

# I FORGOT MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW

by

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Fourth draft

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*"To restore the human subject at the centre - the suffering, afflicted, fighting, human subject - we must deepen a case history to a narrative or tale..."*

from *"The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat"*  
by Oliver Sacks

*"... But if we write the history of this period of blood and tears - and I firmly believe we will - who will believe us? Nobody will want to believe us, because our disaster is the disaster of the entire civilized world..."*

from *"The Holocaust Kingdom"*  
by Alexander Donat

## **CHARACTERS:**

HANNAH                      about 30.

GORMAN                     about 40.

EMMA BERGMAN            about 45.

FRANK SMITH                about 50.

## **SETTING:**

The action takes place in 1970.

The tapes of Emma's voice heard between the scenes date from some time later.

Emma's surgery has a desk and at least two chairs.

The garden has a park bench.

EMMA            *(off)* Ahem. "Memory and Imagination", by doctor Emma Bergman. Must get a jazzier title. Um. This book is dedicated to the memory of my mother and sister. Foreword. Or preface, introduction, whatever. I am not a theorist. I am first and foremost a physician. My responsibility is to my patients, but my work with them has led me to ask myself a certain number of questions. My ambition in this book is no more than this: to throw out those questions to the neurological fraternity and beyond, to those better equipped than I am to, er, reflect on them. And in so doing to challenge some of the assumptions that have limited neurology to a mechanistic vision of the human brain. To embrace the human, the moral, the - no... er, to prone a more human, less abstract approach to... bums! Bloody great big bums! Black bums, brown bums, bare-naked bollock-bums and tit, tit, tit, tit, tit! A less abstract approach to theories of how the brain functions in order to encompass the moral and philosophical issues inherent in any reflection on, er, human thought and action... This is no good. Write the foreword later. First get on with the bloody book. Right. Chapter One: The Yesterday Man.

Lights up on:

**Emma's surgery**

Emma and Frank.

EMMA            You must be Frank Smith.

FRANK           Yes, I suppose I must. Yes, of course I am. Yes yes, and you're...

EMMA            I'm doctor Bergman. Come in and sit down. Tell me in your own words what seems to be the problem.

FRANK           Well, doctor, I... now that's funny, I... You must be standing in for doctor Ellis - he's off on his holidays, is he? I think it must be you that Anna saw - when was it? Two or three years ago now. Seems like yesterday... No, must be more, must be more. Funny how time slips away... We were very impressed with your diagnosis. Laryngitis, you said. And there we were thinking she just had a bit of a sore throat - always so fragile, Anna, even in the finest weather, the slightest little chill... where was I?

EMMA            Where indeed? I think you were going to tell me what the matter is.

FRANK           No no, that's your job, you're the doctor. Where's old Ellis off to this year then? Bognor again? Or Brighton? Anna and I had the most wonderful week in West Wittering, before the war, must be - God, must be five, six years

ago now. Long walks on the beach, not a soul in sight, the wind whistling round our ears. We told them we were married. Nobody knew. Nobody about. Hardly the height of fashion, West Wittering, but that's what we wanted. We didn't want to meet anyone. We didn't want to mix. We were a world unto ourselves. Bugger Bognor, we said. Blast Brighton. Let's get away from it all and walk in the wind in West Wittering... Or was it East Wittering? Such a nice man, doctor Ellis, don't you think? Always a kind word for everyone, nothing too much trouble for him, great bedside manner.

Pause

EMMA           Actually it was a doctor Phillips sent you to me.

FRANK          How's that? I don't quite... Is he a small fellow, with glasses?

EMMA           He's a general practitioner in Dover, who looked after you there, do you remember? He recommended you come to me.

FRANK          I've never been to Dover in my life. What would I want with Dover? Give me West Wittering any day. Damn Dover... Ah, now wait a minute... of course - that's where aunt Beth moved to when uncle Harold died - how is Beth? I haven't seen her in...

EMMA           In how long?

FRANK          Let me see, must be... I was still in short trousers... must be going on ten years...

Pause

EMMA           So you have no memory of Dover. What about Bognor? You mentioned Bognor just now. What do you remember about Bognor?

FRANK          Nothing. We didn't go to Bognor. We went to West Wittering. Or maybe East Wittering. May have been Worthing, but certainly not Bognor. You'd have to ask doctor Ellis about Bognor.

EMMA           This doctor Ellis, where does he practise?

FRANK          Where...? Well, here... doesn't he?

EMMA           Where exactly is "here" for you?

FRANK          What do you mean, where is here? Here is here. Where do you think it is?

EMMA           What town are we in?

FRANK           Well, Teddington, of course... Aren't we?... That's not it, is it? This isn't doctor Ellis's surgery... Are we still out there? I thought I was back, I... Am I still out in the camp?

EMMA           What camp?

Pause

You appear to be having a few problems with your memory, Mister Smith. It's playing tricks on you. That's why you're here. I'm a neuropsychologist, I take a special interest in cases like yours. You can stay here with us. This is a home for people like you.

FRANK           You mean I'm a nutcase? I'm round the bend, is that what you're saying?

EMMA           Not at all, you're perfectly sane as far as I can see. Only your memory has been playing tricks on you. Can you tell me the last things you remember before coming here?

FRANK           Last thing I remember... Last thing I remember, after the boats, is... the action, actually seeing some action at last... Soon find out who your real friends are... Ginger, Taf, Tinker - well, Tinker never found out who his friends were... Yes, we're going into this...

EMMA           This what?

FRANK           This... camp.

EMMA           Which camp?

FRANK           What?

The telephone rings. Emma answers.

EMMA           Yes?... Well no, I'm in the middle of - ... well, who does he think he is? ... I don't care, tell him he'll have to wait.

She puts the receiver down, leans back in her chair, then suddenly lunges forward with her arms outstretched and touches the far corners of the desk with her forefingers. She then arranges the objects on her desk into two symmetrical groups with little impulsive gestures, her face contorted by tics.

EMMA           Bugger Bognor!

FRANK I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch that.

EMMA No no, I'm sorry, Mr. Smith. I should have warned you - this doesn't usually happen while I'm consulting, but if I'm interrupted like that... I get these tics. I've had it since I was a child, in fact it's what got me interested in neurology in the first place. It's called Tourette's syndrome... It's actually more common than you'd think.

FRANK What is?

EMMA Tourette's. My tics.

FRANK What tics?

EMMA I get this compulsion to reach out and touch things. Or I get phrases that stick in my mind and just come out. Or I feel obliged to divide everything into twos or threes. Or then again sometimes I just go berserk: some tiny little thing will send me into a blind rage, and I start hurling things across the room... But only when I'm on my own.

FRANK You should see a doctor.

EMMA I've got it pretty much under control. It doesn't affect my work.

