

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)

an offbeat black-and-white romantic comedy

A **Bonafide Films Ltd.** Presentation

Written & Directed by **Tim Plester**

Produced by **Colin Teague & Margery Bone**

Starring **Tim Plester, Myanna Buring & Craig Parkinson**

Music by **Barbarossa**

SHOOTING SCRIPT

January 2006

CHARACTERS

MULLIGAN
ESTHER
THE GINGER KAT

BARBAROSSA (A Singer/Songwriter)
BARBAROSSA'S BAND

CAFE EMPLOYEE
FIRST DEAF PERSON
SECOND DEAF PERSON
BALDING GREY-FACED PEDESTRIAN

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PARLEZ VOUS THE ANGLAIS?

One Saturday afternoon, back in the late late 20th Century, I sat myself down in the oldest Repertory Cinema in the world, and watched the late Krzysztof Kieslowski's remarkable 'Three Colours Trilogy' back-to-back. The experience of that afternoon inspired me, in part, to begin writing what became the following short screenplay.

Along the way I gained further inspiration from the odd flirtation with the "subtitles for the hearing-impaired" option (now made available to all by the DVD-generation) and from a trip to the Uppsala short film festival in Sweden - where it occurred to me that the hometown multi-lingual audience were reading the Swedish subtitles to English language films, despite having a perfect understanding of the original English words being spoken by the actors on screen. The failure of at least two relationships have also found their way into the mix somewhere.

Set in North London at the start of the 21st Century, 'English Language (With English Subtitles)' is concerned with ideas of communication... or the lack thereof. On a very basic level, it's a story about the break-up and eventual mending-back-together of a relationship between a typically English man and his oh-so-Scandinavian girlfriend. Yes, it's a little slight perhaps, but that's entirely intentional. Its slightness is kind of the point. Its slightness is, I hope, part of its charm. With 'English Language (With English Subtitles)' I'm interested in breaking the skin of a situation rather than completing a full autopsy. I've deliberately left tees uncrossed and eyes undotted. Eschewing voice-over, the script is instead shot through with unfinished sentences, inadequate gestures, pregnant silences and a number of internal monologues; all that paralytically bloody English kind of stuff.

The spoken words that the characters do manage to vocalise do not always respond to the subtitles that accompany them on screen. Aye, and there's the rub! For whilst there will undoubtedly be occasions in which the subtitles act like supportive scaffolding to what is being said on screen, there will be other occasions when they will be used to disarm or to consciously juxtapose or obfuscate matters. Sometimes the subtitles may reveal subtext. Sometimes they may paraphrase. Sometimes a particular situation may simply render the use of subtitles entirely unnecessary and/or irrelevant. The characters don't have all the answers. The characters can't see the "bigger" picture. They're just along for the ride. Bear with me, I sure you'll get the hang of it.

TIM PLESTER (Author)

December 2005

PLEASE NOTE: Any text which is book-ended by a ">" and a "<" (>like so<), is text which is designed to appear on screen in the form of subtitles.

English Language... 01

01. BLACK SCREEN

Fade-up the sound of motor-vehicles passing by at high speed.

Give it a moment and then fade-up our first subtitles – simple white letters on a plain black background, at the bottom of the screen...

Subtitles read; >SOUND OF MOTOR-VEHICLES PASSING BY AT HIGH SPEED.<

FADE-UP PICTURE TO REVEAL:

02. EXT. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER NORTH CIRCULAR ROAD. NIGHT

The midnight hour has long since passed; yet still a steady trickle of cars and lorries pass below us. There is such a lack of colour to proceedings that we might be forgiven for thinking we're watching a black-and-white film. In fact, what should rather rapidly become apparent is that we are watching a black-and-white film.

Subtitles read; >EXT. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVERLOOKING ROAD. NIGHT.<

A man in his early Thirties (MULLIGAN) stands on a pedestrian bridge overlooking the road. Wearing a bobblehat and a vintage ski-jacket, he leans against the railings – lost in his own thoughts.

