

 Sleep had taken her far from the room and the bed and the known world, to a cold brook that slid over shifting gravel in a peculiar light, quietly dripping leaves, and she did not trust her feet to guide her. The light was like a taste or a smell and it would not leave her, even as the room reappeared and Joshua was standing there.

Rather than disturb her, he had made himself busy. She watched him light candles, revive the small fire that he'd set burning that morning. She willed herself back into the room and away from that cold sticking gloom, though she could not find the words to greet him. He found the plates of fish that had been delivered by a girl from the governor's staff earlier in the day, some time when Charlotte was at odds with time. She knew she had been thrashing when the girl arrived; hair wild, the covers back and the nightdress bunched around her hips as she fought the choking grip of her delirium. She pleaded with her eyes that her body had been taken over, but it must only have made it worse. The girl had stood transfixed in horror, set the plates on the table and fled.

①

③

From Monday to Friday, I come in at 8.30. I take an hour for lunch. I used to bring in my own sandwiches, but the food at home always went off before I could use it up, so now I get something from the high street. I always finish with a trip to Marks and Spencer on a Friday, which rounds off the week nicely. I sit in the staffroom with my sandwich and I read the newspaper from cover to cover, and then I do the crosswords. I take the *Daily Telegraph*, not because I like it particularly, but because it has the best cryptic crossword. I don't talk to anyone – by the time I've bought my Meal Deal, read the paper and finished both crosswords, the hour is almost up. I go back to my desk and work till 5.30. The bus home takes half an hour.

I make supper and eat it while I listen to *The Archers*. I usually have pasta with pesto and salad – one pan and one plate. My childhood was full of culinary contradiction, and I've dined on both hand-dived scallops and boil-in-the-bag cod over the years.

After much reflection on the political and sociological aspects of the table, I have realized that I am completely uninterested in food. My preference is for fodder that is cheap, quick and simple to procure and prepare, whilst providing the requisite nutrients to enable a person to stay alive.

After I've washed up, I read a book, or sometimes I watch television if there's a programme the *Telegraph* has recommended that day. I usually (well, always) talk to Mummy on a Wednesday evening for fifteen minutes or so. I go to bed around ten, read for half an hour and then put the light out. I don't have trouble sleeping, as a rule.

②

"Any you boys seen Curley?"

They swung their heads toward the door. Looking in was Curley's wife. Her face was heavily made up. Her lips were slightly parted. She breathed strongly, as though she had been running.

"Curley ain't been here," Candy said sourly.

She stood still in the doorway, smiling a little at them, rubbing the nails of one hand with the thumb and forefinger of the other. And her eyes traveled from one face to another. "They left all the weak ones here," she said finally. "Think I don't know where they all went? Even Curley. I know where they all went."

Lennie watched her, fascinated; but Candy and Crooks were scowling down away from her eyes. Candy said, "Then if you know, why you want to ast us where Curley is at?"

She regarded them amusedly. "Funny thing," she said. "If I catch any one man, and he's alone, I get along fine

with him. But just let two of the guys get together an' you won't talk. Jus' nothing but mad." She dropped her fingers and put her hands on her hips. "You're all scared of each other, that's what. Ever' one of you's scared the rest is goin' to get something on you."

Show, Don't Tell(i). Read extracts 1-3:

- What can you glean about the characters?
- What aspects are particularly effective, do you think?