

EEN LEEG EILAND - AN EMPTY ISLAND

Speaker ferry 1: Good morning; the time is now 8 am and we expect to arrive in Newcastle at 10:15 Central European time.

Kees: Look at that sign, the north, that's where we're going.

VO (voice over): Five years ago, it was April and cold, Kees and I did bird research on the Shetland Islands. During those weeks we traveled to all the islands there were, except one, which was too far away and inaccessible. That was Foula. Britain's most remote inhabited island.

Speaker ferry 2: Good afternoon ladies and gentleman, the weather conditions just light winds here in Aberdeen at the minute. As we make our way further north.

VO ... Since I was born, the world's population has almost tripled. And where it used to be quiet, it is now busy. With Foula the reverse is the case. For centuries it was populated by about 150 people, but according to Google, only 31 live there today. That sounds like paradise to me because I love emptiness and islands.

Speaker ferry 2: Arrival time should be on schedule at 07:30 in Lerwick tomorrow morning.

VO: So, when we can finally get a summer off, my husband Kees and I will go to Foula. Kees Camphuysen is a marine biologist specialized in seabirds and I am Threes Anna, writer.

T: Look Shetland Mainland, we're almost there!

K: Nice weather.

T: Well with this wind we can probably cross.

K: I hope so.

Car sound.

T: Look Kees, see you there.

K: Foula!

T: Way off in the distance, on the horizon, hard to see because it's all hazy.

K: I hadn't even seen it yet.

T: No, that's why I said, stop, stop, stop, there lies Foula.

K: and a beautiful calm sea towards it.

T: I think when we call later, they will say there is sailing.

VO: after 2.5 days of traveling, we are almost there. And I'm getting more and more curious about those 31 people on that remote island

Sound mail boat.

T: a very small boat where our stuff is now loaded from the car. Its 4 people crew. And we with lots of boxes and boxes full of food and a bicycle!

Skipper: You guys wanna jump on board. Come this way.

T: All cardboard boxes with messages with a name on it are lifted on board.

Sailor: Yah we need to eat.

VO: We also have to eat, says the female sailor, pointing to all the boxes in the supermarket.

VO: And then we sail out into the Atlantic Ocean. Full of anticipation. Would life on Foula be something for me? Is it really as fantastic as I imagine it to be? That empty island there on the horizon that is 5 kilometers long, 4 kilometers wide, and has hills that are 400 meters high.

Ship's horn.

T: suddenly there is a pier. And there are some houses. An old house and a new house. And I see someone walking on the pier. And there's nothing else here.

Unload crew.

VO: With a crane all our boxes and bags and my bicycle are hoisted off board.

T: Luggage and food.

VO: And while Kees loads all the luggage into our landlord's car, I start cycling.

Bird Sounds. Bicycle brakes.

T: Well, there you go as a Dutch cyclist, I thought I was in good shape! *Panting.* But none of it, it's a steep hill that I have to climb. You have to imagine it's all grass. There is no tree. There is only one road on the island that runs from south to north. Well road is a big word, more like a path, a paved path. Most houses here are made of natural stone, of boulders, gray round boulders, stacked, but most of the structures are ruins. And you see more modern houses, but all the houses are very far from each other, there is no village, they are just loose places surrounded by car wrecks. And you can also see those wrecks along the side of the road, some completely sunk into the earth. And there's nothing else. Nothing at all. There is no shop, there is no hotel, nothing at all. Yes, sheep there are and ponies. *Leaf sheep.*

VO: It had taken me a long time to find a house on Foula. And via, via, via, we had managed to rent the house of someone's deceased mother.

T: And I'm going now, if I go over that hill, I'm gonna walk and will see the house we're going to.

Ocean sound.

T: There's the house. A low little white house. And if you keep walking you are in the ocean.

To knock.

T: Oh, door is closed. The house seemed white but is fairly weathered. Well just walk around because it's a big mud mess around it. Yes, there is an old stove and there is an old pan next to it, and a broken toilet. What a mess. And there is another sheep grazing in the yard. *Bleat.*

VO: It takes a long time before Kees finally arrives with all the stuff. But when he arrives, we discover that the door is not locked but jammed. And because the weather is usually bad here, but not today, we decide to put all our stuff in the house first and then climb up. Because we think of the words of David Attenborough who said that you didn't have to go to East Africa to see real natural beauty. Go to Foula and see just an amazing... ..amazing site of the wealth and glory of wild life.

