

NOT QUITE RIGHT

by

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**SCENE 1 – FIRST PRESENTATION (3.32 pm)**

**CHARACTERS**

- **ACTOR A – Chris / Penny (invisible dog) / Practice Manager**
- **ACTOR B – Meena / GP 1**
- **ACTOR C – Receptionist**

**SETTINGS**

- **Chris & Meena's front room at home**
- **GP surgery, reception**

*In GP surgery reception, the RECEPTIONIST (wearing headset and consulting a screen) has just answered the phone.*

RECEPTIONIST

Good afternoon, surgery.

*In their front room, MEENA and CHRIS are an elderly couple. MEENA is the caller (CHRIS and the RECEPTIONIST can't hear one another directly).*

*CHRIS is nearby, feeling not quite right, keeping their dog PENNY under control.*

MEENA

Is that the surgery?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, surgery, how can I help you?

MEENA

Can I make an appointment please  
for my husband?

RECEPTIONIST

Is it an emergency?

MEENA

*(to CHRIS)*

Is it an emergency?

CHRIS

I don't think so.

MEENA

(to RECEPTIONIST)

No, it's not an emergency.

RECEPTIONIST

Are you sure?

MEENA

(to CHRIS)

Are you sure?

CHRIS

I don't know.

MEENA

(to RECEPTIONIST)

No, it's not an emergency.

RECEPTIONIST

Is it urgent? Chest pain? Breathing difficulties? Anything like that?

MEENA

No, nothing like that.

RECEPTIONIST

What's your husband's date of birth?

MEENA

May the Eighth 1951.

RECEPTIONIST

Name?

MEENA

Chris Webber

(to CHRIS)

She wants to know your name.

CHRIS

Tell it her then.

MEENA

I have.

PENNY

Woof!

MEENA

You'll know us, we've a very noisy dog we tie up outside when we come. She's friendly but – you know – very noisy. Labrador.

PENNY

Woof!

MEENA

Penny!

RECEPTIONIST

Did you want to make an appointment to see a doctor or a nurse?

MEENA

*(to CHRIS)*

Do we want to make an appointment to see a doctor or a nurse?

CHRIS

Doctor.

MEENA

*(to RECEPTIONIST)*

Doctor please.

RECEPTIONIST

What's the nature of the problem?

MEENA

He's feeling just not quite right.

RECEPTIONIST

I've got an appointment to see Dr Patel next Thursday.

MEENA

Nothing this afternoon then?

RECEPTIONIST

You need to phone first thing if you want an appointment on the day.

MEENA

Oh right.

RECEPTIONIST

So shall I book your husband in for  
next Thursday, 11.40, Dr Patel?

MEENA

Dr Patel. Oh you like him.

CHRIS

Yes, I like Dr Patel.

RECEPTIONIST

That'll be 11.40, Thursday, Dr  
Patel.

MEENA

11.40, Thursday. Dr Patel.

RECEPTIONIST

Ok, thank you, we'll see you then.

MEENA

Goodbye.

CHRIS

Thursday!?

RECEPTIONIST

*(picking up a new call)*

Good afternoon, surgery... Ok...

*CHRIS and MEENA become the PRACTICE MANAGER and GP 1,  
respectively, both busy and passing through.*

GP 1

*(looks at watch)*

I've another 17 patients to see  
today.

RECEPTIONIST

*(on phone)*

No I don't think so. Let me ask.

GP 1

There's no chance I'm going to make  
it to that hospice meeting I said  
I'd go to.

RECEPTIONIST

Has anyone seen a set of false  
teeth?

MANAGER

Not me.

*GP 1 shakes her head.*

RECEPTIONIST

*(on phone)*

No, I'm sorry, no one's...

*All three exchange shrugs.*

MANAGER

I've been writing chasing letters  
all day.

RECEPTIONIST

*(on phone)*

Let me take your name and your  
number.

MANAGER

I've just spent an hour and a  
half sorting out just one patient  
discharged with a catheter. Can't  
get a district nurse for love  
nor money.

RECEPTIONIST

*(on phone)*

Ok, thank you, yes, I've got that.  
I'll give you a call straight away  
if they turn up.

MANAGER

We're going to have to at least try  
"Telephone First".

