

The Watchful Eye: EPISODE 4
An audio drama told in 6 parts

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Scene 1.

<A knock on a heavy wooden door>

Terry (to himself) This better be good. (calling) Come in.

<The door swings open>

Ed Hi, Terry. It's Ed.

Terry Yeah, I can see you standing there.

Ed (nervously chuckles)

Terry And I distinctly remember telling you not to come here unless in an absolute-fucking-catastrophe-of-an-emergency. So (pause) I assume *this* is that emergency, is it?

Ed Ha. Well. Err-

Terry Speak up you fucking melon. I'm losing patience.

Ed No, course not. It's just-

Terry If you don't tell me right this second why you've graced your unwelcomed presence on me this morning, I'm going to get up from this table, and I don't want to get up from this table, do you know what I mean?

Ed Fuck. Err-

Terry Ed?

Ed Yeah?

Terry That was your final warning.

Ed Uh?

<A chair scraps against the floor as Terry pushes his chair back>

Ed (panicked and fast) I didn't pick up the girls on Monday morning because I double booked myself and I couldn't get out of it so instead of letting you down I tried to get a *mate* to step in for me and deliver the girls without you knowing so things would carry on as normal but (pause).

Terry But?

Ed Yeah.

Terry But what?

Ed Okay, if I tell 'ya, you've gotta promise not to hurt me.

Terry This is damage limitation, Edward. You're gonna get hurt one way or another. How severe is totally up to you.

Ed Okay. Right. Here goes. My mate, *Max*, he well (pause) picked them up instead. And then (pause) dropped them off at the nearest train station.

<silence>

Terry Fuck me. *All* of them?

Ed What?

Terry He dropped *all* of the girls off at the same train station?

Ed Yes.

Terry And he's your mate?

Ed Well, not anymore. Obviously.

Terry Obviously?

Ed Yeah.

Terry Why obviously?

Ed Cos. Err-

Terry Mmm?

Ed He got arrested by the police the other day and now (pause) Shit. I'm in big trouble, ain't I?

Terry It seems you are, yes.

Ed I just thought it best to tell you first, Terry. You know me. Always straight down the line. No fibbing, or nothing.

Terry Where do you think the girls are now then?

Ed I have no idea.

Terry No, of course you don't! And that's because they're not your pet fucking cat that's got a fucking tracking thingy in its fucking neck.

Ed (pause) No. They're not, Terry.

Terry -and they're not a bunch of fucking homing pigeons, are they, Edward?

Ed No, Terry. They're not.

Terry So as I see it, those girls are gone. And if they're gone, that means you owe me for every single one of them-

Ed I didn't, I didn't, see. Like I said. It wasn't me-

Terry I don't want to hear your snivelling excuses. It was your responsibility, Eddy. I don't care who or why. But I know you owe me. And I want to be paid for each of the girls you lost.

Ed Paid?

Terry Are you a fucking parrot? You repeat what I say one more time and I'll cut you another piss hole with this well-used biro I'm holding, comprende?

Ed *Comprende?*

Terry (annoyed) Do you understand me?!

Ed Yes. Yes, I do. Sorry, Terry.

Terry Good. Right, so it was twelve girls. Each costing me seven-grand, but I'm going to round it up to a solid ten-per because of the headache you've caused me this morning.

Ed So, so- how much is that?

Terry You fucking work it out. I'm not a calculator, am I? But I expect payment here, by tomorrow. Or I'll stop being such a reasonable man. Now... Get the fuck out of my wine bar.

Scene 2.

<A cubicle door opens and the lock slides across>

Charlie (agony) Ahhhh, fuck. Shit. God...

<We hear a zipper fly opening>

Charlie (agony) Arrrrrrrgh!! Shit, shit, shit-

<A toilet door opens>

Barry Chaz? You alright mate?

Charlie All good in here. Just finishing up.

Barry I'm expecting a very important phone call in a minute, so could I meet you by the car?

Charlie Sure. Are you able to pay the bill though? I'll be down in a minute.

Barry Really?

Charlie Is there a problem?

