A one act play

Wind

Bob Davidson
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by
Bob Davidson

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Wind – Bob Davidson

Cast

MARK – A late twenties slightly confused environmentally friendly good guy.
GAIL – His late twenties slightly confused environmentally friendly lovely wife.
WULLIE – A seventy year old live alone sheep farmer.
WINDGEN EXEC – The boss of a “Green Energy” company. (Could be M or F)
EXEC PA – His younger male personal assistant.
The curtain rises on a fairly basic living room. A living room in a cottage, a farm cottage which happens to be the current happy home of Mark and Gail… a couple of slightly dreamy, well meaning eco warrior types. They rent the cottage from Wullie Sutherland a past retiring age sheep farmer who lives alone in the farmhouse across the field. They rent Wullie’s cottage because it is remote and offers them a back to basics, back to nature, chance at the good life. The set is simply furnished. No TV or PC or anything of that nature. Maybe a wind-up radio and definitely a guitar. There is probably a kitchen offstage left and there is a door to the outside world upstage right. As the lights come up Mark is kneeling on the floor beside what looks like an exercise bike. There is an electric kettle on the floor beside him and there are a few tools strewn about. He is fiddling with some wires…

GAIL

(offstage from outside the cottage door)

Ding dong!

MARK

(mimicking the ding dong tune)

Come in!

The door opens and Gail struggles in carrying two stuffed full bicycle panniers. She is wearing a reflective waistcoat and a cycle helmet and is visibly out of breath

MARK

Hello, Sausage.

GAIL

Vegetarian Sausage…

MARK

(correcting himself)

Vegetarian Sausage, yes, sorry. It’s not got the same ring to it… as a pet name I mean. Perhaps I should just call you carrot or something? That’s fairly inoffensive.

GAIL

Perhaps you can give me a hand with these bags. There’s ten kilos of lentils in one and five kilos of broth mix in the other.

MARK

You should try and have the weight more evenly distributed. You’ll end up cycling in circles.

GAIL

It’s bad enough as it is!

MARK

Oh nonsense, Carrot… it’s only nine miles…

GAIL

Nine miles there, and nine miles back!
Good exercise, darling.

Up hill!

Can’t be uphill all the way there and back… that would be impossible.

All the way back, when the bike is fully laden.

In any case, darling it’s nine miles, because we wanted to live here. Way out in this tiny cottage miles from anyone. Nine miles from anyone… except Mr Sutherland across the field. Out of town. You don’t want to go back to living in the flat do you?

No.

Well then.

You can go the next time.

But, I thought you liked getting out… a chance to socialise…

Going to Tesco is not exactly my idea of a chance to socialise.

Going where? You went to Tesco?

She nods sheepishly.

What did you go there for? You know we don’t go to supermarkets. Tesco is taking over the world. They’re bent on world domination. I mean they’re handy… I’ll admit…what was wrong with Jimmy Smith’s?

He was closed.

Closed! It’s not Wednesday is it?

No, it’s Monday and he was closed. I think he’s closed for good… there was a sign up in the window saying as much.
MARK
Jimmy Smith’s closed… well I never. Another local shop bites the dust. Oh, I’m sorry, darling I didn’t mean to be Mr Grumpy, I just hate supermarkets. Here, give me the bags, have a seat and I will make you a cup of tea.

GAIL
Tea!!

Tea.

He exits stage left with the bags and returns with two empty mugs. She watches with interest.

GAIL
We haven’t had tea for ages.

MARK
Wastes electricity darling.

GAIL
We haven’t had tea for one year, four months, three weeks and six days.

MARK
Do you know if everybody in the country was to have one less cup of tea a day we could close down a nuclear power station?

GAIL
I do know that dear, you’ve told me lots of times… every day when you give me a glass of water.

MARK
Nothing wrong with a glass of water – however today we’re having tea. Right – on ye get…

He pats the seat of the exercise bike.

GAIL
What?

