Scene 1

All of the action takes place in Carol’s house.

Interior Acoustic.

We hear the Uzbek ring tone ringing and ringing ... 

Cut to typing

Phil

Dear Carol. Here are some interesting things I’ve read in my guide book which I think you need to know. Number 1) They have a Russian washing powder here called Lemon barf. Number 2) When they shake hands with you they put their left hand on their hearts. Number 3) If your eyebrows grow together over the bridge of your nose you are considered very attractive. I think that’s just the men but could be the girls too.

Cut back to Uzbek ring tone ringing and ringing ...

Azimbek

Madam there’s no answer. Call back. Call back later.

Carol

No! No. See. Erm. The thing is that my husband hasn’t been answering my calls now. For two days. We said we’d speak on Thursday and now it’s Sunday - have I spoken to you before?
Azimbek: I don’t think so.

Carol: Would it be possible - could you just go up to his room and knock on the door?

Azimbek: I’m not allowed to leave the desk.

Carol: Well could you send someone else?

Azimbek: Your husband is probably sleeping.

Carol: For two days?

Azimbek: I have an uncle who once slept for a year Madam.

Carol: Please could you just go and ask someone to go and check on him?

Azimbek: We don’t disturb our guests Madam. If they don’t pick up the telephone.

Carol: I’m worried that something has happened. You know like a car accident or I don’t know what.

Azimbek: His key is not here. This means he’s in his room.

Carol: Well what if he’s had a heart attack? Or what if he’s lying on his bed in a coma?

Azimbek: sighs.

Azimbek: One moment Madam.

At the other end of the telephone we hear Azimbek instructing someone in Uzbek to go to the room.

Azimbek: Call back in fifteen minutes. Call back and we’ll have an answer for you.

Carol: Thankyou. Thankyou very much.

Azimbek: No problem.

Carol: What’s your name?

Azimbek: Azimbek.

Carol: Azimbek. I’m Carol.

Azimbek: Okay Madam.

Carol: Erm. Will you be on the desk later?

Azimbek: (resigned) For the next twelve hours.
Call Waiting by Katie Hims

Cut to typing

Phil Number 4) The old Slav women sit on the streets trying not to look like beggars but they’re basically penniless. Because the Russian state pensions means nothing now. Number 5) Despite being Muslim most Uzbeks drink a lot of booze and listen to gale force techno music. Number 6) If you eat too slowly someone may ask you if you are ill or unhappy. Number 7) There are scorpions and venomous snakes in the red desert. Number 8) A pumpkin is called buglama.

Cut to Uzbek ringing tone.

Azimbek Hello this is the Intercontinental Hotel.

Carol Azimbek?

Azimbek Yes Madam. There’s no one in the room.

Carol Oh.

Azimbek Maybe he went out and he forgot to leave his key at the desk. It’s a beautiful day here. Perhaps he went out into the sun. Don’t worry. I’m sure he’s okay.

Carol Then why hasn’t he called me?

Cut to typing.

Phil Number 9) Russian newly weds come to have their photos taken by The Earthquake Memorial which is three blocks long. Number 10) Everything shuts down at Midnight by Presidential decree. Number 11) The Lucky Strike nightclub in Tashkent has a light up floor. Number 12) President Karimov got 500 million dollars for allowing the United States Government to have a military base here. Number 13) Strip clubs are not allowed but there are a couple of places that will flout this rule. Number 14) Asalom alaykhum means peace be with you.

The typing stops and then begins again as Carol writes.

Carol Dear Phil. Just read your email again.

Carol sighs.

Carol Dear Phil. Just read your email again. Wanted to write to you cos I can’t speak to you. Erm. Dear Phil. Just read your email. Wondering how you are. Where are you Phil?
Scene 2

*Cut to Carol on the telephone.*

**Patrick**
I see. I see. Right. Yes.

**Carol**
I’m sorry to bother you on a Sunday. I just didn’t know who else to call. I mean who else I was supposed to call. You’re the only one from his work who I’ve actually met. I mean we went to the Christmas party you know but we didn’t stay long. Cos **Phil** wanted to get back for Match of the Day.

*We hear a woman’s voice distantly in the background of Patrick’s house.*

**Patrick**
Sorry Carol — hang on, with you in a minute! Listen Carol I’m absolutely certain that there’s nothing to worry about. The company would not place Phil’s life in any danger. Let me make some phone calls and I’ll call you back. I’ll call you right back.

Scene 3

*Cut to Carol typing*

**Carol**
Dear Phil. It’s Sunday morning and I just thought I would write you a short note to say hi…. Dear Phil. It’s Sunday and I haven’t heard from you for a while. Dear Phil. Dearest Phil.

*Cut to an English ringing tone.*

**Lyn**
Hello.

**Carol**
I’m scared something’s happened to Phil.

**Lyn**
What?

**Carol**
It’s me. Carol.

**Lyn**
I know it’s Carol.

**Carol**
You know Phil is away don’t you.

**Lyn**
Where’d he go?

**Carol**
Uzbekistan.

**Lyn**
Oh.

**Carol**
I just rang his boss. Just now. Patrick his name is. I didn’t know who else to call. And he said a funny thing. I mean it only occurs to me now that it was a bit weird. But he said I can assure you that the company would not put Phil in any danger.
Lyn

Why’s that funny?

Carol

Well I mean - that hadn’t even crossed my mind. That Phil’d be in danger ’cos of the company.

Lyn

Well he was just saying what he’d say. I mean what you’d say if you were Phil’s boss.

Carol

Do you know where it is?

Lyn

Where what is?

Carol

Uzbekistan.

Lyn

Erm.

Carol

It’s next to Afghanistan.

Lyn

Is it?

