IMAGINARY SPEECHES FOR A BRAZEN HEAD

A NOVEL BY PHILIP WHALEN

by Philip Whalen

SELF-PORTRAIT, FROM ANOTHER DIRECTION
MEMOIRS OF AN INTERGLACIAL AGE
LIKE I SAY
MONDAY IN THE EVENING
EVERY DAY
HIGHGRADE
YOU DIDN'T EVEN TRY
THE INVENTION OF THE LETTER
ON BEAR'S HEAD
SEVERANCE PAY
SCENES OF LIFE AT THE CAPITAL

A Novel

Imaginary Speeches For A Brazen Head

By Philip Whalen

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Burden. I tell thee, Bacon, Oxford makes report
Nay, England, and the court of Henry says,
Thou'rt making of a brazen head by art,
Which shall unfold strange doubts and aphorisms,
And read a lecture in philosophy . . .

—Robert Greene, M.A., *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay.*

. . . these two with great study and paines so framed a head of brasse, that in the inward parts thereof there was all things like as in a naturall man's head. This being done, they were as farre from perfection of the worke as they were before, for they knew not how to give those parts that they had made motion, without which it was impossible that it should speake . . .

—*The Famous Historie of Fryer Bacon*

The Brazen Head. Time is.

. . . . . .

The Brazen Head. Time was.

. . . . . .

The Brazen Head. Time is past.

(*A lightning flashes forth, and a hand appears that breaks down the Head with a hammer.*)

Miles. Master, master, up! hell's broken loose; your head speaks; and there's such a thunder and lightning, that I warrant all Oxford is up in arms. Out of your bed, and take a brown-bill in your hand; the latter day is come.

—Robert Greene, M.A., *The Honourable History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay.*

Imaginary Speeches For A Brazen Head

Tom was carefully building a cigaret while he listened to Dorothy read the latest letter. When she stopped, he asked, "Is that it?"

Dorothy looked at him as if he had just entered the room. She said, "Yes."

"I don't know," Tom said. "I was just thinking about how fifteen or twenty years from now, he'll still be writing to you, whenever he's out of town or whenever we're traveling."

"He'll stop, after while," she said. She turned to face the window, walked into the tall embrasure and looked out. The flat white light of London hit her and she backed up a little. At that moment, Tom saw her lose all coloration. She appeared to be a flat, black and white picture. "But I like his letters," Dorothy continued. "He always answers my questions and tells me what's happening and where everybody else is. And they're partly to you, too."

"I guess I could live without his creepy messages," Tom said.

"He's always liked you," Dorothy replied.

"That's what I'm talking about. He's got some kind of morbid, masochistic kind of kick going. He doesn't care anything about me."

"Oh, Tom, who's a masochist now? Come on—let's go out."

"What time is it?" Tom asked. He was standing in front of the mirror that hung above the fireplace, rubbing his chin. "Maybe I ought to shave."

"How should I know? I guess there must be some pubs or bars open by this time. Move just a little." Dorothy had joined him in front of the glass. She began re-securing the pins in her hair, which was a peculiarly metallic blond color and quite wavy. She wore it in a complicated arrangement of rolls and soft braids; it was very long.

Tom looked at her, expressionlessly, and said, "Hello."

Dorothy grinned at him in the glass. "Hello," she said. She kept on fiddling with her hair. He watched her. Suddenly she was hugging him; she kissed him across the mouth. He kissed her in return.

"I like you best, after all," she said. "I love your big round old head." She kissed him again.

"I guess your old man is pretty good," Tom said.

"I'll say," Dorothy told him. "Let's go."

■ ■ ■

At the Nepalese Young Gentlemen's Elegancy Academy, Clifford Barlow stood before a class of adolescent boys. "This," he said. "This." and he inscribed a large ℈ on the black board. Facing the class again, he repeated, very clearly and distinctly, "THIS."

Forty-five rich, dark, and handsome Nepalese young gentlemen looked Clifford right in the eye and replied, clearly and distinctly:

"DISS!"

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says: "SHE comes along and lights up each of our senses, then SHE selects a different partner and moves away. The numbers on the watch dial glow for a while after they've been exposed to the sunshine, then their light finally dies away. They remember for a while, then they rest. The circulation of the blood, the flow of the breath, what did I have for breakfast—each of these trips a different brain electric relay network chain, brain clouds of light, the great Andromeda nebula, other universes outside this one which we usually think of as true and real, which we in fact keep insisting is the only one . . . bright billowing clouds that mix together into "I," "I want," "I see," "I remember," . . . and more of the same sparkling fog produces this earth we're sitting on, produced Queen Victoria, Ashurbanipal, the cobalt bomb, all kinds of gods, buddhas, unicorns, the fried egg sandwiches we shall eat for lunch."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy was trying to answer Roy's last letter. Clifford was raving and shouting in the kitchen. At last, Dorothy got up from her desk and went to find out what was the trouble.

"Wild beasts of the forest are invading my kitchen!" Clifford pointed to a very small slug on the floor near the sink. Clifford seemed to be in a fit of some kind, a thousand miles off.

"Well, just don't keep shrieking about it," Dorothy calmly replied. "Take it outside."

"My fingers are too big," Clifford said. "I can't get hold of it without hurting it!"

Dorothy found a table knife with which she carefully scooped up the slug. She handed the knife to Clifford, who regarded the slug with a worried gaze. "There," Dorothy said. "Now take your little friend outside."

Clifford turned to regard his wife with his great brown eyes. He tugged at one side of his mustache. "Is he all right?" he asked.

"Of course, ninny. He can walk over the edge of a razorblade without hurting himself. See his little horns peeking out?"

"I'll put him on a leaf," Clifford said.

"He'll eat your entire garden," Dorothy called after him.

Clifford made some sort of unintelligible answer from outside the house.

■ ■ ■

At a bar in Sausalito, Roy Aherne kept drawing great circles on the oilcloth before him. It was already inscribed with various hieroglyphs, gargoyles, mathematical equations, graphs, astrological signs, Chinese ideograms, chemical formulae, and bars of music signed "Johann Sebastian Bach."

Roy had a great felt pen full of Magic Ink. Wreathed in fumes of banana oil, booze, and tobacco, Roy wept with the beauty of his visions. "Down through the flames of Hell and Torment, all that screaming and torture, all our dismal evasions and failures and mistakes—but he says 'RISE!'—and up we come, translated out of that earth, breaking out of that garbage, mortician's wax, and pickling sauce into STARS! You must see, at last, that the circle is only a circle if you keep looking at it from one direction. If you turn it only a little, you discover that it is a helix: the circle's bounded in one dimension, but there's really another one to it—the CYLINDER! The Worm Ourobouros! The Angels *have* to fall, we all *have* to be here, but we don't have to stay . . . "

One of the young men who had been reverently listening to Roy set a fresh drink in front of him. Roy took a sip of it and sighed. He rested his heavy hawk face against his hands for a second, then slowly passed them backwards across his kinky red hair and clasped them behind his imperial head.

"It's so beautiful," Roy said. He smiled and his big green eyes appeared to be dark and warm for a moment. "You realize that Blake actually showed it in his pictures of Jacob's dream . . . a SPIRAL stairway from Earth to Heaven, with men and angels ascending and descending in the midst of starry clouds; the Bible says 'ladder' . . . now it's all owned by some English earl. Of course, Blake had read about the Gnostic idea about the Zodiac being a giant water-wheel that carries the Soul through the great circle of all the worlds and heavens and hells. Naturally the Church put the Gnostics down very early—first or second Century A.D.—the Church said the Soul can go only two ways, down or up—and must eventually stay up with God or down with the Devil, absolutely, for eternity. You certainly have beautiful

breasts, my dear," Roy told the girl who was sitting directly across the table from him. (It was a small table.) "They are so yummy-looking that I'd like to spend several weeks kind of studying them. You wouldn't mind if I licked on them a little bit, would you?"

The girl, who had long black hair, very white skin and big blue eyes, laughed and told Roy, "People usually say nice things about my eyes. Don't you like them?"

"They *are* unusual, aren't they?" Roy said. "Why don't you come over to my place and let me look at them, too?"

"I came with Neely and Terry," the girl said. "I have to go back to the city with them."

"Are you part of their act?" Roy inquired.

"What?"

"Do you have to do it all together in order to get your kicks or can Neely and Terry do it by themselves?"

"You're getting kind of nasty, aren't you," the girl said.

"Honey, being a nasty old man is my trade." Roy gave her a dazzling smile. "But seriously, why don't you take me with you when you go? I have to get back to the city some time tonight. I have to go to the unemployment office in the morning and pick up my check."

"I don't know," the girl said. "I never been in an orgy." She rolled her eyes and squirmed a little bit in her chair.

"I wasn't thinking of anything quite so ambitious, myself," Roy said. "Besides, I haven't met Neely and Terry. Maybe we ought to be introduced?"

"They're sitting right across from you, at the bar," the girl said.

■ ■ ■

"One of the least delightful things about Europe OR Asia," Dorothy's letter continued, "is the people from home that you keep meeting and having to talk to—people that I used to see sometimes at home and who I didn't want to know *then*—not to mention several thousands of others I have to look at. I don't think that it's really a money thing, and it isn't really that they are Americans. They're just not interesting. I wish they were all dead or would all go away or something."

■ ■ ■

Tom and Dorothy drank ale in the family section of a neighborhood pub.

Tom said, "I can do without his creepy interest."

"I thought you admire his writings so much," Dorothy remarked.

"You told me yourself that he's as queer as a nine-dollar bill and I can see the kind of icky look in his eye. I don't have any use for him. Let him run around with all the other queers and leave us alone. It's embarrassing to see him, to have him around—"

"All right, Tom," Dorothy said.

"I mean it," Tom said.

"All right, Tom, you've been very positive and masculine."

"Ah, cut out all that psychological bullshit!"

"All right, Tom. Have you thought where we might have dinner?"

"I'm not ready to eat yet. Let's have a little more of this ale."

"I've got to pee," Dorothy said. "I'm sure you'll excuse me. Order one for me. A small one."

■ ■ ■

Clifford was playing through the *Art of Fugue*. The organ was a small electronic American one. He hated all electric organs, but this one had a pedal keyboard and it was the only thing that resembled a pipe organ in the city of Katmandu. He had had to spend considerable time searching it out. It stood in the chapel of a French Catholic mission hospital. Clifford had enough high-school French at his command to beg the priests to let him practice on this machine.

He kept his eye directed upon the page of Bach before him. He knew that the mountains were there outside the window. They were the real reason for his own presence in Nepal. But he had to keep his fingers in training, had to spend a certain amount of time every day in Bach's company in order to improve his own character, as he told the priest. The good father approved of the idea of character building, but it was to be hoped that Clifford might play music by Catholic composers from time to time: the continuous association with a Lutheran mind could not be entirely salutary. Clifford obliged him by playing a piece of Rameau or César Franck at each one of his practice sessions.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy wasn't attending to what Tom was saying, nor to the vision of the London street before her. She was thinking, "Well,

here's London. It certainly isn't like Delhi. That's the point of its being London, isn't it. Just as 'now' is this year and not last; Cimabue isn't Massaccio. Isn't that right? Yes it certainly is, Dorothy; I'll tell the world."

She remembered, just then, that Clifford had once apostrophized a large cockroach:

"Fatuous, extravagant insect!"

and that was in Delhi or outside Kandy or in Saigon? "How clever of you to remember, Dorothy," she told herself. "Only you don't really remember—not specifically, not accurately. That was certainly Clifford's voice that I just now heard in my inner ear, and I could see his fist and bent arm raised above his head like somebody in a Victorian steel engraving."

She must, after all, stay with Tom. She might, when she got older, be able, at last, to live by herself and not worry about any man any more—but maybe not. Why not have what there is now. Considering that Clifford and the rest had been, finally, impossible. *That* life had been great, she had needed it, she wouldn't have been able to recognize Tom if she hadn't known Clifford and Roy. But there was too much *of* them: they were too complicated, too specialized—and at the same time, too various, too competitive, too ambitious, too egoistic—whatever it was, Dorothy had Tom now, and must stick to him. There were only a few strong colors and textures about him: fine bronze and cedar wood and ivory all joined and polished; she thought of him as if he were an artifact that had been produced by craftsmen of some remote island tribe. She liked him, she loved him, there was a great deal of *him*, she thought, "My copious husband." Tom was massive but he moved well. Dorothy hated to think about how he could eat almost continuously all day long without getting fat. He remained solid, massive. He had played football when he was younger—not many years ago. He never complained about growing old, like Clifford did, and he was ten years or so younger than Roy. Dorothy sighed. Had she remembered to take her pills? She thought of her mother's elephantine shape. She was determined not to go like that. Clifford was perhaps the most beautiful of all, though—heavy, dark hair, big eyes and perfect, olive-colored skin.

■ ■ ■

Roy was one of the guests at a cocktail party being given by Max and Alice Lammergeier. Alice had been cross with Max for having invited Roy. "He talks so loud," she said. "He dominates the room. It's like having a sound truck in the house."

Max told her, "There's going to be lots of people. He won't attract or bulldoze all of them. I like having Roy at a party; he loosens the other people up. Otherwise, they all try to be stuffy and normal. They're shy of me being a shrinker. Anyway, he probably needs a dinner."

"Why don't you just give him a dollar and let him get something for himself to eat in Chinatown or someplace. It'd certainly be easier on my nerves."

"He'd only put it on his bar tab or buy a magazine with it. Mrs. Gorman's cooking tonight, anyway, isn't she? You're not having to make the dinner."

Alice tried to explain, patiently, but she was growing more annoyed with Max. "You forget that it's as much work for me to supervise the old battle axe and keep her from drinking too much Bordeaux and keep an eye on the catering people—caterers! Hah. All those beatniks they so foolishly hire as waiters, all hair and fingernails . . . "

"Just like Paris," Max said.

"It wasn't *my* expensive handmade wristwatch that disappeared from the kitchen windowsill where you were silly enough to leave it the last time we had a party. I might just as well prepare everything myself, for all the help these idiots are."

"Come on, Alice, you've been crazy about Roy for years."

Alice was immediately piqued. "Max, that gag isn't the least bit amusing and it never has been!"

Max was laughing and trying to tickle Alice's ribs.

"I mean it!" she yelled, trying to break away from him. "You carry everything beyond any reasonable limit, now STOP IT!"

"Aren't you my angel baby?" Max inquired, hugging her close to him.

"No, you idiot, stop it."

"Will you be nice to Roy?" Max said, tickling her.

Alice shrieked and chortled "NO! STOP!"

"He'll tease you if you aren't."

"Why does he have to come at all STOP IT, I SAID. Oh, all right. All right. But not again for a long time, huh?"

"Mmmmm," Max said, and tenderly tweaked her.

Later in the evening, Alice set her jaw and gave Max a hard look from across the living room where Roy was gassing on and on to a small circle of the other guests.

"The whole 'Matter of Europe,' " Roy was saying, "has been that of Classical logic—the conventionally accepted . . . that is, we always think of it in such terms as 'inescapable common sense' and so on—that order of progression from *A* to *B* to *C: A*, you're

on the main floor; *B*, you're moving with the escalator, and *C*, you're at the second floor. There are perhaps three or four more stories to the building, not to mention a couple of basements, but the escalator isn't concerned, isn't connected to them—those other places don't exist in terms of the universe represented by that escalator."

A bright young broker, late from the Stanford business school inquired, "Don't you think that Camus was trying to show us that there was a question of riding or not riding the escalator—and that really adult, mature, responsible people must choose to ride it?"

"No, I don't, and I think Camus was a booby when it came to philosophizing."

The young broker and the rest of the people who were listening to Roy were shocked and offended by this statement. All of them were Americans, all of them believed what they read in *Life* magazine (namely that the newly dead M. Camus was the smartest man the West had to offer in its ideological battle with the International Communist Conspiracy) and all of them were shocked to hear someone speak so carelessly of the noble dead.

Roy sensed their disapproval and immediately began to try outraging them further. "Where'd you ever get such a lunatic notion? But I suppose that I let myself in for it, as usual, by introducing this brilliant analog or Parable of the Moving Stair . . . all I'm trying to tell you is that Europe was a dead issue long before these very good novelists like M. Camus came along and tried to glue it all back together . . . I suppose if I had to choose between Karl Barth and Karl Marx, I'd kill myself, too . . . "

Alice gave Max a hard look. Max fixed his gaze upon her and slowly crossed his eyes. Alice turned away swiftly to attend to the guests who were standing about in the other rooms. She greeted several new arrivals, then passed into the kitchen to remove the Bordeaux out of Mrs. Gorman's reach.

Roy's ex-wife, Margaret, was talking to Beth Sanderson in the library.

"Max is gorgeous," she was saying, "but he's an utter lunatic. Imagine being hooked up with that weensie little Alice and her glasses and her sinus and her genius children."

Beth said, "Max is really very gentle and sweet. We went together for a long time when we were in school, but we kept quarreling about politics and everything, so I started going with Mark. Alice was in nurse's training when Max was at Langley Porter; that's why she's kind of bossy and hypochondriac now . . . but Max is such a tease and such a clown that he really gets her

going sometimes. Aren't these hot canapés good!" A nasty looking young man with a beard and a stiff red jacket had come up to them with a big tray full of Swedish kickshaws.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "We must practice doing everything right. We must practice being perfect. The Saints, the Bodhisattvas, the Confucian Sages—all of them practiced at it until they could do everything perfectly, and they were perfect themselves, of course. Any one of us can do the same thing. What else is there to be done, after all?"

■ ■ ■

Dorothy washed her hands very carefully. She messed with her hair a little bit, and even though she kept turning her head slightly, in various directions, she kept her gaze fixed on the eyes in the mirror. She would write to Roy about the hotel, and the fake crown jewels and the Tate Gallery and how everything smelled of wet wool and coal smoke and all the good food. She thought of how much younger Roy looked when he was undressed and how much he used to worry about the size of his cock. When it stood up, he could certainly do a lot with it. Other times he stayed away too long. "Well," she told herself, "I fixed all that once and for all, didn't you, Dorothy, and he's still wondering what's happened. I don't care. What else shall I tell him, in my letter: Dear Roy, Tom's jealous of your little thing even though I've told him and everybody else that you're not only a faggot but impotent as well and even though they may have heard that we went to bed together, nothing ever happened, did it. Aside from which, Tom thinks you want to do it to him, whatever it is or however they do it and the idea makes him vomit and he hates you. I don't care. Please write to me soon about Max and Alice. Does Alice have any new glasses? Love beyond measure, Dorothy. That would be an answer, all right. And a PS: If you see Clifford or write to him, please tell him that my mother must have that piano back again *right now.* (I really do have to tell him that. Mama is such a pest, yelling about that piano in every letter.)"

