

# COMEDY

Two Audio Plays

by Peter Stickland

FRANK AND MOUSTIQUE GO BOATING

FRANK AND MOUSTIQUE GET A LIFE

**77**books

COMEDY: Two Audio Plays

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A sound recording of FRANK AND MOUSTIQUE GO BOATING was brilliantly produced by David Cunningham in 2011. To listen to this on your computer copy and paste the following link.

<http://www.stalk.net/piano/f&m.htm>

It was played by Resonance FM in the summer of 2011

Frank was read by Peter Stickland, Moustique by Christine Fasse, with Lena Tutunjian the presenter.

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# FRANK AND MOUSTIQUE GO BOATING

## ACT ONE; LIFE WITHOUT THE OTHERS

### A disused dairy in Kentish Town

Introductions are read by a presenter

**Sound cues are given in bold type.**

**The sound of a ship's horn is followed by applause. Someone is playing happy birthday on the xylophone. A door bangs shut and footsteps can be heard approaching.**

M. Hello, are you the play?

F. No, my name's Frank.

M. Frank?

F. Before you crack any jokes, I've heard them all before.

M. What kind of jokes, ca?

F. Jokes, like, 'let's be Frank,' or 'Frankly I'm bored.'

M. Those are jokes?

F. Well, there's no telling with some folk.

#### **Mosquito**

M. Moustique.

F. What's a mistake?

M. Rien, rien, I was giving you my name.

F. Now you've lost me.

M. My name is mistake, I mean Moustique.

F. Mystique?

M. Not mist, moo, like the sound of a cow, quoi?

F. Now I'm really lost. Can we start again?

M. My name is Moustique.

F. Moustique, what kind of name is that?

M. It's not my real name; mon papou quoi.

F. What does it mean?

**Slap** (mosquito sound stops.)

M. Mosquito.

F. Mosquito, as in, 'hello my little mosquito.'

M. Precisely.

F. How touching.

M. What did your father call you?

F. To be honest my father was Frank.

M. Ouais, ouais, oulala, you're difficult to follow.

F. All but the most sensitive find me odd.

M. Are you here to make a play?

F. Yes, but no-one turned up.

M. Moi.

**French accordion**

F. You have, but you're late.

M. What am I late for?

F. Search me. Have you made a play before?

M. I've been in one, but I didn't make it.

F. Here's a script.

M. Is it the script for our play, ca, ce truc?

F. Who knows? I'm not doing this play.

M. What play are you doing?

F. I'm doing one about an orang-utan.

**Orang-utan**

M. How are you going to do that?

F. Improvise. Do you want to join me?

M. Sure how do we start?

F. We start tomorrow.

M. Why not today?

F. It's past visiting hours.

M. We can always visit someone else.

**Street noise**

F. Visit me; I've been eluding myself all day.

M. Was there a reason or was it just bad luck?

F. Bad luck and good luck.

M. Is it true that they'll spend millions here?

### **Construction site**

F. It will change beyond recognition.

M. Then how will we know?

F. It is earmarked for growth.

M. I'm not into earmarks.

F. What even in your own language?

M. It is possible to forget your own language.

F. We live constantly in surprised amazement.

### **Rain**

M. Does it still count if we receive help?

F. Like leaving the door open?

M. Open or unhinged.

F. We must learn to be flexible.

M. Open mindedness works sporadically.

F. Only if it opens new doors.

### **Door slamming**

M. New conditions invigorate, ca c'est sur.

F. But not precipitation; it always brings damp.

M. And I accepted this invitation willingly.

F. It's not like answering a summons.

M. You don't fight like everyone else, do you?

F. You scratch my back and I'll scratch back.

M. I feel the imminent return of an old enemy. Un vieil ennemi oui!

F. Is this some kind of treadmill?

M. I appear to be moving.

### **Machinery**

F. Either that or it's a gesture of dismissal.

M. Maybe it's a new wave.

F. You've got off to a good start.

M. I hadn't imagined that I'd begun.

F. I'm way behind already.

M. Will you still be here while I'm gone?

F. I might still be back there.

M. Then I'll see you when I return, d'accord?

F. Are you going back or on?

M. I had considered catching up.

### **Running**

F. Difficult decisions increase with age.

M. You're very critical.

F. We should try to keep things on an even keel.

### **River**

M. I have no idea about nautical terminology.

F. Ssh... There's someone coming.

M. C'est bon; we don't have to specialise.

F. How dispiriting. It must have been my heart.

### **Heart beat**

M. It beats so loudly, I can't hear my own.

F. The need for self reference is a great solace.

M. Un alibi et un bon!

### **Mosquito**

F. Don't you mean excuse?

M. No, I try to avoid the approval of the public.

### **Slap**

F. Damn these fleas.

M. I'm fed up with it too; world fairs, picnics, et les rodeos c'est pareil.

F. Cigarette?

M. No thanks.

F. Ha, ha, ha.

M. Why do you laugh?

F. Because this is the esoteric version.

M. Guess my profession; I keep secrets.

F. I'll tell you one. The last time I visited my dentist...

M. Stop. I recently tied my dentist to his chair. Si si chteu jure!

F. Are you a private patient?

M. No, he's a bore.

F. Mine only likes frogs.

### **Frog**

M. What was your secret?

F. I siphoned the petrol out of his car.

M. Do you think we have something? Quelque chose, un truc, Chai pas moi!



F. Last night a dwarf came and stole my bread.

M. There was a barefooted child in my dream.

F. The dwarf was insignificant.

M. The child taught me to climb pine trees.

### **Bird song**

F. He told me I was revolting.

M. I'm always trying to avert disasters.

F. I only manage to precipitate them.

M. How did you stop the havoc?

F. I put him in my pocket.

M. A dream can follow one through the ages.

F. Waking up abruptly, one forgets.

### **Alarm clock**

M. It can take the ground from under you.

F. We must learn to fight from the armchair.

M. Comparisons are never on a fair and square basis.

F. Much more should be said about it.

M. I've only met the victims.

F. But you're a fully fledged member.

### **French national anthem**

M. Nan, nan mais, I can still quit if I want to.

F. That's missing the point.

M. And that isn't the issue.

F. Are you practicing ancient methods?

M. I don't suspend myself in brooding, alors ca non.

F. It helps to avoid the nagging.

M. But a sense of bondage still remains.

F. There's no point hanging around then.

M. Not without appropriating something, nan?

### **Glass shattering**

F. You shouldn't hedge your bets.

M. I don't bet on hedge funds, ca va pas nan?

F. Don't you mean hedge funds?

M. Can a hedge fund the future?

F. In future I'll find a hedge.

M. I hope it's a hedge of the future.  
F. We can never be a hedge of the future.  
M. It's like the end of the rainbow.  
F. Where the ladder of success begins?  
M. I hope so.  
F. Many are called but few are chosen.

### **Fog horn**

M. Shh...Did you hear that?  
F. Sounded like a fog horn.  
M. And the silhouettes of boats floated through the fog.  
F. Was that a quote?  
M. No; it came to me from the mists of time.  
F. Does this happen often?  
M. There're times when we must make the best of things, tu crois pas?  
F. Salubrious opportunities are a great boon.  
M. It beats digital instrumentation.

### **Digital instrumentation**

F. We should never cover up unwillingness.  
M. That happened long ago.  
F. With action there's always discontinuity.  
M. We must begin to record disappearance, ca c'est sur!  
F. Concealment never admits the expectation.  
M. Unless it's a mirage.  
F. In a certain light you look like Bergman in Casablanca.

### **A kiss is just a kiss (sound track)**

M. You look like you're ready to chop down trees ma parole!  
F. Had you been called Mystique you'd have had more allure.  
M. Thank you Fred.  
F. Or Mystic; that would have added a spiritual dimension.  
M. Don't even go there, Flambeau.  
F. Flambeau, I like that; it has the call of the wild about it.

