

# **CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE NURD KIND**

A Short Spoof

by

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**[www.schoolplayproductions.co.uk](http://www.schoolplayproductions.co.uk)**

THE BUTLER DID IT  
START OF TERM AT GRUNGE HILL  
&  
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE NURD KIND

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ISBN 978 1 872475 81 3

Printed and published by  
**SchoolPlay Productions Limited,**  
15 Inglis Road,  
Colchester, Essex, CO3 3HU

## **CAST**

**Dad**                    *Kevin Nurd*

**Ma**                     *Pauline Nurd*

**Tracey**                *their 16-year-old daughter*

**Wayne**                *their 14-year-old son*

**Jason**                 *their 12-year-old son*

### **Her-next-door**

**Alan**                  *Tracey's boyfriend*

### **Gran**

### **Auntie Beryl**

**Koker** }  
          }  
**Kola** }                *visitors from a neighbouring galaxy*



## CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE NURD KIND

by Roger Poole

*The scene is the Nurd family's living room in the Midlands. On a settee and two armchairs arranged diagonally across the stage, facing a TV set down left, sit DAD, MA, JASON, WAYNE and TRACEY. There is a chair at the back of the room and another at stage left. DAD'S can of beer is on a low coffee table in front of the settee. A door upstage centre leads to the garden. A door downstage right leads to the hall and stairs.*

*(It is evening. DAD, MA, TRACEY, WAYNE and JASON are sitting around the television, viewing with vacant expressions. MA makes occasional inexpert movements with her knitting needles).*

**Dad:** *(After a silence).* Disgusting! That's what I call it - disgusting!

**Ma:** *(After a slight pause).* What is?

**Tracey:** What's wrong with it?

**Dad:** All this violence and foul language. It's a disgrace.

**Ma:** *(Agreeing).* Oh, yes.

**Dad:** I mean, it's not fit for family viewing. What kind of example does it set?

**Jason:** I think it's good.

**Dad:** *(Angrily).* Good! What's good about it? All that fighting and swearing! YOU hadn't ought to be watching, anyway. You're too young.

**Jason:** Oh, Dad!

**Dad:** Rewind it, Wayne, I'm gonna tell your Auntie Beryl we don't want to see no more of their holiday videos. What they get up to in Torquay's their own business. What's on the telly, anyway?

**Wayne:** *(Operating the remote control).* There's one o'them nature films - all about dung beetles.

**Dad:** Disgustin'! We ain't havin' that in the Nurd household! I don't know why I pay the licence.

**Tracey:** You don't, do you?

**Dad:** 'Course I do - well, at least, I did once.

**Ma:** You're supposed to pay EVERY year, Kevin!

**Dad:** Yeah .... well .... I'm getting round to it, aren't I? I mean, I haven't been well just lately, have I?

**Ma:** *(Roused).* Not been well! You've been well enough to get yourself down to the betting shop every morning this week aand over to the "Dog and

Parsnips" every night till chucking-out time.

**Dad:** (*Caught off guard*). Yes .... well .... a man has to relax now and again, don't he?

**Ma:** I know ONE as has to!

**Wayne:** (*Standing*). I'm going to play my "Mindless Morons" CD upstairs, Mom.

**Ma:** All right, love.

**Dad:** And keep the volume down! We don't want to hear that load of long-haired layabouts bellyaching down here!

**Tracey:** Better than a fat bald old layabout bellyaching down here!

**Dad:** (*Bristling*). Just watch it, our Tracey, or you'll get a clout round the ....

*(A knock at the door prevents DAD from providing details of where TRACEY will receive a clout. WAYNE decides against going to his room and waits to see who is calling).*

**Ma:** Somebody at the door. Wonder who it is.

**Jason:** Might be the football pools man.

**Ma:** He never comes round the back. Might be Her-Next-Door.

**Tracey:** Or Auntie Beryl with her club money.

**Dad:** (*With heavy sarcasm*). Yeah, or it could be Arnold Schwarzenegger come round to borrow a knitting pattern! Why don't you stop rattling and open the perishin' door!?

