

USELESS KNOWLEDGE

"Double Landlocked"

A Single Camera Limited Series Pilot

By Alan Wigley

INT. PUB - NIGHT

MEN clog the bar. WOMEN CHATTER. A burly GENTLEMAN preps a microphone on stage. A teenaged-GIRL takes tickets.

The looming thundercloud that is ARNOLD BENNETT, 50's, sits by himself. He looks towards the gentleman on stage.

This man is JACKO, 30's, an audacious Londoner.

JACKO

Good evenin' everybody! And welcome to the June edition of the monthly pub quiz series 'ere at the Tavern. I'm Jacko, ya quizmaster. Thanks for avin' me.

TEAM MEMBERS take their seats. Arnold organizes his scratch paper.

JACKO

A quick run down of the rules before we start then. Rule number one: The quizmaster is always right. I'll say it again. The quizmaster is always right.

The CROWD JEER.

JACKO

Settle down you lot. Rule number two: Please turn off all cell phones, iPhones, Blackberry's, or any other electronic devices ya may 'ave on ya. If I catch any of you cheatin', that'll be the end of your evenin'. I'm a mean bastard, trust me.

Jacko looks at a TEAM just off stage, as if to imply he will keep an extra eye on them.

The team LAUGHS hysterically.

BALDING MAN

I was only checkin' the rugby score Jacko! Honest!

Arnold raises his empty pint to a young BARMAID. His gesture is quickly acknowledged.

JACKO

Rule number three: There are four strict toilet breaks after each round. If ya need to get some booze out ya kidneys at any point durin' the quiz, please do it at one of these designated breaks. And, furthermore ladies and gents, remember that England has just enforced a new cigarette rule.

The crowd GROANS.

JACKO

Oh shut it you lot! If ya need a smoke, please do it at one of these toilet breaks, please do it outside, and please be no less than ten feet away from the building.

Arnold puts his cigarettes away, takes a swig from his new ale. It LEAKS over his chin.

JACKO

Rule number 4: Each team must have a scriber, to be responsible for jottin' down your answers. The scriber must also put their name on the answer sheet. And please, for fuck sakes, do not elect the doctor on your team to fulfill this position. I'm sick 'n tired of tryin' to decipher answers that look as though they were penned by a two year old!

Jacko looks towards a freckled MAN at the back.

FRECKLED MAN

Best medical penmanship in Britain
Jackie boy!

Arnold writes his name on the first answer sheet.

JACKO

And, lastly, rule number five: If at any point throughout the evenin' you are confused with any of these rules, just remember to revert back to the most important rule of the lot. Rule number 1: The Quiz Master is always right. What did I say folks?

CROWD

The quizmaster is always right!

JACKO

Oh, you're an intelligent bunch.
Ok...are we ready then?

The crowd RUMBLES back. Arnold gets comfortable.

JACKO

First question: What is the world's
oldest surviving republic?...What
is the world's oldest surviving
republic?

Teams put their heads together.

Arnold only needs a few seconds, before confidently writing
down his answer.

JACKO

Question number two: What island
chain takes its name from the
Spanish meaning 'low sea?'....What
island chain takes its name from
the Spanish meaning 'low sea?'

Again, Arnold only needs the shortest of moments to conjure
up his answer.

TOMMY, 40's, behind the bar, shakes his head in disbelief
at Arnold's distinctive talent.

LATER

Arnold stands on stage beside Jacko.

JACKO

Ladies and gents, your four time
consecutive champion, who won this
thing all by himself once again,
missing only two questions all
night, and makin' the rest of ya
look like a bunch o' muppets, Mr.
Arnold Bennett!

The crowd APPLAUD the champion. A few MEN give him a
standing ovation.

Arnold accepts his prize; a bottle of champagne.

LATER

BARMAIDS wipe tables. Jacko breaks down sound equipment.

Arnold is at the bar, studying the bottle of champagne.

ARNOLD

(to Tommy)

You need to stop handing out the shit stuff Tommy. It's bad business for you eh.

TOMMY

(Irish accent)

What are you on about?

ARNOLD

A bottle of Mumm Cordon Rouge NV. What this bile cost you? Ten quid a case? You're a nice guy Tommy don't get me wrong. But, I think it's safe to say your a tight bastard as well.

