

Andrew

Hello everyone. This is Andrew Pond, Artistic director of Eclectic FULL Contact Theatre. Welcome to Season 2 of The Half Hour Audio Hour. Every month, we'll be featuring a different playwright, allowing you to not only hear their work, but to find out a little more about them and their process. This month's production is Blag, written by Victoria Morris, directed by Sophie Flack, and starring Sam Cartwright, Winter Foenander, and Rachel Proulx. Before we start, we'd like to briefly introduce you to Victoria. After the production, stay tuned for an interview with Victoria for more insight into the play and this process.

Victoria is a Screenwriter originally from the West Midlands who now lives in London. Her work has been a finalist in several screenplay competitions including the Edinburgh TV Festival New Voices Award, The Funny Women Writing Awards, the Screencraft Family Feature competition, and the Stage 32 TV Pilot contest. She wrote two series of popular animation web series Tiddlytubbies and is currently on the writing team for a new animation project. Victoria is also a Story Consultant and Script Editor with over six years' experience working in TV Scripted Development. She also mentors new writers and enjoys performing comedy stories at open-mic nights.

And now, Blag

(SFX: Whistle, soccer match, plane taking off, indistinct chatter, then interior of airplane)

ALAN

Picture the scene right? It's April 2001 Manchester United are about to take on Bayern Munich in the champion league quarterfinal. There's 60000 people in the crowd watching as these 11 players enter the field and then another man a twelfth player. He's dressed in the same kit. You know he's confident. He's got his chest out and his head held high and and and in that moment he truly believes that he is an actual player for Manchester united and what's more the world's media are Taking pictures

01:04.19

PAUL

And no one noticed.

01:10.63

ALAN

Old Neville did. All lined up in their team pose they were when Gary Neville asked him who he was, but in all the chaos had no choice but to just let him stand there with them.

01:16.51

PAUL

Our Gazza's not a grass.

ALAN

Carl power his name was, the man that did it. Said it was the best day of his life.

01:24.53

PAUL

Um, we'll be legends in our own right. You know if England smashes it tomorrow. We were actually here; we saw it firsthand.

01:37.41

ALAN

Yeah, us and 60000 others. Not really being a legend is it?

(SFX:Plane landing, Samba music, sounds of airport)

ALAN

Ah, just breathe in that air! Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Home to 6.32 million people. Christ the Redeemer Pelé and one of the best football teams in the world. They've won more world cup finals than any other country and scored the most goals of all time.

BRAZILIAN FAN

Você irá cair!

02:05.42

PAUL

What he say?

ALAN

Well let's just say he's on the Brazilian side.

PAUL

Knew was a dumb idea of yours to wear these England shirts.

02:12.99

ALAN

Loud and proud we stand here--The three lions!

02:16.86

PAUL

Yeah, let's get a taxi to the hotel. Taxi!

02:20.67

ALAN

Actually Tax Ski is the way they pronounce it here.

02:24.82

PAUL

Yeah, very helpful.

(SFX: Car pulls up, power window lowers)

PAUL

Hi there, mate. You know this hotel?

(SFX: Doors open, they get in, doors close. Car drives)

02:33.39

TAXI DRIVER

(Portuguese accent) Where Lampard? Is Lampard with you? I love Lampard! Lampard the man

02:38.81

PAUL

Oh no mate, We're not um.

02:40.35

ALAN

Yeah, yeah, ah, he's in the one behind yeah him and Gerrard. Meeting them at the hotel, we are.

02:47.93

PAUL

Alan what you doing?

02:49.13

TAXI DRIVER

How come you not on tour bus?

02:51.57

PAUL

Yeah, that's a boy. Why are we not on the tour bus, again?

02:56.61

ALAN

Uh, it broke down.

02:59.30

TAXI DRIVER

This hotel you go not good. You got wrong hotel.

03:03.59

PAUL

It's fine. We'll just--

03:04.69

ALAN

Oh yeah, yeah, which hotel is that again?

03:07.75

TAXI DRIVER

All the football players stay at the Diamond hotel.

ALAN

Ah those cheeky chappies eh, Paul? winding us up. (Laughs)

03:14.76

PAUL

Uh yeah, sure.

(SFX: Car pulls up, door opens, they get out, door closes)

PAUL

Thank you mate. Bye.

03:21.46

ALAN

Obrigado. Tchou. That's how you say thank you and Goodbye in Portuguese.

03:32.85

PAUL

Yeah ta for that.

(SFX: Car drives off, honks horn. Sounds of people milling about, tropical birds)

PAUL

Ah so got so got plan now have you?

03:40.96

ALAN

He thought we were on the team.

