

BBC RADIO DRAMA

RADIO 4 AFTERNOON DRAMA

A HISTORY OF PAPER

by Oliver Emanuel

Him MARK BONNAR

Her LUCY GASKELL

BBC MAIDA VALE STUDIO 6, LONDON W9 2LG

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CA: Rosalind Gibson & Rebecca Wright

DIRECTED BY KIRSTY WILLIAMS

you float like a feather

in a beautiful world ó

Radiohead.

Characters

HIM, *Scottish, 30s.*

HER, *English, 30s.*

Scene 2.His Glasgow flat. 1999.Music plays: Creep by Radiohead.

1. HIM: A postcard. Shoved through my letterbox at approximately quarter past midnight on Vwgufc{"6vj"Fgegodgt"3;;;0"Kvøu almost vjg"oknngppkwo0"Køo"4;0"O{"iktnhtkpgpf" left six months ago, taking everything cpf"Køxg"urgpv"gxgt{"gxgpkpi"ukpeg" getting drunk and listening to Radiohead at full-volume. (*Shrugs*) I know, I know. Pathetic. Dv"kvøs the only album the woman left me and I find it comforting.
2. Then the postcard falls onto the doormat and everything changes.
3. Sometimes a piece of paper can do that.

Scene 3.

4. HER: A History of Paper.

Scene 4.

A book is opened, a page turned.

1. HER:

Introduction. Paper is everywhere.

Kvøu"vtwg0"Nqgm"ctqwpf"{qw0"

Vjgtgøu"vkuuwg"rcrgt"hqt"dnqykpi"{qwt"
nose. Paper money for buying things.
Letters, shopping lists, bus tickets,
train tickets, cinema tickets, confetti,
passports, postcards, love notes, hate
mail, toilet roll, newspapers, bills,
more bills, posters, last will and
testament, and post-it notes to remind
you not to forget that thing you always
forget.

Imagine your life without paper for a
second.

Ecpøv"fq"kv."ecp"{qwA

Paper is essential to our lives. Our
spiritual, educational, legal and sex
lives. We write our dreams on paper. We
tell our secrets. Paper is an expression
of our deepest selves. Paper is us.

1. HER: Cpf"kvøu"gxgt{yjgtg0

An autumn day. A tree in the wind. Leaves falling.

Scene 5.

1999. He turns the postcard in his hand.
Music continues...

2. HIM: Kvøu"c"rqvectf"qh"c"dgcej0"Qp"vjpg"dcem"
are the words:

3. HER: Hello Number 4. Please could you shut up?
Your music is doing my bloody head in.
Thanks. Number 6.

4. HIM: What the - ?

5. HIM: Dqpøv"mpqy"vjpg"pgkijdqwtu0"Køo"pqv"
unfriendly but Køxg"dggp"eqookvvgf"vq"o{"
own misery these last months and not been
paying proper attention.

He goes to the stereo and switches off
the music.

Scene 6.

Rtgugpv"fc{0"Jgøu"rkemkpi"vjtgwij"vjg"dqz"
of paper.

1. HIM: Know you're in here somewhere. Where are you? *(He finds the rose)* Ah.

2. HIM: **Flattened and a bit faded, vjg"rcrgtøu" old. But a rose is a rose is a rose.**

He sniffs it.

3. **That dusty paper smell. Like whisky and rain and skin and everything brilliant. Is there a better smell in the world?**

Scene 7.

1999. The next morning. A knock on his door.

He opens it, yawning.

4. HIM: Hello?

5. HER: Oh. Hey -

1. HIM: **Kvøu"jgt0"K"fqpøv"mpqy"kv"{gv"dvw"kv"ku0**
2. HIM: Can - can I help you?
3. HIM: **Køo"uwffgpn{"cyctg"vjcv"Køo"ygctkpi"o{"
owoøu"qnf"ftguukpi"iqyp"cpf my skin is
unkem"ykvj"uygcv"htqo"ncuv"pkijvøu"
whisky.**
4. HER: I'm from next door. Number 6.
5. HIM: **Ujgøu"ygctkpi"c"fctm"dnwg"rkpuvtkrg"uwkv0"
Her hair is bright pink and done up in a
tight knot. She has very pale skin and
big green eyes.**
6. HIM: Oh.
7. HIM: **And she is stunningly, mind-blowingly,
embarrassingly beautiful ó**
8. HIM: I - I'm really sorry about the noise. I
didn't realise -
9. HIM: **I ccpøv look her in the eye ó**
10. HER: No it's cool -
11. HIM: No it's not, it's awful, I'm sorry -

