

PSYCHIATRICKS

By Joy Hinckley

adapted from Moliere's

A Doctor in Spite of Himself

Characters:

TREV, owner of Trev's Treelopping

DEB, Trev's wife

BOB Bollard, owner of Bob Bollard Bodyworks

LUCY Bollard, his daughter

BABS, office manager at Bob Bollard Bodyworks

CHOOK, apprentice at Bob Bollard Bodyworks

DONNY, foreman at Bob Bollard Bodyworks

DESI, panelbeater at Bob Bollard Bodyworks, and husband of Babs

Production notes: Designed to be performed in a slapstick clownish way, similar to Marx Brothers or Three Stooges. Wacky sound effects could be used for things that might not actually make a noise in real life.

Scene 1

TREV enters, looking backwards.

TREV No, I won't! I've got a business to run here, Deb. Trees don't lop themselves, you know.

DEB (*entering*) They'd pretty well have to the amount of time you spend doing it. I'm telling you, I want a word with you. Get back here you no-good loser.

TREV Takes one to know one.

DEB Pathetic comeback, Trev. It's obvious I'm a loser. I wouldn't have married you otherwise. Now get here and explain to me why you drank the housekeeping money again.

TREV The Dalai Lama says we need to simplify our lives.

DEB And you're certainly achieving that, you drinking, smoking, gambling no-hoper. In the last three weeks you've simplified away the car, the sewing machine, and my engagement ring.

TREV But darling, an engagement is for a brief moment. A marriage is forever.

DEB Worse luck for me.

TREV Worse luck for me. I knew I should never have got married.

DEB You couldn't wait to marry me. You had the hots for me, admit it. Goddammit, I was the Strawberry Festival Queen.

TREV And now look at you – the Prune Festival Princess.

DEB You can talk. If you grew a beard your face would look exactly the same as your big hairy arse. Now what about my money? You've lost everything with your gambling. You even lost Scooby in a poker game.

TREV Ah yes. That I do regret. He was a good kid. But we've got three more eating us out of house and home.

DEB And we're back to where we started. What about the housekeeping money? There's no food in the house. What am I supposed to feed the kids on?

TREV Isn't it about time you stopped nagging?

DEB Nagging!

TREV There you go again.

DEB I'll give you nagging.

TREV And I'll give you a good slap around.

DEB Don't you dare.

TREV (*advancing threateningly*) Or what?

DEB Or I'll have you done for domestic violence.

TREV That'd be right! Turn on your own husband. Typical. Bitch.

DEB Loser. Lowlife.

TREV By geez you're provoking me, woman!

DEB I'm provoking you!?

TREV (*Bellows*) Yes, you stupid ugly recalcitrant mouldy old cow!

NEIGHBOUR (*voice offstage*) Oi! Don't abuse your wife like that!

DEB You mind your own business!

TREV You tell the old busybody.

DEB What if I like being abused?

NEIGHBOUR (*offstage*) Fair enough. Need some suggestions, mate?

TREV and DEB (*together*) Piss off!

DEB So what's it to be then, Trev?

TREV What's it to be? What's it to be? I'll tell you what it's to be. I'm off to the pub as soon as I've finished chipping this pile of branches. (*exits. Offstage, to neighbour*) What are you still staring at? You wanna go, mate? Eh? Eh?

DEB He'll pay for it this time. Oh yes. He's drunk the housekeeping money once too often. I'm sick of his bad treatment. I'll teach him a lesson. (*goes to side of stage to think*)

Enter DONNY and DESI at other side of stage.

DESI Geez, Donny, this is not what I done me panelbeating apprenticeship for. For a start, I don't know where to start, eh?

DONNY Look Desi, we're stuck with it. You know the score – the boss says jump, we say how high. Anyway, we're doing it for poor little Lucy. We want to help get her better, don't we? And Wayne Kerr who owns Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos has promised us a nice little sweetener if we can get her better so that he can marry her. Not that she wants to marry him. She's dead set on young Chook, but the boss has threatened to sack Chook if he tries to see her, and disinherit her completely if she has anything to do with Chook. The Boss's rapt in that Wayne Kerr, but.

DESI But the boss's tried all the doctors. What makes him think we can find somebody better?

DONNY I guess he must be desperate if he's asked us to find somebody, eh, Desi?

DESI Yeah, Donny.

DONNY Too right, Desi.

DESI Why?

DONNY Why what?

DESI Why would he have to be desperate to try us?

DONNY I rest my case.

Meanwhile, DEB has been thinking and pacing.

DEB There's gotta be some way. Revenge, that's what I need. He's a pig. He so deserves to be brought down a peg or three. A great big pig peg.

