

Something's going down in Dalgarno

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SCENE 1 BEANIES ESTATE - EXTERIOR -DAY

A PUBLIC SPACE on the BEANIES GARDENS estate.
We see the FRONTS of HOMES. There is an old BATTERED CHAIR.

ENTER NARRATOR

NARRATOR

(NARRATOR addresses audience directly.) I'm NARRATOR. I was minding my own business, not disturbing anyone's piece and Tara Kennedy - from over at the community centre - asked me to narrate this show. I thought about it. She smiled at me. I thought some more. She smiled some more, said please and - How does she do that? - here I am. Anyway this story is about a bunch of people who weren't doing anything very much. Then one day a woman in the council offices got to thinking .

CUT

(CHILDREN dresses as RATS scurry around and move the BATTERED CHAIR out of the way and replace it with furniture for the next scene..)

SCENE TWO. COUNCILLOR'S OFFICE - INTERIOR - DAY

A COUNCILLOR - is at his DESK. He has a quality

SWIVEL CHAIR. He's loud and bullish.

COUNCILLOR

Ye, great idea. - really good. Offer the residents of BEANIES and Gluttons estates some of the old filthy to do it themselves. (BEAT) No, I know it's dirty. I meant filthy, money, as in filthy rich. (Beat) £3000! (BEAT) Yes I see what you mean. We get to green the estates and stuff the Greens - ha, ha, ha, - doesn't get better. Worth every penny. Lets do it.

SCENE 3 BEANIES ESTATE - EXTERIOR - DAY

NARRATOR

And so down on the Beanies things began to happen.

(ENTER CAST who bursts into action - they sweep, clean, mop and distribute recycling sacks. The RATS move FURNITURE away)

RUBBISH is piled and DUST BINS are in place ready

for collection. A GIRL (S) is doing MARTIAL ARTS

DANCING. She wears DARK SHADES. A

TEENAGER, DANNI, is playing on a SKATEBOARD.

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(ENTER BIN MEN - PAUL and JERRY. Paul is in his early 20s and wears TRAINERS, CLEAN JEANS and a TIGHT, WHITE T-SHIRT..JERRY is middle aged and dressed appropriately for the job in OVERALLS and BOOTS.)

DANNI

Here come the intrepid slime fighters Binman and Rubbish

AMY

What? What you on about DANNI?

DANNI

You know, like crime fighters Batman and Robin

AMY

Batman! You think we're all kids? I only watch good stuff.

(PAUL walks towards the GIRLS)

PAUL

That's right, ladies. Only the best.

(He looks into AMY'S eyes / shades)

PAUL

Looking good.

(Then he takes out a COMB and combs his hair in the reflection in her glasses.)

PAUL

Don't go.

(AMY walks away.)

JERRY

Only likes the good stuff, Paul.

PAUL

Sees quality and doesn't recognise it. Sad.

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JERRY

Quality! Binman and Rubbish is right, innit. I'm the bin man and you're rubbish.

PAUL

Tell you what, Jerry, me old mate, why don't I show some of those daughters of yours a few moves. I hear some of them are getting a bit long in the tooth.

(Paul starts to put distance between himself and Jerry who is starting to boil nicely)

PAUL (CONTINUED)

I might even take that missus of yours off your hands for an evening. I reckon she'd be a bit desperate after

(JERRY runs for PAUL who runs - darting between bins, jumps over the chair....)

ENTER JEAN, a woman (in her 70s?) and her friend Maureen who looks softer and more 'lady-like.'

JEAN

It's shocking, Maureen, shocking.

MAUREEN

What's that Jean.

JEAN

This. (She waves a small carrier-bag) Them. The council waste disposal experts or recycling engineers or whatever they call themselves.

MAUREEN

It's only a bit of fun, Jean love.

JEAN

Fun! Fun! I pay my council tax for those useless ninnies to remove waste . So I step out my own front door and nearly kill myself slipping on this - on my doorstep. (She throws some old food - bits of bread and veg - on the ground.) Well - what you going to do about it?

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(Jerry and Paul stop running)

JERRY

Us?

