

# **ELECTRONIC CITY**

(Electronic City)

Falk Richter

Translated by Dr. Marlene J. Norst  
Sydney 2003



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**Translator Contact:** Dr. Marlene J. Norst / 63/3 Wylde St / Potts Point, NSW  
2011 / Australia / phone (02) 9357 3720 / marlenenorst@bigpond.com

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## **Characters**

**Tom**

**Joy**

**A team of about 5-15 people**

- Tom enters the building in which he has been living for about two weeks**
- knows nobody**
- endless corridors**
- twenty-five units on each floor**
- the city?**
- Los Angeles**
- New York**
- Berlin**
- Seattle, Tokyo, New Mexico**
- he's not too sure himself**
- he runs along the corridor uncertainly**
- looking at the key in his hand**
- looking at the wall-paper**
- which is strangely bland**
- there's nothing unusual here, nothing to help one get one's bearings and**
- yes, exactly, he isn't sure himself any more, Europe, North-or South America**
- it could just as easily be a block of units above that shopping mall in Brisbane, Queensland**
- in Melbourne or Sydney**
- somewhere in Hong Kong, Taipei or Singapore**
- he has no idea just now**
- he knows nobody and he can't remember anything: Have I ever been here? Is this the right floor, the right corridor, was that to the right or left of the lift and above all: IS THIS ACTUALLY THE RIGHT BUILDING**
- Moved too often lately, totally lost all sense of direction: Where's Joy, where's Joy? Have I really been here for two weeks or... or ...I don't know: Two HOURS, when did I actually get here and above all: How? With what plane? Or did I get here on foot? No, that's**

impossible, that can't be, no, hold on, I...my brain's not working, I...I... nothing reminds me of anything here, nothing, all that plain grey and this carpet, the view from the window. Could be anywhere -" if only I'd taken my mobile-my Palm, my Organiser, my Notebook- or at least a compass"  
-or a Discman, then I'd be able to listen to some music now till sooner or later someone or other came past  
-He's got a little notebook where he jots down on what floor in what city he has rented a room  
-and he needs these notes damn, shit, my plane, how am I supposed to catch that in time? I need those fucking things, notes for the next flight or I needn't even bother going there and ...and -7-1-7-2-4?? 7-1-7-2-5??  
That damned numerical code, if I only knew in which city I am here, then... then and why there's this sudden power failure in my brain, all numbers deleted, everything gone, JOY? Where's JOY? Wasn't that her name, the name of my wife, my girl-friend, that was her name, wasn't it? but exactly what genre are we talking about here have we actually decided that?

**Tom:**

Horror, frenzy, metropolis, banks, stock exchange, money gushing, testosterone gushing, streaming, the whole building, two thousand single room apartments, all belonging to the same chain, with identical facades all over the world, I get the feeling I'm always arriving never leaving, I'm travelling but never moving, my brain keeps saying: "you've been here before," even though I've never been there before. My brain keeps recognising everything, even when I realise, no, I've never been here before, so there's no way I can know it, but the rooms always look the same, the rooms say: "Welcome home." You can read it on the friendly hand-woven mat in front of the entrance: "Welcome home" and that's also the name of the firm that builds these single room apartments all over the world: "Welcome home."  
**BUT DAMN IT ALL THIS ISN'T MY HOME I MIGHT LIVE HERE BUT IT ISN'T MY HOME**

*short pause*

But where is it then? Where could it possibly be?

-but what genre are we talking about here? Have we actually decided that?

- managers of Psycho-pharmaceuticals somewhere at the other end of the world in skyscraper beds, camping places, half-day accommodation where they have a quick lie down, a brief collapse, take a rest, so as to continue their flight a few hours later in order to merge, invest, speculate**
- and wherever they arrive, it looks exactly the same**
- and wherever they arrive, they meet the same people**
- and wherever they arrive, they collapse exhausted in hotel-rooms**
- which, wherever they arrive, have exactly the same design and can't be told apart**
- so that wherever they arrive, they can have the feeling that they haven't moved at all**
- that wherever they arrive they are in their own home and that at the end of a day's work they always return to the same place**

**Tom**

**I have the feeling that I'm constantly sitting with my laptop on my lap in some lobby some business lounge waiting room and that I know all the people around me very well, they're all my friends although I've never seen them before in my life, although I've never exchanged a single word with them and then my mobile rings and the mobile of the man beside me rings and then the mobile of the man who sits beside the man beside me rings and then, simultaneously, we all speak into our mobiles and say that we're about to arrive that we're just waiting for our luggage that we're exactly four and a half minutes late because our plane arrived exactly four and a half minutes late and that's why we'll be four and a half minutes late for the meeting and why we'd just like to ask them to begin the meeting four and a half minutes later, could you do that sorry I mean would that be possible could you please ask everybody to wait another four and a half minutes or do they all have to be somewhere else by then? will they all be gone by then? on their way to the next appointment? hello is anybody there? hello we seem to have been cut off somehow, shit what's up? I've been cut off hello! fuck!**

- It's impossible to tell the airport business lounges apart any more and you get the feeling that you're sitting in large waiting rooms or reading rooms after work having a nice drink together with your colleagues and letting the day die away.**

**-all at the same time but not synchronised like a choir: BUT  
WHAT ARE WE ACTUALLY WAITING FOR WHAT IN GOD'S  
NAME ARE WE ACTUALLY WAITING FOR**

**-for the connecting flight**

**-for a figure that's being phoned through**

**-for someone to tell us what we're to buy, sell, get rid off**

**-my charger, fuck, shit, help. where's my charger!!**

**-could this damn plane kindly put a bit of a spurt on, I have to fly on for that deal in Seattle or was it Rome? I can't remember which it is any more, once again I'm missing out on everything, so please get a move on, could you, please, hello, faster, damn and shit, get a move on, otherwise I'll miss out on everything again and then I'm out- out of what? that's the question - but that's a question I'm not going to answer, because that would only slow me down and I need all the speed I can muster otherwise I'll crash and these damned safety precautions are all useless anyway, if you crash, you crash and good-riddance, you can all climb into your life-jackets as much as you like as we go crashing into this forest but you won't catch me doing that not this fellow, damn it all, faster!**

**-connect collect delay**

**-flexible workforce flexibilise re-engineer reconstruct re-educate  
reinforce reduce re-measure**

**-(all) reassure redirect reform reconfirm**

**-downsize download**

**-outsource out-task**

**-downed by downers**

**-upped by uppers**

**-(all) very very flexible**

**-7- 14- 25 or 7 – 14 – 26, he can't remember any more, he simply can't remember, he doesn't even know all the places he's been to lately and what he actually did there**

