNA

Yes.

WOOSTRUSS

Tell me... what's an internal monologue?

SUZANNA

Don't be silly... it's... it's like voices that... are like your own voices but don't - you know, stream of... I... I know it's not a problem.

WOOSTRUSS

What kind of internal monologue you had recently? Give me an example.

SUZANNA

Umm... like... a black man's voice?

CUT TO:

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

A black man's voice?

(V.O.)

One of us has lost his mind. That or...

(ALoud)

It's great because this internal monologue... you can turn it off whenever you want. Like a switch.

SUZANNA

Yeah.

WOOSTRUSS

(V.O.)

I've lost my son.

(ALoud, TENSE)

Where the blazes is my son?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna switches Wostruss off in terror and tries to remain composed, looking around but being all alone.

CUT TO:

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

You slimy impostor! You - what would my son say? - *fuck artist!* You fuck artist! You... fuck artist! This is *outrageous!* My son must think

that you've stolen me! You're just a *program!*

But...

(beat)

... how can I hate a program?..

(beat)

I'll tell you how! I'll strangle you! You fuck-artist! Where's my son?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE of Jack waking up with a start, grasping for a watch, realisation that he has woken up late. The train is slowing down.

JACK

That fuck-artist!

Jack scrambles out of his goods-filled bed. DJ Harry is in the doorway, trading through a radiant smile. He is giving cigarettes to someone and taking money. Jack notices that all the cigarettes have gone from DJ Harry's bed but his is still stacked high with them.

JACK

What happened... to your cigarettes?

DJ HARRY

Money! Nushka nushka... no *problem*, we at Mongolia, Ulan Baatar.

JACK

But... she-

DJ Harry looks out of the window and his face falls suddenly.

DJ HARRY

Ah no - customs! Jack...

(looking at the cigarette boxes)

You got greedy!

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The customs police board the train and are rapidly approaching Jack's compartment.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

DJ Harry stands to *his* side of the room and straightens his hat nervously.

DJ HARRY

You foreigner - good. Maybe... maybe one year prison. Maybe.

JACK

But!

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Two stony-faced Mongolian policewomen - POLICEWOMAN 1 and POLICEWOMAN 2 - are very close.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: JACK'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE of Jack gulping.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly another customs policewoman - POLICEWOMAN 3 - shouts something Mongolian from near Suzanna's compartment. The other two policewomen ignore Jack's compartment to check it out. Jack and DJ Harry both step outside their compartment to see what it is. POLICEWOMAN 3 - a very fierce and determined creature - is shouting at Suzanna, who has been called to the doorway. Although most of her Mongolian is incomprehensible two words are occasionally, notably uttered: Matthew Kelly.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suzanna is being given a bollocking by policewoman 3. She keeps trying futilely to interject. Mongolian policewoman 1, having just joined, looks from a picture of Matthew Kelly on a passport, to Suzanna, three times.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Jack and DJ Harry peer around to see as much as they can without being spotted by Suzanna. DJ Harry smiles proudly - his mission accomplished.

**INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT -
CONTINUOUS**

Policewomen 1 and 2 are shaking their heads. As they talk - with subtitles - Genghis wanders into the room, spotted only by Jack and DJ Harry. In the background he takes Suzanna's gun from the table next to the vat and walks out, kicking, punching and gun-toting. Meanwhile:

POLICEWOMAN 3

(SUBTITLES)

To steal a long distance train ticket from any person is quite beyond the pale. But to purloin it from a man held in such high esteem by so many nations as the honourable Matthew Kelly - this is audacious beyond words!

POLICEWOMAN 1

(SUBTITLES)

I cannot believe this bitch. I desire for her to burn in hell. Can we do that? Can we burn them in hell?

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Jack attempts to grab the gun from Genghis but cannot get past the policewomen.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: SUZANNA'S COMPARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly Suzanna grabs the gun and points it at Genghis' head, expecting a certain amount of tension. The policewomen are completely unfazed by this and, after a short pause, snatch the gun from her.

POLICEWOMAN 3

(SUBTITLED)

Insufferable idiot. She will even use a child's own toy gun against him.

They continue to remonstrate her. Genghis runs into the room, takes Wostruss and runs out.

INT. JACK'S TRANS-MONGOLIAN: CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Genghis hands Wostruss over to Jack, who is relieved to be reunited with his father.

JACK

Goodbye.

DJ HARRY

(gently)
No problem.

EXT. JACK'S ULAN BATAAR STATION - MOMENTS LATER, DAY

Bue-skied day at busy platform covered in snowy sludge. Jack jumps off the train gleefully, runs a while until he is by himself and then switches on Wostruss.

JACK

Dad! How are you? Jesus! The person you've been with since Moscow - it hasn't been me! I don't know how to explain this, I-

WOOSTRUSS

It's OK son, I worked it out for myself. How's your internal monologue, Jack?

JACK

Relentless. Why?

WOOSTRUSS

Because that's the way you were made.

JACK

Dad, I-

WOOSTRUSS

But Jack, I have to say goodbye to you now. I'm sorry, Jack. I'll be with you again.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S ULAN BATAAR STATION - CONTINUOUS

The same platform but different. Wostruss is handing Jack over to Patrik. Patrik is chortling away, a cradled babybrain in a vat in one arm, Jack in a vat in the other. He moves slowly away from Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

Never make a bet with a Dutchman, Jack. Rather, never bet your own son.

JACK

What? Dad I don't under-

WOOSTRUSS

I love you Jack. Goodbye for now. You'll get your present. We'll make it to Tokyo. We'll-

PATRIK

I have to go now, Mr. Woostruss, Oo-kay! For sure you will see me again, since we are staying at the same campsite, but I really must claim my winnings for the now! Goodbye!

WOOSTRUSS

Can we... share a taxi?

PATRIK

(definite)

No.

(playful again)

And don't worry about it! I know it's your son but I will take good care of him, for sure!

(pretending to drop him)

Oops! Catch you later, Mr. Woostruss.

Woostruss is all alone. A haggard Russian wanders up to him.

RUSSIAN

Boots?

Woostruss shakes his head pathetically.

EXT. JACK'S ULAN BATAAR STATION - DAY

Jack is alone amongst a bustle of people. A beautiful and sweet Mongolian lady - MUNKNY - approaches him.

MUNKNY

Jack?

JACK

Hi... er.

Jack is obviously enchanted by Munkny's beauty and lost for words.

MUNKNY

(shaking his hand)

I'm Munky. I'm from 'What a Way to Holiday'. I'm your guide.

JACK

Yes.

(a beat)

You're beautiful.

MUNKNY

(laughing)
Thank you! Nobody has ever welcomed me like that before.