Carol

I didn’t know that. Til just now. Just now I thought. I don’t even know where this bloody country is. So I looked at a map. And it’s right next to Afghanistan. I called this Patrick bloke three hours ago and he said he’d make enquiries and he’s not called me back.

Lyn

Well he’s probably still making his enquiries.

Carol

Do you think I should call him again?

Lyn

Have you told Mum yet?

Carol

No.

Lyn

Don’t tell her.

Carol

I’m not going to.

Lyn

She’ll just get hysterical.

Carol

I’m not going to tell her.

Lyn

Good.

Carol

Do you think I should call this Patrick bloke again?

Lyn

Well if he had anything to tell you he’d have rung you wouldn’t he?

Carol

I just want to do something. Call people. Call anyone.

Scene 4

Cut to Carol typing.
Carol
Dear Phil. It’s Sunday afternoon and you’re all I can really think about it and it reminds me of when we first started going out and in my head all day long and all night it was just Phil. Phil. Phil. Your name. Sort of driving me mad. And I couldn’t do anything without thinking of you. It was like you were by my side the whole time or something like that. I’d be washing my hair or I’d be on the phone to the bank or I’d be crossing the road or whatever it was and you’d just be there. In my head. Like a default position.

Cut to English Ringing Tone.

Machine Your call is being diverted. Please wait.

Phil
Hi. This is Phil. Please leave me a message

Carol

Cut to the Uzbek ringing tone. And then a recorded message.

Embassy
You’re through to the British Embassy in Tashkent. No one is here to take your call. Please call back between the hours of eight am and six thirty pm. Monday to Saturday. Alternatively you can leave a message.

Carol
Hello. My name is Carol Reece and I don’t know where my husband is. His name is Phillip Reece. He works for a British company called CamCom Europ. He’s a software engineer. He arrived in Tashkent last Monday. So it’ll be a week tomorrow. He was due to fly home this coming Tuesday. He’s six foot two. He looks a bit like Ian Botham. You know the cricketer. I’d be very grateful if someone could call me back as soon as possible.

Scene 5

Cut to Carol typing.

Carol
Dear Phil. You’re better looking than Ian Botham but you do remind me of him. I mean there’s something about you. The shape of your face. And there’s the moustache. Obviously. But even without the moustache I still think there’d be something of Ian Botham about you. Or something of you about Ian Botham.

Cut to the Uzbek ringing tone.

The Uzbek words are highlighted in italics.

Police
Hello.

Carol
Is that the police? Am I talking to the police in Tashkent?
Police
I can’t understand you.

Carol
Have you got anyone who speaks English?

Police
I can’t understand a word you’re saying.

Carol
English. I’m English.

Police
English?

Carol
Yes!

Police
Wait one minute. Wait just one minute. (Go and get Ruslan will you.)

Carol
I’m sorry I don’t speak Uzbek or Uzbekistani. I thought someone would speak English. I just thought. I can say one thing. There’s one thing I do know. Asalom alaykhum. Is that how you say it?

Carol does not pronounce the phrase correctly.

But of course the policeman does.

Police
Asalom alaykhum?

Carol
Asalom Alaykhum?

Police
Asalom alaykhum. Very good. Ruslan. Speak to this woman will you.

Ruslan
Hello?

Carol
Hello! You speak English!

Ruslan
Yes.

Carol
Are you a policeman? Is this the main police station in Tashkent?

Ruslan
Policeman. Yes Madam.

Carol
I think my husband is missing in your country.

Ruslan
Missing?

Carol
Disappeared.

Ruslan
Dis- appeared. Spelling please?

Carol
D. I. S.

Ruslan
Wait. D. I. S

Carol
A. P. P. E.
Ruslan  Wait. A. P. P. E.
Carol   Oh God.

**Scene 6**

*Cut to Carol typing.*

Carol Are you alright? And if you’re alright where are you? And if you’re not alright where are you? And what can I do? That’s what I want to know. No one can tell me what to do.

**Scene 7**

*Cut to telephone ringing.*

Carol *(tense)* Hello?
Patrick Carol it’s Patrick.
Carol Hi.
Patrick So sorry I haven’t got back to you til now.
Carol Have you got any news?
Patrick I’ve made a few calls and I can’t seem to get hold of anyone who has spoken to him in the last two days but I don’t think that’s any reason to panic just yet.
Carol *(disappointed)* Right.
Patrick I realise that you’re horribly worried but I’m sure there’s a perfectly reasonable explanation for his silence. He’s probably just working flat out to get the job done.
Carol What exactly is the job?
Patrick Sorry?
Carol What exactly is it that he’s gone out there to do?
Patrick He’s installing a new software programme.
Carol Who for?
Patrick For the Uzbek Government.
Carol The Government?
Patrick So he’ll be very well protected.
Carol Protected from what? What does he need protecting from?
Patrick I’m just saying that he’ll be looked after Carol.

Carol Yes. Sorry. Sorry. It’s just that. I realised I didn’t even know what he was doing. I mean he could be scaling great heights to install something at the top of a mountain for all I know. He could be lying at the bottom of a frozen fjord. Even though you probably only get them in Norway but there could be an Uzbek equivalent couldn’t there?

Patrick I can assure you that he will have been entirely deskbound during the whole week.

Carol Right.

Patrick No mountain climbing. Nothing like that.

Carol Right.

Patrick Tomorrow it’ll be easier to take some action Carol. Everyone will be back in the office and I’m sure Phil himself will give you a call. But I’ll continue to make my enquiries. Let’s talk again tomorrow.

Carol And what if he’s dead by tomorrow?

Scene 8

Cut to Phil speaking on an answer machine.

