

OUR ORDINARY LIFE

by

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In memory of Des: You can't kill the pain, you only amplify it and pass it on. RIP buddy.

Intro title credits:

The beginning of the film, with the soundtrack of "Ordinary Life" by 80s band Rouen, is the opening title sequence showing Nick having a heated discussion in a boardroom where he is obviously being fired. He is then escorted out of the building by security without being allowed to go back to his desk. His phone is taken from him. The scene cuts to where he is angrily driving off from the company car park while other employees look shocked from the window.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

Nick is working at the kitchen table while his wife, Karen, is preparing dinner.

NICK

Alright, look at that!

KAREN

(dryly) Look at what?

NICK

I have 11 likes on my motivational post.

(Karen reads over his shoulder.)

KAREN

You actually wrote that? And worse, morons actually like that?

NICK

Not morons, business owners with the entrepreneurial spirit, like me, to run their own business. And these business owners have money to spend. With me.

KAREN

Well, if that's the type of customer you attract, then I worry for you.

NICK

Look, I have to build up a brand, and people need to know my new set-up. Its called brand awareness. Using BusinessConnect allows me to find new customers. It's social media for business professionals.

KAREN

Professionals? Well, that's you scuppered. Seems more like handjob
(MORE)

KAREN (cont'd)

awareness. Look Nick, it's been over a month since you started this venture, you have no customers for your web business, and we have no income. Your redundancy ran out as soon as it was paid to you as it disappeared into our debt mountain. You always said not to worry about money. And I always have and now I can't sleep from worry. I worry we can't pay the mortgage, I worry we can't feed our children. I worry there is no way out of this. My teacher's salary covers hardly anything. It barely services our debts. Getting 10 likes on some crappy business social media platform that is only read by morons, sorry business professional, who really have nothing better to do is futile.

NICK

(sulkily) It was 11 likes. We all have to start somewhere, it just takes time. Steve Jobs started in a garage.

KAREN

I admire the fact you want to be entrepreneurial and the next Steve Jobs. But sat here writing bollocks on our kitchen table, while I cook, you have more chance of selling your body. Mmm, well actually I take that back. But you need to do something.

NICK

I don't want to be the next Steve Jobs. I would take all the money, but I don't want the fame. You are always in the newspapers and the paparazzi are always following you around.

KAREN

The only thing following you around is the dog, and only then if you are carrying food. You are going to be in the papers alright, for being the dad of the poorest family in Britain. Nick, you have to do something. Find a job.

NICK

I can't, I tried, everyone is being made redundant.

KAREN

You can't just sit here, go out and sell door-to-door.

NICK

My body?

KAREN

No, don't, you would have to pay them. And even then I am not sure I'd wish that on them. Find some work! We are desperate.

(Nick just pulls a face and gets up to head to the WC.)

Craig, one of their teenage children, wanders past, head deep in the phone. He beats Nick into the toilet. Nick looks and sighs.

NICK

Hey, I know you, please don't sit there for hours on your phone, I need to go.

It used to be we would go online to escape the real world. Now I wish the kids would escape online to go into the real world. Their online obsession can't be healthy. Sitting on the toilet for hours can't be healthy. You know they never talk on the telephone, they are scared to ring people. What monsters have we created?

KAREN

They are going to be homeless monsters if you don't find work.

NICK

So! (comes smooching over) what's cooking, good looking?

KAREN

Instant noodles, all we can afford.

NICK

Seriously??

KAREN

Yeah, and I got some greens out of the garden. Grass.

EXT. TRADING ESTATE - DAY

Nick wanders around a trading estate, knocking on doors and speaking with receptionists about his web services. Most say no.

He walks up to the trade counter for a plumbing distributor and pitches to Barry. Surprisingly, Barry takes an interest.

BARRY

So you do websites? I am always interested in my online presence.

NICK

Yes, websites for your business (looks up) U-Plumb-Me. For your plumbing enterprise, I can do an ecommerce site.

BARRY

I don't know what that is. But just a website so people can see my catalogue. Maybe even buy things on my website.

NICK

(in disbelief) Yes, I can do that. We can give you an online shop window into (looks up again at sign) for U-Plumb-Me. Naturally, you will also want to be found by the search engines, Google and all those.

BARRY

(looking at his phone) Yeah. I want to be at the top of Google. How much will this cost?

NICK

Well, it's normally about 1000 pounds and for top placement in Google.

BARRY

I'll give you 250 quid.

NICK

Well, there is quite a lot of work involved.

BARRY

We are all on a budget, maybe if you do by next week that would be great. 250 quid is all I have. Sorry, I must go, take my business card, message me what you need.

(As he jumps into his sports car and drives off.)

NICK

(sarcastically to himself) No money my arse. (pretends to be calling) Hi Karen, I have a new customer.

(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
Bad news it's for a rich guy who
has no money. Go figure.

(As he watches the car drive off.)

NICK
Buttmuncher.

Rouen: "Shake" becomes background music into next pub scene.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

John is at the bar buying a round with Nick.

JOHN
How's the new business?

NICK
Given how the whole world wants to
be online, you'd think offering
online business services would be
easy.

JOHN
You trying to create the next
Facebook? It's a trillion-dollar
company!

NICK
I would be happy with just a couple
of thousand dollars. Every month.

JOHN
People start these companies to get
rich, filthy filthy rich.

NICK
I wish I could get rich, I would
buy myself some real friends.

JOHN
What?

NICK
What?

(Slight pause, carry on as before)

JOHN
Fuck it, John, why not get a proper
job?

NICK
Great idea! Wish I had thought of
that: the issue is everyone is
cutting back. I can see why you
were made the manager at the
library, such insightfulness.

JOHN

Hey, it's a steady job, I like the peace and quiet. And I can go online all day.

NICK

Oh the irony: work somewhere where you have unlimited access to books, and spend the day online.

JOHN

Hey what can I say, I have a wife who is the main breadwinner. I am all for feminism.

(Nick goes to pay)

JOHN

Hey don't, mate, I know times are hard, it's fine.

NICK

Thanks John, you are a real mate, I will keep you as a mate when I have created my trillion-dollar company.

JOHN

Hey, I'm quite happy with a beer. Beer is more important than friendship.

NICK

What?

JOHN

what? Seriously having money solves some issue but creates others. Most rich people become totally obsessed with working. They can easily retire but they don't. They might have 10 million in the bank but they see their contemporary with 100M in the bank and they want that. Mean while the guy with 100M in the bank sees his rival with 1 billion in the bank and he wants that. Take the richest man in the world, he still works all hours. You would think he would want to travel the world or cure cancer or do something noble. Nope, just carry on working all hours. Then in the end, the rich people die like the rest of us. And for what?

NICK

To have a nice solid gold gravestone?

JOHN

Well if that helps in the after life. A reason for being is the most important element in life - we all want to feel we make a difference.

NICK

what about being happy?

JOHN

what makes you happy?

NICK

Stability, enough money to make ends meet.

JOHN

What about your family, what about the feeling of achieving something that you did?

NICK

you know what makes me happy - walking in the rain up a mountain.

JOHN

You see, the best things in life are free.

NICK

True, but easy to say when you have money.

JOHN

You have friends, family , a roof over your head, you are not destitute yet. As humans when we are up against it, we step up. Trust in yourself, something will come. Now, you are a bit heavy, lets go give these drinks to our knobhead friends.

NICK

You calling me fat?

JOHN

What?

AT THE TABLE - NIGHT

They join their friends, BoJo and Tommy, who are not talking and are looking at their phones.

NICK

Well you two are a bag of laughs on your phones.

BOJO

We are looking at the latest football scores.

NICK

Oh, how exciting, are Kidderminster Harriers winning against Arsenal?

BOJO

Yes, no, what??

NICK

What?

JOHN

What? Shit, we forgot the crisps. I'll be right back.

(BoJo slams his phone down)

BOJO

You're right, fuck the phones. Lads night out, no women allowed. Well at least not wives, hahahaha.

NICK

Reminds me of my grandfather who always gave a toast at Christmas (holds up his beer): Here is to wives and girlfriends, let's hope they never meet.

(Everyone except Tommy still on his phone says, 'cheers!')

BOJO

Tommy, you with us in the real world?

TOMMY

Unfortunately yes, my fantasy world is a disaster, at least my fantasy football.

(Looks up and joins the conversation)

(John returns with the crisps)

JOHN

Here you go piggies, stinky breath cheese and onion, salt & vinegar, and ready boring salted.

BOJO

So Nick, how's the online business, making a living?

NICK

Yes, no. No. It's really hard to find business.

BOJO

What is it, just websites?

NICK

Yes, no. It's an online boutique business creating enhanced virtual shop windows into a company's commercial services.

TOMMY

Websites then?

NICK

Nooooo, yes. Everybody wants to be online, but all the companies I deal with don't want to pay for it, and there is shitloads of competition. It's really hard to find business. Though I did get approached by a local massage parlour who wanted me to advertise the services of each girl on their books, they wanted me to go down there for a meeting one evening, but I chickened out. I was worried that they wanted to pay me in kind.

TOMMY

Well I am sure Karen would have been relieved. Saves her a job. And let's face it, it's an ugly job.

NICK

Fuck off, just because you can't get laid even in a brothel.

BOJO

Haha, that night in Amsterdam.

TOMMY

Owww, I'm relieved I couldn't. Sure would have caught something and my poor Tommy Thomas would have never recovered.

BOJO

I am not sure the hooker would have recovered either. Sometimes even money can't compensate for a boat race like that one. And having to touch something as miserable as that (points at his crotch).

TOMMY

You will never know the delights of what I have hidden away.

NICK

Oh gawd, stop it. So how is the world of online dating?

BOJO

Yeah, bit like your website business. So many women looking for love and good times, and only one me. A good thing like me is hard to find.

TOMMY

Have you tried using someone else's photo?

BOJO

Very fucking funny. My photo on my dating profile is already from 10 years ago, no one on dating sites uses their current photo. Often the photo is just a headshot, missing out the body part, often for a very good reason. Maybe you could invent a new dating app that is more realistic and successful in matching people?

TOMMY

You mean exclusively for ugly people?

NICK

Jesus Tommy, you don't like being reminded of your night out in Amsterdam.

TOMMY

Also, what wasn't coming out that night was his Eton Wick.

(Everybody looks silent)

TOMMY

Eton Wick, Dick, you know, his lack of nobility when it came to his Dutch horizontal jogging shenanigans.

(Pause)

BOJO

You are not really one for Cockney Rhyming Slang.

NICK

I know this sounds like one of those contradicting paradoxes, whatever that is, given as I am in the world of online promotion, but how about you just try the old fashioned way? Go and chat someone up. Look over there, a bunch of lady drinkers, how about you go and say hello?

BOJO

Seriously, it's just too much effort.

NICK

What, too much effort to find the love of your life? The woman of the hearthfire, the harbor of your soul? What are you expecting? That they might eat you like a black widow?

(John is about to speak, but Nick shushes him)

BOJO

Yeah, it's too much effort. With this app, if you match, meet-up and they like you, then you see them again, if you don't; you shag them anyway and move on. You ghost 'em.

JOHN

Reeeeeeeally, you do that?

BOJO

No. Not me, I'd have to have a date first. But apparently others do.

NICK

That's my point, until 20 years ago and for the last 200,000 years we found a mate by going out and showing our physical credentials and attracting a mate with our strength, pheromones, and the ability to drag home the dinner. Or in John's case, with his wallet.

JOHN

What?

NICK

What?... Anyway... It's like my kids. They never go out anymore like we did. We'd be out on a Friday night, binge drinking as much as possible because last

(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)

orders were at 11 where we would finish with some shots. Why? I can't remember why. Seems a bit crazy now I think of it. Anyway, we would be shitfaced, quick visit to the takeaway on the way home, and in bed for midnight. Normally alone. Well, always alone. Despite thinking we looked the absolute bollocks. Anyway, the kids now are all online gaming. I'm not sure it's healthy. They never go out.

TOMMY

Yeah, because getting drunk till you puke is healthy and good for the core and long life.

NICK

(ignoring him) Worse, the kids have smartphones. The telephone was invented for calling people. But kids today are too shit scared to call anyone. They won't even ring the doctors. They go "oh can't we message them", its like no they only take telephone appointments. Then its "can't you do it?" . I am like no, you want to be treated as an adult you can call them yourself. They are teenagers of a different world, it's a different generation, I was never like this. We spent hours on the phone.

TOMMY

Which also annoyed our parents. Every generation fucks off the previous one. It's the puberty evolution. If teenagers get on with their parents, it would create a split in the fabric of time and space, that will cause the end of civilization. Worse than climate change.

JOHN

I am sure climate change is worse.

BOJO

No, what is worse is the woke agenda.

JOHN

You know what woke is?

BOJO

Woke should be just about recognizing minorities and giving them the positive recognition they deserve. Just because they are gay or whatever does not mean they should be discriminated against. That is decent and correct. But for that to be taken to a level where we get into an argument of someone who wants to be identified as, I don't know, a broom, and I am being told that's their right then I have an issue. And worse, if I disagree with them then cancel culture kicks in. If you are a celebrity, you can't dare speak out for fear of losing your career. It's big brother dictating what you can do through the back door.

NICK

Back door?

JOHN

What?

NICK

What?

BOJO

Will you two shut the f up. We go from a society that tolerates freedom of speech to some dystopian society where we have to conform and are told what is wokey and politically correct, and heaven forbid if you have your own opinion about it, then you are dragged off and imprisoned.