MARK
Hop on and get pedalling.

GAIL
I’ve just cycled nine miles to the shops and nine miles back… uphill…

MARK
Alright, I’ll do it… you keep an eye on the kettle.

GAIL
Oh, how exciting.
He climbs aboard the exercise bike and she kneels on the floor by the kettle watching it closely. He begins to pedal and after a few revolutions...

MARK
Well?

GAIL
(looking up)
Well what?

MARK
Is anything happening?

GAIL
Em…

MARK
No steam coming out?

GAIL
Not as such… did you put water in it?

MARK
Of course I put water in it… do you think I’m mad? Is it warming up at all?

She feels the kettle with her hands.

MARK
(getting out of puff)
Is the wee orange light on?

GAIL
No… not really.

MARK
What do you mean not really is it on or not?

GAIL
It’s not on.

MARK
Is it switched on?

GAIL
Yea…

MARK
… oh it’s no use.
Wind – Bob Davidson

*He grinds to a halt and slumps over the handlebars, wheezing slightly.*

Would you like a glass of water?

No… I want a cup of tea.

We could light the stove?

No, it’s June… no stove…

*He leaps from the bike.*

There has to be a way.

*He kneels beside her on the floor and examines the kettle.*

The light didn’t come on at all?

*She shakes her head. He feels the kettle between both hands.*

There is a slight warmth there…

I think I maybe warmed it up with my hands.

Mmm… maybe. I think… the problem could be in the volt department. I don’t think we’ve got enough.

How many do we need?

About… two hundred and forty…

How many have we got?

Three.

Three… hundred?

Three volts. We’re probably a bit short on the amps front as well.
There’s maybe a case for nuclear after all.

There’s never a case for nuclear, Sausage.

Maybe if we had a tandem?

Wow… that’s it…

Is it? I was only kidding…

No, not a tandem…

*He kisses her on the forehead and leaps to his feet.*

We have… three volts and a trickle of amps. Eight threes are twenty four… If we had eighty of my machines here all connected in series… hey presto the magic two hundred and forty volts and enough amps to run a small village.

Eighty machines… that would mean that you would need eighty people to pedal.

Oh yea…

Where are you going to get them?

(snapping his fingers)

The unemployed… in order to get your benefit you’ve got to do a couple of hours pedalling every day. They could take it in shifts.

Hoodies…

… yea a sort of community service. Good idea, Sausage.

People in call centres.

Well they’ve got a job, darling.
Wind – Bob Davidson

GAIL
Yes, but they just sit there, don’t they? Surely they could do a bit of pedalling while they’re on the phone? They could power their own computers.

MARK
Well they might get a bit out of puff when they’re trying to speak to folk… Supermarket checkout operators though… they don’t speak. We could de-commission all the nuclear power stations and fit them out with rows and rows of my machines. They could be human powered electricity generating stations.

GAIL
You could have like a national service where everyone between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one gets sent off to pedal. Pedal for Victory.

MARK
Pedal for Victory… I like that.

GAIL
So much better than the army.

MARK
Too true. And it was all my idea. I could be rich… enjoy the trappings of enormous wealth.

GAIL
Our idea, darling, we could be rich and we don’t want to enjoy the trappings of enormous wealth.

MARK
Don’t we?

GAIL
No!

MARK
No, you’re right dear… still it’s not a bad idea all the same… although I don’t actually think you’d get people to do it. Sit and pedal all day long.

GAIL
I don’t know… if you disguised your power stations as the “Feeling Great Gym” twits would probably pay for the privilege!

MARK
Mmm… very possibly.

He moves downstage and stares out through a window in the fourth wall, way out over the audience. He turns and beckons her forward and she joins him.

MARK
That’s the future. They are the answer.
Wind – Bob Davidson

GAIL
They’re beautiful.

MARK
Not as beautiful as you, Sausage, but they are beautiful. Strong and silent.