FRANK Glad to hear it. What line of work are you in?

EMMA I'm a neuropsychologist.

FRANK Really? Well, I suppose somebody has to be. And nobody minds you being a bit doolally?

EMMA No, they're all used to it now. It's something I've learned to live with. I took some medication a while back, that actually stopped all the tics and things. But it threw me right off balance, I didn't feel I was me any more, I'd become just... dull. So you'll have to forgive me the tics and nerviness and occasional odd behaviour but, believe me, I'm a lot more fun like this... Now Mr. Smith, I want you to look at the photo on the cover of this magazine here.

FRANK Yes, what is that?

EMMA Just study it for a moment. Then a little later I'll ask you some questions. It's a photo of Armstrong walking on the moon.

FRANK            Armstrong doing what?

EMMA            Walking on the moon.

FRANK            Louis Armstrong?

EMMA            Er, no. Neil. Last year. The man who walked on the moon.

FRANK            You're pulling my leg, aren't you? Is Ginger here? This is one of his little jokes, isn't it? I must have got a bit of a bang on the bonce and he's put you up to this. Make out I'm in a loony bin. Well, the game's up, darling. You had me going for a moment but it won't wash any more. Where is Ginger?

EMMA            What was the camp you were going into?

FRANK            This is one gigantic leg-pull. Making out I'm round the bend. Where's Ginger?

EMMA            I don't know any Ginger. This is 1970. The war is over.

Pause

FRANK            The war is over? Is it? Who won?

EMMA            We did.

FRANK            Oh. Good... So where's old doctor Ellis off to this year?

Pause

EMMA            Perhaps now you could tell me what you remember of the picture I showed you.

FRANK            What picture would that be?

EMMA            The magazine cover.

FRANK            What magazine?

EMMA            This one. Do you remember now?

FRANK            Never seen it before in my life. What is that?

EMMA            That's a man walking on the moon.



FRANK           A load of old rubbish in those magazines. Never read 'em myself. Last paper I read was out in the shitehouse down Uncle Curly's pub. The headline was "peace in our time". We were at war before I got to the sports pages.

EMMA           Your uncle ran a pub?

FRANK           The Railway Arms.

EMMA           What did your father do?

FRANK           Dad runs the horse and cart business. In station yard. Does all the deliveries.

EMMA           I see. And all this is in Teddington?

FRANK           Teddington? Whatever gave you that idea? They live in Heston.

EMMA           Do you know where you are now, Mister Smith?

FRANK           Well, I'm...

EMMA           You're at the Neurological Institute. I'm doctor Bergman. Doctor Phillips recommended you come to us. You can stay with us here. It seems you were in a pretty bad state in Dover. Sleeping rough, living like a tramp. You fell ill. Do you remember that?

FRANK           I've never been to Dover in my life.

Pause

EMMA           Mister Smith, do you know what year it is?

FRANK           1945, of course.

EMMA           What would you say if I told you it is now 1970?

FRANK           I'd say you were pulling my leg, doc.

EMMA           Look, this is my agenda.

FRANK           1970, what is this? You make your appointments twenty-five years in advance? I'd heard you were busy, but this is ridiculous.

EMMA           How old are you now?

FRANK           Twenty-five.

Pause

EMMA Take a look in this mirror. Is that the face of a twenty-five year old?

Pause

FRANK Oh my God... Oh Lord, what have you done to me?

EMMA I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset you. I just wanted you to appreciate the problem. You appear to have lost the last twenty-five years of your life.

FRANK Yes. Yes, that was careless of me.

EMMA You must be very confused... You had some papers on you in Dover. That is how we know who you are. We are trying to trace your family.

FRANK Was I staying with Aunt Beth?

EMMA No. What is your aunt's surname? Can you remember? Is it Smith?

FRANK No, Harold's name is Wicks. Of course I remember.

EMMA Good. Wicks, you say? Can you remember her address?

FRANK I've never been there. You'd have to ask dad.

Pause

EMMA We did trace your parents. I'm afraid your father has been dead for sixteen years.

Pause

FRANK What?

Pause

EMMA Your father died sixteen years ago. And your mother a year later. Your brother was killed in the war. We are trying to get in touch with your wife.

FRANK My wife?

EMMA Yes.

FRANK Anna went to France. She had family in the north somewhere.

EMMA You didn't marry Anna.

FRANK What do you mean, my wife?

EMMA Diane Smith, née Langton. You married in 1947. A daughter, Catherine, born in 1951. Last heard of living at number 27, Thorn Tree Road, Bognor Regis.

FRANK Bognor?

EMMA It's the address that was found in your papers. But apparently you left in 1960. And your wife and daughter moved away shortly afterwards. We haven't been able to track them down yet, but we're working on it.

FRANK Listen, there must be some mistake. I don't have any wife. Let alone a daughter. I've never set foot in Bognor. I went to West Wittering once, but that was it. I never married Anna. She went off to France. We lost touch. I tried to find her but... we lost touch.

EMMA Who is Anna?

FRANK She had the most beautiful voice. I thought I was pretty good, I thought I was the cat's whiskers to tell the truth but when I heard her, when I heard Anna sing, my heart came into my mouth, I was just... flabbergasted.

Pause

She thought she had an uncle out our way. But she couldn't find him. So she went to France. She had family in the north somewhere. We lost touch.

EMMA What was her name, her surname?

FRANK I've... It was a foreign name. I had the address, but she'd moved away.

EMMA The one that got away, eh? ... Or perhaps you did find out, perhaps you even saw her again, who knows? Perhaps -

FRANK I never saw her again. We lost touch.

Pause

EMMA The name Diane doesn't ring any bells? Diane Langton? Bognor Regis?

FRANK I've never been to Bognor in my life. I don't know what all this is about. I don't know what you want from me. I don't mind a bit of fun and games but I mean, what is going on here? What has happened to my regiment?

Pause

What has happened to my regiment? Where are Ginger and the boys? Did they go into the camp? Why are you keeping me here? Are we in the camp now? Is that where we are? Who are you? What do you want from me? Name, rank and serial number, that's all you'll get from me. What is it you do here? What have you done with all those poor people?

EMMA Please don't get excited. I quite understand that you're upset. I quite understand that.

FRANK Who is in charge of this camp? I demand to see your commanding officer. Where are my men? Where is Lieutenant Spriggs? What is happening here?

EMMA It's alright, Mister Smith. No-one's going to hurt you. Just sit down here in my chair. I'm going to nip out and fetch something to calm you down.

FRANK What is going on? What have you done with all those poor people? What have you done to Anna?

EMMA I'll be right back.

Exit.

Frank looks around, grows quiet. His expression grows blank. He stares into space, not moving.

Enter GORMAN.

GORMAN You must be Doctor Bergman.