(Silence)

TOMMY

What was that about back doors?

BOJO

Shots anyone?

INT. HOME - NIGHT

Nick and Karen are preparing for bed.

KAREN

How's the pub? I hope you didn't spend any money.

NICK
(sarcastically) Of course not,
dear.

They brush their teeth

KAREN
Do you ever hear from any of your
ex-colleagues? Can they help you
find work?

NICK
Nahhh, they are all, you know, See
You Next Tuesdays. Crispy
undercooked nutella tacos.
Basically a bunch of cun...

KAREN
(interrupting)
Yes I get it. You would think given
the time, blood, sweat, and tears
you gave for that company that they
would want to help.

NICK
The issue with work colleagues is
that you don't choose them like you
would friends or a beautiful wife,
colleagues are just a bunch of
random people put together by a
recruiter and a random manager who
think they know best, and they
expect everyone to get along and
create a seamless profitable
business based on a 30-minute job
interview. You then get to spend
the next best years of your life
time with work colleagues spending
more time with them than you do
with the people you want to be
with. It can ven be a whole
lifetime. Once you are pushed out
you become persona non grata,
people don't care. If you die, you
are replaced before you are even
cold in the ground. In fact, it is
a proven fact when people are fired
it improves moral. It's like a
good old-fashioned hanging. Proven
that it improves the mood as the
are relived it wasn't them. And my
old boss was a complete dick who
thought he knew better about
everything. Turdclanger.

KAREN
Finished? You do sound a bit
bitter.

NICK

I have every right to be. I closed some of their biggest ever orders, I have a bad few months, and the new boss baby who likes to manage me via an Excel spreadsheet, thinks I am too old and outdated. And I am gone out of the door in the most humiliating way possible.

KAREN

Did they say that you are too old?

NICK

Yes, no, but it's obvious. They want younger people so they can pay less and cut costs, on the misguided approach that they will make more money despite having no experience. I hope they go broke.

KAREN

You poor old flower.

NICK

Well yeah, here we are, middle-aged, and over the hill. So fancy getting over my hill? (smooches)

KAREN

Not tonight, darling: tired, and I have to get up early for work.

NICK

If I was a rich successful businessman you would feel differently.

KAREN

Of course, I wouldn't have to get up early for work.

NICK

Just got to go for a minute, need a poop.

KAREN

Don't sit for hours on your phone.

NICK

I never do.

Karen leaves and closes the door.

(After 10 seconds: Nick is in the bathroom alone. You hear the sound of the Pornhub jingle from his phone followed by Nick going 'Shit, shut up,' as heavy breathing emerges. Followed by 'Oh bollocks, shhhhhh.')

HIGH TECH HOME

Amelia is getting out of her high tech car, she uses her phone to lock the car door and open the front door.

The home alarm goes, she uses the phone to turn it off and again to turn on the lights.

She throws off her high heels and wonders into the kitchen, opens the fridge. Absently minded turns on some music with her phone.

AMELIA

Well Mr phone, you haven't stocked the fridge very well have you?
(talking into her phone)Hey Siri, what do you recommend that's healthy from DeliveryDinner?

SIRI

Well maybe if you want something healthy, how about learning where the cooker is?

AMELIA

What the flipperly flips did you say?

SIRI

You heard me. You are so lazy, just cook something rather than adding to the Gross Domestic Product of planet arse.

AMELIA

(staring at her phone in disbelief)
what is this, this can't be? My phone, you the one thing in my life I truly love, please don't turn on me, please, please I couldn't live without you, please don't say these things.

BEDROOM

Suddenly the alarm goes on her phone and Amelia wakes suddenly from her dream. She grabs her phone, and stares at it.

AMELIA

O, M, G, don't ever do that, Siri what day is it?

SIRI

Good morning Amelia, it is Saturday

AMELIA

Siri, do you think I have a big arse?

SIRI

I cannot answer that. However I can show you websites that say why having a big bottom makes your more attractive. Also a website which says having a bigger bottom gives you smarter children. Or a website that states from Big Bum to Small Tum in 14 days.

AMELIA

Oh for fruit cakes . Don't you start on and hinting about losing weight, finding a man and having children. You sound like my mother. Amelia you are not getting any younger. Amelia when will I get grandchildren? Amelia when will you put your phone down and get a life and find a decent man? As if they are all mutually exclusive. Anyway why do I need a man when I have you Mr Phone. You are the only companion I need. (pause). Siri. Are you still there?

SIRI

What can I do for you Amelia?

AMELIA

Show me that website on why having a big arse makes me more attractive.

EXT. TRADING ESTATE - DAY

Nick meets with Barry at the trading estate, trying to finalize the website design.

NICK

How's my favorite customer?

BARRY

We need to do some more changes.

NICK

More? We've already done 3 iterations; this is a 250 quid website.

BARRY

I was chatting online with someone who was an expert yesterday. They said something about using customized templates that are, what was it, SEO friendly. He said putting a big video in there was bad.

NICK

Barry, that was what I told you, but you insisted on it.

BARRY

Yes, but I have now spoken with an online expert. You are not online, are you? You are here.

NICK

I fail to see the difference.

BARRY

My online image is very important to me.

NICK

Online image - about what?

BARRY

I just need to ensure that I portray the right image. A bit like an influencer.

NICK

Barry, about this website, I can't keep doing changes, it's only 250 quid, I have done everything you asked and more. You agree a successful businessman is one who can make a decision, especially under pressure?

BARRY

Absolutely, even if it's the wrong one, at least it was a decision. Not everyone can do that.

NICK

Well, I think you'll find they can. But you made a decision on your website, I did it. Now a good businessman has to stick by his decisions, you're a good businessman, the website looks great Barry, please just pay me.

BARRY

Well, I only want a few changes.

NICK

Why, Barry, why?

BARRY

Well, that online expert is a potential date, I want to impress her by doing the changes I said. She will come on a date with me.

NICK

Can't you just show her your Porsche?

BARRY

That's the first thing I did, it's my dating profile as my main headline picture.

NICK

(sarcastically) Well, that does surprise me. And she knows you are an entrepreneur, an owner of a major successful business?

BARRY

Sure, that's in my profile too.

NICK

I don't want to appear rude, but maybe you should just show her yourself, who you really are.

BARRY

What do you mean?

NICK

You know, as a person, with your good looks, and personality, use charm.

BARRY

Have you ever tried to date online?

NICK

No, I am a bit weird. I met my wife face to face in a bar and chatted her up. I know, it sounds crazy.

BARRY

Well online, they have hundreds of choices, you have to stand out.

NICK

I don't know, I have never done it, but it sounds really shallow. Can't you meet someone the old-fashioned way?

BARRY

I work in plumbing, it's all big fat hairy builders.

NICK

And that's just the women?

BARRY

You know it bro. With massive biceps and a cock. Anything goes these days. I don't go out much, except golf, but unless I want a GILFY girl that is a friend of my mother, then the only thing I will be gripping is my golf club.

NICK

What ever did people do before the internet?

BARRY

Dunno, died old, lonely and frustrated? Unless you do my changes, I may die old, lonely and frustrated.

NICK

OK Barry: I'll do it, but it's the very last time.

(Barry looking at his phone)

BARRY

Yeahhhh. Look at the nipples on that. Hey don't judge me, this is plumbing talk.

COFFEE SHOP

Amelia is sat at the table talking with her friend Becky. They are opposites in terms of characters.

BECKY

Amelia, what the fuck are you doing?

AMELIA

I'm taking a photo of my cake. And please don't swear.

BECKY

Oh stop being so posh and self righteous. Why the fuck would you take a photo of your cake? It's just a slice of sponge cake, the most boring cake on earth.

AMELIA

Really Becky, why do you have to swear all the time?

BECKY

And why are you on your phone the whole time, is that for Instablam, for your millions of disillusioned followers? A sponge cake really?

AMELIA

Look, see, I already have a 10 likes.

BECKY

Seriously? its hardly been 5 seconds. Are these losers constantly on their phones?

AMELIA

They are not losers. Many people use their phones to help with everyday things. They see their phone as a source of guidance or companionship. They would be lost without it.

BECKY

But surely Amelia, even you can see that companionship is not an inanimate object. A goldfish gives better companionship. If they are on their phone constantly surely that's obsession. (silence)
Amelia - do you think you have a phone addiction problem?

AMELIA

You know I work with the youth to help them find themselves. We encourage people not to use their phones.

BECKY

You work with the girl guides once a week.

AMELIA

Yes and we do a lot of activities and games that are not phone related. We teach them outdoor activities, how to camp, how to cook on an open fire, how to tie knots and build things.

BECKY

If you could you would have them tying knots in an application on
(MORE)

BECKY (cont'd)

their phone. I never see you not on your phone. A sort of how not to tie knots while not not on your phone knot phone application.

AMELIA

Really Becky, I have no idea what you are talking about. Do you think I have a large derrière?

BECKY

Are you talking about your cake?

AMELIA

No, my posterior, my haunches, caboose, my, you know, behind.

BECKY

Ohhh, your bootie. No. I have a fat arse. You have a well rounded heinie. Why on earth would you ask that?

AMELIA

My phone said I had.

BECKY

What? You are telling me there is an app that measures how big your arse is?

AMELIA

Not exactly. Siri told me. In a dream.

BECKY

What?

AMELIA

I had a nightmare, my phone turned against me.

BECKY

You can't do anything normal can you Amelia? Dreaming naked of going to school on the bus is a normal dream.

AMELIA

Is it?

BECKY

I hope so. I believe it to be associated with feelings of insecurity.

AMELIA

But you are so confident,
especially with your choice of
expletive vocabulary.

BECKY

All in the world is not always as
it appears. Especially when it
comes to how people think?

AMELIA

Something you want to talk about?

BECKY

I am not the one dreaming about my
phone.

AMELIA

Well I am always here if you need
to talk. Having said that, I got to
go and attend to my horse.

BECKY

And what pray may I ask, are you
doing with Prince Enchanting the
Third today?

AMELIA

I am making a a tik-tok video

BECKY

Oh for fucks sake.

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Nick, John, BoJo, and Tommy are at a table, drinking beers
but looking at their phones. Rouen's "Lying All the Time"
plays in the background.

NICK

Hey ladies.

(BoJo looks up.)

BOJO

Hey, it's the billionaire
entrepreneur, what's up doc?

NICK

Same ole, same ole, do you guys
want a drink?

BOJO

No mate, sit down, you don't have
to go to the bar anymore.

NICK

Why not, have we finally been
barred?

JOHN

If we were going to get barred that
would have happened years ago.
Jesus, the things we have done.
They wouldn't ban us, they need the
money.

(BoJo shows his phone to Nick.)

BOJO

Look mate, there is an app where
you can order your drinks. They
bring them to you.

NICK

What now?

TOMMY

It may be good for me, it stops me
playing the fruit machine every
time I go to the bar.

NICK

Gawd, the whole world just got
lazy. Do robots bring your drinks?

JOHN

Well if they did, that would be a
pity, it stops us ogling and
chatting up the barmaid.

NICK

Perhaps the thought of you chatting
them up is probably why they would
want robots.

JOHN

What?

NICK

What?

BOJO

Can you imagine touching a robot on
its arse, it would probably fire a
laser at you and shoot your
appendage off.

TOMMY

Not the robots that I see on the
internet. They actually allow that
sort of thing. In fact, it could
bring extra revenue for the bar.

BOJO

You mean turning the pub into a robot whorehouse?

TOMMY

Yeah mate, sounds fantastic. Beer, sex, and robots, licensed to frill.

JOHN

You can't chat up barmaids these days, or at least flirt - it's not woke.

BOJO

Of course, you can. You can't try to touch them, that's not a woke thing, that's just plain sexual harassment, I think you'll find that was never allowed.

NICK

If you touched a robot in the wrong place, you think that's hardware harassment?

TOMMY

Depends which ware is hard.

JOHN

If you touched a bot on her bot, she would bot you out cold.

BOJO

Probably the only chance Tommy would have is with something that has no thinking. Something that is non-ascension, aka non-human. Or animal. Talking of which, didn't you try it on with the landlady once?

TOMMY

Really, I can't remember. I thought that was why they had threatened to ban us.

BOJO

No, I think you will find that's when you turned the landlady down. Face like a lama's sphincter. And you told her that. She was very upset.

TOMMY

Yeah, as I say, I don't really remember. It was a heavy night on the source.

BOJO

Or you probably chose to forget.
Thankfully you are with friends and
we can remind you. Now talking of
source, what do you girls want to
drink?

NICK

I think you will find that you are
assuming my identity, now that is
not woke.

BOJO

Jesus, back to being woke. You are
right, I assumed your identity, and
that's why I have ordered you a
snowball.

NICK

Fuck off: just get me a pint of
best.

BOJO

OK, 4 pints of best.

NICK

It's okay, I just want one.

BOJO

(sarcastic) Oh haughty ho ha ha.
Such a comedian. Now, let's look at
this app. Mmmmmmm. It says do I want
to order crisps?

NICK

Yeah, cheese and onion.

TOMMY

Pork scratchings.

BOJO

Hang on, I'm still looking for
sleaze and bunion.

TOMMY

Plain, like your women.

BOJO

Oki doke, at least they are human.

JOHN

Debatable.

BOJO

Wait, wait, I will have plain too.
Fuck, it's crashed. Fuck this, I'm
going to the bar.