GAIL
Not as strong and silent as you, and \textit{(breaking the spell slightly)} they’re not \textit{that} silent when you’re up close. They make a sort of whooshing noise.

MARK
What? No, no… but we’re not up close are we? They must be… fifteen… maybe twenty miles away. Amazing eh? All that distance and you can still see them.

GAIL
It’s because they’re so big.

MARK
They are a fair size I have to admit. But they have to be that size to capture all that energy. To produce all that power. Clean renewable power for today… and tomorrow…

GAIL
… and the day after.

MARK
Yes, Sausage… and the day after…

GAIL
… and the day after that.

MARK
Yes dear… for ages. \textit{(changing the subject just slightly)} It’s amazing at this distance you can even see them turning. Those massive, beautiful, powerful turbines feeding the grid with clean, pure, natural energy.

GAIL
\textit{(squinting forward slightly)}
I don’t think they are turning… I think they’re all stopped.

MARK
Are they? \textit{(He squints forward too)} There can’t be enough wind… happens sometimes.

\textit{He moves back upstage and tidies up a bit around the exercise bike. She sits and picks up the guitar and sings…}
Wind – Bob Davidson

GAIL
Hour after hour, they make clean efficient power
This power is yours and mine…
That comes from a wind turbine
Wind power is so cooo-el not like fossil fue-el
And for your information
Is better than a nuclear power station.

MARK
That was beautiful, sausage. (He gazes at her lovingly) I think we should have a baby…

GAIL
A baby? Oh darling…

She hugs him, twanging the guitar.

MARK
Mmm? No, no… a baby wind turbine… I think we should have a baby wind turbine in the garden. I’m going to ask Mr Sutherland the next time I see him. I’m sure he won’t mind. Just one about 2 meters across. It would do us just the job, Sausage.

GAIL
I suppose so. He won’t put our rent up?

MARK
No… you know what he’s like. (Impersonating Mr Sutherland who happens to enter unseen and unannounced through the cottage door) “I’m no’ interested in money… as long as I’ve ma porridge and a pot o’ soup on the go, there’s no’ much coming over me.”

WULLIE
My sentiments exactly…

MARK
(leaping to his feet)
Mr Sutherland… we didn’t hear you knock…

I didnae knock…

WULLIE
Didn’t ring the bell…

GAIL

WULLIE
You dinnae hae a bell. You’ve got a bit o’ paper drawing pinned to your door… my door actually with “shout Ding Dong” written on it and I’m no’ gonnae do it.

MARK
Door bells waste electricity Mr Sutherland… do you know if everyone in the country got rid…
WULLIE
Rubbish. They don’t waste electricity at all. A set of batteries lasts me about five years. That *(gesturing towards the door)* is a waste of paper if you ask me. Bet you huddnae thought of that!

MARK
No… I hadn’t actually… that’s a good point.

WULLIE
*(producing a vacuum flask from inside his dungarees)*
Everything has its cost.

MARK
Mmm… em, was there something you were wanting Mr Sutherland.

WULLIE
Och, no’ really. I'm missing a ewe and a lamb so I was oot fur a look and I saw your door open so I thought I’d drop in a for a cuppy. I’m sure they’ll have just gone for walk somewhere and they’ll turn up. I wouldnae want anything to happen to them. I’m very fond of all my animals.

GAIL
That’s lovely.

*He pours himself a cup from the flask as Mark and Gail look on in envy.*

MARK
Mr Sutherland, you know that Gail and I are very environmentally aware…

WULLIE
Uh huh…

MARK
… and we are keen to embrace modern technologies, in particular the generation of energy from renewable sources…

WULLIE
…aye…

MARK
Well, we were wondering *(he stares at the cup of steaming tea.*) We were wondering if… if… you couldn’t give us a cup of tea could you?

WULLIE
Och is that all… of course. Give me your cups.

*Gail grabs their mugs and Wullie pours some tea into each one from the flask. They take a heavenly sip each.*

MARK
Oh, that is beautiful!
Wind – Bob Davidson

Scottish Blend.