PAUL

No. You see love, we don't deliver rubbish to you. We take it away.

JEAN

Then stop chasing around and TAKE IT AWAY.

MAUREEN

Jean love...

JEAN

And if you try to patronize me a again I'll have one of my family recycle you for the benefit of the community. But only

MAUREEN

Jean love...

JEAN

once they've cut your guts out and used them as a tie to swing you from the nearest lamp post with.

MAUREEN

Jean love... mightn't that be a little ... excessive?

DANNI

No worries Maureen, we'll be ever so polite.

MAUREEN

Oh, that's nice. I am pleased. - Don't like nastiness. (Other, human, members of the caste start arriving with little bags of food waste found on their doorsteps. They compare notes, indignantly.)

AMY

What's going on. That's what I want to know. Something funny about it, I reckon.

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JEAN

You're right, Girl. But it's not funny. Someone's trying to make sure we don't win the £3,000. That's what.

MAUREEN

Who would do such a thing?

DANNI

Someone who doesn't have food on their doorstep that's who.

MAUREEN

But Gluttons decided not to take part in the contest.

(JERRY and PAUL reach for the BINS.)

4.

JEAN

You leave those right there.

JERRY

But...

JEAN

Some of these good people are going to help you out. Off you go, now.

DANNI

And by the time we've finished with them we'll be looking shinier than American teeth in a toothpaste advertisement.

(The MEN and RATS carry out the BINS and RECYCLING BAGS, purposefully.)

MAUREEN

Oh, dear, Jean love. It's not going to get....

JEAN

Messy. Yes, dear. It's going to get very messy, down on Gluttons. (BEAT Jean shouts to the departed bin men) Hey, no one said anything about leaving that chair.

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JERRY (OFF STAGE)

Sorry darling. Not our department.

EXIT JEAN and MAURINE

ENTER NARRATOR . He sit in CHAIR shaking his head.

NARRATOR

Well, that looks like trouble to me. Beansies going off to war with Gluttons over £3000 of prize money. Couldn't get worse - cold it?

EXIT.

SCENE 4 BEANIES ESTATE - EXTERIOR - NIGHT

We see an empty Beansies estate. A cool looking CAT,

THOMAS, is moving around the area. We see that he is

placing pieces of food in front of doors.

ENTER FRED

(FRED has his signature TUBE in his hand and walks slowly half way across the stage before he notices THOMAS the CAT.)

FRED

Phooo.

(FRED throws his drink in a nearby BIN and misses.)

FRED

Yeh, you put me off . You distracted me.

THOMAS (V.O.)

Yeah, right

FRED

A talking cat!

THOMAS (V.O.)

It was just a rubbish shot.

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FRED

No it wasn't. No, no this is silly. Cat's don't talk. Can't talk. Of cause they can't.

THOMAS (V.O)

So why you talking to me? Tell you what , why don't you stop talking and leave me to get on with it?

(FRED slumps into the chair muttering . Then he suddenly sits bold upright.)

FRED

Hang on. You really are talking .

THOMAS (V.O)

(SILENCE)

FRED

And you're the one putting food on the doorsteps. What are you doing? Stop it. You'll attract rats.

THOMAS (V.O)

Don't you talk to me of rats. Nasty creatures are rats. Always scurrying and scratching and making a mess. Even dogs are better than rats.

FRED

Well stop putting the food out for them.

THOMAS (V.O)

I'm not putting it out, genius. I'm putting it back. It's you lot who put it out so Mrs.. R and he disgusting little ones can have burgers with mushy peas and coleslaw salad

FRED

What no chips?

THOMAS (V.O)

Not Mrs. R's brood. She's particular about diet. Not that the little ones don't go and find their own. Thieving little

FRED

But why?

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THOMAS (V.O)

Same old reasons I suppose, they just like sweet sticky things. You just going to sit there?

FRED

Not the rats - you. Why you doing it?

THOMAS (V.O)

I told you. We're getting overrun. You got to stop throwing food away.

FRED

Me?

THOMAS (V.O)

All of you. But you'll have to tell them.