She bumps into Donny.

DEB Sorry mate. Didn't see you there. I'm off in me own world. Trying to think of a pig peg.

DESI What's a pig peg?

DEB A big fat ugly problem.

DONNY Big fat problem. We know about them. We're in exactly the same situation, eh Desi?

DESI Yeah, Donny. Big problem.

DEB What's your problem?

DONNY Our boss, Bob Bollard of Bob Bollard Bodyworks, is trying to find somebody to cure his daughter Lucy. She can't talk. Completely lost the power of speech. He's had the GPs, the Ear Nose & Throat man, the Speech Pathologist, the Psychologists, the Hypnotherapists, the Naturopaths, the Homeopaths, the Osteopath, the Reiki Master and the Crystal Therapist. He's sent us out in the hope of finding someone where everybody else has failed.

DEB *(aside)* You beauty. It's my lucky day. Here's a top way to get even with the old bastard. *(To Donny)* This is your lucky day. We've got right here the most amazing psychotherapist in the world. Hopeless cases are his specialty. World famous.

DONNY You're joking! Where is he?

DEB He's just over there working that woodchipping machine you can hear.

DONNY What's a world famous psychotherapist doing with a woodchipping machine?

DEB Chipping wood. It's...ah...it's how he relaxes after a hard day's work with troubled teens, desperate housewives and senile seniors.

DESI Does he do perplexed panelbeaters?

DONNY That was a big word for you, eh Desi?

DESI Yeah Donny. "Panelbeaters" has *(Counts on fingers. Gives up)* lots of letters.

DEB His name's Trev. He's easy to recognise because he's wearing stubbies and a shirt that says "Chug more beer".

DONNY That's an odd outfit for a famous psychotherapist.

DEB Ah, well, that's because he tries to throw people off the track. You know how psychologists and such are often a bit *(points to own temple with classic "dotty" circle motion and "hoo hoo" noise)* themselves, well he doesn't like admitting he's a doctor at all. He chugs his beer and pretends to be ignorant so that people don't bother him. It's terrible. He has this amazing God-given talent for healing and does his best not to use it.

DESI *(wistfully Homer Simpsonish)* Hmm...Chugs beer.

DONNY Focus, Desi. *(to DEB)* It's true, that great men are often a bit *(finger "hoo hoo" routine)*. But is he really as good as you say?

DEB Well, this big slug of a teenage boy had been on his computer for seven days solid and fallen into a drooling coma. Nobody could rouse him, not even with Red Bull or offers of free mobile credit. Trev came along, whispered in his ear, and he ran off to compete in a triathlon.

DESI Wow.

DONNY Must have been a powerful affirmation.

DEB Maybe. Then recently this old dear who had lost all her marbles was brought to him. He put his hands on her temples and hummed and muttered something, and she completely recovered and now has a twenty-nine year old toyboy.

DONNY The healing touch!

DESI Sounds like the man we're after, Donny.

DONNY Too right, Desi.

DEB Now remember, he won't admit to being a doctor. He'd rather get a good thrashing than let on. So don't be afraid to knock him around a bit. I think he secretly enjoys it, actually.

DONNY Must do. otherwise, why go through the pretence, eh, Desi?

DESI I wouldn't cop it unless I was a bit *(“hoo hoo”)*.

DEB Well there you go. We know he's *(“Hoo hoo”)*, except for his miraculous healing powers.

DESI If it's a flogging he needs, we're the men, eh Donny?

DONNY Let's do it, Desi.

DEB Go for it, fellas. *(Goes towards exit. Aside)* And I hope you give him the thorough thrashing he so richly deserves. *(Exits)*

Enter TREV carrying a small esky

TREV Crikey. That's thirsty work. I've earned a little gurgle. Just a tiny stubette or two to tide me over till I get to the pub. (*Takes a stubby from the esky. Donny and Desi observe from a distance. TREV sings*)

TREV How dry we are, how dry we are
Lord only knows how dry we are
We'll sell our shoes to buy some booze
And swallow all the salty stews
Lord only knows how dry we are. (*or some other suitable boozing song*)

TREV Ah well, it's not a bad life if you don't weaken (*chugs on the bottle*).

DESI Check out the T-shirt, Donny.

DONNY "Chug more beer". That's our man, Desi.

DESI I reckon, Donny.

TREV (*noticing them watching*) What are those bastards staring at? (*Somewhat aggressively*)
You blokes right there?

(*Donny approaches. Puts out his hand to shake TREV's. TREV thinks he's reaching for the beer and hastily puts it behind him.*)

DONNY I'm sorry, sir, you don't seem to understand.