**-comparing figures, estimating stock-exchange fluctuations on the basis of data which exactly...and suddenly it occurs to him:**

***now Tom and the previous speaker in unison: He screams in a whisper – I have to find that damned room I need those notes, that data those figures otherwise everything will collapse tomorrow and it'll all be my fault – 7-14-27-9 7-14-27-10 I don't know anymore, blackout, ground***

zero, loading error, my brain won't read the commands anymore, everything's becoming blurred, everything looks the same, help! help! damn and blast: **IS ANYONE THERE ?**

**-Enlargement: Tom is running through the building without knowing where to, no sense of direction, can't make a decision, reels, freezes, stands still, wants to sit down  
-but there's no chair, he wants to lean against the wall  
-but he keeps sliding down, the material doesn't support him  
-suddenly the lift has disappeared, now he'll never get out  
-CUT!**

**-People are lying in hotels that are also at the same time short- term clinics and holiday accommodation**

**Tom:**

**Is this place a hotel or a short- term clinic? Is this a corridor, a high security tract or am I in the intensive- care unit? Am here on holiday? There's an extensive leisure program on offer here, isn't there? By the way, where's the gym?**

**-Tom is hunched over the racing bike in the gym,  
-Beside him are twenty other men who look exactly like him:  
-sloping shoulders, pigeon-breasted and a bit of a beer belly  
-just your typical banker  
-but doing his best  
-yes doing his best still to get the most out of his exhausted body  
-harassed, perspiring, lonely, unloved, without sex.**

**Tom:**

**-for weeks nothing but the porn program on the hotel TV channel. And that's the same everywhere too. Sometimes you notice that you're in Australia because there are suddenly a lot of Asian girls on the program. You can tell Tokyo by the hard core porn scenes, a lot of anal sex, a lot of equipment, a lot of lesbians in patent leather. Texas is always a bit slack, you've got to bring your own DVD's and load them into the computer, otherwise you can completely forget the bit of pleasure that such a business trip has to offer.**

**-Pornographic moans**

- a woman fakes an enormous orgasm
- a woman alone in an empty room everything dark but for the candle-light
- she's wearing a patent-leather skirt and a mask
- someone pokes a heavy object into her genitals
- pours candle grease all over her
- she's riding on a black rubber tail
- while a pack of men in suits stand round her greasing away at her
- simultaneously now the sound of seven hundred businessmen in the "Welcome Home" Hotel chain
- they're lying on their beds beside their laptops and masturbating
- into the bed-spread of the "Welcome home" bed- linen series
- heavy breathing
- afterwards they run into the "Welcome Home" bathroom, past the "Welcome Home" art print series "Alpha 2000"- an impressionist print based on Monet by a Belgian artist contracted to "Welcome Home Incorporated"- and they wipe off their sperm on a sort of "One Wipe and It's Gone" "Welcome Home" tissue bearing the message "Welcome Home/ Wipe Clean gives you a smile"
- seven hundred business men fall exhausted into their beds
- heavy breathing
- then they open their e-mail account and continue working
- mustn't waste time
- a quick jerk off and then on with the job

**Tom:**

-Is this place a hotel or a porn-cinema or is it my Fitness Club? I check in, *Electronic City*, enter my pin number mustn't ever forget that or I'm lost, after all, I've been living here for years, haven't I? Last night someone was moved out, two hours later, someone new moved in, who looked exactly the same: an exchange, just an exchange, nobody noticed.

- resting, collapsing
- swallowing pills, looking at the TV
- relaxing, waiting
- waiting, but for what, for what?
- waiting for it to continue again next morning.
- but where to? where to?
- I don't know, that's all in a message that my Palm forwards to my mobile and that I'll find as an SMS beside my bed in the morning



while the water for the coffee I'll toss down before my flight leaves. is boiling in the cupboard beside the ironing board  
-people suddenly go rigid in the corridors and try to remember their numerical code, they look in the mirror and don't know any more what they see there,...

**Tom**

Is that supposed to be me that character there in my bathroom mirror, is that me? I cannot remember the last time I looked anything like that.

... because their neighbours do not differ from them in the smallest detail

- because they cannot remember their own story
- because they don't have a story
- only a succession of ever- recurring events

**Tom**

This has been going on for years and years, hasn't it? When, I can't seem to remember any more, when did all this actually start?

-Tom begins to count

**Tom:**

17 16 15 14 13 12 11

- softly he sings a song that he suddenly remembers
- in a weak voice
- scarcely audible
- more like a careful breath
- the voice of a man who only sings when he has to reassure himself
- who doesn't know that he has a voice with which he could sing
- who only sings when he is suddenly afraid, when he doesn't know what to do next,
- doesn't know how he can get out of a situation where he has completely lost the overview

**Tom sings:**

"Let's just close our eyes, I'll just forget myself...what I want is a real thing!"

-The sound of rolling waves, then a quiet whirring sound along an

endless corridor

**Tom:**

How come no one's talking here? Why is it so terribly quiet?  
Hello, can anyone hear me ?!

-he screams

*(both voices, one on top of the other: Tom's voice and the previous voice:)*  
“ Hello, can't anybody hear me !! HELLO, IS ANYBODY HERE!!??”

-but there's only his face

-searching

-confused

-just before the moment when he realises that he will never find  
his way out of here again

**Tom:**

17 21 12?

18 22 14?

19 25 3?

-he screams

*(a scream that breaks off suddenly)*

-deep down inside him, something screams that is not he himself

-he would never dare to utter a sound

-people would think he was mad

-or call the police

-Tom, do let out a scream

**Tom:**

No, I can't

-Just give it a try

**Tom:**

No, I can't, please, I can't

-He pulls himself together, stays calm, inside him a voice he doesn't  
recognise is screaming

-in confused panic, he stands beside the lift and waits for someone

to chance by, his brain tries possible number combinations, but in vain,

he holds on to the outer door of the lift, his heart is racing, now gently, gently, this is the place where the hotel turns into a clinic, but he hasn't got his pills on him, that shit Thorazin, where the hell is it? 17 28 19 3 40 4 0 5 1 7 17 22 32 that shit Thorazin the hell is it? Where am I, how will I ever get out of here again?!!

-he looks through his pockets, he finds a photo of a woman.

-A woman in a shopping centre. In an airport lounge but where where? Where could that be?

