## About A Boy Script - Dialogue Transcript

Voila! Finally, the **About A Boy script** is here for all you quotes spouting fans of the Nick Hornby movie featuring Hugh Grant and Rachel Weisz. This script is a transcript that was painstakingly transcribed using the screenplay and/or viewings of About A Boy. I'll be eternally tweaking it, so if you have any corrections, feel free to <u>drop me a line</u>. You won't hurt my feelings. Honest.

Swing on back to Drew's Script-O-Rama afterwards for more free scripts!

About a Boy Script As ever. Let's do it. Let's play Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? Who wrote the phrase "No man is an island"? John Donne? John Milton? John F. Kennedy? Jon Bon Jovi? Jon Bon Jovi. Too easy. And, if I may say so, a complete load of bollocks. In my opinion, all men are islands. And what's more, now's the time to be one. This is an island age. A hundred years ago, you had to depend on other people. No one had TV or CDs or DVDs or videos... ... or home espresso makers. Actually, they didn't have anything cool. Whereas now, you see... ...you can make yourself a little island paradise. With the right supplies and the right attitude... ...you can be sun-drenched, tropical, a magnet... ... for young Swedish tourists. Hi, it's Kristina. I haven't heard from you. I had a great time last weekend. So give me a call, okay? 'Bye. And I like to think that perhaps I am that kind of island. I like to think I'm pretty cool. I like to think I'm Ibiza. There were people who had a good time in life. I was beginning to realize I wasn't one of them. I just didn't fit. I didn't fit at my old school. I definitely didn't fit at my new one. I heard that some kids got taught by their parents at home. Mum couldn't do that, unless I paid her to teach me. Because it was just her and me. And she went to work. She made 400 pounds a week. Where was I gonna get that kind of money from? Maybe if I was like that movie kid, Haley Joel Osment... ...I could pay her that much. But if that meant being good at drama, forget it. I was crap at drama. 'Cause I hated standing up in front of people. So, basically, I had to go to school. The sad fact is that, like any island dweller... ... from time to time I had to visit the mainland. This is Imogene. You can hold her if you like. That's... Well, okay. Yeah. Got her. Lovely.

Yeah, she's delightful, isn't she? I know. Isn't she? To tell the truth, I'm being crap with her. You better take her back. She could've been yours if you got your act together. Just think of that, yeah. So, the place is looking really nice. Barney, Barney, Barney. Say hello to Will, Barney. Here we go. It's the Antichrist. Hello, Barney. How are you? -He's lovely. -Yeah. And what about you, Will? Any desire for a family of your own yet? I'd rather eat Barney's nappies. Not really. I'm sort of all right as I am. Please, Will. What does that mean? "Please" what? Look at yourself. You're 38 and you've never had a job... ... or a relationship that lasted longer than two months. I wouldn't exactly say you were okay. I mean, I would say you were a disaster. I mean, what is the point of your life? Bloody hell. You're right. There's probably no point to my life ... ...but thank you for bringing it up. The reason we wanted you to come here today was we wanted to ask you... ...how would you like to be Imogene's godfather? Seriously? Seriously. Listen, I'm really, really touched. But you must be joking. I couldn't possibly think of a worse godfather for Imogene. You know me. I'll drop her at her christening. I'll forget her birthdays until her 18th, when I'll take her out and get her drunk... ...and possibly, let's face it, you know, try and shag her. I mean, seriously, it's a very, very bad choice. We know, I just thought you had hidden depths. No. No. You've always had that wrong. I really am this shallow. Here we are. You know you don't have to walk me to school anymore now, Mum. I know the way now. But what if I like walking you to school? Right. Who are you? I'm me. And what are you not? A sheep. Right. And what does a sheep go? Marcus? I love you. Look. I love you, too. "I love you, Marcus!" "Love you!"

Look at him! While I couldn't accept the offer... ...to become their child's godfather... ...I did allow them to set me up with Angie, a rather beautiful coworker of Christine's. They had, however, being them, neglected to tell me one thing. There's something you don't know about me. Yeah? Something exciting? I think so, yes. I have a 3-year-old boy. I wanted to throw the napkin on the floor, push over the table and run. Brilliant. I love kids. Yeah. I like messing about with them. Doing kid things. I'd have been disappointed if you didn't have a child. Why do you say that? God knows. Mainly because it sounded smooth and winning. Because I love kids so much. They're so lovely. What in God's name are you saying, you idiot? She can't be buying this rubbish. But she did buy my rubbish. And for the next few weeks I was suddenly Will the Good Guy. Her kid took to me, mainly because on our first meeting... ...I took him to the zoo and held him upside down by his ankles. I wish relationships with proper humans were that easy. You know, you are brilliant. I came to realize that with single mums... ...particularly ones who'd been badly treated... ...and eventually abandoned by the father of their children, you became by comparison... You are a wonderful person. No, I'm not. But it was hard to be wonderful all the time. Eventually I began to wonder whether Angie was exactly what I was looking for. For instance, she was late for the new IMAX movie because the babysitter hadn't turned up. I'm so sorry. It's all right. That pissed me off. -You okay? -Yes. And there were deeper problems. She couldn't stay at my place, and she didn't have a DVD, or satellite or cable. So we were always stuck watching some crap made-for-TV movie about a kid with leukemia. I'm afraid there's nothing we can do. God! No! Please, please, no! I was going to have to end it. But having been Will the Good Guy... ...I didn't relish going back to my role of Will the Unreliable, Emotionally-stunted Asshole. I'm sorry? You're breaking up with me? You... ...self-centered bastard. I can't believe I've wasted all this time with you! You useless, superficial loser. Will... Then something magical happened. I'm sorry. I'm not sure this is working out. It's not you.

