

Catharsis

by Eoin Costello



Entry for the PJ O'Connor Radio Drama Competition 1997

Synopsis

This play is about one man's experience of a crisis in his life. It takes place in London in the early 1990s. All the things he had taken for granted come into question. Running largely on autopilot a series of minor disasters create a maelstrom that creates long term change to his outlook on life.

This is a work of fiction and all people and scenarios are fictitious.

Points about scenes

All dealing room scenes have voices talking continuously in the background with occasional shouting in reaction to market news.

The phones buzz instead of ringing on the stock market due to the sheer number of phones ringing all the time.

Cast List

Bill Tyndall: The central character. He's in his late twenties and is from Dublin. He's a fund manager at Hustle and Co., a large international fund management firm in London.

Patricia Fitz: Bill's girlfriend. They share an apartment. She graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, having studied biology. She's kind hearted but something strange happened to her growing up in a boarding school which she never wants to talk about. She finds Bill's lifestyle and career choice somewhat distasteful and empty.

Dean Redneck: Bill's best friend. He is a salesman at Push and Shove Stockbrokers in London. Dean is not a particularly nice person. He believes in the creed 'Greed is Good' because it works for him.

Bob Blunt: Chief Executive of Hustle and Co. He's Bill's big boss.

Suzanne Hazard: Bill's direct boss at Hustle and Co. She's a Londoner from outside 'the system' in the sense that she has worked her way to the top of her Department at Hustle and Co. through hard graft, having left school after the O Levels. She's valuable but she's vulnerable to manipulation by people in the system that are from the 'Old School Tie' brigade.

Head of personnel at Hustle and Co.: Is the corporate hatchet man who never displays any emotion.

Gillian Penpusher: Slightly bumbling, absent-minded editor of the Stock Market Insider.

Diane: Secretary at Hustle and Co.

Monday

Sound of a busy dealing room. Phone buzzes.

Bill Tyndall - Hello Bill Tyndall speaking.

Dean Redneck - Hiya Bill, Dean here. Have you any business you want me to do this fine Monday morning. Any shares you want to buy, any shares you want to sell?

Bill Tyndall - Bloody hell Dean, it's only 8:00 AM, I've just got in. It's a bit early to be touting for business.

Dean Redneck - You know the way it is Bill? It's the early bird that gets the worm Bill.

Bill Tyndall - You got the warm bit right!

Dean Redneck - Do you want to buy any more shares for the Mega Conglomerates holding your firm has been building? You've been buying those shares for months.

Bill Tyndall - Yeah, actually, buy £1 million pounds of Conglomerates if the price weakens at any point today.

Dean Redneck - By the way, mind your eye on that one, I've heard their financial fundamentals aren't sound. When are you going to sell that holding?

Bill Tyndall - I'm afraid that's confidential information my friend, what I will say is that we'll sell in time to leave something in it for the next man before it falls.

Dean Redneck - You're only afraid to help a friend because you know all these phone calls are recorded because of insider dealing regulations. I bet I'll get it out of you in the pub later.

Bill Tyndall - Give me a break Charlie. You get your commission anyway, so why are you so interested?

Dean Redneck - Okay. Okay. Get up to anything over the weekend.

Bill Tyndall - Not much. We played rugby against Wasps on Saturday at the HAC grounds up past Moorgate. Some serious talent on the WASPS side, Chris Oti, Jeff Probyn, Rob Andrew, Marcus Rose.

Dean Redneck - Is that the pitch over where they buried plague victims and you have to get a shot if you get dirt in a cut?

Bill Tyndall - Old wives tale mate. Anyway we got destroyed by Wasps, what did you get up to yourself?

Dean Redneck - Ah, the usual place down the Kings road with some of the city lads chasing a bit of skirt.

Bill Tyndall - You're a sad man.

Dean Redneck - So are all men, but they just hide it better than I do. Listen, I've got free tickets for the Proms at the Albert Hall if you and your intended would like to use them.

Bill Tyndall - Hang on a second, that's a bit strong, 'intended'!

Dean Redneck - Just teasing you a bit, remember, it was you that told me you sat down in Cafe Rouge to end it after a month together but choked when she started crying. Wimp!

Bill Tyndall - I told you that story in a weak moment Dean, that was 18 months ago and, while it's not a 'Gone with the Wind' whirlwind romance, we do get along.

Dean Redneck - Remember the first rule of mendacity my friend, it's easier to bungle along in a relationship you're not happy in than to get out of it!

Bill Tyndall - Give me a break will you! What night are the tickets for?

Dean Redneck - Thursday night.

Bill Tyndall - Hang on a sec. I'll just check my diary with the department secretary.

Bill Tyndall (*Intercom Sound*) - Morning Diane, can you give me a rundown of my week please?

Diane - Morning Bill, no problem. Tuesday morning, meeting with the head of the investment division, Mr. Blunt, for your annual review. Tuesday lunchtime meeting with Gillian Penpusher of the Stock Market Insider to discuss the article you've written for them.

Bill Tyndall - Sorry, Diane, Tuesday lunchtime was it? (*sound of scribbling in his diary*)

Diane - Yes, that's it. Wednesday, visit the Henley Regatta with some clients. Thursday and Friday are blank at the moment.

Bill Tyndall - Great, thanks Diane. Hi Dean, sorry for keeping you waiting. I'll take those tickets. It's Patricia's birthday that day so that works out nicely.

Dean Redneck - Okay, I'll get our messenger to drop them over to you. Listen, do you want to go for a pint this evening to catch up on a few market stories?

Bill Tyndall - Ok, sure. I've got to go now, here comes the boss. See you in the Colonial Club at seven.

Dean Redneck - Oh god, not that 'pea soup and linoleum' club of yours. Let's say the Green Man at seven.

(*Hangs up*)

Bill Tyndall - Morning, Suzanne, looks like I got in before my boss for once.

Suzanne Hazard - It's that bloody northern line again.

Bill Tyndall - Do anything over the weekend.

Suzanne Hazard - I went sailing with my favourite broker, you know, ahem, Marcus. What about yourself?

Bill Tyndall - Ah, not much. Excuse me a mo Suzanne, I must ring Patricia before I forget.

Receptionist - Hello, Hampstead Hospital Research Department.

Bill Tyndall - Dr Fitz please.

Patricia Fitz - Hello, Patricia Fitz there.

Bill Tyndall - Hi Patricia, it's me. Did you get in on time?

Patricia Fitz - I nearly crashed the car on the Swiss Cottage Roundabout I was so engrossed in that blooming Radio 4 documentary you recommended! Did you get in on time?

Bill Tyndall - Yeah, I beat Suzanne for the first time ever. I have got a mountain of brokers reports on my desk to work through already though. By the way, what will we do Thursday night?

Patricia Fitz - You've forgotten haven't you.

Bill Tyndall - Forgotten what?

Patricia Fitz - You've forgotten that Thursday is my birthday, haven't you? I know you have nothing planned for it, I'm quite annoyed to be honest.

Bill Tyndall - Of course I haven't. I have a surprise plan for you.

Patricia Fitz - You don't fool me. I know you've forgotten! You really don't care that much about me at all I think!

Bill Tyndall - Honestly, I haven't.