Subtitles read; >FADE TO BLACK.<

The monochrome picture slowly fades to black. The sound of motor-vehicles passing by at high speed fades along with the picture.

03. BLACK SCREEN

Title card; 'ENGLISH LANGUAGE (WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES)' by Tim Plester.

FADE INTO:

04. INT. MULLIGAN & ESTHER'S FLAT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

An enquiring voice issues forth from inky black darkness...

WOMAN'S VOICE (ESTHER)
(Scandinavian accent-)

Mulligan?

Subtitles read; >(WOMAN'S VOICE:) Mulligan?<

WOMAN'S VOICE (ESTHER) (CONT'D)
Mulligan?

Subtitles read; >(WOMAN'S VOICE AGAIN:) Mulligan?<

A bedside lamp is switched on, revealing ESTHER, all alone in a double-bed. She is wearing striped pyjamas, and is squinting a little at the introduction of the artificial light. She leans across and checks the time on the bedside clock radio. It's 2:45am... or thereabouts.

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 02

04. CONTINUED:

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Are you okay Cookie?

Subtitles read; >Are you okay Cookie?<

There is no reply.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

What are you doing out there?

Subtitles read; >What are you doing out there?<

There is still no reply.

Subtitles read; >NO REPLY IS INSTANTLY FORTHCOMING.<

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Mulligan!

Subtitles read; >Mulligan!<

MULLIGAN finally appears in the doorway, wearing a pair of matching striped pyjamas. He stands there for a moment, but says nothing.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

Have you been out walking again?

Subtitles read; >Have you been out walking again?<

MULLIGAN

It's late Esther. You should go back to sleep.

Subtitles read; >HE ATTEMPTS TO DEFLECT THE QUESTION.<

MULLIGAN climbs into the double bed, and turns his back on his lover. ESTHER sits herself up, using the pillows as a support.

ESTHER

(sighs, and then-)

What is it Cookie? What's wrong?

Subtitles read; >What is it Cookie? What's wrong?<

MULLIGAN

Nothing.

Subtitles read; >HE WON'T SAY.<

Reaching across, ESTHER begins to stroke MULLIGAN'S hair.

ESTHER
Mulligan, come on. Speak to me.

(CONTINUED)
English Language... 03

04. CONTINUED:

Subtitles read; >Mulligan, come on. Speak to me.<

MULLIGAN says nothing.

Subtitles read; >MULLIGAN SAYS NOTHING.<

ESTHER (CONT'D)
Jesus! Why won't you ever just talk to me? I hate it
when you get like this!

Subtitles read; >Jesus! Why won't you ever just talk to me? I hate it
when you get like this!<

ESTHER (CONT'D)
Is it me?

No answer is forthcoming from MULLIGAN.

Subtitles read; >Is it her?<

ESTHER (CONT'D)
Is it something I've done?

No answer is forthcoming from MULLIGAN.

Subtitles read; >Is it something she's done?<

MULLIGAN turns over onto his back to look at ESTHER.

ESTHER (CONT'D)
Do you still love me?

MULLIGAN looks at ESTHER but says nothing.

Subtitles read; >Yes Esther. I love you so very much.<

ESTHER (CONT'D)
Do you... do you want me to go? Do you want me to
leave? Is that it?

MULLIGAN looks at ESTHER but says nothing.

Subtitles read; >No Esther. I don't want you to leave.<

Obviously tired and frustrated by this kind of behaviour, ESTHER throws
herself back on to the pillows and looks up at the ceiling.

ESTHER (CONT'D)

För helvete! Det här är ju löjligt!

Subtitles read; >(You'll have to forgive me, but I'm afraid I don't speak the Scandinavian.)<

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 04

04. CONTINUED:

After a pause, MULLIGAN finally opens his mouth.

MULLIGAN

Look - I'm sorry Cookie. Okay. I'm just... I'm sorry.

