

DON'T MESS WITH US
COS THIS IS WHAT WE WANT

BERYL Did you get that, Monty?

MONTY Yeah, loud and clear. As I've always said if a job's worth doing, it can wait until tomorrow.

(Exit MONTY. BERYL starts clapping.)

BERYL Why didn't we know about this, Connie?

CONNIE I've only just found out myself.

BERYL No! I think she goes swanning off to these here job evaluation meetings so you can see more of Monty.

RITA Why are we fighting amongst ourselves?

BERYL You want a fight? Alright! Outside!

SANDRA Beryl, shutup!

CLARE Yeah, and mind your whatsit –

RITA – Language.

BERYL Bollocks.

(They go back to work.)

SCENE THREE

(Union Convenors' office at Ford. This is an office for the convenors and shop stewards to use, though it is within the suite of management offices. Present are BILL (TGWU) and SID (AUEW).

Music No. 4: UNION SONG

MEN
BROTHERS AND SISTERS
COMRADES EVERY ONE

FIGHT FOR YOUR FUTURE
AND THE UNION
THE RIGHTS OF MAN
ARE THE RIGHTS GOD GAVE
WE WORK TOGETHER
OR WE DIE AS SLAVES

(Enter MONTY. He picks up his Tupperware snack box.)

SID What you got there comrade?

MONTY Jammy Dodgers.

SID / BILL Phwoargh!

(SID and BILL take his Jammy Dodgers. MONTY is unhappy.)

SID All property is theft, Monty.

MONTY Listen, the girls are not happy.

BILL What's their problem? You've had her ain't yer, that Connie?

MONTY None of your business, is it.

SID There can be no personal secrets in the revolution comrade.

MONTY Me and Connie was a long time back.

BILL Who else you had in that shed, comrade? Beryl?

SID Urgh! Sandpaper.

SID / BILL Rough.

SID So, they won't sign?

BILL No, Connie's not happy.

SID I'm not Sneezy.

BILL And I'm not Doc.

SID Comrade, I represent two thousand engineers. Bill here –

BILL – One thousand fitters –

SID – and every one of them's got a proper man's hairy arse.

BILL It's only your two hundred effing women that are effing it up.
(SID spots MR HOPKINS walking towards the Convenor's office.)

SID Management. Hopkins?

BILL Wahey! Must've had the yanks on the blower, are we letting him in?

MONTY I don't have a problem with Hopkins.

BILL That's because you're a bourgeois revisionist running dog.

MONTY And what are you?

BILL West Ham.
(BILL goes to let him in.)

SID Wait! Anyone got any farts?
(They all try and fart, SID succeeds. Enter HOPKINS. They remain seated.)

HOPKINS Alright lads. Jesus, phwo! . . . Sid, what's this about the NUVB not signing off the new grades?

SID My boys have signed.

BILL It's the girls.

HOPKINS Monty?

MONTY Yeah, the girls are not happy about being downgraded.

HOPKINS Who wouldn't be. It's your job, Monty, to persuade them of the bigger picture. Management and Union. It's a long game.

SID It's test match cricket.

HOPKINS It's a game of give and take. You scratch my back.

BILL I scratch yours.

SID And what a beautiful back it is, Mr. Hopkins.

HOPKINS Thank you, Sid. Monty, it's a done deal. The men are happy. The vote was overwhelming.

BILL Five thousand men. Two hundred women.

HOPKINS You can't win.

BILL / SID Oooh!

HOPKINS Monty, your hands are tied and I've got your balls in a Kenwood Chef.

MONTY But I represent these women. Look, can we do something procedural so things don't come to a head?

HOPKINS Sid? Any ideas?

SID We could confuse the poor little darlings with some totally incomprehensible bollocks.

HOPKINS The grievance procedure?!

BILL The grievance procedure was Connie's idea.

SID She'll have to comply.

HOPKINS That is brilliant! Tomorrow morning, head office, Warley.

SID Afternoon.

BILL After lunch.

MONTY Berni Inn.

SID / BILL Phwoargh.

(HOPKINS *exits.*)

BILL

Go on then!

SID

^{Sod}
Fuck off, Monty!

BILL

Win 'em over.

SID

If you're not back in half an hour we'll drag the river.

(MONTY *leaves.*)

SCENE FOUR

In the factory, machines working, so they're shouting at each other.

SANDRA

Who else is B grade?

CONNIE

The cleaners. Unskilled assembly.

RITA

My Eddie.

CASS

We ain't unskilled.

BERYL

It ain't just anyone who can freddle a needle!

RITA

You have to take three tests to get in here.

(*Enter MONTY.*)

MONTY

Alright ladies, I've spoken to the management –

BERYL

– bastards!

MONTY

– and we're gonna insist on registering a formal grievance.

RITA

Hang on! I just thought, what about the girls at Dunton?

CASS

Yeah, they do the same job as us.

MONTY

They have, anomalously, been given C grade. Skilled.

ALL

(*Uproar / Complaints.*)