

HANGDOG

by
Cat Jones

Characters

Hangdog

Detective

Oscar

Delta

Birdlime

Cohen

Cheryl

Long

SCENE 1. HANGDOG'S POEM PART 1.

HANGDOG:

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep.

I'm the grit in yer eye,
I'm the stitch in yer side,
I'm the rash yer scratch that drives yer wild,
I'm the hangnail that just won't be filed,
I'm the burn in yer throat,
When yer chokin' bile.

I'm the photo with eyes that shake yer,
The cold sweat in the night that wakes yer,
The bit o' yer own brain that hates yer,
And the dark old place it tries to take yer.

SCENE 2. EXT. PRISON. EVENING.

OSCAR WHISTLES TUNELESSLY.

HE FLICKS A ZIPPO AND LIGHTS A
CIGARETTE. HE INHALES, COUGHS,
THEN HAWKS AND SPITS.

IN TIME, FOOTSTEPS APPROACH.

OSCAR: Detective?

DETECTIVE: Yes.

OSCAR: I'm the Oscar 1.

DETECTIVE: Oscar 1?

OSCAR: The highest rankin' uniform. Welcome to HMP
Highgate.

BEAT.

You done one of these before have yer?

DETECTIVE: These?

OSCAR: A death in custody.

DETECTIVE: Actually no.

OSCAR: Well not to worry. I'll talk you through it. It's
business as usual for us.

DETECTIVE: You've had more than one then?

OSCAR: Two this year.

DETECTIVE: That's a lot.

OSCAR: It's quite a job keepin' someone alive who don't want to be.

DETECTIVE: Shall we get started?

OSCAR: I'll finish me fag first if yer don't mind?

DETECTIVE: Go ahead.

OSCAR: It's a ten-minute walk out the prison every time yer want a burn. I wouldn't mind but there ain't a tar free lung in the place so it's not clear exactly who we're savin' by it.

BEAT.

And anyway you've a visitor.

DETECTIVE: A visitor?

OSCAR: The woman in the car over there. Asked if yer were here yet. I told her yer weren't but she said she'd wait.

DETECTIVE: (SIGHS) Give me a minute.

OSCAR: Take yer time.

DETECTIVE APPROACHES THE CAR.
WE HEAR THE WINDOW OPEN.

DETECTIVE: What are you doing here Long?

LONG: Same thing you are.

DETECTIVE: I wouldn't have thought there was much news in a prison suicide.

LONG: Don't ever cheat on your wife will you Detective.
You're a hopeless liar. We both know this is going to be huge.

DETECTIVE: What do you want?

LONG: An early comment for a story in the morning edition. I'll write you a very flattering part in it.

DETECTIVE: You know I can't do that.

LONG: Well maybe I can get something a bit later then when you've looked into it.

DETECTIVE: Go home Long. Save yourself sitting here all day for nothing.

LONG: Then what about something I can attribute to an unnamed source?

DETECTIVE WALKS BACK TO OSCAR.

Detective!

DETECTIVE:

(TO OSCAR) Let's get started shall we.

OSCAR TAKES A FINAL DRAG ON HIS
FAG AND FLICKS IT AWAY.

SCENE 3. INT. PRISON SEARCH AREA.
EVENING.

OSCAR: I won't put yer through the indignity of a search Detective. I'm meant to, but I think we can assume yer've no wraps of heroin in yer tighty whities.

DETECTIVE: Don't break the rules on my account. Just do as you'd normally do.

OSCAR: Suit yerself.

BEAT.

Shoes, jacket and belt on the conveyer. Then sit yerself on that chair.

DETECTIVE: What is it, an X-ray?

OSCAR: That's right. Lookin' for the mobile phone plugged up yer backside. It's a full time job keepin' contraband out of this place. We find SIM cards in their babies' nappies and razor blades in their nanna's jackets. You can get up now.

SCENE 4. INT. PRISON CORRIDOR.
EVENING.

A PRISON GATE IS UNLOCKED AND
OPENED THEN SLAMMED SHUT AND
LOCKED.

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE WALK DOWN
THE CORRIDOR DURING THE
FOLLOWING:

OSCAR: So who was that woman then? Yer stalker?

DETECTIVE: A journalist. She's reporting on the suicide.

OSCAR: I'm surprised anyone cares! He were a smack rat, the lad who topped himself. Blackened old ladies' faces when they struggled him too much for their handbags. Did one so badly that she never woke up.

PAUSE.

Yer don't put rubbish in the bin then cry when it rots do yer?

DETECTIVE: This lad was public property.

OSCAR: How d'yer mean?

DETECTIVE: They used to call him Child C.

OSCAR: Who did?

DETECTIVE: It was about ten years ago. He was put in the hospital by his stepdad and you couldn't open a paper for weeks without reading about it. There was a big campaign and three social workers got sacked.

OSCAR: Yeah I think I do remember somethin' about that.

DETECTIVE: Well that's why she's sitting outside. She knows it's going to be big news.

OSCAR: And that's why you're here too is it? I thought yer might be a higher rank than normal.

DETECTIVE: It doesn't much matter to me who he was if I'm honest.

OSCAR: Well that's a relief to hear.

DETECTIVE: I'm no bleeding heart but I'm a bloodhound for the truth. If something isn't as it should be I'll find it.

THE ALARM ON OSCAR'S RADIO WAILS
AND A DISTORTED VOICE ANNOUNCES:

VOICE: General alarm House Block 3 Bravo Wing. First response to attend. I repeat, first response to figures 3, Bravo Wing.

OSCAR: Back to the wall please, Detective.

DETECTIVE: I'm sorry?

OSCAR: Back to the wall.

A NEARBY GATE CLATTERS OPEN
THEN SLAMS AND LOCKS.

OFFICER: Stand back! Stand back!

A GROUP OF OFFICERS RUN PAST AND
THUNDER INTO THE DISTANCE.

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE CONTINUE TO
WALK.

DETECTIVE: What was that?

OSCAR: Who knows? A fight. A cell set alight. Could be any number of things.

DETECTIVE: Don't you need to go?

OSCAR: Don't worry, it'll be well attended. We send a nurse along in case the prisoner gets a scratch and an officer with a video camera to film it for when he sues us. Then we spend the rest of the night fillin' in forms. No doubt it's gone the same way in your line of work.

DETECTIVE: We have procedures to make sure things are done properly if that's what you mean. I can't say they bother me.

OSCAR: It's this one.