FRANK Yes, I suppose I must. Hello. Now you must forgive me, I know the face, it's just that the name escapes me... Isn't that maddening?

GORMAN Gorman. Bruno Gorman, but I don't think...

FRANK Of course! Come in, Bruno old boy, sit down, make yourself at home. How are you these days? How long has it been?

GORMAN We've never met.

FRANK What are you talking about? Of course we've met! Why else would you be here talking to me? How long has it been?

GORMAN I think I would remember... Are you sure you're not confusing me with someone?

FRANK No no no, never forget a face. Not so good on names, but I never forget a face. Knew you the moment you stepped in that door. When was the last time?

Pause

GORMAN Perhaps you've come across my book.

FRANK That's it! Of course! Now I must tell you that was what I call a darn good read.

GORMAN Thank you.

FRANK A real corker. Damn good stuff. Read some of the best bits out to Ginger and the lads. Very much appreciated, I can tell you. Heaving bosoms, throbbing loins, they loved it.

GORMAN I think there must be some mistake...

FRANK Oh yes, I like a good read.

GORMAN I have reason to believe you have my wife here.

FRANK Do we? Good God! Not the redhead? I see where you get your inspiration from.

GORMAN She's lost her memory.

FRANK Well, that's a relief. For a moment I thought we might be in trouble there.

GORMAN I've come to take her home.

FRANK Yes well, we always knew it couldn't last. But I can't say she won't be missed. Because she will. She will be sorely missed.

GORMAN What couldn't last?

FRANK What?

GORMAN You just said you always knew it couldn't last.

FRANK            Did I?

GORMAN         What couldn't?

FRANK            I'm afraid you've lost me there, old boy. I haven't a clue what you're rattling on about.

GORMAN         Am I to infer that there is some sort of improper relationship between my wife and members of your staff?

FRANK            What does she look like, this wife of yours?

GORMAN         Are you trying to make fun of me?

Pause

                    Only I should warn you. I have no sense of humour.

Pause

FRANK            Where did you say we met?

GORMAN         You must have just seen my photo in the press. My book caused a bit of a stir. Now where is Hannah?

FRANK            Oh you write books, do you? I knew a fellow used to write poems once. Used to see him in the Dog and Partridge. What was his name?

GORMAN         I have no idea. I don't read poetry. Now will you take me to my wife?

FRANK            Now I come to think of it you'd see him in the Crown and Anchor too, on a fine day. He lived down Bolton Avenue, so if it was raining obviously he wouldn't venture out beyond the Dog and Partridge. But when the weather was warm you'd find him at the Crown and Anchor, the beer was better and he could take the short cut through the park. Funny fellow though. Scottish. Greasy hair, side parting, looked a bit like Hitler. But, believe it or not, he was a red. I know that for a fact because I spoke to him once. In the Dog and Partridge come to think of it, though it wasn't raining. He came right out with it and asked me if I wanted to join the communist party. I was shocked. Nobody had ever asked me that before. Not in the Crown and Anchor, not in the Dog and Partridge, not even in the Carpenters' Arms. I'd had all sorts of propositions, mostly dishonest, especially in the Carpenters', but I'd never heard the like of that. He said what do you want? The barbarians are at the gates, do you want to let them in? What do you want to happen to this country? Do you want justice? Do you want equality? Or do you want the

sound of jackboots stamping on the outstretched hands of young children? Tell me. Tell me what it is you want. So I thought for a while and then I said alright I'll tell you. And I told him. I said what I want right now is a pint of mild and bitter. "Sorry mate, I'm skint", he said. So that was the end of that. No wonder communism never really took off in this country.

GORMAN Will you take me to my wife?!

FRANK Yes, of course, she'll be in her room upstairs. I'll show you up. You shouldn't keep me talking, I'd clean forgotten her. It's like Uncle Curly says, I'd forget my head if it wasn't screwed on.

Enter Emma.

FRANK Ah, there you are, she's saved us the trouble.

GORMAN This is not my wife.

FRANK No? Well, who the hell is it then? Just a minute...

EMMA *(to Gorman)* Is there something I can do for you?

FRANK Ah, but it's Mrs. Clark, the butcher's wife! Come on in, I wasn't expecting you here. This is D. H. Lawrence, he's looking for his wife. Have you brought my lamb chops? That's very kind of you, you needn't have come all the way out here to the, to the...

GORMAN Who are you?

EMMA I was about to ask you the same question.

GORMAN My name's Gorman.

EMMA Ah. Foreman Gorman.

GORMAN I'm sorry?

EMMA Yes, I did tell them to ask you to wait outside. As you can see, I've got my hands full at the moment. I'm doctor Bergman.

FRANK Are you now? How do you do? I'm sergeant Smith.

GORMAN But you said...

FRANK I hope it isn't catching.

EMMA           What isn't?

FRANK          Whatever it is he's caught. I was perfectly alright when I came in here.

EMMA           Well, there's a lot of it about. I've brought you a little pill, Mister Smith, and a glass of water.

FRANK          Water? Never touch the stuff. Mine's a mild and bitter.

GORMAN        This man is an impostor.

EMMA           He's a riot. But we mustn't get him too excited.

GORMAN        Where is Hannah?

FRANK          Yes, have you seen his wife? The redhead with the big bucket, scrubs the barracks. She's in hot water now.

EMMA           There are a number of problems. Not least is the fact that the administration can't find any trace of any Hannah Gorman. They have no national insurance number for her. No date or place of birth.

GORMAN        I really don't think that is any of your business. Hannah's not staying.

EMMA           The trouble is, you see, that Hannah refuses to believe that she's who you say she is.

Pause

                  We'd like to get in touch with her parents.

GORMAN        Her parents died, a long time ago, when she was quite small. Or so I was told.

EMMA           Who told you?

GORMAN        She did.

HANNAH        No other family?

GORMAN        No. Only me.

EMMA           How did they die?



GORMAN I believe they had an accident.

HANNAH What kind of accident?

GORMAN I don't know the details. I'm the only one that can help her, you see. She needs me.

EMMA Does she?

GORMAN Yes. That is the bottom line. She needs me. And funnily enough, when all is said and done, when push comes to shove, when it comes to the crunch, I need her too.

EMMA Why?

GORMAN I need her to do the washing up.

Pause

That was a joke. I don't often make jokes. I hope you appreciated it.

EMMA Was it supposed to be funny?

GORMAN Oh no. It was just a joke.

Pause

EMMA You could be anybody. You could be someone who just picked Hannah up off the street and pretended to be her husband.

FRANK Do you know this fellow, doctor? Only frankly speaking I don't much like the look of him. Looks like a spiv to me. Why isn't he in uniform?

GORMAN Oh shut up.

EMMA Buggerbog!

Emma suddenly lunges backwards and touches Gorman's bottom. He jumps away from her, alarmed. She is shaken by a number of tics before returning to normal.

