

Characters

Christopher Boone

Siobhan

Ed

Judy

Mrs Alexander / Posh Woman / Voice Six

Mrs Shears / Mrs Gascoyne / Voice One / Woman on Train /

Woman on Heath / Shopkeeper

Roger (Mr Shears) / Duty Sergeant / Voice Two / Mr Wise /

Man behind Counter / Drunk One

Policeman One / Mr Thompson / Voice Three / Drunk Two /

Man with Socks / Man on Phone / London Transport

Policeman / London Policeman

Number 40 / Voice Five / Lady in Street / Information /

Punk Girl

Reverend Peters / Rhodri / Uncle Terry / Voice Four /

Station Policeman / Station Guard

All actors remain on stage unless prescribed otherwise.

There is also a dead dog. With a fork sticking out of it.

Scenes run into one another without interruption regardless of alterations in space or time or chronology.

Part One

A dead dog lies in the middle of the stage. A large garden fork is sticking out of its side.

Christopher Boone, 15 years old, stands on one side of it. His 42-year-old neighbour Mrs Shears stands on the other.

They stand for a while without saying anything. The rest of the company watch, waiting to see who is going to dare to speak first.

Mrs Shears What in fuck's name have you done to my dog?

Christopher is frozen to the spot.

Mrs Shears Oh no. Oh no. Oh no. Oh my fucking Christ.

Christopher's teacher, 27-year-old Siobhan, opens

Christopher's book. She reads from it.

Siobhan It was seven minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the lawn in front of Mrs Shears' house.

Mrs Shears Get away from my dog.

Siobhan Its eyes were closed. It looked as if it was running on its side, the way dogs run when they think they are chasing a cat in a dream. But the dog was not running or asleep. The dog was dead.

Mrs Shears Get away from my dog.

Siobhan There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog. The dog was called Wellington. It belonged to Mrs Shears who was our friend. She lived on the opposite side of the road, two houses to the left.

Mrs Shears Get away from my dog.

Christopher takes two steps away from the dog.

Siobhan My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and the capital cities. And every prime number up to 7507.

Mrs Shears Get away from my dog for Christ's sake.

Christopher *puts his hands over his ears. He closes his eyes. He rolls forward. He presses his forehead onto the grass. He starts growling.*

Siobhan After twelve and a half minutes a policeman arrived. He had a big orange leaf stuck to the bottom of his shoe which was poking out from one side. This is good Christopher. It's quite exciting. I like the details. They make it more realistic.

Policeman One *enters. He has a big orange leaf stuck to the bottom of his shoe, which is poking out from one side. He squats next to Christopher.*

Siobhan He squatted down next to me. He said to me:

Christopher *stops growling.*

Policeman One Would you like to tell me what's going on here, young man?

Christopher *lifts his head from the ground.*

There is some time.

Christopher *looks at the policeman.*

There is some time.

Siobhan I do not tell lies. Mother used to say that this was because I was a good person. But it is not because I am a good person. It is because I can't tell lies.

Christopher The dog is dead.

Policeman One I'd got that far:

Christopher I think someone killed the dog.

Policeman One How old are you?

Christopher I'm fifteen years and three months and two days.

Policeman One And what precisely are you doing in the garden?

Christopher I'm talking to you.

Policeman One OK, what were you doing in the garden in the first place?

Christopher I was holding the dog.

Policeman One Why were you holding the dog? Why were you holding the dog?

Christopher I like dogs.

Policeman One Did you kill the dog?

Christopher I did not kill the dog.

Policeman One Is this your fork?

Christopher No.

Policeman One You seem very upset about this.

I'm going to ask you once again.

Christopher *starts growling.*

Policeman One Terrific.

Christopher *carries on growling.*

Policeman One Young man I'm going to ask you to stop making that noise and to stand up please calmly and quietly.

Christopher *carries on growling.*

Policeman One Marvellous. Great. Just flipping –

Policeman One *tries to lift him up by his arm.*

Christopher *screams. He hits Policeman One, who starts at*

entirely sure what to say or quite believing what has just happened.

Policeman One I'm arresting you for assaulting a police officer.

I strongly advise you to get into the back of the police car because if you try any of that monkey business again you little shit I am going to seriously lose my rag. Is that understood?

Siobhan I find people confusing. This is for two main reasons. The first main reason is that people do a lot of talking without using any words. Siobhan says that if you raise one eyebrow it can mean lots of different things. It can mean, 'I want to do sex with you.' I never said that.

Christopher Yes you did.

Siobhan I didn't use those words Christopher.

Christopher You did on 12 September last year. At first break.

Siobhan And it can also mean, 'I think that what you just said was very stupid.'

Duty Sergeant Could you take your laces out of your shoes please Christopher?

Christopher *does.*

Duty Sergeant Thank you. Could you empty your pocket onto the desk please?

Christopher Is that in case I have anything in them that I could use to kill myself or escape or attack a policeman with?

The Duty Sergeant looks at him for a beat.

Duty Sergeant That's right.

Christopher I've got a Swiss Army knife but I only use that for doing 'odd jobs' not for stabbing things or hurting people.

Duty Sergeant Jolly good.

Christopher *empties his pockets.*

Voice Four A piece of string.

Voice Five A piece of a wooden puzzle.

Voice Six Three pellets of rat food for Toby, my pet rat.

Voice Four £1.47 (this was made up of a £1 coin, a 20p coin, two 10p coins, a 5p coin and a 2p coin).

Voice Six A red paperclip.

Voice Four A key for the front door.

Voice Five A Swiss Army knife with thirteen attachments including a wire stripper and a saw and a toothpick and tweezers.

Duty Sergeant Could you take your watch off please Christopher?

Christopher No.

Duty Sergeant I'm sorry Christopher?

Christopher I need my watch to know exactly what time it is.

Duty Sergeant Take your watch off, please Christopher.

Christopher please will you take your watch off. I'm asking you for a final time.

Give it here lad.

The Duty Sergeant tries to take the watch.

Christopher starts screaming.

The Duty Sergeant stops. He moves away. He nods his head.

Christopher stops screaming.

Duty Sergeant It's all right son. You keep it.

Christopher *calms down.*

Duty Sergeant Do you have any family Christopher?

Christopher Yes I do.

Duty Sergeant And who is your family?

Christopher Father and Mother but Mother's dead. And also Uncle Terry who is in Sunderland. He is my father's brother and my grandparents too but three of them are dead and Grandma Burton is in a home because she has senile dementia and thinks I'm someone on television.

Duty Sergeant Right. Lovely. Do you know your father's phone number Christopher?

Christopher *turns to Ed. Ed looks at him. He holds his hand out in front of him with his fingers stretched. Christopher does the same. They touch fingers. Then let go.*

Christopher I could see the Milky Way as we drove towards the town centre.

Ed Could you?

Christopher Some people think the Milky Way is a long line of stars, but it isn't. Our galaxy is a huge disc of stars of millions of light years across and the solar system is somewhere near the outer edge of the disc.

Ed Is that right?

Christopher For a long time scientists were puzzled by the fact that the sky is dark at night even though there are billions of stars in the universe and there must be stars in every direction you look, so that the sky should be full of starlight because there is very little in the way to stop the light reaching earth.

Ed *stares at him. Says nothing.*

Christopher Then they worked out that the universe was expanding, that the stars were all rushing away from one another after the Big Bang and the further the stars were away from us the faster they were moving, some of them nearly as fast as the speed of light, which was why their light never reached us.

Ed Terrific.

Duty Sergeant Christopher. Mr Boone. Could you come this way please?

Christopher Are you going to interview me and record the interview?

Duty Sergeant I don't think there will be any need for that. I've spoken to your father and he says you didn't mean to hit the policeman.

Did you mean to hit the policeman?

Christopher Yes.

Duty Sergeant But you didn't mean to hurt the policeman?

Christopher No. I didn't mean to hurt the policeman I just wanted him to stop touching me.

Duty Sergeant You know that it's wrong to hit a policeman don't you?

Christopher I do.

Duty Sergeant Did you kill the dog Christopher?

Christopher I didn't kill the dog.

Duty Sergeant Do you know that it is wrong to lie to a policeman and that you can get into a very great deal of trouble if you do?

Christopher Yes.

Duty Sergeant Do you know who killed the dog?

Christopher No.

Duty Sergeant Are you telling the truth?

Christopher Yes. I always tell the truth.

Duty Sergeant Right. I'm going to give you a caution.

Christopher Is that going to be on a piece of paper like a certificate I can keep?

Duty Sergeant No. A caution means that we are going to keep a record of what you did, that you hit a policeman but that it was an accident and that you didn't mean to hurt the policeman.

Christopher But it wasn't an accident.

Ed Christopher, please.

Duty Sergeant If you get into any more trouble we will take out this record and see that you have been given a caution and we will take things much more seriously. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Christopher Yes.

Siobhan The second main reason is that people often talk using metaphors. These are examples of metaphors.

Voice One I am going to seriously lose my rag.

Voice Two He was the apple of her eye

Voice Three They had a skeleton in the cupboard.

Voice Four We had a real pig of a day.

Voice Five The dog was stone dead.

Siobhan The word metaphor means carrying something from one place to another and it is when you describe something by using a word for something that it isn't. This means that the word metaphor is a metaphor. Wow. That's clever.

Christopher It's true.

Siobhan Yes. I think it should be called a lie because a pig is not like a day and people do not have skeletons in their cupboards. And when I try and make a picture of the phrase in my head it just confuses me because imagining an apple in someone's eye doesn't have anything to do with liking someone a lot and it makes you forget what the person was talking about.

Christopher turns to Ed.

Christopher I'm sorry.

Ed It's OK.

Christopher I didn't kill Wellington.

Ed I know.

Christopher you have to stay out of trouble, OK?

Christopher I didn't know I was going to get into trouble. I like Wellington and I went to say hello to him, but I didn't know that someone had killed him.

Ed Just try and keep your nose out of other people's business.

Christopher I am going to find out who killed Wellington.

Ed Were you listening to what I was saying, Christopher?

Christopher Yes I was listening to what you were saying but when someone gets murdered you have to find out who did it so that they can be punished.

Ed It's a bloody dog Christopher, a bloody dog.

Christopher I think dogs are important too. I think some dogs are cleverer than some people. Steve, for example, who comes to school on Thursdays needs help eating his food and he probably couldn't even fetch a stick.

Ed Leave it.

Christopher I wonder if the police will find out who killed him and punish the person.

Ed I said leave it for God's sake.

Christopher Are you sad about Wellington?

Ed Yes Christopher you could say that. You could very well say that.

Siobhan reads more from the book.

Siobhan Mother died two years ago.

I came home from school one day and no one answered the door, so I went and found the secret key that we keep under a flowerpot outside the kitchen window. I let myself into the house and wiped my feet on the mat. I put the key in the bowl on the table. I took my coat off and hung it by the side of the fridge so it would be ready for school the next day and gave three pellets of rat food to Toby who is my pet rat. I made myself a raspberry milkshake and heated it up in the microwave. Then I went up to my bedroom and turned on my bedroom light and played six games of Tetris and got to level 38 which is my fourth best ever score.

An hour later Father came home from work.

Ed Christopher have you seen your mum?

Christopher No.

Siobhan He went downstairs and started making some phone calls. I did not hear what he said. Then he came up to my room and said he had to go out for a while and he wasn't sure how long he would be. He said that if I needed anything I should call him on his mobile phone.

He was away for two and a half hours. When he came back I went downstairs.

Ed I'm afraid you won't be seeing your mother for a while.

Christopher Why not?

Ed Your mother has had to go into hospital.

Christopher Can we visit her?

Ed No.

Christopher Why can't we?

Ed She needs rest. She needs to be on her own.

Christopher Is it a psychiatric hospital?

Ed No. It's an ordinary hospital. She has a problem . . . a problem with her heart.

Christopher We will need to take food to her.

Ed I'll take some to her during the day when you're at school and I'll give it to the doctors and they can give it to your mum, OK?

Christopher But you can't cook.

Ed Christopher. Look. I'll buy some ready-made stuff from Marks & Spencer and take those in. She likes those.

Christopher I'll make her a get-well card.

If I make her a get-well card will you take it in for her tomorrow?

Siobhan How are you today Christopher?

Christopher I'm very well thank you.

Siobhan That's good.

Christopher In the bus on the way to school we passed four red cars in a row.

Siobhan Four?

Christopher So today is a Good Day.