**Tracey:** Why don't YOU open it?

**Dad:** WHAT?

**Tracey:** (*Cowed somewhat*). I said that's TRUE. I'll open it.

*(She opens the door upstage. No one enters. She steps outside, leaving the door ajar).*

**Dad:** (*To MA*). If it IS your Beryl, don't ask about her leg or she'll be here all night.

**Ma:** If it's Her-Next-Door, ask when they're going to mend the fence and keep their hens off our rhubarb.

*(TRACEY enters followed by KOKER and KOLA, both of whom are dressed in the kind of outfit typical of aliens in cartoon stories. Their faces are green).*

**Tracey:** Hey, dad, there's two fellers here. See 'f you can help 'em out.

*(MA puts down her knitting, rises and moves to the back of the settee).*

**Dad:** *(Sitting with his back to the door and therefore not realising that the visitors are standing right behind him).* Tell 'em we don't want any. And if it's Jemima's Witnesses, say not today, thank-you .... we're all devout West Bromwich Albion worshippers.

**Koker:** Good evening.

**Dad:** *(Jumping to his feet and turning as if from an electric shock).* Blimey O'Riley! How did you ....? Who ....?

**Koker:** My name is Koker.

**Kola:** And mine is Kola. We are deeply honoured to make your acquaintance.

*(KOLA turns to MA, takes her hand and kisses it with old-time chivalry).*

**Ma:** Ooooooh! Charmed, I'm sure!

*(KOKER reaches over the settee, takes DAD'S hand, bends over it and kisses it).*

**Dad:** *(Stepping back and snatching his hand away).* 'Ere, what's YOUR game?

*(JASON and WAYNE nudge each other and snigger).*

**Koker:** We are travellers from the solar system Lexima.

**Dad:** Well, it's no good tryin' to flog anything round here tonight, mate. Come back on pay day.

**Kola:** To be precise, we come from Amaril, largest planet in our galaxy.

**Ma:** Fancy!

**Dad:** It ain't trick-or-treat, is it?

**Koker:** We have just arrived on your planet Earth and ....

**Dad:** *(Sitting and picking up beer can).* I hope you ain't about to sing carols! "Good King Wenceslas", that's all you lot ever come out with. - "Good King Wenceslas". I can't stand "Good King Wenceslas". You never sing anything movin' and poetic like "Rudolf the Red-nosed Reideer", or that other one .... how's it go .... ? *(DAD starts singing in his saloon-bar baritone).* "Have yourself a merry little Christmas ...." *(He takes a swig).*

**Kola:** We bring you greetings from Amaril.

**Koker:** From Teligorn, our Emperor.

**Kola:** And from the Empress Zumelia.

**Koker:** On behalf of the entire Council of the Amarillion tribes, we bring a message of friendship and goodwill!

*(KOKER and KOLA smile amiably, bow from the waist, straighten and study the effects of their historical announcement upon the NURD family).*

**Dad:** *(Thoughtfully, suspiciously, having understood nothing they have said).*  
Double-glazing!

**Kola:** *(Startled).* We beg your pardon?

**Dad:** You're trying to sell us double-glazing, right?

**Kola:** We regret - we do not understand your meaning.

**Koker:** The term you use is strange to us. It does not feature in the briefing we received ....

**Kola:** .... before leaving Amaril. We have no knowledge ....

**Koker:** .... of double-glazing.

**Jason:** Neither had the cowboys who double-glazed Auntie Beryl's house last year.  
*(He smirks at his own joke and nudges WAYNE).*

