

Your main commentary should be focused on the use of *Have+EN*. Other topics may also be addressed.

- Until now, Flora has listened in silence, patiently watching her husband tell his absurd and ridiculous story, which she considers to be the largest mound of crap ever built by human hands. Under normal circumstances, she would fly into one of her rages and accuse him of two-timing her, but these are not normal circumstances, and Flora, who knows every one of Brick's faults, who has criticized him countless times during the three years of their marriage, has never called him once a liar, and in the face of the nonsense she has just been told, she finds herself, at loss for words.
- 5 'I know it sounds incredible,' Brick says. 'But it's all true, every word of it.'
- 10 'And you expect me to believe you, Owen?'
'I can hardly believe it myself, but it all happened, Flora, exactly as I told it to you.'
- 'Do you think I am an idiot?'
'What are you talking about?'
- 15 'Either you think I'm an idiot or you've gone insane.'
'I don't think you're an idiot, and I haven't gone insane.'
'You sound like one of those crackpots. You know one of those guys who's been abducted by aliens. What did the Martians look like, Owen? Did they have a big spaceship?'
- 20 'Stop it, Flora, that isn't funny.'
'Funny? Who is trying to be funny? I just want to know where you've been.'
'I've already told you. Don't think I wasn't tempted to make up another story. Some stupid thing about getting mugged and losing my memory for two days. Or being run over by a car. Or falling down the stairs in the subway. Some drek
- 25 like that. But I decided to tell you the truth.'
'Maybe that's it. You got beat up, after all. Maybe you've been lying in an alley for the past two days, and you dreamed the whole thing.'
'Then why would I have this on my arm? A nurse put it there after they gave me the shot. It's the last thing I remember before I opened my eyes this
- 30 morning.'
Brick rolls up his sleeves, points to a small fresh-colored bandage on his upper-arm and tears it off with his right hand.
'Look,' he says. 'Do you see this little scab? That's the spot where the needle went into my skin.'
- 35 'It doesn't mean anything.' Flora replies, dismissing the one piece of solid evidence Brick can offer. 'There are a million different ways you could have gotten that scab.'
'True. But the fact is it happened just one way, the way I told you. From Frisk's needle.'
- 40 'All right, Owen,' Flora says, trying not to lose her temper, 'maybe we should stop talking about it now. You're home. That's the only thing that matters to me. Christ, baby, you don't know what it was like for those two days. I went nuts, I mean one hundred percent nuts. I thought you were dead. I thought you'd left me. I thought you were with another girl. And now you're back. It's
- 45 like a miracle, and if you want to know the truth, I don't really care what happened. You were gone, and now you're back. End of the story, okay?'
Brick stands up and begins pacing around the room.
'Do you believe me now?' He asks. 'This Brill. This goddam August Brill... I'd never even heard of him before yesterday. How could I have made it up? I'm not smart enough to have thought of half the things I've told you, Flora. I'm just a guy who performs magic tricks for little kids. I don't read books. I don't know anything about book-critics, and I'm not interested in politics. Don't ask me how but I've just come from a place that's in the middle of a civil war. And now I have to kill a man.'
- 55 He sits down on the edge of the bed, overwhelmed by the ferocity of the situation, by the sheer injustice of what has happened to him. Watching Brick with worried eyes, Flora walks across the room and sits down beside him. She puts her arms around her husband, leans her head against his shoulder and says: 'You're not going to kill anyone.'
- 60 'I have to,' Brick answers, staring down at the floor.