■ ■ ■

Alice Lammergeier began wearing spectacles when she was a little girl. Her mother made a great fuss about how it would spoil her looks and what a shame it was. She hoped that the spectacles

would be only temporarily necessary. But Alice liked to read and her eyes were bad, and she had to go on wearing glasses and she was sensitive about it and hated to wear them.

She was fussing about all this one morning while Max was reading the Sunday papers in bed beside her.

"Try mine," he said, removing his heavy plastic-rimmed specs. "See how they suit you."

Alice took the big glasses and went to her dressing table. She put them on and peered at herself in the mirror. "They're only window glass, compared with mine," she said, and then she laughed. The huge glasses on her small face made her look like a young girl.

Max said, "If you've got to have glasses, really *have* them. Have lots. Get a lorgnette. Get prescription sunglasses. Get seven sets of contact lenses and have purple eyes on Thursdays. Go see that new kid oculist across the hall from my office. He can fix you up."

■ ■ ■

"But this way, every day is the same," Dorothy complained. She hated the idea. She hated Ceylon. Elephants are actually cranky and unreliable. Dr. Bitteschoen was being difficult. Orchids in profusion are not amusing. Monkies and bugs and flies and primitive toilets . . . "Clifford, I just can't repeat the same routine, I want to have something happen next."

Clifford sat quiet still, watching her. "You want a big operatic climax of some kind?" he inquired.

"I want *something* to happen," Dorothy wailed.

"Everything is happening right now," Clifford said, gently. "You're happening. What more do you want?"

"It's not the same thing," she said. "Maybe I want surprises. Maybe I don't want to know what's going to happen and I already do. I know I want more than that . . . "

"Then make something else happen. But after you've cooked it, you're going to have to eat it or wear it or sell it or bury it. And after that, what will you do for an encore?"

Dorothy collapsed upon a screechy rattan chair. "I don't know," she said, "I just hate it, that's all. I know I'll get up in the morning and the house will look a certain way and I'll be washing and dressing and taking pills and drinking coffee. At a certain time I'll be going into town to work for Dr. Bitteschoen or not, depending on which day it is. You'll be here or not, and you are a certain way in the morning, you'll be doing all your morning things, answering letters, and I'll be writing in my

journal and then sorting over my Singhalese-Dravidian file cards and you'll . . . "

Clifford felt himself growing a little impatient with Dorothy's recitation. He interrupted her.

"You could run away and join the circus, I guess. You'd see a new town every week and have different problems every day and spend the winter in Florida," he said.

"Well, I'm trying to be honest with you, Clifford, seriously trying to tell you how I feel."

"I'm being serious. If you don't want to stay here, go away. If you're tired of trying to be a linguist, quit your job with Bitteschoen. You could stay at home and we could have babies. I'd like that."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "Plenty of people will tell you that it's the Fate of Man to be eternally a day late and a dollar short. Don't you believe it."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy and Tom met Dr. Bitteschoen quite accidentally in a Dutch museum where they had gone to look at Van Gogh paintings. Dorothy squeezed Tom's neck in the bend of her elbow.

"This is my new husband, Louie. I took him away from a movie star. He used to be a faggot but now he's reformed. His name is Tom Prescott."

"How do you do, Mr. Prescott," Dr. Bitteschoen said, shaking Tom's hand. "I very seldom attend the cinema," he added, rather apologetically.

Tom said, "I don't either."

"Dorothy has mentioned you quite often in her letters to me," the Doctor continued. "Please allow me to congratulate you. You must know that Dorothy has always been like another one of my daughters."

"All sticky and incestuous," Dorothy said, seizing Dr. Bitteschoen in a great embrace. "Oh, Louie, I'm so glad to see you. We must go and have a drink right now and talk. Come on, Tom."

Later on, Tom asked her, "Say—what's all this business about faggots? You know what you're talking about? Do you know what it means?"

"Of course I do, Old Meany. Don't be so gloomy and grouchy."

"I don't think you do," Tom said. "You keep saying it to everybody. You say Roy is a faggot and then fix him up to marry your best friend. Now you call me that to some guy I never met before.

I don't like that. I don't think you know what you're saying."

"Tom, I'm not totally stupid," Dorothy indignantly replied. "Gigi Fiske's brother, Luke, used to borrow her false eyelashes when we were all at Harvard."

▪ ▪ ▪

The Grand Mahatma says: "It is absolutely imaginary—the world of other people's wishes and feelings and our notions of them and our mistakes about them. We imagined that they loved or hated us; they were engaged in remembering an old movie, occupied with inventing the Binomial Theorem or rehearsing to themselves what they were going to tell us next because they imagined that we were thinking about them in a certain way . . . and about all the rest of the world . . . And they supposed that we were on the point of saying or doing something that they had imagined we ought, 'characteristically' (or 'morally' or 'naturally' or 'insanely') to be doing in the present circumstances."

▪ ▪ ▪

Roy was out rock hunting with Max Lammergeier. It was a warm day, early in the spring. The sunshine was hot, where they were sitting on top of a great boulder. A freighter was slowly making its way towards the Golden Gate and the Pacific. Roy said, "I don't know—fuck it. All I really like is fucking and food and poetry and landscape and music. But I get tired of people too easily—and they get tired of me: I talk too much and too loud. I want too much from them, I want to consume them, get so close that we both disappear. They don't like that, they get scared, bored . . . I belong in a monastery . . . an asylum . . . jail."

▪ ▪ ▪

Clifford yelled for Dorothy. "Please come and set the table now, I'm ready."

Dorothy obediently cleared away all the papers and flowers from the dining table. She went into the kitchen. Clifford was industriously stirring a pot full of curry. It smelled exactly right. "Can I taste it?" she asked.

"No," Clifford said. "We have to have drinks, first. I've put them with the nuts and other good things on the big brass tray. Take them in, now, if you please."

Dorothy looked at him. He was seeing something else, he was

somewhere else. She might have yelled at him or pinched him but he wouldn't really attend, would only ask, patiently, attentively, "Well, what is it?", and she would be unable to stand that, right at this particular moment. She took the tray with its little dishes and its two bright thin glasses into the living room and set it on a low table. She put a record on the phonograph and started it playing; it was music from a popular Broadway show. Dorothy said, "Hello, Shitface," to the lizard who lived upside down on the ceiling. An elephant honked in the distance. The room was filled with yellow light. Bugs clattered and pestered at the screens which surrounded the living room.

Clifford joined her. "Let's have our drinks, now," he said. "I hope they're all right."

Dorothy tasted the cold bright fluid. It reminded her about how she used to imagine drinking perfume, how nice it would be to drink something which was liquid and which smelled so good. The martini was cold, aromatic, and heavy . . . not heavy the same way syrup or oil is, but massive as liquid metal: mercury . . .

▪ ▪ ▪

The Grand Mahatma says, "All American children are fond of saying, (even when it's both untrue and unprofitable) 'I can if I want to.' The children say, 'When I grow up, I'll do exactly as I please. I'll be my own boss.'

"The reason why Americans look the way they do when they're forty years old (mean, whipped, half crazy) is that they've done everything that they wanted to do and have had everything they've always wanted and now (at age forty) they've found out that there's a great deal more of the universe to see, to own, to control, and all of it is quite indifferent to the powers and accomplishments and fading charms of these successful maniacs. These people figure that if they really wanted to, they could have all this extra territory and experience for their own . . . but they also know, now, that they'd ask (after the having, the owning), 'What shall we do now?'—the same question they've been asking their wrinkles and their fading hair and bright plastic teeth every morning in the bathroom mirror:

" 'What in hell am I going to do now? I ought to study Sanskrit but it's too hard, my memory doesn't function any more. I used to love playing chess but I never learned to do it right so I stopped playing years ago. I wish I'd learned to play the piano, but I never had time to practice. Now my fingers are old and stiff and my reflexes are too slow and I can't concentrate on anything

any more like I could when I was a kid.'

"When they were children, these people used to pester their mothers, always asking 'What shall we do now?'

"Their mothers told them, 'Go wash your hands and practice your music lesson. Go out in the garden and pick a big bouquet of flowers and take it to old Mrs. Prendergast—poor lonesome old thing, I've been meaning to call on her myself and take her some flowers, but I've been so busy I don't know where the time goes. But I do know that I want you out of the house for a while, right this minute—I have work to do.' "

■ ■ ■

Dorothy came into the hotel room. Tom looked around at her and said hello. He was lying on his belly on the bed, reading a book. He was all naked and pink and clean.

"You look like some awful baby picture," Dorothy said. She sat down beside him on the edge of the bed. She peered over his shoulder at the book, and then she began to tickle the back of his neck. Tom shrugged and wagged his head. "Don't do that," he said, trying to continue his reading.

"Do you know who I just saw in Trafalgar Square?" she asked him.

"Yes I do. You saw the Beatles and Lord Snowdon all walking arm-in-arm and singing the sextet from *Lucia*."

"Aren't you smart. How did you know?"

"OW! Quit it, will you?" Tom rolled about on the bed; Dorothy had yanked a single hair from his left buttock.

"I met my old teacher, Dr. Bitteschoen that I've told you all about. He bought me tea and he wants to meet you but he's leaving London tonight for Tübingen. We'll see him when we get to Germany."

Tom asked, "What's the old geezer got to say?"

"Oh, we talked about Ceylon and Clifford Barlow and all our friends and linguistics people."

Tom said, "Uh-huh." He was reading again.

"Poor baby," Dorothy said. She stroked his scarred legs. Tom kicked his feet and shouted, "HEY! I told you all that scar tissue is still real sensitive!"

"I'm sorry, Tom. I forgot. I won't do it again."

"Well, we got some good out of it all, anyway," Tom said. "They got us a trip to Europe."

"That insurance man was awfully snotty, though," Dorothy said. "You'd think it was all his own personal money."

■ ■ ■

Roy and Clifford were driving to Seattle. Clifford had been engaged to give an organ recital at the University. Roy went along to help drive the car, to keep track of the scores and turn the pages and cheer Clifford up.

Roy said, "You know how she'll finally be—she'll have a little apartment in New York or San Francisco—possibly she'll go back to Cambridge, but I doubt it—she'll have a big whiskey voice, weight about 175, all her hair piled up on top of her head like Amy Lowell (no cigars, though). She'll have learned how to cook, at last, and with luck, she'll know how to mix martinis. She'll give little dinners for old friends when they come to town. Young people will make pilgrimages to her door. She'll go to one or two of the best parties and openings every year, and write about seven volumes of reminiscences . . . "

"You've got quite a scenario going there, haven't you," Clifford remarked. "I hope she'll get pregnant right away and have lots of babies."

"It isn't in the cards," Roy said.

"You sure sound positive," Clifford said, rather sharply.

"She doesn't like the idea of having children except as an idea; Dorothy will always be too young or too busy or too old for actually doing it. Anyway, she has her work," Roy told him.

"So she says," Clifford glumly replied. Then he sighed. "I want to have a family," he said. "I'm going to find me a nice healthy country girl and marry her. She doesn't have to be smart. She doesn't have to do anything except keep house and take care of the babies."

"It's a little hard to imagine you living with some squaw," Roy said.

"I've had all the wiggy intellectual chicks I need," Clifford told him. "Enough is enough."

"I expect she and Margaret are having a great time in Reno," Roy said, and immediately wished that he hadn't, for Clifford was looking very sad. "Remember the time we hitchhiked to Portland and it snowed all the way from Ukiah to the north?" Roy asked.

Clifford said, "If I had a nickel for every time I've hitched on this road, I'd be a rich mother today. Let's stop and get a beer at this place up here. Are you hungry."

▪ ▪ ▪

"Let me have some before we go out," Dorothy said. She had her coat and boots on. Tom passed her the cigaret. She held it care-

fully in her gloved fingers, then inhaled some acrid, aromatic smoke along with deep sniffs of fresh air. She held her breath and crossed her eyes as she handed the cigaret back to Tom, who smoked again.

Dorothy exhaled and then she said, "Give me just a little more. This isn't quite as wild as that other stuff we had in Tangiers. Then we'll go. I don't want to get too blasted."

■ ■ ■

Roy hiked very slowly up the dusty trail towards Forester Pass in the California Sierra. He carried the same Army surplus A-frame pack which he had sworn, the year before, never to carry any place again. He sweated a lot, but he was determined not to drink very often from his canteen.

Simply by walking, he had transformed the world into granite rock and blue sky and dust. His shoulders hurt but he knew better than to shift the rucksack into a "new" position. He set his left foot one pace ahead, rested his weight on it, then his right foot swung itself one step up, solid and square on a block of granite. He tried to speed up a little bit. It was mid morning and he felt nervous about getting over the pass and down to a good camping place on the other side before it was night. It seemed to him that he was going so slowly that it might take him until late afternoon to reach the top of the pass.

He kept remembering different fragments of the Brahms Double Concerto. Thinking of the music and trying to remember what passage came next beyond the one he was hearing in his inner ear made him forget the shoulder straps cutting into his shoulders. But sometimes the same few bars of music kept recurring, obsessively, and simply added to his misery. Then he'd suddenly be remembering another part of the music and yet another and he'd forget about his feet and about the difficulties of breathing.

Roy stopped to rest at the big bronze memorial tablet which marks the place where a trail crewman was killed while working on that section of the path. Roy poured out a small libation of water to his ghost. He didn't remove his pack; he simply leaned against the boulders and looked back down the vast rocky basin towards the small dark pines that mark the highest camp on Tyndall Creek, miles below. It all looked like pictures of Tibet, which he'd seen in books. Roy wished he could go to the Himalayas. He told himself, "I'd be great in the Himalayas; I can just barely go along this trail without fading away, and I'm so old

now, that I'd probably have a heart attack if I tried wandering around in country even higher than this."

He began walking again, slowly gaining altitude. Soon he began to smell the dead burro. It lay where it had lain two years before, no further changed, as much as Roy could see; it hung across the jagged rocks, an old moth-eaten steamer rug. Someone had scattered powdered lime across the carcass and the surrounding stones. The animal had been half mummified by the dry air, and probably it was also still partly frozen. When the frozen parts thawed in the summer sunshine they rotted enough to stink. The stench was very loud in that place where there was nothing else to be smelled—"Not even my own sweat," Roy thought. There was a faint roaring of distant flies.

He followed the switchbacks of the trail through the odor of carrion and at last he was beyond it. He climbed higher. The trail to the pass seemed even longer than he had remembered it. Here was a whole section of it that seemed unfamiliar, a steep winding through scree and gravel. Soon, however, the trail became a narrow ledge carved into the face of the mountain and he began to see flowers growing out of the cracks and joints in the dark, fine-grained rock. Roy knew that he must be approaching the crest. There were very short-stemmed sunflowers, heather, and purple penstemons. Higher still, he began to find the brilliant blue flowers of polemonium which local climbers call "skypilot." He picked one; the stem was thick and furry. He looked back to the south but he could no longer decide which one of the long brown whalebacks was Mt. Whitney. He had trouble squeezing his diary shut upon the thick blossoms of polemonium that he wanted to keep.

He was surprised when he got to the top of the pass and looked at his watch; it wasn't yet half past twelve. He took off the pack and put on his sweater and a windbreaker. The breeze was light but very cold. He sat on the rocks near the trail sign that says "Forester Pass 13,200" and ate his lunch while he looked out towards the great blue and tawny peaks to the north—Mt. Brewer and the tops of the Palisade group beyond. The distant peaks all stood out with clear, sharp edges against the blue sky. Roy looked into the miles of wilderness, exulting in the idea of its emptiness, its comparative uselessness to anyone and its fantastic beauty. Nobody wanted to live there, nobody could make much money out of it, not many people had the energy to visit much of it. It was all a marvel and a delight to him. He loved every rock, every pond, every twig.

One year he had been hiking with his friend, Mark Sanderson.

At the top of a 12000 foot pass they had met a minister and his ten sons. The minister invited Roy and Mark to join him in meditation and prayer; it was, after all, a Sunday. Since there was nowhere else to go, and they wanted to stay and enjoy the view for a while, Roy and Mark resigned themselves to prayer. The minister shut his eyes and raised his face to the Heavens. He addressed the Deity at great length. His boys knelt about him on the rocks. The youngest of them was perhaps eight or nine years old, and the oldest was a serious personage of eighteen or twenty who wore a splendid blond beard. Each boy covered his eyes with one hand as he knelt. Roy noted how much all the boys resembled their father: they were long thin people with beaky noses and lantern jaws. Each of them wore gold rimmed spectacles. All of them were blond.

After the departure of the holy family, Mark Sanderson raved for ten minutes about the baleful effects of the Christian religion, its apparently endless powers of proliferation, its stultifying effect upon the political, educational and cultural life of America. It was responsible for dishonesty in government, hypocrisy in education and censorship of the arts. Mark inveighed against the growing power of the Black International, both at home and abroad, and about the possible dangers involved in having a Papist for president of the United States. Very soon, superstition, censorship and fascism would envelop and destroy America.

Roy said, "I expect."

He preferred to travel alone in the mountains. Going with a party was like going to a museum with other people: you must wait for them or they must wait for you and nobody can see anything and you have to go back alone, later, to find out what was really there. If you want to see mountains, why bring people with you?

Roy lit a cigaret and began writing in his journal about the pass and the weather and the flowers. He wondered when he'd get around to quitting cigarets. "Why should I quit anything I like," he wondered. "Because then I'd be able to breathe. But why go on breathing—all it does is keep you alive and while you're alive you have trouble breathing and your shoulders hurt and you can't see straight and you're tired of the whole proposition anyway. Dorothy is gone, you're a flop as a great poet, you're too crazy to hold an ordinary job for very long, you bother people, other people bother you—and so on, around and around in a puddle of mush and slobber."

