

Across stage. Doctor Holman's surgery. A desk divides Holman from Don and Ruth. Holman removes a blood pressure meter from Don's arm, and begins to check his case notes.

Don I need something in writing! A signature

Ruth On the consent form – to take to the disability test centre.

Hol I see. - The new pills: do they make you drowsy?

Don They give me dreams. Now if you'd sign the letter...

Hol What sort of dreams?

Ruth Black people chasing him: around the West End. They never get him though!

Don Not that I'd mind if they did.

Ruth He's not a racist.

Don I loved my time in Africa!

Ruth - Nor am I.

Don I find black women very beautiful.

Hol (*inspecting notes*) Yes, quite. Well there's obviously life in the old dog yet. We'll up the dose of Amnium for the insomnia. Now: you understand about the MRSA? You're a carrier but you're OK yourself at the moment. But others must take special care, especially with these ulcers.... - Now, I see you lost your licence last year.

Ruth Crashed. - Into a row of bollards.

Don They had no right to be there.

Ruth The council stuck them in overnight.

Don I always take that corner wide!

Hol I see... but the test is in a special car on a private circuit, I take it?

Ruth - So he can't kill anyone. (*Don shoots an irritated glance*)

Hol Well, over the next couple of days I want you to put yourself through your paces. Driving is stressful, Don, and I need to see the blood pressure stands up, We don't want you having another stroke! So I'm going to ask you to subject yourself to a little exercise!

Throughout the next exchanges he checks Don's vital reactions, then shines pen-torch in an irritated Don's eyes and moves forefinger in front of them.

Ruth Joe helps him with his swimming twice a week.

Don I can swim on my own.

Hol Get out and about a bit!

Ruth Joe'll take you to the art shop!

Hol Still doing the water colours?

Don Oils!

Ruth - From photographs. Bit on the small side, I always think.

Don No-one's asking you.

Ruth More like little postcards.

Don They're miniatures!

Ruth And Joe is taking him to Pizza Express tomorrow!

Don Dump.

Ruth And shooting the day after...

Hol (*Writing case-notes*) My god, not still using the pop guns?

Ruth Only clay pigeons. - Joe operates the trap.

Hol Jack-of-all-trades, this Joe!

Don He's a bloody awful driver!

Hol (*shining light in Don's ears*) Yes, well as long he gets you from A to B.

Don I don't want to go from A to B. I want to go off the map!

Hol (*still distracted with tests*) Off-road, eh?

Don The Skeleton Coast! Peru!

Hol Give me a cough, Don.

Don Macchu Picchu! That's where I want to bloody well go – not A to B!

Hol So! Don: hunt, shoot, fish – do what you like! All being well you can give the test a go - (*Casts wry glance at Ruth*) if only for the experience, eh? Come and see me in a few days and I'll have the form ready for collection. There are a couple of other things we should talk about as well. - The eyes are fine, by the way.

Don See! I can see! He can see I can see! People think I'm blind - putting obstacles in my way. Talking behind my back - telling me I can't do things when I know I can! Why won't people listen to me when I'm telling the truth!

Lights focus on Joe as he wheels Don out of the surgery.

Joe (aside) Conversation is a consulting-room. Words are like instruments of diagnosis - stethoscopes we sound each other out with; thermometers that measure each other's moods. - Intimacy is like health, always in the balance. It thrives or degenerates according to the regime we administer. Of course, total honesty is impossible, one doctors one's sentiments in accordance with the patient's constitution, so to speak. An overdose of truth can kill - or cure...