

COMEDY SKETCHES 4

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The Apprentice Vampire (1)

EXT. WOODED LANDSCAPE - EVENING

A young vampire with traditional black hair, white face, blood stained extended fangs, posh cape ... the full glorious ensemble ... is being held by a very threatening village mob with pitch-forks, crucifixes, flaming torches etc. as the obligatory full moon is shining overhead.

On the ground lies a young attractive woman with two fang holes in her neck. A distraught village woman is holding her.

Village woman : Poor, sweet, Veronika. Poor ... simple ... sweet ... Veronika.

Dead ... before her life had ... begun.

Overcome with rage, she runs at the vampire with her fists clenched ... but is she prevented from attacking him and consoled by the mob.

The terrified vampire (who is remarkably good looking despite the blood stained extended fangs which haven't yet retracted and is desperately trying to cover them, unsuccessfully, with his upper lip) is looking into the faces of the barbaric looking village mob coming ever closer to him.

He speaks with a strong Germanic accent made much more difficult to understand because of the heavy lisp caused by his attempts at covering his fangs with his lips.

Vampire : But ... but ... she was lying here when I got here - just before you guys arrived. And, yes, I was bent over her to see what had happened to her ... and how could I help her ... you know.

Village man 1 : What is your name? (*shouting*) What ...

Vampire : Reinhardt.

Village man 2 : You're a Count, aren't you. (*shouting*) Count what ?

Vampire : OK ... one, two, three, four, (*pause*) sorry, but I'm a bit rusty after that.

Village man 1 : Yeah. He's a Count all right. They're all inbred. All born stupid.

Vampire : I would not agree completely with what you said sir but, I admit there are indeed many of us who

Village man 2 : Shut up! You think we are just superstitious simpletons, don't you?

(*rhetorical pause*)

Let me tell you that the most charming, cultured folk in this world derive from our ranks.

We worship the beauty of nature ... music and dance ... and respect for our fellow human beings ... and the worship of God.

Not the worship of money ... like the folk that come from your ranks.

Village man 1 : (*angry*) Money that you steal from us. Money that you take from the blood and sweat of the honest working man and honest working woman ...

Vampire : (*in a faint*) Blood I can accept but ... Sweat ... Yuk!

Village man 2 : (*continuing*) ... and when they have given all they can, you still want more from them ... more ... more ... more.

Vampire : (*dramatically to himself*) How did I get caught up in this awful world.

It's not supposed to happen this way ... or such is my understanding.

Village man 2 : That's because the other parasites had the sense not to get caught.

They were experienced parasites, you idiot!

Vampire : (*hurt*) Idiot? I think not, sir. Inexperienced maybe because of my youth and ... maybe with a lot to learn ... I concede this, but ...

Village man 1 : Shut up! You are a leech - and you know it.

Vampire : (*reflecting, in Romantic Poet dramatic fashion*) ...

A leech.

I never thought of myself in that way before.

Although ... maybe you have a point that I never considered.

Maybe ... maybe I am a leech.

A leech takes some blood and gives health back in return.

I give health to your society.

Village man 1 : Shut up! Are you a Count? Don't lie to us now!

Or you will be tied to a tree and burned to death.

Vampire : (*rhetorically*) Is there any point in telling you the truth?

Village man 2 : The truth? That is a strange new defence for you types.

The truth ... hmmm ... let's see! We never dealt with this before.

But, OK! What is this thing you call (*with inverted fingers*) The Truth?

The mob are horrified because the inverted fingers symbol is translated to mean the fangs of a vampire. He tries to placate them.

Village man 2 : No. It doesn't mean a vampire. It means quotes.

Mob voice 1 : Quotes? Does that mean more than one vampire?

Mob voice 2 : (*horrified*) Maybe a whole flock of them.

Village man 2 : Please relax folks. It's nothing like that.

He is about to explain this inverted fingers symbol to his fellow villagers but abandons it. In frustration, he turns to the vampire.

Village man 2 : We could all be in our warm homes, dancing and drinking our lovely moonshine.

Instead we are out here in the cold, talking to you.

Now, before things get really bad for you ... tell us the truth.

Vampire : (*relenting*) Can't you good people please understand that this wonderful woman ... you know ... wanted me ...

Village man 1 : Wanted you ... wanted you for what??

Vampire : (*ignoring this unromantic ignorance and continues, struggling*)

And she wanted to be with me forever and ever.

She loved my poetry and my ... my zest for life ... my ... joie de vivre.

And I wanted this too. What's so wrong with that ... I ask you?

The mob females are overcome with the romance of it all.

The men are silent and shuffle nervously as they reflect on what he has said.

Village man 2 : (*with frustrated threat*) For the last time. Are you a Count?

Vampire : (*resigned*) OK. It's true. I am a Count.

Proud and defiant, the vampire dramatically moves his hair away from his face, as the mob moves closer in awe and admiration with eyes wide open and saliva dripping from their toothless straw-chewing mouths.

Vampire : *(almost tearfully)* I was born to be a Count.

Just like Bonnie Prince Charlie was born to be a King.

Clearly not understanding his reference, the mob remain transfixed in reverence of their aristocratic superior. A village woman moves forward and breaks the silence.

Village woman 1 : I think he's telling the truth.

Village man 2 : How'd you know?

Village woman 1 : Believe me, I know. It's not easy to '**make up**' all that stuff.

Village man 2 : What. We caught him red-handed - or red toothed more like it. Talk about a smoking gun. Hello!

Village woman 1 : Look. Can we please stick to the facts here. I mean we are not an unreasonable mob, are we?

The mob shuffle nervously afraid to make eye contact with each other for fear of being exposed as the unreasonable mob they are.

Village woman 1 : There was no gun involved OK. And there was no smoke or any form of burning at all. Nobody got burned. Correct me if I'm wrong here.

Village man 1 : *(trying to suppress his anger)* Can I please enquire as to how you deduced that he is not lying - if I may be so bold as to ask.

Village woman 1 : It's very simple. Like I said. Heavy **make up**. That's how I know.

Village man 1 : Heavy make up!

Village woman 1 : For sure. It's as plain as the paint not on his face.

Believe me, I know how hard it is to apply convincing make up like that.

His fangs alone would take an eternity.

Why do you think your wife looks so pretty?

She used to be the ugliest woman in the area. Everyone knows this.

An uncommonly attractive village woman steps forward ... and all are impressed ... and seeing the admiration of everyone ... she smiles.

Tragically, her smile reveals her brutal toothless mouth as unchewed straw and slobber falls out.

A shudder of revulsion surges through the vampire's body at the sight of this.

The mob show no revulsion and continue to stare contemptuously at the vampire.

Village man 2 : Well, I'm not convinced.

Vampire : OK. I'm not really a Count ...

Angry surge forward from the mob.

Vampire : Well, not yet ...

Scared surge backward from the mob as the guys holding him twist his arms.

Village man 2 : Explain yourself!

Vampire : OK. Try to understand, I'm a Count's son. So, I will be the Count after he ... you know ... dies ... but he is still alive ... and maybe always will be ... will he ever die? ... who knows ... he's very selfish ... a very selfish Count, it must be said.

Shocked silence all around as everyone absorbs this.

