

Macmillan's Marvellous Motion Machine

a play for radio

by Jules Horne

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for Catherine Bailey Limited

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MACHINE = the mechanical spirit of the velocipede.

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SCENE ONE: DUMFRIESSHIRE, 1840S

FADE IN COUNTRY ROAD.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) In the beginning was the WHEEL, and the wheel did ROLL. And man put wheel behind wheel, and saw that it was GOOD. And man saw MACHINE. And man saw MO-MEN-TUM.

MACMILLAN: (BELLOWING, OFF) Oot the road!

[DEEF AGNES: What's he say?

WEE TODDY: Oooooo thaaa – ow!

DEEF AGNES: Nae need tae bellow.]

MACMILLAN APPROACHES WITH THE CLANKING BIKE.

MACMILLAN: (APPROACHING) Back, I said. S'all right. I've aw day. Aw... day.

MEG: Wull! Back, he says!

WULL: (INDIGNANT) Wheesht, wumman. Think I'm donnert?

BURNIE: (SLURRED) No as donnert as Daft... Pate... Macmillan.

WEE TODDY: He's no, Mr Burnie! Ow!

DEEF AGNES: Haud your wheesht.

VILLAGERS SETTLE. EXPECTANT HUSH.

CATHERINE: Good – good luck, Pate!

MACMILLAN: Thank you, Miss Sinclair.

WHISTLES. LAUGHTER.

DUKE: Good luck, Mr Macmillan.

MACMILLAN: Your grace.

DUKE: Fine day for it!

MACMILLAN: Aye. Ar-hem.

BURNIE: Shhpeech!

MEG: Speech!

SHOUTS: SPEECH!

MACMILLAN: What? No – er no. No! Er-

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw the MO-MENT, and that it was
BRIGHT.

SHOUTS QUIETEN DOWN!

MACMILLAN: This, your grace, ladies and gentlemen of Keir –

BURNIE: – and Penpont!

WHISTLES.

MACMILLAN: - (WEARY) and Penpont –

MEG: And Thornhill –

MACMILLAN: Ladies and gentlemen of Dumfriesshire – as you know –
two years of late nights – early mornings –

WULL: Get on wi it!

MACMILLAN: (PERSISTS) Thanks are due! First to Burnie – the twae
wheels here –

BURNIE: Thass ma wheels...

MACMILLAN: This bit iron came by way of his grace's ploo – sir –

DUKE: Ah yes. Good man.

MACMILLAN: This bit carving in the form of a horse heid, by way of my
good lady mither –

OLD MRS MAC: (PRIDE) He's an awfy laddie –

WULL: (CALL) Ride the thing! I've a horse needing shod!

MACMILLAN: I will, I will. But first let's take a moment to appreciate that
this is no an ordinary machine.

VILLAGERS. MURMUR.

WULL: (STEALING THUNDER) It's a dandy horse.

MEG: Wull!

MACMILLAN: It's no a dandy horse, Wull.

WULL: Aye it is. I've seen yin afore.

MACMILLAN: It's no a dandy -

WULL: In the smithy at Drumlanrig.

MACMILLAN: It's no a -

WULL: Been there twenty year.

BURNIE: Aye. I mind his lordship's faither used to skite about on the
green-

DUKE: (INTRIGUED) Oh yes...

DEEF AGNES: No half.

BURNIE: - wi his tails oot ahint, flapping...

DUKE: He did!

DEEF AGNES: Tails oot ahint, like a muckle flapping birdie -

MACMILLAN: IT'S NO A DANDYHORSE! It's a PEDESTRIAN ACCELERATOR!

BURNIE: A ped-ped-

WEE TODDY: A pedestrian accelerator!

MACMILLAN: Thank you, Mr Todd. The dandyhorse was nae mair as a
seat on wheels. A gentleman's toy. This - Pedestrian
Accelerator - is a very different beast. First, it has - see
here: a pair of pedals- one each side. Second - a piston rod
- here and here, forming a crank, which means ... Mr Todd?

WEE TODDY: (ROARING) Mo-men-tum!

VILLAGERS. MURMUR.

MACMILLAN: So if you'll just stand back there, I'll demonstrate.

BURNIE: Wh – where is your destination, Pate?

MEG: (JOKE) Glasgow.

VILLAGERS LAUGH.

MACMILLAN: (SERIOUS) Aye. Glasgow.

OLD MRS MAC: He's an awfy laddie.

CATHERINE: Careful, Pate!

DUKE: Bon courage, Macmillan!

EXPECTANT HUSH. MACHINE ATMOS GROWS.

MACMILLAN READIES THE VELOCPEDE: CLANKS.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Mo-men-tum.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Daft Pate, is it?

MACHINE: (CLOSE) ENER-GY.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Daft Pate Macmillan wi the daft ideas.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHNNN!

MACMILLAN: (PUSHING OFF) Uffff.

VILLAGERS: ALARM. THE BIKE TAKES OFF. CLANKS,

METALLIC SCRAPING.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) Now – observe – if I – put my – FEET-

VILLAGERS: WHOAHHH. CLANK.

MACMILLAN: (WOBBLING) Ohh...

VILLAGERS: (CONT UNDER) Ohh...

CATHERINE: Watch yoursel, Pate.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) you – see that – I can – keep my – Whooaah!

WULL: What's he like?

MEG: Gie him a chance.

WULL: He's cowping.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) SLOW. SURE.

MACMILLAN: (MORE CONFIDENT) Oh... oh...

WEE TODD: He's away!

CATHERINE: Go on, Pate!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) SLOW. CON-STANT.

MACMILLAN: (LESS CONFIDENT) Whhoah... whhho...

VILLAGERS: (CONT UNDER) Whoah...

WULL: Tellt ye...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) LEAN.

CATHERINE: Mind the ditch!

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Lean where?

MACHINE: (CLOSE) LEAN!

WULL: Watch oot, ye daft gomeril!

MACMILLAN: (ROARS, COMING CLOSER) Whooahh... woooaahhh! OOT
THE ROOOAAAAAD!

BURNIE: Stop!

DUKE: Good lord.

WEE TODD: Mr Macmillan!

CATHERINE: Paaaate!

MACMILLAN: (CLOSER) I CANNAE STOP!

VILLAGERS: (PANIC) Make way! Stand back! Whoah!

MACMILLAN: Wooo... Wooahhh. Whoah. Waaaaahhhh...

BIKE FALLS. ALMIGHTY METAL CLATTER.

OLD MRS MAC: I cannae look.

CATHERINE: Pate!

DUKE: Macmillan?

CATHERINE: He's hurt.

DEEF AGNES: Daftness.

WEE TODDY: Are ye hurt?

CATHERINE: He's bleeding.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE, GROANS) Ughhhhh... ughhh...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Lean.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE, IN PAIN) I leaned. I did!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Lean LEFT.

CATHERINE: (APPROACHING) Pate? Here, let me look –

MACMILLAN: (ALoud) Lean left? But I was cowping to the r...
(REALISATION) Aye!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) AYE.

MACMILLAN: Haaaah. (LAUGHS, CONT UNDER:) Lean left to turn left,
lean right to...

CATHERINE: (OVER) Pate? Pate! He's talking to hissel.

DEEF AGNES: (OVER) He's no wyse whiles.

SCENE TWO: DRUMLANRIG CASTLE DRAWING ROOM.

OPEN FIRE BACKGROUND.

DUKE: ... and then blow me if he didn't get up –

DUCHESS: (OVER) - no –

DUKE: – half-concussed... - well, he's a tall chap, isn't he, Meg –

MEG: Aye, sir.

DUKE: – and head straight into the smiddy –

DUCHESS: (OVER) – really?

DUKE: - well, they CALL it a smiddy – wheeling this mongrel object
– this – what was it?