TOMMY

Fuck off! Cost me a good eighty that did. That's top of the line stuff.

ARNOLD

Wrong. If that were the case I'd be holding a bottle of Alfred Gratien or something. Look at the D-cup air bubbles in this piss...

TOMMY

What about them?

ARNOLD

See how they just kind of bust out and run for the surface? They can't wait to get the hell out of there. Good champagne is delicate, slow, subtle, in no big bastard hurry to get anywhere because they're loving the journey so much. Don't try to bullshit me my an, I know my alcohol.

TOMMY

That's the problem with you Arnie...you seem to know far too much.

Arnold LAUGHS. Jacko strides over.

JACKO
That's me Tommy. Thanks for 'avin
us again, yeah.

TOMMY
Good on ya lad. Grand performance
tonight. You were extra special.

JACKO
Cheers.

He extends his hand to Arnold.

JACKO
Well done, mate. Again.

ARNOLD
Thank you, Jack. Good range of
questions tonight. You're getting
better.

JACKO
Cheeky git. I dunno if I should
genuinely congratulate ya or feel
fuckin' sorry for ya. When was the
last time you got laid?

ARNOLD
Is that question part of the quiz?
What can I win?

JACKO
Do you know that I've hosted over
two hundred quizzes around the
country, 'n I've never met a bloke
with a brain filled with more
useless shit than you?

ARNOLD
Guess it's not so useless afterall
Jack.

JACK-O
I guess not mate, no. You should
really consider takin' these things
a bit more seriously.

ARNOLD
How do you mean?

JACKO
I've got a cousin who lives in New
York, and last year his team

JACKO
finished fourth place at some big
pub quiz competition.

ARNOLD
Fourth eh?...good for him. Striving
for mediocrity I see.

JACK-O
Don't be so quick to judge, mate.
He won a chunk 'o cash. Look it up.
Can't imagin' what the grand prize
is. See ya Tommy.

He turns for the door.

TOMMY
(to Arnold)
You know...he's mentioned that
shite to me before.

ARNOLD
Mentioned what?

TOMMY
That big tournament in New York.
His cousin tried ta get him over
there ta host it a couple years
back. He turned it down. He needed
ta audition.

ARNOLD
Audition?

TOMMY
Yea, it's big stuff. Apparently all
the buzz in September. Supposed ta
be quite the big deal for the
winning team. I've never looked
into it though.

ARNOLD
I've never heard of it...

He takes the final GUZZLE from his glass.

EXT. ARNOLD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Arnold staggers to the front door of his modest bungalow.

INT. ARNOLD'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

IRENE, 40's, studies a pile of documents at the table. She doesn't look at Arnold when he shuffles in.

Arnold checks the kettle. It's hot.

IRENE
Well?

ARNOLD
Yep.

IRENE
How many is that now?

ARNOLD
Jacko said four, but I think he missed one.

IRENE
Five in a row then?

ARNOLD
I'm not really counting.

IRENE
Of course you're not.

Arnold smiles. His wife looks at him.

IRENE
Mark rang again.

Arnold preps his tea bag.

IRENE
I said Mark rang again.

ARNOLD
I heard you the first time.

IRENE
No, you didn't. You chose to ignore me because you heard the name Mark.

Arnold stirs, takes a quick sip. He burns his lip.

ARNOLD
Ahh!...Shit!

IRENE
What've I told you about that?

ARNOLD
Can you remind me, Irene?

IRENE
You can remember the name of the
lake that splits Bolivia and Peru,
but you can't remember to slow down
when you drink your tea?

Arnold LAUGHS.

ARNOLD
That was a good night. Can't
believe I got that one. I was on
top form eh?

He heads for the hallway.

IRENE (O.S)
Life's just fun and games for you
Arn, isn't it?

ARNOLD
No, Irene. The fun and games just
give me one.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

SUPER TITLE: NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

MARK, late 20's, sleep deprived, rests his head against the
wall.

A middle-aged NURSE sticks her head out the door.

NURSE
Mark Bennett?

HOSPITAL HALLWAY

Mark follows the nurse through the jungle of scrubs.

NURSE
It's very important to know that if
she awakens Mr. Bennett, she may
not remember who you are. Please
understand that.

MARK
 (English accent)
 Is that rare?

NURSE
 In your wife's condition Mr.
 Bennett, no.

MARK
 She's not my wife.

