

The Valuation

written by

John Stone

Radio Play

(c)

FADE IN:

EXT. HOUSE - RAINY DAY

FOOTSTEPS.

DOOR CHIME.

Short silence.

DOOR OPENS.

MORLAND GREEN (45) opens the door. He has a clear, but timid voice tone.

ESTATE AGENT (50's) Rolls his r's, and has a perky voice tone.

MORLAND GREEN

Yes, can I help you?

ESTATE AGENT

Ah! Mr Green? Greatorex Estate Agents. You called us for a valuation of your property?

MORLAND GREEN

Yes, that's right.

ESTATE AGENT

Last Friday morning, I believe.

MORLAND GREEN

Oh yes, yes, come in. Sorry, you caught me slightly unprepared. You're earlier than expected.

ESTATE AGENT

(sarcastically)

Oh, I'll go away and come back in two minutes, shall I?

MORLAND GREEN

(apologetically)

No, no. It's fine. Come on in.

ESTATE AGENT

I will then.

DOOR CLOSES.

FOOTSTEPS & SHUFFLES.

MORLAND GREEN

So, where would you like to start?

ESTATE AGENT

No rush, no rush.

(pauses)

I'd just like to ask a couple of questions before we get started, if I may?

MORLAND GREEN

(nervous chuckle)

That's fine. Fire away.

ESTATE AGENT

Are you the sole vendor of this delightful Victorian bungalow?

MORLAND GREEN

Yes, I am now. I inherited my twin brother's share when he passed.

(clears throat)

He passed away, suddenly.

ESTATE AGENT

Commiz, commiz.

(pauses)

May I ask what happened to him?

MORLAND GREEN

(sighs)

He took his own life unfortunately. He couldn't live with his sexuality, apparently.

ESTATE AGENT

Gay, was he?

MORLAND GREEN

(awkwardly)

Yes he was, in fact.

ESTATE AGENT

And when did this suicide happen, did you say?

MORLAND GREEN

I didn't. But seeing you've asked
- last week.

ESTATE AGENT

As raw as that, is it?

MORLAND GREEN

Yes. I haven't even had time to
arrange his funeral.

ESTATE AGENT

So he's still warm then?

MORLAND GREEN

(sighs)

We made an agreement that if one
of us should kick the bucket, the
other would be the sole owner of
the bungalow.

(innocently)

It's in the will and testament.
It's official. It was all agreed.

ESTATE AGENT

(aside)

Hmm. I bet.

MORLAND GREEN

What was that?

ESTATE AGENT

Oh, nothing.

MORLAND GREEN

Is there a problem?

ESTATE AGENT

No, no. No problemo.

MORLAND GREEN

Can we get on with it then?

ESTATE AGENT

In a moment.

(pauses)

May I ask why the urgency to sell
up? Surely his burial should take
precedence over preference, no?

MORLAND GREEN

I want to move to London.

ESTATE AGENT

London, England?

MORLAND GREEN

(narked)

Yes, of course.

ESTATE AGENT

Not married, then?

MORLAND GREEN

Divorced, actually.

ESTATE AGENT

Painful, was it?

MORLAND GREEN

(casually)

Pretty standard, actually.

(intolerantly)

Look, can we just get on with it?
I have things to do. I need to go
out.

ESTATE AGENT

(obdurately)

Just one more question. It won't
take long.

MORLAND GREEN

But I...

ESTATE AGENT

-Do you have a figure in mind?

MORLAND GREEN

Well, I don't know. I'm not an
estate agent am I? That's why I
booked a valuation.

ESTATE AGENT

Don't be smart, Mr Green. It
makes you look a bit odd.

MORLAND GREEN

(aback)

I beg your pardon?

(pauses)

Look, I just need my property
valued, so I can sell up and move
on.

ESTATE AGENT

I can tell you exactly what it's worth right now. I shan't need to look around.

MORLAND GREEN

(brightly)

Oh. Can you?

ESTATE AGENT

It's not worth anything.

MORLAND GREEN

(aback)

Nothing?!

ESTATE AGENT

Yep. Nothing. Zilch. Zero. Not a Cumberland sausage, or sweet Fanny Adams.

MORLAND GREEN

But I don't understand. What is all this? Who are you?