You've been great. It's me. Well, my situation with Louie and his dad. I'm not ready to launch into a relationship with anybody new. Yeah. I'm so sorry. I think I understand. You're a wonderful man, Will. I'd never watched a woman cry without feeling responsible before. She even wanted me to forgive her. It felt amazing. Listen, you don't have anything to feel sorry about. Really. So that was the end of Angie, but the beginning of a whole new thing. Single mums. Why hadn't anyone told me about them before? Passionate sex, a lot of ego massage and a guilt-free parting. There must be thousands, just waiting for a nice guy to sleep with and break up with. Fabulous, sexy, gorgeous single mums. Can I have Cocoa Puffs? No, it's not Sunday. The crying had started again. And it scared me... ...'cause now it was in the mornings. She'd never done that before. I couldn't figure it out. Nobody was dead. She had a job as a music therapist, which is kind of a teacher for sick kids. So there was enough money for food and everything. Should I get my own breakfast? No, I'm doing it. So, you looking forward to school today? Today, you'll need to effect... ...the decimal point when you multiply it by 10... ...100 and 1000. Nothing to do but frown Rainy days and Mondays always get me down Thank you very much, Marcus. Hi, Nicky. Hi, Mark. -Are you going to Computer Club later? -I don't know. Marcus... Madonna! Go on, give us a song! You'd like that, wouldn't you? Spice Girls or something. Three of them. Yeah. Hey, Spice Girls. You made me lose my football. Marcus, we don't really want you hanging around with us anymore. -Why not? -Well, it's because of them. -They've got nothing to do with me. -Yes, they do. We never had trouble with them before we started hanging out with you. Now we get it every single day. Besides, everyone thinks you're weird. Only a bit, though. Okay. 'Bve. There you have it. I was having a shit time at home and a shit time at school. It was fine deciding single mums were the future... ...but the frustrating truth was I didn't have their numbers. -Hi, Dad. -Hey. Where did they hang out?

I'm a single father, I have a 2-year-old boy. I'm a single father, I have a 2-year-old boy. I'm a single father, I have a 2-year-old boy. I'm a single father, I have a 2-year-old boy. SPAT. This was exciting. A potential gold mine of single mums. I could see the beautiful creatures now, getting roaring drunk... ...forgetting their troubles, ready to rock and roll. That was when I was 7 months pregnant. By the time I had the baby, he was in Majorca with another woman. Not even the one he cheated on me with the first time. Well, with me, it was the week before the birth. He said I'd got too fat. Mine was shagging his secretary. Such a cliche. I'll tell you one thing: Men are bastards. After about 10 minutes... ...I wanted to cut my own penis off with a kitchen knife. Me. Yes. I have a 2-year-old. Ned. He's got blue eyes and sort of sandy-colored hair... ...and he's about 2'3. And his mum left. -Really? -Yeah. Yeah, I mean, obviously it was a very big shock... ...because we were so happy, you know? Sandra's neurology practice was just up and running... ...and then one day her bags were packed, and my best friend was waiting outside... ... in his Ferrari. Yeah. You know, the Modena? The one with the supercharged engine, where you can see it through the back window? -You got dumped then? -Yeah. May I ask, does your ex see Ned at all? Sorry, I didn't catch your name. Suzie. Suzie. She doesn't see much of him. no. How does he cope with that? He's a very good little boy. Very, very brave. They've got amazing resources, don't they? Just the other day I was thinking about my ex. He came crawling up, put his little pudgy arms around my neck, and he said: "You hang in there, Dad." God, that's amazing for a 2-year-old! Is it? Yeah, he's very special. Very, very special. Sometimes I think, you know, he's the one taking care of me. Teaching me the ways of the world. Sorry. Thank you. My God, what a performance! I was even fooling myself. There you go. You okay?

Yeah. Perfect, thanks. -Trust me? -Of course. By the end of the evening, I had a date lined up. Single parents alone together! Single parents alone together! All for one and one for all! The problem was I also had an imaginary 2-year-old son. The date was a SPATpicnic in Regent's Park, with everyone bringing their kids. Sadly, Ned couldn't be there. His mum had come and picked him up at the last second. -What a shame. -Yeah. I'm sorry. -Got it. -This is Megan, by the way. Hello, Megan. Yeah. A friend of mine from SPAT isn't feeling so great... ...so I said that we'd take her kid to the picnic, too. -Is that all right? -Yeah. The more the merrier. Right. Come on, slowcoach! I hated that SPATlot. Mum's friend Suzie was fine, but now there was that wally who wanted to get off with her. Marcus, Will. Will, Marcus. Hi there. Right. Pile in, everyone. Look what a mess Ned made of the car seat. What a shame he can't come. So, what do you do? Me? There were too many lies to keep track of so I told the truth. -Nothing. -Well, before then. -What do you mean, before I did nothing? -Yeah. I did nothing. You've never worked? I've done the odd day here and there, but, no. Crazy, isn't it? It's... Brilliant. My God, I was going to have to tell her. What happened, in fact, was that my dad wrote a song... ... in 1958, and it's quite a famous song... ...and I basically live off the royalties of that. You know Michael Jackson? He makes a 1,000,000 pounds a minute. That's 60,000,000 pounds an hour. I don't make a 1,000,000 pounds a minute. -Nothing like, sadly. -How much then? Marcus! I was beginning to wonder if we'd be stuck with this weird kid all day. So, what's this song then? If you can live off it, we must've heard of it. It's Santa's Super Sleigh. God, please don't sing it. Look who's coming round the bend It's Santa and his reindeer friends With a ho, ho, ho and a hey, hey, hey, It's Santa's super sleigh I expect people do that all the time.

No, I think you two are the first. Sorry. I don't understand. How does that make you money? Do carol singers have to pay you 10 percent? They should, but you can't always catch the little bastards. So, how often do you look after him? Marcus. Every once in a while. His mum's a little off-color sometimes. You call it off-color, I call it nuts. She's not nuts, Marcus. She just needs a weekend taking it easy. We'll have a nice picnic, and when you get home, she'll be all rested up. My God! What the hell is that? My mum's homemade bread. It looks pretty good. No, it isn't. It's healthy. You miss him, don't you? Who? Ned! Yeah. Yeah, very much. He'd have loved this. I think I killed a duck. I was only trying to feed it. What's that floating in the water next to it? Is that your mum's bread? You didn't have to throw the whole loaf. That would've killed me. You the one who was throwing bloody great loaves at the ducks? Yeah, he was, but I've stopped him now. You know, boys will be boys, and all that. So he killed it. No. Sorry, I misunderstood you. The duck was dead already. He was throwing bread to try and sink the body... ...because Megan here was getting upset. Marcus wouldn't kill a duck. Would you, Marcus? No. I love ducks. They're my second favorite animal after dolphins. They can kill sharks with their noses. I'll have to wade in and get it. Listen, I hope it's not some sort of epidemic. I think we beat the rap there, mate. Yeah. Well. Marcus? Mum. That day, the Dead Duck Day, was when it all began. That bloke Will just followed us in and I didn't tell him not to. Afterwards, I realized that there was no way I could have been nervous just then... ...because just then I didn't know there was anything to be nervous about. But then I put the key in the lock, opened the door... Are you decent? And a new part of my life started. Bang! Jesus Christ. Oh, my God. -Will, call an ambulance. -Marcus, where's the phone? Where's the phone, mate? It was horrible. Horrible. But driving fast behind the ambulance was fantastic.

