



Scripts.com

Stuart: A Life Backwards

By Alexander Masters

Hello, Alexander. It's Stuart.

Hello, Stuart.

You know, admitting I've had lots to drink
and that, but I can't help reflect

I'm Alexander, the bloke
in the glasses driving,
not the mumbly one on the tape.

That's Stuart.

I got to know Stuart in 2000 and
decided to write his biography.

All my friends said it was mad.

I mean, after all this man was unknown,
he wasn't famous, not a celebrity,
but the book turned out okay.

Just wish Stuart could
have been here to see it.

I think it was the first ever biography
of a homeless man.

From birth to the present day.

So, back in 2000 I was earning
a bit of extra pocket money

working as a fundraiser

at Wintercomfort,

which is a busy little day shelter in Cambridge,
normally full of homeless people.

Full, that is, until the morning that
the police decided to raid the place.

They've been arrested.

All of them?

What a good idea.

Uh, no, no. It was, um,

just my boss, Ruth,

and um, her deputy, John.

Some of the clients have been secretly
dealing drugs on the premises

but because Ruth and John ran the charity,
they were held responsible.

They've got evidence, on film.

I was furious at the injustice of it.

And, uh, then really, for the
first time in my life

I actually began to take a real and
practical interest in the homeless.

Fuck off, pisshead!

I'd like to introduce to you Alexander Masters,
a dedicated friend of the homeless himself,
chairman of the campaign.

Oh, we were convinced
they'd never be convicted.

I mean, if prisons can't control drugs then
how could Ruth and John be expected to?

As everyone knows, we're here this evening
about Ruth Wyner and John

The judge, Justice Howarth, sent them down
for five years, and four years.

- Shame.

- Thank you.

- Fascist.

- Thank you.

But this is the crunch,
what are we going to do about it?

How is this campaign going to
get Ruth and John out?

- Yes?

- We could send them books.

Bunyan, he's good for prisons.

Hardly. Miracle of the Rose,
by Genet, if you must.

Excuse me, this isn't gonna work.

Sending them books, eh?

It won't fit in the box.

- Sorry?

- The inmate's belongings.

Everyone's got one.

- Who is that?

- No idea. They all look the same to me.

you're also allowed a piece of carpet

what won't fit in your box,

and a budgie

or, or a canary,

and obviously the cage is not

going to fit in the box.

But, it is Ruth and John what will suffer.

All of them books, the screws will just chuck them out

because they won't fit in your box.

I'm not being funny, but you should really know

about boxes if you're gonna have a campaign.

Me name's Psycho, but you can

call me Stuart, if you like.

- Um, what's your address?

- Umm... 2 Laurel Lane.

Yeah, they help me: doctors, a couple clothes, outreach, sometimes lunch with two puddings.

Yeah, they put it all on, those two. And the staff.

I'm not being funny, yeah, but I am really grateful.

- The other day I got a really [indiscernible].

- Oh, great.

- Can I help?

- Yeah, uh, yeah.

That's how I first met Stuart Shorter.

Street brawler, alcoholic, a heroin addict, sociopathic street raconteur with a fondness for what he called "little strips of silver".

Knives, to you and me.

- Thank you very much for agreeing to store these.

- Oh, no problem.

Mind the step. Oh, dear.

Here you go, mate.

Welcome to my humble abode.

2 Laurel Lane.

Well, they are laurels, aren't they?

I only heard about the meeting this morning when I was picking up my breakfast.

- Your address?

- Mm-hm.

A bad idea, number one, mate. You could get any old riff-raff showing up. Oh, dear, dear.

Yes?

It's you.

I've addressed some envelopes.

- Which, uh...

- They alright?

Horrible.

I've had a blinding idea for the campaign.

Yeah, get us on television and all.

Not even violent, if we leave out the kidnapping.

- Do you want to come in?

- Oh, yes please.

It's a bit wet out there.

Ooh, that's nice.

- How many sugars?

- As many as you got, mate.

Hhot.

All them books.

Have you read all of them?

No.

Half?

Not exactly.

The Hunting Wasp.

A whole book about them little summer things.

This one.

What is this one about?

The colour mauve.

How do you fucking get away with this?

Now, this blinding idea.

Have you got a car?

No.

What do you like better: Volvo or VW?

And then a few weeks later I had the idea about the book and started doing a little research.

That boy has suffered. He deserves a book.

You should write a book about me.

Always such a caring boy.

Happy-go-lucky little thing.

Legs all over the show, bless him.