Siobhan Great. I am glad.

Christopher I've decided I am going to try and find out who killed Wellington because a Good Day is a day for projects and planning things.

Siobhan Who's Wellington?

Christopher Wellington is a dog that used to belong to my neighbour Mrs Shears who is our friend but he is dead now because somebody killed him by putting a garden fork through him. And I found him and then a policeman thought I'd killed him but I hadn't and then he tried to touch me so I hit him and then I had to go to the police station.

Siobhan Gosh.

Christopher And I am going to find out who really killed Wellington and make it a project. Even though Father told me not to.

Siobhan Did he?

Christopher Yes.

Siobhan I see.

Christopher I don't always do what I'm told.

Siobhan Why?

Christopher Because when people tell you what to do it is usually confusing and does not make sense. For example people often say 'Be quiet' but they don't tell you how long to be quiet for.

Siobhan No. Why did your father tell you not to try to find out who killed Wellington, Christopher?

Christopher I don't know.

Siobhan Christopher if your father's told you not to do something maybe you shouldn't do it.

Well, we're meant to be writing stories today, so why don't you write about what happened to Wellington?

Christopher OK I will.

Siobhan I can help you.

Christopher Will you help me with the spelling and the grammar and the footnotes?

Ed Christopher, I'm sorry your mother's died.

She's had a heart attack.

It wasn't expected.

Christopher What kind of heart attack?

Ed I don't know what kind of heart attack. Now isn't the moment Christopher to be asking questions like that.

Christopher It was probably an aneurysm.

Ed I'm sorry Christopher, I'm really sorry.

Mrs Shears' house is assembled.

Siobhan That evening I went round to Mrs Shears' house and knocked on the door and waited for her to answer it.

Mrs Shears answers her door. She is drinking a cup of tea.

Mrs Shears What are you doing here?

Christopher I wanted to come and tell you that I didn't kill Wellington. And also I want to find out who killed him.

Mrs Shears Christopher, I really don't think I want to see you right now.

Christopher Do you know who killed Wellington?

Mrs Shears Can you go now Christopher.

Christopher I wanted to see if the fork was in the shed.

Mrs Shears If you don't go now I will call the police again.

Christopher Reverend Peters, where is heaven?

Reverend Peters I'm sorry Christopher?

Christopher In our universe whereabouts is it exactly?

Reverend Peters It's not in our universe. It's another kind of place altogether.

Christopher There isn't anything outside our universe Reverend Peters. There isn't another kind of place altogether. Except there might be if you go through a black hole. But a black hole is what is called a singularity which means it's impossible to find out what is on the other side

because the gravity of a black hole is so big that even electromagnetic waves like light can't get out of it, and things which are far away. And if heaven is on the other side of a black hole then dead people would have to be fired into space on a rocket to get there and they aren't or people would notice.

Reverend Peters looks at him for a while before he responds.

Reverend Peters Well when I say heaven is outside our universe it's really just a manner of speaking. I suppose what it really means is that they are with God.

Christopher But where is God?

Reverend Peters Christopher we should talk about this on another day when I have more time.

Siobhan The next day was Saturday and there is not much to do on a Saturday unless Father takes me out somewhere on an outing to the boating lake or to the garden centre, but on this Saturday England were playing Romania at football which meant that we weren't going to go on an outing because Father wanted to watch the match on the television. So I made a decision. I decided to do some more detection. I decided to go out on my own.

Mr Thompson Can I help you?

Christopher Do you know who killed Wellington?

Mr Thompson Who are you?

Christopher I'm Christopher Boone from number 36 and I know you. You're Mr Thompson.

Mr Thompson I'm Mr Thompson's brother.

Christopher Do you know who killed Wellington?

Mr Thompson Who the fuck is Wellington?

Christopher Mrs Shears' dog. Mrs Shears is from number 41.

Mr Thompson Someone killed her dog?

Christopher With a fork.

Mr Thompson Jesus Christ.

Christopher A garden fork.

Mr Thompson Oh.

Christopher Do you know who killed him?

Mr Thompson I haven't a bloody clue.

Christopher Did you see anything suspicious on Thursday evening?

Mr Thompson Look son, do you really think you should be going round asking questions like this?

Christopher Yes, because I want to find out who killed Wellington and I am writing a book about it.

Mr Thompson Well I was in Colchester on Thursday so you're asking the wrong bloke.

Christopher Thank you.

Number 40 It's Christopher isn't it?

Christopher Yes it is. Do you know who killed Wellington?

Number 40 No. No. I don't. No. I'm sorry.

Christopher Did you see anything suspicious on Thursday evening, which might be a clue?

Number 40 Like what?

Christopher Like strangers or the sound of people arguing.

Number 40 I didn't Christopher, no.

Christopher Do you know of anyone who might want to make Mrs Shears sad?

Number 40 Perhaps you should be talking to your father about this.

Christopher I can't talk to my father about it because he told me to stay out of other people's business.

Number 40 Well maybe he has a point Christopher.

Christopher So you don't know anything that might be a clue.

Number 40 No. You be careful young man.

Christopher I will be. Thank you for helping me with my questions.

Do you know who killed Wellington on Thursday night?

Mr Wise Bloody hell. Policemen really are getting younger aren't they?

Mr Wise laughs. Christopher walks away.

Christopher Do you know anything about Wellington getting killed?

Mrs Alexander I'm afraid you're going to have to say that again. I'm a little deaf.

Christopher Do you know anything about Wellington getting killed?

Mrs Alexander I heard about it yesterday. Dreadful. Dreadful.

Christopher Do you know who killed him?

Mrs Alexander No, I don't.

Christopher Somebody must know because the person who killed Wellington knows that they killed Wellington. Unless they were a mad person and didn't know what they were doing. Or unless they had amnesia.

Mrs Alexander Well I suppose you're probably right.

Christopher Thank you for helping me with my investigation.

Mrs Alexander You're Christopher aren't you?

Christopher Yes. I live at number 36.

Mrs Alexander We haven't talked before, have we?

Christopher No. I don't talk to strangers. But I'm doing detective work.

Mrs Alexander I see you every day, going to school on your school bus. It's very nice of you to come and say hello. Even if it's only because you're doing detective work.

Christopher Thank you.

Mrs Alexander I have a grandson your age.

Christopher My age is fifteen years and three months and three days.

Mrs Alexander Well almost your age. You don't have a dog, do you?

Christopher No.

Mrs Alexander You'd probably like a dog wouldn't you?

Christopher I have a rat.

Mrs Alexander A rat?

Christopher He's called Toby.

Mrs Alexander Oh.

Christopher Most people don't like rats because they think they carry diseases like bubonic plague. But that's only because they lived in sewers and stowed away on ships coming from foreign countries where there were strange diseases. But rats are very clean.

Mrs Alexander Do you want to come in for tea?

Christopher I don't go into other people's houses.

Mrs Alexander Well maybe I could bring some tea out here. Do you like lemon squash?

Christopher I only like orange squash.

Mrs Alexander Luckily I have some of that as well. And what about Battenberg?

Christopher I don't know because I don't know what Battenberg is.

Mrs Alexander It's a kind of cake. It has marzipan icing round the edge.

Christopher Is it a long cake with a square cross-section which is divided into equally sized, alternately coloured squares?

Mrs Alexander Yes I think you could probably describe it like that.

Christopher I think I'd like the pink squares but not the yellow squares because I don't like yellow. And I don't know what marzipan is so I don't know whether I'll like that.

Mrs Alexander I'm afraid marzipan is yellow too. Perhaps I should bring out some biscuits instead. Do you like biscuits?

Christopher Yes. Some sorts of biscuits.

Mrs Alexander I'll get a selection.

She goes into her house.

He waits. Then before she gets back.

Siobhan She moved very slowly because she was an old lady and she was inside the house for more than six minutes and I began to get nervous because I didn't know her well enough to know whether she was telling the truth about getting orange squash and Battenberg cake. And I thought she might be ringing the police and then I'd get into much more serious trouble because of the caution. So I walked away.

The Company cheer, as if a goal has been scored.

Christopher Why would you kill a dog?

Siobhan I wouldn't.

Christopher I think you would only kill a dog if a) you hated the dog or b) if you were mad or c) because you wanted to make Mrs Shears upset. I don't know anybody who hated Wellington so if it was a) it was probably a stranger. I don't know any mad people either, so if it was b) it was also probably a stranger.

Siobhan Right.

Christopher But most murders are committed by someone who is known to the victim. In fact, you are most likely to be murdered by a member of your own family on Christmas Day.

Siobhan Is that a fact?

Christopher Yes actually it is a fact. Wellington was therefore most likely to have been killed by someone known to him. I only know one person who didn't like Mrs Shears and that is Mr Shears who divorced Mrs Shears and left her to live somewhere else and who knew Wellington very well indeed. This means that Mr Shears is my Prime Suspect.

Siobhan Christopher.

Christopher I am going to find out more about Mr Shears.

Mrs Gascoyne Mr Boone, nobody has ever taken an A level in the school before.

Ed He can be the first then.

Mrs Gascoyne I don't know if we have the facilities in the school to allow him to do that.

Ed Then get the facilities.

Mrs Gascoyne I can't treat Christopher differently to any other student.

Ed Why not?

Mrs Gascoyne Because then everybody would want to be treated differently.

Ed So?

Mrs Gascoyne It would set a precedent. Christopher can always do his A levels later. When he's 18.

Ed Christopher is getting a crap enough deal already don't you think, without you shitting on him from a great height as well. Jesus, this is the one thing he's really good at.

Mrs Gascoyne We should talk about this later. Maybe on our own.

Ed Are there things which you're too embarrassed to say to me in front of Christopher?

Mrs Gascoyne No. It's not that.

Ed Say them now then.

Mrs Gascoyne If Christopher sits an A level then he would have to have a member of staff looking after him on his own in a separate room.

Ed I'll pay for it. They can do it after school. Here. Fifty quid. Is that enough?

Mrs Gascoyne Mr Boone.

Ed I'm not going to take no for an answer.

Ed turns to Christopher.

Ed Where have you been?

Christopher I have been out.

Ed I have just had a phone call from Mrs Shears. What the hell were you doing poking round her garden?

Christopher I was doing detective work trying to figure out who killed Wellington.

Ed How many times do I have to tell you Christopher? I told you to keep your nose out of other people's business.

Christopher I think Mr Shears probably killed Wellington.

Ed (slouts) I will not have that man's name mentioned in my house.

Beat.

Everybody on stage pauses to look at Ed and Christopher.

Christopher Why not?

Ed That man is evil.

Christopher Does that mean he might have killed Wellington?

Ed Jesus wept.

Christopher I know you told me not to get involved in other people's business but Mrs Shears is a friend of ours.

Ed Well, she's not a friend any more.

Christopher Why not?

Ed OK Christopher. I am going to say this for the last and final time. I will not tell you again. Look at me when I'm talking to you for God's sake. Look at me. You are not to go asking Mrs Shears who killed that bloody dog. You are not to go asking anyone who killed that bloody dog. You are not to go trespassing on other people's gardens. You are to stop this ridiculous bloody detective game right now. I am going to make you promise me Christopher. And you know what it means when I make you promise.

Christopher I know.

Ed Promise me that you will give up this ridiculous game right now, OK?

Christopher I promise.

Siobhan I think I would make a very good astronaut.

Ed Yes mate. You probably would.

Siobhan To be a good astronaut you have to be intelligent and I'm intelligent. You also have to understand how machines work and I'm good at understanding how machines work.

Christopher You also have to be someone who would like being on their own in a tiny spacecraft thousands and thousands of miles away from the surface of the earth and not panic or get claustrophobia or homesick or insane. And I really like little spaces so long as there is no one else in them with me.

Ed I noticed.

Siobhan Sometimes when I want to be on my own I get into the airing cupboard and slide in beside the boiler and pull the door closed behind me and sit there and think for hours and it makes me feel very calm.

Christopher So I would have to be an astronaut on my own or have my own part of the spacecraft that no one else could come into. And also there are no yellow things or brown things in a spacecraft so that would be OK, too.

And I would have to talk to other people from Mission Control, but we would do that through a radio link-up and a TV monitor so it wouldn't be like real people who are strangers but it would be like playing a computer game.

Ed Which you like.

Christopher Also I wouldn't be homesick at all because I'd be surrounded by lots of things I like, which are machines and computers and outer space. And I would be able to look out of a little window in the spacecraft and know that there was no one else near me for thousands and thousands –

Ed Christopher.

