



The Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Elfriede Jelinek for the work *Not Anticlockwise To Omaha*, a bleak and rambling study of a troubled family, excerpted below. Praised for its wildly lurching prose, it did have its critics. What aspect of the novel did they take exception to?

Not Anticlockwise To Omaha

Where was Charlie on Oscar night? On a late shift. Hurt. Forever. He had conned a dear old friend last November, Victor. And if he could unscrew those screw-up letters of his. No - too big.

It had always been up to Echo Ling - his big-shot sister - to keep those two foes, self-destruction and blackjack, at bay. She could stab that life-sucking barbaric beast. Only she. Gambling at the Taj is like doing Romeo as a cockney. Sure-fire train-wreck and all moronic intent - why assume contrari-wise? Half-broken pacts he would stop for her just added to the problem. He was now doomed - forever lesser.

“Don’t read good books - write them.” she’d say, always the comic.

“That’s every course I’ve taken. Might as well Tango in Lima. As deep as a subway on Everest - I need useful advice Em.”

But she politely declined.

India. November. Chennai to be precise. Echo had semi-abandoned her post as sentinel of his soul. At the Sierra Club he saw Vic, an oaf and a great pal. He’d half-written *Last Tango* in Paris. Not winning the Oscar nagged at him half-constantly. An odd - and sweet - pup!

“Your tenth stay - ninth? - this year. Mike Lee-Jones give you a job?”

“My word. Mate, no. I’m actually sort-of here for you!”

He then laid his mega-plan on thick - preying on Oscar-regret and rum dependency - to devise a way to play Romeo to his mark’s most deep desires; the Sierra Club, no Echo to protect it, had become a bomb.