Roy stood up. He felt as if he kept right on going up, since he wasn't wearing the rucksack. He laughed and jumped around

on the rocks. Little birds flew about, cheeping querulously. There were mountains all around. Below him to the north were lakes and tarns and little piney meadows where he would sleep this night. He sang and whistled; the wind flapped his hair. "No wonder I was tired," he told himself. "Carrying all *that* up 13000 feet of mountain."

A moment later an Air Force jet fighter came crashing and screeching miles above him in the sky overhead. It hustled off to the west while Roy jumped and waved and yelled: "Hollow wooden head son of a bitch! Get out of here! Get out of these mountains!"

■ ■ ■

Dorothy said, "I'm going to the store. Do you want anything?"

Tom looked up from his book. He looked at her as if she were a total stranger who had wandered into the room by mistake.

"What?" he asked.

"Do you want anything from the store?"

"I don't know. Which store are you going to?"

"To the little one."

Tom thought for a minute, then he said, "Get some of those hand-made doughnuts. And get me some ice cream. Ah . . . " He paused, looked blankly at Dorothy. "Chocolate," he concluded. Then he looked back at his book.

"Is that all?" Dorothy inquired. She was suddenly wildly angry with him. "We're supposed to go to Mark and Beth's for dinner tonight. You always stuff yourself whenever we go over there. Must you eat a great mountain of goodies just before dinner?"

Tom said, "Look, you asked me if I wanted anything. I was quietly minding my own business. I'd like to have some doughnuts and ice cream and coffee. It isn't anywhere near dinner time, it's only a little bit after two, and they never have dinner before eight o'clock."

"You'll die, that's all," Dorothy exclaimed. "You'll eat all these pounds of ick and have a heart attack and die. You're greedy and self-indulgent and disgusting. I hate you! I hope you choke!"

"You haven't even started for the store yet," Tom said. He was trying to remain calm and to be patient. "I don't have anything to choke on. But you've been taking those god-damned pills again and they're going to drive you so goofy I'm going to have to have you committed—if your liver doesn't quit first. I asked you not to do that."

"Do you want me to be a big fat sow like Mother? I *have* to take them. I don't have that hummingbird kind of metabolism

you've got. It just isn't fair!"

Tom looked at her and quietly asked, "Are you going to the store or not?"

Dorothy was still excited. "Yes!" she said, almost shouting. "I've got to buy soap and pepper and things . . . "

"Well, go do it," Tom said. "I've got to read."

■ ■ ■

"I always thought it would be lovely to play the harp—so lovely and graceful." Such were the sentiments of Margaret Gridley's mother. Often as Margaret walked beside the glassy Willamette near her California ranch-style home outside Eugene, she would recall that wistful thought of her mother's. Usually, however, Margaret was thinking of the voice of her friend, Herbert Wackernagel, singing the baritone solo in Bach's Cantata 517, *O Heilige Stern Gefallen,* and about Mr. Steadman, the organist, who used to faint in the middle of the passage about the crown of thorns. Whenever the choir had to practice that part of the cantata, a pair of boys had to sit at either end of the organ bench beside Mr. Steadman in order to prevent him from collapsing forward onto the keyboards. The choir would continue singing *a capella* until Mr. Steadman, who had been vigorously fanned and patted and restored by a jolt of amyl nitrate, was able to continue playing.

Margaret Gridley could sympathize with Mr. Steadman. She no longer sang in his choir nor attended the First Methodist-Episcopal Church. Gazing at the stained glass windows in that building regularly sent her off into semi-cataleptic trances during which she was incapable of any other knowledge save that imparted to her by the splendid baritone voice of Herbert Wackernagel and heavenly vistas of red green yellow blue light. Her mother told her that nice girls don't have those kinds of feelings. Margaret became a Unitarian; there were no stained-glass windows in that church. Her parents insisted that she must attend some kind of Divine Services every Sunday; they said they didn't care which church it took place in, so long as it was a Protestant one.

Everyone in Eugene was horribly shocked when the fact was learned that Mr. Steadman, Herbert Wackernagel and the two choirboys who used to keep Mr. Steadman from collapsing, had been observed on several occasions while they were playing snooker together at Glad Charley's Old Time Pool Hall Tavern

in the old bad part of Eugene down by the Southern Pacific tracks. All four of them were formally excommunicated from the First Methodist-Episcopal Church with bell, book and extinguished candles—the Reverend Mr. Soames was very High Church; some of his parishioners suspected that Mr. Soames's heart inclined towards Rome and Popery. There were certain citizens who told it for a fact that four surplices were hung upside down on the back wall of the vestry of the church; however, this was considered by the more charitable members of the community to have been a slander that had been originated by certain regretably censorious members of the United Brethren Church which stood on the opposite side of the street from the First Methodist-Episcopal.

To the surprise of everyone, Mr. Steadman didn't leave Eugene under a cloud. He was invited to become the organist for the Unitarian Church and also to give lessons in organ playing and composition at the University. The president of the University received a few letters and anonymous phone calls about Mr. Steadman's Moral Character, but the president of the University was a notoriously liberal churchman and probably a Radical. Mr. Steadman kept his job.

"Now that all the fuss is over, Margaret, you can start coming to church with me again," Mrs. Gridley said.

"I like it at the Unitarians," Margaret replied. "It's so much quieter and simpler."

Margaret's father bulged his great blue eyes and hollered, "You just want to go down there and look at that damned Wackernagel kid!"

"I've already told her about that," Mrs. Gridley said. "There's no sense of running it into the ground. This is a small town, they grew up together, they're bound to see each other now and then, but she's not to talk to him or have anything to do with him."

"God-damn little heifer wants to get bred," Mr. Gridley shouted.

"Orval!" Mrs. Gridley shouted back at him. She couldn't bear his coarse language.

"I don't know why he don't get to hell out of here," Mr. Gridley continued. "After all the scandal and shouting down to the church. That's what anybody else would have done—and that goes for old Steadman, too—but Herb's a stubborn Dutchman, just like his old man. That old Calvin set right there and died rather than use that phone to call himself the doctor. Mad at the phone company. Didn't want one in the house, but old Sister Wackernagel says her and the kids got to have it and got one

put in and paid for it, too. Old Calvin he wouldn't have no more to do with it."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy was undressing. Roy was already in bed, as usual.

"I wish you wouldn't look at me, dressing and undressing, I'm so awkward, my body's so ugly," she said.

"No you aren't. I love to see you," Roy said. He lay propped up on one elbow, admiring her pink and white skin, her golden hair.

Dorothy got into bed and turned out the light. They embraced each other.

Sometime later, she asked him, "Did you ever really make it with other men?"

"Sure," Roy said. "Lots."

"Then why do you like making it with me so much?"

"Because you're beautiful and you feel good and I love you and we fit together in more interesting ways and it makes me feel, somehow, more righteous or justified or something . . . "

Dorothy said, "You really like doing it don't you. You ought to get married."

"I'm too crazy, too queer to marry anybody," Roy said. "Besides, you have to marry Clifford and I have to be alone to read and write."

Later in the night, Dorothy awoke and found him sitting up on the edge of the bed, smoking a cigaret. "What's wrong?" she asked. "What time is it?" She hugged him gently around the belly.

"Nothing," he said. "I got too hot and woke up and wanted a cigaret. Go to sleep."

Dorothy said, "Ummmm." She clung softly to him. Then she woke up again and was aware of Roy wandering about the room. "What's wrong?" she said.

"I'm looking for my socks," Roy said, kneeling down on the floor and groping about.

"Come back to bed and go to sleep. Don't go away."

"I have to go home and work, now," Roy said.

"Why do you always leave me?" Dorothy asked. She was still wrapped up in the bed clothes. Her eyes were closed but she spoke very softly and clearly.

"I always come back, don't I? Don't be afraid. I'll see you after work tomorrow and we'll have dinner," Roy told her.

"Don't leave me."

"I told you, it gets too hot and sweaty and uncomfortable in

bed and I can't sleep so I start writing in my head and I want to look things up and it drives me cuckoo to have to stay in bed if I have to be up. I have to go home," Roy said.

Dorothy clung to him softly. She gently squeezed him. "All right," she said. She didn't let go.

Roy felt impatient, he had to get out of doors, he wanted some fresh air, he wanted to check a phrase in Yeats's *Per Amica Silentia Lunae.* He kept quoting it to himself inexactly; he wanted to use it in a paragraph, a long strophe that he kept hearing, now, inside his head.

"Let me go, now," Roy said, quite softly, and kissed her.

She squeezed him again and said, "All right." Dorothy tried to let go of him and stay asleep, let him out of her dreams, she was dreaming this story about Roy and he was temporarily fading out of the script and he'd fade back in again but the dreaming was only true dreaming as long as she was warm in bed with her eyes shut and it was night. Was it still night? "What time is it?" she asked.

Roy said, "Quarter to three," and he kissed her again and went away.

Dorothy had had her orders from Clifford, which was a part of the scenario as well, "Be nice to Roy, take him to bed and make it with him, he is lonely and sad and thinks that he's an old queer that nobody can ever love, and he has never known what it's like to be happy with a girl. Help him out. He's really a beautiful old guy but he doesn't know it and he likes you."

■ ■ ■

Dr. Ludwig Bitteschoen was a short, neat, very handsome old man with soulful brown eyes and beautiful wavy white hair. He looked distinguished, he looked like somebody famous.

He told Dorothy, "When I was young, I was often taken for a popular actor from the Berlin Staatstheater. I'm still mistaken for somebody else. When I go stay with friends in Pacific Palisades, young persons with autograph albums approach me and ask where do they remember me from. Of course," he continued, smiling, "I *am* famous, among precisely a dozen people who are concerned with linguistics and philology. Nobody reads what I write, however—not even my book on world language which is so politely designated a 'quality paperback.' "

Dr. Bitteschoen had, at an early age, been a very junior member of the Weimar Government. No one had ever forgiven him for that. He became a refugee in 1932, but he returned to Ger-

many for a few years after the war. They gave him the Goethe Prize and honorary degrees from half a dozen ancient universities. He had formed enough American connections during his exile to provide him with the scholarships and foundation grants which made it possible for him to travel about the world and to carry on his linguistic researches. He was often invited back to America as a visiting professor or as a special lecturer in the more expensive universities.

At Berkeley, for example, he held a lectureship which required no teaching. He had only to address the public and the academic community once a month in Wheeler Hall. Not many people attended these occasions, but Dr. Bitteschoen was always there on time, on what he called his one "working" day, happily discoursing upon the development of the morphemes in ancient Peruvian Indian languages.

Dr. Bitteschoen loved California and he was particularly fond of Dorothy, who was about the same age as his own daughters. He had long ago accepted her as a member of his family. He had first known her when she was an exceedingly bright undergraduate. She was one of the few Americans whom he had chosen to train as one of his own disciples. (All his European protégés were long since installed as full professors in the largest and most prestigious European and American universities.)

Dr. Bitteschoen had been a guest at Dorothy's wedding, when she married Clifford Barlow. He loved to play violin duets with Clifford, who could make jokes with him in German. Dr. Bitteschoen could never understand why Dorothy and Clifford should be getting a divorce. He told Dorothy, upon that occasion, "It seems to me very middle class, very American; I am surprised. Clifford is a very fine man. Why can't you stay with him?"

Dorothy was confused, then. In a way, she was angry with Dr. Bitteschoen for offering a defense of Clifford (that Monster!) and at the same time, she was profoundly touched by what she recognized as the Doctor's real interest in her happiness and welfare. She also knew that he was right, that it was middle class and American and careless, like people in Hollywood gossip columns who kept marrying and divorcing and having "great friends." But there was no help for it. She was American, she was middle class: that was the way her world was organized; she must adjust to it. She had to be married in order to have any kind of real world—she had lived alone, but living alone, her life became too disorganized, too chaotic. She drank too much, wasted too much time, became careless, afraid she was going insane.

She needed some person and some place where she could remain connected, a person and a place with whom and in which she could remain certain and settled. Being married to Clifford had been good for her; he had taught her something about how to discipline herself, how to organize her work and her time. She had become more certain of her own identity and surer about the value of her research. At the same time, she felt herself and her work gradually being crowded out and smothered by the large and complicated life of studying, practicing, teaching and socializing, of which Clifford was the center. He wanted her to participate in all of it, to keep his house running and to do her own work as well; it became too difficult. She had fled, she had found Tom Prescott, who promised to provide her with a quieter, simpler home life.

Dr. Bitteschoen had a hard time understanding about Tom. How could Dorothy have any intellectual relationship, any discussion of her thoughts or of her work, with Tom? Tom was a presentable enough young man, but he wasn't an intellectual, he had never been to the university—how could he and Dorothy have any really satisfactory kind of life together? Tom was a good pinochle player and a fine photographer and Dorothy loved him. Dr. Bitteschoen accepted the fact of the relationship, at last, as another example of Dorothy's American eccentricity.

Dr. Bitteschoen's wife, Berthe, was a perfect companion and a perfect mother to his children as well. She was warm, smiling, gentle, and silent, a wonderful cook and housekeeper. She could read and speak almost all of the modern European languages. She could play the little harp that she had inherited from her Austrian grandmother. She typed all of Dr. Bitteschoen's notes and papers for him, brought up four beautiful daughters, and she devoted her efforts to soothe and comfort and protect Ludwig Bitteschoen.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "We never think of ourselves as having motives for what we do. We ascribe motives to other people. What is the engine that makes the wheels go round.

"Now the engine is called psychology. It used to be the Four Humours, combined with those ambitions and propensities which were labeled the Virtues and The Seven Deadly Sins, abstractions which were personified in poetry and represented by Giotto on the walls of Italian churches.

"Before that, it was 'emulation'—life was a contest, an Olympic Game: who can give the more persuasive speech in court, who

can write a better tragedy, who can succeed at being wise and sane?

"And before that, it was simply a question of who's going to be master: who shall command, who shall obey, who's going to get all the women and all the food?

"We returned to this last point of view (i.e., to our earliest human point of view) in the 1860's. Alfred Jarry makes King Ubu tell it to us: 'Kill all the people, take all the money and go away.' Here's where we actually are (we don't believe in 'psychology') after two and three-quarters world wars, wondering why we feel frustrated and unhappy and half mad, asking each other, 'How could so-and-so *do* such a thing?' and 'What ever possessed you to do a thing like that?' "

■ ■ ■

Roy took a great bag full of dirty clothes to the coin laundry nearest his apartment. He seldom patronized that one, it was more expensive than the place two blocks away, but it was raining, his head hurt, he felt that he should probably go to bed and go to sleep until the rain and the headache went away. But he was tired of listening to himself worrying about "when shall I ever do the laundry?," so out he came, in spite of headache and weather, and he carried a little volume of Walpole's letters in his coat pocket.

The moment he entered the laundromat he began to lose his temper. He had imagined that on a rainy day in the middle of the week there'd be only a few or possibly no other customers in the place. He found it occupied by a mob of harried young people with many children. There were also several dogs milling about underfoot.

Roy located a washing machine that had just been emptied a moment before by a nervous mother. The tub held a fine warm stink of pee. He jammed his own smelly shirts and sheets into the machine and then he discovered that he'd forgotten to bring the laundry soap with him, and that he hadn't the right kind and number of coins that the washing-machine demanded.

The money-changing machine was empty. He had heard people working it while he had been searching for a washing machine, and while he was putting his clothes into it. Several children had been entertaining themselves by making the machine turn dimes into nickles. At last they went away to put the nickels into the Coca Cola machine, then a lady bought what sounded like two dollars worth of change, after which the machine died. Al-

though the lady hammered industriously on the front of its cover for some time, no more money came out.

Roy walked out of the laundromat fuming and muttering curses. He tried getting some small change from the corner grocer, who informed him that there was a shortage of coins because people were always coming in and taking them away to put into the laundry machines. The grocer had scarcely enough coins in his cash register to make change for his customers.

Roy stormed away to the little branch bank on the next corner. There was a slow-moving line in front of every window. His anxiety and rage mounted higher. Someone in the laundromat was bound to begin flinging Roy's clothes out of the machine and Roy would have to wait for an hour before he had the chance to use another machine.

The man ahead of Roy at the teller's window gave the bank clerk a big bundle of checks, a mass of bills and a small sack full of silver coins. All this had to be counted twice over, one item at a time, and each item recorded on several kinds of forms and in several ledgers and a number of rubber stamps had to be applied to all the papers and ledgers. Then the man produced a bill from the gas company—there was some argument with the clerk about that, but at last, the man slowly wrote out a check for the correct amount and the teller read it, and went away to make sure that the man really had enough money in his account to cover the amount of the check, and then the teller stamped the bill paid and stamped the check OK and the man ahead of Roy went away.

Roy moved up to the teller's window. The clerk presented him with a small prism of black plastic which was elegantly engraved in gold. In case Roy might have been illiterate or blind, the teller very kindly read the golden words aloud: "Next window, please," then he shut the brass wicket and went away.

▪ ▪ ▪

Beefy Johnson's father was a successful lawyer and a member of the Urban League, the NAACP, the ACLU, the University Club and the Democratic Party. He had once been invited to join the Most Worshipful Sons of Light Masonic Lodge, but he had declined. He thought of it as being a slightly comic organization, one of the kind which, he supposed, white people thought of as a "nigger lodge"—like the Mystic Knights of the Sea in *Amos 'n' Andy*. Edwin Johnson and his wife belonged to the Episcopal Church, where he was a vestryman.

He used to tell Beefy, "Basil, I wish to God you'd quit hanging

with that Fillmore element. I'm not saying they're bad. I know they're mostly just poor and phenomenally unlucky. But you've got to be careful. Bad luck rubs off easy onto you."

"The color don't," Beefy said.

"I'll disregard the *ad hominem* remarks, Basil. I know these boys don't do half the things that the cops say they do, but most of the guys who're sitting over there in Q right now only did half or less of what they got sentenced for. They're serving time for getting caught. Now listen. Try not to be lingering around that corner innocently minding your own business on the day when the narcotics people come around to select their candidate for the boy they're going to run in the newspapers as the key man in their annual multi-million dollar bust. Understand?"

"All right, Papa, I'll be careful," Beefy said.

"I know you think I'm a square and all that. The more people in this town that think so, the easier it is for me to get along. But damn it, I want you to have as many chances as you can and all the dice are double-loaded. . . "

"I think you're my Papa," Beefy said. "Dr. Lammergeier says he thinks you've made a remarkable adaptation."