1. HIM: **Cpf"vjgtgøu"vjcv"oqogpv... like turning a page, when the next thing could be anything, you have no idea, and all you can do is hope ó**
2. HIM: Dunno if you have plans tonight or -
3. HER: No, I don't I -
4. HIM: As an apology for the noise -
5. HER: No that's -
6. HIM: I understand if you don't want -
7. HER: Yeah... That sounds great.
8. HIM: **Kv"ycu"vjg"tqug0"Vjcvøs what swung it for me, I reckon. A piece of folded paper.**
9. HIM: Great. I'll knock on your door at 7.
10. HER: Great.
11. HIM: Great.

They smile. She walks away. He closes the door.

Scene 8.

Pages are turned.

1. HER: **Chapter 99. The Last Piece of Paper.**

Kvøu"vjg"gpf"qh"vjg"yqtnf0"Cnoquv0

The librarian breathes through an oxygen mask and walks slowly down a metallic walkway...

2. **The trees are gone. The rivers and oceans are gone. The natural resources of the earth are deep in the red. Those humans that have survived are forced to live in underground bunkers. A solitary librarian, dwelling deep in the Himalayas, is on his final round of the day...**

The librarian opens an airlock...

3. **The librarian knows the stories of the past. A paper-rich past. When the world consumed a million tonnes of paper a day.**

He continues to walk...

1. HER: **He knows the numbers so well, knows them
like a prayer, even though their meaning
ycu"nquv"nqpi"ciqí**
2. HIM: *(Reading through the oxygen mask) 0-7-7-
1-6-3-1-6-7-1.*

Scene 9.

1999. Pizza Express. Evening.

They are eating pizzau0"Jgøu"kp"okf"hnqy.

Music plays: Creep by Karen Souza.

3. HIM: ...but it's the end of the world, eh.
Don't misunderstand me. I'm not religious
or anything. Don't believe in star signs
or the rapture. Not superstitious, walk
under ladders all the time, I've broken
tonnes of mirrors -
4. HER: How?
5. HIM: What?
6. HER: How did you break a tonne of mirrors?

1. HIM: Long story. Worked in a factory once.
It's stupid. The mirrors aren't the point
-
2. HER: What's the point?
3. HIM: Everything's going to stop. Cease. End.
In less than a month.
4. HER: Do you really buy this Y2K thing?
5. HIM: Totally. Don't you?
6. HER: Well...
7. HIM: Think about it. The whole world's run by
computers. Banks, air-traffic control.
Even the little strip on your train
ticket is read by a computer.
8. HER: What's the worst that could happen?
9. HIM: Planes fall out of the sky. Governments
collapse. I miss my train for work.
10. HER: Wouldn't it be kinda peaceful?
11. HIM: Peaceful?

1. HIM: Weirdo.

They eat pizza.

2. HIM: Yjgpøs the moment of love? Is it now? Or was it ten minutes ago? There must be a moment, aye. Feel like if I knew when it was I could understand but nqy"kvøu"nkmg" something is pulling at me, like a rock, nkmg"itcxkv{"Køo"hcnnkpi"cpf"hcnnkpi"cpf" vjgtgøu"pqvjkipi"K"ecp"fq0

Slight pause.

3. HER/HIM: So you were saying about that thing/ What did you say before when I - ?

They stop.

4. HIM: Go ahead.

5. HER: You.

6. HIM: Tell me about yourself. What's it you do?

7. HER: I'm a journalist. Freelance. I cover lifestyle. Travel and food, mostly.

8. HIM: Impressive.

1. HER: Not really. A lot of lonely nights and terrible meals.
2. HIM: Aye and 5 star hotels.
3. HER: It's tough.
4. HIM: (*Mocking*) I'm so so sorry.
5. HER: And it's a disaster for relationships, of course. Never around for more than a couple of weeks, never in the same place, always on the move. Most men don't like that.
6. HIM: Fools.
7. HER: Yeah but it's my fault really. It's who I am. I get bored easily.
8. HIM: Is that why you do that to your hair?
9. HER: (*Touching her hair*) What? Don't you like it?
10. HIM: No I do -
11. HER: Is there something wrong with it?