Patricia Fitz - Well, that's this surprise then?

Bill Tyndall - Oh lord, if you must know it's dinner in the new Russian place Borshch n Tears in Knightsbridge and then tickets for the Proms at the Albert Hall.

Patricia Fitz - Typical, that's just typical of you. There you go, spoiling the surprise on me.

Bill Tyndall - God, I just can't win with you. Do you want to go or not?

Patricia Fitz - Of course I would. You know I love classical music. What piece is it?

Bill Tyndall - I haven't a clue, perhaps it'll include your party piece on the piano Ave Maria, one of the less scary things you picked up at that boarding school you were banished to.

Patricia Fitz - You're being mean to the birthday girl now.

Bill Tyndall - Ok, ok. Anyway, I've got to go. Oh by the way, I'm meeting Dean for a drink tonight.

Patricia Fitz - Ok. Try not to be too late, will you? You know, I'm a bit nervous on my own.

Bill Tyndall - No problem. See you later. (*Phone hangs up*).

Suzanne Hazard (*speaking in the background*) - Your wife's not going to be out looking for us again is she Marcus?

Bill Tyndall - Oops, I shouldn't have heard that, but now that I have there's something I need to get off my chest with you Suzanne. I know you are my manager and all that but I have to ask is it ethical to be doing all your broking business with the same broker that you are sleeping with? Other people in the market are talking about it. Another fund manager said to me yesterday 'Oh Suzanne is so in love, the only problem is that he's married already'.

Suzanne Hazard - I don't see that it is any of your business Bill.

Bill Tyndall - I looked back through your last year of trade's and 90% of your commission has gone to Marcus' broking firm.

Suzanne Hazard - That's because they are the biggest brokers in the market, you should deal with them too if I'm honest.

Bill Tyndall - Look Suzanne, it's just not possible that they have the best prices on all the stocks at all times, we are under an obligation for our clients to get the best prices and that means using different brokers for different deals in my view. At the minimum it's a conflict of interest! It's getting our team a bad name in the market. Remember Jill Keates got fired from BMW fund managers for channeling all her commission through her husband's firm!

Suzanne Hazard - You're the one getting us talked about in the market, you're the one talking to those rumour mongers!

Bill Tyndall - Ok, let's leave it for now, I've an analysts meeting up at Broadgate, see you later Suzanne.

Suzanne Hazard - Yeah, go on ye auld mizmog!

(Sound of bar people talking)

Dean Redneck *(laughing)* - Jesus. Bill, do you remember the time? Uh, mad Dog McGraw stuffed that sucker at Citibank with millions of pounds of a complete dog stock.

Bill Tyndall - Of course I do. The company went bust and the guy was sacked.

Dean Redneck - Bah, so what? Mad Dog got his commission. Speaking of Mad Dog, did you hear the news about his employers?

Bill Tyndall - No, what's happened?

Dean Redneck - They let 50 people go first thing this morning. The whole trading floor, security wouldn't even let them into the building. They were each handed a letter of redundancy and told to bugger off

Bill Tyndall - You're joking. That's rough. Although I heard a better one. A friend of mine found a black plastic bag on his trading desk one day. There was a note on it saying 'You've been terminated. Please put your personal possessions in this bag and leave the building.'

Dean Redneck - It should have said you've been 'sacked', get-it, you know the note on the bag. Oh boy, the city is real here today, gone tomorrow business, isn't it? Ah well, I always have the Spanish to fall back on.

Bill Tyndall - Whatever that means! It is a risky occupation, I remember the first day I started at Hustle & Co. Tim Robinson was getting fired. My new manager said don't worry, that's not a daily occurrence. Nearly as risky as those Robert Maxwell shares you tried to sell me last week you git.

Dean Redneck - I had a long position in them so I had to get them off our book, they went up after I called you!

Bill Tyndall - Yeah right, dead cat bounce just before the company went bankrupt.

Dean Redneck - Hang on a sec, it's hardly my fault the company went bankrupt!

Bill Tyndall - Come on Dean, don't play the innocent. All the classic signs were there. Large loans from the banks. Dodgy accounting. The chairman Robert Maxwell was an absolute ego egomaniac complete with Dickie Bow and Havana cigar. Maxwell knew bloody well his company was going bankrupt, but kept lying to the public.

Dean Redneck (*Belches loudly*) - If you know so much about it you should write an article for the Stock Market Insider.

Bill Tyndall - Ha, as a matter of fact I have. I'm meeting the editor tomorrow to discuss it.

Dean Redneck - You're taking the mick. What are you going to write about?

Bill Tyndall - Exactly what we've just been talking about, how to spot companies that are going bust. I've used Robert Maxwell as my main example. It's not ok that the big players in the market are always on the right side of these crashes and the small time investors and savers get screwed over.

Dean Redneck - What are you going to call it? How to spot a stock market crook or something.

Bill Tyndall - I haven't decided yet. What about something like 'Bowties and Big Bucks - how to spot the next bankruptcy'?

Dean Redneck - And are you going to print people's names in it?

Bill Tyndall - Of course. Uh, there would be no point in it if I didn't.

Dean Redneck - Jesus Bill, you can't do that. That would be, uh, libel or something built.

Bill Tyndall - I have to use their names. The public has to be told who these crooks are. I'm sick of seeing egomaniacs ripping the public off with impunity. And the city stands by and not only watches but makes loads of money from it.

Dean Redneck - But what about your own career? You could get sacked.

Bill Tyndall - Don't worry, I've got that covered. The beauty of it is that I'm making sure it's published anonymously so no one can ever point the finger at me.

Dean Redneck - I hope you know what you're doing. I don't want to see you booted out of Hustlers. Where would I get my commission from then? *(Laughs)* Will you have another pint?

Bill Tyndall *(swallows contents of glass)* I don't know. What time is it?

Dean Redneck - 11.30pm.

Bill Tyndall - Nah I'd better go. Patricia will kill me, it's a big birthday later this week, for her it's some kind of milestone. The way she's up to emotional high dough about it you'd think it was her 40th birthday not her 25th!

(Bar sounds fade)

Tuesday

Suzanne Hamper - Hah, It's your turn to be late today Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Morning Suzanne. There was a bloody bomb scare at Moorgate. I had to get out and walk.

Suzanne Hazard - Well, don't forget your annual review with Mr. Blunt starts in a couple of minutes.

Bill Tyndall - Now that is something I'm not likely to forget Suzanne.

(Sound of door closing)

Bob Blunt - Sit down Bill. Make yourself comfortable.

Bill Tyndall - Thank you Bob.

Bob Blunt - Actually Robert if you don't mind please, yes Robert is preferable to the familiar Bob. As you know Bill I don't beat around the bush. We are very pleased with your performance so far this year. You're one of our star managers. We are increasing your salary by 20% to £60,000 pounds and giving you a bonus of £20,000 pounds.

Bill Tyndall - That's certainly generous Robert. I'm very pleased. Thanks,

Bob Blunt - You've earned it Bill. You've generated millions of pounds of income for Hustle & Co in the past year. I'm especially pleased with the profit on the Mega Conglomerates shares. The door to my office will always be open to you. Bill, speak to me whenever you want.