PAUL

Yeah, but we're not, are we? And we haven't got reservations her, so...

03:47.39

ALAN

We could go in for a beer in the hotel bar, though.

03:51.54

PAUL

And how do you expect to get past those armed police?

03:54.50

ALAN

Oh yeah, have they got shields?

PAUL
Yup

ALAN
wow there's about 20 of them.

04:00.92

PAUL
What a place though, eh? How the other half live. It's massive. How many rooms you reckon? And I've never seen so many palm trees in a car park. Ah look, see, everyone's showing badges and that at the entrance. Let's go.

04:16.51

ALAN
Ah, not much of a story for the lads when we get back. Some taxi driver thought we were an England player for one second.

04:23.63

PAUL
Well, we are what we are.

ALAN
I should have been a footballer you know.

PAUL
Here we go. Yes, well you were warned to go to practice rather than the pub.

04:33.82

ALAN
I know I know. What an idiot I was. Imagine if I stuck with it. I knew I was a good player

04:42.30

PAUL
You're good at other things now.

ALAN
like what? Any Tom Dick and Harry can load a pallet onto a truck. Hardly legend material.

04:48.16

PAUL
On to a truck that takes essential foods to thousands of people.

04:52.85

ALAN

What vanilla yogurt with crunchy balls and sugar-free strawberry milkshakes?

04:57.97

PAUL

You'd do anything for anyone.

ALAN

not Dougie I wouldn't.

PAUL

No fine. Okay, not Dougie.

ALAN

Call me a loser. He's the loser I'll show him.

PAUL

He's an idiot. Everyone knows that.

05:10.44

ALAN

Oh let's try get into the Diamond hotel.

05:14.45

PAUL

You're mad. How?

ALAN

Just blag our way in! See if we can meet the players, get some selfies with 'em, have a beer in the posh hotel bar.

05:20.22

PAUL

Your paying then how we gonna do that?

ALAN

There must be a way.

PAUL

I dunno, Alan.

05:28.42

ALAN

Just one time don't you want to do something totally spontaneous and unexpected?

05:36.19

PAUL

We are. We said we go to the non-tourist bars for a change. Mix it up

and mingle with the locals.

05:41.55

ALAN

They are all right there in that hotel, just a mere one hundred meters away, all of our heroes. If we got in, we'd be legends back home. Don't you want to be a legend?

05:57.80

PAUL

It's impossible.

ALAN

I got it. Follow my lead.

(SFX: limping)

06:00.59

PAUL

Um, what what you doing, why're you limping?

06:00.74

ALAN

Oh Oh oh, just go with what I say.

PAUL

Alan? Alan!

ALAN

Oh Oh hi Oh high there. Hola, banheiro for favor. OH! toilet. OW! Please OH! My Foot. Oh God It Hurts so much O Oh pain. Um I'm in pain I can't I can't walk anymore!

06:28.57

PAUL

This does not look good. Let's just go.

(SFX: mumbling, then limping picks up again)

ALAN

AH! Oh...Oh, Obrigado Obrigado... Oh Oh my God they're letting us in.

06:37.67

PAUL

You sure they didn't say wait inside till we arrest you?

06:40.69

ALAN

So we did it. We actually did it.

PAUL

What now? the players won't just be hanging round in reception will they? There'll be in their rooms or training. I think--

06:50.71

ALAN

Don't move a muscle.

06:52.83

PAUL

What? What? Is it a spider

06:57.94

ALAN

No.

07:11.25

PAUL

The police. It's a police isn't it? They probably think we're just one of those English hooligans and I know I put it about a bit really Alan but I'm just a boring accountant. Ah I'm not even doing a macho job in the warehouse like you I'm not ready for jail I'm not!

07:19.79

ALAN

Paul will you calm down? It's not the police. Roy Hodgson is right behind you?

07:27.76

PAUL

Are you winding me up.

ALAN

Well you know over over a little to the left but you know hey Roy, mate? Can I get a selfie mate please?

(SFX: running, then two bodies collide)

07:37.86

ALAN

Ah, watch it I was just gonna take a quick pic with the big R.

07:41.92

PAUL

It's the bodyguard Alan. we're going. It's okay, just using the toilet.

07:46.45

ALAN

No, he said I could! The the Royster said I could! look ah just just

go and ask him.

07:53.96

PAUL

He's got into the lift. Come on Alan, we don't want to annoy this very kind, massive scary armed guard

(SFX: Bathroom door closes, sad Brazilian Muzak, sink. Water stops, hand dryer)

PAUL

Sorry, mate.

08:06.40

ALAN

Miss's okay.

PAUL

we got close.