EMMA Foreman Gorman. Norman the doorman. Buggerfucktittittit.

GORMAN What is this madhouse? Aren't there any real doctors here?

EMMA I am in charge here. Now please just wait outside. I'll be with you in a few minutes.

GORMAN Don't bother. I want to speak to somebody sane.

Exit.

EMMA Oh well. I see why she'd want to forget him. Now, I think you've had enough excitement for today, Mister Smith. I'll show you to your room.

FRANK That's very good of you, dear, but I think I'd better be getting back home. I've been away for some time now, mum'll be worrying.

EMMA Your parents and brother are all dead, Frank. Don't you remember?

Pause

FRANK I knew about Andrew. But... when did it happen? Nobody told me. The war's almost over. Isn't it?

EMMA It's been over for a long time.

FRANK Has it? Who won?

EMMA We did.

FRANK Oh. Good. What about the horses?

EMMA What horses?

FRANK Who's looking after the business?

EMMA I don't know about that. It was a long time ago.

FRANK Curly'll be wanting me to lend a hand. He'll be expecting me. When's the next train to Heston?

BLACK

EMMA *(off)* How does our memory actually work? The fashion at the moment is to compare it to a computer, with a huge stock of fixed, permanent images at its disposal. I'm not crazy about that analogy. Certainly the human brain categorises, and classifies: it might be said we convert our experiences into abstractions that we can then file away under general headings. I think this

capacity is the very basis of our intelligence. It's crucial. But it is not everything. We have to be able to reconvert the abstraction back into something concrete. We can of course summon up the sensorial memory... but I don't believe it's been there all the time, filed away, intact. I think we somehow recreate it, and the present inevitably colours the impression we have of it. I believe we constantly reinterpret the past in the light of new experiences. I would venture the hypothesis that remembering is not simply a case of our consulting a stock of previously recorded information - it is at once something less and something much more than that. It is a creative act. We are not librarians, we are writers. Remembering is an act of the imagination.

Lights up on:

Emma and Hannah.

EMMA            Your brain is in perfect working order, Hannah. It's just that your past has been accidentally erased, as if the tape had been wiped clean. It may yet come back. If it doesn't, you'll just have to think of your life as one big puzzle. It's a question of putting all the pieces together again.

Pause

No-one can make you lose your memory. The most likely explanation for your amnesia is the bang on your head when you fell. There's nothing sinister about it.

HANNAH        How do you know I fell?

Pause

EMMA            Why should he lie to you?

HANNAH        Because I can't tell the difference. He can say whatever he wants.

Pause

He said I was in love with him.

EMMA            You don't feel that's true?

HANNAH        I don't like him. His house is... strange. I don't like his friends. I don't like the feel of his fingers. I don't like the sound of his voice... Can I have forgotten how to love him?

EMMA Oh yes. There would be nothing extraordinary in that. You don't have to lose your memory to feel like that.

HANNAH Do you feel like that?

EMMA I did once.

HANNAH And what happened?

EMMA I left him.

HANNAH I'm glad.

EMMA But we're not here to talk about me.

HANNAH We can't talk about me. I don't know who I am.

EMMA Then that's something we'll just have to find out, isn't it? Has anything come back to you?

Pause

HANNAH I can see him, sitting opposite me, at the kitchen table, smoking. He is talking to me in a falsely casual tone of voice. He asks if I've seen anyone while he was away. I say no, no-one. But he doesn't believe me. He grabs hold of my arm and says tell me, tell me who was here, tell me who you were speaking to, who you were laughing with. I say no-one, no-one was here, no-one has spoken to me. I try to move away but he holds on to my arm. He says I heard you, I heard you laughing. You were laughing at me. He takes his cigarette in his other hand and brings it up close to my forearm. He says tell me who was here. Tell me who was here with you, laughing at me. I say, no-one. He stubs the cigarette against the underside of my arm and holds on to me so I can't get away. It burns through my skin. I try not to scream. I try not to scream because I know if I scream he will hit me.

Pause

EMMA Are you sure you're not imagining this?

HANNAH You don't believe me. You think I'm lying.

EMMA I don't think you're lying. I just think perhaps your brain is working overtime.

HANNAH        The marks on my arm are not my imagination.

EMMA            No, but the scene you've described could be a rationalisation, a way of explaining to yourself how the marks came to be there.

HANNAH        You mean he didn't burn me with a cigarette?

EMMA            I think we need to be wary.

HANNAH        But how can I be sure? How can I be sure of anything? What is the difference between memory and imagination?

Pause

EMMA            That's really a very good question.

HANNAH        So even if I get my memory back, I can't be sure it really is my memory?

Pause

Yesterday I remembered something. I don't actually remember remembering it. I just suddenly became aware that I'd always assumed it was still there. And it wasn't. It had gone.

EMMA            But what was it?

HANNAH        I think... I think it's a sort of file, a folder with all sorts of papers in.

Pause

I can see... I have an image, in my mind, of this high, wire... - what do you call it? Not a wall... you can see through it, you can see through the wire... what do you call it? A fence? Sounds strange, all of a sudden: fence... and when you look through it there is a patch of ground - empty, waste ground, the grass is... patchy, and beyond this... patch, there is... another fence, another wire fence... And beyond this other fence, another patch of waste ground and then... trees. Very tall trees, very... dense, the undergrowth thick beneath them, the ground dark... and dank, beneath them. It's as if the light couldn't filter through, couldn't penetrate that far down. It's as if the earth, beneath these trees, had never seen the sun...

Pause

But other than that I can't remember a thing.

EMMA           What is inside the fence?

HANNAH        I am. That is where I belong. That is where I come from.

EMMA           Who else is there?

HANNAH        No-one. Shadows. Vague forms, moving, shifting about. I can't see their faces. But they are with me, around me, looking out with me. We look out towards the trees.

Pause

And on the second fence, stretched out on the wire, is the figure of a man. His clothes are torn and ragged. His arms are outstretched, his body hangs limp, he doesn't move. There is a trickle of blood seeping from his hands, where they clutch the wire, the barbs on the wire. Everything is still. Then the wind stirs. The clothes hanging loose on his body begin to flap, the material flaps in the wind.

Pause

EMMA           Do you know who he is, this man?

HANNAH        No. He looks like... what's-his-name, the strange man.

EMMA           What strange man?

Pause

HANNAH        He says it's a masochistic fantasy.

EMMA           He would.

HANNAH        Have you spoken with him? What did he say?

EMMA           He said he needed you.

Pause

Is that what you wanted to hear?

Pause

HANNAH        You don't really like men, do you?

Pause

EMMA We're not here to talk about me.

Pause

You put me in something of a dilemma. As a doctor, I would recommend that you and your husband see a psychiatrist, the two of you together... As a woman, and just on pure instinct with no scientific basis whatsoever, I'd say get out of there. Keep well clear of him.