Three months after that we carried

out Stuart's blinding idea

which was a sleep-over protest

in front of the home office

to persuade the then Home Secretary,

Jack Straw, to release Ruth and John.

Which was better than his first idea,

which was to kidnap him.

Stuart took care of our transport.

Somehow.

And on the way to London I read him

the first few pages of my book idea.

"Stuart Clive Shorter was a happy-go-lucky little boy,

'the most considerate of my children', marvels his mother."

Bollocks!

Boring!

Why do you want to write

this fucking book anyway?

To make lots and lots and lots of money.

Seriously? You think you can
make money out of it?

Could, maybe.

Something as boring as that?

Don't be so rude. Anyway, it's not my
fault that you started out so dull.

You got make it more exciting.

Do it backwards. Like a murder mystery.

Like a best-seller.

You know, like what Tom Clancy writes.

Yeah! How'd I get to be like this?

What murdered the little boy I was?

Make them nine-to-five sit up.

I mean, you put ten socks in the washing
machine and only seven come out.

Where do they go?

- Stuart?

- I'll tell you another thing and all

- Stuart?

You take the machine apart and it ain't in it neither.

- Stuart?

- What?

- What's this?

- What?

- This.

That, Alexander, is a lice.

The main place you get those
is around your bollocks.

That lice, that'll grow.

Scabies are smaller and they go under the
skin and live there, literally nibbling.

It took five and a half hours for our convoy
to do the 50 miles from Cambridge to London.

Stuart would never drive
above 30 miles an hour.

Hey, Buckingham Palace.

What a load of bollocks! Huh!

Who needs a queen?

- Oh, no, no, no, no. No, not like that.

- What?

Use this, right? Underneath, yeah?

Here you are.

You lose more heat that way

than you do that way.

Ruth and John need these:

eyes on the back of their heads!

End [indiscernible] police state now!

People are being wrongfully imprisoned
for working in a charity
and doing nothing but trying
to help the homeless.

Charity workers in prison because
of a miscarriage of oh, fuck off.

Charity workers in prison because
of a miscarriage of justice.

Okay, listen up, everyone!

Okay, everyone! Listen up!

Everyone, please. Quiet, please!

Everyone, we need you to move this way,
thank you.

Wait a minute, hold on, hold on. Why?

This is a peaceful protest.

Yeah! Fucking why?

You can't cross these brass flags if
the Home Office doesn't want you to.
That's social fucking fascism, that is!
And then we must put a fence in behind
you to ensure you're not trespassing
and ones on either side to protect you.

- What?

From the public, sir. They might step on
you. And a fence in front just in case
during the night you roll onto
the road and get run over.

Oh, I see. So you mean
to cage us in completely.

I didn't say cage, sir, no.

That was your word.

Do prisoners really get wages?

Yeah.

You mean a lot like normal people?

Yeah, make a fucking fortune.

Millionaires coming out of the nick
every week.

You've been in a lot of prisons then?

Have I? Fucking hell.

How many?

Well, um...

Well, start off, when I was a nipper
there was Send Detention Centre,
Baintnow House, back to Send again,
Eriestoke, Norwich,
then I grew up and went to big boy prison.
Whitemoor. Aw, now that's
what I call a real prison.

You got everything there, mate:
terrorists, psychopaths, security threats,
murderers, manslaughters, crazies...

Which lot do you belong to?

Crazies, really.

Mm, yeah.

Norwich, Whitemoor again.

Grendon Underground.

Thirty-one.

I don't think I've missed any.

Oh yes, I have actually!

I've been to Leicester three times as well.

Wayland was me last one.

Good night. Sleep well.

Thank you. Same to you.

Oi, you. Since you got so much
fucking time on your hands, yeah,

answer this one:

get killed by screws in prison every year?
Murders.

Oh, sorry, Gov. Excuse us, how was we
supposed to know that bending him in half
the wrong fucking way was bad for his health?

It was only people like me what is
really rotten, isn't it? Really bad.

Beyond hope. You haven't got the faintest
fucking clue, have you? Huh?

- Yeah, all he said was "Good night".

- You can fuck off and all you fucking geeky

- Oh, shut up yourself, Stuart.

- You fucking wanking middle class cunt fuck, Alexander.

You want to know how I became what I am?

I'm giving you fucking answers!

Why don't you write a book
with no fucking answers, eh?