Bill Tyndall - Thanks Robert. I'll certainly bear that in mind.

Bob Blunt - By the way, how much have we invested in Mega Conglomerates at the moment?

Bill Tyndall - About £20 million pounds.

Bob Blunt - I think it's time to close that position, I am not convinced of the financials of that firm. Time to sell and release our profit Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Of course Robert, you're right, I'm planning to close out the bulk of the holding on Friday morning.

Bob Blunt - Why Friday?

Bill Tyndall - The Central Bank is meeting on Friday morning and I think they will move interest rates up that will cause Mega Conglomerates share price to fall heavily and therefore reduce our profit.

Bob Blunt - Hmm, good thinking Bill. Just make sure that you don't get your hand caught in a slamming door.

Bill Tyndall - I don't follow Robert?

Bob Blunt - What I mean is that as the deadline approaches market volumes will get thinner and thinner while traders hold their breath to see the outcome of the meeting. Leave selling it too late and there will be no buyers in the marketplace Bill and you'll get stuck holding the shit parcel, that's what I mean.

Bill Tyndall - I'll have it covered Robert, I am working closely with Dean from Push and Shove Stockbrokers on this so that we get the timing right.

Bob Blunt - Good, I have full trust in your judgment Bill, you should know that by now. So thanks again for your hard work. Make sure you handle the Mega Conglomerate deal properly and you'll be getting a much bigger bonus next year. You'll have to excuse me now Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Certainly, oh, before I go did you read my draft article I sent you for your review about companies going bust Robert?

Bob Blunt - Yes, I did. I thought it was a bit strong on some points to be honest. It could certainly be embarrassing to our venture capital arm that the article identifies one of their larger investments as dodgy.

Bill Tyndall - Well, it can be toned down. I've sent it to the Insider and they're probably going to publish it.

Bob Blunt - Okay. Just make sure that it goes out anonymously. We don't want any legal problems.

Bill Tyndall - Certainly Robert. Thanks again.

(Door closes, sound of dealing room returns - Sound of phone ringing)

Bill Tyndall - Hi Patricia, it's me. Guess what?

Patricia Fitz - What Bill? My birthday's canceled?

Bill Tyndall - No silly, I've got my pay rise.

Patricia Fitz - Yeah. What did you get?

Bill Tyndall - 20% increase and £20,000 pounds bonus.

Patricia Fitz - What? Just for sitting around on your backside and eating expensive meals. Don't you ever feel guilty?

Bill Tyndall - I did for a minute actually when I went out to get my cappuccino, so I threw a fiver to a shouting 'the homeless need your help' outside our building.

Patricia Fitz - Oh god, you are all heart you git.

Bill Tyndall - I know, listen, I have to leave for a lunch meeting at the Ritz with Mr. Ben Pusher. Uh, he's the editor of the Stock Market Insider.

Patricia Fitz - That's fine. I have to go too, I have a lunch meeting in the canteen with the cleaner over sausage and chips. *(Laughs)*

(Sound of piano playing and people eating cutlery cluttering and conversation.)

Bill Tyndall - This lobster is delicious, Gillian.

Gillian Penpusher - Good. I am glad you like it Bill, more wine?

Bill Tyndall - Yes, thanks.

Gillian Penpusher - I thoroughly enjoyed the um, article. A very good introduction to the warning signs that a company may be going, um, bankrupt.

Bill Tyndall - Thanks Gillian. I'm glad you liked it. It's the first real article I've written.

Gillian Penpusher - You work for Hustle and Code, don't you?

Bill Tyndall - That's right. I manage some of the UK investment funds there.

Gillian Penpusher - They're, um, a good firm. Uh, how did you do it?

Bill Tyndall - Through hard work and ability Gillian.

Gillian Penpusher - Yes, indeed. The um, article I meant, how do you spot companies that are about to go bankrupt.

Bill Tyndall - Oh, sorry Gillian. In my work I follow a lot of companies on the stock market. Amongst the ones that went bankrupt I have noticed some recurring patterns. I thought it would make a good article.

Gillian Penpusher - Were these patterns evident in the case of Robert Maxwell and other villains?

Bill Tyndall - Exactly. By the way, please make sure you publish the article anonymously with no mention of myself or my employers. My boss has insisted on that.

Gillian Penpusher - That's fine. That's normal practice in cases like this where the person writing is still working in the heart of the market. We'll use some made up name for the piece.

Bill Tyndall - Right. So when are you going to publish it?

Gillian Penpusher - Um, I think we'll publish it in Friday's edition which goes to press on Tuesday evening.

Bill Tyndall - Uh, today is Tuesday.

Gillian Penpusher - What? Um, heavens, of course it is. What was I saying? Uh, Thursday, it will go to press on Thursday evening.

Bill Tyndall - That's great Gillian, I can't wait.

(Music page to be replaced by Sound of the Room)

Suzanne Hamper - Hi Bill, did you have a good lunch?

Bill Tyndall - Not bad. That editor is a very clever guy. Listen, what I said about you and that broker guy, it doesn't mean I don't think you are a good colleague, it's just I had to say something.

Suzanne Hamper - Oh, thhhaat's absolutely alright, little Marcus was telling me over a bit of a boozy lunch earlier about the time he rang the teenage chat line and patched the call to the new guy Tom. Tom picked up the line and a chorus of kids said Hello, hello, then the next thing the invigilator managing those call lines cut in and said 'I think you are too old to be on this call sir' and the line went dead. The new guy was sitting there with a baffled look on his face

Bill Tyndall - You guys did something similar to me when I started here in fairness, note on my desk 'Ann Summers called, ring this number, she said it's important'.

Suzanne Hamper - Oh, Marcus did better than that, there was a guy on his team who was a bit of a git. Marcus rang the Lesbian Hot Chat line and patched it through to the guy's desk expecting him to be shocked by what he heard, do you know what the guy did?

Bill Tyndall - No idea.

Suzanne Hamper - He furtively looked around the office and then disappeared under his desk with the telephone and didn't reappear for half an hour!

(Laughter)

Wednesday

(Sound of boat races, oars hitting the water, cheering, sound of cars, pulling up and doors closing)

Dean Redneck - Nice new Beamer. Bill. Not as big an engine as mine though.

Bill Tyndall - Good for you Charlie!

Dean Redneck - You were able to wrangle the day off work anyway.

Bill Tyndall - Yeah, I told him I was taking clients to the Regatta.

Dean Redneck - Me too. It works every time. Anyway time for a bit of R&R after a hectic start to the year, it's quiet now on the market, you know the old saying 'Sell in May and go away'.

Stewart at the entrance - Excuse me, sir, do you have your members' enclosure badges? Thank you. Please go ahead gentleman and please remember you are not allowed to remove your jackets or ties inside.

Dean Redneck - Jesus. Talk about stuffy. I wouldn't bother going into the enclosures except it has the best Pimms cocktails at Henley, oh and the best sloan rangers of course.

Bill Tyndall - Well, it's got to be better than that polo match we were at last year. Remember you stood in all those horse turds and they had the same rule about not taking our jackets off.

Dean Redneck *(laughs)* - Yeah, I should have had those horses shot. Let's sit down on the bank here. I'll get the drinks, oh, there's Rod Stewart over there!