She's conscious. She was okay in the ambulance. She was asking after you, Marcus. That's nice of her. Listen, you know this has nothing to do with you, don't you? I mean, you're not the reason that she... You're not the reason that she's here. Isn't that right, Will? Yeah, that's right. I'll go get you some water. -I can get that. -No, you're okay. Your mum's going to be okay. Yeah, I suppose. That's not the point, though, is it? Right, you mean you're afraid she might try again? Just shut up, all right? There you go, warm and flat. Are you with Fiona Brewer? Yes, I'm her friend Suzie. This is Marcus and Will. She's recovering well, but we'll keep her overnight. I'm going to get a consent form for Ms. Brewer so the boy can stay with you two tonight. Right. So, my place or yours? Sorry. Okay. -I should get back to Ned, I think. -I'll take that. All right. All in all, this was very interesting. So I'll call. But I wouldn't want to do it every night. See you soon. The thing is, a person's life is like a TV show. I was the star of The Will Show. And The Will Show wasn't an ensemble drama. Guests came and went, but I was the regular. It came down to me, and me alone. If Marcus' mum couldn't manage her own show... ... if her ratings were falling, it was sad, but that was her problem. Ultimately, the whole single-mum plot line was a bit complicated for me. I got the letter. Thanks. Oh, my God. I'd forgotten. You forgot? You forgot a suicide letter? I didn't think I'd have to remember it, did I? Did you read the part where I said I'd always love you? It's a bit hard for you to love me when you're dead, isn't it? I'm sorry. I can understand why you're angry, Marcus. I don't feel the same as I did yesterday, if that's any help. What? It's all just gone away? All that? No, but... ...at the moment, I feel better. "At the moment" is no good to me. I can see you feel better at the moment. You just put the kettle on.

But what happens when you finish your tea? What happens when I go back to school? -I can't be here to watch you all the time. -I know. We have to look after each other. The two of us. Suddenly I realized two people isn't enough. You need a backup. If you're only two people, and someone drops off the edge... ...then you're on your own. Two isn't a large enough number. You need three, at least. -Three what? -Nothing. But I'd had a great idea. The important thing in island living is to be your own activities director. I find the key is to think of a day as units of time... ...each unit consisting of no more than 30 minutes. Full hours can be a little bit intimidating... ...and most activities take about half an hour. Taking a bath: One unit. Watching Countdown: Okay... One unit. Web-based research: Two units. Exercising: Three units. Having my hair carefully disheveled: Four units. It's amazing how the day fills up. I often wonder, to be absolutely honest... ... if I'd ever really have time for a job. How do people cram them in? Yeah, Will here. It's Marcus. Pardon? It's Marcus. Marcus? Marcus. Hi. How'd you get my number? From Suzie. I thought you'd like to take me out for the day on Saturday. And why did you think that, Marcus? Suzie said we hit it off. Did she? Yeah. -And you said, "See you soon." -I said what? "See you soon." The night you dropped us off. Remember? You said, "See you soon." This is soon, all right, Marcus. The thing is, mate, my life is kind of hectic at the moment. Why? I thought you did nothing. I've got Ned and stuff to look after. Matter of fact, I should be on the way to preschool right now. What's that noise? That's a lawn mower. So, you know, just time-wise it's not... Tell you what, just hold the line one sec. Hold on, one sec. Thanks. But then I thought, "Why not?" Why shouldn't I take the poor little sod out for a meal? I could be Uncle Will. Cool Uncle Will, King of the Kids.

Okay, Marcus. You're on. I'll come if you take my mum, too. She has no money, so we'll have to go somewhere cheap or you'll have to treat us. Listen, don't beat about the bush, Marcus. Why should I? We're poor. You're rich. You pay. Bring your little boy, I don't mind. That's really big of you. Fine. Come round at 12:30 or something. Remember where we live? Flat 2, 31 Craysfield Road, Islington, London, N12SF. England, the world, the universe. Yeah. Marcus? So, Fiona, how are you? -I mean, how are you feeling? -My stomach's fine. Great. I must still be a bit barmy, though. This kind of thing doesn't go away overnight, does it? No. If Mum was going to get Will to marry her, she'd have to quit making jokes. At least she looked good. I had her put on that nice hairy jumper... ...and the earrings she got from her friend that went to Zimbabwe. The kid seemed to think this was a date. As for his mum, she was clearly insane... ...and appeared to be wearing some kind of Yeti costume. This had better be quick. We were definitely not ordering starters. I'll start with the artichoke, please. Then I'll have a mushroom omelet with fries and a Coke. -I'll have the vegetable platter. -We're vegetarians. I'd never have guessed. Steak sandwich, please, mate. Thanks. This was going really well. I wondered if we were going to move into Will's place or move into someplace new. I heard he sang a good song I heard he had a style I knew, of course, the song couldn't last forever... ...that I'd soon be at home, tucked up in bed. I knew it, but I couldn't feel it. And there he was, this young boy I must've been insane. All I'd wanted was a date with Suzie. This was my punishment. Strumming my pain with his fingers The worst part was when they closed their eyes. Killing me softly with his song Killing me softly Come sing with us, Will. I should really get going. Thanks. That's the problem with charity. You must mean it. You have to mean things to help people. Like the time I volunteered to help out at a soup kitchen... ...and very nearly made it. Or the time at Amnesty International. Did you know in Burma you get seven years in prison for telling jokes? Next time you laugh, think of Pa Pa Lay, the Burmese standup comedian. We're at a crucial stage in our struggle for human rights...