*The RECEPTIONIST clocks the mention of "Telephone First"  
despite being on the phone.*

RECEPTIONIST

*(on phone)*

You're welcome. Bye.  
*She puts the receiver down, ears pricked.*

GP  
*(sceptical)*  
Mmm.

MANAGER  
We can reduce the number of  
appointments if we could deal with  
more patients over the phone.

GP  
Will it actually save any time in  
practice? Does anyone ever research  
these things?

RECEPTIONIST  
*(sarcastic)*  
Well, I'd definitely recommend being  
on the telephone all day long.

MANAGER  
Seems obvious to me. You can deal  
with most patients in a quick phone  
call and still get to see the ones  
who really need it. What's not to  
like?

GP  
I'd like the evidence!

RECEPTIONIST  
*(responding to a new incoming call)*  
Good afternoon, surgery.

## **SCENE 2 – EMERGENCY (4.56 pm)**

### **CHARACTERS**

- ACTOR A – Chris / Penny (invisible dog)
- ACTOR B – Meena / Second Paramedic
- ACTOR C – Paramedic

### **SETTINGS**

- Chris & Meena's front room at home
- Ambulance

*MEENA (anxious) sits beside CHRIS (in this scene, slightly dazed, more subdued than in Scene 1). PENNY's with them.*

MEENA

So what happened? Did you bang your arm?

CHRIS

*(Not sure)*

Uh...

PARAMEDIC

*(OFF)*

Hello!

MEENA

Oh.

*(CALLING)*

Door's on the latch!

*(TO CHRIS)*

That's them.

*MEENA gets to her feet.*

PENNY

Woof! Woof!

MEENA

Penny come here.

*The PARAMEDIC appears.*

PARAMEDIC

Hello, my name is Kaz. You called for an ambulance?

MEENA

Yes, I'm really sorry. It's for my husband. It's probably nothing but they didn't have an appointment at the doctors and he's banged his arm or something putting out the bins. The collection's tomorrow.



PARAMEDIC

First, would you mind putting your  
dog in the next room?

MEENA

Oh yes, of course, come on Penny.

*MEENA takes PENNY to the next room.*

PARAMEDIC

Thank you.

*The PARAMEDIC tends to CHRIS.*

PARAMEDIC

Hello, I'm Kaz. What's your name?

CHRIS

Chris.

MEENA

*(from the other room)*

His name's Chris. I'm his wife.

PARAMEDIC

Your missus says you banged your  
arm, is that right? Can you tell me  
what happened?

CHRIS

*(vague and confused)*

It's better than it was. But it's  
just sort of not quite right. I  
don't know really.

PARAMEDIC

Did you fall?

*CHRIS shakes his head.*

PARAMEDIC

Do you hurt anywhere else?

CHRIS

*(not entirely sure)*

No.

PARAMEDIC

And are you normally fit and well?

CHRIS

Yeh.

*MEENA is back with the PARAMEDIC and CHRIS having shut PENNY in the next room.*

MEENA

He's not quite right, are you  
Chris?

PARAMEDIC

Chris, can you hold your arms out  
in front of you with your eyes  
closed?

*CHRIS is able to do this but he struggles just a touch  
more with his right arm than his left.*

PARAMEDIC

Great. And give us a smile?<sup>1</sup>

*CHRIS's smile is tentative but symmetrical.*

PARAMEDIC

Lovely. Now, do you have any  
medical conditions? On medications  
for anything?

MEENA

He's got something for his blood  
pressure. And cholesterol. And...  
is there something else? There's  
red ones and yellow, more sort of  
orange.

PARAMEDIC

*(to MEENA)*

Tell you what, could you collect  
his medications together for me?  
Sorry, I didn't catch your name by  
the way?

MEENA

Meena.

<sup>1</sup> Paramedic here looking for normal or abnormal face movement

PARAMEDIC

Meena, thank you. If you wouldn't mind doing that for me.

*MEENA sets about collecting all of Chris's medication together in a plastic supermarket bag.*

PARAMEDIC

So Chris, do you think you can stand?

*CHRIS begins to struggle to get to his feet but the PARAMEDIC stops him.*

PARAMEDIC

No, no, it's ok, I can see you're struggling. Did you take a bang on the head or anything?

