



This Student Life

Welcome to the OU

SCENE 1

Inside the flat of Neil and Dave. Dave is watching TV. Neil opens the front door and comes in with a box, closing the door behind him. He puts the box on a table.

Neil:

There we are. That was starting to make my arms ache.

Dave:

What's that?

Neil:

It's a box.

Dave:

What's in the box?

Neil:

It's a computer. I've been saving up for this. I've just been down that big store on the High Road, they reckon this is the business.

SOUND:

Sounds of the box being opened and a laptop being removed.

Dave:

Well, it's very sleek. I like the way that logo lights up. (*Windows 8 jingle*) Makes my old computer look, well, like an old computer. I'm jealous.

Neil:

Yeah well, so you should be. This has got everything. It's 64 bit, 8 gigabytes RAM, a terrabyte of hard drive, and it comes with a dual core, and it's HD.

Dave:

Wow. What's all that mean?

Neil:

I've no idea. It's what the bloke in the shop said. Get your fingers off

Dave:

Oh go on, Neil. Let me have a go

Neil:

No chance. This is mine. You've got a computer.

Dave:

Yeah, but it's old and useless.

Neil:

Well then you're a perfect match. This computer's going to turn my life around.

Dave:

Oh yeah, how exactly is it gonna do that?

Neil:

Well, if you must know I've just signed up with The Open University.

Dave:

Blimey mate, they must be desperate if they're letting in people like you.

Neil:

Whaddya mean "people like me"? Bloody cheek. Anyway, the point of it being 'open' is that it takes all sorts.

Dave:

Even Bertie Bassett, eh?

Neil:

Hmm, very droll. I've signed up for a degree in the social sciences.

Dave:

Really? I did a bit of that stuff – Marx and Weber and wotnot.

Neil:

Really! You've studied social sciences?

Dave:

Yes Neil, I have hidden depths.

Neil:

Yeah well, very well hidden.

Dave:

You'd be surprised what I know.

Neil:

Well, I might ask you for some advice then, though I don't think we do any of them you just said. Who was it – Marx, Weber, the other one?

Dave:

(chuckling) Yeah, Wotnot, he's one of the great thinkers, you wanna read his stuff, Neil.

Neil:

Really? I'm not daft you know?

Dave:

Jury's out on that, mate. So you're chucking in your job, then?

Neil:

No, that's the brilliant thing. I can keep on working while I study. What is wrong with this thing? What does that mean 'no internet connection'?

SCENE 2

Sounds of two people walking on gravel. A car door is opened. The car is started and the engine is heard.

Ted:

You okay love?

Donna:

Fine, Ted. I'm glad Luke's finally gone off to university.

Ted:

Yes. I was starting to wonder if he was ever going to leave home.

Donna:

Well, he just wasn't sure it was for him.

Ted:

He does seem a bit old to be starting University though, don't you think?

SOUND:

Silence, sound of car engine

Ted:

You're sure you're alright. You've gone awfully quiet. Donna?

Donna:

I'm fine Ted. Don't go on. I was just thinking that with all the kids away from the nest we can spend some time on ourselves.

Ted:

I suppose so. What have you got in mind?

Donna:

Well. D'you remember, I was looking at those courses from the Open University?

Ted:

What? Which courses?

Donna:

Don't you remember there was that ad in the Sunday paper a couple of months ago?

Ted:

Oh yeah, I memorise all the rubbish that falls out of the paper on a Sunday. Do I take a left here?

Donna:

Yes, I think so.

Ted:

You think so? Well, that helps. Come on look at the map.

Donna:

It's dark Ted. I can't see properly.

Ted:

Oh, for Pete's sake.

Donna:

Yes, it's left. Next turn off left.

Ted:

And, you're sure?

Donna:

Yes. I'm sure. At least, I think it's left here. Or the next one.

Ted:

We're nearly on it. Is it left or not?

Donna:

Yes, yes. Left. Definitely.

SCENE 3

Background sound of a TV showing kids shows. This is the home of single parent Katie and 3 month old Jade.

MUSIC:

Duration: 00:07

Katie:

Okay Jade, let's get you changed, and ready for bed. That's enough of Peppa Pig. And I want to open my box from The Open University.

SOUND:

phone ringing

Katie:

I think I know who that is. Hello...

Cheryl:

Hiya, what you up to?

Katie:

I'm in the middle of changing a nappy if you must know. What d'you want, Cher?

Cheryl:

Oh, sorry. I was just wondering if you fancied some company later?

