
Jack Underwood

This time

it's going to be great! God called out to his wife. – I know I've said it before, but I think I'm really onto something. I'm going to give them a linear sense of time, just one direction, all the way! – What? Mrs God replied, arriving in the doorway where the garage meets the utility room, adjoining the kitchen – but that's hardly anything at all? she said, bemused, placing one of two plates with neatly cut sandwiches, each with a pile of assorted accompanying pickles, down on the workbench. – I know! But that way they'll have beginnings and endings! Think how dramatic that will be! They'll need neat little bodies to inhabit, perhaps starting off small and new then growing larger, then more prone to malfunction, until they fail and each of them disappears down the shoot, whoosh! I know it seems like a brutal constraint but it'll create pressure, dynamism, I mean, think how many of them will never meet, lovers kept a thousand years apart by a cruel lottery of ordering! And the great meandering conversations, stratified, strung out across the epochs, new voices, inflections, accents and terminologies joining all the time, just as the older voices and languages slide from memory, one gigantic melting block of ice that none will ever see even a corner of.

Just imagine the intensity of that narrowed, sharpened experience. What a trip! God grabbed the sandwich and chewed madly, scrutinising the sketches he had made. – They'll be popping off like champagne bottles, they'll be out of their tiny minds! Mrs God rolled her eyes, taking her identical sandwich and pickles back indoors where the afternoon stretched like a cat between naps.