OSCAR UNLOCKS A GATE.

SCENE 5. INT. PRISON WING. EVENING.

THE GATE SLAMS AND OSCAR LOCKS

IT.

Shall we start in the office?

SCENE 6. INT. OFFICE. EVENING.

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE ENTER THE
OFFICE AND CLOSE THE DOOR.

OSCAR: This is Delta 3. She were on duty last night when it happened.

DELTA: His mother's arrived. She had a look in the cell and then the Chaplain took her off to pray.

DETECTIVE: The victim's mother?

OSCAR: It's tradition. Family of the deceased are invited in to see the place where their loved one exited.

DETECTIVE: Start by telling me everything you know about the victim.

OSCAR: The prisoner were known by most people as Hangdog. He was 18 –

DETECTIVE: I'd like to hear it from the officer on duty if you don't mind.

OSCAR: No, go ahead.

DELTA: Hangdog were 18 years of age, like he said. Came from Young Offenders four month ago. Had a pretty sizable subbies habit –

DETECTIVE: Subbies?

OSCAR: Subutex. It's a heroin replacement for recoverin' addicts. Some of the prisoners hoard it and flog it on. Comes in tablets that they crush and snort. Hangdog had a nose like a Dyson. Would've snorted Shake n Vac if there'd been nothin' else goin'.

DETECTIVE: And he was on a suicide watch?

DELTA: That's right. He were a cutter. Used to let blood when he couldn't score and that. We were checkin' him every fifteen minutes. I always set an alarm clock so I don't forget.

OSCAR: It's obvious now that fifteen minute checks weren't enough but that you'll have to take up with the psychs, they're the ones who decide how often they're checked on, not us.

DETECTIVE: So every fifteen minutes you opened the door and went in?

DELTA: No yer just look through the flap. Shout 'em if they're still or yer can't see 'em prop'ly.

DETECTIVE: And you checked him last at what time?

DELTA: 0530 hours. He said he were climbin' the walls. But I've seen him like that a hundred times. Worse even.

DETECTIVE: And you checked him again at what time?

DELTA: 0545. But he were hangin' by his sheet. I cut him down. Tried to bring him back but he wouldn't come.

OSCAR: The nurses came down from Healthcare. Kept on pumpin' him 'til the ambulance came.

DELTA: They declared him at 0636.

DETECTIVE: I was told he left a suicide note?

OSCAR: Of sorts. It's a poem. Not bad actually. Have a read.

OSCAR HANDS DETECTIVE THE POEM.

It were lyin' next to him so he meant it to be found.

DETECTIVE: And what does this bit mean at the end? (READS)
Too Long Form Hangdog.

OSCAR: I dunno. The length of his sentence perhaps? He were only 18 months into a nine stretch. Prisoners have exed 'emselves over shorter.

DETECTIVE: It's written in a different hand to the poem.

DELTA: Yes.

DETECTIVE: Do you know whose?

OSCAR: Couldn't tell yer.

DELTA: He also had bruised knuckles on his right hand when we found him.

DETECTIVE: Had he been in a fight?

OSCAR: Maybe. Though he weren't much of a fighter in all honesty. Can't have been 10 stone wet through.

DETECTIVE: An attack then? A defensive injury.

OSCAR: More likely.

DETECTIVE: Was there anyone who might have wanted to hurt him?

OSCAR: It's a prison Detective. The prisoners hurt each other for kicks. And Hangdog weren't what yer might call popular. Yer'd be quicker startin' with the cons who *didn't* want to give him a slap.

DETECTIVE: And what about the staff? Did any of them want to give him a slap?

OSCAR: No doubt a few wanted to. But we show a bit more restraint than that.

DETECTIVE: Was there anything else significant about the body?

OSCAR: He wrote the word 'shame'.

DETECTIVE: Shame?

OSCAR: It was scratched into his forearm.

DETECTIVE: Any thoughts about what that might have meant?

OSCAR: Sometimes when they land in prison and the junk wears off, they see clearly what they are for the first time. Some even do what this one did. A good turn to the taxpayer yer could say.

DETECTIVE: I'd like to talk to the cellmate.

OSCAR: Birdlime. Says he slept through it all.

DETECTIVE: Well that hardly seems likely does it?

OSCAR: Good luck tryin' to get him to admit to anythin' else. We've moved him to a different cell. He's not exactly chuffed about it.

SCENE 7. HANGDOG'S POEM PART 2.

HANGDOG:

I'm the ringin' in yer ears,
I'm the cracks in yer lips.
I'm the sty in yer eye,
And the creak in yer hips.
I'm the stench in yer nostril,
The taste in yer mouth,
That swillin' and spittin'
Won't ever get out.

I'm yer achin' gut,
I'm yer paper cut,
I'm a splinter,
I'm a blister,
On the sole of yer foot.
I'm yer every misfortune
And bit o' bad luck,
I'm the walls that stand tall
Of the rut where yer stuck.

SCENE 8. INT. BIRDLIME'S CELL.
EVENING.

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE APPROACH
BIRDLIME'S CELL. INSIDE HE BANGS ON
THE DOOR AND SHOUTS:

BIRDLIME: I want me stuff! Give me me stuff!

OSCAR: He's a real treat this one. Yer want to just talk to him through the flap?

DETECTIVE: No. Open the door.

OSCAR UNLOCKS THE DOOR.

OSCAR: Shut yer noise Birdlime!

BIRDLIME: I want me stuff.

OSCAR: It's in evidence. Part of an investigation.

BIRDLIME: What investigation?

OSCAR: Police. They've come to talk to yer.

BIRDLIME: Well tell him I ain't fluent in pig.

OSCAR: Tell him yerself.

BIRDLIME: Yer can't keep my stuff from me. I've got rights.

OSCAR: They know all about their rights this lot.

DETECTIVE: The quicker we close the investigation the quicker you'll get your stuff.

BIRDLIME: Well I'm not talkin' 'til I get it.

DETECTIVE: What is it you need from your things so badly?

BIRDLIME: Burn.

DETECTIVE: Is that it?

BIRDLIME: Obviously you ain't a smoker.

OSCAR: Yer can tell can't yer?

DETECTIVE: Is he allowed to smoke in here?

OSCAR: Well if he had some burn he could.

DETECTIVE: Give him a cigarette.

OSCAR: What? I'm not givin' him one of –

DETECTIVE: I said, give him a cigarette.

OSCAR TAKES OUT A CIGARETTE AND
GIVES IT TO BIRDLIME.

