



Monologue from

WE WILL BE GONE by Anna Jordan

Character: Sam, Age range: Mid twenties to mid thirties

Setting: Wally and Sam sit in Wally's room in the Chelsea Royal Hospital. Sam is the chef at the Royal Hospital. His wife has left him. Here he talks about his younger brother coming back from the Gulf War.

Sam: What does it feel like to kill a man?

I wanted to ask my brother that question. When he came back from Iraq. How do you do that? Ask your kid brother if he took anyone out. And how it felt. But I wanted to know.

It was the day after I finished catering college. I did a massive buffet, for all the family. Vol-au-vents, smoked salmon pin-wheels, all that. Dead professional. Mum kept saying how proud she was of me, that she could never have done anything like that. Even dad said it looked great. It was a fitting welcome for John, he said, and he put his hand on my shoulder. John arrived in a black taxi. I remember thinking, wow, black taxi. Dunno why.

I expected him to look different. And he did. A bit...thinner. Sharper. His eyes were a bit brighter. He walked into the lounge and I watched him, from behind the others, shaking hands with my uncles and cousins and throwing his arms around my mum and spinning her around, lifting her off her feet. When he'd said hello to everyone he just sort of stood there. Hovered in the middle of the room and for three or four seconds no one said a bloody word. It was a horrible horrible silence. A silence of expectation, when I reckon everyone had their own questions they wanted to ask. I remember thinking it then, shall I just come out with it, now: 'So how was it then bruv? Did you take anyone out?'. Imagine. (Beat) In the end John just threw his arms into the air and shouted 'Lets go to the pub!' And everyone cheered. And everyone got their coats. And then they were gone. I stayed back, to put all the food in tuppawares 'cos I'd taken a long time over it and I didn't want it to go to waste. I thought they might have it when they got back from the pub. But dad and John got a kebab. Mum had a little plate of it though, and kissed me on the cheek after. And she kept saying, for the whole of the next week, how great it was that she didn't have to make dad any packed lunch. But dad said he was sick of fucking vol-au-vents.