Village man 1 : Are you now saying you are not a vampire either? Swear to God!

Vampire : I swear to ... *(the word chokes in his throat as he desperately tries to say it)*

Village man 1 : Can't say the word 'God'. Eh?. Well then you better swear on something else fast.

Vampire : *(blurts it out)* I swear on my own grave.'

Everyone is again hushed. The luckless vampire knows he said something wrong and realises what it is.

He continues, eagerly watching the reaction of the mob with each utterance.

Vampire : My mother's grave? ...

Vampire : My father's grave? ...

Vampire : My grave? ...

Vampire : I'm terribly sorry. I really don't remember which it is I was told you people wanted to hear. Really sorry!

They told me many times but I can't remember. Terrible memory!

The village mob surges forward and beat the unfortunate vampire to death with their clubs, crucifixes or whatever they have in hand.

Throughout the mayhem, a mob voice is heard ...

Mob Voice : Let's burn him afterwards, just to be sure.

Then the disembodied voice of the vampire is heard as the murder frenzy rages.

Vampire : You cannot kill me this way. You silly schmucks!

May your pathetic gods have mercy on your pathetic souls.

His mocking derisive laughter is heard over the thuds of the murder blows and the shrieks of delight from the mob - as they obey their God's commandments.

The Apprentice Vampire (2)

INT. COUNT'S CASTLE, SITTING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

In the early rising sunlight, the forlorn sounds of wolves howling in the surrounding woods reverberate around the outside walls of the castle ...

... and reverberate around the inside walls and corridors of the castle ...

... and reverberate around the opulent sitting room.

Veronika, clad in very expensive vampire-like attire, is sitting in the sitting room clearly oblivious to the sounds of the wolves howling.

The heavy drapes are drawn ... and the room is dimly lit with weak artificial lights.

She is a full bodied woman, regal-looking but with a barely disguised stern, domineering demeanour.

She has a nail file in hand and is carefully filing her finger nails and admiring her progressing work.

When satisfied with her progress, she opens her mouth, revealing her two large extended vampire fangs.

She begins to file at her fangs.

She picks up her hand mirror to see what she is doing but there is no reflection in the mirror.

Veronika : Damnation! So many disadvantages about being ... Undead.

She throws the mirror aside and continues to file at her fangs as best she can.

Suddenly the door swings open and recoils against the other side and almost knocks down the entrant.

Reinhardt arrives home in a somewhat bedraggled, confused state.

His otherwise impeccable dress is a mess. He is stumbling and speaks with a heavy slurring and incoherence.

Reinhardt : My Darling Wife.

He staggers towards her with outstretched arms - full of love for his woman.

He trips on his own legs and falls flat, face down on the floor.

She does not react to this and continues with her fang filing.

He struggles to get his legs under him again and resumes his advance to his wife.

Reinhardt : *(still eagerly smiling)* My Darling Wife.

When he arrives at her side, she pushes him aside without even looking at him.

He struggles to understand her hateful behaviour.

Reinhardt : What is it?

Veronika : I was meant for better things, OK.

Reinhardt : But ... when we met ... you were a peasant and working in a ...

Veronika : *(shouting)* Shut up!

Reinhardt : OK. So ... what did I do wrong, this time?

Veronika : You didn't knock.

Reinhardt : Knock? But ...I had to get inside as quickly as possible ... you know!

The sun was coming up fast. The villagers were on the prowl.

And, worse of all my love - I was going to die outside.

Veronika : *(calmly)* Go out again ... close the door behind you ... and knock.

As instructed, he staggers back to the door and exits closing the door behind him.

He knocks on it.

Veronika : *(atmospherically paused)* Enter.

He enters but does not rush to be in her arms this time.

She examines the job she did on her fingernails and casually says to him ...

Veronika : And what time do you call this?

He is taken aback and desperately searches his pockets in a frightened manner.

Reinhardt : I don't know for sure. I had a watch when I left. Where the Hell is is?

Veronika : *(shouting)* I'm saying it's way too early to be coming home!

Reinhardt : *(like a naughty child)* I'm sorry, my love.

Veronika : And you're drunk!

Reinhardt : *(genuinely stunned)* Is that it? I'm drunk?

By Jupiter ... I was wondering what it was.

Veronika : So why are you coming home drunk?

What happened after you left me in the middle of the night?

And don't forget to tell me about the peasant slut you 'didn't meet'.

Reinhardt : OK. I went to the outskirts of the village and waited.

I desperately needed sustenance. You still don't know this feeling.

Nobody came along the road except this big guy who was singing madly.

He didn't notice me approach him from behind ...

Although I can't understand why because I accidentally tripped and fell and my head hit the ground and I groaned very loud and he looked around but he didn't see me.

I must be getting good at this, my love. Isn't that great!

Anyway, he had so much blood in him. It was amazing.

And I probably drank it all. I was feasting for about an hour ... or two.

She notices two fang holes in his neck - that he had been trying to hide with his shirt collar but had dislodged the shirt covering in telling his enthusiastic story.

In a fury, she points to the neck wounds.

Veronika : What the fuck is that?

Reinhardt : I am too cultured, even when drunk, to respond to such profanity.

While he is genuinely shocked, she snarls with her fangs protruding.

Veronika : You've been with another woman.

Some bitch ... who gorged on a total idiot like you.

She leached from my own idiot husband. She took what's mine!

Although terrified and drunk, he realises she is the one forgetting what happened.

Reinhardt : No. No, my love. That was you ... last night.

That is why I desperately needed sustenance. You drained me.

That is why I had to leave this place and find some.

Surely you remember!

Veronika : *(relenting)* Yes, maybe some vague memories are coming back.

Reinhardt : *(still clutching at straws)* Last night was our first ... you know ... my precious love ...

Veronika : First what?

Reinhardt : First time we feasted ... since we got married ... two weeks ago.

Veronika : By Lucifer's balls. How could I forget. But forget I did.

(laughing) It was clearly a very forgettable memory. Surely you remember.

Reinhardt : It was very lovely for me my love - and it always will be. Forever.

Veronika : *(snarling)* And there will be much more of this. Lots more.

I desperately need you. I need everything you have.

Reinhardt : And I need you so much my love. I need you more than ...

Veronika : *(interrupting)* Yes. There will be ... more of this ... for all of eternity.

She laughs demonically and slaps his face.

He goes to kiss the hand that slapped him.

She pushes him away and swishing her flowing gown she walks off, dramatically.

He remains stooped and bedraggled - but still retaining his romantic poet persona that he is so beloved of and the essence of what he believes he is.

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The Apprentice Vampire (3)

INT. COUNT'S CASTLE, SITTING ROOM - EVENING

An older vampire - Carpathie - impeccably dressed and sophisticated and making no attempt to camouflage his malevolence - is standing imperiously before Reinhardt, who has lost his romantic poet persona and is staring wide-eyed like a frightened boy.

Carpathie : The reason I called you to be in attendance today is because I love you.

I do not want to belittle or denigrate you in any way.

But I am your father and it would be remiss of me not to advise you.

Reinhardt : So ... did I do something wrong, Pater?

Carpathie : Not willingly, I wager. But you are lacking in skills that you should be well in control of at this stage of your life.

You are my only son and - when, or if, you have a son of your own - you will understand why I have ... shall we say ... concerns about you.

