

Intimate Conversations

- (1) **Me:** Tell me what you saw at Kew Gardens?
He: Trees, trees everywhere. And mind you, that was a windy day.

Age 77

He drew a tree without any leaves. "Why?" I asked. For him it was what he saw outside, the trees during autumn, the wind swaying the branches, whirling. The shapes constantly changing.

- (2) **Me:** (handing a cup of tea) Do you want anything else?
She: Bring it near (indicating the flower vase in the middle of the table).

Age 101

She liked to look at the curve of the petals. The colours of each flower in the posy. The coloured pencils in her hand. "Interesting" - that's what she would always say.

- (3) **Me:** So you will have to tell me which one you like the best (from the sculptures displayed)? Not yours, but others.
He: Is this a boat? I am admiring it. There is so much to see out there.

Age 89

He loved sailing and anything nautical. He couldn't do it anymore. Is it the vastness of the open sky or the disconnection from land which he missed most?

- (4) **Me:** What do you do in your spare time?
He: One of my jobs now is mainly looking after the children, isn't it? Because their mums and dads are at work. So it is quite enjoyable.

Age 79

His granddaughter came with him, holding his hand. She let him lead the way and he happily introduced her to the group. She left him to return later. Happy recognition filled his face with joy. She was not judging him, she was innocently fond of him.