



CARRY ME HOME – PART ONE

by Keith Badham

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“Carry me home” An Audio Play

by Keith Badham

Dramatis personae

Jack Jones
Arthur Rowe
Mrs Marsden
Mary Edwards
Sue Nightingale
Ivy Gillespie
Jackie English
PC Smith
PC Joyce
Steve Edwards
Stuart Dier

Opening Music Suggestion - Carry me Home - Primal Scream

Scene One - The Home

(The Sound of tea being served in the background. A Distant Television is on with "Pointless" being shown)

Jack: So what's my story? Where to begin? My name is Jack, I've been imprisoned here against my will for the last four years. Perhaps "Imprisoned" is a little wide of the mark? Abandoned then. After spending most of my life tending to and caring for my children, they took the only sensible option open to them when considering the "Problem of Dad", and put me in a home. More of that later. So I was born in 1940. A War Baby! Lived in London all me life and proud of it. Worked on the Railways and then as a lorry driver. Course in those days, you had to hump all the loads yourself. None of this hydraulic malarkey. Which in turn is what caused me to have the back problems that have consigned me to this bloody chair I am stuck to. In the end, it was apparently "All too much" for me. What they meant was it was all too much for them of course, but like I said, more of that later. So this place is where I now have no choice but to call my home. The Belle Vue Retirement home, where good people come to die....I might have added the motto. It's in Worthing, so we get all the health benefits of the sea air, with the added bonus of being woken up at the crack of dawn by the bloody Seagulls. I'm a widower. Irene popped her clogs 11 years ago....The Big C. Terrible it was, watching the beauty drain away from her, and the poison replace it. It was a blessed relief when she went in the end. Her pain stopped. I miss her. Every day. And it might have been the end of her pain, but in many ways it was the start of mine. Gawd that sounds so selfish doesn't it? But it's true. I became a burden instead of a Father. An Inconvenience instead of a Granddad. They sap the humanity out of you. It's like you hit a certain age, 71, 72, and it's "That's your lot mate". Hand in your name and personality over there. Leave your history and your dignity on the desk, and welcome to being a statistic. This is why so many of them in here give up. The old girl in the corner, sits there every day. Never speaks. I have never heard a word from her, one or two other noises, but we don't talk about that do we? She can't help it. I don't even know her name, but I suppose you get to the stage where that's not important anymore.

Still. It's not all bad you know. I get by. Well you have to don't you? You can't just give up, roll over and die. I'm not like that, never have been. So I keep myself busy. I have hobbies, pass-times. I'm in the dominos league. The Card School, although we aren't allowed to play for money anymore since the fuhrer took over. We still do of course. It's one of the advantages of living in here. They think we are stupid, and sometimes that suits us. We are not allowed alcohol either, and that really pisses me off. If you make people sneak drink in, make them drink in

secret, then what are you creating? What are you encouraging? They haven't got the sense they were born with have they? Still it's not all bad. There's Mary.

She's one of the warders....sorry.....Carers. Lovely girl! Lovely girl. What is it they say? If I were 60 years younger....and she was single, and she was less attractive, and I was less hideous, then I definitely would fancy my chances! She's the one who makes this place a bit more bearable. Keeps the spirits up. You can tell she's a good un by the way the fuhrer talks to her. There's not much love lost. Sorry, of course, you don't know who the fuhrer is do you? Mrs Madden. She's the manager of this place. A more helpful caring and warm person, you would all wish to meet. Her approach to care appears to be to care for her procedures and rules. You've probably gathered by now....I don't really like rules. I mean, I get why they are needed, I'm not an anarchist! I just don't like them when they exist for the sake of existing. Asking permission to leave the table for example. I'm not a child. Then there's the rules about going out. I'm an adult. I should be allowed to come and go as I please. Sitting in the wheelchair can be a pain, but Arthur over there helps and we have a bit of fun when we go out don't we Arf? I say, Arf? Oh never mind. He's as deaf as a post. Ain't you Arf? Deaf as a post?

Where you going?

Oh never mind....So we are now being told that we can only be out for an hour at a time. What the hell does it matter? Some of em in here, I grant you, can't be allowed out by themselves. I get that, I'm not stupid. But me and Arf...well what difference does it make? We're hardly going to go ram-raiding with the wheelchair are we?

Arthur: No there isn't any Jack

Jack: Eh? Isn't any what?

Arthur: Post mate...You asked if there was any post didn't you?

Jack: No you daft old b....Oh never mind...OK mate, thanks for checking. See what I mean? He won't turn up that deaf aid....Says it makes a whistling sound. So as I was saying, today, (Whispers) we are going to break the rules. We've been told to be back here by three o' clock. By the time we've got our coats on and got down to the seafront it'll be time to come back. Pointless. And all because of er and her stupid bloody rules. So, we are going on the run, fugitives. Like that film. Rubbish film mind you. We wont be gone too long. Don't want to cause too much trouble. Just enough to let her know she's not our Boss. She might be the manager, but she's not the Lord Almighty. I've got a plan of course, but, you know...Need to know basis.

Mary: Afternoon trouble

Jack: Ello Mary love, how are you?

Mary: All the better for seeing you Jack. So where are you taking me today then?

Jack: Well, I thought we could go dancing first, then a bite to eat, and then....Oh, how about Paris?