TREV (*Hugging the beer protectively*) Oh I understand your type all right. Buy your own.

DONNY Please, hear me out and it's my shout.

TREV Well why didn't you say so? What can I do for you, gentlemen?

DONNY Are you Trev?

TREV Who wants to know?

DESI Just tell us, are you Trev, orright?

DONNY Stay cool, Desi. We're looking for Trev because we have a top-paying job for him.

TREV In that case I am Trev.

DONNY Excellent. We've very pleased to have found you, eh, Desi?

DESI Very pleased, Donny.

DONNY We need your help with a very difficult case.

TREV A case of what? Wine, beer...? That I can help with, and also anything in my line of business.

DONNY We've heard that you're the best in the world at your line of business, eh, Desi?

DESI World famous.

TREV I'm sure that's very flattering. Tree lopping is a much misunderstood art. These days any old body who's been downsized thinks they can have a go at it.

DESI Well...

TREV They undercut my prices but do they do the job properly? Hm?

DESI That's not what...

TREV I charge \$40 an hour. But you're getting an expert experienced expert. Fully insured.

DESI Will you listen?

TREV \$40 an hour. Not a cent less, I'm afraid.

DESI Look, we know about...

TREV My treelopping and woodchipping business is the best in town. I don't overcharge and I'll have a go at anybody who's been suggesting that you can beat me down.

DESI Now let's get to...

DONNY Right! Let's stop beating about the bush. We know you're really a famous psychotherapist. Really, it's pathetic the way you go on. You owe it to the world to share your great talent for healing.

TREV Excuse me?

DESI Just quit the bullshit, ya moron.

TREV What bullshit? Who do you think I am?

DONNY We KNOW.

TREV What do you KNOW?

DESI We KNOW you're a famous psychotherapist, eh Donny?

DONNY Right, Desi. So you can stop denying it right now. Otherwise we'll have to resort to something we might all regret.

TREV To what?

DESI Do something you at least will be sorry for. After meeting you I doubt I'll be doing much regretting for what we're about to resort to.

TREV You can resort away, but I'm not a...what did you say...psychotherapist?

DESI He's going to make it hard for himself, eh, Donny?

DONNY Right, Desi. Please, sir, just admit it now.

TREV I'm not a doctor. I'm not even a tree doctor. I just chop 'em and chip 'em. Chop, chip. Chip, chop.

DONNY What?

TREV Chip chop! chip chop!

DONNY What's he saying?

DESI I think he wants to go to the chip shop, Donny.

DONNY There's no time for that now. *(to TREV, as to a deaf simpleton)* Later. We'll go later. We'll even shout you some crumbed fish. Eh, Desi?

DESI Yeah Donny. Battered savs. Mmm, you'd like that, wouldn't you? Calamari? Potato Scallop?

TREV Battered savs? Calamari? I'm surrounded by mad people!

DONNY That's right, we're completely mad, eh, Desi? Really mad?

DESI What Donny? Oh, yeah Donny. Psycho mad. ("*Hoo hoo*")

DONNY ("*Hoo hoo*") So don't cross us, whatever you do.

TREV Or else what?

DONNY The woodchipper. Eh, Desi?

DESI Yeah Donny. The stump grinder.

DONNY & DESI (*make stump grinding noises*) Gnyaarrrrghzzzz.

TREV You wouldn't.

DESI Try us.

TREV I'm outta here. (*He makes to leave*)
(*DONNY and DESI grab TREV and propel him horizontally towards exit*)

DONNY & DESI Gnyaarrrrghzzzz.

DONNY (*Stopping*) Or maybe one a them big branches up his... (*gestures and makes "whoop" up-the-fundament" noise*).

DESI Brilliant, Donny. I'll get one. (*exits and returns with large pointy stick*). Get a good hold of him, Donny.

DONNY Right, Desi. (*Desi jabs TREV with the stick. "Poink" FX*).

TREV Ow!

DESI Now are you a psychotherapist?

TREV No.

DESI (*pokes again: "poink"*) Now?

TREV Ow! Stop that! (*"poink"*) Argh!

DESI We will if you'll just admit what we already know. You're a famous psychotherapist who specialises in difficult cases. (*holds stick poised for another jab*)

TREV All right! I give in! I'll admit to anything.
(*They put him down.*)

DONNY So you admit to being a psychotherapist.

TREV A psychotherapist? Where did you GET that from? What makes you think I could possibly be a psychotherapist?

DESI He STILL hasn't given in, Donny. (*he lunges for TREV and starts to throttle him*)

DONNY Are you a psychotherapist?

