



# WHO NEEDS STEPHEN KING?

BY

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**CHARACTERS:**

*PEGGY – infirm, mid 80s*

*PAT – mid 80s*

*LUKE – care assistant, 50s*

*Talking Book Voice*

**1 Int, PEGGY'S ROOM IN A CARE HOME. THE PRESENT**

The sound of rain is heard. Hard driving rain. This merges into the song Dusty Springfield: I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU. This is heard in good quality and becomes a tinny sound, the music now coming from an old cassette player. PAT opens the door and looks at the sleeping PEGGY. She moves to the tape recorder, takes a deep sigh as if steeling herself and clicks it off.

PAT: Peggy? Peggy, hello? Hello Peggy.

PEGGY stirs, grunting as she wakes up

PEGGY: Oh. Oh Pat? Is that you?

PAT: Of course. Don't you know my voice?

PEGGY: Er... what? Hang on, hang on, let me turn my hearing aid up.

PAT: Hello.

PEGGY: Yes, your voice, yes. Come closer. There you are. Pat.

PEGGY shifts herself in her chair

PEGGY: Must have dropped off. What time is it?

PAT: Quarter past 11.

PEGGY: In the morning? They've changed my pills. Trying to dose me up. Make me less of a problem

PAT: Are you sure?

PEGGY: Of course I am. I never used to have blue ones.

PAT: You did.

PEGGY: Not this blue. Navy. Mine were sky blue.

PAT: How can you see them?

PEGGY: I can't. But they taste darker.

PAT: Are they working?

PEGGY: They are for this lot. Bloody knock out drops they are. Doping me up.

PAT: Raining.

PEGGY: Is it?

PAT: Cats and dogs. Proper stair-rods. Feel

PEGGY feels PAT'S sleeve

PEGGY: Wet.

PAT: Soaked. Lucky I had my umbrella

She rests it against the wall

PEGGY: Don't put it there. Letting it drip - the staff'll think it's me. Put it in the bathroom

PAT: It won't matter

PEGGY: Don't argue with me please. Put it in the bathroom

PAT goes to the bathroom

PEGGY: (*calling*) What did you bring me?

PAT: (*off*) Pardon?

PEGGY: What did you bring me?

PAT returns with her shopping bag

PAT: Let me get my coat off. I got you some wine gums.

PEGGY: Oh Christ. What for?

PAT: To eat.

PEGGY: I don't like wine gums.

PAT: You do.

PEGGY: Permit me to know what tastes I am attracted to please. I don't like wine gums. I can't eat them. They're too hard.

PAT: I thought they were soft.

PEGGY: You're soft if you think they're soft. They're very difficult to eat. They're hard. Because they're hard.

PAT: Shall I take them away then?

PEGGY: No, I'll have them now they're here. Try and force a couple down somehow.

PAT: Shall I put them in your cupboard?

PEGGY: Let me see the box....

She takes it and peers at it closely

PEGGY: These aren't wine gums.

PAT: They are.

PEGGY: They never are. I know what wine gums are and these aren't them.

PAT: It says so on the box.

PEGGY: Where?

PAT: All over

PEGGY: Well... they must have changed the recipe then. Mucked about with it. These aren't what I would call wine gums.

PAT: I got you some flowers

She takes them out of the bag and gives them to PEGGY

PEGGY: Oh, freesias. They're lovely and cheap this time of year, aren't they?

PAT: They smell nice

PEGGY sniffs them

PEGGY: If you like petrol – you got these from the BP garage didn't you?

PAT: Certainly not. - it was Esso. And I got you another book on cassette. A pound in the Help the Aged shop. Stephen King.

PEGGY: He does horror doesn't he? Might help with my constipation. Does it smell of wee in here?

PAT: No.

PEGGY: It should do, I've been wetting myself all morning. I've been getting through Tena pads like they were polo mints.

PAT: Luckily they haven't got a hole in the middle

There is a nasty pause

PEGGY: You always have to have the last word, don't you?

PAT: No.

PEGGY: You always have to top me.

PAT: I wasn't.

PEGGY: Ridiculing. If you had my condition, you wouldn't do it.

PAT: I thought we were having a joke.

PEGGY: Belittling me and my embarrassing condition...

PAT: I wasn't.

PEGGY: ...which, incidentally is a very personal and delicate matter.

PAT: I know it is. I thought we were joking

PEGGY: How hurt I feel. Oh my heart.