OSCAR: Fine but he's connin' yer. Yer'll get nothin' from him.

BIRDLIME: Don't mind if I do. Been a while since I scored a straight. Look at his face. He's about to pop a vessel in his eye. I'd go twos with yer boss but I dunno where yer lips have been.

OSCAR: Don't push it.

OSCAR LIGHTS THE CIGARETTE.

DETECTIVE: I need to find out what happened to Hangdog.

BIRDLIME: I don't know nothin' about it. I went to sleep and he were alive. Woke up and he were doin' the floorless waltz.

DETECTIVE: A friend of yours was he?

How long had you been sharing a cell?

BIRDLIME: Grand total of one day. So perhaps it was somethin' I said.

DETECTIVE: One day?

BIRDLIME: They bunked him up with me yesterday mornin'. Before that he were with Cohen.

DETECTIVE: Why was Hangdog moved?

BIRDLIME: Don't ask me why screws screw. They got their own logic.

DETECTIVE: I wasn't asking *you*.

OSCAR: Hangdog asked for a move. Said him and Cohen had fallen out. It happens.

BIRDLIME: Weird tho'. They were tight as. Yer couldn't slip a bit of paper between 'em most days.

OSCAR: Hangdog weren't the easiest to live with.

BIRDLIME: That's true enough. He could've driven a Buddhist to bitch slappin' him. Snap snap snappin' through the night.

DETECTIVE: Snapping?

BIRDLIME: Snap snap snap. We can put men on the moon. And cut cancers outta persons' brains with a laser. And yer know what we give cutters to stop 'em cuttin'?

DETECTIVE: No.

BIRDLIME: A rubber band to snap their wrists with. Yer gotta love that right?

DETECTIVE: A rubber band?

BIRDLIME: That is some low-tech fix. A frickin' rubber band.

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE: So it was annoying you, him snapping the band?

BIRDLIME: Ah, I see where yer goin' with that but I got a chance at re-cat comin' up. Yer think I'd be stupid enough to slap *that* little squealer?

DETECTIVE: He had bruised knuckles. You've got a bruised face.

BIRDLIME: Seriously? Yer think if me and Hangdog had beef, it'd be him wearin' marks on his knuckles and me wearin' marks on me face? Tell him, man.

OSCAR: I don't know what went on between you.

BIRDLIME: Unbelievable. Everyone knows that Cohen and Hangdog had strife yesterday and you're still tryin' to pin somethin' on me.

DETECTIVE: What kind of strife?

BIRDLIME: I dunno. But they got up in each other's grills over it at mornin' scan.

DETECTIVE: Hangdog and Cohen had a fight?

BIRDLIME: Oh the screws didn't tell yer that?

OSCAR: It weren't really a fight. A bit of argy bargy. Nothin' more.

BIRDLIME: See Cohen's what we call a screw's con. That'll be why he's protectin' him.

OSCAR: He's an enhanced prisoner. He's well behaved so he gets extra privileges.

BIRDLIME: He's yer eyes and ears on the wing ain't he Boss?

DETECTIVE: Did Cohen have a fight with Hangdog or not?

OSCAR: I don't think either of 'em threw a punch.

BIRDLIME: Neither of 'em are exactly built for fightin'. There were more huggin' than hittin'. Like a slow dance in a concentration camp.

DETECTIVE: I'm going to need to speak to him.

BIRDLIME: You'll like him. He's a batty little Boy Scout.

OSCAR: Fine. He's just out here.

BIRDLIME: Off so soon? We must do this again!

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE GO TO LEAVE.

So I can have me stuff now?

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE EXIT.

(BEHIND DOOR) What about me stuff?

SCENE 9. INT. WING. EVENING.

OSCAR: That's him there. He's the wing cleaner.

DETECTIVE AND OSCAR APPROACH
COHEN WHO IS MOPPING THE FLOOR.
IN THE BACKGROUND WE CAN HEAR
BIRDLIME FROM BEHIND HIS DOOR.

BIRDLIME: I want me stuff!

OSCAR: The detective wants a word with you Cohen. About Hangdog.

COHEN KEEPS MOPPING.

COHEN: I don't know anythin' about that. He changed cell before it happened.

BIRDLIME: (TO COHEN) I can see you little piggy! I'm watchin' you!

OSCAR SLAMS THE FLAP OF
BIRDLIME'S CELL DOOR SHUT.

OSCAR: Give it a rest Birdlime!

DETECTIVE: I just want to talk to you about how he seemed over the last few days.

COHEN: He seemed fine. (LOWERING HIS VOICE) Look I can't really be seen talkin' to you.

DETECTIVE: Then let's go into your cell.

COHEN: They'll see that too. It's not like I know anythin'.

DETECTIVE: Well you know why you and Hangdog had a fight yesterday morning.

COHEN: I dunno what yer talkin' about.

OSCAR: There's no point lyin' about it lad.

DETECTIVE: I'm going to give you five seconds before I thank you at the top of my voice for your full cooperation.

COHEN: (SIGHS) My pad's over there.

COHEN GOES INTO HIS CELL.

OSCAR AND DETECTIVE FOLLOW.

SCENE 10. INT. COHEN'S CELL.
EVENING.

COHEN CLOSES THE DOOR.

DETECTIVE: This is a very tidy cell.

COHEN: I like to keep me things in order.

OSCAR: Everythin' in its place, int that right Cohen.

DETECTIVE: A pretty impressive display of certificates you've got there.

COHEN: Yeah I've done loads of courses and that. Literacy. IT, Thinking Skills.

OSCAR: Some prisoners make the most of their time in jail and others... well others are more like Hangdog. Look at that there. Little git used to rip the corners off Cohen's certificates to make filters for his rollies.

COHEN: I didn't really mind.

DETECTIVE: Is this your handwriting here, on this letter?

COHEN: Yeah why?

DETECTIVE GETS OUT HANGDOG'S
POEM.

DETECTIVE: It's the same as on this poem that was found in Hangdog's cell.

COHEN: Cos I wrote it out for him. He couldn't write yer see so sometimes I put stuff down on paper for him.

DETECTIVE: When did you write this?

COHEN: Night before last.

DETECTIVE: Do you know who it's about?

COHEN: I thought maybe it were some girl on the out who were messin' him about.

DETECTIVE: These photos of your family are they?

COHEN: Yeah. That's me girlfriend and me little girl.

OSCAR: And yer've got another one on the way ain't yer.

COHEN: Yeah.