MARK
Anyway, what I was going to ask you, Mr Sutherland was… would you have any objection to us having a wind turbine… just a small one, maybe in the corner of the garden, next the rhubarb?

WULLIE
No.

MARK
No, you have no objection, or no we can’t have one?

WULLIE
No, I dinnae mind if you stick a windmill in the garden. There’s one up on the hill there.

A wind turbine?

MARK
WULLIE
No, no… a windmill. It’s been there for about a hundred years. We used to use it to pump water up for the cattle.

Oh!

MARK
WULLIE
Oh, aye… there’s nothing new under the sun as they say. The Dutch are the lads for their windmills. And what are you going to do with this wind turbine of yours?

GAIL
We’re going to generate clean renewable energy so we can produce enough electricity to run the cottage.

WULLIE
Oh, very good. But it’s no’ windy all the time you know?

GAIL
Yes, we know that, but with a wind turbine you have to adjust your electricity usage to fit in with the wind strength.

MARK
Yea… for instance, if it’s really windy then you can maybe put the tumble drier on.

WULLIE
Aye, but if it’s really windy can ye no’ jist hing yer drawers oot on the line?

MARK
*(looking at him as if he’s daft)*
What? No, no… you’re missing the point.
Wind – Bob Davidson

GAIL
I’m not sure he is, Mark. We don’t need a tumble dryer!

MARK
No, we don’t need a tumble drier… Nobody actually needs a tumble drier… but I mean if the electricity was free there’d be no harm in getting one and chucking the clothes in.

WULLIE
I didnae hae a tumble drier. I just hing ma drawers oot on the line.

MARK
What about in the winter time though?

WULLIE
Well, I dinnae generally wash as much in the winter. Ye dinnae sweat as much when you’re cauld. And on those few occasions when I do wash the longers I just dry them on a tattie basket by the fire.

MARK
Ah but your fire burns fossil fuels…

WULLIE
Naw, just logs and puckle coal.

MARK
But what about your carbon footprint?

WULLIE
(Checking his boots)
Oh dinnae tell me I’ve left sheep poo on yer carpet again?

GAIL
No… your carbon footprint. Burning coal and wood creates carbon in the atmosphere…

WULLIE
Does it… and that’s a bad thing is it?

GAIL
Yes. The more carbon dioxide there is in the atmosphere the greater the risk of global warming. Do you really want the climate round here to warm up?

WULLIE
Yes.

GAIL
What?

WULLIE
It’s freezing here in the winter. You just wait… Mains O’ Muircraggs is a hell o’ cauld hole in the winter.
GAIL
It’s not a simple as that Mr Sutherland. We’ve all got to change our ways or else the planet is doomed.

WULLIE
Naw!

GAIL
Yes. What do you do with your used aluminium cans?

WULLIE
Ma what?

GAIL
Old drinks cans and the like?

WULLIE
I never buy drink in cans.

GAIL
Fair enough…. What about your old milk cartons?

WULLIE
I get my milk from Jealous Annette… my cow.

GAIL
Mmm… cows are also part of the problem I’m afraid.

WULLIE
Jealous Annette is part of the problem?

MARK
Aye… they burp a lot of methane apparently.

WULLIE
Oh… I never knew that.

GAIL
What temperature do you have your central heating thermostat set at?

WULLIE
I dinnae hae central heating. I’ve just got the range in the living room. It heats the living room. I can bile a kettle on it. It’s got a wee oven that I can heat up a steak pie in. It dries ma washing, and there’s a wee tap for drawing off hot water for washing ma face and having a shave. I can make ma porridge on it and a pot o’ soup too. And as long as I’ve got ma porridge and a pot of soup on the go, there’s no’ much coming over me. And I’ve had upwards o’ ten lambs a’ tucked up in tattie baskets round about the hearth to keep warm. It’s a braw thing ma range.

