

TRANSCRIPTS

Part 1.

Sue: Have you been to the new sports centre, Jim?

Jim: Yes, Sue. It's not cheap, but it's big and light.

Sue: Does bus eighteen go there?

Jim: That's right. It takes fifteen minutes. Don't get bus twenty-five because you have to walk a long way.

Sue: I like doing sport early in the morning. Is it open at seven?

Jim: Yes, you can go there from six, except on Sundays. Then it doesn't open until nine. The swimming pool has good hot showers; you have to bring your own towel but you can get soap there. They don't make you wear a swimming hat.

Sue: Do they sell things to eat there?

Jim: Only sandwiches; they don't sell drinks. I usually take some fruit.

Sue: I'd love to go with you next week. How about Wednesday?

Jim: Well, I work until late on Wednesday. I'm free on Saturday but it's too busy then. It'll have to be Thursday.

Sue: OK. See you then.

Part 2.

Edward: Have you ever been out on a boat in the middle of a calm lake? Felt the soft breeze in your hair and felt it gently rock your boat. It's difficult to think of anything more relaxing, isn't it? But for my guest tonight on Special People, Jane Walters, being becalmed on any stretch of water in a boat would bring rushing back memories of a terrifying experience she encountered last year in the Pacific Ocean. Jane, am I right in thinking my lake image did not comfort you at all?

Jane: Hi, Edward. No, it pains me still to think of myself out on the water in any type of situation similar to that which you described.

Edward: Could you tell our listeners what happened to you?

Jane: Well, basically, I had crossed the Pacific, west to east and was bound for Panama. A thousand miles west of Panama, my yacht "The Belle Trieste", hit what I can only assume was either a whale or a log floating in the water. It was four o'clock in the morning and I couldn't see a thing.

Edward: So the yacht was holed?

Jane: Oh yes, I started taking on water immediately. You just can't believe the utter panic that grips you in a situation like that. I realized I had about two to three minutes to get off the boat, onto my life raft with as much useful equipment as I could possibly manage. But I made a big mistake.

Edward: Oh?

Jane: I threw into the lifeboat a few extra supplies on top of what was always stored there. You know, the lifeboat is there already stocked up...as a timesaver. I threw in a few extra things but I forgot the most important thing which was my G.P.S. device.

Edward: Now, could you explain what G.P.S. is for our listeners, Jane?

Jane: Yeah, sure...now G.P.S. stands for global positioning system. It uses a network of satellites in orbit around the Earth to pinpoint the exact position of everybody who has a G.P.S. set. Down to a couple of meters, it can know where you are. So it's obviously a really useful tool for people such as sailors, trekkers and the like. If you have it with you!

Edward: I would have thought there would have been a device with G.P.S. in the life raft.

Jane: Ah, yes there was! But I had taken it out two days previously to check something and I had really stupidly forgotten to put it back. It was negligence of the highest order and it almost cost me my life. "The Belle Trieste" sank and took two fully operational G.P.S. devices with her to the bottom of the ocean. And I was left with an 8ft life raft and enough supplies for about a week...which I thought would suffice.

Edward: I can't imagine how terrifying an experience it would be out there, you know, in the middle of nowhere on a small boat. Didn't you feel absolutely powerless, Jane?

Jane: Err, not so much actually. Us sailors are well used to the rigors of being in the middle of nowhere as you put it. I was certainly concerned about the G.P.S. device...I thought things were going to be a lot trickier without that, but I can't say I lost my cool, lost control of the situation. I was pretty calm considering the great danger that I had just been thrust into.

Edward: Right, so you are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean in a boat little longer than the height of an NBA player. I heard you talk earlier before we came on air about the fact, the rather unfortunate fact, that you had sunk your yacht in the worst possible place in the ocean. I mean, for me, believe me, anywhere further than 50 yards from the beach is the WORST possible place, but I mean you are a sailor with, what?, ten, twenty years experience and yet you knew you had been dealt an unlucky hand.

Jane: I was slap bang in the middle of a huge area of ocean known as the Doldrums.

Edward: Sounds pretty depressing!