TREV Gark.

DONNY Let go of him for a minute, Desi. He can't actually answer.

DESI Oh, right.

TREV Look, ok, if I have to admit to being a psychotherapist to get gorilla-boy here offa me, then I'm a psychotherapist.

DONNY Now you're talking. Now he's talking, eh, Desi?

DESI Yeah, Donny, now he's talking. What about again?

DONNY He's admitting he's that famous doctor.

DESI Oh, yeah, right Donny. Goodo. About time, eh, Donny?

DONNY Too right, Desi. (*Sorrowfully*) Now why did you have to drive us to that unpleasant behaviour? We don't enjoy having to exercise violence, eh, Desi?

DESI Not into scrappin' and wife abusin' and such, Donny. Why, if I ever met somebody who mistreated his wife I'd – I'd – (*TREV cringes*) Cripes, lucky I haven't met one yet, that's all I can say. (*TREV relaxes*)

DONNY So hopefully that's cleared the air, we apologise for any...discomfort...and assure you won't regret having come clean with us.

DESI Absolutely. The boss'll pay up big on this job, eh, Donny?

DONNY Mega.

TREV So you're sure I'm a psychotherapist?

DONNY The best.

DESI World famous.

TREV (*aside*) Could I have become a psychotherapist without noticing it? It's true, there are whole chunks of my memory that are a bit hazy, but I just put that down to being out of it a lot of the time. Nah. Still... (*to the others*) You are quite sure I'm a doctor?

DONNY The best in the world.

DESI Cured all kinds of hopeless nutters.

DONNY And you'll get any fee you ask for if you come along with us.

TREV In that case, I AM a psychotherapist. I just forgot for a minute. So, what's the problem? Where do we go?

DONNY There's a young woman who's been struck dumb.

TREV Well don't look at me, I didn't strike her.

DONNY Doctor likes a joke, eh Desi?

DESI Right, Donny. Even if he don't cure the boss's daughter, he might be good for a laugh.

TREV (*to Desi, handing him the esky*) Here you, carry the doctor's medicine bag.

DONNY Let's go.

END OF SCENE ONE

Scene 2

Enter BOB, DONNY, DESI, BABS

DONNY Now before I bring him in, I have to explain he's a bit...eccentric.

BOB Eccentric?

DONNY If he was a cake, he'd be a Gravox lamington rolled in shredded government promises.

DESI If he was—

BOB I get the idea. So why exactly am I seeing him?

DESI He's a genius, eh, Donny?

DONNY That's right, Desi. Fixed all manner of hopeless cases. Cured a cuddly catatonic kiddy.

DESI Saved a senile senior citizen.

BOB Right, right. I get the idea again.

DONNY Actually, I think he just likes playing the fool. Clown-doctor type, eh Desi?

DESI Makes me laugh, Donny. But he's dead smart an' everything as well.

BOB Well, I suppose I'd better meet him then. Go and fetch him now.

DONNY Righto boss (*exits*).

BABS If you want my opinion, you're wasting your money again. There's one thing that will cure young Lucy. A big engagement party with a nice boy.

DESI Give it a rest, Babs. Boss didn't ask you to fix his problems, he asked me'n'Donny.

BABS Well maybe he oughter. She doesn't need no nerve tonics and high colonics, what she needs is a good –

DESI Babs!

BOB Well I've done my best. Didn't I introduce her to Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos? Sound businessman with excellent prospects, a fine catch for any sensible girl. Anyway, no fine prospect is going to want her if she can't talk.

DESI (*looking at BABS*) I dunno about that.

BABS Oh Bob, she's not interested in Mister Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr's Preloved Prestige Autos. You know very well it's young Chook from spraypainting that she really fancies.

BOB That scruffy long-haired lout? He hasn't even finished his apprenticeship yet. And Lucy tells me his hobby is collecting beer cans of all things. What sort of prospect does that make him?

BABS The kind of prospect that will make Lucy happy. I mean, look at all these socialites and celebrities in the magazines. All the money in the world and they've got all these anorexias, bulimias, neuroses, myxomatoses and what have you. True love is more important than money.

DESI Crikey you do go on, Babs. (*to BOB*) Here's Donny back with the doctor.

Enter DONNY and TREV

BOB Doctor, thank you so much for coming. We really need your help here.

TREV Hippocrates says...Hippocrates says that diagnostic accuracy is assisted by the consumption of beer.

BOB Hippocrates said that?

TREV Absolutely.

BOB Whereabouts does he say that?

TREV In his chapter on beer.