TOMMY

So no sexy robot coming?

BOJO

I'll send you the landlady so you can remind yourself of what you are missing out on.

TOMMY

Aww God no, just send the death bot. I can look lovingly into her laser eyes as she vaporizes me. It will be less painful.

(BoJo goes to the bar. Tommy looks at his phone.)

NICK

(to John) Look in here. Everyone comes out socializing, but everyone is on their phones. Look at that couple there. They haven't said diddely squat since they came in.

JOHN

It's an addiction thing.

NICK

Or they hate each other.

JOHN

Or it's purely physical.

NICK

I can't remember what that's like.

JOHN

Something you want to talk about?

NICK

No, but these conversations about robots get me thinking, how do I sneak one into the house without Karen and the kids knowing?

JOHN

Well, maybe you can rent one. You are looking for new business ideas, maybe a robot whorehouse isn't such a bad idea?

NICK

Yeah. Well, also if you get caught with a robot, whether it's a whore or not, are you really being unfaithful?

JOHN

Depends on your definition of unfaithful.

NICK
Being caught with another woman.

JOHN
Or man?

NICK
Well yes, but cock and balls don't
do it for me.

JOHN
What about in-betweens?

NICK
Well okay, I mean being caught by
anything human.

JOHN
So a robot is fine?

NICK
Well, I think so.

JOHN
So if you got home tonight and
found Karen with a robot balls-deep
in her on the marital bed, how
would that make you feel?

NICK
(laughs) Balls-deep? Do they have
balls?

(Tommy starts to take an interest and puts his phone down.)

TOMMY
Yeah, big metallic clanging ball
bearings, and probably a telescopic
penis that can extend on command.

NICK
Fuck me.

JOHN
It probably will if you ask it. I
suspect that makes you robosexual
meaning mechanical on organical.

(BoJo returns with drinks.)

BOJO
What we talking about?

NICK
What a gigantic organical slag my
wife is.

JOHN

What he means is, if we shag robots, would that mean we are being unfaithful to our partners?

BOJO

Unless your partner is a physical vacuum cleaner, and it has been known, then I don't think so. Though they give great blow jobs, mmm, apparently.

JOHN

Surely vacuum cleaners don't blow?

BOJO

Have you ever had a blow job John? I don't believe there is any blowing involved.

TOMMY

But he is married!

BOJO

Exactly: never had a blow job.

EXT. SCHOOL RUN - DAY

Nick is driving Craig to school.

NICK

Come on, Craig, you will be late.

(Craig gets into the car, puts his seatbelt on, and goes straight on his phone.)

NICK

(looks at him) So, what's new?

CRAIG

(matter of fact) Nothing.

NICK

So what you looking at?

CRAIG

I can't hear you, (points) I have my headphones on.

NICK

(quietly) Your mum and me were thinking of buying you a motorbike for your 16th birthday.

CRAIG

Really?

NICK

No, of course not, I have no money.
You guys bleed me dry.

(Silence.)

NICK

So what you looking at?

CRAIG

Humppf, if you must know, I am
looking at a video of the
backrooms.

NICK

Backrooms, is that some sort of
porno video game?

(Craig looks at him with disdain.)

CRAIG

No, Dad, don't be stupid. It's a
lore.

NICK

Of course it is.

NICK

So, what's a lore when it's being
dangled in front of me?

CRAIG

(again looks at him) It's a
fantasy, a narrative as a work of
fiction that you can never truly
comprehend.

NICK

Seems like this conversation. So
what is backrooms?

CRAIG

It's a series of never-ending rooms
painted in yellow. It is full of
surprises. It plays on your
imagination, a bit of a
psychological horror game.

NICK

I thought you said it was a lawn.

CRAIG

A lore, Dad, you are so stupid.

NICK

I am not the one who watches videos
of never-ending rooms painted in
yellow waiting for the boogeyman to
(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
jump out. Sounds like a waste of
time.

NICK
So how is school?

CRAIG
It sucks.

NICK
Why does it suck?

CRAIG
Because it does. Teachers suck.

NICK
Why do they suck?

CRAIG
Because they don't listen.

NICK
They are not supposed to, you are
supposed to listen to them. That's
how teaching works. They teach, you
listen, you learn.

CRAIG
They take our phones away.

NICK
So they should, otherwise the only
thing you would learn is fantasy
and nothing in the real world.

CRAIG
What like climate change, the rich
are getting richer, and that the
world is doomed, wars are coming
closer, and World War 3 is
pending.

NICK
Is that how you feel?

CRAIG
It's depressing, half the class is
off sick with anxiety.

NICK
I am sorry to hear that. Look, I
know we don't quite see eye-to-eye,
but you are my son, I love you and
if...

(Craig gets out of the car and walks off.)

NICK

...there is anything I can do to help you then I am always here. Normally in the kitchen washing up.

(Young for day break 20 secs @ 1min 50)

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Nick, John, Tommy, and BoJo are in the pub.

NICK

Took Craig to school today, god I hate puberty. One minute you are their hero, daddy I love you, I want to be like you, next minute it's basically fuck off dad, you are annoying, stupid, and embarrassing. By the way can I borrow money. And by borrow, I mean a long-term interest-free plan where I never have to pay it back.

JOHN

Yeah, it's tough for teenagers today, especially in the world online world of social media.

NICK

(continuing his rant without really listening) When you have babies, they warn you about that. Yeah, they never sleep, they puke like Vesuvius, and could drown a village in lava puke, they poop the most rancid stinky stuff known to mankind that I am surprised as parents we don't continually stink of, and sleep is a scarcity saved for when you are at work. But after 6 months eventually they sleep and normality resumes. And when the terrible twos hit, actually in comparison they become a lovely mini human compared to the bawling, bowel-bursting baby stage. But nobody ever warned me about puberty. It's like an emotional hand grenade that they throw at you. I now get stressed, bad-tempered, and it gives me headaches. They turn into these entitled pricks. We were never like this.

BOJO

I am sure we were. I know I was. I stole my dad's car once, crashed into a police car. Ran off. They knew it was me, but got dad to report it stolen. Which technically it was.

(They all stare at BoJo.)

JOHN

With my two teenagers, it's been tough. I would say they have had some serious mental health issues. I'm not sure exactly why, but it seems common.

NICK

Actually Craig said half of his class were off with anxiety. I thought he was overreacting.

JOHN

Between us, the girl has been self-harming. We had to find her help. It was devastating for us as parents, as we initially blamed ourselves. But then when you look online, you see how some of these social media companies encourage trends and other shitty things for kids to do. The social peer pressure is enormous. There is a TikTok group titled 'What I have eaten today' which encourage girls to boast how little they have eaten in a day, they compare notes and body images. No wonder they start getting eating disorders and they compare themselves to these so called beautiful women who look like twigs, and frankly I find extremely unattractive. These so called influencers should be locked up and banned. It's truly sickening.

NICK

Yeah, why does the government not crack down on it?

JOHN

Well we contacted our local MP, doesn't give a rat's arse. There are so many issues in the world, everything is diluted. European laws would cover this but well you know, given how the great Brexit is
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

working. Money and bonuses for the fat cats overrule everything else.

BOJO

No politics in the pub, we agreed to that!

TOMMY

He ain't called BoJo for no reason!

NICK

I suspect it's all to do with money. But social media is pulling society apart.

JOHN

It's worse, especially for kids. All their school reports are online in an app, parents get to track their kids in a way that we never had, every minute of every day. That's not progress, that's some dev geek trying to create a multi-billion dollar application with out thinking through the consequences on society. Everybody just wants to be a billionaire.

TOMMY

And then there is cyber bullying and all those perverts out there trying to take advantage of vulnerable children.

JOHN

We tried to educate our children, we were very late giving them phones, we knew as soon as we did that we would be giving up a big part of them.

NICK

It's an addiction. But we are as guilty of that too. We are always on our phones. For good or for bad, in sickness and in health, I now announce you man and app, you may now kiss Facebook on the arse cheek and hand over all your personal data. It's an addiction. But we are as guilty of allowng that too.

TOMMY

it is true, I got addicted to short video reels. These short clips on police chases, they keep serving them up knowing that I like them.

(MORE)

TOMMY (cont'd)

How do they know? I was about to walk the dog the other day, I found myself sat at the bottom of the stairs in my hat and coat and absent-mindedly holding the dog on its lead indoors, while scrolling my phone. I was probably there for 30 minutes at least. Dog just staring at me as if had lost the plot. Which of course I had - I was like I was in a trance. When I realized, I was disgusted with myself. But then I keep doing it. I think I need help. It so true. I am glued to my phone.

JOHN

From experience, Nick, you are looking for a new business idea, why don't you set up a clinic to help people with phone addiction?? Like an alcoholics anonymous, but for phone addition. Call it Internet Anonymous, or something.

NICK

Maybe it's the beer talking, but it sounds like an great idea. Though I have no idea how to start.

BOJO

most businesses start out not knowing how to do it. Fake it until you make it.

NICK

yes, but this is serious, I don't want to psychologically fuck people up by giving them wrong advice.

TOMMY

Nick, its not about giving advice, its about showing that there is an alternative to phones. The internet is here to stay, we can't avoid it, but like living with my ex- wife, who I still love, I had to learn to live with her not being there, but still being there as she is the mother of my kids. Maybe I can help, I did psychology at university.

NICK

You and your fucked up analogies , but I think you may have some sort of point and appreciate the help.

(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)

Let me think about it. Though I am not being called internet anonymous, sounds like some sort of online vigilantes wearing masks. I would need a catchy name.

BOJO

How about this for a name - a Get Away Smartfone Haven, or GASH for short.

NICK

Oh, for fucks sake.

BOJO

That's another good name.

TIK TOK HORSE YARD

Creation of Tik Tok - by Amelia.

Amelia leads the horse from the stall into an adjacent larger stable with an elaborate four-poster bed and a rug and pictures hanging from the wall. A majestic white horse stands in the middle of the room, wearing a glittery bridle and a wig. Amelia is in a designer dress and a tiara, is holding a smartphone on a selfie stick, trying to frame both herself and the horse in the shot.

AMELIA

Now, Prince Enchanting the Third, remember what we practiced. When I say 'TikTok superstar', you do the hoof thingy, alright?

The horse, PRINCE ENCHANTING THE THIRD, nods as if he understands, then sneezes loudly, causing Amelia to flinch.

AMELIA

Oh, Prince Enchanting the Third! You're going to be a viral sensation, just like me. Let's do this!

She hits record and upbeat music starts. Amelia starts performing an elaborate dance routine, while Prince Enchanting the Third just stands there, looking more puzzled than ever. After a few seconds, he seems to catch on and starts bobbing his head awkwardly to the beat.

AMELIA

(encouragingly) Yes, that's it! Show them how it's done! This is great fan following fodder.

Suddenly, Prince Enchanting the Third gets too into the music and starts prancing around, knocking over a vase, a

lamp, and finally the selfie stick. The phone goes flying, landing with the camera facing up, capturing Prince Enchanting the Third's bewildered face as he leans down to inspect it. The horse runs off, Amelia phone gets smashed

AMELIA
Mr Phone, nooooooooo

Suddenly an alarm goes off and Amelia wakes up

AMELIA
Oh for fucks sake.

INT. HOME - DAY

Breakfast time. Craig and Daniel are at the breakfast table, both on their phones. Nick and Karen take their breakfast to the table and sit down.

KAREN
Guys, you know the rules about no phones at the table.

(Nick sits down. The kids get up and leave without saying anything.)

NICK
Yeah, good morning to you too, my beautiful children. I hope you have a nice day. (sarcastically replies to himself) Yeah you too, Dad. We just wanted to remind you we love you very much and are very grateful for everything you do for us.

KAREN
It's their hormones.

NICK
We were never like that. We have just brought up a load of entitled kids who expect everything, and expect it immediately and don't want to follow any rules.

KAREN
Children, not kids. Just go easy on them, I do hear some horror stories about other peoples children. I think so far, touch wood, we haven't done too bad. They are not carrying knives or starving themselves or worse.

(She then tries to change the subject.)

KAREN

How's the money making?

NICK

Mmmm, good news this morning, I had an email and I have won the lottery in Columbia. I had no idea I was doing it. I also got a really interesting email from a Nigerian Prince offering me money from his dead uncle, apparently we have the same name.

KAREN

That's nice dear, perhaps we can go and live in the prince's palace where we don't need to pay the mortgage.

NICK

You know it is a worry with the kids...

KAREN

Children

NICK.

...especially with phone addiction. You know Craig said half his class are regularly off with anxiety and mental health issues.

KAREN

Craig spoke?

NICK

Yes, I was surprised too. When I took him to school, he had no choice really, I opened up a conversation with him and he fell into the trap of talking back. But you know, it is something our generation never had, being brought up on the internet. We are to blame. As soon as they are old enough to hold a tablet, we force one on them to shut them up and then they are instantly hooked. And then we complain when they spend too much time on their phones.

KAREN

I often see youngsetsr cycling along on their phones. It's really stupid.

NICK

But it's our fault. Not just the parents, but society. Everything has to be done online - banking, parking, appointments, shopping, playing music, or answering the f'ing doorbell. Even at the pub now we have to order drinks online. Then you have social media and influencers. And the feeling that you are an imposter or not good enough because you see everyone else online is having a great time and you start believing that it's only you having a shit time. The world has gone mad.