### **Rainforest**

M. You're Frank.  
F. You're right; until tomorrow then.  
M. Until tomorrow?

F. The day after today.

M. Is that when we meet?

F. Well only if we arrange it the day before.

M. Can you do four o'clock?

### **Big Ben**

F. No, how do you do that?

M. To be frank, I never tried, nan jamais.

F. I'm not listening.

M. I hear you.

F. My place then.

M. Is it a flat?

F. Quite flat, just a piece of waste ground.

### **Rainforest and Big Ben**

## ACT TWO; BEFORE THE PARACHUTE OPENS

### A piece of waste ground in Hackney

#### **Chain saw and tree falling**

F. Bonjour Mastic.

M. It's not Mastique, it's moo like a cow remember?

F. Moostick.

M. And try 'stique' rather than stick.

F. As in pique, not pick.

M. Voila, precisely, like physique, not physic.

F. I think we're done.

#### **Applause**

M. Frankly, I'm relieved.

F. Do you see this quizzical expression?

M. Mais oui.

F. It indicates my confusion.

M. What are you confused about?

F. We're not talking psychology are we?

M. No, bringing so much together causes explosions.

F. Have I dragged you into things you were trying to avoid?

M. I suspect you might bungle this.

F. How disappointing that you've taken it that way.

M. Je crois que, either that or you've expressed yourself badly.

F. I thought I had used my powers of persuasion.

#### **Political speech**

M. Perhaps we should follow our heart, nan?

F. Are you kidding? That could take years.

M. So do dreams.

F. I need to fix my indicator.

M. I bet all your thoughts are guesses.

F. I'm an atheist. All I need is a screwdriver.

M. What were you digging when I arrived?

F. Books.

M. Alors, did you find any?  
F. No, I was burying them.  
M. They were rotten?  
F. In a manner of speaking.  
M. They might eventually prove useful.  
F. Did you bring a bag?  
M. If I kept count of all the hundreds of...

#### **A cry in the distance**

F. Shh...Did you hear that?  
M. More fog horns?  
F. Sounded like a cry of alarm.  
M. We're in bad shape when it comes to time.  
F. Which is what?  
M. I don't know, but there's a remarkable sky.  
F. Please don't nudge me; I might spike myself.  
M. Tap it with something first. It's too firmly embedded.

#### **Tapping**

F. Do you fantasise about being successful?  
M. Why, do you?  
F. No. I worry about acting the part of an orang-utan.  
M. There we are; they are out; two privileged objects.  
F. They have temper tantrums.  
M. Nan, nan, nan, nan, nan, not when I've screwed them in here they won't.  
F. Things are not turning out the way I imagined them.  
M. Are you prone to thinking of any kind?  
F. I guess. I try to figure out what the signs say.  
M. Signs read they don't speak; or maybe we are both wrong.  
F. Speaking of which have you practised your lines?  
M. Is that a criticism?

#### **Bird song**

F. No, that was a short course in photosynthesis.  
M. Good; then I've finished something at last.  
F. We haven't started rehearsals though.  
M. I know and I must wash my hair tonight.  
F. There's a bath here somewhere.

### **Police siren**

M. Really? Whose house is this?

F. It belongs to the farmer on the bench.

M. A farmer dans la ville?

### **A cow mooing**

F. Yes, he ploughs shares.

M. For the stock market?

F. I talk gibberish to test if you're listening.

M. I don't believe that's the truth.

F. But you're nodding your head.

M. If I don't understand, I nod. Ouais c'est ca, I nod.

F. Your nose is rather antagonistic.

M. I've waited years to hear that observation.

F. What will you do on your birthday?

M. I'll insult everyone I know.

F. Will that take long?

M. That may be irrelevant to the task.

F. We could go inside.

### **Phone ringing**

M. Do you have a phone?

F. Dim sightedness might invoke musicality.

M. Cold ears might insight hunger.

F. And insensibility, does that help?

M. You don't swing your arms when you walk.

### **Orang-utan**

F. How can I tell if you see three-dimensionally?

M. Search me.

F. Do you believe in chiromancy then?

M. I studied my hands at breakfast today. Is that the same thing ou pas?

F. Who knows? You should concoct a plan.

M. Repeating what we know turns back from the surface.

F. I bet you pray for a moratorium on misrepresentation.

### **Furniture crashing down**

M. Oh, Oulala, my shoe.

F. You should keep it on your foot.

M. Franchement Frank, it's futile to give advice.  
F. I know. Good advice can be fatal.  
M. Try following your nose.  
F. This is called trapping and intimidating.  
M. Are you popular?  
F. I suspect that you are holding back another question.  
M. What does, "get lost" really mean?

### **Rainforest**

F. Will an answer be worth it?  
M. Mon Dieu, you keep yourself so celibate.  
F. I should encourage you to be always exactly as you are.  
M. Don't boast about your cynicism.  
F. Quite a warrior aren't you?  
M. It's my profession. I dislike secret melancholy.  
F. Such are the hazards commonly undertaken.  
M. Do you think the stars have a malign influence?  
F. Not as obviously as bad wine or a crowd of tourists.  
M. Either it's raining or it isn't.  
F. I feel like an astronaut.  
M. You look like a gorilla.  
F. Have you just had a fight with someone?  
M. Vraiment, I only want ruins and curiosities today.  
F. I feel like a drink.  
M. Do you know of any unpredictable corners?  
F. Only the ones where the wind curls the leaves.  
M. Good. I'm starving. How about an Indian?

### **Indian music**

F. When I was six I was in Bombay; no it was Calcutta.  
M. I must telephone the library; then I will eat.  
F. I must phone too. It was just before the monsoon.

### **Mosquito**

M. What was that?  
F. A great deluge of water from out of the sky.  
M. No, that sound.  
F. It's like insects before a storm.

### **Slap**

- M. Are you referring to me or are you still in India?  
F. No, I'm taking my hat off because the bees like it.  
M. They like roses. Shouldn't you put more clothes on?  
F. No, but I'll comb my hair.  
M. All the world's a stage.  
F. That's funny, I was just thinking of Shakespeare.  
M. How now spirit, whether wander you?

### **Cat**

- F. I'm the merry wanderer of the night.  
M. Then I must be your lady.  
F. Then it's you who led me here.  
M. Oh, faint heart, don't worry, the fairyland can't buy us.  
F. I bet that cat is their ambassador.  
M. Do you speak another language?  
F. I can convince people that I speak Italian, but it makes me lonely.

### **Aeroplane**

- M. Let's travel, aller.  
F. I don't know whether I would be happy or sad.  
M. Sometimes I cry when I'm happy.  
F. Miserable people often have a whale of a time.  
M. Expecting every moment to be their next.  
F. Don't you mean last?  
M. Be gone dull care.  
F. I won't take that personally.  
M. Or lying down.

### **Sawing wood**

- F. How will I know when it's ten o'clock?  
M. La-bas, la bas, try the spare room.  
F. I haven't got time.  
M. Oh time, it's like butterflies; all you need en fait is a net.  
F. What did I expect?  
M. Surely there's a clock somewhere.  
F. Come to think of it, there isn't.  
M. And I still don't have any money.



F. Then there's little chance of you getting any.

M. Couldn't we kidnap someone?

F. Look dear...

M. For Christ's sake, don't call me dear.

### **Cash register**

F. Money; why is it always money?

M. Do you think I don't know what you're doing?

F. My tongue is free to do what it likes.

M. And what about the hunched back?

F. I'm too old for that.

M. You're young enough to work.

F. So are you. I'll pay you a pound an hour to clean up.

### **Hoover**

M. I must start to think more of myself.

F. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen; that is the show.