HANNAH What do you put your trust in: your instinct or your science?

EMMA Oh, I would say instinct, every time.

HANNAH Let me stay. Let me stay here with you.

EMMA That won't go down too well at the office. You see, as far as the administration is concerned, Hannah Gorman doesn't exist. I'd be breaking all the rules by letting you stay here.

Pause

But I don't worry too much about the rules. They were only invented to help us help the patients. They take on a life of their own, but I'm for the spirit of the law before the letter. When the letter loses touch with the spirit, we surrender reality to the idea, we stray into abstraction. We forget our humanity.

Pause

HANNAH Does that mean I can stay?

EMMA Of course you can stay.

Pause

I traced you to your school, Hannah. Purley High. No qualifications, I'm afraid. I spoke to a teacher there. She remembered you. She said you were raised by an aunt. She said you never knew your parents.

Pause

HANNAH So even if I get my memory back I can't be sure it really is my memory. And even when I had my memory I still didn't know who I was?

Pause

EMMA Would you like to meet this teacher?

HANNAH I remember... the strange man.

EMMA Yes?

HANNAH On the cross. "This is my blood you drink. This is my body you eat."

EMMA That's what you meant: the man in your dream looks like Jesus.

HANNAH What man?

EMMA The body hanging on the wire. In your dream.

HANNAH There is no man in my dream.

EMMA You told me he looked like the strange man, but I didn't know what you meant, until now.

HANNAH In my dream there is a high, wire fence curving back at the top, then a patch of grass, then another fence. And beyond that the trees. There is no man.

Pause

When the wind blows there is a rustling sound. Some dead leaves spin slowly to the ground, then one flutters up again, towards the fence. The shadows are all behind me. They shift about, restlessly, with a rustling sound, behind me. They are talking to me, in a whisper. They are telling me their names. They are telling me their stories. They are speaking too quickly, too quietly, all at once, I can't catch what they're saying. I turn around to look at them, but there is no-one there. Rows and rows of empty buildings, and in the distance two lone chimneys silhouetted against the sky. There is no-one there. I am quite alone.

EMMA No, you're not. Trust me.

BLACK

EMMA *(off)* What would life be like if the human brain had not developed its particular faculties? Take away the capacity for categorisation and abstraction and you'd have chaos, there could be no order, society could no



longer exist. Take away the imagination and not only would we have no art, but we would no longer have any sympathy for others, we would ignore the reality of human emotions, we would reduce the rest of mankind to a cipher. It seems to me that this is a real danger, that it can and does happen, not just in individuals but in a more general sense in whole communities. What is fascism if not a massive failure of the imagination?

Lights up on:

Emma and Gorman.

EMMA            She doesn't want to see you.

GORMAN        Yes, she does.

EMMA            That's not what she says.

GORMAN        You can't trust what she says.

Pause

I don't think you fully understand. It's a game she plays. A sort of test. She makes up these stories to see how I will react. She's always done it. She's always tried her little tricks on me.

EMMA            What sort of tricks?

GORMAN        For instance, she would take a lighted cigarette and hold it to her arm, and burn herself, repeatedly. She would run out into the street and stop a passer-by. She would show him the burn marks and tell him I'd been trying to torture her.

Pause

EMMA            Why didn't you tell us this before?

GORMAN        You didn't ask. I thought you'd realise. She's suffering from paranoid delusions.

Pause

EMMA            An old Jewish friend of mine, whenever he moves to a new apartment, the first thing he does is check the size of the cupboards, to see if they're big enough to hide in. People tell him he's mad, and he agrees, but adds: "Just

because I'm paranoid doesn't mean nobody's out to get me." Does it bother you that Hannah is Jewish?

GORMAN She isn't.

Pause. Emma has a mild attack of tics, but rapidly overcomes it.

EMMA She has this memory of two rows of fences separated by a patch of grass, with trees beyond, and a dead body stretched out on the wire. What do you make of that?

GORMAN That is not a memory. That is a fantasy. That is a film she once saw.

EMMA A film?

GORMAN Yes. A lousy film.

EMMA What was it called?

GORMAN I don't know. It doesn't matter. Film has no future. It's just going to disintegrate. All those little particles, fixed on celluloid, they're just going to disappear. The light burns them out. The air just eats them up. All those images, all those familiar faces, all those tired old clichés, all slowly fading. Soon there will be nothing there. And that's as it should be. Because there never really was anything there.

EMMA Everything disappears eventually. That doesn't mean there was never anything there. The past is with us, in us, part of us - it is the foundation of what we are.

GORMAN No, it isn't. It's just a load of old junk cluttering up the roadside.

Pause

EMMA You said Hannah's parents were killed in an accident.

GORMAN That is correct.

EMMA Would that be an accident that also involved some six million other people?

Pause

GORMAN I'm afraid I don't actually subscribe to that particular, highly contestable interpretation of history.

EMMA No. I'm afraid I haven't read your book. But I'm aware of your opinions.

Pause

What are you saying? That the millions of people who died just never existed?

GORMAN Oh, there were some deaths obviously, mainly due to allied bombing, but on the whole the German camps were quite a bit healthier than the allied equivalent.

Pause

EMMA I see. At least I think I see. Time is on your side, of course. Once the witnesses are gone it'll be easier for you. In thirty years time there'll be no-one left to remember. It's not as if it were really credible in the first place. I don't believe anyone even now has fully grasped what happened. Tell one person's story and the world will weep. Tell them six million died and no-one even begins to understand, it's just statistics, it's just dry, dry as...

GORMAN Ashes?

Pause

EMMA Half my family died in those camps.

GORMAN You didn't.

EMMA No. I did something unforgivable. I survived.

Pause

I was saved by my tics. My father took me to London to see a specialist. My mother and sister stayed behind.

Pause

Those camps were beyond description or understanding or imagination. Those pictures that you see, those piles and piles of emaciated corpses, they're not just pictures, they were real people. They were living, breathing, eating, feeling, thinking, suffering people. Thousands upon thousands of them. Mothers and daughters and children. Those pictures are real.

GORMAN No, they're not. They're fakes.

Pause

It was the delousing procedure that gave rise to all those stories about gas chambers. A simple measure of hygiene.

EMMA Oh, I see. Then they did exterminate the lice? That isn't just a myth?

Pause

GORMAN Doctor Bergman. I have done my best to be civil with you. I have made allowances for the fact that you suffer from some sort of bizarre mental handicap. I have quietly listened to all you've had to say. I have tried to be fair. But I have nonetheless come to the conclusion that no possible good can come of Hannah's staying on in your care. I believe it is my duty to remove her from your sphere of influence. Now please take me to her.

Pause

You have no right to refuse me access to her.