"What else does that damned quack have to say about me?" Edwin asked. Then he sighed. "Well, I got enough to worry about besides him. That reminds me, I've got to mail him a check for you and your Mama. Anyway, you keep your money in your wallet and your pecker in your pants, OK?"

"All right, Papa. I've got to go rehearse now, uptown."

"What are they playing this week?"

"The First Brandenburg Concerto," Beefy said. "They've got me a real baroque trumpet, one that goes so high it almost sounds like a whistle."

"Then I suppose you'll be down in Sutter Street later. I wish you'd just bring your friends to the house. That's why we've got a house with a playroom in the basement—a place I paid too much for in a nice neighborhood and then kept on living in until the expensive neighbors got tired of breaking the front windows and making creepola phone calls at three in the morning and they got used to seeing our bizarre-looking countenances every day. Your mother won't care as long as you don't burn up a lot of pot. I'll talk to her if she fusses."

"Where are they going to park?" Beefy asked him.

"Park in the driveway, park in front of . . . " Then Edwin stopped himself and sighed. "Yah, yah, yah," he said quietly. "I remember the cops tag everything in the neighborhood that isn't an $8500 Merce or something. OK, I'm sorry. Go blow. But be

careful, Basil. Remember I'm here if you need me."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy said, "It's really all your fault, Roy. You introduced me to Tom. I suppose I could kill myself or something."

"Why?" Roy asked her. "If you can't live with Clifford any more, quit."

"It's a lot more complicated than that. Clifford is very upset. I don't care. He's so impossible. But it's so—"

Roy interrupted her. "Yeah, I know, I know."

"Well, all my things are still in Delhi," Dorothy said. "And you know Clifford. But he's so quiet and so kind of cold that I feel awful. Anyway, I'm going to live with Tom; we're getting an apartment, soon." Dorothy paused and stood up. "It's all totally irrational." She began to pace the little hotel room.

"You don't have to explain anything," Roy told her. She looked very unhappy, walking back and forth, with her arms crossed before her and her shoulders hunched up as if she were cold. Watching her, Roy experienced a peculiar mixture of impressions and feelings. Dorothy's voice, her manner of expression, her usual phrases—none of these seemed to have changed. But he had never, in the past, heard her acknowledge the reality of her own unhappiness, or that other persons might experience unhappiness on her account. She had been used to joke, half-seriously, about the unreality of other people and the imaginary character of their feelings; other people were either too stupid to feel anything or they were only pretending to have emotions they didn't really feel.

It seemed to Roy now, that Dorothy was at last trying to understand her own choices, her own feelings, and that she was finally aware that feelings and actions have consequences. Here she was, consciously willing to risk her own feelings, her own resources, in return for her freedom of action . . . and to accept the responsibility for injuring Clifford's feelings, as well.

"There'll be all the thing of going to court and talking about it," Dorothy said. "So awful—I don't know how I can stand that. And I don't know what I'll wear."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "Nothing exists, really, except the Absolute Brute Necessity which is our Heart's Desire, our inmost private dream—the dream that shocks us most when we

remember it. Its appearances are very fleeting, very swift, but it really hits us, really makes us tremble."

■ ■ ■

Margaret Gridley and Herbert Wackernagel used to play doctor under the front porch of Herbert's house in the country outside Eugene. No one every caught them at it. They had heard about other children being found out and punished; they were, consequently, very discreet.

When they graduated from highschool, Herbert got a football scholarship to the University, but as he put it, "I don't care about studying all that stuff that don't mean anything. I'm tired of school." He went into the Army and Margaret went to Radcliffe.

Herbert came home to Eugene after he got out of the Army. He got a job in an electrical repair shop. He lived with his mother. In the evenings he drank beer and shot pool at Glad Charley's. On weekends he'd go with his friends to one of the little towns on the Oregon coast where they'd rent a couple of motel rooms, find some girls and have a good time with them, far away beyond the purview of the Godly city of Eugene.

Margaret Gridley came home from Radcliffe, one Christmas holiday and brought a dead portable phonograph with her. She took the machine into the repair shop and there was Herbert.

"How's tricks, Maggie?" he asked. He always looked her straight in the eye and grinned. One of his front teeth had been broken in a football game, and the tooth had been repaired with a bright yellow gold inlay. Seeing that gold tooth reminded Margaret that she'd never liked any other man but Herbert Wackernagel.

Margaret knew that he must be slightly insane. Certainly his father had been eccentric and his mother was a sweet, timid little lady who seemed to be always on the verge of schizophrenic withdrawal. Herbert's older brother, Cleveland, came home all strange from World War II. They had to send him to the State Hospital in Salem.

■ ■ ■

Roy wondered why he was so easily led to believe that his friends —indeed, that everyone else in the world—knew, better than he did, how he should conduct his own life. He imagined that he had a clear sense of his own necessities, his own feelings. He thought that he had learned a little bit or at least was able to remember

fairly clearly what had been his own experience of the world around him.

Why did it seem so completely reasonable, so compellingly true when a friend told him, "You don't want any potato chips, do you. They're no good."

Roy would find himself automatically agreeing with what his friend said, and would decline the opportunity of eating the potato chips, although he was all too aware, a second later, that he loved potato chips, and that he was capable of eating a pound of the things with the greatest possible relish and pleasure. Why didn't he trust his own senses? Why did he allow his friends to make him ashamed of what he liked?

"And what demands do these senses make upon the world, anyway?" Roy asked himself. "All I want is some potato chips—preferably fresh ones. I don't want to be Atilla, I don't want mankind to obey my every whim, I'm not Hitler. I'm an idiot! I've allowed myself to be taken in again! Contrariwise, even if I was Atilla or Hitler, the world would simply watch and suffer: it has stood still for all they could do and worse besides. But I suppose there's an attitude, a point of view, a system in which the desire for potato chips is equivalent to the desire for the sadistic destruction of whole worlds and peoples . . . but I also remember Blake's line, 'O God, protect me from my friends.' "

■ ■ ■

Dorothy drank coffee with Dr. Crowley in the Faculty Room. The sun shone through tall Gothic windows. The warm yellow light felt wonderful on her tired legs. She stretched them out and felt one of her stockings give. "There goes another $2," she thought. "Oh, well . . . "

"You've got new specs," Dr. Crowley remarked.

"Oh, this is a pair I've had for a long time. I couldn't find one of my contact lenses this morning," Dorothy told him. She liked talking with Dr. Crowley. He was a tall, courtly, quiet man. Although he'd been on the faculty for many years, the experience hadn't marked him, hadn't dyed him with the pedantic tint. He seemed as much a visitor as Dorothy herself.

"How are your classes going now?" he asked.

"Fine, thanks. But I'm afraid I don't really like teaching. I always hated schools and colleges when I was young, and I was never interested in being a school teacher—but somehow I've ended up doing a lot of teaching, anyway. If you free-lance at all, like I do, it isn't so bad—in between jobs I can travel and buy a

few things."

This last struck Dr. Crowley as a mild understatement. He and his wife had been dinner guests at Dorothy and Tom's house. He'd seen the collection of primitive carvings and metal castings from seven or eight different cultural areas. (Tom's photographs he considered a waste of time; they weren't interesting, no matter how many of them had appeared in national magazines.)

Dr. Crowley said, "Therese and I were wondering if you people would like to drop over on Friday night. We're having just a little gathering for cocktails and dinner."

Dorothy told him she was very sorry they wouldn't be able to attend; some of their friends were arriving from Chicago on Friday. "We'll be entertaining them all weekend," she said.

She disliked turning down any invitation but she couldn't allow herself to ruin another weekend with aimless delightful socializing and lush. But now she'd have to remember, the next time she saw Dr. Crowley, that she'd told him this mild fib. It had taken her a number of years to learn how to decline a social invitation and how to keep track of which scenario she was acting out with what other person or persons. "I'm getting old and cynical," Dorothy thought.

■ ■ ■

Roy could see that he had come to the slaughterhouse. He was preceded by beef cattle of different ages and sizes, then it was his turn. They had him told his hands together above his head and they tied them together with a piece of cord—not too tight, but tight enough, just as they shoved the two sharp steel hooks through the meat between his Achilles tendons and the ankle bones and he was heaved up by the hooks and hung spraddle legged upside down. They sliced open his throat with a knife in order to start him bleeding (that's why his hands had been tied —so he couldn't grab at his throat and get his arms in the way). The skinners were simultaneously cutting and stripping his skin off, and the dresser was cutting carefully around his anus and scrotum on either side of his penis to meet in a single line at the belly to divide the skinned writhing muscles and yellow fat and tumble balls guts belly lungs heart liver pancreas more guts all sliding falling down past his eyes onto some fast-moving conveyor belt into the dark and they inspected the carcass with a ten-cell flashlight and stamped the purple ink government inspection stamp onto the meat.

The accompanying medical record reported the presence of

gold teeth. The head was now chopped from the carcass and the gold teeth extracted from it. (Had the medical record showed the presence of a platinum skull plate, surgical pins in the bones or other metal parts, all this metal would have been carefully salvaged.) After they got the gold, the brain was removed.

And after Roy there came some geese and chickens, several lambs and sheep, and then there was Margaret, looking strangely innocent, childish—she didn't know what was going to happen to her and Roy couldn't tell her, he was already dead, he didn't really know, himself, and that was the end of that.

All this intelligence had reached him in the shape of pictures and phrases, after he had awakened out of a sound, undreaming sleep at four o'clock one winter morning. It all began with the line, " . . . several sheep and lambs and then there was Margaret." It had felt like having a nightmare, but he was wide awake, and he had to follow the whole thing through completely, experience every detail. Then he was appalled by the knowledge of his total horrors: suicidal, masochistic wishes, of course—these were things that he really wanted to have done to himself and to do to other people.

At six o'clock he got up and turned on the big overhead light in the bedroom. Then he got back into bed and went to sleep. He awoke an hour or so later, somewhat refreshed, then fell asleep again, dreaming what seemed to be part of some story by Ernest Hemingway, all about World War I. Roy was a young officer who must go on a dangerous mission with another couple of officers, under the leadership of an older English army man. Roy was frightened, but he would go and do whatever was expected of him. The old Englishman was Ford Madox Ford.

■ ■ ■

When she was a girl, Margaret Gridley kept finding and making odd and beautiful things. She kept them in her room. Her mother would ask her,

"Margaret, where did you get this . . . thing?"

"I made it. I found that metal jigger in the street and I got the wire out of the basement and those big beads are some that Aunt Maude gave me to play with when I was little."

"How did you get it all together like that?"

"I borrowed some glue and pliers from Papa's workshop," Margaret said.

"It *is* kind of pretty . . . but what do you call it? What's it for?"

"I don't know, Mama, it's just a thing."

When she got to Radcliffe, Margaret found out about Art. She went to museums and galleries in Boston and New York. Other girls and boys asked her, "Isn't Picasso sublime? Isn't Rauschenberg too much?" and Margaret said, "I guess so," and shrugged. She couldn't see why they were so extravagant in their praise for things that they saw in museums; she had been making works of art for years. The only difference was that none of her things were in museums.

Margaret's room in Cambridge was different from anyplace else in the world. She decorated and furnished it herself, after having spent many days investigating and shopping in the remnant stores and junk shops of Boston and its suburbs. Her fellow students were scandalized and delighted. The Dean of Women wrote a letter about it to her friend, Frank O'Hara, at the Museum of Modern Art. Nobody had ever seen a room done up in velvet, fur, panels of solid black or yellow oilcloth and softly gleaming surfaces of metal and glass.

Margaret's clothes were very simple and nicely fitted, but the colors and textures of the materials that she liked to use for making them caused lots of discussion around the campus. Some days she wore a one-piece gabardine coverall with a zipper from crotch to neck, the kind which Air Force pilots wear. She had a big fur and leather jacket and strange suede boots to go with it.

■ ■ ■

Clifford went to the market to buy a bucket of yogurt and whatever goodies that the day might afford. He wandered slowly with the noisy Nepalese crowd. The sun shone; there was a fine stink of burning dung, spice, and incense in the air. He felt a cold flash of terror when he glimpsed a tall red haired woman just as she was turning a corner out of the main market into a side alley. Clifford was afraid that it was Flora McGreevey, Dorothy's mother, who had come directly to Katmandu in order to find him and compel him to give her piano back to her.

The piano had resided, for several years, in the living room of his friend, Mark Sanderson. Mark was a composer and teacher who lived with his wife and many children in a big brown-shingled house in Berkeley. The piano was in daily use. Mark had a few private students; his wife, Beth, practiced daily and taught their own children.

A large assortment of other instruments inhabited the same room. In addition to books and musical scores, the ceiling-high bookshelves housed an assortment of horns, flutes and fiddles. A

shiny baritone horn stood underneath the piano. There was a cello in one corner of the room, and shiny metal music stands were waiting in unexpected places to be knocked over with a great crash by unwary guests.

Clifford got letters from Mark on very rare occasions, but when he wrote, Mark always mentioned the piano, it was in fine condition, and he still hadn't been able to manage to get another one which he liked as well, and it was sort of embarrassing to keep this one of Clifford's—or Dorothy's—or Flora McGreevey's. Maybe he ought to try buying it instead of continuing to worry Clifford about it; it would take him a couple of years to pay for it, if Clifford wouldn't mind—or Flora?

Flora McGreevey had originally bought the piano for her children. She had unexpectedly inherited a little money from a distant relative. Flora thought that Dorothy and her brother ought to have a really good piano when they started taking lessons—a better instrument than the baby grand which she got when she was first married. (Baby grands had been fashionable in that era. They were used to support elegant, deep-fringed "Spanish" shawls of silk velvet dyed orange and red. People had begun to make living in penthouses a chic thing to do, and a baby grand piano was a regular fixture in penthouse apartments which overlooked the East River. These pianos were very seldom played because it was so much bother to remove the big shawl and find a place to put that. When the shawl was, at last, removed, however, a couple of white circles and a cigaret burn were displayed on the mahogany case, emblems of a couple of large parties which Percy McGreevey had given for some old Yaley friends.)

Flora spent a little of her inheritance on the big Steinway parlor grand which now stood in Mark Sanderson's house. She gave the baby grand to a cousin who had asked her for it. He had a wonderful time refinishing it in "antique white" and gold trim. His talented roommate painted an extremely bawdy picture on the inside of the piano lid. From a distance of five or six feet, the picture seemed to be an innocent 18th Century style pastoral scene of shepherds, nymphs and flocks and trees, but when it was more nearly examined, it became very clear what all these assorted people, sheep and mythological beings were actually doing.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy and Roy were lunching together in a Russian place in Clement Street.

"I don't think we should have any of those," Dorothy said,

nodding in the direction of a refrigerated showcase. Behind the glass was an assortment of bizarre looking pastries of the most counter-Revolutionary order, all swollen with whipped cream, and shamelessly bedizened with colored icings. Each one was an insult to the suffering masses of the world and to the memory of Nikolai Lenin.

"We have to," Roy said. "It's expected of us. They won't let me come in here again if we don't have some, and I like the soup here. Anyway, we owe it to the memory of his Late Imperial Majesty, Nicholas II, Tsar of All the Russias." Roy toasted the memory of that Monarch in coffee and pretended to throw the empty cup over his shoulder.

"Well, all right," Dorothy said, doubtfully, "But we really *do* know better, don't we."

Roy said, "Sure we do." Then he held a short conversation with the waitress, in Russian.

Dorothy said, "I forgot you could do that. It really is impressive. I can tell which are the verbs, though."

"I expect so," Roy said, and he laughed.

"Anyway, I'll tell you all about Vienna," Dorothy said. "They really have whipped cream on everything. There are crystal chandeliers made out of real rocks—quartz and amythest and topaze chunks like eggs—and polished mahogany everywhere that there isn't brocade or crystal or whipped cream. It's funny the difference there is between the ways they use wood and stone in Europe and Asia. In Europe it all smells different, it all means something else. In India the stone is all alive. In Europe it's part of a graveyard. I don't see how elephants can stand to live there —but I suppose it's their job."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "Nobody loves you when you're old and gay. Everyone forgets that while fairies aren't exactly mortal, they have to live through several millennia before they finally fade away; their old age is very long."

■ ■ ■

Tom Prescott woke up in the dark. Something was the matter; he couldn't move one of his legs, and something was holding his left arm and hurting it every time he tried to move it. With his right hand he groped about for the lamp which ought to be on the bedside table. His hand struck metal and glass which crashed on

the floor and broke. Where was the telephone. . . .

"Hey," Tom said. The crash of glass and metal and the sound of his own voice made a strange echoing noise. There was no echo in his bedroom; he must be in jail or something.

"Hey," he said. "Darlene." He heard footsteps, there was somebody running. It was Darlene; Tom could hear her dress rustling as she came towards the bed. "Darlene," he said.

A strange woman's voice said very clearly and quietly, "It's all right, Mr. Prescott. Don't shout; you'll disturb the other patients. I'm going to give you another hypo and then I'll fix that IV in your arm, you've got it all pulled around . . . "

Tom said, "Where are you? I'm in a hospital? Why don't they put the lights on?"

"Now, then, Mr. Prescott, just lie back again. The sun's right on your face. I'll fix the blinds."

"Hey," Tom said.

"Please don't yell, Mr. Prescott. You're in the hospital. You'll disturb the other patients."

"What time is it?"

"Two forty-five," the woman said. She sounded like Tom's teacher in the second grade.

"Miss Telfer," Tom said. Someone was tugging at his left arm, hurting him. "Hey," he said. "Cut it out! Why don't you turn on the god-damned lights?"

"We don't need the lights right now," the woman said, calmly. "There's a bandage over your eyes. Please don't pick at it. Your eyes will be all right, Doctor says. The lids will be a little scarred, that's all, and they'll be painful for a while. That's why I gave you another hypo. You musn't thrash around quite so much. Your left leg is in a cast. It was broken in two places, but it will be all right, soon. Don't worry about all that. Try to rest."

"Miss Telfer," Tom said.

Another woman's voice said, "I'm your night nurse, Mrs. Gustavson. Don't try to wave that left arm too much. We're feeding you intravenously until tomorrow morning. We'll take out the IV when Doctor makes his rounds."