M. What? That can't be the end can it?

F. Sure, what's wrong with that?

M. But we haven't started to make a play.

F. So what are you saying, it wasn't worth the effort?

M. Oh no, I had a lovely time. What about you?

F. Yes, I could go on forever.

### **Thunder and a down pour**

M. I liked the stubborn creepy crawlies best.

F. Yes, they're like a tape recording through sleep.

M. Even the sound of them made me itch.

F. Yes, it's not just yesterday's extravagance.

M. Are you referring to mosquitoes, ou bien quoi?

F. Oh no. When in doubt, I go for colour.

M. We must fight for our right not to fall.

F. Shall we go in or go out.

M. It depends on the colour.

F. Is it going to rain?

M. I can honestly predict that it isn't.

F. It's nice after a storm; it's different, quieter.

### **Bird song**



## ACT THREE; A RAPSONY OF IMPERTINANCE

### A squat in St. John's Wood

#### **Splashing sounds**

F. Do it on the spur of the moment.

M. But I've spent too long trying.

F. Oh Musteek, you must try again.

M. Moosteek.

F. Maybe I should stick to mosquito.

#### **Mosquito**

M. Are you getting your own back for being Frank?

F. Jokes at my expense have cost me dear.

M. Please don't call me dear.

F. I meant dearly.

M. Is that the turn of phrase?

F. I don't know whose turn it is.

#### **Slap**

M. This will go down like a led balloon

F. It may even tip the boat over.

M. It's all to do with turnover.

F. Was it only yesterday we met?

M. No it was another day.

F. Yesterday was another day.

M. As was the day before.

F. Now let me think.

#### **Splashing**

M. That must wait 'til I'm back in the boat.

F. Do you remember seeing the oars?

M. Nan, rien de rien.

F. You remember nothing?

M. It happened so suddenly.

F. We should concentrate on getting ashore.

#### **Waves on the beach**

M. On getting to the bank.  
F. All the way to the bank and back.  
M. Arretes, it will get out of hand.  
F. Do you have chips on both shoulders?  
M. Your thoughts travel faster than I do.  
F. I blame the molly-coddling.  
M. Are you thinking of another woman?  
F. No one mentioned a new date.

#### **Arabic music**

M. Oulala, slowly he sank beneath the weight of misinterpretation.  
F. And you never get your feet wet, I suppose?  
M. Me? Who am I, in the water, to speak of such things?  
F. But you think it doesn't concern me?  
M. It's unattractive to act as if you were above it all, vraiment.  
F. This could go down on record as gentle violence.  
M. But I'm the one treading water.

#### **Water down the plug-hole**

F. What have I been trying to tell you all afternoon?  
M. Then you must be bilingual after all.  
F. Would that lift the blues?  
M. We rarely hear two languages at the same time.  
F. A little colour always helps.  
M. The hue, the tone, the tint, the shade, everything helps. Tout.  
F. Can I trouble you for more of the same?  
M. Just a tinge. Will it bring me closer to hand?  
F. Of course, but it won't impact on statistical charts.  
M. Ecoute, I was told that being blonde was an attractive starting point.

#### **Wolf-whistle**

F. The choice of cloth still has much to do with it.  
M. Nan, nan, nan, nan, nan, not if it's cut on the bias.  
F. Why do your eyebrows rise when you say bias?  
M. The acquisition of good habits is always endearing.  
F. What, like clearing up behind you.  
M. Oh the mess we get ourselves into.

#### **Orang-utan**

F. Are you referring to method acting?  
M. No, to you. Having tidied up you can't find yourself.  
F. And you've let yourself go.  
M. I will tell you something.  
F. I feel that rejection is close at hand.  
M. I'm only here for the rehearsal.  
F. And think of me, I'm still here when you've gone.  
M. You don't think of it as a play then?  
F. More like a series of sentences without parole.

### **Soldiers marching**

M. And you never get to the bank?  
F. Not even to the hole in the wall.  
M. So its consolation you're after.  
F. I have a tendency to accept alleviation.  
M. Aller, we must gather our things before the weather changes.  
F. We mostly have more than we need.  
M. Some succeed because of what they don't see.  
F. Is that the old way of doing it?  
M. There's more of the past ahead of us than you think.

### **Fog horn**

F. There's that sound again.  
M. Can you capture it?  
F. I don't know where to begin.  
M. Behind every successful man there's a woman.  
F. I don't feel successful.  
M. I wonder if anything important began with this declaration.  
F. You really want to 'get on' don't you?  
M. Well it beats treading water.

### **Cistern flush**

F. Can you row?  
M. I can punt.  
F. We'll just have to use our hands.  
M. I need to be in the boat first.  
F. It won't be long now.  
M. Something about a creek and a paddle comes to mind.

### **Motor car racing**

F. This is definitely water and I have found the puddle.

M. Did you mean paddle?

F. Paddle.

M. Or oar.

F. Or oar. Who cares?

M. Et ben, then give me a hand.

F. Here.

M. Hold on.

F. Aghh!...

### **Splash and cascade of water**

M. One in the boat is worth two in the brink.

F. We must hold the stern and kick our legs.

M. Franchement, no other condition could have inspired such a statement.

F. It's the bank we must achieve, not a higher plane of consciousness.

M. Swimming will indeed be more effective than meditation.

F. It's idle to panic.

M. Did you mean paddle?

F. It's the suspense that's killing me.

M. What did you sing when you were young?

F. My old man said, follow the van.

### **Engine running**

M. What, and don't dilly dally on the way?

F. Yes I know; chance would be a fine thing.

M. Will you be buried in the family vault?

F. You've got me questioning causality now.

M. What with one thing and another, c'est ca?

F. Exactly.

### **Whistling**

M. I wonder if this will ever serve a purpose.

F. A grandchild is great impetus for narrative.

M. Do you imagine a career in maritime adventures then?

F. It depends on how long this one lasts.

M. Good point and the wind is getting up.

F. It's a shame you never got up.

### **Tree crashing down**

M. It's a shame I never followed the van.

F. We'll think of something.

M. Are you talking collectively?

F. I'm out of my depth.

M. And no chance of a lifeline.

### **Mosquito**

F. You're always there when I need you.

M. Like a lighthouse in the storm.

F. But we're getting further away.

M. We'll reach the bank eventually.

F. Not with our turnover.

M. Your jokes are like winking in the dark.

### **Slap**

F. We must take the rough with the smooth.

M. OK, I'll wax lyrical about the moon and you get us out of here.

F. I thought it was my turn to start a scene.

M. I'm in the grip of drowning.

F. I never said it was time for light refreshments.

M. There are people on the bank.

F. Shout to them; I'll wave my arms.

### **Laughter**

M. They're laughing. They think it's a performance.

F. Help. This is not a poem, I promise you.

M. It's no use. We'll have to get there by instalments.

F. Dear bank, you are so attractive.

### **Bird song**

M. It's no use talking to the bank.

F. Then I shall pray for a life boat.

M. A rope on a tractor would be less surreal.

F. Just keep your eyes open and your mouth shut.

M. What a novel and refreshing experience you invite.

F. I'm a realist. Something will turn up.

M. That's an optimist.

F. It's always worked in the past.

M. No point changing now. How old are you anyway?  
F. My only qualification is my youth.  
M. But you've spent a long time getting there.  
F. It should stand me in good stead.  
M. Not me, my nerves are frayed.  
F. Don't even think of fraying.  
M. Tu veux dire, even if I go limp and ragged with cold and exhaustion?  
F. Anyone passing would think this a pastoral scene.  
M. Can you reach the branches of that tree?  
F. I've got it. I'll just swing my leg over.  
M. Tu sais quoi. You were born for this role my dear orang-utan.  
F. Just watch out for the temper tantrums.

### **Digging**

M. Shall we stop here? I can't extemporize any longer.  
F. I thought we were improvising.  
M. Whatever, call it an impromptu rehearsal.  
F. Do you think it will work on the stage?  
M. Ibsen will rot in his grave.  
F. Don't you mean turn?  
M. Nan, not if he's dead.  
F. Maybe it should be performed in the round.  
M. Will it work best without the water?  
F. Oh yes, we can't have water. Water will ruin it.  
M. It's all about not having the water then.

### **Rain**

F. Do you think the audience will laugh?  
M. Only if they're nervous.  
F. We'll have to make do and hope for the best.  
M. I hope they like it off the cuff.  
F. Is that the same as off the bone?  
M. Not really. It's more like ad lib.  
F. I never understand; I just play it by ear.  
M. I'll come round to your way of thinking eventually.  
F. Can you remember how we started?  
M. Funny you should ask that, I was thinking the same thing.



