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Mary and Martha

By Richard Curtis

My name is Mary Morgan,
and this is the story
of me and Martha.
I'm telling it to you
because it's still
all a surprise to me.
We start in April last year.
I haven't met Martha
at this point.
This is where I live.

BOY:

Oh! Oh! Ugh!
Got it!
It is officially
the smallest splinter
ever removed from a human foot.
That doesn't mean
it didn't hurt.
Oh, you are the biggest girl!
Although I don't know
why I say that
because I'm a girl,
and I never made
a sound like that.
Really did hurt.

MAN:

Somebody get me a microscope.
Come on, guys.
We got to get moving.
And don't forget that
I have book club tonight,
which means you two heroes
are on your own for dinner.
Will you please make it something
other than takeout pizza?
Never.
Extra pepperoni?
What's the book?
It's called "Birdsong."
The definitive novel
on World War I.
Pretty serious stuff.

WOMAN:

Ben!
What?
You're nearly 15 minutes late.
You're gonna miss the train.
No, I won't.
Yes, you will!
No, I won't, because
I'm a young person,
and therefore,
I travel faster than you,
who's getting quite old now.
You cheeky bugger.
Now some tea and cake?
No! Your totally
too late for tea.
Now go on, get out the door
before you're really
in trouble.
All right. Just...
just make me a slice of toast, will you,
while I put on my shoes?
Give me strength.

BEN:

What?!
Where are my shoes?
Hey!
Come and talk to your mom.
One second.
I'm almost finished
with my jungle city.
Gonna build Death Star later.
OK.
It's your choice,
though I may just turn
into a Death Star if you
never speak to me again.
Take him! Take him!
Coming at you!
Go on, Benji!
Tackle the ginger bastard!
Come on!

Ohh!

Ha ha ha!

[SHEEP BLEATING]

George, bed.

George?

George.

WOMAN:

We have 5 of these.

Just move through mud.

Keep the lower back drawn down,
navel into the spine.

In and...

And he writes

like a 5-year-old.

And that goon Scanlon.

He spends 90% of
his time preparing
the kids for tests,
and the other 10% when they can
actually be learning something,
they're watching DVDs.

Huh.

I mean, they're supposed to be
studying Greek history,

and they're watching

"Clash of the Titans."

Alice, it's not funny.

I'm telling you,

something's gonna change.

Oh, I don't know, you know?

I mean, I think maybe

you should take it

a bit easy on George

at the moment.

Take it easy? What?

This is precisely the time

I've got to save him.

He's my only son.

I've got to hone him.

Yes, but I'm sure he's

feeling pretty sensitive

with the whole bullying thing.

What bullying thing?

What bullying?
Apparently he's getting
bullied at school,
and he doesn't want
to talk about it,
and I hear about it from
goddamned Alice in Pilates.
All right.
Well, I'll call the principal
and make an appointment
immediately.
I'll fix it.
I don't know if I can wait.
No, you'll wait, OK?
This is serious.
We'll do it properly.

MAN:

Mary, I would strongly
advise we take this slowly.
You know, these things are always
more complex than they seem.
OK. OK.
The first battles
of the War of the Revolution
were fought at Lexington and...

MAN:

Sorry to disturb.
Mrs. Morgan and I would just like
to have a quick word with you.
Right, but first,
I'd like to have
a quick word
with Felix and Matthew
because your asses
are mine, you little thugs.
Oh, my God.
Don't swear.
Did you honestly think that
was gonna make it better?
Yeah, I did.
Well, you were wrong.
It's hard enough making

friends without your mom
making enemies.

I'm sorry.

[BELL RINGS]

And I was stupid.

Are we gonna go?

Shh. I'm thinking.

I'm leaving you.

Excuse me?

I'm leaving you.

Is it because of my strictly
sexual affair with Anita?

You're having an
affair with Anita?

Well, maybe I am,
maybe I'm not.

I'm trying to guess why you
would possibly want to leave me.

OK. Well,

I'm not leaving you permanently,
but I do want to ask you
if I can take George out
of school, take him away
and teach him myself
and have an adventure.

You know,

I just think he'll do better with me
than in the hands of the people
who are teaching him now.

Honey, can't we just take him away
for the summer like normal people?

No. That's two
months away.

We'll lose him inside
his computer by then.

You know, in the school,
they didn't even know
that those kids
were bullying him.

I don't know.

Taking him out of school is... is extreme.

Yeah, it's extremely fun,
and I think it
should be abroad.

Is this the start of a long and
serious conversation with me,
his father,
or have you made up your mind?
Guess.

Yes!

What is it?

They said yes!

They... they thought

I was brilliant.

It doesn't actually
say that, does it?

Well no, but it implies it.

The implication of every
word is they think
that I'm totally brilliant.

"Thank you for your
application,
which we have
accepted."

Yeah. What

do you think?

Well done, darling.

Do you know what?

I am so proud of you,
you great, stupid lump,
though I wish you were
going somewhere sensible
like France
or Belgium or somewhere.
Mum, France is too small.

I'm a big boy.

I need a big continent.

Get your feet off.

MAN:

north of Johannesburg,
but, uh, a million miles
from the world
as you might know it.
For less than you could
live at home,
let my family and I treat you
to a true African adventure.

The 3-bedroom house
is surrounded
by 500 acres...
What do you think
about South Africa?
Best scenery in the world,
best animals in the world,
totally affordable.
You know, nice but real.
You're really serious
about this, huh?
Yes!
I want to be
an extraordinary mom,
and to be an extraordinary mom,
I have to, at some point,
do something extraordinary.
Come with us.
Be an extraordinary dad.
Oh, that's fair.
I have 25 employees.
I know.
Bye.
Have a good day.
Love you.
Love you, too.

