

THE ANGRY ROADS

Edward Bond

A play for Big Brum

Casarotto Ramsay Ltd

(2 9 13 – revised 23 9 13

Norman

Father

City

Now

## ONE

A first floor room in a suburban Edwardian house converted into flats. It is clean but sparse and has a sense of neglect. The walls uniform dark dull grey with a slight green tone. Left, a double window. Plain curtains, the same colour as the walls but lighter. They reach down halfway between the bottom of the window and the ground. In the back wall right a wooden door. It leads to a short passage and an unseen outer door. It has two panels. The wood is stained brown lighter than the walls. The stain is chipped and towards the bottom scratched and scuffed. A brass Chinese dragon door handle. In the right wall an open doorway to the kitchen and other rooms. All the furniture is wood. A medium-size middle-class solid dark table worn by use. Two chairs, one bent-wood utility, the other more formal with a padded leather seat and back fastened with brass studs, the leather worn and torn in one or two places. A medium-size carpet with an Edwardian gentlemen's club design. Threadbare patches at the doorways, below the window and under the table.

Night. Curtains open. Street lighting outside. Norman is in his mid-teens. He sits in the utility chair at the table. He sorts through a medium-size plastic-wood crate of out-of-date toys. He assesses them dispassionately. He drops the damaged toys in a bin liner. The rest he stacks neatly on the floor by the table. A few toys about which he is undecided are on the table. After a while he stops. Stares abstractly into space. Comes to with a little start. Inspects and selects more toys. Suddenly he gets up and goes straight to the window. He holds a tin puppet. He looks down into the street. Cranes left to look along the street. Nothing. He turns back to the room. Stares across at the toys. Goes back to them thoughtfully. Hesitates what to do with the tin puppet. The outside door is heard opening and shutting. He puts the tin puppet on the table. Sorts toys. Slight pause.

Father comes in. Late forties or early fifties. Lean. Stubble. Work jeans and shirt. Loose comfortable street jacket. He carries a small carton. He puts it on the table. Doesn't look at Norman. Takes off his jacket. Hangs it on the back of his padded chair. Goes through to the kitchen. Silence.

Norman            (Sorting Calls.) All right? (Stops for a moment. Silence. He examines a toy. Calls) Kettle's hot. (Silence. Sorts) My stuff. Played with that. Antiques now.

Father comes back. He carries a mug of tea. He sits at the table. Opens the carton. Heated take-away food. Eats with his hands.

Norman            Working late? (Father eats) Out with the mates?

Silence. Suddenly Father grimaces. Stands. Goes out to the kitchen.

Norman            (Toys) Take them up somewhere. Right place. Not round here. Fetch a few quid.

Father comes back unscrewing the cap on a plastic bottle of tomato ketchup. Shakes it on the food.

Norman            Been with your mates? (Toy car) Used to carry this round for hours. (Drops it in bin liner) Clutter. Chuck em out. Rid of it. Don't know

why I didn't do it ages ago. (No response) Been walking? (Looks at Father) On your own? (No response. Examines toys) That won't help. If you'd come in straight from work I'd've got something. Eat together.

There are some toys on the table. Father calmly brushes them off.

Norman        Don't do that? Oi! What's that for? (Picking up the toys) I can get something for these. Look the head's come off! (Stares at Father) What you do that for? Just because tomorrow it's --. Look it's broke. Been walking. This time of night. Come in. Rotten mood. I thought I'd stay up. In case. Thanks a lot.

Father stands. Goes towards the kitchen. Stops. Comes back. Raps on the table.

Norman        What? The toys? You think I got the toys out to --

Father goes out to the kitchen.

.Norman       (Calls) God the ideas that go on in your head. I was waiting up so I needed something to do. The toys! -- God you'd have to walk miles to work that one out! You've been building up to this for weeks. Always the same. Every year. Every time.

Norman is going to put toys back on the table. Changes his mind. Stacks them on the floor. Father comes back. He carries a carton of milk. Sits at table. Pours milk into the tea. Eats.

Norman        Why didn't you tell your mates? They know anyway. Everyone does. Could've told them what tomorrow is. Look it's broke. They'd've taken you out for a drink. Take your mind off it. Be a help. You'd rather brood. (Father raps table.) No. (Father raps table. Gestures to bin liner and crate) No. They can stay there. This is my house too. If it wasn't the toys you'd find something else. Every year. Even when I was a kid. When it came round I had to play quietly in case you --. "Don't bang about with the toys." When Mother was here she said I mustn't even --

Father brushes his hand across the empty table in the same gesture he used to brush off the toys. Short silence.