JACK
I'm sorry, it's just my dad. He said you should never wait before you tell a girl that she is beautiful, or she may never know and that would be the greatest tragedy of all.

MUNKNY
Well I am - how do you say? - flattered?

JACK
Yes.

MUNKNY
Follow me. I will give you a tour of Ulan Bataar before going to the Ger camp.

They walk to the car.

JACK
OK. But I don't know anything about Magnolia.

MUNKNY
Magnolia?

JACK
Mongolia. See.

EXT. OUTSIDE ULAN BATAAR STATION - DAY

Wostruss is getting into a taxi by himself. The parking system here is a little ad-hoc.

WOOSTRUSS
To the Balimka Ger camp?

A hand is placed on Wostruss's shoulder as he goes to get in.

REGINALD (O.S.)
Chap there! Did I hear make mention of the Balimka Ger camp?

Wostruss turns around, we PULL BACK and see REGINALD - an upper-class English gentleman dressed in a fine suit and wearing a moustache. This man is even more eccentric than Wostruss - this comes through in how eyes flame up as he relishes every articulation, and the gusto he puts into speech. Together, similar as they are, they look like old friends.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes indeed, but I didn't hear mention of your name?

REGINALD

Reginald.

WOOSTRUSS

Woostruss. Did I just sneeze?

Reginald suddenly takes his handkerchief out of his pocket, as if expecting this line.

REGINALD

This won't be necessary. You were simply stating your name. Your stock introduction, I presume, considering the flawless delivery.

WOOSTRUSS

It works on the ladies.

REGINALD

And it worked on me. May I accompany you, Woostruss, as it appears our destinies are temporarily entwined?

WOOSTRUSS

You may.

They both enter the back of the taxi.

REGINALD

(entering)

Then I will tell you, Woostruss Borrington, how it is that I already feel intimately acquainted to you and why I am surprised to see you without your son.

WOOSTRUSS

(as car pulls out)

I am flummoxed.

REGINALD

But first - but *first!* I must wax my moustache.

Reginald produces a pot of wax in one swift motion. He and tends to his moustache for a moment while Woostruss sits in awe.

WOOSTRUSS

You smother me in suspense.

(raising eyebrow to the wax)
May I have a drop?

REGINALD

My pleasure.

They sit in silence, waxing their moustaches.

INT. JACK'S TAXI THROUGH ULAN BATAAR - DAY

Jack and Munkny are in the back of their own taxi, going through the centre of Ulan Bataar. The streets of this small capital are alive with various activities: a handful of people trying to push-start a bus; roadside portrait painting; tourists trying on their new Mongolian jackets. Jack is trying to take it all in, but is really paying more attention to Munkny.

JACK

All I know about Mongolia is...

MUNKNY

Him?

JACK

What?

Munkny points at a statue.

MUNKNY

Genghis Kahn!

JACK

Yeah! I'm sorry, I know that's really ignorant.

MUNKNY

That's OK, we still love him! Our favourite men of history are Genghis Kahn and Damdiny Suhebaatar... it means Axe Hero! But we are a... loveable bunch, really!

A few more scenes of the streets.

INT. WOOSTRUS'S TAXI THROUGH ULAN BATAAR - DAY

Reginald and Wostruss are now on a long, open road. Outside - in front of spectacular snow-capped mountains - are sprawling Ger camps: camps made up of circular tent-like structures that the majority of Mongolians still live in. Reginald and Wostruss take all of this in but are paying more attention to each other.

REGINALD

So you see I am something of a vat enthusiast.
To have been put in your lap by sheer fate..
Fabulous, is it not, how a body can remain so
silent while the mind screams incessantly from
thought to thought.

WOOSTRUSS

Fabulous.

REGINALD

And to encase such a thing.. we have much in
common, you and I.

WOOSTRUSS

Fabulous.. So will you assist me in rescuing my
son?

REGINALD

Of course. Tell me how it has come to be that he
is removed from his father.

WOOSTRUSS

Well... there's this particular Dutchman...

INT. JACK'S TAXI ON ROUGH ROAD - DAY

They're travelling on a rough and bumpy, snow-covered road.
Jack is obviously all too aware of the pressure building in his
bladder, wincing with pain and looking off into thin air every
now and again.

JACK

Is it far then, to the camp?

MUNKNY

A little way yet, I am sorry!

There are a few more agonising bumps.

JACK

It's just I need the toilet somewhat.

MUNKNY

I understand. So all of us Mongolians have a
blue birthmark on our buttocks.

JACK

(other considerations)
Yeah I love that.

MUNKNY

If you want to identify a Mongolian, ask to see their buttocks!

JACK

Yeah whatever. Look-

The car gets stuck in the snow.

MUNKNY

(too calmly for Jack)

We have become stuck in the snow. Don't worry, a jeep will come to pick us up in five minutes, Jack.

As they are leaving the taxi to stretch their legs:

JACK

Can I just... run off... and go to the toilet?

MUNKNY

Yes. There is nobody around.

We PULL BACK to see that there is nothing but snow all around.

MUNKNY

I am afraid there are no trees in these parts.

Staying with Munkny, we see Jack run off in one direction for what seems like a very long time. We shift to near Jack, hearing him breathing hard. He has his hands down by his groin, off-screen.

JACK (V.O.)

Jesus... Jesus... it's not that it's too cold - *physically* I could do it - it's just... ever since primary school. I could never do it in front of people.

We pan around slightly and see that Munkny is very far away, very indistinct through the snow.

I've got to piss or I'll piss myself.

(pause)

She's beautiful. I'm glad I told her.

(pause)

Gah. Farthest from home I've ever been. And I'm still thinking of girls. And my failure to supply piss on tap. These things follow me everywhere.

Jack zips back up, having done nothing, and runs all the way back to Munkny.

JACK

(putting on a smile)
All done!

MUNKNY

Excellent. The jeep is coming - there!

We see the jeep.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S JEEP - MINUTES LATER

This is an even bumpier journey. The driver must keep steering erratically from left to right to avoid getting stuck in the snow. Jack is in a daze, unable to focus on what Munkny is saying - so while Munkny talks we cannot hear her, but instead hear Jack's monologue.

JACK (V.O.)

Just shut up. You're too pretty. I fancy you. I always fall in love. Love. So valuable... and it's readily available. But just for this moment I want her to be a toilet. I want to piss in her. Not *in* her. But... God.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss and Reginald are now in a jeep slowly making its way over the hilly, snow-covered terrain.

REGINALD

We must murder him.

WOOSTRUSS

Oh no! He's just a sporting fellow. We will win him back.

REGINALD

It is fascinating, how you refer to your own son as a possession. As *yours*.

WOOSTRUSS

He is mine.