PAT: (*contrite*) I'm very sorry if I've offended you

PEGGY: And upset me

PEGGY waits for a response

PAT: ...and upset you.

PEGGY: And betrayed me.

PAT: ....and betrayed you.

PEGGY: I should think so too. You've no consideration for me at all. Not a jot. Did you get me any crisps?

PAT: Yes

PAT rummages in the shopping bag

PEGGY: Well, at least that's something. Salt and vinegar?

PAT: You don't like salt and vinegar

PEGGY: I do. They're my favourite bouquet

PAT: You've never liked salt and vinegar. You say it's too acid.

PEGGY: What utter nonsense. I have always had a strong inclination for salt and vinegar far beyond every other variety that is currently available. So I have another disappointment to struggle with now, do I?

PAT: No.

She produces a bag of crisps

PAT: Salt and vinegar.

She throws them at PEGGY. They land in her lap

PEGGY: Oi, careful! You could have had my eye out then.

PAT: As ordered, salt and vinegar.

PEGGY examines the packet close-up

PEGGY: These are Tesco's'. I can't eat these. I can only eat Walkers crisps. I can't stomach these. They make me bilious. They make me bilious just to look at them.

She makes a passable attempt at retching

PAT: I thought you might say that.

PAT rummages in the bag again and triumphantly produces a packet of Walkers crisp

PAT: Walkers salt and vinegar crisps

Very daintily PAT sets them down in PEGGY'S lap

PAT: Tuck in.

PEGGY: I'll save them for later.

PAT: Oh, not even going to try one?

PEGGY: Do you want me to ruin my lunch? Do you? Is that your little game? Ruin my lunch so my blood sugar goes through the roof? Nice.

PAT: I got you some roast chicken flavour too.

She gives her them

PEGGY: I might squeeze a couple of these down now

PAT: What about your blood sugar?

PEGGY: They aren't the same formula. There's little risk attached. I'll give them a go.

PAT: If you're sure....

PEGGY tries to open the packet and fails.

PEGGY: Can't get the packet open

PAT: Here

PAT takes it and does it for her. PEGGY eats one

PEGGY: I've missed you.

PAT: I know.

PEGGY: I wonder why they call them 'Tena'? Perhaps that what they cost before they became popular. Have you missed me?

PAT: More than you could possibly imagine.

PEGGY: The room next door's free, you know.

PAT: What happened to Miss Harland?

PEGGY: Dead. Died in the night. Night staff found her.

PAT: Oh no.

PEGGY: Her heart they said but... . She told me she wasn't swallowing her painkillers – spitting them out and storing them up 'til she'd got enough.

PAT: Shame.

PEGGY: Mind you she also told me that visiting vicar was trying to get her pregnant so who knows. Any road she got her way in the end. With the pills. Beat them all in here. Thwarted them.

PAT: 'Thwarted', that's a mighty word.

PEGGY: It's like 'twatted' but it's got an 'H' in it. So will you move in?

PAT: To Miss Harland's room?

PEGGY: We can be near each other then. Every day.

PAT: I... I don't....

PEGGY: I need you to be here. I miss you when you're not here. I miss you when you're not with me. Pat?

Silence

PEGGY: Can I have a kiss?

PAT: Of course.

She pecks her cheek

PEGGY: A proper one.

PAT kisses her full on the mouth. An expression of love for the years they have been together. PAT wipes her mouth

PAT: Ooh, chicken crisps.

PAT keeps her voice loud so PEGGY can hear

PAT: Did you do anything yesterday?

PEGGY: I don't know. Probably. Everything's a bit lost these days. I think I made something. With scissors.

PAT: There's a new collage in the entrance hall.

PEGGY: That might have been it. They have us keeping a balloon up in the air sometimes. And throwing a beanbag at...

She can't remember

PEGGY: (cont'd) ...something. A bucket. Or one of the other old people, I don't know.

PAT: You like games.

PEGGY: I do but they've got to have a point to them. There's not much point throwing a beanbag at an old woman, is there? The least they could do is give you a prize if you hit her in the face.

PAT laughs

PAT: Shall we have some music?

PEGGY: Ooh, lovely. Play a cassette

PAT goes to a pile of cassettes by the player. She begins sifting through them

PAT: You should get you CDs you know. They're much better.

PEGGY: What are they?

PAT: They're like little silver records. I keep telling you.



PEGGY: I like cassettes.