T: Wow, wow. Gosh, we're suddenly here at a very large cove, with a cliff with a kind of hole at the bottom, it looks like a fairytale, all kinds of birds that nest there. *Bird sounds.* These are the highest cliffs in Britain. Foula is actually a kind of mountain that has been cut off on one side with a knife. And cliffs steeply down into the ocean. It's very high. They say that if you throw a stone down it takes 11 seconds for it to hit the sea. 1- 2 -3 -4 etc. 11. Pats. That high. God damn, nice isn't it?

K: Beautiful hey.

T: Yes, really crazy.

VO: Back at the house we had fallen asleep tired and overwhelmed by nature, but when we woke up it was drizzling and gray. Normal summer weather here. So, when Kees goes to explore nature a little later, I get on my bike curious about how people live here. How?

Bicycle sound.

K: I haven't seen a living soul. No one anywhere. Yes, I have seen you cycling but for the rest I have not seen a person and I have walked all the island around, I have seen all the houses, I have not even seen anyone behind the windows. I just haven't seen anyone.

T: No no.

K: Have you seen people?

T: Yes, I have seen people.

VO: I had cycled to the end of the road and seen three people. Two men sheltering behind a wall. And someone further down the field. I went for that.

Soggy footsteps.

T: Uh that was really deep. Damn.

F: You got your leg wet!

T: I went deep in, stupid me.

F: Mmm.

VO: This is Francis, an old woman in a worn-out oilskin suit, barefoot in cut-off rubber boots, turning pieces of peat.

T: Did you cut them yourself?

F: Yes.

VO: Our conversation is about her peat.

T: How long it takes before it is dry like this.

F: Oh, it all depends on the weather. Two months if you're lucky.

VO: How you dry it and when and for how long.

F: If the weather is bad leave it till May.

T: Is this your peat area?

F: Yes.

VO: On the swampy bottom are blocks of peat that she has cut herself and is now carefully turning over.

T: So, nobody else will cut here peat?

F: Mmm.

VO: I understand she lives alone.

T: Is it difficult Francis, that you have to do everything alone?

VO: Sometimes, she says, but I like to be by myself.

F: I like living on my own.

VO: Then I can do what I like.

F: I can please myself.

VO: And then suddenly she picks up two heavy plastic bags full of peat and swings them over her shoulder.

T: Shall I carry one too? She walks ahead of me completely bent over and doesn't say anything more.

Door open wind, sounds stove and coal.

K: Is there anything going on in there?

T: Sigh. Yes. It does burn, I just closed it now, because I thought it would draw better.

VO: we also have a stove, only we don't burn peat but coal.

K: Add coal then?

T: Yes, I would.

VO: And we don't have to cook on it because in addition to the stove, our house also has a brand-new butane gas stove.

Door opens, wind and rain.

VO: I'm impressed with old Francis, who doesn't seem to need anyone. Is only she like that? Or is that the basis for living here? I look for other islanders and knock on the door of the school. The largest building on the island, once built with EU money.

School bell + school yard.

Teacher: so, I am Beverly McPherson. I am the only teacher in Foula primary school.

T: What is Foula to you?

Beverly: Foula is (laughs) 60 degrees north. And if you go directly west from here, your next landfall will be Canada. If you go directly north from here, your next landfall will be the North Pole. And then we're 16 miles of chaotic sea between us and the closest point on mainland Shetland.

VO: She tells how remote it is.

B: ha ha ha ha, but yeah what we have today is very typical. Rain. But we also get mist, which is soaked you. That would be 100% humidity. You're just literally walking in wet.

VO: and how much it rains.

B: Life on Foula; it dictates to you. The winds. The flans. And everyone in Foula can tell you a story of someone who was knocked off their feet by the flans.

VO: and that the wind blows so hard that sooner or later everyone will be blown over. Beverly also tells me that she has lived here without her husband for almost three years. And says that 13 houses are currently occupied. Not by 31 but by only 28 people. Of which four are 80+, and six children. And all these people live here permanently, except for herself (the school teacher) and the nurse. I tell her I find it hard to find people here.

B: Visiting people at home just isn't something that's done here.

VO: Because no one knocks on a door just like that, people like to be on their own here.