Norman        You think I'd bring out the toys to stir up the past? Bad enough without me adding to it.

Father gets up and goes out to the kitchen.

Norman        (Examines toys. Takes one from the good pile and throws it in the bin liner. To himself.) Forgot the milk. Sit here. Past midnight. Sorting old toys. My father forgets to put milk in his tea because he's a victim of the past. Tormented. Tea no milk. Punishment. (Slight pause) People go round carrying a spade to bury themselves.

Father comes back with a spoon. Doesn't look at Norman. Sits. Stirs his tea. Drinks.

Norman           (Apologetically) Sorry I said mother. Shouldn't've said. – (Grunts) Yeh. Sorry I stayed up. Sorry I tried to help. (Throws toy in the bin liner. Fiddles with the tin puppet) Sort it out yourself. Your problem. Tired of being blamed for what I haven't done. Anyone would think I -- (Stops abruptly) Oh.

Norman gets up. Puts the tin puppet back on the table. Goes to the window. Looks out. A little silence.

Norman           (Very sad) You've been round there.

Father rattles the mini-puppet on the table.

Norman           Round there . . . (Going to table) – and my toys! (Suddenly angry. Snatches the tin puppet. Throws it at bin liner. Misses) Its got nothing to do with it! Toys! Toys! Toys! – anything! -- to make me feel guilty! Its you! You did it! I don't even know what Im supposed to be guilty of! If it was up to you I wouldn't --! You don't tell me. Nothing! It must've been in the papers. Where are they? Torn! You tore them up! Thrown away! (Father stirs his tea. Norman becomes quiet) Its not just tomorrow. Its every day. The whole year. When I was a kid I thought my toys were crying because of that. They didn't want to be in the house. Used to ask them what it was. When I was a kid. Really. Didn't expect an answer. Ask them for the sake of asking someone. -- Why cant you tell me?

Father stands. Takes the cup out to the kitchen.

Norman           Will it be like this next year?

Father comes from the kitchen. He looks at Norman for the first time. Stares. Goes to the table. Knocks on it.

Norman           That's a lie. (Father knocks) You're lying. Im not listening. Its a lie. (Father knocks) . . . Yes -- I can guess that! (Father knocks) The taxi? Your taxi? -- I know that already. So? Then? (Father knocks) No you're lying again. You always lie.

Father sits down in a gesture of weary despair.

Norman           I know you're lying. I know a lot. ( Slight pause.) Mother told me. (Father stares at Norman) Before she left.

Father stands. Rigid. Eye catches sight of food. Snatches a crust. Stares at it. Moves rapidly. Goes towards kitchen door. Turns. Goes towards street door. Turns back. Stops still. Abruptly goes to table. Sits sideways from Norman. Hunched over his arms on the table. Stares down at them. He has forgotten Norman. Silence.

Norman           Im here. (Pause.) She had to tell me. Or I wouldnt know why she was leaving us. She couldn't leave and not --. Listen -- Im here! She couldn't leave me and not --

Suddenly Father looks at Norman. Norman stops in shock. Short silence. Father hammers chaotically on the table

Norman        No! She had to tell me! She couldn't leave -- just go -- you think its wrong to tell that to a six year old kid? -- she had a right to tell me -- so her son would understand why she left --

Father hammers out angry regular isolated beats.

Norman        -- your taxi -- the other woman -- all the -- she didn't understand it ! -- she didn't know herself -- she was telling me so I could tell her -- a kid! -- what it meant -- so she could understand! She had to tell me! What else could she do? She wasn't just leaving you. She left me. Disappeared. Because of what she couldn't understand in this house. (Father stops hammering) If she'd gone to the moon she couldn't get far enough away. She couldn't live here. (Flat) She left me to live with it. A kid. She said she knew she shouldn't but she couldn't do anything else. She told me so that I'd forgive her. I was a kid. I knew there was something she couldnt tell me because she didn't know what it was.