Barry It's just, I got it last time.

Charlie Did you?

Barry I'm pretty sure I did, yeah.

Charlie (agony) Ahhhh! Okay, err- right. One sec. I'll get my wallet and slide it under the door.

Barry Cheers mate. See you out front then.

Charlie Yep. See-ya down there. Two secs and I'll be with you. (agony) Fuuuuuuck!

Scene 3.

<Traffic. A door opens>

Barry (disappointed) Oh... Sure. That's okay. I wasn't that keen on the role anyway. Nah, that's okay. Thanks.

Charlie All good, mate?

Barry I didn't get the role.

Charlie (mock surprised) Whaaaaa- the one you smashed the audition for?

Barry (sheepish) Yeah, apparently I didn't smash it as much as I thought I did.

Charlie Aw, mate. I'm sorry to hear that. I'm sure you were great, it's just politics, ain't it? The director was probably fucking the lead and she wanted her boyfriend in it, so they had to employ the cousin of the costume designer. You know how this shit works.

Barry Yeah, you're probably right. I was just really hoping, you know?

Charlie I know. Come on. Let's go solve some crime, that always makes you feel better.

Barry Not today, Chaz.

Charlie And then, we can get a few coca-cola chupa-chubs-

Barry (upbeat) Oh, yeah? That'll be nice! Thanks mate, you're a real pal.

Charlie Don't mention it.

Barry I couldn't help but over hear you in the toilet back there.

Charlie Oh, nothing to worry about. I'm sure it'll pass.

Barry I just don't think you should strain so hard. You'll end up doing some proper damage.

Charlie Wise words.

Barry We are truly a great partnership, ain't we?

Charlie The best... Do you have keys to the car?

Barry I thought you had them?

Charlie Nah, I gave them to you before I went up to the salad bar.

Barry Oh, shit. Maybe I left them on the table.

Charlie I don't remember seeing them.

Barry I'll go check.

<Footsteps as Barry walks away>

Charlie Hey Baz, remember...

Barry Yeah?

Charlie (cheesy) You're gonna be a star!

Barry Awww, I'll be right back. Don't go dying on me.

Scene 4.

<Loud traffic as trucks drive past>

<We hear a ringing dial tone, which eventually cuts to voicemail>

Max (voicemail) Hi, you've rung me and I haven't picked up. So let me know what you want and I might ring you back.

<beep>

Ed (panicked) Hi Max, it's Ed. I really, really need to talk to you mate, some stuff is going down and I-

<knocking on Ed's van window>

Max (muffled) All right, Ed?

<Ed undoes his window>

Max How's it going?

Ed That's odd.

Max What is?

Ed I was just calling you.

Max Were you? I didn't hear it ring.

Ed (pause) Are you going somewhere?

Max Yeah, I'm off to *Al-as-kaaa*. One way. It's gonna be great! Fancy coming?

Ed What? You're going *where*?

Max It's in Africa, I think. Yeah, gonna go chill over there for a bit. This inheritance should be here any day now, and then there's Fran's *life insurance* too-

Ed Is there something wrong with you?

Max No, I feel great. Thanks for asking though.

Ed Your wife has gone *missing*, not confirmed dead yet by the way, and you're about to leave the country after fucking up a deal that's got Terry Harvey gunning for us! You're mental. Completely, fucking, insanely, mental!

Max Who's Terry Harvey?

Ed You know that shipment you collected on Monday?

Max No, remind me.

Ed The girls.

Max Hmm.

Ed The container full of Asian girls you were meant to deliver to different parts of the country?

Max Rings a bell, yeah.

Ed And you dropped them off at the station!

Max Okay, what's your point?

Ed Well, those girls belonged to a guy called Terry *cut-your-nuts-off* Harvey. And he wants *you* to pay for each of the ones you've lost. Two-hundred grand in total.

Max Shit, that's a lot of money, innit?

Ed And if you don't pay by Friday, he's gonna come find you.

Max Friday?

Ed Yeah.

Max *This* Friday?

Ed Yes!

Max Ah, that's relief. I'll be on holiday by then.