Go on, you fuck off.
You find your fucking answers.
On a scale of anger, one to ten,
I'm probably on four and Stuart's on eleven.
You never can tell...
how families have been down and they've
been up then they've been down again.
You just like Stuart, you know?
Drugs, prison, being a beggar.
Go on, go on.
Yeah, mate.
- Bastards!
- Morning.
Like the taste of piss, eh?
You bastards.
Someone smells nice.
After three months of preparation.
I mean, who's bloody stupid idea was it that
we camp out over the weekend anyway,
the one time Mr. Straw's not going to be there?
- I bet it was yours.
- Oh, fuck off.
- Oh, I like this song.
- This is a good song.
Still, one blimey thing did
come out of that weekend:
Stuart's idea that his life should
be written backwards.
It was cutting me throat what done it.
Put a beer glass into me neck.
Just lost it.
Sometimes you wouldn't believe how
hard it is to fucking die.
So, you got a council for that,
because you tried to kill yourself?
Works a trick for the old housing
points, doesn't it?
Whoosh! Straight to the top of the list.
It's not all gone though.
What's not all gone?
The hatred.
I got so many enemies.
Up here, mate.
Somebody's going to get hurt though,

that's what scares me.
When's this thing going to happen?
I call it me "black mists".
Next week? Next month?
Next ten seconds?
That is lovely bit of workmanship.
That's value. That's value.
Oh my God.
This for the series.
For my son.
You've got a son!?
Yeah. In Glasgow with his mum.
Fourteen years of age to mind.
Always out on the golf course,
the little 'un.
Not bad there, mate.
Not better than Laurel Lane.
Wine always smells like sick.
Here, have a beer.
Fancy something to eat?
So why do you want to be a writer, then?
Oh, I don't know, really. Bit like a
disease, all my family's got it.
Didn't want to be left out, did I?
Nah. I know what you mean, mate.
Me dad is a thief,
and, um, me mum's a barmaid.
What's the colour orange highlighter
in your diary for?
Family stuff.
Yellow?
Social.
Now, uh, this book
that you're writing about me,
is it just to make your name?
And yours.
I've, uh, had an idea for a job, too.
For the foreign businessman what
doesn't have time to waste,
what does he need?
An office... in a van.
It's lateral thinking, isn't it?
Gets off the plane at Stansted,
straight into the back of me van.

That will have everything:
good-looking bird what can do shorthand,
fax, internet, wires all over the
fucking gaff. It's brilliant.
Red sauce or brown?
Oh, yes please.
I mean, uh, red.
- WhatWhat's
- Oh yeah, that fella upstairs
is gonna make me a bed what folds up against
the wall, like what James Bond has.
- Ooh.
- Yeah. It's got to have, um,
springs and latches on the floor
otherwise it's boing, boing, whoosh!
Boing, boing, whoosh?
You know what I mean, bird's not going
to be too happy if she gets her face
squeezed up against the plaster, is she?
Hey.
Sorry.
Good stuff, that. You can use it with anything.
See that right by the bed? This should be a
huge stain where I overdosed there last week.
And all the spilled cans and vomit. That
cleaned it up really, really well, actually.
But you want to, um, you want to leave it, uh,
for about... about a week before you vacuum.
Here you are, mate.
Careful, yeah? It's a bit hot.
I never asked you why you were in prison.
The last time
Stupid things.
Me mate, Smithy, well bubblegum chap,
I'm not being funny, he's in the
Guinness Book of Records.
1983 edition, as it goes.
Like brothers fighting the world.
Respect, trust, and honour.
Go, go, go, go, go!
Right.
Ow.
- Oh, fuck. Did you get menthols?
- Menthols? Fuck off.

- She'll fucking kill me. She asked for menthols.

- Well, give her the vodka.

She don't want vodka, she wants menthols!

Go, go, go, go, go!

Aw, I don't believe it!

These aren't fucking menthols either!

They're just in a green packet.

I've got ten packets of green cigarettes.

Hurry up.

25 quid, 60!?

Women! They think they can boss you
about in everything, don't they?

And one day, Smithy got a tip-off.

- 20,000 quid?

- Just keeps it under the counter.

Not a cop shop in 20 miles.

Fucking That's fucking irresponsible.

No pride of ownership.

Go, go, go, go, go!

Right.

Let's just say it was funny because
as soon as we was sent down,
Smithy's missus moved in with the
fella what told us about the job.

Five years.

Pretty steep sentence.

Were you armed?

No.

Only with a crowbar.

Hey, Alexander? You wanna stay for tea?

Me favourite, "convict curry".

We used to make it in jail.

Ooh, mushrooms!

- What about the first time, then?

- First time what?

Well, that you were sentenced as an adult.

I can't I can't really talk about that, mate.

But, I mean, robbing an empty post office is
Burgle.

