

THE CROSSING

THE DRIZZLING RAIN IS UNCEASING. EVERYTHING IS SOAKED AND GLISTENING.

TWO LADIES - ONE YOUNGER, ONE ELDERLY WITH A CANVAS SHOPPING TROLLEY - STAND AT THE CROSSING BENEATH THE BLINKING ORANGE BEACONS. OTHERWISE THE AVENUE IS DESERTED.

THEY WAIT.

THE SCREECH OF METAL FILLS THE ATMOSPHERE, THE SOUND OF HEAVY TYRES THROUGH STREAMING RAINWATER. AN ENORMOUS, LUMBERING CRANE-TRUCK, ALL NOISE AND FLASHING YELLOW LIGHTS, JUDDERS GRINDINGLY TO A HALT TO ALLOW THEIR PASSAGE. THE AIR BRAKES HISS LOUDLY.

THE LADIES, DWARFED BY THE TRUCK, STEP OUT FROM THE CURB AND SLOWLY NEGOTIATE THE PAINTED ASPHALT ZEBRA. THE YOUNGER WOMAN SMILES UP AT THE DRIVER AND MOUTHS 'THANK YOU'. THE OLDER CONCENTRATES HARD ON HER FEET AND LEANS ON THE TROLLEY FOR SUPPORT. PROGRESS IS HESITANT AND PAINFUL.

FINALLY THEY REACH THE SAFETY OF THE OPPOSITE PAVEMENT AND VISIBLY RELAX.

THE ENGINE GROWLS AND THEN ROARS AS THE BEHEMOTH DRAGS ITSELF FROM ITS INERTIA. IT GRADUALLY PULLS AWAY. PROGRESSIVELY GATHERING MOMENTUM, IT ADVANCES INTO THE DISTANCE IN A CLOUD OF SPRAY UNTIL EVENTUALLY IT DISAPPEARS.

THERE IS NO OTHER TRAFFIC. THE DRENCHED STREET IS EMPTY AGAIN. AND SILENT.

THE TWO LADIES TURN AROUND AND WALK BACK ACROSS THE ROAD.