Christopher What?

Ed Could you please, just, give it a bit of a break, mate. Please.

Siobhan And know that there was no one else near me for thousands and thousands of miles which is what I sometimes pretend at night in the summer when I go and lie on the lawn and look up at the sky and I put my hands round the sides of my face so that I can't see the fence and the chimney and the washing line and I can pretend I'm in space.

And all I could see would be stars. And stars are the places where the molecules that life is made of were constructed billions of years ago. For example, all the iron in your blood, which stops you being anaemic, was made in a star.

And I would like it if I could take Toby with me into space, and that might be allowed because they sometimes do take animals into space for experiments, so if I could think of a good experiment you could do with a rat that didn't hurt the rat, I could make them let me take Toby.

But if they didn't let me I would still go because it would be a Dream Come True.

Christopher Father said.

Siobhan I see that's a pity.

Christopher So the book is finished.

Siobhan Well, Christopher, if your father said he wanted you to stop then I think he probably has a good reason and I think you should stop. But you can still be very proud because what you've written so far is just, well it's great.

Christopher It's very short.

Siobhan Well some very good books are very short.

Christopher / It's not a proper book.

Siobhan Why not?

Christopher It doesn't have a proper ending. I never found out who killed Wellington. So the murderer is still At Large.

Siobhan Not all murders are solved Christopher. Not all murderers are caught.

Christopher I don't like the idea that he could be living somewhere nearby and that I might meet him when I go out for a walk at night.

Siobhan I don't think that's going to happen Christopher.

Christopher Father said I was never to mention Mr Shears' name in our house again and that he was an evil man and maybe that meant he was the person who killed Wellington.

Siobhan Christopher, I think you should do what your father tells you to do.

Mrs Alexander What happened to you the other day?

Christopher Which day?

Mrs Alexander I came out again and you'd gone. I had to eat all the biscuits myself.

Christopher I went away.

Mrs Alexander I gathered that.

Christopher I thought you might ring the police.

Mrs Alexander Why on earth would I do that?

Christopher Because I was poking my nose into other people's business and Father said I shouldn't investigate who killed Wellington. And a policeman gave me a caution and if I get into trouble again it will be a lot worse because of the caution.

Mrs Alexander You're very shy aren't you Christopher?

Christopher I'm not allowed to talk to you.

Mrs Alexander Don't worry I'm not going to tell the police and I'm not going to tell your father because there's nothing wrong with having a chat. Having a chat is just being friendly, isn't it?

Christopher I don't do chatting.

Mrs Alexander Do you like computers?

Christopher Yes. I like computers. I have a computer at home in my bedroom.

Mrs Alexander I know. I can see you sitting at your computer in your bedroom sometimes when I look across the street.

Christopher And I like maths and looking after Toby. And I also like outer space and I like being on my own.

Mrs Alexander I bet you're very good at Maths aren't you?

Christopher I am. I'm going to do A level Maths next month. And I'm going to get an A*.

Mrs Alexander Really? A level maths?

Christopher Yes. I don't tell lies.

Mrs Alexander I apologise. I didn't mean to suggest that you were lying. I just wondered if I heard you correctly. I'm a little deaf sometimes.

Christopher I remember you told me. I'm the first person to do an A level from my school because it's a special school. All the other children at my school are stupid. Except I'm not meant to call them stupid, even though that is what they are.

Mrs Alexander Well I am very impressed. And I hope you do get an A*.

Christopher I will.

Mrs Alexander And the other thing I know about you is your favourite colour is not yellow.

Christopher No. And it's not brown either. My favourite colour is red and metal colour. Do you know Mr Shears?

Mrs Alexander Not really, no. I mean I knew him well enough to say hello but I didn't know much about him. I think he worked in the National Westminster bank in town.

Christopher Father said that he is an evil man. Do you know why he said that?

Mrs Alexander Perhaps it would be best not to talk about these things Christopher.

Christopher Why not?

Mrs Alexander Because maybe your father is right and you shouldn't go round asking questions about this.

Christopher Why?

Mrs Alexander Because obviously he is going to find it quite upsetting.

Christopher Why is he going to find it quite upsetting?

Mrs Alexander I think you know why your father doesn't like Mr Shears very much.

Christopher Did Mr Shears kill Mother?

Mrs Alexander Kill her?

Christopher Yes. Did he kill Mother?

Mrs Alexander No. No. Of course he didn't kill your mother.

Christopher But did he give her stress so that she died of a heart attack?

Mrs Alexander I honestly don't know what you're talking about, Christopher.

Christopher Or did he hurt her so that she had to go into hospital?

Mrs Alexander Did she have to go into hospital?

Christopher Yes. And it wasn't very serious at first but she had a heart attack when she was in hospital.

Mrs Alexander Oh my goodness.

Christopher And she died.

Mrs Alexander Oh my goodness. Oh Christopher. I am so, so sorry. I never realised.

Christopher Why did you say 'I think you know why your father doesn't like Mr Shears very much'?

Mrs Alexander Oh dear, dear, dear. So you don't know?

Christopher Don't know what?

Mrs Alexander Christopher look, perhaps we should take a little walk in the park together. This is not the place to be talking about this kind of thing.

Mrs Alexander I am going to say something to you and you must promise not to tell your father that I told you this.

Christopher Why?

Mrs Alexander I shouldn't have said what I said. And if I don't explain, you'll carry on wondering what I meant. And you might ask your father. And I don't want you to do that because I don't want you to upset him. But you have to promise not to tell anyone I said this to you.

Christopher Why?

Mrs Alexander Christopher, please, just trust me.

Christopher I promise.

Mrs Alexander Your mother before she died was very good friends with Mr Shears.

Christopher I know.

Mrs Alexander No Christopher, I'm not sure that you do. I mean that they were very good friends. Very, very good friends.

Christopher Do you mean that they were doing sex?

Mrs Alexander Yes, Christopher, that is what I mean.

I'm sorry Christopher: I really didn't mean to say anything that was going to upset you.

Christopher Was that why Mr Shears left Mrs Shears, because he was doing sex with someone else when he was married to Mrs Shears.

Mrs Alexander Yes. I expect so.

Christopher I think I should go now.

Mrs Alexander Are you OK Christopher?

Christopher I can't be on my own with you because you are a stranger.

Mrs Alexander I'm not a stranger Christopher, I'm a friend.

Ed And what have you been up to, young man?

Christopher I went to the shop to get some liquorice laces and a Milky Bar.

Ed You were a long time.

Christopher I talked to Mrs Alexander's dog outside the shop. And stroked him and he sniffed my trousers.

Rhodri God you do get the third degree, don't you? So how are you doing captain?

Christopher I'm doing very well, thank you Rhodri.

Rhodri What's 251 times 864?

Christopher 216,864. Is that right?

Rhodri I haven't got a bloody clue.

Ed I'll stick one of these aloo gobi sag things in the oven for you, OK?

Christopher OK.

Rhodri With your little bottle of red paint in it, eh Christopher?

Christopher It's not red paint it's red food colouring because I don't eat yellow food. If you put red paint into a curry it would be extremely dangerous and it would probably kill you.

Ed Hal Rodders! You Plonker!

Ed laughs at Rhodri, Rhodri leaves.

Ed finds Christopher's book on the kitchen table.

Siobhan Have you told your father about this?

Christopher No.

Siobhan Are you going to tell your father about this?

Christopher No.

Ed goes to the book.

There is a tone.

He begins reading Christopher's book.

Siobhan Did it make you sad to find this out?

Christopher Find what out?

Siobhan Did it make you sad to find out that your mother and Mr Shears had an affair?

Christopher No.

Siobhan Are you telling the truth Christopher?

Christopher I always tell the truth. I don't feel sad about it because Mother is dead and because Mr Shears isn't around any more. So I would be feeling sad about something that isn't real and doesn't exist and that would be stupid.

Siobhan What was your mother like Christopher?

Do you remember much about her?

Christopher I remember 20 July 2006. I was 9 years old. It was a Saturday. We were on holiday in Cornwall. We were on the beach in a place called Polperro. Mother was wearing a pair of shorts made out of denim and a striped blue swimming costume and she was smoking cigarettes called *Consulate*, which were mint flavour. And she wasn't swimming. She was sunbathing on a towel, which had red and purple stripes, and she was reading a book by Georgette Heyer called *The Masqueraders*. And then she finished sunbathing and went into the water and she said

Judy Bloody Nora it's cold.

Christopher 'Bloody Nora it's cold.' And she said I should come and swim too, but I didn't like swimming because I don't like taking my clothes off. And she said I should just roll up my trousers and walk into the water a little way. So I did. And Mother said

Judy Christopher! Christopher! Over here love.

Christopher! Look it's lovely.

Christopher And she jumped backwards and disappeared under the water and I thought a shark had eaten her and I screamed. And she stood up out of the water again and came over to where I was standing and held up her right hand and spread out her fingers like a fan.

Judy Come on Christopher, touch my hand. Come on now. Stop screaming. Touch my hand. Listen to me Christopher. You can do it. It's OK Christopher. It's OK. There aren't any sharks in Cornwall.

Ed When we were inside the park Mrs Alexander stopped walking and said 'I am going to say something to you and you must promise not to tell your father that I told you this.

Your mother before she died was very good friends with Mr Shears.'

Christopher And other times she used to say:

Judy If I hadn't married your father I think I'd be living in a little farmhouse in the South of France with someone called Jean. And he'd be, ooh, a local handyman. You know, doing painting and decorating for people, gardening, building fences. And we'd have a veranda with figs growing over it and there would be a field of sunflowers at the bottom of the garden and a little town on the hill in the distance and we'd sit outside in the evening and drink red wine and smoke Gauloise cigarettes and watch the sun go down.

Ed What is this?

Christopher *looks at Ed.*

Christopher It's a book I'm writing.

Ed Is this true? Did you speak to Mrs Alexander?

Christopher Yes.

Ed Jesus, Christopher, how stupid are you? What the fuck did I tell you Christopher?

Christopher Not to mention Mr Shears name in the house. And not to go asking Mrs Shears, or anyone about who killed that bloody dog. And not to go trespassing on other people's gardens. And to stop this bloody ridiculous detective game. Except I haven't done any of those things. I just asked Mrs Alexander about Mr Shears because . . .

Ed Don't give me that bollocks you little shit. You knew exactly what you were bloody doing. I've read the book, remember. What else did I say Christopher?

Christopher I don't know.

sucking your fucking nose into other people's business. And what do you do? You go around sticking your nose into other people's business. You go around raking up the past and sharing it with every Tom, Dick and Harry you bump into. What am I going to do with you Christopher? What the fuck am I going to do with you?

Ed throws Christopher's book.

Christopher I was just chatting with Mrs Alexander. I wasn't doing investigating.

Ed I ask you to do one thing for me, Christopher: One thing.

Christopher I didn't want to talk to Mrs Alexander. It was Mrs Alexander who . . .

Ed grabs Christopher's arm.

Christopher screams.

They fight each other.

Ed shakes Christopher hard with both hands.

Christopher falls unconscious for a few seconds.

Ed stands above him.

Ed I need a drink.

He goes and picks up the book.

He leaves.

He comes back without the book.

Ed I'm sorry I hit you.

I didn't mean to.

I love you very much Christopher. Don't ever forget that. I know I lose my rag occasionally. And I know I shouldn't. But I only do it because I worry about you, because I don't want to see you getting into trouble, because I don't want you to get hurt. Do you understand?

Christopher Where's my book?

Ed Christopher, do you understand that I love you?

Ed holds his right hand up and spreads his fingers out in a fan. Christopher does the same with his left hand. They make their fingers and thumbs touch each other.

Christopher Is it in the dustbin at the front of the house?

Siobhan Christopher, why have you got a bruise on the side of your face?

Christopher Father was angry. He grabbed me so I hit him and then we had a fight.

Siobhan Did he grab you hard?

Christopher Yes.

Siobhan Christopher, are you frightened of going home?

Christopher No. Because I need to find my book.

Siobhan Do you want to talk about it any more?

Christopher No. Because grabbing is OK if it's on your arm or your shoulder when you are angry, but you can't grab someone's hair or their face. But hitting is not allowed, except if you are already in a fight with someone then it is not so bad.

Siobhan When I got home from school Father was still at work so I went outside and looked inside the dustbin. But the book wasn't there.