GAIL
Ah… well you’re probably slightly different from most people Mr Sutherland.
I dinnae see how.

What do you do with your old newspapers?

Use them to light the fire.

You should re-cycle them.

I do… I use them to light the fire. How much is your windmill going to cost you?

About… four thousand pounds.

Four thousand pounds!!

Well you have to buy quality, darling.

Dinnae call me darling!

I was speaking to her. And four thousand pounds isn’t too bad for a wind turbine that size. Some of them cost a lot more than that and besides we could qualify for a FIT

Phit’s a fit?

FIT or F. I. T. means Feed In Tariff. That means me get paid for every unit of electricity we produce. In fact we get paid whether we produce any or not!

That can’t be right.

It is, Sausage. I’ve looked into it. They reckon it takes about ten years to get enough money back to pay for the turbine but after that… we’re in the money.

I don’t want to be in the money. I thought we were just going to produce enough for us. So we could have a cup of tea when we wanted it, and were able to switch the light on when it got dark. I don’t want to be in the money. I don’t want to be in the money at all. This is not what this is about. I can’t believe you’re doing this. Where does the money come from?
I don’t know!

Mr Sutherland… do you want to be in the money?

Me? Naw… I’m no’ interested in money as long as I’ve ma porridge and a pot o’ soup on the go there’s no’ much coming over me.

But there’s money to be made. Millions of it.

WULLIE

Millions? Not for us obviously. But if we can do our bit for the environment and make a pound or two in the process then I don’t see the harm in it.

I’d rather it was just for us. Just enough for us. I thought we were going to live in as small and as friendly a way we could. In this wee cottage. Is that too much to ask? Living in this cottage, growing our own vegetables away from the hustle and bustle, surrounded by sheep. Not bothering anybody and nobody bothering us. I’m not interested in tumble driers or feed in tariffs or whatever they’re called. I just want to live a wee quiet life. And if I hear the words “do our bit for the environment” one more time, I’ll scream.

It’ll be fine, Sausage. Trust me.

Lights fade to blackout.
Music sfx.

Just when you think you know the answers
It can all become unclear
With a world so full of chancers
This could all end up in tears
Oh the problems that you find
With a wind that can unwind
In the windmills of your mind.

Lights up two weeks later and the set is the same more or less. Gail (no longer wearing her cycle helmet and reflective vest) is sitting opposite two people. They are on the sofa and could be a older person Windgen Exec and possibly a younger person Exec PA. They are both wearing hard hats and reflective jackets. There is not much talking until from outside the cottage door…
MARK

(shouting angrily)

DING DONG!

GAIL

(meekly)

Come in.

Mark enters brusquely, wearing Lycra cycling shorts, a bright yellow cycling jacket and a cycle helmet. He is in so much a tizzy that he fails to notice the two incomers and protests to Gail.

MARK

Some idiot has parked a four litre four by four Range Rover Vogue right on top of my parsnips!

Gail nods in the direction of the sofa. Mark glances over and then back to Gail.

Who are they?

GAIL

They’re to do with your wind turbine.

MARK

Oh, right... our wind turbine, darling our wind turbine. (He turns to the folk on the sofa) Please excuse my slight outburst but I must say I’m slightly surprised at your choice of vehicle. I thought perhaps you might have cycled.

WINDGEN EXEC

From Manchester?

MARK

You drove that thing all the way from Manchester?

WINDGEN EXEC

No, from Edinburgh. We flew from Manchester to Edinburgh.

MARK

You did what?

WINDGEN EXEC

We flew from Manchester to Edinburgh, then we hired “that thing” as you call it, to drive up here. It’s comfy and good for driving up rough farm tracks.

MARK

Have you any idea how many polar bears have died because of your actions?