REGINALD

He was - as every other man - not created in order to be enslaved. He is free-

WOOSTRUSS
Free in his world, yes but-

REGINALD
Yes. Then what does it matter whose fingerprints
are on the glass Jack cannot touch?

WOOSTRUSS
I talk to him.

REGINALD
As any fool could.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S JEEP - CONTINUOUS

Patrik suddenly talks through the vat by Jack's side.

PATRIK
Hello Jack!

JACK
(reaction)
Fuck off.
(to MUNKNY)
I'm sorry, I just *really* need the toilet again.

MUNKNY
Well we are here now. The toilet is there. You
can say your greetings to-

But Jack is out of the car:

EXT. JACK'S GER CAMP - CONTINUOUS

This is a small settlement made up of 8 or so large Gers, all emitting thin pillars of smoke. A few Mongolian workers mill around, carrying wood and riding horses. They try to greet Jack but he has his eyes set on the toilet. It feels like an epic journey as we follow him, CLOSE and JERKY, over to a ramshackle hut.

INT. TOILET - CONTINUOUS

Jack gives a sigh of relief and then realises that the toilet is just a hole in the ground. But he remains unfazed and squats down.

CLOSE-JACK'S FACE.

JACK (V.O.)

Do I go around the front or the back? I don't care! I have walls!

We hear the wonderful sound of pissing.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER CAMP - DAY

The same camp but different. Wostruss and Reginald get out of the jeep. They are also fascinated by this settlement but have other things on their minds. As they make their way to the nearest Ger:

REGINALD

But enough of my philosophy. Yes. I will assist you. We must present another challenge to this Patrik.

WOOSTRUSS

As was my thinking. But hush - we are staying in the same Ger as him. He'll be in here, I wager.

REGINALD

Yes, and wagering is surely how you're going to get your son back.

Wostruss opens the padded door of the Ger.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER - CONTINUOUS

They are both impressed by the interior of the Ger as they step in. The layout is very simple: a strong frame of polished wood supports a large canopy of felt, with a central stove and beds put to the side. There's a carpet and delicately crafted chests of drawers. Patrik is exercising by his bed. He stops, as before.

PATRIK

Wostruss!

WOOSTRUSS

Patrik!

EXT. JACK'S GER CAMP - EARLY DUSK

Jack is playing with a few dogs by his Ger. Munkny is listening to a HORSEMAN COACH who's talking Mongolian fast and obviously with some import. Munkny turns to Jack occasionally to translate.

MUNKNY

He says that you are lucky to come at this time because a nomad shepherd who is in the area is going to leave in a few days time.

(not translating)

This is a great opportunity, Jack. This nomad will not have ever seen a westerner before. He lives alone with his family, moving hundreds of miles every few months. And we can see him if we go by horseback. Do you want to?

JACK

Yeah. Yeah of course!

MUNKNY

Then I will quickly show you around the campsite while the horsemen coach go and catch the wild horses.

JACK

Wild horses?

MUNKNY

Yes!

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY PLAINS - WARM DUSK

CLOSE-JACK: Jack - dressed head-to-toe in furs etc. - is riding through the snow on a wild horse. He has Woostruss in front of him on the saddle and talks to him.

JACK

Dad! *Dad!* I'm riding on a wild horse! I look like Laurence of Arabia! On Shadowfax!

We PULL BACK to see that Jack is tethered to the HORSEMAN COACH.

We PULL BACK further to see a dramatic scene of them riding over to a single isolated Ger, the sun setting behind the snow-capped mountains behind them.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER - CONTINUOUS

Woostruss, Patrik and Reginald are at a table scattered with sheep's ankle bones. Jack is on the table, near Patrik, and Woostruss stretches over to talk to him.

WOOSTRUSS

Son! What do you think of Mongolia?

JACK

(between breaths, horseriding)
It's *amazing!* I told a girl she was beautiful!
Because she was! And this is... this is just the
best holiday ever, dad. I'm so glad I came.

WOOSTRUSS

I would never have let you miss out on this,
Jack. And... there are still complications with
your... ownership but...

JACK

You'll work it out dad.

CLOSE-WOOSTRUSS.

WOOSTRUSS

I'm working on it.

JACK

Good. Bye!

WOOSTRUSS

So...

We PULL BACK to see the bone-covered table again.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

... it's like a cross between dominoes and subuteo,
but all the pieces are the real ankle bones of
sheep?

PATRIK

Yes.

WOOSTRUSS

And... are you still in a betting mood, Patrik?

EXT. NOMAD GER - DUSK

Jack dismounts, the horseman coach tying the horses up.

MUNKNY

OK there are a number of rules you *must* follow
here.

Jack tries to pay full attention to this, and is obviously a
little frightened.

MUNKNY

One: only ever walk around the Ger clockwise.
Two: When you're sitting *always* point your knees towards the nomad, who's the head of the household. Three: if you're given anything, you must accept it in your left hand. And-

JACK

Wait! Clockwise... knees... left hand... OK

MUNKNY

And... you'll be fine.

JACK

What if I break the rules?

MUNKNY

They are much respected traditions of Mongolian nomads. Don't break the rules.

JACK

What if I break them?

MUNKNY

Don't. Oh and one more thing - whatever they offer you to eat, eat it.

They enter:

INT. NOMAD GER - CONTINUOUS

This is a much lower quality Ger than the one we saw before. There is no carpet, the wooden frame is not polished, and it is much more lived in. There are 6 small children and 3 lambs milling about. One stern-looking adult - the NOMAD - wears a thick, colourful robe. As Munkny talks to the nomad in Mongolian, Jack fiddles with his fingers and forces smiles for the children. The nomad shakes hands with Jack and hands him a lamb. Jack looks at it and feels he must take it. After receiving he realises that the placenta is still attached. He looks to Munkny.

MUNKNY

(whispering)

Don't eat that.

They perch themselves on a heap of wood and Munkny talks to the nomad in Mongolian some more.

MUNKNY

(to Jack)

He says, what is your name?

Jack realises his knees aren't facing the right way and readjusts, still very nervous.

JACK

Jack. What's his name?

MUNKNY

(translating)

Eska.

(pointing)

These are four of his sons, two of his daughters, and three of his sheep - he has 250. And... he says you have a very manly beard.

JACK

Thanks. Say thanks. It's just stubble, but thanks.

MUNKNY

He says...

(laughing)

... do you know David Beckham?

JACK

No. But say yes. Maybe No, say no.

Munkny translates but the nomad isn't really listening. He whips a rifle out from behind him and points it at Jack. Jack is startled and the nomad's children laugh.

MUNKNY

He made a joke.