1. HIM: No no. I didn't mean it like that. Pink suits you.

2. HER: I never thought of it before. I suppose

1. HIM: I'm trying. Very good at Chapter 1s. I've got Chapter 1s nailed. It's the rest of it I'm missing.
 2. HER: Sure you'll finish a book one day.
 3. HIM: Aye. Maybe.
 4. HER: You will. I know it.
 5. HIM: **Ujgøu"dgkpi"nice. I know she is. Yet the way she says it."kvøu"iqv"vjg"hqteg"qh"c" prediction.**
- Slight pause.
6. HER: Will you make something for me now?
 7. HIM: Eh?
 8. HER: Some origami.
 9. HIM: Really?
 10. HER: Why not?
 11. HIM: O...kay. Give me that paper mat. (*She passes her paper mat*) The paper's got to be square.

1. HER: Why?

2. HIM: That's the rule.

He tears the paper to make a square and
begins to fold. All this as he makes the
crane...

3. HER: You've got very big hands.

4. HIM: Do I?

5. HER: Yeah.

6. HIM: And what does that signify?

7. HER: Mmmm. Big hands mean good for folding.

8. HIM: (*Laughs*) Ha. We'll see, won't we?

9. HER: What's it gonna be?

10. HIM: Hmm. For you, I reckon it'll be a crane.

11. HER: A crane?

12. HIM: The bird not the big mechanical thingy.

1. HIM: Almost. All we have to do is flip it over and blow its stomach.

2. HER: Shut up.

3. HIM: Seriously. Go on. Blow.

He holds it up and she blows. The crane inflates.

4. There you go. Bob's your mother's brother.

5. HER: Brilliant.

6. HIM: It's nothing.

7. HER: Thank you.

8. HIM: My pleasure.

A beat.

1. HER: Wait a second. Have you got a pen?

2. HIM: Er. Not on me.

3. HER: I've got one in my bag.

She goes into her handbag and finds a pen.

4. Give me that bit of paper.

He hands it over and she scribbles on it.

5. HIM: What's this?

6. HER: My number.

7. HIM: But... you live next door. Are you moving?

8. HER: I'm going on assignment tomorrow. That's my mobile. Give me a ring and we can do this again sometime. If you want to, that is.

Scene 10.

A few pages are flicked. A train leaves a station.

1. HER:

Chapter 37. Hemingwa{øu"uwkvecug0

**The year is 1922. Kvøu"cp"ke{"Fgegodgt"kp"
Paris. A young woman named Hadley boards
a train at the Gare De Lyon to meet her**

1. HER: If nothing else, the tale of Ernest Jgokpiyc{øu"missing suitcase is proof vjcv"kvøu"pqv"always the paper itself vjcv"jcu"xcnwg"dvw"yjcvøs written on it.

The train hoots its horn as it disappears into a tunnel.

SCENE 11.

3;;;0"Jgøu"tcpucemkpi"jku"Incuiqy"hncv.

2. HIM: WHERE IS IT?
3. HIM: I was Mr Cool. Seriously.
4. HIM: I HAD IT. DEFINITELY.
5. HIM: I came home, put the scrap of paper with her number on it in the special place on the mantelpiece and waited two days. Two whole days. I was a zen master, eh.
6. HIM: AHHHHH.

1. HIM:

1. HIM: What do I do now? I'm gonna have to move house or something...

A knock at the door.

He sits up.

Another knock.

2. Wait!

He scrambles to the door and opens it.

Kvøu" jgt.

3. Hello?

4. HER: Oh. Hey -

5. HIM: You're back.

6. HER: Last night.

7. HIM: How are you? How was your trip?

8. HER: Crazy. Berlin. The lights and the market. They do Christmas like no-one else.

9. HIM: They invented it, aye.

1. HER: Huh?
2. HIM: Christmas. The Germans invented Christmas. I mean, the tree and Santa and that...
- Slight pause.
3. HER/HIM: So I was gonna say I/ I don't know if you knew but -
- They stop.
4. HIM: Go ahead.
5. HER: You.
6. HIM: No you.
7. HER: I lost my mobile.
8. HIM: Oh.
9. **Oh.**
10. HER: It's a total brick but I'm an idiot and managed to leave it somewhere. I'm always losing things -

1. HIM: Aye me too -
2. HER: And I was sad cos obviously I'll have to buy a new one and they cost a fortune and my boss will shout at me but also cos maybe you'd called and -
3. HIM: Aye -
4. HER: I can't get my messages, you see. I'm so sorry -
5. HIM: No bother.