-A clue? a clue?

-She's standing at the check-out?

-Tokyo? New York?

-London, Berlin, Taipei, Melbourne, Madrid?

-The goods on the shelves behind her give no indication of the place where she might be staying

-A woman

-A somehow...

-... very normal average sort of woman

-black hair, average face

-a bit harassed, a bit sad, a bit yes sad, tired, lonely, no particular distinguishing features

-who is this woman?

-where is this woman?

*Now together with Tom*

- 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11

*again without Tom:*

-he sings a song by the Eurythmics that he suddenly remembers from a film that he saw with her, about two lovers (*don't sing:*) "I want to walk in the open wind I want to talk like lovers do want to dive into your ocean if it's raining with you."

Tom (at the same time, in a very weak soft voice, moving from speech to singing): "...I want to walk in the open wind I want to talk like lovers do want to dive into your ocean if its raining with you. So baby talk to me like lovers do, walk with me like lovers do, talk to me like lovers do...and then strings, synthetic strings now in my head controlled by a PC, beautiful, soothing, pleasant."

**-10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1**

**Tom: “I want to walk in the open wind. I want to talk like lovers do, want to dive into your ocean if it’s raining with you”, figures figures figures, go on, fast, keep moving, don’t miss out, ring up, sell, stop, keep moving, hurry up and get the suitcase from the carousel**

**-the lift rushes past  
-there’s scarcely a sound, nothing,**

**Tom:  
Here every sound is so cushioned that you can’t really tell any more that you’re actually alive, nothing is palpable, nothing is audible, yet in my brain there is an explosion like a plane crash, I’m crashing, I’m crashing, Alarm, Look out! I can’t go on, I’ve got a defect, I don’t know what to do next, I’m no longer getting any signals from the terminal, nobody’s helping me, nobody’s guiding me to the runway where to? where to? no signal, I can’t understand anything, how does all of this actually function? now I’m going to turn myself off for a bit, I’ll try a New Start, Control Tower? Mayday, hello? 7 11 14 12 70 3 24 12 can anybody hear me, my brain is counting counting, it’s playing through all the number-combinations, ten seconds to go till the impact 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 zero zero zero**

**( terrifying sounds of a loud crash, a crash)**

**a loud voice:**

**-CUT!!!**

**(silence, then:)**

**yes OK that was quite good but can we have the last part again, Tom**

**(No answer)**

**Tom!**

**(No answer)**

**Tom!!**

**Tom:**

**No, please, not again**

**-Just try it once more**

**Tom:**

**No please, I can't, please please not again**

**-Tom stand up please, we're going to do the crash one more time, something didn't quite work with the impact, seventeen C please, the second time, Crash , Blood and ready to roll:**

**(terrifying sounds of a loud crash, a crash)**

**-Tom is lying beside the runway**

**-snow**

**-a snow drift**

**-I'm not moving anymore**

**-everything's rushing past me**

**-that's the moment when everything comes to a standstill**

**-everything crashes, we're lying beside the runway, pleasant, silence**

**-another beautiful scene in this film: thousands of businessmen lie bleeding beside the frozen runway : gentle breathing, a beautiful moment**

**-a very very beautiful moment**

**-Yes and I can assure you a great deal of hard work went into that**

**-you had to have two airports put completely out of action for those shots**

**-All those crashes, you just can't fake them, you've got to do them for real, that cost me heaps, but I had this idea in my head and I simply had to realise it: Planes that fly into that tower, bleeding businessmen on the runway, I'd been dreaming about it for such a long time, it simply had to become a reality.**

**Tom**

**Look at us all lying here. Nobody's moving any more, everybody's looking at the wreckage of the crashed plane and all the notices say "Cancelled" or "Twelve Hours Delay"**

**- were you also thinking about...**

**-Yes, definitely, yes: trade: goods, ways and means and values in today's world market, new horizons, consumption as the reason for living, business-architecture, flexibility has become the prescribed pattern of behaviour, the new type of amnesia, the loss of a sense of history, the failure to understand one's own hysterical mode of life, the**

**compulsion to conform, to assimilate is thus reinterpreted as freedom of self-expression; the staging of world politics: the production of pictures, marketing and the war, all uncontrollable processes together produce an uncontrollable system, whose way of functioning is not capable of being copied by anybody and which, in the final analysis, can no longer be represented by a picture or a story since it is itself picture and absence of narrative, if you see what I mean**

**-Yes, indeed I understand that, I understand that perfectly.**

**-Cut! Close-up of a perspiring young woman, black hair, ordinary-looking, no particular distinguishing marks.**

**-your first day of work as a part-time worker in the airport lounge in**

**- let's say**

**-London Seattle**

**-Rome**

**-Sydney Madrid**

**-New York**

**-Hamburg Berlin Tokyo**

**-New Mexico Atlanta**

**-Rome**

**-we've had Rome**

**-your first day in this branch**

**-fear in her face**

**-a growing fear**

**-she's a "fill-in" a so-called "standby"**

**-at about 10pm she gets an e-mail with her duty-roster and is flown to various parts of the world, should anybody need replacing anywhere.**

**-it's always the same supermarket chain with its integrated "prêt a manger" the Fast Food Outlet of the Upper Classes, almost always positioned in the same place in the different airports, same design, same line of goods, same demands on the staff, she begins work, at night at 1am, the cash register is handed over by a colleague, so far it's only happened twice in her entire career that she has encountered the same colleague in a shop again, once in Seattle, once in Madrid, it was Amy from Ohio and they quickly shared a cup of coffee, had a bit of a chat and found it strange that their lives resembled each other so closely. despite the fact that they came from two completely different parts of the world. Both of them were really keen on "The Golden Girls" and they talked about their favourite episodes, about "Sex and the City" that they both found kind of funny**

but a bit too sexy, both of them found Al Bundy a bit over the top but “Emergency Room” was really their world where they both felt at home, George Clooney and there they both laughed and looked at each other, knowing exactly what the other was thinking just then and both repeated the name again “George Clooney. George Clooney” and it was somehow clear that this man didn’t just have a pretty face, that there’d also be a thing or two to discover under that doctor’s coat which would make it pretty worth-while pretending to have a little accident, snigger, snigger, do you want another cup, sorry have to get going, I’ve just been called, but perhaps, yes, perhaps next Tuesday, when I’ll be on Shift 37b in Sector A in Toronto, won’t you be in Vancouver then or somewhere like that?

