Folklore is a traditional story of a community passed through generations by word of mouth. Failure is a common theme in these types of stories. People like to bond over each other’s disasters. This is one of those stories.

There are so many expressions to do with silence. Most of them negative: wall of silence; deafening silence; stunned silence; dead silence.

So how did I end up on stage in my underwear, drowning in a sea of silence?

To find the answer to this question, I’ve been digging around [trying very hard to find information] into old Facebook conversations. One conversation pinpointed [discover the answer] the birth of Chimponobo. The conversation happened after I watched a former colleague perform a musical comedy gig [a public performance]. Let me read the message to you:

“Hi Sophie great show! Singing, comedy you can do it all. You inspired me to write a show. Of course I can’t sing and I have no musical talent it will be called Chimponobo!”

And she said:

“Hehehe. I really hope you start writing Damien if I can do it anyone can. Well not anyone, but you have a vague comic appeal [sort of funny] . Yes do it!”.

And upon those two simple words ‘do it’ Chimponobo was born. But maybe I should have looked up the meaning of the word ‘vague’ before getting too excited about her advice.

I had visions [I could see the future] of Chimponobo taking the comedy world by storm [to be very popular]. I took a comedy course. I got one of my best friends to be the other half of Chimponobo: The bonobo bit, I wanted to be the chimpanzee. I reworked the script over and over again. We practiced it over and over again. Until I felt we had a masterpiece.

The shows were booked and my comedy teacher gave me one last piece of advice and he said:

“Remember they think they’ve seen it all but they haven’t seen you yet. Slay’em! [Slay them means to amuse someone a lot]”

We definitely got slayed.

Ahhh Chimponobo... Mmm, well that was interesting.

So, I think you’re still sad about it and I’m sorry.
Brendan
Should I be remembering what this is?

Kristin
Chimponobo was when you were launching [starting] your career in comedy.

Brendan
Yeah yeah I do. It was your Melbourne comedy show.

Bronwyn
You worked very hard on the script. I know you tried to rehearse [practice for a show] but I think we kept like getting drunk instead of rehearsing. Whoops. Anyway...

Kristin
You wore a strange mask and we did a comedy show and we crashed and burned [fail quickly in a dramatic way] incredibly badly and I played guitar incredibly badly.

Bronwyn
It was just a terrible crowd. It wasn’t that you guys weren’t funny.

Brendan
I remember seeing your butt [slang for bottom]!

Bronwyn
How could you not think this is funny? This is very cool.

Brendan
I thought it was quite good actually. I enjoyed how weird it was but I do remember the room were kind of sitting there after your performance in a state of shock [very surprised by something unexpected]. Like people were just like I don’t know what to do.

Kristin
Oh no that’s right the compere [someone who introduces a show] literally didn’t diss anyone else [diss is to say bad things about someone while literally makes it stronger] who performed that day except for us, to say:

“Yeah and they practiced that.”

Bronwyn
I just, I don’t know maybe you just needed a little bit more rehearsal. Maybe the world just wasn’t ready for Chimponobo. Maybe it was just too controversial. Maybe people, I don’t know, they just didn’t have their minds open [willing to accept new and different things] to your weird comedy.

Brendan
But I liked it I kind of thought it was like weird, quirky humor [unusual in an interesting way].

Kristin
And then there was like one random [a person you don’t know] afterwards said “I thought you were funny.” And then we decided to try to hang our hats on that [rely on what that one person said believe about our comedy show] and it didn’t work. We realised we were shit [slang for bad].

Bronwyn
Umm and I hope that Chimponobo.. and at least I hope the mask lives on.
Kristin
I regret nothing.

Act 4
Damien Outro
That wasn't quite the end of the story. My dreams of comedy stardom were shattered forever [I realised I wasn't going to be a comedy star]. We drank some beer to drown our sorrows [drink a lot of alcohol to make you feel better after a bad experience] and I cancelled the next gig straightaway [right then]. Chimponobo never performed again or will they?

Damien

So, should Chimponobo be reborn [perform again]? I'll leave it up to you.

You can either vote in the poll in this YouTube video or head over [go to] to English Riot and you can read the original Chimponobo script and then leave a comment saying either yes or no.

This time there'll be no silence.

Hmm come on! Ahhh...

Thank you.

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**Speaking Task**

Record yourself telling what happened in my story or tell your own failure story (try using some of the expressions below to structure your story).

Then listen to your recording and find five ways you could improve on it and then record yourself again. Language learning is all about repetition!

**Story Telling Expressions**

Starting a Story
We thought it was going to be like any other.... + time expression: day, night, weekend, Christmas [to lead in to something that was unexpected]

So, this was something that happened....

So, I've only heard this story I wasn't actually there. [start a story where you weren't there]

Linking Ideas
So, they... And, there was... And at that point in time... Then somebody... .....by that time... And then... And... So...

Ending a Story
And I think that's the end of the story.

I think there's nothing else to it.

That was kind of what happened.
## Authentic English Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic English</th>
<th>Listening Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘how it all went down’</td>
<td><strong>Slang:</strong> It means what happened but I’ve never heard this expression before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘So it was a billboard about.. across the road from our house’</td>
<td><strong>False Start:</strong> The speaker started to say ‘about’ but then changed to ‘across’ which made it hard to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘But I’ve only heard the stories of this mission to the top of the gunshop’</td>
<td><strong>Weak Forms &amp; Connected Speech:</strong> Used weak form of ‘to’ /tə/ and ‘top of’ connected up /to pav/ making it harder to understand.</td>
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</tbody>
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