MAN ON TV:

kitchen for the striking miners.
Right at the bottom?
I'm reliably informed it's
absolute heaven there.
So what exactly is your job?
What subject are you teaching?
I don't know.
Everything.
I'll... I'll do sport,
reading, English.

MAN:

teaching English?
Sure as hell am.
Better learn how to speak
it properly yourself

first, then.
Oh, don't be so stuffy.
So will there be other
English people there?
I don't know.
Don't care.
I've met thousands
of English people.
I want to meet people
who aren't English.
Dad?
Yeah?
Will you buy me a nice, big,
really expensive camera
so I can take
millions of photos
while I'm out there?
No, I won't.
Thank you.
Brilliant.

MARY:

I have something huge to say.
Ready?
Are you having another baby?
No.
It's not that.
It's not that.
Good because nobody
really likes to think
about their parents having...
Yeah, I know.
It's disgusting.
Well, it is.
Take a deep breath
because I had a big idea.
I've decided we're going
away for 6 months.
I take a rest from designing,
you quit school,
and we go live in Africa.
Dad joins us when he can,
and together, we have
the biggest adventure

of our lives ever.
Like Swiss family Morgan.
What do you think?
If you guys really want a baby,
I'm cool with that.
Can I say no?
No.

WOMAN:

in the Johannesburg area?

MARY:

may roam a bit.
Well, malaria, but it's
winter over there,
so that shouldn't be a problem.
OK, and, uh, tetanus
and diphtheria?
He's up to date on those.
And it says one more.
Measles, mumps, rubella.
Yep, all up to date.
Great!
Thank you, doctor. Bye.
OK, good-bye.
Good to go.

MAN ON TV:

leaky faucets or rusty tiles.
Here you go.
More socks.
Apparently it gets
quite cold at night.
I'm not gonna be wearing
socks in Africa,
not with these beautiful feet.
Mom, seriously.
What...
You ready for this?
I am.
My experience,
Mom's usually right.
Yeah, I guess so.
Say, "Cheese!"

Cheese!
Cheese!
Heh heh.
Perfect.
Hurry up.
You'll be late.
I love you both.
Mind how you go, darling.
Love you, son.
Ugh! Heh heh.
Bye!
Bye!
Take care.
Bye!
[PEOPLE ULULATING]
Hi!
Hello, Mrs. Morgan.
Hello.
Hi, Mr. George.
Hi.
I'm Pumalele.
Pumalele?
Yes.
Nice to meet you.
Wow! It's colder
than I thought.
Oh, yeah. It's
almost winter here,
and so it's sometimes cold,
but don't worry, ma'am.
I'm going to be
summer all afternoon.
Would you like some
music as we drive?
Yeah, please.
OK.
School starts now.
What's this?
Your first assignment.
Whatever catches your eye.
George, can you please
take your iPod off?
This is also part
of your education.

You're kidding.
What? No, no.
Chastity Brown.
A very great lady.
You like country and western?
Yeah. It's my favorite
kind of music.
Wow. Like Dolly Parton
and Tim McGraw?
That's a little bit
old-school.
Wait. So we're not
gonna get any
Ladysmith Black Mambazo?
Not in my car.
[CAMERA CLICKS]
One bite?
I've had one bite.
OK. One step
at a time.
Here you go.
Patience, is that right?
Yes, ma'am.
Patience.
Um, do you happen to
have anything,
um, I don't know,
more American in the kitchen?
She makes very good pizza.
No, you do pizza in Africa?
Of course.
Super crispy.
Do you, uh, mind making it two?
Two pizzas. OK.
Thank you.
Come on, a smile,
I know, that's too much to ask,
but a nod would be great.
Pizza a good thing?
Thank you.
Thank you.

MAN:

Uh, Kumi, right?

Yes, welcome.
Thank you.
I-I feel like
the prime minister.
This is amazing.
Yeah.
Do you mind if
I take some photos?
Go for it!
Is that OK?
They're beautiful children.
Um...
Here you go, yeah.
[THUNDER]
Can I?
What's wrong with your room?
OK. Just this once.
[RAIN FALLING]
Ugh. Did you
just let one fly?
Maybe.
Heh heh.
Maybe means yes,
and you didn't say, "Excuse me."
So you must be punished.
[LAUGHING]
Stop!
Pew!
It smells so bad!

MARY:

Weird.
Um, now I have
a serious curriculum
and a serious timetable...

KIDS:

And I thought I brought
a bunch of books...
on Africa,
but I don't know where the hell they are.
Now I did find these inside,
although they're from 1973.
We could just look it

up on the internet.
Yeah, that's a great idea.
OK, so what do we got?
The British Empire,
a bunch of Zulus,
a bastard named Rhodes,
Apartheid,
which is racism at its very worst,
and the incredible
Nelson Mandela.
Wears pretty strange shirts.
Yeah.
His moral sense is impeccable,
but his clothing sense...
Sucks.
Yeah. It sucks.

BEN:

to the final vote, OK?
Greatest African of all time.
All those supporting
Nelson Mandela,
defeater of Apartheid,
raise your hand.
Just... just Paul?
Ah. Right. OK.
And all those
for Didier Drogba,
ill-tempered striker
for some team in China
and the Ivory Coast?
All of you.
Do... do you know what...
do you know what, though?
It's almost equal,
and as luck would have it,
I have the casting vote,
so I vote for Nelson Mandela.
So Nelson Mandela it is...
No!
The greatest
African of all time
in this classroom today.
Yes, he does.

