

The Watchful Eye: EPISODE 2
An audio drama told in 6 parts

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Scene 1.

<A glass is filled with beer and placed on a counter>

Rodger Whoa, cheers Nikki. I need to settle my nerves after that. T'was all a bit (pause) *dramatic*, weren't it? Who would have thought, our new friend, a (deliberate) *mur-de-rer*! He seemed so pleasant, especially when he offered to buy us both a drink, do you remember?

Nikki He's only been arrested. He needs to be charged first, they could let him go once they work out he's innocent.

Rodger Nah well, it's obvious he did it I think. You know there's no crime around here apart from the odd *killing*. People just get bored. Bored of their lives. Bored of being bored. So they start murdering each other. That's why I drink. To stave off the boredom, I mean.

Nikki So actually I'm doing a public service by serving you?

Rodger I guess that's one way of looking at it.

Nikki Better you off in here, than out there, killing people because you're bored.

Rodger Exactly.

Nikki (to herself, disbelief) Je-sus, christ.

Rodger I wonder where he buried her. I don't even know what street I'm on half the time, let alone where to dump a body. You need a clear focus for that sort of thing, don't you? The police, they're good. You better believe they'll be tracing clues, you know? With all the techno-mumbo-jumbo they've got nowadays. I've seen it on the telly. You have to be very careful with every decision you make if you wanna get away with *killing* someone.

Nikki I suppose you just think like a copper, and do the opposite. Subvert expectations.

Rodger *Subvert expectations*? I like that. I like that a lot! Yeah, I'll be sure to remember that one. You're quite clever actually, aren't you? We could do it together. A Bonnie and Clyde type deal.

Nikki What's a Bonnie and Clyde?

Rodger It's just a saying, ain't it?

Nikki I've never heard it before. Sounds like rhyming slang for-

Jude (calling, distant) It's a film!

Rodger (to Nikki) Did you hear that? (pause) Sounded like someone dying.

Nikki I think it was your friend in the corner.

Rodger (to Jude, patronising) Oh, sorry sweetheart! Being so small and tiny, we didn't see you hiding away over there. Has your dementia finally started up? Do we need to send for the authorities?

Jude *Bonnie and Clyde* is a film, based on a real life couple who went around America robbing banks and petrol stations. Eventually dying-

Rodger Ooooo, someone knows their shit from their pears, don't they?

Jude I would have thought it was common knowledge. But I guess not.

Rodger Oi! What are you trying to say? That I ain't got no common knowledge, or something?

Jude I think the verdict is pretty conclusive on that one.

Rodger And what's that supposed to mean? (to Nikki) Is she taking the piss outta me?

Nikki Yeah, she's calling you a thick-o.

Rodger *Thick-o?* (to Jude, disbelief) Are you calling me a thick-o, you old hag?! I'll knock your false teeth out if you keep mouthing off!

Jude Does it make you feel like a big man picking on a little-old, harmless pensioner? I'm sure you'd shy away at the sign of real trouble. *Pussy*.

<A bar stool is pushed aside>

Rodger (shouting) Fuck yo-

<Butch starts barking loudly>

Rodger (screeching) Arggh! Sorry, I'm sorry.

Jude Calm down, calm down, Butch.

Rodger Please! No...

Jude There's a good boy. (to Rodger) Let that be a warning to you. (to Butch) Come on, boy. Let's go. It seems that stink has infected the whole place. Someone should call the fumigators, and quick.

<A door opens and closes. The barking subsides and fades away>

Rodger (out of breath) Bloody, fucking, Nora! I thought it was going to kill me. Did you see that? That great big thing, it would have ripped me to shreds and ate my nuts for dessert.

Nikki It's your own fault for antagonising her.

Rodger That was totally unprovoked! I should call the old bill, get her sectioned, or rehomed, or whatever you do to old people. My heart is racing like the clappers. I think you better rack up the Bailey's, beer just ain't gonna to cut it today. Get one for yourself too.

Scene 2.