- no day-dreaming now, please
- the queue is getting longer and longer

**Joy:**  
How does this thing work?

- we’ve never had an accident here
- everything always works perfectly
- and, after all, she’s really only here to hold this shit-infrared-scanner against the label and to press ”total” at the end
- to take the money and put it in the till
- the change falls out of the automat into a small bowl beside the register all by itself
- from where the customers can retrieve it themselves
- while she can already put the next sandwiches and packets of sushi through the scanner

**Joy:**  
And I’m really only here to hold that shit-infrared-scanner against the label and press “total” at the end, the change falls out of the automat by itself, anyway, into a small bowl beside the register from where the customers can then retrieve it themselves while I put the next lot of sandwiches and packets of sushi through the scanner. Before that for three weeks, I was sorting Calvin Klein underpants according to size in a warehouse in Singapore and before that I was working in a freezer for United Airlines somewhere in the Atlanta airport area where previously I’d worked the telephones for Coca Cola’s customer service – that freezer was about as big as three football fields and we

had to store the beef there in little airline alfoil-packages and when an order arrived by email, some character in the office in Manchester- it had somehow all been shifted to Manchester- had to use the computer to steer these kind of forklift bits through this football-field freezer in order to shovel out the portions that had been ordered and load them onto the plane and we- that's me and the two fat fifteen-year old Mexican girls, who were always flown back to Mexico City at the week-end because they didn't have a work permit- we three were just there to go into the freezer room when in some place somewhere a grapple got stuck, when every so often an alfoil package of beef fell down or got stuck, that was it, the rest of the time we sat in the rest-room, smoked and watched "Emergency Room", that was my best job so far

-OK thank you Joy, but as far as I know, nobody actually asked you.  
-please only speak when you get a red light on your monitor, thank you  
-and now could we please rewind the whole thing again  
-we're going back again  
-resume your positions, we're doing it again, Attention:

-Her first day in this branch  
-There's fear in her face  
-a growing fear  
-she's a fill-in, a so-called "stand-by"  
-the queue's getting longer and longer

Joy:  
How does this thing work?

-the infrared-scanner is stuck  
-something's not working  
-the bar codes can't be entered  
-an incredibly loud noise and an unpleasant sort of blinking  
-while the queue in front of the register is getting longer  
-longer and longer  
-twenty-seven business men with sushi-packets in their hands, all of them in a hurry, all of them made nervous by the this woman behind the register who can't cope who's too stupid to the scanner over that stupid barcode-thingamajig  
-and, actually, she's only there to hold that shit infrared-scanner up against the label and press "Total" at the end, take the money and



**put it in the cash-register. The change falls out of the slot machine into a small bowl beside the cash-register all by itself from where the customers can retrieve it themselves, while she can already put the next sandwiches and sushi-packets through the scanner.**

**-“Fuck”, “damn and shit,” “bloody hell”, the businessmen are beginning to make themselves heard  
-are gradually losing it**

**-At this point in the film one suddenly gets a feeling of what would happen, if these people weren't functioning along such ordered tracks, if they suddenly lose it and what's more in a high security place like an airport lobby, where the system for which they're working is at its most vulnerable: stock exchange and air transport. You're showing the men in a state where it needs only a spark to set them off and they'd be starting to smash everything, burn it all down, run amok**

**-Yes that force has always intrigued me. The terrorist- in- the system. Or to put it another way: the unfortunate accident: the broker who runs through the shopping centre and shoots everything in sight, and who can, perhaps, best be compared to a plane crash, the broker who crashes and in doing so destroys everything around him. The catastrophe-in- the system**

**-the western version of the suicide-bomber, but one acting without a motive?**

**-It would of course be interesting to find out, whether these men at the very moment, when they're shooting everything down, believe that they have a motive, that perhaps, at that very moment, they believe, they know exactly, to what end and against whom their campaign is directed**

**-a way of thinking that we would describe as sick**

**-certainly a way of thinking that we must describe as sick, but nevertheless a way of thinking, that we must take seriously if we want to find out, what motivates it, what triggers it off**

**-and now back to the cash register, Joy and the businessmen.**

**-fuck**

**-fuck fuck**

**-fuck fuck fuck**

**-my plane**

**-fuck**

**-fuck**

**-fuck**

**-no time**  
**-I've got to fly on**  
**-further further further**  
**-faster**  
**-damn and shit**  
**-my connecting flight**  
**-if I miss it then I won't get another cancel right now and the mobile doesn't work here**  
**-fuck fuck fuck**  
**-could this chick perhaps put a bit of a spurt on**  
**-quite a bit of a spurt on**  
**-perhaps eventually even work out how that thing functions**  
**-why is it that these people have less and less idea of what they're supposed to be doing**  
**-that idiots are always being put there who haven't the foggiest and who couldn't give a fuck because they'll be giving notice after three days anyway**  
**-who never know how anything works**  
**-fuck**  
**-I've got to fly on**  
**-I'm hungry**  
**-on my plane they'd rationalised lunch away**  
**-now we've got these "Pret a manger" shops all over the place and the assistants are too stupid to operate the shit-scanner**  
**-fuck**  
**-fuck**  
**-fuck fuck**  
**-fuck fuck fuck**  
**-fuck**  
**-fuck**  
**-fuck fuck**  
**-fuck fuck fuck**

**Joy:**

**Doesn't one have to enter a numerical code if one wants to type it in by hand 12-58-3 12-58-4 or 59-4 how did that "Change to Manual" go again? oh goodness,**

**-she dials the number for emergency: 17 16 4 28 003**

**Joy (simultaneously):**

17 16 4 28 003

- a tape somewhere at the other end of the world
- probably New York
- Washington, Detroit or Copenhagen
- she's heard that the headquarters had to be moved from New York or Atlanta to Copenhagen for financial reasons
- or Helsinki
- or somewhere else anyway somewhere in northern Europe, now there's that tape and nobody's answering. What language am I supposed to speak? Surely not Finnish?
- No, she waits for the end of the tape; then leaves a message.
- Joy

Joy:

-“the infra-red reader is out of action, the infra-reading machine that reads the bar code the numbers the codes with the code reading machine hello it's not working and I'm the only one in the shop and I can't leave the building to ask my colleague next door hello I'm all alone here and there are only these business men and they're going to kill me in a minute and I do need some help how do you do that manually without using the laser how does that work?”

- And at that moment she thinks of:

- “Laser,
- Faser,

-Captain Uhura of the Space Patrol Orion, completely alone on the ship standing on the bridge,  
-her husband who's somewhere on another planet and is trying with great difficulty to find the numerical code to get himself beamed back to his home universe.”