**Kola:** We have journeyed for several of your Earth years on our mission to bring peace.

**Koker:** We represent a mighty star fleet awaiting us thirty miles above your planet.

**Kola:** With the leaders of your world, we shall discuss co-operation between our people and your own ....

**Ma:** *(To DAD).* Don't they talk lovely, Kev?

**Koker:** Our landing craft was bound for a settlement called New York ....

**Kola:** .... But in your planet's polluted atmosphere our instruments malfunctioned ....

**Koker:** .... and we have lost our way.

**Dad:** New York? Blimey O'Riley, you're tellin' me you've lost your way, if you're tryin' to get to New York! *(DAD guffaws with the enthusiasm of someone who is NOT lost when in the company of others who are!).*

**Tracey:** 'Ere, if you're going to America, you wanna go to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

**Jason:** That's where our Auntie Pat lives. She's married to a cop.

**Wayne:** Yeah, he's got a gun.

**Ma:** Two lovely little girls, they've got, an' all .... Polly and Styrene. Polly's five and St ....

**Kola:** *(At last, becoming impatient!).* We wish you to take us to your leader!

**Ma:** What?

**Dad:** Who?

**Koker:** Since we have failed to reach our intended destination, we must make contact instead with your local ruler.

**Dad:** *(Perplexed).* I don't get you mate.

**Koker:** We would like to talk with your regional commander.

**Ma:** Ooooooh!

**Dad:** D'you mean Councillor Pratt?

**Ma:** Or the vicar?

*(There is a knock on the garden door. HER-NEXT-DOOR enters without waiting to be admitted).*

**Her N-D:** It's only me! *(She perches on an arm of one of the armchairs).* To MA - Hey, Pauline, I've just heard - Mrs. Foskett on the corner's having another. That'll be her seventh. Hope this one's better lookin' than the rest. They all look like constipated warthogs. *(Suddenly noticing KOKER and KOLA).* Oh, excuse me - didn't realise you had visitors. Relations of Kevin's, obviously. Can't mistake the family likeness.

**Dad:** *(Annoyed).* They're selling double-glazing.

**Tracey:** They took the wrong turning for Newport.

**Wayne:** They're after the vicar.

**Kola:** *(Impatiently).* Stop! Listen! *(But he's wasting his breath).*

**Jason:** Vicar's on his holidays again. I know 'cause choir practice is cancelled.

**Tracey:** *(To KOKER and KOLA).* Best thing you can do is get back to the motorway.

**Her N-D:** There's a twenty-mile tail-back on the motorway, love, according to Radio WM. A mobile chippy's collided with a truck load of pigs. Now the north-bound's covered with sausages in batter.

**Ma:** None o'mine'll eat sausage. Funny innit?

**Koker:** *(Almost shouting).* IS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU FOOLISH BEINGS / CAN NO-ONE UNDERSTAND OUR PLIGHT?

**Her N-D:** *(Startled).* Oooh don't raise your voice like that, dear. You've no idea what my nerves is like. Doctor Cheesewright says to me, he says ....

**Koker:** Then help us, please. Cease your babbling and gabbling which reminds me so much of the sporkon birds at mating time on our home planet.

**Dad:** 'Ere, don't get shirty with us, pal. You know what you can do with yer sporkon birds, whatever they might be. Ever since you two came in you've talked nothin' but rubbish.

**Her N-D:** Oh yes, Kevin, that reminds me: what's that heap of rubbish in your back garden?

**Tracey:** Well, that's very nice, I must say.

**Her N-D:** No, I mean what's that THING you've got out there?

**Dad:** Thing? How do you mean, thing?

**Ma:** Have you left your mountain bike outside, Jason?

**Wayne:** There's that trolley from Tesco's.

**Her N-D:** No, none o'that. There's something big where your rhubarb is.

**Dad:** (*A tiger roused*). On my rhubarb! There'd better NOT be somethin' on my rhubarb!

**Ma:** (*To TRACEY*). Hark at the proud gardener! He only ever goes out there to spit!

**Dad:** (*Striding majestically to the garden door*). I'd like to see anybody dump anythin' on MY rhubarb!

**Ma:** (*To HER-NEXT-DOOR as DAD peers out through the open door*). Sure it's not your hens, Elsie? If you'd get your Brian to mend the fence, the perishin' things wouldn't get through.