I wondered if Father had put it into his van and driven to the tip and put it into one of the big bins there but I did not want that to be true because then I would never see it again. One other possibility was that Father had hidden my book somewhere in the house. So I decided to do some detecting and see if I could find it.

I started by looking in the kitchen.

Then I detected in the utility room.

Then I detected in the dining room.

Then I detected in the living room where I found the missing wheel from my Airfix Saturn 1b Rocket 172 model under the sofa.

Then I went upstairs but I didn't do any detecting in my own room because I reasoned that father wouldn't hide something from me in my own room unless he was being very clever and doing what is called a Double Bluff like in a real murder mystery novel, so I decided to look in my own room only if I couldn't find the book anywhere else.

I detected in the bathroom, but the only place to look was in the airing cupboard and there was nothing in there.

Which meant the only room left to detect in was Father's bedroom.

I started by looking under the bed.

There were seven shoes and a comb with lots of hair in it and a monkey wrench and a chocolate biscuit and a magazine called *Men Only* and a pair of navy underpants from Marks & Spencer that are called Y fronts and a Homer Simpson pattern tie and a wooden spoon, but not my book. Then I looked in the drawers on either side of the dressing table. But these only contained aspirin and nail clippers and batteries and dental floss and tissues and a spare false tooth and a tampon but my book wasn't there either.

Then I looked in his clothes cupboard. In the bottom of the cupboard was a large plastic toolbox which was full of tools for doing-it-yourself but I could see these without opening the box because it was made of transparent grey plastic.

Then I saw that there was another box underneath the toolbox.

The other box was an old cardboard box that is called a shirt box because people used to buy shirts in them.

Christo

se things including, finally, the shirt box.

Siobhan

I opened the shirt box I saw my book

was ins

Christo

book.

Siobhan

ard his van pulling up outside the at I had to think fast and be clever.

house ?

I heard

ing the door of the van.

And th:

iw the envelope.

It was a

addressed to me and it was lying under box with some other envelopes. I

my boo
picked

Christo

envelope.

Siobhan

ver been opened.

It said

Judy Cl
Wiltshire.

Boone, 36 Randolph Street, Swindon,

Siobhan
they were ad
confusing.

noticed there were lots of envelopes and
essed to me. And this was interesting and

And then I nc
were written. ?

d how the words Christopher and Swindon
y were written like this.

Judy Christop
:r Swindon.

Siobhan I only now three people who do little circles
instead of dots ov r the letter i. And one of them is Siobhan.
And one of them was Mr Loxley who used to teach at the
school. And one of them was Mother.

Ed Christopher?

Christopher Hello.

Ed So what have you been up to young man?

was Using Money and Public Transport. And I had tomato soup for lunch and three apples. And I practised some maths in the afternoon and we went for a walk in the park with Mrs Peters and collected leaves for making collages.

Ed Excellent, excellent. What do you fancy for chow tonight?

Christopher Baked beans and broccoli.

Ed I think that can be very easily arranged.

I'm just going to put those shelves up in the living room if that's all right with you. I'll make a bit of a racket I'm afraid so if you want to watch television we're going to have to shift it upstairs.

Christopher I'll go and be on my own in my room.

Ed Good man.

Siobhan I went up to my room. And when I was in the room I shut the door and took out the envelope. I opened the envelope. Inside there was a letter. And this was what was written in the letter:

Judy 451c Chapter Road, Willesden, London NW2 5NG. 020 8887 8907. Dear Christopher: I'm sorry it's been such a very long time since I wrote my last letter to you. I've been very busy. I've got a new job working as a secretary for a factory that makes things out of steel. You'd like it a lot. The factory is full of huge machines that make the steel and cut it and bend it into whatever shapes they need. Also we've moved into a new flat at last as you can see from the address. It's not as nice as the old one and I don't like Willesden very much, but it's easier for Roger to get to work and he's bought it (he only rented the other one) so we can get our own furniture and paint the walls the colour we want to. You haven't written to me yet, so I know that you are probably still angry with me. I'm sorry Christopher. But I still love you. I hope you don't stay angry with me for ever. And I'd

send

I thi

Lots

Your

Siob

as a

Mom

writ

Then

Mom

of th

was

that

Ed

Chri:

Ed

Chri:

Ed

Siobl

one r

was i

Moth

Perth

from

writt

I dec

beca

LEAI

Chris

more to write me a letter (but remember to address!).

all the time.

ally confused. Mother had never worked factory that made things out of steel. And lived in London. And Mother had never me before.

on the letter so I couldn't work out when n the letter and then I looked at the front d I saw there was a postmark and there postmark, 16 October 2011, which meant posted eighteen months after Mother had

doing?

reading a letter:

he drilling. That David Attenborough :is on telly if you're interested.

started writing my book there was only e. Now there were two. Perhaps the letter nvelope and it had been written before Perhaps it wasn't a letter from Mother. ter to another person called Christopher her's mother. Perhaps someone else had rd pretended to be Mother.

uld not think about it anymore that might ve enough information and could easily **LONG CONCLUSIONS.**

on on the floor. He curls himself up into a ball.

The next day Christopher comes home from school.

Ed You're soaking.

Christopher Yes.

Ed Give me your coat I'll hang it up.

How was school?

Christopher It was good thank you.

Joseph Fleming took his trousers off and went to the toilet all over the floor of the changing room and started to eat it, but Mr Davis stopped him.

Ed Good old Mr Davis eh?

Christopher Joseph eats everything.

Ed Does he?

Christopher He once ate one of the little blocks of blue disinfectant, which hang inside the toilets. And he once ate a £50 note from his mother's wallet. And he eats string and rubber bands and tissues and writing paper and paints and plastic forks. Also he bangs his chin and screams a lot.

Ed I know how he feels. Christopher –

Christopher Tyrone said that there was a horse and a pig in the poo so I said he was being stupid, but Siobhan said he wasn't. They were small plastic animals from the library that the staff use to make people tell stories. And Joseph had eaten them.

Ed Christopher I've got to go out.

Christopher Why?

Ed I've just had a call there's a lady. Her cellar has flooded. I've got to go out and fix it.

Christopher Is it an emergency?

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Chris:

Ed

Why can't Rhodri go?

Just put on a call.

There are two emergencies.

One is late.

It's raining very heavily.

The rain looks like white sparks.

Can I go out will you be OK?

I will because there's no one around
and I'm staying in doors.

Good. Good lad.

He's looking at the rain.

It's because it makes me think how all the
pipes are connected.

It's all connected with me.

There's a problem if there's a problem.

Yeah? Christopher yeah?

He went into his bedroom and opened up the
top of the toolbox off the top of the shirt box
and I counted out the letters. There
were 10 of them. They were all addressed to me in
my name. I took one and opened it. Inside was

building becomes frantic. At times almost ballistic.

Judy 451c Chapter Road London NW2 5NG 020 8887 8907. I was looking through some old photos last night, which made me sad. Then I found a photo of you playing with the train set we bought for you a couple of Christmases ago. And that made me happy because it was one of the really good times we had together. Do you remember how you played with it all day and you refused to go to bed at night because you were still playing with it. We told you about train timetables and you made a train timetable. And there was a little wooden station, too, and we showed you how people who wanted to go on the train went to the station and bought a ticket and then got on a train? And you played with it for weeks and weeks and weeks. I liked remembering that a lot.

Siobhan Then I opened another envelope. This was the letter that was inside.

Christopher continues to build a train set. It should be as big as he can possibly make it. He makes it with attention and detail as the letter continues.

Judy Dear Christopher: I said that I wanted to explain to you why I went away when I had the time to do it properly. Now I have lots of time. So I'm sitting on the sofa here with this letter and the radio on and I'm going to try and explain.

I was not a very good mother Christopher. Maybe if things had been different, maybe if you'd been different, I might have been better at it. But that's just the way things turned out.

I'm not like your father. Your father is a much more patient person. He just gets on with things and if things upset him he doesn't let it show.

But that's not the way I am and there's nothing I can do to change it.

bro
toge
crow
Gra
peo
wh
And
over
cross
told
But
and
wha
ther
on t
had
out c
just l
and I
what
I hac
until
the w
woul
And
and y
you s
happ
any m
was b
I hit l
We h
Beca
your f
thoug

Once when we were shopping in town I went into Benalls and it was really mad to get a Christmas present for you were frightened because of all the p. It was the middle of Christmas shopping as in town. And I was talking to Mr Land kitchen floor and went to school with me. I down on the floor and put your hands I you were in the way of everyone so I got n't like shopping at Christmas either, and I : and I tried to pick you up and move you. and you knocked those mixers off the shelf g crash. And everyone turned round to see and Mr Land was really nice about it but und bits of string and bits of broken bowl everyone was staring and I saw that you nd I was so cross and I wanted to take you t you wouldn't let me touch you and you r and screamed and banged your hands or and the manager came and asked me was and I was at the end of my tether and o broken mixers and we just had to wait screaming. And then I had to walk you all ch took hours because I knew you bus again.

at night I just cried and cried and cried s really nice about it at first and he made t you to bed and he said these things ld be OK. But I said I couldn't take it ually he got really cross and he told me I rd said I should pull myself together and s wrong, but I was so upset. iments like that.

ught I couldn't take it any more. And patient, but I'm not. I get cross, even n to. And by the end we stopped talking

to each other very much because we knew it would always end up in an argument. And I felt really lonely.

Siobhan And that was when I started spending lots of time with Roger.

Judy And that was when I started spending lots of time with Roger.

And I know you might not understand any of this, but I wanted to try to explain so that you knew.

Siobhan We had a lot in common. And then we realised that we were in love with one ano -

Judy I said that I couldn't leave you and he was sad about that but he understood that you were really important to me.

Siobhan And you started to shout and I got cross and I threw the food across the room. Which I know I shouldn't have done.

Judy You grabbed the chopping board and you threw it and it hit my foot and broke my toes.

Siobhan And afterwards at home your father and I had a huge argument.

Judy And I couldn't walk properly for a month, do you remember and your father had to look after you.

Siobhan And I remember looking at the two of you and seeing you together and thinking how you were really different with him. Much calmer.

Judy And it made me so sad because it was like you didn't need me at all.

Siobhan And I think then I realised you and your father were probably better off if I wasn't living in the house.

Judy And Roger asked me if I wanted to come with him.

Siobhan And it broke my heart but eventually I decided it would be better for all of us if I went.

Jud

Siol

Jud

He

Siol

Jud

Siol

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

Siob

Jud

aid yes.

meant to say goodbye.

I rang your father he said I couldn't -

ty. He said I couldn't -

I I couldn't talk to you.

it know what to do.

I I was being selfish and that I was never to house again.

aven't.

er if you can understand any of this. I difficult for you.

what I was doing was the best for all of us. I

pher I never meant to hurt you.

ave dreams that everything would get

remember you used to say that you wanted to

vell I used to have dreams where you were

'ou were on television and I thought that's

what it is that you want to be now. Has it

still doing maths? I hope you are.

loads of love, Mother.

to the middle of the track. He crouches down.

a ball. He starts hitting his hands and his feet

the floor as the letter continues. His thrashing

le has been sick. He lies still for a while,

respond.

Christopher what the hell are you doing?

se are. Oh shit. Oh Christ.

move or respond.

Ed stops himself from crying.

Ed It was an accident.

Christopher *doesn't respond.*

Ed I don't know what to say . . . I was in such a mess . . . I said she was in hospital . . . because I didn't know how to explain it was so complicated. And once I'd said that . . .

I couldn't change it. It just . . . I got out of control.

Christopher *doesn't respond.*

After a time Ed approaches him.

Very, very gently he touches his shoulder. Christopher doesn't respond.

Oh Jesus, Christopher. You've got sick all over your . . .

Ed Let's sit you up and get your clothes off and get you into bed OK? I'm going to have to touch you, but it's going to be all right.

Ed lifts Christopher onto the side of the bed. Christopher doesn't resist or fight at all.

Ed takes Christopher's jumper and shirt off.

Ed Have you had anything to eat this evening?

Can I get you anything to eat Christopher?

OK. Look. I'm going to go and put your clothes into the washing machine and then I'll come back, OK?

Ed moves away. Christopher sits alone. Ed comes back.

Ed How are you feeling? Can I get you anything?