Rob people, burgle post offices.

Yeah, but what I mean is it's hardly
a Schedule 1 offence, is it?

Of course not.

Well, that's serious, isn't it?

It wasn't kiddie fiddling.
I didn't say that it was.
It wasn't.
We'll talk about it Thursday, yeah?
Thursday afternoon.
Another time, right?
Then you mop with the bread.
Mop up your juices.
So, smash the window, break
the steering wheel lock
by turning the wheel in opposing directions.
Yeah. And if the street is too
public to use a brick...
Slide stick. Remove the metal band from a
pallet of bricks, reduce to eighteen inches,
remove a notch from one side,
insert into door panel.
Ba-kow! I'm in the post office!
Boot in the rubble!
No, there's no point in ram-raiding a post office.
- Why not?
- Can't you not pay attention?
There's no point in ram-raiding a fucking post office.
There's never no money in the till, is there?
Gone are them days.
I forgot money.
Here.
No, no, no, no. I'll get a taxi,
I'll stop at a bank on the way.
No, honestly, take it.
It's me beer money.
You'll be doing me a favour.
You'll be doing society a favour.
And buy a fucking car.
Get yourself a fucking license.
Oh, I almost forgot.
Here. Bought you this.
Your black mists.
Thought you could talk into it
next time you're in one.
You'll be okay?
Call if you need any help.
2am, 4am, anytime.
Yeah, so you can bring a fucking camera?

Oi!

You're alright, Alexander.

Often used to say to Stuart, "I wish I could just pick you up sometimes, turn you upside down and shake all the bad things out of your head, then put you back up the right way again."

The change in him.

We just couldn't understand it.

And of course I would like to thank you all for coming here today to hear me talk about the campaign and the petition.

Stuart and I gave nine or ten talks together about the campaign that spring in Birmingham, London, Oxford, and of course villages around Cambridge.

Mr Stuart Clive Shorter.

I'd speak first, and then Stuart would get up and knock the audience off its seats with the story of his life.

A typical suicide attempt, just an unbearable sense of hatred, waste

"I am the nightmare you frighten your children with", he said.

"The sort of person these two charity workers were trying to help to get off your streets."

"We should have awarded Ruth and John medals instead of sending them to prison."

so I just twisted around and I emptied everything that remained into my right buttock.

Stuart did two things for the campaign, really.

He folded letters and he exposed his soul.

That alright?

- Exactly. So, if we write

- Oh, this is your name.

If we solve the puzzle, do we solve you?

He's just...

He's just very, very interesting, you know?

He tells me about a world I knew nothing about and... I... I just like him.

It's absolutely extraordinary. He knows the

exact day that he changed into a sociopath.
Between 4pm and 5pm. The exact day!
It's like knowing what was in Dr Jekyll's
potion that turned him into Mr Hyde.
This thing, Stuart's black mist,
came that night.
Apparently it started by a knife fight.
The first I heard about it was a
call a day later from his mother.
At least there's no blood.
Usually there is blood.
Perhaps the cleaners have been 'round.
Just for the blood.
Campaign's helped him a lot, you know.
Kept him straight.
Ain't been this happy since
he was a little boy.
"Alexander only."
Hello, Alexander. It's Stuart. You know, admitting
I've had lots to drink and that, but
I can't help reflect about
Stuart had been bailed to appear
at Cambridge Magistrate's Court.
I went with him for moral support.
They don't look too upset to be here.
Well, wait till they get to Crown Court,
that's when it gets serious.
Godspeed the day.
Excuse me, you're about to fall off
Fuck off.
Good lad, just say that to the
nasty man with the wig and
everything will be fine.
Sometimes it takes so long you forget
what your fucking crime was.
Here, listen to this. It's the little 'un.
If I don't know you, fuck off!
I'm not in and I don't wanna talk to you!
I didn't think it was like that.
I was thinking maybe he should go
to business school.
But now I don't know.
He ain't right.
I've had to have words with him about

the importance of politeness.

He's fourteen.

It really shocked me, to be honest.

Mr Shorter?

According to police statements they could smell smoking oil when they arrived on the scene.

Chip fat.

It was the anniversary of my brother's death.

I wanted to burn the devil out of myself.

The Magistrate's Court decided they couldn't handle the complexities of Stuart's case so they referred it to the Crown Court.

Disgrace. Forty policemen and you still get bailed?

Beats me why you hate the system.

Well, my mum says she doesn't understand it neither.

What did the barrister mean when he was talking about "attempted manslaughter"?

I reckon I tried to cut my neighbour's head off with a bread knife.