...which have been grossly abused by the ruling junta. We need your support more than ever. Together we can make a difference... You're kidding. And what's your boyfriend say about that? Wait a minute. You say you haven't got a boyfriend? Talk about human rights violations. Is that right? You're in the bath now? You have to mean things to help people. Fiona meant Killing Me Softly. Killing Me Softly meant something to her and look where she ended up. Me, I didn't mean anything, about anything, to anyone. I knew that guaranteed me a long, depression-free life. Yet over the next few days, I did have a strange feeling. Like a presence lurking at the back of my mind. And I didn't like it. You don't have a kid, do you? What? You don't have a kid, do you? Of course I do! What are you on about? No, you don't. I've been watching you, and you don't have a kid. What is it to you, anyway? Nothing. Except you've been lying to me, my mum and my mum's friend. -Can I come in? -No. Why? 'Cause I'm busy. -What are you doing? -I'm watching TV. I could watch it with you, if you like. That's very nice of you... ...but I usually manage on my own, thanks. Don't you have homework to do, or something? -Want to help? -No, that's not what I meant. I meant, why don't you go home and do your homework? I'll do you a deal. I won't tell anyone you don't have a kid if you go out with my mum. You'd want your mum to go out with someone like me? You're not too bad. I mean, you told lies, but apart from that you seem okay. And she's sad. I think she'd like a boyfriend. I can't just go out with someone... ...because you want me to. I'd have to like the person, as well. -What's wrong with her? -Nothing's wrong with her, it's just the system. That's how it... I'm not talking about this with you. Just go. Okay. But I'll be back. I'm really scared! That's the best I could come up with, "I'm scared." But as a matter of fact, I was. Okay, that's it. Tim, goodbye. -Jill, goodbye. Carol, goodbye. -Goodbye. And from me, arrivederci. Bye-bye. Thanks. See you. Hello, everybody. Welcome to the game of Countdown. You remember yesterday, Carol, I revealed to a grateful nation... ...that our guest, Tom O'Connell...

Yes. He, like all of us, changes for each show. But he is such a... -Is that right? -Yeah. Another term for Hosta, I think. -Yes. well. Named after Heinrich Christian Funck, who also invented disco dancing. Yes. I've got all his audios. Mum, did you always know I was going to be a vegetarian? Yeah, of course I did. I didn't decide on the spur of the moment 'cause we ran out of sausages. Did you ask me if I wanted to be a vegetarian? What, when you were born? I do the cooking and I don't want to cook meat. You have to eat what I eat. But you don't let me go to McDonald's, either. Is this premature teenage rebellion? I can't stop you from going to McDonald's. I'd just be disappointed if you did. Don't worry, Mum. I won't go to McDonald's. After a few visits, Will seemed to think he had to ask me serious questions. But I knew he really wanted to watch Xena: Warrior Princess. So, how's it going at home then? -You mean my mum? -Yeah. She's all right, thanks. I mean, you know, she's... Yeah, I know. No, nothing like that. Does it still bother you, then? Does it bother me? Are you decent? Every single day. That's why I come here, instead of going home. A bit. When I think about it. Fucking hell. I don't know why he swore like that, but it made me feel better. It made me feel like I wasn't being pathetic to get so scared. I wouldn't make the mistake of asking about Fiona again. Marcus was clearly screwed up about it... ...and unfortunately I couldn't think of anything to say that'd be of any value. Next time he could talk to Suzie, or a counselor... ... or anybody capable of something more than an obscenity. Shit! It can't be. November-the-sodding-19. Six weeks before Christmas and already they were playing the bloody thing. Dad? What was your dad like? A bit sad, really. You know, he wrote one crap song that turned out to be a massive hit... ...and then spent the rest of his life trying to write a better one. Do you ever want to write songs like him? Is that what the guitar's for? No. So, that's just there to look cool. Yeah. I like Santa's Super Sleigh. Madonna! Come here! We've got something.

He's getting away, look! Hurry up! On Pet Rescue today, the clever stoat keeps everyone... ...on their toes in Somerset. Hey! What are you doing? Who are you? Who am I? Bugger off, that's who I am! Go on, piss off! Who were they, then? Who? What do you mean, "Who?" The ones trying to embed sweets into your skull. Oh. them. They're just a couple of older kids. They started following me after school. Does this happen often? They never chucked sweets before, they just thought of that. I'm not talking about the sweets. The kids trying to kill you. Yeah, they give me a hard time. You know, about my hair, and my clothes and singing and stuff. And what? And singing? Sometimes I sing out loud without noticing. That's not a brilliant idea, is it? I said I did it without noticing, didn't I? It just happens! I'm not going to do it on purpose, am I? I'm not stupid, you know. My advice is to keep out of people's way. Try to make yourself invisible. How can I be invisible? One machine in your kitchen is an invisible machine? I don't think so. I just try not to think of it, that's all. It happens, and I wish it didn't, but that's life, isn't it? There's nothing I can do about it. No. There is something we can do about it, Marcus. You're coming with me. I was worried he was going to take me to the headmistress' office. But instead he took me shopping. I don't get it. We're starting with your feet. I can't make you invisible, but I can make you blend in with the crowd. I don't know how to tie them. They've got these funny strappy things. It's called Velcro. It's a revolutionary new technology. For Christ's sake. It's not hard. All right, wait a minute, it is a bit hard. -Everything all right? -Yeah, thanks. Pretty trendy, your old man, isn't he? There. You think you look cool, don't you? Don't know. -Do you think I look cool? -Yeah, Marcus. -I think you look cool. -Yeah. That's it, you got the walk. That's really cool. Brilliant. High five. Yeah. I was suddenly hit by an extraordinary rush of well-being. So this is what people meant by a natural high. And it only cost 60 quid. I had made an unhappy boy temporarily happy.