Look maybe I shouldn't say this, but . . . I want you to know that you can trust me . . . You have to know that I am going to tell you the truth from now on. About everything. Because . . . if you don't tell the truth now, then later on it hurts even more. So . . . I killed Wellington, Christopher. Just . . . let me

Ed leans

she we

difficu

days. I

keep t

over .

though

Or the

friend

Christ

say to

more .

so stu

lookin

other

exactl

And at

me ou

was lik

stoma

yelling

slams t

. . . I k

probal

red mi

about.

was lik

I neve

Ed hol

Christ

Ed C

tonigh

sleep a

Hones

Ed leat

muu uell . . . Eileen . . . Mrs snears . . .

o me. She helped me through a very

you know how she was round here most

Well . . . Shit Christopher, I'm trying to

I thought she might carry on coming

. . . and maybe I was being stupid . . . I

. . . eventually . . . want to move in here.

ove into her house. I thought we were

I thought wrong. We argued

. She said some things I'm not going to

hey're not nice . . . I think she cared

y dog than for us. And maybe that's not

ck. Maybe it's easier living on your own

tupid mutt, than sharing your life with

beings. I mean, shit, buddy we're not

ance, are we? Anyway, we had this row.

ularly nasty little blow-out, she chucked

. And you know what that bloody dog

one moment, roll over, tickle its

th into your leg the next. Anyway, we're

and it's in the garden. So when she

rd me the bugger's waiting for me. And

Maybe if I'd just given it a kick it would

nd off. But, shit Christopher, when the

n . . . Christ, you know what I'm talking

not that different me and you. And it

I'd been bottling up for two years just . . .

to turn out like this.

I up for Christopher to touch.

it. Ed stares at Christopher.

Christopher. I'm sorry. Let's leave it for

ing to go downstairs and you get some

n the morning. It's going to be all right.

er groans. He starts counting.

Christopher 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, 512, 1024, 2048, 4096, 8192, 16384, 32, 768, 32, 768, 32, 768 –

Siobhan Father had murdered Wellington. That meant he could murder me.

I had to get out of the house.

I made a decision. I did this by thinking of all the things I could do and deciding whether they were the right decision or not.

Ed Stay home.

Siobhan I decided I couldn't stay home any more

Ed Christopher, please.

Christopher No because I can't live in the house with you any more because it is dangerous.

I can't go and live with you because you can't look after me when school's closed.

Siobhan I could try and –

Christopher No because you're a teacher.

Siobhan Yes.

Christopher Not a friend or a member of my family.

Uncle Terry You could go and live with your Uncle Terry.

Christopher You live in Sunderland. I don't know how to get to Sunderland.

Uncle Terry Get a train. Get the train from Swindon.

Christopher And you smoke cigarettes. And you stroke my hair.

You're not a friend either.

Mrs Alexander I think I am a friend.

Christopher No. And you're not a member of my family.

Mrs Alexander I do have a dog.

Christop I can't stay overnight in your house or use your

Mrs Ale not really a stranger Christopher.

Christop

Judy 4 Road, London NW2 5NG.

451c Ch London NW2 5NG.

451c Ch London NW2 5NG.

Christop rdy.

451c Ch

Christop n NW2 5NG.

Light fal.

Part Two

The Company is on stage.

Siobhan Christopher I want to ask you something. Mrs Gascoyne wondered if we would like to do a play this year. She asked me to ask everybody if we'd like to make some kind of performance for the school. Everybody could join in and play a part in it.

Mrs Gascoyne I think it would be a good thing for everybody to join in and play a part in it.

Siobhan I was wondering if you'd like to make a play out of your book.

Christopher No.

Siobhan I think it could be really good fun Christopher.

Mrs Gascoyne I think it could be really good fun.

Christopher No. It's a book and it's for me and not everybody just for me.

Siobhan I know that Christopher but I think a lot of people would be interested in what would happen if people took your book and started acting bits out of it.

Christopher No. I don't like acting because it is pretending that something is real when it is not really real at all so it is like a kind of lie.

Siobhan But people like stories Christopher. Some people find things which are kind of true in things which are made up. You like your Sherlock Holmes stories and you know Sherlock Holmes isn't a real person don't you?

I would help you if you were worried about that.

Christopher No.

Reverend Peters I think I'd rather like to take the part of a policeman.

Christ

Ed (sh

Comp

Christ

Nobody,

After a

Then C

Mrs A
to you

Christ

Mrs A

Christ

Mrs A
told m

Christ
from a
day, to

Mrs Al
Toby, (

Christ

Mrs Al

Christ

Mrs Al
house?

Christ

Mrs Al

Christ

e too old to be a policeman.

topher. Christopher.

he space and watch Ed.

as to where Christopher is.

ip.

mes out. He is holding Toby in his cage.

ristopher, what on earth has happened

ou look after Toby for me?

to's Toby?

s my pet rat.

... Oh yes. I remember now. You

is special pellets and you can buy them
I he needs new water in his bottle every

ry do you need somebody to look after

ing to London.

w long are you going for?

I go to university.

ght. Are you and your father moving

why are you going to London?

ing to live with Mother.

Mrs Alexander I thought you told me your mother was dead.

Christopher I thought she was dead but she was still alive. And Father lied to me. And also he killed Wellington and so that means that he could kill me.

Mrs Alexander Is your mother here?

Christopher No. Mother is in London. She lives at 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG.

Mrs Alexander So you're going to London on your own?

Christopher I think I am going to do that yes.

Mrs Alexander Look, Christopher, why don't you come inside and sit down and we can talk about this.

Christopher No. I can't come inside. Will you look after Toby for me?

Mrs Alexander I really don't think that would be a good idea Christopher.

Where's your father at the moment Christopher?

Christopher I don't know.

Mrs Alexander Well perhaps we should try and give him a ring and see if we can get in touch with him. I'm sure he's worried about you. And I'm sure that there's been a dreadful misunderstanding.

Christopher leaves.

He goes back to his house.

He sees Ed's cashpoint card on the floor. He stares at it, frozen in his tracks.

He approaches the card.

He takes it, puts it in his pocket.

Compan

1. 3558. 3558. 3558.

Christop

He leaves

The Com

ndon town centre.

Christop

an I buy a map?

Lady in

n?

Christop

an I buy a map?

Lady in

of where?

Christop

here.

Lady in

I know where do you want to get to?

Christop

ig to the train station.

Lady in

on't need a map to get to the train

Christop

ause I don't know where the train

Lady in

n see it from here.

Christop

it. And also I need to know where

Lady in
the top.
station's

. That building. Says signal point on
sh Rail sign on the other end. The
f that.

Christop
horizont
houses?

mean the stripey building with the
t you can see poking out over those

Lady in

the one.

Christop

I get to that building?

Lady in

n Bennett.

Christopher I knew that the train station was somewhere near. And if something is nearby you can find it by moving in a spiral, walking clockwise and taking every right turn until you come back to a road you've already walked on, then taking the next left, then taking every right turn and so on. And that was how I found the station.

The Voices here are pre-recorded.

Voice One Customers seeking access to the car park please use assistance phone opposite, right of the ticket office

Voice Two Warning CCTV in operation

Voice Three Great Western

Voice Five Cold beers and lagers

Voice Two CAUTION WET FLOOR

Voice Four Your 50p will keep a premature baby alive for 1.8 seconds

Voice Three Transforming travel

Voice Five Refreshingly Different

Voice One It's delicious it's creamy and its only £1.30 Hot Choc Deluxe

Voice Two 0870 777 7676

Voice Four The Lemon Tree

Voice One No Smoking

Voice Two Fine leas

Voice Five Automatic Fire Door Keep Clear

Voice Two Air Conditioned

Voice Three Reserved Parking

Voice Four Open As Usual This Way

Voice

oking

Voice

rol

Voice

must be carried

Voice

Voice

must be carried

Voice

Blend

Voice

Blend

Voice

ail

Voice

i 7 am-7 pm

Voice

must be carried at all times

Voice

unch Offers

Voice

Subject to the Railway Byelaws Section Act 2000

Voice

stand on the right

Voice

Coffee

Voice

Access

Voice

Care with Children

Voice

Coffee

Voice

dispensers

Voice

Coffee

Voice

must be carried at all times

Voice

re you all right, young man?

Voice

too old.

Voice

re you all right, young man?

Voice

too old to play a policeman.

Voice

re you all right, young man?

Voice

Station

Christopher No.

Station Policeman You're looking a bit worse for wear. The lady at the cafe says that when she tried talking to you, you were in a complete trance. What's your name?

Christopher Christopher Boone.

Station Policeman Where do you live?

Christopher 36 Randolph Street.

Station Policeman What are you doing here?

Christopher I needed to sit down and be quiet and think.

Station Policeman OK let's keep it simple. What are you doing at the railway station?

Christopher I'm going to see Mother.

Station Policeman Mother?

Christopher Yes, Mother.

Station Policeman When's your train?

Christopher I don't know. She lives in London. I don't know when there's a train to London.

Station Policeman So, you don't live with your mother?

Christopher No. But I'm going to.

Station Policeman So where does your mother live.

Christopher In London.

Station Policeman Yes, but where in London.

Christopher 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG.

Station Policeman Jesus. What is that?

Christopher That's Toby, my pet rat.

Station Policeman A pet rat?

Christopher Yes, a pet rat. He's very clean and he hasn't got bubonic plague.

Station

Christic

Station

Christic

Station to Lon

Christic

Station

Christic

Station

Christic

Station

Christic

Station

stroll to

Christic

Station

Christic

Station

Christic

police

I'll get

Voice C

Station

Christic

Voice C

Station

Christic

Yes, what's the number?

Have you got a ticket?

How precisely were you going to get

a cashpoint card.

Is this your card?

Father's.

Father's.

Father's.

OK.

I see the number. It's 3558.

Ohhh. Why don't you and I take a

line, eh?

Just don't touch me.

Why would I want to touch you?

Know.

Well, neither do I.

See I got a caution for hitting a

car that meant to hurt him and if I do it again

it's trouble.

Insert your card.

Are you're serious aren't you?

Are you're personal identification number.

How do you lead the way?

?

Station Policeman Back by the ticket once.

Voice One Please enter amount. Ten pounds. Twenty pounds. Fifty pounds. One hundred pounds.

Christopher How much does it cost to get a ticket to London?

Station Policeman About twenty quid.

Voice One Please wait. Your transaction is being processed.

Christopher Is that pounds?

Station Policeman Christ alive. Yep. Its twenty pounds.

Voice One Please take your card and wait for your cash.

Beal.

Station Policeman Well I guess I shouldn't keep you chatting any longer.

Christopher Where do I get a ticket for the train from?

Station Policeman You are a prize specimen aren't you?

Christopher Where do I get a ticket for the train from?

Station Policeman In there. Now are you sure you know what you're doing?

Christopher Yes. I'm going to London to live with my mother.

Station Policeman Has your mother got a telephone number?

Christopher Yes.

Station Policeman And can you tell me what it is?

Christopher Yes. Its 020 8887 8907.

Station Policeman And you'll ring her if you get into any trouble OK?

Christopher I want to go to London.

Man behind Counter If you don't mind.

Christ

Man b

Christ

Man b

Christ

Man b

Christ

Man b

Christ

Man b

Christ

Man b

Someone

Siobha

In you

at you

the lin

helps c

you're

left, rig

Christ

Christ

Station

We've

Christ

to go to London.

• Single or return?

does single or return mean?

• Do you want to go one way or do you

to stay there when I get there.

• For how long?

I go to university.

• Single then. That'll be £17.

is the train to London?

• Platform 1, five minutes.

is Platform 1?

• Through the underpass and up the

signs.

Christopher. *He barks at them like a dog.*

means tunnel Christopher.

a big red line across the floor. It starts

through the tunnel. And walk along

the rhythm in your head because that

when you're doing music or when

ing. Left, right, left, right, left, right,

right, left, right, left, right, left, right,

the train to London?

Christopher. Caught you just in time.

at the police station. He's looking for

✓

Station Policeman So why are you going to London?

Christopher Because I'm going to live with Mother.

Station Policeman Well I think your father might have something to say about that.

Christopher *tries to run.* **Station Policeman** *grabs him.*

Christopher *screams.* **Station Policeman** *lets go.*

Station Policeman OK, let's not get over-excited here. I'm going to take you back to the police station and you and me and your dad can sit down and have a little chat about who's going where.

Christopher Have you arrested Father?

Station Policeman Arrested him? What for?

Christopher He killed a dog. With a garden fork. The dog was called Wellington.