-Joy:

Joy:

“Ring me here in hm fuck wait Seattle I think well the number here is now how does that number go again where exactly am I? What city!”

- minus 7.53 plus 8.94 minus 12.86 plus 13.11 minus 0.72 minus 0.33 plus 1.85 minus 16.33 minus 3.44 minus 11.44 minus 12.14 could not be definitely assigned, is not impossible renewed unrest in the police faces a riddle due to human and technical failure the victims of

**the attack was a fourteen year old school child threat of retaliatory strike must reckon with a further sinking of the economic growth rate to below 0.8 percent will have to be accounted for before the fact-finding commission Opposition's donation scandal demands full explanation seven-year old Bettina reported still missing shot into the crowd of people seventeen pupils died at the scene of the outrage high level alert of bomb threat at City Airport twenty wounded died on the way with poison gas his entire family after being sacked only seven-year old Marie survived the attack**

*(simultaneously with:)*

**-a glance out of the shop but nothing within her reach recalls any kind of memory, everywhere there are monitors with CNN and stock-exchange figures, that race across the picture, underneath, while travellers hurriedly pull their wheeled cases along in the direction of the Boarding Gate. Pictures of crashes, wars, crisis areas, NATO bombers, dictators, oil-companies, fighter helicopters, happy businessmen using the mobile to put their dear little daughter to bed at the other end of the world, a suicide-bomber attack on a Children's Home in Tel Aviv, retaliatory strikes, official residences being bombed, a happy family at the breakfast table, conscious of the ever-rising returns on their share-portfolio, having as yet no idea of the crashes that await them as they sit together, laughing and facing: Starbucks, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, a Hugo Boss store, Versace, the Body-shop, Paul Smith, where am I? there's a number beside the cash register: "you are at cashier desk 908 at location 00 708-PQ12, ahh, OK,**

**Joy:**

**"hello listen call me on 908/00708/PQ12 and please hurry up I'm all alone here and I can't remember the numerical code you need in order to continue, there's nobody but me in the shop",**

**-thirty-two panic-stricken hectic businessmen all dressed in identical suits are in transit there's not a second to lose keep moving quickly quickly keep moving**

**-and she keeps trying to repair this thing, this shitty thing though she hasn't got the faintest idea**

**Joy**

**not the foggiest**

**- doesn't even know how the thing's supposed to work**

**Joy**

**Actually, I haven't got a clue how the thing's actually supposed to work. What are you meant to do when it suddenly refuses to enter anything**

**-the only woman in the whole supermarket standing there in her horrible shitty red -and -white checked smock with her first name JOY embroidered on the front**

**-it's half past three in the morning the men in the queue are getting restless Joy now panic-stricken frantically bangs the infra-red machine against the cash-register a number of times and tries to enter the code again , (*\*speaker below begins to speak*) holds back her tears of rage**

**- and the actress who plays Joy, very competently, holds back her tears of rage**

**Joy:**

**-Do start please please do get a move on",**

**-she begins to search in her drawer for the booklet with the instructions,**

**-and the actress playing Joy manages to get exactly the right expression needed to show the growing despair that's present but mustn't become visible, mustn't be expressed , because you don't want to reveal yourself, mustn't expose any weaknesses, mustn't ever expose them, no matter how overburdened you might feel because of these fucking machines, that's what she thinks, while she's playing Joy and what's more playing her so well that nobody can tell the difference any more between the actress Joy and the real figure Joy who's in fact serving as the model for this figure here. I'm not even alienated from my work any more, I'm completely confused by my work. The instructions, fuck, where are they? Where the fucking fuck are the fuck fuck fuckingng, where are the where where where where where the fuck are the fucking I'm going into a spin I can't get the fuck out of this fuck fuck fuck alone any more help. She searches frenzidly, desperately**

**-but there's nothing there**

**-there's nothing there at all**

**-just a few bits of paper,  
-cancelled bills  
-then she finds a photo that shows a man in a suit, standing  
somewhere in an endless corridor in front of a door with the  
numerical code**

**Tom:  
7-1-7-2-4**

**-he's holding a worn-out old Nokia mobile to his ear just like in the  
film MATRIX and looking lost in thought towards the camera like an  
Undercover-Agent.**

**Joy:  
Tom, goodness me, Tom,**

**-she takes her mobile, dials a number, we hear it ringing.**

*mobile rings*

**-back in the corridor  
-somewhere in another town  
-where-ever that might be  
there beside the lift is Tom still standing  
he's waiting  
-he's waiting  
-he's crying  
-he's pissed in his pants  
-he's slapped his face several times to bring himself round  
-Tom's voice is heard as voice-over above a sea of numbers ,  
airport-lounges, suites of rooms, hotel beds, hospital beds, porn booths,  
everything's blurred, everything's merging, the sound of a lift going up  
and down, always rushing past Tom while he's slapping his face,  
splattered with tears of rage:**

**Tom's voice (*while slapping his face splattered with tears of rage*):  
"Now look here you do damn well know it, so pull yourself  
together this shitty bird brain or bloody-brain computer is  
going to work! Bloody well get going, finally do something ,  
count, think, off you go, you fucker, or I'll beat you to pulp, I'll  
throw you out! A computer that doesn't work goes straight into**

the garbage bin, is that understood!”

*(sound of the mobile ringing more insistently, louder)*

**Tom:**

**That damn mobile, is that my mobile!?! Bloody hell, is that my mobile there that’s ringing again ! Is that my mobile? Where in heaven’s name is it where? Where’s that damn sound coming from? Where’s my room? And where, damn and blast, is the numerical code for this lift? And why is nobody here why’s everything dead? Are they all hiding or lying dead in their beds? I want to get out of here!!”**

*The mobile tone even louder, now distorted)*

**Tom:**

**That is my mobile. That’s certainly my mobile tone I remember downloading it from One.tel before that shit went broke too!!**

- now just keep calm,
- stay calm, quite calm
- now bloody well calm down and try to concentrate

**Tom:**

**I can’t**

- pull yourself together

**Tom:**

**I don’t want to go on with this I can’t I want to get out of here**

- You’re staying right here!

