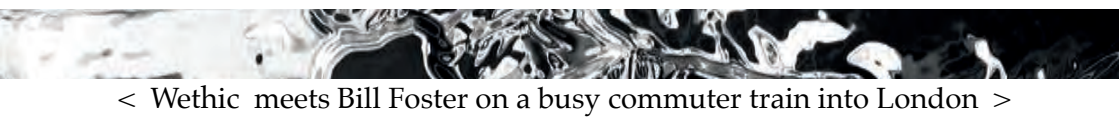




< GHOSTING TO WORK >



< A TRAINING SCRIPT FOR ALTERNATIVE DESTINATIONS >



< Wethic meets Bill Foster on a busy commuter train into London >



< A Post Workers Theatre Production - N.Mortimer - D Macdonald - Featuring words of K. Weeks & E.R.Smith >



This is a reality interface with two characters.

It is intended to be read on a train as part of your daily commute.

You should choose which of the two characters you want to become and then read your chosen part to exit your commute and enter a new space of transiting employment.

Instructional footnotes: The script includes additional actions or thought experiments that you should chose to act upon as you perform the dialogue. These are not mandatory to the performance but will greatly improve the alternative journey.

< S C E N E >

Bill is glitching, a confused version of his former self and Wethic has been attempting to console him whilst trying hard to engage Bill in a conversation about the possibility of a life without commuting, or even a life without work. Encompassing both the most rational and the most irrational of behaviour, this pair of commuters find an absurd relationship forming as Wethic seeks redemption for his role in creating a world governed by a definition of work that is hard to stomach.



< C A S T >

Wethic is the gender neutral embodiment of the late Capitalist Work-Ethic and is struggling with issues of identity and overtaken by conflicting remorse. They are in the form of a newspaper that speaks. They float around on a breeze of air conditioning that can be conjured at will.

Bill Foster is the central character in the 1993 film Falling Down, a downtrodden man who finally snaps during rush hour and goes on the rampage. Bill is a 40 something man in a short sleeved white shirt with a tie and a black briefcase.

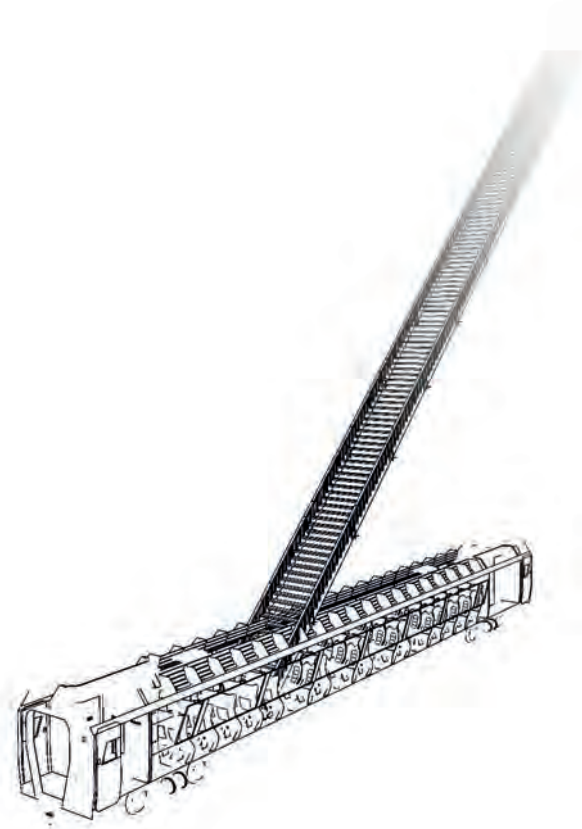
PRIMING <> MANTRAS

Read for your chosen part at least once, but preferably 2 or 3 times, and ideally out loud in a climbing crescendo. Memorising this text will be highly desirable and provide the best results for the transcendence to alternative destinations of your commute.

I am Wethic. I am now the machine that drives the cognition of work. Paid or unpaid. Most live for this work rather than work to live. I am not the work itself, but the energy and the compulsion and the persistence that work implies. I am now within the body of the work ethic - its tense in here, a muscular environment, finely tuned but twitchy. I am feeling sad. I am I need of a change, a change to the very core of my identity, a change that can overcome the black cloud that sits above my thoughts and actions every nano-second, every particle that governs my ability to make all of you enslaved to something that is perceptual but which governs your lives.



I am Bill Foster. I am now a middle aged angry man. I now resemble an actor called Michael Douglas. I am now a problematic character depiction of a frustrated citizen in a western system of control. It is quite tense in here, quite a muscular environment, but I yearn for a more simple atmosphere. I am blind to many of the more rational ways to overcome my predicament. I favour impulsion to meditation but my temper is used to being kept under wraps. I am looking for a way to tease out the knots in my compulsion to psychotically and violently lash out against the flaws I see in society. I am feeling sad. I am in need of change and want to leave the purgatory that is the confines of the script written for me.