Bill Tyndall - Great. Phew, it's hot. I can't stick this boater hat any longer.

Dean Redneck - Here you go *(sound of pouring)*. That boater hats always bring me back to the garden parties at university.

Bill Tyndall - Same here, they were the good old days weren't they, not a care in the world. It's funny how we romanticise the past, isn't it Dean?

Dean Redneck - How do you mean Bill?

Bill Tyndall - Well how with time all the memories of the good old days at college and ex-girlfriends seem to become fond memories, do you know what I mean?

Dean Redneck - Sort of. I certainly have plenty of good memories of various girls I've shifted. What's your theory Bill, why do we only remember the good things when we think of the past?

Bill Tyndall - I don't know. Maybe it's because most of us are afraid of the future. We're all a bit bored with the present, so the only thing we can be sure of is the past and therefore it appears more rosy.

Dean Redneck - Very deep, my friend. So you're saying the only reason the past seems like the good old days is because it's not the present, not because it was genuinely better.

Bill Tindle - Exactly.

Dean Redneck - Hmm. We've done well since we left college though, haven't we?

Bill Tindle - In money terms we are top notch. Oh, I got my pay rise yesterday.

Dean Redneck - Yeah. What did you get? Bill Tyndall pretty good, 20%.

Dean Redneck - Not bad. Still not as much as me, I got 25%, that's quite a lot of extra cases of Boli champagne a year!

Bill Tyndall - You always have to go one better, don't you Dean?

Dean Redneck - Now, now Bill, you know that bitterness is the refuge of the disappointed. Anyway neither of us did as well as that Fiachra guy I heard is setting up the new index fund tracking system at your place. I hear he's some kind of rocket scientist making £250,000 a year.

Bill Tyndall - Bah, so what, why do you let things like that bother you?

Dean Redneck - You know how it is Bill, it's not enough to succeed yourself, everyone else must fail.

Bill Tyndall - Well, you're in the wrong job then because there'll always be someone doing better than you. Do you ever think that we are just a breed of parasites that live off other people's money Dean?

Dean Redneck - I'm not into thinking. I'm into drinking. (*Belches*)

Bill Tyndall - It's always a pleasure having philosophical discussions with you, Dean. Anyway, the way I see it, we are only empowered by the company temporarily. They lend us some of their power and the authority of their company name until they're finished with us. I remember going on one company visit, they really put out the red carpet, Rolls Royce collected me at the station, and slapped up meal in the Club but they had no interest in me beyond who I worked for. When Coleridge's, you know the poet, grandson showed me around Lloyds of London it wasn't because of who I am but who I worked for and there's a serious risk of getting lost in your role and confusing it with who you are.

Dean Redneck- I went for a job interview once, the guy in Lazard Frere doing the interview told me right, we compile the bible for mergers, we work 24 hours a day through the weekend and that's it. We make a lot of money. I said that suits me fine as long as my nice big cheque keeps coming in. I don't care. You used to be the same Bill but your heart doesn't seem to be in it anymore.

Bill Tyndall - Maybe you're right. I am beginning to think that there is life outside the stock market.

Dean Redneck - Wow. Steady on. There is no need for that sort of blasphemy.

Bill Tyndall - It's not blasphemy, I got a shock the other day when I got my payslip, I noticed my retirement date on it for the first time. While in college I had a great lecturer on the course subject 'The History of Political Thought', particularly eloquent on Marx's theory of the alienation of labour, the ruling class paid those employees that created the value a very small percentage of the value they created.

Dean Redneck - What's your point?

Bill Tyndall - The thought of being measured out at the very start of my career for the number of years of productive use I might provide to a large employer does not appeal to me, that's my point. I'm definitely going to look into that pub idea of mine before it's too late.

Dean Redneck - Ha, that old chestnut again, why does everyone in the city always talk about their plans to leave it, I don't get why people feel that pressure.

Bill Tyndall - Think of it this way. In the city you get paid enough money to develop an expensive lifestyle, big mortgage etc and then it's very hard to escape. Some never do. I have sometimes thought of going back to Dublin to work in my old man's business.

Dean Redneck - Are you crazy? Walk away from a great career handling hundreds of millions of pounds to change batteries and straps in old dears watches and hearing aids up a backstreet. Anyway, getting back to the real world, what's the real plan with Mega Conglomerates?

Bill Tyndall - I'm sorry, Dean, to tell you that would be insider dealing, I'm not going to get into the City habit of doing business through the bottom of a pint glass.

Dean Redneck - Look Bill I didn't want to bring it up but you owe me. Remember I gave you the heads up on Colouroll before it was suspended. I told you that my firm had been made insiders to the fact that it was going to be declared bankrupt. Hustle & Co made a killing on that Bill!

Bill Tyndall - Okay. Okay. But this is the last time we exchange information. We are going to sell the total holding on Friday morning minutes before the Central bank meeting.

Dean Redneck - You are having me on. You're really selling so soon (*Laughs*) The market will be completely wrong footed as it sees Hustle & Co's growing holding as a vote of confidence in the management. Everyone in the market thinks that you are going to keep buying those forever. Only you and me know the truth!

Bill Tyndall - Well, you'd better keep your mouth shut or it'll ruin everything.

Dean Redneck - Don't worry my friend, the only person I am interested in is myself. I won't say a word to anyone else. Now that business is out of the way, we can discuss pleasure. Did I tell you I'm not going out with Amy anymore?

Bill Tyndall - No? How come she lasted longer than most of your flings Dean?

Dean Redneck - Ah, it was getting too serious. We had considered getting married a couple of times, actually.

Bill Tyndall - Well, why didn't you.

Dean Redneck - Well, it's like this. I reckon marriage decisions are a bit like a drowning man. The drowning man makes it through the heavy, middle of the night 'are we going anywhere' discussions to surface for air once and often a second time. However time is against him and the third time he sinks due to the sheer weariness and gives in, 'well would getting married answer your question'. I'm not the settling type so I got out before I went under, there was no way I was going to trade a couple of hours of peaceful sleep for a life of bickering.

Bill Tyndall - Interesting analysis if a bit bleak. You've obviously never been in love.

Dean Redneck - Ha, love my friend, is a general anesthetic applied by nature to help extinguish the 'am I really doing this' to help get you through the marriage ceremony. Unfortunately it wears off and you wake up a couple of years later with a mother of a hangover and a couple of sprogs.

Bill Tyndall (*laughing*) - Why are you so down on relationships Dean?

Dean Redneck - Because you are bound to get bored eventually. Like seriously, in the scratcher with the same person all the time? The way I see it, for girls it's always about love and commitment whereas for men it's a bodily function to be performed with as many different members of the opposite sex as possible. It's in our genes.

Bill Tyndall - If you are a caveman, maybe, anyway, not all girls want to get married.

Dean Redneck (*sounding a bit drunk*) - Ah, and that's where you are wrong, my friend. It's in their programming. I haven't snogged a girl yet who didn't feel let down if I didn't take their phone number and promised to call. And if I do call, that's tantamount to saying 'will you marry me?'

Bill Tyndall (*laughing*) - I think the drink is bringing out the philosopher in you.

