

Smoking The Pipe©

Draft 1.

Written by Jude Ashton.

SCENE 1.
Monday bites.

Int. 8:00am. MR.SMITH's bedroom at the back of the shop.

He awakes and urinates in his bedside bucket. Then he light his pipe. The MR.SMITH starts to leave the room and then hears the dog drinking from the bucket.

In an unfazed pipe spoken mumble.

MR.SMITH
Stupid dog.

The MR.SMITH puts tobacco in his pipe and smoke it.

MR.SMITH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
This is my pipe. It helps me get through this life. I think I am having a mid life crisis at seventy three. Last time this happened I got married at twenty two. That's when I met her. My tobacco pipe, and we have been together ever since. This is my calm before the storm. I like to embrace the day before the day embraces me. This is my pipe and I am going to smoke it.

He hears a light tap at the shop door and goes to the door. An old voice comes from the door.

WOB
Let me in! You're late today.

He unlocks and unbolts all the security fittings. The door opens.

WOB (CONT'D)
It's raining today, we should get some business.

MR.SMITH
I don't know why I bother.

The dog runs to Wob to greet her.

WOB
Ahhh he's licking me! Someone loves me don't you?

MR.SMITH
I wouldn't let him do that if I were you.

WOB
He loves me! Don't you?

MR.SMITH sighs heavily. Puffing quicker on his pipe.

MR.SMITH
Awww bloody hell.

The bell on the shop door rings and rolls on to the floor.

You haven't fixed that! What do I
pay you for anyway?

WOB
You don't pay me anything.

MR.SMITH
True. Well serve this lady.

OLD LADY
Good morning Mr.Smith. How are
you on this fine day?

MR.SMITH
Well I am still alive.

There's a nervous silence. Then they all smile together.
Except MR.SMITH.

OLD LADY
I have this watch and it's not
working.

She hands him a old watch and the MR.SMITH has a look at it. Lots of smoke coming
from his pipe.

MR.SMITH
It's only got one hand love.
That's the problem.

OLD LADY
Has it, really? Lets see, oh it
has.

Looking at Wob.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)
He's right you know.

MR.SMITH rolls his eyes and is rubbing his forehead.

MR.SMITH
Look madam I can show you some
other watches we have for sale..

OLD LADY
Oh no I couldn't. My husband
bought me this. Couldn't you just
fix it?

MR.SMITH
No love, it's broken beyond
repair.

OLD LADY
Yes I understand that, but when
will you fix it?

MR.SMITH
I can't fix it love. It's broken,
okay?

OLD LADY

Oh... I will have to get another
watch wont I?

The old lady sits down on the seat near the counter and fiddles with it. She mutters things to herself. Another customer comes in. Wob fixes the bell back on the front shop door.

MR.SMITH

Good morning love, what can I do
for you?

LADY

Hi, I have this umbrella and I
took it to the shop down the
road. I can't remember the name
of it. I think it had a wooden
duck outside the shop.

MR.SMITH

Ducks are us?

LADY

No that's not it...erm...

MR.SMITH

Let's have a look at it?

She keeps talking and talking.

Hangan, so the man says he can't fix it.

MR.SMITH starts rubbing his forehead with both hands and more
smoke comes out of his pipe.

The phone rings and rings, rings. Wobs head starts wobbling
faster and faster.

MR.SMITH (CONT'D)

Do you want me to fix it love or
what?

LADY

Yes, so the man says that I
should come to your shop. Well I
didn't know where your shop was.

The phone is still ringing. Then suddenly the old lady with
the broken watch stands up and pushes her way in front of the
lady being served.

LADY (CONT'D)

It moved! I saw the finger move,
it moved! Look?

This interruption doesn't stop the lady still telling her
story. The phone is still ringing.

Still rubbing his head. The phone is still ringing.

MR.SMITH

Jesus give me strength. Its
broken love, you stupi..its
broken.. just like me.

LADY

...so then I found the shop and
here I am!

The phone is still ringing and hasn't been answered. The MR.SMITH leaves the two women standing at the counter talking at the same time. He storms over to the unanswered phone.

MR.SMITH

Yes? Who? No this is a shop!
There isn't any Michelle here,
it's a shop. Yes a shop. What?
Jim?