GAME <> PLAY

WETHIC:

Oi! - Are you still as uncomfortable as me? Do you feel any better than before? Have you had any time to think about if there is a way that working so much can become more morally viable? ^{#1}

- ♦ -

BILL:

I am not economically viable ^{#2}

WETHIC:

Oh, well that's my fault I suppose, making you all work as if it's a calling, a religious magnetism. Why am I held in such high esteem rather than energising other pastimes and practices with the same fervour? Why did you all fall for it?! I'm hurting, really hurting! Look around, look at the image that this train carriage presents to us all! Citizens willingly standing squished, tired and beaten, fighting for air, I have been rationalising exploitation and legitimising inequality for centuries, but have you considered this? Do you know

#1

If sitting - move in your seat for longer than is commonly accepted as a suggestion of getting comfortable.

If standing - stretch out your arms to find the furthest fixture to support yourself

#2

Repeat this line whilst reflecting on what this means to you and your current existence. Keep going, let it become awkward, until you get uncomfortable glances from your fellow commuters

what could be wrong with the world of messy motivation I have ruled over ?^{#3} ◦

BILL:

[to other passengers] Can anybody tell me what's wrong with this picture? Anybody? Anybody at all?^{#4} ◦

WETHIC:

Listen Bill, I know that it's me Bill. I'm wrong Bill. I have somehow created a perfect storm of necessity and desire, habit and intention. I've confused coercion and choice that has resulted in a daily drudgery hurtling at 140 miles an hour! What have I done? How was I so stupid, so greedy, so easily led to be a weapon of the few and a trap for the masses? -For fucks sakes Bill, can you please tell me why it is that you are so angry at the wrong people - it should be me! - Me goddamit, not the immediacy of a service provider or yet another worker caught up in my riddles...^{#5} ◦

BILL:

I'm just standing up for my rights as a consumer... What do you think of that?^{#6} ◦

#3

Close your eyes and think about what has made you get on this train today picture what your motivation could be if it were a shape made of ice. Now picture it melting - if this is enjoyable make it known to your fellow passengers.

#4

Direct this question to the passengers around you, searching for an answer before you deliver your own.

#5

Meditate on what separating the definition of coercion and choice. Hold each definition in outstretched palms

#6

Stand up, do something unexpected, pound a table, slam the fold out tray... let the moment take you.

WETHIC:

Oh Bill - really? I'll tell you straight up - these rights only exist to distract you from the very basic reality that you are paying for this commute through the nose - and- like the rest of the livestock on this vessel you will continue to put up with the extortion because you have to get to work. Not because you need to. I am the work ethic! ME! You all have swallowed my convictions that work forms a significant part of one's identity - your own self expression is somehow rationalised as a central perk of the reason to work! It was me who told you devote yourself to 'work to work' elevated it to the centre of all life and confounded means with ends! #7

BILL:

I did everything they told me to. Did you know I... You know they lied to me when they said... #8

WETHIC:

LIES Bill! That's why I'm like this! - How can I ever make this up? Turn this around? I want to, but where to start?

#7

*Repeat the phrase:
means and ends - means and ends - living for my work - on what does this depend?
ends and means! - not means and ends! - working to live - I should make amends!*

#8

Why do you feel cheated? Use these line as departure points, completing the story yourself.

I forced you all to accept the primacy of work over all the time and space of anything non-work related, but then made you all hungry for the incentives of pay rises in order to make consumer goods become the reward and the badge of honour for each of your contributions and your status as good producing citizens! FUCK! - IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE LIKE THIS!!! It's not a universal truth is it?! It can't possibly be useful without someone benefiting from all that work - without a fiction built on a duty to consume from specific people and produce for specific people! #9

BILL:

Have you ever heard the expression, "The customer is always right"?

Well, here I am. The customer. I know how it works. I think your just trying to justify...

I am just disagreeing with you!

We have the freedom of speech, the right to disagree!

I am the customer. The customer. #10

WETHIC:

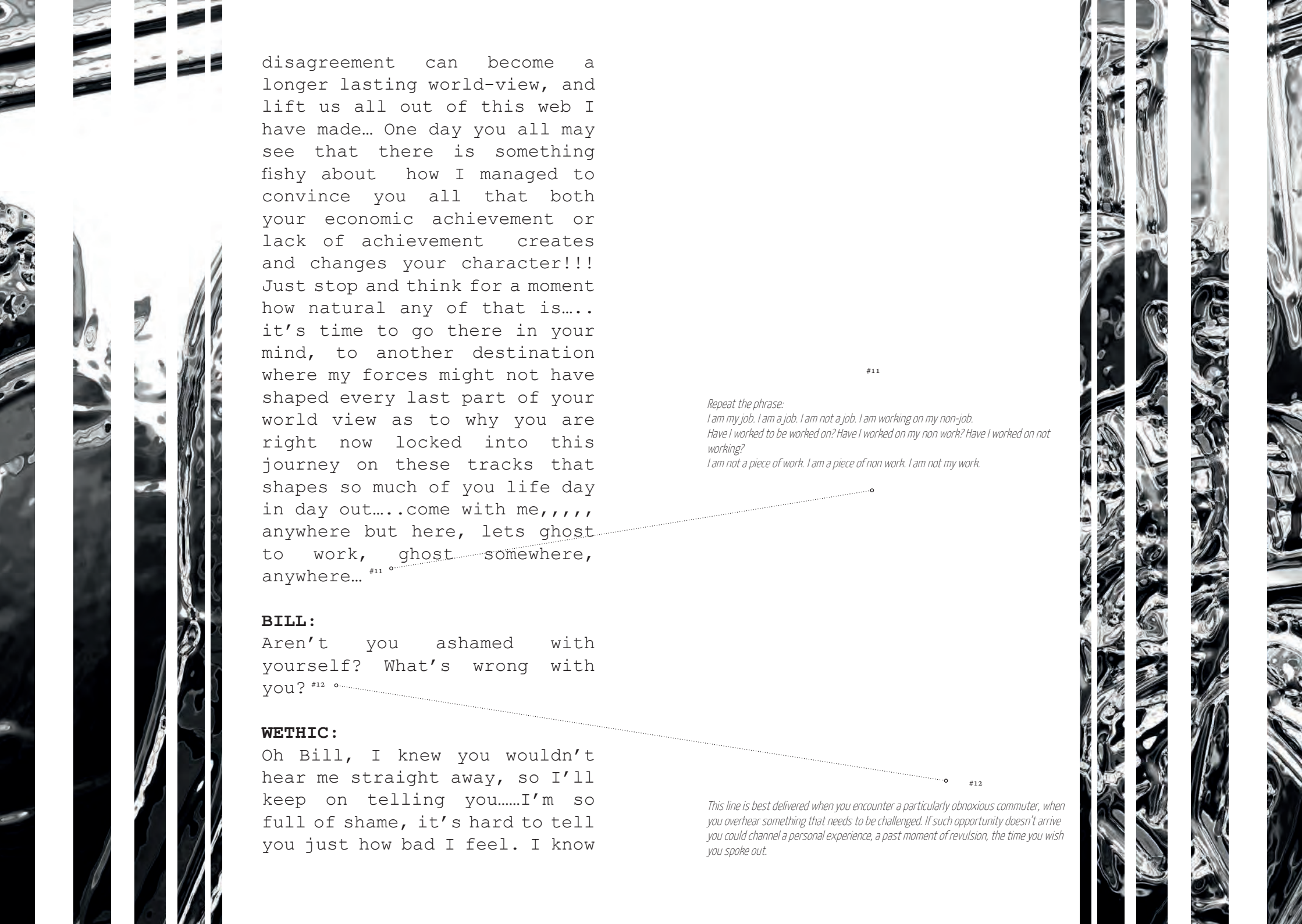
That's right BILL - that's the spirit....MORE disagreement is very much agreeable but perhaps

#9

Close your eyes and visualise what you will do today- focus on a single task - this might be :talking on the phone, typing, deciding, filing, shredding, etc. Slow down the task you chose into a slow motion action replay and commentate as if you are a television host. Do this out loud to your fellow passengers.

#10

Reach for your mobile phone and pretend to dial, ..., wait a moment and then start the argument, get angrier and louder with each line (you should be shouting by the end).



disagreement can become a longer lasting world-view, and lift us all out of this web I have made... One day you all may see that there is something fishy about how I managed to convince you all that both your economic achievement or lack of achievement creates and changes your character!!! Just stop and think for a moment how natural any of that is.... it's time to go there in your mind, to another destination where my forces might not have shaped every last part of your world view as to why you are right now locked into this journey on these tracks that shapes so much of you life day in day out....come with me,,,,, anywhere but here, lets ghost to work, ghost somewhere, anywhere... #11

BILL:

Aren't you ashamed with yourself? What's wrong with you? #12

WETHIC:

Oh Bill, I knew you wouldn't hear me straight away, so I'll keep on telling you.....I'm so full of shame, it's hard to tell you just how bad I feel. I know

#11

Repeat the phrase:

I am my job. I am a job. I am not a job. I am working on my non-job.

Have I worked to be worked on? Have I worked on my non work? Have I worked on not working?

I am not a piece of work. I am a piece of non work. I am not my work.

#12

This line is best delivered when you encounter a particularly obnoxious commuter, when you overhear something that needs to be challenged. If such opportunity doesn't arrive you could channel a personal experience, a past moment of revulsion, the time you wish you spoke out.

I've done all of this, made you
all value working in such a way
that it make us sick, but I want
to talk more constructively
with you - please, we've been
here before..... Are you still as
uncomfortable as me? Do you
feel any better than before? I
wonder, have you had any time
to think about if there is a
way that working so much can
become more morally viable? #13 / #1

[Repeat from - ♦ -]

#13 / #1

*If sitting - move in your seat for longer than is commonly accepted as a suggestion of
getting comfortable
If standing - stretch out your arms to find the furthest fixture to support yourself*

Wethic included excerpts from:

Kathi Weeks:

The Problem with Work: Feminism,
Marxism,
Antiwork Politics, and Postwork
Imaginaries. 2011

Bill Foster includes excerpts from:

Ebbe Roe Smith:

Falling Down : Screenplay. 1993