

WILLIAM: *(wrapping up the broadcast)* And just before we sign off, Lent fever has taken over the SWLK studio, so we'll be sharing our updates with you as we each attempt to give something up. Be sure to tune in again tomorrow. This is William Callaway -

BOOKER: And the good-looking one -

WILLIAM: Signing off for SLWK News. From all of us here in the studio, goodnight.

BOOKER: Goodnight.

WILLIAM: Goodnight.

BOOKER: Goodnight.

WILLIAM: Goodnight.

BOOKER: Goodnight.

WILLIAM: Goodnight.

(The pair smile into the distance for a second, until...)

BOOKER: And sleep well.

JESSIE: And that's a wrap!

(The presents relax. Booker pulls out a hip flask. William gives a disparaging look.)

WILLIAM: Really, Booker? Five seconds off air and you're already on the sauce?

BOOKER: What can I say, Callaway? Working with you is a charm...

WILLIAM: Well you could always walk? It's not like you'll be missed...

BOOKER: You break my heart, Cal, you really do.

(Heather, carrying a jar, enters and sits on the desk, giving William a quick kiss on the cheek. Maisie, with a large sheet of rolled up paper and a bowl containing scraps of paper, follows.)

HEATHER: Right guys, listen up! We all know how this works-

BOOKER: Yes, Lent's not a difficult concept, Weathergirl. It's not like we try to fail every year. We choose something, say we're giving it up and don't. Can we go now?

JESSIE: Why do we bother?

WILLIAM: Because like everything Bulldog Blake asks us to do, it's a publicity stunt.

JESSIE: Does she honestly think the average Joe cares what we do in our spare time?

BOOKER: Speak for yourself.

JESSIE: Oh c'mon, surely in the 21st Century we've got bigger, more important things to spend our valuable time discussing.

(Maisie, who's been flicking on her phone, bursts into laughter.)

MAISIE: Oh Daniel, check your phone, I'm sending over this video of an aardvark scuba-diving, it's hilarious!

BOOKER: I rest my case.

HEATHER: Can it, Booker.

BOOKER: And she's only the autocue girl, she shouldn't be permitted to use her phone during working hours.

JESSIE: So?

BOOKER: So?? You confiscated mine.

HEATHER: Yes, but no one likes you.

(The argument is killed by Dan's helpless outburst of laughter after watching his phone.)

DAN: It's the way it nearly bumps into that halibut!.... Oh. Sorry.

HEATHER: We're picking for each other this time. You pull a name out the bowl, they pick for you, and every time you mess up, money goes in the jar.

DAN: What happens to the money? Is it going to charity again?

JESSIE: After last time?!

DAN: Hey I thought it was a legit charity, I've been apologising for that the whole year! I tried to give the money back, you wouldn't-

HEATHER: In what world is "Socks for Moles" a legitimate charity?!

DAN: Look, I just wanted to look out for the moles, ok? I messed up.

JESSIE: We any closer to getting that money back?

DAN: Well, I did send a very angry email.

BOOKER: Then what are we doing with the money?

MAISIE: We tally up who gives in the most frequently with these stickers, and whoever has the least stickers after the forty days gets to keep whatever's in the jar.

BOOKER: Wait... Sorry, wait. The money's up for grabs?

MAISIE: Yep.

DAN: Seriously?

MAISIE: Yep.

WILLIAM: But c'mon everybody, we always give it to charity.

HEATHER: Legitimate or not...

DAN: Yes, yes, fine. Daniel messed up, we get it.

WILLIAM: Yeah, put a sock in it, Heath!

DAN: That's not funny, Will!

BOOKER: I agree. Did you see that knackered hedgehog on the A18 last night?

WILLIAM: Yes?

BOOKER: Well that was funnier than you, mate.

WILLIAM: I just think it could go to a good cause.

BOOKER: Hey, my divorce lawyers are a good cause.

MAISIE: I could use a new bike...

HEATHER: Will, if you win, you can still give it away.

(Maisie unrolls the paper and moves to tack it up to the wall.)

MAISIE: Now... We hang this up and keep track.

BOOKER: Woah, woah, woah – what's to stop us taking some stupid stickers off our tally?

HEATHER: Little thing called honesty, Booker.