NURSE
 Oh, I'm sorry. I just assumed.

They stop at a room. The nurse opens the door for him.

HOSPITAL ROOM

A young, bruised and wounded WOMAN lies unconscious. A heart monitor BEEPS regularly.

Mark stands at the end of the bed. He studies her.

MARK
 Laura?

No response.

MARK
 Laura?

No response.

MARK
 It's me, babe. It's Mark.

His phone VIBRATES. It reads: DAD.

He ignores it.

INT. ARNOLD'S CAR - DAY

Parked curbside, Arnold flip shuts his cell phone.

On the RADIO, a cheery MALE VOICE kicks in.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
 It's that time of the day again
 folks. Get ya mobiles out and ya
 thumbs ready. The first caller with
 the correct answer wins tickets for

DJ (V.O RADIO)
two for Paul McCartney's comeback
tour at a venue nearest you.

Arnold puts his cell away, but listens in.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
Okay, here it is. It's a geography
one. I'll only ask it once...

Arnold turns up the VOLUME.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
What country's flag is the only
flag in the world with a bible on
it?

Arnold starts the engine as he thinks.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
Yes! Jeanine. You are the first
caller. I asked what country's flag
is the only flag in the world with
a bible on it? Do you have the
right answer for us, Jeanine?

A young, perky VOICE answers.

JEANINE (V.O RADIO)
I think I do yeah.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
Go on then Jeanine...the airwaves
are all yours.

JEANINE (V.O RADIO)
Is it Isreal?

Arnold LAUGHS. There's a dramatic SILENCE on the radio.

ARNOLD
Stupid bitch.

DJ (V.O RADIO)
No, Jeanine. That's the Star of
David. But, thanks for calling.
Unlucky.

Arnold drives off, passing a small SHOE SHOP.

INT. SHOE SHOP - DAY

Only one CUSTOMER, studying a pair of high heels.

Irene reads a magazine behind the checkout counter.

IRENE

Can I help you with those Miss?

CUSTOMER

Do you have these in black?

IRENE

We might. Let me have a little look
for you.

STORAGE ROOM

Irene struggles to reach a shoe box.

From behind her, BRANDT, 30's, helps out. He then embraces
her, KISSES her neck.

IRENE

Oh, not now B. I've got a customer
outside wanting this color.

BRANDT

Shhh. She can wait. I'll only be a
sec.

IRENE

No, my husband would "only be a
sec." You could go all day.

BRANDT

Well, go and ask the customer if
she'd like to join then.

Irene LAUGHS.

IRENE

Dirty boy.

BRANDT

I'm definitely not a boy when I'm
around you.

Irene turns, drops the shoe box. They KISS.

IRENE
What time is it?

BRANDT
Back o'twelve...why?

IRENE
Shit. I need to run to the post office. Can you help the nice lady outside?

BRANDT
I'm the boss here, Irene. You answer to me remember...

IRENE
C'mon B. It's important I get this parcel off.

BRANDT
Okay, but just this once.

He picks up the shoe box.

Irene heads out.

IRENE
And promise me you won't sleep with her.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

Irene is served by the Scottish HELEN, 40's.

HELEN
How's he enjoying America?

IRENE
"Enjoying" is not the correct word. He's there for a very good reason.

HELEN
Ach, just a wee rammy of the male ego. Nothin' more.

IRENE
I wish that was only the case Helen, trust me. I don't think I'll ever forgive Arnold for what he did to his own son.

Helen TAPS a few buttons, and STAMPS Irene's package.

IRENE
My purse is a bit empty today. You
guys do credit now, right?

HELEN
Aye, management just installed it
last week. Give us a shot then.

Helen enthusiastically swipes Irene's card.

The Machine BEEPS. Card DECLINED.

HELEN
That's not right.

She tries again. Card DECLINED.

HELEN
Ehm, not sure what to do here
Irene.

IRENE
(frustrated)
Try this one.

Again, card DECLINED.

IRENE
That lying bastard! I'll have his
throat!

EXT. USED CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

Arnold is in mid-CONVERSATION with FREDDY, 50's.

FREDDY
...ahh, I coulda sworn it had
something to do with that old New
York World Newspaper sponsoring the
series back in the nineteen -
thirties, hence, The World
Series...