(keeping a calm façade)

I don't know what it was, but keep calm, that gun is real and loaded.

JACK

O...K.

The nomad hands the rifle over to Jack and Jack reluctantly accepts.

JACK

Ask him... does he ever have to use this... on people.

Munkny translates and the nomad laughs.

MUNKNY

He thinks that is very funny. He knows all the other nomads within 400 miles. They could never shoot each other.

JACK

Jesus. I don't even know my neighbour.

MUNKNY

(point at the vat)
He asks what that is.

JACK

Oh. Tell him... it's my father.

Munkny translates and the nomad nods sagely.

MUNKNY

He says that family is very important.

The vat suddenly bursts into action.

WOOSTRUSS

Jack! You've got play this Mongolian *bone* game!

The nomad's family all look to one another. One child approaches the vat, curious. Jack slowly switches the vat off.

JACK

Tell him it's a... machine of memories, made in the 80s.

Munkny translates and the nomad says something with an understanding shrug.

MUNKNY

He says he understands... people think that nothing happened in the 80s but... stuff happened.

CUT TO:

EXT. GER CAMP - LATE DUSK

Jack and Munkny are shaking hands with the nomad from horseback.

JACK

Ask him - is he happy?

The nomad listens to Munkny, understands, laughs, looks around him, speaks.

MUNKNY

He says of course he is.

They ride away the same way as they came. We PULL OUT for another breathtaking shot of the landscape.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER - NIGHT

They are still at the table of bones and now have bowls of mutton soup on side tables. They are all highly involved in the game. Patrik carefully flicks a bone, it collides with another, and he picks up the second bone with the same hand he flicked with.

REGINALD

Ha! Left hand flick, left hand pick-up, illegal move!

PATRIK

(of course!)
Oh how silly!

WOOSTRUSS

I'll tell you what, Patrik. I'll bet you on the next game of bones... I want my son back. I'll bet anything.

PATRIK

Woostross! I nearly forgot. Of course. I will tell you what, oo-kay, I will give you one *free* chance to get your son back. For sure, my man. We Dutch... we're nice. But not on bones. Something more... epic. OK how does this sound - horseback archery?

WOOSTRUSS

Horseback archery? I've never-

PATRIK

Nor have I, but it looks like a hoot, no?

REGINALD

I'll adjudicate.

WOOSTRUSS

OK then. OK.

PATRIK

OK good! Tomorrow morning.

WOOSTRUSS

Tomorrow morning.

SERIES OF SHORT SCENES - NIGHT

Jack chatting and drinking with Munkny.

Jack and Munkny looking up at the Mongolian moon.

Reginald and Patrik dancing with Mongolians in their Ger.

Jack going to sleep, happy.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER - NEXT MORNING

WOOSTRUSS'S P.O.V.: Room coming into focus, the sound of whipping.

PULL BACK to see that Reginald is whipping Wostruss. Wostruss is deeply perplexed but does not get up.

REGINALD.

As a rule I never wake a sleeping man. Unless I whip him also.

WOOSTRUSS

But I-

REGINALD

This is a big day today, Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

Indeed. Although I don't think that necessitates a morning lashing.

EXT. JACK'S GER CAMP - MORNING

Jack is making sure his clothes are on tightly.

JACK

Remind me, why am I going to climb that mountain by myself?

MUNKNY

Because you're a big strong man. And it'll give you time to think. Mongolia is a wonderfully peaceful country.

JACK

And you're... are you coming?

MUNKNY

I can't... but you have to go with a dog to protect you from wolves.

JACK

(flat)
Right.

A play Mongolian shepherded dog licks his hand.

MUNKNY

He's called Squeakles.

JACK

I see. And I'm going-

Munkny points to the top of a faraway mountain.

MUNKNY

To the top of that mountain.

JACK

I see, so I go straight ahead... straight ahead... straight ahead... and it's the first thing right in front of me?

MUNKNY

You can't miss it.

JACK

OK.

Jack sets off. Squeakles bounds by his side and Jack strokes him.

JACK (V.O.)

The things I do for girls...

Munkny runs after him.

MUNKNY

I forgot - you must place a stone at the top of the mountain and walk around the collection of stones three times. Clockwise.

JACK

Why?

MUNKNY

Shamanism.

JACK

Oh.

EXT. TARGET RANGE - DAY

Wostruss, Patrik and Reginald are all on horseback, following a Mongolian INSTRUCTOR. In front of them is a target range: a number of large target boards set across the snow. They are all very able riders.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Jack, holding his father, walking up the mountain.

JACK (V.O.)

I'm in the middle of nowhere... but this is the centre of these people's world. Jesus... maybe this is time for me to think... time for me to find myself. Am I looking? Can you find something if you're not looking for it? Of course you can. What an idiot. More importantly... that toilet... we've had a few scrapes... God... I like saying hello to the food here but I certainly don't look forward to saying goodbye.

EXT. TARGET RANGE - DAY

They all come to a stop. The instructor hands them each a bow and a quiver of arrows. He starts to give them instructions.

INSTRUCTOR

Right...

EXT. MOUNTAIN - DAY

Jack is still walking. The dog keeps running off but always comes back to Jack.

JACK (V.O.)

I'm happy I came. I mean, it's been life-threatening at times. But it's been cool. And dad... horseback archery to win me back... how does it happen, Squeakles? How does it happen?

(pause)

I guess I love him even if he is a bit of a cock.

EXT. TARGE RANGE - DAY

The instructor is sitting on the floor, while the three travellers are ready to go.

WOOSTRUSS

Right. Outer circle 20 points, inner circle 50 points. Five arrows each.

PATRIK

And this is between Wostruss and I so, Reginald, would you like to go first?

REGINALD

I would love to.

Reginald rides off one way and comes back. He's moving fast as he aims to the side and shoots. He hits dead-centre. The Mongolian claps and Wostruss gasps. The next time Reginald passes and shoots he shouts something to Wostruss.

REGINALD (CONT'D)

You won't understand this Wostruss.

Reginald rides away, comes back and takes another shot. Again, the shot the perfect.

REGINALD (CONT'D)

You are a scientist and a father.

Another perfect shot. Wostruss is nonplussed.

REGINALD (CONT'D)

While I am a collector and a rascal.

Reginald draws his bow towards Wostruss, calm and assured.

REGINALD (CONT'D)

I *will* fire. Gentlemen, your children, if you'd be so kind.

WOOSTRUSS

You-

REGINALD

Flummoxed?

(to the instructor)

Run or I *will* fire.

The instructor dithers slightly. Reginald quickly shoots the saddle off the instructor's tied horse. The instructor runs away. Reginald makes sure he is far enough away.