**Dad:** (*Surveying his property through the gathering gloom of evening*). Blimey O'Riley, there IS summat out there! Looks like a skip with flashing lights on it.

**Jason:** Who's left a rubbish skip in our garden?

**Ma:** Of all the flippin' cheek!

**Kola:** It is ours.

**Dad:** (*As if KOLA had not spoken*). I bet it's them next-door-but-one...you know, where they're having an extension built for the snooker table. Knocking down the old coalhouse first. The daft builders - they've delivered a skip here by mistake! (*Sits*).

**Ma:** Typical!

**Her N-D:** I can believe it, love, I can just believe it. Don't care what they do nowadays, builders don't. Look what happened when we had our downstairs toilet built ....

**Koker:** Our landing shuttle is parked on the ground behind this dwelling. We apologise for any damage caused to your crops.

**Her N-D:** (*Oblivious*). First time Brian flushed the loo, the door fell off!

**Ma:** Oooh, I know! Me sister's storm-porch was the same. The builder was at our Beryl's so long working on it, his wife reported him missing. Police dug up eight gardens looking for his remains! All they found was a forty-year-old cocker spaniel and a bomb with 'Present from Adolf Hitler' painted on it.

**Her N-D:** Fancy!

**Ma:** Very first day at Beryl's, he took hour and a half to get the lid off his box.

**Her N-D:** What - his tool box?

**Ma:** No, his sandwich box!

**Her N-D:** It's a disgrace!

**Ma:** And then, when he'd finally done, Beryl's postman complained he couldn't reach the letter box.

**Her N-D:** Why was that?

**Ma:** Dozy builder had only gone an' hung the door upside down, hadn't he?

**Kola:** (*Making a huge effort to remain in control of his temper*). Our - landing -

craft - has - descended - upon - your - recreation - area. There - is - no - need - to - be .... *(But he is interrupted by another knock on the back door).*

**Ma:** Somebody at the door. Wonder who it is.

**Jason:** Might be the football pools man.

**Ma:** He never comes round the back.

**Tracey:** Could be Auntie Beryl with her club money.

**Dad:** *(Exasperated)*. Don't go through all that again!

**Her N-D:** I'll see who it is.

*(KOKER and KOLA move out of her way. She opens the door. The audience cannot see who she is talking to).*

**Her N-D:** Oh, hello, love. D'you want Tracey? *(To TRACEY)*. Tracey, it's Alan - your heart's delight, the light of your life, the man of your dreams, your hunky handsome superstud!

**Tracey:** Tell Alan to come in. The rest 'ad better call round tomorrw night.

*(HER-NEXT-DOOR gestures an invitation and ALAN enters. He is a pale youth, dressed in sweat-shirt and jeans, and is the very opposite of the image HER-NEXT-DOOR's words have created. He stands just inside the doorway, looking shyly from TRACEY to his feet and back to TRACEY again).*

**Tracey:** 'Lo Alan.

**Alan:** 'Lo Trace. *(Pause)*.

**Tracey:** What d'you want?

**Alan:** *(Pause)*. Comin' out?

**Tracey:** Dunno. *(Pause)*. Where?

**Alan:** Dunno.

**Tracey:** Oh.

**Alan:** *(Embarrassed at realising that everyone on stage is listening to him)*. We could go and feed me dad's ferrets.

**Dad:** *(With heavy sarcasm)*. Blimey O'Riley, who said romance was dead! It's sheer poetry listenin' to these two, innit? I can hear violins playin'!

