

# Stories for lipreading

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## THE BIRTHDAY GIFTS

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

Welcome to Stories for Lipreading. If you haven't used our website before, we suggest you look at our 'How to Use' page before you begin. We hope you enjoy this joke, which is called 'The Birthday Gifts'.

### The Birthday Gifts

Four brothers left home to make their way in the world.

They all became rich and successful. But they were very competitive and liked to outdo each other with the birthday gifts they gave their elderly mother, who lived a long way away. One year, just before their mother's birthday, the four brothers met up and started boasting about how generous they'd been with that year's birthday gifts, each one trying to outdo the others.

The first son said, 'Well, I gave Mum a house for her birthday this year.'

The second son said, 'I know. But I've had a £50,000 cinema installed in the house for her.'

The third son said, 'Well, yes, but I had my Mercedes dealer deliver a brand new car to her.'

The fourth son said, 'You know, what Mum *really* loves is reading the Bible and you know she can't read much anymore because she can't see very well. I met this vicar who told me about a parrot that can recite the entire Bible. It took experts 12 years to teach him and I have to donate £10,000 every year to the church for the next 20 years to buy the parrot, but it was worth every penny. Mum just has to name the chapter and verse and the parrot will recite it!'

Well, the other brothers were very impressed. Later that month, they all received thank you letters from their mother. This is what she wrote to the first brother:

'Dear Charles, the house you gave me is lovely. But it's too big and I only live in one room and now I have to clean all those other rooms as well. But thank you anyway.'

And to the second son, she wrote:

'Dear Michael, I'm sure the cinema you had installed is wonderful, but I've lost nearly all of my hearing and I'm almost blind so I'll never use it. But thank you anyway.'

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And to the third son, she wrote:

‘Dear William, I’m too old to travel and I have all my groceries delivered so I never use the Mercedes – but thank you anyway.’

And to the fourth son, she wrote:

‘Dearest Malcolm, you were the only one who thought to give me a really practical gift. Thank you. The chicken was delicious.’