You didn't. Did you?

Yeah.

And if he hadn't have moved, I'd have got him too.

So you called your neighbour who made your boing-boing-whoosh bed a poofter and then that's why he lost it?

No, he thought that I called him a poofter.

- And you did nothing of the sort?

- No.

Then what did you do?

I just asked his friend if he was a poofter.

It's not a joke, Alexander!

- Well, I mean

- When my bell's up, I'm looking at life!

I've lost my keys somewhere.

So you didn't call your neighbour who made your boing-boing-whoosh bed a poofter.

But what What did his mate say when you called...

What did his mate say when you asked him if he was a poofter?

Just... said he suffered

from premature ejaculation.

Which I thought was quite
interesting at the time
because I suffer from the same complaint myself.
Um, I'm going to see some friends in
Norfolk next week.
Come along.
No, can't.
You heard the Magistrate, I'm not allowed
out of Cambridge until me trial.
And another thing about washing
machines, right,
this fella on the TV,
he put three of them washing machine
inner bits together.
Not even a concrete one. Nothing.
And he said it was a sculpture.
And somebody bought it!
I'm not being funny, yeah?
But there is a viable business
opportunity there.
Rent a barn.
Lay out all the bits.
And when you've had enough
of washing machines,
do fridges.
You know, that's what really
annoys me, Alexander.
I'm always getting these great ideas,
you know, about how to make money.
People are always telling me that
they're wrong, you know?
I never get no encouragement.
No encouragement at all.
Can you hold the wheel?
You want some?
Uh, yes. Thank you.
Save me some.
I will.
I think I've got a bit of a cold coming.
Here, listen to this!
I apologise for not being
currently available.
Be so kind as to leave your
name and message.

So, why don't you just get an ordinary job?

- 9 to 5?

- That's the one.

Getting up in the morning,
coming home late at night.

On the nose.

Full time.

What, have you ever had one of those?

- Nope.

- Ohh.

I've done a bit of valeting work for
a friend of me brother's.

And?

I head-butted the bloke.

Your version of putting your head down
and getting on with it, I suppose.

He tried to fiddle with me sister.

And then later on, you know, ah s

I don't know.

And now you don't know what?

Nothing. Just later on

my brother Gavvy killed himself.

Well, you know don't have to say
anything, Stuart.

Talk about it another time.

Yeah. Thanks.

When the police found Gavvy they
said he'd really suffered.

The tablets he'd taken had eaten his kidneys
and his liver away before he died.

And he had been in absolute agony dying.

And I'm glad.

I'm glad my brother suffered.

- Chainsaw carved mushrooms?

- Fucking hell.

What did they do to deserve that?

Fucking nice little number you
got going here, mate.

You get many knob heads falling for it?

Yeah, plenty.

Oh wow.

I'm James. Good to see you.

Alexander's told me all about you.

Reuben, yes?

- I'm Dido.
- Ah, you have a lovely house.
- Hello, darling.
- Hi, hi, hi.
- Good to see you.
- This is for you.
Ooh, thank you. Lovely, mmm.
Now, Alexander told you that I'm an alcoholic, hasn't he?
I'm also a Schedule 1 offender and a thief, but I won't cause no trouble.
May I have a tour of the estate, please?
- Is that a pear tree?
- Yeah.
You can make cider out of that.
And them apples, eh?
Famous actors used to come here and play tennis, like Lawrence Olivier and Lawrence Olivier? Really? Right there?
21-Love!
Hey!
You ought to knock all of them trees down and build a go-kart course.
If you fix this place up it would be really lovely here.
Ooh, [indiscernible]. Very nice.
Ooh, it's very tasty. Yeah.
Fucking amazing here.
Yeah, A-fucking-One.
They're so false.
False tits.
Now, I prefer a bit of natural bounce myself.
I mean, and if they're going to sag, they're going to sag, aren't they?
I don't get it, Alexander.
How come you're so interested in homeless people?
I'm not. I was only working at Wintercomfort because the money was good.
Nine quid an hour. And the hours, shift work.
How long are these onions meant to cook?
Till they feel satisfied.
And then it meant I could write in the morning.

Yeah, but why?

Look, Stuart, if I was interested in you as a homeless person, I'd have been sacked for unprofessional conduct ages ago.

- So?

- So I like you as a friend, is that so bad?

Fenugreek?

It's a bit weird if you ask me.

Couldn't agree more.

seven, eight. There's always somebody what won't want two.

Yeah, but why?

Because you're funny, intelligent, good company.

What do you want, a fucking love letter?

