

Excerpt from "Tree Shall Not Be Moved". Alan enters.

ALAN

Eh up, me ducks.

GIDEON

Grandad (*he gives Alan a massive hug*) I knew you'd be here.

LISA

(*Muttering a prayer to herself*) God grant me the fucking serenity to accept the things I cannot change.

ALAN

(*To Lisa*) Duck.

LISA

Are you dry?

GIDEON

It's not even raining.

ALAN

I'm drier than a nun's... proverbial.

GIDEON

Mum was about to hijack the protest.

ALAN

Well, your mum can stand down now the two musketeers are together, can't she?

Gideon belts to the tune of "All for Love" by Bryan Adams.

GIDEON

All for one - !

ALAN / GIDEON

And one for trees.

Gideon and Alan do a celebration dance.

ALAN

Your mum's on nights anyway so she can go home and have a sleep now.

LISA

Oh, I'm wide awake Dad.

GIDEON

Look, I think everyone's a bit hangry. So, let's have a quick sarnie and get our strength up for the protest.

ALAN

I got you a couple of French bread loaves there.

GIDEON

We've already made the sandwiches, what are we going to do with them now?

LISA

I can think of a place he could shove 'em.

Gideon offers the sandwiches around.

GIDEON

See - We're all good. Cause, whenever you're by safe tree, it's like, all sandwiches, no dickheads.

LISA

Depends on your definition.

GIDEON
Who you calling a dickhead?

Beat

ALAN
Did you put tomato in these duck...? Before you packed 'em...? This is bloody tomatogeddon.

LISA
Listen, Earl of sandwich, you don't like it, you don't eat it.

Beat. They fall silent.

GIDEON
I heard you had a relapse, Granddad?

LISA
Where did you hear that?

GIDEON
You said it on the phone. *(To Alan)* I've had to go to smelly Sue's down the road.

LISA
And she's been very good to you.

GIDEON
She doesn't even talk to me? And when she does, it's just to say she thinks climate change is a hoax or that Piers Morgan is handsome *(he wretches)*. So, I just sit there on me own in silence. And you know them houses where everything smells like a sweaty dog? It's like that. Except there's no dog.

ALAN
Sorry haven't been able see you mate. Doctor changed me cholesterol medication, and said I might get wet wind... You know when a fart comes out as more than just an announcement. Shittin' hell mate, never mind wet wind, I've had a soggy hurricane coming out my arse.

Gideon bursts out laughing. Deep enters. Gideon leaps up.

GIDEON
Oh, hey Deep, yeah, we were just talking strategy. This is Granddad Alan, who I told you about - legend. And that's Mum.

LISA
Hiya ducky -

ALAN
You alright?

HARDEEP
I'm good, thanks, I've got so many great things for the protest.

GIDEON
Hardeep is basically the Greta Thunberg of Stoke on Trent.

HARDEEP
Yeah, I brought a megaphone, handcuffs, and a trifle.

GIDEON
What?

HARDEEP
Me mum practiced all this bat-shit British food ready for the coronation, she's obsessed, says she's so good at British baking she's expecting a call from the Queen any day now.

LISA
Don't you mean the King?

HARDEEP
No, she means Mary Berry.

GIDEON
Who brings a trifle to a protest?

ALAN
Oh no!

GIDEON
What?

ALAN
She's a deserter.

LISA
Never mind the trifle, where did you get the handcuffs?

HARDEEP
My mum is such a badass, she keeps these handcuffs by her bed in case we get burgled at night.

LISA
Oh right. I had no idea your mum was so... cautious.

ALAN
And is your dad still present in your life, Deep?

LISA
Sounds like Hardeep's mum likes someone with a bit of staying power, so you might not qualify.

HARDEEP
Don't you think we should rehearse the chant?

GIDEON
Yeah, I was just about to say that.

Gideon grabs Hardeep and guides her into action.

GIDEON
Right, you're going to be on the frontline here. So, the chant goes (*He chant-sings to the tune of Wannabe by The Spice Girls*) If you wanna cut down my tree, you're gonna have to kill me -

GIDEON / HARDEEP
...cut off all my body, you're a bunch of dickheads - !

HARDEEP
Comrade, I don't think you've been practising the choreography - !

GIDEON
I have, honest.

HARDEEP
Look, let me show you.

Hardeep talks Gideon through the protest chant choreography.

ALAN
That chant reminds me of something.

LISA
It's Wannabe by the Spice Girls, but for god's sake just let him do it, I heard the alternatives earlier, and they're so much worse. (*Beat*) Remember when them kids wrote bender on his forehead in permanent marker?

ALAN
Bastards. He'd scrubbed it so hard he'd almost taken his eyebrows off.

LISA

We bought him here. You put his school tie around his head like Rambo and told him this was his safe tree and you'd always be here for him.

ALAN

I will always be here.

LISA

Not if you're back on it. We both know that.

GIDEON

(To Lisa and Alan) What are you two gossiping about?

LISA

Just saying it's a very special tree, isn't it?

GIDEON

Yeah, Deep, did you know that this tree is literally protected ground?

HARDEEP

Is it, what like magic?

GIDEON

No, like, well, basically, yeah, because everyone who comes to this tree is safe from the world. And...

Gideon ushers Deep discreetly away from Lisa and Alan.

GIDEON

...when I met David Attenborough, he said he might do a documentary.

HARDEEP

He is so cool. My mum says he's, like, the ultimate daddy.

GIDEON

You're involved in a very important cause, and I hope you know that.

HARDEEP

We're just so lucky to have found our purpose.

GIDEON

Yeah.

Gideon and Hardeep take a moment to acknowledge the profundity of their endeavour.

GIDEON

(To Alan/Lisa) Right, up you get.

LISA

Excuse me?

GIDEON

We can't leave Deep doing the chant on her own, imagine how silly she'd look. Up. I'm gonna show you. I mean, me and Deep will show you.

Alan and Lisa stand. Gideon demonstrates his chant dance moves, Hardeep acts as dance captain - Alan and Lisa copy.

GIDEON

You go...*(Chanting)* If you want to cut down this tree. You gonna have to kill me.

LISA / ALAN / DEEP

If you want to cut down this tree. You gonna have to kill me.

GIDEON

Grind up all my body, you're a bunch of dickheads.

LISA / ALAN / DEEP

Grind up all my body, you're a bunch of dickheads.

GIDEON

OK, then you hold hands.

Beat. Lisa is not into it.

GIDEON

Hold hands.

Beat. They all hold hands.

GIDEON

We finish with *(In military chant)*. We are a united front.

HARDEEP

We are a united front.

GIDEON

Don't leave Deep on her own. *(Chants)* We are a united front.

LISA / ALAN / DEEP

We are a united front.

GIDEON

The council are a bunch of -

ALAN

Ooh mate, I think we go with the other one since your mum's here.

Beat. Awkward moment between Alan and Lisa.

GIDEON

(Chanting) No matter how much you grumble and grunt.

GIDEON / LISA / DEEP

No matter how much you grumble and grunt.

GIDEON

We are a united front.

LISA / ALAN / DEEP

We are a united front.

GIDEON

Ok, everyone stand down. Deep, you be over here looking out for the tree cutters, and when they're coming, you give the call. Deep -

HARDEEP

Yeah?

GIDEON

You were made for this.

HARDEEP

Stand by everyone.

Gideon grabs the megaphone and the handcuffs.

HARDEEP

Oh my god, they're here.