

Assault Within Tent



A One Act Play



Bob Davidson

Assault Within Tent

A One Act Play

By
Bob Davidson

© Copyright by Bob Davidson 2007
www.bobdavidson.co.uk

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

Cast

CAMPSITE WARDEN. A lady, slightly disenchanted with her role as campsite warden due to the red tape and health and safety interference (something she left her previous job to avoid.)

DOUGLAS - 80 year old male – ex RAF aircrew. Flew with Bomber Command during the war. This was a big part of his life.

MANDY - 50 year old self-made woman. Made her money in the lingerie trade. Sent her kids to boarding school and has difficulty in remembering their names.

MARIE - 50 year old mother of seven. No nonsense, common sense approach, likes eating buns and drinking real ale.

LYNN - 50 year old war weary photographer. Probably the most settled and sorted of the four chums last of whom is...

CAROL - 50 year old who feels that life is not passing her by, but in fact has already past her by. She lacks a sense of achievement or fulfilment.

ANNA – 30 something bubbly full of life Eastern European lady.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

The curtain opens and there on the left is a small tent. To the right, across an essentially bare stage there is a large sign-post completely covered in signs warning about this, that and the other. “No Fires” and speed limits etc. Trying to find a space on the post to attach yet another sign is CAMPSITE WARDEN a lady who is showing signs of a little frustration. In walks DOUGLAS, an eighty year old, moustachioed upright figure of a man. He is wearing huge khaki shorts and is carrying a frying pan and a mug and is returning to his old faithful tent after doing the breakfast dishes.

DOUGLAS

Good morning, looks like we're going to get another fine day.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

Aye, well make the most it. Forecast says it's going to rain tomorrow.

DOUGLAS

Ah, but we need the rain. That's what keeps Scotland looking green and beautiful.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

(looking at him suspiciously)

You're not a farmer are ye?

DOUGLAS

No... I'm retired.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

Retired farmer?

DOUGLAS

No, teacher.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

Roll on retirement. Then I wouldn't have to deal with any of this rubbish. Look what arrived for me this morning from the Health and Safety Executive.

She shows him the sign.

In the event of a fire – do not use the lift. *(She looks around)* Lift! It's a campsite!

DOUGLAS

Yes, I see what you mean *(he points to the sign)* leave the building by the nearest exit. You could always cross out building and write in tent with felt pen.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

There was a covering letter with this that said that I should stick it up somewhere suitable and that there would be a fine if I didn't. I know where I'd like to stick it.

DOUGLAS

I was at an aircrew reunion lately at a museum and they had a Halifax bomber there, just like the ones we used to fly. Anyway there was sign on it and do you know what

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

it said? “Climbing onto this aircraft could be dangerous, do so at your own risk.” Hah, they didn’t have signs on them like that in 1944.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

No, I bet they didn’t. Anyway, you’ve picked a fine quiet wee corner, are you enjoying your stay?

DOUGLAS

I am that. I love the fresh air. It fair perks me up when I get away for a few nights under canvas. Reminds me of my training days back in the RAF. Mind you what a damned job I had with this frying pan. I had a lovely fry-up for my breakfast but I had to chisel bits of burned bacon off the pan with my Swiss Army knife. Used to get bacon and eggs before we went on night ops. Old habits die hard, eh?

CAMPSITE WARDEN

They do that. Are you travelling on your own?

DOUGLAS

Yes, I’m a widower. My wife died nine years ago. Cancer. We bought a tandem just after the war. Cycled the length and breadth of the British Isles on that bike and camped everywhere from Cornwall to Caithness. I became a teacher you see, great long summer holidays.

CAMPSITE WARDEN

Well I hope you have a very peaceful few days. If you see a sign that says “No Camping” just ignore it.

DOUGLAS

(nodding at the sign)

What are you going to do with that one?

CAMPSITE WARDEN

You know... I think I’ll burn it... that would be quite fitting don’t you think?