Now shut up and drink your freaking beer.

Marvellous.

- What was it again?

- "Convict Curry".

Hey Stuart, it's Thursday!

You gotta tell!

No, not now.

Come on. A promise is a promise.

Come on, you've talked to us about everything else.

Give it a rest, Alexander.

- You don't wanna know.

- Stuart's first prison sentence.

He'll only talk about it on a Thursday because he gets his dole money Wednesday afternoons, which means that if talking about it upsets him, he's still got enough heroin left to calm him down.

Is that right?

It was nothing.

I was

I was in the pub one night.

It was the little 'un's birthday.

I was, I was in the pub celebrating.

It was over ten years ago.

This bloke says...

It was just nastiness.

Come on.

Alexander, please.

Look, Thursday's the day.
So I come home.
[Indiscernible] says,
"you've been fucking [indiscernible]."
You're drunk.
If you want it, you gotta rape me.
I'll fucking kill you, you cunt!
Get out!
You wanted a fucking baby!
And I think then I realised that I had
made a proper mess of it all, really.
I'm fucking leaving.
You fucking are now!
Did you fuck around with me!? Yeah!?
I'm a bit ashamed of that to be honest.
Go on, fuck off! Fuck off, [indiscernible].
Oh, for fuck's sake.
Go on, fuck off!
Fucking hell!
It's alright.
Fuck off!
So we sat around for a bit
and decided we'd come out together.
We're coming out now. We're together.
I'm sorry.
Go! Get him!
Connie, just shoot the fucker!
He just lost it. It's not Stuart.
Move! Move!
Lovely stay, Alexander.
Thank you very much.
I really enjoyed it.
I was really surprised, Alexander,
to be honest.
I thought that middle class people had
something wrong with them, you know?
But they're just ordinary, aren't they?
I was a bit shocked, to tell the truth.
Over the next few months Stuart's
trial for the attempted manslaughter
of his not poofster, boing-boing-whoosh bed
making neighbour was postponed once,
twice,
a third time,

and then a fourth.

He needed some cash so I gave
him 250 quid for his car
and I'm still waiting for the paperwork.
Meanwhile, the campaign went from
strength to strength.

Newsletters, petitions, protests,
even benefit gigs.

And then it was Stuart's bright idea
to go and see our local MP.

Oh shit.

I'm sorry, I'm just a bit nervous is all.
Mr Shorter is not from Anne's constituency
I'm from Anne's constituency. I wish
to take Stuart as my guest.

Alexander...

For that you'll have to make a new appointment.

Oh, rubbish! She's got nothing else
to do, has she?

The council is not gonna have no emergency
winter shelter for the homeless.

And I'm frightened

In winter it's smack what
keeps you fucking

I'm sorry.

keeps you warm.

But this year there's going to be
one more death a month, again.

Why?

Puppies.

I'm not sure I follow you.

On the streets.

Puppuppies.

'Cause the homeless love their dogs, right?

But the hostels only allow two to
three places for pets.

So, if there has been two new litters,
then loads more people are gonna
have dogs, aren't they?

And therefore will be forced to sleep out.

And hence... therefore... furthermore,
more deaths.

You see, on the street it's the
little things that kill people.

That Justice Howarth must hate
the campaign's guts. Humiliation!
Seven months after they were
sent down Ruth and John
have been released on bail after
a high profile campaign by MPs
and other homeless charities, they won
the right to appeal against prison sentences
four and five years.

This was our first sight of Ruth Wyner
and John Brock on the steps of the
Royal Courts of Justice this morning.
After seven months in jail, the so-called
"Cambridge Two" have been released on
unconditional bail and are now free to
challenge their original convictions.

I can't see if the light's on.

Stuart, it's Alexander.

Stop whatever illegal thing it is
that you're doing and get down here!

It's me muscular dystrophy.

Humeroscapu... or something.

Muscular dystrophy.

It's a real gobstopper,

I never learnt the name.

What you don't know can't hurt you.

I only came in to see the nurse because
I wanted a cuddle and it spits too soon.

Stuart!

I thought maybe it's because of
me muscular dystrophy.

You know, 'cause your dick's a muscle, isn't it?

It started on me ticker.

They tried twice to put a pacemaker in me tit,
but the veins just crumble 'cause of
the amount of critic I've injected.

Gotta laugh, haven't you?

I can't believe he hadn't told you.

He tells everyone. About everything.

- Well, now, that's not true.

- Mum, yes.

That's his way of coping, isn't it?

Twenty years. Non-stop.

Ever since he first went on the streets.

Twenty years?

