

I Am Legion  
A Dramatic Monologue for One or Many Voices  
David Calcutt

Listen –  
Wait –  
The first thing I remember is –  
The first thing –  
No -Wait –  
Just a minute –  
The first –  
I'm lost.

There's a lot of roads round here. They've all got different names. I live in one of them. One of these roads. It's got a name. One of these names. But I can't remember what it is. That's the thing. I can't remember. What the name of it is. The road. I'm trying to find it. I think it's round the corner. At the top of the hill. I think you turn right there and it's that road. Or left. You turn left. Or you carry straight on. I can't remember. I went to the supermarket. I had to get something, and I went to the supermarket to get it. And I got it, it's here in this bag. I remembered that, I remembered what I went to get from the supermarket, but I don't remember the name of the road where I live, I don't remember where it is, how to get there, there's so many of them and they've all got different names –

Wait –  
What -?  
No, wait –  
The first thing I remember is –

- it's quiet isn't what are you up to this week you owe me forty five pounds don't make me laugh all that money on a wedding you buy it then you just throw it away life of riley that's what you've got mate come here I said come here now can you hear me I can hear you I should think everybody can hear you I can hear everybody –

What -?  
Listen –  
I remember –  
The first thing -  
Wait – wait – just –  
I remember –

The first thing I remember is waking up in the road. I was lying in the road. A road like this. But it wasn't this road. It was another road. Early in the morning. Six or something. Earlier. Five. The sun was just rising. There was nobody around. Except me. And a woman. There was a woman. I heard her first. She said something, she asked me what I was doing, and then I raised my head and then I saw her. She said to me, What are you doing lying in the road? I told her I didn't know. I must have passed out. Because that's what happens sometimes. I pass out, and then I wake up. You pass out? she said. Yes, I said, I pass out. How often? she said. How often do you pass out? Is it a regular thing? Does it happen a lot? More than you'd think, I said. More than you'd believe. She asked me where I lived and I told her I didn't know. I couldn't remember. I couldn't even remember who I was. Well, what do you remember? she said to me, and I told her, the first thing I remember is waking up in the road –

Wait -  
What's that - ?  
Listen –  
What - ?

- what's that you're saying what's wrong with you why are you talking to me like that have you heard yourself you're shouting why are you shouting at me well you never told me before it's irrelevant you're just trying to take control of my life that's it that's the end that's the end of our conversation I'm not talking anymore I'll speak to you later goodbye –

Wait –  
Stop –  
Where am I? –  
Where was I? –  
Listen –

I was in the road, on my feet now, not lying down anymore, and this woman was talking to me, she was saying, Don't you remember anything else? I don't remember anything, I said. I wanted to go because it was starting again, I could hear it starting, but she looked at me a bit puzzled and then she said, I know you. I know who you are, she said. No, you don't, I said, and she said, Yes, I do, I've seen you before. I know you. You're that alky, she said. You're the one who's drunk all the time. It was starting and I was trying to get away but she kept on. I saw you in the supermarket, she said. You were singing. You were drunk and singing in the supermarket. That wasn't me, I said to her. I've never been drunk. I've never sung in the supermarket. Look, I went to the supermarket just now, to get something, and I wasn't drunk, I wasn't singing. I just went to get something and I got it and now I'm on my way back, but I can't find my way back because I can't remember the street, the name of the street, there's so many and I'm lost –

Listen –

Listen –

She was just going on. And it had started and it was just going on. And it wouldn't stop.  
And she wouldn't stop. And I said to her I said to her I said -

Stop -

- sometimes there's one and sometimes there are many I hear them it starts quiet then gets louder too loud all of them going on going on at the same time and that's when I pass out because it's too loud and too many and then I wake up and I can't remember who I am who I was before it's always somebody different first one then another everybody nobody and then it starts again quiet then getting louder too loud all of them going on –

Stop –

Wait – just –

listen –

The first thing –

It's quiet –

Listen – listen –

I remember –

I'm lost –

All these roads -

Listen -

We are many.

It Was The TV That Got Me  
Leila Rasheed

The TV squats in the corner of the room, beholding us. It has been that way since Dad moved out, taking the remote control with him. Since then, it has failed to function. Friends say that new models can be had for half the price of a repair. They are missing the point.

Dad invited me over for lunch a few weeks after he moved out. It was important to be mature about these things, so he said. In the end I decided I should go, if only to get the remote control back. After all, I reasoned, I was an adult now. I had left home, so why shouldn't he?

She lives high up, in the flat Dad bought for her, with a swimming pool on the roof and a patent leather couch and green marble work-surfaces. You can see your face in every surface. I stood beside many versions of myself and circled a glass of cold champagne in my fingers. The liquid fizzed like a channel you can't get. Dad charged around, over-doing the host act, appearing and disappearing as he opened and closed mirror-plated doors to display en-suite, walk-in design features. She – the only one of us not reflected, except in my eyes - smiled and said she wanted to get to know me better. I mumbled something and wished she wasn't so attractive.

What this place needs is a home entertainment system, said Dad, during one of the more awkward silences.

That reminds me, I said. Dad...

But he wasn't listening. He was measuring a wall, while she flicked through the John Lewis catalogue. At home, we only had an Argos catalogue, and even that was last year's. I put my glass down and left.

I came home to an empty house. Mum was at work, my brother and sister at school. I pushed the living room door open. No-one had opened the curtains that day and the room was dark. I stood there a long time, imagining myself the over-seer of a dark universe, full of indistinct solids and unutterable thoughts. Even though the TV was off I knew it was beholding me. I knew it beheld everything that came into its line of sight. I tried to out-stare it, but it had a grip that was un-masterable. When the television has nothing more to show you, it will show you yourself.

I phoned him some days later. I meant to ask about the remote control, but I did not get the chance. He over-rode me as usual, switching to the sport without pausing to ask if I was watching the film (I was). He told me he needed my help to move the new television into her flat. It was important for everyone's sake to be very mature, so I said yes, of course. I circled a can of warm Coke in my hand as I spoke, sitting on the sofa and feeling the television's gaze upon me. The liquid buzzed like a fly behind glass; trapped. I watched the dark person inside the television who was me, and realised with a sinking feeling that I would do whatever it wanted, whatever that was.

The new television was sleek and flat and wide and had a plastic skin congealed across its black space. I had to stagger with it clasped in my arms like an oddly-shaped dance partner. We negotiated the lobby, the lift, the landing. I carried it into the living

room, she backing away from me with grateful coos and directions and mind my mirrors. It was then that I realised I was mistaken. Our television certainly had a purpose in mind, but it was not concerned with me, any more than the universe is concerned with a single comet.

It was a pleasant revelation, like finally understanding an elusive mathematical concept. Smiling I carried the new television past the area designed for it, full across the room and through the open window I lifted it. I heard them shouting behind me, but I did not turn. I let my aching arms relax and I let go. It fell thirteen stories, it fell like a waterfall of 24 hour news, like confetti of advertisements, like a bomb full of East-enders, the air signalling around it until it burst in a perfect explosion of nothing.

A few days later, I found the remote control, down the back of the sofa.

[Leila adds: The title is the over-hearing]