ALAN

No, you were right. It was a stupid idea I don't know what I was thinking that someone like me might get to hang out with someone like them. These really important talented people.

08:19.53

PAUL

Mate.

08:24.28

ALAN

They wouldn't want to drink with me anyway, would they? I Mean what have I got to talk to them about?

08:27.14

PAUL

You're the funniest person I know. Gerrard, Lampard, they're great players and all but I bet none of them can give the bants.

08:34.15

ALAN

C'mon. Let's go to our hotel and get drunk.

(SFX: Muzak ends, Bathroom door closes. Footsteps)

08:41.14

PAUL

Hey, watch that building stuff.

(SFX: Alan trips over wood)

08:42.53

ALAN

OW! What idiots have left that there? Have they not heard of health and safety? Hey why have you stopped? Paul? You alright?

08:54.85

PAUL

I've got an idea. See with that building stuff, there's two hi-vis jackets. We could put them on, look like we're working here doing the maintenance. What do you think?

09:02.24

ALAN

Look before I was just going to take a cheeky selfie with them if they didn't mind. But I mean impersonating someone else deceiving the hotel staff and the patrons that dwell in it--

09:15.26

PAUL

You're right. I'm sorry it's a stupid idea.

09:19.38

ALAN

I Mean if you really think about it. It's nothing but COMPLETE GENIUS and oh my God they've got helmets too.

(SFX: Them getting dressed)

09:27.82

PAUL

Grab the end of that wood so we can carry it.

(SFX: picking up wood)

PAUL

Ready?

09:31.73

ALAN

So Let's do it.

(SFX: Hallway, door opens, carpeted footsteps, door closes)

PAUL

Oh man, I'm sweating.

ALAN

Well we couldn't take the lift, could we?

09:42.53

PAUL

We should've brought pots of paint not a blooming 6-foot piece of wood. Are we there yet?

09:45.19

ALAN

Oh yeah, yeah this is the floor. It's the penthouse.

09:49.61

PAUL

And they all stay on this floor?

09:54.45

ALAN

Of course, it's the best. Oh oh look? Look there! It's a sign to the bar.

(SFX Background chatter rises and falls)

ALAN

There's the door

10:02.21

PAUL

Or Hell's bells.

ALAN

Mate, you really need to work on some more Macho phrases.

PAUL

I know I know.

10:10.77

ALAN

Um'm I'm just telling you for your own good.

PAUL

Yeah yeah I will so what do we do? Now we we can't just walk in with a long piece of wood.

10:16.80

ALAN

Well I'm gonna go take a peek you just lean the wood against the wall.

(SFX: Wood leaning against wall)

10:20.37

PAUL

What shall I do.

ALAN

You know, just look like you're doing maintenance.

10:27.19

PAUL

Rightio.

(SFX: Grunts)

10:29.52

ALAN

Mate. What are you doing?

10:29.88

PAUL

I hammering a nail into the wall.

ALAN

But but with a pretend Hammer. you've got an invisible hammer.

10:37.99

PAUL

Uh, yeah.

ALAN

You're hammering an invisible nail.

PAUL

Yes...

10:45.20

ALAN

It's just do you think someone might think that's just a bit strange?

10:47.12

PAUL

Yes, yes, of course.

ALAN

Right, can you just--just stand there, Okay? Just don't move.

10:52.62

PAUL

Okay.

10:59.80

ALAN

Right, lemme see. Uh, it's pretty busy in there and--ah, the view,

Paul. It's incredible. That's a mountain over there. Beats our concrete city.

11:04.32

PAUL

Yes, great. Lovely story. Now are there any players in there?

11:08.13

ALAN

Yeah, yeah, there's Daniel Sturridge

PAUL

Cool!

ALAN

and--oh...

PAUL

What?

ALAN

Everyone's wearing a suit in there.

11:13.52

PAUL

No hi-vis jackets?

ALAN

No.

PAUL

Carrying any wood?

ALAN

Oh Lampard's got this cool blue handkerchief in his pocket. Oh no.

11:27.58

PAUL

Is someone coming?

11:28.30

ALAN

No, they've all got these red wristbands.

11:32.78

BRITISH LADY

Oi! Can I help you guys?

ALAN

Uh, hi.

11:36.92

PAUL

Ah, hello there. Great madam.

11:40.67

ALAN

Yeah, we're we're we're fine, thanks. Well, we went the wrong way. All look the same doesn't it? You know doors walls carpets... Anyway, we'll be off. We're just taking this wood back. Come on Paul pick up the wood.

(SFX: they pick up the wood)

11:52.41

BRITISH LADY

Wait a minute.

ALAN

Uh, yeah?