**Tom:**

**No!**

- You’re staying put, pull yourself together

**Tom:**

**I don’t want to be in this play please let me be in another play**

**have another role please please another role**

**-for you there's only this one role and no other and now pull yourself together, somehow or other you've got to bring your life to an end without causing too much chaos that's all you're being asked to do**

*the hideously loud, unbearable noise of a mobile ringing*

**Tom:**

**That's my mobile, it's lying in one of these rooms and all I've got to do is follow the signal and then I'll know where I live and my papers will be there and I'll know where I have to go and whom I have to ring and email and how I can get the right information for tomorrow's meeting, because damn and shit I haven't the faintest idea of the name of the firm we're supposed to take over, who was it who wanted to merge with whom and how many shares were we supposed to buy in that I DON'T KNOW I DON'T KNOW ANY MORE**

*a mailbox message, Tom's voice is on the message:*

**"I am temporarily unavailable please leave a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can."**

**Joy:**

**Where are you? Where are you? I can't cope...I...how does this thing work? How? Please call me, please give me a ring some time, do please please call me, where exactly are you?**

**-The moment is frozen**

**Joy hangs up and waits**

**-now she hears herself speak, her own voice as if in a Documentary film talking about herself.**

**-a film about her life:**

**-A TV team is standing beside her, very nice people, the producer, an extremely nice, friendly, good-looking chap whom I'll be playing myself,**

**pays particular attention to her, seems to be honestly interested in her, devotes time to her, listens to her, please Joy, take a seat, make yourself comfortable why don't we just get on first-name terms, Joy, I'm Peter, well now, Joy, just go ahead and tell us how it all happened:**



**Joy:**

**Well, everything was more or less, kind of hecticallt global, ever so flexibly networked and rationalized, that is to say, we were the data rushing through the information network with no idea of who or what we were. I can't remember a thing, a hurried photograph shot at high speed, pictures superimposed on one another, pictures moving so fast that you can't recognize anything. except perhaps a wild rush of colour, you sense that there's someone there, somewhere, standing or lying or sitting or thinking but you don't recognize anything, everything's a blur, that's how I remember my life. A sea of numbers",**

**-Yes, Joy, lovely, but could we have it a little more factual perhaps?**

**Joy**

**More factual?**

**-Yes, Joy, after all we do want a few facts too, not just pretty pictures, don't we? We're the ones responsible for the metaphors. You just deliver the material and we'll make something out of it, OK? Thanks all the same, Joy, but believe me, we're really better at it, after all we have studied.**

**Joy**

**Yes, but I did some study too. Three semesters, Economics, I think it was, then the money ran out or I wanted to get practical experience, stuff like that so I took a year off and by the end of eight weeks I'd already had twenty-seven different jobs, mostly standby-type jobs, because I couldn't stand it for more than three days anywhere, you could call it a very flexible life-style, I served the Computericons in a fully computerized bakery or searched for lost baggage, that had flown off to the wrong place, I counted the miles for Frequent Flyer customers or cancelled bookings to South Sea islands after terrorist attacks, I selected news-announcer mistakes for comedy programs on Pay-TV or did gag re-writes for the early evening series, I developed ideas to allow actors who weren't a success with the viewers, to be written out of the Daily Soaps and I cleaned the video cubicles in the World of Sex chain mainly in the Benelux countries – Belgium, the Netherlands, Strasbourg -and in Poland, there were lots of telephone jobs: Telebanking, even investment-consulting, although I actually didn't know the first thing about it, but we got leaflets that told us what**

investments we should advise the customers to take up, so we just read those off to them, I did a lot of standing round on the street asking people their opinions about new varieties of cheese, which one would you choose? helped with the planning of election campaigns, delivered pizzas for Forsa and all that shit, cut sushis, was a security guard at the railway station and cleared out the junkies, did telephone sex and recruited new members for the police-academy, actually after a while I was really home-sick for the Uni again

-You think that's funny, do you Joy?

Joy

Yes, somehow....I do.....funny...yes, confusing too, but funny at the same time

-Joy's voice years later in an apartment in an entirely different place

- nicely settled into a life that has survived quite a lot,  
-now finally together with Tom in one place, both have found peace, that's how she sees herself, while she reads these sentences out loud as if to a TV team,

Joy's voice:

TV teams have something very comforting about them, it always helps me to imagine that all of this is only an episode in a TV series, because TV series always have a "happy end" what's more on TV all questions are answered and all problems solved, the bad people die and the good ones do, somehow, manage to get together in the end. And that's something you really can't say for THIS HERE DAMN REAL LIFE OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL THE SHIT, where unfortunately all the questions remain unanswered, the characters constantly change, you completely lose your overview over the whole plot, none of the figures act from motives you can follow, you get the feeling you're watching each other go mad, you don't understand a thing and people DON'T, in fact, keep finding each other, they part company before they've even met and their life tells them fifty thousand different stories, none of which they understand, and whose plots they're never really a part of.

-the sound of the sea and the wind

- difficulties are counterproductive in a flexible system
- everything must be simple and comprehensible otherwise uncontrollable processes are set in motion

### **Joy**

After all, in life it's a matter of reducing complications to a minimum and just functioning for a while without immediately plunging everyone and everything into madness. Now wouldn't that be a worthwhile goal!

- Joy's voice is now heard in the TV series "Joy's World": the life of an ordinary woman

*(Trailer for "Joy's World"- a world of Joy- the story of an average girl in a not so average situation ha ha" thunderous applause and here is JOY, even more applause, a jingle plays then again the sound of sea, wind and "Julia" by the Eurythmics)*

### **Joy:**

"When we first got to know each other? Terminal 4, Transit lounge, just before the Passport Control. Both of us were in a mad rush, it was a moment we were scarcely conscious of, a frantically blurred camera scan. Security camera scan.

-CUT! And again, please:

*Joy (Trailer, then: she speaks her text, and if one listens closely, one can notice that she has learnt it off by heart)*

"When we first got to know each other? At the Security Control. I had to hurry, because I was late and nobody wanted to let me get past so I pushed in, I stood directly in front of him and he wanted to push me aside again.