BOB Well – right, um - (*gestures at BABS, she gets a beer and hands it to TREV during the following*).

TREV So, doctor, I've been hearing all these great reports about –

BOB (*looking around*) Who are you talking to?

TREV You.

BOB I'm not a doctor.

TREV You're not a doctor?

BOB Of course I'm not a doctor.

(*TREV quickly exits and returns with a big pointy stick and commences to jab at BOB with it*)

BOB Yow! Stop that! Hey!

TREV There, now you're a doctor. Worked for me.

BOB Excuse me? (*To DONNY*) What's the meaning of this, Donny? Who is this lunatic?

DONNY Aarh...well I did warn you he was a bit eccentric. But he does know his stuff.

BOB (*advancing on TREV*) I'll give him stuff. I'll stuff his underpants up his nose for him.
(*TREV beats a strategic retreat*)

DESI It's just his way of havin' a bit of a laugh, eh, Donny.

DONNY That's it, Desi. (*they look anxiously to BOB*)

TREV I do beg your pardon, sir. I get a bit carried away sometimes. No harm done?

BOB (*checks his rear*) Not much.

TREV (*checks his own rear and sniffs*) So we've cleared the air between us?

BOB Yes. We'll say no more about it. I'd like to consult you about my daughter. She's come down with this terrible ailment.

TREV I'm delighted – that I can be of assistance. If only you were a bit off-colour too – I could show you how sincere I am in my desire to help.

BOB That's very gratifying, I'm sure.

TREV What's your daughter's name?

BOB Lucy.

TREV Lucy. Lucy. What a lovely name. Lucy by name and Lucy by – why don't you pop off and round her up so I can take a look at her?

BOB I'll go and see what she's up to.

TREV And who is this lovely young thing here?

BOB That's Babs, my office manager. (*exits*)

TREV Oh, I could manage that manager. Ah, Babs, charming Babs, I am at your service. Allow me to monitor your heart rate. (*He lays his head on BABS' bosom*) Just a quick blood pressure check. Oh yes, rising as we speak.

DESI Aarh...scuse me, doc, but would you mind getting your head offa my wife's boobs?

TREV Ah – so she's your wife?

DESI Thassright.

TREV (*making as if to shake his hand but missing him altogether and embracing BABS*) Congratulations on such a wonderful wife. I can see you're a very happy couple.

DESI (*pulling TREV away from BABS*) Yes, it's nice.

TREV (*embracing BABS again*) And I'm so glad for you that you have such a handsome and intelligent husband, my dear.

DESI Thanks for the compliments, but enough already.

BOB reenters

BOB She'll be here in a minute.

TREV Excellent. The full resources of modern medicine await.

BOB Where?

TREV (*taps head*) Here.

BOB Right.

TREV While we wait, why not avail yourself of my skill? I can give all your staff a thorough examination. (*Heads towards BABS with hands in breast-grab position*)

DESI Oh no you don't. (*heading him off*)

BABS Desi, I'm a grown woman. I can take care of myself, you know.

DESI We don't approve of messing with other people's wives, eh, Donny?

DONNY That's right, Desi. Don't approve at all.

Enter LUCY and BOB

TREV Ah, is this the patient?

BOB Yes, my only child. (*Quietly to TREV*) It would break my heart if she was to die.

TREV She'd better not try any such thing. (*To LUCY*) No dying unless the doctor says you're going to.

BOB Here, Lucy, sit down.

TREV Not a bad looking sort of patient. She'd scrub up all right.

BOB There, you've made her laugh already.

TREV Excellent. Now my dear, where does it hurt?

LUCY (*pointing to mouth, head, chin and throat*) Nya, ha, haw, haw hee haw.

TREV Come again?

LUCY (*as before*) Nya, ha, haw, haw hee haw.

TREV Once more?

LUCY Haw he haw.

TREV Can't make out a word.

BOB Well that's it. She's lost the ability to talk and so far nobody's been able to find out why. She needs to be cured fast.

TREV Why the rush? Strikes me that a female without the ability to nag would be much nicer to have around.

BOB Well, a very nice young man is interested in her for a start. Mr Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos himself. (*LUCY rolls her eyes*)

TREV Hm. Tell me, how are her bowels? Does she go...?

BOB Well yes.

TREV And is it...you know,...?

BOB Honestly, I couldn't say.

TREV (*to LUCY*) Give me your hand. (*takes pulse*) Aha. Dead giveaway. This sort of pulse is a sure-fire indicator. Your daughter is dumb.

BOB That's right! You've got it in one.

BABS Brilliant. No hesitation at all!