And there wasn't anything in it for me at all. I didn't even want to shag his mum. Marcus! What happened to your shoes? They stole them. Why would anyone want to steal your shoes? I could see I had to tell the truth. The problem was, the truth would lead to a lot more questions. They were nice ones. They were just ordinary brown lace-ups. No, they weren't. They were cool new trainers. Where did you get cool new trainers? She had loads more questions. Will bought them for me. Will? -The guy who took us to lunch? -Yeah. He's sort of become my friend. He's sort of become your friend? She kept repeating the last thing I said. Except she shouted it. I go round to his place after school. You go round to his place after school! -You see, he doesn't really have a kid. -He doesn't really have a kid? Can I play computer games now? Where does he live? He's not there at the moment. He's out to dinner. Christine had asked me to dinner for a pep talk. You will end up childless and alone. Both fingers crossed, yeah. You must have a lot of courage. Why is that, Christine? Most people need something in their lives to keep them afloat... ...and you have absolutely nothing. Doesn't that scare you? Do you know what you want? Yes, I do. I'll have the steak... What the hell are these little after-school tea parties about? Hi. Sorry? What did you say? I was just wondering why a single, childless man would want to hang out... ...with a 12-year-old boy every day? You didn't tell your mum that you've been coming round? -I think I forgot. -Tell me what? What are you doing with my son? Wait a minute. What are you suggesting here? -I'm not suggesting anything. -I think you are. You were suggesting that I've been interfering with your son. I'm simply asking you why you entertain 12-year-olds in your flat. -My God! -Oh, my God! What do you have to say for yourself? Well? Don't "well" me! Don't "well" me about this! He comes over uninvited every night! Do you know why? He's having the shit bullied out of him at school! And you haven't got a clue. You send him out like a lamb to the slaughter! He's been taken to pieces every day of the week, you daft, fucking hippie!

I think you're being a bit melodramatic. Marcus is fine. Strange. Will had it right, Mum didn't. It should be the other way around. You haven't had much contact with kids. I used to be a bloody kid! I went to a bloody school. I know when kids can't settle down and when kids are miserable! Look at him, for Christ's sake! Don't accuse me of being melodramatic. -This coming from a woman who tried to ... -Cowabunga! -What's the matter with you? -Nothing. I just felt like a shout. Jesus, what a family. Will, you're disturbing the other customers. It's fine. I'm sorry. I'm done. -Okay, so, you're not... -What? No, I'm not! No, I'm not. Listen, don't worry about it. I won't open the door to Marcus again, okay? I'll be glad to be rid of the pair of you, frankly. Go on. Bugger off. Sorry. So that's it, is it? You're just out of his life, like that. Excuse me? Let's say you're right and I'm wrong. Let's say there's this whole world... ...that I don't understand, and somehow, miraculously, you do. What are you going to do about it? I'm not going to do anything. He's none of my business. -You're a selfish bastard. -That's what I tell him. -He always puts himself first. -But I'm on my own. It's just me. I'm not putting myself first. There's nobody else. Yes, there is! There's Marcus. You're involved now. He keeps coming around your bloody house. You've come into his life for a reason. You can't just shut him out. You can't shut life out. "No man is an island." -She's right, you know. -Yeah, she is. No, she's not! She's wrong! Some men are islands. I'm a bloody island! I'm bloody Ibiza! What are you talking about? Do you want to come over for Christmas? No, Marcus, I do not want to come over for bloody Christmas. I do not want to spend Christmas with Miss Granola Suicide and her spawn. I'd always thought what you did with Christmas... ...was sort of a statement about where you stood in life. I was going to spend this Christmas the way I usually did. Watching videos and getting drunk and stoned. Before you came, I was all alone. It is bad to be alone. Alone, bad. Friend, good. Friend, good! Now come here.

The good news was it wasn't just me and Fiona and Marcus. The bad news was, well... So, you're Marcus' dad. Yeah, I guess so. And this is my girlfriend, Lindsey. And Lindsey's mum. Hi there. -Thanks, Dad. -That's okay. I had to hand it to the kid. He could be enthusiastic about some truly crap present. Wow, a tambourine! Thanks, Mum. Isn't that cool, Will? Yeah, that'll come in handy. I saw it and I thought, "This'll be perfect." Maybe you can perform at that school concert. Get a pop group together. Make some friends. Maybe, Mum. When you sing, it brings sunshine and happiness into my heart. Thanks, Mum. This one's from me. Brilliant! What is it? It's a CD, Marcus. By Mystikal. They're cool. You'll like them. And what kind of music is Mystikal? It's sort of world music. "Shake Ya Ass." Slash rap type thing. Shake Ya Ass? Is he Moroccan? I'm afraid we haven't got a CD player. It's great anyway. I know you haven't got a CD player, so, I got you one of them as well. What a lucky boy. Look, Mum. -Open yours, Will. -All right. Thanks a lot. -Marcus, is this a joke? -Yeah. It's not bad. Hi. Sorry, I'm dead late! -Have I missed anything? -No, come on in. -Merry Christmas. -Merry Christmas! Hey! Long time no see. Where's Megan? At her dad's. Where's Ned? At his mum's for Christmas? Yeah. No. I should probably go, shouldn't I? You could go pose as Santa, try and shag some carol singers. Are you a professional Santa? How lovely! Right. That's it. I'm off. Thank you very much. It was great. Suzie has every right to express her anger. Yes, and she's expressed it. Now I have a right to bugger off. Thanks a lot. 'Bye. Wait! He's my friend. I invited him.