Wait, wait.

[CHANTING, "DIDIER DROGBA!"]

Nelson Mandela. No?

[DEEP VOICE] 10.

One day when I was
about your age,
very early in the morning,
my father wakes me up,
and he tells me,
"We're going for a ride,"
and after ten hours
stops at a village
and turns to me and says,
"Son, today you
become a man."
So we went into a corral,
you know, where
they keep the cows.
I was snipped down there, brah.
Covered head to toe in clay,
wrapped in a blanket,
and put in a hut
with other initiates
for one month.
Yeah.
I left the boy I was behind,
the day my father picked me up,
and I realized since then
that actually becoming a man
is a lifelong journey.

BEN:

keep hustling.
That's it. Tackle. Ohh!
Oh! Great play!
Pass, pass!
Ehhh!
Pass the ball!
Paul's got the ball!
He's got it, he's got it!
Here you go.
Who's gonna...
No, Ben! No, no, no!
This is rugby,

this is not football!

Get it! Ohh!

No! I don't believe it!

Ohh! Ohh! Help,

Micaela, help!

No! You cheat

you get punished!

Go! Whoo!

[CHEERING]

[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

We have a big day tomorrow.

Because it goes

all the way from dawn

right through to sunset.

[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

Hey, Mr. Ben.

Are you and Mrs. Micaela

going to do putla-putla?

Ha ha ha!

You're in big trouble.

[KIDS LAUGHING]

So what's the most

dangerous animal in Africa?

Got to it be a lion.

No, no.

Hippo, man, hippo!

Yeah. It's the hippo.

What about humans?

They got to be pretty

high on the list, right?

OK, number one, human.

Number two, hippo.

Number 3, black mamba snake.

[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

Let's go find the snake!

Let's go!

Yay!

Let's run again.

Let's run!

Let's run again!

[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

OK, dinner.

Can we just finish?

I beg your pardon.

Did you just say,
"Can I just finish?"
You want to extend the class?
Maybe.
Yes! Ha ha ha!
Yay!

GEORGE:

Yes?
Where are we going?
We are going out
there on a fieldtrip.
One schoolroom, not enough.
A whole continent...
that's more like it!
Yes. Today we go out
into the great unknown,
accompanied by our
fearless guide...
Hey.
And of course inevitably...
Country and western, bub.
You're lying to me.
There's not a thing out there.
Are you sure, my man?
Look properly, look there.
Wow!
Oh, my gosh!
They're tall.
Heh heh heh!
[SPEAK FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
Take care of your
mother, Mr. George!
No scuba diving
with the sharks.
OK! We'll miss you!
Oh, and Mrs. Morgan!
Yes, Pumi?
No one speaks English
there in Mozambique, OK?
Great.
The sun feels good, huh?
Yeah.
Glass in the window

is so last year.
In fact, there will be
an extra charge
because of the additional
ventilation afforded
by the no window scenario.
Heaven.

[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

Thank you.

We should bring Dad here.
He would completely freak out.
He's more of
a pizza-pasta guy.

True.

Ohh!

I think I just saw a rat.
I think I just ate one.
Did you and your mom or dad
ever hang out like this?

Mom, lots,
Dad, never.

Whenever we were on vacation,
he was in Washington.

Government bigwigs
don't take time off.

I don't ever remember him
on a beach or in shorts
or even hanging out
for that matter.

I like it.

What can I say?

It saves me money at Christmas.
You know, I'm starting to
rethink these mosquito nets.

Hmm?

They could be the height of fashion.

I could make a fortune.

Heh.

[MOSQUITO BUZZES]

[MOSQUITOES BUZZING]

[SHOUTING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

Gooooooooal!

Definitely a goal.

[CHEERING]

Yeah. Well played,
Mr. Beckham!
Whoo!
That was... I got it!
Awesome!
Nice work!

BEN:

Just a few more smiles.
No! No more photos.
Where are you going?
Oh, you have that
to look forward to.
Aah!
Gross.
Yeah, you say that now,
but love's pretty nice.
I think you'll enjoy it.
Why kid with me?
Sorry.
[SPEAKS FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
Thank you.
You know what?
I don't think I'll have any.
I'm not feeling great.
Really? What kind
of not great?
Just not great.
You know, there's
a limit as to how much
fish and rice a kid can eat.
Do you think they
poisoned the fish?
Mmm. I'm not sure
it was even fish.
We're lucky to get out alive.
I need to get you to a doctor.

MARY:

feel, baby?
Worse.
We're gonna get you
to the hospital,
and they're

gonna fix you all up,
and I'm gonna take you home,
and everyone there
is gonna pamper you.

Mom, stop, stop the car.

I'm gonna be sick.

Please stop. Stop.

OK, OK.

George?

Honey?

George?

[HORN HONKING]

George?

How much longer, Pumi?

We'll be there very soon.

How long?

We... we should

be 10 minutes.

OK? We'll be there soon,

I promise.

George?

Pumi, please hurry!

[HORN HONKING]

That's good.

I got you.

[SIRENS]

Here. Here you go.

MARY:

Please! Please, sir!

Hey, hi, yes.

How... how long has

he been like this?

About 3 days, I think.

3 days?

I thought he had the flu.

No, this isn't the flu.

Come, come with me.

I'm almost sure

your boy has malaria.

Malaria?

Yes, I'm afraid he's very sick.