Reinhardt : What are your concerns, father?

Carpathie : OK. for a start, your choice of wife leaves a lot to be desired.

She is crude and vulgar, without even a smouldering semblance of culture.

Reinhardt is bewildered and very deeply hurt at this appraisal of his wife.

Reinhardt : But ... but she is a lovely specimen she is perfect ...

Carpathie : You found her in a public house where the lowlife go to get some fun.

Reinhardt : *(sobbing)* Please Father. Don't go any further. Where's your humanity?

Carpathie : We are not human. Can't you understand the basics ?

Yes, she has a good child-bearing body and her looks are acceptable for the wife of a Count.

But she has nothing of the grace and charm that people of this family or any other similar family would expect in a wife.

You will have to present her at various functions and balls. What happens when she belches or farts or vomits on the other guests. What will you do then?

(shouting) I taught you all you needed to know in that department.

Why are you such a ... slow learner ... in everything.

Reinhardt : *(hurt)* Well ... not everything. For example, I now can recite an entire poem without prompting. OK, just one poem ... but I can do it ... and another thing ...

Carpathie : *(interrupting)* I heard what happened with the drunk villager.

Reinhardt : I didn't know he was drunk.

Carpathie : He was singing his head off at three in the morning going along a country lane. What did you think - he just 'scored' with the big-bosomed woman who is married to the blacksmith?

Maybe he did. I don't know ... and I don't care. Can't you understand?

He was the only man in town who hadn't shagged her at that point and he suddenly felt he was a very important man indeed.

And you couldn't even sneak up on a very drunk man. It's not possible to believe ... but true. Isn't it?

And then you tripped and banged your stupid head and shouted.

The only reason he didn't catch you is because he was too drunk to see you lying on the road directly behind him.

Stunned silence as Reinhardt is struggling to come to terms with what he is hearing.

Carpathie : And then ... you hurt your uncle ... my only brother. You hurt him badly.

Reinhardt : Uncle Athelrod ?? I said nothing to him. I swear! I wouldn't do that.

Well, I know he is going through an emotional time recently.

I mean, he isn't even sure if he is a boy vampire who wants to be a girl vampire.

Or a girl vampire who wants to be a shellfish, because of his Fear of Flying.

Fear of Flying is a difficult condition for a vampire. You're bound to know that! Come on!

But then he discovered that shellfish live at the bottom of the sea and so he desperately wanted to be one of the free swimming fish ...

... swimming in the mid water. Neither at the bottom nor at the top ...

... preferably a mackerel

He wants to be a mackerel because they are so common and not special in any way because he really doesn't want to draw any attention to himself.

But he also wants to dress like he was - you know, wearing his cape and keeping his white face and precious fangs etc. ... but as a lovely mackerel.

It wasn't going to be easy for him but he was prepared for the challenge.

He told me how prepared he was for this challenge and was going to win.

I'm sure I don't have to tell you all this, father?

Carpathie : Shut up! Shut up! This beautiful world we had is falling apart.

(distraught) Why? I don't know. Does anyone?

Maybe, as you're part of this new world ... you do?

Reinhardt : Well, maybe it's because of wormholes in parallel universes and ...

Carpathie : Shut up, you idiot! Of course, you don't know.

This whole beautiful world is falling apart and you don't even know it is.

You don't even know that it was such a beautiful world.

Reinhardt knows to stay quiet and let his father speak when in his speaking mood.

Carpathie : The Roman Empire was the glory days. They revelled in their pantheon of Gods and so did we ... as much as they did. Because they couldn't see us.

Then the Barbarians came in and it became a Christian Empire with all that holy water and crucifixes and all that stuff. But we clung on.

You can't imagine how bad the Dark Ages were because we are creatures of the Dark and had to remain very hidden lest their 'light' be shone upon us.

The Black Death didn't just decimate the goddam Christians - it practically wiped us out as well. We had to drink their putrid blood and we died with them. We died horribly!

Thankfully, the Christians have mostly discarded their religious crap now ... but it still lingers. And so do we ... but with precious little left.

I must cling to the little bit that is left before even that is taken away.

And what have I got left?

(shouting) All I have is my only son who is a complete idiot and my only brother who wants to be a mackerel.

He tries to conceal his sobbing as best he can till his idiot son steps into the breach.

Reinhardt : I'm sorry you feel this way Pater. Maybe it's not as bad as you think.

For example, two and a half thousand years ago, the ancient Greeks were lamenting about how the young men were really nothing compared to the previous generations - and look at what happened. Look what happened!

Carpathie : Yes, the Greeks were taken over by the Romans in a flash. And they were taken to Rome as slaves - ok, educational slaves - but slaves nevertheless.

Reinhardt : OK. Maybe that wasn't a good example. Our generation may be letting things slip a bit. But I didn't mean to hurt Uncle Athelrod in any emotional way. I said nothing to offend him in any way...

Carpathie : Shut up! What do you mean, emotionally? You didn't hurt him emotionally.

You hurt him physically. By Lucifer's balls, are you that stupid?

Reinhardt : What! I didn't even see him. Believe me I'd have known him well had I met him.

Carpathie : *(trying to calm himself)* When we discovered you missing, I sent him out to keep an eye on you. He has better eyes at night than any of us.

And he did. He found you feasting on a well known drunk villager.

Can you imagine how disgusting that was for him. *(angry)* **We have class.**

Reinhardt is failing in his attempt to reconcile with his father and is distraught.

Carpathie : So, he landed beside you and before he could counsel you or communicate with you in any way - you just lashed out and punched him.

Reinhardt : I swear. The only thing I punched that night was this stupid bird who sat beside me when I was feasting and clearly wanted some of my kill for himself ...

Carpathie : That was not a bird who wanted some of your kill. You idiot!

He wouldn't touch that piece of shit you were feasting on - not if he was starving and a hundred priests with crucifixes were surrounding him and starving him to death.

He was the 'bat' you punched, you blithering moron!

He was your redeemer ... your salvation ... your messiah ... before you were about to become even more damned.

Reinhardt : At this point, I should say I'm sorry. But I genuinely had no idea ...

Carpathie : And now. I am going to ... try ... to get some normality into your pathetic life. I am going to start with your unbelievably low class wife of yours and tell you exactly what she is.

Reinhardt : Don't say it father. If you do, you can't unsay it. Nobody can!

Carpathie : Of course I can unsay what I said. We are the Undead!

Look what happened to you last night. Can you explain all your madness?

Reinhardt : But ... but she had drained me ...

Carpathie : Who drained you.

Reinhardt : Veronika.

Carpathie : Mein Gott in Hell. I can't believe what I'm hearing.

I simply can't believe it.

It is not she who drains you ... It is you who drains her.

She is the woman. You are the man ... not she!

Distraught, he sits with his head on his hands, unable to assimilate what he has heard.

Reinhardt : But, father ... times are changing. This is a new generation.

The roles of men and women are changing. You'll see it everywhere ...

Carpathie : Times do not change for us. There is no change. Don't you understand?

Maybe for the peasants. They have slow change. But not for us!

We are eternal creatures ... not idiots with different fashions that change every year or two. And then back again 10 years later. Hello!