TREV Well, there, ya see, there's plenty of others would have hummed and hawed and hedged their bets, might be this, could be that. Me, I get straight to the nub of things.

BOB But what's the cause of her being dumb?

TREV To put it in layman's terms, it's all down to a failure of the vocal abilities.

BOB Yes, but what's causing the failure of her vocal abilities?

TREV Here it gets more complex. Can't be explained as easily in layman's terms. Do you speak Latin?

BOB 'Fraid not.

TREV In essence, what we have he is a case of in vino veritas, nil illigitimus carborundum, caveat emptor, with a touch of carpe diem. Bonus, bonum, boner. Ecce homo.

BOB Crikey. They didn't teach us that at Nambour High.

DESI That is so clever I didn't get a word of it.

TREV So this all leads to an overload of toxicity in the liver on left side, following on from palpitations of the heart on the right side, with the result that the neurons are ricocheting in a spasmodic manner.

DONNY Geez, I thought I was pretty cluey, but this bloke takes the cake, eh, Desi?

DESI Too right, Donny.

TREV To conclude, she has a touch of the depardeius, as we say in French, compounded with an inclination to foccaccia, as we say in Italian, with a neurosis deriving from a surfeit of what the Hebrews might term chutzpah. Are you still with me here Bob?

BOB All ears. That was a very comprehensive explanation, except I'm a bit confused. You said the heart was on the right and the liver on the left. I've always thought it was the other way around.

TREV Ah, yes, well, that used to be the received wisdom in the case, but modern medicine has debunked that particular myth. The heart is where we doctors say it is, or else.

BOB Right, didn't know that, sorry. You get out of touch with all the demands of running a business. So what should we do for her?

TREV My first advice is to feed her some sunflower seeds.

BOB Why?

TREV Because this ailment is essentially neurotic in origin, we can apply what used to be known traditionally as “sympathetic magic”. Now, what do they feed parrots on?

BOB Sunflower seeds.

TREV. Correct. And what do parrots do?

BOB Talk! You’re a genius! Donny and Desi, quick, nip off to the supermarket and get some sunflower seeds. (*DONNY & DESI exit*)

TREV I’ll check on her progress this evening. In the meantime, I feel duty bound to administer a little medical aid to your office manager.

BABS Nothing wrong with me.

TREV Ah, but the current emphasis is on preventive medicine. I’ll just administer a little special injection.

BABS Oho, I think I have an idea of what sort of special injection you have in mind, fella. (*exits*)

TREV You’ll come around to my way of thinking in time, my dear. (*to BOB*) Well I’ll be off then.

BOB Just a minute.

TREV What’s up?

BOB I’ll just pay you for the consultation.

TREV I couldn’t possibly.

BOB Come on.

TREV No, no.

BOB Just a token (*writing cheque*).

TREV If you insist. Just so as not to offend, you understand. (*takes cheque. Cash register FX “ta-ching!”*)

BOB exits

TREV (*looks at cheque*) Well bugger me. That’s not too bad for a morning’s work.

Enter CHOOK

CHOOK Doc, you’ve gotta help me.

TREV (*grabbing his wrist*) Hm. Very weak pulse. Tongue out.

C HOOK (*with his tongue out*) I’m not sick. That’s not why I’m here.

TREV Well put the disgusting thing away then. (*Chook puts tongue back in mouth*). Are you sure you want to put it in your mouth? You don’t know where it’s been.

CHOOK Look, doc, my name’s Chook and I’m in love with Lucy. The boss don’t approve of me ‘cos I’m only an apprentice spraypainter, not a successful businessman like Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos.

TREV I’m already sick of this Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos, and I only just heard of him.

CHOOK Bob thinks he's the bee's nuts, but Lucy don't love him, she loves me. But Bob has threatened to sack me and disinherit her if we so much as meet up with each other. And he'll know if we do. He's got mates everywhere.

TREV Very tragic I'm sure, but what has all this soap opera got to do with me?

CHOOK I've got a plan and I need your help.

TREV (*pretending outrage*) You are daring to ask me to compromise my professional principles to help you deceive the – (*Chook brings out a fistful of cash*) – but of course you do seem like a decent sort of lad and I have to admit being touched by your plight. So how can I help?

CHOOK Look, all this sickness of Lucy's is only bunged on. Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos has been coming round in his sports car with flowers and chocolates and whatever, and her Dad's been pestering her to go out with him. I reckon HE's the one in love with the slimy bastard. She's just sick of it and wants Wayne Kerr –

TREV – of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos –

CHOOK That's right, they said you was quick on the uptake. She wants him to quit bothering her, and she wants to get her Dad worried enough about her wellbeing that he gives in to what she wants.