A beat.
6. HER: So what did it say?
7. HIM: Mmmm?
8. HER: Your message. You said you left a message. What did it say?
9. HIM: Oh well it wasn't -
10. HER: Cos I'm not sure what your schedule is over the next couple of weeks. You're probably busy with the bookshop with the mad shopping rush and family Christmas stuff -

1. HIM: Well aye but -

2. HER: But I was wondering if you have plans for
New Year. Hogmanay. The Millennium. If

Scene 12.

The pages are turned. The music continues.

1. HER

Appendix. The danger of Chinese lanterns.

The UK government has recently set out new legislation concerning paper hot-air balloons, commonly known as Chinese lanterns. These popular toys consist of a wooden frame, tissue paper skin and a fuel cell. The dangers enumerated in the new law include environmental impact, fire hazard, as well as possible interference with air traffic control. Chinese lanterns have been blamed for a dramatic rise in UFO sightings. In addition, a government spokesperson introducing the white paper said they could be dangerously romantic and may lead to feelings of attraction between a man and a woman on a beach at midnight on the last night of the world...

Scene 13.

3 ; ; ; 0 "Vjg" dgcej" cv" Pgy" [gctøu" Gxg.

Ujgøu" rwvvpki" vjg" hkpcn" vqwejgu" vq" vjg"
Chinese lantern.

1. HIM: Isn't this dangerous?
2. HER: Nah.
3. HIM: Feels a bit dangerous.
4. HER: How? It's paper and wood and glue.
5. HIM: And a naked flame.
6. HER: It's just a wee candle. What harm could it do?
7. HIM: Did I mention that I'm a total wimp when it comes to these things? I hate breaking rules. I'm not brave or chilled out in any way.
8. HER: That's okay.
9. HIM: Is it?

1. HER: I'm brave enough for both of us.
2. HIM: But what if, I'm saying, *what if* it crashes into a thatched cottage and sets the thatch ablaze and starts a raging fire that razes an entire village and kills a hundred people?
3. HER: A thatched cottage?
4. HIM: They exist.
5. HER: Look around you. We're miles away from anywhere.
6. HIM: Aye but -
7. HER: You made the crane for me. I've made this for you. Do you want it or not?

He thinks.
8. HIM: Aye I do.
9. HER: Good. Now shut up and pass me the lighter. (*She takes the lighter and tries to light the candle*) Dammit. This wind.
10. HIM: How if I stand like this...?

He moves. She tries again. It lights.

1. HER: Ah. There we go!

2. HIM: Now what?

3. HER: We wait for the lantern to fill up with hot air. Hold it steady.

Slight pause.

The sea and the darkness and the night.

4. HIM: Well... this is nice.

5. HER: Isn't it?

6. HIM: Very nice. It's nice.

7. HER: Nice is the word.

8. HIM: Cold and windy -

9. HER: Only a bit windy -

10. HIM: True -

11. HER: And nice. Very nice.

1. HIM: Exactly.
2. HER: A nice way to spend the apocalypse.
3. HIM: The only way, I heard.

Slight pause.
4. HER: Unbelievably dark isn't it? Can't even see the sea.
5. HIM: Must be there somewhere.
6. HER: What if the world has ended already and we've missed it?
7. HIM: Oh no. Didn't think of that...
8. HER: For all we know, the world has ended in a technological holocaust and folk are this minute wandering the streets in their pyjamas unable to get cash out of their banks or change the channels on their TVs.
9. HIM: *Oh the horror! The horror!*
10. HER: Where's that from?

1. HIM: A book by some bloke.
2. HER: Excellent.
3. HIM: This is much better.
4. HER: Two people on a beach on the west coast of Scotland in January, slowly freezing to death.
5. HIM: Are you freezing to death?
6. HER: A bit.
7. HIM: Do you want my scarf?
8. HER: (*Shakes her head*) You're alright. I'll let you know before I finally expire.

Slight pause.
9. HIM: Is this something you do a lot, aye?
10. HER: Not really.
11. HIM: Now she tells me.