But he's gonna be OK, right?

WOMAN:

help in here.
All right.
Get him some oxygen.
Please, ma'am.
Stay outside! Stay outside!
All right, give me
some diazepam there.

WOMAN:

10 milligrams of valium.
Let's go.
Let's not lose him.
I need pulse, respiration.
Quickly, quickly.
Clear the airway.
Suction it up. Come on.
Swipe it clean.
Hold him.
Let me get it in.
IV in.
Keep him still.
[BEEPING]
[BEEPING ACCELERATES]
[FLATLINE]

WOMAN:

has happened?
Check his pulse.
No pulse.
What?
He's not breathing.
Let's start compressions.
On my count.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9, 10,
11, 12, 13, 14, 15.
Two breaths.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9, 10,
11, 12, 13, 14, 15.
Two breaths.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9, 10,

11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Two breaths.

Still no pulse.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

6, 7, 8, 9, 10...

Come here.

[AIR PUFFS]

[AIR PUFFS]

[AIR PUFFS]

[DIALING]

[RINGING]

Hey, babe.

Peter?

[PEOPLE CRYING]

[WHISPERING] Peter,

I can see some people crying.

Can you ask them

to stop, please?

They hardly knew him.

If I can hold in my tears,

I would expect them

to do me the respect

and do the same.

I can't do that, sweetheart.

I won't...

I won't do that.

OK.

OK.

[DOOR CREAKS]

Your dad is here.

PASTOR:

in this solemn moment

to commend George Anthony Morgan

into the hands of Almighty God.

[INDISTINCT CHATTER]

Honey, your dad is still here.

I think he's about to go.

I don't want to see him.

You haven't said a

word to him all day.

The least you could

do is say good-bye.

Dad.

I'd forgotten
how beautiful it is here.
Maybe it's because you've
only been here twice.
If Dad hadn't left me and Mom,
I would have never
taken him away.
Mary.
No. It's true,
and I won't say it again,
and I will never say it to him.
I was trying to prove
to George that I would
always be on his side
and by his side
because my dad always put
his job before his family.
Always.
If he had loved me more,
our Georgie would still be alive.
And I can't sit here.
I can't sit at this table.
Where's George?
Where... where
is George?
I'm good.
Don't worry.
[CRICKETS CHIRPING]
[CHEERING]
[FIREWORKS EXPLODING]
Hey.
You ready?
I can't go out.
You know, at some point,
you have to leave the house.
Let's make it tonight.
There's a lot of people.
There's no focus on us.
What would I talk about?
Small... small talk.
You know, that's
what people do.
They... they talk
about small things.

It's what makes human
company bearable.
Bearable's our
highest goal right now.
You're right.
I should leave the house
but not to some party.
Well, OK.
Where do you want to go?
Back.

[INDISTINCT CHATTER]

[INSECTS BUZZING]

Hello?

Hi.

I'm Martha.

Do you mind if I join you?

Oh, no.

No, not... not at all.

Thanks.

My first day here.

Don't know what to order.

Well, you don't get a choice.

Oh, well, that's
all right then.

Not necessarily.

You don't look like the
normal clientele here.

No.

No, but if you don't mind my saying so,
neither do you.

Yeah.

I guess that's true.

My son came here,
sent me lots of photos,
but I wanted to see
it for myself.

What about you?

Yeah, well, I-I came
here with my son,
but we didn't we didn't...
we didn't get
s-so lucky.

Then I think we have
something in common.

MARY:

How old was he?

He was 24.

24? Oh. I thought...

somehow, I thought

they were always younger.

God, how stupid of me.

That's what Ben

thought, as well.

Gave all his pills away to

the children he was teaching.

Well, he was fit and strong,

thought he wouldn't need them.

I'm so sorry.

Yeah.

And I am so sorry, too.

Wow! Is he handsome!

Thank you.

Quite surprising, really,

coming from an old

thing like me.

No. So what was

he doing,

volunteering, a job?

Well, it was a bit

of both really.

He'd been to university,

but daft thing spent

most of his time

either playing rugby

and chasing girls.

Got no marks

in his exams at all,

so, um, to make most

of a bad job,

he thought, "I know.

"I'll go and teach in Africa.

That'll be

interesting."

Hmm.

And he completely fell

in love with it,

but then he made

his big mistake. Hmm.
Is that easier for you?
What?
That he made the mistake,
that you didn't make a mistake?
No.
Why? Do you
blame yourself?
I completely blame myself.
I am completely to blame.
So what are your plans, Mary?
I don't know.
You?
Well tomorrow,
I'm going to where Ben worked.
I just want to
see it, you know?
Can I come?
Yes, of course you can come!
I should think they'll
be thrilled to see you.
You're much prettier than I am.
Up early, though.
The bus leaves from

the jetty at 7:

Screw the bus.
I got a car.
Great!
That'll be much more comfy.
Micaela.
Yes.
His camera.
Yes.
He gave it to me
when he was sick.
I think you should have it.
No, no, no, no, no, no, no.
Look. If you do this,
you can see
all of his photos.
Oh, really?
That's a good,
little camera, isn't it?

He was very lucky
you were here.
Thank you.
And thank you for him.
Yes. A nice piece
of work.
I put a lot of work
into him over the years.

MARY:

but nowhere else?
Yes. One day we'll have
them everywhere,
but for now,
this is the most important place.
And what's wrong with
these little guys?
Jose, here had a fall,
and Manuel has diarrhea,
and like your sons,
Paul has malaria.
Is he going to be all right?
We hope so.
I have given him what
we have to treat it.
[SNORING]
I just wanted...
Yeah.
I'll go back to bed
in a little while.
Yeah.
Oh!
Sorry, Micaela.