WINDGEN EXEC

No.
MARK
No? No… no, neither do I… but I bet it’s a few. (To Gail) Can you believe this? They’re supposed to be in the green energy business yet they fly in polar bear murdering aeroplanes and drive gas guzzling four by fours… Wait a minute… (back to the folk on the sofa) what are you doing here anyway? I only asked you to send me a brochure… one that was printed on recycled paper or paper made from wood from sustainable forests?

WINDGEN EXEC
We’re here to do with the wind turbines.

MARK
Turbine. Not turbines. A two meter one, just by the rhubarb.

WINDGEN EXEC
(standing up)
Ah… I do believe we are at crossed purposes here.

EXEC PA
(also standing up)
Crossed purposes…

WINDGEN EXEC
(to EXEC PA)
Be quiet, George.

EXEC PA
Quiet, yes.

WINDGEN EXEC
My name is Alan Smith, and I run a company known as Windgen. How do you do?

He puts out his hand to Mark, who shakes it reluctantly. Exec PA offers his hand to Mark too, but it is swiped away by Windgen Exec.

WINDGEN EXEC
We were invited here by a…

He turns to Exec PA and snaps his fingers.

EXEC PA
(consulting a document)
…Mr Sutherland…

WINDGEN EXEC
…Mr Sutherland, to discuss the feasibility of installing a seventeen turbine wind farm, here at…

He snaps his fingers again…

EXEC PA
… em… Mains Of Muircraggs Farm.
Wind – Bob Davidson

WINDGEN EXEC

… Mains of… whatever.

GAIL

But you can’t.

WINDGEN EXEC

I think we can actually.

MARK

Mr Sutherland would never want a wind farm here.

Windgen Exec snaps his fingers again and Exec PA hands him a letter.

WINDGEN EXEC

(reading)

Dear Windygen, I hear there is a lot of money to be made in wind farms. Could you put one on my farm at Mains Of Muircraggs? It is quite windy here, though not all the time. It is mostly drizzle or sleet. Maybe you could hae a look the next time you’re passing. Yours Faithfully William Sutherland, Mains Of Muircraggs, etc etc…

MARK

I can’t believe this.

WINDGEN EXEC

See for yourself…

He hands over the letter which Mark and Gail read in stunned silence.

GAIL

But we don’t want to live next to a wind farm!

WINDGEN EXEC

But you won’t be my dear.

MARK

I mean we agree with them in principle obviously… what do you mean?

WINDGEN EXEC

Well our proposal is for a seventeen turbine farm… sixteen of which will be strategically placed in the Mains of whatever it is fields out there…

MARK

… and the seventeenth?

WINDGEN EXEC

Show them, George.

EXEC PA

(holding a small gadget and wandering slowly about)

Well according to my GPS… the centre of the supporting mast for the seventeenth turbine will be exactly… Here.
Wind – Bob Davidson

*He points to the floor, centre stage.*

GAIL

NO! It can’t be!

EXEC PA

(to Windgen Exec)

I told you they’d be nimbys.

MARK

NIMBYS!

EXEC PA

Aye… not in my back yard.

MARK

I know what nimby means… but this isn’t in our back yard is it? It’s in our living room.

EXEC PA

Ah well technically that will not be the case because we’ll demolish your house first.

GAIL

What?

WINDGEN EXEC

Oh don’t worry, you’ll be relocated… to a flat in town or something. It’ll be great, you’ll be nearer the shops.

GAIL

We don’t want to move to a flat in town. We don’t want to be nearer the shops…

MARK

… we were in a flat in town and we wanted to move here.

Sorry.

MARK

But how do you know this area is any good for a wind farm? It’s never all that windy here…

GAIL

No… we’re sheltered by the hills. It’s practically flat calm every day.