PATRIK

I am so sorry Mr. Wostruss. I only gambled for a bit of fun, I-

WOOSTRUSS

My beef is not with you.

PATRIK

I'm not handing over my little Von Kurt.

REGINALD

You will. Or Woostruss's heart will be pierced.
Ha ha. Ha ha.

WOOSTRUSS

But... why?

REGINALD

Because I'll shoot an arrow through it! Ha ha.
There is nothing new about soul catching,
gentlemen. The divine forces have been in the
business for quite some time, and it is a
perfectly human desire, really, to possess others
absolutely.

PATRIK

What will you do to my little Von Kurt?!

REGINALD

Do not worry, I will take perfectly good care of
them. I have 48 others in a nicely air-
conditioned room.

WOOSTRUSS

But I'm their father.

REGINALD

No. You are not. You never were. What did you
make yourself Woostruss? Maybe a bit-part
character who comes and goes? Don't tell me that
you made yourself into a ridiculous brain in a
vat?

WOOSTRUSS

You know I did, Reginald, you know all about me.

REGINALD

Indeed! The first encapsulated human... what a
treasure!

(demanding)

Patrik.

WOOSTRUSS

Now, Patrik.

Patrik reluctantly hands over the vats. Reginald packs them into a bag.

EXT. MOUNTAINS - CONTINUOUS

Jack walking alone.

EXT. TARGET RANGE - CONTINUOUS

We focus on Reginald, galloping away.

We WIDEN to see Wostruss and Patrik.

PATRIK

I'm so sorry.

WOOSTRUSS

Sorry? For what? Nothing will come of this.

PATRIK

What do you mean?

WOOSTRUSS

Oh we'll save them. You're a competent archer, right?

PATRIK

No, I was bluffing.

WOOSTRUSS

Damn. OK well my aim is usually pretty true. You just make a lot of noise. Let's go.

PATRIK

Together!

They spur their horses and gallop after Reginald.

CUT TO Reginald looking behind him, geeing his horse on, bounding over the rolling hills.

CUT TO Wostruss and Patrik in hot pursuit.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Jack continues his peaceful walk.

CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

Hooves pounding. Tense, speedy chase. Wostruss fires an arrow at Reginald but misses. We PULL IN on Jack's vat in Reginald's bag.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Jack takes a breather. He begins again and the camera starts shaking, hooves pounding just before we CUT TO:

EXT. SNOWY PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

WITH WOOSTRUSS AND PATRIK: Reginald is far away now.

WITH REGINALD: Reginald is laughing as he leaves them behind. He goes over a hill and suddenly encounters a jeep. The horse rears up on his hind legs, sending Reginald to the floor. He soon regains his feet, bag-over-shoulder, and advances on the jeep, aiming the bow and arrow at the driver. The jeep slows down. Reginald opens the door, punches the driver and throws him out.

WITH WOOSTRUSS AND PATRIK: They come over the hill and see Reginald getting away in the jeep.

WOOSTRUSS

Damnation!

PATRIK

We'll lose him!

Reginald drives off very fast. Wostruss and Patrik are not far behind and are gaining on him, but Reginald accelerates fast and pulls away from them. Suddenly the car swerves to a stop.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Jack is now quite near the top of the mountain. The camera is shaky and there is the sound of scuffling, but Jack is unaware of this.

EXT. SNOWY PLAINS - CONTINUOUS

Reginald is thrown out of the driving seat. From the passenger seat steps Oma, arms akimbo. Patrik and Wostruss ride up to her, followed by the Mongolian instructor. The instructor holds Reginald to the ground.

OMA

Einingun Schlasingen.

WOOSTRUSS

No need for anymore German Oma, the cavalry have arrived. Reginald, your soul catching days are over.

OMA

And I should think so too. You never heard of soul catching in *my* day.

WOOSTRUSS

We are indebted to you, Oma.

OMA

Ah, it was just an easy right hook. All that I ask of you is that you get me to a *toilet*.

EXT. MOUNTAIN - CONTINUOUS

Jack reaches the top of the mountain and looks around. This is an amazing spot. The tranquillity is only disturbed by Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

You'll never believe what just happened.

JACK

(laughing)

Dad I wish I didn't believe all the things you tell me.

WOOSTRUSS

I'll tell all later. Here's Oma. You know, that deranged grandmother from the Russian train.

OMA

Hello? Are you alright in there?

JACK

(still laughing)

Yes I'm fine. I'm on top of a Mongolian mountain, all by myself with a dog called Squeakles who's meant to scare off wolves. I have to throw a stone onto a heap of stones and walk around it three times clockwise. It's a shamanism thing.

OMA

Oh. Well good luck!

JACK

Thanks.

Jack is left by himself. He throws a stone into a heap at the peak of the mountain and walks around the heap of stones three times. The camera follows him around, allowing breath-taking panoramic shots. Jack stops, stands, and breathes deeply, appreciating the moment.

JACK (V.O.)

You know Jack-

Jack is cut short by the appearance of the nomad. The nomad is surprised to see Jack as well. They stand facing each other nervously for a few moments, as if getting ready to speak, but sensing the futility of it. The nomad makes an apologetic gesture, throws a stone on the heap and walks around it three times. Jack and the nomad look over the land together. The nomad presents two pre-rolled cigarettes and offers one to Jack. Jack declines. The nomad smokes and sits down on the heap of stones. Jack sits down next to him: close enough to be friendly. The nomad points at Wostruss, still curious. Jack shrugs in a 'you know how it is' way. The nomad reciprocates with an 'I know how it is' shrug. After a pause the nomad follows this up with an 'I don't have a clue' gesture. The nomad gets up and idly starts to juggle. Jack seems mildly impressed. He too gets up and juggles. Then he tries to coordinate paired juggling between them, indicating to the nomad when he should throw and to what hand. They are soon juggling perfectly for a few cycles, before a stone falls and the cycle breaks. Now they are back at where they started, nervous and silent. The nomad nods to Jack and Jack nods to the nomad. They walk down opposite sides of the mountain, parting.

EXT. WOOSTRUSS'S GER CAMP - DAY

Wostruss is saying goodbye to Oma and Patrik, the jeep ready for him. He pats Patrik on the back.

PATRIK

Goodbye. May your Chitvyairks always be happy!
For sure you are an excellent.

WOOSTRUSS

And you're the finest Dutch gambler I've ever met. So long, Patrik. And Oma...

OMA

Wostruss we have exchanged email addresses,
which I hear is quite the rage these days. Let us

correspond in this manner. Now please leave my sight before I shed a tear.

WOOSTRUSS

If you weren't 30 years my senior I'd-

OMA

I know, Wostruss, you have already described it in adequately graphical terms.