MEG: A pedestrian acc –

DUKE: Accelerator – that's it!

DUCHESS: (AMUSED) – A pedestrian – accelerator –

DUKE: - ha! And next minute, the sound of hammering.

DUCHESS: Hammering?

DUKE: Like a man possessed. And everyone just – sidles off.

DUCHESS: Macmillan, you said?

DUKE: Kirkpatrick of the Penpont Macmillans.

DUCHESS: Isn't the brother something in Glasgow?

DUKE: (DISTRACTED - HE'S READING THE PAPER) Hm?

MEG: A teacher, I think.

DUKE: A somewhat brighter spark.

DUCHESS: He sounds rather good to me. Could use him here.

DUKE: Hm... Ah – here you are, Meg. (READING FROM
NEWSPAPER) 'The Queen and Prince Albert left town for
Windsor Castle at twelve o'clock on Monday, in an – ts ts ts
– OPEN carriage and four-'

DUCHESS: (OVER) Really?

MEG: Oh!

DUKE: (CONT) '- escorted by a party of Hussars.'

DUCHESS: Thank the lord for that.

MEG: Amen.

DUKE: (READING) 'The attempt on the queen. Francis will probably be tried on Thursday next, but his case may be postponed until-'

DUCHESS: Oh - don't read out.

DUKE: Why?

DUCHESS: You spoil it.

DUKE: Do I?

OPEN FIRE RISES INTO:

SCENE THREE: MACMILLAN'S SMITHY. EVENING.

ROAR OF FIRE. HAMMER CLANGS ON ANVIL. TODDY

CLUMSILY PUMPS THE BELLOWS.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) In the beginning was the FIRE, and the fire did BURN.

MACMILLAN: Faster, Mr Todd! It needs braith!

WEE TODDY: Aye, sir.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw the fire, and that it was HOT.

MACMILLAN: Faster! Gie it laldy!

WEE TODDY: I'm trying, sir.

BELLOWS PUMP HARDER.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And that if he put iron to fire, the iron did melt.

MACMILLAN: I want it finished the night!

WEE TODDY: Sorry, sir.

BELLOWS WEAKEN.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHHN.

MACMILLAN: Keep on at it!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHHN.

MACMILLAN: Nearly there, Mr Todd!

BELLOWS WEAKEN AND STOP. MACMILLAN CLATTERS

DOWN HIS HAMMER IN ANGER.

MACMILLAN: Aw. I don't believe you. And you wanting to be a
hammerman?

WEE TODDY: Aye, sir.

MACMILLAN: Well, a hammerman needs to strive. What does he need to do?

WEE TODDY: Strive, sir.

[MACMILLAN: With all his what, Mr Todd?

WEE TODDY: Strength, sir. (BEAT)]

MACMILLAN: Oh dinna greet, ye Jessie. A hammerman doesnae greet.

[WEE TODDY: (SNIFF) I'm no.

MACMILLAN: Let's see your hands. Aw - you've no been putting vinegar on.

WEE TODDY: A huv!

MACMILLAN: You've been biting your scurls, then.

WEE TODDY: I've no, sir! (BEAT) I need to – I need to –

MACMILLAN: No again.]

WEE TODDY: (BLURTS) I need to gaun hame, sir. It's past ma bed.

MACMILLAN: Is it?

WEE TODDY: Did ye no hear the clock, Mr Macmillan? It's past nine.
She'll – she'll –

MACMILLAN: Aye. Look, you'd better – och, wipe your nose, will ye?
Dreeping aa place. Toddy – see ! Catch!

MACMILLAN THROWS A COIN. IT LANDS ON COBBLES.

WEE TODDY: Sorry.

MACMILLAN: Pick it up, then. And hide it frae your gran. Now scram.

WEE TODDY RUNS OFF.

MACHINE: (OVER) The fire is DY-ING.

MACMILLAN: I can see that.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Needs OXY-GEN.

MACMILLAN: The boy's no up to it.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) FEED it.

MACMILLAN: I'm no a machine. What am I to dae?

MACHINE: E-VOLVE.

MACMILLAN: Aye, right. Grow an extra pair o airms.

MACHINE: LEGS.

MACMILLAN: Legs... now hang on... wait wait wait... (IDEA) A foot pump?

MACHINE: AYE.

MACMILLAN: That would work. A board each side. Stop the laddie getting blisters.

MACHINE: (URGING) OHHHN.

MACMILLAN: Naw. It's ower late.

MACHINE: OHHHN. OHHHHHN.

MACMILLAN: (LAUGHS) Ha! Late? Late for what, exactly?

MACMILLAN SCRAMBLES FOR WOOD IN THE SMITHY.

MACMILLAN: (CONT) Late for doomsday... late for ma ain funer – ha! A bit of ash! That'll dae.

MACHINE: BIGGER.

MACMILLAN: Or maybe this?

MACHINE: Aye.

MACMILLAN: And look – this'll make a pair.

MACHINE: OHNN.

MACMILLAN STARTS FURIOUSLY HAMMERING, THIS IS
JOINED BY KNOCKING ON THE WALL. MACMILLAN
STOPS.

OLD MRS MAC: (THROUGH THE WALL, SHOUTS) Get to yer bed, Pate.

MACMILLAN: (CALLS) In a meenit!

HE RESUMES HAMMERING. KNOCKING THROUGH THE
WALL. HE STOPS.

OLD MRS MAC: (OFF, SHOUTS) Have ye seen tae the horses?

MACMILLAN: Hhhhhhh. (CALLS) No yet!

OLD MRS MAC: (OFF, SHOUTS) How no?

MACMILLAN: I'm working.

OLD MRS MAC: (OFF, SHOUTS) You're no. You're wasting your time wi
that–

MACMILLAN: (ANGRY) I'm no wasting my time!

OLD MRS MAC: (ESTABLISH AND FADE UNDER) If ye spent half the time ye
spend in that smithy ower your daft machine [on a decent
day's work Kirkpatrick Macmillan you'd be/ aye letting me
doon/ no like your brither who's aye been a worker no a
dreamer and look at him up in Glasgow a fine hoose and a
wife / and you twenty-eight and no sign o wedding/ and
whae'd want ye/ ye muckle sumph /get oot tae thae horses
this meenit/]

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE, OVER) So that's that, then.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) SUN-RISE.

MACMILLAN: Aye. First thing the morn.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Soon.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) No soon (BELLOWS) ENOUGH!

DISTANT FARM DOGS BARK. FADE OUT.

SCENE FOUR: DRUMLANRIG CASTLE DRAWING ROOM.

OPEN FIRE. MEG IS SERVING TEA. CROCKERY CLATTERS
UNDER.

DUCHESS: So he's agreed? (TO MEG) Thank you, Meg.

DUKE: Hm? Yes. (TO MEG) Just milk, thank you. (TO DUCHESS)
Starts today.

MEG: (UNDER) Your grace.

DUCHESS: (CONT) So soon?

DUKE: Nearly bit my arm off. I gather he's quite keen to try new
pastures. Further afield.

DUCHESS: (AMUSED) It's only five miles.

MEG: Six miles, your grace.

DUKE: See? It's all of six.

DUCHESS: What about the infamous machine?

DUKE: Didn't ask.

DUCHESS: I'm dying to see it. Has he got it working yet?

DUKE: Don't think so. He's looking a bit – well, like he's been in
the wars, isn't he?

MEG: He's no got the hang o it yet.

DUCHESS: Oh dear.

SCENE FIVE: OUTSIDE DRUMLANRIG SMITHY.

COUNTRYSIDE.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) In the beginning was the TIME, and the time did
MOVE. And man did CLOSE the land in WALLS, and move

towards the CITIES. And the cities did EVOLVE and SPRAWL
across the emptying land.

BURNIE: (DRUNK) Tae Kirkpatrick Macmillan. On and –hu- UP!