Mary: Oh, sounds lovely, but I've got to be home to get the boys tea on. Maybe another time eh?

Jack: Yeah, you always say that! Maybe another time

Arthur: It's nearly two Jack

Jack: What?

Arthur: It's nearly two mate....

Jack: Yes, i know, I'm not stupid Arf.

Mary: See you tomorrow Trouble

Jack: Tomorrow?

Mary: Yup. Afternoon off, Doctors for my 25 week check up, School run and then Pilates

Jack: Yuk....Can't stand foreign food.

Mary: It's a kind of exercise you silly sausage.

Jack: I know, I'm pulling your leg, you take it easy in your condition

Mary: Ooh my hero!....Stay out of mischief, or Mrs Madden will go mad, and I will get the blame as usual for encouraging you!

Jack: Well she can bugger off

Mary: Language Jack! Now, be good!

Jack: Us? of course!!!

Mary: Look after him Arf....No wild drunken afternoons

Arthur: Righto Love

(Mary Exits)

Arthur: What's she say?

Jack: So as I was saying. We have a plan to put in action. Come on Arf. Lets get ready!

End of Scene. Music Suggestion Fade in "Right Action - Franz Ferdinand"

Music Fade out

Scene Two - The Sea Front

Jack: So here we are, Approaching the Florence Nightingale tea rooms. It's well named an all. You need a bloody nurse after eating one of their pies. In for a quick cuppa, go over the plan one more time, and then sit back and wait for the chaos to happen. I must get this bloody chair seen to. It's creaking more than Ethel after a Cauliflower cheese innit Arf? Arf? Turn it on!!!!!!

Arthur: Sorry Jack, I can't hear you mate, I'll just turn this up a bit. Now what were you saying?

Jack: Nothing, lets just get the teas in and we can go over the plan

Arthur: No flan for me mate, don't want to spoil my figure do I? (He laugh's too much considering the quality of the gag)

They enter the tea rooms

Sue: Oh here they come, Butch and Sundance!

Jack: Alright Sue love? How's you?

Sue: Oh must grumble darlin, mustn't grumble....The usual?

Arthur: No thanks love, just two teas

Sue: That is your usual Arf?

Jack: Ignore him love, he's turned it down instead of up

Sue: Sit down love I'll bring em over

Jack: (Laughing) I aint got much choice but to sit down ave i? So, Arf. Let's get this plan straight. Arf! TURN IT UP!!!

Arthur; Sorry Jack, still not got used to this new one....There, I think that's better

Jack: So we finish the tea

Arthur: It's not arrived yet

Jack: I know that! I'm not stupid! WHEN it arrives, we finish the tea, and then we go to the arcade.

Arthur: Check

Jack: We spend half an hour there, and then pop next door to the hall of mirrors. Once we have waited there, the Fuhrer will have sounded the alarms, and sent her stormtroopers to the pier to collect us as usual. We can watch them through the net curtains in the Hall of mirrors. Once they realise that we aint there, we can then go to the pier.

Arthur: Check

Jack: Then, when she eventually catches up with us, we can plead ignorance and say were were there all the time

Arthur: Check. But....Whats the point?

Jack: What do you mean what's the point? It's obvious aint it?

Arthur: Yes, of course, but....Remind me

Jack: We are subverting the system! Playing with her mind. She thinks she controls us, but we are not numbers, we are free men!

Sue: Two teas for the revolutionary masters

Jack: Sarcy mare

Sue: Oi, do you want your secret kept?

Arthur: She's in on it?

Sue: Whose she? the Cats Mother?

Jack: Funny saying that isn't it?

Sue: Yes, where did it come from?

Arthur: Well etymological experts believe it was first used in a play called The white cat! or, Prince Lardi-Dardi & the radiant Rosetta, by Francis Cowley, produced at the Globe Theatre in 1870. This theory is hotly disputed by others, believing it to come from earlier folk tales, but the true origin is unlikely to be firmly established.

Silence

Jack: It never ceases to amaze me. The depths of knowledge that you are capable of, and the complete lack of any bloody use that any of it is.

Arthur: Well there's no need to be rude

Jack: Anyway, to calm your fears, yes, Sue is aware of our plan. She will be providing us with an alibi, should it be required

Sue: I think you are both off your rockers to be honest

Jack: Another strange phrase, the origin of which will never be known to us I suppose....Let's ask Stephen Fry over here shall we?

Arthur: Well my understanding is that it is derived from the phrase "Off your trolley" which originates from the use of Trams. If a Tram track was uneven at any point, it would lose contact with the electrical wire above it, causing an uneven or bumpy journey. This came into popular usage to describe a person of questionable sanity, as someone who is a bit uneven themselves, and therefore Off their trolley. The leap from Trolley to Rocker is not a great one

Jack: Again, fascinating information, unburdened by any practical bleeding use. I understand your reservations Sue, but if you can't stand up to these buggers occasionally, they think they've won don't they? Non violent resistance they call it don't they? Civil disobedience

Sue: Well Perhaps Martin Luther thing and Mahatma Randy would like to pay for their teas before they bring down the state?

Jack: Pay the woman Arthur, it's your turn

Arthur: It always seems to be my turn (Handing over the money)

Jack: Well you are of wealthy stock aint yer?

Sue: Is he? (Seductively) Well, if I'd have known that

Arthur: Leave it out...I'm not wealthy, I'm careful