Silence. Father has withdrawn into himself

Norman        People shouldn't do things like that to a kid. You could make it right -- now -- before tomorrow --. (Imitates Father's rap on the table) You could tell me. In your way. (Father pulls the cup towards him) No you don't need any milk. (Quiet) Why did you go back there tonight? It doesn't help. (Picks up a toy. Does nothing with it) If Mother hadn't told me I wouldn't know anything. I dont know how you lost your voice. All I know you could've been born dumb. I want to go away. You could look after yourself. You communicate with your work mates. Get on with them. Write notes. Tell them things. In here in this house -- you don't write for me. You'd have to say too much. I have to work it out. Bang bang bang. You could've learnt a sign language. Something. You don't trust me. You don't trust yourself. I don't know if you even speak to yourself anymore. Perhaps there's just silence in your head. Can you remember your voice? The sound you made? Sometimes the table creaks and I think its you. I start to answer. Start a conversation with a piece of wood. (Taps table) Least it says the truth. One night I woke up. Nightmare. Heard my heart beating. Banging. I thought it was you saying something. Talking to me. Im haunted by sounds no one else notices. I ought to go away. While I can. When Im here on my own I dont feel lonely. When you come in I feel it -- Im alone. Im sitting here on my own now. When you come in tomorrow I may be gone. D'you know I keep a case packed under my bed? The essentials. I ought to go. Mother did.

Father shudders. He taps on the table quietly a few times. Then he turns his chair a little towards Norman. Lifts his head so that Norman can read his face. It is blank. Taps on the table.

Norman        No -- that's what I know already. (Father goes on tapping) It's when you drove

a taxi. You pretended to work late nights. Mother told me. You told her taxis earn more at night. You were with another woman. (He grips Father's hands to stop him tapping) No not then -- *that* night when you left the woman's place -- (He knocks on the table with Father's hand. Lets the hand go. Father taps -- spasmodically, awkwardly) -- when you left her place. She came down to the street. Yes? She followed you? That what you mean? Rowing. Yes I know. Mother told me. The woman was rowing you in the street. What about? (Father tries to twist away) What about? You don't row in the street about nothing. You could talk then! What was it about? It wasn't about your tip! Mother couldn't tell me. She didn't know. You tell me. (Silence. Father's hands twitch on his face as if trying to tap on it.) Bed. Its time. (Nods at toys) Sort them in the morning.

Norman starts to move the crate and bin liner. Father watches him for a moment. Twists awkwardly in his chair to reach into the pocket of his jacket hanging on the back. Takes out a dead pigeon. Its soiled with mud. For a second he holds the dead pigeon in his hand. Stares at it. Throws it on the table. Doesn't look to see Norman's reaction. Glances round as if to find something to wipe his hand on. Wipes it on his shirt. Norman stares at the bird.

Norman        Dead. Pidgeon. Dead for days. Why did you -- ? (Father raises his hand to knock the table. Leaves it for a moment in the air. Lets it sink) It was in the road. Run over where you ran the woman down. Same spot. (Father jerks to stare at Norman) Exact -- was it? Spot you killed her. It would be. That's what happens. Life. Same out there as it is in here. That why you brought it? Tell me that? (Silence. Looks at bin liner) Rubbish in that one. Crap. Wouldnt get anything for 'em. The rest'll fetch something. Specialist line in antiques. Toys. Like old records. Vynol. Collectors pay for that.

Norman picks up the pigeon. Takes it to the window. Opens the window. Throws the Pigeon out.

Norman        Enjoy the trip. Your last.

Norman closes the window. Starts to go towards the kitchen. Stops. Leans his back against the wall.

Norman        No one ever leans against the wall in their own house. Do that in strangers' houses. -- Rowing in the street. Wasn't one of the rows you had with mother. Everything and nothing. Dont go to another woman for the row you can have with your wife. -- Funny --- dead carrier-pigeon comes with the message. You want to tell me something or you wouldn't have picked it up. Wouldn't have brought it. If I flap its wings will it croak? (Father stares at his arms on the table.)What was the row about? I can see it. She ran out of the house. Down the steps. Hair all over the place. Know there's steps. Used to pass them on my way to school. You were already in your taxi? Must've been. That's why she ran. Did she try to open the door? Tug it. (Father knocks) No that's your old lies again. If she was so het up she ran down the stairs she must've opened the -- (Father knocks. Harsh sing-song) Lie -- lie -- lie! Go on! (Father knocks) Of course you can remember! She yanked at the door! I can

tell that and I wasn't there! (Father knocks) Don't lie! (Norman hammers his fist on the wall) Listen! -- the house knows you're lying! (Hammers the wall) Tell him!

Silence.