WOOSTRUSS

But I-

OMA

You must go to Tokyo and give your son his birthday present. And don't ever stop being a fool with brains.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes. Yes. Goodbye.

Wostruss enters the jeep and it drives away. We see a full horse-charge farewell - the Mongolian instructor and another horse rider matching the speed of the jeep for a hundred metres.

WOOSTRUSS

Jack, in my work I've found the answers to it all - all the questions: what makes a human's world, what makes a human human, what every conscious thought, every social interaction, every twinkle in every eye is reducible to, how it can be explained. I used to think that once I knew everything I'd be above it all - I'd transcend it - I would no longer be one with it, affected by it. That scared me. But-

(sniffing back a tear)

- a stupid joke still elevates me... a good farewell still makes me weep.

JACK

That's OK dad. I don't know much... I didn't even know what the capital of Mongolia was... but I know that you can't help enjoy life. You're one of the silly people who even enjoys crying.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes.

JACK

At times like this.
(pause)
I met a special somebody today.

WOOSTRUSS

A girl?

EXT. JACK'S GER CAMP - CONTINUOUS

Jack is also ready to leave. He looks up to the top of his mountain.

JACK

No. Well yes actually, a girl as well. But someone else. We didn't talk to each other. Well, we talked through juggling.

WOOSTRUSS

(composing himself)
How do you do that? What's the juggling alphabet?

JACK

I don't-

WOOSTRUSS

No, you're right. That's one of the universal languages: mathematics, slapstick, and juggling.

JACK

Exactly.

WOOSTRUSS

And one more I forget.

JACK

Anyway, my guide Munkny is also pretty special too.

WOOSTRUSS

That's it! Love. Or maybe it was sex...

JACK

It's all universal, dad.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes.

JACK

And she's coming now so I've got to say goodbye.

WOOSTRUSS

Flood yourself with happy tears, son. You'll never get too many of them.

Munkny approaches, eyes sparkling.

MUNKNY

I wish you well, Jack.

JACK

You too. I'm glad we called each other beautiful, even though we will never see each other again.

MUNKNY

(as if great friends)
Jack, I never said you were beautiful!

JACK

You never *said* it.

They hug and stay embraced.

MUNKNY

What's that?

JACK

Umm... it's a... hug... a cuddle?

MUNKNY

No what's *that*?

JACK

Oh that!

MUNKNY

It feels like a...like a knob?

JACK

Yeah that's just my external occipital protuberance.

(edging back)
I'm sorry. I know it's really weird and-

MUNKNY

No. I like it.

JACK

Really? Thanks.

MUNKNY

Jack... it would be a tragedy if I didn't tell you...
you're beautiful.

They laugh.

JACK

Thanks.

Jack gets into the jeep. We FADE OUT as it drives away.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO TOKYO - DAY

Plane from Ulan Bataar to Tokyo. Wostruss settles into a window seat, with Jack to his side. An obese AMERICAN man sits down next to Jack. The American dwarves the vat.

AMERICAN

Hi there.

WOOSTRUSS

Hello.

AMERICAN

Don't worry, I know what you're thinking, this fat American's going to be really obnoxious and's gonna take up two seats because he's so obese. But I'll tell you what, I bought two seats! So it's fine. It's *mine*.

The American inspects Jack as Wostruss talks.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes, well let then let your fat ooze my north-Atlantic brethren. Let your jelly-like adipose tissue engulf the armrest that divides your two seats.

AMERICAN

(not listening)
Yeah. So what's this?

WOOSTRUSS

That's my son.

AMERICAN

Oh, right.
(pause)
Did he pay?

WOOSTRUSS

No. He doesn't have any arms. I paid for him. Could you do me a favour and flop your weighty midsection over to your other seat... he doesn't like to be crowded.

AMERICAN

Sure.

INT. JACK'S PLANE TO TOKYO - DAY

Jack is sitting on his plane with Wostruss on his lap as they begin to take off. A nervously excited JAPANESE businessman sitting next to him strikes up a conversation.

JAPANESE

In Japan the number 4 is vely special! Do you know why?!

JACK

No, I don't think I do.

JAPANESE

Means *death!* In Japan buildings no even have fourth floor! Hee-hee!

JACK

Really?

JAPANESE

Oh yah. So today is vely special day! It is 4th of the 4th of the 4th!! So death 300%!

The plane is rattling as it begins to take off.

JACK

Well at least it's not... 400%

JAPANESE

Hoh hoh! Oh yes!

JACK

(to Wostruss)
Are you yawning dad?

INT. WOOSTRUS'S PLANE TO TOKYO - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss makes a yawning noise.

INT. JACK'S PLANE TO TOKYO - CONTINUOUS

Jack is keeping up a prolonged yawn. The Japanese man sees this and copies him.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S PLANE TO TOKYO - CONTINUOUS

Wostruss is doing much the same and the fat American copies him also.

FADE OUT

INT. JACK'S PLANE TO TOKYO - DUSK

The plane lands in Japan. In front of Jack is an in-flight video from a camera on the front of the plane. This shows a Japanese signalman bowing. Jack chuckles and bows slightly to him.

INT. WOOSTRUSS'S TOKYO AIRPORT - MINUTES LATER

Sickly-bright Tokyo airport. Wostruss is softly bashing a vending machine.

WOOSTRUSS

Now Jack, act civilly to the indigenous population... of vending and arcade machines.

The can finally pops down and he picks it out.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

This country is all about respect and dignity.

Wostruss pats the machine affectionately and walks away from the camera to the exit. After a decent pause, while walking away:

WOOSTRUSS

And samurais. If you want to get respect fast, say that you're a samurai.

JACK

But I'm white.

FADING OUT:

WOOSTRUSS

Well then say that you're *with* a samurai. Now get some sleep... tomorrow... it's finally present time.

SERIES OF SHORT SCENES - NEXT DAY

Jack waking up in a hotel, running straight out.

Jack catching the tube. It's packed. Japanese men all sleeping standing up.

Jack going in wild in an arcade, inviting Japanese boys to play all his favourite games. They're eager. Playing on rock-band simulating machines.

Jack sitting in a pachinko parlour next to a grim-faced Japanese man with a cigarette dangling out of his mouth, attending to the madly musical ball bearings to the point of appearing comatose. Jack slowly gets up and leaves; guy doesn't notice.

INT. TOFU RESTAURANT - DAY

Wostruss is sitting down on the floor in a private traditional Japanese room. He is alone with Jack, eating tofu and not liking it a bit.

WOOSTRUSS

Every time I'm here I try tofu... and every time I regret it. I'm on my 7th course. I want to escape.

A Japanese waitress walks in, bows politely and offers him another dish of tofu.

WOOSTRUSS

More?

WAITRESS

Yes!

