

Contemporary Literature

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The titles, The Homecoming, The Birthday Party, The Caretaker, first three important plays, The Dumb Waiter followed. So, what do these plays suggest? What do these titles suggest? Sorry. So, Pinter's plays, the titles like The Birthday Party, The Caretaker, The Homecoming, The Dumb Waiter, The Dumb Waiter, so what do the titles suggest? What happens in a traditional birthday party, the way we understand a birthday party? Cake, okay, guests, okay, the birthday boy or the birthday girl, okay. So, it is a joyous occasion, of course, it is, most of us, a birthday party happens to be a joyous occasion. A caretaker, what images, what ideas come to your mind when you think of a title like the caretaker? It is used in the sense, in a very western concept, who is the caretaker? Somebody who takes care of the, of the property, of the house, okay, it is almost like a housekeeper, okay, something like that or let us assume, you know, you have a building, an apartment building, okay, you have a caretaker. Then what does a caretaker do? Takes care, okay, traditionally that is what a caretaker is supposed to do.

Let us talk about something more deeper, the homecoming. What does homecoming suggest? Reunion with your family members. Reunion with your, with people you care about, okay. So, but what happens if you have read something of Pinter, you will know what actually happens in these plays.

The birthday party is anything but a birthday party. The homecoming is one of his most violent plays. The caretaker again is something what people do to, how brutal people can be to one another under the garb of civilization. So, what, what do we understand with, about the titles of Pinter? They are extremely misleading. That is the first characteristic of Pinter's play, that language can be misleading, not can be, but language is always misleading.

So, when we do a course like, I keep coming to the theories of communication over and again, what do theories of communication tell you? You are doing communication, right. What is the definition of communication? Its interaction, its way of getting across to people is a way to bond with people. In Pinter, language does everything except this. So, the unreliability of language, the instable nature of language, the indeterminate nature of language, which comes through from the titles itself. So, the caretaker is not a caretaker.

The birthday party actually is not a birthday party. The homecoming is anything but. Now, if you look at that, this idea, then anyone who can give me the meaning of, the exact meaning of the dumb waiter? What is a dumb waiter? Its a what? Its a belt. You are close. A belt, fine.

It is a belt, fine to call. Yes, Akshaya, you are about to say something. Conveyor belt? Let us see what the dictionary says about dumb waiter. This is from Oxford advanced learner's dictionary. This is how it defines it, as an elevator for carrying food and plates from one floor to another in a restaurant or may be in a big mansion, where you cannot carry food and plates repeatedly.

So, this is what you do. This is what a typical dumb waiter looks like. Can you see it? So, when you open this door, you can keep the food and the plates and other eatables and send this small elevator from one floor to another. It could be in a large house, it could be in a restaurant. So, this is what a dumb waiter is, not a belt.

Now, do you think that what role can a dumb waiter play in a Pinter play? Any idea what could the play be about? We were talking about the misleading titles in a Pinter play. And we also keep talking about the language aspects in a typical Pinter play. That means, if commonly this is what we understand dumb waiter as, then the play would be definitely not about this. It could be anything else or it is going to have multiple meanings, multiple points of view, multiple perspectives. That is what all Pinter plays are about.

So, what is the play? Let me just give you a quick understanding of the play. What is it about? It is about two men, Gus and Ben. So, these are the two dramatist personae. These are the people we meet, these are the people we see. A third character called Wilson is mentioned repeatedly throughout the play.

He is considered like a domineering, overpowering presence, but we never see him, we never hear him. We just feel his presence around these two people. So, the plays basically a conversation between a conversation as in Pinter between these two people Gus and Ben. The setting, see whenever we read a play, these are the things that we should first look at. Who are the characters? Where is it set? And then comes the other thing.

The setting is a basement, basement of an erstwhile restaurant. This plays used to be a restaurant. That is what one of the characters say. So, that is it was a restaurant at one point. Now we are not very sure whether it continues to remain a restaurant.

Therefore, the presence of a dumb waiter. The set is very sparse and if you have the script of the play, I am on page 129. Look at the setting, the scene and it is a one act play. So, you have done several plays, you know you have done a five act play, you have done a three act play. This is a one act play.