EMMA So sue me.

Pause

GORMAN I don't think that will be necessary. I'll find her. She'll follow me. I stopped by at the office just now. Apparently they have no trace of her anyway. They told me there had never been any such patient. So that's alright.

EMMA What do you want from her?

Exit Gorman.

Emma gets up and starts to tidy her desk. She is shaken by a number of tics. A file falls from her grasp and she fumbles with it for a moment, then throws it angrily to the floor. She is possessed by a blind rage, kicking and punching the desk, and knocking the objects on it to the floor.

BLACK

EMMA *(off)* It could be said that our imagination allows us to reinject a concrete, sensorial reality into the empty shell that is an abstract idea. It is of course this capacity that has given rise to all our great works of art (and all the lesser ones too, come to that). But it is also, on a more mundane but vitally important level, what enables us to understand our fellow men. "Put yourself in my shoes," we say, when we are asking for comprehension. And we can

all do just that, we can imagine the world from someone else's point of view. I would argue that it is these two faculties, the capacity for abstract thought and the ability to imagine a reality other than that which our senses are showing us, that make us what we are. They're what define us as human. They're what enable us to live in society.

Lights up on:

### **The garden**

Frank and Hannah.

HANNAH        Peaceful, isn't it? I feel safe here.

FRANK         Dead men's fingers.

HANNAH        Pardon?

FRANK         Behind the tulips: dead men's fingers. That liberal shepherds give a grosser name, according to Mr. Jeffreys. Though I'm blowed if I know where Mr. Jeffreys ever ran into any liberal shepherds.

HANNAH        Ah.

Pause

FRANK         The little ones in front are pansies, then tulips, then dead men's fingers.

HANNAH        I'm not very good with names. The words seem vaguely familiar, but I'm never quite sure I've got the right one. And the more I think about it, the less sure I am. One name seems as good as another. Why are tulips called tulips?

FRANK         Tulips are called tulips because they are tulip-shaped.

HANNAH        Ah.

FRANK         Then the laurel hedge, then the fence. I know this garden. I have been here before.

Pause

HANNAH        That's a strange word when you think about it, isn't it: fence?

FRANK         Fence? Perfectly good English word.

HANNAH Is it?

FRANK Oh yes. Comes from Norfolk.

HANNAH What's it for, that fence?

FRANK To keep the nosy parkers out.

HANNAH Is it? Or is it to keep the patients in?

FRANK Patients? What patients?

HANNAH There are some funny people round here.

FRANK Are there? Have they been bothering you? You see anyone acting suspiciously, just point them out to me. I'll have a word with Mister Jeffreys, he'll soon sort them out. Now you're going to think I'm awfully rude, but I'm afraid I've got no head for names. Never forget a face, especially a lovely one like yours, but... who are you?

HANNAH I don't know. Nobody knows. There was one man who said he knew. But I didn't believe him.

FRANK You remind me of someone.

HANNAH Perhaps I am that someone. But if you can't remember who it is and I can't remember who I am, we'll never be any the wiser, will we?

FRANK It's like an echo... coming out of the fog.

HANNAH Everything's like an echo to me. But an empty echo. I've got the echo but I've lost the original sound.

FRANK Yes, I've lost something too... I've lost... my bearings. Nothing makes any sense any more.

HANNAH My life is a puzzle. We have to put all the pieces together. Only first we have to find the pieces.

FRANK What pieces?

HANNAH My life is an empty board waiting for the pieces to be put back on it. I have some pieces, but I don't know where they go. And I have the pieces this man gave me, but I don't think they fit.

FRANK            Which man is that?

HANNAH        He said I loved him, but I don't. He said he wanted to look after me, but it wasn't true. He wanted to kill me.

FRANK           Really? Why?

HANNAH        Because I knew too much.

FRANK           What about?

HANNAH        I don't know. I don't remember.

FRANK           You're having problems with your memory?

HANNAH        Yes, that's right.

FRANK           I knew a man once who had problems with his memory. I forget his name. Used to see him in the Railway Arms. He used to come in, have a drink, have a bit of a chat, and then go. And when he went, he'd always forget his umbrella. Come back the next day and say, "Do you know, it's the damndest thing, I've mislaid my umbrella." And Curly'd give it back to him. Then he'd order a drink and he'd have a bit of a chat. And after a while he'd go off again. And do you know, nine times out of ten he'd forget his umbrella. So he'd have to come back the next day. And so on and so forth ad infinnytittytitum forever and ever till kingdom come amen. Or until war broke out anyway.

HANNAH        What did he do when it rained?

FRANK           I suppose he got wet. But it never rained for long. Not in those days. I'm talking about before the war. This is before I moved to Teddington. Lovely weather we had then. Not like now.

HANNAH        Yesterday was nice.

FRANK           I wasn't here yesterday.

HANNAH        Yes, you were.

FRANK           No no, you must be thinking of someone else. I've never been here before. We only arrived this morning. To tell the truth I shouldn't really be here. Lieutenant Spriggs'll have my guts for garters. I'm looking for someone, you

see. Someone that I knew once, in England. I think she might be here somewhere. The thing is, I'm afraid I don't speak French.

HANNAH Perhaps I can help?

FRANK She's about your age.

HANNAH I have lots of friends.

FRANK She came to stay with her family here.

HANNAH I have this file with all their names in.

FRANK I've been to the address she gave me, but the woman said they've gone away, those people, they don't live here any more.

HANNAH They tell me their stories and I write them down.

FRANK The police came and rounded them all up and took them to the stadium.

HANNAH All their stories, and their friends' stories, and the stories of the people they met, the ones that never came back.

FRANK She said they won't be coming back now. They don't live here any more.

Pause

HANNAH What's her name, this girl?

FRANK Her name is Anna.

HANNAH That's my name.

Pause

FRANK Anna?

HANNAH Yes.

Pause

FRANK Darling.

HANNAH Yes.



BLACK

Lights up on:

Frank working on the garden with a rake.  
Enter Gorman. He sits on the bench.

GORMAN        Not you again?

FRANK           Me again? It's always been me.

GORMAN        What has?

FRANK           I has. Me has. I've never been anyone else.

GORMAN        Last time I saw you you pretended to be a doctor.

FRANK           I've never been a doctor in my life.

GORMAN        I'm looking for a girl.

FRANK           Well, don't look at me. Try the Carpenter's Arms.

GORMAN        What?

FRANK           The Carpenter's. Plenty of it down there. Plenty of everything if you put your hand in your pocket.

GORMAN        No. She's staying here.

FRANK           She can't stay here. I'll be closing up soon. I lock the gates. Throw everybody out. Can't leave 'em in, more than my job's worth.

GORMAN        Her name is Hannah.

Pause

FRANK           Hannah?

GORMAN        Yes.

FRANK           Never heard of her.