B: You have to be a certain kind of person to enjoy this. You have to like your own company and you have to be comfortable when you go through days without seeing anyone. You have to be quite self-sufficient.

VO: because you have to be self-sufficient and well organized because there is nothing everything comes by mail.

B: You have to really prepare in advance.

VO: And then she says something that old Francis had said to me.

B: I quite like just being on my own, which is quite nice. Just pleasing me self what I do.

Sounds Lynn, 'come on babies', shake feed sheep.

VO: The next day I meet a young woman with her dog on the side of the road. She smiles a lot and is missing a front tooth. She is shearing her sheep where she keeps pulling an animal between her knees and then starts cutting it.

Lynn: But invariably we always get the: "don't you get lonely?", I'm like: no.

VO: I seem to ask the same question as everyone else, namely whether she can handle the loneliness.

L: And always the: "How do you do things? You can't go to the shop? So how do you get your shopping?"

VO: How do we order?

L: Just like anyone else.

VO: via the Internet.

L: And they always ask, what is the community, you all friends with each other.

VO: And this small community how does that work?

L: We literary just like any other community, anywhere else, there is nothing special of the people here.

VO: We are no different.

L: We are just people.

Dog panting and shearing sheep.

Birds.

VO: And there are more things about this isolated island life that don't turn out as I thought.

Gate, and walk in grass.

T: Everything is really at such a slow pace here, stress! I don't think anyone here is stressed.

B: That's interesting because I think there is stress.

VO: Says Beverly, the school teacher.

B: The bank balance.

VO: Money.

B: Where is my next meal coming from.

VO: To eat.

B: Stresses of things like can the boats go.

VO: The sea.

B: Stresses of things like the fact that the climate does affect.

VO: The climate.

B: Or... bird flu.

VO: bird flu. Because Foula means bird island and has been known for centuries as the paradise of wild seabirds. And that's why Kees wanted to come here. But upon arrival on the island, it turns out that bird flu has broken out, which is spreading faster and faster around the world. And so the scientist in him emerges and he starts researching the disease.

When I get on my bike looking for people. He goes into the swampy hills, looking for dead birds.

K: I immediately came across all these great skuas. Everywhere.

VO: a large brown gull of prey.

K: look. I counted 52, documented.

VO: That means photographing the animal, recording the GPS coordinates, clipping the wing tips as proof that you counted the bird and disinfecting everything.

K: At one point I disappeared into the swamp so I couldn't do it anymore. So I had to leave 12 because I went into the ground up to my knees. It's fairly depressing to walk these grounds.

VO: This island consists mainly of swampy peat bogs, small lakes and streams that appear everywhere after a rain shower. The world here belongs to the birds and the sheep, you don't see any people here. For there are no paths except the one road. At most the sheep paths that are really made by sheep. Walking here is tough. But because I want to get to know the island better, I decide to go up into the field with Kees for a day.

T: I can imagine you got a little depressed yesterday when you found so much.

K: Yes.

T: Look there's another one.

K: Number 74. T: 74 dead great hunters.

T: What is the area of the great skuas, how are they distributed?

K: What do you mean?

T: Well, where do they live?

K: Here.

T: Yes! And where else in the world.

K: Almost nowhere. Largest colony in the world.

T: Do you have another?

K: I think there's another one over there.

T: Oh, don't touch with your hands Kees!

Cutting sound.

K: don't exaggerate.

T: Well, yes.

K: Just don't make a fuss, I'm very hygienic, so don't exaggerate.

T: Kees, here's another one!! Oh, you too!! I will stay here, there are just so many. See corpses everywhere. *Bird*. Yes, was that your husband? Hey bird?

T: Kees continues walking, I walk towards him, I see 2 lying down again, both are lying dead, 3, no 4, oh crazy, 5, my gosh. Can't believe it, see more, and another and another further on it's horrible, horrible. Still a lot to go, one more here, another there, two more there, two more there, and one more behind that.

K; I do a round, as efficiently as possible.

T: yes, unbelievable so much.

K: You probably haven't seen that yet?

T: I had already seen that one, oh no, gosh, another one!! Oh dear.

K: I can't run faster than I already do.

T: no I'm not saying you have to go faster either, I just want us not to miss one. I actually want to miss them all. There are simply too many.

K: Yes, this is a fatal blow for such an animal.