Norman (Exhausted) Its -- its - the craziness of the past that --. (Tries again) She pulled open the door and --. (Goes to the table. Sits) Why're you agitated? It was twenty years ago. In the past. No one else will hear now. Its just me and the walls. No need for an upset. She opened the taxi door and shouted. No one else heard then. Traffic? People? City? Dont hear the shouting in their own streets. You're the only one who knows. (Norman knocks on the table) She shouted-- and you started to -- (Father knocks Norman's hand away.) You see ! Agitated! Upset! She got in! That's why you couldn't drive off. In your cab. Cant drive home with her in the -- mother would know --.You got out. Open her door. Pull her out. Suppose she stumbled on the street. Is that it? No -- it is! It is! - you got back in the cab -- to drive off -- she's come round the front -- stood there.-- blocking your --. What was she shouting? What was the row? (Father hammers on the table) Did she try to -- yes I know it was long ago but you remember! Did she try to drag you back in the house? She left the street door open when she ran down the --. (Father begins to rap a slow regular denial beat with both fists clench together. Jeering) Go on! Bang bang bang! You looked at your watch. See -- I know! You had to -- my mother's waiting -- if she thought what you'd been up to you'd have to give up your nights out on the --

Father hammers in agitation.

Norman You're trapped. She's stood there. In front of your cab. What's she shouting? You got out --. (Father hammers rapidly) You must have. She's stood in your way so you cant drive your -- you must've got out. (Rapid hammering) Oh you backed! -- reversed -- then tried to swerve and drive on and she ran in front again so you couldn't go -- you got out of your cab again -- again -- you did -- had to -- you pushed her-- that did it -- made it physical -- made it easier to kill the woman --you'd touched -- what did you say? -- threaten -- beg -- tell me what happened! I know this far, got this -- tell me and its over! -- you cant leave it like -- bits -- hanging in the air. (Defeated) Useless. Useless. . (Angry) Is that when you lost your voice? Tell me! What did you say -- your last words? -- everyone else says their last words when they're dying -- that's normal ! -- you said yours and go on living -- Oh what a father Ive had! -- he said his last words to the woman he was killing -- what did you say? -- shouted as you got back in your cab -- jerked the car forward -- struck-- hit her legs -- warning--. Ugh! She didn't move. Stood in the front -- so you --. Is that wrong? I got it wrong? No its not wrong -- if its wrong you'd tell me -- make an excuse to -- in your cab --- look at her through the windscreen. Is *that* when you said your last words? Whispered. God dont tell me you shouted at the woman when you kill her -- not human to shout when you -- whispered -- hissed -- your last -- she saw your lips moving -- she wouldn't get out of the -- stood there -- still -- stood there and you said your last -- what did you say ? -- tell me your last words -- (taps with one finger on the table) -- whisper --



whisper – tell me your last words --they're stuck in your throat -- choking -- tell me so your voice'll come back-- (Father starts to knock. Norman grips his hands to stop him. Struggle) -- no say it the proper way! – now! -- when you knock I feel you're hitting me -- say it! – Im waiting out on the street by your cab! -- see me now! – say it! – I want to hear my father's last words in the proper way --

Father stamps on the ground.

Norman        That's a lie! Your feet are lying ! (He lets go of Father's hands. Father hammers on the table.) Lying! Lying! Your hands are lying! All of you's a lie! -- Everything Ive just said is true. All that Mother told me -- I worked out the rest. (Slight pause) What happened next? When you got out of the cab and looked down at what you'd done. She told me the "before" but not the "after bit." I was six. She lied to me then ran away to hide her lie. You shouldn't lie to kids. Lie about Father Christmas. Not about what matters. Kids know. I didn't tell her I knew she was lying. I was too ashamed to tell her. (Turns. Stares at toys. Flat) This gets nowhere. Late. Past bedtime. . . You go walking there. Come back in a state. You'll pay for that tomorrow. She's dead but she can make you suffer. In the dark. When the time comes. You'll know it exact because you looked at your watch. You rev and run her over. She couldn't row. No voice after that. You cant stop the silence. I suppose she died to find her voice. In this house you learn to think like that. -- Why did you lose your voice? You're not dead. No excuse. You ran her down ? Her fault -- stood in your way. You dont lose your voice for that. An accident. Taxi drivers live with accidents -- pile ups -- skids – crashes – jay walkers – suicides -- you lose your voice for that the whole city 'ld be silent. If that's why you lost it it'd come back. Normal. No one lives in permanent shock. (Slight pause) You were dumb -- sealed up – before I was born.