I should be able to tell him when to go home. I haven't told Will to go, Marcus. Suzie's angry and has every right to be, and she's telling him so. She's right, Marcus. Just leave it. okav? All he did was make up a kid for a couple weeks. God, that's nothing. So what? Who cares? Kids at school do worse than that every day! The point is, Marcus, Will left school a long time ago. He should've grown out of making people up by now. -That's for sure. -It's not fair to gang up on him. He's been better behaved since then. He bought me trainers, he lets me go round to his house and he knows what kids need. What? Expensive footwear and obscene music? If there's something you really need then we can talk about it. No, we can't. It's not a discussion, it's an argument, and you always win. -Why not just tell me what to do? -I want you to think for yourself! I'm thinking for myself! And I want Will to stay! He's not the only one who ever did anything wrong! Remember how we met? Remember why? Because you... Because you threw a loaf of bread at a duck's head and killed it, basically. Excuse me? What's this about a duck? Are we having duck? Delicious! Of course we were not having duck. Instead we had nut loaf with parsnip gravy. As I sat there, I had a strange feeling. I was enjoying myself. I'd never really enjoyed Christmas before. My mother used to make me sing Santa's Super Sleigh... ... in front of my inebriated uncles and aunts... ... just to get at my dad, I think. But Christmas at Marcus', I'm ashamed to say it, gave me... ...a warm, fuzzy feeling. I held that feeling responsible for the strange events that followed. First of all, Marcus got a crush on a girl. Hello. Piss off. And then, even stranger, so did I. It was all Marcus' fault, really... ...because once you open your door to one person, anyone can come in. On New Year's Eve, I met Rachel. She was interesting, smart and attractive. And for about five minutes, I had her convinced that I was, too. ...things like political events. Okay. You in television? Am I in television? No. -Everyone else is in television. -Yeah. I watch television. Right, right. So you're more in front of it than in it. -In it, yeah. -Yes, I get it, yeah. It was torture. For five minutes I realized what life would be like if I were, in any way, interesting. If I had anything to say for myself, if I did anything. But I didn't do anything. And in about 30 seconds she'd know and she'd be gone like a shot.

So what do you do? I'm sort of taking a bit of time off at the moment. -Sounds good, yeah. -Yeah. Time off from what? To be absolutely honest, time off from time off, in fact. The interesting thing about me is I don't actually do anything. -You don't do anything? -Actually, no. -Nothing. -Nope. Wow. That's... Now, Rachel, darling. East Coast or West Coast rap? I have absolutely no... There. She was gone. There was no more to say. All rap music sounds exactly the same to me. Or was there? I tell you what. I know a 12-year-old who'd kill you for saying that. -Really? -Yes. -So do l, come to that. -Yeah? -Yeah. What's yours called? -Mine? He's called Marcus. Mine's Ali. Alistair. And there it was. It wasn't a lie. It was 100 percent her assumption. Well, 50 percent, at the very least. I was in fantasyland again. But this time it was different. SPAT was for fun. This was serious. I acted in self-defense. We arranged to get our lads together. Which means we arranged for us to get together. Single parents, alone together. Happy New Year! I was in deep trouble. And there was only one person who could help me out. Shake ya ass, but watch ya self Shake ya ass, show me what you workin' with Shake ya ass, watch ya self -Show me what you workin' with -What did you just say to me? You heard me, squitty little shitty snot-nosed bastard! Sorry. I was singing along to this song by Mystikal. It's a rap. You like rap? A little. It's by black people, mostly. They're angry most of the time. But sometimes they just want to have sex. You taking a piss? 'Cause if you are, you'll get a slap. I'm not taking a piss. I don't even know how to take a piss. -What's your name? -Marcus. I'm Ellie. Hi, Ellie. Nice to meet you. Not so fast. I'm not ready for physical contact. Next thing you know, we'll be having sex. And where will that get us? And stop telling strangers to shake their ass. Okay, Ellie. See you!

Hello, mate. Listen, I need your help. Why did you tell this lady I was your son? No, I didn't tell her. I told you, she just got the wrong end of the stick. So just tell her. -No. Can't do that. -Why not? We're really going around in circles here. Just accept the facts, okay? You're my son. I'll tell her, if you like. I don't mind. That's very kind of you, Marcus, but no. -Why not? -For Christ's sake! She's got a rare disease and if she believes something that's not right... ...then hears the truth, her brain will boil in her head and she'll die, okay? That's a load of shit. I'm really interested in this woman. What do you mean, interested? What's so interesting about her? Okay, Marcus, here. Here's my last scrap of dignity. Enjoy it. I want to go out with her. Okay? I'd like her to be my girlfriend. There, I said it. Brilliant! Why didn't you just say that? I don't know. I was embarrassed or something, 'cause this is a bit new for me. I just met her, her name's Rachel. She's sort of ... There's this girl at school. Ellie. I kind of want her to be my girlfriend. I'm not exactly sure. I've been meaning to ask you. What's the difference between a girl who's your friend and a girlfriend? Well, I don't know. Do you want to touch her? Is that so important? Yeah, you've heard about sex, right? It is kind of a big deal. I know. I'm not stupid. I just can't believe there's nothing more to it. I mean, like, I want to be with her more. I want to be with her all the time. And I want to tell her things I don't even tell you or Mum. And I don't want her to have another boyfriend. If I could have all those things... ...I wouldn't really mind if I touched her or not. Well, you'll learn, Marcus. You won't feel like that forever. Okay, how do I look? Good. How do I look? Just be as normal as you can, okay? Good advice for Marcus. I wish I could have followed it. I'm sorry it's such a mess. That's where I work. My mouth was dry and my palms sweating. I didn't know what the hell was happening to me. ...manage to tidy up. Ali?

All I could do was stand there, grinning like an idiot. -Should we just go upstairs? -Sure. Okay. Ali. Marcus. Marcus. Ali. You're in my year at school. Really? Yeah, I think I've seen you around. Great! Then you guys'll have a lot to talk about. Will, this is Ali. Ali, this is Will. -All right. -All right. Do you guys want to hang up here for a while? -Yeah, sounds good, right? -Yeah. Okay. For a moment, I loved him. Really loved him. You can show him your new computer games. Good. Okay, catch you later. Let's leave them to it. If your dad goes out with my mum, then you're dead. Really dead. -Don't worry. He's all right. -I don't care if he's all right! I don't want him going out with my mum! I don't want to see him or you around here ever again, okay? I'm not really sure it's up to me. Well, it better be! Or you're going to die. I was getting the feeling that maybe this kid Ali was a serial killer. Can I have a go on your computer? What games you got? Are you listening to me? Yeah, it's just that I can't really do much at the moment, can I? I mean, Will, that's my dad... ...he likes your mum, and I think she's keen on him. She's not keen on him! She's only keen on me! One amazing thing about Rachel... ...was that I wanted to kiss her every time she said something interesting. Which was all the time. It was sexy. It was weird. I use Bristol boards, India ink and... Am I boring you? No, no. No. -What? -Nothing. It's just you looked like Marcus just then. Did I? I think it's sweet how much he seems to take after you... ...and the way he dresses like you, as well. I don't think I dress like Marcus, really. Marcus? Wait! Hang on. Hang on. Come on, we're going back. -He's off his head. -No, he's not. He said he'd cut me up into little pieces and hide me under the floorboards. -He did? -No. But I'm sure he's capable of it. It'll be different. You'll like it, I promise.