First you can't look at a woman's ankles if she has them exposed. Then you can't look at her tits and bum if she has them exposed and wobbling them all over the place for your attention.

Very soon in the future, if you look at a woman's ankles, you will be slapped severely in the face and told you are a pervert.

Surely Reinhardt ... surely you can see that these people have no class.

Soon they will be covering themselves with tattoos written on their bodies to remind them what their names are and what their children's names are or what their football team is.

These are the morons that were thankfully ... Lucifer be praised ... put on Earth for us to gorge upon. They are the cannon fodder ...
the voters ...
the proletariat ...
the idiots ...

... who swallow whatever shit is forced into their ill-bred, uneducated mouths.

They are the eternal idiots whose blood we feast upon.

And, like all us 'monsters', whether we are green-eyed or not, although we need them to remain alive and we stalk this trash blood endlessly to keep us living ... we despise their putrid blood.

We despise the very blood that we feast upon.

Are you understanding any of this?

Reinhardt : *(with little idea of what he is hearing)* Yes. Of course, I do.

Anyway ... about last night ... I desperately needed sustenance.

Surely you understand ...

Carpathie : Yes, I do. I do. You can't possibly imagine how well I know that.

But when it happens - you do not gorge on a drunk peasant's blood.

Can't you imagine the slops these people drink. It could have killed you.

(realising) Well, killed you ... again.

Son. You must learn to avoid situations that are very dangerous.

And that was very dangerous. How can you expect to live forever, if you take huge risks like that?

For example, avoid all drunks because the alcohol in their blood can do terrible damage to you.

Alcohol is a poison - a very addictive poison. Avoid it with all your strength! Lest you become addicted like one of them and die a horrible death.

And anyone who looks sick or with a skin problem - do not! No matter how thirsty you are. OK.

And any 'lady of the night' - for sure she has a disease or two. Even if it's not obvious to you - avoid her like the plague.

And any peasant at all - no matter how healthy they look - after their never-ending feasts in celebration of the harvest or whatever religious nonsense they have.

Do not go near any of them!

Their food is full of garlic and onions and other horrific stuff that will destroy our delicate constitution ... and blood.

Stay a million miles away on all those occasions.

I told you all this stuff before. Why are you being so ... whatever they call it ... effervescent.

Reinhardt : *(retaining his poetic persona)* Poetic. I presume you mean, father?

Carpathie : No. Why can't you just be a bit normal. And learn to ... learn.

Why does a father have to teach his son everything that should be ... natural.

Reinhardt : What then? What should I do when this hunger happens?

Carpathie : Chickens.

Reinhardt : Chickens?

Carpathie : Chickens have pure blood - no pollutants like alcohol or garlic or other disgusting stuff.

You really do need to shape up in this heathen world, my boy.

Reinhardt : But ... a chicken has a tiny amount of blood. Not near enough to ...

Carpathie : Not one chicken, you moron! A chicken coop full of chickens.

The idiot farmer, his idiot wife and children and all their idiot village friends will believe it is some outside predator - they always do.

In America now they believe it is the chupacabra. And why not. It's great for us - but we must be careful. Don't educate them.

Both father and son are crest-fallen. Like all such relationships, there is a big bond that neither wants to belittle or destroy - or even recognise to be in existence.

They want to be closer to each other like they were in the past but the enormity of the alien world they both find themselves in has dented their bond.

Reinhardt : (*distraught*) I wanted to please you so much.

I always did ... Since I was a child. But I fail for you all the time.

Or is that your attitude as it appears to me. I'm not sure which?

Carpathie : (*consoling*) My son. Nothing will sever our bond. It is eternal.

It always was ... and is ... and it always will be.

The bond I have with my father will also never be broken - although he told me nothing of the things you tell me about. But I understood - or at least I hope I did. I now accept why he was ... distant.

I now know that he had to be distant - or we would all fall apart.

If the pillars of a temple are too close - the whole temple falls. The pillars need to be sufficiently distant from each other to hold the temple up and be strong enough to last throughout time. Just like we have to be, my boy.

If the strings of a guitar are too close together the sound the cord produces is just noise as the strings all bang together. A beautiful cord can only be heard if the strings are positioned sufficiently separate from each other. Only then can the sound be perfect.

All of nature is like that ... separation is what makes perfection.

Too much attraction means failure and collapse.

Pregnant Pause

Reinhardt ... you have the good fortune of youth but the misfortune of inexperience. And that inexperience will tear you apart if you don't learn.

You are still a beginner. Maybe an absolute beginner.

However, I have to say, you should be ahead of where you are at this point.

Reinhardt : What shall we do then ... from this point?

Carpathie : From this point ... you are grounded.

Reinhardt : (*horrified*) Grounded.

Carpathie : I can't take any more chances, my son.

Although it will be excruciating agony for you, you will remain in your room studying the Rules of the Undead - the *Regulae Inmortuae* - till you are confident you can pass my exam on it.

And, on my oath, I will genuinely give you the grade you deserve.

Sitting down and trying hard to resign to his cruel fate ... Reinhard is still intrigued.

Reinhardt : Pater. You told me I don't understand women. But I am convinced I do.

I was very good ... you know ... I was good ... with them.

Carpathie : You mean, sex. Don't you?

Can't you understand that a woman is not just a sex thing, my boy.

She is way more ... more ... more complex than that.

And not just complex, she is deviantly complex.

Deviant like a man can't understand. Men are idiots compared to them.

Reinhardt : But why isn't it all just ... simple and lovely and ... sexy.

Carpathie : Sexy. Well. That is their control area ... until they are undead.

Before they become undead, a woman appears to be in control of herself and everything around her ... and she is ... she really is.

But secretly ... secretly, my son ...she wants to be ... controlled.

It's their nature. It's basic stuff. It's Succubus and Incubus.

Reinhardt : (*poetically*) I think you got the wrong analogy there, father.

Succubus and Incubus are very different from what I think you meant.

Carpathie : Shut up! Can't you get a bit more intelligent ... and learn the basics!

Reinhardt : OK. I'll try. So what do men ... us men ... get out of this.

Carpathie : We get so much out of it, my boy ... you can't possibly imagine yet.

And, with your 'progression' ... I fear that maybe you never will.

But I didn't have to ask my father such basic stuff. He knew I would know.

Both men are transfixed, trying to come to an understanding of the other.

Reinhardt returns to his Little Boy Lost persona and moves closer to his father expecting a hug or some affection.

None is forthcoming as his father is distraught and turns away from him.

With a distant look in his old embittered eyes, Carpathie is remembering the glory days of the past where a vampire father didn't have to explain basic stuff to his son.

Just like his father didn't explain basic stuff to him.

Password at the Pearly Gates

EXT. THE ENTERANCE TO HEAVEN - (DAY OR NIGHT)

Richard, a timid, cultured-looking elderly gentleman approaches the Pearly Gates as eagerly and awkwardly as he can move, but with a beaming smile. He is clearly overjoyed that he has reached Heaven.

He approaches St Peter who is sitting at a regal desk looking vaguely at a large computer screen. Two muscle-bound angels stand behind him.

St Peter speaks with an unsmiling courtesy not dissimilar to a dour nightclub bouncer in England.

St Peter : What's your name.

Richard : (*eagerly*) Richard Curtis.