<A heavy door closes. Two sets of footsteps pass and then scrapping of chairs>

Charlie Sorry to keep you waiting, Max. I'm sure you understand, it's been an unusually busy day for us. We've asked an intern to take a look at your phone – I'm terrible at all things technological. But you'll likely get it back in six to eight months.

Max That's no problem. I'm more than hap-

Barry (stropny) *Happy?* At least thank makes one of us! I've got a big audition tomorrow and someone around here has been busy murdering, haven't they? Today of all days! Totally stressed, I am. I'm not sure how I'm going to fit it all in! I'm not even off book yet.

Charlie (to Barry) What does *off book* mean?

Barry (unsure) It means you're just (pause) left of centre I think, not quite *on*, but just off, you know?

Charlie Oh right, that's interesting. You learn something new everyday I suppose.

Max Do you know how much longer you're planning on keeping me here?

Charlie In a rush, are we Max?

Barry Yeah, in a rush, Max, are ya?

Max I mean, not in a *rush*. It's just, well... I need to pee.

Charlie Nervous about something?

Max No, I've just drunk a lot today.

Charlie Trying to work up the courage, were you?

Max No, I just like to stay hydrated.

Charlie Helps you think, don't it?

Max I guess so, yeah.

Charlie Especially when you've got difficult decisions to make like where you're going to bury her.

Barry Tell us where you've buried her, you scumbag!

<Barry slams his fist down on the table>

Max (innocent) Buried, *who*? Fran? Why would I-

Charlie We have an eye-witness account that you were seen dragging a body sized bag from your property this morning. Wrapped in plastic.

Max That's impossible. I wasn't at home this morning. Wait, do you think I buried Fran?

Barry (to Charlie) And actually, I think it was *last night* that the bag was seen by that weird neighbour guy.

Charlie Oh, was it last night? I've got *this morning* written down on my note pad.

Barry I'm pretty sure he said last night.

Charlie Can you bear with us on that one, Max? We can't be sure if it was last night or this morning that you were spotted dragging the bludgeoned, dead corpse of your wife from your property.

Max (shocked) No! I- I didn't! I mean, she may deserve it from time to time, but I wouldn't actually do it. Are you sure she's dead?

Charlie She sure is Max! (confused) But surely you knew that already?

Barry Yeah, 'cos you're the one who did it.

Max No, I did not kill my wife!

Barry On a scale of one to ten, how sure are you?

Max Pretty sure!

Charlie And I suppose you're the expert on such matters, are you?

Max When it comes to things I've done, yeah I suppose I am. I know I can be forgetful sometimes, but I think I'd remember dragging, my- (pause)

Barry *Bludgeoned, dead corpse of your wife.* Bludgeoned is a great word by the way. Very descriptive. Puts a vivid image in your mind, don't it?

Charlie Yeah, I'm trying to increase my *vocablurical* range. It makes me seem more intelligent I think. Better for making it look like I know what I'm doing.

Barry I agree. I admire you for-

Max Arghhh! I'm going to wet myself in a minute if you don't let me go!

Charlie Firstly, we're going to need you to sign this confession and then you'll be off to prison. 'Cos let's face it, it's always- *always* the fella. But look on the bright side, I'm sure they've got a toilet at the prison you can use. In fact, I know they do! I used it once before when I was in a rush. Mind you, it wasn't very clean.

Max Okay, well I haven't got anything to confess so I won't be doing any signing of any piece of paper sending me to prison.

Barry That's a real shame. I was hoping this would be wrapped up so I had enough time to do some more line learning. Are you sure you don't want to sign the confession?

Charlie Wrapped up. I see what you did there. Good one.

Barry Oh, the plastic thing? I didn't even realise-

Max If I was confessing to something I had to confess, then I wouldn't mind at all. But as things stand, I didn't bludgeon my wife to death!

Charlie Ah! But you've already said you don't have a very good memory-

Max Did I?

Charlie You sure did, and so, who's to say you didn't murder your wife and then simply forgot?