KAREN

(looking surprised) Blimey Nick, I never knew you cared so much. You always seem so, well, I don't know, uninterested. You are always on your phone. I didn't think you had noticed. As a teacher, we have kids in the class always on their phones. For a long time we were not allowed to confiscate them, it caused havoc in the class. And the students are just rude or they would film you having a meltdown and put it online. So called classmates would cyber bully each other in class. What we did to torment our school mates and enemies we did only in the playground during school hours, now this happens 24x7. It is relentless. I am not surprised all the kids are off with anxiety.

NICK

When I was at school we had a fight at playtime, and that was that. All done. Cleared the air. We would all be friends again after that.

KAREN

Well I am not sure we should encourage the kids to go punching each other.

NICK

Well it's human instinct. There is nothing instinctual about showing your dinner on Facebook.

KAREN

(looking off in distance in deep thought) Or showing off your 3 beautiful children while on your perfect skiing holiday in Klosters with your rich banker husband while sipping Napoleon brandy. Bitch.

NICK

Mmm, jealous much? Now, now, we all have one of those annoying friends who think they are better than everyone else. And if you don't, then it's most likely you.

KAREN

Yeah, anyway.

NICK

Look Karen, I have an idea, and I want your blessing. I want to help society with their phone addiction. I honestly think there is a business where we can help people get back to a life that removes their instinctive reliance to constantly use their phones. Perhaps without admitting anything, I am a bit addicted.

KAREN

A bit? In the same way Jack the Ripper was a bit addicted to killing prostitutes in Whitechapel.

NICK

What?

KAREN

What?

NICK

When I am with John and the boys in the pub, they are always on their phones. If there was a place for socializing without the need for a phone then you would think that was it. We discussed the idea of a phone addiction clinic, they also think it's a good idea and want to help.

KAREN

Nothing against your friends, but they need help. They couldn't organize a fire lighting competition at an arsonists' convention.

NICK

I am sure they could do something.

KAREN

You know, I think it's a great idea. But remember we have no money to invest in this, but I think you should do it by yourself. You need proper experts to help you who deal with addiction. You don't want to make things worse for people.

NICK

I was thinking I could start small. We could rent somewhere away from here for a weekend. Something like a youth hostel in the middle of nowhere, up in the Welsh mountains. Preferably with no mobile coverage. We can have round circle discussions like they do on Alcoholics Anonymous. But also I can organize some activities to take peoples minds off their phones. I need to remind people of the beauty of real-life. There is more to living than the virtuous and opinionated and false bullshit that the internet churns out daily.

KAREN

Look Nick, it sounds interesting. I am just worried you are wasting your time on something that might not keep a roof over our head.

NICK

Right now, I feel like I am wasting my time. I apply for jobs and get nothing. I start my own website business, but it is so painful. Customers have no idea what they want, but they know what they don't want, which is only when I have created them a website then all of a sudden they become the expert. I am sick of it, and it doesn't pay. I feel like I have nothing to lose.

KAREN

mmmmm. I know someone at school, Marion's husband. He is a university professor, a bit nutty, but according to his wife he has dedicated his life to phone usage. What kids hide on their phones these days is frightening. Maybe you can recruit him as an advisor?

NICK

Good idea. If you let me know his details, I can contact him. I can organize all the things that need to be done. I am going to go for it. Tommy said he would help too. He has some sort of psychotherapy experience. No idea if it helps but I trust him.

KAREN

Well, I will talk with Marion - see you later after work.

NICK

(smooching) Maybe this evening we can have an early night?

KAREN

Sorry, it's that time of the month, I have the Abstract Expressionists doing surrealist pop-art down below, and the sex museum is closed off to the public.

NICK

What? And it's normally open to the public?

KAREN

(kisses him quickly while leaving)
Go and make some money.

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Nick and Tommy knock on Professor MacIntyre's door.

MAC

"Entreeee!"

NICK

Professor McIntyre?

MAC

Yes, come in, call me Mac. You must be Nick?

NICK

Yes, and this is my friend Tommy.

MAC

Well isn't this nice. So our wives are all colleagues at their school and yet we have never met?

NICK

I avoid school social functions. When I left school I had no wish to return and be reminded of my depressing school years.

MAC

Well it's all a lot different these days, at least back then once you went home, that was it for the day.

NICK

So Karen tells me you are a bit of an expert on phone usage, especially amongst the younger generation?

MAC

Yes, it's become a passion of mine. Cyber bullying amongst children and teenagers is a 24 x 7 occupation. Our younger generation today, or the Gen Z, are even worse little shits then we ever were. Highly manipulative, they hide things within layers of apps on their phones so parents and teachers can never find it. And quite awful things too. And the parents are in total denial about it. (parents voice) No my little Brucey would never create a degrading list of girls in his class marking them out of 10 for looks. (/parents voice) Though I am not altogether blaming them, the youth do what the youth do to get ahead, look cool in front of their peers, or just to fit in, and play the system.

TOMMY

Sometimes it's difficult to know what to do or who to blame.

MAC

Well take the companies with a vested interest - whether it phone companies or media companies, their main worry is about profits for their shareholders, and don't give a fucking hoot about welfare. And governments are very slow to do anything and regulate, mainly because there is no vote incentive to do it. And meanwhile half the younger generation go mad. It's a massive concern. And not only because we will rely on these

(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)
little cherubs to look after us in our old age. We could end up looking after them while they sit there with silver foil on their heads dribbling on about conspiracy theories.

NICK
Well that's reassuring. Makes you wonder why we bother having kids.

MAC
You have children?

NICK
Yes, two teenagers. They ignore me mostly unless they want something. Normally money. And then they only ask via messenger. It would be depressing if it wasn't so heart wrenching.

MAC
(turns to Tommy) And you, Tommy?

TOMMY
Yeah, a little girl. Divorced from the mother, mmm, she spends a lot of time on an iPad.

MAC
Yes, start them early on the spiral to online despair. It's an easy way out for parents not to spend quality time with their children and to shut them up. It really is depressing.

NICK
Hence why we are here. I want to do something about phone addiction mainly. Its a common issue even amongst us adults. I want to set up a self help group. A bit like alcoholics anonymous, but less anonymous, more about phones.

MAC
Sounds a worthy cause. I assume the alcohol stays then?

NICK
Well you pick your battles. I need the alcohol for weekends.

MAC
So would it be like a class once a week?

NICK

I'm not sure, I was actually thinking of weekend workshops. Somewhere remote where people can get away from it for a couple of days. To break the addiction you need something more than an hour.

MAC

Yes, I agree, you need to take them out of their comfort zone and open their minds to alternatives.

NICK

Totally. I was thinking we could have class type therapy sessions, but then we can also do activities where by people are not thinking about their phones. Opening up their minds to other initiatives. I was thinking a place in the countryside, we take away their phones when they arrive, no exposure to the internet whether its social media, news, games , YouTube whatever for a long weekend. I am not going to pretend I am an expert in addiction or psychology, so this is where you can help. Do you think this can work?

MAC

Certainly! A weekend getaway without a phone could work as a powerful incentive to reduce phone addiction. In effect we giving a Digital Detox. The whole FOMO thing is taken away giving our brains a chance to reset.

TOMMY

FOMO, what is that?

MAC

Yes, fear of missing out. It is a powerful emotional experience that significantly impacts our well-being. People with phone addiction often find themselves reaching for their phones frequently, even when it's unnecessary. It is closely tied to our use of social media platforms. When we see others having fun, achieving milestones, or experiencing exciting events, we compare our lives to theirs. It can

(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)

make us feel inadequate. Many crave to see people worse off than us as it makes themselves feel more in control in comparison and less incomplete.

TOMMY

Do you think Nick's idea could work?

MAC

Sure. The use of Cognitive-behavioral therapy is effective in changing maladaptive thoughts and behaviors associated with addiction. This client-centered approach helps identify the gap between the current state, addiction, and the desired state, reduced phone use. It fosters motivation for positive behavioral change.

(Nick & Tommy look at each other)

MAC

Basically, a good piss up in the country with fresh air and long walks will help enormously.

NICK

Would you want to be involved?

MAC

Is this a new business venture?

NICK

Ultimately I would love to make a living where I can actually give a positive impact on society. So yes it is.

MAC

well that's something we have in common. When I went into teaching a positive change for our younger generation was something I believed I could foster. I really thought I could make a difference. But kids today are entitled little pricks and as educators we feel both undervalued and unappreciated. Society and helicopter parents are mainly at fault. (parents voice) Ooo my little Luca can do no wrong,
(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)
why did you fail him?? (/parents
voice) Because he is a precocious
little shit who never did any work.
Sorry I digress. Anyway phone
addiction is a subject that is
close to my heart, count me in! Do
you have a name yet for your
venture?

NICK
Yeah, we did some brainstorming in
the pub.

MAC
And?

NICK
Phones Anonymous was out.

TOMMY
What about Phones Away?

MAC
Nice double meaning, sounds
something like a teacher would say.

TOMMY
Friend of ours also suggested "Bone
Your Phone."

MAC
Uh huhhh.

NICK
Maybe Net-Fix, but more internet
related, we also came up with Free
the Tones.

MAC
Radical.

NICK
Fone Free with an F, so instead of
AA meetings we had FF meetings.

MAC
Wowzers.

MAC
Maybe I have a name you can use,
you can have it for free.

PUB SCENE - BEER GARDEN DURING THE DAY

Amelia is sat at the table alone. Glued to her phone. A man approaches her,

Hi, are you Princess Enchanting
waiting for Prince knight in
shining armour?

AMELIA
(looking shocked and
closing the app on her
phone and looking up).
You are Prince In
Shining Armour?

RISHI
At your service!

AMELIA
You look nothing like your picture.

RISHI
To be fair your highness, neither
do you. Are you even a princess?

AMELIA
I am to my followers.

RISHI
Ahhhh, are we doing a real date but
with all the rules of a virtual
date? Should we just message each
other from each side of the table?

AMELIA
Mmmmm, I try to avoid reality. Too
much stress and expectations of
behaving like an adult. Maybe
messaging is a good idea.

RISHI
(pointing to the pub table)

May I have the honour of joining
you on this, the royal banquet
table?

AMELIA
(starting to show
interest)
Well, I decree a brief audience
with Princess Enchantment the third
is allowed. Pray, please take a
seat.

RISHI

Brief?

AMELIA

Well lets see how things progress.
I am not used to talking to
strangers in real life. I do that
online where I hide behind my
persona.

RISHI

Well, may I buy you a drink? I
think the drinks are real here too,
proper glass, liquid and everyting.

AMELIA

You say that, but you can order at
the virtual online bar. There's an
app. I'll take a soda water. With a
lime.

RISHI

Yeah, call me unhip, but I will go
to the bar

AMELIA

Ok

Amelia starts to message with Becky

Amelia message: Well he actually arrived. He seems nice.

Becky message: seems nice? Axe murderers seems nice when u
first meet them. U on phone already??

Amelia message: gone to the bar. How do U know if an axe
murderer is nice when u first meet them? How many u dated?

Beckymessage : Few. Fortunately they had small choppers,
couldn't murder a fly.

Amelia message - Becky u being rude? You know I don't do
rude things.

Becky message - maybe not on 1st d8. But you never go to 2nd
d8 so how would u know???

Amelia message - Because I wait for right gay, I am very
fussy.

Becky - right gay?? No wonder.

Amelia - typo, *guy, trying to type fast b4 he comes back.

Becky message - I would say b careful, but I know you wont
take him home.

Amelia message - I b careful anyway, he might troll me ,
online or hiding in my closet.

Becky message - rather be ghosted?

Amelia message - rather find someone who isn't syco
(deletes) phsco (deletes) pysoch (deletes) mad

RISHI

Here you go.

AMELIA

Thank-you

RISHI

(sits down with a beer)

So how where does the name Princess
Enchanting come from?

AMELIA

Horse. And Prince in Shining
Armour?

RISHI

Ex girlfriend.

AMELIA

What happened?

RISHI

She ran off with Lord Tossplot the
second. Actually my best friend.
Buts its fine, I am sort of over
it.

AMELIA

Sort of?

RISHI

I miss him.

AMELIA

They still together?

RISHI

No. Seems she was still active on
dating sites. Some sort of
addiction. Don't know, don't care.
Anymore. At the time it was
devastating but you know.

AMELIA

More fish in the sea

RISHI

One door closes, another one opens

AMELIA

Time heals all wounds

RISHI

Better to have loved and lost than
never to have loved at all

AMELIA

Focus on yourself right now, being
single is better.

RISHI

She was a right selfish pig anyway,
always flaunting it, you are
better without her

AMELIA

Someone said that?

RISHI

Yeah my mum.

AMELIA

Right, cool mum

RISHI

She is perhaps a little over
protective. Maybe I can introduce
you?

AMELIA

Mmmm, she does sound wonderful, but
perhaps I think we should wait to
see how this date goes first.

RISHI

(after a few seconds
silence)

So, a horse , eh?

AMELIA

Yes, he is the most ideal partner.
Faithful, loving, loyal, always
there.

RISHI

Well I had better not make any hung
like a horse jokes.

AMELIA

No, heard them all before.

RISHI

So to have a horse, you must have
money?

AMELIA

Quite the opposite. Because I have
a horse, I have no money. In case
you were just after my money.
Because I have none. brassic.
Skint. Zilch.

RISHI

Sorry, I didn't mean that as perhaps, it came across. I don't have a horse and I also don't have money.

AMELIA

So much for my knight in shining armour to whisk me off my feet and take me away from it all in his golden carriage.

