

# AN UNSEASONABLE FALL OF SNOW

*A room with two doors. A table or desk, on which lies a phone book and other office clutter. Two chairs. Elsewhere, a coffee pot and mugs.*

*ARTHUR is sipping coffee and leafing through a file. After some time, one of the doors opens. LIAM stands in the doorway. LIAM seems a bit bewildered, disorientated. ARTHUR stares at him for a few moments, evaluating him.*

**ARTHUR:** Liam?

*LIAM stares back at him.*

**ARTHUR:** You're Liam?

**LIAM:** Yeah.

**ARTHUR:** Okay.

*LIAM doesn't know what to do.*

**ARTHUR:** Are you just going to stand there?

*LIAM comes in, still uncertain.*

Shut the door.

*LIAM does. ARTHUR reads. Long pause.*

Sit down, for God's sake!

*LIAM sits. Long pause. LIAM stares at his hands, turning them over, flexing the fingers. He glances round the room.*

Not what you expected, eh?

**LIAM:** What?

**ARTHUR:** It's not what you expected.

**LIAM:** No.

**ARTHUR:** What did you expect?

**LIAM:** What?

**ARTHUR:** What did you expect?

**LIAM:** I don't know.

**ARTHUR:** Nothing will surprise you, then.

**LIAM:** What?

**ARTHUR:** Don't say that again.

*Silence as ARTHUR continues to read the file. He pulls some photographs from an envelope and flips through them. We can't see them.*

You're a brave one.

**LIAM:** What?

**ARTHUR:** I told you not to say that!

**LIAM:** Sorry.

**ARTHUR:** Or that.

**LIAM:** Sorry?

**ARTHUR:** Jesus.

*ARTHUR replaces the photos, closes the file. Thinks.*

Pieces.

*LIAM stares at him.*

**ARTHUR:** A real jigsaw. You like puzzles?

**LIAM:** Don't know.

**ARTHUR:** Don't you?

**LIAM:** Never really thought. Suppose so. Sometimes.

**ARTHUR:** Well we've got one here, haven't we.

**LIAM:** Have we?

**ARTHUR:** Let's start with the givens. Mark out the playing field.  
I know you did it.

**LIAM:** I don't know what you're talking about.

*ARTHUR holds his gaze level for a long beat, considering. Then he sighs, turns away and pours himself another coffee.*

**ARTHUR:** Want a cup of coffee?

**LIAM:** No thanks.

**ARTHUR:** I drink a lot of it. More than is good for me. Don't know why. I don't even like it that much. Old habits die hard.

**LIAM:** Yeah.

**ARTHUR:** Got a few of your own, have you?

*Silence.*

I could be more moderate I suppose. 'Moderation in all things', as they say. That's always struck me as a bit of a contradiction. Surely, logically, it should be 'Moderation in some things'.

**LIAM:** What's your name?

**ARTHUR:** You can take moderation to excess. You interrupted my joke. Don't do it again. It's Arthur.

**LIAM:** Arthur. Okay.

**ARTHUR:** Sort of a warm, comforting name, isn't it. Middle-aged. Harmless.

**LIAM:** I don't know.

**ARTHUR:** You should get yourself some opinions. Where were we? Pieces. Yeah, pieces. Which piece shall we start with?

*Silence.*

How about last night? Let's toss that piece on to the table shall we?

Let's clear a space and put that piece right in the middle. See what we can build from it. Tell me about last night, Liam.

**LIAM:** What do you want to know?

**ARTHUR:** Everything. The big picture, the details, the works. Every time you scratched your arse or went for a piss, I want to know about it.

*Silence.*

**LIAM:** Can I have that coffee after all?