So, it is a basement room. This is the setting, basement in a restaurant. It has two beds flat against the back wall, a serving hatch closed between the beds. Can you tell me what is a serving hatch? Let us imagine the set. So, there is a basement.

The setting is a basement. There are two beds, a serving hatch between the two beds. What is a serving hatch? Any idea? It is an opening in a wall, a small opening in a wall between in the wall that is between kitchen and the dining area. Small little opening from where you can pass on the plates etcetera. So, that is the situation.

Two beds on the wall. There is a small serving hatch. What happens? We have to see. A door to the kitchen and lavatory, a door to a passage. So, very sparsely set. All the directions are extremely clear.

You have a bed, you have a serving hatch that and two doors. Ben is lying on a bed. So, this is our first character. Left reading a paper, Gus is sitting on a bed, right tying his shoelaces with difficulty. Both are dressed in shirts, trousers and braces.

Both are dressed in an identical fashion. Both are dressed similarly. What could that suggest about them? Trousers, shirts and with braces. They are both of them are working in a same place, same organization, same corporate, whatever it is, but it has got to be the same organization.

So, identically dressed. Now, we come to the next part. So, Gus is sitting on a bed, right tying his shoelaces with difficulty. Does it tell you anything? Tying the very simple act of tying one's shoelaces and that too he is doing with difficulty. Think about it and then silence.

So, this is a typical part. You know that it is a typical feature of a Pinter play silence. He mentioned silences at very prominent places. We are going to look at the use of silence of course, and then Pinter is also very fond of using ellipses. You know what are ellipses? Dot dot dot. Earlier he used to use dash dash dash.

Then at one point very early in his career, he decided dashes do not work that well. Let us have dot dot dot. So, he says then dashes, dots replace dashes for me in his theory of

language.

That is what he says. So, silence. Gus ties his laces, rises, yawns and begins to walk slowly to the door left. He stops, looks down and shakes his foot. So, he has just tied his laces with enormous difficulty. Now, he shakes his foot.

Ben lowers his paper and watches him. Gus kneels and unties his shoelace and slowly takes off the shoe. He looks inside it and brings out a flattened match box. So, what is there in the shoe? A flattened match box. Who would keep a match box in a shoe? He shakes it and examines it.

Their eyes meet. Ben rattles his paper and reads. Gus puts the match box in his pocket and bends down to put on his shoe. He ties his lace with difficulty. So, now that he has gotten rid of that irritating flattened match box, he ties his shoelaces again, but again with difficulty.

Ben lowers his paper and watches him. So, what is happening? What are we seeing so far? There are two men, sparsely furnished room. It looks like a run down place, basement. There is a serving hatch. That is all. There is no other piece of furniture, not even a table.

And then, here you have one person lying on the bed reading a newspaper, getting quite impatient, lowering his newspaper occasionally, watching Gus. Gus, who is having trouble with tying his shoelaces. Then we also discover that he has match boxes in his shoes. What does it say about the characters? See, in Pinter, stage directions tell you everything, not the dialogues. Yes Nikita, any comments? Ben appears or comes across as a domineering, as a stronger presence.

Where is Gus? What about him? Weaker, slower, bold. Slightly old. Shoelaces with difficulty could be older, maybe some health reasons, maybe he has a bad problem. So, what happens when in an organization where everyone is supposed to act and dress identically? What is happening? What does it say about someone like Gus? He is someone who is not really, who could not be all that useful. If he is having difficulty even in tying his shoelaces and the person who is more in control, more in charge, he is increasingly getting impatient with Gus's presence.

Let us read on. Ben lowers his paper and watches him. Gus walks to the door, left, stops and shakes the other foot. He kneels, unties his shoelace. Now he takes off the other shoe and slowly takes off the shoe. And what does he find? He looks inside it and brings out a flattened cigarette packet.

So, from one shoe he gets flattened match balls, from another shoe he gets cigarette packet. He looks inside it and brings out a flattened cigarette packet. He shakes it and examines it. Their eyes meet. So, with every act of, you know, a clumsy act, their eyes meet.

