

Percy Filth

written by

John Stone

(C)

FADE IN:

INT. LONDON ICONIC TAXI - NIGHT

Broad shouldered TAXI DRIVER (40's) sits at a red traffic signal during a downpour.

His POV: A ghost town as his wipers slide back and forth across the windscreen.

CU: THE RED TRAFFIC LIGHT CHANGES TO GREEN.

He prepares to move forward when a tall, slim suited PASSENGER (30's) taps on his offside window - His coat pulled over his head to protect himself from the rain.

Taxi Driver lets window down to hear him.

PASSENGER

(desperately)

God, am I glad to see you.

TAXI DRIVER

(jesters)

My name's Leon, but you can call me God if you like, I don't mind, I've been called a lot worse.

PASSENGER

Very funny.

TAXI DRIVER

Where to, then?

PASSENGER

Harwood Drive, please.

TAXI DRIVER

Jump in, then

PASSENGER

Really appreciated. You're a life saver.

TAXI DRIVER

I know. That's what they all say.

The Passenger climbs in the back, shakes the rain off his coat and switches on the heater.

PASSENGER

I've just finished a conference.
I didn't realise the time - It's
just flown by.

TAXI DRIVER O.S

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

PASSENGER

Thank god I did then.

Beat.

Taxi Driver stops the taxi. The Passenger lies slumped on the
back seat with his eyes closed as he snores.

TAXI DRIVER

(sighs)

Guvner, wake up, we're here.

No movement.

TAXI DRIVER /

(loudly)

Oi! Wake up!

The Passenger stirs, then rubs his eyes as he awakes.

TAXI DRIVER /

You're home now, c'mon.

The Passenger lazily sits up. then looks through the offside
window in dismay.

PASSENGER

(dismayed)

Where are we? This isn't Harewood
Drive, is it?

TAXI DRIVER

(irked)

You what?

PASSENGER

I asked for Harwood Drive. Where
are we, pal?

TAXI DRIVER

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

PASSENGER

I said Harwood Drive. I should know where I live, pal.

TAXI DRIVER

Well, I know what I heard. It's my job to listen to people, and you distinctly asked to be taken to Hertford Drive, so pay up and get out!

PASSENGER

Where are we, anyway?

TAXI DRIVER

Hertford Drive like I told ya.

PASSENGER

I know that! I can see that! I meant where in England are we?

TAXI DRIVER

We're in Hertford, obviously.

PASSENGER

You mean Hertford as in Hertfordshire?

TAXI DRIVER

Correct.

CU: FARE METER 91.80.

PASSENGER

(adamantly)

Right, you need to take me to the address I asked for in the first place. And it doesn't come to ninety fuckin' quid either. So turn off the meter and restart it when we get back to where you picked me up from.

TAXI DRIVER

(shakes head)

That's not gonna happen. You need to pay the fare and get another cab.

PASSENGER

(outraged)

Get another cab?! What... in the middle of fucking nowhere at one-o'clock in the fucking morning?! Are you having a laugh, pal?! I'm not paying you a single penny... not until you take me to the address I asked you for when you picked me up.

TAXI DRIVER

It's not my problem if you decide to fall asleep during the journey. Just pay the fare and get out.

Passenger slumps back in his seat and obdurately folds his arms.

PASSENGER

I'm not moving, pal.

TAXI DRIVER

In that case, I'll call Percy Filth.

PASSENGER

Percy Filth?

TAXI DRIVER

Yeah, Percy Filth.

PASSENGER

Well, I'm not moving until you take me home.

TAXI DRIVER

Right then, I'm calling 'em now.

He grabs his phone and hits the digits.

BLEEP BLEEP a few times then a connection.

EMERGENCY V.O

(boring female vocal)

Police emergency. How may I help?

TAXI DRIVER

Yeah hi. I've got a passenger in the back of my taxi. He's refusing to pay the fare and won't get out.

PASSENGER O.S

(interjects)

That's rubbish! 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?

EMERGENCY V.O

Has your passenger threatened you at all?

TAXI DRIVER

No, not yet... but he's getting nasty.

EMERGENCY V.O

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

TAXI DRIVER

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

EMERGENCY V.O

Talk to him nicely and persuade him to pay part of the fare.

TAXI DRIVER

But he won't do that. He's being really aggressive. I'm afraid for my own safety. I could be attacked and left to die of my injuries.

EMERGENCY V.O

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

TAXI DRIVER

Well... no, but-

EMERGENCY V.O

*Please call back if he threatens
you and I'll see what I can do.*

TAXI DRIVER

(angrily)

Oh, well then, thank you very
much for nothing.

He discards the phone and sinks over the steering wheel
during his frustration.

PASSENGER O.S

Wanker! Now take me home.

Taxi Driver turns his head and barks.

TAXI DRIVER

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

PASSENGER

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

TAXI DRIVER

No it's not. Don't be ridiculous.

PASSENGER

It is.

TAXI DRIVER

(calmer)

OK. OK. How about a compromise,
then?

Passenger leans forwards in his seat. He's all ears.

PASSENGER

What's the offer?

TAXI DRIVER

I'll take you back if we split
the difference.

PASSENGER

What's your estimation of the
difference?

TAXI DRIVER

Well, the fare is ninety quid. So add half to that - for going back, makes a hundred and thirty-five.

PASSENGER

(outraged)

What?!

TAXI DRIVER

Hang on, hang on, let me finish.

(pauses)

Half that again... say you pay me sixty-five quid. I can't be no fairer than that.

PASSENGER

(shakes head)

I've got a better idea.

TAXI DRIVER

And what's that?

PASSENGER

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

TAXI DRIVER

(snorts)

I'd rather stick pins in my eyes.

PASSENGER

You're fucked then, because I'm not paying you a penny.

TAXI DRIVER

You're fucked, then.

PASSENGER

How?

TAXI DRIVER

Because I will physically have to throw you out and take the money off you meself.

PASSENGER

How are you going to do that?

TAXI DRIVER

Look, you either pay me the fare shown on the meter, or I will drag you out and take the money out of your wallet.

Passenger gawks as he slumps bag in his seat.

PASSENGER

Are you threatening me?

TAXI DRIVER

Yep. You can take that as a direct threat.

Passenger takes out his phone and taps some digits.

BLEEP BLEEP a few times, then a connection.

EMERGENCY V.O

Police emergency service. How may I help?

PASSENGER

It's DCI Sean Maddox. I'm in the back of a taxi and the driver has just threatened a serving police officer.

EMERGENCY V.O

What's your destination, DCI Maddox?

PASSENGER

Hertford Drive. Hertfordshire.

EMERGENCY V.O

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

Taxi Driver shows a look of horror.

PASSENGER

Looks like you're nicked, pal.

Beat.

BLUE LIGHTS FLASH.

Taxi Driver is led away in handcuffs and seated in the back of a waiting Police vehicle.

Passenger stands with his hands in his trouser pockets and grins with satisfaction as Taxi Driver is driven off towards the station.

FADE OUT.

THE END