PAT: None of these are in the right case.

PEGGY: I know where I am with cassettes.

PAT: God knows how.

PEGGY: Play that singer I like

PAT: Al Bowley?

PEGGY: No, um...

PAT: Irving Aaronson?

PEGGY: ...no...

PAT: Anne Shelton?

PEGGY: ...err... Stephane Grappelli.

PAT: He plays the violin.

PEGGY: But he's got a lovely singing voice. Put him on.

PAT: He doesn't sing. He plays the violin. He plays jazz on the violin.

PEGGY: He sings. I've heard him.

PAT: You don't mean Gwen Stephani?

PEGGY: I've never heard of him and since when did Ben what's-his-name sound like Stephane Grappelli? I tell you he sings.

PAT: He doesn't.

PEGGY: He does. He's French and he sings.

PAT: He plays the violin.

PEGGY: He doesn't – well, he does but he sings as well.

PAT: You're thinking of someone else. Is it Charles Trenet?

PEGGY: It's Stephane Grappelli

PAT: I really want to help Peggy, but Stephane Grappelli doesn't sing.

PEGGY: What a bloody life. Even when you get it right, they still think you're mad.

LUKE, the care assistant comes in

LUKE: Hello Peggy. Pill time. I'm a bit late today. Hello Pat

PAT: Look Peggy, Luke's here. Hello Luke.

PEGGY: Who are you?

LUKE: I'm Luke, Peg. I look after you sometimes.

PEGGY: You never do.

LUKE: I do. Will you take your pills, please? Do you want some water?

PEGGY: Fresh water

LUKE: I'll change it

He picks up the jug and goes out

PEGGY: (*shouting after him*) I should think so too. It's disgraceful. You could walk on that water, the film's that thick.

PAT: Peg....

PEGGY: What?

PAT: Don't start.

PEGGY: Start what?

PAT: Getting all awkward.

PEGGY: I'm not getting awkward

PAT: I think you are.

PEGGY: No, I'm not *getting* awkward. I'm already there.

PAT: I knew you were limbering up

PEGGY: I won't play him up too much; I want him to show you that free room

PAT: I've seen it already.

PEGGY: No you haven't.

PAT: I have. Earlier this year. When we went in for Miss Harland's birthday party in May.

PEGGY: She never had a birthday party. She was a Jehovah's Witness. On her death certificate they put her age down as nothing.

PAT: What rubbish! You still have an age, doesn't matter what religion you are.

PEGGY: She didn't. She was young 'til the day she died

PAT: Nonsense.

PEGGY: .... sounded good though, didn't it?

PAT: It sounded a load of tripe to me.

PEGGY: Well you'd know wouldn't you? Being the hang-dog tripe hound that you are!

PAT: Now stop that Peggy. Any more of that and I shall simply go. I shall leave. I know it can be hard being here and I try and make allowances but I can't have you talking to me like that and taking everything out on me.

PEGGY: I'm... I'm sorry Pat – you're right. I shouldn't take it out on you – I'll take it out on the staff.

LUKE comes back

LUKE: Here we are.

PEGGY: Who are you?

LUKE: I'm Luke. I look after you sometimes. Remember?

PEGGY: No.

LUKE: Ooh Peggy, have you forgotten again? Honestly, what are we going to do with you?

PEGGY: Euthanasia?

LUKE: Oh, what are you like?

PEGGY: I'm like someone who's never bloody met you before.

LUKE: I don't know. You need to take your pills

LUKE pours a glass of water

LUKE: So... what's your name?

PEGGY: Napoleon Bonaparte.

LUKE: Really?

PEGGY: And this is my wife, the famous women's right campaigner Emily Pancake.

LUKE: I thought her name was Pat

PEGGY: Alright... Emily Pat-a-cake.

LUKE: Oh you are daft sometimes. What's your real name?

PAT: Peggy...

PEGGY: (*sighs*) Peggy Baker

LUKE: And when's your birthday?

PEGGY: Ooh... now you've got me.... 24<sup>th</sup> May. 1930

LUKE: Very good. Hold your hand out.

He gives her the pills in a plastic cup

PAT: What colour are they?

LUKE: Hmm?

PAT: The pills

LUKE: Er... Three white, one yellow, two blue.

PAT: Navy blue?

LUKE: Well yes, I suppose so.

PEGGY: See. Oh, m'nose is running.

PAT: Do you want a tissue.