Station Policeman Well, we can talk about that as well.

Right now, young man, I think you've done enough adventuring for one day.

The Station Policeman reaches out to touch him. **Christopher** *screams.*

Station Policeman Now listen, you little monkey. You can either do what I say, or I'm going to have to make . . .

The train begins to move.

Shitting fuck.

Christopher Why are you swearing? Have we started? Has the train started?

Station Policeman Don't move.

Rob? Yeah it's Nigel. I'm stuck here on the bloody train

Yeah. Don't even . . . Look. It stops at Didcot Parkway. So if you can get someone to meet me with a car . . . Cheers. Tell his old man we've got him but it's going to take a while, OK? Great. Let's get ourselves a seat. Park yourself. You are a bloody handful you are. Jeez.

Christo

They ne
glancing
and cari
informa
they are
country

Voice O
that is fi

Voice T

Voice T

Voice F

Voice F

Voice O
has a ga

Christo
because

Voice T

Christo

Voice O
cooker c

Christo

Voice F
Christo

Christo
of a trai

As he tall

1. Ther
black an

2. Ther
houses

everything. Most other people are lazy.
rything. They do what is called
ame word for bumping off something
ost the same direction. And the
ad is really simple. For example, if
ing out of a window at the

ting on a train looking out at a field
re some cows in the field.
unny with a few clouds.

are some flowers in the grass.
s a village in the distance.

s a fence at the edge of the field and it
in they would stop noticing anything
thinking something else like
'ant a bag of quavers'

iced that I might have left the gas

'if Julie has given birth yet.'

am sitting looking out of the window
tryside I notice everything. Like . . .

nervous rhythm with his hand.
cows in the field. Fifteen of which are
ur of which are brown and white
the distance, which has 31 visible

3. There are ridges in the field

4. There is a plastic bag from Asda

5. There is Coca-Cola

6. There is the snail

The snail

There are cows

The cows are facing

The snail

There are nimbostratus clouds

There is a wind

There is a hedge

There is a Boeing 747 400

There is a white Reebok trainer

There is graffiti

'Jane plus Ian 4 ever'

Station Policeman Oh Christ, you've wet yourself. For God's sake go to the bloody toilet, will you?

Christopher But I'm on a train.

Station Policeman They do have toilets on trains, you know.

Christopher Where is the toilet on the train?

Station Policeman Through those doors there. But I'll be keeping an eye on you, you understand?

Christopher No.

Station Policeman Just go to the bloody toilet.

Chr *Chr*

He t *He t*

eyes *eyes*

He l *He l*

wate *wate*

He s *He s*

pape *pape*

Shak *Shak*

He g *He g*

He c *He c*

He h *He h*

He si *He si*

As ha *As ha*

The c *The c*

Chri *Chri*

61 6 *61 6*

139 *139*

223 *223*

Stati *Stati*

He le *He le*

on T *on T*

Wom *Wom*

I thi *I thi*

Chri *Chri*

Wom *Wom*

She te *She te*

smalla *smalla*

She te *She te*

Posh *Posh*

corridor of the train. Shaking and closing his

hands but can't because there is no running

to wash them. He rubs them dry with toilet

toilet.

re rack.

elf.

e numbers to himself.

on the Station Policeman notices he's gone.

es under the following exchanges.

57 11 13 17 19 23 29 31 37 41 43 47 53 59

19 97 101 103 107 109 113 127 131 137

13 167 173 179 181 191 193 197 199 211

19 241 251 257 263 269 271 277 281

Christopher? Christopher? Bloody hell.

er stays where he is. Still counting. Woman

him to take her bag.

You scared the living daylights out of me.

out there on the platform looking for you.

W.

Well. It's your look-out.

leaves. Christopher stays hidden behind the

till counting. A Posh Woman approaches.

're touching my bag!

Christopher Yes.			
<i>She leaves. Christopher stays hidden behind the still smaller pile of bags. Still counting. Two drunk men approach to take their bags.</i>			
Drunk One Come and look at this, Barry. They've got like, a train elf.			
Drunk Two Well we have both been drinking.			
Drunk One We should nick him.			
Drunk Two He could be our elf mascot.			
Drunk One Come on, shift it you daft twat. We've got a match to get to.			
<i>A lady takes her bag, it is the wrong one. She realises.</i>			
Voice One Bollocks.			
<i>Another lady runs to grab her bag, she is talking to someone on the platform.</i>			
Voice Five I'm coming alright. Wait for me in the car park.			
<i>Both ladies take the correct bag and leave Christopher alone. He stops counting. He lies still for a while.</i>			
<i>He looks around. For the first time he is alone on stage.</i>			
Christopher I waited for nine more minutes but nobody else came past and the train was really quiet. And I didn't move again. So I realised that the train had stopped. And I knew that the last stop on the train was London.			
I heard the sound of feet and it was a policeman.			
<i>The Station Policeman enters and explores the back of the stage.</i>			
Station Policeman Excuse me have you seen a 15-year-old boy he's . . . /			
Christopher / Not the one who was on the train before.			
<i>The Station Policeman looks at Christopher. Exits, disappointed. Is replaced by a London Transport Policeman.</i>			
	London		iceman Excuse me have you seen a
	15-year-		earing an orange jacket and a
	rucksack		at with him.
	Christop		ould see him through the door, in the
	next car		was looking under the seats. I decided
	I didn't l		so much any more. So I got off the
	train.		
	<i>He very h</i>		<i>run off the luggage rack and gets off the</i>
	<i>train.</i>		
	Siobhan		elf, right, left, right . . .
	Christop		ht, left, right, left, right, left, right,
	left, right		ft, right, left, right, left, right, left,
	right, le		
	<i>These Vo</i>		<i>-recorded</i>
	Voice O		tries
	Voice T		Airport Check In Here
	Voice O		ory
	Voice F		
	Voice T		nce and taste
	Voice T		i
	Voice F		k
	Voice T		
	Voice F		l
	Voice F		re
	Voice O		v Express
	Voice T		
	Voice T		ass Lounge

Voice Four	easyCar.com	Voice Tv	Day at Manchester United
Voice Five	The Mad Bishop	Voice Tl	Baked Cookies and Muffins
Voice Two	And Bear Public House	Voice Tj	ks
Voice Three	Fuller's London Pride	Voice Fc	ares
Voice Four	Dixons	Voice O	
Voice One	Paddington Bear at Paddington Station	Voice Tl	Pastries
Voice Three	Tickets	Voice Fc	14
Voice Five	Taxis	Voice Fi	ng
Voice One	First Aid	Voice Tv	d
Voice Two	Eastbourne Terrace	Voice Tl	f Cafe Bar
Voice Four	Way Out	Voice Fc	travel
Voice Two	Praed Street	Voice O	lition
Voice One	The Lawn	Voice Tv	nums
Voice Five	Q Here Please	Voice Fi	tandard
Voice Three	Upper Crust		
Voice Four	Sainsbury's		
Voice One	Local information		
Voice Five	Great Western First		
Voice Three	Position Closed		
Voice One	Closed		
Voice Two	Position Closed		
Voice Four	Sock Shop		
Voice Three	Fast Ticket Point		
Voice Four	Millie's Cookies		
Voice Five			

*As the ch
difficult t
against a
approach*
Station t
Christof
The Stati
Station t
Christof
Christof
He makes

*re cacophonous Christopher finds it more
lk. Christopher stops. Rests his head
nds over his ears. A Station Guard*
ok lost.
is Swiss Army knife.
s away.
, whoa, whoa, whoa.
ht, left, right, left, right, left, right.
telescope to hunt his field of vision.

He approaches an information counter.

Is this London?

Is this London?

Information Sure is honey.

Christopher Is this London?

Information Indeed it is.

Christopher How do I get to 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG?

Information Where is that?

Christopher It's 451c Chapter Road, London, NW2 5NG. And sometimes you can write it 451c Chapter Road, Willesden, London, NW2 5NG.

Information Take the Tube to Willesden Junction. Or Willesden Green. Got to be near there somewhere.

Christopher What is a Tube?

Information Are you for real? Over there. See that big staircase with the escalators? See the sign? Says Underground. Take the Bakerloo Line to Willesden Junction or the Jubilee to Willesden Green. You OK honey?

Ed Don't do this Christopher.

Christopher Get away from me.

Ed Christopher, you won't be able to.

Christopher I'm doing really well.

Ed Where's your red line gone? See? It's disappeared hasn't it?

Where's your Swiss Army knife? Have you lost it?

Christopher It's in my pocket.

Ed Where?

Chris

Ed

You c

Chris

carrie

Ed

Chris

Ed

Chris

Ed

Chris

the bl

find t

Ed

Chris

Ed

Chris

£4.50

up to

out of

Ed

the Ju

place.

Chris

Willes

.

re you going to find the Jubilee Line. How what an escalator is, do you?

moving staircase. You step onto it. It is funny. Look.

Everybody's looking at you.

ke something out of science fiction.

out you.

re trying. You killed Wellington.

going?

atch the people. It's easy look. You go to you look at where you want to go. You put your money in.

t any money.

e. I stole your card.

press ticket type. You press adult single.

.50. You take ticket and change. You go You put your ticket in the slot. It comes

line Line. How are you going to get on Willesden Green? You're in the wrong

es a Bakerloo Line. Look. I can go to

ne.

t.

Chris

Ed

Chris

Ed

Christopher You told a lie. You killed Wellington. Swindon's not my home anymore. My home is 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG.

The Tube line appears.

Ed Stand behind the yellow line.

Christopher I know.

Ed The train will be very noisy.

Christopher I know.

Ed It'll really scare you.

Christopher I know.

Ed Try not to let it. Watch what the people do. Watch how they get on and off.

Christopher Yes.

The Company stand with Christopher on the platform.

Ed Count the trains. Figure it out. Get the rhythm right.

Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open. Train going.

Silence.

Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open. Train going.

Silence.

Christopher Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open.

Train going. Silence.

Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open. Train going.

Silence.

Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open. Train going.

Silence.

Train coming. Train stopped. Doors open . . .

He looks in Toby's direction.

Christopher

Toby?

Where are you?

Toby, Toby, where are you?

Up here this is my world.

If you don't get down here, I can't get up.

And when I come going to let you know, I'll be there.

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

He finds Toby.

Toby?

Where are you?

Up here this is my world.

If you don't get down here, I can't get up.

And when I come going to let you know, I'll be there.

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Christopher

Man with So

Punk Girl He's a kid. You can't just let him get hit.

Man with Socks Yes I know he's a kid. I can see he's a kid by sodding well looking at him. Mate. Please come on.

Christopher You're so silly. What am I going to do with you Toby?

Stop being so difficult.

Man with Socks I don't believe this is happening. This is ridiculous, mate get your arse out of there now.

Tube train starts rumbling

Christopher Don't panic, I found him.

Punk Girl Help him den, you muppet.

Man with Socks Oh Christ. Oh Christ.

Christopher and Toby *are back on the platform.*

Man with Socks What the fuck do you think you were playing at?

Christopher I was finding Toby. He's my pet rat.

Man with Socks Fucking Nora.

Punk Girl Is he OK?

Man with Socks Him? Thanks a fucking bundle. Jesus Christ. A pet rat. Oh shit. My train. Fuck.

He leaves.

Punk Girl Are you OK?

She touches Christopher's arm. He screams.

Punk Girl OK. OK. OK. Is there anything I can do to help you?

Christopher Stand further away. I've got a Swiss Army knife and it has a saw blade and it could cut someone's finger off.

Punk C

She lean

Christi

Train g

He groa

Train c

He groa

Train c

He is bu

Christo

The Voi

Voice O

Scandir

Voice T

Christo

Voice T

Voice Fi

your en

Voice Fe

Christo

Voice O:

Voice T1

Voice Tw

Voice Fi

Voice Tw

ly: I'm going to take that as a no.
 er counts the trains again.
 oming. Train stopped. Doors open.
 topped. Doors open. Train going.
 topped. Doors open.
 ain.
 rain going to Willesden Junction?
 rcorde
 e 53,963 holiday cottages in
 many.
 DTICS
 rain going to Willesden Junction?
 10 if you fail to show a valid ticket for
 Gold, Then Bronze
 rain going to Willesden Junction?
 ock
 ing the doors can be dangerous

voice three Con. 1C

Christopher Is this train going to Willesden Junction?