1. HIM: Eight... seven... six...

2. BOTH:

Slight pause.

1. HIM: Are you dead yet?

2. HER: Almost.

3. HIM: Come here. I'll try and revive you.

She goes to him, he holds her and they
kiss.

4. HER: Hello.

5. HIM: Hello.

6. HER: So that was the end of the world was it?

7. HIM: Aye apparently but we're still alive.

8. HER: Yeah.

9. HIM: So what happens now?

Music plays: Creep by Solala.

Scene 14.

Rtgugpv"fc{0"Jgøu"uqtvkpi"vjtgwij"vjg"
box.

1. HIM: Why is it we forget the special things
 but the trivial stuff never leaves us,
 eh? I want to remember what she wore that
 night and how it felt when she kissed me
 for the first time.

Ogoqt{øu"cruel."Køo"vgnnkpi"{qw0

Vjcvøu"yj{ kvøu"korqtvcpv"vq"mggr"vjkipu0"
 Even the most meaningless scrap can say
 so much.

He pulls things out of the box.

2. A shopping list for the chicken and mash
 I made that first time she came round.

Ticket stubs for *Being John Malkovich*
 which I loved and she hated.

The kitchen roll on which 4Tarfse

1. HIM: The postcards from when she was away,
from Australia, Thailand and Brazil.

A ticket stub from the Great Wall of
China.

Vjku"ku"vjg"uvwhh"ygøtg"ocfg"qh."c{g0"Pqv"
flesh and blood or even twitter
fqnnqygtu0"Kvøu"vjg"vjkipiu."vjg"nkvvng"
vjkipiu."yg"ngcxg"dgjkpf0"Kh"vjcvøu"iqpg"
then what are we?

She fkipøv keep anything. When she moved
in, it took fifteen minutes. Only had two
suitcases and a shelf of DVDs.

Glasgow. 2000. He puts down a box,
breathing deeply.

2. HIM: Is that it?

3. HER: What else do I need?

4. HIM: Are you an international spy? Or planning
a quick getaway?

5. HER: (Smiles) You'll have to wait to find out.

They kiss.

Back to the present day.

1.

Scene 15.

A page is turned. Blossom blows in the wind.

1. HER:

Chapter 25. Confetti.

Kvøs 1875. The merchant Enrico Mangili has started selling paper confetti in his shop in the centre of Milan. Up until this point confetti in Italy has traditionally been sweets or sugar coated cnoqpfu."gxgp"dkvu"qh"htwkv0"Ocpiknkøu" moment of genius came whilst wondering through the silk merchants in the city. He noticed the paper off-cuts used for the silk yqtoøs bed resembled petals from a flower yet were far less costly than the real thing. In less than a decade, Ocpiknkøu"kpxgpvkqp"becomes the common confetti across Europe and the USA.

Currently, the largest collection of confetti listed in the Guinness Book of Records belongs to Casey Larrain of Chatsworth, California, and amounts to 1447 varieties.

Casey says her favourites are shaped like the characters from *The Wizard of Oz*.

1. HER: Are you drunk, husband?
2. HIM: Aye it's a possibility, wife.
3. HER: Lovely.
4. HIM: WE GOT MARRIED.
5. HER: Yeah we did.
6. HIM: Why are you on the ground? You'll get your dress dirty.
7. HER: Doesn't matter. Can you pass me that jar?
8. HIM: What jar?
9. HER: By your feet.
10. HIM: Oh aye.

He picks up the jar.
11. Where did you get this?
12. HER: I pinched it from the kitchen.
13. HIM: What?

1. HER: What?
2. HIM: You stole it? I married a thief!
3. HER: Oh get over it.
4. HIM: What's it for?
5. HER: To keep the confetti in. I've got enough now. Give it to me.

She gets to her feet and takes the jar off him and puts the confetti in it.

6. HIM: But - but you never keep anything.
7. HER: Well it's not just any old confetti is it? It's our confetti. I know that it's silly but I wanted to keep some to remember the day.
8. HIM: **Easy to forget wøf"qpn{"dggp"vqigvjgt"c" short time. I could still be surprised by things she did. Every day, in fact. I fkfpøv"okpf0"Ocfg"og"nqyg"jgt"oqtg0**

He smiles.

9. HIM: You're so weird.

He pulls something out, it tears.