Father stands. Norman doesn't notice.

Norman        I don't know the colour of your cab. Was it black? Normal. Green. Must've been some colour.

Father swings the table away from Norman. Norman stays seated in shock. Father stares at him a moment. Then he hammers violently on the table.

Norman        What?

Father, a burst of violent hammering.

Norman        What? I dont understand! (Father stops). . . What are you trying to -- ?

Father hammers again. Stops.

Norman        I was there? -- There? -- when you killed the -- ?

Father hammers on the table. Stops.

Norman        (Bemused shock) I was there when you killed the --?

Father snatches up his jacket. Gets into it at lightning speed. Stands rigid hugging himself. Still. Norman stares at him in silence.

Norman        He'll be saying I did it next.

Father runs lurching out through the door.

Norman        (Calls) Why are you scared of me?

Norman goes out through the door.

Norman        (Off) I wasn't even born.

The room is empty.

## TWO

Same. The table, toys, crate and bin liner are as they were.

Norman comes from the kitchen. He carries a case. He hesitates. Uncertain. Glances round the room. Turns to go to the door. The sound of it being opened and shut outside. He steps back. Goes into the kitchen

Father comes in through the door. His left arm is in a sling. The empty sleeve of his jacket hangs from his shoulder. He stops in the middle of the room. He is lost in thought. After a few moments Norman comes from the kitchen.

Norman        Heard you come in. (He notices the sling.) What's happened? What've you done?

Father takes no notice of him. Goes to the table. Sits. Takes a packet from his pocket. Puts it on the table. Stares at it.

Norman        What's happened? (Goes to the table. Picks up the packet. Reads the label.) Pain killers. You've been to the A and E. Jeesh. You haven't been fighting? You slipped? --You didn't fall off the scaffold? (Father becomes aware of Norman. He makes a slight ducking gesture with his head) But you fell? You had a fall at work? (No response.) Is it just your arm? You're all right? Nothing else?

Father turns wearily away from Norman. He fidgets out of his jacket. Drops it on the floor. Norman picks it up. Holds it.

Norman        Is it broken? (No response. Tablets. Reads label) Every four hours. When did you take them? Is it broken? (Father makes a brusque minimal gesture) A fracture? (Father half-gestures to his head) Hair fracture. -- (Slight sigh) How long is this going to take? You can't work with your arm in a --

Father turns abruptly and stares Norman full in the face. Norman turns away. Hangs the jacket on the back of the other chair.

Norman        (Flat) You're scared. Dodgy enough working on scaffolding your age. Job for younger blokes. You can't shout out if something's going wrong. Up there. Put your mates in danger. (Slight shrug) If you're going to start having accidents -- (Stops abruptly. Shrugs. Low) Boss couldn't get insurance to cover you -- cost too much. Your mates wouldn't like it anyway, you causing accidents. You shouldn't have gone in today. Mood you were in. If you hadn't run off I'd've told you. (Father half-taps the table once or twice.) Don't blame me. I wasn't there. Tired being blamed for what everyone else does. I didn't start the row. You came in. Rotten mood. You had the row. You weren't rowing to get to the bottom of anything. Rowing to take your mind off it. This -- your duffed-up arm -- it's all part of it. A side-show. That's your life. (Examines the tablets) Pink. -- If it wasn't your arm you'd find something else. When did you take these? You due yet? (No response.) Aren't I going to be told? (He sits) The scaffolding -- that it? You up on top? You slipped? -- no.

(Thinks. Twiddles his fingers) Something dropped on you? No -- wouldn't explain a fracture on your --. You dropped something? It's not that? -- still wouldn't explain --. You dropped something -- 'fraid it'd fall on someone passing underneath the --? That still don't say. Warning sign: pedestrians don't walk under the -- use the other footpath -- anyway there's safety nets so nothing can fall on any -- (Picks up packet. Thinks) You dropped something. (Tosses packet on table) It fell. Caught in the safety net. Something heavy. Metal wrench. Hanging there. Anyone -- pedestrian -- your mates -- was to pass under it -- drop on their head -- metal wrench -- heavy duty -- solid death -- always happens because it shouldn't. You panic -- reach down -- get it before it--can't shout warning -- (He slowly slides his hand towards the packet) reach before it --

Father gets up. Draws curtains. Stands facing them. Head bowed.