*(KOKER and KOLA have been conferring during DAD'S speech. KOKER approaches ALAN - much to ALAN'S alarm!).*

**Koker:** May I ask if you are a member of this family?

**Alan:** Eh?

**Koker:** Are you related to this young person? *(He indicates TRACEY)*.

**Alan:** (*Growing suspicious*). What's it to you, mate?

**Ma:** It's all right, Alan. Don't be rude to the gentlemen. They're just on their way to Newmarket.

**Kola:** (*Snapping*). New York!

**Ma:** (*Startled by KOLA'S vexation*). Oooh!

**Koker:** (*To ALAN*). I merely wish to talk to you for a moment. Shall we step outside?

**Alan:** (*Interpreting this as a challenge to a fight and becoming suddenly macho*). Certainly! Any time you like, pal. You wait here, Trace! (*He opens the door*).

**Tracey:** Where you goin'?

**Alan:** Only outside - to sort out your boyfriend here!

**Tracey:** (*Agitated*). He's NOT my boyfriend. Don't be stupid!

**Dad:** Well. YOU loosed him in, gel - him and his sidekick.

**Alan:** (*Shaking with jealous anger*). I might have known, Tracey Nurd. The minute my back's turned you start inviting blokes into the house. I thought you promised ....

**Tracey:** (*Becoming angry herself*). Promised? Promised what?

**Alan:** You know.

**Tracey:** No, I don't. What did I promise?

**Alan:** No more chattin' fellers up. No more playin' the field.

**Tracey:** (*Bristling*). Playing the field? Playing the field? Who d'you think you are, comin' 'ere on a Tuesday night ....

**Wayne:** It's Wednesday.

**Tracey:** .... comin' 'ere on a Wednesday night, expecting me to go out with you at ten o'clock....

**Jason:** It's quarter to nine.

**Tracey:** .... expecting me to go out with you at quarter to nine, and insultin' my friend Mr. Kola ....

**Koker:** I'm Koker.

**Tracey:** (*Exasperated*). Koker - Kola - whatever! All I can say is you've got a nerve, Alan Hodson, and I don't care if you never come round 'ere again! So push off!

*(TRACEY becomes tearful. ALAN stands helplessly in the open doorway, wondering what to do. During the following conversation, MA and TRACEY move downstage left and talk in dumbshow with HER-NEXT-DOOR. Downstage right, WAYNE and JASON talk with DAD).*

**Koker:** (*Moving to centre-stage with KOLA*). These Earth beings are primitive and

irrational. Communicating with them is impossible.

**Kola:** We will make one final attempt to do so, however. Silence them with your hypnos spray. Then they MUST listen to us.

**Koker:** (*Producing a spray cannister*). The hypnos cannister is almost empty. I made considerable use of it in quelling the frolicsome Zargs on the planet Vix.

**Kola:** So I recall.

**Koker:** And also the deranged Ogball supporters arriving for a match on the planet Wox.

**Kola:** Quite so. Yet, if enough remains to hold these primordial beings tongue-tied for a brief time ....

**Koker:** I'll see what can be done. (*KOKER waves the cannister in an arc above his head, a fine spray settling upon the assembly*).

**Ma:** (*Affronted*). Mr. Koker, what ARE you doing? I hope you're not suggesting my lounge is nifty. I admit (*Struggling to get her words out as the hypnos spray takes effect, her voice becoming increasingly mechanical and drowsy*). that .... when .... Dad .... takes .... 'is .... boots .... off .... (*Pause*).

**Kola:** Forgive us for taking this measure, humans, but we must proceed with our mission without further delay. At present you are unable to move or speak, but you are able to hear everything we say to you.

**Koker:** Our glorious home planet of Amaril supports a race of beings like ourselves - beings who have attained the highest peak of civilisation.

**Kola:** The Council of the Amarillion peoples recognise it as their duty to venture forth into the universe, making contact with other life forms, and helping them to develop as we have done.

(*DAD gives a grunt of frustration*).