Jane: Well, exactly. That's where we get the expression from, you know, "to be in the doldrums". It's a vast expanse of sea around the equator where all the Earth's winds sort of cancel each other out and you can have day upon day of dead calm. The sea resembles a mirror and it can rain continuously for days too. It's a very depressing, draining place to be in. Sailors need wind and if that precious resource is suddenly cut off, you're left feeling totally powerless, becalmed in a frustrating situation you can't do anything about.

Edward: So that heightened the danger for you I take it?

Jane: Well, yes. I knew there were some shipping routes, some cargo shipping lanes way to the north of where I was. But we're talking some hundred and twenty miles. Which I admit, doesn't sound too far, but I was on the oceanic equivalent of a mill pond...and I wasn't about to paddle 120 miles in the seven days for which I had supplies. But, of course, I had to.

Edward: I always thought wind and wave were a sailor's worst enemies and yet you were in a gravely dangerous situation through the lack of these natural forces.

Jane: I was going to starve to death or die of thirst. I had 5 days' worth of food and 6 days' worth of water, if I rationed myself pretty severely. But even at that point, I wasn't too concerned as the Doldrums is famous for its rain too, as well as its lengthy calms and lack of wind. So I have to say, I told myself, "right Jane, at least you'll have enough to drink. It will be the ultimate diet. I'll lose, like, 30 pounds and be able to fit into my graduation dress again." You know, I tried to make light of it all.

Edward: And I suppose your mental state, your psychological fitness if we might call it that, it is crucial in a situation like that, wouldn't you say?

Jane: Oh, without a shadow of a doubt. You need to keep positive, keep thinking that a Panamanian tanker will be the next thing over the horizon, that some Costa Rican coast guard plane was about to fly over me. I would find myself hearing the phantom engines of planes for hours at a time. The mind plays pretty strange tricks on a person in a stressful situation and I was desperate...you know, desperately scanning skies for signs of planes that weren't there.

Edward: At what stage did you start to panic?

Jane: I have to say I began to lose hope after 11 days. My food was pretty much all used up and there had been half an hour of light rain in all that time...absolutely unheard of in the Doldrums. I was by then overdue into Panama by a few days and I knew the authorities would probably have been contacted and that maybe they were looking for me. But I knew I had drifted further south too and was by now perhaps one or two hundred miles from where "The Belle Trieste" had gone down...and ever further from those all important shipping lanes. Yeah, it was after about eleven days that I first began to contemplate the possibility, that hidden doubt that creeps up on you in the dark of the night, that fear that perhaps I wasn't going to get out of this after all.

Edward: I mean what did you do? Did you pray? Did you look back on your life? Did you play through your memories? I can't imagine the sheer dread that must have been coursing through your body at that time.

Jane: You know Edward what I did? I cried a lot. I cried at my own stupidity. I cried for the fact I was going to die in horrible circumstances because I had taken the G.P.S. device out of my life raft. I cried too for the fact that I could precious afford to be crying and wasting what little water I had.

Edward: And then, enter the story, an angel.....

Jane: My angel, my Angelo. Angelo Ortega, brilliant pilot with the Panamanian Coast Guard. He had been looking for me for two days and had returned to the area five times, flying outward spirals from my last known position. When he spotted me, and I was totally oblivious to the fact there was a plane flying a mere 2000ft above me, he had about 4 minutes of flying time left in his fuel tanks and was readying to turn for home. I must have been unconscious or delirious at the time.

Edward: It was a miracle, wasn't it?

Jane: It really was. If he hadn't seen my little boat at exactly that moment, he would have turned for home and another plane would have taken over the search in a different area of the ocean some 15 miles to the west. You know, they've shown me the grid of the area, the map of their search plan. My sector of the ocean, where I was found, they weren't going back to it for another good while, I would have been out there and heading southwards into a huge empty area of ocean that would have seen me clear of the shipping lanes for about three weeks. I would have died. It's as simple as that.

Edward: And they had flown over you once before, I heard?

Jane: I can't believe, there I was scanning the skies for planes that didn't exist and it's now emerged that a pilot flew over me at 6000ft on the seventh day.

Edward: So how were you finally rescued?