MRS STOTT: You're a disgrace, Tam Burnie.

BURNIE: (CONT) And guid luck wi all your endeavours-

MR STOTT: Leave him alane.

BURNIE: (CONT) in the fine castle o Drumlanrig. (MUTTERS) God
bless their blessed souls.

MACMILLAN: (CALLS) Mr Todd!

WEE TODDY: (APPROACHING, BREATHLESS) Found one, sir.

MACMILLAN: Well done. Now we can start. (DECLAMATORY) Now, ladies
and gentlemen, this is no ordinary broom –

MEG: (APPROACHING, BREATHLESS) Gie that back here, you
muckle thief.

MACMILLAN: Is this your broom?

MEG: It's her grace's and you'll gie it back this meenit.

MACMILLAN: You'll surely no stand in the way o scientific endeavour?

MEG: I'll stand in the way o a lippy smith. Gie that here.

THEY FIGHT.

MACMILLAN: Uff. I'll no break it!

MEG: You'll no get the chance. Ufff. Let go!

WEE TODDY: (WARNING) Mr Macmillan!

TWO HORSES APPROACH. THE FIGHT STOPS.

DUKE: Good afternoon. Macmillan.

MACMILLAN: Your grace.

MEG: Your grace.

DUKE: How are you settling in? (TO DUCHESS) This is -

DUCHESS: (INTERRUPTS) Mr Macmillan. Pleased to meet you. Don't
let us interrupt.

MEG: He's ta'en ma broom.

MACMILLAN: Borrowed –

BURNIE: He's going to do a dremonstation.

WEE TODDY: A scientific endeavour!

DUCHESS: Fascinating. (PAUSE) Well, do go on.

MACMILLAN: Mr Todd?

WEE TODDY: Aye.

MACMILLAN: Mr Todd will use the broom to demonstrate the principle
of balance and counterbalance. The same principle used to
balance upright on the velocipede.

BURNIE: Velopiss-eed.

DUCHESS: (SOTTO) I thought it was a pedestrian accelerator?

DUKE: (WARNING) Now, dear.

MACMILLAN: Mr Todd, please point the broom straight upward – bristles to the sky – yes – and place the tip in your palm.

WEE TODDY: Like this?

MACMILLAN: Exactly. Now, observe how he is holding it with his second hand. And if he lets go with that second hand, what will happen?

BURNIE: It'll cowp.

MACMILLAN: Correct. Unless...?

DUKE: Unless he moves the hand under the broom. To keep the (REALISING) ...balance?

MACMILLAN: Mr Todd? Please demonstrate.

WEE TODDY BALANCES THE BROOM ON HIS HAND.

VILLAGERS: Oh. Oh!

MACMILLAN: Observe: the tip of the broom is a single point of balance. Observe further: to correct the toppling broom, Mr Todd has to move his arm.

DUCHESS: Of course.

MACMILLAN: Of course. But in which direction?

DUCHESS: The direction it's falling in.

DUKE: Really?

DUCHESS: Obviously.

MACMILLAN: Correct. In the SAME direction as the fall. If it falls to the left, you correct it by moving your hand to the left. Falls forward, move your hand forward to keep it up. So when we come to the velocipede the same principle applies. When you topple left, you must lean to the –

DUCHESS: To the left.

MACMILLAN: And vice versa. Thank you, Mr Todd. And now –

DUCHESS: Did you build it yourself?

MACMILLAN: Aye, ma'am.

BURNIE: I made the wheels.

MR STOTT: I pit on the rims.

DUCHESS: (IRONIC) Good to see your men are usefully employed.

DUKE: Good man. Marvellous fun.

DUCHESS: Well, Mr Macmillan – let's see a demonstration.

MACMILLAN: It's no ready.

DUCHESS: What do you do? Put your feet on those – what are they?
Crank?

MACMILLAN: Pedals, your grace.

DUCHESS: Pedals. And then you ... what? Fall over? (OFF THEIR
LOOKS) Well, honestly. It's like skating, surely. Once you
get going, it's fine.

MACMILLAN: Aye.

DUCHESS: There. Quite simple, really. Well, Mr Macmillan?

MEG: Aye. On you go.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHHHNN.

MACMILLAN: Just – just clear a path there.

DUCHESS: (SOTTO) Rocket coming through.

THE VELOCIPED SETS OFF. HEAVY CLANKS.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw the moment, and that he was
STRONG.

MACMILLAN: Uff. You just need – some – momentum –

HE PUSHES OFF.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) PUSH ... push... SLOW...

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE, SARCASTIC) 'Like skating, surely'...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) PUSH... DOWN...

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) 'Quite simple, really' ...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) PUSH... DOWN...

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Steady, Pate.

MEG: (CALLS) He's getting it.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Steady...

WEE TODDY: He's got it!

DUKE: He has!

MEG: He's away!

MACHINE: (CONT) steady...

MACMILLAN: (CONT) Whoah... whoaaaah...

MACHINE: (CONT) LEAN left...

MACMILLAN: (CONT) Left...

MACHINE: (CONT) LEFT.

DUCHESS: Oh lord.

DUKE: Back, back!

MRS STOTT: Oot the way!

MEG: Get back!

BURNIE: Save yersels.

DUKE: Stop, man!

MACMILLAN: Whooaaaahhhh! Out the road!

VELOCIPEDA CRASHES TO A HALT. HORSE NEIGHS IN

ALARM.

DUCHESS: (ALARM) Mr Macmillan!

SCENE SIX: DRUMLANRIG CASTLE.

OPEN FIRE. DUKE IS READING THE NEWSPAPER.

DUCHESS: (HEATED, AMUSED) He DID, I tell you.

DUKE: Hmmm? Oh – nonsense.

DUCHESS: On purpose. (TO MEG) Didn't he, Meg?

MEG: Wouldnae put it past him.

DUKE: He can hardly steer the thing.

DUCHESS: He absolutely can.

DUKE: Maybe you deserved it.

DUCHESS: I did not. (BEAT) I could have been hurt. Who does he think he is?

DUKE: (PREOCCUPIED) Hm...?

DUCHESS: Imagine, if we all went crashing around on a 'velocipede' -

DUKE: (READING) Oh look: 'Ascot Races began on Tuesday...'

DUCHESS: (OVER, ANNOYED, TO MEG) He's hopeless. Meg, I'll take Silver out after all.

DUCHESS GETS UP.

MEG: Yes, your grace.

DUKE: (READING, CONT) 'Among the many noble attendants of her Majesty were the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch... ' What?

DUCHESS: Nothing. I'm taking Silver out. Meg?

DUKE: I think he's got something, you know.

DUCHESS: Hardly. (TO MEG) No, the green velvet.

DUKE: Can't say I've seen it done before.

DUCHESS: (TO MEG) Thank you. (TO DUKE) It's just a dandyhorse. Which was all the rage for precisely one summer.

DUKE: (REASONING) With pedals. So your feet are off the ground. Makes all the difference. If you could keep upright, you could go on for miles...

DUCHESS: You're not going to ask him to make you one, are you? Couldn't bear it. Everyone staring, and laughing up their sleeves.

DUKE: (TEASING) Do you think he would?

DUCHESS: (LAUGHS, LEAVING) Be serious.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And that was the end of the beginning.

SCENE SEVEN: SMITHY.

HAMMER ON ANVIL. RHYTHM OF CLANGING AND

TURNING METAL. JOHNNY IS HAMMERMAN.

JOHNNY: Oggh. So. You're brither's in Glasgow?

MACMILLAN: Aye.

JOHNNY: A teacher?

MACMILLAN: Aye.

JOHNNY: Weel off?

MACMILLAN: Don't know.

JOHNNY: Oggh. Ever been?

MACMILLAN: No.

JOHNNY: How no?