DETECTIVE: Congratulations.

OSCAR: He's gonna be one of our success stories this one. Side step the ol' revolvin' door.

COHEN: That's the plan.

DETECTIVE: And what's this here?

COHEN: Toothpaste. That's what we stick up our photos with.

OSCAR: They're not allowed anythin' else. Blu-tac can be used to stuff up the locks and tape for bindin' and gaggin'.

COHEN: And some of the lads ink themselves with drawin' pins. So we're left with toothpaste. It's funny, cos everytime I smell mint I think of me family.

DETECTIVE: So there was a photo there that you've taken down?

COHEN: No... I don't think so. Maybe it fell down. I don't know.

DETECTIVE: Seems like something you'd remember. Photos being so precious in here.

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE (Cont): You didn't get on with Hangdog then?

COHEN: Nah we did mostly. We were just different that's all. I've got a chance at release comin' up so I'm just trying to keep me nose clean.

OSCAR: And Hangdog had his nose in any bit o' dirt he could find.

COHEN: He were okay really. Just couldn't get sorted. His mum were a junkie and he were born rattlin'. The things he'd been through. I'm not sure his life were liveable straight headed.

DETECTIVE: How long were you padded up with him?

COHEN: He came onto this wing from Alpha a couple of months ago. Cos he'd run up some debt.

OSCAR: The lads there were threatenin' to put him in a box.

COHEN: But there were no one to buy from on here so he went legit for a bit. I were sharin' with someone else but me and Hangdog got on okay so when the other lad got his papers we asked if we could be twoed up.

DETECTIVE: Birdlime says he was driven mad by Hangdog snapping his rubber band. But it didn't bother you?

COHEN: I got used to it. I'm a deep sleeper anyway.

DETECTIVE: So what went wrong then?

COHEN: A dealer arrives from another nick and suddenly he's back to his old ways. I was worried I might get dragged into it. That I might get taxed or somethin'.

DETECTIVE: Taxed?

OSCAR: Sometimes if a prisoner runs up credit then is ghosted to another jail his padmate gets left with the debt.

DETECTIVE: Who did he owe money to?

COHEN: I'm not a grass.

DETECTIVE: Is that what you fought over? Him dragging you down.

COHEN: Pretty much.

DETECTIVE: So you told Oscar you wanted him to move cell?

COHEN: Yeah but Hangdog finds out and he starts throwin' his weight about. Says I should move cell not him. But this is one of the best cells and they weren't gonna give it to a prisoner on basic like him.

DETECTIVE: And why did it come to a head yesterday?

COHEN: How d'yer mean?

DETECTIVE: What was it that made you decide yesterday that you didn't want to share with him anymore?

COHEN: I don't know.

DETECTIVE: Well it just seems strange to me that the night before last you were getting on so well that you wrote out his poem for him. But by the next morning you wanted a cell move.

COHEN: I just got worried about it overnight I suppose.

PAUSE.

OSCAR: If yer done here Detective, shall I take yer back to the office?

DETECTIVE: Oscar said it was Hangdog who wanted to move and you just said it was you. Who wanted him out?

COHEN: Well I suppose we kind of agreed it together.

DETECTIVE: Then why were you fighting over it?

COHEN: I'm not really sure. Maybe it were him. I can't really remember.

DETECTIVE: You seemed quite certain a minute ago.

OSCAR: I think maybe what happened were that Cohen told Hangdog he wanted him to move but Hangdog were the one who told me. I think maybe it's me who's got it wrong.

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE: Right.

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE (Cont): I bet your little girl can't wait for you to come home.

COHEN: Yeah she's countin' down the days.

DETECTIVE: She's going to be very upset when she finds out you've been done for lying to a police officer and you won't be coming after all.

COHEN: I've not lied. It's like he just said. I told Hangdog that I wanted him to move out and Hangdog told Oscar.

DETECTIVE: I don't believe you.

COHEN: It's the truth.

DETECTIVE: You're not telling me everything.

COHEN: I am.

DETECTIVE: Who was Hangdog's dealer then?

COHEN: If it gets back to him that I told yer.

DETECTIVE: I'm not going to tell anyone.

PAUSE.

COHEN: It were Birdlime.

DETECTIVE: So Hangdog was sharing with a prisoner he owed money to?

OSCAR: I didn't know that. It were the only bed we had spare.

COHEN: It's Birdlime yer should be chargin' with somethin' not me. He's got his fingers in everythin' in this nick. You want to ask him what happened to Hangdog.

DETECTIVE: I intend to.

SCENE 11. INT. BIRDLIME'S CELL.
EVENING.

DETECTIVE AND OSCAR ENTER.

BIRDLIME: Back so soon? I'll have burn for bang up if there's one going.

OSCAR: Get stuffed.

DETECTIVE: Give him a fag.

OSCAR: Yer not serious?

BIRDLIME: Don't tell anyone Boss but I'm startin' to like this pig.

OSCAR GIVES BIRDLIME A FAG.

DETECTIVE: Tell me about your name Birdlime. I'm guessing it isn't the one your mother gave you.

BIRDLIME: It's a nickname. Rhymin' slang. Back in the day it were this sticky stuff they used to put on tree branches to catch birds with. Their claws got all caught up in it and when they tried to fly away, they snapped their own little legs clean in two.

DETECTIVE: So last night when a man in the bunk above you was tearing his sheets and slicing his wrists, you were sleeping soundly?

BIRDLIME: That's right.

DETECTIVE: You know, sometimes we arrange to have prisoners brought from prison to the police station when we want to interview them for another crime. And when we put them in a police cell overnight we struggle to wake them up in the morning because they've slept so well. Do you know why that is?

BIRDLIME: Maybe yer have really comfy beds at the cop shop? Or maybe it's the cup of drinkin' chocolate yer give 'em when yer tuckin' 'em in.

DETECTIVE: It's because they're in a cell alone. Most people who've been in jail know that you don't sleep in a cell when you're paired up unless you absolutely know you can trust them. So I don't think there are too many deep sleepers in prison. And even if there were, a prisoner who's done as much bird as you certainly wouldn't be one.

BIRDLIME: Fine. You got me. I were awake and I saw him do it. So what?

DETECTIVE: What did you see?

BIRDLIME: I saw him slide off his bunk. I saw his feet scrabblin' about for the floor. We call that the 'oh shit shuffle'. When the panic sets in and yer realise you can switch yerself off but yer can never switch yerself back on again.