**Koker:** Kola and I are but two of the ten thousand Amarillions who are voyaging in star fleets through unexplored regions of space ....

**Kola:** Settling on planets which make us welcome and respond to our teaching ....

**Koker:** Planets whose people desire progress ....

**Kola:** And are eager for change ....

**Koker:** Casting aside their ignorance ....

**Kola:** To learn the lessons and skills we can teach ....

**Koker:** For instance: how to work seventeen or eighteen hours a day without tiring ....

**Kola:** How to live on grass and herbs instead of the harmful foods you eat at present ....

**Koker:** No more chocolate, or fish and chips.

**Kola:** No more crisps, no beef burgers - and no beer!

*(DAD grunts again, this time in alarm).*

**Koker:** You see, we know your weaknesses.

**Kola:** We have learned your language.

**Koker:** We understand your ways.

**Kola:** But we will teach you how to put aside all useless and trivial things....

**Koker:** Like television and snooker.

**Kola:** Football and bingo.

**Koker:** We can teach you the art of meditation, of seeking out eternal truths.

**Kola:** We can ....

*(He is interrupted by a bumping noise Offstage, and GRAN enters through the door downstage right. She wears an ankle-length nightdress and her hair is in curlers).*

**Gran:** I was just getting into bed when I heard you lot down here. Are you having a party? Who's here? I've left me glasses upstairs. *(MA can only grunt in reply).*

*(KOKER points the hypnos cannister at her, but it is now quite empty. GRAN takes it off him, drops it onto the settee and shakes his hand, peering short-sightedly into his face).*

**Gran:** How do young man. You're looking peeky. Been drinkin' Taiwan lager? Last face I saw the colour o'yours had been in the sea two months. *(GRAN notices KOLA and shakes his hand, too).* By heck, your pal looks as bad. I should try liver salts. Friends of our Tracey's, are you? You both look smarter than that scruffy Alan who comes hanging round here after her. *(ALAN grunts with indignation, but GRAN hasn't noticed him yet).* She's a one for the lads is out Tracey. I was the same at her age, mind. The fellers used to come round our house in droves. By the dozen. Me dad used to go mad. Said I'd got to decide on just one of 'em. They all wanted me to marry 'em, you know. Oh, yes, I had ample choice. But what did I do, eh? What d'you think I did? I went and married Archie Barnfather - the barmiest pillock in the whole street... God rest his soul! I must have been daft choosin' him. Do you know, after the honeymoon, I sent him round the Co-op for a tin of sardines ....

*(There is yet another knock at the back door).*

**Gran:** Oooh, somebody at the back door. I wonder who it is.

**Jason:** (*Wagging his jaw as the effects of the hypnos wear off.* Might - be - the - football pools man.

**Ma:** (*After exercising her mouth a little*). He never comes round the back. Might be your Auntie Beryl with her club money.

**Dad:** (*Groans like orang outang with severe toothache*). COME IN WHOEVER IT IS!

(*AUNTIE BERYL enters .... with her club money! GRAN sits on chair upstage*).

**Beryl:** It's only me. Sorry I'm so late. I've had to take our Glenys up to Casualty with her bottom.

**Dad:** You what?

**Beryl:** She's come out in that rash again.

**Ma:** Poor little duck.

**Dad:** It's only nettle-rash. She's probably been sliding down the canal bank again.

**Beryl:** That's what the doctor said. But I'd like a second opinion. (*Sits on chair stage left. MA perches on arm of armchair left*).

**Dad:** You've just had one - MINE!

**Ma:** Sit down, Beryl. I'll put the kettle on. These two young chaps have just dropped in. They're on their way to New Brighton.

**Kola:** (*Wearily, as he and KOKER sink into the settee*). New York.

(*WAYNE slides off settee and onto floor and JASON shuffles along to make room for them*).

