

Speechless

A 45' Radio Play

by

Andrew Viner

Agent:

Gemma Hirst

Gemma Hirst Associates

24 Greville Street

London

EC1N 8SS

020 3008 4457

gemma@gemmahirst.co.uk

SCENE 1 - KITCHEN.**F/X: COFFEE MAKING.**

1. EMILY: (SWEET, EARLY 20s) So, how do you like your coffee?
2. GUY: (CONFIDENT, FUNNY, LIKEABLE, EARLY 20s) Like I like my women. Hot, strong... in a slightly chipped Chingford borough council mug...?
3. EMILY: (LAUGHTER)
4. GUY: (CLOSE) Is what I wanted to say. What I actually said was...
5. EMILY: So, how do you like your coffee?
6. GUY: (NERVOUSLY STRANGULATED) Um...

SCENE 2 - MONOLOGUE.

7. GUY: (CLOSE) Here in my head I have the oratory of Olivier, the verbals of Voltaire, the rhetoric of Roosevelt. Here in my head I am the toast of the toastmasters, women hanging upon my Wildean wit.

SCENE 3 - POSH SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

8. GUY: (HAMMING IT UP) There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.

F/X: LAUGHTER, PARTICULARLY FEMALE.

9. GUY: (CLOSE) But all I can say is... Um...

SCENE 4 - MONOLOGUE.

**F/X: STIRRING CLASSICAL MUSIC FADES UP
UNDER.**

1. GUY: (CLOSE) Here in my head is Roget's Thesaurus, the Oxford English Unabridged, an overflowing lexicon instantly accessible to give me *le mot just* for any occasion. Here in my head. And then I open my mouth and...

F/X: NEEDLE YANKED FROM RECORD.

2. GUY: Um...

SCENE 5 - MONOLOGUE.

3. GUY: (CLOSE) At various stages in my life I have been diagnosed with...

SCENE 6 - VARIOUS DOCTORS' SURGERIES.

4. DOCTOR #1: Autistic spectrum disorder.

5. DOCTOR #2: Attention deficit disorder.

6. DOCTOR #3: Communication disorder.

7. DOCTOR #4: Social anxiety disorder.

8. DOCTOR #5: Receptive aphasia.

9. DOCTOR #6: Anomic aphasia.

10. DOCTOR #7: Expressive aphasia.

11. DOCTOR #8: Elective mutism.

12. DOCTOR #9: Selective mutism.

13. GUY: (CLOSE) Before settling on:

14. DOCTOR #10: He's just shy, aren't you, laddie? I said "Aren't you!"

SCENE 7 - MONOLOGUE.

1. GUY: This isn't l'esprit de l'escalier – the wit of the staircase when the pithy response comes too late. I know what I want to say, I just can't say it. I've been prescribed beta blockers, SSRIs, SNRIs, MAOIs – I'm surprised they never called out the RNLI. These did no good whatsoever, and also totally eradicated my libido, which, to be honest, was a welcome relief when my best chat-up line was:

SCENE 8 - NIGHT CLUB.**FX: LOUD MUSIC.**

2. GUY: Do you... Do you. Do you come here.

3. GIRL: Of course I come here. Idiot.

SCENE 9 - MONOLOGUE.

4. GUY: (CLOSE) School was obviously a nightmare.

SCENE 10 - ASSEMBLY HALL.

5. HEADMASTER: And now Whitmoor will read his prize-winning essay to the whole school. Whitmoor?

F/X: TENTATIVE FOOTSTEPS TO LECTERN. LONG PAUSE. EXPECTANT COUGHS.

6. HEADMASTER: Whitmoor? Get on with it.

F/X: HUGE LAUGHTER AND JEERS BUILD FROM CHILDREN.

7. HEADMASTER: Whitmoor? Oh, can someone get a mop?

8. GUY: (CLOSE) I stayed invisible after that. Or as invisible as you can be when you've wet yourself in front of the entire school. No more prize-winning essays. Don't talk to strangers? I tried not to talk to anyone. The only person I could ever really speak in front of was my mum. She never gave up. Even long after I'd left school.

SCENE 11 - OUTDOORS.

FX: WIND NOISE, BIRD SONG, A FEW NEARBY PEOPLE.

1. MUM: What a view! It's so beautiful here. Don't you think, Guy?
2. GUY: (QUIET AND DELIBERATE, BUT MORE FLUENT) It's ... It's very nice.
3. MUM: I'm inspired to start a new embroidery. All those greens.
4. GUY: That is a lot of greens.
5. MUM: So many greens. There's that song – Forty Shades of Green.
6. GUY: I'm counting 41 here.
7. MUM: Yeah, maybe 42 with that tree.
8. GUY: You'd better rollerblade down to that thread shop. Buy up all the greens.
9. MUM: [LAUGHING] And you know what they say about this place.
10. GUY: Mum...
11. MUM: Now I know you don't believe in any of that, but I do. I believe one day the world will listen to you.
12. GUY: That'll never [happen]...
13. MUM: Come on, humour me – while we're here at this special place where miracles happen.
14. GUY: (CLOSE) No, not Lourdes...
15. MUM: Kiss the Blarney Stone. Give it a shot. They say those that do get the gift of the gab.
16. GUY: (KINDLY) If it shuts you up.
17. MUM: That's the spirit.
18. GUY: (KISS)

SCENE 12 - MONOLOGUE.

1. GUY: (CLOSE) It did about as much good as, well, kissing a lump of rock. I don't know how I'd have survived in the past – short of joining a Trappist monastery – and even they might have been a bit chatty for me. Luckily, modern technology has eased my daily routine.

SCENE 13 - LONDON UNDERGROUND TICKET HALL.**F/X: TICKET BARRIERS.**

2. GUY: (CLOSE) Oyster card through the ticket barrier.

F/X: TICKET BARRIER.

3. GUY: (CLOSE) And then on to the tube.

SCENE 14 - TUBE TRAIN.

4. RECORDED VOICE: Mind the gap!

F/X: DOORS CLOSE, PULLING AWAY.

5. GUY: (CLOSE) No danger of anyone talking to anyone there. But just in case, I've got the modern world's greatest "Do not disturb" sign: the pair of earphones.

F/X: EARPHONES BEING INSERTED (ONE SIDE FIRST). BACKGROUND BECOMES MUTED AND MUFFLED.

6. GUY: (CLOSE) I don't even own an iPod.

SCENE 15 - FOYER.

1. GUY: (CLOSE) At work it's another swipe card in...

F/X: BEEP.

F/X: BARRIER OPENS.

2. GUY: (CLOSE) Up in the lift.

F/X : TING!

3. RECORDED VOICE: Floor seven.

F/X: LIFT DOORS OPEN.

4. GUY: (CLOSE) Then into my cubicle.

SCENE 16 – OFFICE.

MURMURED CONVERSATION, PHONES RINGING.

5. GUY: (CLOSE) Arrive early, leave late, make an Excel spreadsheet of everyone else's preferred break times so I know when the kitchen's empty and the risk of human interaction is practically zero. It means I end up having my elevenses at 9:37, but it's a small price to pay. How had I got the job?