St Peter : password?

Richard : (*shocked*) What?

St Peter : (*subdued frustration*) What ... is ... your ... Password?

Richard : (*absolutely frustrated*) But ... But. I'm sure I don't have to tell you.

St Peter : Oh, yes you do, mate - as far as I'm concerned.

Richard : But ... but ... I've been a really good man all my life. Never did anything wrong to another human or animal or even to the vegetation of God's glorious Earth. Anyone can tell you this. Seriously, anyone can! Everyone knows me as Sweet Richard. Swear to God!

St Peter : (*angrily*) What is your Password, Sweet Richard?

Richard : But ... I have no idea ... I had no idea that this was important. It's not in any of the important literature. It's not in the Bible, the Koran ...

St Peter : (*still angry*) There was no computers back then.

Jesus Christ! how stupid are you?

Richard is stunned - trying to reconcile what he is now hearing with what he hitherto believed. And, more importantly, trying to find a solution.

St Peter : (*exasperated*) OK then! Allah be praised! Let's see what we can do.

What's your IP address, or your last sperm count, whichever.

It's all here mate - for people who (*using inverted fingers*) 'forget their password'.

Richard : (*still shocked*) Although it was, hitherto, a difficult life for me because I had never once doubted anything my devoutly religious parents had instilled into my youth and the equally chaste Church I had belonged to all my life that I fervently embraced and refused to deviate from ...

St Peter : (*angrily*) What is your Password?

Richard : (*unable to accept what is happening*) The pretty girls at school who made it obvious they wanted me for fun ... out of wedlock, you understand ... and I had to refuse them and, subsequently, had to endure the name-calling and physical abuse from all the girls and boys.

I was 'a poof', 'a fairy', 'a bum boy' and that was just a fraction of the everyday reality of the names that I had to endure and keep my head down, lest I receive a severe beating in the schoolyard.

St Peter : (*still bored*) Password?

Richard : But I never deviated from anything in my Christian life because I believed in it with my heart and soul and I have always loved it above all else.

St Peter : (*still bored*) Password?

Richard : (*desperately*) And in my business life and private life - you can check this. I have never done anything wrong. Not said anything wrong. Never betrayed anyone nor cheated anyone. Never lied nor accepted what other people said before checking the facts.

I have sacrificed so much ... to my own detriment ... throughout my life. I have suffered so much throughout my brutalised life and my horrific experiences.

(at breaking point) God Almighty! I totally deserve to be ... admitted.

St Peter : *(glancing at his screen)* Yes, Yes. Of course we know all this.

What you say is right. I'm not questioning this.

But we need the correct password. It's just basic security because the Earth is plagued with constant hacking of other people's identities.

So we have to be careful and, I'm sure, deep down, you understand this ... *(glancing at his name on screen)* Richard.

You're an IT savvy guy yourself. I mean, you're bound to know that you can't even buy a loaf of bread without at least two passwords. Hello! What planet were you living on?

Richard : Earth.

St Peter : Earth? You mean ... Earth 795 ?

After some furious clicking on his keyboard, St. Peter realises there has been a glitch. Richard remains speechless and is so relieved as Peter smiles somewhat ...

St Peter : Ahhh, I've got you now ... yes ... yes ...

Thank Allah and the Buddha and all the others for that matter.

I really didn't want to mess up again. I'd be in trouble if I did.

Memories. Memories. Who needs them?

Both men exchange 'knowing' glances. They seem to be in tune.

St Peter : However Richard ... you will still need a password.

Richard goes from his frustrated elation to instant devastation.

Richard : (*enraged*) But ... But. I don't have a bloody password.

... and, if I ever was given it ... I don't remember what it is.

Look. I'm a creative person - full of original and brilliant stuff.

As a result, I don't remember ... trivia.

St Peter : Trivia? (*contemptuously*) Stand aside. A bit of courtesy, please.

Richard : Courtesy?

St Peter : There are others waiting. Can't you see the queue behind you.

Please learn respect for others, Mr Curtis.

One of the large angels puts his hand on Richard's chest and moves him aside. He steps back and is flabbergasted.

Richard : But what happens now?

St Peter : There will be a slow train coming around the bend ... very soon ... to take all you rejects ... Sorry, I mean all you people who forgot their passwords to ... (*indicating with his eyes*) down. You know.

A traumatised Richard stands aside while the next man in line comes forward with a strut very reminiscent of the illiterate thug.

St Peter : Name?

Man : Jim Davidson.

St Peter : Password?

Jim : Show's yer fukkn tits.

St Peter : (*checking his database*) Yes. Congratulations and welcome to Heaven, Mr Davidson.

As Jim triumphantly walks past Richard he laughs in his face and says ...

Jim : 'Show's yer tits'.

Richard : (*pleadingly*) Was ... was that it? Was that my password?

Jim : No. You fukkn idiot! Any English scumbag stuff would have worked.

You should have read the tabloids while you had the chance, mate.

They love us up here ... same as back on Earth. What world were you on? What's wrong with you?

Jim walks off shaking his head and laughing, as only a scumbag can laugh.

INT. RAILWAY PLATFORM.

Sweet Richard, completely confused, stumbles onto the platform called HELL. There is no return platform across the tracks. He joins the other sweet cultured people standing there and awaits to board the slow train to Hell.

A railway worker - a platform guy with a whistle - is walking along also waiting for the train. A shell-shocked Richard approaches him.

Richard : (*panic stricken*) I thought Heaven was for people who made it. People who were of the good stuff ... you know ...

The platform guy interrupts him and speaks with a heavy East End accent.

Platform Guy : If you faut Heaven was for people who ... made it. You was right mate!

Same as Earf - we only take people who ... Made It.

They's all ... Made Men ... and Made Women. They made it. Roi!

So ... boi extension ... if they made it on Earf - they'll make it ere.

But we get all kinds a wannabes. You wooden believe it, mate!

I mean - Mother Teresa. She was walking on past with her fukkn head in the air.

Superior bitch. Mother Superior bitch. We saw it stray away.

Couddn believe when we apprehended her. Simply cuddn believe it.

No idea what her password was - no idea she said. No jokkin'
That was her 'defence'. Goddam bitch.

Same wif David Attenborough. Hello! Do you fink we'd a sent im ta
Hell if he didnn deserved it ... Fukk off. He deserved ta go ... DOWN.
Seriously DOWN.

Claimed he had no idea what his password was neiffer. Fukkn liar!

The Dali Lama. What! The Dali fukkn Lama.
What an opinionated prick! Doen get me started on that bastard.
Genuinely fott he had the solution for ... everyfing.

And he had the solution for noffin'. Noffin' I tell ya!

The best you can say about the whole lotta them bastards is that they
are child molesters.

Who do these people fink they are? God Amitey! They fink they can
walk on by - wif a heavy duty fukkn swagger and no password.

Or even a 'door' ticket from a Commercial Banker or Drug Smuggler or
a Mafia Don or English Royal Family or a trafficker of children for sex
purposes or somefink like that. But nuffink at all!

Unbelievable!

Richard : So, why am I not acceptable in Heaven. What's wrong with me?

Platform Guy : You're just too nice, Richard. God Amitey! Way too nice.

You're way too nice for Heaven, mate. Way too nice.