*CHRIS shakes his head.*

PARAMEDIC

No, right.

*MEENA has the plastic bag of medicines.*

MEENA

Here's all his tablets and things.

PARAMEDIC

Thanks. Meena, does Chris seem confused to you?

MEENA

No more than usual.

PARAMEDIC

Is his face look any different?

MEENA

*(affectionate)*

He always looks like that. No oil painting, are you Chris?

PARAMEDIC

Well, Chris, I'll tell you what. I think we should get you checked out properly at hospital. If you come with us now, in the ambulance, I'll do some basic observations and get a bit more information from you on the way. Is that ok?

Meena, is that ok with you? Are you able to come with us to the hospital?

MEENA

I need to get someone to look after the dog first. She'll go mad here on her own.

PARAMEDIC

Can you get a friend or a neighbour to give you a lift down to the hospital once you've sorted out the dog situation.

MEENA

Yes, I'm sure I can do that.

PARAMEDIC

We're going to take him to the big County Hospital, so that's more of a drive I'm afraid. About 45 minutes.

MEENA

But City Hospital's much nearer, you'd be going right past the door.

PARAMEDIC

It's just they've got more equipment at County. To give him a proper check over, you know.

MEENA

Well, you know best.

*MEENA now fusses around CHRIS.*

MEENA

You've got your hearing aid on  
though, love?

*(checking that it is in place  
behind Chris's ear)*

Yes, good. He won't hear a thing  
without that.

Oh and you'll need your glasses.

*(she gets and puts CHRIS's  
glasses on him)*

I'll come and find you in the  
hospital, all right love?

*MEENA leaves the room and immediately re-enters it as  
SECOND PARAMEDIC with a carry chair*

*The PARAMEDIC and the SECOND PARAMEDIC help CHRIS into  
the carry chair*

SECOND PARAMEDIC

Hi there, I'm Sam. What's your name?

CHRIS

Chris.

SECOND PARAMEDIC

Just relax while I tip you back,  
Chris. Don't worry I've got you.

*The PARAMEDIC hands the plastic bag of medicines for  
CHRIS to hold on his lap.*

PARAMEDIC

You hang on to your medicines.

*The PARAMEDICS wheel him... to and into the ambulance.*

PARAMEDIC

Arms in Chris. That's it.

SECOND PARAMEDIC

Are you sure you want to take him  
all the way over to County in the  
rush hour? He doesn't seem too bad  
to me.

PARAMEDIC

I think just to be on the safe side. The stroke unit team might want to take a look at him.

SECOND PARAMEDIC

Fine. We'd better get going then.

*The SECOND PARAMEDIC goes up front to drive...*

PARAMEDIC

Ok, Chris, I'm going to run one or two tests on you as we go, if that's ok. Also, I need to make a start on the paperwork, otherwise I'll never get it all done. I say 'paperwork' but it's not on paper it's on a screen. Exactly like the old paper forms only slower.

Are you all right there?  
Comfortable? Ish?

*Blue lights. The ambulance sets off.*

### **SCENE 3 – TRIAGE (7.17 pm)**

#### **CHARACTERS**

- ACTOR A – Official / Visitor / Relative / Chris
- ACTOR B – Triage Nurse
- ACTOR C – Paramedic

#### **SETTING**

- Hospital A & E

*The PARAMEDIC wheels Chris's wheelchair (we have - for now - to imagine Chris is sitting in it) up to the busy TRIAGE NURSE and her computer screen for a handover.*

TRIAGE NURSE

Sorry you've had to wait outside for so long. So this is...?

PARAMEDIC

Chris Webber – 66 years of age –

*An OFFICIAL (with clipboard) walks between the PARAMEDIC and the TRIAGE NURSE (they have to move to accommodate him), clearing a path.*

OFFICIAL

Can we keep this passageway clear!

*The PARAMEDIC and the TRIAGE NURSE move back together and continue where they left off...*

PARAMEDIC

... obs normal, has a problem with his--

*The OFFICIAL turns and calls back in their direction.*

OFFICIAL

And we can't take any more patients on the AMU<sup>2</sup>. We're completely full.

PARAMEDIC

--arm.

*The OFFICIAL moves on.*

OFFICIAL

Keep it clear!