SCENE 17 – MUM'S LIVING ROOM.**F/X: TICKING CLOCK.****F/X: ENVELOPE TEARING OPEN.**

1. MUM: I've got you a job!
2. GUY: W-what? How?
3. MUM: You remember that CV you wrote?
4. GUY: I was testing the new printer.
5. MUM: I know. It looked great. Rotis serif - lovely font. So I sent it to Chingford Borough Council – they were advertising for an office junior in complaints administration. And they loved it!
6. GUY: But. But. I can't do an interview!
7. MUM: But listen.

F/X: UNFOLDING LETTER.

8. MUM: "We would like to offer you... blah blah blah... commencing 9am Monday morning." I guess their administration department really does need help. But this is your chance to shine.
9. GUY: As an officer junior in complaints administration?
10. MUM: Give it a shot. From little acorns...

SCENE 18 – OFFICE.**MURMURED CONVERSATION, PHONES RINGING.**

1. STEVENSON: (HARRIED, HURRIED) OK Guy, so the job is pretty simple. Complaints come in via email here.

F/X: MOUSE CLICK.

2. GUY: Uh-huh.
3. STEVENSON: Or by post or phone.
4. GUY: Uh-huh.
5. STEVENSON: You're quiet – I like that. Now, we've got a number of serial complainers – they're never satisfied. I'm sure you'll be overwhelmed with correspondence from Mr Roth of Seacroft Gardens before too long. Or the Grips of Roth as we call them.

F/X: MOBILE RING.

6. STEVENSON: Sorry, got to get this. Any questions? No? Great.

F/X: MOBILE BEEP ANSWER.

7. STEVENSON: *Stevenson here. (PAUSE) Yes, right away... (WALKING AWAY)*
8. GUY: (CLOSE) I wouldn't say I was great, but a year later I was still there, dealing with complaints. Lots of complaints. People really wanted to talk to me.

1. COMPLAINER #1: (NERVOUS WOMAN, WALKING THROUGH UNDERPASS) (ON TELEPHONE) I'm calling about the Abingdon Road underpass – at least 50% of the lights are now out of action leaving murky corners where anyone could lurk and Aagh! It's OK, it's just my shadow. Aagh! No, me again.
2. GUY: Um...
3. COMPLAINER #2: (POMPOUS MAN) (ON TELEPHONE) The potholes on Carlton Terrace are causing damage to my BMW X3's suspension every time I drive over them – it's not safe to swerve round the potholes, not even with the BMW X3's dynamic traction control – it's a false economy not to repair them, given the replacement cost of a BMW X3...
4. GUY: Um...
5. COMPLAINER #3: (POSH WOMAN) (ON TELEPHONE) Every time I walk down Ellesmere Road I pass a drain that regales me with a distinct aroma of, well, I do not wish to say of what the aroma is, suffice it to say that it is an aroma of which one does not wish to be regaled whilst one is walking down Ellesmere Road.
6. GUY: Um...
7. COMPLAINER #4: (BORING MAN) (ON TELEPHONE) This so-called traffic calming has gone too far. I drive out of my house: mini roundabout. 20 yards later? Mini roundabout. 20 yards later? Mini roundabout. 20 yards later? Mini roundabout.
8. GUY: Um...
9. COMPLAINER #5 (PRIM FEMALE): (ON TELEPHONE) I'm calling to complain about my neighbour's planning permission – the plans stated frosted glass, but he can see right up my back passage. It makes me feel very exposed – I like to store all manner of items there.
10. GUY: Um...

1. GUY: (CLOSE) So on my second day I programmed the phone system so that anyone ringing me got sent through a tortuous menu system.
2. RECORDED VOICE: Thank you for calling Chingford Borough Council. Your call is important to us. Press 1 if you are calling about an existing problem. Press 2 if you are calling about a new problem.

F/X: KEYPAD TONE (1).

3. RECORDED VOICE: Press 1 if the problem has existed for less than 30 days. Press 2 if the problem has existed for 30 to 60 days. Press 3 if the problem has existed for 60 to 90 days...

F/X: KEYPAD TONES...

4. ROTH: (RECORDED MESSAGE) At last. This is Mr Roth from Seacroft Gardens. I am telephoning you once again vis-à-vis the graffiti on the wall adjacent to the library. It has been there for over seven days now, in direct contravention of your so-called “zero-tolerance” policy. Not only that, but the language is quite blue in its nature, and badly spelled to boot. Perhaps if the library were open for longer these ruffians might at least learn that this particular word is spelt B-O-double-L-O-C-K-S, not X (RUNNING UNDER NEXT LINE) [this isn’t the United States of America, and while I’ve got you on the telephone, I know you got my last message about the dog faeces, well there’s been another quite sizeable incident right outside the post office, I believe the offending creature is a Saint Bernard in breed and judging by the consistency of what I had to scrape from the sole of my shoe appears to be fed on a regrettably high-fibre diet...]
5. GUY: (CLOSE) If they made it through the menu and left more than three messages then it’d forward on to one of my colleague’s phones. I did the same for emails: a keyword autoresponder for the first three from the same address so I only had to get involved if they wrote back a fourth time. Complaints fell by 87%. Everyone was happy.
6. ROTH: ... and as for the so-called “regular” green bin collec[tion]

F/X: LONG BEEP ENDING OF PHONE CALL.

1. GUY: (CLOSE) Nearly everyone. Outside of work, just about anything could be ordered with the click of a mouse.

F/X: MOUSE CLICK.

2. GUY: (CLOSE) And for those day-to-day essentials...

SCENE 19 – SUPERMARKET.

F/X: BEEP OF ITEMS BEING SCANNED.

3. GUY: (CLOSE) You can use one of these beauties – the pinnacle of technological achievement.

4. SYNTHETIC VOICE: Please place item in the bagging area.

5. GUY: (CLOSE) I once made it nineteen blissful days without having to utter so much as a syllable to anyone. Apart from my mum. And yes, this was self-perpetuating. A vicious circle of no friends. I could never get another job, or even be promoted. I could never get a girlfriend. And that was OK. I could survive. At least I thought I could. But then, at 9:37 one Monday morning, with utter disregard for 'coffee-breaks.xls', I found you in the kitchen at work.

SCENE 20 – BREAK ROOM.**F/X: DOOR OPENING AND CLOSING.****F/X: KETTLE BOILING. COFFEE MAKING.**

1. EMILY: (CRYING) Oh hi. No, don't go. I'm Emily. Guy, isn't it? Sorry, I'm not usually a complete blubbering mess. It just started when I saw this dead badger on the way to work – they're such beautiful creatures... *[shy yet majestic and so misunderstood]*

2. GUY: (CLOSE) She is the beautiful creature.

3. EMILY: And then this lorry driver nearly knocks me off my bike, then goes, "Sorry love, didn't see you". Look at me – I know the all-in-one waterproof look is deeply unflattering, but I simply cannot be any more fluorescent. You'd notice me, right?

