

Lennie looked startled and then in embarrassment hid his face against his knees. "I forgot again."

"Jesus Christ," George said resignedly. "Well—look, we're gonna work on a ranch like the one we come from up north."

"Up north?"

"In Weed."

"Oh, sure. I remember. In Weed."

"That ranch we're goin' to is right down there about a quarter mile. We're gonna go in an' see the boss. Now, look—I'll give him the work tickets, but you ain't gonna say a word. You jus' stand there and don't say nothing. If he finds out what a crazy bastard you are, we won't get no job, but if he sees ya work before he hears ya talk, we're set. Ya got that?"

"Sure, George. Sure I got it."

"O.K. Now when we go in to see the boss, what you gonna do?"

"I . . . I," Lennie thought. His face grew tight with thought. "I . . . ain't gonna say nothin'. Jus' gonna stan there."

"Good boy. That's swell. You say that over two, three times so you sure won't forget it."

Lennie droned to himself softly. "I ain't gonna say nothin' . . . I ain't gonna say nothin' . . . I ain't gonna say nothin'."

"O.K.," said George. "An' you ain't gonna do no bad things like you done in Weed, neither."

Lennie looked puzzled. "Like I done in Weed?"

"Oh, so ya forgot that too, did ya? Well, I ain't gonna remind ya, fear ya do it again."

A light of understanding broke on Lennie's face. "They run us outta Weed," he exploded triumphantly.

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I couldn't believe my ears. I knew the police used bad language, of course. But I thought it would come out more when they were under stress, with terrorists and such like, not on the phone to members of the public in the course of a routine inquiry. Unless, of course, she really was under stress. Could Matty, or whoever pushed him, have actually killed someone? A child, maybe?

'Maureen.'

'Yes, I'm still here.'

'Maureen, I'm not really a policewoman. I'm Jess.'

'Oh. I could feel myself blushing at my own stupidity.'

'You believed me, didn't you, you silly old bag.'

'Yes, I believed you.'

She could hear in my voice that she'd upset me, so she didn't try to make any more of it.

'Have you seen the papers?'

'No, I don't look at them.'

'We're in them.'

'Who's in them?'

'We are. Well, Martin and I are in them by name. What a laugh, eh?'

'What does it say?'

'It says that me and Martin and two other mystery, you know, people had a suicide pact.'

'That's not true.'

'Der. And it says I'm the Junior Minister for Education's daughter.'

'Why does it say that?'

'Because I am.'

'Oh.'

—What'll yeh have, Des?

—Coffee, thanks.

—Anything with it?

—No.

They were men who didn't eat buns in public.

—So, said Des.—Tell me about celticpunk. Dot com.

Des was Southside. *Rednecks and southsiders need not apply.* But that kind of shite didn't seem to matter much any more.

—So, said Jimmy.—Here's what happens. Someone googles the Irregulars and —

—Who'd do that? Des asked.

—Well, I did, said Jimmy.—Before I came out. Did you?

—Yeah.

They laughed.

—There yeh go, said Jimmy.—People like us. Old heads, music fans. And actually. Kids. D'you have kids, Des?

—I do, yeah, said Des.—Well. One.

—Boy or —

—She's in Germany, said Des.—With her mother.

—That's messy, said Jimmy.—Is it?

—It is, said Des.—I try to get over every six weeks or so.

—Does she speak English?

—I speak German.

—Do yeh?

—I do, yeah. I lived there for a long time.

—Back to google, yeah?

—Okay.

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④

Oh, yes, Mr. Kane.

And what's your name?

McCourt, sir.

That's not a Limerick name. Where did you get a name like that?

My husband, sir. He's from the North.

He's from the North and he leaves you here to get the relief from the Irish Free State. Is this what we fought for, is it?

I don't know, sir.

Why don't you go up to Belfast and see what the Orangemen will do for you, ah?

I don't know, sir.

You don't know. Of course you don't know. There's great ignorance in the world.

He looks out at the people. I said there's great ignorance in the world, and the people nod their heads and agree there's great ignorance in the world.

Show don't Tell (11)

- What are the characteristics of the dialogues 1-4?
- What do you learn about the characters and their relationships?
- Anything else?