Max That's true. That's true. I guess you've got me there. Where do I sign?

<A piece of paper slides across the table and pen clicks>

Barry (eager) Just at the bottom there!

Max But before I do that, I should probably show you this-

<Max un-crumples a piece of paper>

Charlie What's that?

Barry It looks like a ransom note, don't it?

Charlie It sure does. (to Max) Did you write this?

Max No, it was left on my van windscreen this morning. Do you think it's important to proving I didn't kill my wife?

Charlie Read it out loud Barry, I haven't got my glasses.

Barry It says *we want twenty-grand for the safe return of your wife by noon Friday, or else. Call this number to arrange a drop off and exchange.* And then it just gives a phone number to call at the bottom there.

Charlie What do you think the *or else* means?

Barry Oh, I'd dread to think.

Charlie Right, I think that's pretty evidently evidence that Max here *did not* bludgeon his wife to death after all, but in fact, someone, or some *people*, have kidnapped her and left a ransom note demanding a financial incentive for her safe return. Okay Max, should we swing by the bank before we ring this phone number?

Max (desperate) No, no- I can't think clearly! My bladder is going to burst!

Charlie Surely you'll be eager to get the twenty grand these monsters are demanding?

Max I'm going to mull it over for a bit, actually. Twenty grand is a lot of money.

Barry That's true! Twenty grand *is* a lot of money. Maybe you could haggle with them. Offer half, say?

Max Hmm. I don't think I'd give 'em a fiver.

Barry That's fair.

Charlie This is your *wife* we are talking about here!

Max Have you ever met my wife?

Charlie This whole thing is starting to feel a little *off book*, wouldn't you say?

Scene 3.

<Eager typing on a keyboard>

Raymond Monday 11th August, 2006. The Watchful Eye blog post #135. Exciting news! Today I write with some eagerness to document a breakthrough, witnessed by yours truly. Truly, *truly*...

<typing stops>

Raymond What was it? How do I describe... Oh, I don't know. I finally get the case of my life and I don't even know what to say about it. I'm useless, *darn-bloody-useless-*

<A mug of tea smashes against a wall on the far side>

Raymond Oh, god. What a mess! Get it together, Raymond. They're relying on you to document everything, honestly and fairly. Who knows, you may be asked to give evidence in court. What am I saying?! Of course you will! (mimicking) *Calling Raymond Montgomery Etherington to the stand.* Oh, god. What will I wear? I'll have to polish my shoes. Maybe get a new tie from M&S, nothing cheap, a fancy one. I will have my day in court!

<We hear a meow>

Raymond Oh, well hello there, Señor Burtie. Are you hungry? Should we go and get you some food? Let's go and see what's in the cupboard. Yes, let's see what I've got-

<An eager knocking on Raymond's front door>

Raymond Heavens, who could that be? Oh, maybe the police are back for more evidence!

<Burtie Meows again>

<A front door opens>

Katherine Hello.

Raymond (confused) You're not the two policemen I spoke to earlier.

Katherine No, I'm Katherine. My sister, Francesca, lived, lives, across the street.

Raymond Oh I see. Can I just say? I'm sorry for your loss.

Katherine She's not been found yet, so (pause). Can I come in? I'd like to talk to you about what you saw.

Raymond Well, now. I'm actually rather busy writing up my report and feeding my cat. Could we perhaps schedule for another-

Katherine You're writing up a report? About what happened to Fran?

Raymond Oh, dear. Yes, well. I write, you see. For a blog and I-

Katherine What's a blog?

Raymond Well, it's like this online thing, a journal, if you will. And people subscribe and get a notification went I post updates, and then they read what I post, and- (eager) would you be interested in seeing it? Come on in.

<A front door closes>

Raymond (disappearing) You'll have to excuse the mess, I don't normally have two sets of visitors in one day.

Katherine That's okay. I won't stay long. I just want to hear what you know about my sister and her-

Raymond (distant calling) If I'm being honest, I know very little. I just know what I know, and I told that to the police, and even that wasn't that much to go on.