Meanwhile rows of numbers burred past, there were airport announcements in all different languages, a place you couldn't place, numbers, X-Ray machines, was it a hospital? An airport? Businessmen sitting in lounges, totally worn out, totally empty, with a text projected over their faces saying "I feel empty" and then a confusingly confused choir of voices saying: \* "I feel so empty, I am so fucking empty, I don't know who I am"

**Tom (*joins in at \**)**

**...I feel so empty, I am so fucking empty, I don't know who I am, as soon as I arrive I crash onto the bed and I don't know where I am, when I arrive, I look at the ticket for the next day , I check my emails, I read my sms, I don't know where I am: In the air, on the ground, am I just landing, am I just taking off? There's something dead lying here beside me and I believe, yes, I believe, it's me.**

**-Scene17 Airport Terminal D at night**

**Joy: Excuse me, please I've...please, I've got to catch my plane,**

**Tom: Sorry, so do I**

**Joy: I'll lose my job**

**Tom: So will I and so will three hundred thousand others**

**with me if I don't get to my meeting on time, so if you don't mind, please**

**Joy: Sorry, but I need the money more than you do and now get lost, you idiot**

**Joy:**

**But he didn't want to let me in, because he was in just as much of a hurry as I was, we nearly came to blows, you become so aggressive at airports, people become so aggressive, when they run out of time, when they miss their meetings, they feel so helpless, when they're held captive like a caged animal behind a barrier and some character in front of them goes digging around in their bags for hours and they keep being called back to be checked all over again, because they keep having a coin or a key or a mobile in their trouser pocket.**

**Tom:**

**Get lost or I'll shoot down everything in sight, I'll set fire to it, I'll flatten the lot of you, beginning with you, you cunt, got that?**

**Joy:**

**I hit Tom square in the face. He crashed to the floor, jumped up again and hit me back, we bled. Both of us. Then we were taken away by the security guards, our particulars were taken, our bags were searched.**

**"Who are these crazies?"- "We'd better keep them here." They put us in a glass cube and left us there for two hours.**

**Tom:** They kept looking in at us and the video-cameras kept us under surveillance.

**Joy:**

Whenever we talked to each other, one of the security would knock on the door and raise a warning finger.

**Tom:**

Damn and shit, my connecting flight, now I can forget about my meeting, the merger, the take-over, and you can forget about your jet, that's gone anyway, that's really gone. You have no idea what you've just done, my charger fuck shit help where's my charger, my mobile won't work in this fucking glass cube, how am I expected to do that damn deal, cancel, relay the information, connect, collect, delay, re-engineer, restructure, re-educate, reinforce, reduce, reform, flexibilise, downsize, outsource, download, transmit the right figure, at least transmit the right figure to that other Tom, that other character in our office who's also called Tom und who sometimes sits in for me, because he looks exactly like me and has the same voice and all because you stupid cunt wouldn't get out of the way, I hope you die, I hope you die, you pig. Do you realize that hundreds of people die when a meeting like that doesn't take place, are you actually aware of that? Hundreds of heads of families out of work, massive production losses, a fall in the share price, recession, inflation, no profits, no yield, they'll all starve now and the funds will all collapse, they'll all be floated and then what? What are they all going to do when they've got nothing to do? Nobody needs them, nobody wants them, they only put us in the red all these rotten employees, but where are they all supposed to go now? What are we supposed to do with them?

**Joy:**

You're very sexy when you get all excited, did you know that? You remind me a bit of George Clooney, did you know that? Are you having an erection, just now?

**Tom**

Brother, are you all mixed up !

**Joy**

And Tom in his white coat rushed along the corridor the corridor of the

**intensive care ward where I was a patient, with all the right instruments in his doctor's bag which would relieve my pain, diagnose all the malignancies and excise them from my body. He was so aroused that we immediately had sex in that damned glass cube with all its video-cameras, he was in such good form that he really fucked damn well (*short pause*). That didn't happen so often afterwards.**

**-We see Joy and Tom in the Glass Cube having sex and a big fat security guard with greasy hair watching it all on the monitor while various ground-staff colleagues and travellers hurry by, casting a brief look at the interior of the Cube uncertain whether they're watching a promotion gag for the start-up of some enterprise or just the making of a porn film or a TV program about Sex in the Public Arena.**

**-that's just the post production for that Doco-soap "Joy's World – a World of Joy", but it didn't ever happen like that, in fact it never actually took place at all, it was just filmed after the event, because she happened to mention something vaguely along those lines they made a film out of it.**

**Joy**

**Nonsense it's all true I did actually experience all of it**

**-Now is that Joy speaking or the woman who's later going to play Joy in the film?**

**-in the series**

**-and how successful was the series?**

**-not very successful, it soon got the chop.**

**Joy**

**Nonsense the series was an absolute hit. "Joy's World – a World of Joy." There were more than eight-hundred episodes, they showed practically the whole of my life again on film, that was wild, that was simply terrific and the woman who played me put it across pretty convincingly, in fact, she played my life a whole lot better than I did. She was better at being Joy than I was.**

**-CUT!**

**back to the group of increasingly impatient businessmen wearing Boss**

**and Yves Saint Laurent pinstriped suits carrying packets of Sushi and small so-called Manager- salads and Happy Fitness Drinks in their hands chaps who mustn't miss their connecting flights and HATE THAT DAMN SHIT OVER-BURDENED PERSPIRING WOMAN WITH THE NAME JOY EMBROIDERED ON THE FRONT OF HER CHECK UNIFORM**

**-with whom they would never in their wildest dreams get into bed even if they were in Texas and the damn "Welcom Home" porno-channel weren't on**

**-Cut, Frame 17 D Slash 1, Electronic City, at night:**

**-Joy's voice electronically distorted on the phone: Tom please call me back I'm sorry you're sure to be at a meeting but...I can't take any more ... I've got to talk , to talk to someone, there's nobody here, I can't take any more, I can't take any more"**

**-Cut, good, OK, we'll carry on in a moment, a three minute break for everybody and then we'll follow immediately with Frame 17 D Slash 2. Electronic City, by night:**

**-Loud penetrating ringing of a mobile. On a film screen we can see a panic-stricken man running up and down a corridor in all directions towards the ringing sound and away from it again, he's looking for it but can't find it.**

**-CUT!**

**Could we shoot that again, please! OK, Attention, everybody, we're shooting it again.**

**-What for?**

**-The sound was shit.**

**-Ah, OK, the sound was shit, well everybody: this time please let's not have shit sound again OK, - ready:**

**-The ringing of a mobile phone along a corridor, one can see a panic-stricken man running up and down in all directions towards the ringing sound and away from it again, he's looking for it but can't find it, this time with optimal sound**

**-CUT! This time the ringing was optimal from all directions, a mobile symphony, super, super, I love you all, on we go:**