MARTHA:

he look to you?
He's a little worser.
I think I should take
him to hospital.
How far away is that?
Two hours by bus.
Two hours? Jesus.
[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[HORN HONKING]

[PUMALELE SPEAKING
FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[WOMAN WAILING]
[BABY CRYING]
[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[HEART MONITOR BEEPING]
[BEEPING ACCELERATES]
[DOCTORS AND NURSES SPEAKING
FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[BEEPING SLOWS]
[CHILD CRYING]
I need to step outside.
We'll stay here and watch him.
[SOBBING]
[PUMALELE SPEAKING
FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
Pumalele, he's quite
handsome, isn't he?
Yeah, and he's quite
the basketball player, too.
Yeah?
Yeah. Him and George,
they used to play all the time.
Is your husband handsome?
Yeah. Yeah, I think
he's pretty cute.
What about yours?
Mine?
Mm-hmm.
Oh. Heh.
I don't know.
Ha ha ha!
I never really
thought about it.
Oh, come on.
He must be.
Why else would you marry him?
Well, he was very polite.
[WOMAN SOBBING]
[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]
[INDISTINCT CHATTER]
[CHILDREN CRYING]

[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

There's lots of people.

Yes. Lots of malaria.

This is all malaria?

No, but most, yes.

Micaela, please don't be embarrassed

if this is embarrassing,

but I need to be useful.

I don't have a job.

Do you think I could be of any

help in your orphanage at all?

Really?

Yes, really.

Of course.

It's easy to be useful there.

Yeah, well I can

cook quite well,

Victoria sponge cake

a speciality.

That's a start.

And football?

Football? Oh, yes.

I'm a brilliant player

if somewhat violent.

Ah, well.

Like mother, like son.

And you, Mary,

What are your plans?

I have to get home.

Yeah, of course

you do, darling.

But didn't we get lucky

bumping into one another?

Mmm. Didn't we?

[INDISTINCT CHATTER]

[BEEP]

[CELL PHONE VIBRATING]

[WHISPERING] Hello?

Hello, Mary, darling.

It's Martha.

Hi. How's it going?

Can't sleep?

What?

Can't sleep in the middle of the morning?

Oh, no! I'm sorry.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

I've completely forgotten
the time difference.

I'm sorry, darling.

I'll call back later.

Oh, no, no.

I was awake.

How's it going there?

Not bad, actually.

And I'm thinking perhaps, um,

I can be a little bit useful here.

My muffins are a triumph.

Ha ha ha!

Um, you know what?

I woke Peter up.

Maybe we can talk at a
slightly better time tomorrow?

Yeah, OK, darling.

Sorry.

Bye.

Who the hell was that

at 4:

It was Martha.

She's alone.

She wants to talk.

Martha.

Sorry.

[BABY CRYING]

ALICE:

he just assumes that

I won't have an opinion
about the car.

Don't tell me.

Oh, we've already
been through this,
even with the second car.

This is the second car!

I mean, I'm gonna be driving
the damn thing,

but no, no, no, no,
he'll buy it.
He'll decide what it is.
And so finally,
he agrees to a Mercedes,
And I say, "I don't
want that damn Mercedes.
I want a Lexus." Right?
I mean, come on.
I'm gonna go now.
Why?
The honest answer is I'm not
ready to feel this normal again.
You know, I've just
seen some terrible things,
and I'm having a hard
time getting worked up
about... about one
great big car
versus another great big car.
Honey? Mary?
Don't go crazy on us.
You know, Alice, look.
The way I see it now,
you're the crazy ones.
We spend every
minute of our lives
obsessed or angry about things
that don't matter at all
when I've just stood in a room
where children are allowed
to die of a mosquito bite,
and I would cry all
night about how I wasted
my life, except I can't
allow myself to cry
at all because I've
just wasted my son's.
You see?
I just wasted my son's life.
Maybe we should sell the house.
Sell the house?
Yeah.
It just seems so big now.

We just have so many memories, you know?
Tough ones.
Sweetie, you've made this house so beautiful.
It's us.
We could buy something smaller that costs less.
We don't need to sell the house.
And buy stuff with the difference which would make a difference where I've just been.
You know, nets, medicine, salaries for nurses and doctors.
You're kidding.
No. Maybe what happened to George was a one-in-a-million chance for someone like him, but it turns out he's just one of millions of kids this disease kills.
Honey, please.
This is insane.
Give us a chance to get our lives back on track before we try to fix other people's.
Please.
I love you.
I love you, too.
Can I help you?
Hi. Yes!
I called a couple of hours ago, and I couldn't get an appointment for a month, so since I was just passing by, I thought I'd just drop in in case the senator happened to have...
No, I'm afraid that he doesn't.

OK. I don't want
a lot of his time.
I just want a little bit
of advice as a person
from his state who has
just driven 3 hours
in some really nasty traffic.

Oh, really?

Yeah.

No. It won't work.

OK. I'll just wait
just in case.

OK.

OK.

Senator, hi!

Hi.

Excuse me...

excuse me, sir.

I'm... I'm Mary Morgan,
and I was just...

I was wondering if you
had a minute.

Oh, I'm afraid I don't have
a minute to spare right now.

Why don't you make an
appointment with my secretary?

I just... I wanted to talk
to you about malaria.

Malaria?

Yeah.

Wow.

Uh, that's a big subject, Mary.