MACMILLAN: I've no the time.

JOHNNY: Got family?

MACMILLAN: Just ma mither.

JOHNNY: She's got her health?

MACMILLAN: Aye.

JOHNNY: (HEADSHAKE) Ts. Get yourself tae Glasgow, man. S'where
aa the decent paid work is.

MACMILLAN: Aye?

JOHNNY: That's where Jock's went. Hhh. Yin night, he just lays doon
yon hammer – says 'I'm away'. A dinna even look up –
we'd fa'en oot. In the morning, I come in, the fire's no lit,
the clinker's no scraped... Gone.

MACMILLAN: Why d'you fall oot?

JOHNNY: Some lassie. He's ship-building now. Engineer wi Napiers.
Decent paid work.

MACMILLAN: The fire's low.

JOHNNY: No ma job.

MACMILLAN PUMPS THE BELLOWS.

MACMILLAN: Should get a lad in.

JOHNNY: It'll no happen. No wi this lot. Skinflint.

MACMILLAN: His grace?

JOHNNY: They're all the same.

MACMILLAN: I had an idea. You could pit a foot crank ont. Pit your whole
weight into it.

JOHNNY: Oh aye?

MACMILLAN: Pair o pedals. One fit doon makes the ither rise. Like this.

JOHNNY: Like your machine there. The velocipede.

MACMILLAN: Aye.

JOHNNY: What's it for, that?

MACMILLAN: (LAUGHS) Dunno.

JOHNNY: Impress the lassies?

MACMILLAN: I doot that.

JOHNNY: I've been tae Glasgow.

MACMILLAN: Aye? What's it like?

JOHNNY: Aw... Ffff... ye want to see it... the Clyde, the ships, the railway...

MACMILLAN: Folk living like rats, I heard. Twenty tae a room, nae windaes.

JOHNNY: That's just talk. Decent work there. If you've the heid for't. Like you.

MACMILLAN: Like me?

JOHNNY: Folk wi mair off 'up here'. They've chances now. Can make their ain way. It's all changing. You're no stuck wi the life you were born tae. Look, man – what have we got here? The land, the weaving. The weaving's deid. The land's

enclosed, paircelled oot. Nae land – what's your chances?

(BEAT) At least folk aye need their horses, eh?

CATHERINE: (OFF, CALLING) Hello!

MACMILLAN STOPS HAMMERING.

MACMILLAN: Hello.

CATHERINE: You're busy.

MACMILLAN: Miss Sinclair.

JOHNNY: This your lassie?

MACMILLAN: No.

JOHNNY: (FLIRTATIOUS) Miss Sinclair.

CATHERINE: I – I – was bringing a package for her grace. But if you're
busy-

JOHNNY: No. Mind your frock.

CATHERINE: Oh. Ts ts. (BEAT) Are you liking it here, Pate?

MACMILLAN: Aye.

CATHERINE: Have you finished the velocipede?

MACMILLAN: Nearly.

CATHERINE: When'll you ride it oot?

MACMILLAN: Soon.

JOHNNY: You'll be wanting a hurl ont, Miss Sinclair.

CATHERINE: (FLUSTERED) Oh! No. No!

JOHNNY: How no? Sidesaddle.

CATHERINE: I dinna think so.

MACMILLAN: You cannae ride it sidesaddle. It's pedals on baith sides.

JOHNNY: A jest, Pate. (CATHERINE) He's no a man for jesting. More a man for big ideas.

CATHERINE: Nothing wrong wi that.

JOHNNY: (CHANGES TACTIC) You're right there, Miss Sinclair! The bigger the better. (VELOCIPEDE) This is no just a pair o cairtwheels, eh Pate? It's The Velocipede – the future o transportation.

MACMILLAN: Johnny –

CATHERINE: Do you think sae?

JOHNNY: Oh aye. It's the end o horses for a start.

CATHERINE: (UNSURE) Surely no.

MACMILLAN: The man's a blether. Dinnae listen.

JOHNNY: Do you keep a horse, Miss Sinclair? Cocky, ill-natered beasts. Aye needing fed, needing watered – but this – eh, Pate? It's biddable. Disnae eat. Winnae buck, throw you

off. Tell you what – Pate's glowering cos it's oor secret – Yin
day...

CATHERINE: What?

FADE IN MACHINE ATMOS. THIS GROWS UNDER.

JOHNNY: We'll all hae yin. Every man, woman, child.

MACMILLAN: That'll dae.

CATHERINE: Maybe he's right, Pate.

JOHNNY: Herds o velocipedes all roond the country. A manufactory
making them day and night. And this, my partner Pate
Macmillan, the wealthiest man in Scotland – wi a fine
hoose, fine carriages, fine prospects...

MACMILLAN: Catherine –

CATHERINE: (TO JOHNNY) I ken everybody mocks him – (TO PATE) they
do, Pate, behind your back – (TO JOHNNY) but if I believe in
him, and you do –

MACHINE: (UNDER) OHHHN...

CATHERINE: (CONT, OVER) – and you're pairtners and can work
thegither –

JOHNNY: (IRONIC) We'll take on the world.

MACMILLAN: AN ALMIGHTY HAMMER BLOW. THE

MACHINE ATMOS CUTS.

CATHERINE: (ANNOYED) You're a – a –

MACMILLAN/JOHNNY: (SAME TIME) Gowk/Realist.

MACMILLAN: Her grace'll be waiting.

CATHERINE: Oh! Yes. I'd best – (LEAVING) Are you going to the dance on Saturday, Pate?

MACMILLAN: I'll see.

JOHNNY: We'll see you there.

CATHERINE LEAVES.

JOHNNY: (LAUGHING) What did I tell ye? Impress the lassies.
Macmillan's Mighty Machine –

MACMILLAN: Some jest.

MACMILLAN HAMMERS FURIOUSLY. JOHNNY LAUGHS.

JOHNNY: Steady, Pate. We're no falling oot ower a lassie.

MACMILLAN'S FURIOUS HAMMERING CROSSFADES TO:

SCENE EIGHT: MACMILLAN'S DREAM.

MACHINE ATMOS, GHOSTLY NEIGHS, SHOUTS.

SNATCHES OF JOHNNY'S REMEMBERED VOICE

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw the death of the land, the end of the weaver, the fall of the horse... and was sore afraid.

SNATCHES OF JOHNNY'S REMEMBERED VOICE

JOHNNY: (ECHO) It's the end o horses for a start. The weaving's deid.

ENGINES, FACTORIES: THE INDUSTRIAL AGE.

MACMILLAN: (BAD DREAM) Uh... uh... no... no!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man felt the pull of the city, the pull of production, the pull of MACHINE.

RHYTHMIC PRODUCTION LINE.

JOHNNY: (ECHO) Herds of velocipedes... all roond the country ... a manufactory... day and night...

MACMILLAN: (DREAM) Bigger... better...

A WOMAN'S LAUGHTER.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man felt the pull of the woman, the pull of EVOLUTION.

SNATCHES OF VOICES DRIFT:

JOHNNY: You'll be wanting a hurl, Miss Sinclair.

CATHERINE: ...I believe in him!

JOHNNY: ...fine hoose, fine carriages...

CATHERINE: I'll be wanting a hurl, Pate Macmillan.

MACMILLAN AWAKES IN A SWEAT.

MACMILLAN: (AWAKES) Uh... uh... what?

MACHINE: And man did finally gain MO-MEN-TUM.

CROSS FADE TO:

SCENE NINE: COUNTRY ROAD.

RHYTHMIC VELOCIPEDE ATMOS: MACMILLAN ON THE
MACHINE.

MACMILLAN: (OFF, APPROACHING, EFFORT) Hahahhaa! Hahhhaaa!

(CALLS) No – sae – daft – now – look!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) FUSION.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) Man and machine – perfectly matched...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) CALIBRATION.

[MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) Horseless, hayless...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) HUMAN ENERGY.]

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) Macmillan's Marvellous Motion... whoaaah...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) BA-LANCE.

MACMILLAN: Concentrate.

MACHINE: (OVER) Small counter MO-TIONS.

MACMILLAN: Focus ahead.

[MACHINE: (OVER) OHHNN.

MACMILLAN: As long as you keep going... keep –]

MACHINE: (OVER) MO-MEN-TUM.

MACMILLAN: Aye. It'll stay up –

[MACHINE: (OVER) Intrinsic stability.

MACMILLAN: It WANTS to stay up –]

MACHINE: (OVER) Steady motion returns to steady.

MACMILLAN: Hell, you can hardly fall over if you try – (WOBBLE)
whoaooohh –

[MACHINE: (OVER) DIS-TUR-BANCE.

MACMILLAN: (RIGHTING) Wooo!] If it wasn't for wet grass – tussocks –
mud –

[MACHINE: (OVER) Low TRAC-TION.

MACMILLAN: Or stanes –

MACHINE: (OVER) High FRIC-TION.]

MACMILLAN: Fff... if everything was smooth underfoot – you could ... ride
aa the way to Glasgow. If it wasnae for – (EFFORT) wasnae
for – uff –

[MACHINE: (OVER) RE-SIS-TANCE.

MACMILLAN: Ufff... the problem of...

MACHINE: (OVER) OHHHN.]

MACMILLAN: Ufff... HILLS...

MACHINE: (OVER) HAAAR-DER.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT, BATTLING HIMSELF) Come ON... come ON... this is
hardly a – HILL – uff... uff... no.

THE BIKE SLOWS TO A HALT. MACMILLAN STOPS.

MACHINE: (OVER) PRO-PEL.

MACMILLAN: (EXHAUSTED) That's enough.

MACHINE: (OVER) RIDE.

MACMILLAN: How, exactly? (HE STARTS PUSHING) You ungrateful...
damn... machine...

MACMILLAN PUSHES THE BIKE. CONT UNDER:

MACMILLAN: Pffff. If it wasnae for the hills, ye could... wait wait wait
(IDEA) – ye could tunnel the hills! Aa the hills atween here
and Glasgow. A smooth track, aa the way intae Glasgow.
Charge a toll, thruppence a shot... and watering stops, and
eating stops, and viewing stops... (THE IDEA RUNS OUT OF
STEAM).

MACHINE: (OVER) OHHN.

MACMILLAN: (PUFFING, MOCKING) Ohhn and ohhn. Is that your only
tune?

MACHINE: EN-DURE.

MACMILLAN: (PUFFING) Give a man a chance here. We're nearly at ... the top...

MACMILLAN STOPS AT THE TOP. WE HEAR THE WIND.

BIRDS.

MACMILLAN: (PUFFING) Look at that, eh? (BEAT) Fair way doon.

MACHINE: EN-JOY.

MACMILLAN: Aye.

MACMILLAN CLIMBS ON. CLANKS OFF DOWN THE HILL,

GATHERING SPEED. A MOMENT OF EXHILARATION.

MACMILLAN: Waaaaaahhh... aaahhhAAAaaaAAAaaaAAAA... woooo...

(CONT)

THE MACHINE ENJOYS IT TOO:

MACHINE: (OVER) MOoohh – MEN-TUUUM...

[UNTIL:

MACHINE: COR-NER.

MACMILLAN: (OH-OH) ... stop...

MACHINE: (OVER) SLOW...

MACMILLAN: I can't. The bend. I can't stop... agggghh...

MACMILLAN REACHES THE BEND.

MACHINE: (CLOSE, OVER) LEEEEAN.

AS THEY GO ROUND THE BEND:

MACMILLAN: (CONT) AH'M LEEAAANING!]

OUT THE OTHER SIDE, HE FADES INTO THE DISTANCE:

MACMILLAN: Wooooooh! (CONT UNDER)

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw that the machine was ready to go to Glasgow. (CONT STRAIGHT TO:)

SCENE TEN: VILLAGE. PATE SETS OFF FOR GLASGOW.

INSIDE THE SMITHY.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And he chose the day to set off for the world.

MACMILLAN: (TO HIMSELF) Delighted to make your acquaintance.
Kirkpatrick Macmillan. Inventor. And this is my invention -
the – Pedestrian Accelerator ... no, the velocipede – the
motion machine... ts... no...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) BI-CYCLE. (PRONOUNCED STRANGELY: BY-cycle)

MACMILLAN: (CONT) BI-CYCLE. (HE LIKES THIS) Bicycle. The pedal-driven
Bicycle – invented by myself, Kirkpatrick Macmillan. Of Keir.

CATHERINE ENTERS.

CATHERINE: (AMUSED) They're waiting, Mr Macmillan. Of Keir.

MACMILLAN: Who?

CATHERINE: Half o Penpont. His grace. Her grace... Pate –

A HURRIED KISS.

CATHERINE: For luck.

MACMILLAN: (HESITANT) When I get back from Glasgow –

CATHERINE: (DISMISSIVE) Aye.

MACMILLAN: Then.

CATHERINE: Then what?

MACMILLAN: I'll have time.

BEAT.

CATHERINE: You'll no be back. You'll find work. You'll leave.

MACMILLAN: I'm coming back.

CATHERINE: On that thing? Really?

MACMILLAN: Aye... (CONT)

CATHERINE: (OVER) Hahaha.

MACMILLAN: (CONT)... I'll ride it till ma banes crack. When I cannae ride it, I'll push it. When I cannae push, I'll cairry it...

CATHERINE: (OVER) Aye.

MACMILLAN: (CONT) And I'll find a man – I will – wi a manufactory – to make the machine – ten, twenty, fifty a week –

CATHERINE: Shhhh. You'll spoil it.

JOHNNY ENTERS. HE'S HEARD.

JOHNNY: Dinna believe a word. Six year he's had a brither in Glasgow and never been up. They're building ships, they're crying for engineers, he's never been up.

CATHERINE: He's away up now.

JOHNNY: On that thing?

MACMILLAN/CATHERINE: Aye.

FADE IN VELOCIPEDA ATMOS, BUILDS UNDER.

JOHNNY: Well good luck. (TO CATHERINE) But if you're waiting for the fancy life and the fancy hoose, Miss Sinclair, then dinna go waiting for Daft... Pate....

MACMILLAN: That's enough.

PATE ATTACKS JOHNNY. A SCUFFLE.

MACMILLAN: Oaaaaah.

JOHNNY: Ufff.

CATHERINE: Stop that. Pate!

JOHNNY FALLS. MACHINE ATMOS CUTS.

JOHNNY: Ufff. Fsss. We're no going to fa oot ower a machine?

CATHERINE: That'll dae.

MACMILLAN: Catherine-

CATHERINE: Away ye go.

SHE OPENS THE DOOR. HE WHEELS THE BIKE OUT.

CHEERS FROM GATHERED VILLAGERS.

OLD MRS MAC: Behave yoursel.

MACMILLAN: (STILL ANGRY) Aye.

OLD MRS MAC: Fond wishes to your uncle. And dinnae be late.

MACMILLAN: I'll no be late.

AS MACMILLAN SETS OFF ON THE CLANKING BIKE:

DUKE: All the best, Macmillan.

DUCHESS: Bon voyage, Mr Macmillan.

DUKE: And when you come back, remember what we discussed.

MACMILLAN: Aye, sir. I'll be delighted.

DUKE: (TO DUCHESS) I thought I might commission....

DUCHESS: You're not serious.

DUKE: I'm perfectly serious. I think he might have something there. I really think he might.

MACMILLAN: Aye, your grace. We'll talk when I'm back.