ARNOLD
No, that's just a myth in
America...an untraceable anecdote
derived from nowhere really, trying
to cover up the fact that the Yanks
actually are that arrogant
afterall.

FREDDY

The bastards! I knew it!

ARNOLD

However, it was The Spalding Guide of America, another publication of the same period, that named it the "World Championship Series" or somethin' like that...in the hope that other nations like Australia and Britain would soon play and become rivals. None have though, obviously.

FREDDY

And the name just stuck through time?

ARNOLD

Yep. Precisely. It was a good question from Jacko. He almost had me.

FREDDY

Oh, I'm sure he had you sweatin' Arn. How the hell do you know all this useless crap?

Arnold LAUGHS.

ARNOLD

You know Fred, you're that second person since last night to use that word. Jacko described it that way too.

FREDDY

Eh?

ARNOLD

"Useless."

FREDDY

Lets be honest mate, knowing all these petty little facts isn't gonna get you anywhere...is it?

ARNOLD

No, maybe not...except five consecutive wins, thank you very much.

FREDDY

Alright Mr. Einstein, I've got a--

ARNOLD

No! I don't call me that. I personally believe he's just a touch overrated. Call me Mr. Kant.

FREDDY

Who?

ARNOLD

You're joking. Immanuel Kant. The eighteenth-century philosopher from Russia. He was a genius!

FREDDY

Fine. Mr. Cunt it is. I've a got a trivia question for you...

ARNOLD

Go on then. Fire away.

FREDDY

There was an open spot on my team Saturday night...why'd you turn it down?

ARNOLD

You've got that smug-faced prick on your team.

FREDDY

Who?

ARNOLD

He pays your wages.

FREDDY

Oh, lay off'im Arn, he's just stressed, that's all.

ARNOLD

Don't make excuses for the twat. He's got an ego the size of the Atlantic.

FREDDY

So do you.

ARNOLD

So be it. But at least I get all my questions right.

FREDDY

Not all. Ya missed two ya derilect.

ARNOLD

How many did your team miss?

FREDDY

If you were with us we woulda cleaned up house. C'mon mate, play with us next time. I could use a bit of glory in my life right now.

ARNOLD

If I play with you lot I'd be the one doing all the work while the rest of you get blattered, with that smug-faced prick undermining me every single question.

FREDDY

But you do all the work by yourself anyway, so what's the difference?

ARNOLD

I perform better alone, that's the difference.

FREDDY

Does your wife feel the same way?

They both LAUGH.

From across the lot, the smug-faced LYALL, mid 40's, waves for Arnold.

ARNOLD

What the hell does he want now?

INT. LYALL'S OFFICE - DAY

Lyall tries to be straight forward.

LYALL

Look, Arnold. I understand that--

ARNOLD

Don't get all sentimental with me Lyall. Just tell me. Am I? Or am I not?

LYALL

It's nothing personal Arn. Trust me pal, you're a good bloke. This is happening to everyone across the country. Times are shit.

ARNOLD

Good excuse Lyall. Spoken like a true businessman. What about Freddy?

Lyall keeps his mouth shut.

ARNOLD

What about Freddy, Lyall?...Oh, this is unbelievable! You're keeping him on aren't you?

LYALL

His position isn't guaranteed either.

ARNOLD

No, but he gets to stay on longer cuz he's your mate.

LYALL

You're my mate too, Arn. This is tough for me.

ARNOLD

No, I'm not you're mate. That's why you can do this. You've never liked me, Lyall. Why Freddy? Honest!

LYALL

You want honest? Okay Arnold, it's simple...he's sold more cars than you!

ARNOLD

What?! You're joking! The guy has sold only two more cars in the last month. There's nothing between us.

LYALL

No, there isn't. Except those two cars. I'm running a business here Arn, and business is crap right now. Look out my window...do you see one single fucking customer? My options are very limited here.

ARNOLD

When I go, you bringing someone else in?

LYALL

All I know is I need to sell some cars. I need someone good. Not a...well, I won't say.

ARNOLD

No, c'mon Lyall. Keep up the honesty buddy. You were doing well there.

LYALL

I need a professional. Not a fucking loser who stands around all day talkin' bullshit trivia.

ARNOLD

Maybe you should consider keeping your mouth shut at the next quiz and let Freddy do the talking...you might not finish last place.

Arnold smiles a victorious smile.