F. Were we in the boat or on the bank?

M. Or on the boat in the bank?

F. There were no tellers.

M. And no captive audience.

**Applause and rain**

## ACT FOUR; PADDLING IN PUBLIC

### A Ship's Chandlers in Wapping

#### **Sounds of the river**

M. My name is Moustique.

F. Remind me again. Speak your peace.

M. My name is Moustique.

F. Is this a lesson in tolerance?

M. Yes and you're lengthening your stride.

F. I'm taking the air.

M. You're trying to get away with something.

#### **1930's police whistle**

F. Comes a time when a man has to make his own decisions.

M. Your awareness of the present is a reckless vision.

F. We should not waste even the smallest legacy.

M. So why are you in search of maritime knick-knacks?

F. Shopping on an empty stomach is never recommended.

M. A visit to the chandlers is hardly shopping.

F. It may be down to earth, but it's wildly relaxed.

M. Has your intransigent hardness suddenly softened?

F. There's no point getting mad about nothing at all.

M. Break a leg.

F. I hate false glamour.

#### **Gun fire**

M. Is this it?

F. Don't worry; I've got your back.

M. Why, are we under fire?

F. You're asking for a piece of my mind.

M. I'm not; you need everything you can get.

F. But look, it's a veritable treasure trove in here.

#### **Arabic music**

M. I prefer breakaway objects.

F. I can't cope with objects that break away.

M. I was referring to balsa-wood furniture.

F. So what, you're a slapstick comic now?

M. No, but I love mock-glass made of crystallized sugar.

### **Glass breaking**

F. Are you still thinking about your stomach?

M. Have you read the signs? - whale oil, tallow, lard.

### **Whale**

F. I knew I should never have come.

M. It never rains but it pours.

F. Why don't you check out the food in galley supplies?

M. And now it's raining cats and dogs. Des chats et de chiens!

F. Look, truce. It's a storm in a tea cup.

M. You've got your fingers crossed.

F. I do this for good luck.

### **Dog barking**

M. And what do you do when you're telling lies?

F. I turn fluorescent pink and break down sobbing.

M. That would be out of keeping with your gorilla costume.

F. So humour me and look for some rope.

M. What! Are you going to hang yourself?

F. We need it as a prop. How else will we get ashore?

M. You mean to the bank.

F. Stop, just stop. We had an agreement remember?

M. I would love it if you were a snake charmer.

### **Snake charmer's pipe**

F. And the relevance of this is?

M. Forget it. A charmer of any kind would do.

F. And you of course would play the snake.

M. Actually, I imagined the rope as the snake.

### **Mosquito**

F. Think of our quest as art rather than magic.

M. Then how do you explain the gorilla costume?

F. I'm taking the air.

M. Say that once more and you're heading for a solo career.

F. Look, here's an oar. Mark the classic, simple lines.

M. You're mistaking it for a fashion model.  
F. Oh, my darling, where have you been all my life.  
M. Learning the salsa so that I could dance with you.  
F. And I imagined it as a striking pose.  
M. Give her a frilly dress and she'll dance the flamenco.

#### **Flamenco music**

F. Look at us from here. I'll freeze and make a tableau.  
M. I think a tableau needs more than one character.  
F. How about a series of suspended animations?  
M. I think it will induce hibernation in the audience.  
F. Look, go and buy a mars bar or you will kill everything.  
M. I thought the rigor-mortis had already set in.  
F. So think about the creation of living pictures.  
M. After all these words you want living pictures?  
F. *Poses plastiques*; a story through body motions.  
M. Body motions? Sounds like erotic entertainment.  
F. Take the plunge and find yourself a prop.

#### **Splash**

M. There are hatchets, spikes, boat hooks and caulking irons.  
F. No, look over there. Take an oarlock.  
M. Take a warlock?  
F. Why would I suggest a warlock?  
M. So that I could summon demons as my minions.  
F. Well I'm going to hold this pose.

#### **Ghost music**

M. There, my warlock has drained the life from you already.  
F. An oarlock attaches the oar to the boat.  
M. Oh, any opportunity to put your oar in, eh?  
F. Afterwards we'll swop parts.  
M. What? You want me to wear the gorilla suit?  
F. No way, I'm naked under here.  
M. Well I'm not being an oarlock while you play the oar.  
F. You've missed the point.

#### **Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> rocket**

M. I've got it. I'm rudderless. So what do I need?

F. A compass?  
M. No you chimp, a rudder.  
F. Chump. The word is chump not chimp.  
M. OK, jump then.  
F. Between a rock and a hard place.  
M. Stop talking to yourself, this is a duet.  
F. Rock bottom one minute and flights of fancy the next.  
M. Oh come on, you love flights of fancy.

### **Bird song – slap; singing stops**

F. The butterfly is short lived.  
M. Do you have butterflies before you perform?  
F. No, I have mosquitoes.  
M. I bet you do; sick to the stomach with nerves.  
F. I'm a pacifist. I can't stand loud noise.  
M. I can't stand the noise people make when they eat.  
F. Karaoke – that has to be the worst.  
M. I will very quietly go and look for a rudder.

### **Sea gull**

F. Striving towards a better future she sailed off in search of accessories.  
M. You make it sound like a holiday.  
F. Don't talk to me about holidays.  
M. When was the last time you took a holiday?  
F. Holiday's are the art of practising patience under pressure.  
M. Voila. Voici un gouvernail.  
F. And yet you are holding a rudder.  
M. Precisely. I prescribe more holidays in France.

### **French accordion**

F. You look like a platypus with that in your mouth.  
M. And you look like old father time.  
F. Which is what?  
M. Search me.  
F. I had a moment of déjà vu just then.  
M. You see, even brief holidays in France can be beneficial.  
F. Suddenly I'm peckish.  
M. Oulala! And does that put you in a good mood or not?

F. We will take our rudder and oar and eat.

M. What about rope?

F. I've never eaten rope.

M. We need the rope to get ashore.

F. Or to the bank.

M. Don't let's go there.

F. But what props shall we buy.

M. The rudder and the oar will keep us going.

### **Rowing**

F. Oar, the rudder and the rope.

M. Don't give up on the oar; it lends you a certain gravitas.

F. I thought I had included the oar.

M. En fait, I only heard the rudder and the rope.

F. Without the rope we'd be without hope.

M. I'm sure we could cope.

F. Are you married?

M. No.

F. Then we can't elope.

M. I said cope, but I'd like to elope.

F. Will the performance suffice?

M. No, I need a honeymoon in France.

### **Fireworks**

F. But I've just found my youth.

M. Oh tu vois that comes and goes depending on how you're feeling.

F. I need the till. I must pay.

M. Do they charge for youthfulness?

F. For the rudder and the oar.

M. Now I'm behind. Shall we slow down?

F. Will a tableau vivant be slow enough?

M. Providing its quiet. I'm a pacifist too.

F. The other evening...

M. Yes...what? Were you about to reminisce?

F. When you left.

M. Yes.

F. And I was still there.

M. Yes.

F. After the rehearsal.

M. Phew, this is slower than suspended animation.

F. Now I've lost my thread.

M. But you bought the rope.

F. And lost my radar.

### **Metal spring**

M. Did you mean rudder?

F. I think we're ready to paddle.

M. It doesn't sound very clever.

F. Come on, we're not after funding.

M. I still need approval.

F. Trust that you're welcome; you don't need the Welcome Trust.

M. I feel quite constructive with a rudder.

F. It's the star of the show.

M. It might win an Oscar.

### **Applause**

F. What role do you have in mind?

M. You mean it could be a tragic rudder or a comic rudder?

F. Or a rudder of suspense.

### **Cloak and dagger music**

M. I'm surprised Hitchcock didn't use a rudder.

F. Now let me think.

M. You know how that holds everything up.

F. Ok, Let's go boating.

### **Sea gull, ship's horn and clapping**

The End

# FRANK AND MOUSTIQUE GET A LIFE

Introductions are read by a presenter. She also presents the weather.

