**Act III: The Longhill Burn**

**Pg. 36**

Jimmy Johnson feels adrift,

Although he can’t quite pinpoint it.

On the surface, all is good,

Kicking ‘round the neighbourhood.

Sundays, Wednesdays – Five-a-Side,

Teaching kids to weave and dive;

Running ‘round the playing fields,

Wind-burnt cheeks, knees scuffed and peeled.

He picks up odd jobs here and there,

(It just depends what’s going spare)

And Janet says he’s a godsend,

while her bad back is on the mend.

Life ticks on and though it’s fine,

Jimmy knows he’s biding time.

He often dreams of childhood days,

The endless, stress-free summer haze…

But then, he always had some friends,

To knock about with at weekends.

Since Year Ten it’s always been,

Just him and Laura – lovelorn teens.

He always wanted her to have

As much as possible – that’s love –

But now- a twinge of self-pity -

She’s gone to university.

**Act III: The Longhill Burn**

**Pg. 38**

One evening passing by the green,

He sees a quite nostalgic scene.

Kids and adults play together,

A rounders game for sunny weather.

Jimmy watches, hand on chin,

Recalling happy times for him,

He’s lost deep in his reverie,

When someone asks if he wants tea.

A person he’s not seen till now

Takes his hand and gives a bow

“I’m from the Firesmiths. How’d’you do?

Stay a while and have a brew.”

He’s sees a few more dressed the same,

Joining with the rounders game.

He’s curiosity is raised:

“What brought you Firesmiths here today?”

“They say they’re going to build a fire,

a huge and beautiful Longhill pyre,

The like of which won’t be believed,

Out on the Eastmount Playing Fields.”

Jimmy lifts the mug and sips,

The tea’s like nectar on his lips.

He listens to the voices churn,

The Firesmiths talking of their Burn.

**Act III: The Longhill Burn**

**Pg. 40**

It’s been three days since Laura called,

And Jimmy’s feeling really bored.

His mother makes him take a walk,

And tries to get her son to talk.

But he’s not in the mood for chatter,

Doesn’t quite know what’s the matter,

When “Whoah!” his mother cries out, turning,

“That massive bonfire, ripe for burning!”

They see those Firemiths have been grafting,

Building, heaving, layering, crafting.

And now the neighbourhood’s alight,

Excited, for the Burn tonight.

The light is fading, sky is pink,

When Jimmy and his mum go in.

The Firesmiths gang have one more task,

“What gives you hope?” a helper asks.

Jimmy takes the piece of card,

Holds it tightly, thinking hard,

And somewhere deep within his heart,

He feels a tiny flicker start.

He writes of people brought together,

Longhill memories in all weathers –

Nosy Nigel, Sue the snob,

Christine from the corner shop,

Neighbours, friends, community,

The things that make your heart soar free.

He stands back then, in heat-edged dark,

To watch the bonfire in his park.

**Act III: The Longhill Burn**

**Pg. 42**

Jimmy can’t believe his eyes,

Behold the bonfire’s epic size!

It really is a mighty build,

Standing proud above Longhill.

The sun is setting, sky ablaze,

All around him faces gaze.

Waiting for the fire to start,

The flames to reach the central heart.

And as it burns, a crate is lifted

Offered to this pyre – gifted.

Hoisted up to reach the heart,

And burned until it falls apart.

Jimmy sees what’s happening,

That all their hopes are crammed within,

And burning them till black and curled,

Will send them out into the world.

The crowd is whooping, full of cheer,

And songs of Longhill reach his ears.

When the fireworks bang and crack,

A hand is placed on Jimmy’s back.

He turns. She meets his eyes and smiles,

“I wanted to come home – surprise!”

In his heart, a warmth alights,

As Laura’s smile beams through the night.

He doesn’t know if it’s for good,

But something’s lifted in his mood.

Their arms entwined, flames dancing high,

They watch the colours paint the sky.

**Act IV: Re-Rediffusion’s Voice Park**

**Pg. 46**

Agnes could make herself just disappear

From the littlest toe to the tip of her ear.

It was a habit she’d come to adopt,

Which ensured that her social life floundered and flopped.

It wasn’t because she was rude, not one bit,

But rather she found that her words wouldn’t fit;

Instead, she would make herself just so, so small,

That people who saw her, saw nothing at all.