DOUGLAS

Aye, burn the damned thing, but remember...

DOUGLAS/CAMPSITE WARDEN

Don’t use the lift!

CAMPSITE WARDEN

Right, I must get on. What are you getting up to today?

DOUGLAS

Well... I think I’ll have a wee trip into the village – see if I can pick up a young thing eh?

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

CAMPSITE WARDEN

You old devil... best of luck. Cheerie bye. *(She watches him wander to his tent and says under her breath)* Old habits die hard eh?

She exits. DOUGLAS has a brief tidy up and he too exits.

Off stage we hear singing/screeching as women approach... four of them belting out the following song.

Fal deree, (a-a-a-ah) fal derah, (a-a-a-ah) fal deree (a-a-a-ah) fal de ra-a-a-a-ah.

Fal deree, (a-a-a-ah) fal derah, (a-a-a-ah)

They appear on stage with an assortment of luggage and each one carries a fold up chair. They sing the final line...

With my knapsack on my back...

(Except that one of them sings rucksack, not knapsack.)

MANDY

(Looking round at the other three)

Who sang rucksack?

CAROL slowly raises her hand.

Why did you sing rucksack? You know that it's knapsack in the song.

CAROL

Well, I think it's because I've *got* a rucksack. I was just being honest I suppose.

MANDY

Oh Carol, dear, it's only a song you don't have to take it quite so literally.

MARIE

Aye. I mean look at me. I've got ma suitcase wae me and I didnae sing *(sings)* "wae ma suitcase in ma hand."

MANDY

Marie, now we're on the subject, why did you bring a suitcase with you?

MARIE

It's got my clean pants in it and ma knitting. I had to bring ma stuff in something.

MANDY

Yes, but it's a camping trip dear. Don't you think a rucksack would have been more suitable?

MARIE

But we've only walked twenty yards from the car. *(she points off stage)* It's parked over there. Look.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

There's a bit of a pause while the four look across the great divide separating them from the vehicle. Each one of them thinking – oh let's just get back in the damned thing and go home.

CAROL

What is a knapsack anyway?

MANDY

Er... it's a sort of kit bag thing darling. Soldiers use them a lot so I believe.

CAROL

Oh I thought maybe it was a sort of sleeping bag. You know, like a bag you got into... to have a nap?

MANDY

Different spelling dear.

LYNN

Right then, who's got the tent?

MARIE

Tent?

LYNN

Yes, tent... you know... the thing we're going to sleep in?

MARIE

Eh... Mandy?

MANDY

Oh good gracious no, I wouldn't know what to do with the damned thing. Carol?

CAROL

What?

MANDY

Did you, or did you not bring a tent along on our camping trip? A camping trip being something that would normally involve tents.

CAROL

No, I haven't got a tent.

LYNN

Brilliant, let's go home then... or maybe Marie could knit us one.

MARIE

No, I haven't got enough wool. I've got hobnobs! Would anyone like a hobnob?

The other three shake their heads.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MANDY

(producing a bottle)

Would anyone like a wee Gin?

The other three shake their heads.

LYNN

Would anyone like to go home? *(She raises her hand)*

MANDY

Well, I'll maybe just have a quick swig. Isn't it amazing that just four short weeks ago we'd all lost track of each other and now, here we all are, thanks to Friends Re-united, about to catch up good and proper with what we've all been up to since we left Breadalbane Academy. Now I don't want the fact that I've been very successful to intimidate any one of you. We're all equals here and I'm sure a lot's happened to us all since we left school in nineteen seventy-five.

CAROL

Seventy-three.

MANDY

What dear?

CAROL

Seventy-three. I left in nineteen seventy-three.

MANDY

Oh yes, you left at sixteen didn't you, I'd forgotten about that.

LYNN

Can we go home now?

CAROL

Do you think I should gather some wood and light a fire?
(she goes into a minor trance) I like fires. I love watching things burn.

