

maintenance on lamp posts etc.) coming high round the side of the house. BILLY is in it, holding a hammer. It comes along the alley and up level with her window.

LV screams.

BILLY Just seeing if wires are all right.

She looks at him, amazed. Can't hear him through the window.

(louder) Just seeing if wires are all right!

She opens the window.

(shouting) Just seeing— *(He nearly knocks her over with the shout, quickly quietens.)* if wires are all right. *(He starts whistling. Presses a button, goes out to the side a bit, away from her view. Whistling as he looks at the wall, up and down)* Do you go out much?

LV No.

BILLY *whistling, trails off.*

BILLY There are no wires.

LV Eh?

BILLY I should be up a telegraph pole three streets away, but I come here.

He presses a button, returns to the window

They look at each other.

I don't know what to say now.

Pause. They look at each other.

I'm like this at work. Then when I do speak they all jump like I've dropped a brick in a bucket.

He smiles nervously.

She smiles a bit.

I'm Billy. Can I ask you your name?

LV LV.

BILLY Oh, does that stand for something?

LV Little Voice.

BILLY Oh, 'cause of your soft voice.

LV I think it's more 'cause no one could never hear me.

BILLY I can.

Pause.

Your mam's a live wire in't she? Bloody hell.

LV Ay.

BILLY I live with me grandad. It's quiet in our house, the clock
an all that.

LV Ours is a mad house.

BILLY Ay. *(He pauses.)* Hope you don't mind having a chat
this high up.

LV No, do you?

BILLY No. No. Safe as houses these. It goes higher than this,
this. See. *(He presses a button)*

The machine rises to above the roof height.

I like going up. Better view.

LV What view?

BILLY *(looking)* Backs. Backs. Works. Works. Backs. Works.
Backs. And the last chimney.

LV I can't even see that.

BILLY No, your view's blocked by the factory.

LV Me mam works there.

BILLY Oh ay. Maybe I can see her through one of the little windows.

LV You won't. She hardly ever goes in.

BILLY Oh.

He presses a button, comes down.

LV stands up. They face each other.

Little Voice, I don't know what's come over me. I've not been able to rest till I could come here again. I've only been like this once before. That's when I first saw Blackpool illuminations. *(pause)* Do you by any chance, like, by any chance, light displays at all LV? I only ask 'cause it's the one thing I can really talk about and I don't want to dry up on you, not now.

She smiles, confused. He takes this as permission to continue.

I've got me grandad's shed on the allotment and I've blacked out the windows. I... No, I'll say no more, it can be boring to the non-enthusiast.

LV No, go on.

BILLY You sure?

LV nods.

Inside that shed. Inside that shed. When I throw the switch, Little Voice, you wouldn't believe it. Light. Up the walls. Off the ceiling. Caught light, bent light, beams under beams of it, colours, colours coming up through colours you've never seen. Shades to make you happy, shades to make you sad, shades to make you— *(powerfully)* voom!

*The last word he sent out so powerfully in his excitement
LV falls back in surprise.*

Sorry!

LV No.

BILLY So sorry.

LV It's all right.

BILLY I don't know what it is, after the illuminations, that was it. I'd only play with torches and Christmas tree lights, I spent all me youth with the curtains closed, fascinated, helpless as a moth. *(pause)* Only thing is I'll never show. Me grandad says I'm like an artist painting masterpieces and keeping them under the stairs, he keeps pestering me to do the lights for his pensioners' do down the working man's club. I always say no. Somehow though, I don't know. After talking to you, telling you. Maybe I shall do it. I don't know. If I did would you come down?

LV I don't know. I don't go out.

BILLY Would you think about it? I could go and find out all the details. I really would be honoured. I really would be so... If you could just see them, LV. *(almost to himself)* I'd take from above, I'd bring down some heaven. Poor old sods they'd think they were getting a mirror ball and a couple of spotlights and they'd be flying when I'd done.

MARI comes out of her bedroom, stops on the landing.

MARI What's going on. You talking to yourself now gal!

LV *(to BILLY)* Sorry. I got go.

She hurriedly pulls the curtain across the open window.

MARI Is that you and your voices.

BILLY LV, the lights.

LV has gone inside.

BILLY presses a button, begins to disappear back round the corner.

MARI *(to herself)* Crazy.