## THE PROLOGUE

### **Rowing sounds, wind and rain**

**Presenter.** Moderate or good; occasionally poor.

M. So where are we?

F. In the shipping lane.

### **Fog horn**

**P.** Rough, occasionally very rough at first.

M. We were fine in the bus lane.

### **Car horn**

**P.** Mostly variable for a time later.

F. I can't afford a fine now or later.

M. Mé dis donc, where was the bus going?

F. I thought it said Mama Mia.

### **Mama Mia sound track**

M. So much for turning left.

**P.** Moderate or rough. Fair.

F. I joined the Navy to see the world.

M. That's Algiers ahead. Ca c'est sur.

### **Arabic music**

**P.** Rough or very rough.

F. No Miss Cheek, that's sea mist.

M. No it is definitely the Kasbah.

F. Then I've slept through the Arabian nights.

### **High winds**

**P.** Veering and decreasing. Rough or very rough.

M. Paddle harder; we're veering away, Frankness.

F. Frankness? Is that like Loch Ness?

**P.** Perhaps gales later. Very rough or high.

M. It's a life on the ocean waves for us mon ami.

### **A life on the ocean waves - song**



F. Uncle Tom's cabin more like it.  
P. Moderate or good, occasionally rough later.  
M. Alors we will be fine when the tide changes.

**Waves on the beach**

F. That was Canute's line, minus the alors.  
P. Slight, occasionally moderate at first.  
M. Come on Jonah. Make for the bank.  
F. You mean shore.  
M. Now I'm seeing white cliffs.

**White cliffs of Dover -song**

F. I said your Kasbah was sea mist.  
P. Thundery, then occasionally poor.  
M. May the sea fairies carry you off.  
F. One sea ferry will suffice.  
M. Oh get a life boat.  
F. No problem, I'll send a distress signal.