4. GUY: (CLOSE) Oh God, I'd notice you.

5. EMILY: And then I found out they want to start fracking for shale gas in the Green Elms nature reserve right next to my flat, can you believe that...? *[It'll be terrible – the noise, the pollution, the earth tremors...]*

6. GUY: (CLOSE) I would give you the whole world if I could.

7. EMILY: And then I got a text from my boyfriend telling me he no longer wants to be my boyfriend – can you imagine dumping someone by text message? *[Unbelievable...]*

8. GUY: (CLOSE) Why would he dump you at all? What a dickhead.

9. EMILY: And then, well that was about it actually, then you came in and, wow, it feels really good to have got all that off my chest. Thank you. (AS THOUGH SEEING HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME – SHE LIKES HIM) You know – you're a really good listener.

10. GUY: (CLOSE) Woah. Beta blockers. Unblocking...

11. EMILY: (AS OPENING SCENE) So, how do you like your coffee?

12. GUY: (AS OPENING SCENE) Um...

1. EMILY: I know! The pressure! I'm afraid we don't quite have the choice of Starbucks or Costa, so instead of venti, grande, skinny, double-decaf, the choice is pretty much... milk and/or sugar, and...

F/X: UNSCREWS MILK BOTTLE LID.

2. EMILY: (SNIFF) to be honest, I'm not too sure about the milk.
(CONCERNED) Guy? Guy?

F/X: DOOR OPENING.

3. STEVENSON: Ah, there you are Guy. Another missive from Mr Roth...

4. GUY: Uh-huh! **F/X: GUY LEAVES.**

5. STEVENSON: He's keen. Ah, lovely. Coffee. Extra milk please.

SCENE 21 – MONOLOGUE.

6. GUY: (CLOSE) And so I scurried off to the safety of my cubicle to listen to Mr Roth's latest complaint.

7. ROTH: (RECORDED MESSAGE) Whilst I'm in no way expecting the verges to be on a par quality-wise with Centre Court at Wimbledon, the roadside mowing schedule does appear to have become somewhat ad hoc, leading to an infestation of dandelions, [I may as well be talking to myself for all the good this does – there's no one else here to listen...]

8. GUY: (CLOSE) Then my life carried on without you. I deleted my spreadsheet and started bringing my coffee in in a Thermos to avoid the kitchen entirely. But a few weeks later I was summoned into Mr Stevenson's office.

SCENE 22 – MEETING ROOM.**F/X: DOOR KNOCK.**

1. STEVENSON: Ah yes, come in. Sit down.

2. GUY: Uh-huh.

F/X: SITTING DOWN.

3. STEVENSON: (SERIOUSLY) Now, it's about this year's complaint numbers. They've hit a record.

4. GUY: Oh. Oh, I...

5. STEVENSON: A record low! Even our friend Mr Roth has scaled it back a bit. Well done.

6. GUY: Ah, um. Mmm. Yes.

7. STEVENSON: Keep up the good work and you could be where I am now. Slashing budgets that mean we can hardly actually address anyone's complaints... But no, seriously, well done.

8. GUY: Thank. Um, thank, thank-

9. STEVENSON: You should tell us what your secret is at our next departmental meeting! I just hope no one tries to poach you! It starts in five minutes – no time like the present. Any questions?

10. GUY: (STRANGULATED) Um...

11. STEVENSON: Great. Come on then.

F/X: THEY GET UP AND LEAVE.

12. GUY: (CLOSE) No! The whole department! And Emily'll be there!

SCENE 23 – CONFERENCE ROOM.

1. STEVENSON: ... which as a result means that in real terms the budget will be cut by 7%. OK, finally, we've got Guy here who is going to let us into his secret of cutting complaints. Don't be shy – come on up.

F/X: WALKING SLOWLY UP TO LECTERN.

F/X: HEARTBEAT, HEAVY BREATHING.

2. GUY: (CLOSE) Glossophobia. The fear of public speaking. When ranked amongst people's fears it is number one – higher even than the fear of death. So if they had to go to a funeral, most people would rather be in the coffin than have to deliver the eulogy.

3. STEVENSON: Just introduce yourself and away you go.

4. GUY: M-My, my. My name is... Hmm. Um. I, er. Um.

5. STEVENSON: OK, let's try this again next week. It happens to everyone.

SCENE 24 – MUM'S LIVING ROOM.**F/X: TICKING CLOCK.**

1. MUM: I'm sure it wasn't that bad.
2. GUY: It was worse.
3. MUM: You just forgot to breathe. You need to listen to your body. At amateur dramatics I learn all kinds of tricks for coping with stage fright. Let's try something. First you've got to relax. Here...

GRAMS: RELAXING NEW AGE MUSIC.

4. MUM: OK. From the diaphragm. Breathe in...
5. GUY: [INHALES].
6. MUM: And breathe out...
7. GUY: [EXHALES].
8. MUM: Breathe in...
9. GUY: [INHALES].
10. MUM: And breathe out...
11. GUY: [EXHALES].
12. MUM: There. That'll really help. Try it next week.

SCENE 25 – CONFERENCE ROOM.

1. STEVENSON: ... which as a result means that in real terms the budget will be cut by 8%. OK, Guy, let's try again.

F/X: GUY GETS UP AND WALKS. PANIC ATTACK STARTS – BREATHING, HEARTBEAT.

2. GUY: (CLOSE) Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in, breathe in breathe in breathe-in-breathe-in-breathe-in-breathe-in-breathe-in-...

F/X: PASSES OUT. THUMP.

3. STEVENSON: (ECHO-Y F/X) Can someone get him a paper bag or something?

SCENE 26 – MUM’S LIVING ROOM.

GRAMS: RELAXING NEW AGE MUSIC.

4. MUM: (SINGING) With this technique, you simply sing, instead of speaking. It uses a different part of the brain.

SCENE 27 – MEETING ROOM.

5. GUY: (SINGING, STILL HALTINGLY) My. Name. Is. Guy.
6. AUDIENCE: [SMIRKS AND GIGGLES]

F/X: PANIC ATTACK. PASSES OUT. THUMP.

7. STEVENSON: (ECHO-Y F/X) We're a borough council not the X-Factor!

F/X: PASSES OUT.

SCENE 28 – MUM'S LIVING ROOM.**GRAMS: RELAXING NEW AGE MUSIC.**

1. MUM: Try imagining your audience in their underwear.

SCENE 29 – MEETING ROOM.

2. GUY: (PANICKY BUT A BIT BETTER) My name. Is Guy. Whitmoor.

3. GUY: (CLOSE) It's working! Just keep imagining them in their underwear.

F/X: COUGHS AND SHUFFLES FROM AUDIENCE.

4. STEVENSON: [COUGHING] Ahem.

5. EMILY: (WHISPERING) Guy? Why are you staring at me? Are you OK?

F/X: PASSES OUT.