Ed Max! Are you even listening to me?! You can't leave the country. I don't know what I'd do, I really don't.

Max Aww, that's very sweet of you mate. But I'm sure you'll cope without me. You've got other friends, right?

Ed Wait a minute. When's the last time you heard from Fran?

Max I dunno, Saturday night. Maybe.

Ed And you received the ransom note, and nothing since?

Max Nope.

Ed What day is it?

Max It's... Wednesday. I think.

Ed (to himself, confused) And she hasn't called you?

Max She, *who*?

Ed Uh?

Max Who was meant to call? Fran?

Ed Yep.

Max But she's been kidnapped. How would she be able to call me? Do kidnapers normally schedule those sorts of things? Plus I gave the two detectives her phone – so if they were to call, they'd get through to the police.

Ed (pause) Max, I've got something important to tell you.

Scene 5.

<A pint is poured and placed on a bar table>

Nikki Drink that.

Rodger I'm not sure I can.

Nikki Drink! It'll do you good,

Rodger No good ever comes from alcohol. I really think I should stop altogether and get my life sorted. I need a wife. A family. A stable job with career prospects-

Nikki And who is going to employ you? There's no jobs out there, trust me. If I had a choice, do you really think I'd be working here? Serving cunts like you?

Rodger I thought you were doing a public service? Besides, I can find something. Anything. Digging roads, cleaning toilets, I don't care anymore. I just don't want to be sat around all day thinking about what we've done to that poor lady.

Nikki Stop being so melodramatic! The plan worked, didn't it? We just have to play it cool, and everything will work out just gravy.

Rodger And when Jude finds out we stole twenty-grand from her, then what? We *robbed* her, Nikki! She's gonna call the police eventually, ain't she? And then what?

Nikki Keep the noise down, yeah? We don't want the entire pub knowing do we?

Rodger It wouldn't matter anyway. Sooner the better, I reckon. Get it over and done with.

Nikki We've done the hard part, ain't we? Now we just need to contact the kidnappers and pay off the ransom and then collect our insurance money.

Rodger It sounds so simple when you say it like that!

Nikki That's 'cos it *is* so simple! We'll be sipping pina-coladas on Brighton seafront before you can say *cash-my-pension*. If it makes you happy, we can even pay Jude back her cheque-

Rodger What, the full twenty-grand?

Nikki We'll have to trim it from your cut, but if it stops you acting like a baby-

Rodger Whoa, hold on a minute! I mean. She did seem pretty content without the money anyway, right? I'm not saying we don't, but I'm not saying we do either. I just need a little bit of time for my conscience to get used to it, that's all.

Nikki Glad to have you back. Right, finish that pint, and I'll pour you another.

Rodger Ah, fuck it.

<Rodger glups the pint down>

Nikki There's a good boy.

<Nikki pours another beer>

Nikki Where's this ransom note then? I'll make the call before the three o'clock happy-hour.

Rodger I dunno. You had it last.

Nikki No, I didn't.

Rodger You did! You were showing off about it. Waving it all around.

Nikki But then *you* took it to keep it safe and away from the bar.

Rodger Did I?

Nikki Yes!!

Rodger Oh. In that case, I literally have zero idea- oh wait, here it is. It was in my pocket the whole time. Crisis over.

<A piece of paper is unfolded>

Rodger Sorry, it's a bit crumpled.

Nikki It's a good thing you don't wash your jeans that often.

Rodger Yeah! (pause) Wait, what?

Nikki Right, there's a number. I'm gonna call it.

<A phone handle picked up followed by several dials. It rings>

Nikki (whispering) It's ringing.

Ed (on the phone) Hello?

Nikki Hello?

Ed (on the phone) Yeah? What do you want?

Nikki Hi.

Ed (on the phone) How did you get this number?

Nikki We would like to pay the ransom.

Ed (on the phone, surprised) You would?

Nikki Yep. Is this afternoon suitable?

Ed (on the phone) And you have the money?

Nikki We do. All twenty grand. Where would you like to meet?