Tom heard her go out of the room. She wasn't Darlene. He was in a hospital, all banged up. He hadn't seen Darlene for a couple of years. Now she and Ted lived in Santa Monica. He was driving to San Francisco, going up the Waldo Grade and here came this truck out of its own lane and down the hill a thousand miles an hour.

"Hey! Hey! Hey!" Tom shouted.

"Well, Tom, how are you feeling?" a man asked him.

Tom said, "Augh?"

"You've been getting lots of rest. That's good. Don't bother about making small talk."

"Augh," Tom said. "I can't think of your name."

"That's right," the man said. "Ed Bancroft, your doctor. You're doing fine, Tom."

The nurse's voice said, "Do you want him to have this now, Dr. Bancroft?"

Tom heard them leave the room, still talking. Then he thought he could hear Dorothy talking, but he was too tired to figure out what she was saying.

■ ■ ■

Clifford cut fresh bananas and cucumbers and mangoes into a bowl. He ladled curds of fresh yogurt over the fruit, then he poured a couple spoonfuls of dark, Nepalese honey over the yogurt. The honey fell in vagrant golden loops, garlands, and jolly swags of gold. While he ate, he read a chapter of *Mansfield Park.* He could hear someone blowing a conch horn in the distance. The neighbors were singing a mournful native ditty while they cooked up a curry which smelled like a Chinese herb drugstore.

Clifford wondered what Jane Austen's handwriting looked like. Do any of her manuscripts still exist? He had seen Beethoven's notebooks the first time he went to Europe. It had taken lots of time and patience to get letters from several very important professors in order to get him permission to examine the notebooks. If he was going traveling and was planning to stay in some place for any length of time, he carried a reproduction of Blake's *Jerusalem* with him.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy said, "It could be sort of fun, sometimes, though. So many people came to Delhi and it was easy to get from the city out to where we were living. Of course, everybody had to come and see Clifford Barlow, but a few of my friends came, too—Margaret Gridley and Gigi Fiske and Max and Alice Lammergeier from San Francisco. We had some great parties when Alice and Max were there. And of course there were all the other Americans and people from Europe . . . we all went out a lot to hear music together. We'd smoke a whole lot of bhang and get out of our heads listening to Ravi Shankar and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and everybody. They used to play all night. And of course the linguistics people came by—Dr. Bitteschoen, and Dr. Chadwick

from London and Dr. Saru from Japan and Professor Ptichki from Moscow—people I knew when I was at Radcliffe or when I was teaching at Michigan."

Tom asked her, "Can Clifford really play a sitar? Or does he just fake it?"

"He had a teacher and everything," Dorothy said, "And you have to be really good in order to get an Indian teacher. It isn't like Japan, where all you have to do is pay and you can get a teacher to teach you anything you want to know. Clifford's teacher was quite certain that Clifford was the reincarnation of some prominent Bengali musician, otherwise Clifford wouldn't have been able to learn anything, much less play music. Clifford used to practice for hours on end. Then he started learning the tabla. That's really hard. Even I can get some kind of noise out of a sitar or a sarod, but I'm nowhere nearly coordinated enough to even start with the tabla. Of course Clifford's left hand is in training from the organ and the harpsichord and all the other lovely instruments that he's been playing since infancy. He has fantastically quick reflexes—the big bore!"

"Margaret Gridley's the one who married that jazz player, what's-his-name, isn't she?"

"Oh, yes. She married Beefy Johnson. He was a junky. They didn't stay married long; he already had a wife in Pascagoula, Mississippi or someplace. She wrote Margaret a nasty letter. Then Beefy Johnson got killed. Everybody knows all about that, it was in *Time* and everything. Margaret was only about eleven years old at the time and *very* skinny, but she was bright for her age. She's lots different now."

Tom laughed. "I can imagine," he said.

"Every time they print a picture of Françoise Sagan, I say to myself 'There's Margaret.' Of course, Margaret's much better looking than that in real life."

"Was she really in the movies?"

"She certainly was. She was in a couple of B movies and then she had a small but very good part in a big movie. She can upstage anybody any time. She made thousands of dollars for a while. She knew James Dean. But she had to stop; all the makeup was ruining her skin like some terrible disease and she met Beefy Johnson and they got married in New York. But all that happened years ago. We'll probably be seeing one of her movies on TV almost any time now. Won't that be something!"

"Come on," Tom said. "How long ago?"

"*Years* ago—at least six—"

"That isn't very long ago. You always talk like a year lasts

forever," Tom said.

"Well, we all move around so much and everything happens so fast, it all seems like ages ago," Dorothy told him.

■ ■ ■

Roy had a hard time sleeping in the airplane. He'd had a lot to drink before he got aboard, and he'd taken a pill to prevent airsickness. He stayed awake a long time, talking to the college girl who had the seat beside his. Now she had curled up in her chair and covered herself with a big blanket and gone to sleep. Roy felt half asleep and half sick.

He thought that he'd been awake all the time, but he had fallen asleep for a little while. The plane was flying out of the mountains and the very earliest dim light of pre-dawn showed the leaden shine of the River Platte lying in great meanders and loops across the flat grey prairie below. It reminded Roy of pictures that he'd seen of Mesopotamia. He was excited by the thought that he had known without the effort of trying to remember that this was the Platte and that now he was out of the West, heading into a strange land without mountains.

■ ■ ■

Flora McGreevey was looking very smart. Dorothy no longer hated her but she was jealous of her mother's clothes and expensive hair.

Flora was saying, "I like society. I *am* society. Society is all my friends. Some people imagine that society is rich people, but there haven't been any rich people since 1929. Your Uncle Terry got a Hispano Suiza when he graduated from Yale, but he had to go over and pick it up from the factory himself. I remember he went tourist class. It was very funny, we brought all this champagne and a couple of enormous *bon voyage* baskets down into the absolute guts of the *Ile de France*. I was only a little girl at the time, of course. Terry was years older than me, he was born in the year before the Fire."

Flora McGreevey, being a native of the city, never mentioned the great earthquake of 1906; it was the Fire which had destroyed San Francisco. Dorothy was as distressed as ever to watch her mother extinguish cigarets in the sauce which remained on her luncheon plate.

Flora McGreevey loved to eat and she was a very good cook. When Percy McGreevey left her, all her friends told her, "You

ought to open a little tea room, Flo—you could make a mint of money just serving tea and coffee and those delicious biscuits and rolls you know how to make."

Flora told them that she was too busy to operate a restaurant. She wasn't having any trouble finding enough to eat. She had all her committee work to do, for her favorite charities and for the Democratic Party. She was a great success with all of it.

Dorothy's father had run away with a young person who had not quite had a career in the movies. During the second World War, Percy McGreevey made lots of money in some not quite illegal way. Dorothy had been able to study at Radcliffe, instead of at Cal or Stanford.

Flora McGreevey was enormous, but she wasn't the noisy, jolly type of fat lady. She had perfect teeth, beautiful red hair, and a very sweet looking face. She had sometimes been described by her husband's friends as "pretty in the face, but Big."

A rich broker, eating luncheon with a rich lawyer, observed Flora and her daughter in the restaurant. The broker said, "You let Flo McGreevey into your office and she talks you out of your back teeth for the Children's Hospital or whatever it is she's collecting for or organizing. But I always tell my secretary to send her right on in. Flo's a real lady and a very genuine person. There ain't many like her left in the world. I know people had a lot to say about her and that symphony guy—that Russian fellow with all the long hair—"

"There's nothing to all that," the lawyer said. "Anyway, everybody knows all them guys is queer. Flo's always been interested in getting money together to back the opera and the symphony, that's all—she's a very refined and highly cultivated person. That damned Perce McGreevey ought to have been shot, walking out on her and those kids like that. I fixed him, though. We tied up his business hand and foot until he signed a support agreement and made over the house to Flo. He paid, too."

The broker lighted a big cigar and leaned back in his chair. "Well, old Percy was kind of a bastard," he said, "But you can't help liking the guy. I saw him down in Nassau last winter, still the same old big-talking Percy, always laughing and clowning around, always on the lookout for a piece of ass. He's pretty well fixed, you know, even after you guys were done trimming on him."

"That little piece that took off with him," the lawyer said, stirring his coffee, "did she stick with him?"

"I guess so, but she's dead, now, you know—took pills."

Flora was telling Dorothy, "I went to see your friend Dr.

Lammergeier this morning about the Opera Fund. He's absolutely the most enchanting person in San Francisco. He could charm the buttons right off your coat!"

■ ■ ■

Roy flipped the little paper book onto a pile of other ones that lay in a corner of the cupboard, saying, "Well, Mrs. Woolf, thank you very much." Instantly, he knew a flash of terror and delight. He had said exactly what he meant, exactly what he felt at that moment. He had been telling himself, earlier, that it wasn't one of her best novels, but when he actually came to the end of it, he felt pleased and satisfied and he had thoughtlessly addressed himself to the woman whose "voice" was still in his head: "Well, Mrs. Woolf, thank you very much," and there was this terrific sensation and it was followed immediately by the knowledge that Mrs. Woolf had received and acknowledged his gratitude.

■ ■ ■

Clifford asked Dorothy, "How's your mother?"

"Awful, as usual," Dorothy replied. "We went to the Palace Hotel, of course. Everybody kept looking at us."

"The two of you in one restaurant is quite a production. Your mother is a great looking woman."

"You should have married her instead of me," Dorothy cried. "You're both so awful!"

Clifford was becoming impatient with her. "Come on, now," he said. "Stop flittering around and tell me what you're trying to say."

"She's talking about marrying that awful Alex," Dorothy said. "She gave me a hundred dollars to fix my hair at Elizabeth Arden's. She's going to buy a house in Phoenix from that awful friend of yours I don't like from Bull Run College, what's name, the fake architect fairy—"

"Hawthorne?"

"Yes—only how she ever happened to even meet him is beyond me."

"It was at our wedding party," Clifford said, gloomily.

"One of his icky five-sided triangles that keys in with the Sacral Universe once every twenty-five years for ten seconds on her birthday. Roy would love to have a house like that, he's so crazy about magic and birthdays and stars, but he's penniless, of course."

"He came to lunch with me today," Clifford said. "He has a part-time job, now, and he brought some whiskey."

"Roy's such a bore. Why do you waste your time?"

"I told you to stop flittering around," Clifford shouted at her. "You're babbling again. Go take a hot bath or clean up the kitchen or feed the cats. Calm *down*!"

Dorothy came and sat on his lap and kissed him. He tried to jerk his head away from her.

"You're so smart," she said. "You're always so calm and good."

"Come on, quit it!"

"I don't care," Dorothy said. "Let's go to bed and fuck."

■ ■ ■

For no reason at all, Roy was trying to remember the name of a mongoloid idiot that he'd seen in a freak show, years ago, when he was a boy. The mongoloid, billed as The Marvelous Pinheaded Lady, was of uncertain age. Her thin hair had been arranged to stand up in a little braid at the summit of her almost bald, pointed head. She wore a big shapeless dress of red and white checkered gingham. Great circular spots of rouge had been applied to her cheeks and brilliant red lipstick painted on to her mouth.

Roy could remember being frightened, repelled, and fascinated with looking upon this wonder. The side-show barker had addressed her by a lewd-sounding name with a diminutive ending. Roy couldn't remember that name; when he tried to think of it more than twenty years later. He could remember the face and the dress and the way she moved—bearishly soft and clumsy—but the name seemed lost to him forever.

■ ■ ■

"You must *work*," Clifford told her.

"I'm doing something else, right now," Dorothy calmly replied, looking, up from her book. "Anyway, I'm not interested in gardening. I like to see the flowers in the morning, but if there wasn't a garden, I wouldn't miss it."

"You must work in it, or you can't enjoy it," Clifford said, quite pointedly.

"I might work on it tomorrow—I work on it a little bit sometimes, if I don't have anything else to do—right now, I'm doing something else."

"You're sitting on your ass in front of a mirror," Clifford

said.

"You go dig in your garden all you want to and enjoy yourself, but don't shout and yell at me about it," Dorothy replied.

"I'm right!" Clifford told her. "It'll take you fifty years to find it out, but you will. You'll find it out I'm right."

"Of course you're right, Clifford. Look at yourself—nobody could be more correct—nobody could be more perfect. There you are in a raving screaming fit. Very rightly so."

Clifford lectured her for a little longer, but at last he disappeared among the flowers. Dorothy sighed and put on her glasses. She returned to the book that she'd been working with all morning. It was difficult at first for her to concentrate on it again. She was annoyed with Clifford's self-righteous roarings. "Why must he have a uniform world where everyone feels like doing the same things at the same times?" she asked herself. "Not only feel like it but be doing it enthusiastically . . . " She felt that the world was quite uniform enough: one place reminded her of another, one person had eyes or voice or nose or some other feature or combination of features which resembled those which belonged to another person. And people keep doing the same things over and over again—want the same things. Why must Clifford have it even more organized, more controlled?

Dorothy got up and went into the kitchen. She set the teakettle on the stove to boil. Out the window she could see bamboo and orchids growing. She could hear the intermittent scrape and rattle of Clifford's gardening procedures: pick, pick, pick, pick, pick, snip, rattle, silence. Click, shaky rattle snip. That garden was going to straighten up and and do right, or Clifford would know the reason why not. It must be as correct as he himself was.

Dorothy suddenly laughed, listening to Clifford's indignant thrashing and snipping. She brought the tea tray into her study and sat down to her book again. Soon she was absorbed in reading and occasionally writing extracts or queries or cross-references on three-by-five file cards. When she came to the end of a chapter, she put all her things away and began preparing lunch for Clifford and herself.

■ ■ ■

Margaret Gridley had felt a little bit lonely and out of place at Radcliffe, when she first arrived. She found out right away that the western part of the United States and its inhabitants were great subjects for humor and comedy to her fellow students who had lived all their lives in New York and New England. Most of

Margaret's classmates had only a vague notion as to the geographical location of her ancestral home. "And who are the Gridleys?" the more snobbishly inclined asked each other. A Miss Peabody remarked that they were, perhaps, still Navy people.

Margaret only smiled. Her mother had taught her the old-fashioned White House Cookbook etiquette; her stiff, rather dusty formality amused the Deans and professors. Margaret's manner, combined with her distinctive sense of style in dress and living, soon established her as a remarkable individual. A few of the girls were afraid of her sarcastic style of speech. However, her roommate, Miss Gigi Fiske, spoke very highly of her, and Margaret began going about in the company of Gigi's brother, Luke. She was no longer so much of a figure of fun as she had been at first. The Fiske's were a very old and proper family down in Maine. They had Back Bay connections and they owned some islands off the coast. (The U.S. Navy leased most of its ships from Gigi's father.)

Gigi's brother, Luke—Mr. Lexington Fiske III—was in Harvard, then, a very handsome boy with long blond hair in a slanted bang across his forehead. Margaret thought he had a rather interesting mind. She enjoyed hearing him talk about psychology and literature faster and faster while he very shyly touched her breasts and legs. When she asked him whether he had a contraceptive, he was abashed and a little angry.

"Don't you have anything?" he demanded.

"You didn't expect that I'd be carrying a supply of such appliances with me, did you?" Margaret inquired, in her turn.

On another occasion, she armed herself in advance, and they had a pleasant afternoon together.

"It's awfully nice of you to be interested in Luke," Gigi Fiske told her. "He was all mixed up with this awful creature from Bennington who was a bondage queen and it sort of got him disillusioned with women for almost a year. I'd certainly appreciate it if you'd go out with him, now and then. You don't have to get emotionally involved or anything . . . "

■ ■ ■

"Damn it, I'm right," Clifford told Roy.

"Absolutely," Roy said. "You're right in exactly the same way that Mr. Kant said that *he* was: 'apodeictically.' "

"You go ahead and laugh. Dorothy used to say the same thing. She left me, and you'll drop me, but I know I'm right."

"Sure you're right," Roy told him. "I expect that I can forgive

you, after all."

Clifford was angry. "You're afraid to have a serious discussion! You're afraid to believe in anything, to face up to reality! You won't take any responsibility for your own feelings!"

Roy tried to calm him down by apologizing. "OK, Clifford," he said, "I was teasing again. I'm sorry; I won't do it any more."

"Your teasing and laughing are only hostility! You laugh because you're embarrassed—you don't want to think about what you're saying or what I'm saying. You're afraid of any sincere feelings, any direct communication."

Roy felt terrible. "All right," he said. "I'm very sorry."

They walked on down the street. Roy felt bad; Clifford appeared to be miserable.

▪ ▪ ▪

Herbert Wackernagel said, "I got a new Lancia outside, Maggy—you want to see it?"

"I saw it outside the shop," Margaret said. "I wondered whose it was."

"You got to let me take you for a ride in it."

Margaret smiled and thought a moment. "You pick me up at Marjory Grimshaw's place tonight. My folks still don't want me to see you, but I'd like to talk to you, OK?"

Marjory Grimshaw was Margaret's closest friend in Eugene. She was a student at the University. She had wanted to go to Radcliffe with Margaret, but she hadn't been able to pass the entrance examinations and she had been too late in applying for admission to Stanford, so there she was, still in Eugene. She planned to go to Stanford or Europe, next year. It was for thinking of lines like these—"Stanford or Europe"—that Margaret sincerely admired Marjory Grimshaw. Marjory had a natural sense of style; Margaret had to work at it.

The social columns of the Eugene *Register-Guard* quite accurately recorded the fact that Miss Marjory Grimshaw gave a dinner party at the lovely home of her parents, the fashionable and popular Forest Grimshaws, for the young lady students that were home for the holidays. Margaret Gridley's name appeared at the head of the guest list. The name of Mr. Herbert Wackernagel didn't appear in the social columns or anywhere else in the paper.

Mr. Wackernagel and Miss Gridley strapped themselves into the black leather bucket-seats of the Lancia and in a remarkably short time they were miles from Eugene, speeding through dark rain forests. They went to a little hunting lodge in the woods, a

place Herbert owned in common with the two whilom choirboys who had been the companions of his youth. (On this particular weekend, they had gone to Coos Bay to get laid.)

There was lots of beer and sandwiches and pretzels and crackers and cheese and salami. A wood fire roared in the little iron stove and a kerosene lamp shed a warm yellow glow across the knotty pine boards of the walls. It was raining very hard outside.