GORMAN I spoke to someone. One of the other patients. She said she often comes out here.

FRANK Patients? What patients?

Pause

Is it lunch time?

GORMAN What time do you eat?

FRANK What time do we eat? Don't you know? We eat at lunch time.

GORMAN Forget it.

FRANK Forget what?

GORMAN What?

FRANK I've forgotten what it is I'm supposed to be forgetting.

GORMAN Why don't you just shut up?

FRANK You can't come into my park and talk to me like that. I'm in charge here. Until Mister Jeffreys gets back. He left me his whistle.

GORMAN Where is it then?

FRANK Where is what?

GORMAN Mister Jeffreys' whistle.

FRANK You know Mister Jeffreys?

GORMAN I know Mister Jeffreys very well. He happens to be a friend of mine.

FRANK When's he coming back then?

GORMAN He didn't say.

FRANK Alright for some.

GORMAN What have you done with his whistle? You've lost it, haven't you? Jim Jeffreys leaves his trusty whistle in your safekeeping and what do you do? You go and leave it somewhere. Do you know what that is? That is

negligence of the highest order. That is a contretemps that could be of calamitous consequence for your career in park-keeping.

FRANK I'm sorry, I don't speak French.

GORMAN You'd better toddle along and find it. I think you left it over there.

FRANK I wonder if you could help me. I'm looking for someone. Perhaps you've seen her.

GORMAN Don't change the subject.

FRANK Her name is Anna. I went to her house but they said she didn't live there any more.

GORMAN Did you say Hannah?

FRANK Are you deaf?

GORMAN Why don't you just take a walk and look for Jim Jeffreys' whistle.

FRANK Mister Jeffreys' name isn't Jim.

GORMAN Yes, it is.

FRANK No, it isn't.

GORMAN What is it then?

FRANK Lionel.

GORMAN Lionel Jeffreys? That's not him. That's somebody else. I'm talking about Jim Jeffreys, the park-keeper.

FRANK So am I, but nobody calls him Jim.

GORMAN He's Jim to his friends.

FRANK He hasn't got any friends.

GORMAN Well, he's got me. And if I tell Jim you've left his whistle lying around in the grass somewhere, exposed to the elements, gathering dust, dripping dew - if I tell Jim Jeffreys you've wet his whistle, there'll be hell to pay. So be a good boy and bugger off and look for it.

FRANK I've seen you before somewhere.

Pause

What are you hanging round here for?

GORMAN I'm waiting for someone.

FRANK Have you been making a nuisance of yourself?

GORMAN No.

FRANK Have you been acting suspiciously?

GORMAN Not at all.

FRANK That's your story. What's your name?

GORMAN Gorman.

FRANK Sounds German.

GORMAN It's not German. It's Scottish.

FRANK That's no excuse. Don't you know there's a war on?

GORMAN No, there isn't.

FRANK A clever dick, are we? We don't like clever dicks round here. What's your name?

GORMAN I told you. Gorman.

FRANK That wouldn't be Martin Gorman, by any chance?

GORMAN No.

FRANK Hermann Gorman? Have you been making a nuisance of yourself?

GORMAN No.

FRANK Have you been acting suspiciously?

GORMAN Not at all.

FRANK            Only I'm in charge here, you know.

GORMAN        No, you're not. You haven't got a whistle.

FRANK            I don't need a whistle. I've got a rake.

GORMAN        I'll be back later.

Exit Gorman.

BLACK

Lights up on:

Frank gardening. Hannah appears. Frank rushes to her and embraces her.

FRANK            Anna! Darling! I thought I'd never see you again.

HANNAH        I've only been gone half an hour.

FRANK            You just disappear like that. Scare the life out of me.

HANNAH        Be careful, she's watching us.

FRANK            Who?

HANNAH        That doctor. She says she wants to take care of me. But it's not true. She wants to do me harm. She doesn't want us to see each other.

FRANK            I thought I'd never see you again. Why did you go?

HANNAH        I don't know. I don't remember.

Pause

I don't remember anything.

Pause

Tell me. Tell me the story of how we first met.

FRANK            You don't remember?

HANNAH        It's all gone.

FRANK           It was at the Crown and Anchor. I was staying at the Dog and Partridge at the time but I often used to nip down to the Crown because the beer was better, and there was a piano. It was hot. One of those hot summer nights we used to have before the war, when it stayed light until the pubs shut. All the doors and windows were open, there was just the faintest breath of air. There were people drinking outside on the pavement. I was standing at the bar sipping my pint. And then you appeared in the doorway, with your friend. What was her name?

HANNAH        I don't remember.

FRANK           Yes, you do. You were sharing a room with her, over the shoe shop down Church Street. Big girl, laughed a lot, came from Wales. You were the shy one. Hardly said a word all evening. But you didn't have to. Your eyes were smiling. I did all the talking. You did the listening. And your Welsh friend did the butting in. Nice girl, mind you, but a bit slow on the uptake. Not too quick to take a hint. Shirley, was it? Or Sheila? I wonder what happened to her?

HANNAH        I lost touch with her.

FRANK           Anyway, as luck would have it, it turned out she could play the piano. So we plonked her down on the piano stool and I turned to you and looked you right in the eyes and said "Do you know I Only Have Eyes For You?" You laughed, such a pretty, girlish laugh, and you lowered your eyes. When you looked up again I was still looking at you. And you looked back at me and you smiled. And Shirley, or Sheila, or whatever her name was, she hadn't seen any of this, she just said "Yes, I know that one" and started playing. Only she didn't know it, she kept stopping, and we couldn't remember the words, so we didn't get very far. Bit of a fiasco really. But they had the sheet music for "These Foolish Things", so we switched to that. And you began to sing and oh, my heart came into my mouth. It was as if that song had been written just for you. You put your heart and soul into it. And people started coming in from outside, just to listen. They gathered round the piano to listen to you. They were enthralled.

HANNAH        You're exaggerating. They were just coming in from the rain. I wasn't that good.

FRANK           You were phenomenal. You brought the house down.

HANNAH        There was a ripple of mild applause.

FRANK           And you turned to look at me. Your eyes shining. And I locked my eyes onto yours. Of course they were all cheering and shouting for more. But you weren't having any of it. You said you wanted some fresh air.

HANNAH        Fresh air? But it was raining.

FRANK           Only a slight drizzle. It was warm. We didn't even notice it. I walked you down to the river. You threw some stones into the water, you wanted to make them skim. I showed you how to do it.

HANNAH        You weren't much good at it either.

FRANK           We hadn't got the right sort of stones. They need to be flat. You have to have flat stones, to skim with.

HANNAH        You made me laugh.

FRANK           You were flushed with the excitement.

HANNAH        Of skimming stones?