Birds.

And then along the way I meet Sheila, she's the island's bird expert.

S: The whole of Foula was covered with seabirds, hundred's, thousands. Was like you had a ceiling of birds instead of just having empty sky.

VO: Ha! A ceiling of birds instead of an empty sky. Her gaze slips away for a moment, then she continues to feed her ponies. And she tells me that the bird flu has major consequences for the island.

S: Yes, it is destroying our economy.

T: But how?

S: Tourists! Yes, it's the seabirds the tourists want to see.

VO: I never realized that the seabirds were part of their economy, especially since I haven't seen a tourist since I've been there. Until suddenly. On a morning.

T: Yes, I just arrived by bike and I am now in the harbor. And in front of the port is a cruise ship. And now dingies coming off, with all people in a kind of arctic suits and life jackets. They land here.

Sounds of arrival tourists on the pier.

T: Can I ask you something?

Tourist: Yes of course.

T: Do you know where you are?

Tourist: I forgot the name, that's embarrassing. ...Good question. Ahh...Begins with an F, felli, fouli, fella.

B: yes, absolutely we get cruise ships here and people don't know where they are.

VO: says Beverly the school teacher.

B: Or where they come from or where they are going.

Shiela: They don't know which island there're on, they forget the name, because it is mainly elderly people.

VO: Says Sheila about the visitors to her island.

Tourist: Which Island? Foula. Is it Foula.

T: And what are you expecting to see this morning.

Tourists: Birds, birds, wonderful birds, seabirds. Well, we were promised birds.

VO: but that special bird they want to see is sick or dead. So the tourists are directed to the seals, the war memorial and the peat cutting.

T: What kind of trip is this?

Tourist: National Geographic, the main interest is nature, National Geographic.

Horn.

VO: this year 4 ships have passed by. They have an average of 200 passengers and come ashore for 3 hours.

Tourist: Yes, fortunately for the people, that they can earn a little money from the tourists again.

VO: Earn now! The ships remain at sea and therefore do not pay mooring fees, and it depends very much on the organization of a cruise whether the islanders get paid, usually on the basis of a voluntary tip. But the islanders come up with something for that. Like Fran. She has a box full of homemade souvenirs that she puts on the harbor when the tourists come back from their walk.

Fran and tourists: Here's the shop! Tourists talk about where the shop is and they all say they have no money. No credit card. 4 pounds! 2 pounds!

VO: I see a lot of islanders in the harbor that morning. All of them have come out to show groups of tourists around. Because slowly it becomes clear to me that everyone, except the school teacher and the nurse, can only survive by working several jobs. Which means, especially in the summer, they are always busy. In a barn, or along the road like Lynn the sheep shearer.

T: So how many jobs do you have?

L: The boat.

VO: Sailor on the mail boat.

L: fire brigade.

VO: The fire department.

L: The electricity.

T: What you do with the electricity?

L: Just keep it running. Do daily maintenance checks, if the power goes off, go see if I can press a couple of buttons and get it back on.

VO: For centuries this island was self-sufficient and I thought on such a remote island, it still is. But that turns out not to be true, it is easier to buy things than to grow or make them. But then you need to have some luck with the weather.

Lyn: The most frustrating thing is if the boat has not been in ages.

VO: Because in the winter the mail boat can sometimes not sail for weeks.

L: And I've been short on hay and I come to the point.

VO: Too short hay and then she only gives the animals half every day, so that there is at least something.

L: Because my animals are gonna starve otherwise, so it is a bit of a curse to rely on hay.

VO: It's awful to be so dependent. And she's not the only one, because uh...

Skipper M: pretty much every person on Foula, with the exception of the teacher and the nurse, has some sheep and so it is part of everybody's lives.

VO: Everyone has sheep says the skipper of the mail boat.

T: And what does that yield?

Robert: You don't make very much per sheep at the market, maybe like 5 pounds.

L: And then the next year after, last year, 2 pounds was a good price.

VO: 2 pounds, that wasn't even enough to pay for the ear tags or the passage.

T: but Lynn how can you make a living?

L: if I didn't work on the boat then I would struggle financially.

VO: And she's not the only one. R: we slaughter our own sheep for eating, it is much better value just to eat them yourself.

Sheep bleat.

Beverly: So, lots of people on this island have multiple jobs. But by and large, the women, very much, croft their land, in and around their houses.