Whenever Gus does something clumsy, something which is not very smart, he looks at Ben, may be for his approval or almost assured that Gus, Ben after all is not going to approve of his condition. Ben rattles his paper and reads. Gus puts the packet in his pocket, bends down, puts on his shoe and ties the lace. He wanders off left. Ben slams the paper down on the bed and glares after him.

Now look at the language. We have not had a word from these characters, but what are those verbs that tell us about Ben's increasing irritation with Gus? He is rattling his newspaper, may be he is not even reading the newspaper that intently. He is just looking and observing Gus and getting impatient with him. Then he rattles his paper again. He slams the paper down and glares after him. So, all these are not very friendly looks, not very friendly acts.

He picks up the paper and lies on his back reading, silence. So, so far nothing has actually transpired. There has been no conversation, absolute silence. Now, a lavatory chain, we know there is a presence of a lavatory somewhere and the kitchen somewhere. Lavatory chain is pulled twice off left, but the lavatory does not flush.

So, there is a sound. So, look at the sounds. There is a silence, there is sound. There is also the sound of rattling of the newspaper, slamming of the newspaper that is it. So, that is those are the only sounds so far and silence. Gus reenters left and halts at the door, scratching his head.

Ben slams down the paper. Now, when we were talking, when we were introducing Pinter last time, I remember reading the first passage to you when he talks, when Ben talks about the lorry started and ran over a very old man. Gus finds it very difficult to believe and then Ben says it is down here in black and white. We are on page 130.

Gus incredible, silence. Gus shakes his head. Are you with me here? Are you able to locate that? Gus shakes his head and exits. Ben lies back and reads. The lavatory chain is pulled once off left, but the lavatory does not flush. So, they have had this kind of conversation.

A person was just trying to cross the road. Then he goes under the lorry. The lorry was

not moving, but the moment he goes under the lorry, it drives off and killing the man in the process. This is the conversation they have. The lavatory on the other hand, it does not flush, but you can hear the pulling, that sound of the pulling of the chain.

It does not flush. Ben whistles at an item in the paper. Gus reenters. I want to ask you something. Ben, what are you doing out there? Well, I was just. Ben, what about the tea? Gus, I am just going to make it.

Well, go on, make it. Yes, I will. He is laid on some very nice crockery this time. I will say that.

It is sort of striped. There is a white stripe. Ben reads. It is very nice. I will say that. Ben turns the page. You know sort of round the cup, round the rim, all the rest of its black you see. Then the saucer is black except for right in the middle where the cup goes where it is white.

So, description of crockery, cup and saucer, black and white. This is one of the earlier productions of the dumb waiter and very pointedly even the theater name is black stripe theater. May be it is a coincidence. I think they just wanted you know to perhaps pun on the whatever we have just seen. Now, look at this particular poster. What does it tell you if you just observe? What are the colors mentioned? Black and white.

Look at the dialogue on page 130 also. A man of 87 crawling under a lorry, it is unbelievable. Do you get it? It is down here in black and white says Ben. And then the very next moment we have Gus praising the crockery again black and white. This is the production black and white. Does it suggest you now? Of course, we do not know much about the play at this stage, but what could it be? Black and white.

What do these colors suggest generally? Dichotomies, binaries. Are you familiar with these terms? Binaries, this or that. So, what could be give you some examples of dichotomies Hari? Opposites.

Good and bad. Rich and poor. Assent them. So, these are the dichotomies. So, could it be this that the dramatist is trying to draw our attention to? Possibly. At this stage, we are not very sure, but in all Pinter's plays, you will find plenty of ambiguity. So, till the end, you are not going to be very certain of what he is trying to tell you. So, just look very closely at the language. So, here you find and what do you see here? One person, two people with their backs towards each other.

One is what is he holding? He is holding a revolver, a gun. What is he holding? It

looks like a mug or a cattle. What does this suggest? Two people not facing each other, but with their backs towards each other. One holding a gun, one holding this hot cup of coffee or tea. What does it tell you? And the dumb waiter.

Just now you have seen what a dumb waiter actually. You know the dictionary does not say, I mean I was looking up the dictionary and I wanted to see the exact meaning of a dumb waiter. It does not talk about a waiter who is dumb. Definitely not, but dumb waiter is an elevator, a lift which is usually used in the dictionary. It is always used in a restaurant, but here you do not find anything of that dumb waiter. Any comments here? What, what if you just look at a picture, if you just look at a poster, what does it tell you? You want to go for a performance of the dumb waiter.

