

Please choose one piece to perform

PUNCH - BY JAMES GRAHAM

MALE

Ay up. Look, I'm not saying The Meadows is the Bronx, right? But you grew up fast round here. If you weren't showing a bit of muscle, you were basically asking to get turned over. My mates? We weren't evil. We were just... bored out of our minds, duck. There's nothing to do in Nottingham on a wet Tuesday except sit on the wall, share a smoke, and wait for something to kick off. And when it did? God, the buzz. You feel it right here in your chest. You're not just some invisible kid from an estate anymore. You're somebody. People look at you. You walk into the square, shoulders back, and you think: yeah, this is my city. You don't think about the tomorrow part. You don't think about what happens when the fist actually connects. You just want the noise to stop making you feel so small."

FEMALE

"I knew them lads. Grown up right alongside 'em. You see 'em outside the shops every single day, looking all big and hard with their hoodies up, acting like they own the pavement. It's all a front, innit? A performance. You laugh it off because it's just what Notts boys do. They get a bit of change in their pockets, a bit of cheap beer down 'em, and suddenly they're the kings of Old Market Square. But then you see it go wrong. In a fraction of a second. No warning, just a stupid argument over nothing at all. And you watch the swagger completely drain out of 'em. Suddenly they're not hard anymore. They just look like frightened little kids standing over a bloke on the floor, realizing they can't take back what they've just done."

Saturday Night Sunday Morning – Allen Sillitoe

Male

"Nine-hundred and fifty-four. Nine-hundred and fifty-bloody-five... Another few more, and that's the lot for Friday. Fourteen bob and tuppence for a thousand of these cylinders a day. No wonder I've always got a bad back. I'll have a fag in a bit; no use working every minute God sends. I could finish in half the time if I went at it like a bull, but they'd only slash me wages, so they can get stuffed. *Don't let the bastards grind you down.* That's the one thing I've learned in this life. Look at Jack. He wants to get on, don't he? 'Yes, Mr. Robboe. No, Mr. Robboe...' And look where it gets him—a fat gut and a head full of worry. Not me, duck. What I'm out for is a good time. A skinful of ale on a Saturday night and a girl who don't ask too many questions. All the rest of it? The government, the bosses, the big-wigs? It's all just propaganda."

Female

"You think you're a bit of a lad, don't you, Arthur Seaton? I've heard all about you down the club, sinking pints until you roll down the pub stairs, and running around with women who ought to know better. Well, you can wipe that grin off your face because I'm not one of your married pieces you can just mess about with and leave behind when Monday morning comes. I've seen how my mam's had it, stuck in a house with a man who spends his whole packet on bookies and beer... I want a bit of life, yeah, but I want a proper roof over me head, too. So if you think you're just going to whistle and I'll come running... you've got another thing coming, duck. You want me? You'll have to behave yourself. And I don't think you've got it in you to be good for more than five minutes.