Phil Carol it’s Phil here. Alright sweetheart. Are you there? …

Carol? No? Must have missed you. Oh well. Erm yeh everything’s fine here. You know. Hotel’s very snazzy. Haven’t made it to the Lucky Strike nightclub with the light up floor but hope to get there before the trip is over. Maybe I’ll meet a beautiful Uzbek woman with one eyebrow and run away with her. That was a joke by the way. Anyway hope you’re okay. Give us a ring when you can. Okay. Yeh. Speak soon.

BT To play the message again press one. To save it press 2. To delete press 3.

Carol presses one.

Phil Carol it’s Phil here. Alright sweetheart. Are you there? …

Carol? No? Must have missed you. Oh well. Erm yeh everything’s fine here. You know. Hotel’s very snazzy.

Cut to typing

Scene 9

The telephone rings

Carol
Hello?

Lyn
It’s me.

Carol
Hi.

Lyn
Any news?

Carol
No news.

Lyn
Shall I come down?

Carol
It’s a stupid name for it - answer phone.

Lyn
Erm. What you talking about?

Carol
I mean they call it an answer phone but actually it doesn’t answer you at all. And it doesn’t give you any answers.

Lyn
Do you want me to come down?

Carol
I’ve been reading stuff.

Lyn
What stuff?

Carol
About Uzbekistan.

Lyn
And?

Carol
It’s not very good.

Lyn
What do you mean?

Carol
I found out today. From Patrick. That Phil’s gone to work for the Uzbek Government right.

Lyn
Right.

Carol
Well that’s not good. Not at all. Like there was a massacre there last year. Loads of people were killed and the government are denying it and and there’s like this big international kind of condemnation. But Phil’s gone to work for them.

Lyn
Carol…

Carol
And I wonder if he knew that and didn’t tell me. Cos I didn’t know. How dodgy they were. I didn’t even know where it was even. Let alone all the human rights stuff.
Lyn
Look. I mean normal people go and work for dodgy governments all the time. It’s normal. I’m not saying it’s right. Course it’s not right. But that’s like the world isn’t it.

Carol
Yeh but I don’t want it to be Phil.

Lyn
Shall I come down?

Carol
Where is he? I mean where can he be? And how can it be alright? I just don’t see how it can turn out alright. This situation. And I want it to be a big mistake. I’m desperate that it’s just something really stupid like his phone has been switched off. But I’m scared that he’s dead.

Lyn
He’s not dead.

Carol
Say that again.

Lyn
He’s not dead.

Carol
Do you think he did know?

Lyn
Know what?

Carol
Who he was working for?

Lyn
I don’t know.

Carol
Will you come down?

Lyn
Yeh. Course.

Scene 10

Cut to Carol typing.

Carol
Dear Phil. I feel sick. As sick as a parrot. As sick as a dog. As sick as a pig. But you have to be pig sick rather sick as a pig. I think that’s right. Sick as a parrot always sounds like a joke. Like the punchline to a joke.

The telephone rings.

Carol
Hello?

Azimbek
Is that Mrs Reece?

Carol
Yes.

Azimbek
This is Azimbek from the Intercontinental Hotel.

Carol
(urgent) Have you got news?

Azimbek
Madam there’s been an unfortunate incident.
Carol  
(panic) Have you found him?
Azimbek  
No Madam. There’s been a robbery.
Carol  
What do you mean?
Azimbek  
All of your husband’s things have been stolen. I’m very sorry. We don’t understand how this could happen.
Carol  
But.
Azimbek  
We wanted to tell you this Madam. As soon as possible.
Carol  
Have you contacted the police?
Azimbek  
Of course.
Carol  
And what are they doing?
Azimbek  
They’re doing their police work.
Carol  
But I thought it was a big hotel, a big snazzy hotel.
Azimbek  
It is Madam.
Carol  
How could you have a robbery?
Azimbek  
It is. Unfortunate. Unlucky. Regrettable. The Hotel Insurance. Will pay. We wanted to tell you Madam. As soon as possible.
Carol  
…Thankyou.
Azimbek  
If I can be any further assistance.
Carol  
Azimbek?
Azimbek  
Yes.
Carol  
Do you know the cricketer Ian Botham?
Azimbek  
Yes Madam.
Carol  
Do you? Do you know what he looks like?
Azimbek  
I think so.
Carol  
What does he look like?
Azimbek  
He’s got a moustache.
Carol  
That’s him! My husband looks like him. A lot like him. But he’s more handsome. He’s a handsome version of Ian Botham.
Azimbek I think Ian Botham is very handsome.

Carol Oh. Well Erm. Anyway if you see a man who looks like Ian Botham walking in to the hotel that’s my husband. And I want you to keep him there with you. No matter what he says to you. Keep him with you.

Azimbek Yes Madam.

Scene 11

Cut to Lyn on the phone, on the train.

Lyn What? …What? Sorry. I can’t hear you very well.

Carol Don’t you think it’s weird that there was a robbery?

Lyn Yeh. Course it’s weird.

Carol He kept saying. The hotel receptionist kept saying. I thought you should know as soon as possible.

Lyn Well of course.

Carol No but I felt like there was hidden message.

Lyn (reproving) Carol.

Carol What?

Lyn What sort of hidden message?

Carol I don’t know. Like he was warning me that there was more to it. That there was something he couldn’t say. I mean. Why not? All the phones are bugged in Uzbekistan. That’s what it said in the papers.

Lyn Don’t you think you’re getting a bit.

Carol What?

Lyn Paranoid.

Carol I don’t know.

Lyn I’ll be with you in an hour. An hour and a bit. Trains nearly at Kings’s Cross. Then I’ve just got to change.

Carol I know the route Lyn. I know how you get to Reading from King’s Cross. I mean you don’t have to explain it to me.

Lyn Have you rung Mum?