You have heard Pinter is a great playwright, Nobel prize winner, all those things and you want to say a play, my Pinter and you, you know a production is on, a performance of the dumb waiter is there running in the city. You see this poster, what does it tell you? Definitely the binaries, yes. For instance, the fact that, very fact that they are turned away from each other is, is a sort of, it tells you that they are not meeting at any point.

Yes. Against. Yes. And the one is holding a gun, the other is holding a very household device. Yes. Something like, it shows dominance, dominance and submission, I mean that is not going too far.

Yes. The fact that is. These two people are extremely different. Yes, black and white, the binaries that we were talking about. So, from the beginning, Pinter gives you all these verbal clues, the verbal hints. He is not going to tell you these people, one is this, one is that, that is not, that is not what a playwright like Pinter would do. He is not one of those didactic, one of those moralist and freaky kind of a playwright.

He just will give you lots of clues and it is your job to infer, to come to a conclusion. Look at it, look at the poster, it is there, black and white, two people not facing each other, but against each other. One is holding a gun, one is holding a cup of coffee, something very domestic, something very conventional and something which you use in your everyday kind of life, but these two people are not what they appear to be. So, about the play, again we go back to the same, is a play about two people, Gus and Ben while a third is mentioned, but never seen. The setting which is a basement with two beds, a serving hatch in between, bathroom etcetera and a single location which is a constant factor, a constant set in all Pinter plays. He does not move the location too much, if you have read the homecoming, I am sure some of you have, you know it is all stage at the same set.

The birthday party or everything happens in the same place, both men dressed identically. Now, coming back again to page 131, you know sort of round the cup, round the rim, all the rest of it is black, you see. Then the sauce is black except for right in the middle where the cup goes, where it is white. So, a detailed observation, a detailed description of the crockery, black and white, very pretty to look at, especially to Gus. Ben reads, then the plates are the same, you see, only they have got a black stripe, the plates right across the middle.

Yes, I am quite taken with the crockery. Ben still reading, what do you want the plates for? You are not going to eat Gus. I brought a few biscuits. Well, you had better eat them quick. I always bring a few biscuits or a pie, you know, I cannot drink tea without anything to eat. So, who is talking about eating, who is talking about crockery? Gus, it is very clear, the poster we just saw.

So, he, one person who is more concerned with the day to day normal activities, routines of life. The other man, we do not know, we do not understand much about Ben. He just responds. Gus brings out the flattened cigarette packet and examines it.

You got any cigarettes? I think I have run out. He throws the packet high up and leans forward to catch it. I hope it would not be a long job, this one. Now, you see, they are here on a job. It is very clear now.

So, they are waiting for a job to get done, but what job it is right now, we do not know. I wanted to ask something. Ben slamming his paper down.

Now, he is getting increasingly irritated. What is that? A child of eight killed a cat. Get away. It is a fact. What about that? A child of eight killing a cat. How did he do it? He do it. So, naturally the assumption is that if it is a killer and it has got to be male child, it was a girl.

How did she do it? He picks up the paper and studies it. It does not say. Why not? Wait a minute. It just says her brother aged eleven viewed the incident from the tool shed.

Go on. That is bloody ridiculous. Pause. He did it. Who? The brother. I think you are right. Pause. Slamming down the paper. What about that? A kid of eleven killing a cat and blaming it on his little sister of eight.

It is enough too. He breaks off in disgust and seizes the paper. Gas rises. What time is he getting in touch? Now, who is this he? We do not know. Ben reads. What time is he

getting in touch? What is the matter with you? It could be any time.

Any time. Gas moves to the foot of Ben's bed. Well, I was going to ask you something. What? Have you noticed the time that tank takes to fill? What tank? In the lavatory.

No. Does it? Terrible. Well, what about it? What do you think is the matter with it? Nothing.

Nothing. It has got a deficient ball cock. That is all. A deficient what? Ball cock. No. Really. That is what I should say. Go on. That did not occur to me. Gas wanders to his bed and presses the mattress.