LYALL

There's the door Arnold.

INT. ARNOLD'S CAR - DAY

Arnold drives in SILENCE. He notices a billboard.

EXT. ARNOLD'S CAR

The billboard reads: DISCOVERED YOUR TALENT YET? A smiling FACE under the words points directly at Arnold.

A phone number is also printed on the advertisement.

INT. ARNOLD'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Arnold watches "Who Wants to be a Millionaire."

ON T.V, CHRIS TARRANT, the host, asks a middle-aged CONTESTANT the quarter-Million pound question.

TARRANT

Okay Jim, are you ready for the next question?

JIM

Absolutely.

TARRANT

For two-hundred and fifty thousand pounds, with no life-lines left?

JIM

Let's go for it, Chris.

Arnold turns up the VOLUME, leans in. The question is:

TARRANT

As of this year, what country is the leading lithium metal producer in the world? Is it A: Argentina? B: Chile? C: Bolivia? Or D: Serbia?.

ARNOLD

Has to be Chile. Has to be. The Salar de Atacama desert is known for the stuff. Easy. C'mon Jim.

JIM

B. Chile. Final answer Chris.

ARNOLD

There ya go mate! Get in there.

Tarrant looks at Jim hard. He's about to SPEAK when...

IRENE (O.S)

You bastard! How could you?!

Irene KICKS the television. It CRASHES to the ground.

Arnold springs out of his arm chair.

ARNOLD

What have you done you stupid bitch?! That cost me five hundred quid!

IRENE

And our wedding cost my father three times that! I've wasted my life with you, you pathetic shit!

She SLAPS her husband. Arnold grabs her hand.

ARNOLD
Get a grip Irene! Calm down!

Irene SOBS.

ARNOLD
What's the matter? What's happened,
Irene?

IRENE
You happened.

ARNOLD
Is it Mark? I just rang him earlier
today. We'll talk soon. I'll make
things right.

IRENE
You'll never make things right
Arnold, that's the problem with
you.

ARNOLD
What the hell have I done, Irene?

She looks up at him, eyes soaking.

IRENE
You looked me in the eye last week
and told me you fixed things at the
bank...that everyting was squared
away.

ARNOLD
It is, Irene. It is. We're fine.

No response.

ARNOLD
Irene, we're fine.

IRENE
My God. Not only have you fucked up
your life, your son's, and now
mine, you're still as big a liar as
you've always been. What did I
marry?

Arnold sits back in his arm chair, speechless.

IRENE
You embarrass me in front of Helen
today, and then I come home to find
this...

She hands him an already opened envelope.

In RED, a statement reads: HOUSE FORECLOSED IN 90 DAYS.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Arnold talks to Tommy, who wipes glasses.

TOMMY

Jesus Christ Arn. Why didn't you just tell'er?

ARNOLD

I thought I could get things all squared away before she'd find out. I hadn't the slightest clue the post office had upgraded.

TOMMY

C'mon Arn eh? Irene's no dumb shite. She'da found out one way or the other, no?

ARNOLD

I was going to tell her about getting the sack first. She might have mustered up a little bit of sympathy for me.

TOMMY

Jesus! You got the sack? When?

ARNOLD

Today.

TOMMY

Arn, I'm sorry pal.

Tommy POURS Arnold another pint. He takes no money.

TOMMY

How much you in the hole?

ARNOLD

Is that important right now?

TOMMY

Maybe Jacko was talkin' more sense than ya thought then...

ARNOLD
How do you mean?

TOMMY
The other night, at the quiz. That
big tournament in New York.

ARNOLD
You were really taking him
seriously? This is real life Tommy,
not a Disney film. You know what
Jacko's like. He talks the biggest
load of nonsense sometimes.

TOMMY
Like he said Arn, don't be so quick
to judge. That's your biggest
problem you know...

ARNOLD
I don't judge you.

TOMMY
Aye, I know. I give ya free pints
ya wee gobshite.

They LAUGH.

ARNOLD
You honestly think it's a good
idea?

TOMMY
Arn, mate...never in my sixteen
years of running this pub have I
ever had a customer who could win
every quiz show in the world if he
wanted to...so long as they don't
throw a math's question your way,
that is.

ARNOLD
Give it a rest, it was only those
two questions. I was distracted by
that stunning new barmaid of yours.