VO: What Beverly the school teacher means here is that in addition to all the jobs, the women also take care of the vegetable garden. But I had just noticed that there were very few vegetable gardens. So, I ask Lynn if she has a vegetable garden.

L: No, if it's not sheep, I can't grow it. laughs.

T: Do you eat vegetables or not at all?

L: Uhm when I can buy them from the shop.

VO: And that's basically what I see. Every time the mail boat arrives, all the boxes from the supermarket are unloaded, which makes remote life here quite vulnerable, but we are doing it now too. Send an email with your shopping list and then hope that the weather stays calm so you don't have to wait longer than a week. So, we no longer only eat canned vegetables, but also fresh vegetables.

Stove

Kees: That ash just won't fall down. Yes, I don't know if I have to take all those coals out again.

T: Hey?

K: Remove coals first.

T: Are they still warm?

K: Well, I don't see anything red. Sigh.

VO: Because without a heater, no hot water.

Blowing and heater is burning.

VO: and when the stove finally worked again. So much dust was in the room that my laptop got stuck.

Sound stuck laptop.

VO: I asked around if there was anyone on the island who could help me. Well, nobody. I also received no good tips via Twitter and Instagram. And suddenly I remembered an old trick I had once learned in India. If your laptop jams, grab the vacuum cleaner.

Vacuum cleaner.

K: You are used to asking somebody else.

T: I'm used to call the repair shop.

Kenn: yeah, no we don't call each other up to fix the problem, no.

Beverly: I have 3 computers.

VO: The teacher has 3 computers.

B: Because every time one breaks down, I get my husband to send me another one.

VO: You have to come up with a solution yourself and that applies to everything here.

Broken motor running.

Skipper M: There have been so many times in the past.

VO: Says the skipper of the mail boat.

M: When you find yourself in a difficult situation something is broken and there is no shop to buy a kind of replacement part for, so you get ingenuitive, and you try and get creative.

VO: And those cars? All those broken cars what about that?

T: Because people recycle the cars. I've seen your car there is like a little barn.

VO: Your bus became a shed.

T: With hay in it, there's the red car.

M: Okay. Yeah yeah.

T: Donna's car became a greenhouse. She is planting tomatoes in it.

M: The reality is that you don't need to have the MOT.

VO: You don't need an MOT here.

M: So, there is an endless supply of very cheap cars. People think that if you keep it, you have spare parts. The truth is you don't. That's the truth. This is a kind of an island mentality, that you struggle so hard to get something to come here, that you maybe not so keen to let it leave again, maybe it's gonna be useful. None of it works and it is all broken. Ha-ha-ha-ha. But they still got it!

VO: Yes, you never know what you need it for, so everyone keeps everything.

Beverly: We've got to remember that the people who do jobs on the island are often not professionals in that field.

VO: And often don't have the right materials or tools.

B: So, a lot of what you see is, I hate to use the word botched.

VO: shoddy work.

B: but that's what it is.

VO: But there is no choice, they have to do everything themselves. Also their energy supply.

Skipper M: we are not connected to the national network; we have to produce our own electricity.

VO: And that is done with 3 small windmills, a large solar panel and a small hydro-electric power station.

M: Working from a loch on the hill. Because we have this renewable electricity.

T: But the hydro is broken now?

VO: But that hydroelectric plant hasn't been working for a while.

M: Uhm yeah, it has some technical problems, it is not operating at the moment. That's correct. That is one of the things that need to be fixed.

VO: So, I'm not going to also say that one of the windmills has no blades. And that sustainable energy can be disputed because everyone burns coal and peat.

R: yeah, we use coal sometimes, it's just more expensive, so if we can we use peat. And peat smells nicer as well.

Sound Heater.

K: sigh.

T: Everything is complicated, everything is, everything takes effort to get it done, nothing is easy, really nothing. Keeping a house dry is not easy, heating a house is not easy. Until two years ago, the electricity went out every day on the island.

K: God.

T: The water is complicated. They have their own water, but that needs to be purified, and chlorine passes through it to make it drinkable. Well, everything is an effort.

VO: I'm starting to wonder if I could even live here. Like the old Francis who is not connected to the electricity and the water.

T: And then I saw her a little further away so I put down my bike, I climbed over the fence. But it's all so muddy there, I sank to above my knee again. What was she doing! She was sitting there filling bottles of water. At the stream.