Dean Redneck - Look, uh, there are two fine looking wenches in the marquee. Let's see if we can get you to lose your monogamous ways Bill. Hey girls, champagne all round please waiter. Have any of your teams won in the rowing today?

Girl - Nah, we're only here for when they all jump in naked at the end.

Dean Redneck - Excellent. I'd like you to meet a friend of mine, Bill. He was too shy to come over and introduce himself.

Girl - Are you one of those city yuppie blokes?

Dean Redneck - Definitely, loads of money!!

(Conversation continues, but sound fades)

Dean Redneck *(very drunk)* - Yeah, girls, it's all about power in our game, when we say give me a quarter, we are not talking about sweets, but a quarter of a million pounds worth of shares! Ha, one day I lost £3 million pounds on one company. The stock market is a tough place baby!

Girls *(with affected indifference)* - Really fancy that. Listen, it was great getting the inside track on the city, but we have to make tracks ourselves, don't we? Sharon?

Sharon - Yeah. It was lovely meeting you Dean. Uh, you are such an important guy. Tell Bill when he comes back from the toilet that we had to split, power meeting to make don't you know.

Dean Redneck - Hey, wait girls, can I give you a lift to my turbo Porsche, it's red.

Sharon - No way, not only are you drunk but I find you pretty disgusting too.

Bill Tindle *(annoyed)* - Where have the girls gone? Dean, don't tell me you gave them your Masters of the Universe crap again have you?

Dean Redneck - Bah, who needs them? Plenty more out there.

Bill Tyndall - You idiot, you're in love with yourself and your job. How could anyone be interested in you? Come on, it's late, let's go.

(Sounds fade away. Door closes)

Patricia Fitz - What the hell Bill, it's 1:00 AM and you are drunk again.

Bill Tyndall - I'm sorry darling. I got held up with Dean. Huh, I see you finished off that nice red wine I was saving.

Patricia Fitz - Why shouldn't I? I'm bloody sitting on my own all night. You said you'd be home by nine Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Well, I'm sorry. As I said, I got held up with Dean.

Patricia Fitz - I'm sick of this carry on. You can move in with him if you're going to keep behaving like this!

Bill Tyndall - I think you're being a bit unreasonable Patricia.

Patricia Fitz - I don't think I'm being unreasonable at all. All I'm asking is that you try and come home at a reasonable hour at least four nights of the week, preferably sober!

Bill Tyndall - But I had a couple of things to discuss with Dean.

Patricia Fitz - It's always the same old bull. You talk to him all bloody day at work and then you spend your evenings with him and your other market cronies. Anyway, he's only interested in you for the amount of commission he can get out of you.

Bill Tyndall - Don't be stupid. It's not like that. We're friends, it's not just about business.

Patricia Fitz - You can be so naive. He would stitch you up for 50 pence.

Bill Tyndall - Why is it you don't like any of my city friends?

Patricia Fitz - All your so-called city friends are alcoholics and divorced, if not once, twice, or three times. Think about it Bill, is that the way you want to end up?

Bill Tyndall - I think you've had enough wine, let's agree to disagree.

Patricia Fitz - Leave that bottle alone (*pours a drink*). Your lifestyle makes me sick. It's obscene. The level of freebies you get. bottles of Bollinger champagne in wine bars, meals at the Ritz. Meanwhile, every day at the hospital I deal with unfortunate people who would be glad to root in the drugs of your pal's decadence.

Bill Tyndall - Seriously, give it a break, would you? I can't understand why you resent my success so much. You know that I work very hard at my job. It's survival of the fittest in the stock market. Anything I have is solely due to my ability.

Patricia Fitz - Oh, and I suppose that your time at the right university didn't help make a few influential friends, the right face, the right accent. Am I getting through?

Bill Tyndall - Look Patricia, it's late, it's a big day tomorrow for your birthday, Let's hold off on letting off steam and debating the inequities of the society we live in for now.

Thursday

Bill Tyndall - Ok Dean, let's run through the plan for tomorrow. The Bank of England meeting is at 11am. My boss doesn't want us selling too close to the meeting in case buyers dry up as the meeting approaches. I reckon the best time to sell is at 10am, what do you think?

Dean Redneck - Yes, sounds like a plan, sell the entire holding of 20 million Mega Conglomerates at ten, is that confirmed?

Bill Tyndall - Yes, I'll send you the sell order now.

(Dealing room sounds fade to be replaced by rain sounds in a street)

Bill Tyndall - Happy birthday love, why are you standing outside in the rain, they have the reservation in Borshtch n Tears, you could go in.

Patricia Fitz - Thanks Bill, oh you know me, I feel awkward in those situations.

(Rain sounds are replaced by sound of orchestra tuning up)

Usher - This way to your box, Mr. Tyndall

(sound of door opening)

Patricia Fitz - You mean that we have this whole box to ourselves *(in a whisper)*

Bill Tyndall - I'm afraid so Patricia and free champagne all night.

Bill Tyndall - And the best thing is that I got the tickets free as part of a deal. Although I'm not saying I'm going to enjoy this classical music stuff.

Waiter - Your seat madam. Would you like a glass of champagne?

Patricia Fitz - Oh, yes, please. Hmm. Lovely. Look at the size of this place, I can't remember the last time I was in the Albert Hall, it's incredible. Bill, bill, look who is in the box below us.

Bill Tyndall - Who?

Patricia Fitz - It's Prince Charles, it's Prince Charles, that nose is recognisable anywhere!

Bill Tyndall - You're right. Ba. Big deal. Why shouldn't he be here?

(Sound of conductor commencing)

Patricia Fitz - Shush. Bill. It's starting.

(Music fades)

Patricia Fitz - It's the interval, quick, let's go down to the bar. We might get a look at Prince Charles

Bill Tyndall - Oh god, please spare me that.

Patricia Fitz - I don't know why you have to be so negative whenever we are together. You never want to spend more than 20 minutes with me.

Bill Tyndall - Look, don't get wound up love, please take it easy on the champagne, remember what happened last time.

Patricia Fitz - I was not choking you in my sleep if that's what you mean, you were imagining it, my hands had merely lying across your neck,

Bill Tyndall - Someday we really have to talk about what happened to you at that boarding school Patricia.

Patricia Fitz - Oh Jesus, not that, not now, I was not traumatised in my past, I am just not great at managing alcohol but it's my birthday today so I'm going to indulge a bit and you can't stop me.

(Chattering fades out - Bedroom)

Bill Tyndall - I'm sorry.

Patricia Fitz - What for?

Bill Tyndall - I'm not quite sure to be honest but I feel I've done something wrong to you a lot of the time. I've organised a special evening for your

birthday and I've booked us a fancy hotel in Wales this weekend before you leave for the conference in San Francisco.

Patricia Fitz - You see, you haven't a clue. You're totally unfeeling. I feel like I'm reaching out to a stone. I just can't bond with you.

Bill Tyndall - What I don't understand is why you only talk about feelings when you've been drinking? When I try and talk from the heart you shut me down.

Patricia Fitz - Stop avoiding the subject Bill. The only time I can talk to you about my feelings *is (emphasis on is)* when I'm drunk and you can't even do that. It's not just letting off. Ah, turn off the light, I give up.