6. STEVENSON: (ECHO-Y F/X) Yes, he's passed out again. Let's give him one more chance.

SCENE 30 – MUM'S LIVING ROOM.**GRAMS: RELAXING NEW AGE MUSIC.**

7. MUM: Pretty, is she? I'm afraid that is a hazard with that technique. There is maybe one more way. Now, I know you don't believe in my magic, but give it a shot. I'm going to take this candle – red to represent power. **F/X: MATCH STRUCK.**

8. MUM: Then I put these beads around you in a circle, and knot this piece of string here.

F/X: BEADS PUT DOWN.

9. MUM: Now close your eyes while I sit behind you and place my hands on your head like so, and then... (LONG PAUSE)

SCENE 31 – CHURCH.**GRAMS: PRE-FUNERAL ORGAN MUSIC.****F/X: MOURNERS MUMBLING.**

1. VICAR: I'm so sorry for your loss, Guy.
2. GUY: Uh-huh.
3. VICAR: Was it a long wait before you realised she was... that she had... that um...

F/X: MUSIC STOPS.

4. VICAR: Sorry, there's my cue.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS UP TO PULPIT.**F/X: MUSIC STOPS, MOURNERS FALL SILENT.**

5. VICAR: Welcome to this service in remembrance of the life of Nicola Whitmoor. Nicola was a sister, a mother...
6. GUY: (CLOSE) Nicki. She hated being called Nicola. Nicki.
7. VICAR: ... She was also an active member of her local tapestry society...
8. GUY: (CLOSE) Not tapestry, embroidery – the difference was really important to her.
9. VICAR: Born in Herefordshire...
10. GUY: (CLOSE, BUT GRADUALLY GETTING LESS CLOSE) Hertfordshire. You don't know her at all. She was my mother. She was amazing – she lifted a car that had crushed my pram, she taught herself Ancient Greek because she wanted to read clay tablets, she'd give anything a shot. She took up rollerblading in her 60s – she's the reason the park put up those "No skating" signs.

F/X: MUFFLED LAUGHS.

1 GUY: She [GASP OF REALISATION] I said that out loud. I said all of that out loud.

F/X: SOME EXPECTANT COUGHS FROM OTHERS.

2. VICAR: Would you like to continue up here, Guy? What you're saying is very heartfelt and I'm sure we'd all like you to share it.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS SLOWLY UP TO PULPIT.

3. GUY: (SLOWLY AT FIRST) My name is Guy. Nicki, not Nicola - Nicki was my mum. (SLOWLY GATHERING CONFIDENCE) She raised me on her own. I guess I was a quiet child, but she made up for that.

F/X: APPRECIATIVE CHUCKLES.

4. GUY: She'd give anything a shot. Those ducks in the park never saw her coming.

F/X: APPRECIATIVE CHUCKLES.

5. GUY: She believed in magic – sorry, I...

6. VICAR: It's fine.

7. GUY: But I guess what she really had was hope. Hope that there were always more things in life to say “give it a shot” to. Hope that people would get out of the way when she was rollerblading. Hope that one day I would make the world listen, and I'm so sorry that she's not here to see it. To hear it.

8. VICAR: Thank you, Guy, for those lovely words. And now we turn to our hymn books – number 216 – The Lord Is My Shepherd.

9. ALL: SINGING. **GRAMS: CHURCH ORGAN.**

SCENE 32 – MONOLOGUE.

1. GUY: (CLOSE) It was like the barrier between inside my head and out had been lifted. Maybe her spell worked, maybe it was because I'd kissed that lump of rock that time, maybe it was because she'd never be there to speak for me again. Maybe I just forgot that I couldn't do it, like a mother lifting a car off a pram forgets that it's too heavy to lift. I couldn't bear being at home in the silence, so I went back to work the next day, even if it meant going to the meeting again.

SCENE 33 – CONFERENCE ROOM.

2. STEVENSON: ... which as a result means that in real terms the budget will be cut by 9%. OK, Guy, let's give it one last chance, shall we?

F/X: GUY WALKS UP TO STAGE.

3. GUY: (CLEARS THROAT) My name... My name... My name...

F/X: IMPATIENT RUSTLES AND COUGHS.

4. STEVENSON: Guy, Guy, I'm speechless. Sorry, unfortunate word as you're actually speech-less.

5. GUY: I'm not speechless, speech-less – I'm bloody speechful! Like yesterday!

6. STEVENSON: Yesterday?

7. GUY: My mum's funeral.

8. STEVENSON: Guy, I'm so sorry. You didn't say anything.

1. GUY: I never say anything! Haven't you noticed? But hey, that's how I cut complaints. (GAINING CONFIDENCE) You want to make the department more efficient? Be speechless! I've been reprogramming the phones so I don't have to say a word. The less I've said, the less people have complained. Aren't I clever? Even the gripes of Roth are withering on the vine. Though fair play – he hasn't given up yet. So why don't you just replace the whole department with one massive email autoresponder? Save yourself a shedload of money. You wouldn't even need to buy that disgusting coffee any more. So that'd save another 17p.

F/X: AUDIENCE GIGGLES.

2. GUY: Because I've shown if people stop communicating for long enough, they forget that they can. So if that's what you want, be speechless.

F/X: EMBARRASSED SILENCE FROM AUDIENCE –
ONE COUGH AND CHAIR SCRAPE. THEN APPLAUSE
SLOWLY STARTS.

SCENE 34 – KITCHEN.

1. STEVENSON: Well, Guy. I think we can forget about anyone poaching you after that little performance.
2. GUY: I don't care about...
3. STEVENSON: You're staying right here with me. That line about people forgetting they can communicate. (EXCITED) Imagine! Well we don't have to – you've done it. We can increase our reliance on automation to the point where the public will forget they could ever communicate with us at all. Forget salami slicing, we can make big cuts. Not because we want to – I don't want to, but we have to. Genius!
4. GUY: I'm not sure I...
5. STEVENSON: You're too modest. Now, you've also got a way with words. I'll need a good communicator like you on the team to implement this. How does a promotion sound? With a modest pay rise?
6. GUY: Um, I guess...

F/X: STEVENSON'S MOBILE RINGS.

7. STEVENSON: Better get this. Catch you later, Guy.

F/X: STEVENSON WALKS AWAY.**F/X: EMILY ENTERS.**

8. EMILY: Guy, I'm so sorry about your mum.
9. GUY: Thank you.
10. EMILY: I can't believe you came in today. Or that you gave that brilliant speech. That line about people forgetting they can communicate. (HORRIFIED) Imagine. How awful. But you were amazing – you made us laugh. You made us cry. Well, me anyway.
11. GUY: Really?

1. EMILY: Yes. I'm useless at public speaking. Like tonight's the open evening consultation on that cycle lane. I really want to say something, but... (SCARED/FRUSTRATED NOISE) You wouldn't be able to help me, would you?
2. GUY: Oh, I don't know, public speaking's not really my...
3. EMILY: It would mean the whole world to me.
4. GUY: (TENTATIVELY) I'll give it a shot.
5. EMILY: Great. So, how do you like your coffee?
6. GUY: (CONFIDENT, AS OPENING SCENE) Like I like my women. Hot, strong... in a slightly chipped Chingford borough council mug...?
7. EMILY: (LAUGHTER) Coming right up.