Carol No.
Call Waiting by Katie Hims  BBC Radio 4 / Open University

Lyn

Don’t.

Carol

I won’t.

Scene 12

Cut to Patrick on the telephone. We can hear his office at the end of the phone.

Patrick

I don’t think we should jump to conclusions Carol.

Carol

Of course you don’t.

Patrick

We don’t even know that anything has happened to Phil.

Carol

Oh Patrick come on. Something’s wrong. Something’s absolutely, definitely wrong and now all his stuff has been stolen from his hotel room and you think there’s no connection? I don’t believe you. I don’t actually believe that you think that.

Patrick

It’s quite late now. It’s Sunday night and I think we’re all overtired.

Carol

(amazed) Overtired?

Patrick

Yes. So I suggest we speak again tomorrow?

Carol

Don’t you think it’s a bit dodgy that you sent him to Uzbekistan?

Patrick

Well I didn’t send him personally.

Carol

But did you know? Do you know what Uzbekistan is like? I mean I didn’t know anything before. I didn’t know even know where it was before. ’Til I looked at a map. Did you know that it’s right next to Afghanistan? Did you know that? …Because I didn’t. And it makes you think doesn’t it. It makes you think that you should look at a bloody map when your husband goes away, so when you’re waving him off you know, you actually have some idea of where it is that he’s going.

Patrick

Erm.

Carol

I started reading things today. And I thought bloody hell. What’s Phil doing somewhere like that? And did he know before what he was going into? I mean did anyone warn him?

Patrick

Carol I can assure you that Phil will not have been placed in any danger whatsoever. It just isn’t company policy.

Carol

All I want is. I want something to happen.

Scene 13

Cut to typing.
Carol

Dear Phil. In the words of Crystal Gayle. It’s three o clock in the morning. Lyn’s here. She arrived at midnight. She’s asleep now. I’m wide awake. More awake than I’ve ever been in my life. I wish we could think to each other. I keep thinking that we could. If I made more effort. That if I just concentrate and try and get a picture of you in my head I can hear you. But all the pictures I get are. All the pictures of you that come into my head. Well they aren’t good. And I keep trying to tell myself that you’ll turn up tomorrow. I feel sick. Cos something bad’s happening isn’t it. Something really bad. I’m not actually going to send this to you. Obviously. As it wouldn’t be very encouraging.

Scene 14

Cut to breakfast radio. Kitchen sounds. The radio is playing something cheerful and inappropriate.

Lyn

What time is it?

Carol

Six thirty.

Lyn

Did you sleep?

Carol

No.

Lyn

Not at all?

Carol

No.

Lyn

You’ve got to sleep Carol. You can’t do this on no sleep.

Carol

I can’t sleep. I close my eyes and I just see Phil staring at me like a dead person in a film. You know all glassy eyed. And bloody. I keep thinking about things on television. All those programmes with dead people in them, people on slabs, people being cut up, people being cut open, detectives and forensics and all that blood that you get on a Saturday night with maybe a follow up on Sunday or Monday. And all that stuff is for people to relax over on a Saturday night, can you believe it? All that blood for people to eat their dinner, their fish fingers and oven chips over.

Lyn

Tea. We need tea.

Carol

Do I sound demented?

Lyn

Yes.

Carol

I think I am. Slightly.

Text message sound.

Carol

(urgent) What was that? Where’s my phone? Where’s my phone?
Lyn Erm.

Frantically they look for phone.

Carol That was a text. Wasn’t that a text? Where is it?

Lyn Don’t get too excited Carol. It could be anything.

Carol Where is it?

Lyn Here. Found it. Here.

Carol (urgent) Give it to me. Give it to me.

Lyn hands Carol the phone.

Carol It’s from Phil! It’s.

Lyn What?

Carol It’s a text from Phil. It’s.

Lyn What’s it say?

Carol (reading) Help me. I’m in trouble.

Lyn Let me see. Let me see. Let me see.

Carol I think I’m going to be sick. I think I’m actually going to be sick.

Lyn Use the sink.

Carol throws up.

Carol Oh God. Oh God. Oh God.

Lyn I’ll turn the radio off.

Lyn turns radio off.

Carol Oh God. Oh God.

Lyn (urgent) Carol look it’s good we heard something. Think of it like that. Now we’ve got something to work on. We’ve got proof or something. Let’s text him back. We’ll text him back and then we’ll get on the phone. We’ll call his boss. We’ll call the foreign office. We’ll do everything we can.

Carol is struggling to breathe.

Carol Yes. Right. God. God. Oh God.

Lyn What shall we say to him? What do you want to say?
Carol  What do I want to say? Erm.
Lyn  Just think. Think for a minute.
Carol  *(trying to be calm)* Erm. I don’t know. I’ve no idea.
Lyn  Help on it’s way.
Carol  But it isn’t on it’s way.
Lyn  But it will be.
Carol  Okay. Okay. Help on It’s Way. I love you. Tell us more if you can. Kisses. Carol
Lyn  Yep. Okay.
Carol  Okay. Does that sound alright?
Lyn  Yep that’s fine. Help on it’s way…
Carol  Where is he? I mean what can possibly be happening?
Lyn  I’m doing it. I’m doing it right now.
Carol  Do you think he’s just lost? Could he just be lost in the desert? They do have a desert. He mentioned the desert once. It doesn’t have to be…Have you sent it?
Lyn  I’m sending it. Right now.
Carol  Has it gone?
Lyn  I’m just doing it.
Carol  What do I do? What do I do? What do I do now?
Lyn  Put something warm on.
Carol  What?
Lyn  Put a jumper on.
Carol  I’m alright.
Lyn  Your teeth are chattering.
Carol  It’s not cos I’m cold. It’s cos I’m terrified.
Lyn  I’ve sent it. It’s gone.