**Beryl:** New York! Ooh, smashin'. Hey - if you get the chance, pop round and see our Pat in Tulsa.

**Jason:** Yeah, she's married to a cop.

**Wayne:** He's got a gun.

**Ma:** And they've two lovely little girls -

**Koker:** (*Bored*). Indeed - Polly and Styrene. You mentioned them earlier.

**Beryl:** Never been further than Torquay, meself - hey, that reminds me: did you like our holiday video?

**Ma:** Oh, yes, it were lovely, weren't it, Dad?

**Dad:** (*Grumpily*). Unbelievable!

**Beryl:** (*To DAD*). I say, Kevin, what's that you've got out there on your rhubarb?

**Dad:** Horse manure.

**Beryl:** No, that big thing.

**Dad:** (*Wittily*). A 'orse.

**Kola:** I believe you are referring to our -

**Dad:** Actually it's a rubbish skip from up the road. Ruddy builders 'ave 'ad it delivered 'ere by mistake.

**Beryl:** You ought to complain.

**Gran:** *(To DAD)*. You wanna go round and make a stink about it.

**Her N-D:** Flippin' builders. Look what happened when we had our downstairs toilet built -

**Koker:** *(Rising in desperation)*. **NO - PLEASE - NO!** IT IS OUR LANDING SHUTTLE. WE CAME IN IT - BRINGING GREETINGS - FROM OUR EMPEROR - TELIGORN!

**Wayne:** Tele what? Oooh, I nearly forgot. Change the channel. Mindless Morons are on in a minute. They're at number three this week. *(Pointing a remote control at the TV)*. Nah! Number Four!

**Beryl:** *(To MA)*. I've brought me club money, Pauline.

**Ma:** Ta. D'you want to order anything?

**Beryl:** Not yet. I'm saving for a new dressing-gown for the winter. The cat had her kittens on me old one and they think it's theirs now.

**Dad:** *(Crossing to GRAN'S chair and, taking the jacket draped round it as he speaks)*. Well, It's time I was off to the 'Dog and Parsnips'. *(To KOKER and KOLA)*. Fancy a couple of jars, lads?

**Koker:** *(Puzzled)*. Jars?

**Dad:** Bevvies. Pints. *(He mimes the downing of a pint)*. Suit yourself, anyway. *(He puts on the jacket)*. Now, where's me cap? *(He goes out through the door downstage right)*.

*(KOKER and KOLA stand)*.

**Kola:** We must leave.

**Koker:** This planet is quite unsuitable.

**Kola:** Nothing worthwhile can be done here.

**Koker:** Civilisation here is in its infancy. The prevailing culture is too basic and undeveloped.

**Kola:** Our task here would be too great.

**Koker:** Quite impossible.

**Kola:** Yet we will be seen to have failed in our mission.

**Koker:** The Emperor will not be pleased.

**Kola:** He may not believe what we report about these creatures. *(Pause)*.

**Koker:** We could take back evidence.

**Kola:** Evidence?

**Koker:** A live specimen.

**Kola:** *(Glancing in the direction of the hall where DAD can be heard whistling).*  
You mean, return to Amaril with a living creature from planet Earth?

*(KOKER nods and smiles. DAD enters).*

**Dad:** Are you coming, then, lads? It's only just across the road - unless you'd prefer 'The Mermaid's Arms'. Nice drop of bitter down there, but it's a ten-minute walk.

**Koker:** We have transport.

**Dad:** Of course - your car's outside, innit? Fair enough, we'll drop in to the 'Mermaid', then.

*(As the others chat together, KOKER and KOLA steer him away from the hall door and towards the back door).*

**Dad:** What - you're out here? Oh, well, all right, then. *(To MA).* I'll bring you back a bottle of stout, love.

**Gran:** 'Night, Kevin.

**Dad:** *(Calling as he exits with KOKER and KOLA).* 'Night.

**Ma:** Shall you be late back, love?

**Dad:** *(From outside).* Might be. Don't wait up.

**THE END**