F/X: COFFEE MAKING.

SCENE 35 – MONOLOGUE.

1. GUY: (CLOSE) I really wanted to help you. I'd apparently already given two good speeches, but I had no idea how a speech really worked. So I swotted up – it was fascinating. The first man who spelled out the ground rules was Cicero. They say he had the sharpest tongue in Rome. He used it to attain high office, win court cases, secure changes to the policy of the Roman republic. According to Cicero, the three aims of the orator are [docere, delectare, et movere]:

GRAMS: ROMAN FANFARE.

2. CICERO: *Docere, delectare, et movere.*

3. GUY: To prove your thesis to the audience, to delight the audience, and to emotionally move the audience. I guess I did all three at that meeting. I looked up more famous speeches – Martin Luther King for anaphora – the repetition of key phrases at the beginnings of sentences. I have a dream... about this. I have a dream... about that. And De Gaulle for the rule of three. After the fall of France, he didn't just call on men from France's armed forces, he summoned in rhyming sequence men of the army, navy and air force – de terre, de mer et de l'air.

F/X: CRACKLY RADIO.

4. DE GAULLE: [L'APPEL DU 22 JUIN 1940] [J'invite tous les militaires français des armées] de terre, de mer et de l'air, [j'invite les ingénieurs et les ouvriers français spécialistes de l'armement...]

GRAMS: FRENCH NATIONAL ANTHEM.

5. GUY: So that evening, I was ready for my D-Day using the power of the spoken word. And I was going to use it for you.

SCENE 36 – PUBLIC DEBATING ROOM.**F/X: MICROPHONE BUMP AND FEEDBACK.**

1. EMILY: And it's, um, three cyclist deaths in the last seven years. No, seven in the last three years. Um. What next? La-la-la-la. Oh yes.

F/X: AUDIENCE BORED MURMURS AND COUGHS.**F/X: DROPPED PAPERS.**

2. EMILY: Oh, God, my notes. Sorry. (BENDING DOWN) Hold on. Hold on...

F/X: GUY WALKS UP.

3. GUY: (OFF MIC) Perhaps I can help?

4. EMILY: (OFF MIC) Yes please.

5. GUY: (ON MIC) So, quite simply, a new cycle lane between the Green Elms nature reserve and the shopping precinct would protect, connect, and respect all members of the travelling public.

6. OTHER MEMBERS:

Agreed! / Hear hear! / Well said!

7. GUY: (CLOSE) Vive la France! The three things don't even need to be different.

8. GUY: Ask me my three main priorities for this cycle path as part of the borough's transport policy and I tell you: integration, integration and integration.

9. OTHER MEMBERS:

(A LITTLE MORE HEARTY THAN LAST TIME) Agreed! / Hear hear! / Well said!

10. GUY: (CLOSE) Nice one, Tony. Like Mum said, the world was listening. By the end of my speech, they were in the palm of my hand.

1. GUY: (UNDER PREVIOUS) *[And so, even though we face the transport difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. I have a dream that one day this borough will rise up and live out the true meaning of its speed limits. I have a dream that one day that even the box junction at the intersection of High Street and Church Street, an intersection suffocating with the pressure of multi-modal gridlock, will be transformed into an oasis of calm and efficient traffic flow.]* I have a dream that one day the pedestrian, the cyclist and the car driver will be able to travel together in safety and freedom. They will not be judged by the mode of their transport, but by their destination. This inner relief ring road cycle path is that dream!

F/X: APPLAUSE.

SCENE 37 – PUBLIC DEBATING ROOM.**F/X: PEOPLE MILLING.**

1. EMILY: Guy, you were brilliant! Thank you so much. (KISS)
2. GUY: (SURPRISED AT KISS) Oh, wow. Thank you.
3. EMILY: No more dicing with death every morning.
4. GUY: Well, you will still have to drink the milk when you get to work.
5. EMILY: [LAUGHS] Maybe I could ask for your assistance again?
6. GUY: Yes. Of course. Anything to help a ... friend.
7. EMILY: There's this plan for a local badger cull and it's just barbaric. Something needs to be said. Nature's calling us!
8. GUY: Let me give it a shot.
9. EMILY: Thank you! (KISS)
10. GUY: (CLOSE) I couldn't believe how well the first speech had gone. But I needed some extra rhetorical tricks. I studied more the ideas of what makes a speech great. Pankhurst and Khrushchev may have spoken for hours at a time, but I was more taken by Churchill's dictum that a good speech should be like a woman's skirt; long enough to cover the subject and short enough to create interest. And I even picked up a tip from Enoch Powell.
11. ENOCH POWELL:
As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood.'
12. GUY: (CLOSE) No, not proclaiming that the rivers of Chingford would run red with blood, but by having a full bladder before delivering a big speech to add extra passion and urgency.

SCENE 38 – OUTSIDE PROTEST.

1. GUY: (OUTDOOR P.A. SYSTEM) (URGENT) This situation is getting desperate now! We cannot hold on any longer. We must heed this call of nature! So what do we want?
2. CROWD: Save the badgers!
3. GUY: When do we save them?
4. CROWD: Now!
5. GUY: What do we want?
6. CROWD: Save the badgers!
7. GUY: When do we save them?
8. CROWD: Now!
9. CROWD: (CARRYING ON UNDER) What do we want? Save the badgers! When do we save them? Now!
10. GUY: (COMING OFF STAGE) Make way, make way. Coming through.
11. EMILY: Guy, this is amazing!
12. GUY: (WANTING TO GO) Yes, great isn't it?
13. EMILY: The urgency in your voice! It's like it all just had to come flooding out of you. I could hug you so tight! (HUGS) (KISS)
14. GUY: Aaaah! (PUSHING HER AWAY) Get off me!
15. EMILY: Guy?
16. GUY: (RUNNING OFF) Nature calls.
17. GUY: (CLOSE) I loved helping you, but I wanted more. I wanted to feel that audience in the palm of my hand again. To make the world listen. I spoke anywhere I could. Stevenson had me speaking at staff motivation seminars where JFK helped me out.

1. KENNEDY: Ask not what your country can do for you, [but what you can do for your country.]

SCENE 39 – MEETING ROOM.

2. GUY: [Ask not what the complaints administration department can do for you], but what you can do for the complaints administration department.

F/X: APPRECIATIVE MURMURS.

3. GUY: (CLOSE) At a planning meeting to replace the ugly old shopping precinct, with a bit of help from Ronald Reagan.
4. REAGAN: Mr Gorbachev – tear down this wall.

SCENE 40 – DEBATING CHAMBER.

5. GUY: Mr Stevenson - tear down this mall!

F/X: APPRECIATIVE MURMURS.

6. GUY: (CLOSE) At the ribbon-cutting ceremony opening a new high rise block with some [more] help from Mr Churchill.
7. CHURCHILL: This was their finest hour.