FRED puts his head in his hands

FRED

Me. Oh my Ahhhh.

SCENE 5 PUB -EXTERIOR - EVENING

The Beanies RESIDENTS, minus the rats, are gathered in the area outside PUB. There are a few TABLES and CHAIRS. People are standing on chairs and leaning in the

DOORWAY.

There are residents of both the BEANIES and GLUTTONS estates present. We interrupt them in the middle of a noisily, good natured-ish meeting.. SASHA is a TEENAGER from GLUTTONS estate.

SASHA

Hey, what are you on?

FRED

I'm just telling you what happened.

SASHA

So there you were - just walking through the estates when some cat stops you.

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FRED

Yeah, well, I stopped it.

SASHA

Of course you did.

(Laughter)

Whatever.

PATRICK

Ah, leave him alone.

DANNI

Yeah, you leave him alone.

SASHA

Look. Someone is putting rubbish on my doorstep and you want me to buy some rubbish story about talking cats. Well, down on Beanies you're thick enough to buy it, OK, but I'm not.

FRED

Look, I'm only trying

PATRICK

Cat or no cat maybe he's got a point.

SASHA

Which is what? That you Beanies lot are dumping their rubbish on our doorsteps?

DANNI

Now wait a minute.

SASHA

If we waited you'd be coming over with your bins

DANNI

We never.

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SASHA

No? What were you all doing the other day then - having an egg and spoon race? (Lots of shouting and noise. The barman rings the BELL. SILENCE)

BARMAN

Break. Ye, that's better. End of round one. In fact it's the end of the whole boxing match. Finish your drinks and get out. I've had enough.

RESIDENTS

It's not closing time.

BARMAN

It is now..

The residents trickle out leaving only PATRICK and JEAN standing at the bar.

BARMAN

Some of us have got homes to go to you know.

Patrick finishes his drink

JEAN

It seems he doesn't want us.

PATRICK

Shame. Just when I was beginning to enjoy the peace and quiet. Never mind. Can I walk you through the estates?

JEAN

It's not necessary.

PATRICK

I think I'd like to.

They walk away from the PUB TABLES

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SCENE 6 ESTATE -EXTERIOR - NIGHT (SAME)

JEAN and PATRICK walk through the estate. Behind them we see - but they don't -

THOMAS is putting FOOD back on DOORSTEPS.

PATRICK turns and sees THOMAS.

PATRICK

Oh, my goodness! Look at that.

JEAN

You know what this means, don't you?

PATRICK

It really is the cat.

JEAN

The old fool was telling the truth

PATRICK

Well...

EXIT

SCENE 7 BEANIES -EXTERIOR - DAY (TO CONSIDER???)

DANNI

That moggy did not talk to my Nan.

SASHA

No - of course not, mate. Just used its special powers - woo, woo.

DANNI

You taking the Michael?

SASHA

Nah, never. Tell you what though - they'd have been more respectful if old Fred had said it was a pit bull.

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DANNI

(Laughs) Like, do it or I'll rip your throat out. Unless it's yours. Death by drowning in a sea of slobber's what I hear.

SASHA

Yeh, lets threaten them with that at this meeting Jean's called are you?

ENTER NARRATOR

NARRATOR

Well this is when really strange things started to happen. Something even stranger than catwhispering. The residents called a meeting and asked Rudi along. You know Rudi? Everyone round here does - runs streetlytes, helping people turn their lives around.

ENTER RUDI

RUDY- crosses the stage towards AR2 and PR2

DANNI

Hey, Rudi

SASHA

Rudi, my man.

RUDI

How you doing boys? You coming to the meeting or are you just hanging in the wind.

SASHA

Nah, we wouldn't miss it for the world.

DANNI

And Sasha here has a new system for persuading people to cooperate.

RUDI

(Tongue in cheek) I'm truly glad to hear your taking an interest in community matters boys.

They LAUGH and EXIT together.

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SCENE 8 INTERIOR - COMMUNITY CENTRE - DAY (SAME)

People from the two communities are gathered. Thomas, the cat, is sitting on chairs and people then being pushed off and moved on.