WINDGEN EXEC

Oh, that’s not a problem. We’re not too worried by that sort of thing. You see there’s nowhere all that good for a wind farm, because… well…

EXEC PA

…they’re crap.
Wind – Bob Davidson

WINDGEN EXEC
Please, George… language! But I’m afraid my not so eloquent little minion here is correct…

EXEC PA
Told you…

WINDGEN EXEC
Look, we’re obviously in this for the money. Green financing is all the rage these days and there’s literally hundreds of millions of euros out there to be had We, at Windgen are keen to get our hands on as much of it as we can. But the reason were keen to fling these things up at such a rate is because the old bubble’s going to burst. You see wind turbines aren’t all they’re cracked up to be. It’s something to do with the kinetic energy of the wind…

EXEC PA
… kinetic energy.

WINDGEN EXEC
Sshh, George. Apparently there’s just not enough kinetic energy in the wind to make the damned things work properly. You see wind is really just air that’s moving about a bit and air is a light as… well… air I suppose…

EXEC PA
… not heavy enough…

WINDGEN EXEC
… quiet, George. There’s not a wind farm in Britain producing more than say… 20% of the energy that was claimed it would before it was built.

GAIL
That’s not true.

WINDGEN EXEC
I’m afraid it is. You see the wind is funny stuff. Damned unpredictable. Sometimes it blows… sometime it doesn’t. Then there’s the National Grid. That’s a funny old thing too. Did you know that the grid has to have the exact amount of power going into it as is taken out of it. It’s a very fine balancing act. Tricky enough without a few thousand wind turbines deciding whether they want to contribute or not. One too many wind turbine and the whole thing will go bang and the lights will go out.

MARK
Rubbish… that’s all lies.

WINDGEN EXEC
‘Fraid not.

EXEC PA
‘Fraid not.
WINDGEN EXEC
You see the painful truth is we make lots, and I mean lots, of money whether they produce any electricity at all.

GAIL
That is immoral!

WINDGEN EXEC
Yes. It is, and highly profitable. But people like them you see. They look good... as long as you're far enough away. Takes away a bit of the guilt. Oh what does it matter if we waste a bit of energy here and there? The jolly old wind farms will replace it all cleanly and tirelessly while we sleep. As long as they're not in my back yard. It’s all tosh of course.

MARK
And just what are you going to do when the bubble bursts?

WINDGEN EXEC
Oh we’ve got that one sussed. We’ve already registered a company for the environmental deconstruction and disposal of wind farms. We’ll go around and cut them all up for scrap... make even more money. Mind you that’s one thing in their favour. Can’t do that with nuclear. Can’t go near the stuff for hundreds of years...

EXEC PA
... thousands!

GAIL
I’m going to protest… (she takes off her jersey) I’m going to tie myself naked to a tree.

EXEC PA
(Taking out his Blackberry)
Brilliant!

MARK
(To Exec PA)
What are you doing?

EXEC PA
If she’s going to tie herself naked to a tree, I’m going to get a few photos for Facebook.

MARK
Oh no you are not... Gail, put your clothes back on...

GAIL
(starting to unbutton her blouse)
No... someone has to make a stand. This is dishonest greed…

MARK
... Gail it’s June... you’ll get covered in midgie bites...
GAIL

I can wear a net!

MARK

Not all over you couldn’t. Come on dear, put your clothes back on. And you put that camera away before I belt you one.

WULLIE

*(shouting from outside the cottage door)*

Knock knock!

MARK

Who’s there?

WULLIE

*(poking his head around the door)*

Me!

WINDGEN EXEC

Mr Sutherland, how nice to see you again.

WULLIE

Hallo.

WINDGEN EXEC

We were just discussing our little business venture with your tenants here.

Wullie stands with a strange grin on his face. His foot is tapping. Windgen Exec looks closely at him and shouts…

TAKE THE EARPHONES OUT, MR SUTHERLAND!

Wullie footers in his ears and removes the earphones…

MARK

What is that?

WULLIE

It’s an IPOD.

MARK

A what?

WULLIE

*(pointing at Windgen Exec)*

He gave it to me. Jimmy Shand on the move. It’s got every record Jimmy Shand ever made on it. You could hardly believe that eh? A’ they tunes on this wee thing.

