

Percy Filth

written by

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Radio Play

(C)

FADE IN:

INT. LONDON ICONIC TAXI - NIGHT

Squeaking windscreen wipers as Traffic signal bleeps.

Taxi engine rattles as it stops.

Tap tap on window.

Window squeaks as it descends.

PASSENGER (40's)

PASSENGER

(well spoken)

God am I glad to see you.

TAXI DRIVER (50's)

TAXI DRIVER

(gruff accent)

Leon, actually, but you can call
me God if you like. I've been
called a lot worse.

PASSENGER

I'll call you anything you want
if you get me out of this rain
and home.

TAXI DRIVER

Where's home?

PASSENGER

Harewood Drive.

TAXI DRIVER

Jump in, then.

PASSENGER

You're a life saver, pal.

TAXI DRIVER

That's what they all say.

Taxi door opens, then closes shut. Taxi drives off.

PASSENGER

I've just spent the whole night
at a conference. I didn't realise
how quickly time flies - It's
just flown.

TAXI DRIVER

You're lucky you caught me. I was
just about to turn off me light
and head home.

PASSENGER

I really appreciate it.
(pauses)
Can you give me a shout when
we're there?

TAXI DRIVER

No problem, mate.

Silence.

Beat.

Diesel engine rattles as the engine is switched off.

Passenger snores.

TAXI DRIVER

(sighs)
We're here, mate.

Long Silence.

TAXI DRIVER /

(loudly)
Guvner?

Silence.

TAXI DRIVER /

C'mon! You're home now, mate.

Short silence.

PASSENGER

(wearily)
Where the hell are we?

TAXI DRIVER

(aback)
You what?

PASSENGER

I asked you to take me to
Harewood Drive. Where are we,
pal?

TAXI DRIVER

No, no, no. You said Hertford
Drive. I know what I heard, mate.

PASSENGER

Poppycock, I did! I said Harewood
Drive. I should know where I
live, pal.

TAXI DRIVER

Well I know what I heard. It's my
job to listen to where people
want want to be taken to, and you
distinctly asked to be taken to
Hertford Drive. Now pay up.

PASSENGER

Where are we, anyway?

TAXI DRIVER

Now don't start all that with me.
You know exactly where we are.
Now pay up!

PASSENGER

I meant where in England are we?

TAXI DRIVER

Are you taking the Mickey Bliss?
This is Hertford Drive,
Hertfordshire.

PASSENGER

(adamantly)

You need to take me to the place
I asked for. And it doesn't come
to ninety-quid either. So turn
off that thing off and restart it
when we get back to where you
picked me up from.

TAXI DRIVER

(shakes head)

You're 'avin a bubble bath aintcha? That's not gonna happen. You need to pay the fare on the meter and get another cab if you want to go back to London.

PASSENGER

(outraged)

Get another cab?! What... in the middle of nowhere at 1 a.m in the sodding morning?! You're the one having a laugh, pal! I'm not paying you a single penny until you take me home.

TAXI DRIVER

Look, it's not my problem if you decide to fall asleep during the journey, mate.

PASSENGER

Well I'm not moving until you take me back.

TAXI DRIVER

In that case, I'll call Percy Filth.

PASSENGER

Percy who?

TAXI DRIVER

Percy Filth.

PASSENGER

Well, I'm not moving.

TAXI DRIVER

Right! I'm calling 'em right now.

Bleep bleep, then a connection.

EMERGENCY

(boring female vocal)

Police emergency. How may I help?

TAXI DRIVER

Hi. I've got a passenger in the back of my cab and he's refusing to pay the fare.

PASSENGER

(interjects)

That's poppycock! He's brought me to the wrong place! Go on... tell her that while you're at it.

TAXI DRIVER

(on phone)

Did you hear that, luv?

EMERGENCY V.O

Yes, I did hear that.

(pauses)

Has your passenger threatened you at all?

TAXI DRIVER

No, not yet... but he's turning very nasty. Aggressive is the language I'd use, luv.

EMERGENCY V.O

I'm afraid unless your passenger physically threatens you we cannot respond to your request. All our units are very busy at the moment.

TAXI DRIVER

So what am I supposed to do with him, then?

EMERGENCY V.O

Probably talk to him nicely and persuade him to pay at least part of the fare.

TAXI DRIVER

But he won't even do that, luv. He's being really threatening. I'm afraid for my safety. I could be attacked any minute now.

EMERGENCY V.O

But you said he hadn't threatened you. So has he, or not?

TAXI DRIVER

Well, no, but-

EMERGENCY V.O

*-Call back if he threatens you
and I'll see what I can do.*

TAXI DRIVER

(angrily)

Oh, well. Thank you very much for
nothing.

(pauses)

A waste of time you lot are.

Call ends.

PASSENGER

Now you'll just have to take me
home.

TAXI DRIVER

I'm not taking you anywhere until
you pay me what it says on the
meter!

PASSENGER

That's unadulterated theft, that
is. You could be charged with
theft with menacing behaviour.

TAXI DRIVER

Oh don't be ridiculous.

PASSENGER

It is.

TAXI DRIVER

(calmer)

OK. How about we compromise,
then?

Short pause.

PASSENGER

OK. What's the offer?

TAXI DRIVER

I'll take you back to London and
we split the difference.

PASSENGER

What's your estimation of the
difference?

TAXI DRIVER

So the fare at the moment is ninety-quid. If we add half to that for the return, that makes a hundred and thirty-five.

PASSENGER

You what?!

TAXI DRIVER

Hang on, hang on... let me finish.

(pauses)

If we half that again. Say you pay me sixty-five quid up front? I can't be no fairer than that.

Long pause.

PASSENGER

I've got a better idea.

TAXI DRIVER

What's that?

PASSENGER

You turn off that meter and scrub the ninety quid, and I'll pay you thirty-quid to take me home like we agreed. It's normally around twenty-quid from where you picked me up.

TAXI DRIVER

(snorts)

I'd rather stick pins in my eyes.

PASSENGER

You're doomed. I'm not paying you a single penny, then.

TAXI DRIVER

We'll see who's doomed, mate.

(pauses)

I'll turn you upside down until your wallet falls out of your pocket.

PASSENGER

How are you going to do that, then?

TAXI DRIVER

Look, you either pay the fare, or I'll drag you out and shake you until you do pay.

PASSENGER

Are you physically threatening me?

TAXI DRIVER

You can take that as a direct threat from me. mate.

BLEEP BLEEP - CONNECTION.

EMERGENCY

Police emergency service. How may I help?

PASSENGER

It's DCI Percy Filth here. I'm sitting in the back of a taxi and the driver has just physically threatened me.

EMERGENCY

What's your destination, DCI Percy Filth?

PASSENGER

Hertford Drive. Hertfordshire.

EMERGENCY

There's a unit on its way to you right now. It should be with you within one minute.

Call ends.

PASSENGER

Right, step out of the vehicle please. I'm nicking you for attempted unadulterated theft with menacing behaviour.

POLICE SIRENS.

THE END