Francis: Nobody else drinks this water, public water is it.

VO: They put chlorine in it, she says, that's poison!

F: They put it in to poison anything in the water and then expect it is safe for us.

T: But now with the bird flu. Then I said, yes, but Francis, you can't, there's bird flu in the water.

F: Oh, I always boil it.

K: Well, if she cooks it, I think it will be fine, but it kind of depends on where she taps it.

T: Well, she taps it just below the loch where most of the dead lay.

K: Jesus.

VO: Also the teacher has to take care of herself.

Beverly: you know, when I when I'm struggling to try and mend a gate.

VO: If I struggle with a broken gate.

B: You know, nobody's going to stop and help me, you know, just get on with it. Just, you know.

Kenn: aha we don't go and bother each other with too much small stuff, because we are all... you know.

VO: even a house, you build it yourself.

Sheila: because nobody is going to do it for you on an island like Foula, remote island, you had to do it all yourself, and if you don't, you not manage. You can't. I mean everybody here has to do that, they always had to do that.

VO: And so it has been for centuries.

S: Right from the first people ever came here they had to do everything themselves.

Wind.

VO: I ask old Francis if she was ever afraid. For example, from the wind.

F: Umm yes. The roof might go, the windows might go.

T: So, you repair your own house too?

F: No, it falls into disrepair.

Wood creaks.

VO: In the meantime, I finally also want to speak to the nurse, but she is never at home. Until I hear she's gone. In protest.

Beverly: So instead of having a nurse who's resident on the island.

VO: Do they want to train the islanders to provide first aid.

B: Head office don't think you need to have a nurse. If you can fly a nurse or a doctor in.

Sound plane.

VO: Yes, there is a landing strip on the island. Where a tiny plane can land. But almost all the flights I tried to record were canceled because of the fog or too strong winds. It's like the mail boat, you never know when it's going. And so a dentist visit or a funeral can sometimes take 2 or 3 weeks. And that's the same for someone to come to the island.

S: it is very expensive to have people here.

VO: It costs more.

S: It costs more per person. It costs more per child to educate them at the school here, then it would in a big school. The government.

VO: If it were up to the government, we wouldn't be here.

S: So, they don't do anything that might encourage people.

VO: I also ask the school teacher.

B: Yes! We are a forgotten island. We're a neglected island. There's no doubt about it, in many, many ways.

VO: And the future?

B: Oh gully! The future of Foula is entirely dependent on political will and funding.

VO: Because without government support, they cannot survive here, she says.

S: No!

VO: Sheila shakes her head hard.

S: We are like limpets, the harder you knock us, the stronger we cling onto the rocks.

VO: We are like sea snails, the more you tug at us, the harder we hold on.

Ocean.

Sound cork.

VO: And then just like one night, Kenn, our landlord, comes by with a bottle of whiskey to loosen his

own tongue.

T+K: Cheers!

Kenn: Sigh. You know. I think that the kind of person you need to be to live here. They don't live here because they want to be ruled.

VO: On the contrary, people live here because they want to be their own boss.

Kenn: Not to have somebody tell them what to do. That would completely ruin the place. You know. We are just free to do what you wanna do, when you wanna do it. Really.

VO: He told me earlier that he had come back to Foula, him and his family during the corona crisis.

Kenn: Yeah, that's right.

T: Why?

K: I felt that the future of the world was uncertain. I mean Foula is an isolated island, and if there is some terrible pandemic sweeping the world.

VO: Then it's safe here.

K: Everybody, the whole community we are not at any doubt that we will continue. That's our strength.

Islanders sing together.

VO: Our house is usually used for the Tune, singing together. So, when we say they are welcome, they don't wait and our house fills up. We sing and drink until the next morning. It is a nice farewell because we are going back to the world full of people. In my heart I take the emptiness with me, because as much as I would like to, I don't think I can survive on this barren mountain in the middle of the ocean. But I will miss these strong loners. And the next setback, I'll think of Beverly's words...Just get on with it!

Children also sing.

Bobby: Let's role of to the bloody huys.

Laugh.

Kenn: Thank you very much for the hospitality cooks.

K: Thank you.

T: You were very welcome.

T: And the most exciting thing is, of course, whether the stove is still on? Yes! Well done.