*TRIAGE NURSE has information up now up on her screen.*

TRIAGE NURSE

*(to the PARAMEDIC)*

Ah yes, so he's got a problem with his arm.

*The Official has become a VISITOR and interrupts the handover.*

VISITOR

Excuse me, can you tell me the way to Costa please?

TRIAGE NURSE

*(an efficient dismissal)*

Yes, keep going, just round the corner.

VISITOR

Thank you very much.

*The VISITOR exits.*

TRIAGE NURSE

*(to the PARAMEDIC, while looking  
at the screen)*

Sorry. Problem with his arm?

PARAMEDIC

But he says it's much better than  
it was. Main thing is he's a little  
confused and, to me, his face seems  
ever-so slightly –

*The Visitor has become a worried RELATIVE.*

RELATIVE

My Mum's just collapsed in the  
waiting area!

TRIAGE NURSE

*(to the PARAMEDIC)*

Sorry, hold on a minute.

PARAMEDIC

I'm just thinking: possible stroke.

RELATIVE

I don't know what's wrong with her.  
I'm not sure if she banged her  
head!

TRIAGE NURSE

*(to the RELATIVE)*

I'll be right with you.

*(to the PARAMEDIC)*

I'll get someone down to take a  
look at him right away.

*(apologetic)*

But if you could just keep the  
passageway clear.



*With the TRIAGE NURSE's attention now taken up with the collapsed patient, the PARAMEDIC moves the wheelchair to the waiting area, where CHRIS is now reunited with it (as if he had always been there).*

*CHRIS has his medicines in their plastic bag on his lap. He doesn't have his hearing aid anymore. He does have his glasses.*

*The PARAMEDIC puts the brakes on the chair.*

PARAMEDIC

Bit busy today. And every day.

#### **SCENE 4 – TO THE SCANNER (7.35 pm)**

##### **CHARACTERS**

- **ACTOR A – Chris**
- **ACTOR B – Junior Doctor**
- **ACTOR C – Stroke Nurse**

##### **SETTING**

- **Hospital A & E**

*In a cubicle in A & E, CHRIS is sat in his wheelchair. His condition has deteriorated.*

*CHRIS has his eyes closed and both his arms outstretched, palms up, in front of him toward a JUNIOR DOCTOR, who is performing a neurological examination<sup>3</sup>.*

JUNIOR DOCTOR

*(Loud/emphatic, since CHRIS has lost his hearing aid)*

And keep your eyes closed and turn them over.

*CHRIS turns his palms over... his right arm drifts slowly downwards as he does so.*

*The specialist STROKE NURSE (wearing a backpack) arrives.*

STROKE NURSE

Is this Chris Webber?

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hhcxaeOCYs> about 55 s in?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

Yes.

STROKE NURSE

What do you think? Present or absent?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

Present?

STROKE NURSE

Present, yep. Hello, my name is Luisa. I'm the stroke nurse practitioner, nice to meet you Mr Webber.

*The STROKE NURSE is immediately down at CHRIS's eye level, assessing him.*

CHRIS

Soh. Cah. Loh. Ha.

*(an attempt to say "Sorry I can't hear you, I've lost my hearing aid")*

*CHRIS (with his good left hand) reaches for his ear to indicate where his hearing aid should be.*

JUNIOR DOCTOR

He's been deteriorating since they brought him in, over half an hour ago now. I really think –

STROKE NURSE

Yep, me too. Have bloods been done?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

Yes, but I tried three times and I couldn't get a line in.

*The STROKE NURSE is holding and examining CHRIS's inner arm*

STROKE NURSE

I'm not surprised looking at these veins.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

I know there's a huge queue for the scanner.

STROKE NURSE

Don't worry, we'll bounce him to the front. If he needs clot-busters he has to get them within an hour of arriving in Accident and Emergency.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

I reckon we've got about 11 minutes if we're going to make that.

STROKE NURSE

No time for a porter then. I'll wheel him up myself. I don't suppose he can stand?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

No.

STROKE NURSE

We don't have the equipment to weigh him in the chair so we'll have to estimate his weight for the dose. About 14 stone 7 do you reckon?

JUNIOR DOCTOR

I guess.

