

TWO

INT. THE SHAKESPEARE. 13.00

IT'S FULL WITH SHOPPERS, LUNCHTIME DRINKERS, CURIOUS TOURISTS, A FEW STUDENTS AND OLD MEN WITH NOWHERE TO GO EXCEPT THEIR USUAL PLACE AT THE USUAL TIME.

AT THE BAR, LEANING OVER IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION SO THAT ONLY THEY CAN HEAR EACH OTHER, ARE GERRY THINKWELL, A MIDDLE-AGED REGULAR WITH MUCH TO SAY ABOUT MANY THINGS AND WEARING A JACKET THAT BELONGS ON A YOUNGER MAN, WITH MS ELLEN CLAYGATE, WITH HER CHECKOUT SMILE FROM HER JOB AT TESCO EXPRESS.

GERRY PLACES HIS PINT ON THE BAR, MOVES IT WITH HIS FINGER INTO A TIDY PLACE, AND QUIETLY UTTERS THE CULMINATION OF A LIFETIME OF PONDERING ABOUT THIS AND THAT.

GERRY I know these things, Ellen. In the beginning was the word and once the word was spoken it was also heard and once

ELLEN (Interrupting above) but what I'm saying is

GERRY (Interrupting above) and once heard it was internalised and then heard as if outside and then

ELLEN (Interrupting above) like the voice of God?

GERRY I've not finished, pet.

ELLEN Sorry.

GERRY Then the voice in the disembodied was given its freedom and so

ELLEN (Interrupting above) who by?

GERRY I've not finished, pet.

ELLEN Sorry.

GERRY Once given freedom it was no longer heard

ELLEN Are you sure about that?

GERRY I am. Now do you want another drink?

ELLEN I hear the voice.

GERRY Not possible, Ellen. I know these things. Not possible

ELLEN But if it's the voice of God

GERRY God is dead.

ELLEN They kept that quiet.

GERRY Now do you want another drink or not?

ELLEN I think I'd better; after that news.

GERRY TRIES TO CATCH THE BARMAN'S EYE.

ELLEN Gerry

GERRY What?

ELLEN If the voice is no longer heard why do I hear the voice?

GERRY You don't. Not possible. If it was possible I'd know.

ELLEN But I do hear. When alone. Doesn't happen often.

GERRY Take it from me, Ellen. It doesn't happen at all.

ELLEN It's like a movie going on but indistinct. The voice belongs to an American. He's alright, I don't worry about it.

GERRY I would, pet. I would worry.

ELLEN He says nice things, comforting things.

GERRY Does he say "would you like another drink, pet?"

ELLEN No

BARMAN What's it to be, Gerry? Same again?

GERRY Same again. And a Jack Daniels on the rocks for Ellen's imaginary friend.

ELLEN He doesn't drink.

GERRY Really? I'll have to drink it then