WOOSTRUSS

How many courses are there?

WAITRESS

14!

WOOSTRUSS

Each one more devastating than the last?

WAITRESS

Sorry excuse me what you say please?

WOOSTRUSS

Thank you.

INT. NOODLE BAR - CONTINUOUS

A plain noodle bar. Jack is sitting in his own booth, having trouble eating noodles with chopsticks. Three grown Japanese women swarm around him, taking a video with a digital camcorder, amused by how he eats the noodles. Jack speaks to Woostruss.

JACK

I'm being videotaped just because I eat noodles like an amateur! And they were just laughing at me because I put soy sauce on my rice! They said they've never seen anyone do that before! They're loving it!

WOOSTRUSS

That's great! I have to meet a few academic associates of mine soon Jack, so keep yourself entertained.

JACK

I'll have no problems with that.

Jack keeps eating. One of the Japanese women oohs and aahs at the vat and takes Jack over to the window to show him something. We are deep in Akihabara: an electronics district. Across the road is a big, rather gaudy neon advertisement featuring a massive picture of a vat just like Woostruss. Jack is intrigued.

EXT. AKIHABARA STREET - MINUTES LATER

Jack runs out of the noodle bar and approaches the building, Woostruss in hand. He enters:

INT. TAIPURO LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Plush, hi-tech lobby. Jack looks up at a looped video that plays on an impressively large flat screen monitor. We catch this at the end.

VIDEO: a man smiles at the screen.

FEMALE (V.O.)

... good as new!

The video begins again.

VIDEO: a well dressed woman walking casually with a brain in a vat. The woman walks into the building Jack is in now.

FEMALE (V.O.)

The Taipuro Company welcomes you! Finally we have made it possible to turn one of these:

(close up of vat)

Into one of these!

(man walking out, hand in hand with original woman)

Free your loved one from the inconvenient glassy confines of any model of the Brain in Vat series. In one of our specialised laboratories -

(view of a sci-fi-ish room with a couple of happy scientists)

- we rewire the brain using state-of-the-art Taipuro bio-engineering-

(lousy computerised graphics with lots of fancy arrows)

- and give your acquaintance's brain the body they already believe they have -

(diagram of body being wrapped around brain)

- so they'll leave here in a few hours, born afresh to the real world-

(the man walking out of building)

- feeling as good as new!

(we're back at where we began, zooming up to smile)

Jack is stunned. He stands fixed to the spot, looking from Woostruss to video.

JACK

To give him the real world... what a gift...

(realisation)

Wait!

CUT TO:

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

A modern neuroscience laboratory with brain-scanners, modern computers etc. Woostruss is shaking hands with a team of obsequious and enthusiastic Japanese scientists.

CUT TO:

INT. TAIPURO - CONTINUOUS

Camera PUSHING IN ON Woostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

Your present, Jack... it's unique. It's not wrapped up in a bow. You can't get a refund on it and buy something better. It's not a car..

it's not a weekend in a Japanese love hotel. I hope you're pleased with it, son. I hope I'm doing the right thing. I wanted to open your eyes. I want you to be free.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

Woostruss is smoking cigars and drinking Bloody Marys with the Japanese Scientists.

SCIENTIST 1

So he was the first brain to ever be put in vat and now he shall be the first out!

SCIENTIST 2

Another Bloody Mary, Woostruss?

WOOSTRUSS

Bloody hell yes. Keep Mary bleeding. It's a special night tonight!...

(first sign of concern)

You are sure this is safe, yes?

SCIENTIST 3

As sure as you were when you did this to him those 19 years ago!

WOOSTRUSS

Gosh. I was young, I was wreckless, I lived in my dreams. But, more pertinently, I was a mad scientist.

The three Japanese scientists all laugh and look at each other.

SCIENTIST 1

Yes well we are very much the same, only Japanese!

WOOSTRUSS

(gazing at Jack)

And he'll look how he thinks he looks.

SCIENTIST 3

Oh of course. State of the art!

SCIENTIST 1

And no longer do you have to switch him on. He will just be there. Yours. The greatest experiment of all time-

SCIENTIST 2

- well at least in the top 10 -

SCIENTIST 1

- finally completed.

INT. TAIPURO OFFICE - DAY

Jack is sitting in a well-kept and decorated office, talking to KIKO - a rather surly and uninterested Japanese man in a t-shirt who smokes idly.

JACK

So when he comes out he'll have to adjust to the real world?

KIKO

I guess, yeah. Sure.

JACK

I mean he won't actually be a scientist. He didn't really invent brains in vats.

KIKO

A-hmm.

JACK

He'll be a juggler by trade.

KIKO

If that's his thing. Yeah.

JACK

Can you go into the process anymore? Can you explain the science of it... I mean, in layman's terms.

KIKO

Well it's all on the video.

JACK

What?

KIKO

The video in the lobby. It was all on there. I mean you can go down and watch it again if you really want but-

JACK

The infomercial thing that took less than a minute?

KIKO

A-hmm.

Another Japanese man - SHUKI - walks by the office.

KIKO (CONT'D)

Hey Shuki, I thought we put all the layman's science on the video, right?

SHUKI

Er yeah, we did.

KIKO

That's what I thought.

JACK

So... you just... how do you...

KIKO

Look we've done it a hundred times and we do it all the time so..

JACK

You reprogram his brain?

KIKO

A-hmm.

JACK

And give him a new body?

KIKO

A-hmm.

JACK

And restore his-

KIKO

Look friend it was all on the video OK? I mean wasn't it? Wasn't it all on the video?

JACK

I guess.

KIKO

So you just sit with him. We just put him in this mumbo-jumbo-machino over there and-

Kiko lethargically waves at a machine in the corner of the room. It looks pretty safe.

JACK

Sorry what's that machine? What's its technical name?

KIKO

The MJM. The mumbo-jumbo-machino. You don't need to know. I don't know. Anyway, you wait until he falls asleep and then that's it, the techies fly in and within a few hours it's fine.

JACK

OK. And this is completely reliable?

KIKO

A-hmm. I swear on my mother's life. Sure.

INT. LABORATORY - NIGHT

The scientists are leaving the room. Wostruss is sitting with Jack connected to a machine.

SCIENTIST 3

And you're sure you want to stay with him until he falls asleep?

WOOSTRUSS

Yeah... as long as Mary keeps bleeding. He was nearly kidnapped by a soul-stealing gimp named Reginald, you know.

SCIENTIST 3

That sounds really interesting... tell us all about it with him there.

SCIENTIST 1

Yeah we'd really like that.

SCIENTIST

See you tomorrow!

Wostruss is left alone, slumped over in his chair. The room is dimly lit. He sips on his Bloody Mary.