Cut to:

Scene 6. – continued

<the sound of traffic>

Ed Err. Meet?

Nikki (on the phone) Yeah. To make the exchange.

Ed You wanna make an exchange?

Nikki (on the phone) Yes! We have the ransom money. So we want to pay so you can release that woman to us.

Ed Oh, good. Sure. I can arrange that, definitely.

Nikki (on the phone) Good. So where?

Ed Where's good for you?

Nikki (on the phone) Is that how it normally works?

Ed Yes.

Nikki (on the phone) Okay, let's do it in The Rooster pub car park. Do you know where it is?

Ed Sure do!

Nikki (on the phone) 7pm. Don't be late.

Ed I won't, don't worry. Bye.

Max See! I knew you'd make new friends quick enough.

Ed I can't believe what's just happened.

Max You'll have to tell me about it another time. I've gotta start packing and I hate to rush. I always

forget something important, like my toothbrush or comb-

Ed Look, Max! You know, Fran, yeah?

Max Fran? As in my *dead* partner, Fran?

Ed She's not dead, and (pause) she's not really kidnapped either.

Max No?

Ed No.

Max Cool, anyway it was good knowing you. Have a good one. See-ya!

Ed Wait, wait, wait! Do you not want to know what happened to her?

Max Not really.

Ed Come on, Max! Be normal just for a minute yeah? Surely you've got time to let me explain.

Max Err- if it's literally a minute, I do. Anything more than that then-

Ed Listen, Fran and I (pause) have been having a *passionate* love affair (pause) for several years now (pause) whenever you were at work, I'd go round to your house, and pound Fran (pause) hard. (pause) And she loved it. (pause) So we devised-

Max Wait.

Ed What?

Max What does *devised* mean?

Ed It means to come up with something. Like a plan.

Max Is that the dictionary definition?

Ed I dunno, it's what it means though.

Max Can you use it in a sentence?

Ed Okay. We devised a plan to steal twenty-grand from you so we could elope-

Max Wait-

Ed It means to runaway and marry in a foreign country.

Max Great. Carry on.

Ed Fran and I, *devised* a plan to steal your Gran's inheritance from you and move away together. She told me about your reluctance to spend any money on her, so she thought you'd pay the money straight away if we were to fake her kidnapping. (disappointed) But, you didn't. So, here we are.

Max Is that it?

Ed Are you not going to hit me or something worse?

Max Nah, I owe you, *big time*. I've wanted rid of Fran for years, and you're very welcome to her. Sorry I didn't pay the twenty grand, no hard feelings, yeah? I'll send you a postcard from Alaska.

Ed (confused) But that phone call, just now (pause) apparently they are going to pay the ransom!

Max Whose *they*?

Ed I have no idea! They got my number, somehow. And they want to pay for Fran's safe return.

Max But (pause) I don't want her *safe return*.

Ed But the way I see it, if Fran turns up then you won't be able to claim that insurance money either, so how will we pay Terry back?

Max How much does Terry want?

Ed All of it.

Max *All of it*? That's a lot of money, innit? Nah, I'd rather keep it for myself thanks.

Ed But you won't get any if Fran's *alive*!

Max Oh, I see your point. What do you suggest we do then?

Scene 7.

<We hear typing>

Raymond Thursday 15th August, 2006. The Watchful Eye blog post #138. (excited) Readers! I've located the missing person. She is safe, and alive, and it's all down to your faithful writer.

<the typing stops>

Raymond (to Fran) Sorry about this. I don't mean to be rude, but I must keep my readers informed about any progress in your case.

Fran (confused) You're keeping *who* informed?

Raymond My readers, of course!

Fran I don't understand.

Raymond I write. A blog. About crime. And in particular, at the present time at least, about your case. About your murd- well, supposed murder.

Fran Right.

Raymond (awkward) Yeah.

Fran Do you have many readers?

Raymond Quite a few, yeah. My subscription has doubled since I started reporting about-

<we hear a couple of clicks of a mouse>

Fran What?

Raymond Oh, god damn.

Fran What is it?

Raymond I've lost a subscriber.

