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My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and their capital cities and every prime number up to 7,507.

Eight years ago, when I first met Siobhan, she showed me this picture

and I knew that it meant 'sad', which is what I felt when I found the dead dog.

Then she showed me this picture

and I knew that it meant 'happy', like when I'm reading about the Apollo space missions, or when I am still awake at three or four in the morning and I can walk up and down the street and pretend that I am the only person in the whole world.

Then she drew some other pictures

but I was unable to say what these meant.

I got Siobhan to draw lots of these faces and then write down next to them exactly what they meant. I kept the piece of paper in my pocket and took it out when I didn't understand what someone was saying. But it was very difficult to decide which of the diagrams was most like the face they were making because people's faces move very quickly.

When I told Siobhan that I was doing this, she got out a pencil and another piece of paper and said it probably made people feel very

and then she laughed. So I tore the original piece of paper up and threw it away. And Siobhan apologised. And now if I don't know what someone is saying I ask them what they mean or I walk away.

I find people confusing.

This is for two main reasons.

The first main reason is that people do a lot of talking without using any words. Siobhan says that if you raise one eyebrow it can mean lots of different things. It can mean 'I want to do sex with you' and it can also mean 'I think that what you just said was very stupid.'

Siobhan also says that if you close your mouth and breathe out loudly through your nose it can mean that you are relaxed, or that you are bored, or that you are angry and it all depends on how much air comes out of your nose and how fast and what shape your mouth is when you do it and how you are sitting and what you said just before and hundreds of other things which are too complicated to work out in a few seconds.

The second main reason is that people often talk using metaphors. These are examples of metaphors:

I laughed my socks off.
He was the apple of her eye.
They had a skeleton in the cupboard.
We had a real pig of a day.
The dog was stone dead.

The word metaphor means carrying something from one place to another, and it comes from the Greek words μετα (which

means *from one place to another*) and φερειν (which means to *carry*) and it is when you describe something by using a word for something that it isn't. This means that the word metaphor is a metaphor.

I think it should be called a lie because a pig is not like a day and people do not have skeletons in their cupboards. And when I try and make a picture of the phrase in my head it just confuses me because imagining an apple in someone's eye doesn't have anything to do with liking someone a lot and it makes you forget what the person was talking about.

My name is a metaphor. It means *carrying Christ* and it comes from the Greek words Χριστος (which means *Jesus Christ*) and φερειν and it was the name given to St Christopher because he carried Jesus Christ across a river.

This makes you wonder what he was called before he carried Christ across the river. But he wasn't called anything because this is an apocryphal story which means that it is a lie, too.

Mother used to say that it meant Christopher was a nice name because it was a story about being kind and helpful, but I do not want my name to mean a story about being kind and helpful. I want my name to mean me.