Uh, I'm gonna be more useful
on "My local school
isn't any good."

What exactly do you think
I can do about malaria?

Um, I don't know really,
but, oh, uh, what I do know
is that it's

a preventable disease
that has killed over half a
million people every year.

OK. Well, how much

does the U.S. spend
on malaria at the moment?
I don't know exactly.
Is it more or less than
the last administration?
Is it spent through
governments or NGOs?
I don't know,
but it killed my son.
Oh, well, I'm sorry
to hear that.
I-I'd be happy to help
you pursue some kind
of recompense, uh...
I don't want recompense.
You can't sue a mosquito.
I'm just... I'm trying
to work out if there's
anything I can do
about anything else.
Of course.
I-I do have
to go, Mary,
but it was good to meet you.
Yeah.
Good luck.
Thank you.
I hope we meet again.
Oh, and senator?
Yes?
My local school's
no damn good either.
Heh.
OK, buddy.
Let's do it.
[CHILDREN CHATTERING]
Wha... ha ha ha!
Offside! Offside!
Now you see this?
We're going to turn all
those pieces of fabric
into one of these nice bags,
and then we're going to
take it down to market,

and we're gonna sell them
for lots of money.
Now then, fold it
in half like that.

MICHAELA:

You have a visitor.
Oh, a visitor.
Who's gonna visit me?
Fold it in half...
Hello, darling.
What are you doing here?
I'm full of surprises.
No, you're not.
Only two kids have died
since I've been here.
What'd they die of?
Malaria.
Yeah.
Um, when are you
gonna come home?
Where is that, then?
Where is home?
It's where we live.
No, I don't think I can
live in that house anymore.
But you've been living
here where Ben was,
and he'd be leaving anyway,
and we'd be alone
together anyway.
Yeah, I know.
I've thought about that, too,
And I'm sure we'd
have been fine,
but I'd have lived on hope,
telephone calls, Christmases,
photographs of babies.
I am so sorry, Charles.
I clearly misjudged things,
put too many eggs
in one basket,
loved him too much.
And me not enough.

We both let things slide.

Yes.

I've wasted you
and my lovely, noisy boy.
What an epic miscalculation.

[KEYS JINGLE, DOOR OPENS]

Hey.

I've been calling
you for hours.

Oh, I'm sorry.

My phone died.

I'm sorry.

Where were you?

I went to Washington.

Today?

Yeah, I went to, uh,
talk to our senator about malaria.

And how did that go?

Very badly.

He didn't have a huge gap
in his schedule,
and he asked me a bunch
of questions about policy,
things I didn't have
any of the answers,
but I'll be prepared next time.

So there's gonna
be a next time?

Maybe.

Maybe, I don't know.

The only person who
knows anything
about government policy now
that works is your dad.

If I remember right,
you're not too thrilled
about what the time
he spent on that did
to your family.

That's not fair.

Now if you'll excuse me,
I'm gonna go find someone
who does know something
about this,

and I'm gonna write to them.
Write them?
To say what?
I don't know.
My son died.
Their sons are dying.
Help us.
[CELL PHONE DINGS]
I know.
I guess among other things,
I'm just jealous.
You got those 5 weeks,
the last ones.
[CELL PHONE VIBRATING]
Hey, Martha.
How you doing?
Oh, it's not the middle
of the night
again, is it?
Yes, it is, but don't worry.
I was awake.
I'm starting a campaign.
I am going to write
to everyone,
every address I can find
on anyone with anything to do
with U.S. aid
or malaria funding
or the State Department.
I'm even gonna write
to the president.
What, the president?
God, you are busy!
And you're never gonna guess
who popped in to see me.
Who?
Charles!
No!
You could've knocked
me down with a feather.
I've never known him to leave
home except on business.
Do you know what?
I think he's more affected by it all

than I am.

So, Martha,

how long were you still thinking
of staying with us here?

Hmm?

You must be missing home.

Oh. Heh heh heh.

You'd have thought,
wouldn't you?

But what would I do there, hmm?

Who would I be?

It's just that, um,

I got a letter

from the aid agency,

and it looks like

they found

a replacement for Ben.

Oh.

Yes!

What?

I got a letter from a McDonald,

from the State Department,

which is perfect,

and he wrote,

"Dear Mrs. Morgan,

"Thank you for your letter.

"We at the

State Department have

"an ongoing commitment

to the fight against malaria

"with our partners in Africa

"and around the world.

"If you're interested

in learning more,

"the Senate appropriation

subcommittee that deals

with malaria is scheduled

for October 7."

What do you think?

Maybe I should go.

What?

You can't go, Mary.

It would be a waste of time.

If you get in at all,

you'll just sit there
and watch these
politicians do their jobs,
and you... you can't
say anything,
and you can't do anything,
and you're gonna be heartbroken
when you realize that you
can't help with this.
Well, maybe I can
learn something.
Maybe I can meet someone.
I'm just starting
to get replies.
If I can just get
to the right people,
write to the right people,
maybe I can do enough to save
one life,
and that will be enough for me.
Save a life, lose a marriage.
That's what you've
been thinking?
While I've been writing my letters
and trying to do all I can do,
that's where you've
been heading?
I have to fight
here, sweetheart.
You're fighting all the time,
and I have to fight, too.
Do you remember
before you went away,
we were up in the bedroom,
and you said to me,
"I'm leaving you"?
Yeah, I was joking.
It was a joke.
The joke came true.
If that's a threat,
it's really unforgivable.
Maybe we both have too
much forgiving to do.
OK.

