

Captain Mental is sitting on the left side of a bus. By his window, a leafy suburban view goes by at 30 mph. It's raining. In front of him are a couple of unoccupied seats and a 50 year old driver. He is smiling broadly and his eyes are wide, almost certainly because he's near the hugely idolised Mental. On the cop's right, are a small group of rowdy children sharing stories of the times they saw the policeman. Mental sighs and talks to himself 'Still a long journey to the dinner party with my number one fan. I guess I'll pass the time in the best way I can - by playing solo word games. Here goes... Cherb my food derb. Cherb my biscuit derb. Cherb my confection derb. Cherb my confectionary derb.' The children stare at Mental in awe as does the driver for a few seconds. He nearly crashes then goes back to driving sensibly.

A child engages Mental 'Dude, what's that game you were playing?? You have to teach us it!!' The driver is clearly listening in on the conversation. Mental is cool 'It's very simple really. What you have to do is say 'cherb my' then say any one syllable word that you want. You then follow the word with 'derb.' Then you say 'cherb my' again, followed by a two syllable word that relates to the one syllable one. You then say 'derb' again. You then say 'cherb my' followed by a three syllable word that relates to the one and two syllable words. In the two player version, the first guy takes the first word, and the second guy takes the second, etc.' Another child shakes his fists with excitement 'Let's play now!!' Mental is serious 'I don't know... I mean I'm pretty good. Can you face the challenge?'

The child responds 'Piece of cake! You go first!' Mental concentrates hard 'Cherb my cop derb'. The child is quick 'Cherb my copper derb...' Mental is faster 'Cherb my policeman derb'. The child is nervous 'I... I can't think of a four syllable word that has to do with the police...' Mental smiles 'Then I get the point.' The bus driver comments as he roams 'That's BRILLIANT!' Mental is humble 'Oh, you just need to practice, that's all...' The bus driver continues 'That's not what I meant, I meant the game... It's totally awesome!' The children agree loudly 'Yeah!' A mysterious 40 year old man wearing sunglasses taps Mental on the shoulder from behind. The former is calm 'That game I overheard you playing... Mental... It will be the next big thing. I'm deadly serious.' Mental laughs it off 'Ha. It's something to pass the time, that's all...'

The strange man asks the cop a question 'Would you like to challenge me to a game?' Mental nods 'Cherb my bus derb.' The other guy responds 'Cherb my transport derb'. Mental clenches his fists 'Cherb my vehicle derb!' The other man smiles 'Cherb my automobile derb...' Mental looks down in shame 'Dammit!' The victor replies 'Never mind that, I can make you rich. How does a million pounds sound to you?' Everyone on the bus cheers. Mental is confused 'But how can you sell a game that can be played by voice alone?' The strange man replies 'Where there's a will there's a way, as the saying goes. Have you noticed how everyone on this... automobile has been fascinated by your idea. THAT'S what matters.'

Mental clears his throat 'I have to be honest, Sir... I didn't come up with the game. HOWEVER, the guy that did was a villainous scumbag and now a helpless fish who has absolutely no rights, whatsoever.' The strange man replies 'The Sausage Roll Killer?' Mental replies 'Yes. He plays it 24/7 to pass the time and he's getting damn good at it. But no one will ever know apart from you and me. And the hundred or so policemen that guard him.' The strange man is enthusiastic 'Ok. I can't wait any

longer, I need to know now what items will accompany the game. That's how we'll make our money. You're a creative man, what are your ideas? You must have some...' Mental shrugs his shoulders 'How about a special timer that counts down the amount of time players have to come up with words?'

The strange man is cautious 'Can't anyone buy a timer?' Mental replies 'It will have 'cherb my derb' written on it.' The strange man replies 'And 'cherb my derb'... Do you think it matters the phrase came from the most deranged man in the UK?' Mental sighs 'I don't think anyone has to know.' The strange man looks impressed 'Agreed. And any more ideas?' Mental replies 'A hat with 'cherb my derb' written on it. To get people in the spirit, I mean. And maybe a device that gives an electronic shock to the losers...' The strange man looks surprised. Mental panics 'Not fatal!' The strange man winks 'Of course. So, we have a timer, a hat and an electric shock device. Anything else?' Mental is thoughtful 'A dictionary? And chocolates for the winner? Belgian?' The strange man sits by Mental 'Hm. I don't know why I've stood for so long. It wasn't to intimidate you or anything, I don't consider myself above the law. I actually like the force! I'm very grateful as is everyone.'