And you're unlucky also. If the train was on time, you'd a missed it.
And you coulda maybe talked your way out of it. I can see you're a bit
offa talker.

He blows his whistle as the sound of an approaching train can be heard.

Platform Guy : *(speaking in a non Cockney accent)* Ladies and Gentlemen.
Apologies. The slow train is late again but it's approaching. Get ready
to board and be seated as quickly as possible. And no standing - it's a
very rocky journey. *(laughing to himself)* And that's the best part.

The Reformation Debate

INT. BBC TV STUDIO - EVENING

Three men are sitting facing each other in a TV studio. Adorned in lights is the name of the program ... *Hot Stuff*

Sam McClelland, your classic pompous BBC interviewer, an idiot who has no idea that he is an idiot or pompous, nor any other pertinent stuff relating to what he really is.

He is interviewing Dr Charles Chisholm, an intellectual professorial looking guy. A Church of England clergyman who 'knows' his stuff ... or so he would be very inclined to believe and would, instantly, reject any insinuation to the contrary.

The other man being interviewed is Bernard Badcock ... a monk clad in monk attire who is staring wide-eyed like a rabbit caught in the headlights and appears distinctly out of place in this studio and wishing he weren't there.

Sam : Tonight our guests are Dr Charles Chisholm - a well-respected bishop in the Church of England and a renowned expert in theology - not just in the Anglican communion here but in all sister churches - especially the Episcopalian Church in the USA.

And with him is Brother Bernard Badcock - a Trappist monk and an unashamed defender of Roman Catholic England.

Bernard : I'm a monk in a Benedictine Monastery ... but it's true I am an unashamed defender of Catholic England. The one and only true faith.

Sam : My apologies. This is Brother Bernard Badcock - a Benedictine monk and an unashamed defender of Roman Catholic England.

Bernard : There is no such thing as Roman Catholic. There is only The Catholic Church with the Bishop of Rome as it's head.

(indicating Charles) When these guys invented their own Catholic Church with whatever idiot who sat on the throne as it's head - they called the real Catholic church - the Roman Catholic church.

Sam : Both of these men have sat before in debate and - it's fair to say - there was no love lost between them on their previous meetings.

For non-Christians this is probably very difficult to understand.

Both men smile awkwardly at Sam, and say a subdued Hello to the audience and the camera.

Sam : The debate tonight is on the fiery subject of ... the Reformation.

Or - to be more precise - the debate between More and Tyndale.

And these two gentlemen, 500 years ago, were as different from each other as - well, as these two gentlemen are to each other here tonight.

Their meeting was the very epicentre of what later became known as The Reformation in England.

To understand what happened is to understand what happened next.

Would you agree Dr Chisholm?

Charles : I certainly would agree with that. However, the modern audience, which is what we have here with us tonight, may not be aware of the ramifications of being the loser of such a debate.

The loser of this debate does not mean that they simply lost the debate. And all go home and lick their wounds etc.

It means they may lose their lives with the threat of a horrible prolonged execution hanging over them ... and their followers.

Sam : Very different from a modern debate, don't you think Mr Badcock?

We've come a long way from all of that, haven't we?

Bernard : (*angry*) Well, let's see. Henry the Eight was defending the Church and certainly didn't want this new European Protestantism polluting his realm with transparent blasphemy.

His Lord Chancellor was Tomas More - a wise, learned and devout religious man by all balanced accounts at the time.

Charles : William Tyndale was a very learned and devout theologian who was genuinely trying to make the Word of God available to everybody by getting the Bible translated ... into English ...

Bernard : (*interrupting*) which had been previously translated from Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek and then Latin and German etc.

Charles : (*ignoring him*) In outlining his position, he wanted the boy ploughing the field to be able to understand and interpret what was written in the Bible ... without the authoritarian corrupt Roman Church telling him what to believe.

Bernard : That is laudable but Tyndale believed that any person ... any person at all ...with no theological education whatsoever should be allowed to interpret the Bible in any way he wanted ... or in any way **she wanted**.

Even a woman with babies running around her feet every minute ... can interpret God's word in any way she wants. Jesus Christ!

Charles : Yes. That is the essence of what Tyndale was saying. And what is so terribly wrong with that ... in your warped opinion.

Bernard : The Bible is a sacred book. Deep down you know that ... even though you can be best described as heathen. And you are asking that any uneducated moron in the world can interpret it any way they want. What is wrong with you?

And you reject the Pope and all ecclesiastical authority and simply steal all the Church lands and monasteries, create your own church and elect someone like the monarch - no matter how disgusting they may be - to be the leader of Christianity in England.

Obnoxious!

Charles : Ordinary humans are sacred also - created by the Sacred God himself. And God has directed his 'chosen' people to have dominion over the Earth - His Earth. God's Earth.

Bernard : You mean Manifest Destiny and Predestination. This new Protestant interpretation of God's word says that God gives you the right to invade other peoples countries and do what you want there.

Charles : And I suppose the most powerful country in Europe - Spain - didn't do exactly the same ... with the Pope's blessing.

Yes, they brought some Christianity - of a sort. But they also brought diseases, rape, plunder, famine etc.

And they took away every piece of gold they could steal - leaving the people there with nothing except stupid Roman Catholic idolatry.

Bernard : There are no people more chosen than those who follow the leadership of Jesus Christ ... especially his humility. And you sir are a travesty of Jesus Christ's teaching and I will not sit with you again.

Sam : Please Mr Badcock ... you must refer to Dr Chisholm as Reverend.

Bernard : What is reverent about him except his reverence for the Power and Glory of the Earth when it should be the Power and Glory of God.

Charles : Just like I thought it would be. This has been a desecration of all I hold dear .. that a superstitious, idolatrous Catholic idiot like you should be attempting to engage in intelligent conversation with me.

(pointing at Bernard) And this is coming from a man who believes in Transubstantiation. He believes Holy Communion is eating the body and drinking the blood of Jesus Christ. The best I can say about this reprobate is that he is a cannibal.

Bernard : This is the end - may you rot in Hell, Chisholm.

Enraged, both men pull off their microphones, rise and shout expletives at each other - not in a language that any men, especially religious men, should use. They begin pushing each other and then a very messed up physical fight begins.

Neither man being a pugilist, both of them are unable to throw a punch properly and both are barely able to stay standing. They fall to the floor in a wrestling huddle.

They continue to stay struggling on the floor and remain locked in a morbid dance ... while Sam McClelland addresses the camera and tries to present a semblance of normality ...

Sam : I'm Presbyterian. So, not Anglican or Roman Catholic.

I'm a Real Protestant, just like the great John Calvin.

Anglican is just watered-down Catholic. Anglican Catholic, thankfully, not Roman Catholic.

Come on, folks! Both of these guys are fools.

God reveals himself in the original Bible - the Old Testament. He smites all his Old Testament enemies. He smites everyone who doesn't believe he has the power to smite them. He smites everyone and everything - to show that he was God.

The modern concept of God is mad ... compared to the original.

Especially Catholics who believe that all people are equal and everyone must treat everyone else equally.

So, what they are saying is ... someone like me must make myself equal to a Catholic ... a Native ... a Nigger ... a Slanteye ... a Whatever.