Subtitles read; >HE SAYS HE'S SORRY.<

ESTHER

I don't understand. I never understand what you mean by that? What? What are you so sorry about?

Subtitles read; >I can't say. It's not my fault, see? I'm English. Born and bred. Like my father before me, and his grandfather before him. It's in my blood. Part of my heritage. Like a cloudy sediment in the veins. We're stunted. Emotionally. It's a national disease.<

MULLIGAN takes ESTHER'S hand in his and attempts to kiss it. ESTHER snatches her hand away, throws back the covers, gets out of bed, and exits the room - leaving MULLIGAN all alone on the mattress. The sound of a tube-train rattling along the tracks fades into earshot.

Subtitles read; >HE SAID HE WAS SORRY.<

CUT TO:

05. EXT. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER RAILWAY LINE. DAWN.

A Northern Line tube-train approaches, passes below our feet and continues on towards Mill Hill East. MULLIGAN stands on a semi-encaged pedestrian bridge overlooking the tracks. He leans against the wire-mesh for a moment longer before continuing on his way.

CUT TO:

06. EXT. TYPICAL GREASY-SPOON CAFÉ. DUSK.

Later that day, and the streets are slowly darkening outside a greasy-spoon cafe situated within spitting distance of the North Circular.

CUT TO:

07. INT. TYPICAL GREASY-SPOON CAFE. DUSK.

MULLIGAN and THE GINGER KAT sit in front of the remains of two all-day breakfasts. THE GINGER KAT is smoking a home-rolled cigarette.

THE GINGER KAT

(exhaling smoke-)
So, that was that then?

Subtitles read; >so comma that was that then question mark<

MULLIGAN
Yeh.

(CONTINUED)
English Language... 05

07. CONTINUED:

Subtitles read; >(I feel a little nauseous.)<

THE GINGER KAT
She just... what? Packed her bags and left?

Subtitles read; >she just packed her bags and left question mark<

MULLIGAN
Pretty much, yeah.

Subtitles read; >(I can't stop thinking about the first time that me and Esther kissed.)<

THE GINGER KAT
And, I mean - when's she coming back?

Subtitles read; >and comma when is she coming back question mark<

MULLIGAN
She said she'd phone.

Subtitles read; >(It was in the park. On a bench. Near the band-stand. Next to the ancient oak-tree.)<

For a moment-or-two the camera focuses on the gutted remains of a smoked kipper, which sits on the dirty plate in front of THE GINGER KAT.

THE GINGER KAT
(exhaling cigarette smoke-)
Man, that's harsh!

Subtitles read; >man comma that's harsh exclamation mark<

A CAFE EMPLOYEE appears and removes the dirty plates. THE GINGER KAT continues to smoke. MULLIGAN chews the inside of his mouth.

Subtitles read; >PAUSE.<

In the background, a man carrying a well-loved old guitar-case (the singer/songwriter BARBAROSSA) enters and approaches the CAFE EMPLOYEE. We do not hear their conversation, but we see the CAFE EMPLOYEE turn and point as if giving directions. BARBAROSSA exits.

MULLIGAN
What did you want to be when you were growing up?

Subtitles read; >what did you want to be when you were growing up
question mark<

THE GINGER KAT

Er... the usual. Y'know? Soldier, fireman... astronaut.

Subtitles read; >er the usual comma you know dot dot dot soldier comma
fireman comma astronaut (obviously) full-stop<

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 06

07. CONTINUED:

MULLIGAN

(after a slight pause-)

I always wanted to be an ice-cream man.

We wait very patiently, but no subtitles appear on the screen.

THE GINGER KAT stubs out his roll-up, and rises.

THE GINGER KAT

Listen Daddio, I need to take a wazz and then I'm
gonna have to get off – okay?

Subtitles read; >(WAZZ / *Brit.sl.* The act of urinating.)<

MULLIGAN

Yeah. Sure.