PEGGY: I've got one up my sleeve I think

PAT: Are you getting a cold?

PEGGY: No, just the snots

She blows her nose

PEGGY: Do I know you?

LUKE: I'm Luke, I look after you. Right, that's that done. Let's have a bit of a tidy up.

LUKE sings as he does so

PEGGY: (*To PAT*) They have all sorts here. Foreigners. From agencies. You never see the same face twice. Poles. Spanish. Lithuanian. There was one last week from the Former Yugoslavian

Republic of Macedonia. By the time she'd finished telling me where she came from, I'd forgotten what the beginning was. Yet the strange thing was I understood her better than the one from Liverpool.

LUKE continues to sing

PEGGY: Listen to him singing. He's the one who stole my brooch.

PAT: Peggy! Sssh!

PEGGY: He can't hear me. He's got a hearing aid. Deaf as a post. And he took that brown coat of mine. And a big box of wine gums. Didn't you, y'theiving sod.

PAT: Peggy, Luke doesn't have a hearing aid. That's Warren, the other nurse.

PEGGY: Is it?

LUKE: (*whispers*) Yes.

PEGGY: I thought you were deaf

LUKE: No, that's Warren. (*To PAT*) I think she's a little confused today. (*To PEGGY*) In the fog today, aren't you Peggy? A Foggy Day in London Town. Bless her. How are your bowels?

PEGGY: On strike.

LUKE: Do you want some lactulose?

PEGGY: I want some dynamite. Either that or a jar of Vaseline and a corkscrew.

Then she becomes apologetic

PEGGY: I don't mean to be offensive – I'm just naturally gifted.

LUKE: So do you want some lactulose?

PEGGY: No, I'll push through.

LUKE sighs heavily

LUKE: Now Peggy, you know what I've told you. I don't mind. I don't care what you say. It's water off a duck's back as far as I'm concerned. But other staff, like the ones from the agency, they might not see it like that.

PEGGY: That's foreigners for you

LUKE: And if you talk like that to them, they might suggest you need a reassessment. They might say we need to move you up to the secure wing. The dementia unit. For your own good. That's what they might say. And you wouldn't want that, would you?

No answer

LUKE: Would you?

PEGGY goes very meek

PEGGY: No.

LUKE: No, you wouldn't.

PEGGY: No.

LUKE: So think on then. Now, you're my last medical call so I'm on tea duty now. Would you like a cup of tea?

PEGGY: Yes please

LUKE: One for you Pat?

PAT: Oh that would be very kind. Milk, no sugar

PEGGY: The same as me

LUKE: Not coffee?

PAT: No, tea's fine.

PEGGY: It is for me too.

LUKE: And shall I put those flowers in a vase?

PEGGY: Yes please.

LUKE: Won't be long

He goes out

PEGGY: Why don't you defend me? Letting him talk to me like that

PAT: You started it.

PEGGY: I never did. He was immensely rude to me. Grossly so. I pay his wages.

PAT: You said he stole your brooch

PEGGY: So it was him, was it? Doesn't surprise me. He wants murdering.

PAT: Don't talk so silly.

PEGGY: With a big knife. The pisspot. Oh, that reminds me, I don't want Richard speaking at my funeral.

PAT: I thought you did. He's the only relative you've got left.

PEGGY: He's not been to see me once.

PAT: He has. His name's often in the signing in book

PEGGY: That's cos he comes in, signs his name and buggers off again. So I've come to the conclusion he's a swine. And a dullard. And a cad. And a turd. Which makes him over-qualified. That branch of the family were always over-achievers.

PAT: But we've asked him now.

PEGGY: Well.... Say I was confused. Tell him as I got older, I got worse and worse and I became really grumpy and nasty. Lie for me.

PAT re-acts

PEGGY: He won't mind. He'll understand. He's a nice lad. I've always had a lot of time for Richard.

PAT re-acts again

PEGGY: Why won't you move in?

PAT: Well, apart from anything else, I'm not sure we could afford it.

PEGGY: We could. If we sold the house.

PAT: It's been sold Peggy. That's how we pay for you to stay here.

PEGGY: It's not been sold.

PAT: It has.

PEGGY: Where are you living then? In a tent?

PAT: No, I'm at the YWCA.

PEGGY: What's that?

PAT: You know what it is. The Young Womens' Christian Association.

PEGGY: So use the money you spend there to come and live here. So you're near me.