Let us all thank the great God of Fire and Brimstone that that will never happen to God-Fearin' prodasin folk.

Sam's voice is switched off and a benevolent Voiceover is heard - a beautiful female voice - as Sam seethes inaudibly in the foreground and the 'theological' clergymen still continue to 'fight' in the background.

Voiceover

Tomas More and William Tyndale were both horribly executed.

And they were horribly executed by the same man ... Henry the Eighth.

More ... for being the Lord Chancellor who refused his king's orders to grant him a divorce and allow Henry to re-marry.

Tyndale ... for being a good theologian who wanted everyone to have access to the Word of God without clergy intermediaries.

We are now living in a modern world - where execution for failure in a debate is not normal.

Remember it is the power of the rulers of society - normally very stupid people - who decide the winner. It's not the power of the debate.

On a personal note ... the debate between More and Tyndale is one of the few things in history I would have given my right arm to be a fly on the wall for - because the ironic thing was ...

both were wrong ... and both were right.

I do realise that a fly doesn't have a right arm or even a left one - or they have many left and right arms - but please stay with me on this.

Wouldn't it have been great if their debate happened on modern media and we could have seen how mad it all was back then.

They flung disgusting insults and name-calling at each other but they did not resort to fisticuffs - or so was my understanding. But I doubt that now - as a casual glance around this studio will confirm.

I'm sure they had no idea how Christendom would become so fragmented and the massive religious wars that would result because of their ... debate.

The studio fades out the fighting clerics in the background and a smiling relaxed Sam, having regained calm is re-voiced and lit up in the foreground.

Sam : I'm terribly sorry. It appears they did not reach an accommodation in this debate tonight. But tune in next week when we will be discussing 'Extra-Terrestrials'

'Should we kill them or simply let them take over our lovely Planet'.

Realistically, letting them take over is probably the easiest option - but is it the right one?

(winking and pointing at the cameras) See you next time.

This is Sam McClelland reminding you all to ...

Be Nice ...

Be Aware ...

Be Fair ...

.....

Penny and Dolores (Can't wait)

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Penny a depressive but exceptionally pretty young woman who can only dwell in the negative, is sitting at her kitchen table with an almost empty glass of wine and an almost full bottle of wine and, beside this, a very empty wine bottle.

She is bedraggled and smoking a cigarette with as much fervour as she can and dusting the ash into the empty wine bottle.

Her flatmate arrives.

Dolores is an understanding young woman, comely, well dressed and exuding positive energy.

She waves her hand in front of her face to disperse as much of the cigarette smoke as she can - rather than inhaling it all - and tentatively approaches Penny.

Seeing her friend's dark mood, she smiles and continues eagerly.

Dolores : Hello sunshine!

Penny : Hi.

Dolores : (*enthusiastically*) So how did it go tonight?

Penny : Do you have to ask?

Dolores : Oh, I'm sorry.

Penny : It's not your fault, I suppose.

Dolores : Oh, no. But I can't believe it. Darien seemed a ...

Penny : Darrell. His name is Darrell.

Dolores : Darrell, yeah. He seemed like a really nice bloke. I thought you two were great together.

Penny : I just don't know what's wrong with men nowadays. Has the whole bloody world gone crazy?

Dolores : (*encouragingly*) So what happened? You were looking really nice. Believe me, you were Penelope. You told me you were going to invite him back. And I stayed away - till now. Oh, I'm so sorry, my dear.

Penny is silent and gulps more wine. Dolores sits beside her - determined to find a solution to this most recent Penny catastrophe.

She puts a comforting hand on Penny's closed fist.

Dolores : So, he came back ... and something went wrong?

Penny : No. He didn't come back.

Dolores : (*parentally*) OK. Now tell me exactly what happened, Penny.

Penny : (*hesitating*) OK. So there we were in the Black Lion. There was me – looking sexy – like you said. Wasn't smoking or drinking much – like you said. There was him – being a real gentleman and all.

Dolores : Sounds great so far. So ... what happened?

Penny : So – at the end of the night ... I leaned over and said ... as sexy as I could ... 'I wanna invite you back to my place and sleep with you tonight'.

Penny abruptly stops and gulps more wine. She puffs hard on her cigarette and tries to blow smoke rings as nonchalantly as she can under her trying circumstances.

Dolores : (*tentatively*) And ... And what did he say?

Penny : (*fuming*) He said 'I can't wait'.

Can you imagine Dolores? He said 'I can't wait'.

I thought men were gagging for it! Jesus Christ! What the Hell could be more important for him to do. But, obviously, something was more important that he couldn't postpone. Hello!

Dolores : (*realising*) Ahhh. I see ... So, what happened then?

Penny : Well. I was understandably angry. Goddam! I'm only bloody human Del,

Dolores : You shouted at him. Didn't you?

Penny : Bloody right. Wouldn't you?

I called him a poofter and told him to check out some male public toilets.

Because clearly that was what was more important for him tonight.

Lot's of his type of guys hang out there.

Then I stood up, finished my drink and poured his pint over his head and walked out. Bloody poof!

Penny and Dolores (Off Course)

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Penny and Darrell are sitting in front of the TV and cuddling on the couch with two glasses of wine and a wine bottle on the coffee table in front of them.

He is tentative and somewhat scared. She is embarrassed.

Penny : Darrell, look I know I said it before ...

Darrell : You said it many times so far this evening ... It's ok.

Penny : And I know you said you forgive me and all that ...

Darrell : Yes, my love, I forgive you ...

Penny : It's just that Dolores said I was out of order and I should try to be more level headed ... (*indicating how silly Dolores comment was*)

Darrell : Pen. It's ok. We all get language wrong sometimes and that's because we sometimes use language in different ways.

Language is a flexible beast and also a dangerous beast. It can mean different things in different situations.

One man's meat is another man's poison.

Penny : (*stunned*) I'm not starting a fight here, 'cause maybe I got the other thing wrong ... the last night ... but you did call me a sexy bit of meat today and I invited you around tonight ... to ... you know ...

Darrell : Yes. And it was lovely. Thanks.

Penny : Darrell. Am I a piece of meat to you? Is that just what I am to you?

Darrell : (*terrified*) No Penny. Please be reasonable. It's just a turn of phrase.

We are all meat and you are sexy meat. That's all, my love.

He cuddles and reassures her as best he can ... but she remains obstinate.

Penny : Darrell, after what Dolores said, I'm wondering ... how do you see my life.

Is it ok to you? Am I ok to you? How do you feel? Seriously! Tell me.

Darrell : Well, besides feeling that I'm walking in a mine-field sometimes, I feel fine.

She playfully pushes him aside and he is relieved he survived his fun observation.

Penny : You'd probably have me walking in front of you in that mine-field.

Although she remains vaguely smiling, he hugs her again with trepidation.

Penny : So, you think I'm ok and my life is going fine?

Darrell : Of course.

Her face becomes frozen in shock and dismay. She jumps to her feet, incandescent with rage and screams at him.

Penny : You fukkn faggot. You think my life is off course.

Or maybe it's all of me that's off course.

So what course should I be on ... Darrell the Mariner?

You probably see yourself as a great sea-farer and you believe I have a course to follow and I'm clearly off it.

You delusional poof.

She picks up his glass of wine and pours it over his head.