BRITISH LADY

Taking the wood back where?

11:59.59

ALAN

Um.

12:00.90

PAUL

The the forest we're taking it back to the forest.

12:06.27

BRITISH LADY

So let me get this straight. You're taking that piece of wood back to the Forest where it technically came from.

12:15.40

ALAN

Ah, no, ah, no yeah, you see when he says forest, he means...well he means the car park, doesn't he? Yeah that that's the nickname the staff use, isn't it.

12:26.51

BRITISH LADY

Sure...that...yeah I knew that.

(SFX: Music, carpeted footsteps fading into tiled footsteps as they cross back into the lobby of the hotel.)

12:36.47

ALAN

So have you got a suit with you?

12:40.68

PAUL

Nope you?

ALAN

No...

PAUL

To our hotel then.

ALAN

What? that's it. We're not going to try anymore?

PAUL

We don't belong here.

ALAN

I've got it.

PAUL

No don't even--

ALAN

Of course it's obvious.

PAUL

What?

12:56.24

ALAN

We're just gonna go buy some suits.

12:57.94

PAUL

The Rio fund is strictly for food and beer. You said so yourself no deviations. Besides we never get back in there again!

13:05.20

ALAN

We will. We'll look the part.

13:15.54

PAUL

And even if we did get in, who'd believe that we're footballers.

13:15.87

ALAN

Feel the part feel like we're meant to be there.

13:19.65

PAUL

Or for that matter, that we would be people who'd be associated with them.

13:39.88

ALAN

It's all in the mind. Did you know that Carl Power, the mysterious 12 player, also went on to do a warm up round at Wimbledon with Tim bloomin' Henman.

13:49.75

PAUL

Is that true.

ALAN

picked up a tennis racket for the very first time that day

PAUL

And no one noticed.

13:59.68

ALAN

he got an applause from the crowd after, and shook hands with Henman!

13:59.72

PAUL

No.

ALAN

And you know why he got away with it? Because he believed it. He really believed he played for Manchester United and he really believed he was a champion at Wimbledon.

14:11.70

PAUL

Yeah, but.

14:16.43

ALAN

Monday morning, we're just doing the same thing. Same job and seeing the same people doing the same routine. Listening to Froggy and Buttwick complaining all day and and Dougie being a jobsworth...

14:24.59

KID

Excuse me Sir, are you playing for England?

ALAN

Actually, kid, no..we--

14:29.47

PAUL

Why Yes, little one. We are. Picture?

KID

Sí

(SFX Camera clicks 3x)

PAUL

Any time. No problem. Bye now! You enjoy the match tomorrow, yeah?

KID

Que bacana! Obrigado!

PAUL

He really thought I was a player.

14:40.81

ALAN

Told you we should wear the England tops. So how does it feel Paul Mills to be a millionaire footballer who plays for England?

14:48.78

PAUL

Where do we get the suits?

ALAN

Really?

PAUL

Come on. Besides we to go quick because that kid's dad is looking at those pictures and he don't look happy.

(SFX: upbeat music fading into downtown ambience)

15:04.50

ALAN

Oh I feel like I'm the man in this suit. Don't you?

15:10.48

PAUL

It's somewhat hard with ill-fitting trousers and mismatched jacket. Frank Lampard doesn't get his suits from a charity shop.

15:37.41

ALAN

Well, the Rio fund didn't quite cover the tailoring place did it? You look great. Honest I swear people look at you differentyl when you wear a suit. We should wear 'em more often.

15:47.20

PAUL

What down the Jolly Farmer? The lads would take the Mick.

15:50.68

ALAN

Ah damn Lampard had that blue handkerchief in his pocket didn't he? I forgot to get one--oh and what about the wristband?

16:04.85

PAUL

I Have an idea.

(SFX: Upbeat music fades into the sound of someone eating crisps)

16:08.89

ALAN

I Mean can you imagine earning that kind of money a week.

16:13.30

PAUL

I don't know if I go out and buy a massive house though.

16:18.69

ALAN

Hey have to look the part swimming pool and the like.

16:24.18

PAUL

It's the cost of running it. Perhaps I could invest in the solar energy.

(SFX: Paul eats crisps)

16:28.83

ALAN

Why'd you have to be so practical. You're telling me you wouldn't be driving a Porsche rather than your old banger.

16:32.23

PAUL

You leave Mary Mini out of this. Well maybe a small Astin Martin wouldn't hurt I suppose. Would you still go down the Jolly Farmer.

16:44.17

ALAN

Of course, get the pint in.

PAUL

You'll regret that.

(SFX: Paul eats crisps)

16:50.94

PAUL

Right? Let's see if this works. Hold still.