MANDY

Em... I don't think so dear... I don't think it would be allowed somehow. I think we should all just have a wee glass of wine and a relax.

CAROL

Ok.

MANDY

Lynn?

LYNN

(reluctantly)

Yea... okay, we're here now. One glass, and then we go.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

They set out their chairs and break out a bottle of wine.

MARIE
(raising her glass)

Well, here's to us.

CAROL
Wha's like us?

MANDY
Oh, I can never remember the next bit... Here's to chums re-united.

LYNN
Wait, wait, I'll get a photo.

LYNN grabs her camera, leaps up and gets into position to take a photo. The three others stand and at the last minute spy the tiny tent and quickly pose around it. They chink their glasses as LYNN snaps a picture.

MARIE/MANDY/CAROL
Chums Re-united!

The camera clicks and Lynn sits down again with the others.

CAROL
What shall we talk about.

MANDY
Men!

LYNN
Oh no, something interesting please. Not men. I don't care if I ever see another one.

MARIE
(concerned)
Oh, Lynn.

LYNN
Well it's true... I'm happy being single... (again), I haven't met one yet that's been on anything like my wavelength.

MANDY
Who was that really spotty, smelly, greasy little oink, covered in acne, who had a real crush on Lynn?

MARIE
From school?

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MANDY

Yes... remember? Fancied Lynn rotten. What was his name?

CAROL

Oh yea... I remember him, what was his name again...?

MARIE

Pizza Puss!

MANDY

Oh yes... that was it. Pizza Puss. God, he was horrible wasn't he. I wondered whatever happened to him?

LYNN

I married him.

MANDY

What? Oh well... I mean... He was a nice chap...

CAROL

...he had a nice personality. He was just a bit...

MARIE

...Hormonal.

MANDY

Yea, but then loads of boys were like that at his age weren't they. What was his name again?

MARIE

It was Pizza...

MANDY

No, no... his real name?

LYNN

It was Garry. Garry Lithgow.

There is a pregnant pause.

Don't you see? When I married him, I became Lynn Lithgow. It wasn't easy.

CAROL

Did it not work out?

LYNN

No... I mean apart from the name thing, we were young.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MARIE

Did he eat too many Pizzas?

LYNN

No, he didn't actually like Pizzas. We were together just under two years. I think we were just too young. I mean how can you possibly tell at nineteen what you're going to be like at twenty-nine?

CAROL

Yea or thirty-nine?

MANDY/MARIE

Or forty-nine.

MANDY

So, Lynn, no more men in your life after that?

LYNN

Yea, I then married a guy called Dave Wood... became Lynn Wood!

CAROL

Really?

LYNN

No... that was a joke... (*suddenly serious*) mind you so was being married to Garry Lithgow. There was a few more. Some one night stands, a couple of short term relationships when I was at Uni and one more husband. He was a Vietnam Vet... met him out in Africa. He was a helicopter pilot.

CAROL

That must have been handy for his work... being a pilot. He could fly out to look at elephants with sore tummies and things.

LYNN

What?

CAROL

You said he was a vet.

LYNN

No he was a Vietnam Vet, a veteran of the Vietnam war. He didn't look after elephants. He just flew helicopters.

CAROL

(*slightly confused*)

Oh.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

LYNN

That one lasted two years as well. We were too alike I think. A classic case of the sum of the parts being slightly less than the whole. We were both happy to split up. He went off to the Far East and I carried on taking photographs of people who were starving. The world seems to like those kind of photographs.

MANDY

Do you keep in touch?

LYNN

What? Oh... sorry, well we did for about eighteen months but it wasn't easy with us both travelling around so much. Then I heard through a mutual friend that Tom had been killed in a helicopter crash in Alaska. He had been trying to rescue some oil-men from a ship that was on fire. That's just the way he would have chosen it I suppose.

MANDY

Any kids Lynn?

LYNN shakes her head and takes a swig of wine and refills her glass.

