

KNOX. I think not.

TURING. Well, I do.

KNOX. You can't go through life ignoring the effect you have on other people or the effect that other people have on you.

TURING. (*deliberately provocative*) You can try.

KNOX. You've spent far too much time thinking about your Turing machines. We are, after all, human beings; and you should try to accept the many imperfections that are part of our human condition.

TURING. Tolerate, perhaps; not accept.

KNOX. Nevertheless, allowances have to be made; compromises have to be reached.

TURING. I beg to differ.

KNOX. All right! — let me give you an example. A few minutes ago, you enquired about my health. Suppose I had answered you directly. Suppose I had told you that I am mortally ill and have only a year or so to live. Suppose I had broken down and wept. Suppose I had opened my heart to you and said that I had no wish to die; that I was frightened and in despair. I can't believe that you would have welcomed such a disclosure. I feel sure that you'd have found it distressing, embarrassing and somewhat inconsiderate. And so — being aware of your feelings as well as my own — it would seem to be both correct and appropriate for me to moderate my response.

TURING. Are you dying?

KNOX. Similarly — or so it seems to me — when you reveal the nature of your sexuality, you cannot afford to ignore the effect it's bound to have on other people. Fear, for example; when people are asked to accept something

they do not understand. Or anger — when what you so unashamedly reveal seems to be contrary to everything they've ever believed in. And pain. You're bound to cause a lot of pain. Not for yourself, necessarily — that's your concern, anyway — but for people who are close to you, anyone who's fond of you. Pain. Real pain. (*TURING is silent; brief pause.*) Speaking of Wittgenstein; he once wrote something that impressed me deeply. I sat down, there and then with the book in my hand, and memorized what he had written. This is what he said: "We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely unanswered." (*KNOX Exits.*)

Scene 3

SCENE: LIGHTING change: Crisp winter's day.

AT RISE: SARA Enters and goes to TURING.

SARA. Alan, my dear, you are so silly! (*She embraces him.*) Why didn't you tell me you were coming down?

TURING. I wasn't sure I'd be able to make it. I didn't want to disappoint you.

SARA. Well, it's a wonderful surprise. I'm delighted. (*another embrace*) Just look at that dreadful jacket. I do wish you'd take more care of yourself. How long can you stay? Don't tell me you've got to go rushing back tomorrow morning.