Voice Four TALK TO THE WORLD

Voice One Warwick Avenue

Maida Vale

Kilburn Park

Queen's Park

Kensal Green

Willesden Junction

Christopher Where is 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG?

A Shopkeeper shows him an A-Z of London.

Shopkeeper A to Z of London. Two ninety-five. Are you going to buy it or not?

Christopher I don't know.

Shopkeeper Well you can get your dirty fingers off it if you don't mind.

Christopher Where is 451c Chapter Road, London NW2 5NG?

Shopkeeper You can either buy the A to Z or you can hop it. I'm not a walking encyclopaedia.

Christopher Is that the A to Z?

Shopkeeper No, it's a sodding crocodile.

Christopher Is that the A to Z?

Shopkeeper Yes it's the A to Z.

Christopher Can I buy it?

shopkeeper

Chris

Man

Man

Chris

Chris

Chris

Left.

Right.

Left.

Right.

Left.

Right.

Left.

Judy

Judy

Roger

Judy

Christ

Christ

rounds ninety-five, but you're giving me not having you scarping.

is the A-Z. He opens it. He looks for Chapter

naches him.

is cheese. Oh yes. The nurses. Never. loody liar.

e map. His voice quielens the more he talks.

ts. And then huddles into a ball. Right. Left. Right. Left. Right.

I for a while.

hether you thought it was funny or not. 'm sorry OK.

you should have thought about that look like a complete idiot.

b. Judy sees him. ther:

eren't in so I waited for you.

Judy Christopher:

Christopher What?

Judy Christopher:

She goes to hug him. He pushes her away so hard that he falls over.

Roger What the hell is going on?

Judy I'm so sorry Christopher. I forgot.

Judy spreads her fingers. Christopher spreads his to touch hands with her.

Roger I suppose this means Ed's here.

Judy Where's your father Christopher?

Christopher I think he's in Swindon.

Roger Thank God for that.

Judy But how did you get here?

Christopher I came on the train.

Judy Oh my God Christopher. I didn't... I didn't think I'd ever... Why are you here on your own?

Christopher, you're soaking. Roger, don't just stand there.

Roger Are you going to come in or are you going to stand out here all night?

Christopher I'm going to live with you because Father killed Wellington with a garden fork.

Roger Jumping Jack Christ.

Judy Roger, please. Come on Christopher. Let's go inside and get you dried off.

Roger Come on then Soldier, let's get you warmed up. You'll catch your death out here.

Christopher *doesn't move.*

Judy

Christopher

Christopher

give him an

Judy Are

Christopher

Judy I know off. I can get bed.

She leaves the

Judy T-shirt

She goes back one of her old

Judy You

Christopher

Judy You

Christopher

Judy Why you all those happened where you

Christopher

Judy What

Christopher had some heart attack

Judy Oh

She starts to

He gives Toby to Roger.

y. Have you got any food I can

opher?

ed.

ou let me help you get your clothes -shirt. You could get yourself into

lets Roger to pass her a T-shirt.

T-shirt.

her's room and changes him. He wears

me.

ie to me, Christopher? I wrote t thinking something dreadful had I away and I'd never find out you were dead.

I went into hospital because you h your heart. And then you had a

Christopher Why are you doing that?

Judy Oh Christopher, I'm so sorry.

Christopher It's not your fault.

Judy Bastard. The Bastard.

Christopher, let me hold your hand. Just for once. Just for me. Will you? I won't hold it hard.

Christopher I don't like people holding my hand.

Judy No. OK. That's OK.

London Policeman I need to speak to him.

Judy He's been through enough today already.

London Policeman I know. But I still need to speak to him.

Christopher Boone. Please can you open the door.

Roger Come on Christopher.

Judy Christopher love. It's all right. Just open the door will you sweetheart?

Christopher Is he going to take me away?

Judy No Christopher he isn't.

Christopher Will you let him take me away?

Judy No. I won't.

Christopher Do you promise?

Judy Yes. I promise.

London Policeman Your father says you've run away. Is that right?

Christopher Yes.

London Policeman Is this your mother?

Christop

London I

Christop
and so th:

London I
back to Sw

Christop

London P

Christop

London P

Judy He

London P
argument
whether.

Judy Of

London P
far as I'm t

Christoph

London P

If your hu:
us a ring. C
among you

Ed I'm ta

Judy Rog

Roger I'n
home.

Ed I'll call

Why did you run away?

Father killed Wellington who is a dog
he could kill me.

I've been told. Do you want to go
father or do you want to stay here?

stay here.

Would how do you feel about that?

stay here.

Well, on, I'm asking your mother.

her I was dead.

Let's . . . let's not get into an
I what here. I just want to know

stay.

Well I think that probably settles it as

going to take me back to Swindon?

and causes any trouble, just give
re going to have to sort this out

whether you like it or not.

...

be spoken to like that in my own

damn well like.

Judy You have no right to be here.

Ed He's my son in case you've forgotten.

Judy What in God's name did you think you were playing at saying those things to him?

Ed You were the one that bloody left.

Judy So, you decided to just wipe me out of his life altogether?

Roger Now let's just all calm down here, shall we?

Ed Well, isn't that what you wanted?

Judy I wrote to him every week.

Ed What the fuck use is writing to him?

Roger Whoa. Whoa. Whoa.

Ed I cooked his meals. I cleaned his clothes. I looked after him every weekend; I looked after him when he was ill. I took him to the doctor. I worried myself sick every time he wandered off somewhere at night. I went to school every time he got into a fight. And you? What? You wrote him some fucking letters.

Christopher gets up out of the sleeping bag.

Judy So you thought it was OK to tell him his mother was dead?

Roger Now is not the time.

Christopher finds his Swiss Army knife.

Ed I'm going to see him. And if you try to stop me . . .

He gets into Christopher's room. Christopher points his knife at him.

Judy comes in.

Judy It's OK Christopher I won't let him do anything. You're all right.

Ed Christ

Ed squats dor

Christopher

Ed Christ
About the le
anything ilk

Ed spreads h
Christopher

Ed Shit. C

London Pol

Ed What t

London Pol

Ed Don't l

London Pol
come with r

Judy I thi

Ed I'll be l

Christophe
promise you

Christophe

London Pol

Roger watch

Judy and Cl

Judy You
all right. I f

They leave C

hausted.

wife at him.

y, really sorry. About -. About -.
neant . . . I promise I will never do

es to get Christopher to touch him.
e still holds his knife out. He groans.

ase.

3oone.

u doing here? Did you call him?

3oone, come on mate.

re. This is my son.

ow. This can all be sorted out. Just

go now. I think he's frightened.

promise you Christopher: I

Ed leave.

ue.

left alone together.

p now. Everything is going to be

his room. He lies down. He settles.

Immediately Christopher has settled it is the next morning. Roger and Judy give him breakfast. He is overwhelmed by them.

Roger OK. He can stay for a few days.

Judy He can stay as long as he needs to stay.

Roger This flat is hardly big enough for two people, let alone three.

Judy He can understand what you're saying, you know?

Roger What's he going to do? There's no school for him to go to. We've both got jobs. It's bloody ridiculous.

He gives Christopher a strawberry milkshake.

Judy Roger. That's enough. You can stay as long as you want to stay.

Christopher It was Mother who gave me the milkshake. *They look at him.*

It was Mother who gave me the milkshake not you.

Judy picks the milkshake up.

Christopher You need to shout more loudly at him. Like you're really angry with him not just being nice.

Judy looks at him. *Nods.*

Judy OK.

She puts the milkshake down. She's much angrier.

Roger That's enough. You can stay as long as you want to stay.

She looks at Christopher examining his response. Expecting more feedback.

Christopher I have to go back to Swindon.

They both look at him.

Judy Christopher you've only just got here.

Christophe
Maths A level

o back because I have to sit my

Judy You

is A level?

Christophe
Thursday

king it on Wednesday and
t week.

Judy God

Christophe

end Peters is going to be the

investigator.

Judy I'm

y good.

Christophe

to get an A* grade. And that's why

I have to go
have to go

lon. Except I can't see Father. So I
on with you.

Judy I do

her that's going to be possible.

Christophe

to go.

Judy Let

is some other time, OK?

Christophe

have to go to Swindon.

He stands at

Judy Chr

e.

Christophe

is it?

Siobhan

past two in the morning.

Christophe

p.

Siobhan
being silly.

I're scared of Mr Shears. You're

Christophe

body about. You can hear traffic.

He wanders

Siobhan

here?

Christopher A Fiesta. A Nissan Micra. A Peugeot. A Ford Granada.

Siobhan What colours are they?

Christopher I can't tell. I can only see orange and black. And mixtures of orange and black.

Siobhan Look at the things people have in their front garden.

Christopher Oh yes. Is that an elf?

Siobhan It's a gnome. And a teddy bear. And a little pond look.

Christopher And a cooker.

I like looking up at the sky.

Siobhan Me too.

Christopher When you look at the sky at night you know you are looking at stars, which are hundreds and thousands of light years away from you. And some of the stars don't exist any more because their light has taken so long to get to us that they are already dead, or they have exploded and collapsed into red dwarfs. And that makes you seem very small, and if you have difficult things in your life it is nice to think that they are what is called negligible which means they are so small you don't have to take them into account when you are calculating something. I can't see any stars here.

Siobhan No.

Christopher It's because of all the light pollution in London. All the light from the streetlights and car headlights and floodlights and lights in the buildings reflect off tiny particles in the atmosphere and they get in the way of light from the stars.

Judy Christopher?

She starts looking at him.

Siobhan I h

Christopher

Siobhan I h

Christopher
Siobhan?

Judy Christ

Christopher

Judy Jesus (looking for you again, I swear don't know w

You need to F
own again Ch
that?

Christopher

Judy You ca

Roger Don't

Judy I'm no
somebody in.
I wanted to cc
is.

Roger It wa

Christopher

Judy Christu
I'm getting pl
me to court. I
good time.

her.

han? Where are you going?

opher?

stares at him.

re you doing out here? I've been
ou'd gone. If you ever do that
topher, I love you, but . . . I

I won't leave the flat on your
istopher do you promise me

e in London.

rol.

ly fool, Roger, they got
en call me. They didn't ask me if
been off two days. It's illegal that

job, for Christ's sake.

o Swindon to take my A level.

your father threatening to take
the neck from Roger. It's not a

Judy It's only an exam. I can ring the school. We can get it postponed. You can take it some other time.

Christopher I can't take it another time. It's been arranged. And I've done lots of revision. And Mrs Gascoyne says we could use a room at school.

Judy Christopher I am just about holding this together. But I am this close to losing it, all right? So just give me some . . .

She breaks. She cries. She holds her fist to her mouth to try to stop herself.

She leaves the room. She comes back.

Judy Would you like an iced lolly?

Christopher Yes I would please.

Judy Would you like a strawberry one?

Christopher Yes I would please because that's red. What's it called here?

Judy It's called Hampstead Heath. I love it. You can see all over London.

Christopher Where are the planes going to?

Judy Heathrow I think.

Christopher I rang Mrs Gascoyne.

I told her that you're going to take your Maths A level next year.

Christopher screams. He throws his iced lolly away.

Judy Christopher please. Calm down. OK. OK
Christopher. Just calm down love.

Judy Well

Christopher hurts and he

Roger gives

Roger He Puzzles. It's the Universe.

Christopher

They're not

I'm not goin

Roger Wel appreciated.

Judy Chris to eat love. I flavoured in

Roger Con

Judy Be qu I'm going to

Roger I do

Judy Roger get a silver st

Roger Hal

Judy And if

Roger A gol

Judy Roger

ook like to you?

reams. He only stops because his chest

radio and three children's books.

wanted a radio. 100 Number y. This one is called The Origins of Nuclear Power.

children.

ow my contribution is

you a chart. Because you've got Complan and it's got strawberry

Christopher if you drink 200ml then ar on your chart.

, please. If you drink 400ml you

ml you get a gold star.

it's very original I have to say. not helping.

88 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Christopher picks up the radio. He leaves. He detunes it so that it is between two stations. He listens to the white noise. He turns the volume up very high.

Some time.

Roger watches him. He opens and drinks four cans of lager. He necks the lager in one go.

Roger comes into **Christopher's** room. He is very drunk.

Roger You think you're so clever, don't you? Don't you ever, ever think about other people for one second, eh? Well I bet you're really pleased with yourself now aren't you?

He grabs at Christopher. Christopher rolls himself into a ball to hide.

Judy comes into the room. She grabs **Roger**. She pulls him away from **Christopher**.