Norman        (Hand slides) -- ugly metal brute -- reach it -- before -- someone's (He picks up the packet and gently drops it) dead . . . You reach down -- stretch -- slip -- hit the scaffolding. Crack. Didn't tell the mates what happened, say what it was. Cause an accident -- 'fraid of the sack. Stick it out till its knock-off. Make a dash to A and E. (Checks label) When you due? (No response) The wrench still hanging in the safety net. (Silence). . . I want to know why I'm here. I want to know why I stay. Why I don't go away. Why I listen to you and talk for you. Why. What's the point of going on? What's the point of this place? What's the point of anything. If it wasn't your arm it'd be something worse. . . (No response) Sometimes I get so angry. I shake. Fists clenched. (No response) I was lied to when I was six. It didn't matter then because I knew everything. Now it matters. I don't know. You've always lied to me. Every time you hit the table or knock a cup or slam the door it's a lie. When I speak for you I tell your lies. Tell your lies to myself -- lie to myself on your behalf. Now I've begun to tell my own lies. I can't go on much more . . . Why did you say I was there? What sort of a thing to say is that? What did you row about?

Father turns away from the windows. Goes to the table. Reaches for the packet.  
Norman picks it up.

Norman        What was the row about?

Father indicates his fractured arm. He is shaking. Gestures pleadingly.

Norman        What was the row about? What did the woman say?

Father taps on the table.

Norman        It's a lie! It's a lie! You can still try all that! It's a lie!

Father shakes. Lifts his left arm with his right arm. Trembles.

Norman        What did she say ?

Father goes to the kitchen.

Norman            (Calls) You rowed! Rowed! Rowed! Rowed! Rowed! What about?

Father comes from the kitchen. He carries a cup of water. He holds it out to Norman. Quivering. The cup shakes.

Norman            What did the woman say?

Norman snatches the cup from Father. Father goes to the window. Faces the drawn curtains, Stretches his arms wide as if he is embracing a vista or holding onto something.

Norman            She was there. Stood in front of the taxi. You sat in the cab. She shouted. We got that far. What did she shout? You sat there cringing -- cringing --

Father turns. Stiff with rage. Marches to the table. Slams his fist on the table twice.

Norman            What?

Father slams his fist on the table twice.

Norman            I don't understand. What -- ?

Father steps back in fear. He goes to the wall. Cowers sideways against it.

Norman            What does it mean? I don't --

Father gestures at the table as if he is erasing the sound of the two blows. Norman hits his fist in his palm twice.

Norman            You did this !

Norman goes to father. He hits his fist in his palm twice again.

Norman            This! What does --- ?

Father turns to Norman. Tries to grab his hands. Hold them. Norman pushes him off.

Norman            What? What?

Father goes to the table. Sprawls across it. Desperately wipes his arm across it trying to erase the sound of the knocks.

Norman            What does -- ? . . . There were two. Two people. With you.

Father collapses in the chair.

Norman            There were two people. I knew. Yesterday. I knew it. Where did the other one come from to be in the -- ? -- tell me -- please -- (He goes to Father) Tell me! Dont stop. Two. You owe me the -- (Stoops) Please. Please. Help me father. (Father touches the air almost gently as if he were trying to knock on it) Two.