Bill Tyndall - Look, not yet, it feels like you have something important to say.

Patricia Fitz - Well I do, I'm 25 now, I'm not going to wait on the shelf any longer.

Bill Tyndall - Look, it's almost 2am, at this point I'd almost say anything to stop this pressure and go to sleep, so are you saying you want to get married?

Patricia Fitz - Well I'm sick of pretending everything is all right between us. Why don't you ever say anything about our relationship? Why do you leave it to me to say the hard things Bill!

Bill Tyndall - I don't know what you want me to say.

Patricia Fitz - Jesus, you're useless. This living together is getting me down. I think you should move out.

Bill Tyndall - You're joking.

Patricia Fitz - I'm not. It's my flat and I want my own life back. You know what the alternative is? I want to get married. I'm sick of this limbo. Where are we going, bill? What do you want from me?

Bill Tyndall - Shit, you sound exactly like a girl at work. She told her boyfriend, either we get married or it's off. She took her TV and the washing machine with her when she moved out. He lasted six months before he gave in.

Patricia Fitz - (*shouting*) A girl at work, a girl at work. That's all that's important to you. Work, work, work. Your personality is defined by work. Your ego is

defined by work. The only thing you're really in love with is yourself and your poxy job. How can you love anyone else?

Bill Tyndall - *(in a plaintiff tone)* Look, Patricia, I'm sorry. I can't argue anymore.

Patricia Fitz - I'm 25 now and I am not going to hang around forever

Bill Tyndall - I'm too tired. It's 2:00 AM, I've got to get up at six. 6:00 AM, tomorrow's Friday and there are some major things happening.

Patricia Fitz - Well that says it all, Work. I wish you would get out of my life.

Bill Tyndall - I don't think you really mean that.

Patricia Fitz - I do. I really do. I felt it for a long time.

(Sound of rustling of bed clothes, light being switched off.)

Friday

(Sound of alarm clock.)

Patricia Fitz - Eh, what time is it?

Bill Tyndall - *(in a determined resigned tone)* It's six o'clock.

Patricia Fitz - Oh my head. You're wide awake. How come?

Bill Tyndall - I haven't slept a wink since our late night discussion
Patricia. You're right, I will move out and see where things sit then.

Patricia Fitz - Eh, thinking, thinking, what did I say, my head's killing me.

Bill Tyndall - You don't you remember what you said last night about moving out?

Patricia Fitz - *(Wide awake)* Eh, what's that about moving out? Ah, don't pay any attention to that. I didn't mean any of it.

Bill Tyndall - I think you did. To be honest, you know what they say in vino veritas.

Patricia Fitz - No, not at all, the last four years, uh, we've been together, do they mean nothing to you.

Bill Tyndall - Of course they do, but it's not the point. Look I have some big meetings today and you have that conference in San Francisco next week to pack for, let's talk seriously when you get back.

(Dealing room sounds - Intercom sounds)

Bill Tyndall - Morning Diane, what's my schedule for today?

Diane - Oh dear Bill, you sound a bit under the weather this morning. Before I go into that Gillian Penpusher of the Stock Market Insider is on the line. She says it's important.

Bill Tyndall - Excellent. Put her through please.

Gillian Penpusher - Morning Bill. How are you?

Bill Tyndall - Great, apart from a mild hangover.

Gillian Penpusher - Not to worry you. Um, uh, you're only young once.

Bill Tyndall - So what's the story? Sorry, no pun intended.

Gillian Penpusher - Indeed. You'll be, um, glad to know that your piece is appearing in today's production, in fact it's already on the shop shelves. However, we think there's been a bit of a problem with your anonymous name for the piece.

Bill Tyndall - (*Sounding concerned*) - What do you mean?

Gillian Penpusher - The, uh, print boys are saying it mightn't come out properly because of, uh, something, uh, computer error. I'll be getting a print copy in an hour or so. I'll ring you once I see it. I'm sure it'll be fine.

Bill Tyndall - But as long as it doesn't go out under my real name, that's essential.

Gillian Penpusher - Indeed. No. I'm sure it'll be okay. I'll talk to you in a while. Bye.

Bill Tyndall - Okay. Bye. (*Hangs up*) Jesus Christ.

Sound of phone dialing.

Patricia Fitz - Morning, Patricia Fitz here.

Bill Tyndall - Hi Patricia, it's me. I'm sorry to bother you, especially after what I said this morning. There is a problem with my article for the Insider.

Patricia Fitz - Is there. Oh dear. What's happened?

Bill Tyndall - The editor of the Insider just rang. She's obviously a complete fool and a bloody glue sniffer. She just rang me and said there was a problem with my anonymous name on the print run.

Patricia Fitz - Is there? I hope for your sake they don't cock it up. Blunt will kill you if the company name is on that article.

Bill Tyndall - Jesus. Don't I know it?

Patricia Fitz - The editor is probably afraid to tell you she's screwed up, it sounds like they have screwed it up Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Oh, shut up. Will you please? You're making me shit myself,

Patricia Fitz - If it's there Bill you could get sacked if it goes out with your name on it.

Bill Tyndall - Tell me something. I don't know. God, this is an absolute nightmare.

Patricia Fitz - You better ring that editor back.

Bill Tyndall. Yes, exactly. I'll talk to you later.

(phone rings)

Gillian Penpusher - Gillian Penpusher speaking.

Bill Tyndall - It's Bill here Gillian. Listen, my article has to go out anonymously.

Gillian Penpusher - I've just got the first print copy and it's bad news I'm afraid.

Bill Tyndall - It's ha it hasn't gone out as to where I work as well, has it?

Gillian Penpusher - Um, it has, I'm afraid.

Bill Tyndall - What? I told you to make sure that it was totally anonymous.

Gillian Penpusher - I'm terribly sorry. It was, um, a glitch in the system.

Bill Tyndall - Jesus, I can get into serious trouble because, uh, of that bloody glitch.

Gillian Penpusher - As I say, I'm really sorry.

Bill Tyndall - You're sorry! Jesus. I'm the one that's going to be sorry. I can see my job walking off down the bloody road. There's nothing you can do about it. Are you sure?

Gillian Penpusher - There's nothing I can do about it. Mm. I'm positive.

Bill Tyndall - So I'm up shit creek. Now I'm going to get into serious bloody trouble here. I'm really going to get it in the neck.

Gillian Penpusher - Listen, Bill, uh, I'll see what I can find.

Bill Tindle - What?

Gillian Penpusher - I'll um, see what I can do.

Bill Tindle - Okay, please do. It's a matter of my having a job tomorrow. Thanks, bye.

(Dialing)

Dean Redneck *(voicemail)* - Dean Redneck here, I am unable to take your call at this moment, please text me.

Bill Tyndall. - Dean, it's Bill. I need to know that you have confirmed the sale order for our Mega Conglomerates. I have another situation I am managing at the moment and I won't be able to keep my eye on this for the next hour, please call me to confirm you've done the deal.

(Dialing)

Voice - Hello Legal department, Hustle & Co

Bill Tyndall - Hello, this is Bill Tyndall in the Investments Department. I submitted an article to the Stock Market Insider to be published anonymously. The editor rang me just now and told me that due to the cock up their end, my name and the first firm's name would appear on the article.