**-17 D Slash 3b, Electronic City, by night, yes, sound please and go:**

**-Joy's Voice: 17 16 15 14 13 12 11, anxiously, breathlessly she sings "take me to your heart, why don't you take me to your heart?"**  
**-a Eurythmic's song from the album "In the Garden", the first album that Joy bought herself as a teenager that time in Houston or Brighton or Bonn or wherever, with Annie Lennox before she became world –famous, when the Eurythmics were still unsuccessful, unknown and even then she was icy, that voice, cold as ice, one sings along with her and slowly freezes to death, pure electronics mixed with falling snow, Joy's voice is soft, cold, lost, nobody knows this song, nobody knows what she's singing, nobody can sing along with her. She waits, there's a ringing sound, no answer, she looks round and what she sees is not a very pretty sight, a row of enraged men in suits on the verge of cracking up, on the verge of smashing everything to pieces**

**-You are searching for moments in our society where one couldn't describe it as "civilised" any more, aren't you?**  
**-At this moment in time one can no longer describe our society at all there is NO language to do it with yet such a language still needs to be found in the next few years. At the moment the force that is revolutionizing and completely restructuring our society is infinitely stronger and more successful than the forces that could describe this process, let alone criticize, correct or actually halt it.**

**-(again on the set) We'll film the raging of the men later, OK, we'll simply mix it in later, OK**

**-She sings: "So we are living in desperate times, ohh, such an unfortunate time I can't relate to you I just can't find a place to be near you", and she thinks of her husband Tom somewhere on the other side of the globe, she's forgotten in which city and what's more when and with what airline he's flying back again and whether she's managed to organize her work so that she'll be doing her night shift at one of the airports that he'll pass on his return flight or rather on his continuing transit-flight OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL THESE SEEMINGLY NEVER-ENDING BUSINESS TRIPS ON WHICH HE'S BEEN ENGAGED FOR OVER TEN YEARS**

**Joy:**

**(sings as described above)**

**"Time after time I try to contact you Time after time I try to talk to you but you don't take me to your heart".**



**-Joy's voice *in panic on the voice-mail* :**

**-Tom, Tom, can you, please, call me back, please."**

**-and we see her husband who is somewhere in Seattle, Atlanta, London, New York in an apartment-block furnished in the most restful of colours running panic-stricken in the direction of a mobile ringing tone. As he is running, he holds his head, and bangs it furiously against the wall, he wants to scream, but doesn't dare to, he is afraid that they'll lock him up, that someone will call the police and they'll pick him up and he hasn't got his passport with him and can't identify himself, he doesn't even know where he is or the number of his apartment though**

**he can hear his mobile ringing but then of course three million other men have exactly the same ringing tone so how is he to know that it's really his mobile that's ringing somewhere next to the suitcase that he hasn't even unpacked yet, how is he supposed to be sure of anything at all,**

**Tom:**

**I don't know anything, I don't know anything any more, I run, I crash, I fall (*he screams in a whisper*)**

**Joy**

**Tom Tom Tom please ring me help**

**Tom**

**Joy Joy Joy damn and shit where are you I love you**

**Joy**

**Love?**

**Tom**

**Yes love or I need you at least I'd like to be with you much rather with you than here I can't take any more I can't take any more**

**Joy**

**Love?**

**Tom**

**Yes something like that or perhaps it would just be nice to fall asleep beside you or look at the TV no not the TV no to listen to music or  
17 16 15 14 13 12 11**

**-and now there are combinations of numbers, a sea of number-combinations: Tom's voice repeatedly heterodyned, ever more frantically, faster, till he breaks down exhausted:**

*Tom, later Joy joins in and then after a while all the speakers so that a sea of numbers is created*

**17 47 13 11-17 48 13 12 – 1 11 17 3 - 5 9 16 2 – 15 19 22 5 –  
27 19 13 12 – 14 19 28 12 – 18 19 22 12 – 7 15 98 3 –80 99 45 11  
– 2 22 23 9 – 100 200 300 12 etc**

**(simultaneously)**

**-Tom and Joy's voices looking for the right number-combination, a number-combination for entering the prices in the prêt a manger shop, for securing the lift, for activating the power in the apartment and for disabling the security on the porno channel, for the mobile PIN code, for the ECcard, for the AMEX, for the email account, for the E-ticket at the airport, for the mobile, for the bank account, for receiving the email and for actually finding the damned apartment block in the first place!!**

**-both drown in an increasingly blurred background of number-combinations layers of superimposed photos of various cities waiting rooms hospitals short- term clinics ware-houses shopping-malls internet-cafes VIP lounges TV studios holiday clubs all over the world, nothing, absolutely nothing significant, places you can't place in which time is frozen in a hundredth of a second, stressed passengers standing behind the barrier at the security control, who'll make into the home-stretch first? the same suits, the same suitcases, a carousel that always produces the same suitcases, rushing businessmen on the way to their connecting flights, collapsed businessmen in Singapore and Hong Kong waiting for their next flight and using every opportunity to take a deep breath, respirators, plane crashes, ambulances, motor car races, aeroplane shows, athletes, photo-finishes, the winner beat the second place- getter by a hundredth of a second who in turn beat the third place-getter by half a hundredth of a second  
-Joy and Tom, both exhausted, both lonely, run and run, they race,**

**crash, take buses taxis railways trains ships, helicopters, planes and try to keep “their figure”, to give their lives direction, to act “authentically”, to be themselves, to snap up the right information and pass it on, to follow all instructions to the letter, to be credible, authentic, flexible, effective**

**-A sudden silence**

*(Pause)*

**-A sudden standstill**

*(Pause)*

**-For a moment everything is silent**

*(Pause)*

**- the roar of numbers stops**

*(Pause, silence, for a while nothing is heard)*

**Joy ( supported by a floating celestial harmony not quite of this world:)**

**“Tuesday week I’ll be in Amsterdam for seven hours at Terminal 4 right beside Gate 65, I’ve looked it up and you’ll arrive that evening from Madrid and fly on to Toronto, if you could perhaps fly via Amsterdam rather than Brussels and just take a connecting flight a bit later, then I could arrange my shift so that I could take my break exactly between 11:00pm and 11:30 pm and then we could get together in the KLM lounge and finally talk” live” with each other again, I’d really just like to lay my head on your shoulder again even for a moment...**

**Tom (continues)....to hold you, to kiss you, we could go to the men’s loo or to that prayer-room on Terminal 4 ,where nobody ever goes and perhaps have a quickie there**

**Joy laughs**

**Joy : I love you**

**Tom: The L- word. You frighten me.**

**(Joy laughs)**

**Tom: I miss you**

**(one can hear them both breathe, uncertainly, carefully, the rest is spoken rather like a question with no real confidence)**

**Joy: We’ll manage that.**

**Tom: Yes. We’ll manage that.**

**The End**