(SFX: Crisp packets rustling)

16:53.47

ALAN

How's the handkerchief look?

PAUL

yeah fine it works.

ALAN

And the wristband?

PAUL

Yeah, yeah...

ALAN

what if they fall off.

17:06.31

PAUL

Well then yes, we're screwed as it's just a packet of cheese and onion crisps folded into a triangle and a packet Ready Salted for the wristband. Look, who are we kidding? This is never going to work is it?

17:17.58

ALAN

Close your eyes

PAUL

don't be daft.

ALAN

come on. Do it. Do you want pictures with the players or not?

17:24.80

PAUL

Fine.

ALAN
no peeking.

PAUL
Will you get on with it?

ALAN
Okay picture the scene--you're on a football pitch.

17:33.23

PAUL
Yeah, Arrow park where half the pitch is like a swamp cause some idiot built it on a slope.

17:38.23

ALAN
No, it's Aston Villa Park

PAUL
Okay I'm there.

ALAN
and Birmingham city run onto the pitch and smash ya four-nil.

(BOTH LAUGH)

17:45.99

PAUL
Hey that's not fair! Four-nil? You wish! Only god performs miracles you know.

(SFX: Sound of football match under ALAN's speech)

17:51.70

ALAN
Okay, okay, Now you're running through the gate and onto the pitch. The crowd is screaming and chanting and horns are blowing and your adrenaline's pumping, your heart pounds, and you know that there's only one person in the whole world that's meant to be on the field right there and then, and it's you. And you run then leap up to kick the ball and it curves smoothly into the back of the net!

(SFX: Crowd cheers, horns blow)

ALAN
Well?

18:23.36

PAUL

What's your plan.

ALAN

We have one chance to walk in there like we belong. Okay?

18:28.00

PAUL

Okay.

(SFX: Footsteps approaching the hotel)

PAUL

the guards clocked us.

18:33.12

ALAN

Just keep going.

(SFX: Football match fades in as they continue walking)

PAUL

He's opening the door.

ALAN

Obrigade, obrigade...

PAUL

They're letting us in! They didn't blink a bloomin' eyelid!

(SFX: Cheering and horns)

18:44.13

ALAN

I Told you. come on.

(SFX: footsteps)

18:47.20

PAUL

Where are we going?

ALAN

to the players' bar. Let's get the lift.

PAUL

I'm so chuffed.

(SFX: Elevator door dings and opens)

ALAN

ready?

18:53.30

GABRIELLE

Excuse me Gentlemen.

18:55.37

PAUL

Oh no.

GABRIELLE

you're going the wrong way.

18:58.65

ALAN

Right? Yeah, sorry you caught us sorry we we were just just.

GABRIELLE

not to worry. All looks the same doesn't it? You're in conference Room B. I'll take you, if you follow me.

19:07.86

ALAN

Right then. Okay,

(SFX: Footsteps fading to carpeted footsteps)

19:11.80

GABRIELLE

Was the journey in fine?

ALAN

yeah, yeah, yeah, it was great.

GABRIELLE

you found the car we got for you okay?

ALAN

Ah yeah, yeah, thanks.

GABRIELLE

Everyone is so very excited to see you.

19:21.63

ALAN

Are they? Um, you know actually I'm feeling a bit tired after the journey.

19:29.10

PAUL

Me too--practically falling asleep.

ALAN

Maybe we could go freshen up.

19:33.95

GABRIELLE

You English have such a funny sense of humor. They're all waiting sir.

19:37.97

ALAN

Right? Well then, let's go

PAUL

Alan!

ALAN

Look whatever it is I'm sure we can get out of it.

PAUL

That's going well so far then.

19:45.83

GABRIELLE

We we are so glad you came all the way from England to do this session.

19:51.45

ALAN

Sure, Yeah, yeah.

GABRIELLE

And your accommodation is sufficient?

ALAN

Oh more than yeah, yeah.

GABRIELLE

The football players take all the best rooms.

ALAN

I'm sure they do.

20:04.41

GABRIELLE

Right. Here we are.

(SFX: Door opens, sound of chatter which fades, door closes)

GABRIELLE

Hello ladies and gentlemen they have arrived at last.

(SFX: polite applause)

20:08.61

ALAN

Ah, stop, stop, really there's no need...

20:12.75

GABRIELLE

May I present to you Dr. Dominic Colfield and professor Augustus Branson who will share with us their research and findings from their Alaska trip last year

(SFX: polite applause)

20:23.46

ALAN

Ah, hello everyone. Ah um, oh no, we've got a problem. You know what? I need a projector for my slides and there doesn't seem to be--

20:38.52

GABRIELLE

It's okay Dr. Colfield we set up the projector already with your slides. Do you want the first one up?