Katherine They arrested my brother-in-law for *murder*, that must mean something? And the two policemen said at the pub that a neighbour had reported-

Raymond Would you like a coffee? I'm just making myself one. I've got this new fancy machine, and you just throw everything into this percolator and *ding*, your coffee is done... in like, five minutes or so. Depending on how many you're making. It can do up to twelve cups. Modern technology, eh?

Katherine Did you say you actually saw Fran wrapped in a sheet of plastic or just-

Raymond Did I mention how truly sorry I am for your recent loss? But apart from that, I'm not sure what else I can say right now. It's an on going investigation, and so whatever I may say to you may be taken down as evidence and used against me in a court of law.

Katherine I thought that was something the police said when they arrested someone.

Raymond All I know is that my lips are sealed until the police put me on that stand and request my evidence. But, I'm sorry, until then I'm not going to say another word.

Katherine I thought you were going to show me some sort of writing diary-thing or something?

Raymond Oh, my *blog*? Sure, sure! It's fantastic. Really it is. I do only have one subscriber, but I'm hoping

that your sister's death will increase matters now I have something to report.

Katherine So he *did* murder her then? Did you see her body?

Raymond I didn't say that, no. And please don't try and twist my words. I would appreciate your honesty in light of this tragic episode. Emotions are high, and I'm not at liberty to withhold my actions any further.

Katherine All I want to know is whether my sister is dead and whether Max did it. The house has been roped off and no one is saying a damn thing!

Raymond Now that *is* interesting, *interesting*. Normally police will release a statement if it's an open and shut case. Perhaps it's not murder after all!

Katherine (hopefully) Really? Is that true?

Raymond No, I'm not 100% on that, to be honest. But it seems to make sense, doesn't it?

Scene 4.

<a squeaky door opens and we hear traffic and general outside ambience>

Charlie Fag?

Max Excuse me?

Charlie Would you like a fag?

Max Ah, yes please, I'd love- actually, no. I think it's about time I gave up.

Charlie Good for you! Me on the other hand, Christ. I'll never be able to give up. Impossible.

Max Well, sometimes all you need is a push in the right direction and suddenly it all makes sense.

Charlie You're probably right. I just love 'em so much. You know? Anyway, mind how you go, and sorry again for keeping you in for so long. We're only doing our jobs, you know how it is.

Max No problem, honestly. I actually enjoyed seeing what the inside of a police station looked like. See-ya!

Barry (to Charlie) What about the ransom note?

Charlie Oh yeah, good point! (to Max) Hold up there, Max. About that ransom note. Any idea who left it? It would really help us with our investigation if you knew.

Max Sorry, I don't.

Charlie That's a shame.

Barry Yeah, a real shame.

Max Am I allowed to go home now? My house isn't needed for evidence or nothing?

Charlie Nah, we don't really do that sort of thing.

Max But I see it in them movies all the time.

Charlie Yeah but in the real world, police work is still done the proper way. All this DNA, bio-chemical infusion bollox is just for the chicks. There's no such thing. It's all make believe.

Max (surprised) Really? I'm pretty sure finger printing has been around-

Charlie Look mate, do you want to do this job or would you prefer to leave it to the professionals?

Max The *professionals*, I guess.

Charlie Good. Now on your bike, before we change our minds.

Max But I don't have a bike. I planned on getting the bus home. (pause) See-ya later on then!

Charlie (to himself) God-damn.

Barry (to Charlie) What are we going to do now?

Charlie Oh, I dunno. (pause) Actually, I'm a little peckish after all that hard investigating.

Barry Yeah me too, now that you mention it! What do you fancy?

Charlie We could try that new sandwich place that's just opened up on the high street. Devil's *something*, it's called. Could be all right.

Barry (suspicious) Nah, I don't really fancy a sandwich.

Charlie You don't?

Barry (suspicious) No. I don't like sandwiches all that much nowadays.