MULLIGAN has to sit up in his chair and inch forward a little in order
for THE GINGER KAT to squeeze past.

THE GINGER KAT

Oh, yeah. I meant to give you one of these.

THE GINGER KAT pulls out a wad of newly-printed business cards. He
hands one to MULLIGAN, and points at some text on the reverse of the
card.

THE GINGER KAT (CONT'D)

I've just had the "old" broadband installed.

THE GINGER KAT pats MULLIGAN reassuringly on the back and exits in the
direction of the toilets – leaving MULLIGAN alone at the table, gazing
at the business card in his hand.

Subtitles read; >gingerkat23@ntlword.co.uk<

THE CAFE EMPLOYEE returns to replace the dirty ashtray with a clean one
and to wipe down the eating-surface with a damp cloth.

Subtitles read; >CUT TO:<

CUT TO:

08. EXT. GOLDERS HILL PARK, NORTH LONDON. MIDDAY

Fallow deer are grazing peacefully in their enclosure. MULLIGAN allows his gaze to wander towards them as he walks through a fairly deserted municipal park. Over the top of all this, we hear the opening bars of a fragile and enchanting folk song being scratched out on a well-loved old guitar. The waterfowl and the pheasants look on from their enclosure. Elsewhere, somebody is walking an arthritic old dog.

MULLIGAN passes two people (FIRST DEAF PERSON and SECOND DEAF PERSON), who are conducting a conversation in British Sign Language (BSL).

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 07

08. CONTINUED:

FIRST DEAF PERSON

(signing-)

Basically, it's about this typically English man who finds it difficult to express his emotions, and how, consequently, this impacts on his relationship with his Swedish girlfriend. It's a comedy. Of sorts.

SECOND DEAF PERSON

(signing-)

Doesn't sound very funny. What happens at the end?

FIRST DEAF PERSON

(signing-)

I don't know. I've not seen it.

As MULLIGAN walks past a bandstand next to an ancient oak-tree, we see that the stage is occupied by BARBAROSSA and his band - strumming away on their instruments. It becomes apparent that this is the source of the bewitching music we can hear. The subtitles, in this instance, are replaced by the notation of the song's chord-progression. For example; >♯(G...D...A... etc...)♯<. As the song continues, we may notice that the soundtrack is marginally out-of-sync with the performance; almost as if BARBAROSSA and his band are miming along on a 'live' Saturday morning TV programme. Furthermore, the guitar and microphones don't appear to be plugged-in to any available speaker-system, despite the fact that the sound we are hearing is fully amplified. The performance takes on the vague air of a slightly skewed pop promo, complete with its fair quota of rapid edits, extreme close-ups and *de rigueur* swooping camera-angles.

We intercut the band's performance with hyper-real "flashback" footage, shot on super-saturated colour super-8, and showing MULLIGAN and ESTHER enjoying themselves in the municipal park during sunnier months. They hold up hand-written placards proclaiming things like "just watching the clouds pass by", "teaching you to count to 10 in Swedish" and "the time the frisbee got stuck in a tree". CUT TO: ESTHER holding up a placard reading; "I like the way you smile" and MULLIGAN responding by holding up a placard reading; "I like the way you laugh". CUT TO: MULLIGAN holding up a placard saying; "scar; caused by misunderstanding with dog" and ESTHER responding by holding up a placard reading; "tattoo; as a result of losing drunken bet!" CUT TO: ESTHER running down a hill holding up an "I ♥ Mulligan" placard. CUT TO: MULLIGAN running down a hill holding up an "I ♥ Esther" placard.

As BARBAROSSA caresses his guitar in slow-motion, the subtitles read, something along the lines of; >This track is called 'Afterglow'. Taken from the mini-album 'Sea Like Blood' by Barbarossa. Released by Fence Records. Available from discerning record stores and by mail-order from the Fence records website. Lyrics reproduced by kind permission... etc.<

The picture slowly slips deliberately further and further out of focus as MULLIGAN walks further and further away from the bandstand – turning the fallen leaves to mulch underfoot as he goes. The music slowly begins to fade along with the picture.

