

## Poor Reception – DAY 11 (Morning)

*Dad walks in with his customary blue corner shop bag with a Daily Mail, cans of lager, mobile phone, tobacco tin inside. His ritual begins.*

DAD: Hiya son. Sorry it's been a couple of days. I had to pop back home and sort out some stuff. I finally got hold of Fanny. She didn't have a clue you were here so I told her what had happened. Said she would come down and see you.

THE MAN: She did. Went swimmingly.

DAD: Something's going on there. I mean who doesn't know that their fiancé's in hospital, eh? I swear to God, if you've let another one slip through those bloody fingers of yours, well, I don't know.....but it won't be nice.

THE MAN: Nothing's going on, Dad, we just had an argu...

DAD: ...You and women. You and bloody women. Why you couldn't you settle down with just one of them, like me and your Mum, God rest her soul.

THE MAN: You and Mum weren't exactly perfect, Dad.

DAD: I mean, Jasmin was a nice one.

THE MAN: Jasmine? She were a psycho, Dad. She stole my bloody bed. My actual bed that I actually slept in! I mean who steals a bed?

DAD: And what about that American one.

THE MAN  
& DAD: Esme

THE MAN  
& DAD: The hippy.

THE MAN: She wanted me to go vegan, Dad. Vegan.

DAD: Anyway.

THE MAN: Are we going to spend all morning going over my failed relationships, or shall we just crack open the cans and get going on the thinly veiled racism. What's it going to be, Dad?

*Dad opens his can of lager and prepares his Daily Mail.*

THE MAN: There we go.

DAD: Well, I'll try giving Fanny a call in a bit and see what she says. Try and get to the bottom of this.

THE MAN: She won't speak to you if you fucking call her Fanny, I'll tell you that for nowt. Look, we just had an argument. Same shit, different day.

*Dad begins rifling through his plastic bag.*

DAD: Right, so, despite your Uncle Barry insisting that he knows all about technical bollocks, it turns out he knows bugger all. So I had to go to your Aunty Jen to get me all set up on the internet. So you owe me, right? Because, your Aunty Jen, well let's just say it's becoming a bit of an hostile environment. Reminds me of your Mam so much she does. So Fran eventually sent me a text with your password and I managed to get logged in. So we've put a message on your wall and I've let people know what happened. *Gets out a new, but basic smartphone and starts pawing at it like a cat pawing a ball of wool. Squints.* See what you've done to me? I've gone all tech savvy!

*Shows him the phone.*

THE MAN: Oh my God. They saw you coming didn't they?

DAD: It comes with 1 gigabits of internet and loads of minutes and texts. I don't really understand it but I'm told this is the best way to get in contact.

THE MAN: Watch out comments sections, a new passenger is about to get on the crazy train. Choo Choo!

DAD: Now we've had loads of people asking how you are. I've had quite a few texts too. Gav says *(reading from phone)* 'I'm on holiday at the moment and will have a beer with him once I'm back. He'll be up in no time'. I don't think he realises how bad it is. I'll set him straight. One of your mates said something on facebook last night. Now who was it? Ah that's right, Thomas Mckendrick.

THE MAN: Tom!

*(Reading)* I was on the phone to him when it happened. I thought it was really strange because he kept cutting off. Please send him all our love. I'm going to come over as soon as I can. I'm looking at flights now. We're both really shocked and gutted. Love, Tom and Neil.

THE MAN: Love you guys too.

DAD: Tom and Neil? Tom and Neil? Like as in Thomas and Neil? Well, blow me, there's nowt as queer as folk, eh?

THE MAN: You said it.

DAD: I just realised what I said.

THE MAN: Yep.

*They both start laughing.*

*A man in the bed next door starts to scream, really loud. He's suffering from Alzheimer's and has had a stroke.*

MR SANDHU: NO! NO! I will NOT. Harjinda, tell her. I don't even like it. *Interspersed with some Punjabi.* Where am I? Who are you? What are you doing here? Mother, Father. There's a thief!

DAD: Did somebody steal his marbles?

*Dad bursts out laughing again and The Man follows.*

*The alarm goes off and a group of nurses arrive to restrain Mr Sandhu.*

THE MAN: Poor sod.

DAD: Poor sod.

Right. Where were we? Yeah, Ash has written that he's really sorry for what happened. That's nice.

*Phone starts ringing and buzzing with an abrasive ringtone.*

THE MAN: Woah Dad. Jesus!

*The phone keeps ringing until he figures out how to answer it. He grabs his tin of tobacco from his pocket and starts rolling it.*

DAD: Hello? Oh hello Jen. No, couldn't figure out how to answer it. Sure I will. No, nothing much. All the same here. What was that? Do I want dinner? No, I ate here at the hospital. Oh sorry, you mean tea. I forget. Yeah, well if you don't mind that'd be great. I'll be leaving here soon. No, I won't be smoking. No, filthy habit. Right. See you.

*He looks over at THE MAN, flicks it into his mouth and puts his finger over his lips to say "sssh". A flicker of the cheeky, fun loving man that he used to be.*

DAD: See you soon, son.

THE MAN: Later.

*A smile zips across his face, only to be replaced when he again realises the reality of his situation.*