Charlie That's weird. I thought everyone liked sandwiches. Fair enough. Where do you suggest we go instead then?

Barry Charlie (pause) I'm kidding! *Acting*, aren't I? Did I get you? Did I really get you?

Charlie Wha-what? (confused) *Acting*? So, you *do* want a sandwich? Or?

Barry Course I do! I mean, who in their right mind doesn't like sandwiches?

Charlie Okay yeah, 'cos I thought, oh no he's totally lost his mind. How are we going to be partners if he doesn't like sandwiches?!

Barry (chuckles)

Charlie You're going to be chuffed with yourself all day now, aren't you?

Barry I sure am. (pause) But did I really-really get you? You're not acting with me either?

Charlie No! I can't act for caramel. I admit, you totally got me.

Scene 5.

<A car door closes>

Taxi Driver Where to, mate?

Max Norway.

Taxi Driver (confused) Say that again?

Max I want you to drive me to Norway.

Taxi Driver Are you on something? I'm not taking you all the way to Norway. Where do you actually want to go?

Max What about Barcelona?

Taxi Driver No.

Max Tokyo?

Taxi Driver Nope!

Max Budapest?

Taxi Driver Look mate, you either tell me where you want to go or I'm gonna chuck you out.

Max I've actually told you several places where I'd like to go but you don't seem keen on any of them, so why don't you tell me? Will that make things easier for you?

Taxi Driver What about home?

Max Yours or mine?

Taxi Driver Yours, obviously!

Max Good, yes. Let's go there. And then to the airport. I'm not too keen on planes, but seeing as you don't want to drive me, it'll have to do.

<A car engine starts and the radio comes on>

Scene 6.

<A car pulls up and the engine idles>

Max I'll only be two seconds. Gotta pack a bag.

Taxi Driver The metres running.

Max That's good to know.

<A car door opens>

<The sound of the engine fades away as Max walks towards his house. He jangles a set of keys to find the right one. A front door opens in the distance>

Katherine (calling) Max!

Max Huh? Oh, hello Katherine. What are you doing here? How are your toes doing?

Katherine Did you murder my sister? Where is she, you fucking pig?! Where. Is. She?

<Katherine hits Max several times on the arm>

Max I didn't murder your sister, Katherine. (sarcastic) Why would I do such a thing?

Katherine Because she's a selfish, ignorant, overbearing, cunt, that never turns up on time and never sticks to plans, that's why!

Max Are you sure you didn't do it?

Katherine She's my sister! I wouldn't-

Max Under the right circumstances, I think everyone would. But I unfortunately this time, I didn't kill Fran and I have no idea where she is either.

Taxi Driver (calling) I'm *still* on the metre, mate.

Max (to Taxi Driver) That's fine, thank you!

Katherine Are you going somewhere?

Max Maybe, yes. If the driver makes up his mind.

Katherine You can't leave when, when- well, when you're still under police investigation.

Max I'm not under police investigation anymore. They let me go.

Katherine (confused) So, you're definitely innocent?

Max I think so.

Katherine So who did it if not you?

Max I'm not sure they even know if there is a *who* who did it.

Katherine (pause) I know you've done *something*, I can see it on your face! You're too... smug. And if you did kill Fran, you're going to stay right here until I can prove it!

Max What, right here? As in, where we're standing now?

Katherine (frustrated) It doesn't have to be exactly where we are right now, no. But you're certainly not leaving!

(to Taxi Driver) He doesn't need you anymore, thank you.

Taxi Driver Right, but he still owes me for the fair. The metre has been running.

Max If I'm not leaving, I really should go pay the man.

Katherine Go on then.

<foot steps as Max walks down the garden path>

Max (suspicious) Here you go, how much do I owe?

Taxi Driver So that's sixty-two-

<suddenly a car door opens and Max jumps in, closing it quickly behind him.>

Max Quick, drive, driver, drive!

Katherine (calling) Max! Where are you going?!

Taxi Driver What's going on?

Max I said DRIVE!!!