MANDY

(almost apologetically)

I've got two.

MARIE

I've got seven.

MANDY/LYNN/CAROL

Seven!!!

MARIE

Yes... seven. What's wrong with that? Look Mandy has two. Lynn doesn't have any... Carol... do you have any?

CAROL

(slightly flustered)

No... no I don't have a daughter... I mean, or a son... a child. I don't have a child.

MARIE

Well there you go then, that's nine between the four of us which works out at just over two each, which I think you'll find is the national average. So it's a good job I had seven.

LYNN

Seven kids. How did you do it?

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MARIE

Oh just by doing what comes naturally. Oldest one's a doctor. I've got a fighter pilot, one at college, one in Lidl's and three still at school. The youngest's in primary five. Girl, boy, girl then twins, a boy and a girl, then boy and then Megs, who is a girl in case you hadn't guessed. She's ten and she's my favourite.

CAROL

Oh you shouldn't have favourites... it's not fair on the rest.

MARIE

Oh they've all been my favourites at one time or another. Usually when they're the youngest. And... life isn't fair anyway. Three of them are dyslexic and one was born blind in one eye. But I told them all. Nothing. Nothing has to hold you back. Dyslexia, being half blind. I told them, don't let stuff like that close any doors to you. You get one crack at this world, go out there and grab it by the throat and I want no complaints. And I get no complaints, and I've nothing to complain about. We're one big happy family.

MANDY

Wow... good for you Marie. You're a credit. What about your poor old husband? You haven't mentioned him at all.

MARIE

(cheerily)

Oh he left us all years ago. I was pregnant with Megan at the time.

CAROL

What!

LYNN

The bastard.

MANDY

Typical!

MARIE

(Still cheerily)

No, no. I don't blame him really. The house was hectic to say the least. Usually a bit of a riot going on. No, he said that he'd prefer somewhere quieter and so he moved in with a woman half my age. She was lovely. A real good-looking girl with a beautiful figure. He said the sex was fantastic.

LYNN

I can't believe I'm hearing this.

MARIE

Lynn, I'm delighted that he's happy. He didn't want to spend the rest of his life with someone like me. Look I'm all podgy.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MANDY

You've had seven kids darling you've every right to be podgy. *Pause.* And in any case you're not podgy at all.

MARIE

No, what is the point in getting upset about George leaving me for a gorgeous twenty something hotel receptionist called Sheryl. Like I've just said, you get one crack at this world and that goes for me too. I'm not going to be miserable when I've got so much to live for...

CAROL begins to sob.

What's the matter Carol?...

CAROL

(blowing her nose)

Nothing.

MARIE

I bear no grudges. It's a complete waste of time. I've never borne a grudge and I never will.

MANDY

I think you're an absolute saint dear, I really do.

LYNN

More wine anybody?

They all nod, and she tops up the glasses.

MANDY

(staring out into the audience)

My word... would you just look at that great monstrosity of a thing.

MARIE

Good grief it's the size of ma house.

CAROL

Who would want a camper van like that? It's obscene.

MARIE

Look it's towing a wee car behind it.

MANDY

It must be like driving a bloody great truck.

MARIE

It would be great for a family.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

CAROL

It would Marie, but you wait and see there'll be just a couple, retired off early on a big pension and nothing else to spend their lump sum on.

MARIE

Oh my goodness... what's happening with that big thing on the roof? Look!

LYNN

It's a satellite TV dish. Couldn't possibly go away without the telly. Couldn't possibly go away without a tent either of course...

CAROL

What is the point in coming to a place as beautiful and as peaceful as this only to sit and watch Eastenders? Look, look at that young guy across there with his tiny tent and his pushbike. He's sitting there quite happy reading his book. I bet he's happier than those two. I bet he's thinking how can I make do with less while I bet all they're thinking is how can we get more and more. Oh I hate this world sometimes.