DETECTIVE: You watched him kill himself and you didn't raise the alarm.

BIRDLIME: It ain't my job to.

OSCAR: You're a right nasty piece of work aren't yer?

BIRDLIME: Last time I checked it weren't illegal to mind yer own.

OSCAR: It won't play very well with your re-categorisation assessment though will it?

BIRDLIME: I got four years left and I bet they'll make me do every last day of it.

DETECTIVE: You can cope with another four?

BIRDLIME: Some of us don't sweat our bang up.

DETECTIVE: And what about another twenty? For murder.

BIRDLIME: Yer messin' with me right? Yer really reckon that's gonna fly?

DETECTIVE: He owed you drug money. That sounds like motive to me.

BIRDLIME: Suit yerself. He owed me money. So I got outta bed and I double-wrapped that rubber band round his scrawny neck. Then I dressed it all up to seem like he offed himself.

DETECTIVE: You're up to your neck in the drugs culture here aren't you?

BIRDLIME: The drugs culture. I like that. Makes me sound like an artist or somethin'. Yer think they'll name me in a book?

DETECTIVE: You keep laughing. I'm arresting you on suspicion of murder. (TO OSCAR) I'm going to need him relocated to a police station.

BEAT.

At least you'll get a decent night's sleep there.

BIRDLIME: Yer can't do that? He can't do that can he?

OSCAR: Sounds to me like he's doin' it.

PAUSE.

BIRDLIME: I don't know what yer want from me. I've told yer, I saw it and I heard it. But he did it himself.

DETECTIVE: But you can't prove that.

BIRDLIME: Look, nothin' went on between us. I don't think we swapped five words from the time he moved in to the time they moved him out.

DETECTIVE: Like I said. You can't prove it.

PAUSE.

BIRDLIME: Yeah I can.

DETECTIVE: How?

PAUSE.

BIRDLIME: Cos I filmed it.

DETECTIVE: You did what?

BIRDLIME: There's a phone in the mattress back in my cell.

OSCAR: You better be jokin'.

BIRDLIME: Do I look like the floor show?

OSCAR RUSHES FROM THE ROOM.

BIRDLIME: Yer see I know the tricks you lot pull and I weren't catchin' added time for a stunt I didn't do. So the minute he starts talkin' about the long goodbye, I get my phone ready.

DETECTIVE: He told you he was going to kill himself?

BIRDLIME: Yeah. Like he thought I'd lose any sleep.

OSCAR ARRIVES BACK WITH A MOBILE
PHONE.

OSCAR: Find it. Find the footage.

BIRDLIME FINDS THE FOOTAGE AND
PLAYS IT.

THE SOUND OF HANGDOG IN GREAT
DISTRESS AND THREATENING TO KILL
HIMSELF CAN BE HEARD. THEY LISTEN
FOR A FEW SECONDS.

DETECTIVE: Enough. Turn it off.

BIRDLIME: Goes on like that 'til he gets up the guts. About twenty minutes.

SILENCE.

DETECTIVE: You stood by while he killed himself? You just let him do it?

BIRDLIME: Like I said, it ain't *my* job to stop him.

OSCAR: Yer could have hit the call button. It's two feet from yer bed. No more hassle than gettin' yer phone out.

BIRDLIME: Less if I'm honest. Had to dig out the SIM card and the battery. Put it together in the dark.

DETECTIVE: Why?

BIRDLIME: Why not. Hangdog were a miserable waste of skin and air. His life didn't bring a second of joy to himself or anyone else. The only little bit of control he had were that he could check out any time he liked. Though you lot would've taken that off him too and you reckon *I'm* the cruel one? We put dogs down that have better lives than that yappin' runt.

OSCAR: Why don't you tell that to his mother who's cryin' for him over in the Chapel?

DETECTIVE: I hope you know you're going to face charges over the mobile phone.

BIRDLIME: And I hope you know that he were on a 15 minute suicide watch and I have 20 minutes of film durin' which no one checks on him.

BEAT.

I doubt I'll be the first person to go to the firin' squad.

OSCAR: Detective I –

DETECTIVE: Delta lied. You both lied.

DETECTIVE BOLTS FROM THE ROOM.

BIRDLIME: Look he's right. I don't really need the headache of a phone bust. This never needs to see the light of day if yer get me drift.

OSCAR: Shut up, you idiot!

OSCAR FOLLOWS SLAMMING THE
DOOR BEHIND HIM.

BIRDLIME: (BEHIND DOOR) What about me stuff? When do I get me stuff!

SCENE 12. OFFICE. EVENING.

DETECTIVE BURSTS IN.

DELTA: Detective, a woman called Long has been on the phone for you. She seems very keen to –

DETECTIVE: (TO DELTA) You lied about the suicide watch. You said you checked on him but you didn't.

OSCAR: Don't say anythin' 'til yer've spoken to the union rep.

DETECTIVE: You'd better start telling me the truth.

OSCAR: Not one word Delta!

PAUSE.

DELTA: I know yer tryin' to help me Oscar, but I don't want to lie. I'm sorry.

DETECTIVE: Tell me what happened.

OSCAR: Yer could go to prison. Do yer realise that? Manslaughter. Yer wouldn't be the first. What will happen to yourr little boy then, eh? Perhaps he'll end up in care. Perhaps it'll make another Hangdog of him.

DETECTIVE: The earlier you co-operate, the easier they'll go on you. It's the ones who lie that end up inside.

OSCAR: This silky cat don't give a damn about you Delta. He'll say what he needs to make yer talk. Then he'll throw yer to the dogs and never give yer another thought.

PAUSE.

DELTA I were there. On the landin'.

OSCAR: Delta –

DELTA: On my way to Hangdog's cell to do the check and another prisoner starts bangin' on his door. His padmate's beatin' him and he's screamin' for help. By the time I've dealt with that I've missed Hangdog's watch and then when I get to him it's too late. It's done.

OSCAR: There's a lot to think about on nights. More than yer'd think.

DETECTIVE: More important than a suicide watch?

DELTA: He were always threatenin'. For as long as I've known him. It were all bluster. Prisoners like Hangdog are a strain. Always on a watch, or ridin' the Call button. Windin' up the other cons. It never stops. There's 89 other prisoners with their problems to deal with. I had to make a choice.

DETECTIVE: No you didn't. There's a procedure. And it exists so you don't have to make a choice.

DELTA: So you'd have left the other prisoner to be beaten?

DETECTIVE: If that's what the rules told me to do.

THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

CHERYL ENTERS.