**Scene 15**

*Cut to ringing tone.*
Patrick
Hello?

Carol  Patrick  I’ve just had a text from Phil. He says he’s in trouble. He says Help me. That’s what he says.

Patrick  I’ve had the same text.

Carol  And you didn’t call me?

Patrick  I didn’t want to alarm you. Look Carol I’m heading into the office right now. Don’t panic. I suggest you call the foreign office.

Scene 16

Cut to ringing tone.

FO  Hello you’re through to the foreign office.

Carol  Hello I’d like to report my husband missing please. I mean if I can. Have I come through to the right place?

Scene 17


Lyn  Were they nice?

Carol  Who?

Lyn  The foreign office.

Carol  How do you mean?

Lyn  Were they friendly? Did they make you feel reassured?

Carol  Not really. Not particularly. I mean they weren’t unsympathetic. They were fine. Very professional.

Lyn  So what happens now?

Carol  We wait.

Lyn  For what?

Carol  I don’t know. The phone to ring. Someone to find something out. I’ve no idea. I’ve never been in this situation before.

Lyn  Tea. Strong tea with sugar. That’s what we need. That’s how the British got through the war.

Carol  There wasn’t any sugar during the war.

Lyn  Well the tea part.
Carol

Don’t panic. Don’t panic he says. God he’s an idiot.

Lyn

Who?

Carol

Patrick. Phil said he was pedantic. The pedantic type. He reminds me of Basil Fawlty. I mean physically that’s what he looks like. I’ve only met him once but I went away with the distinct impression of Basil Fawlty.

Lyn

How long is it since you ate anything?

Carol

I don’t know.

Lyn

I could do you scrambled eggs.

Carol

I’m not hungry.

Lyn

You can’t stop eating and stop sleeping Carol.

Carol

Yes I can.

Lyn

You don’t know how long this is going to go on for.

Carol

You know what’s awful. What occurred to me.

Lyn

What?

Carol

We don’t even know for sure that the text is from Phil. I mean it could be from anyone. Anyone at all who’s using his phone.

Lyn

Who would want to send a message like that except for Phil?

Carol

Well I don’t know do I. I mean it could be someone who wants us to think he’s alive but actually he’s already dead.

Lyn

Carol.

Carol

Do you think he’s dead?

Lyn

No.

Carol

Neither do I.

Lyn

What about an omelette?

Carol

Can we text him again?

Lyn

What do you want to say?

*The doorbell rings.*

Lyn

Do you want me to get it?
Carol  It’s alright.

**Scene 18**

*Carol goes to the door. Opens the door.*

Kevin  Mrs Reece?

Carol  Yes.

Kevin  My name’s Kevin Herronvolk. I work with your husband at Cam Com Europ.

Carol  Oh. Erm. Come in. Come in.

Kevin  Thanks.

**Scene 19**

Kevin follows Carol into the house.

Carol  Erm. This is my sister Lynette. She’s just staying with me for a bit. Lyn this Kevin. He works with Phil. Are you an engineer?

Kevin  Er no. No I’m not.

Carol  Oh. Erm but you do know Phil?

Kevin  A little.

Carol  Erm *(unsure)* would you like a cup of tea?

Kevin  No thankyou.

Carol  Erm. So why are you here Kevin?

Kevin  Do you have a PC in the house?

Carol  Yes. Yes we do.

Kevin  Did Phil use the PC for work?

Carol  Erm yes. He did. Yes. Why?

Kevin  I need to take it away.

Carol  Sorry?

Kevin  I need to take the computer and have a look at it.

Carol  *(amazed)* Erm. Sorry but I just need a bit more of explanation than that.

Kevin  Well I don’t really have the clearance to explain anymore than that.
Carol: I thought you came here to help.
Kevin: Well there could be information on that computer that could help Phil.
Carol: I don’t believe you.
Kevin: Why would I lie to you Mrs Reece?
Carol: I don’t know - Mr Herronvolk is it?
Kevin: Please allow me to take the computer away. I’ll bring it right back.
Carol: What exactly was Phil doing for the government of Uzbekistan?
Kevin: doesn’t reply.
Carol: Tell me.
Kevin: I don’t know.
Carol: Liar.
Kevin: Mrs Reece be reasonable.
Carol: I’d like you to leave now.
Kevin: I don’t know why you’re being so obstructive.
Carol: I don’t know why you’re being so mysterious.
Kevin: I need the computer for Phil’s own good. I could help Phil.
Carol: I just don’t believe you.
Kevin: Is the computer upstairs? Perhaps I could take a look.
Carol: Where do you think you’re going? What you doing? You can’t just walk in here and demand stuff you know.
Kevin: I’m sorry. I just need to. I just need to take a look.
Carol: You better leave. You better leave right now.
Carol: Get out of my house or I’ll call the police.
Kevin: Don’t be ridiculous.
Carol: Lyn call them.
Lyn: (uncertain) What — really?
Kevin: That isn’t necessary.
Call Waiting by Katie Hims

BBC Radio 4 / Open University

Carol Lyn just do it.

Lyn Okay. Okay.

Kevin Mrs Reece you’re taking all of this the wrong way. Er Lynette — please don’t call the police. I’m leaving. I’m leaving right now.

Scene 20

Cut to Carol on the phone to Patrick.

Carol Kevin Herronvolk is a right charmer isn’t he?

Patrick Sorry.

Carol I thought you were sending someone from Human Resources.

Patrick We were. We are. Kevin Herronvolk has been round to see you?

Carol (sarcastic) Someone not keeping you in the loop Patrick?

Patrick Carol.

Carol Why did he want our PC?

Patrick Sorry?

Carol Jesus do you lot not to talk to each other about anything?