MARK

*(sneering at Windgen Exec)*

How low can you get?
Just a corporate gift… it has our logo on it. It’s amazing how cheaply some people can be bought.

Mr Sutherland?

Yes, lass?

How could you do this? A wind farm at Mains O’ Muircraggs?

Well, after listening to you two the other week… it got me thinking. I’m no’ as young as I used to be and no’ quite as able for the place. And I could do wae a bit o’ cash. The old Renault 5 is past its best and I thought that if I could maybe have a go at the wind thing, then it could bring me in a bit o’ money.

But you’re not interested in money… remember? You know… as long as you’ve got your porridge and a pot of soup on the go…

Everybody is interested in money. And you’re quite entitled to be interested in it too, Mr Sutherland. Don’t let this young idealist sway you…

But, Mr Sutherland you don’t want to live right next to wind farm…

No, I most certainly do not…

Well then…

I’m thinking of moving to Australia.

What?

An excellent choice, Mr Sutherland if I may say so… good sheep country.

I think that’s New Zealand actually…

Quiet, George please we’re at a crucial stage here. Pass me the contract…

Exec PA fumbles for the correct form…
…and a pen.

MARK
Mr Sutherland, please do not sign that form…

Wullie takes the pen and skims over the form.

WINDGEN EXEC
… just at the bottom there Mr Sutherland.

WULLIE
Man that’s a right bonnie pen that…

WINDGEN EXEC
It’s yours if you want it Mr Sutherland… if you’d be so kind as to just squiggle your name in the box there…

GAIL
But what about the farm? I remember you saying that your family had been in Mains O’ Muircraggs for a hundred and fifty years.

WULLIE
Och aye, but nothing lasts forever.

WINDGEN EXEC
Absolutely, time for a change eh? And we mustn’t hold up progress. Progress and time marches on, Mr Sutherland, so if you’d just squiggle anything in the vicinity of the bottom of the form there then me and my assistant here can set the ball rolling and the windmills turning eh?

GAIL
But your animals! The sheep… you won’t be able to roast your lambs around the fire at night…

MARK
… he doesn’t roast them, darling he just keeps them warm and cosy…

EXEC PA
… no the roasting comes later!

MARK
You are despicable.

GAIL
And Jealous Annette? What will happen to the sheep and Jealous Annette? You can’t take them with you to Australia!

WULLIE
Och… I’ll probably just have them killed…

GAIL
WHAT?
Wind – Bob Davidson

WULLIE
Jealous Annette is part of the problem… you said so yourself.

GAIL
I didn’t, did I? Oh my god I did. Oh Mr Sutherland I didn’t mean it. You can’t kill your cow. *(Turning on Windgen Exec)* You can’t make this man kill his cow.

WINDGEN EXEC
I’m not making him do anything. Look, he signs the form and he gets rich. He gets rich and we get rich…

GAIL
… and who pays?

WINDGEN EXEC
… well you do of course you silly tart. Everybody pays. Everybody who wants the light to come on when they flick a switch pays. Sign the form Mr Sutherland and we’ll be on our way.

MARK
Don’t do it, Mr Sutherland, don’t sign that form...

WINDGEN EXEC
Sign the form, Mr Sutherland think of the money…

GAIL
Don’t sign the form, Mr Sutherland, think of Jealous Annette. Think of Mains O’ Muircraggs…

*Pause.*

…Think of being up at four in the morning wading through a snow drift in a blinding blizzard to rescue an old ewe that’s ready to lamb and delivering that new life there in the dark and the snow. Carrying it home in front of its mother’s nose, leading her back to shelter and safety. And the comfort of that pot of porridge on the range when you collapse back in the house soaking wet and freezing with cold an hour later…

*There is a pause.*

WINDGEN EXEC
Well that’s hardly going to put him off signing.

If you like what you’ve read so far and would like to buy a copy of the complete script or would like to perform the play, please get in touch.

Thanks for reading.

*Bob Davidson*