20:42.23

ALAN

Right. Yeah that'll be fantastic.

20:45.73

PAUL

Dr. Caulfield, are you sure you want the slide up?

ALAN

Yes, yes.

(SFX: slide being shown)

20:58.89

ALAN

Oh well would you believe it? That's the wrong slide. You must have got the wrong batch. Oh darn, now this is a pickle!

21:00.89

PAUL

Um, we have them in our luggage.

ALAN

yes yes professor Brandon

PAUL
Branson!

ALAN
Branson.

PAUL
We'll go get them.

21:08.69
GABRIELLE
I can send for a porter to get your bags

21:10.58
ALAN
No, no, no!

PAUL
No.

ALAN
No, no no need I have uh personal items in there too.

21:17.87
PAUL
Medication

ALAN
Yeah sensitive medication.

PAUL
won't be long.

(SFX: Door opening, closing, and running footsteps, laughter)

PAUL
I Can't believe that just happened!

21:29.32
ALAN
That was brilliant!

PAUL
They're waiting for us to return! We're terrible people.

ALAN
Right, come on no messing around. Let's do this now. Gotta get to the penthouse floor.

(SFX: Elevator dings, door closes, elevator moves up)

ALAN

God I'm so excited

21:42.13

PAUL

Me too.

ALAN

maybe more about this than the match tomorrow

PAUL

What?

ALAN

To victory! Top floor, here we go.

(SFX: Elevator dings, doors open)

PAUL

Is this our stop?

21:48.85

ALAN

No. Damn someone must be getting in. Just act cool, normal.

21:54.94

PAUL

What if it's security? You think that woman followed us?

(Silence)

PAUL

No-one's there.

22:01.69

ALAN

What?

22:04.60

VOICE

Can you hold the lift please? It's an important call.

PAUL

Uh...okay.

22:12.40

ALAN

Wish he'd hurry up. What a cheek! Well he's got ten more seconds or I'm shutting the doors I can tell you that for--.

22:16.64

PAUL

I recognize that voice. It's bloomin' Gerrard! It's Steven Gerrard! It is! Listen!

22:22.71

ALAN

What the-- Gerrard? Oh hell's bells!

PAUL

Alan what's wrong with you?

ALAN

Picture the scene--it's Liverpool versus millsborough. Gerrard collects the ball and controls it on his instep. He allows it to bounce twice and then it arcs in at the top Corner of the goal.

22:39.92

PAUL

Okay mate, when he gets in the lift, you've got to act cool, yeah?

(SFX: footsteps, elevator dings, doors close)

PAUL

Oh, hi there! Held the lift for ya.

22:50.29

GERRARD

Yeah, Appreciate that lads.

22:58.10

PAUL

I mean our pleasure.

(SFX: Elevator dings, doors open)

PAUL

After you Mr Gerrard.

(SFX: Footsteps, light background chatter)

PAUL

Alan ready?

23:01.35

ALAN

Why getting your phone out?

PAUL
be cool.

ALAN
is this the time to make a call?

PAUL
I'm just looking busy. now'll just flash your Ready Salted crisp
packet wristband and walk in.

(SFX: Fast walking, upbeat music plays in the background. Chatter gets
louder)

PAUL
We're in!

23:16.90

ALAN
We did it! There's Lampard.

23:16.99

PAUL
is Neville around?

ALAN
(Laughing) Hiya. Two beers please.

(SFX: Beer bottles being opened)

ALAN
How much is that, mate?

23:28.72

BARTENDER
It's a free bar sir.

23:35.15

ALAN
Ah oh yes, of course I knew that.

(SFX: Beer bottles clinking)

ALAN
Ah, hey there Frank! Nice handkerchief. Mine's scented. Do you mind if
I get a pic?

(SFX: Camera clicks)

ALAN

Ah, Mr. Hodgson, finally!

(SFX: Camera clicks)

23:43.48

PAUL

Mr. Gerrard, can I?

23:44.96

GERRARD

Were you two in the lift? did you boys blag it in here?

(All laugh)

(SFX: Camera clicks)

23:52.40

PAUL

Ah, Alan, don't tell Betsy but I'm never washing this arm again.

(SFX: Music fades into outdoor ambience outside the hotel)

PAUL

You're right! We're actual legends now. It's all over social media.

24:02.60

ALAN

This has literally been the best day of my life.

24:06.69

PAUL

Heeeey...maybe we should go bigger! Be more ambitious! shall try and blag it onto the pitch tomorrow? You know, if we truly believe we're one of the players.