One day, she was wandering round Walton Street,

Perusing the market for good deals on meat,

When suddenly up popped a man in her path,

A strange apparatus attached to his back.

“We’re collecting Hull’s voices!”, he asked if she’d do it,

“It won’t take a moment and there’s nothing to it.”

“I’ve nothing to say,” she cried, “nothing that matters.”

“Don’t worry!” he smiled “there’s no need to natter.”

“Don’t think about words – they can’t always be found.

Dig deep in your throat and have faith in your sounds.”

So, feeling much braver, determined to speak,

She faced the machine and let out a squeak.

Her voice was sucked in, turned to smoke in its case,

She was given a card with a date, time and place.

“When we’ve gathered enough voices, later this year,

Our Voice Park will open – come lend an ear!”

**Act IV: Re-Rediffusion’s Voice Park**

**Pg. 48**

Fast forward some months since that memorable talk,

And Agnes decides to go out for a walk.

The card has been buried, hidden, forgotten

And Agnes’ voice is not exercised often.

She heads out to Pickering Park on the bus,

The day on the verge of transforming to dusk.

She strolls through the park, book clutched to her chest,

Looking for somewhere deserted to rest,

Then, out of nowhere, she hears “aahs” and “oohs”.

The sounds seem to come from the kids’ paddling pool.

And something, yes something, is thick in the air.

She doesn’t know what it is, why, when or where.

Then all of a sudden, to her great surprise,

She feels like her body’s been magnetised;

The pull is insistent, and she’s not alone,

And the others who gather clutch cards of their own.

They follow the noises and lights, still pulsating:

Could this be the Voice Park they’d all been awaiting?

There stand two people, enveloped in sound,

Inviting them into this sonic playground.

“Good evening and welcome. Come and have fun!

Our colleagues will show you what needs to be done.”

They gesture behind them to pods of all sizes,

Spewing out different harmonic surprises.

**Act IV: Re-Rediffusion’s Voice Park**

**Pg. 50**

She doesn’t quite notice when dusk turns to night,

Entranced by the noises enthralled by the lights,

But gradually, watching the others at play,

She plucks up the nerve to hear what they say.

She’s up on her tiptoes and down on her knees,

Playing around with the sounds that she hears,

Keeping an ear out for one tiny squeak,

Pinched from the market on Walton Street.

She’s so busy working her way round the park,

She hasn’t quite realized it’s now pitch-dark.

But then Agnes spots him, the man from before,

Who extracted her voice by the discount meat stall.

“This is for you” he says, holding a bottle,

“This potion will make your voice work at full throttle;

It’s all of the voices we’ve gathered from Hull  
Distilled to an essence beyond powerful!”

“Just uncork the bottle and waft it towards

The place in your throat where you have vocal chords.

Just use a little – though it’s personal choice –

Perhaps you desire a huge, booming voice?”

Well, after that Agnes could hardly object

(Whilst doubting its highly-inflated effect).

She leaves in a rush with no more to discuss,

And she exits the Voice Park to catch the last bus.

**Act IV: Re-Rediffusion’s Voice Park**

**Pg 52**

It’s now three months later and deep in December –

Where is the Agnes who went unremembered?

And held her head low as she walked down the street,

Never daring to raise her eyes up from her feet?

The Voice Park provided a sharp understanding,

That prior to that, she’d been so undemanding.

The times that she’d wanted to roar, cheer and shout,

She’d sat quiet and uttered no words from her mouth.

So, without hesitation she popped out the cork –

Discarded in haste with the promise of talk.

She paused for a moment, the vial in her hand,

And rubbed every drop on her throat as she’d planned.

(Suffice to say, and you’ll know this if you’re wise,

When dealing with magic, pay heed to advice.

If Agnes had, well then, she wouldn’t have faced

A voice like a fog-horn for thirty-six days.)

But nevertheless, when her vocal chords quietened,

And the Labrador living next door was less frightened,

Agnes felt something shift deep down inside –

Her confidence slowly beginning to rise.

She took a great plunge and signed up for the year,

An extrovert, outgoing, Hull Volunteer.

Now, in her scandalous blue, she stands tall,

And speaking to others holds no fear at all.