



Ballyturk

1 and 2 live together in Ballyturk. One day the wall of the room they live in falls down, revealing the outside world, and 3 enters. 3 talks to 1 and 2; 3 is musing about death.

3: Right.

(A pause. Then -)

Everything you've imagined — it is. All life. It's out there.
Everything.

(Like a light has gone off inside ~ 3 visibly fades. 3 looks spent — older. 3 begins talking)

There's a man and he wakes alone. His eyes open and he's conscious of his first breath, of his first movement, of his first thought which may be of food or may be to shuffle himself to his bathroom and relieve himself. And those first beginnings lie on top of twenty-three thousand mornings that have passed where he has aged invisibly, definitely - where he carries half-remembered bits of his life, of the people he has met and hated and loved, of his brothers and sisters who were once his world and now only exist to make him feel older. He carries a billion pictures of life that have no consequence to him and a few pictures which will always haunt or please him. He's made from purpose and mistake and controlled by the movement of this planet around a star — yet in the second he's led by some great need or some little urgency. Only occasionally he's conscious that around him life is beginning and ending to the beat of time — that millions of others are walking in the exact same moment that he is — are travelling with the same purpose but with singular histories — but travelling nonetheless with the same basic need — to keep on living. How unremarkable and how faintly unique to wake and walk in this way — with doors pushing open into a sky bizarrely blue and giving to us systems of weather, shaping us with forever-movable seasons. And too hard it is to think how rain is made — how the sun can push light through darkness — and what it is that holds us up here imperceptibly in space — that man stands and walks in life as it is now — with geographies to navigate — with journeys to his wife, to his work, to lunches, to beaches, to churches, to secret meetings with potential lovers, to parks, to other parts of the village, or town, or city, or countries even. A lifetime of walking distances in the vain hope of making things that bit more fulfilling — of packing his time with experiences some of which will change him greatly and

others with no consequence other than wasting a little more of his life. And to stand there in the magnificence of this world with all these animals and plants and trees too many to ever imagine clearly — and standing with the you as was made —~ in a life that is so chaotically structured by nature ~ to continue living — to remain upright and to be able to carry on searching for something other than what you have - some love or money or experience or cat or cake or son or anything at all — something which makes you continue without the mindfulness of it all ending at any moment — for everything is here and we are here to lay down legacy ~ to give life purpose by reaching its edge. *(Slight pause)* And it's time for you two and for what you've made — time for one of you to walk away and into your passing. In leaving you're giving shape to life - some design and purpose for being what you are — for this is the order that all life demands - *(Slight pause)* it needs a death.

(A long pause. 3 is finished. Then -)

I can't see the start of my life to figure out how I've come to this... this work. *(Slight pause)* You give me a choice of biscuits - I give you a choice as to which one of you will step outside, walk the twelve seconds to me and die.

By Enda Walsh