Marcus, Ali has something to say to you. Doesn't he? Sorry, Marcus. I didn't mean to say those things. It's okay. Ali. Ali finds all this very difficult. Yeah, so does Marcus. Don't you, mate? You know, I mean, divorced parents... ...and not knowing how to feel about new people. Yes. Absolutely. Absolutely the way I feel. Ali didn't get along with the last bloke I went out with. -He was a liar! -All right, darling. He wasn't 100 percent good news. -I'm not saying that you and I are. -That's okay. He fancies you. He told me. -Thanks a lot, mate. -Oh, dear. Cheers. mate. Don't look so worried, sweetheart. Ellie! -Marcus? What, are you stalking me? -No. Too bad. Made me feel like a celebrity. Yeah, but I didn't know that then, did l, sexy? All I'm saying is, you know, watch out. It just looks a bit more like owner and pet than boyfriend and girlfriend. At least I'm honest. What does that mean? It's just that you and Rachel... What? What does that mean? I don't know, I think there's a problem with you and Rachel. I mean, like, you want to be with her but she thinks you have a son. And you don't. If you're going to be with someone... ...shouldn't you tell them things like that? No. I mean, you know, like the truth. What's wrong with you? But later that night, when I was on my own... ...I remembered the deal Marcus was prepared to strike. Yes, I wanted to touch Rachel. But at this moment, if I had the choice... ...I'd settle for the less and the more that Marcus wanted. Jesus, was I turning into Marcus? Would he be buying me shoes soon? I took his advice and told Rachel the truth. Or very nearly the truth. That I wasn't Marcus' natural father. And that is not natural seaweed. The problem was, once I told the truth, I knew there'd be more questions. I don't get it. If you're not his natural father... ...and you don't live with him, then how is he your son? Yeah, I see. It must look very confusing from the outside. Tell me how it is on the inside. It's just one of those long, boring stories.

Look, do you want to move on to wine? You want some Chinese rice wine, miss? You would like to try, I suspect, the Panang Paneng. Yeah? No. Tell me about your relationship with Ali. -Is that as complicated as mine and Marcus'? -No. I slept with his father, and then nine months later I gave birth. Pretty straightforward. Yeah. I envy you that. I'm really sorry to harp on about this but I haven't got it all worked out yet. You are Marcus' stepfather, but you don't live with him or with his mother. No, you see, wait. I never said he was my son. Did I? The words "I have a son called Marcus," never escaped my lips. It's what you chose to believe. Yeah. Right. It's me that's the fantasist. I wanted to believe that you had a son, so I let my imagination run riot. Obviously I played a part, I can see that. No! Not at all. I met you and I thought, "Cute guy." "God, if only he had a son. A geeky, teenage kid, if possible." Then you turned up at my house with Marcus, and bingo! Now I made this crazy link 'cause of some deep psychological need in me. You shouldn't beat yourself up about it. It could have happened to anyone. The first time I met you I thought you were a bit blank. But then you changed my mind. Maybe I was right. -Rachel, listen. -Yes? I'm sorry, you're right. I am a blank. I'm really nothing. I don't know what the hell I was thinking of, I'm sorry. 'Bye, Ellie. Marcus! My man! 'Bye, Marcus! See you, Marcus! Mum? So, if z = 17, does x > 2? Marcus? I didn't know what the answer was. I didn't know what "x" equaled. And I didn't know how to help my mum. And then I realized. There was something she said I could do for her. -I'm thinking of singing at the school concert. -You? At the rock concert? I don't think that would be a very good idea, Marcus. Will you accompany me? All I've got is a tambourine. No, I'm sorry. It's suicide. I mean, they'll crucify you. Mum's at it again. -At what? Sorry. -What do you mean, what?

The crying. She sits in the house all day, crying. She does it in the mornings, too. It's as bad now as it was before the Dead Duck Day. Marcus, I'm sorry, mate... ...I'm a bit busy at the moment. You're busy? Doing what? -Didn't you hear me? -I heard you. -What do you want me to do about it? -I don't know. -You could talk to her. -Yeah? And what would I say? -I don't know! -Why would she listen to me? Who am I to her? -I'm nobody. -You're not nobody. -You're... -Who? Who do you think I am? Who do you think you are? You come here uninvited, you disrupt my life, you screw things up. What do you want from me? This isn't my problem. I'm not your family, mate. I'm not. I'm not your uncle. I'm not your big brother. We've established pretty firmly that I'm not your father, either, am I? But... I'll tell you what I am. I'm the guy who's really good at choosing trainers or records, okay? That's it. I can't help you with real things. I can't help you with anything that means anything. You could try. You're right. You can't help me. How could you? You're a stupid person who watches TV all day... ... and buys things. You don't give a shit about anybody, and nobody gives a shit about you! Mum said my singing brought sunshine and happiness... ...into her life. So I'd do it, even if it meant mine was over. Look, Mum. My life is made up of units of time. Buying CDs: Two units. Eating lunch: Three units. Exercising: Two units. All in all, I had a very full life. It's just that it didn't mean anything. Look who's coming round the bend The fact was there was only one thing that meant something to me: Marcus. He was the only thing that meant something to me. And Fiona was the only thing that meant something to him. And she was about to fall off the edge. Single parents alone together! Single parents alone together! Single parents alone together! All for one and one for all! -Fiona! -Will, we haven't seen you for a while. How's Ned? Who? He's a load of crap. He doesn't exist. Yeah, I made him up. -You made him up? -Yeah. -To meet women. -You're sick.