SCENE 41 - OUTSIDE TOWER BLOCK.

1. GUY: This is their finest tower.

F/X: RIBBON CUT SNIP.

F/X: POLITE APPLAUSE.

2. STEVENSON: Ah, Guy. Great speech again. But I'm still getting grief from upstairs – we've hit a plateau with the serial complainers – Mr Roth's back on the case. We're going to have to do more. Or rather less.

3. GUY: I'll get on to it.

4. GUY: (CLOSE) Life was good. I wish mum could have seen me. No. I wish she could have heard me. She'd have been so proud. And I was seeing you more and more – I never thought I'd ever have a relationship and there I was with you. I even joined the Chingford debating society and walked off with first prize at my first attempt – Green Is the New Everything. I used it all: the rule of three, anaphora, full bladder; [the hem was the perfect length,] and I finished with a rousing homage to the man himself.

SCENE 42 – DEBATING HALL.

5. GUY: [We cannot wait any longer.] The threat is real, the threat is grave, the threat is now. We shall fight oil spills on the beaches, we shall fight aircraft noise at the landing grounds, we shall fight GM foods in the fields and congestion in the streets, we shall fight rising sea levels in the hills; we shall never surrender our planet.

F/X: APPLAUSE.

SCENE 43 – STREET.**F/X: CARS.****F/X: GUY AND EMILY WALKING.**

1. EMILY: You were so inspiring – that was your best yet.
2. GUY: Thank you.
3. EMILY: Do you fancy a coffee? My flat's not far from here.
4. GUY: Great. Or there's a coffee shop still open right here.
5. EMILY: I hear their milk's not so fresh.
6. GUY: I'm sure with the volume they use it never has a chance to go off.
7. EMILY: I'm not such a fan of their background music.
8. GUY: It's usually quieter upstairs where people tend to work.
9. EMILY: Yeah, for someone who's just made a speech that could persuade Jeremy Clarkson to start cycling everywhere, you could maybe use a little help in the listening department.
10. GUY: Huh?
11. EMILY: And the reading between the lines and figuring it out department.
12. GUY: Ohhhh! Coffee!
13. EMILY: Exactly. Coffee.

SCENE 44 – MONOLOGUE.

14. GUY: (CLOSE) The 'coffee' was amazing. Hot, strong, and way more beautifully presented than a chipped Chingford borough council mug. We even had some more the next morning. Two cups if I remember rightly. I'd never known life could be like this. And I was utterly submerged in the world of oratory.

SCENE 45 – GUY'S FLAT.**GRAMS: (ON TV) HITLER SPEECH AT RALLY. CROWDS****CHEERING, CHANTS OF “SIEG HEIL!”**

1. GUY: (LOOKING UP IN DICTIONARY) Gehorsam, gehorsam, gehorsam. Ah! Obedient.

F/X: DOOR BUZZER.**F/X: GUY OPENS DOOR.**

2. EMILY: Hi.

3. GUY: Hi. (KISS)

4. EMILY: Afraid I'm not going to make the fracking debate tonight. My sister's asked me to help her... What are you watching?

5. GUY: Just... an old war movie.

6. EMILY: Are you taking notes on Hitler's speeches?

7. GUY: No! Yes. Come on – he was the best!

8. EMILY: What?

9. GUY: At oratory. I'm not really condoning the other stuff. But ein volk, ein Reich, ein Führer! The old rule of three!

10. EMILY: Yeah, can I just...

F/X: HITLER IS MUTED.

11. EMILY: This is a bit weird. “The other stuff” – that's all part and parcel of Hitler.

12. GUY: It's just – the rhythm. He had rhythm.

1. EMILY: Hitler had rhythm?
2. GUY: It's not what he says, it's the way that he says it.
3. EMILY: But what if what he's saying is actually about eliminating an entire race of people?
4. GUY: Like I said – not condoning that.
5. EMILY: But the two things come together. You are what you say. I'm going to leave you and Hitler to your rhythm.

F/X: DOOR SLAM.

6. GUY: Do you still want me to do the fracking thing?

F/X: DOOR OPENS.

7. EMILY: Yes! I still want you to do the fracking fracking thing!

F/X: DOOR SLAM.

8. HITLER: (ON TV) [ROUSING FINALE] (CHEERS)
9. GUY: (CLOSE) So off I went to preach to the converted, with a little help from Margaret Thatcher, who was herself channelling St Francis of Assisi.

SCENE 46 – MEETING ROOM.

1. GUY: Where fracking brings poison to our water, may the Anti-Fracking Action Group bring cleansing. Where fracking brings noise, may we bring peace. Where fracking brings earthquakes, may we bring stability. And where fracking brings despair, may we bring hope.
2. AUDIENCE: Hear hear! Etc.
3. GUY: Fracking in the Green Elms nature reserve would quite simply be the worst form of energy policy.

F/X: APPLAUSE.

4. GUY: (CLOSE) But unlike the lady, I was for turning.
5. GUY: The worst form of energy policy... except for all the others that have been tried.

F/X: AUDIENCE SURPRISE.

6. AUDIENCE: [SURPRISE]
7. GUY: Because if we don't give the go-ahead to fracking?

F/X: FOOTSTEPS.**F/X: MAIN ELECTRIC SWITCH(ES). LIGHTS GO OUT.**
AUDIENCE CONFUSION AND CONCERN.

8. GUY: (MICROPHONE OFF, VOICE RAISED TO BE HEARD) It's OK – I've just turned the lights out. But this is what a world without cheap, secure energy looks like. From John O'Groats to Lands End a blackout curtain will descend across the nation. So what are the options? Nuclear power? Who needs electricity if we all glow in the dark? Solar power? Wind energy? Well here I'm afraid we're yet to harness the power of light drizzle. Shale gas is scraping the bottom of the fossil fuel barrel? At least it's our barrel, and it's here, far from whatever the latest problem in the Middle East is. It's not ideal, but the real world isn't ideal. And if you're not living in the real world, you'll be living in the dark.

F/X: MAIN ELECTRIC SWITCH(ES). LIGHTS GO ON.
AUDIENCE CONFUSION AND CONCERN.

1. GUY: (MICROPHONE BACK ON) But where there is darkness, may fracking bring light.

F/X: PAUSE THEN ONE PERSON CLAPS, THEN APPLAUSE.

2. GUY: (CLOSE) I'd done it. I'd woken them. Opened their minds to something they'd opposed just minutes earlier. Every face in the room looked at me with interest, regard, even respect. Every face except one.

3. EMILY: Guy?

4. GUY: (RUNNING AFTER HER) Emily! Wait!

F/X: RUNNING AFTER HER, THROUGH DOORS.

5. GUY: (CLOSE) Why did I do it? Like Kennedy's speech about going to the moon, I guess I did it not because it was easy, but because it was hard. Anyone can argue to save a nature reserve and get people to agree. It's far harder to get them to agree to destroying one. Far more of an interesting challenge. It was thrilling, liberating to say these forbidden things.