Legal - What was the nature of the article Bill?

Bill Tyndall - It's about companies that went bankrupt and the people that run them.

Legal - Are these people still alive? Can they be identified from your piece?

(Sound of a loud bong of an intercom sound)

Bill Tyndall - Sorry. Can you hold on for a moment please? What's up?

Voice in the dealing room - The bank meeting has finished and interest rates are to go up by 1% immediately. The market has fallen 50 points in response.

(Noise of excited voices in the background. Snatches of conversation. Sell down to 75 points. Cancel any buy orders until the market bottoms out.)

Legal - Pardon? Did you say something?

Bill Tyndall - I was saying to myself Dean better have sold our holding in time. Sorry, what were you saying?

Legal - Are any of the people mentioned in your article still alive?

Bill Tyndall - *(in frustration)* Of course, they're still alive. It's a topical article.

Legal - Well, then there's the problem of libel, uh, which could be very serious for the firm.

Bill Tyndall - Look, uh, at no point did I want the company's name mentioned, it was a private article that was to appear anonymously.

Legal - Be that as it may it is the end situation that we are concerned with. Have you informed Bob Blunt?

Bill Tyndall - I haven't had the chance yet.

Legal - Do it now.

Bill Tyndall - Okay. Thanks for the help.

(Hangs up dialing sound)

Dean Redneck *(voicemail)* - Dean Redneck here, I am unable to take your call at this moment, please text me.

Bill Tyndall - Dean, why haven't you called me back, I need to know that you sold our holding before the big fall in the market, call me!

(Hangs up dialing sound)

Bill Tyndall - Diane, can you please see if Bob Blunt is available.

Diane - No, sorry. He's at the meeting until 2:00 PM. Is there a problem Bill?

Bill Tyndall - Yeah, you could say that. Could you ask him to speak to me as soon as he gets back please? I'll be at my desk.

Diana - Okay. I'll tell him.

(Phone buzzes)

Bill Tyndall - Bill Tyndall speaking.

Legal - This is the legal department again. Are you sure that there is no way that the magazine can voluntarily stop the article going out?

Bill Tyndall - I'm not sure. I doubt it though. I'll ring them back and ask.

Legal - That would be the best thing. Otherwise we can try and get an injection against them to remove the magazine from the shelves.

Bill Tyndall - Okay, thanks. Bye.

Dials.

Gillian Penpusher - Hello, Gillian Pusher speaking.

Bill Tindle - It's Bill again about the article.

Gillian Penpusher - Oh dear. Yes.

Bill Tyndall - I never wanted my name on that article. My job is on the line here if the article goes out with my employer's name on it.

Gillian Penpusher - Look, I'm sorry, it has already been, uh, printed.

Bill Tindle - When the copies actually arrive at your office, I'll come down there and go through each bloody copy myself and tippex out my name and put an anonymous name on it. The thing cannot go out.

Gillian Penpusher - I'm afraid that the magazine isn't delivered centrally for, uh, circulation Bill. It goes straight out to the shops.

Bill Tyndall - Is there any way you can stop the magazine being delivered to the shops then Gillian?

Gillian Penpusher - I'm afraid not. It's um, too late.

Bill Tyndall - Well, the shit has seriously hit the fan at this end about it.

Gillian Penpusher - I'll speak to Bob Blunt, I know him and see what I can do. It's our mistake and it's um, up to me to try and get you out of trouble.

Bill Tyndall - I would be grateful if you would talk to Blunt. He's my boss and he holds the sword of Damocles over my head at the moment.

Gillian Penpusher - I'll do my best. Bye.

(Door closes)

Gillian Penpusher - Excuse me Robert.

Bob Blunt - Mr Blunt if you please, I have just seen the trade deal for our holding in Mega Conglomerates, you told me you had your best person on this Bill?

Bill Tyndall - I'm sorry Mr Blunt, I don't follow.

Bob Blunt - Our 20 million stake in Mega Conglomerates has been sold for 15 million, that is a 5 million loss on its opening price before the Bank of England meeting, I told you to handle this and it looks like you ignored me. The last fund manager that did that ended up in our 'Special Projects' department in the basement. Anyway, what do you want if it's not that?

Bill Tyndall - Have legal been in touch about the article in the Insider sir?

Bob Blunt - No, I've just got in, what is it?

Bill Tyndall - Well sir, what it is, well, I'm very sorry about what was, what has happened.

Bob Blunt - About what exactly?

Bill Tyndall - Well the article you reviewed for me, the one you said could go out anonymously, well unfortunately due to a glitch in the printing it has appeared with my name and our company name on it.

Bob Blunt - I see, this is the article which mentions the disastrous company that our venture capital arm invested in?

Bill Tyndall - Yes sir.

Bob Blunt - I'm sorry Mr. Tyndall, I can't speak to you any further at the moment. Please be good as to close the door after you leave.

(door closes)

Bill Tyndall - Diane, please put me through to Phillip Putter in personnel please.

Phillip Putter - Hello, Phillip Puter speaking.

Bob Blunt - Uh, this is Bob Blunt. Are you aware of the Tyndall situation? Of the article I mean?

Phillip Putter - Yes, sir. We've just been in touch with the legal department about the libel problem.

Bob Blunt - Okay. We have to distance ourselves from Tyndall as quickly as possible in case there is a legal backlash, also he has made a hash of our main fund's performance due to a mess he made of a deal today.

Phillip Putter - But sir, apparently it was the fault of the magazine publisher, not his.

Bob Blunt - I don't care whose fault it was. Our chairman will be on the phone to me as soon as he hears about this. He will want heads to roll and it's not going to be mine.

Philip Putter - Yes, sir. So is this a case for the 'special projects' department?

Bob Blunt - No, this is an exit situation, this is how we are going to handle it. Get his personnel file out, see if we can twist his annual appraises to make it appear that we were increasingly unhappy with him. What's the name of his department head?

Phillip Putter - It's Suzanne Hazard.

Bob Blunt - Oh yeah. Inform Ms. Hazard that she will be giving evidence against Mr. Tyndall, that he was becoming a liability at work or something. Do you think she will have a problem with that?

Phillip Putter - I don't yet, I had heard from colleagues that there had been some acrimony between them recently.

Bob Blunt - Good, play that up into a 'breakdown in trust'. Finally, in all press releases, we deny all knowledge that the article was going out and say that we never saw it. I think that should give us a copper fastened case for dismissing him. Oh, and tell Suzanne Hazard I want to see her.

Phillip Putter - Yes sir.

(Cafe)

Bill Tyndall - We don't usually do lunch Suzanne, and I know Speedy's is not your kind of place, what's up?

Suzanne Hazard - It's the nearest place to our building. Listen, I got dragged into a meeting just now with a senior director, what's going on Bill?

Bill Tyndall - Oh, I screwed up, or more accurately the Insider magazine screwed up and it's looking like Dean screwed me over!

Suzanne Hazard - Are you a member of the union Bill?

Bill Tyndall - No, that's something that was always frowned upon in the city.