But I thought it was Gavvy's, um,
his brother's suicide that made him homeless.
Don't be stupid.

Stuart had been on and off the
streets since he was twelve.
Then, all of a sudden, this little horror.
Twelve years old, that's when it started.
Gavvy had to run to fetch mum.

Come, it's Stuart!

Put me into care! You hear me!?

Do it now otherwise I'll kill you!

Put me into care now! I'll do the lot of you!

Put me into care!

I said, put me into care!

In you get. Watch your head.

He was taken into care that night.

We didn't see him for three weeks.

Another one for you, Mr Laverack.

You're getting popular, he asked to come.

Poor boy. Poor boy.

Out of the frying pan into the fire.

Well, we weren't the frying pan.

You know what I mean.

We just couldn't understand it.

People said she ought to disown him.

How can you wash your hands
of your own child?

He's my flesh and blood, I'd say.

He's my son.

I just wish I could do more.

Working on the book after the end of
the campaign, writing, rewriting,
I realised then that I could never
hope to justify or explain Stuart.
And whatever had murdered his
innocence had long ago ceased
to be simple enough to sort
out with words.

All I could hope to do was to
staple him to the page.

- Hello?

- It's in me tit.

I'm at Papworth Heart Hospital.

Come visit.

Yeah, on your way, can you pop in to see me gran and grandpa?

They've got a present for me.

I told them it smells like sick but they don't listen.

We haven't seen Stuart in years.

Lots of years.

Well, things haven't been very easy for him recently.

His mother says it's the buses.

They're not convenient.

Stuart?

- No.

- Rory, his son.

- Stuart.

- No.

Rex, his dad.

A bad man, his real dad.

Gypsies.

Stuart?

Gavvy, Stuey's brother.

One day when Rex was beating our Judith real bad, Gavvy hit him over the head with a broom.

He was only five.

Rex moved out after that.

I know why Stuart changed.

Gavvy came 'round special to tell me.

Promised I'd never tell.

Three days later he committed suicide.

To celebrate his getting better.

Couldn't decide red or white.

Tell him to come and see us.

We've waited long enough.

Can't wait forever.

Oh, you fucking star.

I almost died.

How are Ruth and John?

Not good.

He can't work.

Wife says he cries in his sleep.

And Ruth?

Got cancer.

Bastards.

Now do you see what I mean
about the system?

The system. It's the system that's
going to keep her alive.

It's the system that's just given you
a 5,000 pacemaker for nothing.

- Hello?

- Excuse me guys, do either of you know
where the toilet is?

Uh, yeah, sure. I saw a sign that
said down there on the left.

Thanks, mate.

Fucking hell.

I need a cigarette.

Yeah, the whole town's like it.

All cripples.

I spent six years in a school like this.

Day I end up like that, eh,
death day.

Care was like this?

No. Spagie school.

They sent me because of
my muscular dystrophy.

Said I wasn't allowed to go
to proper school.

Well, it was the '70s.

Funny thing, that. There was nothing
wrong with me at that stage.

I was just a bit uncoordinated,
but you'd hardly notice.

But they said since I was
going to die a spag,

I might as well get used to the idea.

Before I was too spagie to
understand, I suppose.

Now all together.

Douchebag! Douchebag! Douchebag!

Gimpy! Oi, gimpy, come here!

Where's your brother now?

'Help me! Hold me! Love me!'

We're coming to kill you.

Did they kick the shit out of you?

Every day, mate.
Give 'em something to do after school.
Then Gavvy would console me.
Please, not Howarth. Please, not
Only one month out of Papworth,
Stuart's day in court for
attempting to cut off his neighbour's
head finally arrived.
We were dreading it would be
Ruth and John's old judge.
Oh fuck!
All rise for Justice Howarth.
At this point Stuart really was looking
at being imprisoned for life.
Court is now in session.
This case concerns Stuart Clive Shorter.
Affray, disorderly conduct, resisting arrest,
an incident at the accused's flat.
No. No, he just said
the whole thing was nonsense.
All that adding charges, taking them
away, attempted murder, not
I don't know, I mean, what can I say?
The lucky bastard got off on
a series of technicalities.
You know what Judge Howarth thinks about
Oh shit. Stuart, I'm so sorry.
Are you alright?
I'm so sorry.
He's free! He's absolutely fucking free.
Oh, you're disgusting.
Wakey, wakey.
Sun has got his hat on, mate.
Sun has got his hat on, mate.
Rise and shine!
Now, I've got to try on a suit
for me sister's wedding.
Can you give me a lift?
Have you listened to the tape?
I was nine, Alexander, when it started.
Nine.
It was three years of abuse.
My own brother.
And then his mate joined in.