DELTA: Yer finished in the Chapel then?

CHERYL: Yeah. There's only so much prayin' I can be doin' with. It's not like it'll bring him back.

DELTA: This is Cheryl. Hangdog's mum.

DETECTIVE: I'm very sorry for your loss.

CHERYL: My loss?

DETECTIVE: Your son.

PAUSE.

CHERYL: He spent more of his life in care than he did with me. So I don't know if I get to say 'my loss' or 'my son'.

DELTA: Course yer do. Yer mum's yer mum whatever happens.

CHERYL: Been lookin' through the stuff they brought out of his cell. Don't feel like I know any of it. He had gym gloves. I didn't even know he went to the gym.

OSCAR: He didn't. He did nick stuff though, so they might not be his.

CHERYL: That sounds more like it. Nicked stuff he didn't even need the stupid boy.

DELTA: The books were his though. He were learnin' to read prop'ly.

OSCAR: Delta were teachin' him.

CHERYL: He did tell me that. He were chuffed.

OSCAR: She used to sit with him every day durin' her break or stay behind when her shift ended.

CHERYL: He said yer were very kind to him. I know he thought world of yer.

DETECTIVE: I'd like to ask you some questions if you don't mind.

CHERYL: You're the police?

DETECTIVE: Yes. I'm investigating why Hangdog killed himself.

CHERYL: He were a teenage drug addict doin' time for manslaughter. Could be some clues in that.

DETECTIVE: But that was true last week and the week before. Something happened to make him do this now. Something changed. I'm trying to find out what it was.

CHERYL: I'm not sure how much help I'll be, but I'll try.

DETECTIVE: (TO OSCAR) While I'm doing that I'd like you to find all the CCTV footage you have of Hangdog on the day of his death.

OSCAR: That's fine. We've got it all here on the computer. It'll mainly be him on the secure corridor. Goin' to his visits and that.

DETECTIVE: Get up everything you've got. (TO CHERYL) So you saw him last yesterday?

CHERYL: That's right. I were in for a visit.

DETECTIVE: And he seemed okay to you?

CHERYL: He never seemed okay. But that were normal for him.

DETECTIVE: So he didn't say anything out of the ordinary?

CHERYL: No. He didn't say anythin' much at all. Yer'd think prison visits would be crammed full with chat but they're not. Yer mostly sit in silence hopin' the two hours'll fly by quick.

DETECTIVE: He wasn't worried about anything?

CHERYL: If he were I'm the last person he'd tell.

DETECTIVE: You weren't that close then?

CHERYL: Not really. We were once. When he were little I used to take him out cleanin' with me. He spent hours sat in empty offices and he loved it too,

pretendin' to answer the phone and tap away on the computer.

DELTA: I remember him tellin' me about it.

CHERYL: There were this one time he were watchin' out the window at this woman leavin' work, readin' a book as she walked down the road. Never lookin' up from it, just expectin' other people to get out the way. And he says, 'Why's that woman walkin' and readin' at the same time Mummy?' and I said, 'Cos her time's too precious to waste.'

PAUSE.

I spent the next two hours emptyin' bins while he spun himself dizzy on an office chair. Time were the only thing we ever had too much of.

OSCAR: There we go. I've found some footage. Him comin' back from yer visit.

CHERYL: He looks tall there. Taller than I think of him. I'm so used to seeing him sat down in –

DELTA AND CHERYL GASP, REACTING
TO SOMETHING ON THE SCREEN.

DETECTIVE: Switch it off.

OSCAR: I'm sorry love I didn't know he'd do that.

BEAT.

It would explain the bruised knuckles though.

DETECTIVE: So he was perfectly fine at the visit, only when he comes out he's so wound up that he drives his fist into a wall.

CHERYL: What difference does it make why he did it?
There's no changin' it now.

DETECTIVE: Did something happen at the visit?

CHERYL: It's done.

DETECTIVE: Did you argue?

BEAT.

Cheryl?

CHERYL: Yes.

PAUSE.

He told me not to come again. Said he wouldn't see me if I did.

DETECTIVE: Why?

CHERYL: Because I wouldn't do somethin' he wanted me to.

DETECTIVE: And what was that?

PAUSE.

DELTA: Take yer time if yer need to.

PAUSE.

CHERYL: Hangdog had a brother. Years before he were born I had another son. But things were bad for me back then and the social services wanted me to put him up for adoption. They were takin' him off me either way. Said it would be better for him.

PAUSE.

I never told Hangdog. But one day when he first came here he walked into another prisoner's cell and found a picture of me holdin' a newborn stuck to their wall. They let yer give 'em a memento yer see, when yer give 'em up.

PAUSE.

At first I thought, well what are the chances of that? Then I realised that every man I've ever known has been in this jail at some point in their life. Me dad, me husband, me sons. Half my life's been played out in that visits hall.

DETECTIVE: Do you know the prisoner's name?

CHERYL: No. I didn't want to know anythin'. What's the point in draggin' it all up?

DETECTIVE: And that's what you argued about at the visit?

CHERYL: Yeah. He started goin' on about it again. I ended up walkin' out.

PAUSE.

Now I think he brought it up cos he knew he weren't going to be around much longer. Like he were tryin' to replace himself.

PAUSE.

I think I'd like to go home now.

DETECTIVE: I don't have any more questions for you.

OSCAR: The officer outside will take yer to the gate.

CHERYL: Thank you.

PAUSE.

They're not allowed off their seats in the visits hall so I reckon walking away from them is about the cruellest thing you can do.

CHERYL EXITS.

DETECTIVE: Delta, start looking through Birdlime's phone for anything that might get us a drugs charge against him. Oscar and I are going to see Cohen.

SCENE 13. INT. COHEN'S CELL.

EVENING.

DETECTIVE AND OSCAR ENTER.

COHEN: Yer can't keep comin' back here. Yer gonna get me done over.

DETECTIVE: I've got a few more questions for you.
That photo that's missing from your wall. I know
what it was of.

COHEN: I don't want to talk about that.

DETECTIVE: Because that's what you were really arguing with
Hangdog over yesterday morning wasn't it?

COHEN: No!

DETECTIVE: What was it? Were you were angry with him
because he couldn't get her to meet with you?

COHEN: I don't know what yer talkin' about.

DETECTIVE: Maybe you asked Oscar to put him in with
Birdlime. Really punish him for letting you down.
Only that didn't work out very well, because he
ended up suicidal in a cell with someone who
couldn't care less. Someone who was willing to let
him die.

