

Jez Butterworth: *Jerusalem*

Explore how Butterworth explores the relationship between the past and the present in this extract from *Jerusalem*.

You should consider the use of dramatic and stylistic techniques, its significance within the play and any relevant dramatic and other contexts.

He takes a bullet from his pocket. Tosses it to GINGER.

GINGER. Could be any old bullet.

He tosses it back.

JOHNNY. Any old bullet, eh? *(He puts it between his teeth.*

Smiles.) So there you have it. I am the only man in history to be conceived in separate postal zones. Born one day early and I've been a day ahead of all you beggars ever since. *(He smiles.)*

ALL. Bollocks!

Bullshit!

JOHNNY *bangs the table.*

JOHNNY. Friends! Outcasts. Leeches. Undesirables. A blessing on you, and upon this beggars' banquet. This day we draw a line in the chalk, and push back hard against the bastard pitiless busybody council, and drive them from this place for ever. I, Rooster Byron, your merciless ruler, have decreed that today all my bounty is bestowed upon you, gratis. There will be free booze, bangers, draw, whizz and whatnot, for all the minions of my kingdom.

Cheers from those gathered.

Before I begin, I want to say a few words about one here who is leaving us. A son of this vale, born of this soil, he's lived fair a score year among us, but tomorrow sets sail on a voyage to the far side of the world.

Cheers.

And although we know he'll go broke inside a week, find nothing but savages and end up selling his bum round Botany Bay, he goes to his doom with our blessing. Lee Piper, you're a pisshead, a whizzhead and you don't pay your way. But you're the only one of these buggers I'd trust with a lit match. So here's your blessing. Tanya.

TANYA *stands. Clears her throat.*

TANYA.

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
And if you want that free one, come back to my mum's,
And I'll get you halfway to Australia for nothing.

They cheer. 'Speech! Speech! Speech!!' LEE stands. Raises a hand.

LEE. Thank you. Thank you, Tanya. Thank you to all. I've been very happy here and. Right. And. Right. And. Right. And. Right.

He starts to cry.

GINGER. Steady the bus.

DAVEY. Here we go.

GINGER. Come on, skipper. Keep the cable tight. Gather.

Gather.

They all take the piss.

LEE. I'm all right. I'm fine. Relax. I'm back. Fuck off. Fuck off. I'm back. *(He holds a hand up.)* Rooster. You've proved today you're not just an old yppo, tight as two coats of paint, a dangerous nutter they should put behind glass, chuck in a box and strap to the back of a diving blue whale. And even if you gets us all killed today, at least we'll all show up in Heaven pissed. Cheers!

Cheers.

PROFESSOR. Well, this is indeed a fitting scene. It is an Englishman's duty at the first scent of May to make the turf his floor, his roof the arcing firmament. And his clothes the leaves and branches of the glade.

JOHNNY. Hear, hear!