Suzanne Hazard - Well union membership is a bit like fire insurance, and at the moment your house is ablaze as Phillip Putter from HR wants to see you in an hour and he wants me there as your manager.

(door closes)

Phillip Puter - Good afternoon Mr. Tyndall. My name is Phil Puter from the personnel department. Following the events of today we are giving you notice of suspension with immediate effect pending an investigation into all the circumstances. Equally your behaviour in the office has been a matter of concern for some time now. There was the management training week in Leatherhead where our firm sent you for your anger management issues and also your manager has shared details of a number of altercations with her in the workplace over recent weeks, taken together these are creating a breakdown in trust, Mr Tyndall.

Bill Tyndall - I'm shocked that it has come to this. What happened wasn't my fault. And hang on a second, when I was selected for that training programme in Leatherhead I was told it was due to me being senior management material, now it's being twisted. And the reason that Suzanne and I have had altercations is a private matter that concerns an ethical matter that I have raised with her.

Phillip Puter - These matters will all be examined during your suspension. I'm only here today to deliver your notice of suspension. Irrespective of the outcome I can assure you that you will receive a good reference. It's, uh, not Hustle and Co's practice to rubbish people.

Bill Tyndall - This is starting to sound like a foregone conclusion. I'm very sorry and very surprised. The job market is very poor at the moment. How do you expect me to get another job?

Phillip Puter - I appreciate no one would step lightly into the current market, but we are exercising our rights to dismiss you, excuse me, suspend you according to your contract regardless.

Bill Tyndall - It wasn't my fault that this has happened. Mr. Bland was aware that I was sending out the article.

Phillip Puter - I'm not in a position to discuss it.

Bill Tyndall - Well, uh, if that's the way it is, I will have to file a case for unfair dismissal with ACAS. You can't sack me for the magazine's cock up.

Phillip Puter - As already mentioned by Mr Tyndall that is not the only factor. Your head of department, Suzanne Hamper, has prepared a document that shows that you have been exhibiting aggressive and irrational behavior in the workplace recently.

Bill Tyndall - What? I don't believe it, Suzanne. How did you trump that lot up? This is a stitch up.

Phillip Puter - I'm not in a position to carry on any further discussion and you are starting to exhibit this anger issue which I mentioned. I would like you to clear out your desk into the black plastic bags provided, you must be out of the building in 15 minutes.

Bill Tyndall - You mean I can't even stay at my desk until lunchtime!

Philip Puter (*sounding very patronizing*) - Mr. Tyndall. It's my own judgment that where people and organizations have drifted apart, it is better to make a clean break. This is likely to be your last day working for Hustle and Co. Go Home.

(Door Slams. Sound of Drawers being opened and emptied into bags)

Bill Tyndall - I can't believe Blunt would do that to me. I'll never get another job in the city. I'm finished.

Suzanne Hazard - I'm very sorry about what's happened Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Sorry, sorry. Yeah, Suzanne. That's all I hear from everyone Anyway. You had a major part in it, how could you do that to me? Turn on me like that, I would never have mentioned what's going on between you and Marcus.

Suzanne Hazard - I had no choice. Philip Putter brought around a document to sign. They said that if I don't do as they instructed, I could say goodbye to being head of the department.

Bill Tyndall - Is that a price worth paying?

Suzanne Hazard - I've worked here since I left school. Bill, I have nothing else.

Bill Tyndall - Bah, forget about it. There's nothing that can be done about it now. I better shut off my computer and go. What's that on my screen? Bill Tyndall link is terminated. Well, they just about sums it all up.

Security man - Excuse me, Mr. Tyndall. I'm the security man for the building. I've been asked to escort you from the premises immediately.

Bill Tyndall - Okay. I am just clearing my desk.

(Building doors close)

Diane - Bill, Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Diane, what are you doing out here on the street.

Diane - I just heard what's happened, I think it's awful. All your years of work for the company in two miserable plastic bags.

Bill Tyndall - I appreciate your kindness in coming down to say goodbye Diane.

Diane - And what about the softball league that you run for our department, will I write Suspended on the fixtures list on the notice board?

Bill Tyndall - Yes, that might be best, here, help me get my plastic bags into the taxi please and all the best Diane.

Monday a couple of weeks later

Sound of a dealing room. Phone buzzes.

Suzanne Hazard - Morning. Suzanne Hazard.

Dean Redneck- Morning Suzanne. It's Dean Redneck here. I've heard that you are in charge of all Bill's business now.

Suzanne Hamper - That's right. I'm in sole authority now.

Dean Redneck - Congratulations. I hope that we will be able to do business together. Dean did make a mess of that Mega Conglomerates business, his order to sell was a bit of a fiction, I think he was losing it if I am honest with you Suzanne. Now that Bill is no more so to speak and I do work for the same firm as Marcus so we are keeping it in the family so to speak.

Suzanne Hamper - Certainly, Dean I don't see any reason why not.

(Sound fades, replaced by the sounds of a bar)

Patricia Fitz - You must have known I would need an explanation Bill.

Bill Tyndall - Listen Patricia, I've no problem meeting you even though it's been three months since I moved back to Ireland.

Patricia Fitz - Like, what the hell, I arrived back from the conference in San Francisco, and you'd gone, like disappeared. I'd even brought you back a pair of Levis Jeans as a present.

Bill Tyndall - I find it hard to talk about these things Patricia, I don't know why, perhaps it's because there wasn't much talk of feelings in my home growing up. Anyway, do you remember we had the weekend in the hotel in Wales before you left for San Francisco?

Patricia Fitz -Yes, I do, what about it?

Bill Tyndall - While we were there I was talking to the solicitors about my unfair dismissal claim and stuff while at the same time I had this gnawing unease in my stomach being with you, I didn't believe in us as a couple anymore

but I dreaded telling you this. You challenged me, 'why do you look so down' and I replied that I was so upset about what Hustle & Co have done to me.

Patricia Fitz - Yes, I remember that. But love can overcome anything Bill, that's what I thought anyway.

Bill Tyndall - I guess intellectually conceiving of love and the absence of it in the practical reality of our daily life together was a gap that neither of us were able to bridge.

Patricia Fitz - Ok, well at least you're being honest now, do you miss the City?

Bill Tyndall - After the sham of an investigation during my suspension I got 'terminated' as they say, I am challenging the dismissal and ACAS said a strong point was that my employers gave tacit permission for the article to go out, they even issued a new HR procedure after my termination closing what had been a gap in their procedures on this. But I'm not expecting a big payout to be honest. I applied for a couple of other jobs in the City but my heart's not in it anymore.

Patricia Fitz - Do you keep in touch with Dean?

Bill Tyndall - That rat, I should have reported him to the Stock Exchange regulatory authority. I found out that the reason he didn't carry out the sell order on that Mega Conglomerates holding was because he had a large personal account holding which he had borrowed money to buy. He had to hold off on selling Hustle & Co's holding until he sold all his own and by that stage the price had dropped hugely.

Patricia Fitz - I never liked him, not someone you could trust to be honest.

Bill Tyndall - Bah, you know what Patricia, that it's all behind me now and I feel strangely philosophical about it. I feel bad about how things went between us but I also feel I've come through a form of catharsis, a realisation that money and status don't bring happiness.