I did not have a very restful sleep today, did you? It is not much of a bed. I could have done with another blanket too.

He catches sight of a picture on the wall. Hello. What is this? Peering at it. The first eleven cricketers. You seen this Ben? What? The first eleven. What? There is a photo here of the first eleven. What first eleven? He does not say. What about that tea? They all look a bit old to me.

What kind of conversation is happening here? First, they start with talking about this eighty seven year old man. He is reading from a newspaper. Gus is not really concerned with whatever Ben is reading from the local news and he has his own things to say. He wants to talk about what time the job is going to start.

That is more important than some kind of an arbitrary death happening somewhere. He does not really concern them. Then, he is also concerned about the time that flesh tank takes to fill. Ben really is not bothered. Then, he starts reading something that is completely unrelated to their situation.

A child of eight killing a cat. How does it matter? Ben is highly interested. At least he pretends to be interested in the newspaper. Gus is not interested at all, but he just wants to make some polite sounds. So, he keeps asking some questions just to keep the conversation on. What is now Pinter telling us about language? Even though there is some dialogue happening, is it a conversation? Is it a communication? No.

So, in Pinter or in all absurdists, you have this term. I will erase the board. Non-sequitur. Are you aware of this term? What does it mean? It is something that does not quite follow. So, when you are talking about crockery, then how does this entire news item of a child killing a cat, how does it matter? Ben is definitely not interested in

the crockery. Gus is on the other hand is not interested in what Ben is reading. So, both are, but they are somehow forced to do a job and compelled to stay in one room.

What is Pinter commenting on? That could be a question. We will move on to page 134 now. Page 134. Gus, he walks about the room. I mean you come into a place when it is still dark.

You come into a room you have never seen before. You sleep all day. You do your job and then you go away in the night again. That is the nature of their job. I will read again.

I mean you come into a place when it is still dark. You come into a room you have never seen before. You sleep all day. You do your job and then you go away in the night again. Pause. I like to get a look at the scenery.

You never get the chance in this job. Ben, you get your holidays, do not you? Gus, only a fortnight. Ben, lowering the paper. You kill me. Anyone would think you are working every day. How often do we do a job? Once a week. What are you complaining about? Gus, yes.

But we have got to be on tap though, have not we? You cannot move out of the house in case a call comes. You know what your trouble is? What? You have not got any interest.

I have got interest. What? Tell me one of your interest. I have got interest. Look at me. What have I got? I do not know. What? I have got my woodwork. I have got my model boards.

Have you ever seen me idle? I am never idle. I know how to occupy my time to its best advantage. Then when a call comes, I am ready. Do not you ever get a bit fed up? Fed up what with? Silence. Ben reads, Gus feels in the pocket of his jacket which hangs on the bed. You got any cigarettes? I have run out.

The lavatory flashes off left. Now, who pulled the chain? Both these men are here in this room, but it goes off. There she goes. Gus sits on his bed. No, I mean I say the crockery is good. It is very nice, but that is about all I can say for this place.

It is worse than the last one. Remember that last place we were in last time. Where was it? At least there was a wireless there. No, honest. He does not seem to bother much about our comfort these days. Now, who could it? Who could this he be? So, this constant reference to this unseen presence. Does it remind you of anything else? Any

other play? Yeah. So, you have a play like Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* where two men constantly refer to a person called Godot who is an extremely important person and when according to them, when he turns, when Godot will turn up, much of their problems will be resolved, but they just go on and go on waiting for him.

Nothing as the play says, nothing happens. Nobody comes, nobody goes. Likewise, here you have these two men just waiting, referring to someone called Wilson. Right now, I do not think that they have mentioned, but they are waiting for someone. They are referring to someone who seems to have a very dominating, overpowering presence in their lives, but nothing happens. When are you going to stop jabbering? Now, this is another.

Now, they are talking, but what kind of talking when Gus talks to Ben, for Ben it is nothing but jabbering. What is jabbering? Meaningless conversation. So, again when we talk about Pinter and his theory of language, then we come across that in spite of using words, in spite of having dialogues, human beings do not really have communication.