DUCHESS: (TO DUKE) If he makes it. (TO MACMILLAN) Bon voyage, Mr
Macmillan.

DUKE: Bon courage!

MACMILLAN: Thank you.

OLD MRS MAC: (CALLS) He's expecting you by eleven.

MACMILLAN: (LEAVING, FARTHER OFF) Aye!

BURNIE: Safe oot, safe in!

CATHERINE: (CALLING) Be careful!

HE SETS OFF ON THE CLANKING BIKE.

CHEERS FROM VILLAGERS.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHHHHNN. OHHHHN!

FADE OUT.

SCENE ELEVEN: THE ROAD TO CUMNOCK.

VELOCIPEDE ATMOS. UNDER, BRING UP STONY TRACK,

CLANKING BIKE. MACMILLAN ON THE BIKE. THIS

CONTINUES UNDER:

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man felt the pull of the city, the pull of the
WORLD.

MACMILLAN: (JOYOUS) Ufff... uff... (CONT)

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And the drag of FRICTION... the drag of flesh ...

MACMILLAN: (SLOWING) Ufff... uff... (CONT)

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And fatigue.

MACMILLAN: Aye.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Motor fatigue.

MACMILLAN: Aye, well, I'm no the fittest motor.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) Reduce – motor – mass.

MACMILLAN: Is that an insult? I'll no take that from you, you mongrel
contraption. [I mean, look at ye. Twa auld cairtwheels. A bit
of iron from somebody's ploo.]

MACHINE: (CLOSE) FORM follows FUNC-TION.

MACMILLAN: Aye, but I want ye to make an impression. Open folks' een.
Get folk talking. 'What's that? Where's it goan?' 'Frae Keir
tae the world.'

MACHINE: (CLOSE) WORLD.

MACMILLAN: There's no just Glasgow – there's Edinburgh – London...
there's islands, oceans, continents ...

MACHINE: (CLOSE) EARTH. STONE. ORE.

MACMILLAN: The earth isnae the hard, enduring thing you might think.
Some places, it opens up – spits out fire – can swallow a
toon.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) MAGMA. LAVA.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) I read it in the Courier. (PEDALS) uff – aye – uff –
you never know – uff – we'll maybe get a mention in the –
Courier.

DISTANT VOICES FROM SMALL TOWN.

MACMILLAN: (PAUSE) This is Auld Cumnock. Are ye ready for Cumnock?

MACHINE: (CLOSE) OHHNN.

FADE OUT.

SCENE TWELVE: CUMNOCK VILLAGE. EXT.

BACKGROUND OF CURIOUS VILLAGERS.

MACMILLAN: (FADE IN) And it needs a bit o adjusting. No much play
atween the rods there.

MOTHER: (OFF, TO CHILD) See that, Mary? He's come all the way
from Drumlanrig Castle. Thirty miles.

CHILD: (OFF) Oh.

MACMILLAN: (CONT) It's fine if you're on the straight. As long as ye
dinna hit a tussock.

MOTHER: (OFF, TO CHILD) Headit all the way to Glasgow.

CHILD: (CLAPPING) Oh!

SCOTT: How dae ye no fall off?

MACMILLAN: Ah, there's a trick there –

DALZIEL: (SUDDEN) There's no trick. Just keep moving. Keep the steering straight.

MACMILLAN: Aye.

DALZIEL: It'll no fall unless you hit a disturbance.

[MACMILLAN: That's right.]

DALZIEL: Gavin Dalziel. Cooper.

MACMILLAN: Kirkpatrick Macmillan. Blacksmith.

HANDSHAKES UNDER:

DALZIEL: Some machine.

MACMILLAN: (Hahah) Aye. Just a bit o – ye know – sport –

DALZIEL: No – it's clever. Clever notion.

MACMILLAN: It's jist a a Draisienne. A dandyhorse. Adapted.

DALZIEL: I ken the Draisienne. Do ye mind if I – ?

MACMILLAN: No. On you go.

DALZIEL BENDS, EXAMINES THE BIKE.

DALZIEL: (PROBING) See, if it was up tae me, I'd put the drive on the front wheel.

MACMILLAN: Naw. Wouldnae work.

DALZIEL: How no?

MACMILLAN: Look: wi a wheel this sma, you'd be cranking your legs like the devil and never getting off the bit.

DALZIEL: So a bigger wheel.

MACMILLAN: Ah – naw. I worked it oot. Tae get any kind o distance for your rotations, your front wheel would need to be... what...

DALZIEL: Three feet?

MACMILLAN: More like five feet. Five foot front wheel, wee eight-incher behind tae balance. Cannae see that working. What are you daeing?

DALZIEL: (BENDING) You'll no mind if I take some measurements?

MACMILLAN: Eh... no –

DALZIEL: For the purpose o study.

FADE IN DANGEROUS VELOCIPEDA ATMOS UNDER:

[MACMILLAN: Aye but – I'm ower six feet, Mr Dalziel, and wi you being so comparatively nate –

DALZIEL: (TO HIMSELF) Thirty-three ... Thirty-three...

MACMILLAN: – and a half.

DALZIEL: – and a half.]

MACMILLAN: (BLURTS) Mr Dalziel – do you think there's any commercial potential int?

DALZIEL: Hahahha. No. [(MEASURING, CONT) Twenty... eight... Are you in business, Mr Macmillan?

MACMILLAN: No. I work at Drumlanrig. At the smithy.

DALZIEL: How long did this take you to make?

MACMILLAN: Twae year.

DALZIEL: Twae year? Fsss. Twae weeks, twae days – then you're talking.

MACMILLAN: Twae days?]

DALZIEL: It's no a new idea, you understand.

MACMILLAN: I've no seen it afore.

DALZIEL: No in Keir Village. But Glasgow...

MACMILLAN: That's where I'm heading.

DALZIEL: Get yourself up there...

[MACHINE: (CLOSE) GLAS-GOW...]

DALZIEL: Find a manufactory –

[MACMILLAN: I will.]

MACHINE: (CLOSE) FAC-TURY...

DALZIEL: Strike while the iron's hot.

BRING UP ROAR OF MACHINE ATMOS.

SCENE THIRTEEN: COUNTRY ROAD.

VELOCIPEDE ATMOS. LATER ON THE JOURNEY.

MACMILLAN CYCLES ON.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man saw the manufactory, and the dream of
MORE.

VELOCIPEDE ATMOS GROWS, BECOMES MORE

RHYTHMIC.

MACMILLAN: Take somebody on. An apprentice. Wee Toddy.

MACHINE: MUL-TI-PLY...

MACMILLAN: Make one a week. Twae a week. A hunder in a year.

MACHINE: (CONT) EVOLVE...

MACMILLAN: Hundurs on the streets! On every street!

MACHINE: (CONT) EVOLVE...

MACMILLAN: In every town. Every city. Every country...

MACHINE: (CONT) EVOLVE...

MACMILLAN: (PUFFS) Could use the toll roads, beat the coaches! Could ride out ten mile and come back at night... fff... could go where the work is, no be tethered. fff... Every man a free man ...

MACHINE: RE-VOL-UTION.

MACMILLAN: (SHOUTS) Revolution!

A HORSE RIDER APPROACHES.

UNCLE: (OFF) Ho! Kirkpatrick. Pate! Welcome to Galston!

MACMILLAN: Uncle John!

UNCLE: (APPROACHING) Thought you were lost! Hahah! Or in a ditch. So your machine – hahaha – very fine. [Heavy piece – lord! You must be hungry. Everyone waiting.] Great excitement. Need a hand?

MACMILLAN: No...

UNCLE: Some speed, dear boy. Impressive. How fast?

MACMILLAN: Oh – maybe... twelve miles the hour. More on the doonhill.

UNCLE: And up? What about up?

MACMILLAN: I cannae go up. No the legs fort.