Jane: Angelo came down and flew over the life raft at about two hundred feet. Damn near scared the life out of me, I can tell you! I was beyond speechless with joy. It was like winning five lotteries at the same time. Then he flew away and I felt empty, even though I knew inside I was saved. A few hours later, a fishing boat from Costa Rica passed by and they took me on board.

Edward: What's next for you Jane?

Jane: I'm going back to Panama. Let's just say I've made a new friend who works for the Panama Coast Guard....

Edward: ...oh, really? Well this is an unexpected turn to the story.

Jane: Angelo is going to teach me how to fly. He says it's safer than sailing.

Edward: Jane Walters, thank you for your moving story this evening. We wish you all the very best in whatever the future holds for you.

Jane: Thanks, Edward. It's been a pleasure.

Part 3.

Community Center Evening Classes

Woman: Hello. Eastwood Community Centre.

Man: Oh, hello. My name's Andrew Dyson. I'm calling about the evening classes you offer.

Woman: OK, Mr Dyson, are there any classes in particular that you're interested in?

Man: Yes, you've got a class called 'Painting with watercolours, I believe.

Woman: That's right. It's a popular class so this term it'll be moving to the hall, so they've got more room.

Man: Right, I know it's on Tuesdays but what time exactly?

Woman: It was 6.30 last term, but let me just have a look at the details. OK, it'll be 7.30 this time, probably it suits more people.

Man: Well, it's my wife who's really interested and that'll be good for her because she's home from work by 7.15 - that'll give her just enough time to get there. Um, what does she need to bring?

Woman: OK, well paints are provided by the tutor, I know that. Um the information says she'll need just a jar for water and some pencils for drawing. There are also lots of aprons here, so she needn't worry what she's wearing. And the cost for four classes is £45, including paints, as I said.

Man: OK, now we're both quite keen on the Maori language class.

Woman: There are spaces on the next course, so you could join that.

Man: Oh, good. Which room will that be in?

Woman: When you come in through the entrance of the community centre building, you'll need to go straight up the stairs in front of you, all the way to the top. And it's the small room you'll find there.

Man: I see. All right, and let me just check when it's starting. I heard from someone that the July course has been delayed until August.

Woman: I'm afraid so. And we're halfway through the June course at the moment so there's not much point you taking that.

Man: I guess we'll have to wait then.

Woman: Well, when you do come, the tutor recommends bringing a small recorder with you just so you can listen again later, and er the cost for five classes is currently £40.

Man: OK, useful information to know. Um, there's one more class I'm interested in - that's the digital photography class.

Woman: Oh, I've taken that class myself. The tutor's very good. That'll be in room 9 and it's starting in two weeks time - in the evening - every Wednesday at 6 o'clock.

Man: Um, obviously I need to bring the camera with me. I suppose it'd be useful to have the instructions that go with the camera, too.

Woman: I'd say so. Um, some people bring along a lot of accessories like extra lenses, but there's really no need for this class. It's mainly focusing on composition really, and getting the most out of the basic camera.

Man: That's exactly what I need. And how much does it cost?

Woman: Let's see. For four classes, it's £35, but if you take eight, it works out as £55, so you're making a bit of a saving - £15 that is.

Man: I see

Man: OK, now just another question for the watercolours class; I've just remembered that my wife asked me to find out about the level - who's it for?

Woman: OK, well you don't have to be very skilled or anything like that. It's designed for beginners, actually. People who might see art as a hobby rather than as a professional opportunity.

Man: That sounds like my wife. And er, who do I talk to if I want to find out some more about the Maori language classes?

Woman: Probably best to talk to the tutor directly, He'll be in the office in about half an hour. His name's Jason Kahui. That's K-A-H-U-I.

Man: Good - I'll give him a call.

Woman: Oh, if you do decide to come to the photography class, don't forget to look at your camera battery and make sure it's charged. I know it sounds obvious but I've seen a few people suddenly find the camera's stopped working right in the middle of class.

Man: Yes, I can imagine it'd be easy to forget that. Oh that reminds me, in the final week of the photography course, is it right that there's a visit to a show in the local area? I work in the city, you see, so I might have to come home early for that one.

Woman: Yes. They'll decide the date once the class has started. Is there anything else I can