That night, I ju I couldn't,
I couldn't take it no more, you know?
They had done everything.
There was nothing more they could do.
- You got any more of these?
- Yeah, backseat, I think.
I think the reason mum still
pampers him like she does
is because she feels guilty
about what Gavvy did.
But he did the same to me.
I'm the same as Stu.
One minute, nice as pie;
next minute, I'm a rattlesnake.
How'd I get to be like this?
What murdered the little boy I was?
When the police found Gavvy,
they said he'd really suffered.
Legs all over the show.
That boy has suffered.
Happy-go-lucky little thing.
Mr Laverack.
- Poor boy. Poor boy.
- Out of the frying pan into the fire.
- Put me into care now!
- Douchebag! Douchebag!
- Douchebag! Douchebag! Douchebag!
- We're coming to kill you.
The tablets he'd taken had eaten his kidneys
and his liver away before he died.
Always such a caring boy.
Happy-go-lucky little thing.
And I'm glad.
I'm glad Gavvy suffered.
That's Gavvy.
That's Gavvy and me.
So he's what murdered the boy you were.
- What made you change.
- Ah, wasn't that.
What was it then?
So many people have had the same
sort of childhood and experiences
as what I have and they learn to
accept and cope and live a very,

in brackets, "normal and competitive life".

I'm quite philosophical about that.

If you had to change one thing about your life, what would it be?

Well, how much is one thing?

It's very easy to blame, isn't it?

Me muscular dystrophy?

Nonces?

Gavvy?

Honestly, it'd be easier to change me.

One thing only.

The day I discovered violence.

Me step-father

said if I didn't go out there and stick up for myself, he'd belt us once.

Fucking fantastic.

Weakling became strong.

The day that I found violence I felt fifty times more strong.

After you've been bullied and pushed about, called spastic, you learn that violence, and fear of violence, and madness, it scares people.

I used to deliberately get myself in a rage.

And after six months,

I found I couldn't stop them.

I wasn't making the madness up no more.

You know what, Alexander?

I don't know myself or [indiscernible].

Madness.

Sometimes I think I'm the child of the devil.

I let the devil in.

Now I can't get him out.

I tried...

burning him out, and cutting him out, and...

he don't take no notice.

Why should he?

He don't wanna be homeless.

You know, there's still one question left.

- What's that, mate?

- Guess.

We're writing the book backwards,

so what's the last bit of information we need?

What's your date of birth?

Oh, right, yeah.

I am Stuart Clive Shorter.

I was born on the 19th of the 9th, 1968.

So, you're...

- You're 33.

- I am 33. I'm getting older, as they say.

And I have led a very controversial
and unpleasant life.

Oh, yeah.

Eh?

Best man or what, eh?

It is gonna be grand.

PPPPeterborough, Cambridge

on 96 and 95.7 FM. And 1026 AM.

BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.

The top story this hour

near the French entrance to the
channel tunnel.

Police have now formally indentified
the man who died after being hit
by a train near Cambridge early this morning.

He was Stuart Shorter, a 33-year-old
from Waterbeach.

The coroner has been informed and an inquest
will take place at a date to be fixed.

Judith? It's Alexander.

Blessed be the God and Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ.

Was it suicide?

I don't know. He didn't leave a note.

But then, suicides often don't.

All I do know is that he stepped in front

of the 11:

I have overcome the world, says the Lord.

Since the Earthly life of Stuart
has come to an end,

we commit his body to be buried.

Earth to earth, ashes to ashes,
dust to dust.

In sure and certain hope of the
resurrection to eternal life.

- To our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

- Amen.

Hello, Alexander. It's Stuart.

Hello, Stuart.

You know, admitting I've had lots to drink and that,
but I can't help reflect about my brother
and my brother's friend.

And they didn't believe me.

And they didn't care.

The abuse.

Being asked to do things that I wouldn't
have thought possible that anyone
could ask of an 11-year-old.

I'm just head-butting, and head-butting,
and head-butting, and head-butting.

The more that you speak,
the more they disbelieve.

And nobody was listening
to anything I had to say.

When I've got my drink inside me
I sit here having mad conversations
with myself.

Talking about mutilating myself,
killing myself,
tracking down those who are responsible.

I want to just lay down and die.

I feel so dirty, and fucking horrible
and hating and attacking anyone

I get close to.

I just wish

once

there could be an escape from this madness.

The book was finally published in April 2005.

I think Stuart would have liked it.