FADE TO BLACK:

English Language... 08

09. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. HALLWAY. LATE AFTERNOON

Several days later and MULLIGAN is weighed-down with recent supermarket shopping. He opens the front-door, removes his headphones and stoops to collect mail before moving to open the interior door to the flat.

CUT TO:

10. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. LANDING/KITCHEN. LATE AFTERNOON

Subtitles read; >"INCOMING MESSAGE" ALERT...<

The "incoming message" light on the ansaphone is blinking. As MULLIGAN climbs the stairs into the flat, he clearly notices this, but moves instead to the kitchen area – from where he can still see the ansaphone.

Subtitles read; >"INCOMING MESSAGE" ALERT...<

He puts down the shopping bags, drops the mail onto the work-surface and switches on the kettle. MULLIGAN opens an official-looking envelope – removing and reading the letter whilst absent-mindedly taking a mug from a cupboard. He adds a tea-bag and an unheaped spoonful of sugar. The incoming message light on the ansaphone continues to flash.

Subtitles read; >"INCOMING MESSAGE" ALERT...<

The kettle reaches boiling point, and turns itself off. MULLIGAN puts down the official-looking letter and pours hot water into the waiting mug. He drains the teabag of flavour, removes it, and taking a carton of semi-skimmed milk from one of the shopping bags, adds a dash to the concoction. Fresh cup of tea finally in hand, MULLIGAN moves to the ansaphone. He hits the button and retreats to the frame of the kitchen doorway. The tape finishes rewinding, and after a "beep" the ansaphone plays back the recorded message. What follows is a long distorted tone, followed by the "cl-clunk" of someone putting down the phone at the other end of the line.

MULLIGAN remains in the doorway with his steaming cup of tea in hand and his expression unchanged. The picture slowly fades to black.

CUT TO:

11. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. LANDING. MOMENTS LATER

MULLIGAN now has the telephone receiver pressed against his ear.

BT CALLBACK SERVICE (V/O)
*You were called, today, at eleven... twenty two hours.
We do not have the caller's number to return the call.*

Subtitles read; >The. Quick. Brown. Fox. Jumped. Over. The. Lazy. Dog.<

MULLIGAN keeps the telephone receiver pressed to his ear as the picture once again slowly fades to black.

CUT TO:

English Language... 09

12. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. LANDING. MOMENTS LATER

A hand (MULLIGAN'S) unplugs the telephone wire from the wall-socket, before the picture slowly fades to black once more.

CUT TO:

13. EXT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. LATE AFTERNOON

From the opposite side of the street (and in one continuous shot), we see MULLIGAN open the front-door of the flat and step outside with the disconnected telephone in his hands.

MULLIGAN opens the lid of a wheelie-bin and drops the telephone inside with a flourish. Brushing his hands off, he steps back inside the flat and shuts the door behind him.

BALDING GREY-FACED PEDESTRIAN (O/S)
Can you hear me now?

Subtitles read; >(QUESTION.)<

A BALDING GREY-FACED PEDESTRIAN passes the flat. He is trying, with little or no success, to get a signal on his fancy new mobile-phone.

BALDING GREY-FACED PEDESTRIAN (CONT'D)
What about now?

Subtitles read; >(SAME QUESTION, SLIGHTLY REPHRASED.)<

The BALDING GREY-FACED PEDESTRIAN shakes his mobile, then puts it against his ear again – walking out of shot as he does so.

Opening the front-door to the flat, MULLIGAN steps back out. He sheepishly retrieves the phone from the wheelie-bin, steps back inside and shuts the door behind him.