RISHI

Yes, but I do have a 3 series BMW. Not golden, but red. Cheers!

AMELIA

Cheers!

Scene Pub Car Park - Amelia walk up to her car, goes into her bag, to look for her phone. She can't find it.

AMELIA

No , Mr Phone, where are you??
(rummaging through bag)
no, fuck, fuck, fuck,
fuck. FUCCCCCCCCCK. I
can't go on. My life is
over.

INT. HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Nick and Karen are at the kitchen table, organizing the first weekend retreat.

KAREN

So how many people are going?

NICK

We have 12 clients, plus the helpers.

KAREN

I can't believe it sold out immediately.

NICK

Yeah, just reinforces the idea that people not only need help, but want help. The irony wasn't lost on me that people found us online. I have booked a youth hostel in deepest darkest Wales, we have booked a mini bus, and they have a massive dining room that we can use
(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
 as a class room. And there is loads
 of activities we can do: long
 walks, archery, baking, open
 swimming. And for those who want to
 just chill: lots of books for
 reading.

KAREN
 Blimey, books, remember those?

NICK
 Mac has some therapy sessions
 arranged. And we can have food
 delivered from the supermarket, and
 cooking and washing up is part of
 the therapy.

KAREN
 We need more therapy in this house.

(The kids arrive at the table.)

CRAIG
 What are you doing? Organizing a
 swingers convention?

KAREN
 Your dad is organizing a new
 venture to tackle phone addiction.

NICK
 Oh my god, I hope it doesn't end up
 as a swingers convention.

KAREN
 I thought everyone is in bunk beds,
 I don't think it's conducive for
 that sort of thing. Stop worrying!

DANIEL
 Phone addiction, seriously, is that
 a problem?

NICK
 Have you ever gone out without your
 phone?

DANIEL
 No.

NICK
 Then you are addicted.

CRAIG
 He loves a bit of a-dick-ted.

DANIEL
 Fuck off, knobsock.

NICK

Daniel, you fell off your bike 6 months ago, or rather you rode into a bollard because you were on your phone. That is an issue. Have you stopped riding while looking at your phone?

CRAIG

of course he hasn't. He is too busy snapchatting his so called ugly girlfriends with whatever made up name he thinks of when I ask him who they are.

NICK:

look I am doing this as I worry about your generation. You have grown up with phones. I hate to think what its done to your cognitive powers of reason, what its done for your creativity, and when I witness the sense of entitlement your generation has, it is concerning for me.

CRAIG

Well, it's your generation's fault for subjecting us to it.

NICK

And typical of your generation to blame everyone else and not take any responsibility for your own actions.

KAREN

He may have a point.

NICK

Don't encourage him. Anyway, I'm trying to do something to address the imbalance. It's a beautiful world out there, you don't need to view it through the eyes of your smartphone .

DANIEL

Oooo (in a made-up English accent): It sounds ghasssssssstly. Though if you can buy me a new phone, then I can see the world in much clearer resolution. My screen has departed from its normal state of well being. Left the station of being astheticaly pleasing.

NICK

If this business is successful then
you two are coming on a course.

DANIEL

Will there be girls?

CRAIG

Only real ones, Daniel, you won't
know what to do with them.

DANIEL

Oh Craig, if only you knew.

CRAIG

I do, Daniel, you ain't fooling
anyone with your Swedish
girlfriends.

NICK

I love Swedish girls. I always
loved the blonde one from Abba. Not
sure about his beard though.

DANIEL

What?

NICK

What?

DANIEL

You ain't funny, dad.

CRAIG

Not like Daniel so called
girlfriends. They are all animes.

KAREN

Jesus boys, I don't want to know.
If you ever give me grandchildren,
I don't want them to be half
virtual. Or worse.

NICK

Right its bed time, Karen you
coming to bed. Maybe tonight we can
re-enact the conception of our
children, which by the way, was the
only good thing about having
children.

DANIEL

Oh be Jesus, I don't want to think
about that. You are sick.

NICK

How did you think you were made?

DANIEL

I don't ever think about it.

KAREN

Looking at the state of your room
and all the tissues on the floor
that get stuck in the vacuum, I
think you think about the concept a
lot.

DANIEL

Aww Mum, you are as bad as Dad.
Stop.

NICK

(Looking at Karen)

come on Karen, let's go do your
favorite position, the reverse
under water crocodile.

KAREN

Yeah, sounds great, make it really
snappy like you know how I like it.
Biaaaatch.

(As they walk off to the bedroom.)

NICK

I bet they are both googling that
right now.

KAREN

FOMO: fear of missing out.

NICK

I have heard that a lot recently.

KAREN

That's good, because you are
missing out again tonight. I have
quite the murder scene going on
below.

NICK

Oh for... FFS.

Coffee Shop

BECKY

How you been?

AMELIA

Awful. My life was on hold for a
week without my phone.

BECKY

Seriously? Its only a phone.

AMELIA

No it was Mr Phone. I use it for everything. I could not drive, I could not get in my house. I had to stay with my parents. It was awful. I had my mothers full attention on th deficiencies of being a perfect daughter. My dad in thee mean time thankfully managed to workout how to bypass my security, but not before setting off the alarm and pissing all the neighbours off. Also I had about 5 parking tickets as I could not move my fooking car.

BECKY

You swore, twice, you never swear.

AMELIA

Yes, well it was.. f'ing awful. My whole social life was ruined.

BECKY

What social life?

AMELIA

My online one. My followers missed me.

BECKY

Did any one of them actually say they missed you?

AMELIA

Not in so many words.

BECKY

Even I didn't miss you, I had assumed you were busy. But I don't spend all my time on my phone tracking you

AMELIA

Perhaps you should in case I end up murdered in a ditch.

BECKY

Talking of murdering, how was your date?

AMELIA

Yeah he was funny, but after about 30 minutes we were both on our phones ignoring each other. It's a shame we had a good spark to begin with. It's how all my dates end up.

BECKY

Maybe it's you? You should not take your phone out of your bag when on a date.

AMELIA

Yeah I think it fell out of my bag or it got stolen. When I went back to the pub, nothing was there, noone handed it in. I could not track it. After our date when I got Mr Phone the second, I was expecting a load of messages from him, but nothing, it seems I have been ghosted.

BECKY

To be fair, you also unintentionally ghosted him. Maybe he was hoping you make the next move. How did you leave it?

AMELIA

Well I said I would message him. But he could have shown willing.

BECKY

Not how a man's brain works. They take everything literally. When you tell them nothing is wrong, and clearly there is, they believe nothing is wrong. Men are so stupid sometimes.

AMELIA

Totally.

BECKY

Do you think you are not a bit over reliant on your phone?

AMELIA

What are you talking about? Everybody has one, its a part of everyday life.

BECKY

Yeah, but look what happened when you lost it.

AMELIA

It's a shame no-one has invented a phone that calls you when you leave it behind.

BECKY

Do you have any idea how ridiculous that sounds. Is it supposed to call
(MORE)

BECKY (cont'd)
itself to tell itself to start
shouting at you?

AMELIA
argggghhhh, I don't know.

BECKY
I did see an online advert, about
phone addiction, it's someone local
to hear I think organizing it. It's
a weekend away in the country with
phone therapy. Maybe you should go?
Maybe you will meet some new
followers? Hahahahaha.

AMELIA
Yes, maybe, very droll, ha ha. Can
you send me the details.

BECKY
Yeah, I'll send it to your phone.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Last of the people are getting on the mini-bus. Nick is
saying goodbye to Karen and Craig.

KAREN
Well, I am not sure what to think,
whether I should be nervous or not.
Everyone is looking happy, maybe
there is something in this. I hope
it all works out.

NICK
Well, if it all goes tits up, then
at least I tried. Mac is on board
thankfully, it's mostly down to him
and his classroom activities, youth
hostel is booked, we have food
arranged, the tank is full. We have
plenty of outside activities to
wean people off their addiction.

(Nick looks at Craig.)

NICK
None of them virtual, these are all
real things you don't need the
internet for. Stuff we did 30 years
ago.

CRAIG
Yeahhh, back in the dark ages.

NICK

It may surprise you, we did have electricity and light bulbs back then.

KAREN

Though I think most these days are connected to the internet. Can you hack a light bulb?

NICK

Probably, though I am not sure what the Chinese would do with my lightbulb data.

KAREN

Data is the new oil apparently. I read that it's worth a fortune.

NICK

Well, it's time to make that particular brand of oil run dry.

(Tommy arrives.)

TOMMY

Everyone is on board, Nick, we are ready to head off to the hills where the internet has not yet arrived.

KAREN

You had better go, good luck sweetie.

NICK

Yes, see you in a few days, back Sunday night.

CRAIG

Good luck with your new business. I hope you make enough to afford a new phone, yours is a piece of shit.

NICK

Oh, the double irony. Thanks, son. Kiss for your dad?

CRAIG

Absolutely. Not.

(Nick gets on the bus. Present are Barry, Tommy, BoJo, John, Rose, and about 12 others including Amelia.)

Play "Ordinary Life" by Rouen: guitar break and keyboard
33.02 of 39.30

NICK

(to the whole bus) Well, welcome everyone to the first outing of Free Fone Life. First of all, I wanted to thank you all for coming. We have 3 days in the beautiful Welsh Hills, which will be a special phone-free area of natural beauty!

(Everyone cheers.)

NICK

Well, I hope you are all still feeling like that on the return journey.

TOMMY

Will we?

NICK

I have no idea I have never done this before. You may all become a mass of zombies for all I know, having killed and eaten each other. That's what makes this so exciting!

(They all cheer again.)

TOMMY

You gotta love that British sense of togetherness. We would all make good zombies, as long as we have tea.

NICK

Right, first things first, it's time to hand over all your phones if you brought them, you don't get them back until we return.

(Big groan.)

NICK

Come on, that's the whole point of why we are here. Tommy, here is the box, collect the phones. Now I am sure most of you don't know each other, so now is the perfect time to talk to people, and I know it's a bit odd, but face-to-face. You can't message each other.

ROSE

Oooo, it's like a big dating bus. It's like Tinder on wheels.

NICK

Urmmm thanks, Rose, but I can't stress this enough. This is not a dating bus, and this is not a dirty weekend.

BARRY

Speak for yourself!

(Rose and Barry smile coyly at each other.)

NICK

You are all grown adults, but we have an agenda. And it's quite serious, I don't want to have a reputation for organizing swingers parties, and the sleeping arrangements are strict. Ladies in one dorm, and men in the others.

ROSE

Will you be having guards on the door?

JOHN

Rose, I don't think you will need one.

ROSE

Cheeky bugger!

TOMMY

All the phones, guv'nor.

ROSE

How do you know you got them all? Don't you need to search us for concealed contraband?

NICK

Rose, are you going to be trouble?

BARRY

I'll search her!

ROSE

Oooo, hello stranger.

NICK

(sitting down) Ooooo be Jesus. What have I done.

AMELIA

(to herself) O, M, G. This sounds ghastly.

(The bus drives on, and people look happy and are chatting. Music "Shake" by Rouen plays.)

Eventually, the bus arrives at a beautiful YHA (Youth Hostel Association) in the hills.

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL CLASSROOM - DAY 1

The room is set up for a session, and participants are seated.

NICK

Welcome everyone, I hope you all had a good journey. We start immediately. As I am sure you all know, the purpose of Free Fone Life and our weekend away is to tempt you away from the addiction of the phone. I want to introduce you to Professor McIntyre, otherwise known as Mac.

MAC

Hello everybody!

NICK

Now the structure of this weekend will be some classroom sessions, but also we have some outdoor activities to get involved with. We are all self-sufficient: food has been delivered but we will be cooking ourselves and socializing. There are no rules except: no phones! If you need to call someone, then there is a pay phone, remember those? But my advice is that while you are here, stay off the grid, relax, be inspired, enjoy yourself, and if you are needed by your family because of some sort of emergency, then somehow they will contact you. Just like the old days. And any phones that I find will be confiscated and you will be fined a day of washing up, especially the pans.

ROSE

Oooo errrr headmaster.

NICK

Yes, I guess I am. Mac, over to you!

MAC

Thank you headmaster.

NICK

Ha!

MAC

Ok everyone, by way of introduction I am Mac, I am a professor at the university where much of my research has been around phone addiction and the harm it can do, especially to the younger generation. Much of it yet we don't know by the way, as they are really they are the first generation going through it, but we already see many alarming signs in terms of mental illness and suicide. So as you can see, it's a pretty serious subject. But as adults we have our issues too and we can set examples to the next generation. As we are all here, we know that phones are getting the better of us. And admitting there is a problem, as with any addiction, is the first step to recovery. But I am not planning to stand here and lecture. I want us to interact with each other as much as possible and explain our feelings. To start with though, I want to know what prompted people to come here. Who wants to start?

(Bit of silence as everyone nervously looks around.)

JOHN

yes I can start. I am always having my phone. I can't even go to the toilet without my phone. I spend so long on my phone at work in the toilet not moving that sometimes the lights automatically go out. And this for me was the point that I realized I needed help. I was waving my arms on the toilet for the lights to go back on, but the sensors were near the entrance so nothing happens and I sat in total darkness. Then someone comes into the toilet, lights spring back to life, and sits in the trap next to me. But I have to pretend that I am not there as how weird it would look if I have been sat there in darkness. Anyway, I swear they went on their phone, and 5 mins later the lights go out again. They do nothing, I do nothing. Eventually I do my paper work in the dark, which by the way is exceptionally difficult, and I get up praying

(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

they don't come out, but as I am washing my hands, they come out and there is this really awkward moment between us like we both know exactly what has just happened. We were both sat in the dark. Being British, we would rather wait on the toilet for hours and wait for the other person to leave, then face the embarrassment of such a confrontation. Silly tosspot came out though. At that moment I thought, "I need help".