ENTER NARRATOR with DANNI and SASHA

AMY

Rudi! What you doing here?

RUDI

Got to be somewhere. And we're here, not somewhere else, because we all care about these estates. That's why it was people from both estates who came to see me about a seeing if there was a way of cutting down on all the food waste we create.

AMY

How we going to do that, NARRATOR, starve?

RUDI

No one starves. We eat well, here. And where going to eat even better, very soon. (SILENCE) Funny how food gets people's attention. I've been up to the council and they have promised us bins into which you will place all your vegetable and fruit waste, bits of carrots, ends of cabbages, apple cores orange peel, You know the stuff and don't need me to tell you what it is. No cooked rice, no pasta, no pastry or pizza crusts and absolutely no meat or fat. Put that in and I hear SASHA has a mean dog (GENERAL LAUGHTER) Now you're wondering why we do this. Well, our new friends up at the council have also offered us not one but two allotments where you'll be able to compost the waste and use it to grow our own vegetables.

SASHA

Ye, but NARRATOR, some of us don't eat vegetables.

NARRATOR

Never have onions on your burgers? - It can happen and it will make a big improvement but no-one can tell you what to do so I'm going to leave you to decide. I only ask that you let me know what your decision is.

EXIT NARRATOR who goes and stands at the side of the stage

AMY

I reckon it's a stitch up.

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DANNI

How do you work that out, Amy?

AMY

Easy. They get us to do all this recycling thing, which we pay them for anyway. And only one estate gets the money. We're being stitched. Trust me.

JEAN

She could be right. Unless - we tell them that we share the money or we want no part of any of it.

DANNI

But Nan, we might lose three...

JEAN

No, DANNI, love. We all gain £1500. I call that a good day's work. Supposing we vote on that.

All HANDS go up.

CUT

SCENE 9 BEANIES - EXTERIOR - DAY

We are in the space where Fred fists `spoke' with Thomas. The fly-tipped ARMCHAIR is in the middle of the stage. A large RAT and three YOUNG RATS (R1 is largest child, R3 is smallest + NEW RAT) scurry around the stage. They look in BINS and on DOOR STEPS . Scurry, scurry

R3

Mum, I'm hungry

R1

We're all hungry. It's not just you, you know.

MOTHER RAT

Yes dears, try not to argue. It won't make things better.

R2

Why's there never any food, now, Mum?

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MOTHER RAT

Well, you see dears, the humans just aren't leaving food out.

R3

Why, Mum?

MOTHER RAT

I don't know, I'm sure.

NEW RAT

Ye, a man told me that sometimes you don't want them to. That they leave food, you eat it and...
(NEW RAT staggers around - pretending to die)

13.

MOTHER RAT

Enough, all of you. Now here's a nice chair a kind person has left out. Get underneath it and I'll tell you a story.

ENTER JEAN and MAURINE as the RATS go behind the CHAIR

JEAN

Oh, my goodness. Did you see that? All over the place they are.

MAUREEN

I did. They went behind that dirty old chair. Quick, get a broom.

Jean shuffles slowly off.

MAUREEN

Blimey, look at her go - moves like a snail on tranquilizers.

EXIT MAUREEN

ENTER NARRATOR on other side of stage

NARRATOR

At times like that it only takes one small thing to tip the balance and ... (He sees JEAN coming back with two brooms and watches her as she approaches MAUREEN)

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MAUREEN

Ta, Jean love.

MAUREEN and JEAN advance on the chair and push it to one side. The RATS explode from behind it in all directions. MAUREEN and JEAN chase after them, swinging their brooms. The RATS dash around, occasionally running straight towards MAUREEN and JEAN who run away before turning around and eventually chasing all the RATS of stage.

MAUREEN and JEAN lean on their BROOMS

MAUREEN

Jean love, we've got to do something.

JEAN

Right as always, but do you think we could do it from inside The Pavilion. I really need a lemonade - with ice and a slice.