Patrick I’m sure he was only trying to help.

Carol I’m sure he’s not only trying to help actually. I’m sure something’s dodgy’s going on. Only I can’t seem figure it out because you’re all so unwilling to me anything.

Patrick Well we’re doing everything we can at this end. We’re aware of the situation and we’re doing everything we can.

Carol What exactly is that?

Patrick I’m afraid I don’t have all the details but the company is concerned. There is a concern.

Carol Right. Great.

Patrick I’m very sorry that I can’t tell you more Carol.

Carol I’m sorry too Patrick. I really am and if you don’t make something happen soon I’ll go to the press. ‘Cos I can’t sit here watching day time television and hoovering the carpet. I’ll go off my rocker.

Scene 21

Cut to telephone ringing.
Lyn
Hello?

Giles
Hello my name’s Giles Ward. I’m calling from the foreign office. Is that Mrs Reece?

Lyn
Er no. I’m her sister. My name’s Lyn. She’s just…. Hang on.

Lyn calls to Carol

Lyn
Carol! It’s the foreign office! (to Giles) Has there been any news?

Giles
I’m afraid there has.

Lyn
What? What? Is it bad?

Giles
I’d rather speak to Mrs Reece personally.

Lyn
She’s just. She’s not been feeling very well…

Giles
Perhaps you could ask her to call me back.

Carol
comes into the living room.

Lyn

Carol
( anxious, hurried) What? What’s going on?

Lyn
(to Carol) Giles Ward. Foreign Office.

Carol
Hello?

Giles
Are you sitting down Mrs Reece?

Carol
Sorry?

Giles
Sit down Mrs Reece.

Carol
What’s happened? Have you found him?

Giles
I’d rather you were sitting down.

Carol
I’m sitting down! For crying out loud just tell me!

Giles
We believe that your husband, has in all likelihood, been kidnapped.

Carol
Sorry?

Giles
We’ve received reports that he was taken by three men into a car on Friday morning. And we have reason to believe he is being held by these men Mrs Reece.

Carol tries to breathe.
Giles  Mrs Reece?
Carol  Yes.
Giles  Are you alright?
Carol  I’m trying not to be sick.
Lyn  What’s going on? Will you tell me?
Carol  (to Lyn) They think he’s been kidnapped.
Giles  We don’t know a great deal more than that. I’m sorry I can’t be more helpful at this stage.
Carol  (slowly, slowly) So, so . . .you don’t really know anything?
Giles  We do have people in Uzbekistan trying to address the situation.
Carol  How are they doing that?
Giles  Well for a start we have very sophisticated diplomatic radio systems with satellite coverage.
Carol  What does that mean?
Giles  It means we’ve got all the highest technology available to try and track him down.
Carol  (slightly non plussed) Right.
Giles  We believe it’s a political kidnapping rather than financially motivated.
Carol  (bleak) That’s good cos we’re really overdrawn at the moment.
Giles  (unsure) Right.
Carol  (bleak) That was a joke.
Giles  (still unsure) Right.
Carol  So what now?
Giles  We’ll keep you posted. Any further information. Anything at all. We’ll pass it on.
Carol  And I just sit here do I?
Giles  I’ll call again this afternoon regardless of whether there’s been any developments. I’ll keep in touch.
Carol  Okay. Okay. Thankyou. That would be good.
Giles  I’m sorry I can’t be more definite Mrs Reece.
Carol  Do you know if it’s got anything to do with the work he was doing?
Giles  The work?
Carol  The work he was doing. Was he doing something dodgy?
Giles  How do you mean?
Carol  I don’t know. But no one will tell me anything.
Giles  I’ll speak to you soon Mrs Reece. Let me get back to you.

Carol hangs up.

Carol  You don’t hear much about kidnapping in Uzbekistan do you?
Lyn  Carol sit down.
Carol  I don’t want to sit down. Why does everyone keep telling me to sit down? . . .
Lyn  You look like you’re going to pass out.
Carol  You know on the news. Sometimes. Like when it’s Iraq or somewhere. They say well the good thing about this particular group is that they’re not too bad, they’re not too violent. They don’t behead people and make a video. And sometimes people come back safely and it’s only a couple of days of being stuck in a room with a blindfold and no shower. Well Phil could be lucky couldn’t he? He could be with one of those groups. I mean. It doesn’t have to be a tragedy does it. Getting kidnapped. Does it?
Lyn  (hesitates) No. No course not.
Carol  It could still all work out fine couldn’t it?
Lyn  Course it could.
Carol  I mean. I mean. Why the bloody hell did he have to go there?
Lyn  Sweetheart.
Carol  Do you remember when me and Phil first started going out?
Lyn  I remember he came round to mine in a dodgy diamond golfer’s jumper.
Carol  But do you remember the story of our first date?
Lyn  Didn’t he get into a fight?
Carol: Yeh. He got a police caution. That was our first date.

Lyn: laughs slightly.

Carol: What if he's hurt? What if someone is hurting him right now? And he’s in agony?

Lyn: You’re going to drive yourself mad if you start imagining every single horrific thing.

Carol: What else am I supposed to think about?

Lyn: Maybe we should start praying.

Carol: Do you believe in God?

Lyn: No.

Carol: Neither do I.

Lyn: But we could pray anyway. Just in case.

Carol: I always think if there is a God he’s not going to listen to people like us who only pray in times of absolute crisis.

Lyn: Well he’s not very nice is he then. God I mean.

Carol: Does this feel real to you?

Lyn: What?

Carol: The whole thing.

Lyn: Phil?

Carol: Yeh.

Lyn: I don’t know.

Carol: It doesn’t feel at all real to me.

Lyn: You need to eat something.

**Scene 22**

*Cut to telephone ringing.*

Carol: *(anxious)* Hello?