<the car screeches away>

Katherine (calling) Come back! I don't believe you! You *killed* my sister...! (to herself) He did it, I know he did.

Scene 7.

<the sound of road whizzing past. A radio plays in the background>

Taxi Driver I couldn't help but over hear-

Max You know, it's rude to eaves drop.

Taxi Driver I do, yeah. But when you're shouting and I'm only sat two feet away, it's actually harder for me not to overhear than it is to, you know what I mean?

Max Hmm. You have a point.

Taxi Driver So are you wanted for murder? Am I helping you escape?

Max It's not true that I murdered someone, but I am escaping, yes.

Taxi Driver Right. Well, as long as you're paying the fare, I don't care. I was just interested, that's all. I gotta gossip with my wife about something over dinner.

Max I've got a wallet full of cash, so just keep driving.

Taxi Driver And on that note, where do you want to go this time?

Max I could do with a drink, actually. Feeling a bit parched, so (pause) *pub?*

Scene 8.

<the front door to the pub opens>

Nikki Sorry, we're closing up.

Rodger (slurring) Yeah, we're closing up. Get out you fuck!

Nikki (to Max) Oh, it's you!

Rodger (slurring) Who you? You who, oh you!

Max Do we have time for a quick one? They're on me.

Rodger (slurring) Yeah, come on Nikki. A bit of time for a swift one, sur-surely?

Nikki Lock the door.

<a lock bolt pulled close, and several shots poured into short glass>

Nikki So did you do it then? We've been wondering all day.

Rodger (slurring) Yeah, did you do it? We've been wondering all day.

Nikki Rodg, ssh. Drink that.

<a glass is pushed across the counter>

Rodger Oh, sure yes.

Max I didn't do anything that anyone else wouldn't have done in my situation.

Nikki (pause) I'm not sure what that means. Did you, or didn't you, murder your wife?

Max I *didn't*. I definitely didn't. That I can be ninety-nine percent sure of. I wish I had though.

Rodger (slurring) What about the other one percent?

Max Huh?

Nikki Yeah, you said ninety-nine percentage sure. What about the other one percent?

Max Well there's always room for a bit of forgetfulness, isn't there? Besides, I'm pretty sure I didn't do it, because I received a ransom note.

Nikki A ransom note?

Rodger (slurring) A ransom note?

Nikki This sounds like something from the movies! (to Rodger) What was that film you mentioned earlier?

Rodger (heavy slurring) Oh, I don't remember, you tell me. What do I care?

Max Yeah, they want twenty-grand for her safe return or else.

Nikki So what are you going to do now? Are you going to pay it?

Max Probably not.

Nikki That's a bummer. A real bummer. She'll likely die now then, I suspect.

Max Probably, yeah.

Nikki Did she have life insurance or anything like that?

Max Life insurance? Life (pause) *insurance*. (smug) Yes! She did! I know she did, I set it up for her. I think.

Nikki Let's just ignore how suspicious that is, but I suppose if she doesn't turn up alive soon, and you're not arrested for her murder, then they'll have to pay out, won't they?

Max Yeaaaaaaaah! I guess if she's dead-dead they will. I'll look into it that tomorrow! I totally forgot about the life insurance. How exciting! I love it when someone dies. I always seem to get a bit of money!

Scene 9.

<banging on a window>

Ed (muffled) Max, wake up!

<more banging on a window>

Ed (muffled) Max! It's me (pause) Ed. Wake the fuck up!

<silence>

Ed (muffled) For god's sake! (calling louder) Max!! Your van is on fire, wake up now!

Max (groggy) Oh, hi Ed. I didn't see you there.

<a van door opens. Ed climbs in and closes the door>

Ed What the fuck is going on? I've been calling you non-stop since I heard what happened.

Max Oh no, don't say it's my ears again! It's getting beyond a worry.

Ed No, on your phone, you numpty! I've been calling you on your phone.

Max Oh, right. The police confiscated it.

Ed Whoa, really? What for?

