***Harold Pinter***

Emphasis is given on the suggestive power of language – language hides more than it tells- THE SUBTEXT

**Last to Go**

A coffee stall. A barman and an old newspaper seller. The barman leans on his couner, the old man stands with tea. Silence.

MAN: You was a bit busier earlier.

BARMAN: Ah.

MAN: Round about ten.

BARMAN: Ten, was it?

MAN: About then.

Pause.

MAN: I passed by here about then.

BARMAN: Oh yes?

MAN: I notived you were doing a bit of trade.

Pause.

BARMAN: Yes, trade was very brisk here about ten.

MAN: Yes, I noticed.

Pause.

MAN: I sold my last one about then. Yes. About nine forty-five.

BARMAN: Sold your last then, did you?

MAN: Yes, my last “Evening News” it was. Went about twenty to ten.

Pause.

BARMAN: ‘Evening News’, was it?

MAN: Yes.

Pause.

MAN: Sometimes it’s the Star, it’s the last to go.

BARMAN: Ah.

MAN: Or the…whatsisname.

BARMAN: ‘Standard’.

MAN: Yes.

Pause.

MAN: All I had left tonight was the ‘Evening News’.

Pause.

BARMAN: Then that went, did it?

MAN: Yes.

Pause.

MAN: Like a shot.

Pause.

BARMAN: You didn’t have any left, eh?

MAN: No. Not after I sold that one.

Pause.

BARMAN: It was after that you must have come by here then, as it?

MAN: Yes, I come by here after that, see, after I packed up.

BARMAN: You didn’t stop here though, did you?

MAN: When?

BARMAN: I mean, you didn’t stop here and have a cup of tea then, did you?

MAN: What, about ten?

BARMAN: Yes.

MAN: No, I went up to Victoria.

Pause.

BARMAN: Yes, trade was very brisk here about then.

Pause.

MAN: I went to see if I could get hold of George.

BARMAN: Who?

MAN: George.

Pause.

BARMAN: George who?

MAN: George…whatshisname.

BARMAN: Oh.

Pause.

BARMAN: Did you get hold of him?

MAN: No. No, I couldn’t get hold of him. I couldn’t locate him.

BARMAN: He’s not about much now, is he?

Pause.

MAN: When did you last see him then?

BARMAN: Oh, I haven’t seen him for years.

MAN: No, nor me.

Pause.

BARMAN: Used to suffer very bad from arthritis.

MAN: Arthritis?

BARMAN: Yes.

MAN: He never suffered from arthritis.

BARMAN: Suffered very bad.

Pause.

MAN: Not when I knew him.

Pause.

BARMAN: I think he must have lft the area.

Pause.

MAN: Yes, it was the ‘Evening News’ was the last to go tonight.

BARMAN: Not always the last though, is it, though?

MAN: No. Oh no. I mean sometimes it’s the ‘News’. Other times it’s one of the others. No way of telling beforehand. Until you’ve got your last one left, of course. Then you can tell which one it’s going to be.

BARMAN: Yes.

Pause.

MAN: Oh yes.

Pause.

MAN: I think he must have left the area.