Fran Is that a bad thing?

Raymond It's- it's- it's *catastrophic*! I went from having two subscribers, to having one! And it's all your fault.

Fran Excuse me?

Raymond Yeah. Ever since I reported of your safe return just now, my subscriber list has dropped by half! *HALF*! I can't let the other half go. This is a state of emergency.

Fran I only popped over to ask whether you had seen my partner, Max? But I can see you're having a bit of a breakdown, so I'll be going now-

Raymond You can't leave!

Fran I can. And I am.

Raymond No. I forbid it.

Fran I don't care. Bye!

Raymond No! You can't! You can't. I can't let you.

<we hear a keyboard being picked up>

Fran (panicked) Put that keyboard down.

Raymond I'm not letting you leave. I can't lose my only subscriber, what will I have left?

Fran Err- I'm sure you'll find something. It's only a diary, what does it matter if no one reads it?

Raymond It matters a lot actually! It's absolutely everything to me. It's the only reason I get up in the morning. To serve this community with information they need to stay safe. My blog, it's all I have. Without it, I'm not sure what I'd do.

Fran Okay, look. I'm gonna-

<We hear the keyboard hitting Fran across the head>

Raymond (grunts)

Fran Ouch! What the fuck!

<we hear the keyboard hitting Fran again>

Fran Stop doing that!

<There is a tussle between Fran and Raymond. Fran eventually manages to break free>

Fran (screaming fading away)

Raymond Come back! Please, don't leave-

<A front door opens and we hear the sound of the street outside>

Fran (screaming) Someone help me! Please help!

<We hear the screeching of a car breaking hard and then a body hitting the bonnet. Fran stops screaming and falls to the floor>

Barry (pause) What was that?

Charlie I think it was a woman.

Barry How can you be sure?

Charlie I can't. It all happened a bit quickly, didn't it?

Barry It sure did. I reckon-

Charlie Yeah?

Barry We just drive on.

Charlie You reckon?

Barry Yep.

Charlie But what if it was a woman?

Barry No one saw, did they? What's the big deal?

Charlie I do feel bad though.

Barry Why?

Charlie I've never run a woman over before.

Barry First time for everything, I suppose.

Charlie (sad) Yeah.

<We hear Fran groaning>

Barry Oh, she's alive! That's good.

Charlie Yes, that's good. Should we still leave?

Barry Yeah. Let's get going, eh? No crime around here for us to solve anyway.

Charlie You're right.

<The car engine starts and it drives away>

Fran Ahhhh. I think my arm is broken. Please (pause) please-

Raymond You're looking a bit beaten up there, neighbour.

Fran Call an ambulance. I'm bleeding.

Raymond Let's not be so hasty. Local crime writer saves injured neighbour from certain death. That could make for a good story.

Fran *Story?* I'm dying! I need your help.

Raymond I think you should come back inside before anyone else sees. Come on-

<Raymond picks Fran up underneath her arms, and she groans>

Fran Please, no. Help-

<Fran's mouth is muffled. We hear a body being dragged along the gravel path way back towards Raymond's house>

Raymond Come on. Come on- in you come. There we go.

<The front door closes>

Scene 8.

<Car driving>

Barry You okay?

Charlie Yeah- yeah. Course.

Barry You look worried.

Charlie We agreed, I didn't do anything, did I? So, what's there to be worried about?

Barry Exactly. Absolutely nothing. But-

Charlie But? What's the but?

Barry If you *did* hit a woman, and you *didn't* kill her, well-

Charlie (panicked) Well, what Baz? Well what?

Barry That would be bad.

Charlie It would, wouldn't it?! Ah, I knew it! I was thinking that when I did it.

Barry Now, I'm not saying you meant to do it-

Charlie I really didn't, she just came flying out of that house!

Barry I know! I know- I saw. So you didn't mean to do it, we've established that. But I'm just saying, if she didn't die. That's really, *really* bad. You could like, be in trouble. Or something.

Charlie Yeaaaaaaah. Fuck. So what should we do?

Barry Well, I think there's only one thing we should do right now.

Charlie What's that?

