

*Ring, ring.*

*Ring, ring.*

*From off we hear a voice – a teenage male voice – calling.*

ALEX (*off*). Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*Ring –*

*The phone stops ringing. Silence.*

Never mind.

*Silence.*

*More silence.*

*Even more silence.*

*Then:*

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*A door bangs from upstairs.*

*Ring, ring.*

ALEX – *a grungy teenager – comes stomping down the stairs. He is solemn, phlegmatic, and everything he says is like an announcement.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

ALEX *has reached the foot of the stairs – right next to the phone – and calls to the kitchen (which we can see is empty).*

Mum!

*Ring –*

*He looks at the phone. Seemingly too phlegmatic even to react. He turns and starts to head up the stairs.*

*Halfway up:*

*Ring, ring.*

*He stops.*

*Ring, ring.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

*He's plodding down the stairs again.*

Mum!

*Ring, ring.*

*He now answers the phone. We hear only his replies.*

Hello.

(...)

Oh. Hello, Mum.

(...)

My phone *is* on.

(...)

I didn't hear it.

(...)

Because it's at Neville's.

(...)

Charging.

(...)

Because he's got a charger.

(...)

Mine's broken.

(...)

I'm not leaving it there, I'll go and get it.

(...)

When it's charged.

(...)

He'll text me.

(...)

Oh, yeah!

*Through the front door, comes PETER. Clearly just home from work. ALEX glances at him.*

(...)

He just arrived.

PETER. Is that Mum?

ALEX *nods*.

Does she want to speak to me?

ALEX. She's in the car – she'll be here in a minute.

PETER. Okay.

*PETER heads off into the kitchen.*

(...)

ALEX. I'll tell him.

(...)

I will, I'll tell him.

(...)

*I'll tell him.*

*He hangs up, as PETER comes back through from the kitchen, having fetched a glass of water.*

PETER. So what's happening?

ALEX. Nothing.

PETER. What did Mum want?

ALEX. Nothing. Hang on –

*He raises a finger, as if concentrating on a thought.*

PETER. What is it, what's wrong?

ALEX. Nothing, hang on.

PETER. Alex –

ALEX. It's okay.

*(Lowers finger.)* I thought I was going to fart.

PETER. Alex, please –

ALEX. It's okay. I think I've stabilised.

PETER. You really, really don't have to announce these things.

ALEX. People don't like surprises.