SCENE 47 – OUTSIDE MEETING ROOM.

1. EMILY: What the hell was that?
2. GUY: I thought you weren't going to be here?
3. EMILY: So that made it OK to give a green light to destroying a nature reserve?
4. GUY: But I really opened their minds about fracking. It was amazing.
5. EMILY: That's not amazing, Guy.
6. GUY: It was a tough crowd. You missed the bit at the beginning where I spoke convincingly against fracking.
7. EMILY: Guy, because of what you said they're probably going to start drilling next door to me. I don't want that.
8. GUY: Ah.
9. EMILY: Ah? That's all you have to say now? But you loved saying all that in there though, didn't you?
10. GUY: No I didn't. I just got carried away. Too much coffee. I was totally wrong. 100%. I'm sorry. Come here.
11. EMILY: [SIGH] You're an idiot, but OK... [THEY HUG]
12. GUY: (CLOSE) But I did love it. I loved every second of having that audience listen and respect even the most unpalatable thing I had to say. And at work that was just what Stevenson wanted. I earned my pay rise turning every negative into a positive, basically shutting down most of the department. It was my Chingford-burg Address.

SCENE 48 – MEETING.

1. GUY: Think of it not as losing a job, but as gaining freedom – the freedom to carry on with increased devotion, unbound by the chains of employment. Because one volunteer is worth twenty pressed men. Satisfaction shall be our salary, the public our annual appraisal. We may be downsizing our department, but we are upsizing our hearts and minds. We shall have a new birth of freedom – and local government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from Chingford borough!
2. AUDIENCE: (APPROVAL)
3. GUY: (CLOSE) I'd just given them a plate of sugar-coated nothing and they lapped it up. Not everyone was getting the message though...

SCENE 49 – OFFICE.**F/X: PHONE RINGING TONE. ANSWERPHONE SOUND.**

4. ROTH: (RECORDED MESSAGE) This is Mr Roth. Since your failure to remove the first piece of graffiti, another obscene word has appeared in the vicinity of the library, creating a kind of – I hesitate to say conversation, more of a slanging match. I would have thought that this latest word was impossible to misspell, but I had obviously reckoned without current literacy standards. You can't ignore me forever, *[you send me through all these menus, but I know you're there listening behind them all.]*
5. GUY: You're right. This is your lucky day, Mr Roth – I'm going to help you with a free motivational speech.

F/X: DIALLING. TWO RINGS. THEN...

6. ROTH: Why are you phoning me if I'm not in? I'm always out between 2:45 and 3:15pm except on Wednesdays. Go on, leave a message.
7. GUY: (OVER) Typical. You call me to complain every week for a year, now you won't even pick up the phone.

F/X: BEEP.

1. GUY: This is Guy Whitmoor from Chingford Borough Council, and I have a dream, Mr Roth. A dream where you ask not what Chingford Borough Council can do for you, but what you can do for Chingford Borough Council. Because I feel like I know you, and I know there is a man who can help you with all your problems, a man who can bend the world to your desires, but you will not find this man at the end of a telephone helpline, you will not find this man by using email, you will find this man by looking in the mirror. You can get on your bike and do it yourself. The only thing you have to fear is fear itself. Because we're all in this together, Mr Roth, and today, in the world of freedom, the proudest boast is "Ich bin ein Chingforder!"

F/X: PUTS PHONE DOWN.

2. GUY: (HAPPILY SATISFIED) I don't think we'll be hearing from him again.
3. GUY: (CLOSE) It was such a thrill to say such shocking things. I wanted to feel that more – get the same visceral reaction. So I went to the site of the old Tyburn gallows, where the condemned would be given an opportunity to say some final words, now known as Speakers' Corner, where I could be amongst others saying the unsayable.

SCENE 50 – SPEAKER’S CORNER.**F/X: PEOPLE, DISTANT TRAFFIC.**

1. SPEAKER #1: Wake up, sheeple! Jet fuel can't melt steel beams! *This is a conspiracy.*
2. SPEAKER #2: And then the great egg shall descend from the heavens and our saviour will emerge...
3. SPEAKER #3: Only in the safety of Buckingham Palace do they reveal their true lizard form – the shapeshifters who rule over us.
4. GUY: If anything, the bankers deserve bigger bonuses.

F/X: AUDIENCE APPRECIATION.

5. GUY: The question isn't should we have invaded Iraq, but why haven't we invaded Iran?

F/X: AUDIENCE APPRECIATION.

6. GUY: Ask me the three main problems facing this country and I tell you: immigration, immigration and immigration!

F/X: AUDIENCE APPRECIATION.

7. GUY: Global warming threatens polar bears? Do we want more of these vicious killing machines?

F/X: AUDIENCE APPRECIATION.

8. GUY: Like the old dog licence, but for children. And genetically selected!

F/X: APPLAUSE.

9. GUY: (CLOSE) It felt amazing. Better than... coffee. I was on such a high I felt I could do anything, even ask you to marry me – that would have made it all perfect. But then at 9:37 the next morning...

SCENE 51 – KITCHEN.**F/X: MAKING COFFEE.**

1. GUY: Morning Emily! Hot, strong and in a chipped Chingford borough council mug please.

F/X: ANGRY STIRRING.

2. GUY: Emily? Are you OK? Emily? Why aren't you talking to me? Never mind. I'm ready to ask you. This is probably the speech that I've thought about most in the world and it's this:

3. EMILY: I'm breaking up with you.

4. GUY: [LAUGHS] No, it's actually...

5. EMILY: No. I'm breaking up with you.

6. GUY: What?

7. EMILY: You never listen to me any more. You're always [interrupting me].

8. GUY: Can I just say this first?

9. EMILY: There you go again. You'll say anything. Anything to get the reaction you want. You don't care what you're saying. And now they're fracking next door to me and you're doing so well decimating our department the rest of the council are following suit, which means no more cycle lane – I nearly got killed again this morning!

10. GUY: Emily, I...

11. EMILY: And then I saw this trending on YouTube: "Brock Horror – Man Whips Up Crowd At Speakers' Corner".

1. GUY: (PHONE SPEAKER) We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight the badgers in the forests, we shall fight the badgers underground, we shall fight the badgers in the fields and hedgerows, we shall fight the badgers in the hills; we shall never surrender. What do we want?
2. CROWD: (PHONE SPEAKER) Cull the badgers!
3. GUY: (PHONE SPEAKER) When do we cull them?
4. CROWD: (PHONE SPEAKER) Now!
5. GUY: (PHONE SPEAKER) What do we want?
6. CROWD: (PHONE SPEAKER) Cull the badgers!
7. GUY: (PHONE SPEAKER) When do we cull them?
8. CROWD: (PHONE SPEAKER) Now!
9. EMILY: Guy, you're a brilliant orator. OK? You're right up there with Hitler. So heil you. But you are what you say, which means you're a shit.
10. GUY: Can I just say this?
11. EMILY: No. I don't want another speech. And you can make your own bloody coffee.