He slams the phone down and the door bell comes crashing down. MR.SMITH grabs his pipe & tobacco pouch. He then slowly walks out the shop. Stopping first and kicking the door bell across the floor.

LADY

Where's he going?

WOB

A meeting, he does that.

Scene 2

Look who I bumped into.

On his way to the meeting his friend Reg sees the MR.SMITH and beckons him over to sit with him while he's fishing.

REG

You should always fish when
there's trouble at home.

MR.SMITH

You're here every week aren't
you?

REG

Hmm. Sometimes not through
choice. If I don't have a good
day I will.

MR.SMITH

You mean if the wife nags at you.

REG

No. If I don't have a bite, I
come back the next day.

MR.SMITH

Oh right. Rose tells me all the
time to go fishing with you.

REG

Does she?

MR.SMITH

Not as such. More like, why don't
you fuck off with that old

miserable fart Reg, down that
shitty old lake near the sewage
works and fish the pissing day
away!.

REG
Oh...

MR.SMITH
Yep.

REG
Wow...

MR.SMITH
Yep.

REG
I'm not miserable am I?

Slight pause

MR.SMITH
Naa. So do you like fishing?

REG
Nope.

MR.SMITH
So why do you fish then?

REG
Don't know really, just do.

MR.SMITH
What bait do you use?

REG
Maggots.

MR.SMITH
So do you use any other baits?

REG
Nope, just maggots.

MR.SMITH
Great...erm...look..I want..

REG
Maggots are over their. Just help
yourself, not scared of them are
you?

MR.SMITH
I don't want maggots. This isn't
working out.

REG
You're not patient are you?

MR.SMITH

What? No I mean my marriage, not
this crap fishing.

REG

Fishing isn't crap. I love
fishing.

MR.SMITH

Yeah I didn't mean that. Sorry.

REG

So what's happened? Pass me the
some of those maggots.

Grabbing some maggots and pulling a face.

MR.SMITH

The love is gone I think, I just
don't know.

REG

Hold the rod level, you aren't
holding the rod right.

MR.SMITH

God, now you sound like her!

REG

What? Why do you think the love
has gone?

MR.SMITH

I don't know. Anyway I got go, I
am going to a meeting with
Charles.

REG

You mean the pub?

MR.SMITH

Yeah, take care Reg.

Scene 3

The meeting

MR.SMITH leaves Reg and finally meets with his close friend
Charlie at his local pub. They play their usual game of pool
and give each other lots of abuse.

MR.SMITH (CONT'D)

That pocket over there.

He points to the pocket with his cue. The black ball then
goes in the pocket at the opposite end. And not the one he
pointed at.

CHARLIE

Bad luck...old boy. Its game, I
win. Wrong pocket.

MR.SMITH
It went in didn't it?

CHARLIE
Yes but in the wrong pocket.

MR.SMITH
Oh you noticed, well I give that
one then. It's just a game, you
know.

They sit down on some chairs near the table with their
drinks.

MR.SMITH (CONT'D)
Why do we still come here for
meetings? It has the same smells.
That pasty you stood on last week
is still over near the ladies
toilets. Hang on, some of it is
still on your shoes.

CHARLIE
Because the ale is cheap and they
let us come in without questions.
Shall we go to the old casino
instead?

MR.SMITH light's his pipe and thinks about it for some
seconds. He continues to talk with his pipe still in his
mouth. Like a baby with a dummy.

MR.SMITH
No can't go there, we just can't.

CHARLIE
I like it there, why not?

MR.SMITH
Because they know me.

CHARLIE
You're barred at your age?

MR.SMITH
Naah I just don't think they like
me.

CHARLIE
Barred I thought so. So here we
will stay then.

MR.SMITH
Yeah.

CHARLIE
So what's the real reason for
this rush meeting? What's on your
old mind?

MR.SMITH
Well...

CHARLIE
Yes?

MR.SMITH
I don't care anymore. The customers want more and I can't give it to them. And the bloody bell keeps falling off the shop door. Wob doesn't do anything. The dog is a walking toilet and most of all I need a new pipe.

CHARLIE
Oh I see. Do you want me to look at the bell?

MR.SMITH
No I don't.

They both have a quick slurp of beer.