UNCLE: No up? That's a flaw, dear boy. Certainly a flaw. But well done. Well done. Family brains, family brains. How's your mother?

MACMILLAN: Fine.

UNCLE: And Robert? Still in Glasgow?

MACMILLAN: Fine.

VILLAGE BOYS CHEER IN BACKGROUND.

UNCLE: Ah. Welcome party. Whole village. Best stable you at the back. Shall we race the last leg? Shall we? Horse and machine?

MACMILLAN: (LAUGHS) Aye?

HORSE AND MACHINE RACE. FADE OUT.

SCENE FOURTEEN: UNCLE JOHN'S HOUSE.

CLINK OF GLASSES. DRINK HAS BEEN DRUNK.

UNCLE: Another?

MACMILLAN: No – I'd best no –

UNCLE: Go on. Not a (DISDAIN) Temperance man, surely?

MACMILLAN: No –

UNCLE: (DRINKING) Cousin James has become a Total Abstainer.

(MIMICS) 'Intoxicating liquor! Heathenish practices!'

[Article in the Courier. Anonymous, you understand. But clearly his.] Just a finger?

MACMILLAN: Thank you, aye.

INTERIOR. CLINK OF GLASSES.

UNCLE: Carpe diem, dear boy.

MACMILLAN: Yes.

UNCLE: Carrrrpe... diiii-emm... How about you, sir? Thinking of settling down?

MACMILLAN: Aye.

[UNCLE: Good. Good.

MACMILLAN: Aye.]

UNCLE: Your mother, you understand. Concerned.

MACMILLAN: (BLURTS) I'm getting mairrit. Tae Miss Catherine Morris Sinclair.

UNCLE: Splendid! All settled. Your health. Your future. Miss Catherine Morris Sinclair.

CLINK OF GLASSES. MACHINE BACKGROUND FADES IN

UNDER.

UNCLE: This velopiss – velopiseed of yours –

MACMILLAN: Bi-cycle.

UNCLE: Anything in it? Commercially, you understand.

MACMILLAN: I ken there is. There's nothing like it.

UNCLE: Tricky to ride.

MACMILLAN: No once you get the hang o't.

UNCLE: Not just a toy?

MACMILLAN: I could beat the stagecoach. Can you imagine – wi better roads... lighter wheels...

UNCLE: (ENJOYING) Here's a notion: sprung saddle. Comfort, you understand...

MACMILLAN: (CONT) Some kind of gearing...

UNCLE: (CONT) Some kind of horn, bell, signal...

MACMILLAN: (OVER) Aye!

UNCLE: (CONT) to announce your presence...

MACMILLAN: A lamp.

UNCLE: A lamp? Well said. A sidesaddle –

MACMILLAN: Eh?

UNCLE: For the ladies.

MACMILLAN: A sidesaddle!

THEY CLINK.

UNCLE: Another?

MACMILLAN: (MUSING) A sidesaddle wouldnae work... cos you've twae cranks... twae feet... (GIVES UP) Aye. Go on.

UNCLE POURS. CLINK. GLUG. FADE.

SCENE FIFTEEN: NEXT MORNING. OUTSIDE UNCLE JOHN'S HOUSE.

MACMILLAN'S HANGOVER JANGLES ALL. THE BIKE

CLANKS OFF.

UNCLE: (SHOUTS, ANNOYINGLY CHEERY) Cheerioooo!

MACMILLAN: (HUNG OVER) Bye.

UNCLE: Bon voyaaaaage! (FADING) To fame and foooort-uuuuune!

CROSS-FADE INTO THE CLANKING BIKE, STILL JANGLING

MACMILLAN'S HANGOVER.

MACMILLAN: (CONT, GROANS) Aaaggh.

MACHINE: TOX-ICITY.

MACMILLAN: Hghhh.

MACHINE: DE-HY-DRATION.

MACMILLAN: Hgghhh. Can ye no stop clanking?

MACHINE: Not clanking. Your head.

MACMILLAN: Stooooop.

MACHINE: OHNN. OHNN.

MACHINE ATMOS, INDUSTRIAL SOUND, HOLD UNDER:

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And the spirit of the machine moved over the land,
past fields and tracks and farms and towns, past earth and
iron, coke and coal, piston, furnace, boiler, smelter – till it
found itself in the city. And man saw the city, and that it
was LOUD.

COBBLED CITY STREET, CROWDS, CHILDREN, HORSES.

MACMILLAN: Glasgow. GLAS-GOW! Yaaaa! (WOBBLES) Whoah... steady...

PEOPLE LAUGH, RUN, GET CLOSER.

JEANNIE: (CALLS) Hello Mister.

MACMILLAN: Hello! Where is this?

JEANNIE: (CALLS) Glasgow, sir!

TODD: The Gorbals.

MACMILLAN: Watch out there.

JEANNIE: (CALLS) What's that, sir?

MACMILLAN: Woah. It's a bi-cycle.

JEANNIE: (CALLS) What's it for?

MACMILLAN: It's for... (out the way there). For coming tae Glasgow!

THE CROWD ENCROACHES DANGEROUSLY.

MACMILLAN: (CALLS) Get back. Watch oot. I cannae – I cannae stop –

CLATTER OF BIKE. JEANNIE SCREAMS AND CRIES. THE

CROWD CURSE. MELEE OF VOICES:

MACMILLAN: Aggh. Sorry! Sorry! Did I catch you – are you hurt?

TODD: (SHOUTS) Oi! Watch where you're breenging –

MARY: (SHOUTS) Peggy! Did that man hurt you?

DAVY: (SHOUTS) Did ye see that? Oaf! Lump! Fetch the polis.

TODD: Aye, the polis.

MACMILLAN: (CONT) No – I didn't – she's only – she ran out –

ANGRY CROWD.

CROWD: (CHANT: RHYTHMIC, MACHINE-LIKE) The polis!

THE CHANTING GROWS.

MACMILLAN: (OVER) No! Nooo!

CELL DOOR SLAMS. SILENCE.

SCENE SIXTEEN: GLASGOW CELL. APPROACHING DAWN.

ECHOEY CELL. A MAN SHOUTS DRUNKENLY IN A

DISTANT CELL. MACMILLAN RATTLES HIS CHAIN. THE

VELOCIPEDE IS ELSEWHERE, BUT STILL HEARD.

MACMILLAN: Cast iron. Brittle. Not much strength under tension. But still stronger than this yaisless flesh.

MACHINE: (ECHO) OHHNN.

MACMILLAN: (ANGRY, RATTLING HIS CHAIN) There's nae 'on'. This is where it ends. (PRAYS) 'Oh Lord, help me in my hour of need...'— and how's he going to help? Spring open my chains? Send a knife so I can end masel?

MACHINE: (ECHO) ENDURE.

MACMILLAN: If you were here I'd break you into bits.

MACHINE: (ECHO) EVOLVE.

MACMILLAN: Melt you down to a cannon ball – you wi your taste for children's blood. Could you no have stopped for once?

MACHINE: (ECHO) MOMENTUM.

MACMILLAN: Friction! Brake! Against yersel, and no against a wee girl's leg. (PAUSE)

MACHINE: (ECHO) SUN-RISE.

MACMILLAN: (PRAYS) 'Oh lord help me in my hour of need'. Get me safe hame and – (REALISES) No! What'll I tell them? I'll no tell them. I'll tell John no tae tell them. 'Lord, please keep shut the mooth of my brither John, who you'll recall is a teacher at Glasgow High School' –

OUTSIDE, A NEWSPAPER SELLER APPROACHES IN THE DISTANCE.

NEWSPAPER SELLER: (OFF) Glasgow Herald! Heeraald! Read all about it!

MACMILLAN: Oh no. It'll be in the Courier. NOOOO!