Christopher is moaning still in his ball.

Judy **Christopher**, I'm sorry. I'm really, really sorry. I promise this will never happen again.

He remains in his ball.

He doesn't stop moaning.

Judy and **Roger** leave.

Eventually he calms.

Christopher What time is it?

Judy It's four o'clock.

Christopher What are you doing?

Judy I'm packing some clothes.

Christopher Where's Mr Shears?

Judy He is asleep.

Come down

Christopher

Judy That

Christopher

Judy I'm j

Christopher

Judy We'r

Christopher

Judy Yes.

Christopher

Judy Pleas
now, OK?

Christopher

Judy Just .
OK? It's goin

Christopher
Maths A Lev

Judy What

Christopher
tomorrow.

Judy We're
London any
I don't neces

Now I need y

Christopher

Judy Jesus.
quiet for half

body. Get into the car.
cars' car?

aling the car?

it.

we going?

in home in Swindon?

ing to be there?

. Don't give me any hassle right

to be with Father.

going to be all right, Christopher,
it?

g back to Swindon so I can do my

, be doing my Maths A level

Swindon because if we stay in
eone was going to get hurt. And
1.

for a while.

you need me to be quiet for?

Christopher: I need you to be

90 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

Ed How the fuck did you get in here?

Judy This is my house too, in case you've forgotten?

Ed Is your fancy man here, as well?

Christopher starts drumming on one of the boxes. He begins drumming on them. He drums and drums and drums. Ed and Judy talking inaudibly under the drumming.

Judy Christopher. Christopher.

He's gone. You don't need to panic.

Christopher Where's he gone to?

Judy He's gone to stay with Rhodri for a while.

Christopher Is he going to be arrested? And go to prison?

Judy What for?

Christopher For killing Wellington.

Judy I don't think so. I think he'll only get arrested if Mrs Shears presses charges.

Christopher What's that?

Judy It's when you tell the police to arrest somebody for little crimes. They only arrest people for little crimes if you ask them.

Christopher Is killing Wellington a little crime?

Judy Yes love it is.

In the next few weeks we're going to try and get a place of our own to live in.

Christopher Can I do my Maths A level?

Judy You're not listening to me are you, Christopher?

Christopher I am listening to you.

Judy I told you. I rang your headmistress. I told her you were in London. I told her you'd do it next year.

Part Two 91

Christopher

Judy I'm back. This

ere now so I can take it.
pher. I didn't know we'd be coming
olve anything.

Mrs Shear

a nerve.

Christopher

we going?

Mrs Shear:
happened.

ound here as though nothing ever

Judy Ign

pher.

Mrs Shears

ly dumped you too has he?

Christophe

we going?

Mrs Shears
you didn't.

oming. Don't try and pretend that
id.

Christophe

we going?

Judy We'r

school.

Siobhan Si

opher's mother.

Judy That

u're...

Siobhan I'

nice to meet you.

Judy Yeah.

ice to meet you too.

Siobhan H.

er.

Christopher

Siobhan Ar

Christopher

Judy He's a

Siobhan Be

level, you said.

Judy He won't eat. He won't sleep.

Siobhan Yeah.

I spoke to Mrs Gascoyne after you called.

Judy Right.

Siobhan She still actually has your A level papers in the three sealed envelopes in her desk.

Mrs Gascoyne I still actually have the A level papers in my desk.

Christopher Does that mean I can still do my A level?

Siobhan I think so. We're going to ring the Reverend Peters to make sure he can still come in this afternoon and be your invigilator. And Mrs Gascoyne is going to call the examination board to say that you're going to take the exam after all. I thought I should tell you now. So you could think about it.

Christopher So I could think about what?

Siobhan Is this what you want to do Christopher? If you say you don't want to do it no one is going to be angry with you. And it won't be wrong or illegal or stupid. It will just be what you want and that will be fine.

Christopher I want to do it.

Siobhan OK.

How tired are you?

Christopher Very.

Siobhan How's your brain when you think about Maths?

Christopher I don't think it really works very well.

Siobhan What's the logarithmic formula for the approximate number of prime numbers not greater than x ?

Christopher I can't think.

Revere

He looks at the table.

He goes

Revere

Well I'r
90 min
name o
Turn o'

Christo

Christo

He stares

He can't become numbers

Christo
1331.

Revere

Christo

Revere

Christo

Revere

Christo
questio
confuse

Revere

Christo

Revere
like tha

Christo

Siobhan
Count t

5. *He picks up one envelope. He opens it. He places it face down on Christopher's table.*

6. *He takes out a stopwatch.*

this is jolly exciting, eh Christopher? Okay. Now the exam is going to last for 90 minutes. First thing to do is to pop your name on the envelope. Are you ready to roll? Please Christopher. And begin.

He takes out the exam paper.

He panics. He breathes heavily. He counts the cubes of cardinal

numbers: 64, 125, 216, 343, 512, 729, 1000,

1331. Are you all right Christopher?

Read the question.

What do you mean?

Read the question.

Do you see the question?

Yes, the questions but I can't read the words. When I look at the words they all seem to be mixed up. They're mixed up to me. I can't read.

Does this question say?

Christopher I'm afraid I can't help you. I can't read.

Christopher Stop groaning. Get your breath. I can't read the cardinal numbers again.

Christopher 1, 8, 27, 64, 125, 216, 343, 512, 729, 1000, 1331.

Siobhan Now. Have another go.

He looks at the questions again.

Christopher Show that a triangle with sides that can be written in the form n squared plus one, n squared minus one and two n (where n is greater than one) is right angled.

Siobhan You don't have to tell us.

Christopher What?

Siobhan You don't have to tell us how you solved it.

Christopher But it's my favourite question.

Siobhan Yes but it's not very interesting.

Christopher I think it is.

Siobhan Christopher people won't want to hear about the answer to a maths question in a play.

Look why don't you tell it after the curtain call?

When you've finished you can do a bow and then people who want to can go home and if anybody wants to find out how you solved the maths question then they can stay and you can tell them at the end.

OK?

Christopher OK.

He picks up his pencil.

He starts answering.

Ed enters.

Judy is behind him.

Ed Don't scream.

OK, Christopher. I'm not going to hurt you.

He cries

Ed I

Judy

Please

Christ
because
couldn

Ed nod

Ed T

Christ

Ed Ju
Very pl

Siobhan

Christo
corrido
Mother
there at
corrido
socks at
Toby di
which is
result.

If I was
things a
Can I cc
put all n
strange

Siobhan

Christopher.

you how the exam went.

siopher:

know if I got all the questions right
ired and I hadn't eaten any food so I
ly.

time.

or?

u. I'm very proud of you Christopher.
you did really well.

flar?

really a flat. It's a room. It's small. The
own. Other people use the toilet.
re toilet before I can use it. Sometimes
: in there so I do wet myself. The
ay and bleach. The room smells like
hener. And another bad thing is that
was two years and seven months old
rat. I don't like waiting for my A level

rouse I would have room to put all my
have to share the toilet with strangers.
your house so that I'll have room to
won't have to share the toilet with
cher. You can't.

... why can't I? Is it because I'm too noisy and sometimes I'm 'difficult to control'.

Siobhan No. It's because I'm not your mother Christopher.

Christopher No.

Siobhan That's very important, Christopher. Do you understand that?

Christopher I don't know.

Mother doesn't get back from work till 5.30. So I have to go to Father's house between 3.49 and 5.30 because I'm not allowed to be on my own. Mother said I didn't have a choice. I pushed the bed up against the door in case Father tries to come in. Sometimes he tries to talk to me through the door. I don't answer him. Sometimes he sits outside the door quietly for a long time.

Ed enters. He's holding a kitchen timer.

Ed Christopher, can I have a talk with you?

Christopher turns away from Siobhan.

Christopher No. No. No. No. No. No you can't. No.

Judy It's OK. I'll be here.

Christopher I don't want to talk to Father.

Ed I'll do you a deal. Five minutes OK? That's all.

He sets the timer for five minutes. It starts ticking.

Christopher, look . . . Things can't go on like this. I don't know about you, but this . . . this just hurts too much. You learn in the house but refusing to talk to me. You have to learn to trust me . . . And I don't care how long it takes . . . if it's a minute one day and two minutes the next and three minutes the next and it takes years I don't care. Because this is important. This is more important than anything else.

Let

to

have

diff

it w

not

you

anc

me:

He l

and

han

Retr

Ed

Chri

The c

Judy

afrai

after

walk

Chri

Ed

Chri:

The a

They l

Judy

Ed

Judy

s call it a project. A project we have to do

e to spend more time with me. And I . . . I

that you can trust me. And it will be

cause . . . because it's a difficult project. But

promise. You don't have to say anything,

I have to think about it. And, . . . I've got

show you that I really mean what I say.

and because . . . well you'll see what I

t big cardboard box. It is importantly cardboard

ther boxes. There's a blanket in it. He puts his

takes out a little sandy coloured Golden

ths old.

uld never ever do anything to hurt you.

stopher's lap.

e able to take him away with you I'm

too small. But your father's going to look

I you can come and take him out for

I want.

he have a name?

ecide what to call him.

y. He's called Sandy.

o now.

ack tomorrow and you can see him then.

Siobhan Christopher.

Christopher Yes.

Siobhan Here.

Christopher What's this?

Siobhan It's your result Christopher.

Christopher Right.

Siobhan You need to open it and read it.

Christopher Right.

He does.

Siobhan Well? What does it say?

Christopher I got an A*.

Siobhan Oh. Oh. That's just. That's terrific Christopher.

Christopher Yes.

Siobhan Aren't you happy?

Christopher Yes. It's the best result.

Siobhan I know it is. How's your dog?

Christopher He's very well. I stayed last week at father's because Mother got flu and he slept on my bed so he can bark in case anybody comes into my room at night.

Siobhan Right. How are you getting on with your father Christopher?

Christopher He planted a vegetable patch in his garden. I helped him and Sandy watched. We planted carrots and peas and spinach and I'm going to pick them when they're ready. He bought me a book, which is called *Further Maths for A Level*. He told Mrs Gascoyne that I'm going to take Further Maths next year. She said OK.

Mrs Gascoyne OK.

Siobhan

that.

Christopher I'm going to pass it and get an A* grade. And I'll take A level physics and get an A* 'm going to go to university in another 've to be in London because I don't like 'are universities in lots of places and not 'ig cities. I can live in a flat with a garden t. I can take Sandy and my books and my will get a First Class Honours Degree. entist. I can do these things.

Siobhan

o.

Christopher

n because I went to London on my own.

Siobhan

y of Who Killed Wellington.

Siobhan

: I was brave.

Siobhan

e.

Christopher

I wrote a book.

Siobhan

I read it. We turned it into a play.

Christopher

Does that mean I can do anything do you

Siobhan

in do anything Siobhan?

Siobhan

in do anything?

Siobhan

ther for a while.

Light.

After

attention person

Christopher returns to the stage. He gets the ill in the audience. Even if it is just one n for staying.

lights, sound, lasers, the boxes, the train tracks, the rest of the company; the orchestra, the fucking ushers for Christ's sake, using dance, song, bells, whistles, the works, he proves by means of a counter-example that when a triangle with sides that can be written in the form n squared plus one, n squared minus one and two n (where n is greater than one) is right angled.

M.
After
the
the
VL
dio
rad
and
I ha
thir
min
A th
Sho
form
(wh
And
He n
Start
A rig
have
If a t
degr
Pyth
squar
To pi
of a r

lights down, smoke, Christopher appears rising rap. There is very cool, electro music.

much for clapping and thank you very behind to listen to how I answered the maths A level. Siobhan said it wouldn't be but I said it was.

what I should use, so I decided to use all computers in the theatre including: which are moving lights, light emitting diode speakers, a Countryman boom mic and 4 PTDX Panasonic overhead projectors and Cynthia who will operate these.

tes to answer ten questions – but I spent my groaning which meant I only had six minutes to answer this question.

displaying 6.00.00.

le with sides that can be written in the form n squared minus one and two n (where n is greater than one) is right angled.

wrote.

the timer.

le is made using projection (or lasers) if you use logarithms if you are in the future).

angled, one of its angles will be 90 degrees therefore follow Pythagoras' theorem.

that a squared plus b squared equals c squared

you draw squares outside the three sides of a triangle then add up the area of the two squares on the two shorter sides and you get the area of the square on the longest side.