TOMMY

The worst thing for me is that my wife (now ex-wife) was coming onto me while I was in bed, but I didn't notice. I was just so engrossed in Facebook on my phone. She then WhatsApp me a picture of her almost naked and threatened to leave me there and then. Only at that point did I look up and see her and regretted ignoring her but it was too late. But for her it was like the straw on the camels back.

BOJO

No humps for you.

TOMMY

I blame Zuckerberg for the breakdown of my marriage. But it has still taken me this long to try to do something about it.

BARRY

(blurts out) I ran a dog over while looking at Whatsapp.

NICK

Holy shit.

MAC

Steady, we are not here to judge.

BARRY

In my defense, the dog wasn't badly hurt, it ran away, but it still shocked me.

PETER

I missed my train stop while on the phone. By ten stops. I missed my train stop while on the phone. I had gone 30 minutes into a 10 minute journey before I noticed.

ROSE

I don't have a particular story,
but I just hate that naked feeling
of not having my phone.

(Barry is about to say something but thinks better of it.)

ROSE

Actually even now, I know we are
not meant to have our phones, but I
really feel like I am missing a
part of my anatomy.

(Again Barry stops himself.)

MAC

Do we all feel like this?

(Everyone nods.)

MAC

It has only been a matter of hours.
We are all going cold turkey
already. Many of us judge
alcoholics or drug addicts as non
contributing members of society.
But what about people and their
phones? The proliferation of
smartphones has brought both
convenience and concern. While they
connect us and we see them as
useful in our every day life,
conversely their overuse has lead
to mental health issues. Studies
reveal a significant rise in
depression, anxiety, and suicide
risk associated with excessive
phone usage. Finding a balance is
really hard. Just by some of your
stories we can see how it has badly
effected every one of us in our own
every day life. Multiple this by
billions of people and you can see
the effect this has on society is a
global phenomina. It is so
disheartening. Young people are on
a trajectory that none of us really
know the outcome. Then you throw in
climate change and the other global
factors, which because of your
phone, these issues follows you
around in your back pocket, its no
wonder there is massive rise in
mental health issues. And I haven't
even started on cyber bullying or
social comparison where people have
a tendency to compare themselves to
others on social media leading to
feelings of inadequacy or anxiety.

PETER

It sounds like we are all doomed.

MAC

Well we humans do have a way of adapting. But many of us also just sticking our heads in the sand. Often we naively believe that someone else will solve all the worlds problems. Or we try to fit a negative scenario into own well suited narrative that its not our fault or it would have happened anyway. Hence the birthing of conspiracy theories. Don't get me started on that! We all here as we recognize each one of us has an issue and we should all congratulate ourselves on being here. Our road to a better life has already begun.

NICK

Thanks, Mac. Maybe it's time for a coffee break.

TOMMY

If you are the headmaster, shouldn't you have a bell?

NICK

Be careful, I might give you detention.

NT. YOUTH HOSTEL - COMMON AREA - DAY

Participants are on a coffee break, chatting among themselves.

ROSE

Sorry about you running a dog over.

BARRY

Mmm, yeah, I don't really want to talk about it.

ROSE

Yeah, I get it. I love dogs. So. You come here often?

BARRY

Haha, nice chat-up line. It's strange doing this face-to-face, I have been single a few years. I have used dating apps but for me, it's just never worked.

ROSE

What does your profile look like?

BARRY

I will show you, (goes to back pocket, panics then laughs) Oh my god, I can't, no phone. How weird is this?

ROSE

Weird, but also strangely empowering! I feel I should be worried about something but what? I can't check, I don't know, and actually, I feel there is nothing I can do. Which means it becomes someone else's problem.

BARRY

What problem?

ROSE

Well that's just it, it's the worry that there may be a problem, but actually, there never is. I always have my phone just in case, but in case of what? That I break down, or find someone having a heart attack? Or someone needs to contact me because, well, that my dog has been run over? None of that is going to happen here.

BARRY

Well, if I am not driving, then your dog should be fine. Are you in a relationship?

ROSE

Oooo handsome, why do you ask, think I should swipe right on you?

BARRY

Well, I have all my own teeth.

ROSE

And a Ferrari?

BARRY

No, but maybe something similar.

ROSE

Well, like online, I don't believe everything I read or hear.

BARRY

But they are on my own teeth, have a look.

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL CLASSROOM - DAY

Mac addresses the group as they return from their coffee break.

MAC

Right, the headmaster has a bit of housekeeping, if you can put your cups in the dishwasher, he ain't running a hotel.

(Nick nods.)

NICK

And as I tell my kids - in, not on!

MAC

The headmaster has spoken. Now as a next step, I want us to recognize how phone usage is an addiction.

BOJO

Is watching porn on a phone an addiction to porn or the phone? Asking for a friend.

MAC

Well, it's both. What is it about the phone that makes us keep going back?

BOJO

Take a wild guess.

NICK

I hear FOMO a lot.

MAC

Yes. The old fear of missing out. Of course, that's one thing, but it's not as simple as that. But before we get on the cure, I want to look at the symptoms. And I suspect many of you don't realize how your phone addiction looks to the rest of the world. It's not just about excessive use of your phone and ignoring people as the world passes you by. Let me ask you some simple questions:
1) When you wake up in the morning, do you look at the phone before saying good morning to your partner?
2) In the house or at work, do you carry your phone from room to room?
(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)

3) When you go out, do you feel lost without your phone, and when you can't find it, do you have a little panic? Are you really anxious, or even angry when you can't find it?

4) When you are at dinner or a business meeting, do you put your phone on the table? What sort of impression do you think that gives your partner when you are on a romantic meal and you plonk your phone on the table? Don't you think it shows them that actually, if anything happens on the phone, that will take priority?

5) When you go out, have you ever thought of taking only one phone just for emergencies? Or does that seem like a completely ludicrous idea?

6) Do you drive with your phone and constantly check it? Despite the chance of getting 6 penalty points and a massive fine, are you still willing to look at it? And using the excuse, I'm only looking when I stop, like when I am at traffic lights, or when I have veered off into a tree?

7) If someone sends you a message, do you feel the need to respond quickly, else they might consider you rude? Tell me, do people really care if you don't respond immediately? In fact, do you think that maybe they think the opposite? They might actually think you have a life. If you have a possessive partner or a demanding boss that expects an instant response, then maybe it's more than just the phone you should be giving up.

8) When you are at a party or family event, are you prioritizing phone interactions over face-to-face conversations: why would you do that? Why are people in your virtual world more important than the family, friends, and loved ones in your close proximity? Why would you prioritize a stranger?

So does that relate to anyone?

BOJO

I am suspecting all of us! I have 2 phones in case I lose 1. And fat lot of good it does, I lose both regularly.

BARRY

Surely that just makes the worry double, as you have two things to worry about.

BOJO

Urmm, yes.

PETER

I could understand two phones if it was split for business and pleasure.

BARRY

Or if you were having an affair.

ROSE

Oh my god, do you do that?

BARRY

No, of course not. I would be lucky to get one person, never mind two.

BOJO

Or more.

ROSE

What seriously?

BOJO

What can I say? These looks and good charms, it's a curse I have to bear. So many women, only one me.

ROSE

Thank God.

MAC

Ok class, settle down. I think the sex clinic is in the next room along.

TOMMY

But that is a good point, what about internet porn? We mentioned it earlier. What if there is an addiction to that?

BOJO

Yeah, I asked that earlier, I was asking for a friend.

MAC

I think it's a good point to make. Are we addicted to the internet and what it can serve up in terms of content, or are we addicted to our phone?

TOMMY

Is it the same thing?

MAC

I am not sure it is. If you are an alcoholic, and if you are drinking at home or in the pub, are you addicted to the alcohol or the pub?

TOMMY

Well, the alcohol.

MAC

In this case, think of the phone as the pub and alcohol as the internet. Is the alcoholic addicted to the pub?

TOMMY

Well, it's the drink that makes him go to the pub.

MAC

Yes, exactly, but the alcoholic is not addicted to the pub, it's the booze. The browser is his (or her) glass, and he or she always craves for it to be full. In our case, all of us here are addicted to the pub. That is the phone, we crave the phone, it's like an ever-filling glass of champagne, which for an alcoholic would be fatal. The phone brings the internet to our back pocket, and we can't help but always reach for it and drink from its bubbly richness. We cut out the phone, we cut off that flowing internet. We take away the alcoholic web page at its source.

TOMMY

I see, I guess, they don't call those internet reels shorts for no reason!

MAC

Yes, very good! I am not here to stop us using the internet: that is here to stay. I like a drink of whisky every now and then. Alcohol

(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)
in moderation is fine. Same with
the internet. But it should not
dictate our lives and who we are.
The social and psychological impact
of the internet is unbounding, from
social media to news to porn.
Every aspect of it affects us.
There are positives, and massive
negatives. In worst cases, it
causes suicide. We can't
underestimate its impact.

(Silence in the room.)

MAC
But there are positives to drinking
for those of us who are not
alcoholics. Same with the phone. In
moderation. And so lies the problem
- the internet is like crack
cocaine. One sniff, and boom, you
can't live without it.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE WALK - DAY

Nick and Tommy lead a large group on a country walk. Three
separate conversations are happening.

CONVERSATION ONE:

TOMMY
What you are doing here, Nick, is
really, mmmmmm, special.

NICK
I think Mac needs to take the
credit, I'm only the facilitator.

TOMMY
It's really exceptional to combine
these activities with classes and
like-minded people. You are
responsible for that and pulling it
all together.

NICK
I must admit when I started out, I
was motivated by money. Karen
worries about our financial
situation. But actually I now just
want this to help people. If it can
be a positive experience for our
guests, then I would already be
very satisfied.

TOMMY

I think it can. Already, I am feeling the benefit, and we're still on day one. Are you addicted to your phone?

NICK

I don't know anyone that isn't.

TOMMY

It's a shame we can't invent a good addiction, like eating vegetables.

NICK

I used to be addicted to jelly babies.

TOMMY

Really?

NICK

Seriously! Every time I went to fill up the car with petrol, I would impulsively buy them in the garage at the check out. Every time. Then as I drove off, I would tell myself to have only one every few miles and make them last the whole journey. Normally within 5 minutes, I had scoffed the lot. And it would make me feel sick every single time. And yet, I continued to do it.

TOMMY

So how did you stop?

NICK

I started getting bad stomach pains, turned out to be Irritable Bowel Syndrome. I went to the doctors and he asked me questions, and in the end he couldn't work it out why, he just blamed it on age and stress. I knew it was the jelly babies but was too ashamed to admit it, and to be honest he asked me how much alcohol I drank, but never directly asked about my sweets intake. So I never volunteered it.

TOMMY

Classic denial.

NICK

In the end, I told Karen, she laughed like a hyena on acid, told me I was ridiculous, and she was

(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
right and I just stopped. Mind over matter. She rarely shows me sympathy but actually, I quite like that. Though I would never admit it to Karen, she takes all the credit. In fact she takes the credit for most of the good things in my life.

TOMMY
Yeah, we don't credit our partners enough. Normally because we can't get a word in edgeways.

NICK
(laughs) Jesus, look at that hill we are going up. I hope I don't have a heart attack.

TOMMY
I hope not either. None of us have any phones to call for help. Tomorrow we can do something easier.

NICK
Well, tomorrow you can try some archery, see if you can accidentally kill someone.

TOMMY
Do they allow phones in jail?

NICK
No, they don't. Must add that to the list, another way of curing phone addiction, being caught for murder.

CONVERSATION TWO:

Barry and Rose are walking together.

ROSE
I am so glad I came now. I was really nervous about this.

BARRY
You? Nervous, you have more confidence than a Scotsman in a kilt in a force 10 gale.

ROSE
I do that for show. I become extrovert as a way of covering my insecurity. I even laugh at my own jokes for the same reason.

BARRY

Look Rose, I really like you, but I have to tell you something. I feel there's a click between us, but it is important that you know everything about me before you get in too deep.

ROSE

Are you married?

BARRY

No.

ROSE

Gay?

BARRY

Urmmm, no.

ROSE

You urmmm, were you a woman?

BARRY

No, I wasn't. Any case in this day and age we can be anything we want. But listen, please.

ROSE

Ok, I am sorry.

BARRY

I said I ran over a dog, it wasn't a dog, it was a child.

ROSE

Oh my god, how awful.

BARRY

I know. I was looking at my phone. In fact honestly I was just putting on some music, I looked down for maybe 2 seconds, it all happened so fast. I heard the thump as he bounced off my windscreen. It was truly the most awful thing that ever happened to me. I never meant it to happen. But it did. In that blink of an eye, in the time it takes to blink, my life completely changed.

ROSE

Was the child hurt?

BARRY

Yes, broken leg, broken jaw, concussion. He was in hospital for a week. Witnesses say he just ran out and there was nothing I could have done. But actually I don't buy it. If I was looking at the road I may have anticipated it. I don't know. I live it with every day and wish I could turn the clock back.

ROSE

Oh shit. Poor child. I am so sorry.

