

# Stories for Lipreading

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## [Where's Joe? by Michael Edwards - Setting the Scene](#)

This story is set in January 1950. Bob and his apprentice, Joe, are carrying out the annual boiler maintenance at a steam laundry in a small market town. This involves scrubbing out the inside of the huge steam chamber – a routine task which takes an alarming turn after a slightly boozy lunch break.

### Helpful Vocabulary and Phrases

Two labourers

The fire tubes

Clamped shut with a heavy pressure-proof cover

Bucket and brushes

Other tasks

Midday

Sealing up

Decided to wash them down with a bottle or three of the local stout

Hungry

Some sacks in the coal bunker

Nowhere to be seen

Lazy devil

Ladder

Hoist

Block and tackle

Tightened up the bolts to secure it

Talking-to

Lit

Rising

Resident boiler-man

Steamed up

Peered up at the sight-glasses

Been in yet

Clutching his cap in his hands

Bracing himself