The pale steady light made Margaret's fair skin look warm and mellow. She had very perfect breasts; she appeared never to need a brassiere. Herbert watched her lips and throat and belly moving while she talked, about the past, about her parents, about Cambridge and Mr. Lexington Fiske III. "What do you want to mess around with a dope like that for?" he asked.

"Oh, I get lonesome sometimes—you aren't there," Margaret said. Then she laughed, because she thought Herbert was looking very solemn and jealous. "He's only a little boy," she said. "He's nothing like you. Nobody is." She laid her open hand against the end of his nose. He regarded her steadily between her outspread fingers. He didn't move.

"He has green eyes and a kind of pointed chin," Margaret said, and laid a finger on the dimple in Herbert's chin. "His neck is kind of skinny and his chest is kind of bony. He doesn't have nice solid titties like you, nor a pretty bellybutton." She kissed Herbert's belly, and her long hair fell silkily across his genitals, and Margaret softly seized his rising penis in one hand, kissed its throbbing head and licked on it a little bit. "I haven't seen you for so long," she told it, and caressed it a little more. "There," she said. "Now, hold me once again and then we have to go."

■ ■ ■

While Tom was locked up in his darkroom, Dorothy was trying to give the living room a quick run-over with the vacuum cleaner. The rug was filthy, and Mrs. Hurst, the cleaning lady, wasn't due to come until Saturday, and this was only a Wednesday. Dorothy tried very hard to run the machine slowly and carefully; she tried very hard to keep her temper. She hated to do housework.

Tom didn't like Mrs. Hurst. He was convinced that she was drinking up the household brandy supply. He told Dorothy that he didn't like to have strange types wandering around his house. Dorothy told him that she was too busy, herself, to keep the place properly in order. She was thinking about having Mrs. Hurst work on the house a couple more days a week. The place

always looked grubby to her. And Tom had never learned to pick up after himself.

The vacuum cleaner wasn't working very well. Dorothy guessed that Mrs. Hurst hadn't emptied the dust-bag. She detached the metal pipe from the rubber hose of the cleaner and applied the roaring tube directly to the carpet. She found that it cleaned very well this way, and she had done several square feet of carpet before she realized that it would take a number of hours to complete the job at the rate she was then going. It had already taken up more time than she felt that she could afford to spend on the job—she ought to be reading, there were letters to be answered, she was supposed to be thinking up something nice to do for Professor Crowley and his wife, she ought to be giving herself a shampoo . . .

Dorothy applied the hose to a full ashtray. All the matches and wrappings and butts made a cheery rattling sound on their lazy journey towards the machine's tank. Dorothy cursed, thinking that now she'd have to empty the dustbag herself, because the carpet must be finished and there were six more big ashtrays full of garbage.

"Try to remain calm," she told herself. She turned off the machine and stood still in the center of the living room. Sunlight shone through the dirty metal slats of the Venetian blinds, and in the beams of yellow light there danced eighteen trillion, three hundred million, nine hundred thousand, four hundred sixty-seven motes of brand new (or old) super-adhesive, ultra-grimy dust (the wind was blowing outside) which someone, some vacuum cleaner, some Mrs. Hurst, somebody, was going to have to move out of the house again tomorrow.

Dorothy went into the kitchen and poured herself a slug of brandy. She sat down in the living room and lit a cigaret. She drank a little of the brandy.

"The main thing to remember," she told herself, "is that there's plenty of time for everything, isn't there. I'll have to wash out this ashtray I'm using. I'll have to wash out this glass. Calmly. How do I get into these fits, anyway?"

Dorothy finished her brandy and extinguished her cigaret. Neither alcohol nor nicotine seemed to have been of any use. She took her glass and a stack of ashtrays into the kitchen. She wondered whether she might be pregnant. "That's just what we need, isn't it, Dorothy. Right now. Something else to wash and put away and take care of."

Roy used to yell at her, "Why don't you just stop? That's all you really have to do is stop. Why let yourself get drug off on

these trips that drive you cuckoo? Refuse to go. You know what it feels like when you're starting to go over the edge. Stop falling."

"You're a great one to talk," Dorothy told him. "Who's the one who has a complete and utter nervous breakdown if one of his shoestrings breaks?"

She washed her glass and all the ashtrays, and then finished cleaning the rug in the living room. "No more," she told herself. "No *more*. That's all. I refuse to monkey with any more of it."

There was a small cobweb on a bronze head from Bennin. She picked it off and it smeared itself across her fingers. She gritted her teeth when she noticed—again—the grimy Venetian blinds. "Enough," she said, wiping her fingers on her apron. "Screw it all. Did I take that pill or not?"

■ ■ ■

At a large new university in New England, Roy was being treated to a dinner in the company of seven hundred young ladies. (The young gentlemen, he guessed, must have their own dining halls or maybe one big common mess hall like the Army.) The elderly genteel housemother led the girls in a short prayer. They all recited it in the Spanish language, each young lady standing with her hands on the back of her chair. The housemother explained, after they were seated, that the Spanish prayer and the practise of holding conversation in Spanish while at table one night in each week were traditions of the place.

Roy was charmed by the idea. The room, the building, the whole school—could not have been more than six or seven years old, but it had a tradition. It seemed very strange to hear people speaking Spanish in New England; the sound of the language made him homesick for California.

The young girl who was seated on his left asked him how long he had been writing poetry. Roy told her, "Twenty years or so." She seemed to find the information incomprehensible. She was silent during the remainder of the dinner. Roy was obliged to chat, rather formally, with the housemother.

Seven hundred New England young ladies watched Roy talking with her. Mrs. Buckleigh was a great admirer of San Francisco. She and her late husband had visited that city in the year of the world's fair, just before the war.

Mrs. Buckleigh was very dignified, very self-assured. She had only the dimmest notion of who Roy was and how he happened to be seated next to her, eating chicken à la king and making polite

conversation . . . he had come to lecture on something or other. He seemed to be a rather dull young man in a ready-made suit. He reminded her of one of the graduate students.

Dr. Kratzke from the English Department had approached her and asked if she wouldn't like to entertain a visiting lecturer at dinner. Mrs. Buckleigh pulled in her soft little chin and cocked her head to one side like a bird listening for a worm. She peered at Dr. Kratzke through her spectacles and gave him a tentative, wavering "Yes . . . "

Dr. Kratzke said, "Perhaps I should warn you—he's a Westerner—he may be somewhat informally dressed."

"Indeed?" said Mrs. Buckleigh, as a mental image of the late Mr. Will Rogers, wearing a ten-gallon hat, bandanna handkerchief around his neck, baggy shirt, blue jeans, cowboy chaps, and high-heeled boots with spurs arose before her mind's eye.

"I understand that our younger men have rather given up the use of the necktie. I hope that you'll understand that any sign of unconventional attire is not intended to be a personal affront to you."

"Perhaps the Factuly Club might . . . , " Mrs. Buckleigh began.

"Ah, yes, but Mr. Sidgwick and some other gentlemen from the Regents will be there. I believe that our poet will find himself much more comfortable with you and your so delightful young ladies."

"That's very kind of you to say so, Dr. Kratzke, but if it should happen to be our Spanish Night . . . "

"Splendid, my dear Mrs. Buckleigh, thank you so much. I'll have him brought to Godkin House by whoever meets him at the bus." And Dr. Kratzke sped away before Mrs. Buckleigh had a chance to think of any more objections.

Now here was Mr. Roy whoever-he-was, wearing a quite unexceptionable necktie. But she observed, with consternation, that he was beginning to eat the peel of the baked potato which ought to have been left on his plate. Mrs. Buckleigh turned away to address a few remarks to her assistant, Mrs. Grimes. Mrs. Buckleigh couldn't bring herself to watch someone devouring garbage.

A very young girl scurried into the dining hall and whispered something to Mrs. Buckleigh, who in turn informed Roy, "There's a—Mr.—ah—telephone call for you, if you please?"

Roy thanked her and excused himself from the table. He followed the round-eyed blonde child to the lobby of the building, where she directed him to a telephone booth. He shut the door and picked up the phone. He supposed that it must be his agent,

calling to find out whether he had arrived at the right time and to remind him of his next day's engagement.

Roy said, "Hello," into the phone.

A very quiet male voice said, "Mr. Aherne?"

"Yes."

"We are going to kill you," the man said; then the phone went dead.

Roy stood and read the numbers and the instructions on the coin box. Then he replaced the phone on its hook and walked out into the lobby. Who did he know—a man with an Italian or Spanish accent—who might want to kill him? The Cuban Revolution was upsetting lots of people, and Roy's writings and lectures were replete with comments on many political matters. Well, he told himself, that's that. What can you do with an anonymous phone call?

He rejoined Mrs. Buckleigh. The process of walking through the dining hall made him feel a little bit like having to perform *Aida* all by himself on the opening night of the Metropolitan Opera before a large and brilliant audience who had come out expressly to watch Miss Maria Callas do *Salome*. Roy ate his dessert and drank his coffee and continued making polite conversation with Mrs. Buckleigh, but he felt removed, remote from the scene, he had been killed by the telephone.

In the lecture hall, Roy recited none but his most violently political verses—ones he had not planned to read at all, ones he had not read for years, and he added a great deal of political and anti-clerical commentary before and after each poem. At the end of his lectures, he told the story of the anonymous phone call. Someone had tried to silence him, had threatened to kill him. Let them go ahead and do their worst; he had said his say.

The audience was embarrassed. They didn't understand what he had been saying all evening, and this final statement . . . was it another poem? The ones who understood that it was a statement of something which had happened didn't believe him. One or two people in the audience asked questions about the future of poetry and what ever happened to Stephen Vincent Benét and the tradition of The Beautiful, and then the audience was gently but firmly dismissed by Dr. Kratzke.

Dr. Kratzke told Roy that it was rushing season for the fraternities on campus. The phone call was obviously a student prank—in regretable taste of course, but only a joke.

Roy told him, "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

"I beg your pardon?" Dr. Kratzke. He sounded quite offended.

"You're quite right," Roy said, giving him a large shit-eating grin. "Kids are always full of hell. I've been traveling around a great deal this week and my nerves are a little frayed. I always get stage fright. It doesn't matter how often I appear before an audience; I get scared every time I have to do it again. And lots of people don't like what I say. I know that."

"Well, it was a most enjoyable evening," Dr. Kratzke said. "Very stimulating." (His statements, Roy thought, are worthy of the smile he received.) "I'm only sorry that more of the English staff wasn't here," Dr. Kratzke concluded.

A white-haired gentleman in the group which had formed about Dr. Kratzke and Roy now shook Roy by the hand and assured him that he, for one, had been surprised and delighted with Roy's poetry.

"I thought that I wouldn't understand, but I did! Now I see that I must go back and look at these moderns. For years I've had great doubts about Hopkins and Bridges and their radical experiments—let alone such extremists as Mr. Eliot! I've been avoiding *his* work for years!"

■ ■ ■

Clifford told her, "You haven't got any ideas, you've only got opinions."

"What've you got, Mr. Fulbright Fellowship Declined (isn't *that* great—it sounds like the name of a move in chess)? What did you ever know that was so marvelous?" Dorothy inquired.

"I know all the scholarship in my field and I've kept track of the current journal articles and if I get an idea about any of it, I write an article myself and it gets printed, too. Dr. Gedeckt was my teacher. He's still recognized by everyone as the only man who knows anything about what's happening in geography. What do you know?"

"You know perfectly well what my qualifications are," Dorothy said. "I had comparative and structural linguistics from Sapir's best students. When I was only a sophomore, I was in correspondence with Dr. Chadwick in London. I know three and half Classical languages and seven living ones, including Navaho. I can also play the flute."

"You can't count the beats in a bar of music to save your ass," Clifford calmly remarked.

"Well, I can fake it pretty well," Dorothy said. "I played with the All American Youth Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski."

"Don't yell," Clifford said.

"Don't talk like I was a dumbbell, then. But I'll yell if I feel like it. I paid the rent this month."

"That's what I mean," Clifford said. He retained a calm and reasonable attitude which infuriated Dorothy. "That's a matter of fact, not of opinion."

"That isn't really what you mean!" Dorothy shouted. "You really hate women is what you mean! You're just a big faggot, like all the men I've ever known!"

"Whatever in the big wide world could lead you into making a lunatic switch in subject like that? Why are you so upset?"

"Oh, I don't know," Dorothy said, suddenly sitting down and lighting a cigaret. "Why do I *always* let you get me so excited? I have too many other things to worry about. I've got to take a bath and wash my hair and write a thousand letters."

"Did you answer Roy's letter, yet?"

Dorothy said, "I have one page written, almost."

"Don't seal it up, I have to put in a note to him," Clifford told her.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy dreamed that she had been placed in the Women's Ward of the State Mental Hospital. She was supposed to have been taken to Dr. Springald's private sanitarium, down the Peninsula. Someone at the courthouse had put her papers into the wrong file basket, by mistake, after the lunacy hearing that had been brought by her brother, Ted McGreevey.

Dorothy herself, totally withdrawn, had no idea what was happening. They had put her into a large warm concrete room. She lay down on the floor and curled up small. She could, at the same time, see her brother's freckled face and crew-cut red hair, he was leaning forward, talking very fast to the judge, who was Dr. Bitteschoen, benign and white-haired in a billowing black robe.

Dorothy was all curled up small. Several hours later an attendant raised her out of a filthy puddle, hurled a bucket of tepid water over her, then mopped the floor with a dirty rag mop. "You go lay over there, now," the attendant said, and she led Dorothy to a dry place on the floor where Dorothy lay down and curled up small.

Flora McGreevey telephoned to Dr. Springald's Sanitarium, down the Peninsula, to inquire about Dorothy. Dorothy wasn't there! Where can she be! What have you done with my daughter? "Now Mrs. McGreevey, please be calm, very likely there has been a clerical error of some kind—it quite often happens in these

cases. I'll telephone the State Mental Hospital at once."

Dorothy woke up, feeling frightened and miserable. The names were all so real. Dr. Springald. The State Mental Hospital. "A clerical error of some kind." She had made a mistake in her dream; Dr. Springald was really Clifford being efficient and high-handed and correct, and it was all somebody's else's fault, really. And her brother, Ted, had been killed in the Korean War: why did she still hate him, in her dreams?

■ ■ ■

Tom said, "I was never exactly sure about this geography thing that Clifford does. When I went to school, it was all about maps and the principal exports of Borneo and what's the capital of Bogotá?"

Dorothy laughed. "It's all fake," she told him. "He's really doing a kind of environmental anthropology. It's concerned with how people live in a particular place, how do they fit in with the ecology."

"Anyway, he gets lots of big grants all the time to do it," Tom said.

"Oh yes—he'll only teach if they come and get him and pay him lots of money, and even then it's never for more than nine months at the most; he never likes to stay home more than a year. But he likes to talk to the students, he says that's the only way he can find out what's really happening. He's so sententious—so awful—what do you want to talk about *him* for?"

"Oh, I don't know," Tom said. "I just wondered. Get me some more bananas when you go to the store. And some of those black chocolate cookies with all the nasty inside."

■ ■ ■

Margaret found her mother waiting up for her.

"Who drove you home, dear?" Mrs. Gridley asked.

"I took a taxi. Marge and I had a long talk—she wanted to bring me but I told her that there was no point in her barging around on a night like this. It's absolutely pouring. You shouldn't have stayed up; it's very late."

"The rain made me nervous," Mrs. Gridley said. "I couldn't sleep, so I got some darning and came down here where I wouldn't disturb your Dad. Can I fix you some coffee or tea or something? There's ice cream and cake that you didn't have the chance to eat for supper . . . "

"No thanks, Mama, I want to take a bath and fix my hair and go to bed. I have to stay home and study all day tomorrow. We have examinations when I go back to school."

"Well, you mustn't work too hard. You're supposed to be on vacation, aren't you?"

"I have to be really good in order to keep my scholarship," Margaret said. "You and Daddy have sacrificed so much for my education, I've got to make it pay off."

"You make it all worth while to us, as long as you feel that way," her mother told her. Margaret noticed that tears were beginning to appear in her mother's eyes.

"Use the downstairs bathroom so as not to disturb Daddy," Mrs. Gridley said. "I think I'll go up now. Don't forget your prayers." She approached Margaret and gave her a tiny kiss on the cheek.

"Honey, have you been D R I N K I N G tonight?" she demanded and gave Margaret a piercing stare.

"Marjory and I had just one beer—a half a can apiece. We were talking in the kitchen—"

"Your D A D D Y better not find out! You know how he feels about Women Who Smoke And Drink. And you know how I feel. I realize that we're old fashioned and that you're a big girl now, going to college away back East and everything, but it really hurts me to think you'd . . . "

"Oh, Mama—a glass of beer—"

Mrs. Gridley was growing more indignant as she went on. "It doesn't matter how much it was. The Grimshaws are different—they belong to that country club and have all those big drinking parties, that's their way of living and it's their business, but it's not Our Way. We've never lived like that and we're not about to start. And a girl, a Woman in particular, can't let herself—"

"All right, Mama, I'm sorry. I won't do it again."

"Don't lie to me," Mrs. Gridley snapped. "You've been on your own, back at that fancy school, back there where you think nobody knows you and notices what you do. I don't know what kind of people you know there or their folks or how they live. I don't see why you couldn't have stayed with us right here in Eugene and gone to the University, it's a perfectly good school."

"Now Mama, don't get all upset. I have to bathe and go to bed. You should go to bed, too. I know that Daddy still has to have his breakfast at five-thirty."

"No, I suppose so," Mrs. Gridley blew her nose on a dainty pocket handkerchief and wiped away her tears, impatiently. "I just hope that nobody else *saw* you and Marjorie drinking beer.

Marjorie's mother isn't above telling it all over town."

"Don't fuss so, Mama. I'll go up with you and get my nightshirt and haircurlers."

"Don't stay up much later," Mrs. Gridley said.

"No, Mama, I won't," Margaret told her. They went upstairs together, and Mrs. Gridley clung tightly to Margaret's arm all the way. Margaret wondered, "How often have I said that?"

■ ■ ■

Roy ate a species of breakfast pastry which he had always known by the name of "butterhorn." It was served hot and it had a pat of butter melting all greasy and yellow on top. He slowly drank poisonous chemical-tasting coffee while he ate. He was sitting in a big cafeteria on Harvard Square. The place was almost entirely occupied by college students who looked to him like English movie-stars. The ones who weren't really beautiful appeared to be very distinguished and aristocratic. Roy told himself that they probably all came here from Lincoln, Nebraska and Bellingham, Washington.