COHEN BREAKS DOWN.

COHEN: I never meant for that to happen to him. He were a
mate and I bailed on him.

DETECTIVE: But he wasn't just your mate was he Cohen?
Hangdog was your brother.

COHEN: What?

DETECTIVE: That's why you've taken the photo down isn't it?
Because it was a photo of you and your mother
and now you can't even bear to look at it.

COHEN: I don't know what you're on about.

DELTA ENTERS THE CELL.

DELTA: Detective, I think there's somethin' yer need to
see.

DETECTIVE: Not now.

BEAT.

That's why you took the photo down isn't it?

COHEN: No. I took it down because it were a scan of a
baby that turned out not to be mine. My new start's
already in the dirt and the only person who cared
were Hangdog. But when Oscar comes knockin'
yesterday mornin' and tells me to request a cell
move, I can't see beyond the good parole report
he's promisin'. So I sold out my mate, even though
I knew the only spare bed was in Birdlime's cell
and that he'd prob'ly beat him stupid.

DETECTIVE: Are you saying he wasn't your brother?

DELTA: Detective. I think yer need to know this.

DETECTIVE: What?

DELTA: I've just found a photo on Birdlime's phone. It's of
Cheryl with a baby.

SCENE 14. HANGDOG'S POEM PART 3.

HANGDOG:

I'm the dreams that yer chase,
That are so fast of pace,
That they leave yer too breathless
To finish the race.

I'm the drink that yer sink
To fill empty space,
I'm the failures that shame yer
And spit in yer face.

I'm every penny and pound that yer short,
I'm every tough lesson that yer ever taught.
I'm every fight lost that yer shouldn't of fought,
And every life lost that leaves yer distraught.

SCENE 15. INT. OFFICE. EVENING.

OSCAR: Us old school turnkeys have a name for officers like Delta. Care Bears. We tell 'em the prisoners are here to be punished, so let 'em knock seven bells out of each other, let 'em cry all night if they want to. We make out it's a philosophy. But really it's laziness, and officers like her show us up for what we are.

BEAT.

I'm gonna have a smoke if yer don't mind. They can't sack me twice can they?

OSCAR LIGHTS UP A FAG.

DETECTIVE: You told Cohen to ask for Hangdog to be moved to punish Delta?

OSCAR: I knew that Birdlime wouldn't take any nonsense from him. I wanted to see how Delta felt about Hangdog after he'd ridden the call button cryin' all night.

DETECTIVE: Aren't there rules against that?

OSCAR: Course. You're meant to do a risk assessment when you move a vulnerable prisoner. Make sure the pad mate is suitable. I just didn't think it would play out like that.

DETECTIVE: You didn't need to think. It was there in black and white. All you needed to do was follow the rules.

OSCAR: Yer think this happened because I broke the rules?

DETECTIVE: Didn't it?

OSCAR: There must have been a time when I wanted to be here. When I looked at cons and I saw people. But it's so long ago that I can't remember it. At some point I dried up inside. I stopped bein' a decent prison officer cos I stopped bein' a decent human being.

PAUSE.

Delta made a mistake but she has a more generous spirit than anyone I've ever met. People like me and you are ten-a-penny. A burnt out old has-been and a sharp-suited bright young thing, risin' to the top like cream, recitin' the rule book as yer go. But people like her, who feel somethin' real and act upon it, those people are rare.

DETECTIVE: There's nothing that can be done for her.

OSCAR: I once knew this prisoner who did nothin' but read whodunits from mornin' 'til night. When I asked him why he liked 'em he said it were nice knowin' that someone had done somethin' bad and it weren't him. Said he liked seein' 'em get caught. Made him feel like it were a fair world. Your report, they'll print it in the paper and it'll be a bestseller cos we're none of us much different from that lad, are we?

DETECTIVE: Why are you telling me that?

OSCAR: Because it's a story people need. One with a culprit. Like last time when them social workers got sacked. Why can't I be the culprit? Leave Delta out of it.

DETECTIVE: Because if there's one thing I hate more than dishonesty, it's arrogance. Delta might be the best prison officer in the world but in that moment she thought she was above the rules that made her the worst kind. That's the problem with allowing yourself to have real feelings. You can't just choose the ones that suit. They come as a job lot. She brought compassion but she also brought complacency. She'd have been better off bringing neither.

SCENE 16. BIRDLIME'S CELL. EVENING.

DETECTIVE AND OSCAR ENTER.

BIRDLIME: I'm not answerin' any more questions.

DETECTIVE: That's fine. I don't have any more questions for you.

OSCAR: There's yer stuff. Minus the phone of course. The cardboard box of crap that meant more to you than Hangdog's death.

BIRDLIME: If yer tryin' to guilt trip me yer wastin' yer breath.

DETECTIVE: You know I don't usually get caught up in why people do the things they do. The emotion of it. But it's hard to get my head around how someone can watch someone else take their own life and do nothing to stop them. Much less their own brother.

BIRDLIME GIVES DETECTIVE A ROUND
OF APPLAUSE.

BIRDLIME: I reckon you think yer some real smart guy for workin' that out don't yer? But yer wrong. He weren't my brother.

DETECTIVE: You have a photo of his mother with the baby that she gave up.

BIRDLIME: He told me we were brothers. The second or third time I met him. He comes in my cell lookin' to score and almost falls down at the sight of that

photo on my wall. He tells me it's his mum and he can't get to a phone quick enough to ask her about it. When he comes back he's spoutin' all this stuff he shouldn't know. The year I were born, the care home I went into. But I'm still not sold cos info's like burn in bang up. Secrets are just about the only thing that can move through this dump without keys. But he convinces me. Not cos I want it to be true cos I'm not fussed. Which is just as well because it ain't true.

DETECTIVE: How do you know?

BIRDLIME: Told me last night he made it up. That he saw a photo of a woman who looked a little bit like his old girl and he clocked a chance of gettin' some free subbies. Made sense then why his mum didn't want to know me. Cos there never was no adopted son.

DETECTIVE: And why would he tell you that?

BIRDLIME: Because he'd decided to end himself so it didn't matter anymore. He didn't need me and I think that he liked the idea of goin' out on a high. How often d'yer reckon he's ever got one over on someone like me in his life?

BEAT.

I was relieved. Ties in a place like this make yer weak.

DETECTIVE: Why did Hangdog kill himself?

BIRDLIME: Cos the snifflin' little runt was scared of some woman. He got a letter off her a few days ago.