FADE TO:

INT. LABORATORY - LATER

Wostruss is a little drunker and rubs his eyes, very tired. The following set of scenes are filmed quite CLOSE-UP.

WOOSTRUSS

You'll get your present soon. I hope it makes up for all the years.

INT. TAIPURO OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jack has the office to himself and is sprawled out on the floor, his head by Woostruss. The room is also dimly lit and Jack is also very tired.

JACK

Oh dad-

WOOSTRUSS

Call me Woostruss.

JACK

No that's just weird, dad.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

Please yourself.

JACK

But you don't have to make up for anything. It's been a good holiday. It's been a good present so far. It's been a good childhood.

Woostruss snuggles up, getting more tired.

INT. TAIPURO: CONTINUOUS

Jack closes his eyes. Woostruss's voice is already quite slurred.

WOOSTRUSS

When I was your age my father got me a... truck.

There is a pause due to Jack's tired reactions.

JACK

No he didn't.

WOOSTRUSS

No, shut up, he got me a... trike.

JACK

(another pause)
No he didn't.

WOOSTRUSS

He did. It was a motorcycle with three wheels. It was a glorified, motorised trike. More freedom, same concept... same idea... the same philosophy as a tricycle. Freedom. The open road. The open world. Life. It's all perspective. Perspective. It turns giants into dwarves.

JACK

And knuckles into mountains.

WOOSTRUSS

And dwarves' knuckles into slightly smaller mountains.

JACK

Precisely.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

There's another quiet lull.

INT. TAIPURO - CONTINUOUS

Jack yawns.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

Do you know what humans want the most out of everything?

JACK

What?

WOOSTRUSS

(suspense-building pause)

Answers. And chocolate hob-knobs. I haven't yet met a man who dislikes chocolate hob-knobs.

JACK

We're getting tired. Yeah we better sleep.

WOOSTRUSS

(childlike)

No. Not yet.

JACK

It's bedtime daddy.

WOOSTRUSS

No. Not yet.

INT. TAIPURO - CONTINUOUS

Jack rolls over, happy to settle into sleep.

WOOSTRUSS

How do you spell yoinks?

JACK

Why oinks?

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS

Yeah. I was going to make that into a joke one day. To do with oinks.

JACK

Wow.

WOOSTRUSS

I know. It was my big project.

There's another long pause, Woostruss now probably drifting into sleep himself.

INT. TAIPURO - CONTINUOUS

Tired Jack. As soon as voice resumes switch to:

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

Jack I had a dream the other day, where - you know that I can juggle?

JACK

We can both juggle.

WOOSTRUSS

Yes. One in the trilogy of universal languages. Well in this dream I had to save someone's life using juggling. I had to juggle a heart for transplant and a mini generator that was going to save a hospital and a gasmask... I had to juggle them over a bridge that could only just take the weight of me and two items and..

(sighs)

... it wasn't even a dream, it was just an idea I had.

JACK

I knew it. I've known you long enough to be able to distinguish your dreamlike ideas from your dreamlike dreams.

WOOSTRUSS

Would've made a good dream though.

JACK

Yeah. A good idea for a dream.

WOOSTRUSS

Yeah.

JACK

(wistfully)
Dreams.

WOOSTRUSS

Are you falling asleep?

JACK

No.

WOOSTRUSS

You were. You were beckoning dreams.

JACK

(on brink of sleep)
I wasn't... I was just... snore... snore... do I snore?...

Jack is breathing heavily. He seems asleep. Wostruss doesn't move, himself weary.

WOOSTRUSS

Son?

(no reply)

Jack?

(no reply)

I need to tell you something. I'm getting rather sleepy also. I... I'm sorry. I could never be a father to you.

Wostruss thinks that this is it and snuggles up again. Yet after a pause, Jack replies.

JACK

No. That's all you ever were. That was all you ever were.

WOOSTRUSS

(pause)
Shall I lullaby you, Jack? Like the old days?

JACK

Yeah. OK.

WOOSTRUSS

Once... I made you wet yourself. I sang to you... a lullaby... and you wet yourself... but anyway, here goes...

INT. TAIPURO - CONTINUOUS

Silence. Jack falls asleep.

INT. LABORATORY - CONTINUOUS

Silence. Wostruss falls asleep.

FADE OUT.

INT. WAITING ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE-JACK: curled up on a sofa.

CLOSE-WOOSTRUSS: stretched out on another sofa.

BACK to see whole room: an ordinary, sterile waiting room. The two of them are both in this room. Jack rises and notices his dad. He is intrigued but wary. He approaches Wostruss.

WOOSTRUSS

(instinctively)
You're not going to whip me are you? It's only I was whipped up yesterday and-
(rising suddenly, shocked)
I... you... Jack?

JACK

Dad?

They both inspect and tentatively approach each other, as if aliens in each other's world.

CLOSE-JACK: tear in his eye.

BACK to whole room.

WOOSTRUSS

Jack you're crying.

JACK

I'm one of the silly people who enjoys crying too, I'm-

WOOSTRUSS

But I mean... you're *crying*. I can see your actual *tears*.

CLOSE-WOOSTRUSS: tear in his eye too.

BACK to whole room.

WOOSTRUSS

And I can actually hug. I can actually..

They hug, happy.

CLOSE: THEIR FACES.

WOOSTRUSS

(whilst hugging)

You're right... it does bulge a little too much... it's a little worrying... but...

BACK to whole room.

Woostruss takes Jack's hand and leads it to the back of his own skull.

WOOSTRUSS (CONT'D)

I have the same thing right in the same place.

Jack laughs a little into his father's shoulder. There's a long pause. Then Jack looks around.

JACK

We're not in Japan, are we?

Woostruss also looks around.

WOOSTRUSS

It certainly doesn't smell like it.

They part and stand facing each other, checking in more detail.

JACK (V.O.)

I wonder if he's real. Is this a dream? Is this-

Voice-overs cutting over each other's:

WOOSTRUS (V.O.)

I thought he'd have shorter hair and-

JACK (V.O.)

-one of those stupid happy dreams where you wake up and it makes you sad-

WOOSTRUS (V.O.)

- does he know I'm doing a monologue? Does he - wait, he is!

(ALOUD)

I can see you're thinking, Jack! I could never see it before - I thought I sometimes saw it, but I never did! All I saw was brain! But I can see it on your face now.

Jack understands. We PULL OUT, they become quieter.

JACK

We've got to sort everything out now.

WOOSTRUS

(not bothered)

Yeah we've got the metaphysics to deal with. But let's just chat for a bit more... ahh, the musical groans of Japanese men...

They chat inaudibly as we PULL OUT and FADE TO BLACK.

END.