OK. You're right.
I'm not a politician,
and I'm not gonna
change the world.
I'm just a mom,
but of course I'm not
even that anymore.
I want to show you something.

PETER ON COMPUTER:
Hey. How you doing?
I hear you're going on a trip.

GEORGE ON COMPUTER:
It's gonna be wild.
What do you mean, girls and drugs,
that kind of stuff?
I mean, really wild, wild,
"Swiss Family Robinson,"
"Castaway."
Mom won't even let me
bring my iTouch...
What?
Because there's not gonna be electricity.
Are you gonna survive?
I'm gonna kill
crocodiles and eat them.
Did you say crocodiles?
Yeah.
I think that's a little
bit of an exaggeration.
Maybe bugs.
Well, we'll eat the bugs.
Hi, honey!
Hi, love.
[KISSING SOUNDS]
I got to go,
but how are things with you?
I'm getting a lot of work done.
I'm watching a lot of bad TV.
We really miss you.
You'd be useful on
the crocodile hunt.
But you're happy?
And hungry.
Mom, the food machine

is on its way.
Dad, I got to tell you a secret
I don't want Mom to hear.
Yeah?
Just come loser.
Closer.
Closer, come on.
Come on, Dad, closer.
OK. Really, Dad?
Come on, closer.
Closer.
Ha ha ha!
I love you.
You got me.
[CELL PHONE VIBRATING]
Hello?

MARTHA:

Oh, I can't believe it.
This is incredible.
Sorry.
What?
This is the right time of day.
I know!

It's 11:

At night?
In the morning.
Well, that can't be right.
No, it is.
Well where are you?
Outside.
My house?
Heh.
Ha!
[BOTH CHUCKLING]
What are you doing here?
Hi!
Oh!
I had to leave,
and I suppose I'm heading home,
but I thought I'd
come the long way,
see you first,

support you in your big fight.

Is that OK?

Yes. Thank you.

Come in! Come on.

MARY:

MARTHA:

Stylish, right?

And this is Peter.

Peter, this is Martha.

Oh, hello, Peter.

Very pleased to meet you.

Not as handsome as I said,
but he's not bad, right?

Hello, Martha.

Let me get you some tea.

No, I'll get it.

Oh, thanks, thanks.

But not iced tea.

The English hate that stuff.

Actually,

I'm rather a bush tea person now myself.

Well, aren't you fancy?

Listen, babe, I hope
you haven't come here
under false pretenses.

This whole campaigning thing,
I don't think it was
gonna get anywhere.

It's just part of the craziness of grief,
you know?

I'm sure that's not true.

And Peter, he just sees
me as breaking our hearts
all over again, day after day.

Oh. Well...

I'm sure he must be right then.

So tell me, why did
you leave in the end?

Oh, it got complicated.

Ben's replacement arrived.

Nice German boy, and I thought,
you know, probably

my work was done.
How did it feel leaving?
Oh, it was good.
On the last night,
I had a lovely dinner,
and the kids gave me
a sort of, um...
We love you, Martha!
I don't know what
you'd call it.
Collage?
Had a lovely picture
of Ben on it,
and each of them had
done a little drawing
of themselves with
their names underneath,
and at the bottom, it said,
"We are all
your children."
It's lovely.
Mmm.
All my children.
The problem is, darling,
I'm not really ready
to stop being a mother,
But what can a mother
without a child
actually do, huh?
It's a long shot,
but we have to try.
What's he like?
Conservative, uncommunicative,
and emotionally stunted,
and he put his work
before his family
and never really
succeeded at either.
Oh, good.
Just my type.
Mary.
This is Martha.
Martha.
And what does Peter think of

all this political stuff?
Well, he thinks
I'm stupid and crazy
and destroying our lives.
What about you, Martha?
Oh, goodness.
Well... well, I think Mary
is absolutely wonderful
and can achieve anything
she sets out to do,
and naturally,
I support her 100%.
Right. Well, you may
not be surprised to hear
that I'm rather more on
Peter's side of the fence.
To try to shift the needle of
government policy is very difficult.
You're gonna be frustrated,
and you're gonna
be demoralized,
and quite frankly,
you'd be better off at home.
Look, I know all this, Dad.
I just hoped that maybe
you could help me find
a way to make a difference.
I'm not asking you
to agree with me.
I'm just asking
you for a favor.
My concern is it may not
be a favor at all.
You're clearly in such pain.
Hmm. And now you
take notice of that.
Look,
I don't think I should have come here.
I think this was always
gonna be a big mistake.
I'm sorry, Martha,
but let's go.
Uh, thanks for
the cookies, Dad.

I can't deny it's
an interesting area.
Interesting?
Yeah, I've been
looking into it.
Did you know that...
if you take every
single person killed
in a terrorist act
around the world
in the last 20 years
and you add to that
all the lives lost in the
Middle East since 1967,
the Six Day War,
and you add to that every
single American life
lost in Vietnam, in Korea,
and in every single American
engagement since then...
Iraq, Afghanistan...
if you take all those lives
and you multiply it by two,
that's the number of
children that die of malaria
every single year.
So are you saying
you'll help me?
Yes, I will.
OK. Um, well,
there's
an appropriations committee...
October 7.
I know.
It's where they fix
the money to be spent.
They beef it up,
or they trim it down.
Did you want to...
did you want to speak at it?
Well, I was hoping to just go.
Of course,
if it's possible for me to speak...
I think you possibly could.

I'd have to call
in all my favors.
You'd have to work very hard,
and you would have to work out
exactly what it is you want to say,
but of course I suppose it's
time I started working for you
and not for them.