LYNN

I think you're being a wee bit judgemental Carol. I mean, you don't even know the couple in the camper or the young guy come to that.

MARIE

Oh look, they've got bikes as well. They're bringing them out of that wee shed bit at the back. Aw...there they go, off on a bike run. That's nice.

CAROL

They're stopping at the toilet. I knew it. That's all these people use their bikes for. Watch, in two minutes they'll be cycling back to watch Sky Sports. The only reason they took their bikes is because they couldn't be bothered to un-hitch the car otherwise they would have driven to the toilet.

MANDY

Well I would have thought that there would have been a loo in a thing like that.

CAROL

Oh, there will be. It's probably got a sauna and Jacuzzi as well. It's not exactly roughing it, is it?

LYNN

Not like us eh? We're rufty tufties, we haven't even got a tent!

MARIE

I couldn't do the toilet in a van. Not number twos anyway. I mean... where do they go?

They ponder this question for a moment.

LYNN

More wine anyone?

She tops up the glasses.

I thought a woman of your means would fancy a big Winnebago like that Mandy.

MANDY

Just because I'm a woman of means and I *am* a woman of means, whatever that means... doesn't mean to say that I have money to burn. No, everything has a value and whereas I value the opportunity of spending a night under canvas with you three which, I must say, I'm thoroughly enjoying so far despite the fact we haven't actually got a tent. I can't see the point in owning a monster like that unless it can be used to make money. I would just as soon spend a night at Gleneagles. My trucks on the other hand are different. They earn their keep.

LYNN

Trucks?

MANDY

Yes, I own three. I even drive them sometimes when one of my men is off sick. It's not easy being in women's underwear you know. I'm not known as the Richard Branson of Coupar Angus for nothing...

MARIE

He's a bloke.

MANDY

...what?

MARIE

You cannae be the Richard Branson o' Coupar Angus cos he's a bloke. How about Ann Summers?

MANDY

I don't think so.

MARIE

Ann Gloag?

MANDY

Actually, I'm on waving terms with Ann Gloag. Anyway lingerie is a tough trade. And it's getting tougher thanks to Gordon Brown and his so-called socialist cronies. I'm very nearly taxed out of existence. Don't they know I employ twenty-five people making some of the finest underwear to come out of Scotland? Then just before this last election debacle this little man from the SNP comes around and asks if he can depend on my support. Well I just told him that if the SNP ever got into power in Scotland then I would have to take my lingerie manufacturing business elsewhere. And do you know what he said? Do you know what he said? He said, and I quote – “well as far as I'm concerned you can go' an' make yer fancy pants in China.”

The other three gasp.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

And then just as he was leaving he blurted “you wouldnae happen tae hae a set o’ bra and pants in ma size wid yea?” And I said my dear man, yes of course, but I thought you were SNP not liberal.

LYNN

More wine anyone?

MARIE

Tell us about your kids, Mandy.

MANDY

Oh yes, Richard... and eh...oh I can never remember the other one...

MARIE

...Judy?

MANDY

No, not Judy... Malcolm that was it.

LYNN

Both boys?

MANDY

I think so... they were the last time I looked.

LYNN

When was that?

MANDY

Oh God, years ago. Probably before they went to boarding school. Crikey that is a long time ago. Oldest one will be about thirty now. The other one... what was it?

LYNN

Malcolm?

MANDY

Yes, him... he’s a couple of years younger. Last I heard he was working in a bar in Truro. Finest education money could buy and he’s a barman.

LYNN

And Richard?

MANDY

Who dear?

LYNN

The older one?

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MANDY

Oh yes... he's in some motorcycle gang in New Zealand. There's about forty of them all squatting in some disused factory or other. I haven't seen it but apparently they've converted it into one huge pub. There's a massive bar along one wall and the all the bikers have got their own shed thing or kennel or something that they sleep in. Sounds ghastly.

CAROL

Well perhaps if you hadn't sent your sons off at five years old to some boarding school they may have turned out a bit better.

