

After her spell writing *Shelf Life*,  
Alix leaves us with this salutary piece.  
Thanks, Alix, for bringing your  
particular wisdom and humour to  
these pages. Eds.

*Reflections on Supervision: a sketch based on 'parallel process', where the supervision reproduces the therapeutic encounter under consideration.*

Alix Pirani

## THE MIRRORING

- not by Harold Pinter

( ) Pregnant pause.

THERAPIST. (rushes in looking at watch) I'm here!

SUPERVISOR. You're here...

THERAPIST. You can see I'm here.

SUPERVISOR. ( ) Did your client say he was there?

THERAPIST. ( ) He wasn't there.

SUPERVISOR. He wasn't there?

THERAPIST. He wasn't there.

SUPERVISOR. So why are you here?

THERAPIST. Why am I here?... For supervision.

SUPERVISOR. About a client who wasn't there?

THERAPIST. ( ) He wasn't there at the beginning.

SUPERVISOR. Ah!

THERAPIST. He wasn't there at the beginning.

SUPERVISOR. When did he arrive?

THERAPIST. Later.

SUPERVISOR. Much later?

THERAPIST. A bit later. ( ) He said he'd lost his way.

SUPERVISOR. ( ) Have you arrived?

THERAPIST. Here?

SUPERVISOR. Have you lost your way?

THERAPIST. You might say so. You might say I've lost my way.

SUPERVISOR. Might I?

THERAPIST. You might.

SUPERVISOR. But you're here.

THERAPIST. You can see I'm here. ( ) I asked him, did he feel he'd arrived.

SUPERVISOR. What did he say?

THERAPIST. ( ) Yes. ( ) I asked him, what did he feel was happening now he'd arrived.

SUPERVISOR. You asked him that?

THERAPIST. I asked him that.

SUPERVISOR. Why?

THERAPIST. I hadn't a clue what was happening...

SUPERVISOR. And you expected him to know?

THERAPIST. Who else would know?  
SUPERVISOR. You ought to have known.  
THERAPIST. You're angry with me.  
SUPERVISOR. ( ) Were you angry with him?  
THERAPIST. Because he didn't know?  
SUPERVISOR. Because he didn't know.  
THERAPIST. ( ) He did know.  
SUPERVISOR. He knew? What was happening?  
THERAPIST. He knew.  
SUPERVISOR. ( ) He said he knew?  
THERAPIST. He said he knew.  
SUPERVISOR. So what was — ?  
THERAPIST. He wouldn't tell me... said I should work it out for myself.  
SUPERVISOR. ( ) Cheeky... so did you?  
THERAPIST. Work it out for myself?... Yes.  
SUPERVISOR. So what was —  
THERAPIST. I think you'll have to work it out for yourself.  
SUPERVISOR. Work out what was happening there...  
THERAPIST. ( ) Work out what's happening here?  
SUPERVISOR. What's happening here...?  
THERAPIST. What's happening here.  
SUPERVISOR. What is happening here?  
THERAPIST. Are you asking me? You expect me to know?  
SUPERVISOR. Who else would know?

THERAPIST. You ought to have known.  
SUPERVISOR. You're angry with me.  
THERAPIST. ( ) This supervision's beginning to feel pointless.  
SUPERVISOR. ( ) Does your client feel his therapy's pointless?  
THERAPIST. That's what he said.  
SUPERVISOR. How did you respond?  
THERAPIST. I said in that case why didn't he stop.  
SUPERVISOR. You said that? You didn't challenge him? Point out his resistance? Expose his defences?  
THERAPIST. It would have been pointless.  
SUPERVISOR. ( ) Do you feel you want to stop?  
THERAPIST. With him?  
SUPERVISOR. With me?  
THERAPIST. Yes...It feels pointless. Yes. (stands up to go)  
SUPERVISOR. Wait a minute. Hold it now... What are you avoiding?  
THERAPIST. The ending. Of course. Same as he did with me.  
SUPERVISOR. He avoided the ending?  
THERAPIST. Left early. Walked out after half-an-hour without so much as a by-your-leave. (begins to walk out)  
SUPERVISOR. You didn't stop him?  
THERAPIST. How could I stop him? (walks out)  
SUPERVISOR. You could have — Wait! ... Did he — (rushes to door) — did he pay you? (calls out.) did he pay, I said. (Runs after him calling.) Did he leave owing you money?