91% of malaria deaths
are in Africa.

There are 247 million...

So I'd have a few notes,
and we can just
put it in one piece
and then make it more, um...

Right.

Concise.

Am I going too fast?

No, you're all right.

OK.

OK.

My word, Mary.

You're gonna be
absolutely marvelous!

If I fall down dead of fear,
will you take over?

You must be joking.

You're not gonna hear
so much as a peep out of me,
but I'm so proud of you,
I could explode.

Oh, no, no. Don't.

Don't. Don't explode.

This room cost
a fortune to decorate.

OK. Test me.

Speak up, look them in the eye,
stick to the script.

Yes, Dad.

WOMAN:

submissions from experts
from Malaria No More,
from UNICEF,

from USAID.

We now have a submission
from Mrs. Mary Morgan
from South Hall,
Eastern Virginia.

Mrs. Morgan. Please.

Thank... thank you.

Um, I don't want to take
up too much of your time.

Um, so before I start,
I'll just say that
there's only a couple
of things I want to say,
and the first is
congratulations.

Thank you.

We do believe when
it comes to malaria
America leads the world.
But as a country,
we still spend more
on the cure for baldness
than the cure for malaria.

[LAUGHTER]

So my second point
and the purpose
of my submission is to
ask for more, please.

Right now.

Of course, Mrs. Morgan,
and if we lived
in an ideal world,
there'd be all the money
in the world for malaria,
but a friend of mine
used to say,

"Politics is a pie.

It's just a question
of how you slice it."

What we do here in this
committee is look soberly
and seriously
with experts in the field
at how and if we can

increase that slice
or if, in the very hard
times for everyone,
it has to be a slightly
smaller portion.

Pardon me, but are you saying that
I'm not an expert in the field?
Mrs. Morgan, we're all aware of your
personal involvement in this area
and all admire your courage
in coming here today.

Well, since I'm not
an expert in the field,
perhaps you would
prefer that I focus
on my personal involvement.

Let me tell you how it feels
to have a personal involvement
with malaria.

I miss my son every second
of every day.

I miss him
with every bite of food
and every
familiar object I hold.

And I think of that
movie, you know,
"Back to the Future,"
where that bastard McFly
can just go back in time
because that's my greatest wish,
that I could
just go back just once
and change that one thing.

I would give anything to
change that one thing,
and my point, Madam Chair,
my point is that how
I feel is how the parent
of every single child lost
to malaria feels.

Every mother, every father.
That is no ordinary
slice of pie.

I had the responsibility
of one child,
and I failed.
You have the opportunity
to take responsibility
for millions of children.
Don't fail them, too.
Now, uh, I have
something prepared.
Just... just
a minute, please.
I'm Martha O'Connell.
Yes?
I'm sort of Mary's second.
I wonder if I might show
you a couple of snaps?
If that's what
Mrs. Morgan wants.
Yes. Of course.
Thank you.
Where shall I put...
This is my son Ben.
Malaria.
And this is Mary's son George,
Mary's boy.
And these are just some
of the children I met
in Mozambique where
both of our sons died.
This one is Sebastian.
A little bit of a joker.
This is Anecia.
She wanted to be a teacher.
And Daniel here
played the clarinet.
Pass them along.
All of them, all these sons
and all these daughters
are all now dead.
Would you like us to
make another appointment
with the committee
in a year's time and come back
then with half a million

more photographs?

I'm sorry.

Sorry? You were
magnificent!

Your father and I both
thought you were magnificent.

No, no, no, no.

I mean I'm...

I'm sorry I took George away.

I never said I'm sorry.

And I'm sorry you weren't
in the little school,

and I'm sorry you

weren't on the beach,

and I'm glad you

weren't in the hospital

holding his hand,

but I am so sorry

I never said sorry.

It's OK.

It's OK now.

Yeah?

Yeah.

WOMAN ON TV:

powerful men and women of the Senate
were visibly moved.

Tidewater local

Mary Morgan's testimony

in front of the Senate

appropriations committee

was a passionate,

personal plea.

With fellow mother

Martha O'Connell,

who herself lost

a son to malaria...

Martha.

The women asked families

across the country

to join them in raising money

for malaria

prevention and treatment.

MARY ON TV:

dollars you can buy a net,
which actually saves lives
for the price

of 3 coffees at Starbucks,
lives that are as valuable
as our sons' life.

Well, we don't actually
believe that,

but we know we should,
and we know it's true.

Here they come

One for everyone.

OK. Form a line.

[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

Yeah, pass!

[SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE]

You know, when I was young,
I used to be obsessed
with the pop charts.

Really?

Yeah.

And ever since, I've always loved
to put my life into charts.

You know, like when

I was at school,

I had a chart

of my best friends,

and when David Willoughby

kissed me,

he was at number one

for 11 weeks

till he kissed my best friend.

He shot straight

down to number 37.

And I'm still doing it.

Should we do our best 3, hmm?

Let's do it. Yeah.

OK.

Number 3, the day

my Ben was born.

Oh, it hurt a lot,

but that was a wonderful day.

Hmm.

Georgie,
he took 27 hours to come out.
Yeah. So it was
more than a day,
but that's a good 3.
Yeah.
Two, second best thing.
Nice!
Ha ha! Nice! Nice!
Today.
For the first time in a year,
I'm glad to be alive.
So number one, best thing ever.
Every single moment
George was alive.
And every single moment
my Ben was alive.
[INDISTINCT CHATTER]