Richard: Is that Mrs Reece?

Carol: Who’s this?
Richard  My name’s Richard Gordon. I’m calling from a magazine called Crossing Borders.

Carol  Why?

Richard  Sorry?

Carol  Why are you calling me?

Richard  Well we’re not a big publication but we’re very interested in your husband’s case. I believe your husband may have been kidnapped out in Uzbekistan — is that correct?

Carol  Where did you get that from?

Richard  Have you had any confirmation that this is the case?

Carol  I can’t talk to you about this. I don’t know who you are. I mean you could be anyone. I’m sorry. I’m not talking to you. Sorry.

Richard  Do you have any idea what Phil was doing in Uzbekistan?

Carol  He was working for the government.

Richard  The British government?

Carol  No the Uzbek government.

Richard  I think he may also have been working for the British government.

Carol  What?

Richard  He didn’t talk about his work?

Carol  Erm well not really. I mean it’s software engineering isn’t it. It’s not the sort of thing you can talk about that easily. Cos no one else understands you. I mean that’s what he used to say. And I’m not good with all that stuff myself. So. You know. No. Is the answer. What makes you think he was working for our government?

Richard  Well Cam Com Europ have several government contracts and I believe this could be one of them.

Carol  So maybe it was all above board then. Maybe it’s alright then. If it’s the British government who’ve got the contract. Well. I mean they’ll do everything they can won’t they. To get him out of this.

We hear Carol's mobile phone ringing.

Carol  Lyn can you get that? Richard I’ve got to go.

Richard  Why don’t I leave you my number?
Carol
Yeh, alright. Alright.

Lyn
Carol! It’s the foreign office!

Carol
Richard I’ve got to go. I’ve got to go. Sorry….

**Scene 23**

*Carol takes the mobile from Lyn.*

Giles
Mrs Reece I believe that we may have found your husband.

Carol
Is he dead? Is he dead? Just tell me if he’s dead.

Giles
He’s alive.

Carol
He’s alive. Okay. He’s alive. Okay. Good. He’s alive. That’s good.

Giles
Right now we’re not sure who it is that is holding him.

Carol
So how do you know he’s alive?

Giles
We’ve had several confirmations.

Carol
From who?

Giles
From various sources.

Carol
But who?

Giles
Right now I can’t tell you a great deal.

Carol
Why not?

Giles
We don’t want to put his release at risk.

Carol
But why would telling me put him at risk. I mean who am I going to tell?

Giles
I’m just. I don’t have the authority Mrs Reece. People are negotiating as we speak. Everything is being done that can be done.

Carol
So I just have to sit here and wait?

Giles
Pretty much. I’m sorry I can’t be more informative.

**Scene 24**

*Cut to sound of typing.*

Carol
Dear Phil. I just want to talk to you. That’s the thing. I just want to talk to you and I can’t. It’s completely insane not knowing where you are. It’s like being in the pitch black. Like being in a nightmare. Like. What’s it like? I don’t know really. I can’t believe it’s actually
happening. I feel like there’s not enough air in the house. I feel like
the house is full of dust and my body doesn’t feel like it’s mine. I
feel. I don’t think I’m going to send this. I’m going to save it as a
draft. I don’t want to send this until I know you’re safe. Because
what if you could read it. I mean I wouldn’t want you to read this
right now. I suppose the chances aren’t very likely are they. I mean
that kidnappers would say do you want to check your emails? But
you never know do you.

Scene 25

_Cut to ringing phone. On the other end of the line Phil sounds very
distant._

**Carol**

Hello?

**Phil**

Carol?

**Carol**

Phil!

**Phil**

Hello.

**Carol**

Phil . . .

**Phil**

I’m fine. I’m not hurt. I’m alright.

**Carol**

Good. That’s good.

**Phil**

They took my phone away. I don’t know what’s going on but they
just gave it back to me. Said to me. Call your wife. Call your wife.

**Carol**

What happened to you? What happened? Just tell me. Are you
alright? Are you really alright?

**Phil**

I’m really alright. I’ve been well treated so far. Well fed. You know.
They kept me in a room but it’s a family home. You know. Proper
food. Kids around. Nothing bad. I mean frightening. But other than
that. They say they’re gonna let me go.

**Carol**

It’s you.

**Phil**

It is.

**Carol**

laughs.

**Carol**

It’s your voice.

**Phil**

Yes sweetheart.

**Carol**

I love you.

_The phone goes dead._
Carol: Phil? Phil? He got cut off. Why did he get cut off?

Lyn: See if he rings back.

Carol: Why’d he get cut off.

Lyn: Maybe you should ring the foreign office!

Carol: Why?

Lyn: I don’t know.

Carol: What if Phil rings back?

Lyn: Call on the mobile.

Carol: This is mad. This is completely mad. I heard his voice. He sounded beautiful. He sounded fine — I mean not fine. Different. But fine. You know.

Scene 26

Cut to Carol on the telephone.

Giles: Are you quite sure that it was Phil you were speaking to?

Carol: Of course.

Giles: It couldn’t have been anyone else?

Carol: No.

Giles: This is very good Carol. Very encouraging.

Carol: How long do you think it’ll be? I mean do you think he could be back by tonight?

Giles: I think that’s highly unlikely.

Carol: But it’s not that far is it. I mean if they release him this afternoon then he could be on a plane in a few hours.

Giles: I think it’s all going to take a little bit longer than that Mrs Reece. I’ll call you back. I’ll call you back as soon as I can get any details.

Scene 27

Cut to television on in the background. They are watching a soap opera.

Carol: Was she always blonde?

Lyn: Which one?
Carol: The blonde one.

Lyn: I don’t know. I think so.

Carol: I thought she had red hair.