**SOS Morse code**

P. Hello, you called.  
M. Oh yes, bonjour, we need to get a life.  
P. Certainly Madame, follow me.

**Fog horn and applause**

## ACT ONE; CATERING WITHOUT DINERS

### A refurbished dairy in Kentish Town

**Here comes the bride played on the xylophone**

**Thunder and rain. A door slams**

F. No sign of them yet, Moussaka.

**Greek music**

M. So what, I'm on the menu now?

F. Simmer down, I meant Mustique.

**Caribbean music**

M. And now I'm a Caribbean Island.

F. No man's an Island.

M. The woman before you is Moustique.

F. In English it's Mustique.

**A life on the ocean waves- song**

M. Do I sound English, ou quoi?

F. It means the same thing.

M. Do you know what Frank means in French?

**French accordion music**

F. Frank means Frank everywhere.

M. It means posting something with a stamp.

F. Then call me Stamp.

M. En fait, I will call you Direct.

**Rocket**

F. Anything but that, my second name is Derek.

M. Mais oui, you look like a Derek.

F. And you look like a failed soufflé.

M. To be frank you've lost your palate.

**Police whistle**

F. We'll all lose our palate if the guests don't arrive.

M. Are you still after the applause?

F. I don't know. What comes before the applause?

### **Applause**

M. The hors-d'oeuvres comes before everything.

F. Is that the first course?

M. No, we're starting with the canapés.

F. We don't have a can of peas.

### **Fireworks**

M. Like pearls before swine.

F. And not an oyster in sight.

M. A fiery cocktail would suit me better.

### **Wolf whistle**

F. You don't have the figure for it.

M. Your sauce has turned cold, ma parole!

F. What will we do if they don't come soon?

M. We'll have to skip the hors-d'oeuvres.

### **Marie's wedding - song**

F. That's skip we gaily, a Highland fling.

M. Can you cut the crepe suzette?

F. Please don't call me Suzette.

M. Do you know how we started in this business?

F. Is that what you call it?

M. I suggested that you go into a cave to sing.

F. I'm sure you said catering.

M. Voila.

F. Not everything proceeds in a straight line.

### **Spring**

M. You should at least take off the gorilla costume.

F. It's a hirsute accessory.

M. Wearing her suit to work doesn't work.

F. I think you could take one work out.

M. No, no, no, I never do aerobics. Jamais de la vie.

F. That takes the biscuit.

M. A Madeleine if I remember correctly.

F. No, it was a bourbon.

### **French national anthem**

M. Historical references don't impress me.

F. Are you applying for the position of spit roast?

M. If you can't stand the heat get out of the...

### **Thunder**

F. Do you have a cooling tray?

M. Just pass me the flan ring.

F. The bride will bring her own.

M. Franchement Frank, I need to dust it.

### **Hoover**

F. Dust it after putting flour in?

M. Ecoute, the flour stops it sticking.

F. A stick in time saves nine.

M. You mean stitch.

F. Only if it's coming apart.

### **Suspense music**

M. Stew in your own pot.

F. Steam in your kettle.

M. You're grating on my nerves – barka maintenant.

F. And you're frothing at the mouth.

M. Will you never stop grinding?

### **Grinding machine**

F. It beats glazing over?

M. So the pot calls the kettle black, eh?

F. I'd rather steep in my own...

### **Kettle whistle**

M. Shh, did you hear that?

F. Sounds like the kettle has boiled.

### **Arabic music**

M. Sounds more like the Arabian nights.

F. You said that just for effect.

M. And this carrot is on its last legs.

### **Running**

F. Don't let the job run away with you.

M. You're reducing me to shreds now.

F. Don't even think of shredding.

M. Then stop straining the point.

F. I'm not the sieve you take me for.

### **Sawing wood**

M. I'll whip the cream.

F. I'll stud the onions.

M. How S & M, put your stamp on it.

F. Are you calling me Stamp now?

### **Machinery**

M. You don't have the stamp of a chef.

F. No, but I have the temper of an orang-utan.

### **Orang-utan**

M. Does it run in the family?

### **Mosquito**

F. I don't know where it runs.

M. That joke was runny.

F. Did you mean funny?

M. No, I meant uncooked.

### **Slap**

F. That was one of your family.

M. Are you referring to genetics?

F. Not me, I'm a throw back.

M. Is that like a right back?

F. Yes, right back to the beginning.

### **Soundtrack from 2001**

M. Before cookery.

F. Even before spoons.

### **Mobile phone**

M. I've got a text.

F. What does it say?

M. Nothing, but I'll read it.

F. It's the common thread that ties us together.

M. We're not trussed up yet.

F. Just toss me the phone.

### **Phone conversation**

M. There was no bride or groom – j'y crois pas.

F. Is that a reason to stop eating?

M. Come on, tidy up, it's the end.

F. What! Not even a doggy bag?

### **Dog barks**

M. Not even a hole in the wall, meme pas.

F. That was in the last play.

M. Mais dis donc, You want me to make sense?

F. No, just dust your own dusting.

M. Maybe we should open a tapas bar.

### **Spanish music**

F. Not me, I was forced into catering.

M. Forced into a cave to sing?

F. We must discover where we go astray.

M. I'm waiting for another text.

### **Big Ben**

F. That's me.

M. Are you going to read it?

F. Could be bad news.

### **This is the ten o'clock news**

M. Could be another job.

F. I'd go anywhere to avoid that.

M. Then take up cave singing.

### **My old man said follow the van - song/with echo**

F. It's in Cyrillic script.

M. Aller Frank let me read it.

F. Can we do a Russian/Indian wedding?

### **Russian/Indian music**

M. Caviar on popadoms?

F. Steak tartar and bringal bahji?

M. Dumplings and tarka dall?

F. Herring tikka and bhindi bahji?

M. Borscht vindaloo and aloo gobi?

F. It will go down a storm.

### **Explosion**

M. Is that you singing Fred.

F. Maybe gardening would be easier.

M. You'll eat your words, ma parole.

F. Mountains of food and I must eat my words?

M. I was talking of the future.

F. Like a psychic?

### **Ghost music**

M. Yes, I'd like a side kick.

F. Is that the same as a side dish?

M. You avoid the essence of cooking.

F. I have no taste for it.

M. You've used it too sparingly.

F. I feel like a pudding cloth.

M. The sediment gets you down?

F. I can't pluck up the chicken.

### **Chicken clucking**

M. Did you mean courage?

F. No, I've always said chicken.

M. You just forgot to duck.

### **Duck quacking**

F. Don't soup so low.

M. You get no Marx for that.

**Marx Brothers – wire fence**

F. It was a shot in the dark.

M. You forgot to season it.

F. You choose the season, I'll change my costume.

M. Bottled colourings could do the job.

F. You could colour a fruit cake my dear Froggy.

**Frog croaking**

M. And you've lost your concentrated extract.

F. Not me, I'm a puree.

M. Don't you mean purist.

F. One can always adjust it afterwards.

**Politician's speech**

M. Better to temper the flavour beforehand.

F. I never learned beforehand.

M. Maybe the dish wasn't up to it.

F. The pickle made me sneeze.

**Sneeze**

M. Is that the caper?

F. Could be. Can you dance the caper?

**Knees up Mother Brown - song**

M. Maybe, if you play it.

**Sand dance, knees up and sneezing**



## ACT TWO; GARDENING WITH INTENT

### A piece of waste ground in Hackney

#### **Chain saw and tree falling**

F. Bonjour Mascara.

M. Are we walking along together?

#### **Marching**

F. Mais oui.

M. Then what's wrong with my name?

F. Moustique! It's too long for two syllables.

M. And the virtue of Mascara?

F. You Mascara and I'll Moussaka.

#### **Greek music**

M. Frank also needs more syllables.

F. No, Frank is short and sweet.

M. Frankly, Frankly sounds better.

F. Is that four syllables or two?

M. Four. Repetition suits you, ma parole.

#### **Echo**

F. I'm beginning to see double.

M. That was last night's extravagance.

F. A beer is a beer is a beer.

M. Or a rose is a rose is a rose?

F. No, a briar is a briar is a briar.

M. I get your point, this place is a jungle.

#### **Jungle noises**

F. What are we supposed to do with it?

M. Turn it into a garden pardi.

F. What kind of garden party?

M. Not party, pardi.

F. And you said gardening would be easier.

M. Not me. I was happy catering.

**Whistle while you work - song**

F. You live in the past my kitchen wizard.

M. A coup sûr, I can walk backwards.

F. Perhaps we should set fire to it.

**Fire engine siren**

M. And be convicted of arson?

F. It needs cutting right back.

M. Is that right back to the beginning?

F. No, behind every right back there's a goalkeeper.

**Football crowd cheering**

M. Some of my best friends are goalkeepers.

F. You can't beat a safe pair of hands.

M. I'll put my gloves on.

**Round one, bell - boxing**

F. Are you addressing me?

M. No you must dress yourself, mon cher.

F. Then I'll take my gloves off.

M. Wait, I'll pay you to clear the land.

F. I intend to be well clear of the land.

**Motor racing**

M. A pound an hour and every other day off.

F. I'll have today off.

M. You can only have yesterday or tomorrow off.

F. Will that be the same tomorrow?

M. Mais oui. We either go backwards or forwards.

F. Did you walk through a looking glass?

**Glass shattering**

M. No, but my memory works both ways.

F. What's your happiest memory?

M. In two weeks time when the garden is complete

**Bird song**

F. There's a mistake here somewhere.

M. Ouch! I've pricked my finger.

F. But you didn't move.

M. I know, but I will have to move some time.

#### **Mystery music**

F. Couldn't you employ some goalkeepers?

M. No, they scream louder than I do.

F. Will you come out in a bruise?

M. No, I only bruise inside.

F. Have you tried homeopathy?

#### **Fog horn**

M. I never trusted apathy.

F. I prefer alcohol.

M. You need the 40 proof.

F. Percentage or Wittgenstein?

M. Maybe it's Frankenstein.

F. Maybe it's Jock Stein?

#### **Football crowd cheering**

M. Actually it's Gertrude Stein.

F. So it's a modern garden after all.

M. The best of Picasso's green period.

#### **Auctioneer**

F. We must earmark it for listing.

M. Earmarks put you back at the beginning.

#### **Sound track from 2001**

F. Are you ahead or behind?

M. Either way, we've only one pair of secateurs.

F. I never saw a sack of tears.

M. I should have brought my knitting.

#### **Sawing wood**

F. You could be raking it in while I cut.

M. Not on a gardener's wage.

- F. I know about gardener's rage.  
M. The more you cut the more it grows.  
F. It's not the same as birthdays.

### **Happy birthday to you - song**

- M. Especially if you have six a year.  
F. It's time for a cooked breakfast.  
M. I never had a crooked breakfast, jamais.  
F. I never had a straight croissant.  
M. I still have the wedding breakfast.

### **Echo**

- F. It keeps repeating on me.  
M. That's your wild lifestyle.

### **Mosquito**

- F. No, it's the wildlife in the leftovers.  
M. Like aphids and butterflies?  
F. No, maggots and worms.  
M. Please don't mention spiders.  
F. Sliders.

### **Slap**

- M. Oh lala, that was a close shave.  
F. Did you bring any weed killer?  
M. Do I look like a weed killer?

### **Suspense**

- F. Perhaps we could talk to them.  
M. Come to some sort of arrangement.  
F. Preferably a flower arrangement.  
M. It's no good we must start to cut back.

### **Politician's speech**

- F. Just when we were ahead.  
M. Two heads are better than one.  
F. Then cut away my dear chopstick.