-Fiona, I've got to talk to you. -Go ahead. No, you know, properly talk to you, privately. No, this is a circle of truth. Whatever you have to say, you can say it in front of everybody. Okay. Please don't try and commit suicide again. I can't believe you just said that. That is my private experience. Yeah, well, that's the thing, isn't it? It's not. Marcus is worried about you. I'm worried because he's worried about you. Will, I don't have plans to commit suicide. You don't? Not at the moment, no. Great. Great! Good. You know I'm not attracted to you, right? What are you on about? No. What are you, nuts? Right. Wrong word completely. But that's something that we should, you know, talk about a bit. The crying in the morning thing, the depression. Let's get that fixed. That's what men think, isn't it? What? That unless you've got the answer, unless you can say: "I know a bloke in the Essex Road who can fix that," then there's no point bothering. No. Well, yeah, okay. I would. I'd love to know the name of the bloke in the Essex Road... ...because I've got a feeling I'd be useless. Will, you're not useless. You're here. And that matters. Right. -Now, can we... Do you mind? -What? -Marcus is singing at the school concert. -Marcus is singing? -Yeah, singing. -At school? It's a pop concert. He's so excited. -I want to get there on time. -Wait, wait. What's he singing? Killing me softly with his song Telling my whole life -What time does this thing start? -What have you got against Marcus singing? You know the dream where you're at school without your trousers on and everyone laughs? -What's the connection? -That will be Marcus, but for real. If he sings that song in front of those kids... ...you can just write him off until university. If he reaches university, 'cause he's going to get torn to shreds. You cannot stop someone from expressing themselves. He's not expressing himself! He's expressing you, okay? Oh, God. What? Jesus Christ. You're right. Will, am I a bad mother? No, you're not a bad mother. You're just a barking lunatic. No, I am. I am a bad mother. I've let things slide and I haven't been noticing properly. He's a special, very special boy. And he's got a special soul, and I've wounded it! Please, just shut up. You're wounding my soul. Okay, you park it. What?

Hi. What are you doing here? That's Ali up there. He's talented. Now that was the Def Penalty Kru with Murder Fo' Life. Our next big act is Marcus Brewer... ...singing Roberta Flack's beloved Killing Me Softly. He'll be accompanied by Simon Cosgrove on the recorder. Marcus, I can't do this. -That lot's going to shit all over us. -But you said... I'm sorry. Here's your 5 pounds back. Any moment now. Come on, Marcus, you wally! Wait! Wait! Excuse me. What is going on here? Nothing. Everything's under control. I'm just his voice coach. What are you doing here? I heard you were about to commit social suicide, so I dropped by. -My accompanist left! -Brilliant. -You don't have to do it. -I can't do that. Yeah, you can. Just tell them: Artistic differences. You can't work without him. He had a drug problem. My mum wants me to sing it. It'll make her happy. Look, mate, nothing you do can make your mum happy, all right? Not in the long term. She has to do that for herself. -Get over here right now! -Just bugger off, will you! What I'm saying is, the important thing is to make yourself feel happy. I've tried just making myself happy. She's tried making herself happy. It doesn't work. You need other people to make you happy. But that's just it. If other people can make you happy then they can also make you unhappy. What, you think those people out there are going to make you happy? Hang on. Wait. Marcus, don't. Marcus! Bollocks. Come on, Britney! Yeah, give us a song, then. This is for my mum. I heard he sang a good song I heard he had a style And so I came to see him to listen for a while And there he was this young boy a stranger to my eyes You're rubbish, mate! Strumming my pain with his fingers Singing my life with his words Killing me softly with his song Killing me softly Who the hell is that? Telling my whole life with his words Killing me softly with his song I felt all flushed with fever embarrassed by the crowd I felt he found my letters and read each one out loud I prayed that he would finish

but he just kept right on Strumming my pain with his fingers Singing my life with his words Killing me softly Give it a rest. Killing me softly with his song Telling my whole life with his words Killing me softly With his song He sang as if he knew me Will. In all my dark despair We're finished. And then he looked right through me as if I wasn't there Will, come on. Will, we're finished. So there I was, killing them softly with my song. Or rather, being killed. And not that softly, either. I was singing with my eyes closed. Was I frightened? I was petrified. This was definitely not island living. Killing me softly With his song Thank you, Finsbury. I'd like to introduce one or two members of the band. Marcus Brewer on vocals and tambourine. And that's about it. Let's get off quick. Get off. Marcus, thank you. For the song. You were terrific. -You think so? -Yeah. As a matter of fact, I think we should celebrate. Okav. How about McDonald's? -McDonald's? -Yeah. Thanks, Mum, but it's okay. No, really. I want to go to McDonald's. You know, I'm not really hungry. Come on. Are you telling me you couldn't murder a Big Mac? Mum! Okay, another time. Any time. I'll be around a while, you know. By the following Christmas things were back to normal. Before you came... Every man is an island. And I stand by that. But clearly, some men are part of island chains. Below the surface of the ocean they're actually connected. So you're going to marry my mum, then? Don't know. Why? You think she's up for it? -I used to want him to marry my mum. -You serious? Yeah. But that was when she was depressed and I was desperate. Thanks, mate. Cheers.

How do you use this blender-thing? You don't. I used to think two wasn't enough. Christ. Now there were loads of people. And that was great. Mostly. Are you two lazy bastards gonna get up and help, or what? So how do you know Will? We volunteered together at Amnesty International a couple years ago. Yeah, that's right. How is the Burmese situation, Tom? Better? I mean good? Yeah, and he called me up out of the blue for Christmas lunch. So, here I am. Really? So, listen, what's the deal with you and Ellie now? Is she your girlfriend? Are you insane? Where did you get those trainers? -Why? What's wrong with them? -Nothing. What? By the way, I do think you and Rachel have a shot. -I mean, if you don't screw it up. -Thank you. I'd created a monster. Or maybe he created me. I don't know what Will was so upset about. All I meant was I don't think couples are the future. You need more than that. You need backup. The way I saw it, Will and I both had backup now. It's like that thing he told me Jon Bon Jovi said: "No man is an island." Donated by SergeiK