MANDY

Five and a HALF. They were five and a HALF when they left home...

CAROL

Mandy, how could you do that? Kids of that age need a loving home not some prison camp.

MANDY

Oh nonsense, they were well fed and watered and got plenty of exercise.

CAROL

They're not horses Mandy. They were wee human beings and you gave them away.

MANDY

Makes them independent.

CAROL begins to alternate between sobbing and wailing. The other three shrug their shoulders. LYNN reaches over and strokes CAROL's arm.

LYNN

Carol, what's the matter?

CAROL

Nothing.

MARIE

Well you could have fooled me.

CAROL

Alright, alright I'll tell you what the matter is. I'm fifty.

MANDY/MARIE/LYNN

We're all fifty.

CAROL

Yes, but you've all achieved something. What have I done? Nothing, that's what. One dead end thing to the next. Been to college twice... dropped out twice. Worked in shops until I've been bored out my skull.

MANDY

Retail is crucial to the economy.

CAROL

Oh shut-up Mandy, you silly cow who cares about the economy. *(To LYNN)* You've been all over the world like some Lara Croft with your telephoto lenses and your camouflaged trousers and your Vietnam vets. *(To MANDY)* And you with your fancy lingerie. A woman of means indeed. I know your firm occupies a bit of the old chicken factory and I know that you have two girls spraying the undies with air-fresheners to try and hide the smell of the giblets...

MANDY

...That's not true.

CAROL

Who cares about fancy lingerie anyway as long as you've a clean pair to put on? And old mother Hubbard there with her gorgeous kids. And what have I done? Nothing. Auxiliary nurse, teaching assistant, home help, cleaner...

LYNN

Hey, Carol, there is nothing wrong with being an auxiliary nurse, or a teaching assistant.

MARIE

Or a home help.

MANDY

Or a cleaner. In fact I'm looking for a cleaner and despite the fact you called me a silly cow I might be willing...

LYNN/MARIE

MANDY!

CAROL

They're hardly what you would call careers.

LYNN

Maybe not but where would we be without them? I mean what do I actually do. Take photographs. I've been doing it for over twenty years and maybe just one of my photos will be remembered. Just one. People will look at the image of a dying child and they might stop for a moment and think. That's as far as they'll get. They won't act, that's far too much to expect but they might stop and think. If we're having an achievement competition, I haven't actually done too well either.

MANDY

You should have stayed on at school Carol. Leaving after fourth year like that. That's where you went wrong. I always thought you were the brightest out of the four of us.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MARIE

Aye, you were always top of the class in fact you were a wee swot.

LYNN

That's right. We always got you to help us with our homework, on the bus, remember?

CAROL

I remember.

MARIE

Why did you leave Carol? You just seemed to disappear without trace.

CAROL stares at the ground while the other three stare at her.

CAROL

I had to disappear. I couldn't come back... I was pregnant.

MANDY

I knew it.

CAROL

(Putting her in her place)

No you didn't, Mandy.

MANDY

No, no I didn't... sorry, Carol, go on.

CAROL

I couldn't tell my parents, I couldn't tell anybody, so... I ran away.

MARIE

Where did you go Carol?

CAROL

Peterhead.

MANDY

You ran away *to* Peterhead?

MARIE

Sshh...

MANDY

Only most folks, I would imagine, would run away *from*...

MARIE/LYNN

Sshhh...

CAROL

I know. It wasn't very exotic. I just got on a train to Aberdeen and then on a bus and I ended up in Peterhead. It was actually quite warm and sunny when I arrived. The harbour looked so pretty. I walked about for a while and watched the people. Mostly women with babies. I was about three months pregnant and I'd come to the end of my world. I remember I sat and watched the fishing boats. Gradually the harbour became quieter, except for the gulls. I was still sat there when I realised it was dark. I realised it was cold too. Bitter cold. But it didn't matter. I walked out the harbour wall, right to the very end and sat down with my legs dangling over the side. I gazed into that little corner of the North Sea below my feet. I inched forward until I could make out my reflection on the water in the moonlight. I tried to get a grip against the wall with my heels but they were slipping. I didn't care anyway. Then... I heard a voice...