He ate the last of his pastry. There had been a little difficulty in obtaining it. The lady in back of the counter was a native of Hingham and understood no other dialect; Roy's West Coast drawl was hard for her to follow. Fortunately, Roy had known a number of New Englanders when he was in the Army. He had not much trouble understanding the lady from Hingham, and he luckily remembered the correct dialect word:

"I want a Danish, please. Set it on the stove, first, with a piece of butter on top of it. Leave it there until the butter starts to melt.

The lady said, "Ayuh? I can give yiz a hot Danish. I'll call you."

Roy sipped the coffee slowly. It had been served in the native style—with cream in it. Roy had forgotten that one must ask for black coffee.

He thought about breakfasts that he had known, all kinds and sizes and shapes and flavors. In his grandmother's hotel room a lot of electric cords dangled from a light socket in the ceiling: electric breakfast of eggs boiled on electric hotplate, coffee (which he wasn't allowed to drink when he was at home) from an electric percolator, and toast from an electric toaster which Roy was supposed to be watching, but which he kept forgetting . . . the toast burned while he was gazing dreamily out the window at the towering slash-burners and big yellow trolley cars and

fir trees in the rain, thinking of his mother.

Limp tepid hospital breakfast arrived in many tiny dishes under aluminum covers. It looked like a child's pretend-teaparty, all wheeled in on a metal table. A very small portion of some nasty food substance lay in the center of each dish and slowly melted down into a puddle of clear fluid and a faintly brownish sediment. It smelled of eggs and iodoform.

It was embarrassing for him to eat in a dining car while he was traveling any place, any year. The heavy starched linens and the lead-weighted silver-ware were impressive, and the eggs were always nicely cooked, but it all seemed so difficult and unplasant for the stewards and waiters, they were all unhappy and hung over and bad-tempered, no matter how large or how small a tip anyone left for them. The coffee always tasted good, but who had the nerve to sit at a dining-car table long enough to enjoy drinking it? It was too harrowing on his nerves to watch all the waiters suffering.

Army breakfast in a clattering mess hall was a constant reminder that one must eat to live, not live to eat. The American Puritan's disgust for the body and its requirements, and his total indifference to the taste of food and its proper cooking was given full rein in the great kitchens. A carton of cornflakes opens cleverly down the center, two flaps pop up to admit the application of sugar and milk to the insipid contents—curled shavings of Dead Sea fruits. On a tin tray moulded into divided compartments was placed a small mountain of dehydrated eggs all rainbow-hued, accompanied by two small strings of bacon that had been cleverly constructed of cardboard, and a couple slices of toast rescued from the burning wreckage of some ancient bakery, and huge soggy pancakes hand-knitted from pure Australian flannel with brown sweet water soaking through the threads, and fresh oranges and cold milk and black, Lysol-flavored coffee with lots of canned milk and sugar. Roy remembered that everyone drank lots of the cold milk and devoured pounds of ice-cream —which wasn't surprising, he told himself, considering that in those days all of us were 19 years old and away from home for the first time.

Clifford had taken him to on a visit to the ancestral home of the Barlows in the mountains of Idaho. Breakfast in that household was a very large event. There was hot mush in two kinds—farina, and a marvelous oatmeal which had had to be soaked in water over night and then slowly steamed in the morning. There were eggs—boiled, fried, and scrambled. There were bacon, ham, and pork chops. There were fried potatoes and gravy and

hot baking-powder biscuits and hot rolls and home made bread, all served up with real honey, hand-made jams and jellies and preserves and relishes and pickles. There was home-made butter; there was fresh milk and cream and lots of coffee. There were fruit pies and two kinds of cake for dessert and everybody ate a lot of everything. Once there was a fresh pheasant for breakfast, in addition to all the usual goodies. The pheasant had tried, injudiciously, to cross the road in front of the farm pickup which Clifford's father was driving. There was *faisan sauté en beurre* the next day.

There was a period in his life during which Roy used to tell everybody that he hated breakfast, and in that time, he seldom ate breakfast. Then there was a long period during which there was no breakfast to be eaten, even if he had liked breakfast. Later, he went on a soup kick, and in the morning would open a can of tomato soup and mix it up with lots of milk and butter, or he would have clam chowder or oyster stew. Another season he became addicted to graveyard stew: rich hot milk and melted butter seasoned with salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper with a touch of garlic, into which was broken a pair of big fresh eggs, the whole mixture gently kept hot until the whites of the eggs were solid. When he was temporarily prosperous—had a job or was living on unemployment insurance, he liked to eat cheap steak or liver for breakfast. The meat had to be fried very fast and very lightly, in butter.

Dorothy introduced him to the pleasures of hot *café au lait* with hot French rolls and an assortment of cheeses and fresh fruit. Tom showed him where to go in Chinatown to get small elegant steamed dumplings and pastries made in the Cantonese style, and what kinds of tea there were to drink with them: Dragon's Well, Silver Needle, Lichi, Lapsang Souchong.

In the mountains, it was mandatory to eat Clifford Barlow's Non-Skid Swiss Morning Preparation. That was a combination of quick-cooking oatmeal, powdered milk, assorted nuts, raisins and other dried fruits, all pre-mixed and carried in a big waterproof plastic sack. A measure of this compound would be placed in a big John Muir tin cup and then hot water would be mixed with it, sufficient in quantity to make a thick gruel. It was to be eaten along with hot coffee. It tasted somewhat like stale pastry. It was believed to provide the hiker with every known protein, carbohydrate, mineral and vitamin that is known to nutritional chemistry. Clifford loved the taste of it; to everyone else it was only a horrible necessity.

Roy left the cafteria and walked across the Square among the

beautiful children and on across the Yard to the Fogg Museum, where he spent the rest of the morning writing enthusiastic notes and commentaries and descriptions in his notebook, about all the Japanese and Chinese antiquities. He later lost the notebook during the course of a big house-party in New London, Connecticut.

▪ ▪ ▪

Clifford walked all afternoon in the hills outside Katmandu. He stopped in the market on his way home to buy some gin and a few vegetables. By the time Sarah arrived, Clifford had created a small but elegant supper. He was delighted to see her again.

"I got out again as soon as I could," Sarah told him. "It's getting really vile in New York. Washington can't get any worse. I brought you a new record."

"You're looking great," Clifford said, and kissed her.

"I feel a lot better, now I'm home."

"I wonder myself, which one of my homes I really depend on," Clifford said. "I suppose I'll always go back to Ideeho. I like your hair that way."

"Thanks—do you really? I got tired of having it long; it's too much bother while I'm traveling."

They ate the elegant dinner. They watched the moon rise and listened to the new record. Clifford accompanied Sarah back to her own place and stayed with her for a long time. At last, he kissed her goodnight and returned to his house, singing in the moonlight. He was feeling very satisfied and happy. He could imagine himself living with Sarah and lots of babies and cows and chickens on a big ranch in the country around Lake Coeur d'Alene. Or maybe back East where the land was cheaper and there were exciting winters: he could buy five hundred acres of New Hampshire for practically nothing, he thought. "But I don't really want New Hampshire, either." Anyway, he was happy that Sarah was back; she was a great companion, a great pleasure, bright and honest. She had no pretentions to learning or the arts. He would marry her: she was the plain, healthy woman he'd been hunting for. They could live right here in Nepal for a while, then move to England, later, to stay clear of the American paranoia vibrations. ("But the English," Clifford thought, "have never truly believed in the pedal organ. I'm probably kidding myself again—Sweden is more like it, there are mountains and trees and lakes more like Idaho . . . ")

Of more immediate concern to him was the question of what was to become of Laura, the lovely French botanist he'd been

dining with, while Sarah was in America. Laura had a beautiful body and very fixed ideas about politics, her career in botany, and about the proper relationship between men and women. Although Laura was a few years younger than Sarah, she seemed to be more mature, better organized, more complete. Clifford thought she was just a little bit lacking in spontaneity; on the other hand, she was steady and solid in a way that none of the American girls he had known ("—and married," he regretfully added) had ever been. He loved her broad forehead, her heavy-lidded black eyes.

Sarah had a kind of stability, but it was discontinuous. She laughed at things, she doubted things which Laura tended to take for granted. There were many things, many questions of life and conduct which were, for Laura, settled things, and a few such notions which were beneath the notice of educated people. Clifford was fascinated by what he took to be Laura's Continental outlook on the world. Laura, in spite of all her theories, was able to enjoy herself with Clifford; she was perhaps becoming attached to him; she always seemed to have a fairly clear idea, however, that their relationship was temporary in nature. Laura appeared to have few extravagant illusions about herself or other people.

Sarah was no longer a young girl, but she was still rather uncertain about what there was for her to do in the world. Laura had a job that interested her; she would go on collecting plants, and having a pleasurable personal life. She would teach, write, travel and have love affairs; all this was clearly understood. Eventually she would marry someone of her own social class and raise a proper French family (with the help of at least one servant) all on a carefully arranged schedule. If Sarah got married, she'd do everything herself with the help of Dr. Spock's book and a few electrical appliances . . .

Clifford sighed happily. He crawled into his bed and went to sleep. He dreamed that he and Dorothy were trying to be on time to catch a train in some very large oriental city where there was too much traffic and they were going to miss the train and it was all Dorothy's fault, she had deliberately made them late, and when he complained, she told him, "Go fuck yourself." And he hit her and then it was morning.

■ ■ ■

Roy told Dorothy, "It's funny to be old enough to remember knowing people who knew words and customs which had gone out

of use before I was born, all kinds of things that people of your generation never hear about at all, or maybe see them mentioned in a book and you have to go consult a dictionary or an encyclopedia to find out what they mean. Of course my folks were country people, from a different region than California; your folks were all rich."

"Some of them were, up until the Crash," Dorothy said, "but that was years before my time. I don't think you're so old, you have hardly any grey hair yet. And I like your belly, smooth and pink, it's not old, and neither is this," she said, giving his penis a gentle squeeze.

■ ■ ■

Margaret wound long strands of her hair onto pink plastic bobbins while she sat in front of the mirror. She berated herself for arguing pointlessly with her mother. She realized that she had no longer any immediate feeling of respect or liking for either of her parents. They were a little bit too human, if anything—ignorant, superstitious and totally self-centered. They had tried very hard to keep her brother, Elvin, from marrying Jane Swanson because Jane's parents were "Old Country" Swedes with "funny ways." The Swansons were very clean and they went to the Lutheran Church and they were honest, good farmers, but they couldn't talk English plain, and they were foreigners. Let Elvin marry among his own people; there were plenty of nice American girls.

Margaret had tried to talk to her mother about it. "Janey is an American girl. She was born right here in Eugene and went to school here just like everybody else."

"She was brought up to *their* ways," Mrs. Gridley said. "How could I have them here on a visit? What would people think?"

"God-damned Squareheads! They's too many of them in the world as it is," Orval Gridley put in, bugging his blue eyes. "The *government* ought to round up all these foreigners and send them all back where they come from, every last one of them! Why Elvin ain't got brains enough to marry that Dickerson girl I'll never know. He used to run around with her all the time. That Betty Dickerson is smart as a whip!"

"Cute as a bug's ear," Mrs. Gridley added. "Why, she got a scholarship to the University when she graduated from high-school last year. And her sister, Normajean—that child is the best natured little thing in the world! Always looking out to do something for other people. She worked like a trooper when we had the big church bazaar in January. Elvin is just ungrateful—

I hate to say it about my own child, but he's ungrateful and that's the end to it."

"Well, you was the one that spoiled him," Orval Gridley shouted. "I tried to take the damn kid and knock some sense into him but you'd never let me. I never could get a lick of work out of him."

The Gridleys refused to attend the wedding, which was to be held at the Swanson farm. They forbade Margaret to go, but she defied them. She said, "Elvin's my only brother and Janey was always good to me when I was little and she was the leader of the Campfire Girls. I've bought them a present with my own money that Grandma sent me and I'm going to the wedding. I wish you'd come with me, but I know you won't."

Her mother and father both said quite a number of intolerable things upon this occasion, but Margaret went away to the wedding. It was a very large affair, with a smorgasbord, gallons of beer and wine and other drinks that Margaret had only read about in books. Jane's brothers and sisters and other relatives played music for the dancing—polkas and schottisches and hambos and waltzes. There was a stupendous wedding supper. Margaret was welcomed into the family, along with her brother.

She had a wonderful day, but when she thought of her parents sitting obstinately at home alone, she felt ashamed and angry and sad. Margaret told herself that she was finished with them. They were some other kind of creature, different from all the rest of the world. She must continue to live with them, and she must continue to defer to them, but the meaning of their relationship would be changed. She would always feel a sort of subliminal, unconscious love for them, an automatic response, a learned, memory-bound thing, but it would be that—something in her past life, like her love for dolls when she was a girl, or for a horse she once had owned, or for the landscape around Eugene. It would be absolutely different in quality from the feeling she had for Elvin and Jane and her grandmother, or for Herbert Wackernagel.

Margaret's parents withdrew all their objections to Jane Swanson when their first grandchild appeared. Jane's mother was dead, by that time, and Mrs. Gridley decided that she must go to her son's home and take charge of the household while Jane was in childbed. Mrs. Gridley's praises of Jane became as loud and extravagant as her condemnations had been. And the grandchild was the Eleventh Wonder of the World. Since Jane had managed to reproduce such a wonder twice more, she became a great favorite with the Gridley's, who introduced her to

all their friends and neighbors as "Our Daughter, Jane."

Elvin and his family removed to Salem, to the tune of tears and heartbreak in the Gridley household. Elvin had got a good civil service job with the state government, and although he was (his parents told him) far too young, he bought a fine old house in West Salem where he and his family were now happily living, away from Eugene at last.

■ ■ ■

Roy decided to fly home by jet liner. He had lots of money; he'd go first class. The plane seemed about ready to do a nose-over into Long Island Sound, right at the end of the runway, before Roy was aware that he was leaning far back in his seat and the Sound was falling away at a sharply increasing angle below him. Very soon the plane was high above clouds; he imagined that they must be passing over Cleveland by this time.

Roy thought of the first airplane ride he had, with a staff sergeant in a Piper Cub recon plane. They flew only a few hundred feet above the flat South Dakota wheat fields. The first several minutes of the flight were pleasant and interesting, but soon the plane had gained a lot of altitude and the pilot began to practice "lazy-eights" on his way down to lower altitudes. The plane turned and swooped like a figure skater above the green and brown revolving earth. Roy felt desperately ill, far too ill even to be able to vomit. He had never before experienced feelings of such total wretchedness and despair.

Much later, when he became used to airplanes, Roy was able to eat peanuts, candybars and sandwiches while he was flying. It used to upset new crewmen to watch him; they would be feeling queasy to be flying anyway, and then to discover Roy in the act of devouring a big greasy ham sandwich with mayonnaise and lettuce was enough to make them wish they'd never heard of airplanes, let alone subjected themselves to the horrors of riding in one.

Roy loved to lie in the transparent nose of a B-17, alternately reading and watching the landscape below, until he fell asleep, hypnotized by the drone of the engines. The land and the light would change slowly—mountains of purple stone, tan and chocolate desert, river with its green squares of palm orchards and little fields on either side of it, all in the midst of sand, heat, stone: then a surprising stretch of ocean where the Gulf intruded itself into the desert. He nearly got killed a couple of times, and he had been badly scared, but that was a feeling he could never exactly recall; he didn't want to feel it ever again.

■ ■ ■

Margaret spent a long time in the bath, messing with the pumice stone, fiddling with her toenails. She thought about her parents and their life together, something out of Theodore Dreiser, only worse: her mother's long-suffering, slowly souring endurance of Orval Gridley's half-hillbilly, half-old maid sensibilities, their continual mutual browbeating campaigns to establish spiritual superiority, the self-righteousness of both, their concerted judgment and condemnation of all the rest of the world with the exception of those happy two or three members of the First Methodist-Episcopal Church who were a little richer than the Gridleys. Those were the people the Gridleys tried to be nice to, entertained in their own exclusive home, and whom they regularly hoped they'd be invited to visit.

Margaret thought, "If I had any sense, I'd make Herb marry me now and we'd go live in New York or Berlin or someplace. Then I could be Margaret Gridley Wackernagel. But I suppose I'd have to live here in Eugene and be disowned because Herb would want to go on living here, so he can go on shooting pool down at Glad Charley's. He's absolutely worthless except for that one trick thing he can do better than anybody. I should make him come to Cambridge—that would be a bringdown for Mr. Lexington Fiske III, known to his friends as Lukey Boy, and whom I owe it to all my friends and my lovely parents to marry in order to show that Education Pays Off. Then everybody would leave me alone and I could maybe get going on my own work at last, my own little trick thing."

In her room, the picture of her brother, Elvin, grinned at her. Their mother thought it would be nice to put it on Margaret's dressing table, particularly since Elvin and Jane wouldn't be coming down for Christmas this year. The picture was an enlarged, smeary color snapshot in a blue and gold gesso frame. It usually stood on a lace doily on top of the TV set in the living room, enshrined among Walt Disney animals made of porcelain and a lamp which contained a turning smoke-jack so that the forest-fire scene painted on the glass chimney flickered and blazed and sparkled very realistically indeed.

There was Elvin, holding one of his sons on his shoulders while the younger one stood clutching his father's left trouserleg. Janey stood beside him, holding the baby and smiling. The baby was called Eleanore, "named after one of Her folks, this time," as Mrs. Gridley said. Elvin was a big raw-boned man with big blue eyes, like their father; Jane was small and gentle. There they all were. "And that," Margaret told herself, "is what life is all about. After all the Beethoven and the Sappho and Matisse

and moonlight, this is what really happens. Lots of fun at first, then it's all limp and soft. That's all there is to that."