PAT: There wouldn't be enough. Not nearly enough.

PEGGY: What about my jewelry? We could sell that,

PAT: There isn't any now.

PEGGY: And we know why, don't we? It's because that pisspot nurse has stolen it all. He wants knifing. Hold my hand.

PAT does so

PEGGY: I'm so lonely here Pat. Days of ... nothing. Days of doing nothing.

PAT: I see you most days.

PEGGY: But I forget that. So I'm on my own.

PAT: There's your cassettes - your talking books.

PEGGY: I can't understand them. Don't know what they're going on about

PAT: Why don't you go into the resident's lounge? You wouldn't be on your own then. You could socialise. Mingle.

PEGGY: You can't go in there. Not with that telly going full blast. They turn the volume up to full and you can't talk to anyone. Not with that thing blaring out. You can't hear yourself think. And if you could, the thoughts'd all be about murder and suicide. I miss you.

PAT: I know.

PEGGY: But you won't do anything about it, will you? Oh no. Too busy swanning about at the YWCA. Young Women's Christian Association. *Women's* you'll notice... Not Men's'. Not Men's', is it? No, *Women's*\_ Women's. So, you can rub your scraggy old claws over some poor young innocent lass while I sit here rotting away in this ruin. And stop holding my hand.

Don't touch me.

LUKE returns

LUKE: Here we are. Back again. And your flowers in a vase.

PEGGY: Stick them up your chuff.

LUKE: I think they'd look better in a vase. Are you two dicky birds falling out of your nest?

PAT: It's nothing.

LUKE: Is she being objectionable again Pat? Peggy, are you being grouchy? Pat comes a long way to see you, you know. You should be happy she's here.

PEGGY is about to retaliate

LUKE: (cont'd) Reassessment Peggy. Remember?



PEGGY goes quiet

LUKE: Good. Now, tea for two. White, no sugar, yes?

PAT: Thank you Luke.

LUKE: And for Peggy.

PEGGY takes it begrudgingly

LUKE: Are you going to drink it?

PEGGY: It's too hot. I'll wait a bit.

LUKE: Please yourself. Lunch is at half 12. Will you stay Pat?

PAT: Not today.

PEGGY: No. Got to get back to the YWCA, haven't you?

PAT: No, I haven't. As a matter of fact, I've a doctors' appointment.

LUKE: Oh? Everything alright?

PAT: Fine.

LUKE: I'll see you later then.

He leaves

PEGGY: Care home! They don't give a toss about me. They should call it a 'Don't Care Home'

PAT: Shall I blow your tea cold for you?

PEGGY: I'll do it myself; I don't need your help.... Yes please.

PAT does so

PEGGY: I wish we could go away. A holiday. Abroad. Somewhere hot.

PAT: That would be nice.

A pause

PAT: Are you feeling well?

PEGGY: No, I'm stuck in this hellhole.

PAT: You look very pale.

PEGGY: Do I?

PAT: Is it the pills kicking in?

PEGGY: No. it can't be.

PAT: It might be.

PEGGY: I'm very stiff. Sitting in this wheelchair. Your whole weight goes to one place in your bum.

She tries to shift her weight

PAT: We were going to have some music. Before Luke came in.

PEGGY: Not now, I've got a headache.

PAT: So you don't feel well

PEGGY: It'll stop. Won't it? Everything stops. In the end.

PAT: You were playing music when I came in.

PEGGY: Was I?

PAT: Dusty Springfield. 'I only want to be with you'.

PEGGY: Our song. 'I fell into your open arms and I didn't stand a chance'

PAT & PEGGY: *(together)* Now listen honey....

PEGGY: You running for the bus and falling

PAT: And you grabbing my arm and pulling me on.

PEGGY: A long time ago now. Long, long ago.

PAT: Had to be discrete of course.

PEGGY: Oh yes. Your mother....

PAT: And your Dad.... Unusual for you – it must have taken a lot of willpower for you to bite your tongue. You've always spoke your mind.

PEGGY: Yes. Even before all this lot started.

PAT: Remember when we got up and had that slow dance at David and Zoe's wedding? Everyone staring at us.

PEGGY: That showed them. I was very happy that day. We had some good times, didn't we?

PAT: When?

PEGGY: Oh I didn't mean when we were together. I meant separately. Before we met.

They both laugh

PAT: Did the children come this week?

PEGGY: We don't have any children

PAT: The children from the nursery. The ones that come to visit.