TOMMY
Aye, right'cha were. Geography's
definitely your niche Arnie.

ARNOLD
I won't tell fibs. I do know this
planet inside out, don't I?

TOMMY

Or, coming to think of it...they say that writers are just storage closets jam-packed with useless information.

ARNOLD

How do you mean?

TOMMMY

You ever thought about writing a book?

Arnold CHOKES on his swig of beer.

ARNOLD

A book? About what exactly?

TOMMY

Your life maybe?

Arnold LAUGHS.

ARNOLD

Tell me Tommy...what on earth could the human race learn from me?

TOMMY

You just answered your own question Arn. You're filled with useless shite. Why not make some actual use of it?

INT. ARNOLD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Arnold stares at his computer monitor.

He TYPES: "Writing your first novel" into the search bar.

He SCROLLS through a writing website, quickly gets fed up.

CLICKS back to the search engine...

TYPES: "New York pub quiz." TAPS the ENTER key.

The first link READS: "The International Pub Quiz Championships. Sign up your team today"

Arnold CLICKS the link.

A bright YELLOW webpage. Arnold SCROLLS through the fine text. A line reads: MUST BE A FIVE MEMBER TEAM. NOT A PLAYER LESS OR A PLAYER MORE.

The bottom READS: \$100,000 GRAND PRIZE.

ARNOLD

Fuck me.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

MEN clog the bar. WOMEN CHATTER. A height-impaired GENTLEMAN preps a microphone on stage. A teenaged-GIRL takes tickets.

Lyall sits with a new TEAM. Freddy with his. So to Brandt.

Arnold is by himself again, scratch paper ready.

He doesn't look towards the GENTLEMAN on stage, he looks towards...

PETE ELSWIT, 50's, massive nose, sitting all by himself too.

HEIGHT IMPAIRED GENTLEMAN

(alot posher than Jacko)

Good evening all, and welcome to the July pub quiz. I'm Ted, your quizmaster for the evenin'. Jacko sends his utmost regards. He's not been feeling too hot this week, so he's asked me to fill in. He warned me about you lot so...

The CROWD ROAR. Arnold keeps an eye on Pete.

TED

Now, do I need to give a run down of the rules? Or are we all familiar with the way Jacko runs shop?

FREDDY

What's rule number one?

TED

Do I really need to answer that?

FREDDY

Rule number one for Jacko is that the quizmaster is a prick n' he's always wrong.

The crowd LAUGH hysterically. Pete smiles, Arnold doesn't.

TED

Well, rule number one for me is that I'm definitely always right. Got it?

FREDDY

Right you are there Teddy boy!

TED

Ok...are we ready then?

The crowd RUMBLE back.

TED

Good luck to you all. Here we go. Lets start off nice and easy. Which temperature has the same value in both centigrade and farenheit?... Which temperature has the same value in both centigrade and farenheit?

Not an easy start for Arnold. He struggles with his math.

Pete works out his figures with ease, jots down his answer.

TED

Question two: In the United States, one quarter, two dimes, three nickels, and four pennies equals what? In the United States, one quarter, two dimes, three nickels, and four pennies equals what?

Pete is off and running again. Arnold fidgets in his chair. Tommy watches him.

TED

Question three: In what country would you find the world's highest active volcano? In what country would you find the world's highest active volcano? And, for a bonus point...what is the name of this volcano?

Just what Arnold needed. A geography question.

LATER

Ted marks the last answer sheet, heads to the microphone.

TED

Well my kinship...there's a saying amongst us quizmasters that if there is a draw at the end of the evening, the quizmaster has done his job very well indeed.

FREDDY

In that case Jacko is shit then!

The crowd ROAR with LAUGHTER. Arnold stares at Pete.

TED

Would a Mr. Arnold Bennett and a Mr. Pete Elswit make your way to the stage please?

Pete hits the stage first.

FREDDY

(to Arnold)

Go on Arn! Put the wanker in his place.

Arnold acknowledges Freddy as he shuffles towards the stage.

Lyall watches him, as does Brandt.

Ted pulls out a hat.

TED

Okeey dokey. Here's the rules. In my hand I hold a hat. Inside this hat are six categories on folded paper: Film and T.V, history, sports, science and technology, math, and lastly, geography. Both of you will pick a piece of paper, and Tommy, our trustee host of the evening, will decide what category I will originate the tie-breaking question from. Confused?