1. HIM: Bugger.

2. HIM: Yjcvøu"vjg"oquv"korqtvcpv"rkgeg"qh"rcrgt"
kp"{qwt"nkhgA"Vjg"vjkipi"{qwøf"ucxg"kp"c"
fire. Your passport? A note from a dead
friend?

Køxg"vjqwijv"cdqvw"kv"cv"nqv. When it
eqogu"fqyp"vq"kv."Køf"rtqdcnd{"itcd"
whatever terrible novel was beside my bed
and watch the rest of it burn.

Køo"c"eqpvtcfkevkkp0"

He stops, sits backs and breathes deeply.

3. There atg"uq"ocp{"vjkipiu"okuukpi0"K"ecpøv"
find our wedding certificate. Looked but
kvøu"iqpg0"Suppose kv"fqgupøv"octter
now...

And the letter. Aye. *The letter.*

Remember, this was back in the days when
we were still figuring out emails. Folk
wrote letters to each other. Skype ycupøv"
even a word.

1. HIM: The letter was the most momentous thing that either of us ever received. When did it arrive? I forget the day. It was the summer. Morning. She came into the kitchen waving it at me, while I was having my breakfast. It meant ó

Scene 18.

2001. Summer. The kitchen.

Jgøu" gcvkpi" egtgcn0" Ujg" gpvgtu. "ycxkpi" c"
letter.

2. HER: Look! Look at this!
3. HIM: What?
4. HER: Looky looky look.
5. HIM: You're flapping it around, woman. Can't see -
6. HER: It's the letter. (She shows him)
7. HIM: Fantastic.

1. HIM: **The significant ex. A charming, good-looking editor of a big New York magazine franchise. They were together for two years. I once asked why they broke up and she said he was too good looking and charming and she constantly felt inadequate. She thought this answer was tgcuuwtkpi0"Kv"ycupøv0"**

2. HER: Duncan got in touch and I applied.

3. HIM: Didn't know you still spoke.

4. HER: Only professionally, darling. There's nothing sinister.

5. HIM: And so you got the job?

6. HER: An interview.

7. HIM: *(honestly)* Congratulations!

8. HER: Well we'll see. Never thought I'd get this far. It would be a big step up.

9. HIM: You're totally ready for it.

10. HER: An actual permanent job. Can you imagine? We could actually afford to buy things.

Scene 20.

September 11th 2001. New York. The Tick
Tock diner.

1. HIM: I fgpøv"jcxg"vjg"ngvvgt"dwv"K"fq"have all the pieces of paper from New York. The yellow Metrocard, the receipt from the Tick Tock diner near Penn Station where we had an early breakfast that morning. If I hold the receipt up to the light the date is faded but just about legible.

(reads) September 11th 2001.

2. HER:

1. HER: The view will be amazing.
2. HIM: **She was nervous. Hands twitchy by her side, her big eyes blinking constantly.**
3. HIM: I never told you this before but I'm actually a wee bit scared of heights.
4. HER: You're not.
5. HIM: Legs get all wobbly and my eyes go blurry.
6. HER: You're a plonker.
7. HIM: Can't deny it.
8. HER: Who comes to New York and doesn't go up a skyscraper?
9. HIM: Well I can't come with you anyway. You've got your interview.
10. HER: You could sit in the lobby and look at

1. HER: What about killer bees with mouths like sharks?
2. HIM: Why are you doing this to me?
3. HER: I'M SCARED AND I WANT YOU TO COME WITH ME.
4. HIM: Yj{"fkfpøv"K"iq"ykvj"jgtA"Kp"o{"fctmguv" moments, I wish I had. Kvøu"c"dki" question. Is it better to feel the pain of remembering or never to have had the memory in the first place?

Qxgt"vjpg"pgzv"hgy"oqpvju."kvøu"this above all else I play over and over in my mind.
5. HIM: (*shaking his head*) Sorry, babe.
6. HER: I hate you.
7. HIM: Fair enough.
8. HER: I don't really. I love you. (*She kisses him on the cheek*).
9. HIM: You'll be brilliant. Amazing. I know it. Just breathe and try not to worry.