STROKE NURSE

Right.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

All right Mr Webber, Nurse Luisa here's going to take you for a scan.

STROKE NURSE

You need a scan, Mr Webber, just so we know the best medicine to give you.

JUNIOR DOCTOR

I haven't been able to fully figure out his meds. He couldn't tell me much. There's all sorts in his bag there: antibiotics from 2007; haemorrhoid cream; you name it; a load of tablets out of their packets...

STROKE NURSE

Any anti-coagulants, blood thinners?

DOCTOR

Packet of unopened aspirin; some beta blockers.

STROKE NURSE

We need to make sure he stays on those. They'll have to sort the meds out properly when he gets onto the Stroke Unit.

All right Mr Webber, hold onto your bag, we're going for the record. Chocks away.

*The STROKE NURSE takes the brakes off the chair and wheels CHRIS away swiftly.*

**SCENE 5 – STROKE UNIT (10.07 pm)**

**CHARACTERS**

- ACTOR A – Chris
- ACTOR B – Meena
- ACTOR C – Do Not Disturb Nurse

**SETTING**

- Hospital Stroke Unit

*MEENA arrives for the first time at the Stroke Unit, where a NURSE wearing a "Do Not Disturb" tabard is doing the late evening drugs round.*

MEENA

Excuse me, I'm lost, I'm looking  
for my husband.

*The DND NURSE looks quickly about her for a disturbable  
colleague but none is around.*

MEENA

Sorry, I didn't see your...

*(points at the tabard)*

I didn't mean to disturb you.

DND NURSE

Oh that's fine, really.

MEENA

Are you sure? I'm looking for my  
husband Christopher Webber, they  
said he was here but I don't think  
this is the right place.

DND NURSE

Oh yes, Mister Webber.

MEENA

Because this is the Stroke Unit and  
he hasn't had a stroke, has he?

DND NURSE

Let me take you to him. This way.

MEENA

It's taken me hours to get here, I  
had to sort out the dog and then  
the traffic was awful...

*The DND NURSE leads MEENA to the bed on the unit in  
which CHRIS is lying. CHRIS is tired but otherwise in  
better shape than he was in the last scene. There is  
still some asymmetry and lack of movement on the right-  
hand side, and – although he still seems quite dazed,  
CHRIS's speech is less slurred.*

MEENA

... Chris!? Are you all right my love?

CHRIS  
*(pleased to see her)*  
 Fine.

MEENA  
 What are you doing here? This is  
 the Stroke Unit.

CHRIS  
 I —

DND NURSE  
 He has had a stroke but he's in  
 absolutely the right place to get  
 the best treatment and care. We've  
 already given him clot-busting  
 drugs and he's responded very well.

MEENA  
 But where's his hearing aid? You  
 haven't left it somewhere have you,  
 Chris? You know how expensive  
 that was.

*MEENA roots around for the hearing aid.*

CHRIS  
 Don't —

MEENA  
 And what about your glasses?

*CHRIS realises for the first time that his glasses have...*

CHRIS  
 Gone.

MEENA  
 And what about your pills?

*(to DND NURSE)*  
 He has these little red pills.

DND NURSE  
 What are the little red pills for?

MEENA

I'm not sure now if I put them in his bag.

DND NURSE

I'll get a doctor to come and talk to you about his medications and everything that's been happening.

MEENA

*(acknowledging the DND tabard again)*  
Oh but we're disturbing you.

DND NURSE

You know what: I'm going to take this off.

*MEENA spots that CHRIS is wearing inflatable leg sleeves.*

MEENA

*(to CHRIS)*  
What are you wearing on your legs?!

*(to NURSE)*  
What's he wearing on his legs?!

DND NURSE

They're inflatable leg sleeves, to give him what we call IPC<sup>4</sup> and stop him developing more blod clots.

MEENA

*(giggling)*  
You've got inflatable trousers on!  
They do look funny.

*CHRIS and MEENA laugh together. The DND NURSE smiles too.*

CHRIS

*(to MEENA)*  
How's Penny?

MEENA

Penny? Oh she's having a whale of a time, don't you worry about Penny.