24:17.38

ALAN

What and ruin the actual England match? Are you nuts?

24:24.30

PAUL

Oh yeah...maybe not.

(They laugh)

(SFX: Upbeat samba music)

Andrew

Thank you for listening to Blag, here on The Half Hour Audio Hour. Next up is a brief interview we conducted with Victoria Morris

after the recording of this show.

Andrew:

So first off, thank you very much for allowing, uh, us to be part of your show.

Victoria:

Thank you.

Andrew:

Um, when did you start writing?

Victoria

Well, actually I was one of those people as a kid in school that actually won oh, anything to do with writing any kind of creative assignments, you know. Making people do plays and writing poems and writing stories, and I'd always win little competitions and I always loved it.

And, um, it was actually when I went to uni that I sort of accidentally realized that you could have a career out of it because I was taking a course and it, it, I wasn't getting on with it. And then they gave you options if you wanted to change. And one of them was creative writing and including audio plays and playwrighting, and I've never looked back and it was amazing, really inspired.

ANDREW

Excellent. I, I, I know, I know exactly the type of kid you're talking about because that [00:01:00] was that, that was me as well, so wonderful. Um, so Sophie touched, touched upon it a little bit, but I, I want to hear the story. What inspired Blag?.

Victoria:

Yeah, this is a, this is a great story. My sister was literally just, you know, telling me about her day. And I was sitting, you know, listening to her and she was telling me, she told me this story that her manager had told her about his son. And he had apparently-- . His son had tried to blag when he went to Brazil into this five-star hotel. To just basically get a selfie with the players and it was a little bit different to mine. So I think they tried to go to various, hotels, and I just loved the story. And I was like, um, tell me, you know, tell me more about it. And. Um, she was saying that it actually got into, it was like they were in, they worked in Worcester and it was in the Worcester news and they'd gone kind of viral that they'd had these pictures and they literally met all the players and it was what they intended. And I just wanted to-- I just thought what a brilliant story, what an inspiring story, if you sort of believe in yourself and you're like, yeah, one for the lads and it was, um, I actually just I've thought, yeah, I've been really, I really want to make, and literally I had the idea and I put the names say on a white board, as you do as a writer with lots of ideas. And then one day I

just wrote it and it was, I was very much inspired by that. And it was a really great story.

Andrew:

It is, it's a, it's a. It's one of those, it's one of those stories that you just, you know, if it wasn't true, it should have been. And the fact that the fact that this actually happened is awesome,

Victoria:

Inspired by that their antics in the, and it was just, yeah, it was just fab. And I think, um, see, you know, I always hear lots of stories about blags and it's a, an amazing just to, to bring this one into it and to expand on it. And make it into something y'know, like what people were saying up more emotional and you know, there's always these lads just really wanting to, you know, have fun and, and change and, and grow together.

Andrew

Excellent. This is not on the, the, the, the list of questions I sent you. So I hope I'm not throwing you too much of a curve ball, but I need to know what, where did that. Phrase come from. Why? Why is, why is basically conning your way into some place called Blag?

Victoria

Oh, I mean, yeah, I think it's just, yeah, just the fun of it. Yeah. Blagging somewhere, blagging, someone to get into somewhere.

Andrew:

Oh, so you don't know the origin of that particular.

Victoria:

I know anyway. I mean, obviously you're American,

Andrew:

I had never heard it before. I thought it was...

Victoria:

it's a phrase here, you know, you blag your way into a nightclub or you blag your way into the arrow or something like that. So, I mean, I'm from Midlands in, uh, West Midlands. in obviously UK, so it's a phrase I'm used to hearing and they all would have heard. Yeah. Those, those people that inspired me.

Andrew:

No, I, I, I, I think that that's awesome. It's just, I always love to, to kind of know where that, where stuff like that comes from, but at the same time, but, but at the same time, if you asked me where a bunch of, some American phrases came from, uh, I don't know. That's just what we call it.

Victoria:

It's to me, it's definitely something. Yeah, I've always known..

Andrew:

Um, is this your first audio drama that, that you've you've written?

Victoria:

Actually. So when I was 18, which was, you know, a few or so many years ago. When I was 18, I, you know, I was saying that it was very much inspired when I went to uni and life changed when I sort of randomly picked another course, which is the creative course. And I found out when I was learning about the radio and audio plays that there was a competition and basically, um, no one sort of on the course sort of entered it or anything, but I was like, oh no, I'm going to, I'm going to enter it. You know, we've written something on the course and I won it, and it was amazing. And I went to university of Darby and, you know, I got to go to London and it was just amazing just to see it all recorded and Polly James, who's very old school was it, you know, Lima birds, uh, was in it, and it was just something, you know, when I was so young and it's something since then, I've always, I've loved like hearing the format and wanted to recreate something else. And this was just seemed a perfect opportunity, especially, you know, being audio and you could set it, you know, internationally, and it could be an England that it could be in Brazil.. And it was just a great format to use. So something I always wanted to do again.

