

## **Toni 'Voicemail' Monologue (263 words)**

Hello, this is a message for the committee president, my name's Toni, Toni Lipman. Jane Jones asked me to give you a call regarding a character reference, I hear she's taking up a position with your highly accomplished pothole filling roadworks whatever group. That's terrific. Jane loves...roads. She also loves kids, you probably know she runs the local high school. On Wednesdays, she takes the girls from her English class to her husband's hairdressing salon and gives all the students a free haircut. Isn't that brilliant. It's a chance for the apprentices to try their first ever haircut out on someone who doesn't really matter. They also do it for the elderly. Jane's husband will bring a carload of pensioners in from the nearest nursing home every Friday and let the new colour technicians have a go at doing highlights or tints or scalp bleaches for the very first time. They're very community minded. Jane has been a fabulous presence in my group. She's been a real unofficial deputy to me. This is the group for mothers of children who've topped themselves, the children being the ones who've done the topping, not the mothers. I'm sure she's told you all about it. Getting us online: That was her initiative. Jane signed up all the mums, including myself, to Tinder. Very good profiles. 'Attention to detail'. She said there was no point us sitting around and talking about our grief, what we really need in times like this is a good and thorough root. Anyway, give me a call if you need anything else.

## **Toni 'Nasi Goreng' Monologue (161 words)**

I hope you're enjoying Kuta. Don't think I'll sign those divorce papers. I do wonder if you...if you're feeling guilt. You must. Or... or is this a second chance for you? The dog is dead too. Maybe he wanted to run in front of that car. I walk on my own now. Bought myself a treadmill for the living room. It does flat road, down-hill, mountain climbing mode... just needs a setting where you're made to pause for thirty seconds for a sniff at a Labrador's behind. You know what I did find? When I was cleaning up his room in the weeks afterward. I called the police constable, the one who came out to do the paperwork, I tried to get him to come over again to sort it out 'Officer, it's a crime scene under that mattress!' He sent over a family liaison officer. She didn't want to go near it. Even with gloves! Choke on your nasi goreng.

### **Jane 'Shoelaces' Monologue (131 words)**

This evening you can say as much or as little as you're comfortable with. With my Ollie, he used his shoelaces. The 'nature of my bereavement'. It's a relief to say aloud. You'd find that too, Eliza. That's why you came. Don't be afraid to say what you need to. I should say *was* his shoelaces. They *were* his. Past tense. From his joggers. And I've made them change their product, Eliza. The irresponsible sports shoe company. They should never have produced laces so strong that someone could... I shamed them. I did Eliza. On social media. I know it won't bring him back, but from January next year the laces sold in their shoes, all around the world, will be 25% less strong. Guaranteed to break five times more often.

### **Jane 'Doctor' Monologue (163 words)**

Guilt's a very unhelpful emotion. You said that once. It's been twelve months and I actually feel it more now than when it first happened. I think perhaps it's because the shock has rubbed-off and the guilt is what was underneath. It's really latched on, like a leech. Feasting off me. We don't do much more talking than a Quaker meeting. Perhaps if there were more of us, I mean the chairs might be in a circle but you and I, that's a straight line, a very short straight line. I'm not drinking caffeine. My doctor's weaning me off the Stilnoct. I could go cold turkey tomorrow if I had to. That's his point, I don't need it. He says the Stilnoct has stopped doing anything for me. I'm alright. My GP wants me to go in on Monday with a five year plan. This isn't in it. Me coming here any longer. I want to use my Tuesday nights for something else.

### **Caroline 'Coroner' Monologue (101 words)**

My husband hasn't eaten since... how many days can a person go without eating? I'm worried he'll starve himself to death. I eat when I can keep it down... They said about a week. On Tuesday. No that's today. It was Thursday when they said. Tuesday. What time is it? I don't know. I want to see Mia. It feels like she's been abducted by aliens. I go into her room and see used tissues in the bin under her desk. Lip gloss stains around the rim of a mug. She's completely vanished. I miss the back of her ears.

### **Caroline 'University' Monologue (171 words)**

I think it was the maths. Mia was studying psychology and people who are drawn to that discipline enjoy reading and writing and the humanities, their skill is in communicating with people. You don't necessarily realise, but there's a great deal of maths involved in psychology. It trips people up, you don't see it coming. She'd never gotten on well with numbers. Tears before her HSC. She said something the week before. The algebra questions, that's what did it. I said she could change degrees. I offered it as a comfort. It showed a lack of faith, I shouldn't have said it. I went to a meeting at the university yesterday. I asked for Mia's name to be put on a plaque. One of those gold plaques on the back of chairs in lecture theatres. No, no, a plaque's not enough. I'm going to ask for a scholarship in her name. A fellowship! A professorial chair! A row. I'll ask for an entire row of seats to be named after her.

### **Eliza 'Wingwoman' Monologue (128 words)**

I ah, I think I left the iron on. Oh god, that's so unfeminist. I'm gunna go. Yeah. Suicided children?!!! You said this was a group for childfree women over thirty. A social group. You advertised this as a single gals meet-up! I thought we would be each other's wingwoman. Go out for drinks. Fancy dinners. This is like a therapy group. Oh my god you have a child who died. You had a child oh my god, I, that's, oh my god... How do you oh god I'm so... I'm so sorry... I, you need other women who, so you can talk about... Your pain, I don't belong here, how you feel, your... Does she think – oh my god I tried to get her to drink lager.

### **Eliza 'Babies' Monologue (174 words)**

All of my friends had babies in the last two years. ALL of them. I wouldn't mind except they don't ask me out any more. They go to Rhyme Time and Baby Pilates and always want a coffee afterwards and it doesn't occur to them that I could meet them at the café. I saw on facebook that they have this App for breastfeeding mums. Who apparently all feel sad and lonely doing a feed at 3AM and need a way of connecting with each other, even though their gorgeous child is literally attached to their chest. I downloaded it and started talking to this woman. I didn't know the name of some new nipple cover and something else she wanted to chat about – I guess it seemed to her that I had no idea about anything to do with babies so she accused me of being a man, some perv with a lactation fetish. It happens apparently. Had me blocked from the platform. So I – I started to look for other groups online.

## **Carl 'Niece' Monologue (94 words)**

Is this 'life drawerers anonymous'? Life drawing? Oh no, I've already done that one. I'm Carl. I...I found my, my niece. She might try it again. I should be prepared, in case. There's no group for that. Okay. Right. I have something I'd like to say to my sister. It wasn't a cry for help, sis. You need to take your daughter seriously. Pay her more attention. You'll be sorry if....and you need to visit mum more, I do everything for her, I may as well be an only-child. It's nice to be here.