ESTATE AGENT

The estate agent.

(pauses)

And you're a fibber!

RUFFLE & SHUFFLE.

MORLAND GREEN

Please let go of me, or I'll call the police!

ESTATE AGENT

You're not even divorced. You were never married!

MORLAND GREEN

I was!

ESTATE AGENT

No, no, no. You're a bitter, twisted incompetent inadequate. Oh yes. Simon told me all about you and the sordid little games you like to play in chat rooms.

MORLAND GREEN

What d' you mean? What has this to do with anything? I just called for a valuation, not an interrogation.

A short silence.

ESTATE AGENT

We'll see about that.

NINE PHONE DIGIT SOUNDS.

MORLAND GREEN

Who are you calling?

ESTATE AGENT

Your twin - Simon.

FAINT RINGTONE: "What's your name? What's your name? What's your name?"

MORLAND GREEN

(exasperatedly)

OK. OK. OK. I can explain.

ESTATE AGENT

I want to see the garden.

MORLAND GREEN

(panicked)

But what for?

ESTATE AGENT

To evaluate the valuation.

MORLAND GREEN

But there's only overgrown shrubs and bushes. Nothing much to see out there.

ESTATE AGENT

(lividly)

LIAR! I heard his ringtone.

RUFFLE & SHUFFLE.

MORLAND GREEN

(fearfully)

What are you doing for heaven's sake?!

(pauses)

Get off me! Leave me alone!

ESTATE AGENT

(threateningly)

Where's Simon? What have you done with your twin?

MORLAND GREEN

I told you... he's dead!

ESTATE AGENT

Lets have a butchers hook, then, shall we?

MORLAND GREEN

(dismayed)

Butchers hook?

ESTATE AGENT

Rhyming slang. Butchers Hook - Look.

(pauses)

Open that patio door before I do something seriously egregious.

DOOR UNLOCK.

FOOTSTEPS.

ESTATE AGENT

(scowls)

Dig it up.

MORLAND GREEN

What?!

ESTATE AGENT

I said dig it up.

MORLAND GREEN

But I can't do that.

ESTATE AGENT

Why not?

MORLAND GREEN

I just can't, that's all.

ESTATE AGENT

Dig-it-up!

MORLAND GREEN

Me?!

ESTATE AGENT

Yes, you! Do it!

MORLAND GREEN

What if I refuse?

ESTATE AGENT

Then I shall just have to dig you up.

MORLAND GREEN

(dismayed)

But I'm not dead.

ESTATE AGENT

You will be.

MORLAND GREEN

For goodness sake!

ESTATE AGENT

(seethingly)

Dig it up.

MORLAND GREEN

This is insane.

(pauses)

I've decided to withdraw my application to sell. The valuation is no longer needed. You can leave.

ESTATE AGENT

DIG IT UP!

MORLAND GREEN

NO!

ESTATE AGENT

Right!

MORLAND GREEN

Right then!

ESTATE AGENT

I'll do it!

SHOVEL SCRAPING & PICKAXE DIGGING.

Long silence.

ESTATE AGENT

(gasps)

Oh Simon!

MORLAND GREEN

(bitterly)

Well, he deserved it. He wouldn't see reason.

ESTATE AGENT

(imploringly)

But, but why?

MORLAND GREEN

(measuredly)

Because he was going to kick me out, that's why. He disowned his own brother. I couldn't let him get away with that now, could I?

ESTATE AGENT

But we had plans. We were going to adopt an infant... after our civil partnership, of course.

MORLAND GREEN

Then he should've left when he had the chance. He could have walked out and left everything to me... oh, but he chose not to do that. His selfishness was too precious for him to do that.

(brainwave)

And hang on... How did you know I booked a valuation?

ESTATE AGENT

You used his phone to book me, you fool!

MORLAND GREEN

(flippantly)

So you really are an estate agent, then?

ESTATE AGENT

Yes! Your twin and I were involved in a deep relationship before you came along and ruined it.

MORLAND GREEN

Well, in that case you can join him!

SPLAT!

ESTATE AGENT

OUCH!!

SLUMP!

MORLAND GREEN

(aside)

I only wanted a valuation... not an interrogation.

FOOTSTEPS.

DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

THE END