Barry Get the chupa-chub lollies like we agreed. Then, we can think of a plan! (pause) But she needs to die. That's for sure.

Charlie That's heavy stuff, Baz.

Barry I don't want you getting into trouble. I can't lose you. I think it's our only choice.

Charlie Okay- okay. Right. Lollies first, then (pause) then what?

Barry We'll make sure she's dead.

Charlie If you say so. I think you're doing a terrific job by the way. I know you were a bit sad earlier, what with the bad acting news, but you've really started to turn things around. I really appreciate you being so great right now. I don't know what I would have done without you.

Barry We're partners, ain't we? We stick together. In the good and the bad times. You were nice to me when I didn't get that stupid role, so it's only fair that I help you kill this woman so you don't get into trouble.

Charlie You're a real, pal.

Scene 9.

<heavy knocking on the door>

Katherine Open up!

<more knocking>

Katherine Open this door right now!

<The door opens>

Raymond Hello? Can I help you.

Katherine It's Katherine! We spoke the other day about my sister's disappearance.

Raymond Did we? Sorry, I don't recall.

Katherine Don't lie to me! What's this about you posting that my sister is alive?

Raymond I didn't post-

Katherine Yes, you did! I got an email. You said that she was alive and that you found her.

Raymond Nope. Not me. Sorry, darling. It must be a different crime blog you're following, because I wouldn't lie. And she's certainly not here.

Katherine Raymond, do you have her?

Raymond Have who?

Katherine My sister!

Raymond Why would I have your sister?

Katherine Because you're a shifty little man, and I've watched enough crime dramas on the BBC to know who not to trust. And let's not forget your shitty little diary thing-

Raymond (genuinely hurt) It's not a shitty little diary thing! How dare you! I ought to call the police. You're harassing me, and I don't like it.

Katherine Call the police! See if I care. I know something dodgy is going on, and if you're involved, so-help-me-god. I'm gonna come down on you like a tonne of bricks. I want my sister back, or they'll be hell to pay! You haven't seen the last of me.

Raymond (mock pleasant) Well, until next time! Ta-de-da!

Katherine Fuck you. Asshole.

Raymond Mind your language. This is a friendly neighbourhood.

<The door closes>

Scene 10. - continued

Max Oh look over there, it's Katherine. Fran's sister. Should we go say hi?

Ed No, we bloody-well shouldn't! We can't let her see us.

Max Why not?

Ed Because.

Max *Because* isn't an answer. I like Katherine. You should have gone with her, she's the nicer sister. Most of the time.

Ed Why do you think she was talking to your neighbour?

Max Oh, I dunno. He's always snooping on the street as part of some neighbourhood watch committee thing, and I reckon he was the one to report Fran missing. Bit of a bell-end if you ask me. Always complains about us not putting our bins out in time.

Ed Sounds like he knows too much already. He may be a problem.

Max Nah, he's just lonely. Harmless really. So do you reckon Fran will be home soon? I'm starting to get hungry.

Ed The last time I spoke to her she seemed pretty fed up that you hadn't paid the ransom. Apparently she was going to turn up this afternoon and explain everything.

Max We could order takeaway? What do you fancy? Mexican, pasta, ice cream-

Ed We're gonna break in-

Max To *my* home?

Ed Yeah.

Max Why? I have a set of keys.

Ed We need to make it look realistic don't we? If can't open the front door with a set of keys, the police won't have to look hard, will they? You've gotta make it look legit like me and Fran did.

Max Riiiiight. Yeah, I getcha. I would never have thought of that. You're good! You're *really* good.

Ed Right, so we break in, take her hostage, for real this time, and then take her to the rendezvous place where the other kidnappers will be waiting for us at 7pm to collect the twenty grand.

Max Is it me, or does that make absolutely no sense? What are they going to do with her? Because if they just let her go, that's really not very helpful for me collecting her life insurance, is it?

Ed Don't worry, Max-y boy. I've got it all figured out.

Max You do?

Ed Just watch and learn.

<Ed undoes the glove compartment>

Max Is that a gun?