### **Chinese music**

M. You can be very sweet and sour.

F. Oh Sum Luck.

M. I'm thinking about the garden.

F. And the outcome?

M. There's more to this than pruning.

F. We have to tackle it from the ground up.

M. Will you do the ground work?

### **Bulldozer**

F. If you put your back into it.

M. It's a back breaking business.

F. I've gone back as far as I can.

### **Laughter**

M. Then put your best foot forward.

F. It's time to move on.

M. To better times ahead?

F. That sounds like politics.

M. If poly ticks it's an alarm clock.

### **Alarm clock**

F. That was a crocodile.

M. This job gets more dangerous every minute.

F. Take a leaf from my book.

M. And nip it in the bud?

F. I had breakfast in mind.

M. Breakfast, in a fairy tale?

F. Don't tell me you're a princess now.

M. Mais oui and you're the frog ma parole.

### **French national anthem**

F. But I don't speak French.

M. Well you can't play the lady.

F. You could write me in as a unicorn?

M. No, I'm the Capricorn.

F. But that's astrology?

### **Spooky music**

M. Oh forget the apology.

F. Be yourself then.

M. What, I'm not acting now?

F. This is a real post. Don't take offence.

M. Wire fence?

F. I don't know, why a fence?

M. Why a French what?

F. Your English is incorrect.

### **Land of hope and glory - song**

M. But my British is good.

F. UK?

M. Yes fine, you OK?

F. You seem a little touchy?

M. Did you say touché.

F. It may have been cache.

M. They don't pay us enough for that.

F. They don't even have a cash register.

### **Cash register**

M. We should accept the garden as it is.

F. Will they pay us for that?

M. No, but we can't destroy the life here.

### **Machine gun**

F. Are you worried about the snails?

M. No, they are fresh. Tout fais tout lous.

F. Escargot?

### **French accordion**

M. Yes, we'll go for another career.

F. Career into the decorating business?

M. Is that like de curating business?

F. It's the one with the paint.

### **Splash**

M. Can you picture that?

F. Only if I close my eyes.

M. The audience won't stand for it.

F. Are you sure they're listening?

### **Applause**

M. It's a standing ovation.

F. Then let's call it a day.

M. D'accord, you choose which one.

### **Tell me why I don't like Mondays - song**

F. Now let me think.

M. We've been through that before.

F. We've covered a lot of ground since.

### **Motor racing**

M. Ah, the beauty of our inaction.

F. Now we can go to ground.

M. What will we do with the ladder?

### **Crashing furniture**

F. Wittgenstein suggested throwing it away.

M. He never worked as a decorator, ca c'est sur.

### **Viennese Waltz and motor racing**

## ACT THREE; A NEW DECOR

### A squat in St. John's Wood

#### **Splashing sounds**

M. Decorating a squat must be a first.

F. I thirst for many things, but not that.

M. Only squat teams get decorated these days.

#### **Machine gun**

F. Did you say squash teams?

M. Kevin McCloud never got decorated.

F. But stars rise above the clouds.

M. Look at this place, it's worth a fortune.

#### **Fireworks**

F. Why look, I didn't have my eyes closed.

M. Some earn a fortune with their eyes closed.

F. Some earn a fortune by guerrilla tactics.

M. You use gorilla tactics my dear orang-utan?

#### **Orang-utan**

F. I don't use antiques of any kind.

M. But you use old words.

F. I find it useful to re-use words.

#### **Echo**

M. And where do you find it?

F. I lied about finding it.

M. Let's try guerrilla decoration.

F. Sabotage our own supplies?

#### **Explosion**

M. Make the odd strike here and there.

F. Brushes have strokes not strikes.

M. I don't belong on this journey.

#### **Train**



F. What journey are you on?

M. Who knows? It's like a dream within a dream.

F. Do you judge by intentions or consequences?

M. Maybe the feel good factor should determine it.

### **Applause**

F. Oh La Di Da.

M. Please don't call me Ladida s'il te plait!

F. Squatters are rather keen on new names.

M. What kind of names?

F. Beautiful Adorable Celebrity.

### **Children playing**

M. Even while they squat a squat?

F. Even while they squat in it and squat over it.

M. I'd rather be called Ladida.

### **Cuckoo**

F. If you answer to it, it works.

M. What would you answer to?

F. The door bell and the telephone.

### **Knock on the door**

M. There's a knock at the door.

F. I'm not answering that.

M. It might be the postman.

F. The postman always rings twice.

### **Church bells**

M. I wonder who that is.

F. Well it's not the Rabbi.

M. Could be the Rabbit.

F. It has a familiar ring.

### **School bell**

M. Frankly...

F. Yes Mascara.

M. You are open to suggestion.

F. Our visitor needs a suggestion.

M. OK, I'll answer it.

### **Footsteps, door slam, footsteps**

F. Who was it?

M. A couple selling reincarnation.

F. Did you sell them redecoration?

M. I tried, but they don't believe in it.

F. I hope they come back as a trompe l'oeil.

M. You're galloping ahead, ma parole.

### **Horse galloping**

F. How far have I gone?

M. Who knows? Give me a clue.

### **Bagpipes**

F. Did you hear that?

M. That's quite far enough.

F. We should start to rub down.

### **Sand paper rubbing**

M. Mais non, we're doing a colour wash.

F. Does that involve a shower?

### **Water down plughole**

M. No, no, no, it's watering down the paint.

F. Do we do that when the paint is up?

M. No, we do it beforehand.

F. Is it an underhand solution?

M. No, we use emulsion.

F. Water means less paint.

M. You are learning fast, quand-meme.

F. I'm getting there by degrees.

### **Degree speech**

M. What degrees?

F. A BA in action painting.

M. Learning to throw the can?

F. No, it's about speed painting.

M. The thinner the paint, the more solvent we are.

### **Cash register**

F. Nothing diluted about your emulsion, Mischief.

M. This time we'll see a profit.

F. Maybe he'll come to the door.

M. How will we recognise him?

F. He'll probably wear a carnation.

M. Will he teach flower arrangement?

F. I think you still have far to go.

### **Captain's log - Star Trek intro**

M. Not me. Do you have vertigo?

F. Where's the ceiling?

M. You'll be fine. Just don't look up.

### **Spooky music**

F. You've got all the best lines.

M. Is that a compliment?

F. Do you want accompaniment?

M. No, but you might.

### **Xylophone – my old man etc - song**

F. I'm not singing to that.

M. It's 'my old man said, follow the van.'

F. Where was he going?

M. He probably went into a cave to sing.

F. My mother went into catering.

M. Was she a dinner lady?

F. No, she met my dad on a lunch date.

### **Arabic music**

M. Suddenly couscous springs to mind.

F. You have me eating out of your hand.

M. Straight from the horse's mouth.

### **Horse**

F. What do we do about the Dodo alors?

M. Ignore it; it's extinct.

F. To be truthful, I meant dado.

M. Treat the dado as you would the Dodo.

F. Now you're really getting up steam.

M. Like a resurgent soufflé.

F. It's the gorilla costume that holds me back.

M. It's an overall after all.

F. I've finished the wall.

### **Fog horn**

M. Then answer the door.

F. We should have installed a lighthouse.

### **Footsteps, door slam, footsteps**

M. Who was it?

F. It was a prophet.

M. Did he wear a carnation?

F. No he wore a false beard.

M. How did you know he was a prophet?

F. He predicted rain.

M. Is that what he came to tell you?

F. No, he asked if we could paint his ark.

### **Waves on the beach**

M. Noah! Were you Frank?

F. He thought I was an orang-utan.

M. What did you tell him?

F. I offered to paint his architrave.

M. How did he know we were in the house?

F. He read the signs.

M. Do we get to ride in his ark?

F. No, he only accepts animals.

M. But I'm Moustique, mosquito, remember?

### **Mosquito**

F. But you're unique; it must be two by two.

### **Slap**

M. Then it's back into the water.

F. An hour ago it was water that saved us.

M. Maybe it's a storm in a teacup.

### **Thunder and rain**

F. Perhaps we could film it.

M. Does Noah want it filmed mon ami?

F. Yes, he gave me a script.

M. Is it the script for the film, ca, ce truc?

F. Who knows, we must wait 'til it's finished.

M. What's it called?

F. A shot in the ark.

### **Gunfire**

M. What's it about?

F. Two orang-utans painting the ark.

### **Orang-utan**

M. Do we act in this film?

F. We do everything.

M. This is Goddard's work.

F. Did you add a rogue syllable there?

M. Are you talking Mouse and Stick again?

F. Have you ever been in a movie?

### **Action movie**

M. No, I overslept.

F. Will you be awake this time?

M. Mais oui, how do we start?

F. We start tomorrow.

M. Why not today?

F. Tomorrow is my day off.

M. I had a moment of déjà vu just then.

### **Fireworks**

F. Hardly credible; we only have one gorilla costume.

M. What? You want me to share your gorilla costume?

F. We have to take it in turns to use the camera.

M. And take it in turns to perform a gorilla?

F. Yes. Suddenly I'm giddy.

M. It was you who started the turns.

F. I didn't realise I went so deep.

### **Splashing**

M. Oulala, the depth of your shallows.

### **Laughter and action movie**

## ACT FOUR; A SHOT IN THE ARK

### A Ship's Chandlers in Wapping

#### **Sounds of the river, followed by gunfire**

- F. Take cover in here.  
M. Franchement Frank, you should have had me covered.  
F. You should not have lost the gorilla costume.

#### **Orang-utan**

- M. It wasn't me, I was on camera.  
F. The gorilla costume is exclusive to the sound man?  
M. Mais oui, the fur is on the microphone.  
F. Not so loud, this is a covert operation.

#### **Wolf whistle**

- M. I thought it was a cover story.  
F. Now you've blown our cover.  
M. Did you mean couverture?  
F. No Miss Tick, I meant clover.

#### **Horse neighing**

- M. So you're thinking of retiring already?  
F. Our communication is without hope, Mozilla.  
M. So Thunderbird, you're calling me Mozilla now eh?

#### **Thunderbirds sound track**

- F. Yes, Mozilla Firefox should inspire you to action.  
M. You think of me as a web browser?  
F. No, I think of you as boat painter.  
M. It's an ark and I'm a marine artist.

#### **Dog bark**

- F. Was that a bark from the ark?  
M. Maybe someone else is making a movie.  
F. The ark's too dark to make a movie.  
M. And too slippery ma parole.

F. Non-skid paint, that's what we need.

### **Gunfire and glass shattering**

M. I thought this was a safe oven.

F. There's no such thing as a safe oven.

M. I meant haven. Trust you to eat it raw.

F. We are not catering again are we?

M. No, we are detectives.

### **Police siren**

F. Some are born detectives and some have detectives thrust...

M. Shh... Think of the dead, we must proceed with caution.

F. OK, who shot the penguin?

M. Frankly, we suspect the camel.

### **Snake charmer**

F. You're a snake, but who invited the snake charmer?

M. Only the charmer can get the snakes on board.

F. OK, so who shot the camel?

M. To be Frank, the evidence points to the polar bear.

F. You're blowing hot and cold, mon petit français détective.

### **Maigrette soundtrack**

M. Monsieur, I am in charge of this investigation.

F. OK, so, what was the motive?

M. Love and money.

F. Surely, Inspector Cluestique, it's one or the other.

M. No, it was for the love of money.

### **I want money, that's what I want - song**

F. Noah suspects illegal ticket sales.

M. Anything for place on the ark, eh Constable?

F. You do realise I am also working undercover?

M. Does that come before the undercoat or after it?

F. Before everything. I am head of the Yard.

### **Whistling; Dixon of Dock Green**

M. Sounds like a back street organisation.



F. Nevertheless, you must call me sir.

### **Mosquito**

M. As in yes sir?

F. Precisely. So, do you know who the culprit is?

M. Yes Sir, Yasar.

F. A single yes sir will suffice, inspector.

M. Not yes sir, Yasar.

F. No, not yes sir, yes sir, just the single yes sir.

M. Yasar is the man's name sir.

F. Oh I see. Is he also working undercover?

### **Slap**

M. Who knows, he stole the gorilla costume.

### **Gorilla**

F. To implicate us?

M. Yes sir and Yasar has no alibi.

F. I must congratulate him on his disguise.

M. He hasn't a friend in the world, le pauvre.

### **Gong**

F. Nor Noah by all accounts and he suspects us.

M. Nor Noah, then it could have been Yasah or Noah.

F. Or Yasah and Noah.

### **Applause**

M. Did we just finish something?

F. Yasah and Noah, but we didn't start the film yet.

M. Then why not shoot it from here.

### **Fireworks**

F. The telephoto lens won't reach the ark.

M. With our cover blown it's too dangerous to get closer.

F. We must change our disguise.

M. How about this valet uniform.

### **Wolf Whistle**

F. Have you seen the mess below decks?

M. OK, but we must work undercover.

F. How about a cagoule and sowester?

M. Is that like the Cagney and Lacy?

F. No, the lacy is bound to stand out.

### **Spring**

M. So will the *mic* if you wear PVC, mon cher.

F. Don't call me Cher. Can we fix the *mic* to the camera?

M. Yes, but we'll lose surround sound.

F. How about 3D sound imaging?

### **Machinery**

M. I've never seen sound images.

F. Can you CD LCD screen?

M. The movie in here is different to the real movie.

### **Rainforest**

F. It's called playback.

M. I don't deserve payback? I've been good.

F. Be a Mosquito and try a close up.

M. Why don't I switch to wide angle?

F. Not now Mozilla, you're low on battery.

### **Heartbeat**

M. Frankly you're losing your exposure.

F. Did you mean composure?

M. It's fine with me. Which composer?

### **Beethoven's 5th**

F. Forget it; I'll use the power zoom.

M. That increases the magnification.

F. You have a problem with sharp focus?

### **Alarm clock**

M. Only when we're doing fade out.

F. Where's the self-timer button?

M. Search me. I've searched the view finder.

F. This film business is very complicated.

### **Gong**

M. How about a radio programme, tu crois pas?

**Presenter.** This week's question time comes from Wapping.

### **Applause**

F. Any questions? I thought you were the weather woman.

P. I'm a reader and a host.

M. What kind of ghost ma chérie?

### **Ghost music**

P. A ghost writer for a reader.

F. Is that a career?

P. No, but it's a life.

M. I must make my mark on the ark.

F. Like a shark, having a lark in the dark.

### **Water splashing**

P. The first question comes from my second cousin.

**Man.** *A peach in the Co-op costs 9p and in M & S it costs 30p.*

P. Thank you; and now over to her second cousin.

**Man.** *We know your game and where you live.*

M. These questions are too difficult, vraiment.

F. If it was a radio play we could write our own questions.

P. I could offer my services as a ghost writer.

### **Thunder**

M. I think you're needed at the Met Office.

F. And we must run for cover.

M. I'm not running anywhere.

F. Is this French resistance?

### **French national anthem**

M. You could call it insistance.

P. Did you call for assistance?

### **Cry in the distance**

F. No. it was a cry in the distance.

P. I was wrong in this instance.

M. I arrest you on suspicion.

P. Of what; being a secret agent?

### **James Bond - soundtrack**

F. Yes, your agency takes a secret commission.

M. Then the charge is false pretences.

P. But these are my own clothes.

### **Cash register**

F. But that's Noah's beard.

### **Running**

M. We'll never catch her wearing these cagoules.

F. Complain to the props department.

M. You are the props department.

F. Then you should have checked the weather?

P. Mainly fair; moderate or good.

M. Are you saying this was my fault?

F. No, but I'm blaming you anyway.

M. You were mistaken about the weather.

F. If I agreed, we'd both be wrong.

M. When it's four o'clock it's four o'clock.

### **Big Ben**

F. I'll tell you what occurs to me.

M. Are you hearing voices again?

F. Yes, they advise extreme caution.

M. You're never too old to learn something stupid.

### **Phone ringing**

F. I can never find my phone when I want it.

M. That was my phone. It was Noah. He's leaving.

F. We have no time to lose, Mozilla.

M. Speak for yourself, Thunderclap.

### **Thunder**

F. Now do you believe me?

M. Very Impressive. Do it again.

F. You must wait 'til we're in the ark.

### **Gunshot**

M. A shot in the dark.

F. They've stolen my thunder.

### **Fog horn**

M. Capture that sound then.

F. Sea mist?

M. No, I can't see a thing. Rien de rien.

F. The ark was definitely here when we left.

### **Mystery music**

M. It's a sea-mist mystery.

F. And we've missed the boat.

M. Noah has disappeared without trace.

### **Thunder and downpour**

F. A man and his zoo; all lost at sea.

M. We should steal the life boat.

F. We'll never get away with it.

M. Then we'll steal this canoe.

F. And spend the rest of our life rowing?

M. Did you say rowing or rowing?

### **Marital argument**

F. I meant paddling.

M. That's no way to get a life.

### **Ghost music and Big Ben**

## THE EPILOGUE

### Rowing sounds, wind and rain

- F. Back on the ocean waves then.  
P. Variable. Slight or moderate, occasionally rough.  
M. Frankly, we must take the rough with the smooth.  
F. Not if my name changes with the weather.  
P. Occasionally gales, otherwise Frank.  
M. You're a moveable feast, ma parole.  
F. Aint no cure for the summertime blues.

### Summertime blues - song

- P. Cyclonic, otherwise moderate or rough.  
M. Good idea, I'll call you Cyclone.  
F. The Cyclone Kid sails again.

### The Lone Ranger - soundtrack

- P. Thundery and then occasionally poor.  
M. How many times can you have the same déjà vu?  
F. After the first time it's simply life as we know it.  
P. Increasing for a time. Moderate or rough.  
M. She's very profound, this weather girl.  
F. Kafka's great granddaughter.

### Fireworks

- P. Increasing for a time. Slight or moderate, but rough.  
M. No relation to Gertrude Stein?  
F. And no relation to Wittgenstein.  
P. Moderate, occasionally poor.

### Audience booing

- M. She's very critical.  
F. Maybe we should row faster.  
M. I can't grow any faster.  
F. Nothing helps when you're at sea.  
P. Slight or moderate, occasionally rough at first.  
M. Look, it's a sea ferry  
F. Better send a distress signal.

### SOS Morse code

**P.** Did you call for the sea fairy?

**M.** Yes we're still looking for a life.

**F.** And a wage packet if that's possible.

**Cash register**

**P.** It's moderate and occasionally poor.

**M.** Every little helps.

**P.** Cyclonic. Occasional gales, with severe gales later.

**Gales blowing**

**F.** No that's too much.

**P.** Moderate or rough; mainly fair.

**M.** Yes that's fine. Can we go on a world cruise?

**Ship's horn**

**P.** Occasionally low or high.

**F.** Oh definitely high. Make it a world tour.

**M.** First to Algiers and then to the jungle.

**P.** Good, occasionally moderate later.

**F.** I can hear the birds singing.

**Bird song**

**M.** It's the roses growing in Picardy.

**Roses in Picardy - song**

**Ship's horn and fireworks**