FRANK           With the excitement and the warmth, and the singing, and the attention, and the applause, and the walk in the rain, and the stone skimming, and the touch of my hand on your arm.

HANNAH        We kissed.

FRANK           What a good kisser you were.

HANNAH        You took me in your arms and we kissed.

FRANK           What a wonderful kiss that was.

Pause

HANNAH        What happened after that?

FRANK           You know what happened after that.

HANNAH        No, but after that.

FRANK           Oh, after that. Well after that, I don't know what happened.

HANNAH        Did you take care of me?

Silence

BLACK

Lights up on:

Frank and Hannah, exactly as before.

FRANK            You just disappear like that. You scare the life out of me.

HANNAH         I never go far.

FRANK            Yes, you do. You went to France. I had to invade Europe to try and find you. Then when I get there it's full of foreigners, I can't understand a word they say. I finally make my way to the address you gave me, and what do I find? You've gone. Without so much as a by-your-leave.

HANNAH         I had to go.

FRANK            Without so much as a forwarding address.

HANNAH         There wasn't any time.

FRANK            Not even a note for the milkman.

HANNAH         They came and rounded us all up and took us to the stadium.

FRANK            I told you not to go.

Pause

Think of your throat, I said. The slightest little chill...

Pause

You were always so fragile.

Pause

HANNAH         A high, wire fence, then a patch of grass, then another fence. And beyond that the trees.

Pause



FRANK I looked for you.

HANNAH I survived.

FRANK I looked for you everywhere. But I couldn't be sure. I couldn't be sure I could still recognize you.

HANNAH Somebody had to. Somebody had to live to tell the tale.

FRANK I couldn't go on. I couldn't go on looking.

HANNAH Otherwise they would just wipe our memory from the face of the earth. It would be as if we had never existed.

FRANK I had to turn away.

HANNAH Not even a dog would howl for us.

Silence

Enter Gorman. Pause.

FRANK What time is it?

GORMAN It's lunch time.

FRANK We should get a move on. We'll miss the soup.

GORMAN You go on ahead. We'll be right with you.

FRANK Have I seen you before somewhere?

GORMAN No.

FRANK Oh. Oh well, that's alright then.

Exit. Pause.

GORMAN Pleased to see me?

HANNAH Yes?

Pause

GORMAN        You couldn't just leave me like that. After all we've been through together. You couldn't just disappear.

HANNAH        My mind's a blank.

GORMAN        No, it isn't.

HANNAH        I'm sorry. I can't remember anything.

GORMAN        Yes, you can. You can remember me.

Pause

It will all come back. It will all come back to you in no time. Now that I'm here.

HANNAH        But what if it doesn't? What if it doesn't come back?

GORMAN        It won't make a blind bit of difference.

Pause

Pretty soon now memory will be obsolete. We won't need to remember the past. We'll have computers to do that for us. In thirty years' time nobody will remember anything. We won't have to. Pretty damn soon we won't even have to think. We'll have computers to do that for us.

HANNAH        But I want to remember. I want to remember who I am.

GORMAN        I shouldn't worry about that. I know who you are.

HANNAH        Then who am I?

GORMAN        You're my little girl.

BLACK

EMMA        (*off*) What has the twentieth century brought us? Technology and ideology. It has proved a lethal combination. Have we learnt our lessons? There is ample evidence to the contrary. What will the next century bring us? Let us pray for moderation, memory and imagination.

Pause

EMMA                   *(off)* Footnote. Due to circumstances beyond my control I was unable to continue with the case of Hannah G. She decided to leave as suddenly and as unexpectedly as she had decided to stay.  
Frank S. lived on for another thirteen years. He died in 1983.

Lights up on:

Emma and Frank.

EMMA                   It's chilly out here. Wouldn't you be better off indoors?

FRANK                  Me? No, I'm alright. It's quiet here.

EMMA                   The days are growing shorter.

FRANK                  Are they? The trees are bare too. It must be winter.

Pause

EMMA                   Can I ask a rather personal question, Frank? How do you feel about life?

FRANK                  How do I feel about life? I don't know. I can't say I feel good. And I can't say I feel bad. I can't say I feel anything at all.

Pause

EMMA                   And how do you feel about that?

FRANK                  I can't say I feel anything at all.

EMMA                   You feel alive though?

FRANK                  Do I feel alive? Not really. I haven't felt alive for a very long time.

Silence

EMMA                   Frank, I've been thinking I might go away for a while. Not that you'll miss me. I'll be back, eventually.

FRANK                  You off on your holidays, then?

EMMA                   That's right. A sort of holiday.

FRANK                  Where's it to be this year? Bognor? Brighton?

EMMA Poland, actually.

FRANK Poland? You don't want to go there. Give me West Wittering any day.

EMMA I've got some research I want to do. Some people I want to see. I want to collect their stories. All their stories, and their friends' stories, and the stories of the people they met.

FRANK Funny stories?

EMMA No, Frank. Not very funny. But I want to collect them anyway. Before they're forgotten.

FRANK I used to know a fellow told funny stories. In the Dog and Partridge. Used to come in, have a drink and a bit of a chat, then... - no, that wasn't him... He used to... I forget, no matter.

EMMA I'm exhausted. I was sitting at my desk just now and I suddenly realised I'd been fast asleep for almost an hour.

Pause

I had this dream. I am here, in the garden. I look out beyond the fence and there, on the common, playing on the grass, is a little girl. She is skipping with a rope, in the sunlight. In the distance there are trees, dark and silent, but in the sunlight everything is bright and beautiful. The little girl is wearing a white dress. Her name is Hannah. She is my sister. She stops her skipping and looks at me. Then slowly she backs away from me, step by step, out of the sunlight and into the shade. She disappears into the trees.

Pause

Do you ever feel that everything... that your whole life's work, everything you've strived for, all you've tried to achieve... do you ever feel that the whole damned show is really just a waste of time?

FRANK I wouldn't know. I've never tried to achieve anything.

Pause

I had a dream too. I think it was a dream.

EMMA Do you remember it?

FRANK I don't exactly remember. I just caught myself thinking something. But what I was thinking didn't make sense unless I'd dreamed this dream.

EMMA I see. And what was your dream?

FRANK I think I dreamed that Anna was here.

Pause

I just caught myself thinking: I must tell Anna that. I thought she was here, you see. I seemed to remember her being here. She isn't here, is she?

EMMA What did you want to tell her?

FRANK I wanted to tell her she had the most beautiful voice.

Pause

When she started to sing, she took my breath away.

Pause

I never told her that. I never got round to telling her.

Pause

I thought maybe if I told her... maybe if I told her that, she wouldn't go away.

Pause

EMMA You did tell her that.

Pause

FRANK She isn't here, is she?

EMMA No. She won't be coming back now. She doesn't live here any more.

Silence

Slow fade to BLACK

CURTAIN