Who is the other? Your woman's in the cab. (Father rocks his chair slightly)  
 She got out. Your woman got out of your cab. Went to the front of the –  
 (Father touches the air. Surprise) No? – not there – she's not there ? Where -- ?  
 (Father stretches out his arm very straight.) She went back in the house. Back  
 in the house? What did you --? Why did you stay? (Father raps on Norman's  
 body) No – no -- I don't want to know what you -- ? Why didn't you drive?  
 (Norman walks away. Father sprawls on the table.) You got out and stood on  
 the pavement -- why didnt you drive – drive away and nothing'll happen –  
 drive – drive -- get in the car and – (Father holds up his fractured arm stiff in  
 the air) -- you stood there on the pavement and wasted my life while you wait  
 – for what? (He turns to look at Father) She came out of the house -- with the  
 other -- ? – came down the steps – she's carrying --. (Father picks up the cup)  
 She's carrying a -- no! I don't want to be told ! (Father holds out the cup to  
 Norman) She's carrying a baby. (Father groans) A baby. She put it in the cab.  
 You took it out and gave it to -- pushed it – tried to push it – pushed it – make  
 her take the – take it back – pushed – why didn't you drive away? – you --  
 stood there on the pavement and used my life to -- (Father vomits air. Stuffs  
 the cold food in his mouth to stop it. Chokes.Spits. Writhes) Why didn't you  
 drive away ! -- drive drive drive ! – I don't want to have to know! -- you got  
 back in the cab – and she's there! – stood in front of the – through the  
 windscreen – holding the baby up for you to – (Father tugs the sling from his  
 fractured arm. Yelps in pain. Stuffs the sling in his mouth) -- you jerked the  
 car at the -- hit the woman – hit her legs -- the baby's thrown on the top of the  
 -- hits the windscreen and you – yank – to open the door – yank – to get out  
 – cant -- stuck – (Father tears the sling into strips) -- put the windscreen  
 wipers on to wipe it off -- throw it in the -- you drove back – revved -- to get  
 away from – swerve – the baby caught – caught on the wipers – dragged back  
 and forward on the – the woman reaches to get it -- (Father gags his mouth  
 with the strips. Winds them round his face. Howls) – you get out -- toss the kid  
 down in the road – go to kick it -- and what? (Father howls) – what? – that it?  
 -- tell me what – (Half-imitates Father's howl ) – the cab – you get back in –  
 and she's there! – clinging to the front of your – again! -- crawling up the  
 – I don't want to be told! – to hear! -- you drove over her – jerked and drove  
 over – (Father binds strips over his eyes) – her – and drove off down the –  
 drive down the street – drive and you see – (Father howls) – see – don't tell  
 what you see -- see – the driving mirror – in the – (Shouting at Father's head)  
 – see – see – see -- (Norman covers his head. Rips strips from Father's hands.  
 Presses them on his face) -- blind! -- let me be blind! -- the baby in the road  
 – not hear! – blind for a little while! -- the woman reaching for the –  
 stretching for – (Father stumbles to the bin liner and crate. Takes out toys.  
 Pushes them at Norman. The tin man. Howls. Gifts.They fall. Scream.  
 Fracture) – baby in the – mercy mercy mercy -- get out -- walk back – mercy  
 mercy mercy -- engine running – (Father pulls strips from Norman) -- pick the  
 baby up – drop it on the woman -- try to tug the shawl closer round its --  
 comfort – cant -- no time to do the – years to do the – take years to do the --  
 (Father binds strips round his face. Over his mouth and eyes. Mummifies his  
 head.) – go back to the cab – run – feet on the -- get in -- see in the road the –  
 smash the driving mirror -- bits -- jagged glass – kid's shit smeared on the  
 windscreen -- (Norman goes to the crate. Stares into it as if he could find  
 something. Doesn't touch) – drive back – know it – I know it -- revs back to

the – know it – gets there -- delib' (Cant say the word) – delib' – delib' -- revs  
over the woman -- child – skid – car rocks – cradle – crush them into each  
other – delib' – delib' –

Norman hits the table as he tries to say the word. Father is unconscious. Norman sits.  
Stares before him. Quiet. Table toys cup packet crate bin liner. Silence.

Norman        Deliberately. (Pause) Kid back in body. He doesn't look at Father) It was your  
son. You said your last words to him. Then you lost your voice. How did I  
know all this? They live in the past. They want you to go back there with  
them. Sort out their lives for them. You cant. I wasn't there. How did I know  
it? It seeps out of the silence. -- Tomorrow he wont know this. It didn't  
happen. He took an overdose of tablets. Passed out. Not even an hallucination.

He goes to the curtains. Lifts a flap. Looks out.

Norman        The worst thing that can happen is not knowing it happened. Then it didn't  
happen -- so its always happening. (Lets the flap fall. Half turns back to the  
room) I heard my father's voice.

He goes into the kitchen. Comes back with his case.

Norman        Look in in a few days when you're out. For the rest of my things. Last time I  
speak to you. You cant hear. Keep the toys. You should get something for  
them. -- Is it possible? They didnt tell me I had a brother.

He goes out. The outside door shuts. Silence. Father stirs -- the sound of the door shutting is  
in his brain. He sits up. Looks round vaguely in the direction of the sound. Touches the strips  
on his face but hardly feels them. Doesn't see the mess. Knocks on the table to call Norman.  
Vaguely feels his throat. Gets up. Goes into the kitchen.

Slight pause. Off, two knocks.