Max Evidence. Gonna track my whereabouts over the last few days, build a case, see if they can find any clues.

Ed (disbelief) Track your whereabouts?

Max Yeah.

Ed But what about the fucking job I had you do yesterday morning?

Max What about it?

Ed If the police can track your whereabouts, they're going to see where you've gone, and... and... and... Did you sleep in here last night?

Max Yeah.

Ed Why?

Max The pub was closing up and I couldn't get back in to my place because Katherine, that's Fran's sister, is staking out the place. She still reckons I killed her.

Ed Blimey! No wonder it stinks in here! More so than normal, I mean. Anyway, what the fuck Max? We are in deep, deep, scheisse if they can track your whereabouts Monday morning!

Max Ed, I took care of it.

Ed Oh, yeah. How?

Max I gave them Fran's phone instead.

Ed (confused) Fran's phone?

Max Yep.

Ed (to himself) Fuck me.

Max What's wrong?

Ed Why on earth did you do that?

Max Well, our phones look really similar, right, and yesterday morning I accidently took hers, so I told them it was my phone – rather than looking like an idiot. My phone must still be at the house. (pause) You're looking rather sickly mate, is everything okay?

Ed Huh? Yeah, course. I err- I just, err- realised something important I forgot to set the video recorder for. Coronation Street. Yeah, I hate to miss an episode. I better run off and get it sorted, okay?

Max Oh I hate it when I do that, what a bull ache!

Ed And err, oh. Just before I go. Did they, I mean the police, say anything else? Any sort of clues as to her whereabouts?

Max Only what I told them.

Ed Which was?

Max That there was a ransom note.

Ed Oh, good, you got it. (pause) I mean, really, was there? What did it say?

Max They want twenty grand for her safe return or else. And don't ask me what the or else means, because I haven't got the foggiest.

Ed It normally means or else they'll do something worse.

Max What, worse than kill her? I don't think that's right. Sounds a bit farfetched if you ask me. Nah I'm sure it's just something kidnappers say to try and scare you into paying.

Ed (suspicious) And are you scared? Are you going to pay?

Max Probably not.

Ed What do you mean?

Max I'm probably not going to pay.

Ed (shocked) Why not?

Max Oh, I dunno. I quite like being on my own, so really they've done me a huge favour. I'm gonna see about getting the life insurance pay out for her death though.

Ed (surprised) *Life insurance?* Did Fran know she had life insurance?

Max Does it matter? She's dead, or hopefully soon will be. So big boo-hoo for her not knowing. I'm still alive, and I really want to go to Corfu, so that's what I am going to do. Or Sicily. Once this life insurance has paid out, I'll be able to move there permanently rather than just travelling through. Could be nice. Or Margate.

Ed Look mate, I really think you should consider paying this ransom! Twenty-grand isn't a lot of money when you've got that *inheritance from your Gran*, and-

Max How did you know it was twenty-grand?

Ed Huh?

Max I didn't tell you how much they wanted. So how did you know?

Ed I, err- I dunno. You must have told me.

Max I don't think I did.

Ed I could have sworn you mentioned it earlier.

Max No, I don't- (clued up) I know!

Ed Yeah?

Max This must be that one percent situation, you know? Yeah, that's it! I told you then forgot. Sorry mate. I'd forget my own head if it wasn't taped on.

Ed (chuckles) You sure would.

Max So yeah, wow, *twenty grand*. It's a lot of money, isn't it? I was thinking I could offer them the eight-hundred I got for making that drop off in Knightsbridge yesterday. Probably cheaper than paying for a funeral, but then I won't get the life insurance. Decisions, decisions.

Ed (distracted) Yeah, sure is- wait, what do you mean *drop off in Knightsbridge*?

Max Yeah, I decided against driving all those Asian women around the country because it was going to take me too long, plus I was feeling a bit tired from all the extra shifts I've been doing, so I just left them by the station and told them to make their own way.

Ed Please tell me you're joking?

Max No. Why would I joke about such a thing?