TREV Which is you. And her inheritance.

CHOOK Got it in one.

TREV He can't sack you just for dating his daughter, surely.

CHOOK Yes he can. It's in here. (*takes out paper from pocket*). Bob made me sign it.

TREV (*reads*) "Australian Voluntary Workplace Agreement. Article 1: I will not attempt to date or even talk to Lucy Bollard and if I do I face instant and very fair dismissal and a good kick up the arse" Geez. What else did you agree to?

CHOOK You don't wanna know.

TREV Come on then, tell me about this plan of yours. (*they exit*)

END OF ACT TWO

Act 3

Enter TREV and CHOOK, dressed as a nurse.

CHOOK (*adjusting his bosom*) I don't think I look too bad in this getup. Bob never gives me a second look so he won't recognise me. Now all I need is a few medical-sounding words to make me sound like the real thing.

TREV I wouldn't worry about that. They're ready to believe I'm a doctor.

CHOOK You mean –

TREV Yep. Bob's blueshirts basically forced me into it. Bugged if I can figure out why. But it's turned out to be a very nice little gig. Yes, this psychotherapy business is the best type of medicine to be in.

CHOOK Why's that?

TREV Well any other kind of doctoring, if you stuff up you get sued, right?

CHOOK Too right.

TREV They hold enquiries and all that rot.

Chook Can't get away with dodgy doctoring any more, that's for sure.

TREV Well, my patients come to me because they're mentally screwed up.

CHOOK Yes.

TREV If I cure them, they're happy, they pay me money.

CHOOK Yes.

TREV But if I make them even screwier, they need me even more for even longer and pay me even more money.

CHOOK Pure genius.

TREV (*modestly*) Thank you. Ah, here's a patient now.

PATIENT enters

PATIENT Doctor, doctor, I can't stop stealing things.

TREV (*handing him some pills*) Here, take these pills. They should help you.

PATIENT What if they don't?

TREV Pick me up a Lexus.

PATIENT hands over some cash ("ta-ching" cash register noise) and exits.

TREV See what I mean? And here's another one already.

PATIENT 2 enters

PATIENT Doctor, I keep thinking I'm a deck of cards.

TREV Sit out there and I'll deal with you in a minute. (*PATIENT 2 exits*) (*to CHOOK*) Now nick off and wait till I call.

CHOOK Righto. (*exits*)

Enter BABS

TREV Ah, Ms Babs. I can't tell you what a pleasure it is to see your lovely self again.

BABS Thank you. it's nice to be appreciated for a change. And by such an educated man. What's your specialist field, doctor?

TREV I'm a self-help expert.

BABS Oh, you write those self-help books?

TREV No, I just help myself.

BABS To what?

TREV (*making a grab*) Whatcha got?

BABS I'll have you know I'm a respectable married woman.

TREV And I'll have you know I'm a respectable married man. Darling, we have so much in common! Let's go to bed. (*Makes another lunge*)

BABS Enough of that, cheeky. The boss'll be back any minute.

TREV So what's your job here?

BABS I book in the jobs that need bodywork.

TREV Ohh...I need bodywork real bad. Can you fit me in? (*Babs giggles*)

DESI (*who has been eavesdropping and now steps in*) Oho! Need a bit of panelbeating, do you doctor? I'm the panelbeater here, I can see to it that you get a good reshaping!

BABS Calm down, Desi. I'll see you later, doctor. (*with Desi looking the other way she seductively wiggles fingers bye-bye*)

TREV (*making a hasty exit the other way*) Toodle-oo (*with Desi looking the other way he blows kisses to Babs*)

Enter BOB and DONNY

BOB Ah, there you are.

TREV How's the patient?

BOB Squawking but not talking.

TREV Not to worry. These things often get worse before they get better. Here, I've brought a full-time nurse to look after your daughter. I think a little walk before dinner will do her good.

BOB Good idea. (*Calls*) Lucy! Come and meet your new nurse.

LUCY enters

BOB Go for a little walk together and get acquainted.

CHOOK (*in "girl" voice*) Come along, dear.

(*During the following TREV makes sure that BOB doesn't turn around as Lucy and Chook pash madly upstage.*)

TREV You see, Bob, women are tricky creatures. You know, Mars...Venus...Pluto...Running with Wolves...running with scissors...running like a girl... The influence of the Women's Weekly – shouldn't that be the Women's Monthly? – and speaking of, you have to take into account the hormones, the isoflavones, all those soy products they're into these days – what's it doing to them? Hm? You have to wonder. Are they getting enough chops? Then all these things they're into that used to be the sole domain of the male. Kickboxing...road rage...have you ever been dragged off at the lights by one of these young girls? Can't be good for them, Bob, am I right? Am I right? I'm right. No wonder the poor dears end up with mental problems. And then there's the influence of –

LUCY That's it, I've decided I'm having it out with him once and for all.