CUT TO:

14. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

Subtitles read; >(UNIVERSAL "MUTE" ◀ ICON).<

Later that evening, MULLIGAN sits alone, in the dark, propped-up on his side of the double-bed and wearing his striped pyjamas. The disconnected phone rests on the sheets next to him. He is grazing on Doritos and dip, whilst watching the midweek National Lottery draw on television (on mute). The changing light from the screen flickers across his face.

Subtitles read; >What are you thinking about?<

The light from the television continues to play across MULLIGAN'S face.

Subtitles read; >... Excuse me? *Uhr-hum!* I'm talking to you.<

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 10

14. CONTINUED:

MULLIGAN

I know. I'm trying to ignore you.

Subtitles read; >Okay. Fair enough.<

MULLIGAN pops another Dorito into his mouth and crunches it.

Subtitles read; >... Are you thinking about her?<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

-Can you not, please! I'm trying to watch this.

Subtitles read; >No you're not.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Well, I am actually.

Subtitles read; >Why's the sound turned down then?<

MULLIGAN has no answer to this.

Subtitles read; >... Why don't you just call her?<

Subtitles read; >... Okay. Send her a telegram if you prefer.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

A telegram? *Snort!* I think you'll find you can't really send telegrams anymore.

Subtitles read; >That's where you're wrong. You can do it on-line.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Really?

Subtitles read; >Yeah. Really.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Okay. And - what would I... say in this hypothetical telegram of yours? For instance?

Subtitles read; >I dunno. Up to you really. Whatever you want... The truth? Perhaps. About how, lately, when you wake, alone, in the mornings, you find yourself staring for a long long time at the gaps in your life where once she used to dwell... I'm sure you'll figure it out.

MULLIGAN says nothing in response.

Subtitles read; >... Just a suggestion.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Thanks. I'll bear it in mind.

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 11

14. CONTINUED:

Subtitles read; >I'll let you get back to your program then.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Yep.

MULLIGAN stares thoughtfully at the flickering television screen

FADE TO BLACK:

15. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. LANDING/KITCHEN. MORNING

A hand (MULLIGAN'S) plugs the telephone wire back into the wall-socket.

Subtitles read; >**Click!**<

MULLIGAN (wearing a dressing-gown over his striped pyjamas) stands looking at the plugged-in-again phone for a few seconds whilst sipping from a freshly made cup of tea. Then, cradling the cup in both hands, he exits the room. We hear the bathroom door closing behind him, followed soon after by the sound of a power-shower being turned on.

The camera slowly pans around the room - checking out the décor. On the mantelpiece we come across a framed photograph of MULLIGAN and ESTHER, during happier times together. We linger here for a moment or three.

Almost inevitably, the telephone starts ringing.

Subtitles read; >**Riiing-ring! Riiing-ring! Riiing-ring!**<

We hear MULLIGAN shut off the running water, disentangle himself from the shower, open the bathroom door and come charging down the corridor. MULLIGAN enters the room, dripping with water and pulling on a dressing-gown. He snatches up the telephone receiver.

Subtitles read; >**Riiing-ring! Rii---**<

MULLIGAN

Hello?

Subtitles read; >(FEMALE VOICE:) "Hallo? Could I speak to Esther?"<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Erm, no – she's not here I'm afraid.

Subtitles read; >(FEMALE VOICE:) "Do you know when she'll be back?"<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

No. I'm afraid she doesn't really live here anymore.

Subtitles read; >(FEMALE VOICE:) "Oh. I see. I don't suppose you have a forwarding address or a contact number for her do you?"<

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 12

15. CONTINUED:

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Er - I don't. Sorry.

Subtitles read; >(FEMALE VOICE:) "Okay. Well, sorry for troubling you".<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

Sure. No problem. Bye.

Subtitles read; >**Pip!**<

MULLIGAN stands, looking reflectively at the telephone in his hand for a moment, as water drips from his hair and runs down his face.

MULLIGAN

Fuck it!