PEGGY: Don't know. I had a migraine yesterday so they might have done

PAT: I think they're sweet.

PEGGY: That's 'cos you can escape. You can leave and not be subjected to all their bloody sickly twee nonsense. There were a bunch of the little bleeders last time, all singing Incey Wincey Spider and making a right hash of it. One of them's screaming. One of them's crying. Another one's wetting itself, another's having a temper tantrum. They tell you it's entertainment but it's just this place in miniature.

PAT: Be charitable. They're trying to make you happy.

PEGGY: The only way they'd make me happy would be if they buggered off out of it.

PAT: You never used to swear.

PEGGY: I never needed to 'til I came here.

PAT: You don't seem to have a nice bone in your body at the moment.

PEGGY: Living here does it. It does it to everyone. You're either like this or you give up completely. You can moan at everything or stare at the wall all day. Beef or vegetable, take your pick.

PAT: You used to be such a joy to talk to. Such a quick wit. Such a nimble brain. The conversations we used to have.... it's not very attractive, you know, how you behave.

PEGGY: I'm 89, blind, deaf, immobile. incontinent and I can't remember a bloody thing. Will I suddenly become 'attractive' if I'm able to do some 'nice' talking?

PAT: I think you might, yes. To me

PEGGY: Crap.

PAT: You never used to swear

PEGGY: So you bloody said

PAT: You seem to delight in becoming more and more objectionable every second I'm with you.

PEGGY: You try living in this life-sapping bog hole for a while. You'd be objectionable. I've no life now. It's lost. Gone.

PAT: Christ, it's always all about you isn't it? You think of no one but your bloody self, do you? No one at all. *You* haven't got me anymore, but *I* haven't got you either.

PEGGY: You could have me. I keep saying about the free room...

PAT: I'm not moving into this human museum while I can still function. I still have a life to live.

PEGGY: That's just what I've said isn't it? Mine's done. Mine's over.

PAT: Oh no Peggy, it's not over. You still have a purpose while you can be dominant and vitriolic and snide and sarcastic and cruel and selfish and vicious and nasty.

PEGGY: I think you mean 'pleasantly impish'.

A pause. PAT takes PEGGY in

PAT: I think I mean that this has always been you. You've always been like this. And I've tolerated it all these years because I love you. Darling, I love you very much. And I'll go on loving you. But these visits, they wear me down. So quickly. I've not got the strength for this every day.

Silence. PAT makes a decision

PAT: I think I have to go. I'll see you in a few days. When we've both calmed down a little. Play your tape. After lunch. It'll take your mind off things.

She puts the cassette on PEGGY'S table

PEGGY: Don't go. I'm sorry.

PAT: I can't bear to be with you when you're like this, Peggy. I really can't. It absolutely kills me.

PEGGY: You'll kill me if you go.

She begins to cry

PEGGY: I love you.

PAT: And I love you.

She goes off to the bathroom to get her umbrella

PEGGY: Where are you going?

PAT: *(off)* I'm getting my umbrella. I'm going.

PEGGY: No, don't. I'm sorry. Really, I am. You're going to kill me.

PAT: *(off)* No I'm not. No I'm not.

PEGGY: You are

PEGGY sobs

PAT: *(returning)* I'll try and get in Sunday

PEGGY cries as PAT picks up her coat and leaves.

PEGGY: Don't I even get a kiss?

But PAT has gone. PEGGY's crying finally subsides

PEGGY: Oh bugger!

She takes a deep breath and then we hear her put the cassette in the player and turn it on.

VOICE: BBC Audio presents Salem's Lot by Stephen King. Chapter One. Fog laid thick across the roads that night, grey and heavy. The dust road off the highway was...

PEGGY turns it off

PEGGY: Can't walk. Can't see. I can't stop weeing yourself. I can't remember a single thing. Can't hear. I'm always angry. Can't even walk. And every now and then, when the fog clears.... I see what I am. A glimpse of the monster.

A pause

And the loneliness....

Why would anyone want a book like this? All you need to do is come to a care home? See with your own eyes... The desperation. The helplessness. People reduced to... And be absolutely terrified that someday...it'll happen to you. There's fear. That's horror. Who needs Stephen King?

She drops the cassette player in the bin. It makes a loud thump. MUSIC: It is Stephane Grappelli actually singing. **Darling Je Vous Aime Beaucoup**. The music continues over the closing credits.

The End.

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