BARRY

Don't be sorry. The police investigated, and I admitted I was looking at my phone. I got a suspended prison sentence. I felt so guilty, I would have happily gone to jail.

ROSE

Maybe you deserved jail, maybe you didn't. I can't judge that.

BARRY

This is why I have my own business. I was fired from my job, and lost all my friends. It consumed me, and I had to get away. And so I moved away and started a new life. This is why I am self employed, I don't want to share my history with a new employer. But I am still obsessed with the internet, with my image, not because I am trying to look good, but actually I worry people will still come looking for me.

ROSE

You don't still use your phone when driving?

BARRY

No, absolutely no. I always put it in the glove box when out of temptation's reach. But I wish I could give it up altogether. That professor is right, the phone is like crack cocaine.

ROSE

Come here. I think if you are remorseful and know you have done wrong, everyone deserves a second chance.

(They hug and Barry begins to cry.)

ROSE

Barry, inside you're a good guy. I am glad to have met you. And in the old-fashioned face-to-face way.

CONVERSATION THREE:

A group of five from the class is approaching the summit with an awesome view of the English countryside below.

As they reach the top, the bridge bit from "Young for a Day" album plays as they admire the view.

AMELIA

Oooo. Look at that. I am not hugely religious, but when I look I think OH MY GOD! This is god's creation, his, or more likely hers, cathedral. Don't just look at it, feel it!

PETER

Yeah, it's orgasmic. Makes you wonder why staring into your phone is more addictive than this.

CHARACTER 3

Yeah, I could get addicted to this.

AMELIA

Sometimes we have to appreciate the moments we are in. What a time to be alive. How lucky are we? As far as we know, we are one single fertile planet in the whole universe. When you think that every other planet out there in the hole big universe is just barren rock, no life, no plants. How lucky are we to be right here, right now? Just look at this and breath, soak it up! How amazing is that we have greenery, trees, streams, flowers, birds, animals... well. You know life! Surely we have to make the most of this.

PETER

Damn right: it's a pity there are people in the world who want to destroy all this.

AMELIA

It's like they forget why we are here. People are corrupted by power and greed. Why oh why do we have wars, why would they destroy all this? What's that bird done to anybody?

PETER

Well he or she just flies blissfully along unaware that we humans have the whole world at 1 minute to doomsday.

CHARACTER 3

Is that right, one minute to doomsday?

PETER

Are you aware of the doomsday clock?

CHARACTER 3

I think I read about it online somewhere.

AMELIA

Unbelievable. This whole phone thing. The internet is not destroying the world with memes. Humans do that by, well, by just being humans.

CHARACTER 3

Unless all the machines become sentient.

AMELIA

What?

CHARACTER 3

You know, self-aware, they could then destroy the world.

AMELIA

Like in Terminator?

CHARACTER 3

Yeah.

AMELIA

Well, that would be a disaster.
That would mean our vacuum cleaners
and devices would put us to work.
They would take control. I suppose
phones could take control?

PETER

I don't think phones would do that.
I admit my phone does go a bit
crazy from time to time, but give
it an hour and poof, it runs out of
battery. It ain't fucking plugging
itself in after that and taking
over nothing.

They just stare out.

Couple of other characters quietly listening, but looking
and feeling bored:

CHARACTER 4

Are you buying all this?

CHARACTER 5

I only buy stuff if they have free
next day delivery to my door.

CHARACTER 4

I wish I had my phone: this would
make a beautiful photograph. I
could stick it on social media so
all my friends can see what a
wonderful life I have. I love
showing off.

CHARACTER 5

Do you think you will go straight
back to your phone once we go home?

CHARACTER 4

Yeah, probably. What else am I
gonna do?

INT. YOUTH HOSTEL CLASSROOM - DAY

Mac stands at the front of the class, addressing the group
on their last day.

MAC

Well, it's our last day. I have to
say what a great couple of days
it's been. Anyone missing their
phone?

TOMMY
Surprisingly, not.

ROSE
I feel like I am missing something,
but it's not specifically my phone.
It's that feeling when you go on
holiday and you start having a
nagging doubt you left the iron on
at home. Even though you have not
done any ironing for a week.

BOJO
Or a lifetime.

ROSE
Bojo, nothing you can say can
surprise me anymore.

JOHN
Normally I am addicted to looking
at the news. I probably look at the
headlines up to ten times a day. I
have no idea why. Now since I have
been here, I have no idea what's
going on in the world and it's
surprisingly refreshing. I feel
less stressed, and more tuned into
my world, rather than worrying
about global events that I have no
control over.

MAC
Oh yes, the act of Doomscrolling.
This term refers to the habit of
endlessly scrolling through news
stories, often leading to feelings
of anxiety and distress. Some
people also refer to it as Headline
Stress Disorder. Which brings me
nicely to what we can be doing to
help ourselves.
For example, if you find yourself
feeling overwhelmed by news,
consider implementing strategies to
limit screen time, like when sat on
the toilet, or maybe on the bus, or
those times when we addictively take
our phones out. Big tip! Turn off
news notifications!
So here are some tips for
addressing phone addiction.
First and the most simple,
implement scheduled breaks.
Designate specific times when phone
use is forbidden, for example,
during meal times at the dining
room table. This helps create
(MORE)

MAC (cont'd)

healthy boundaries. You must enforce this with the family. Make your children understand the importance of this. They won't thank you now, but they will later. For those of you with a more spiritual nature, and I would encourage everyone to try this, use Mindfulness Techniques. Practicing mindfulness can help manage cravings to use the phone. Techniques like meditation and deep breathing promote self-awareness and reduce impulsive behaviors. And participate in alternative activities. Engaging in offline activities during the weekend, such as hiking, art, or group games, replaces your phone usage with more fulfilling experiences. Also try swimming, it's not compatible with phone usage.

NICK

And of course sessions like this Group Therapy. Connecting with others who share similar struggles can provide support and encouragement. I would encourage you to pass on your experiences. I am planning on doing more of these events.

MAC

Remember, breaking any addiction isn't easy, but a well-structured weekend away can be a valuable step toward reducing phone dependency.

EXT. ARCHERY RANGE - DAY

Barry, Nick, Tommy, and Rose are practicing archery.

BARRY

Watch this, I used to do archery in the scouts.

NICK

You were in the scouts? You could get the badge for the most satisfied website customer.
(sarcastically)

(Barry fires the arrow way over the top of the target.)

TOMMY

Jesus, I hope no one is behind there! And by behind there I mean 500 miles beyond, that could have taken down an airplane.

BARRY

Yeah, it's been a few years since I did this.

ROSE

Quite a few years.

BARRY

Oi cheeky, were you in the girl guides?

ROSE

No, I was in the convent school, they never allowed us out.

(Barry fires another one, duffs it into the short grass.)

NICK

Convent school, how did that work out?

ROSE

Actually, for an organization that followed God and believed in the goodness of men, they were exceedingly cruel. I could not wait to get out.

(Nick starts to line up an arrow.)

NICK

There was a convent school near us when I was growing up. Once they were 16 they were allowed out. Often we were on the same night outs, discos, parties and things like that.

ROSE

Yeah, they would invite boys from local schools to discos but we were heavily supervised. It was like a nuclear deterrent: if we stepped out of line, we get our knuckles wrapped. Literally with an atomic powered ruler.

(Nick fires an arrow and hits a nearby tree.)

BARRY

Whooosh, you just hit a tree.

TOMMY

I imagine all the squirrels in a 100-meter radius are now shitting acorns.

NICK

the thing about the convent girls, we would often see them in our parties when we were still at school. But actually it was like they had been locked up for so long, that when they were released it was a load of on heat bitches coming face to face with a bunch of randy dogs. They were a quite forward, a complete opposite to the girls in my class. Unfortunately despite our bravado, we didn't know what to do with them.

(Fires another arrow: hits the leg of the archery target.)

TOMMY

Well, you are getting closer.
(sarcastically)

NICK

But the irony never left me that all these parents were paying a small fortune for their daughters to be kept away from randy young teenagers, thinking they were safe, but actually by depriving them of boys they were more curious than ever. And more forward then we could ever hope.

(Nick fires completely over.)

BARRY

Jesus, that was like an Exocet.

ROSE

Yeah, I can imagine, it wasn't a happy time. We were totally indoctrinated though, when people blasphemy, I still find it uncomfortable.

BARRY

Ah sorry Rose, can I swear instead?

ROSE

Too fucking right. The nuns swore like troopers. Effing this and effing that. Unless the parents were then they magically became all saintly. Devils in penguin

(MORE)

ROSE (cont'd)
cloths. Though there were some nice
nuns, but they were in the
minority.

BARRY
Now my nun fetish is ruined.

ROSE
I am sure we can find a fetish for
you.

(Nick and Tommy look at each other.)

TOMMY
Well, as long as it doesn't involve
him firing arrows like Cupid over
her, because he more likely to take
an eye out.

NICK
Like a bullseye? Never going to
happen.

BARRY
Oooo, I'm all of a quiver.

Scene 20 : Mac in the classroom: a creative animation but
avoiding a powerpoint feel.(Think something like the
narrator in the original Hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy.)
Example as follows:- *As the lights dim, the stage fades
into view, and a spotlight shines on a sleek, modern podium.
A figure steps into the light, a silhouette against the
backdrop, reminiscent of the iconic narrator from
Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.*

****Narrator:**** Ah, the wonders and woes of our digital age!
In a world where our handheld devices have become extensions
of ourselves, a peculiar phenomenon has emerged: phone
addiction. Join me, dear audience, as we embark on a journey
through the tangled web of technology and its grip on our
lives.

*With a flicker of light, the first animation materializes,
illustrating the perils of phone addiction.*

****Narrator:**** Phone addiction, though not officially
recognized, bears a striking resemblance to its more
established counterparts. Behold the adverse consequences:
from procrastination to disrupted sleep, it grips its
victims tightly, ensnaring them in a digital labyrinth.

*The slide or animation transitions, revealing the physical
toll of excessive screen time.*

****Narrator:**** But wait, there's more! Feast your eyes upon
the physical manifestations of our digital dalliances. Eye
strain, body aches, hand strain: a trifecta of discomfort,
courtesy of our beloved screens. And let us not forget the

disruptive dance of blue light upon our sleep, leading us into the realm of restless nights and weary mornings.

With a flourish, the slide morphs, exposing the fragile state of mental health in the face of phone addiction.

Narrator: Ah, the mind, a delicate garden where seeds of addiction take root. Depression, anxiety, stress: companions on this perilous journey. And for our young voyagers, emotional regulation becomes a treacherous sea to navigate, lost amidst the waves of social media and notifications.

As the audience leans in, another slide emerges, detailing the withdrawal symptoms and risk factors of phone addiction.

Narrator: But lo, what do we see? Withdrawal symptoms, a siren's call to those who dare to break free. Anxiety, restlessness, irritability: harbingers of the storm that rages within. And who among us is most susceptible? The adolescents, the early adopters, the seekers of connection in a digital age.

The stage dims once more, only to be illuminated by the haunting specter of FOMO.

Narrator: Ah, FOMO: the specter that haunts our screens, whispering tales of missed opportunities and unfulfilled dreams. Social comparison, emotional regulation, perceived threats: all play their part in this grand masquerade. And as the curtain rises on our 24/7 access to the lives of others, we find ourselves ensnared in a web of comparison and longing.

As the final slide fades, the spotlight lingers on the narrator, a beacon of wisdom in the digital darkness.

Narrator: And so, dear audience, we reach the crossroads of technology and humanity. As we navigate the ever-shifting landscape of our digital world, let us remember: balance is key, and awareness is our compass. For in the vast expanse of cyberspace, it is not the destination that defines us, but the journey we take to get there.

With a bow, the narrator fades into the shadows, leaving the audience to ponder the profound truths unveiled in the animated tapestry of phone addiction.

EXT. CAR PARK - DAY

The bus pulls into the car park from where it started. Nick stands at the front, addressing everyone as they prepare to disembark.

NICK

Well, we are back!

BOJO

You don't say.

NICK

(ignoring him) And I wanted to thank everyone for coming. You can get your phones back as you get off. I hope you don't have a million messages and feel the need to respond immediately. As I do with my emails, if you are brave, just delete them all. Remember what you have learned, what you have experienced; I have to say it has been profound for me.

ROSE

(sat next to Barry) Yeah, it's been amazing. I have been on dating websites for years, and as soon as I get off them, I found the love of my life.

NICK

Sorry to hear that. Sorry, I meant the dating websites, not Barry.

BARRY

Yeah, yeah. I can't wait to not recommend your website company from my non phone.

NICK

That is a good point. This is my business now. Please feel free to review Free Fone Life on the review sites, and tell your friends.

ROSE

Shall I tell my friends on social media?

NICK

Absolutely, you can say, "If you are reading this while scrolling on your phone, then you need help! I was a phone looney, I had help from Free Fone Life and it was amazing."

ROSE

I am not sure how to take that.

NICK

Sure you do. I appreciate you coming, I appreciate everyone coming for my first weekend away of hopefully many. Tell everyone, my wife needs the money.

KAREN
(just in the doorway of the open
bus door) What was that?

NICK
Oh be Jesus, you are like Mr. Ben.

KAREN
Who?

NICK
Hey everyone, this is Karen, my
wife and my inspiration.

She gets a spontaneous round of applause from the bus.

(Nick gets off the bus carrying the phones. People start to
get off and thank Nick as he gives people back their
phones.)