CUT TO:

16. INT. MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. KITCHEN/LANDING. MOMENTS LATER

A hand (MULLIGAN'S) pulls open a drawer, and begins energetically rummaging around amongst old air-mail envelopes and other "Swedish" detritus. He digs out an old address book, and returns to the phone – flicking through the pages as he goes. MULLIGAN picks up the telephone receiver and uses his shoulder to keep it pressed to his ear whilst scanning for potential numbers. Almost inevitably the doorbell rings.

Subtitles read; >THE DOORBELL RINGS.<

MULLIGAN looks in the direction of the sound. He thinks about answering it, then deciding against it, returns to the address book. He finds what he is looking for (a post-it note saying "Esther in Stockholm"), and is about to punch in the number when the doorbell rings again.

Subtitles read; >THE DOORBELL RINGS A SECOND TIME.<

MULLIGAN puts down the receiver, but doesn't place it back in its cradle. Tightening the draw-string on his dressing-gown, he exits the room at speed. We stay at a distance as he bounds down the stairs and out into the hallway. Only when he gets to the front-door does he realise that he doesn't have his keys. The doorbell rings again.

Subtitles read; >THE DOORBELL RINGS FOR THE THIRD TIME OF ASKING.<

MULLIGAN
(O.S. - shouting through the door-)
Yeah, yeah - I'm coming. Just hang on a sec. I need
to get the keys. It's locked.

We remain at the top of the stairs as MULLIGAN reappears and comes racing back into the flat. In the distance, we hear the off-the-hook telephone begin to issue a repetitive pre-recorded message.

(CONTINUED)

English Language... 13

16. CONTINUED:

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O)
beep... beep... beep - Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >SOUND OF PRE-RECORDED MESSAGE IN THE BACKGROUND.<

MULLIGAN reappears with the keys and again descends the stairs.

CUT TO:

17. INT/EXT MULLIGAN AND ESTHER'S FLAT. MORNING

The front-door of the flat opens to reveal MULLIGAN in his dressing-gown with his hair still a little on the wet side. His face betrays little.

WOMAN'S VOICE (ESTHER) (O/S)
(Scandinavian accent-)
Hey there Cookie.

Reveal ESTHER, standing on the doorstep with a suitcase next to her. She is wearing her pair of matching striped pyjamas.

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)
beep... beep... beep - Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >SOUND OF PRE-RECORDED MESSAGE IN THE BACKGROUND.<

MULLIGAN
Hey.

ESTHER
Can I come in? I was hoping we could maybe talk
about some things. Properly.

MULLIGAN

Yeah. Yeah, I'd like that.

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >SOUND OF PRE-RECORDED MESSAGE IN THE BACKGROUND.<

MULLIGAN (CONT'D)

You do... know you're wearing your pyjamas?

ESTHER

You do know your hair's wet?

MULLIGAN

I was about to try and call you actually.

ESTHER

Yeah, yeah – of course you were. Now hurry up and close the door you big freak, it's freezing out here.

(CONTINUED)

English Language...

14

17. CONTINUED:

MULLIGAN stands aside to allow ESTHER to enter the flat – kissing him tenderly on the cheek as she passes.

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >SOUND OF PRE-RECORDED MESSAGE IN THE BACKGROUND.<

MULLIGAN picks-up ESTHER'S suitcase from the doorstep. There is a smile etched on his face as he closes the door to the flat behind him.

We remain on the doorstep as the monotonous B.T. incantation continues.

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >*Raccrochez sil vous plait et essayez encore...*<

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >*Cuelgue por favor para arriba e intente otra vez...*<

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >(the same phrase, but in Japanese kanji)...<

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)

beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >(the same phrase, but in Arabic)...<

B.T. ANNOUNCEMENT (V/O) (CONT'D)
beep... beep... beep – Please hang up and try again...

Subtitles read; >REPEAT TO FADE...<

The monotonous B.T. incantation slowly fades. Then, without any warning, the picture snaps to white screen as the tail-end of the film spools through the projector (super-8 style) and leaves us with naught but a smudge of random code numbers and scratches.

FIN.