

FEAR OF MUSIC

(FROM THE COLLECTION *WHAT YOU WISH FOR IN YOUTH*)

by Barney Norris

Fear of Music was first presented by Up In Arms in association with Out of Joint at York Theatre Royal on 19 February 2013.

The play is a two-hander dealing with the complex relationship between two brothers, Luke and Andy, spanning from 1988 to 1993 and set in their house in Andover. Their father is dead and their mother's mental health is fast declining. Luke has recently returned from university. Andy is into rock music and has ambitions to join the army, like his dad.

Here, older brother Luke is recording the top forty while speculating whether or not a bird that flew into their window earlier, had died. Andy then reveals that he once killed a badger.

ANDY – 15 (UK)

I killed a badger once. I was cycling, and I'd just written this really wicked song. It was really wicked. Like, really wicked. And I was freewheeling down this hill singing the chorus, you know, to get the chorus right, and because it was really wicked, and these three badgers ran out in front of me. I hit the first two on the nose and missed the third one. Didn't come off my bike, I was like, waay, like – wobbling and braking. Second badger I hit got up and ran off. But the first one, I'd broken its neck. It was thrashing its arse on the road like this. (*He mimes a badger with a broken neck dying.*) I went back to it, and I picked up a stick, because you're meant to finish them off. But like, badgers are well hard and theirs jaws lock when they bite, so I couldn't stamp on it or anything, so I got a stick. And by the time I got back to it, it had stopped thrashing, it was just breathing really heavily. I stood over it, and watched it breathe, and then it took this really big breath and I thought, that's its last breath. And it was either like it was trying to get enough to keep living. Or like it was saying goodbye. And then its eyes went blank. I got it off the road with the stick and next time I went past someone had moved it.