DETECTIVE: What woman?

BIRDLIME: A journalist. The one who got all them social workers sacked when he was a kid. Said she was writin' an article about what he'd become. That he'd let down the doctor who saved him and all the busy bodies who'd signed the petitions. Said the world would have been better off if his stepdad had beaten him to death. At least the woman he killed wouldn't have suffered. She wanted a comment from him.

DETECTIVE: Do you have the letter?

BIRDLIME: Nah. He burned it. But it cut him up good. He said the press ruined his mum last time. He were worried that she wouldn't stay clean, not if it all blew up again. He thought by killin' himself he could kill the story.

OSCAR: Pouring fuel on it more like.

DETECTIVE: Do you know who the journalist was?

BIRDLIME: Yeah, her name's Long.

PAUSE.

OSCAR: You idiot.

BIRDLIME: Yer what?

DETECTIVE: He wanted to die and he knew the only way he could make it happen was to hurt you so badly that

you'd stand by and let him. You weren't going to go to sleep, not like Cohen would of. So he had to find another way. And the only thing he knew he could rely on you for was hatred and anger.

BIRDLIME: What are you sayin?

DETECTIVE: I think you know.

OSCAR: Detective I don't think –

DETECTIVE: He was your brother.

BIRDLIME: That ain't true.

DETECTIVE: But you've no ties to weaken you now.

BIRDLIME: It ain't true!

BIRDLIME RUNS AT DETECTIVE AND
WRESTLES HIM TO THE GROUND. A
STRUGGLE ENSUES. OSCAR HITS THE ALARM
ON HIS RADIO WHICH SCREAMS AND
SECONDS LATER A TEAM OF OFFICERS
BURST INTO THE CELL AND SUBDUE
BIRDLIME. HE IS DRAGGED FROM THE CELL
SCREAMING.

SCENE 17. STAFF TOILET. EVENING.

DETECTIVE, LOCKED IN A CUBICLE IS
VOMITING.

DELTA ENTERS.

DELTA: You okay Detective?

DETECTIVE: (FROM INSIDE THE CUBICLE) I'm fine.

DETECTIVE FLUSHES THE TOILET THEN
EMERGES FROM THE CUBICLE. HE
WASHES HIS HANDS AND FACE.

DELTA: It'll be the adrenaline. It can make yer very sick.

DETECTIVE: I'm a policeman. You think this is the first time
anyone's ever attacked me?

DELTA: No. Sorry.

PAUSE.

It ain't like gettin' bad news on the out, gettin' it in
here. There's nowhere for it to go. It bounces off
the walls at night. Drives 'em to extremes.

PAUSE.

But it ain't your job to look out for 'em is it? It's your
job to find the truth.

DETECTIVE: The truth.

DELTA: That's what matters the most ain't it?

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE:

When I was about eight we had this Jack Russell. One time it bit my sister's hand and shook it so hard it dislocated her shoulder. When I came home from school the next day the dog was gone. I asked my mother where it was and she said my father had taken it to a local farm. My father listened in, then without looking up from his paper, he just smiled and said, 'Because a farmer needs a wild old dog like he needs a whole in the head.' Later I was playing in the garden when I found a tiny drop of dark red blood on a blade of grass. It was the first clue of my career.

PAUSE.

I hated my father for killing the dog but I hated my mother more for making up a story and most of all I hated myself for wishing that my father had said nothing and allowed me to believe that the dog was alive and happy.

PAUSE.

DELTA:

I'm not sure it's a job for real human beings. Not yours or mine. I think I'm better off out of it.

OSCAR ENTERS.

OSCAR:

If you're ready I'll walk yer to the gate Detective.

SCENE 18. EXT. PRISON. NIGHT.

DETECTIVE AND OSCAR EMERGE
FROM THE PRISON.

DETECTIVE: What will happen to you?

OSCAR: They'll put me out to pasture.

DETECTIVE: Will you miss it?

OSCAR: Well the job ain't for everyone, but it were for me once. A bit like yours in that respect I'm sure. It's a vocation innit, dealin' with misery and muck? Maybe even an art, for those who can do it without gettin' their shirts dirty.

DETECTIVE: It that supposed to be a dig at me?

OSCAR: Nah. Yer've got puke on yer shirt.

BEAT.

DETECTIVE: The suicide watch. I'm not going to be able to leave it out of my report.

OSCAR: I know.

DETECTIVE: But there's a way of presenting these things that throws the emphasis off them. Maybe they won't come after her.

OSCAR: She'll lose her job either way.

DETECTIVE: I'm sorry about that.

OSCAR: It's the cons' loss really.

PAUSE.

Take care Detective.

OSCAR WALKS AWAY.

A SECOND LATER FOOTSTEPS
APPROACH.

LONG: Detective?

DETECTIVE: Yes.

LONG: It isn't too late for me to take a comment from you
if you have one.

DETECTIVE: You're like a dog with a bone aren't you?

LONG: I'm sure we're very alike in that respect.

PAUSE.

DETECTIVE: I've got a comment for you. But it's from Hangdog
not me.

LONG: From Hangdog?

DETECTIVE: That's right. He left a note for you. I've got it here.
It isn't the original I'm afraid, but I'm sure we can
get that to you once the investigation is officially
closed.

DETECTIVE HANDS LONG THE NOTE.

LONG: How do you know it's for me?

DETECTIVE: Because it says so. He wasn't a good writer but there at the bottom. It says, 'To Long from Hangdog'.

BEAT.

Now if you'll excuse me. I've nothing more to say, other than if it means you'll never forget him, I hope every word of that comes true.

DETECTIVE WALKS AWAY.

SCENE 19. HANGDOG'S POEM PART 4.

HANGDOG:

I'm the grey hairs on yer head,
I'm yer middle-aged spread,
I'm the youth that yer lose,
And the lover that's fled.
His desire once like fire,
It's me killed it dead,
And re-lit it for firm flesh,
That now fills his bed.

I'm yer tears,
I'm yer fears,
I'm the years that have flown,
The dementia that sends yer
To worlds not yer own.
I'm the cancer that's creepin'
And sweepin' yer bones.
I'm the ungrateful brats
That don't visit the home.

I'm the chafe,
I'm the scrape,
Of yer bed where yer lie,
And the fear in yer eye
At the moment yer die.
I'm the rattle and rasp of yer very last sigh,
I'm the endless expanse of a heavenless sky.

So don't stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep.

THE END.