*MEENA cuddles CHRIS.*

**SCENE 6 – AFTERCARE (one week later, 3 pm)**

**CHARACTERS**

- ACTOR A – Chris
- ACTOR B – Penny (offstage dog) / Meena
- ACTOR C – GP 2

**SETTING**

- Doctor's surgery

*CHRIS (his speech no longer slurred; arm still slightly weak) is sat in consultation with GP 2. GP 2 is looking over Chris's discharge letter.*

*MEENA is tying up PENNY outside.*

*GP 2 looks up from the letter.*

GP 2

So, should we wait for Meena?

CHRIS

I beg your pardon?

GP 2

I said: I think we should probably wait for your wife.

CHRIS

Yes, my wife is looking after the dog

PENNY

*(OFF)*

Woof Woof Woof Woof!

CHRIS

She's very excitable.

MEENA

*(OFF)*

Penny, Penny, calm down.

CHRIS

The dog, I mean.



*MEENA puts her head around door and then enters.*

MEENA

Sorry, I was just tying up the dog outside.

GP 2

Come in, take a seat.

*MEENA, slightly flustered, sits next to CHRIS.*

GP 2

I was just reading over the discharge letter the hospital has sent me.

CHRIS

Oh yes, they looked after me ever so well in the hospital.

MEENA

We're so lucky to have the NHS, aren't we Chris?

CHRIS

*(not sure what Meena has just said)*  
No, I don't have my glasses or my hearing aid.

GP 2

So, you were in hospital for five days?

MEENA

Five days.

CHRIS

Friday, yes.

GP 2

So, do you know, were some of Chris's medications stopped?

MEENA

Well they kept asking us about tablets and I told them about the orange ones. And the little red ones.

GP 2

Because not all his medications are listed here, on the letter. I can't see his ace inhibitor for example.

MEENA

Yes but it was all fine in the end.

GP 2

*(irritated at the thought)*

Ok, well, I'll have to follow it up the hospital.

MEENA

But we are struggling a bit with his whatsit.

GP 2

Whatsit?

MEENA

His...

*(pointing)*

thingy.

CHRIS

C... Catheter.

GP 2

*(surprise, slight dismay)*

You've got a catheter fitted?

CHRIS & MEENA

Yes.

GP 2

*(scanning the letter again)*

It doesn't mention that in the letter.

MEENA

They said the nurse here at the surgery would be able to sort it out.

GP 2

Did they really? There's no mention of a catheter here at all or what they need us to do with it.

PENNY

*(off)*

Woof!

CHRIS

What?

GP 2

There's no mention here of a catheter.

CHRIS

It's not a cat, it's a dog.

GP 2

*(with a sigh)*

It's going to take a while to sort this. The letter's incomplete. Why don't you make an appointment to come back and see me in a couple of days and, meanwhile, I'll get on to the hospital and try to sort this out? Would that be ok?

MEENA

Yes, we can come back in a couple of days, can't we Chris?

CHRIS

Sorry, what?

**SCENE 7 – TELEPHONE FIRST (two days later 8.33 am)**

**CHARACTERS**

- ACTOR A – Chris / Penny (invisible dog)
- ACTOR B – Meena
- ACTOR C – Receptionist

**SETTING**

- Chris & Meena's front room at home
- GP surgery, reception

*In GP surgery reception, the RECEPTIONIST has just answered the phone.*

RECEPTIONIST

Good morning, surgery.

*MEENA, CHRIS (and PENNY) are in their front room. MEENA is the caller.*

MEENA

Is that the surgery?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, surgery, how can I help you?

MEENA

Can I make an appointment please for my husband?

RECEPTIONIST

Is it an emergency?

MEENA

No, it's not an emergency but you said to call first thing so I'm calling first thing to get an appointment on the day.

CHRIS

Tell them it's an emergency.

RECEPTIONIST

We're trialling a new system here at surgery called "Telephone First".

MEENA

I am telephoning first.

RECEPTIONIST

It's where you talk to the doctor  
on the telephone first.

MEENA

Are you the doctor?

RECEPTIONIST

No, I'm not the doctor. But if you  
give me your husband's name and  
date of birth, we'll get the ball  
rolling.

CHRIS

Is that Dr Patel?

MEENA

*(rueful)*

No, it's not Dr Patel.

RECEPTIONIST

Your husband's name?

MEENA

Chris. Christopher Webber....

FADE...

End