CHARLIE
You won't take the dog will ya?

MR.SMITH
No best not. Well thanks for your time you have been really helpful.

CHARLIE
That's not the real problem is it?

MR.SMITH
No its not. I think I should close the shop once and for all.

CHARLIE
And do what exactly?

MR.SMITH
Absolutely nothing.

CHARLIE
You talked to Rose about this?

MR.SMITH
No just Shirley. I haven't seen Rose for a week or so.

CHARLIE
Shirley? You know its all going to catch up with you know.

MR.SMITH
It already has Charles.

Mobile phone rings to the tune of 'Rule Britannia'

MR.SMITH (CONT'D)
Oh hello honey. No babe, I'm having a meeting. Sugar cube.

Yes, I'm in the pub playing pool.
Next week? Yeah we could do that,
my little kitten. Love you too.
I do, you know I do. See you
babe. I can't say that right
now.....because...yeah there's
someone here. Bye babe.

CHARLIE
The wife?

MR.SMITH
Oh god no! Dance partner.

CHARLIE
You dance?

MR.SMITH
Yeah I dance and we entering a
competition next week.

CHARLIE
Well aren't you full of secrets?
I never knew you danced.

MR.SMITH
I might look old, but I can still
dance. You want to come and watch
us?

CHARLIE
This I have to see. Rose will be
there wont she?

MR.SMITH
No, she doesn't know about the
dancing.

CHARLIE
Oh okay, I can't wait.

MR.SMITH
Anyway it's your shot.

Scene 4
Visiting Rose

MR.SMITH sneaks his key into the door and stumbles on his wife having a
conversation on the phone.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So did you go on Sunday?

ROSE
Mary's wedding.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
You didn't...

ROSE
I did.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So did Jean go?

ROSE
She did.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
What about...

ROSE
Yeah Alison and the other guy.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
What's his name?

ROSE
Oh dear, I always forget...

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Alan! The one with the wig.

ROSE
Wiggy Al, that's right.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
What about you know Marks fancy
bit...

ROSE
Oh her! No, the snotty bitch
didn't go. Never liked her.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Oh I know! She went to a private
school you know?

ROSE
Really?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Catholic too.

ROSE
Oh dear.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
That's her problem isn't it?

ROSE
Well where do you start?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So tell me, did...

ROSE
She was sick with the twins.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Oh god no, was she? You mean
Shelley?

ROSE
No Trudy. The red head twins, you
know?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
That's right. But tell me, did
'SHE' turn up?

ROSE
Who Clare??? She wouldn't dare.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
No not that cow, the other one.
With the lisp and the plastic
bits.

ROSE
Jenny! Bloody hell, she did you
know!

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Don't miss her out.

ROSE
How could you? She can block
eclipses.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So was she with him then?

ROSE
What Terry?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Yeah.

ROSE
No, some other fella!

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
No!

ROSE
Yeah.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So was poor Anne there, did she
make it?

ROSE
Yeah the poor thing, just with
the six little ones.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Awww, poor thing.

ROSE
T-shirt & jeans you know?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Awww. So you had a good time
then?

ROSE
Nahhh, waste of my time.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Was it?

ROSE
Yeah...

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
Shame.

ROSE
They had a good turn out though.
Some surprises.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
So what about the happy couple?

ROSE
Give them twelve months.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
That much.

ROSE
Yeah. They looked happy for half
the ceremony. Anyway ..you wont
guess what the cat just brought
in?

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
No!

ROSE
Yes I am afraid so.

WIFE'S BEST FRIEND
See ya tomorrow then.

ROSE
Bye love.

Puts the phone down slowly, giving a nasty stare at her husband. He just stands in the doorway, puffing away at his pipe.

ROSE (CONT'D)
You eaten?

MR.SMITH
No.

She heads to the kitchen. MR.SMITH sits down in the lounge. Starts lighting his pipe. The tv is on but he isn't watching it.

Rose is still in the kitchen warming his meal up.

ROSE

I hope your not smoking with that
bloody pipe in there. I have just
cleaned up there.

Already puffing away by now. With him brushing away a lot the tobacco off the seat.
And looking behind him.

MR.SMITH

Nope.

ROSE

I expected you on Sunday you
know? I had your favourite meal
ready.