Mental chuckles 'Ok.' The strange man continues 'So yeah, my company is all about innovation, and the fish's, I mean YOUR idea is the greatest concept I've ever heard about.' Mental is nervous 'What if the SRK has told his other criminal friends about the game?' The strange man responds 'I wouldn't worry about that. I'm sure the Sausage hasn't said a word, otherwise everyone would be playing the game already. I bet the people that guard the fish haven't been playing the game as they don't want to admit the animal actually has a good idea.' Mental responds 'That's a very good point.' The strange man is excited 'I want you to phone the guards and ask if they've been spilling the beans... Good luck! I'm sure you'll be ok!'

Mental picks his mobile from his pocket and dials a number. The strange man and children stare at him with adoring eyes. Mental talks into the device 'Hello, it's Mental. Still guarding the fish, I presume?... Of course. Of course you are. Listen, you know that cherb my derb game the SRK keeps going on about? Have you been playing it?... No? Awesome. Even so, how about me you and all the other guards start profiting off it? There's an agent sitting next to me right now on the bus and he's VERY excited about it... How much money will we make you say? Well... what's a million divided by one hundred or so?... There you go then, ten thousand pounds each. A very nice sum of money...' The agent smiles even more than before 'And that's only to start with!' Mental continues into his phone 'And that's only to start with!... You ARE on board? That's great news! Can you ask everyone else for me, please?'

The fish version of the SRK is heard screaming in a high pitched voice so loud, the agent hears 'Steal my game and I'll kill you!!!' Mental rolls his eyes 'You're not in any position to kill anyone fishy, you're too small, have no arms, and are vastly outnumbered... Oh I'm talking to the guard? Well tell what I said to the fish.' The guard is quietly heard repeating the words. Mental talks again 'Anyway, I guess I better leave you to your duties. Bye!' The agent looks up 'Wow. About a hundred people I need to give royalties to? You're not making my life easy, are you? You better be thankful I have complete trust in that little game of yours. Or should I say... 'yours'...' The agent makes quote marks with his fingers. Mental smiles 'You know

I'm not about money, don't you? I'm about spreading the word of an excellent activity...' The agent is warm 'Of course. Of course.'

Mental looks concerned 'Friend, you do know that the SRK is known for turning people into various random objects through Latin alone? It's a long shot, but if the hundred guards that are containing him all fell asleep at the same time, his enemies - that's us - could be in danger...' The agent looks surprised 'That IS a long shot. Mental, you're a smart man, a respected man, but that doesn't seem very likely to me. Also, I don't mean to be blunt, but now the SRK is a fish, wouldn't it be perfectly ethical to kill him and sell him in some tinned food? Why waste so many resources containing him?' Mental looks thoughtful 'It's just an old legal technicality. He was human once, so he gets treated as a human. The law just hasn't been updated for cases like the fish one.' The agent is understanding 'That does make sense. Will there ever be any new laws?' Mental replies 'I really don't know...'

A few days pass...

Dozens of 8 to 11 year old boys and girls chatter in a fenced off school playground by a large building in cloudy weather. Yep, they're all playing 'Mental's' special word game! A trio of fascinated lady school teachers standing by a climbing frame stare at them. The eldest starts a conversation 'Cherb my nice derb!' The second says 'Cherb my behaved derb!' The third says 'Cherb my pacified derb!' The first looks puzzled 'Cherb my... commendable derb...' The second teacher concentrates hard 'Cherb my... I'm sorry, you win...' The first teacher does a victory dance and laughs 'I've just cherbed your derb!' The second teacher comments 'Good game, well done. But cherb my derb? What a strange saying... Doesn't it sound a little fishy to you?' The third teacher grins 'That's the point!' The first teacher comments 'Exactly. It's not evil in any way whatsoever. The phrase and indeed everything was pioneered by a great group of people. The awesome Captain Mental and his coworkers!!'

The Chief of Police is driving his BM double U through suburban streets in light traffic. He is listening to the radio, and James is heard 'Dan, do you want to play the cherb my derb game with me? Or are you scared of losing?' Dan replies as fed up as ever 'For the last time, I'm scared of getting sacked for not talking about Lego!' James laughs 'I just cherbed his derb, Ben!' Dan screams 'No you didn't!!! You didn't!!! YOU DIDN'T!!!!' The Chief comments to himself 'Well, I didn't see that coming... Why can't James get along with people? It's just that... I don't think I've heard that happen even the one time... I mean... ever...' James is heard again 'Fine I'll play on my own. That's the beauty of the game, you can have any amount of players technically speaking. As long as you can get words that are infinitely long like I think you can. Anyway, here goes 'Cherb my Dan derb. Cherb my dickhead derb...' The Chief sighs 'Moron.'

Mental is in his bedroom and lying on his futuristic time-travel bed, throwing bundles of cash in the air 'Yeeessss! Yesssssss! Yesssss!'

THE END. Or is it?????