Both shake their heads.

TED

Terrific. Mr. Bennett, you first.

Arnold picks.

TED

Ooohhh, science and technology.

Pete takes his turn.

TED
 Ahhhh, the ever
 popular...geography.

The crowd CHATTER. Freddy gives Arnold the thumbs up.

TED
 Tommy my good man. What will it be?

Tommy glances at Arnold, and smiles.

TOMMY
 Let's go with geography, Ted.

TED
 As you wish good sir. Mr. Bennett
 and Mr. Elswit...if you would be so
 kind and skedaddle back to your
 seats please, thank you.

Both men do as they're told. Arnold takes a deep breath.

TED
 First player to raise his hand will
 get their answer read first. If
 correct, you will be declared the
 winner. If wrong, however, your
 esteemed opponent will have the
 chance to take the honors of the
 night. If both of you are wrong, we
 start all over again...understood
 gentlemen?

Both men nod.

TED
 That's settled then. Here we go.
 Good luck to you both.

The crowd are hooked.

BRUCEY
 There are only two countries in the
 world that are double landlocked.
 There are only two countries in the
 world that are double
 landlocked...name them.

Losing teams still participate.

Arnold thinks hard. Very hard. Not too confident.

ARNOLD
 (to Ted)
 By double landlocked you mean a
 country that is--

TED
 I don't know Mr. Bennett. What do I
 mean?

He catches the quizmaster's drift.

He looks at Freddy.

FREDDY
 (whispering)
 C'mon mate. This is a pile o'piss
 for you.

Freddy PUMPS his fist. Arnold looks at Tommy.

He looks at Pete, who has his hand high in the air.

ARNOLD
 Shit.

Arnold takes a wild guess.

BRUCEY
 That's it chaps, let's see your
 answers.

A BARMAID collects the answer sheets, hands them to Ted.

TED
 Mr. Elswit...your raised your hand
 first. I asked what are the only
 two double-landlocked countries in
 the world. One is in Central
 Europe, and the other in Central
 Asia.

Arnold's eyes light up.

TED
 You are absolutely correct with
 Liechtenstein Mr. Elswit. But,
 Afghanistan is incorrect. Unlucky
 my good man.

The crowd CHATTER. The TENSION could be cut with a knife.

TED
Mr. Bennett...you now have the
chance to steal the infamous bottle
of champagne.

Ted reads his answer...

TED
Ladies and gentlemen, your
unprecedented champion of the
evening...Mr. Arnold Bennett!

The crowd ERUPT. Freddy runs to Arnold, bear hugs him.

FREDDY
Fucking hell! Unbelievable! How the
hell did ya get that one, mate?!

ARNOLD
Just a wild guess, honestly.

FREDDY
Get out, stop windin' us up. You
knew the answer.

ARNOLD
I didn't Fred, honestly. Those two
countries definitely don't have
beaches...they were the first ones
to come to my head.

FREDDY
You need help, Arn. You have a
serious problem.

They LAUGH.

Arnold struts to the stage, accepts a bottle of ALFRED
GRATIEN. He turns immediately to Tommy.

Tommy smiles back at him.

LATER

BARMAIDS wipe tables. Ted breaks down sound equipment.

Arnold approaches Pete, at the bar.

ARNOLD
Congradulations on a fine second
place finish.

He extends his hand. Pete LAUGHS.

PETE
I'll happily take runner up behind
you, Mr. Bennett.

ARNOLD
Please, don't flatter me.

PETE
I ain't. I know you've won this
thing five times. I came hear
tonight to try and beat ya.

ARNOLD
Tonight makes six, acutally.

PETE
I apologise sincerely.

ARNOLD
Don't mention it.

PETE
Can I buy you a pint?

ARNOLD
I was going to buy you one. What a
competitor you were. Ted said you
didn't miss a single question with
numbers all night. You were the
only player in here to answer that
U.S currency question correctly.

PETE
I did struggle with it though, I
won't lie.

ARNOLD
Bullshit.

They LAUGH. Arnold buys Pete a beer.

ARNOLD
So listen, Pete...you ever been to
New York?

PETE
New York? No. Why do you ask?

Arnold takes a fervent SIP of his pint, and then leans in to
make his pitch.

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF EPISODE:

