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BILLY:

I don't think he's coming is he? My dad.

People don't always do what they say they're gonna do. I know that. I mean he's rung up before. Said - said he wanted to see me. That he missed me. Once, he invited me round to his. He's got this massive new house up in the next town. Four beds or whatever. And he rung me up all like, come over. Have your dinner with us. Us meaning him and his new wife. The new kids.

So I went. I stole money out my mum's purse for the bus fare cos she hates him, she'd never have loaned me it, and I got on the bus and I went. I got there and - house was dark. No car in the drive, blinds all pulled. I'm like, what's going on? Worried, y'know. Emergency or something maybe. My phone was out of credit so I sat on the front step and waited. Biting cold. Freezing, it was. Dunno how long I waited. Eventually they turned up, boot full of Tesco shopping. The wife looks at me like she's trod in something. Like there's a bad smell in the air. And he's like full of apologies. Slipped my mind. Something came up. Busy lives. Another time?

Another time. Turn on my heel and go and I'm waiting for him to call me back. Check on me. How you getting home? Need a lift?

He keeps schtum. I keep walking. Last bus has gone so.... kipped down in the shelter. After a while - you don't even feel the cold.

I know it's daft. I know cos when he was with us he was this useless bag of shite and now he's all sorted and has this life that means he gets to look down on us and I should tell him where to go, I know I should, but -

But the phone rings and I can't help it. A bit of me always believes. This time, this time, this time.