1. HER: How do I look?
2. HIM: Flipping gorgeous. Let me take a picture.
3. HIM: **I pull out the disposable camera I bought at JFK. This is the only picture I take**
vjcv"fc{0"Kvøu"vjg"qpg"K"rwv"qp"cnn"vjg"

1. HIM: What? Me?

2. HER: I forgot to say he asked us to dinner later.

3. HIM: You mean *you*. He asked *you* to dinner later.

4. HER: Both of us. He's married now.

5. HIM: Is he? Why didn't you say before?

6. HER: I enjoy torturing you.

7. HIM: You're a cruel woman. A monster. Knew it the first time I set eyes on you.

8. HER: Will you be here when I'm done? Shouldn't be more than an hour. 10 o'clock at the latest. There's a Starbucks in the basement.

9. HIM: I'll be there.

10. HER: What are you doing now?

11. HIM: Going to wander about the island. Get lost.

1. HER: Don't get too lost.

2. HIM: I won't.

She takes a deep breath.

3. HER: Here I go.

4. HIM: Good luck good luck good luck!

5. HER: See you later, darling.

6. HIM: **And she kisses me on the mouth.**

She kisses him.

7. **And u jgøu"twppkpi"qvw"vjg"fqqt0"**

She walks away.

8. **And as she reaches the door, she looks
back, smiles and waves.**

She waves.

9. **Cpf"vjcvøu"kv0**

The first plane hits the north tower. A massive explosion.

Live news reports from CNN, NBC, BBC cut in and overlap.

1. CNN: This just in. You are looking at - obviously a very disturbing live shot there of the - that is the World Trade Centre and we have unconfirmed reports this morning that a plane has crashed into one of the towers -

2. NBC: We have a breaking news story to you about. Apparently a plane has crashed into the World Trade Centre here in New York City. It happened just a few moments ago. We have very little information -

3. BBC: And we're getting reports of a plane crash at the World Trade Centre in New York City. You can see the pictures there. It's one of New York's tallest buildings. That's all the information we know at the moment -

Scene 21.42230"Jgøu"ycnmkpi"kp"Ocpjcvvcp.

1. HIM: The sidewalks of Manhattan are built for walking. Wide and dirty and the grid system means you can always find your way back.

Køo"vgp"dnqemu"cyç{"yjgp"vjg"hktuv"rncpg"
hits the north tower.

Sirens. Running. Panic.

2. Kpuvcpvn{"vjgtgøu"rcpke"cpf"eqphwukqp0"
Sirens and shouting. Police and fire trucks speed along the streets like a scene from a film. I begin to run.

He runs.

3. Ncvgt."kvøs the smoke folk remember. That rolling grey cloud of masonry and iron
vjcv"mggru"eqokpi"cpf"eqokpi0"Dwv"vjcvøu"
not what I remember.

He stops and looks up.

4. Kvøu"vjg"rcrgt0

Vjgtgøu"rcrgt"gxgt{yjgtg0

1. HIM: It falls from the sky and out across the
 lower part of the island.

Paper floating like feathers.

1. HIM:

The greatest mystery of that day turned
qwv"vq"dg"vjg"rcrgt0"Yj{"fkfpøv"kv"dwtPA"
In the inferno of the collapsing towers,
steel and marble and iron were turned to
dust. Yet for weeks and weeks after the
attacks on the Twin Towers, folk found
business letters, diaries and bank
statements completely intact all across
the island of Manhattan.

How did it happen? How did something so
flimsy and combustible like paper survive
when all those people died?

Scene 24.

Rtgugpv"fc{0"Jgøu"tgrncekpi"vjg"rcrgt"kp"
the box.

1. HIM:

I kept these bits of paper to remember
her. But what do they add up to, truly?

Even if I had all the paper, everything
she ever touched, kv"yqwnfpøv"ocmg"wr"hqt"
her not being here.

He finds a notebook.

1. HIM: Then one day, a year or so later, found myself singing along to a tune on the radio and I could speak again. Doctor f k f p ø v " m p q y " y j { 0

He replaces the notebook.

Music plays: Creep by Scala & Kolacny Brothers.

2. There was no body so no funeral. A lot of folk wrote letters. Lovely letters full of love for her, sorrow for me. E q w n f p ø v " read most of them, obviously.

He puts the letters back.

3. It was the junk mail that killed me. Her name written on a catalogue or a credit card offer and my heart lurched. It was like she was in the other room. Like I could walk through the door and hand it to her.

Felt sorry for the postman. I was always crying at him.