No reply. Then Rose drops a pan. BANG. It startles MR.SMITH. He slowly gets up and
heads for the front door. But then realises that Rose isn't coming in throwing
pans. He leans back and puffs more pipe.

ROSE (CONT'D)

You haven't been home for a
while. I thought you were dead in
an alley or something. But then I
saw the shop open.

MR.SMITH

What are you cooking? I hope it's
not salad again.

Rose sticks her head into the lounge. Forcing MR.SMITH to eventually take his pipe
out of his mouth.

ROSE

Do you want to cook it?

MR.SMITH

No honey, no rush.

Rose precedes back the kitchen and bangs some cupboards (while preparing the food).
MR.SMITH looks over twice to the kitchen worried Rose might come back.

MR.SMITH (CONT'D)

I am thinking of closing the
shop.

The noise stops and it goes silent. Rose comes back into the lounge shocked. Still
holding a pan and pointing with it.

ROSE

What about the money? Are you
serious? I can't live on a
pension. What's the matter with
you? I can't survive, you're not
closing the shop.

MR.SMITH:

It's not about money anymore it's about me! I can't take the
bullshit anymore...

Rose interrupts.

Rose:
Don't curse in my house. I won't have it.

MR.SMITH:
It's our house honey and I am closing the shop.

Rose:
It's our house when you want your food, or she's kicked you out! You can't switch on this marriage when it's convenient for you! This was a beautiful house and then you...YOU shamed it. I am shamed too, I can't walk down the street. I can't look at people down at the shops.
You know they are talking about us, yet you...YOU! You just carry on in your wonderful world! What about me? Do you think about me? I am your wife and as long as that bitch knows that she isn't getting that money.

He frantically puffs harder on his pipe searching for a reply. He replies without looking at her.

MR.SMITH:
What money?

Rose:
The shop of course, I just know you aren't giving her any of it. No hang on, wait a minute. It's her idea isn't it?

MR.SMITH:
No Rose it's my idea and that bitch has a name its Shirley.

Rose:
I don't want to know and don't say her name in my house. I have throbbing headache now. Heres your food have it and bugger off. Antiques road show is on in a minute and I want to watch it in peace. And put that bloody pipe out.

MR.SMITH rolls his eyes. Puts the pipe out and proceeds to eat his now cold meal. Scene fades on Rose's emotional face.

Scene 5
Are those neighbours still giving you any trouble?

Next day back at the shop. A regular customer comes in, Mr.Jones.

MR.SMITH:
Morning Mr.Jones and how are you? Are those neighbours still giving you any trouble?

Mr.Jones:
Robbing buggers they are! The other day I caught a two Nigerians, aged 16. They crossed the road (I was watching them) and went right into my front garden. Straight to my pears and were taking them. I said "Hey what do think you are doing?"

They said "We are taking some pears." And I said "No your not, now fuck off!"

MR.SMITH:
Your pears?

Mr.Jones:

Yeah my bloody pears, cheeky buggers. But if they had just knocked on my door and asked me "Please sir can we have some pears?" I would have said yes of course you fucking can!

Mr.Jones:

Then guess what?

MR.SMITH:

What?

Mr.Jones:

They get their dad and he comes over, big Nigerian he was scary black guy. He says there's no need to be nasty to my kids. I told him if you set one foot on my fucking property I will stick this fucking pitch fork in your fucking eye! So he turned round and didn't mess with me.

Mr.Jones:

There's more, my neighbour told me that some git was robbing my plums at four in the morning. So I got up and I caught him with big carry bag helping himself. I said "Hey what the bloody hell do you think you are doing?" He said "I am taking your plums."

I said " No your not, now fuck off out of my plum tree!" So he did and with the carry bag full of plums. I said "Oy ya bugger you can leave the bag too."

MR.SMITH:

The cheeky git.

Mr.Jones:

And you know what?

MR.SMITH:

What?

Mr.Jones:

If he had just knocked on my door at four in the morning and asked me "Please can I have some plums?" I would have said yes of course you fucking can!

On Sunday bloody Sunday I tell ya! I caught a Muslim up a ladder, the bugger bought his own ladder in my apple tree. I said "What are doing in my apple tree?" He said "I am taking your apples." I said "No your not! Take your ladder and fuck off!"

Mr.Jones:

And you know what?

MR.SMITH:

If he had just knocked on your door and asked you "Please can I have some apples?" You would have said yes of course you fucking can!

Mr.Jones:

No I wouldn't, I can't stand Muslims.

MR.SMITH:

Fair enough mate it's your fruit isn't it?
Riiight then, he's your watch that's twenty pounds.

Scene 6
Dancing to Tom.

MR.SMITH is working at the back of the store. The shop is open and Wob is at the front of the store serving customers.

The room suddenly goes dark and out from behind a curtain appears Tom Jones.

MR.SMITH:

Tom? How long you been there?

Tom:

I am always here.

MR.SMITH:

Always? What? Even when I am..

Tom:

Yes even then.

MR.SMITH:

Oh...so you can you fix watches?

Tom:

No.

MR.SMITH:

Not umbrellas?

Tom:

No I can't. I can sing though.

MR.SMITH:

Well sing then.

Tom starts singing 'Delia' and a spot light comes on. And a 21 year old blonde bombshell comes out the curtains. And she proceeds to dance with the MR.SMITH.

After the song, Wob pops her head in the back room.

Wob:

Where you been? I have been calling you, we have customers waiting.

MR.SMITH:

I was just dancing with Tom..I mean a young girl. And Tom was singing oh nevermind.

Wob:

Tom? Tom who?

Scene 7
Charles visits Rose

Charlie goes to visit Rose at MR.SMITHs house. He knocks at the door.

Charlie:
Rose! Is he here?

Rose:
Charles! You are joking aren't you?

Charlie:
Good. May I? I brought your favourites.

He hands Rose a bunch of flowers.

Rose:
Oh Charles, you shouldn't of! That's nice, thank you.

The go in the house together. And sit close together in the lounge.

Charlie:
How you keeping Rose? Has he been round?

Rose:
Battling on Charles, you know me. He crawled in here the other day. Did you know about the shop?

Charlie:
Yes Rose. I think its best for you too.

Rose:
Did he send you here to say that?

Charlie:
No Rose! He doesn't know I am here. I just wanted to see you.

Rose:
Sorry Charles, I didn't mean that. I just don't understand anymore.

Charlie:
I know Rose, I know. If I can do anything you know I will.

Rose:
Thanks Charles, you're a saint. Cup of tea?

Charlie:
Yes please, one sugar thanks.

Charles sits down. Rose goes in the kitchen.

Scene 8
Renew the shop or not?

Wob walks into the shop office backroom and the light is off. She sees a shadowy figure sitting at the office desk.

Wob:
Ahhhh you gave me a fright! What are you doing sitting in the dark? You nearly gave me a heart attack!

MR.SMITH:
Nothing, just thinking.

Wob:

In the dark? What's the matter? I am switching the light on.

MR.SMITH:

NO don't! I don't want you to see me like this. I am thinking about closing the shop

She sits next to him.

Wob:

What do you mean? I didn't even know you were even thinking about it. You didn't mention this before.

MR.SMITH:

Well I am not closing it, at least not yet. It's stupid... but I am scared, for the first time in my life. I'm not sure about where I am going.

Wob:

Why? You should be happy, the shop is doing well.

MR.SMITH:

I am alone, if I stop doing this there's nothing else left.

Wob:

Don't be silly, you have your wife. She loves you.

MR.SMITH:

No I don't think she does anymore

Wob:

What do you mean?

MR.SMITH:

She's too angry with me and I don't deserve her

Wob:

Then leave the shop open. If it's such a problem, leave it open.

It's not the shop is it?

MR.SMITH:

No.

Wob:

Then what is it?

MR.SMITH:

I don't want to be alone.

Wob:

You're not making any sense, you have people around you. You're not alone.

I know, I know that. But if the shop closes and I retire what will happen then? I can't stop being who I am. I have always worked my whole life, my father worked till he died. I'm sorry I can't believe I am telling you all this.

Wob:

Its okay I don't mind. Look I think you should go home and rest. And maybe we can talk about this in the morning over a cup of tea?

He stands up and gives Wob a hug. Then he puts his hat on.

MR.SMITH:

Thanks.

He calls for the dog and they both leave the shop together.