MACMILLAN RATTLES HIS CHAIN.

SCENE SEVENTEEN: GLASGOW COURT ROOM

FADE IN COURTROOM, VOICES. JUDGE'S GAVEL.

JUDGE: Kirkpatrick Macmillan of the Parish of Keir, this court does hereby find you guilty of riding along the pavement to the obstruction of the passage –

MACMILLAN: Your honour –

JUDGE: (CONT) – and to overthrowing a child to her injury.

[MACMILLAN: But –

JUDGE: You do not speak until invited, Mr Macmillan.] I will now pass sentence.

MACMILLAN: Aye sir.

JUDGE: You will be charged the sum of five shillings. Which you may settle now before this court. You may reclaim your Bi-Cycle from the courtyard where it is chained. And please refrain from mounting it again within the boundaries of this city. DISMISSED!

JUDGE'S GAVEL. MURMURS.

JUDGE: (CALLS) If I might just have a word, Mr Macmillan?

MACMILLAN: Sir?

MACMILLAN APPROACHES.

MACMILLAN: (CLOSE) Your five shillings – I'm – I'm –

JUDGE: (CLOSE) Never mind that. (SECRETIVE) Now... you see, a bit of a dabbler myself... Used to have a dandyhorse, in my younger days. I wonder... this mechanism –

MACMILLAN: It's just a crank, sir.

JUDGE: Of your design?

MACMILLAN: Aye, sir.

JUDGE: I think I know a man who might be interested.

FADE IN OMINOUS MACHINE BACKGROUND.

MACMILLAN: You can have it.

JUDGE: Have it?

MACHINE: (OVER) Noooh.

MACMILLAN: Take it. I don't want it. [Nae use tae man nor beast.

JUDGE: No – I meant – a drawing – the design –

MACMILLAN: It's going for scrap.] Been nowt but trouble.

MACHINE: (OVER) Noooh.

JUDGE: Mr Macmillan. Don't be rash.

MACMILLAN: Twae year I've worked on that. Dreamt o nothing but cranks and wheels. Tae make my name. And now I've got a name. For a crime.

JUDGE: Yes yes, I understand entirely, but –

MACMILLAN: Take it. I never want to see it again.

JUDGE: Yes, but how will you get back?

FADE OUT.

[SCENE EIGHTEEN: RETURN TO KEIR. DALVEEN PASS (HIGH MOOR).]

RAIN, WIND. MACMILLAN TRUDGES IN MUD.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) Ugghh... and wi a HORSE... ugg... they do the WORK... wi a HORSE... when it's wet... you coorie... into its neck... and it cairries you, no the other way ROOND... a HORSE doesn't ... get STUCK... tear your SHINS... doesnae RUST... (BEAT) if I leave you here...

MACHINE: (OVER, LESS POWERFUL) NOOOOOHH...

MACMILLAN STOPS. WILD MOOR STORM.

MACMILLAN: (EFFORT) If I leave you here, you'll no follow. You'll no gallop off, make your ain way hame, save yourself. You'll just lie there. Rust and rot. Back to the grund.

MACHINE: (OVER) Back to the grund – LIKE – YOU.

MACMILLAN: (CRIES) Aw, it's over. I'm finished.

MACMILLAN THROWS DOWN MACHINE. SINKS TO
GROUND, HOWLS.

MACMILLAN: Auuggghhhhhh!

MACHINE: (OVER) GET – UP. GET – UP!! (ROARS, BACK TO POWER)
OOOHHNNNN.

MACHINE'S ROAR, WILD WIND.

MACMILLAN: I cannae. I cannae.

MACHINE: (OVER) OOOHHNNNN.

FADE OUT.]

SCENE NINETEEN: KEIR VILLAGE.

MACHINE NARRATES, WITH VILLAGE VOICES FADING IN:

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And man did return to the land, and heard his
name...

WEE TODD: (TAUNT) Daft Pate! Daft Pate!

DEEF AGNES: Wheesht!

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And heard the shame...

OLD MRS MAC: What were you thinking o?

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And heard the silence...

JOHNNY: (READS NEWSPAPER, AMUSED) '... a gentlemen was
charged with throwing over a child –

CATHERINE: Pate.

MACMILLAN: Catherine.

CATHERINE: Wait!

JOHNNY: Leave him alone.

MACHINE: (CLOSE) And saw the faces, and that they were shut. And
the spirit of the man was INERTIA.

FADE OUT.

SCENE TWENTY: DRUMLANRIG CASTLE. DRAWING ROOM.

OPEN FIRE.

DUCHESS: We have to do something. (TO MEG) Thank you, Meg.

DUKE: Hm? What?

DUCHESS: Macmillan. And Johnny. They don't talk – do they, Meg?
(TO DUKE) My dear, imagine – a smith, and his
hammerman, not talking. The same anvil, all day.

DUKE: Maybe they've nothing to talk about.

DUCHESS: But this could go on for years. And he doesn't go out. He
used to be out all the time, back and forth on his – blessed–

DUKE: - wretched –

DUCHESS: - unmentionable machine. [You got his hopes up.

DUKE: It was never a serious offer.

DUCHESS: I think it was.]

DUKE: Well, I've tried. You come up with something.

DUCHESS: Mm.

DUKE: Something practical. You're good at practical.

DUCHESS: (BEAT) Meg?

MEG: Aye, your grace?

FADE OUT.

SCENE TWENTY-ONE: DRUMLANRIG CASTLE..

MACHINE ATMOS UNDER. MACMILLAN RUSHES ACROSS

GRAVEL.

DUKE: (CALLING) Macmillan! What's the hurry?

MACMILLAN: I've an urgent job, your grace.

MACMILLAN BURSTS INTO THE SCULLERY. WOMEN'S

VOICES FALL SILENT.

MRS STOTT: Mr Macmillan.

SCULLERY MAID: (SOTTO) Daft Pate.

WOMEN SHH.

MACMILLAN: I've – a job needs doing.

MRS STOTT: What job?

MACMILLAN: I'm needing a wife.

WOMEN GIGGLE.

MACMILLAN: Is there onybody – here – interestit in the position?

WOMEN GASP, MURMUR. EMBARRASSMENT.

MACMILLAN: Sorry. I'll be leaving – I was led to believe –

MEG: (BOLD) I'll dae it.

WOMEN GASP, GIGGLE.

MACMILLAN: Aye?

MEG: (BOLD) Aye. If you've the means tae keep me.

MACMILLAN: Aye. Aye. Settled.

MACMILLAN OPENS DOOR TO LEAVE.

MEG: (CALLS) Kirkpatrick.

MACMILLAN: Aye?

MEG: (CALLS) I'm Meg.

MACMILLAN: Meg. I kent that.

WOMEN CHEER AND LAUGH.

MACHINE: (OVER) And that was the end of another beginning.

CROSSFADE TO DUKE AND DUCHESS LAUGHING:

DUKE: What on earth did you say to him?

DUCHESS: Just practical things. About life... wives... moving on...

BRING IN MACHINE. DUCHESS CONT UNDER:

MACHINE: (OVER) OHHN... OHNNN...

DUCHESS: (CONT) ...don't just stand there. Where's your spirit?
where's your fire?

MACHINE: (OVER) OHHN... EVOLVE...

DUCHESS: (CONT) ...get back on the horse... Mr Macmillan. Back on
that horse!

MACHINE: (OVER) ENERGY... VELOCITY... MO-MEN-TUM!

MACMILLAN AND MEG LAUGH, A BABY CRIES. HOLD

UNDER:

MACHINE: And man left no material behind of the machine, for the
iron and wood returned to the ground. All that remained
were the shapes and measures in another man's head,
travelling on to another, and on to another, and on to a
billion bicycles on this earth.

A CACOPHONY OF BICYCLE BELLS. FADE OUT.

ENDS.