That is that kind of underpins Pinter's theory of language. So, for you it could be extremely important. The crockery is very beautiful. Why do not you talk to me about the beauty of the crockery or the lavatory not going off in time or somebody who we have been waiting for so long, he is not turning up. These are the important issues.

For Ben, it is just plain jabbering. So, there is no communication taking place in spite of so much of talk. We are not staying along. Make the tea, will you? We will be on the job in a minute. Now, make the tea, will you? Why is Ben not taking the initiative? We find him constantly ordering Gus around. It is Gus's job to make the tea, but Ben does not also.

As in the beginning, we were talking about one is a domineering presence. So, in this case, it is Ben who tries to take control of the situation. So, repeatedly why are you not making the tea? We will be on the job in a minute. Now, we do not know what that job is. Gus picks up a small bag by his bed and brings out a packet of tea. He examines it and looks up. I have been meaning to ask you what the hell is it now? Why did you stop the car this morning in the middle of that road? Ben lowering the paper, I thought you were asleep.

Gus I was, but I woke up when you stopped. You did stop, did not you? Pause. In the middle of that road, it was still dark. Do not you remember? I looked out. It was all misty. I thought perhaps you wanted to keep, but you were sitting up dead straight like

you were waiting for something.

I was not waiting for anything. I must have fallen asleep again. What was all that about then? Why did you stop? Ben picking up the paper, we were too early.

Gus early, what do you mean? We got the call. Did not we? Saying we were to start right away. We did. We shoved out on the dot. So, how could we be too early? Ben quietly, who took the call? Me or you? Gus, you. We were too early.

Too early for what? Pause. You mean someone had to get out before we got in? He examines the bedclothes. I thought these sheets did not look too bright. I thought they ponged a bit. What is ponged? Smell.

Smell bed. I was too tired to notice when I got in this morning. That is taking a bit of a liberty, is not it? I do not want to share my bed sheets. I told you things were going down the drain. I mean we have always had clean sheets laid up on laid on up till now. I have noticed it. How do you know those sheets were not clean? What do you mean? How do you know they were not clean? You have spent the whole day in them, have not you? What you mean? It could be my pong.

He sniffs sheets. Yes, he sits slowly on bed. It could be my pong, I suppose. It is difficult to tell. I do not really know what I pong like.

That is the trouble. Ben referring to the paper, co, a Ben, co. Ben, what? What town are we in? I have forgotten. I have told you Birmingham. Go on. What do you understand by this language? What is happening? Yes, Rehan. This kind of language, so we have been doing quite a bit about Pinter's language.

He uses plenty of silences. Silences to communicate what? The underlying tension. So, when they talk, they are just, it looks like they are filling in the blanks. They are killing time. There is nothing else to do. So, much of the language that is occurring there is just happening for no reason at all. So, the meaninglessness, the purposelessness of language, but when there is silence, it suggests a lot.

What does the silence suggest? There is lot of tension in the air. Why is there so much of tension? Because the refusal to have real communication between the two characters. When Gus asks some relevant questions, Ben is reluctant to answer.

For example, this question, why did you stop in the middle of the road? We got a call. We left early, but right in the middle of the road, you stopped. I was sleeping. What

happened during that time? Why is this bed not made properly the way it usually is? I can smell someone else in this bed. Who was it? All these are questions, important questions, but Ben's consistent refusal to answer these questions, that reveals a total breakdown of communication in spite of lots of dialogue taking place.

So, there is a mass of words, but no real communication. I want Akshaya and Nikita to please come forward.

Page 138, the bottom line. Pause, an envelope slides under the door, right. Gus sees it.

He stands looking at it. You can stand here. The mic is over here. Keep an eye on it. Page 139, Gus and Ben. 39. Away, they are all playing away.

Ben, look here. What? Look. Ben turns his head and sees the envelope. He stares. What is that? I do not know.

Where did it come from? Under the door. Well, what is it? I do not know. They stare it.

Pick it up. What do you mean? Pick it up. Gus slowly moves towards it. Ben's and picks it up. What is it? An envelope. Is there anything else? No.

Is it sealed? Yes. Open it. What? Open it. Gus opens it and looks inside. What is in it? Gus empty's 12 matches into his hand. Matches. Matches? Yes.

Show it to me. Nothing on it, not a word. That is funny, is it not? It came under the door.