Lyn: I don’t think so. I can’t remember. To be honest. But she’s the one with the brain tumour.

Carol: Oh I know that.

Lyn: So technically you’d think she wouldn’t have any hair at all.

Carol: Maybe she hasn’t started her chemotherapy yet.

Lyn: Maybe.

Carol: Why are we watching this?

Lyn: We need the distraction.

Carol: I forgot.

Lyn: You forgot what?

Carol: That was meant to be a distraction.

Lyn: Shall I switch it off?

Carol: Why hasn’t he called back?

Lyn: Who?

Carol: The foreign office bloke.

Lyn: I don’t know.

Carol: Do you think it’s a bad sign?

Lyn: I don’t know.

Carol: What if they’re not going to release him?

Lyn: They’ll release him.

Carol: This is mad.

Lyn: They’ll release him Carol.

Carol: What if they don’t?

Lyn: Do you want a cup of tea?
Carol I want to text Phil again.
Lyn Shall I do it?
Carol Yes please.
Lyn What do you want to say?
Carol I spoke to him Lyn. I heard his bloody beautiful voice.
Lyn What do you want to say to him?
Carol See you soon. All my love. Carol.
Lyn Okay.
Carol It’s so mad that you can text someone. You can send a message round he world to your kidnapped husband. But actually it doesn’t make you feel any better because if he doesn’t reply you just think what’s happened? What’s gone wrong? I mean maybe if I couldn’t text him I’d actually be less worried in the first place.
Lyn But do you still want to text him then?
Carol Yeh course I do.
Lyn See you soon then? All my love Carol?
Carol Yeh.
Lyn Okay.
Carol Do you think it’s alright that I talked to that bloke?
Lyn What bloke?
Carol The one from the magazine? What if it damages Phil’s situation?
Lyn It won’t. It can’t. How can it?
Carol I don’t know.

Scene 28

*Cut to typing.*

Carol Dearest Beautiful Phil. They say you are coming home. They say it’s all going to be alright. And I don’t know where you are. Or what you’re doing. Or if it’s true. Or. Or anything.

Scene 29

*Cut to Uzbek ringing tone.*
Azimbek: Hello. This is the Intercontinental Hotel.

Carol: Is that Azimbek?

Azimbek: Yes it is.

Carol: This is Carol Reece here. Phil Reece’s wife.

Azimbek: Hello Madam.

Carol: He’s been kidnapped. My husband. That’s what’s happened to him.

Azimbek: I’m very sorry to hear that Madam.

Carol: And I wanted to ask you something?

Azimbek: Yes Madam.

Carol: He was in room number thirteen wasn’t he.

Azimbek: Yes Madam I think he was.

Carol: Can you tell me. Is thirteen an unlucky number?

Azimbek: Thirteen?

Carol: It’s unlucky in England see and I wanted to know is it unlucky in Uzbekistan?

Azimbek: No Madam. It’s not.

Carol: Thanks. Thanks a lot.

Azimbek: Is that all Madam?

Carol: What time is it there?

Azimbek: It’s four am Madam. What time is it there?

Carol: It’s midnight.

Azimbek: Is that all Madam?

Carol: Yeh that’s all.

**Scene 30**

*Cut to Kitchen and breakfast Radio.*

Lyn: Did you sleep?

Carol: No.

Lyn: Me neither.
Carol: Do you think he’s dead?

Lyn: No.

Carol: Last night I dreamed that he was. I was talking to him. I was saying that we should move to Spain. And he wasn’t responding. And then I touched him and he was cold. But he was wearing a pink bobble hat. And I got really angry with him. Do you think he’s dead?

Lyn: No.

Carol: Yesterday when we spoke. For a minute. For an hour. I was high as a kite.

Lyn: I know.

Carol: I should have told him then.

Lyn: Told him what?

Carol: I should have told him but I wanted to save it til I could see him.

Lyn: What should you have told him?

Carol: That I was pregnant.

Lyn: Carol . . .

Carol: I wanted to see his face. His reaction. You know. I wanted. I mean I’ve spent a lot of time imagining that moment.

Lyn: Course you have.

Carol: Now I might not get to tell him at all.

Lyn: Don’t say that.

Carol: But it’s true isn’t it.

Lyn: We don’t know what’s true.

*The telephone rings.*

Lyn: Shall I get it?

*But Carol picks up.*

Carol: Hello…Phil?

Giles: It’s Giles Ward Carol. Calling from the.

Carol: Yeh I know where you’re calling from.
Giles: Have you listened to the news this morning?
Carol: No. Why? What? What’s on the news?
Giles: We don’t know that this man is Phil but there are reports -
Carol: You don’t know that what man is Phil?
Giles: There are reports.
Carol: Of what?
Giles: There’s a video posted on the internet and there’s a possibility that the man in the video is Phil. But those reports are unconfirmed. I don’t want you to panic. There’s nothing to panic about. As of yet. Nothing has been confirmed.
Carol: But what’s the video? What happens in the video?

**Scene 31**

*Cut to typing*

Carol: Dear Phil. I just watched it. They told me not to. But of course I did. I mean. Of course I did. And there’s a man in the video and he’s on fire. And on the news. The woman who reads the news. She said the man was suspected to be British. And I just spoke to the Foreign Office and they’re saying that the man could be you. And it’s impossible to tell if it’s you because of how bad the picture is. And how much fire there is. And I hope that it wasn’t you. I hope that you’re safe somewhere drinking tea with your kidnappers. Drinking tea with men who put their hands on their hearts. I don’t want to tell our child that the last time I saw their father he was on fire on the internet. I want to talk about your fantastic escape. I want to describe what it was like when you came home. When you stepped off the plane. When you first caught sight of me. When you smiled.