He jumps to his feet, grabs his jacket and runs to the apartment door.

He tries to speak but is unable to get a word in as she continues to rage against him.

Penny : I am not on any fukkn course and I am not ... therefore ... off that course.

You pathetic piece of shit. You useless poof.

She picks up her glass of wine and throws it at him. He escapes through the door and slams it behind him as the glass shatters on the closed door.

.....

Penny and Dolores (Dead Dolphins)

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Penny and Dolores are sitting on the couch and watching a beach scene on TV with a traditional Nature TV sound in the background and people playing in the water etc. Dolores is enjoying it and Penny definitely is not.

Penny : I was talking to my parents today.

Dolores : Oh good! How are they? I always loved them - ever since we were little girls at school together. They are a joy to meet. You're so lucky.

Penny : Yeah. Nice to meet. They asked me twice 'is Dolores looking after you ok?'

What the Hell does that mean Del? What did they mean by that?

Dolores : What? It means nothing. Like men say 'Is she looking after you ok' or women say 'Is he looking after you ok'. It simply means - how is everything?

Dolores is distraught and looks away with a look of horror on her face. Penny remains dispassionate and continues staring at the TV.

Penny : Can you imagine those bloody idiots swimming in the sea?

Dolores : *(trying to please her)* Yeah, bloody idiots.

Penny : Well. It's suicide, innit? And the sick parents who let their children out and into a sea of trouble and clearly don't give a damn what happens to them.

Dolores : OK Penny. I really have no idea what you mean. Again, I might say ...

Penny : *(interrupting)* Oh? So, where do all the dead dolphins go?

Dolores : I must admit that generally I am never surprised by what you say and take it on board objectively. But sometimes, you genuinely blow me away.

What ... dead ... dolphins?

Penny : *(surprised)* And dead whales ...

And dead seals ...

And dead fish.

Have you never wondered about any of that?

Dolores : Do you mean like Dolphin Heaven?

Penny : What! No. Don't be silly.

I mean where's the bones, mate. Where's all the bloody bones?

Dolores : The bones?

Penny : The sea should be littered with them.

Over all the millions and squillions of years.

And all the millions and squillions of dolphins and whales and millions and squillions of fish of all shapes and sizes.

There should be skeletons everywhere. Come on Del !

It should be a never-ending bloody huge graveyard out there.

In fact. there should be nothing under the surface of the water at all, except bones.

Miles high ... extending from the ocean floors.

Underwater visibility would be zero. Submarines would be scraped to pieces. And that would be the lucky ones who survived and made it to the surface. The majority would be stuck down there forever - trapped by huge whale skeletons.

All boats would have to be flat-bottomed with reinforced steel.

Swimmers - forget it. They'd come out ripped to pieces and die of blood loss on the shore.

But ... what do you see? Hmmm?

What do you see, Del? Nothing.

Nothing. That's what you see. Nothing.

As far down as you can see - not one goddam bone.

Not one bone - even at the bottom of the sea.

Penny waits dramatically for an answer but, Dolores can't formulate anything resembling an answer - only mono-syllabic splutters. Penny continues.

Penny : And don't tell me they don't have any bones Del. They're bloody full of bones. OK.

Twice as much as we have. Maybe ten times more!

Eat a fish and your mouth and throat are bristling with bones.

Your mouth is like a bloody porcupine.

Dramatic pause from Penny ... while Dolores is still trying to formulate an appropriate response which would be acceptable to Penny.

Penny : And go to any museum and you'll see a huge whale skeleton.

(dramatically) But, believe me, that fish and that whale that we catch are the lucky ones ... before they also ... disappear.

Dolores : Can't say I've really thought about it much, Pen.

I thought I had something to say - but it's gone now.

Penny : Well Dolores, surely you've wondered about the Bermuda Triangle.

And there's loads of them triangles over the whole world.

Some of them are even squares and circles.

No one knows where they're lurking.

And lurking they surely are, Del.

They keep popping up in different places all the time.

And it's not just the dolphins and whales and fish that disappear there, mate.

It's people ... and planes ... and boats.

Just about everything disappears there.

And still ... wait for it ... not one bone.

Not one goddam bone, Del.

It's a mysterious world we live in. Very goddam mysterious.

Dolores : Just an observation Penny, you don't need to respond, and please don't but ...

Don't you think you watch too much television.

.....

Penny and Dolores (Expiry date)

INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Penny and Dolores are sitting on the couch watching a ghost story on television. Lights are dimmed and flickering on their faces and atmospheric scary music can be heard. On the coffee table in front of them are the remnants of a takeaway dinner.

Dolores : Pen. Do you believe in ghosts?

Penny : Course I do.

Dolores : There's no evidence for it though. Real evidence. Factual, hard evidence. Come on!

Penny : (*shocked*) Evidence. Course there is.

Dolores : I realise I shouldn't ask you this but ... do you have ... any ... evidence?

Penny looks at her with disdain. Dolores is familiar with this and doesn't react.

Then she picks up the almost-empty bottle of ketchup and hands it to Dolores.

Penny : So what does the Expiry Date say on that?

Dolores searches and finds the date and reacts in surprise.

Dolores : My God. It's way past it's date ... it's months too old.

Penny : That's right Dolores. It's an ex bottle of ketchup. Do you know what that means ...

(*in Monty Python fashion*) It was once a bottle of ketchup, sitting majestically on the 'Has to Sell' bin in a Tesco supermarket and still feeling proud of it's hitherto majestic splendour. And ... before that ... it was on the 'Before Expiry Date' Tesco supermarket shelf and equally proud of itself.

And before that it glided majestically on the thermal currents along the fjords of Norway and ...

Dolores : (*angrily*) Stop Pen. Have you ever been to the fjords in Norway ?

Penny : (*taken aback*) Well, no. Now that you, so rudely, ask.

Dolores : Well, I have. And believe me, there are no ketchup bottles gliding majestically - or gliding in any other way - along the fjords. OK.

Penny : (*romantically sobbing*) A girl can dream, can't she? Why the cruelty?

Dolores : Pen. The ketchup bottle has expired. That's all.

Penny : Yes. You can say that. But it's still here, isn't it? The ketchup bottle is still here. Right? (*pointing to it*) There it is! The bottle and the ketchup inside it.

Penny's bizarre logic slowly dawns on Dolores - only because she knows her so well.

Dolores : So ... a ghost is just someone who has passed their Expiry date ... but they're still here.

Penny : Exactly!

With very differing emotions, both ladies turn their attention to the TV again.

Penny continues dramatically, in a scary movie Voiceover manner with the light from the TV flickering on her bowed face.

Penny : They are not at rest, Dolores.

In fact ... (*using inverted fingers*) the only Rest they know is ... the Rest of their Lives.

Wandering the Earth ... forever.

Forever searching for the Eternal Rest ... the Eternal Sleep ... but can't find it.

And so their search goes on, eternally.

Silence as Dolores remains unimpressed and turns to look at her accusingly.

Dolores : Can't understand why you didn't tell me the ketchup was out-of-date.

Penny : (*disappointed with her friend*) I'm shocked at your meagre sense of priorities, Del.

Hello! I think, I had more important things to tell you tonight.

Wouldn't you agree?

.....