Must have done. Hey, what is it? Is it a little bit? Yes, it is. It is a big door. It is a little bit. Show it to me. Show it. Show it to me.

Show it to me. Show it. Show it to me. Show it to me. Well, go on. Go on where? Open the door and see if you, if you can catch anyone outside. Who me? Go on. Gus stares at him.

Puts the matches in his pocket. Goes to his bed and brings a revolver from under the pillow. He goes to the door, opens it, looks out and shuts it.

No one. He replaces the revolver. What did you see? Nothing. They must have been pretty quick. Gus takes the matches from his pocket and looks at them.

Well, they'll come in handy. Yes. Won't they? Yes. You're always running out, aren't you? All the time. Well, they'll come in handy then.

Yes. Won't they? Yes. I could do with them. I could do with them too. You could, eh? Yes. Why? We haven't got any. Well, you've got some now, haven't you? I can light the kettle now.

Yes. You're always catching matches. How many have you got there? About a dozen. Well, don't lose them.

Red too. You don't even need a box. Gus probes his ear with a match, slapping his hand. Don't waste them. Go on. Go and light it. Eh? Go and light it. Light what? The kettle. You mean the gas? Who does? You do. What do you mean I mean the gas? Well, that's what you mean, don't you? The gas? If I say go and light the kettle, I mean go and light the kettle.

How can you light a kettle? It's a figure of speech. Light the kettle. It's a figure of speech. I've never heard it. Light the kettle. It's common usage. I think you got it wrong. What do you mean? They say put on the kettle. Who says? They stare at each other, breathing hard.

I have never in all my life heard anyone say put on the kettle. I bet my mother used to say it. Your mother? When did you last see your mother? I don't know.

About... When? What are you talking about your mother for? They stare. Gus, I'm not trying to be unreasonable.

I'm just trying to point out something to you. Yes, but... Who's the senior partner here? Me or you? You. I'm only looking after your interests, Gus.

You've got to learn, mate. Yes, but I've never heard... Nobody says light the gas. What does the gas light? What does the gas...? Then grabbing him with two hands by the throat at arm's length.

The kettle, you fool. Gus takes the hand from his throat. Alright, alright. Well, what are you waiting for? I want to see if they light.

What? The matches. Gus takes out the flattened box and tries to strike. No. He throws the box under the bed. Ben stares at him. Gus raises his foot.

Shall I try it on here? Ben stares. Gus strikes a match on his shoe. It lights. Here we are. Put on the bloody kettle for Christ's sake. Ben goes to his bed, but realizing what he has said, stops and half turns.

They look at each other. Gus slowly exits left. Ben slams his paper down on the bed and sits on it, head in his hands.

Thank you. Now, a simple exchange. Light the gas or light the kettle. What does it suggest? Yes, Krishna. The kettle, you mean the gas. Who does? You do. What do you mean I mean the gas? Well, what do you.

.. That is what you mean. Do not you the gas? Go and light the kettle. I mean go and light the kettle and not light the gas. No, but a simple thing. Light the gas, light the kettle, figure of speech. Yes, Hari. Language can be used in several ways.

For you, it could be light the gas. For him, it could be light the kettle. Both suggest the same thing, but having a violent exchange over a small piece of language. So, this is a figure of speech. There is no such thing as light the gas. The figure of speech says the language user, the linguists or the professional language experts, they prescribe that you say only light the kettle.

There is no such thing as light the gas. The hierarchy, the power struggle, the power relations between the two. Because I say so, it has got to be go and light the kettle. It cannot be anything else because this is what I have heard and he says, you know my mother used to say, but then when was the last time you saw your mother. So, he questions everything.

He puts him down at every place. He constantly makes him realize that he in terms of hierarchy, he is the person on which on an elevated mode. So, this is the language also suggests in several respects the power relations. So, this feature is a very common feature in all Pinter plays and also language could be a very potent means of violence having a scuffle over a simple thing, lighting the kettle and lighting the gas. So, language can be a means to control, to empower and also a means of violence because it all originates from there. When it is silence, things are at least in control, but when it is language, it leads to so much of tension. That is what Pinter says. So, we will continue tomorrow same place. Thank you.