MARIE

(whispering)

What kind of voice? Was it an angel?

CAROL

No... it was a man. He said, you look like the sort of person who is about to make a big mistake. I turned to look at him and slipped but he grabbed my blouse. I hung there over the water for a minute wishing that he would just let me go, but he pulled me up and dragged me away from the edge. He told me that his name was Sergi. He was from Lithuania and was the skipper of a Russian trawler. He took me to his boat and fed me in his cabin. He asked me, *(she does the accent)* - why you try and kill yourself? - I thought that I had nothing to lose by telling him and so I told him I was pregnant. He went crazy. He began shouting *(she does the accent again)* - you try to kill a baby? - He began to cry and showed me a photo of his wife. She was beautiful and he said that he loved her. He said that he would die for her. Imagine that. They had been married ten years but there had been no children. I don't know what made me say it. It was one of those occasions when you hear your own voice as a stranger would hear it. You can have mine, I said. You can have my baby. He went crazy again and he told me to go. I spent all the next day on a bench in the harbour until darkness fell and I made my way out the harbour wall again. He was there waiting for me. Okay, he said. We will take your baby. He paid the rent on a farm cottage for me to live in until I was eight and a half months. I was then smuggled into Lithuania on the trawler and had my wee girl there a week later. The day after she was born I was back on the fishing boat bound for Ullapool. My life has been on hold ever since.

LYNN

You've never made contact with them?

CAROL

No.

MANDY

Did the father ever know any of this?

CAROL

No.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

MARIE

Who was he Carol?

MANDY

Marie, that's none of our business... but if you do feel the need to tell us Carol then obviously you can. We are your old chums after all.

CAROL

Mr Adamson.

LYNN

The geography teacher?

CAROL nods.

Good grief. You... and him...

CAROL nods again

...wow.

Pause.

More wine anyone? Carol?

CAROL

No, I've had enough. In fact I'm going to the toilet.

LYNN

I'll come with you.

CAROL and LYNN exit.

MANDY

Well... what do you think of that? She's a dark horse our Carol. And she had the nerve to criticise me for sending my boys off to boarding school. At least I didn't hand them over as babies to the Lithuanian skipper of a Russian trawler.

MARIE

Well, I think it's fine.

MANDY

You do?

MARIE

Och aye. I mean we can all only do what we think is best at the time. And who knows it might have been the best thing to do. Good grief, it's got to have been better than Carol killing herself. The way I see it is that we're all in this thing together. We're all just wee daft human beings trying the best we can. What does it matter if Carol gave

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

her baby away so long as the wee girl was well cared for and loved. And by the sounds of things she probably was.

MANDY

I suppose so... it was quite a confession none the less.

MARIE

I wouldn't call it a confession Mandy. That suggests she did something bad.

MANDY

(shifting uneasily in her seat)

Marie, now we're alone and on the subject of confessions. I'm afraid I have to make one.

MARIE

It's true isn't it?

MANDY

What's true? Do you mean, you know?

MARIE

What Carol said about the folk spraying your undies to hide the smell of the chickens?

MANDY

Ah... yes. Well, yes... yes that is true I'm afraid, but no, that is not what I wanted to tell you.

MARIE

(wagging her finger and smiling)

It was you that was supposed to bring the tent!

MANDY

Ye-es it was...I forgot the damned thing, but that's not what I wanted to tell you either.

MARIE

Well what is it then?

MANDY

Now I'm only going to tell you because I know that you're an understanding person and it's been bothering me for nearly forty years.

MARIE

Forty years!

MANDY

Yes dear, since your fourteenth birthday party.

Assault Within Tent – Bob Davidson

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