F/X: TEA SPOON THROWN INTO SINK.

F/X: EMILY STORMS OUT.

12. GUY: There is actually a pretty good case that badgers spread TB. Emily? Emily?

F/X: STEVENSON ENTERS.

13. STEVENSON: Ah, Guy. Yes, I've come to tell you that Mr Roth won't be bothering us any more.
14. GUY: Well that's one bit of good news.

1. STEVENSON: He's dead. Neighbours complained about the smell. We had to knock the door down. Neighbours never knew him. From his phone records, his only contact with the world was calling us to complain about things.
2. GUY: (WORRIED) Do you know when? How? Why?
3. STEVENSON: No. But there was an answerphone message.
4. GUY: (ANSWERPHONE EFFECT) I have a dream, Mr Roth. A dream where you ask not what Chingford Borough Council can do for you, but what you can do for Chingford Borough Council.
5. GUY: (STOPPING MESSAGE) I may have been a little over-zealous. But is that why he...?
6. STEVENSON: We don't know. Unfortunately someone's leaked this to the press. And now we're absolutely flooded with complaints. It's a PR nightmare.
7. GUY: You need me to go and deal with the calls?
8. STEVENSON: No, I need you to go home. We're suspending you.

SCENE 52 – MONOLOGUE.

9. GUY: (CLOSE) But Cicero's tongue could not protect him. When the republic gave way to the empire he was decapitated, and Mark Antony's wife Fulvia took his severed head, pulled out his tongue, and jabbed it repeatedly with her hairpin in final revenge against his power of speech. I felt as though an army of Fulvias had been at my tongue. I never wanted to speak again. I'd made the world listen, but to what? All the problems my speeches had caused. The thought that a man might have killed himself because of what I said. That at best he was already lying dead while my hollow words rang out around him. Stevenson sacked me by text message.

F/X: TEXT MESSAGE.

10. GUY: (CLOSE) I didn't go out for three weeks – a personal best. Eventually I needed food ...

SCENE 53 – SUPERMARKET.**F/X: BEEP OF ITEMS BEING SCANNED.**

1. SYNTHETIC VOICE:

Unexpected item in the bagging area. Unexpected item in the bagging area.

F/X: BANGING SHOPPING (TINS ETC) AGAINST TILL.

2. SUPERMARKET MAN:

Sir? Sir? Please refrain from....

F/X: SMASHING TINS AGAINST TILL.

3. SYNTHETIC VOICE:

Unexpected item in the bagging area. (DISTORTING)
Unexpected... Bagging. Bagging. Unexpected.

4. SUPERMARKET MAN:

Sir, I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS AWAY.

5. GUY: (CLOSE) I realise the terrible power of words, Emily. And I just can't speak any more. But living like this – that doesn't work now. I was OK when I didn't know any different. But now I've seen how I could have interacted with the world, and that's worse than never knowing. I don't have anything now. Mum gone, job gone. You gone. Cut off from the world, like Mr Roth in his flat, without even someone to phone and complain to. So this email will be my last words. My last shout out to the crowds at Tyburn. Goodbye.

F/X: MESSAGE SENT SOUND.

SCENE 54 – CHURCH.**GRAMS: PRE-FUNERAL ORGAN MUSIC - F/X:**
EMILY ENTERS.

1. VICAR: Good morning.
2. EMILY: Morning.
3. VICAR: Nice to see that someone has come.
4. EMILY: I felt someone should.
5. VICAR: Yes, such a tragic death. I hear he cut himself off from society after his mother died, found it difficult to engage.
6. EMILY: Yes. It's very sad.

F/X: MUSIC STOPS.

7. VICAR: Sorry, there's my cue.

F/X: FOOTSTEPS UP TO PULPIT. EMILY TAKES A SEAT.

8. VICAR: Welcome to this service in remembrance of the life of ...

F/X: MAIN DOORS OPEN.

9. VICAR: Ah, welcome. Come in.

F/X: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS.

10. VICAR: Guy, isn't it?
11. EMILY: Guy?
12. VICAR: Would you like to come up and say a few words?
13. GUY: (NOT WANTING TO) Um, er, um...

1. VICAR: No, please – come up. Your last eulogy was very moving. I'm sure that you could do the same for Mr Roth. I insist.

F/X: GUY'S FOOTSTEPS.

2. GUY: I. I. I. I.

F/X: HEARTBEAT, FAST BREATHING.

3. VICAR: (DISTORTED) Are you all right?

F/X: GUY PASSES OUT.

SCENE 55 – CHURCH.

1. EMILY: (BECOMING CLEARER) Guy? Guy?
2. GUY: Huh? I...
3. EMILY: It's OK. You don't have to say anything.
4. GUY: I should...
5. EMILY: It's just good that you came. Actions speak louder and all that.
6. GUY: But I killed him...
7. EMILY: You didn't. He died before you left the message.
8. GUY: But he was lying there dead when I said it all.
9. EMILY: I sort of understand why you said it all, even the badgers.
10. GUY: You do?
11. EMILY: I read your email – what you went through. It must have been amazing to be able to speak like that at last.
12. GUY: It was.
13. EMILY: But you stopped listening, and you used to be a good listener.
14. GUY: I know. I'm sorry.
15. EMILY: I know. And you're not Mr Roth, OK? You don't have to cut yourself off from the world. Look, there's no magic. You just had confidence. Then lost it. I guess the question is do you want to give it a shot again?
16. GUY: I've lost everything. My job.
17. EMILY: There are other jobs.
18. GUY: My mum.
19. EMILY: You can still make her proud.
20. GUY: You.

GRAMS: FUNERAL ORGAN MUSIC.

SCENE 56 – EMILY'S FLAT.**F/X: FRONT DOOR. GUY ENTERS.**

1. GUY: Hi.
2. EMILY: Hi, how was your first day?
3. GUY: Not bad.
4. EMILY: Not too much speaking?
5. GUY: Well, more than my other idea of becoming a mime artist.
6. EMILY: [LAUGHS]
7. GUY: But it was OK.
8. EMILY: Your mum would be proud of you. The Citizen's Advice Bureau is great – you listen, you help. So, how do you like your coffee?
9. GUY: Actually, can I have tea please?
10. EMILY: OK. Two teas coming up.

F/X: TEA MAKING.

11. GUY: Emily, I had a big speech worked out, but all I want to say is will... Will. Will you...?
12. EMILY: Yes. I will. (KISS)
13. GUY: Really?
14. EMILY: Yes.
15. GUY: Oh no.
16. EMILY: What?
17. GUY: I'm going to have to give a speech at the wedding. (STARTS TO PANIC, HYPERVENTILATING).

1. EMILY: You'll be fine. This is how everyone feels about public speaking. No one really likes it. Well, no one normal, anyway. So long as you believe all the lovely things you're going to say about me.
2. GUY: Of course.
3. EMILY: And no Hitler.
4. GUY: You sure?
5. EMILY: You'll be fine. Just start "Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking..."
6. GUY/EMILY: (LAUGHS)

END.