Andrew:

Excellent. So what are, what are some of the challenges of, of, of writing for audio as opposed to, you know, the stage or, or some more visual medium?

Victoria:

I mean, I think, yes, Sophie definitely touched on some things, but I think like for me it's kind of like, Subtext. And obviously they can't see your face and they can't see that kind of nuance on your face about emotion. So it's, um, you have to make sure that, you know, kind of thing, you know, that's to do with the acting then isn't it? That that is going to bring the emotion in. Even if it's just one line, one simple line, they have to make it so much more than if you just see it on screen or perhaps you wouldn't even have that line of dialogue. So I think that's quite a challenge. And also for me, I, I just, I never want it to be expositional. You know, you don't want to be like, so say in this, you know, there's a, if I get out of a taxi, you don't want to be like, we're getting out of the taxi now, you know, you want to make sure that you're using the sound effects and all those, and really exploiting those. The elements that you could use and an audio that [you can't end a drama, you know, in a TV, on screen or something, um, sound effects, definitely. I'm definitely making sure that it's not, you know, like explaining everything and making it too

expositional is really important. I think in a, an audio play.

Andrew:

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Um, cause I've, I've seen scripts like that where it's like, and now we're going to tell you what we're doing.

Victoria:

So I'm very aware of that. You can, you know, this there's many things that you can do and it's just sound effects and the emotion that the actors give that kind of, you know, they set the scene without dialogue, which is great.

Andrew:

Now, do you have any upcoming projects that you'd like to plug?

Victoria: I mean, I'm currently doing a new and it's not sort of out yet, but I'm doing, I did a couple of series of Tiddlytubbies, which was a children's animation for, um, yeah. And I I'm going to be doing more children's animation. So that's what I've been doing at the moment. But other than that, I've been working on a comedy feature. Um, so like to, you know, expand and some TV ideas, so...

Andrew:

amazing, awesome.

Victoria:

Lots of fun. I love the comedy, y'know? I like to kind of get on stage and do a couple of comedy stories. So I definitely wanted to keep doing that route. And, you know, this has all been great to review it, to keep doing it and to be inspired by it, so...

Andrew:

No, I can tell you that you liked the comedy. 'Cause this is, this is a very, very funny show. So now have you ever tried to blag your way into somewhere you didn't belong?

Victoria:

I was waiting for this! I think that... definitely, for some reason stories like this gravitate towards me, and I would be the person up. So do what Sophie did. But as in, I would be the person, someone else would be blagging, but I would definitely be in the group that was going in and not perhaps being the leader of it, but also thinking it was absolutely brilliant. And perhaps, you know, like going into VIP areas or something like that, but I've heard some, I've just heard so many stories, and I really love the underdog winning, you know, I love that kind of, if you can blag your way in and it's not hurting anyone, obviously. It's very innocent. Yeah. Plenty of stories that I've heard that I just think, why not try it if you can, as long as it's a little bit innocent. It's all fine. Yeah.

ANDREW

Oh yeah.

VICTORIA

I was more the, you know, the follower, I guess, being inspired. So this was a chance I get to be the, the main person.

Andrew:

Right. I'll make sure to put a disclaimer on this entire interview. That it's like, this is, we only, we only recommend this if you're doing this for, for completely innocent, fun reasons.

Victoria:

Well, I think, you know, you've got, you know, inventing Anna and things like that, and it's all blagging, isn't it? Everyone blags. Everyone blags their CV. I think it's something that's a bit more of a subject now, you know, people, why not, if you, if you can, but definitely not hurting people, no.

Andrew:

Um, excellent. Well, Victoria, thank you once again, so much for allowing us the opportunity to, uh, present this, uh, script. We, we really do appreciate it. It's been an absolute blast. I, I, I love the script. I loved it from the minute I read it and I'm just really grateful that we had the opportunity to be part of it.

Victoria:

Oh, I mean, thank you too. I can, I can tell you're passionate about it all and you know, Sophie directing and the actors, and it was just a-you too, Andrew-you know, it was really great. I feel the passion too, which is it's, it's been amazing, you know, when you write something and you just want someone to get it and be on your page and all that. So it, thank you, yeah too.

Andrew

We hope you enjoyed Blag. Next month, we will be presenting Fairies, written by Adam Szudrich, and directed by Colette Cullen.

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