1. HIM: In the end, the only thing to do was to move house. You reach a point when you need to turn the page and start over, eh?

He closes the box and stands up.

Scene 25.

The book is opened. The first page is turned. A hundred insects buzzing.

2. HER: Chapter 1. Consider the wasp.

Kvøu"327"CF0"Cp"qhhkegt"qh"vjg"Ejkpgug"
cto{"ku"gzcokpkpi"cycuruø"pguv0"Jku"pcog"
ku"Vøuck"Nwp0"Nwpøu"itgcv"umknn"cu"c"
soldier is his ability to stand
incredibly still. Especially useful if
{qwøtg"qp"iwctf"fwv{"cv"vjg"rcnceg0"Or
when confronted by a hundred pissed off
insects with stings in their tails. Lun
had fallen asleep under the mulberry tree
cpf"jcfpøv"pqvkegf"vjg"dw||kpi0"Jg"ycu"
hoping to sneak off without injury when
he noticed what the creatures were up to.
Lun stands still, his face as close as he
dare. The wasps are stripping off the
bark, chewing it and spitting it out as a
white, brittle skin. An idea flashes at
the back of his mind. CONT.../

1. HER:

Scene 26.

Rtgugpv"fc{0"Jg"nkhvu"vjg"dqz0"Kvøu"
incredibly heavy.

1. HIM: Yesterday I sat down at the kitchen table
to write a letter. Ccpøv"tgogodgt"vjg"
last time I wrote a proper letter.

Scene 28.Present day. The letter continues.

1. HIM: The big pgyu"ku"vjcv"Køxg finally met someone. She lives in the village and yqtmu"cv"vjg"nqecn"uejqqn0"Ujgøu"pqv"cu" weird as you but she is excellent0"[qwøf" like her, I think.

Uq"yj{"co"K"ytkvkpiA"Vjcvøu"cxgt{"iqqf" question.

Jgøu"kp"vhe garden. He drops the box onto the grass.

2. Køxg"put everything in the box, all the bits of paper, and made a bonfire in the garden.

He takes out a lighter. Jgøu"dtgcvjkpi" rapidly.

3. I read somewhere that writing allows us to be present evgp"yjgp"ygøtg"pqv0"Kvøu" true. In writing, you come back to me.

And she comes back.

She walks down the garden path and stands next to him, looking down at the box of paper.

1. HER: What the hell are you doing here?
2. HIM: Well, I -
3. HER: Hey. Wait a second. Is that all my stuff?
4. HIM: Some of it, aye.
5. HER: All of it.
6. HIM: Well... the box is mine.

She grins at him.

7. HER: What are you waiting for then?
8. HIM: Eh?
9. HER: Get on with it. Not got all day.
10. HIM: No I -
11. HER: No point in hanging about, darling.
You've got the lighter. Do it.

1. HIM: Not made up my mind yet.
2. HER: Really?
3. HIM: Still thinking about it.
4. HER: Come on. You've dragged this heap of rubbish around with you for years and years. It's time.
5. HIM: It's not rubbish!
6. HER: Bits of old newspaper and receipts from Pizza Express?
7. HIM: There's other things too.
8. HER: A couple of nice postcards perhaps.

He shakes his head.
9. HIM: It's all I've got. All I've got left. Once it's gone, there will be nothing left of you.
10. HER: Not true.
11. HIM: Isn't it?

1. HER: I'm not a piece of paper, darling.

2. HIM: Aye I know, I know that but -

I forget. Every day. I forget how you look and what you said and how you dressed and how you looked when you were angry or sleeping and what you smelled like. I - I hate forgetting.

He is weeping.

3. This is all your fault.

4. HER: I know.

5. HIM: If you hadn't gone then I wouldn't be here.

6. HER: Yeah.

7. HIM: Pretty pissed off about it actually.

8. HER: Me too.

9. HIM: Try to tell myself that it's not the end of the world. Feel grateful for the time we had, not the time we didn't.

1. HER: Nice.
2. HIM: But it wasn't enough was it?
3. HER: No.
4. HIM: Not nearly enough. I can't even -

Then I think maybe if you'd lived,
you'd've got bored of me anyway. Changed
me like you changed your hair.
5. HER: (*smiles*) Anything is possible.
6. HIM: But - but whatever it is, I don't want to
feel like this anymore. Can't.

He wipes his eyes. Slight pause.

