"THROUGH FRAU SCHMID I SPEAK OF GERMAN UNITY" (for Elke)

I'm on the phone, the yellow telephone that connects me to you. I'm on the line, the slim umbilical cord joining us like twins. Your eyes, throat, groin, fingertips, left eyebrow and Achilles' tendon touch the equally corresponding parts of my body. We have become a transparent, yet fateful, jig-saw - a puzzle I try to decode. Something I clutch to my head as I pursue sleep.

On the wall above your bed there is a plastic lamp in the shape of a large yellow telephone, and it is through its pale filter that I maintain my strange and complicated communications.

Each night I dream of your tender thumbs. Dream and caress, dream and caress.

I'm in your telephone.
Did the headache occur after you had been reading or doing close work?

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BY JEFFREY ARCHER