EXIT

SCENE 10 PUB - INTERIOR - DAY (SAME)

There's a scattering of PUB TABLES. (The BAR is painted on a backdrop?) Sitting at them are ADULTS we recognise from earlier in the play - just chilling. At one table is a CITY BOY talking loudly on his MOBILE. PUBLICAN is moving between tables, collecting glasses and talking to people. MAUREEN and JEAN are also sitting at a table near CITY BOY.

CITY BOY

Yar, well anyway I bought this chair, a Philippe Starck. - Nigella said that I must be stark raving mad for that price, ha, ha, ha - but I said that it was an investment. Wait you do know who I'm talking about? The frog designer: Philippe Starck.

(The PUBLICAN comes and stands by the table to collect the empties)

CITY BOY

(To PUBLICAN) You've heard of Philippe Starck, haven't you?

PUBLICAN

Who?

CITY BOY

Philippe Starck

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PUBLICAN

Oh, yeh. Lemon squeezer, geezer.

CITY BOY

What?

PUBLICAN

Lemon squeezer, geezer. Everyone knows that!

CITY BOY

Oh, oh, ya.

PUBLICAN moves on, shaking head.

CITY BOY

Of course I was able to get rid of that ghastly piece of tat I had before You remember it. Big, lumpen thing, should have been in a dentist's waiting room in the 1960s - probably was. I just dumped it, of course, just the sort of thing they like round here. Save them

having to steel it, I expect.

People are looking at City Boy but before anyone can do anything

ENTER COUNCILLOR

COUNCILLOR

(To PUBLICAN) Ah, the proprietor of this fine establishment?

PUBLICAN

That's right.

COUNCILLOR

Good, good, excellent. I'm AI Friendly but people call me Friend - ha, ha (Publican says nothing) , Just my little joke. - I'm your ward councillor.

PUBLICAN

Well done.

COUNCILLOR

I've come to ask you how the council's new policy regarding 24 hour opening has influenced your business.

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PUBLICAN

Right.

JEAN

(Walking towards COUNCILLOR) Excuse me , excuse me. Did I hear you right?

COUNCILLOR

That I have come to talk to this man about twenty four hour opening, yes.

JEAN

That you're a councillor.

COUNCILLOR

Yes, that's right.

JEAN

Good. Now I - that is we - want to talk to you.

COUNCILLOR

Quite so, but I came in to talk to....

JEAN

Hates it. Likes her beauty sleep - same as you do. Don't you love?

PUBLICAN

Quite right - I do.

JEAN

Good, now that's settled we got some SCUM round here, fly tipping furniture, dumping their rubbish, all kinds of malarkey. And we want you to do something about it.

PATRICK

She's right. This has always been a good area. We don't want this happening

COUNCILLOR

Well, it's easy - if someone's breaking the law you need the police.

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JEAN

And you need votes. There's a lot of them around here. Even one or two in this pub if you play your cards write, love.

COUNCILLOR

You know, I really think I might have time for a little chat. I'm sure we could find a way to collect the things unpleasant people leave around.

JEAN

So you will be able to do something.

COUNCILLOR

Oh, certain of it. You have my full support. I quite agree that it really is simply frightful how few people know how to behave, these days. - Now if you will excuse me I shoot.

EXIT COUNCILLOR

CUT

SCENE 11 ESTATE -EXTERIOR - DAY

The PUBLIC SPACE is empty. But in front of one of the DOORS there is a large tatty armchair. ENTER THOMAS who looks as if he is out on evening patrol.

ENTER FRED.

FRED

Ah, it's my old friend Thomas. (BEAT) Good to see you out and about. And looking so sleek and well

V.O.

My work here is done

FRED

What! What did you say?

NARRATOR

I said 'My work here is done.'

NARRATOR is standing at the side of the stage.

NARRATOR

It's looking good.

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MOTHER RAT

Come on children, there's nothing left for us here.

NARRATOR

Almost breaks my heart to see it happen. The rats leave town. Well most of them

CITY BOY

(From behind door) Let me out. Someone's blocked my door.

RESIDENTS

Sorry, boy can't move it. Someone dumped it there . Can't imagine who!

The RATS leave the area. While the RESIDENTS prepare to party.

END