BOB Lucy's voice! She spoke!

TREV (*oh-oh*) Yes.

BOB What a fantastic doctor! What can I do to thank you for this amazing cure?

TREV (*nervous but greedy for the reward*) Well, it wasn't an easy case.

LUCY Yes, Dad, I can talk again and I'm telling you that I fully intend to marry Chook and no-one else.

BOB But...

LUCY And you and Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr's Preloved Prestige Autos can go out together for all I care because I certainly won't date the bugger.

BOB What are...

LUCY Absolutely nothing you can say or threaten will change my determination in the slightest.

BOB If...

LUCY Because I'd rather be poor and married to my Chook than own my own bodyworks AND half of Wayne Kerr's Preloved Prestige Autos.

BOB But...

LUCY (*deafeningly*) No! No argument! I'm through! No butts! Butt out!

BOB (*to TREV*) Can you make her dumb again?

TREV Sorry.

(*CHOOK and LUCY exit one way as DONNY and DESI enter the other*)

DONNY There you are. We've found something out about this doctor, eh, Desi?

DESI Yeah, Donny. Boss, I was hanging about spying on this fella because he's been trying to get it away with my missus. And I seen him and young Chook conspiring together to pull the wool over your eyes. And I heard him admit he ain't even a real doctor. And that nurse –

DONNY – is none other than Chook himself!

BOB What! (*to TREV*) You bastard! I'll sue you for every cent you've got. Get ahold of him boys.

(*DONNY and DESI grab TREV*)

BOB Now wait till I get my hands on you – you dirty lowdown –

Enter DEB.

DEB Geez I've had a time tracking you lot down. How's the doctor going?

DONNY The boss is going to sue him for every cent he's got.

BOB Practicing medicine without a license, theft, fraud, you name it. He's going to jail and no mistake. For a long time if my not inconsiderable influence has anything to do with it.

DEB Is this all true, Trev?

TREV I'm afraid so, my dear.

DEB Bugger. If only you'd finished chipping that big stack of wood.

TREV You cut me to the heart.

BOB Now you two hang on to this criminal while I send for the police.

(*Enter CHOOK in his normal clothes, and LUCY*)

CHOOK Now, Bob, I know we haven't always seen eye to eye, and I'm sorry we deceived you. But I'm sure once you've let me talk to you you'll agree to me marrying Lucy.

BOB No way can you marry this loser, Lucy. Think about your future.

Lucy Now wait on, Dad. For starters, you can't stop me. And for seconds, you might want to hear what Chook has to tell you.

BOB I can't imagine that young no-hoper having anything to tell me that I'd be the slightest bit interested in hearing, but go on.

Chook Well, you know my beer can collection.

BOB It's hard to avoid hearing about you and your pathetic beer can collection. You'd think people round here had lives, but it would seem not.

Chook Well, some of those beer cans are of great historical importance. My Uncle Pity left them to me in his will.

BOB Why'd they call him Pity?

CHOOK 'Cos of his face.

LUCY Don't get it.

CHOOK People would take one look at him when he was a baby and say "Ain't it a pity?".

BOB Are you going to finish this story or not?

CHOOK Right. Well, when I found out the main reason you wanted Lucy to marry Wayne Kerr

ALL – of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos –

CHOOK – and not me was because of his money, I advertised my collection for sale.

LUCY On the Internet, Dad. Global exposure to the international beer can collecting fraternity.

BOB Hm. Shows a surprising spirit of enterprise. And?

CHOOK And we've just been on the Net now and a wealthy American collector has offered me a very handsome sum for the lot.

BOB How handsome?

CHOOK (leans over and whispers into BOB's ear)

BOB (embracing him) Son!

TREV So does this mean I'm forgiven?

BOB As things have turned out so well you are.

DEB In that case you can thank me for making you a doctor.

TREV You got me a pointy stick up the bum, I'll have you know.

DEB I'm sure it did you a world of good.

TREV Oh, all right, but in future, you'd better show a bit more respect. After all, I AM a doctor!

Enter Wayne Kerr of Wayne Kerr Preloved Prestige Autos, holding bunch of flowers.

WAYNE Hello!

BOB Wayne Kerr! *(runs the words together)*

TREV You're not wrong, Bob. See him off, boys!

They all chase Wayne offstage in a hullabaloo of noise.

THE END