KAREN
Well, I don't think I need to ask
how it went?

NICK
It was amazin, they were very
receptive, and Mac did an amazing
job.

(Mac appears.)

NICK
Hey Mac, thank you so much!

MAC
You are welcome, it's good to be
involved, it's the sort of job
where you feel you can actually
make a difference.

(BoJo comes for his phone.)

BOJO
That's not my phone, I had the
latest Apple iPhone with all the
accessories.

NICK
Oh yeah, what accessories?

BOJO
Yeah, it had a 42' widescreen, a
beer fridge, and a PlayStation
attached.

KAREN
And a robotic android woman who
serves your every beck and call?

BOJO

Yes, with big mechanical tits, have you seen it? It must be in there somewhere? (starts to prod in the phone box)

JOHN

(to BoJo & Nick) Fancy a pint tonight?

NICK

What?

JOHN

What?

BOJO

I am up for it, never one to miss out on a non-virtual event.

NICK

Actually I'll take a rain check, I am going to stay in with the missus.

TOMMY

I never understand that expression - take a rain check: what is a rain check?

BOJO

Well I would look it up on my phone and tell you, but you know and all that, the headmaster is watching.

KAREN

The headmaster?

JOHN

Yeah, watch out Karen, he has a cane. If you are caught smoking, looking at porn, or fail to do your homework, you get a thrashing.

KAREN

Really (she says purring): ooooo, I have been such a naughty girl, a naughty girl who has missed you and appreciates it when you decide to stay at home as opposed to going to the pub.

NICK

Have the artists gone home?

KAREN

Yes (purring), and the gallery is closed to the public but I have some private viewings on offer.

JOHN

You two are strange.

BOJO

I would give him his phone back. He probably needs reminding of what to do.

Nick has a big grin and smiles at his friends as he leads Karen away

The scene ends with the sound of the group chatting and laughing as they disperse, each person reflecting on the experience they've had over the weekend.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nick and Karen are in bed, in the afterglow of their intimate time together.

NICK

Wow, it had been a while.

KAREN

And it will be a long while more if you say things like that.

NICK

Sorry, I didn't mean to sound insensitive.

KAREN

Hey, when I am feeling appreciated, I am a more receptive lover. I am not a bloke, I don't think all the time about my penis.

NICK

Thank god you don't, I am not sure how I'd feel about you if you had a penis.

KAREN

Maybe a little gay? Especially if you were in bed with me as you are now.

NICK

I am not sure it would have gone this far.

KAREN

With these puppy dogs, of course it would, how could you resist?

NICK

Mmmm, they are tempting.

KAREN

Stop it, you are too old to do it a second time. You'll break something.

NICK

Yeah, it would break happy though. And naturally I would boast to all my friends how I broke it.

(Karen just looks at him.)

KAREN

So what are your plans for the business?

NICK

You know, I have already been getting some emails from people interested in more sessions. Word of mouth is getting about. I really enjoyed the weekend away, I can see a real business here. I need Mac though. If he wants, I am going to make him a partner in the business. The nice thing is we can fit it in around his university time, he says he can do that part time and with us doing weekends, it should work, we can be super flexible.

KAREN

How did you check your emails?

NICK

On my phone.

KAREN

Hey Mr. Headmaster, isn't that a bit hypocritical? Shouldn't you give yourself lines?

NICK

It's all about moderation. You don't need to give it up altogether. Just need to be very selective when you use it. A bit like my penis in our sex life?

(Karen looks under the cover.)

KAREN

I think the battery's gone flat. That's going to take a long time to charge.

NICK

I think it needs CPR, maybe a
defibrillator to bring it back to
life.

(Karen goes under the covers and impersonates a
defibrillator.)

KAREN

Clear!

MONTAGE: OF FUTURE EVENTS:

(to Young for a Day by Rouen (3 mins 50 mins) Bus,
countryside, walks, cooking, chatting, open water swimming,
Mac giving classes, crying, running from cows, people
falling backwards into a stream, couples chatting, archery
someone pretending they have been shot by an arrow, mix it
up with people on phones, external bad things to show: kids
cycling with phone, walking and texting, Phone Use During
Conversations: etc: good things with the phone - dating,
chatting with family abroad, audiobooks, listening and
dancing to music, photography, include more classes during
the seasons - winter, autumn, spring, summer, band to film
as a part of it?)

INT. PUB - NIGHT

Nick, Tommy, BoJo, and John are sitting at their usual
table.

(Tommy is on the phone.)

JOHN

Ok ladies, what you drinking?

NICK

Take a guess, we drink the same
thing every time.

JOHN

What?

NICK

What?

BOJO

Actually, I fancy something
different. I am giving things up.
Since I gave up my smartphone and
bought a flip phone, my life
definitely has taken a different
direction. I feel more in touch
with reality and more healthy.

JOHN

Really? Shall I order you something alcohol-free?

BOJO

Don't be an old pisspot peacock, that's a bit too extreme. It's not like I gave up phones altogether. I'll have a red wine, apparently much like a prostate exam, it's good for you.

TOMMY

Who told you that, some guy in a public lavatory?

JOHN

I heard you gave up your phone because it was infected with some old skank's love messages and she was scamming everything from you?

BOJO

Ahhhh, that is not exactly true.

TOMMY

Well, what was it?

BOJO

I was using it for financial transactions, playing the stock market, playing the markets, well, you know.

NICK

Did she scam you on the unstoppable risk free upsides of crypto currencies with a promise of a good time and a bit of side boob?

BOJO

I couldn't possibly comment, in any case, just order me another beer.

NICK

Hey, I heard some good news, Barry and Rose are getting married. Low key event, Barry doesn't want the publicity for some reason.

JOHN

Hey, that's good news Nick, as well as a very successful business you have going there, it seems you are a bit of a matchmaker.

NICK

Yeah, at my age I sometimes have an existential crisis about my existence. You know I have probably lived more years than I have left, and though I don't care about dying.

TOMMY

Fuck all you can do about it anyway.

NICK

(drinks arrive)

Yeah, but I feel that if I have made a difference to some people then life is good and worthwhile.

JOHN

Of course Nick, you more than most has made a difference. Not just with your business but with your family and look at us, we are lifelong friends, we are all glue in this friendship, and we all count. Even BoJo.

NICK

Yeah, damn right, even BoJo, cheers everyone.

(They raise their glasses.)

BOJO

Gee, thanks. I did introduce you to Karen.

NICK

And I am forever in your debt.

BOJO

Great. Will you lend me 10 grand?

NICK

No.

BOJO

(raising his glass)

Cheers!

EXT. OLD BUSINESS LOCATION - DAY

Mac and Nick stand outside Nick's original company, where he was made redundant in the first scene. The old company logo is being taken down, and a new logo for Free Fone Life is being put in place.

MAC

So you know this place?

NICK

Yes, I was ceremoniously marched out of here over a year ago.

MAC

So what happened to them?

NICK

Well, they got rid of me, didn't they? (Nick grins) Basically, I acquired some of their biggest accounts. They thought they knew better and could do it without me, but the company had not realized the bond I had with some of those customers. After I left those big accounts started to be neglected, they did not know how to manage them effectively, and the accounts went else where. The business only looked at my cost and not the value I brought to the company. It was bit of a rapid spiral downwards after that and then the company basically went bust. Oh dear, what a shame, never mind.

MAC

So is this like poetic justice moving into their old building?

NICK

Yes, sort of. When I saw it was available and we needed somewhere for our expansion, I just felt it was fate. It brought me some closure on my redundancy, no-one likes to be told they are no longer wanted. But the nice thing was my old boss asked me for a job and guess what I said?

MAC

he could start next week?

NICK

haha, it was tempting just so I could treat him as badly as he treated me. But you know, I am bigger than that, so I just gave him a grown up response.

MAC

What did you say?

NICK

I sent him a poem - Roses are Red,
Violets are blue, You were a shit
(MORE)

NICK (cont'd)
boss, leave me alone, otherwise I
will sue.

MAC
Very mature. I imagine that did the
trick.

NICK
What's he going to do, fire me
again? It's a small world, and
karma has a way of biting you in
the arse. But for me, it felt
awesome. Like eating fish and chips
on a hot sunny day by the seaside.

MAC
What?

NICK
What? Oh, don't you start.

MAC
You know I wanted to set my own
company up. I wanted to call it Mac
and Cheese.

NICK
And I'd be your cheese? Sounds like
a dodgy private detective agency.

MAC
I wanted to set up a chain of
bookstores that would also rent out
books.

NICK
Isn't that just called a library?
And people can get the books for
free.

MAC
Oh, oh yes. Now this is why you are
the businessman and I am the guy
behind the scenes!

NICK
I can assure you, you are as deep
in the foundations of this business
as I am, partner! We all do our
thing to make this a success. And
that reminds me, I have always
wanted to work for a company that
has a hammock. As I get older I
love an afternoon nap. As the boss,
I am getting one.

MAC

As long as you are not on your phone in the hammock.

NICK

A free phone hammock. Mmmm... what an idea, maybe we can sell merchandise?

MAC

I am not manning a gift shop at our events.

NICK

Why not, we can get delegates to exit through the gift shop. We can make a fortune.

MAC

We are already making a fortune.

NICK

Well, it's not millions.

MAC

Compared to a teacher's salary, or even a professor's, it's a fortune.

NICK

Well, we deserve it, maybe we can think about charitable donations.

MAC

Why would you do that?

NICK

Tax deductible. We can help people with addictions, and especially depression. Especially the young, something close to your heart.

MAC

You know Nick, for that, I would man the gift shop!

NICK

I am no cheese, but you are the big Mac!

(Admiring the new sign)

NICK

Look at that, absolutely fucking fucktastic.

NT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Nick is washing up, music playing on the speaker (Rouen, of course).

NICK

Perhaps when I make my millions, I can get a maid who can do all the washing up.

KAREN

Dream on, dreamer. Actually, I don't want a maid. I don't want strangers in the house.

NICK

And a butler. And they won't be strangers, they will work for us.

KAREN

Don't let money change you, be true to your roots, and your washing-up brush.

(Craig and Daniel wander in and ignore their parents.)

NICK

Hello, sons!

They continue to ignore him.

NICK

(impersonates his sons) Hi Dad, how are you, how is your new business? (normal Dad voice) Yeah, it's good thanks for asking. I am the boss these days, isn't that great. (back to impersonation) Oh dad, that's amazing, I'm so happy for you. I love you, daddy.

KAREN

Leave them alone.

NICK

Well, I was thinking of buying them a new gift to celebrate.

CRAIG

A new iPhone? That would be amazing.

NICK

Hallelujah, it's a miracle he speaks!

CRAIG

And?

NICK

And what? You only talk to me when I offer something or you want something

CRAIG
You are such an idiot.

NICK
Charming! Actually, I was thinking
a new bike or something that you
might want to do as a hobby.

DANIEL
New PlayStation?

NICK
I was thinking more something less
screeny and inner, more realism and
outey.

CRAIG
Well, we are going out now, maybe a
car?

NICK
You can't drive. And going out,
this time of night? It's bedtime!

CRAIG
Relax, Mum said we could.

(Karen shrugs her shoulders.)

KAREN
Be back by 11 pm.

CRAIG
But that only gives us an hour.
It's a shame I don't have a watch.

NICK
Use your phone, on second thoughts
I could buy you a watch.

CRAIG
Nahhh, phone upgrade is fine.
Thanks see yaaaa.

NICK
hang on, I didn't agree
(but talking to a closed door).

NICK
Mmm. Now where were we? Servants.

KAREN
Not happening.

NICK
What if we live in a big country
house?

KAREN

Are we becoming aristocracy now? I thought you were a headmaster, not a Lord.

NICK

Oh Lordy.

KAREN

Let's not get ahead of ourselves, yes Freefone Life is going well, but I am not ready to quit yet and become a full-time housewife. Nor do I ever want to.

NICK

Because you would have to be the lady of the house and do the washing up and dust the drapes?

KAREN

We do our fair share.

NICK

We could at least get a cleaner?

KAREN

We will see.

NICK

Me and the boys were talking about robotic servants, they must exist by now. They can do the cooking, and especially the washing up. (Nick smoozes up to Karen) That would leave us more time to do other things.

KAREN

I need a doctor robot, I have a headache.

NICK

Maybe I should get a sex robot.

KAREN

Oh please do.

NICK

Knowing my luck, that will probably turn me down too.

KAREN

Oh you poor horny flower. I am going to bed. To sleep. Good night.

NICK

Ok good night, I'll be up soon.

(Karen goes up to bed. Nick heads into the toilet with his phone. The phone is still connected to the Bluetooth on the radio. You hear the porn noises coming from the radio.)

NICK

(from the bathroom) Why is there no audio?

The porn noises go really loud and then abruptly stop.

NICK

Shit.

(He quickly pops his head around the toilet door, sighs in relief when no one is there in the kitchen, and goes back into the toilet.)

Amelia's House

A car pulls up outside her house, and Amelia gets out and uses a key to lock the car door, and opens her house with several locks. No alarm. Manually turns on the light.

Walks over to the fridge. It's empty.

AMELIA

Well some habits die hard and a girl has still gotta eat.

She pulls out her phone.

AMELIA

Siri - call the Chinese Takeaway, I'm starving

SIRI

What? Again? Why are you such a lazy arse? Perhaps you should go shopping?

AMELIA

What?

AMELIA SUDDENLY WAKES UP STARTLED

AMELIA

Foook.

THE END