Katie:

There you are Jade, is that better? Yeah, come round if you want, but give us a couple of hours.

Cheryl:

It's not gonna take you a couple of hours to change a nappy?

Katie:

I know that. I want to start on my course.

Cheryl:

What course?

Katie:

My Open University course. Remember? I told you all about it.

Cheryl:

Oh right. It's come has it?

Katie:

Well most of its online, but yeah, it all starts this week. I'm quite excited. Look, not being funny, but I've got a half dressed baby here, can we chat later.

Cheryl:

Course. I'll see you later. 'Bout nine alright?

Katie:

Yeah, great. See you later.

Katie:

Hangs up phone

SCENE 4

Neil and Dave's flat. Sound of Neil typing.

Neil:

What has he done to this computer? Ah, finally. I'm gonna kill him. This password's nothing like the one on this slip of paper. So now all I gotta do is put in my OU log in details.

SOUND:

Neil opening an envelope

Neil

What the hell did I do with them? I was sure they were here.

SOUND:

Door opening. Loud noises off.

Dave:

Eh oopt Neil, 'ows thy whippet?

Neil:

Is that supposed to be a northern accent, Dave?

Dave:

So, how's it going? We were expecting you down pub.

Neil:

I've just logged on. It took me bloody ages to crack the wifi. Why did you give it such a stupid password?

Dave:

Stupid? What's stupid about 'Neil's a waster'?

Neil:

Well, apart from the minor detail that you put half of it in capital letters, but not the same letters as you gave me on this scrap of paper.

Dave:

Really? Oops, must have made a mistake. Silly me!

Neil:

'Silly you' my backside. That was your idea of a joke wasn't it?

Dave:

I did say to phone me if you had any problems.

Neil:

Well, yes. If you had answered your phone. Have you checked it lately?

Dave:

Oops. Fifteen missed calls. I didn't think you cared?

Neil:

I don't. I wasted half a night cos of you, you great lummo.

Dave:

Told you, you should have come down the pub.

Neil:

That's your answer to everything.

SCENE 5

A car pulls into a gravel drive, stops and two people – Donna and Ted - get out.

Ted:

Take this turning. We went nearly thirty miles out of our way. How stupid are you, Donna?

Donna:

Stupid enough to marry you.

Ted:

Oh that's very nice.

SOUND:

Front door being opened. They enter.

Donna:

Come on Ted, there's no need for this. I'm sorry. I'm not a very good map reader. Perhaps it'll make more sense when I've studied some geography.

Ted:

What on earth are you talking about?

Donna:

You know Ted, this Open University course I'm going to do.

Ted:

I don't remember agreeing to that. Now why don't you make yourself useful and put the kettle on. Donna:

I'm not your servant, Ted. I'm your wife. And, I've made up my mind I'm doing this course. If my kids have got degrees, I don't see why I shouldn't have one.

Ted:

And how's that getting paid for?

Donna:

I've still got some money that Auntie Christine left me when she died. It's just sitting in the Post Office. I think she would approve of my getting an education.

Ted:

Well, she's dead, so I don't see why she should get the deciding vote.

Donna:

What's your problem, Ted. I'm not asking you to pay for it. That's my money. We agreed that.

Ted:

Yes we did. But I just don't understand why you want to waste it getting a qualification you won't be able to use.

Donna:

There's more reasons for going to University than getting a job. That's why I chose the Open University.

Ted:

Fine, but it all seems a waste of your time to me. Not to mention money.

SCENE 6

Inside Katie's flat. Music is playing in the background. Sound of a number being punched into a mobile phone.

Katie:

Come on Cher, pick up.

SOUND:

On the other end of the phone. There is loud noise in the background. Cheryl is at a club and has had a few too many to drink

Cheryl:

Hiya. Wassup?

Katie:

Where are you? I thought you were coming round tonight?

Cheryl:

Yeah, well I was. Hold on a minute. Get me another G and T Sylv. I'm with Sylvie. She got us into Tramps Night Club, it's banging. Why don't you come down and join us?

Katie:

One word Cher – Jade.

Cheryl:

You won't have to pay. Sylvie knows the bouncer.

Katie:

I said Jade, not paid.

Cheryl:

What? I can't hear properly.

Katie:

Look you go and enjoy yourself. I'll chat to you tomorrow.

Katie:

Katie ends the call

Katie:

Bugger! I could do with some adult company. I've had nothing but baby talk all day. I wonder if there's anyone on the welcome forum?