

Yes, or No?

Kate stood in the living room looking at the phone. Her heart beat was so intense her whole body shook in time to the rhythm, a dance of despair. She had always prided herself on being the glass-half-full person, cheerful, optimistic, looking forward eagerly to life's next amazing adventure. Recently, that had changed and now she looked for the catch, the obstacle, the next insurmountable problem.

Her stomach was churning worse than the washing machine, growling away to itself in the kitchen. She grabbed the phone from its charger and took it with her up the stairs two at a time. It lay still and silent on the toilet floor, then on the bathroom window ledge while she washed her hands, remained silent as she started back down the stairs. Half way down it burst into life. She panicked, fumbled to answer, almost dropping it in her clumsy haste. Pressing the button with one hand, she grabbed the banister with the other, overbalancing on the narrow stair.

"Hello?" She said breathlessly, her heart beat thudding in her ears.

The voice came from far away with an accent so thick it was difficult to tell what language was being spoken.

Kate tried to breathe steadily. "I'm sorry I didn't quite catch what you said." She listened intently, her mouth opening, her eyes widening, the hand grasping the banister tightening until the knuckles whitened.

"My computer has reported problems with the Windows operating system?" she paused in disbelief then erupted like Krakatoa in 1883. "Listen you bloody con artist I am a sodding programmer. Bugger off with your visit this website and we'll con you out of a fortune. Aaaaah!"

She saw red and pressed red to end the call, she stomped down the final stairs then froze. Oh Hell! What if **the** call had tried to get through at the same time?

Kate checked then breathed out with relief. No missed calls. A silent prayer trailed after her back into the living room.

How she hated that lovingly chosen décor. For eighteen long months she and Andrew had followed the rules to the letter, hardly going outdoors, stuck in this particular room until now they were within a micron of screaming and tearing up the wallpaper.

Kate put the phone back on the charger and prepared to continue worshipping at its base. Her hands began to ache with the strength she was clasping them together. The clock's tick grew louder as despair deepened.

The phone rang.

If this was another sleazy cold call, her mind imagined vile revenge even as she answered, "Hello?"

"Mrs Holt? This is the Manager of the Old Ship Inn, Brixham."

"Yes," Kate held her breath.

"I'm ringing to confirm your reservation for two for the last week of July. We have had a cancellation and can accommodate your request."

There were tears in Kate's eyes as she murmured thank you a dozen times before ending the call. They spilled down her cheeks as she waited for the confirmation email, before finally she sent Andrew a text.

"Last vacancy in the southwest for July is now our reservation. We **are** going on a summer holiday, followed by a series of musical notes.