BOOKER: Ok I'll rephrase that, what's to stop us taking some stupid stickers off our tally?

MAISIE: I could take a screen shot every day?

BOOKER: Or I could just buy you a bike and we'll say no more about it?

WILLIAM: Look, we'll all just keep an eye on it. Can we just get this over with please?

(Booker rolls his eyes and overdramatically picks out a name.)

BOOKER: Jessie. C'mon Fletcher, do your worst.

MAISIE: No! We all need to choose first.

JESSIE: I don't-

HEATHER: Just pick one, Jessie.

(They all root round and pull out a name.)

MAISIE: Oh no... Be kind, Matt.

HEATHER: I got you, Maisie.

WILLIAM: Mr Jones, what's your poison?

JESSIE: Heath, you're on me. Dan, who'd you get?

DAN: Callaway.

BOOKER: Brilliant. So, Miss Hawthorne. What would you like to sacrifice?

HEATHER: That's not the point, Booker, she doesn't get to pick! Maisie, I've thought long and hard and I'm going to give up crisps.

ALL (*bar Maisie*): You don't eat crisps.

HEATHER: Fine! This is a stupid game.

MAISIE: Perhaps, you could give up just a little of the negativity, Heather? It often creates a... A bad atmosphere, right everyone?

(This is met by a bad atmosphere.)

HEATHER: Jessie, lose the swearing.

JESSIE: Oh for fuck's sake! But I don't-

HEATHER: Don't even deny it.

JESSIE: Booker, booze.

(She holds her hand out to him.)

BOOKER: Not a chance.

HEATHER: Matt...

BOOKER: Fine! Fine!

(Booker angrily hands over his hip flask to Jessie, who knocks it back. He nonchalantly pulls out another from his back pocket, and is just about to take a swig when Jessie grabs it.)

BOOKER: Ok! (*at Maisie*) But she has to stop writing terrible puns on the cue cards!

MAISIE: I do not write terrible puns!

BOOKER: Last week we did a story about dolphins and you made me ask if they were "So cute on porpoise". On frigging porpoise! They're not even related! One's a mammal and one's a... A reptile!

DAN: They're not reptiles!

BOOKER: I know my amphibians!

MAISIE: But it's my puns which make my autocues so original!

BOOKER: No, it's the puns which make your autocues so terrible!

WILLIAM: Ladies, ladies, please! Daniel, I'll speak to you in private.

BOOKER: Hey, who died and made you Queen? We all have to air our sacrifices, why don't you two?

WILLIAM: Because, Booker, I'm in Seat One.

BOOKER: It's just where you bloody sit!

WILLIAM: Can you argue that I don't sit in Seat One??

BOOKER: Well you're not in it now....!!

(Pause. Then suddenly both gents make a mad dash to sit in it. William wins.)

BOOKER: Fine! Have your stupid little secrets.

MAISIE: But then how are we meant to know if you're doing well? I won't be able to tell, and if I can't tell, I can't put any stickers on the wall.

BOOKER: Very true! You want the money to go to charity, Callaway, what's to stop you letting Dan win so you can twist his arm?

WILLIAM: Because, Matt, I'm not like you.

BOOKER: Though not through lack of trying...

MAISIE: It would be handy to know, Will... For the stickers...

WILLIAM: Ok, I'll tell Jessie what Dan needs to do, and then she can keep tabs, ok?

BOOKER: But I want to know! You like Dan, you'll let him get away with it!

JESSIE: Deal with it, Booker.

HEATHER: Then it's settled. May the best woman win.

(Booker, sulking, grabs his coat and exits.)

JESSIE: Night guys.

(She exits. Maisie shyly approaches Daniel.)

MAISIE: I'll, uh... See you tomorrow Dan?

DAN: Yeah, see you.

(They share an awkward hug, and Maisie heads for the door when:...)

DAN: *(after some internal debate)* Maisie?

MAISIE: Yeah?

(Silence. Daniel looks to attempt to speak, but words fail him.)

DAN: Get home safe.

(Maisie looks disappointed as she turns and leaves. Heather shakes her head at Daniel.)

HEATHER: I'm pleased you're not scared to tell her, Dan. *(giving William a quick kiss)* I'll wait for you outside, Will.

DAN: Night, Heath.