She went to her bureau and took out a photograph album. It was crammed with formal photographs and snapshots, and there were also a number of envelopes full of negatives and loose pictures. She would need several more albums, eventually, in order to mount all the pictures. Between two pages of the bulging book was a thick white envelope addressed to Maggy Gridley. It contained a letter from Herbert Wackernagel—one of the few that he had ever written in his life. It was little more than a note, badly spelled, about his life in the army. He was having a fine time in California, he wrote. The army was OK and he was learning lots about electricity. Swimming was great in the ocean, wish you was here, ha ha. Enclosed with the letter was a very clear full length snapshot of the writer. He was standing with his feet wide apart, his hands clutching the ends of a white towl slung around his neck. He was grinning and the gold tooth gleamed. He was wearing nothing else. The Pacific Ocean showed in the background.

Margaret smiled at the picture, and then put it away again. She felt tired and happy. She put on her reading glasses, took up her copy of R. W. Hutchinson's *Prehistoric Crete,* and got into bed. She read only a few pages before she fell asleep.

She awoke a few hours later; the glasses were jammed against her eyebrows; the book was on the floor. The lamp was very bright. She wondered where she was. She said, experimentally, "Luke?" and then she laughed, softly. She put the book and her glasses on the night table and turned out the light. She giggled to herself. Grey dawn was showing behind the blinds. She could hear her father coughing and swearing in the bathroom. She told herself, "You're such a fraud. It sticks out all over you. Probably God will strike you with lightning, one of these days and haul you away to Hell. Darling Lukey. Darling Herbert. Darling little Nell, a retreating curious egg . . . "

Margaret was surprised when she awoke again, to see a dark, wet morning—more nearly, noon. Rain had continued all through the night. She was warm, she thought it was quite bright outside, and she had been quite certain that Herbert was with her, weighing down the other side of the bed.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "For lots of people, nothing that happens to them is real unless they end up in jail—or at least vomit-

ing and weeping as they writhe on the bathroom floor screeching *'Never again!'* Most of these people happen to be Americans."

■ ■ ■

Roy felt compelled to visit the library regularly—had to, with something of the same feeling of urgency which other people have experienced only in connection with their toilet training. Before he had gone to bed the night before, he had been reading some poems by Ezra Pound. He had read a word which his own small dictionaries didn't gloss. Perhaps the word had been misspelled or mis-printed in the edition which he had been reading. It might have been a foreign word. He'd have to make a trip to the library, in the morning, in order to find out the answers to all these questions. He'd consult the big Oxford Dictionary, several different printings of the poems of Ezra Pound, and probably a Spanish and a big French dictionary.

In the morning, Roy happened to sleep a little later than usual. He felt that he could stay in bed all day, if he wanted to. He got up long enough to go to the bathroom, then he crept back into his warm, comfortable bed. He began thinking about writing. It would be a fine day. He had no engagements, had made no promises. The apartment ought to be completely swept and garnished, but not today. He would leave the house as soon as he possibly could, after he got out of bed. Then he would go to the Ocean Beach and have coffee and pie for breakfast. It was then he remembered that he must go to the library.

He arose and dressed himself. He shaved, although he hadn't planned on doing so. Yesterday's wool socks lay under the sink; they had to be washed by hand, since they were home-made ones which would be ruined by a washing machine. He got the soap powder out of the kitchen and very carefully washed the socks and set them out on old newspapers on the back porch to dry. The sun was brilliant on the Park, the spires and domes of St. Ignatius Church, the complicated Victorian facades of the Sunset district; the Bay was dark blue . . . he must get out of the house and in and out of the library right away.

Roy made the bed and did a hurry-up job of sweeping the floor. The trash box was almost too full to receive the contents of the dustpan. He had to carry the box and the dustpan down the backstairs and empty both of them into the incinerator, which was also nearly full. He set fire to the mess and stood (for endless minutes) watching it, in case any of the neighbors should see the conflagration all untended and dangerous and so, incontinently, send for the fire brigade. It took no longer than he

had planned, but Roy waited until it had all burnt out. He went back to the stairs and washed his hands, then it was suddenly time to go to the bathroom.

In the kitchen, he noticed that the garbage pail was full. He carted it down the backstairs and emptied it and washed it out and carefully made a new lining for it, using an old paper shopping bag. He carried it back up the stairs and replaced it in the kitchen, where he paused for a drink of water. The teapot was standing on the drainboard; it was full of last night's tea leaves. He emptied the pot and rinsed it out, hurriedly, and put it away. He wanted out of the house.

He found his notebook, he was almost ready, and what book would he carry with him to read while he wasn't looking at the ocean or writing? Or he may need it to look at on the bus, or while he waited for the bus, if he decided not to walk home. "Out, out, out!" he told himself. He rocked from one foot to the other while he stood in front of the bookshelves. A small book such as would fit into the pocket of his jacket; he must always have one book to write in and one book to read, just as everyone must carry money, identification, matches, jewels, handkerchiefs, rosaries and lipsticks. Out, out out out! *Silver Poets of the Sixteenth Century.* Sir Thomas Wyatt / Henry Howard: Earl of Surrey / Sir Philip Sidney / Sir Walter Raleigh / Sir John Davies / Edited with an introduction / By Gerald Bullett / London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd. / New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc. (n.d.) . . . OUT! He put on a jacket, picked up the book and a notebook, went halfway down the front stairs, went back to his room for his sunglasses, came out the front door of the house and down the front steps, cursed and turned away and went back inside to get his wallet (which contained his library card) and he congratulated himself upon seeing a half pack of cigarets lying on his desk, he put those in his pocket, and even remembered to pick up a book of matches, as well (out, damn it, OUT). He slammed the door, went down the stairs, closed the heavy front door carefully, down the front steps, down the walk, down the hill towards the library . . . He had taken the wrong jacket; the letters which he had written the night before and which he had felt it was essential to get into the mail today, were in the pocket of the other jacket, the one which he'd decided was too heavy to wear on a sunny day, and he would not go back right now to get them, he was too far towards the library, and he stomped on down the hill in the sun, raging, damn, damn, damn, no, no, no, no, TO THE LIBRARY!

■ ■ ■

Dorothy looked at herself in the mirror. Her hair was all wrong. It was too much trouble when it was long, it didn't look really right when it was short. If it was really short, she was afraid that it looked too dykey. And it was the wrong color anyway, no matter how long or how short. The next time she was in Paris, she would absolutely have to buy a couple of wigs and a fall.

"You old harridan," she told the mirror, "you're so close to thirty-five, now, why should you care what you look like?"

She stood up too suddenly; she felt one of her stockings give and the other one twisted itself around her legs. She swore and adjusted all her clothing. Clifford was shouting, he was waiting, they were late.

■ ■ ■

Tom Prescott made a lot of money one month by selling many photographs and a short text to a local magazine which was devoted to domestic interests. The pictures showed rich San Francisco bachelors in their kitchens, creating solid, down-to-earth he-man food: breasts of Arctic ptarmigan surprise, roast goat shanks Peloponnese, and Sea Urchins Salvador Dali. The idea had been Dorothy's. They have been having dinner at Max Lammergeier's place. Alice was out of town and Max had taken this opportunity to invite Dorothy and Tom to taste his version of gazpacho, magnified hearts of young spring lamb, a complicated salad made from wild grasses, anise roots and mandarin oranges, a vast casserole of riz à la Valenciennes, three kinds of wine, and a flaming dessert, followed by cheeses, fresh fruits, brandy, and coffee. Max was a good cook, and since he'd been married to Alice, he had learned a great deal more about food; however, Alice hated to cook. She could do it very well indeed, but she didn't like to bother with it, she said; it was too time-consuming, she was too busy with the house, the children, golf, the garden. Max seldom had time, himself, to do anything more than work with his many patients. He loved the practice of psychiatry, but he loved, even more, "every pleasure of the belly and the groin." Whenever he could manage to find or steal the time for it, he would prepare a small delicious dinner for a few friends. This time, Dorothy and Tom had been the lucky guests.

"Naturally he's a good cook," Tom said. "Anybody who has all that cream and butter and nice French wine to do with is bound to be a good cook."

"Come on," Dorothy said, "He might have burned it all, or had lumps in the gravy, but he didn't."

Max came back into the dining room with a pot of fresh coffee.

"I wish you'd show Tom your kitchen, Max. I want one like it, some day," Dorothy said.

Max said, "Oh yeah?" and Tom went to look. It was a vast room with one wall of bare brick, the rest of knotty pine. A great number of copper pots and pans hung over an overhead rack. There was a pair of cooking ranges such as might have been used in an hotel.

"In the old days, when my Mama had help and gave dinner parties, they needed stoves," Max said.

Tom was outraged. "My folks thought they were coming up in the world when they rented a house that had an electric stove in it. How do those things work—do you have a stoker to take care of them?"

"They're gas, now. I guess in Grandpa's time they were wood or coal burners. I don't know. They work good, now."

"All this for just one family," Tom exclaimed. He sounded aggrieved.

"Well, the family was big then," Max explained. "When my father was a boy, a lot of people lived here—all my uncles and aunts, my grandparents and various unmarried or widowed cousins and in-laws and out-laws—they all had to eat. There were a couple of hired girls and some spare cousins that did the cooking and baking, under Granny's supervision. But after all, Tom, this was only an ordinary middle-class establishment, for San Francisco. People with money had a lot more complicated kind of layout with roasting ovens and baking ovens and barbecue pits and the whole works. Our outfit was good enough to bake the bread twice a week and rolls and roasts and pies for Sunday —nothing extravagant. You ought to see some of the big ones—and some of the new places, too—they're interesting."

By this time, Dorothy had joined them. She'd grown tired of sitting alone at the table. "*You* take him to see Barney's new place—*I* can't, since he's married to that awful Beverly person, now. Tom, you have to do a story on San Francisco kitchens so that little old ladies will come here and demand to see Max's."

"Sure I do," Tom said. All his radical sensibilities were aroused. "Show them how the other half lives. It always sells."

"Come on, Tom, let's go have some coffee and brandy," Max said.

"Okay, okay, I'm ready," Tom said.

While they were driving home, Dorothy remarked, "I always forget that you've got so many marvelous liberal sensibilities."

"Hell, Dotty, I'm just not used to rich people."

"Max isn't rich people, he's one of my oldest friends. He wasn't

snotty to you, was he?"

"No—it isn't that—but it makes me mad to think that kind of life goes on and on as a matter of course while the rest of the world's in a mess—that it was going on right through the Depression while there were breadlines and all my folks were on Relief."

"My mother still does lots of social work," Dorothy said. "She doesn't have anything to give away, any more, but she puts in lots of time organizing and getting really *rich* people to give the money."

"And the house at Lake Tahoe needs a new roof," Tom added, mockingly. "And I've simply *got* to get away to Italy for a few months this year, Doctor says I must rest more, and the taxes take everything—I know, I know," Tom said. "My old man used to say the same thing, after he started making a little money in the shipyards, early in the war. It's all the same. I just hate poor-mouthing; I hate to listen to it."

Dorothy said, "All right, Tom."

They drove on in silence.

"You and your great ideas," Tom began again.

"Why not?" Dorothy quickly replied. She was tired of what she considered his fake politics. "*Sunset Magazine* will be crazy about it. You can give the money they pay you to Women for Peace or the Viet Cong or some other worthy cause."

Tom said, "You're getting pretty smart, aren't you."

"Well, if you keep dividing the world up into sides, all the time—"

"Yah, yah, yah," Tom said, more gently. "You're right; you're right. I keep forgetting I own a piece of it. But it still makes me mad."

"I'm sorry that I teased you," Dorothy said. "It really is all fucked up; we ought to change it, somehow—but our political ideas are all goofy, too. We just change the color of the paint on the outside—we need a new idea, a new factory—we're doing it all wrong now, that's for sure."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says: "You see it, and seeing it makes you dodge, and that sudden reflex movement makes you hit your head on the door. The Buddhists call this the Law of Karma. It is more or less the basis for the idea of reincarnation. Or it describes that principle which keeps reincarnating itself: that energy that keeps on going until it can be described at last by the mathematics of

the Second Law of Thermodynamics as having reached the state of entropy."

■ ■ ■

Roy had a great three weeks at Monterey—parties and talks and booze and exciting arguments and feuds and fights. He spent lots of time talking with Dorothy, and he got to see Clifford for the first time in several years.

Several hundred students sat and looked at him whenever he came out of doors or sat down in the local coffee shop or in the campus cafeteria. They listened while he talked, they brought him their manuscripts, they shared their wine and tobacco and dope with him. As many could manage it made their way into his bed.

Roy returned to San Francisco long enough to buy a passport and a steamship ticket and to store his belongings. Max Lammergeier produced a titanic farewell party for him, and the next morning, Roy left the city, bound for the orient.

■ ■ ■

Tom's mother arrived for a short visit. She was on her way to see her sister in Hawaii. She went there every year and loved all the Islands, even though they were all well on their way to being utterly ruined by Henry Kaiser and hordes of tourists.

Nessa Prescott was handsome, thin and nervous. Every year, she had a new psychiatrist or a different kind of doctor or team of doctors who were treating her for a new and alarming set of symptoms. She joked about her illnesses, but she never complained. She could afford them; Tom and his brothers all helped to support her.

Dorothy found her appalling. Dorothy told all her friends, "Nessa drinks a great deal more than she ought to, considering all the things she claims are wrong with her. She keeps yakking away to me about clothes and hair and real estate and lawsuits and Hawaii and all her gentleman admirers until I want to hit her. Here *I* am, trying to write something, at last, about the morphemes in Pali and Sogdian, and just enough time left over to make it to my classes in Berkeley and find Tom a clean shirt before *he* goes crazy. (He's in the darkroom all the time, of course. If he has to spend any time alone with his mother, he starts breaking out in spots and blotches.) But the poor woman's got to see him some time, I suppose. And she's looking so gaunt and haggard, you wouldn't believe it. I imagine I'll be looking exactly the same way in about another two weeks."

"I guess we're all of us about as old as we can get," Roy said. "Nessa is only five or six years older than I am, after all. My only hope is for a serene and beautifully quiet antiquity. I may make it, too—I'm not as nervous as Nessa."

"You drink as much as she does," Dorothy said.

"Yeah, but I have a good time and then pass out, when I drink; I don't get all manic and sleepless and phobic."

"You and Nessa ought to get together and cheer each other's declining years," Dorothy suggested.

"She's too skinny and leathery," Roy told her. "You're more my type."

Dorothy said, "I was once, maybe, but that was a long time ago."

"All I know is, I'm a great failure as a poet," Roy said. "My present great age proclaims it. I should have been ruined twenty years ago by whiskey, dope, and beautiful women. Or the war should have killed me."

"*I* tried to ruin you, but you were too old and tough," Dorothy said. "Don't come crying to me now, with your tragic fate. Face. Anyway, you look years younger than you are. I could kill myself, I guess."

"That's the real cure, all right," Roy said. "But if you were dead, you wouldn't know what everybody was doing, and nobody would be able to see you."

"That's right. I certainly couldn't stand *that*. And what *are* they all doing," Dorothy inquired. "I've been too busy, lately, to find out. Tell me everything."

"I don't know. Clifford hasn't written lately and I haven't been to Berkeley for months to see Mark and Beth, and Max is always too busy to talk so I seldom see him or Alice. I'm busy reading all of Chaucer again. I don't care what's happening here —all I wonder about is Troilus: is he going to get at Criseyde or not?"

■ ■ ■

Roy woke up in the middle of the night. He needed only to reach out one hand in order to get his pen and notebook. By shifting his head a little, he could see the clock. Two thirty-five A.M.

He congratulated himself on having had sense enough to leave a light on in his room before he went to sleep. He began writing, setting down the lines of a poem which had come into his head the moment he was awakening. He lay on his stomach. He had shoved the pillow aside and dragged the notebook under his nose. The blankets were arranged in a great cape over his shoulders,

their soft weight and evaporating warmth consoled him; he felt happy. Later, he thought about all the times he'd awakened and risen from a warm bed with great reluctance and suffering in order to find a light, a paper and a pen with which to record some fleeting idea. Now he was at last old enough and smart enough to leave a light on if he wanted it (he paid his own electric bill) and to keep writing materials near at hand at all times.

He had learned, in the past few years, that he was always working, asleep and awake, as long as he went on living alone and nobody was trying to put him on some schedule of business hours eight-to-five in some office, some job that nobody (much less Roy) ought to be doing in the first place. He wondered how much pain, anguish, and general confusion he might have been spared if his parents had simply allowed him to have a lamp in his room at night. He was afraid of the dark. He had nightmares and his screams drove his parents to panic and rage. One or both of them had to try to calm him, reason with him (their feet growing cold, their patience wearing away), persuade him that everything and everybody was asleep; that the world was in God's care. His parents themselves were in the house and would protect him from all harm. All was well, the stars were shining, that noise was only an electric wire tapping lightly, scraping the eaves of the roof. The wind was swinging it back and forth, and the same wind was playing a sleepy music in the poplar leaves. "All is well, God is good, it is a beautiful night."

Roy could never believe that the darkness was benign; for him, it was filled with brain movies—frightening abstractions of contracting space mixed with memories of Hollywood horror films about Dracula and Frankenstein and homicidal maniacs and torture and murder and falling. He never truly came to believe that he had been mistaken about night and darkness. He had seen demons by daylight, too. He must either leave a light on or have someone to sleep with. Temporarily, he had a light.

■ ■ ■

Nessa told Dorothy and Tom, "You must let me take you out for dinner tonight. We'll go to some fun place. There's one I was reading about in a magazine on the plane. It looked marvelous."

Tom said, "Ah, Mama, most of them look all right, but all you get from any of them is the same old stuff. It costs more in some places, that's all. They look good in the magazines because I took the pictures. I got to eat in some of them while I was doing the job. It's all a big tourist con. The food's lousy."

"Well, you and Dorothy decide on a place, then, someplace *you* like."

"Mama, when we have money, we buy a big roast of beef and cook it ourselves. We don't eat downtown. The food in San Francisco is lousy, except in Chinatown and one or two little places that aren't 'fun places,' they just have food."

Dorothy said, "We could have something we never bother to fix at home—go to that fish and chips parlor."

"Come on, Dorothy," Tom said.

"Or we could go to that little place down by the docks where they have good chowder and fish. It's really good," Dorothy explained to Nessa. "Just clams and potatoes and celery. It's the only restaurant I've ever seen where they really put clams in the chowder."

"I know just what you mean," Nessa said. "They usually keep one little clam on a string and sort of wash it off in the soup once a day."

Tom laughed. He said, "It's a good place, but it isn't open at this time of night."

Dorothy made several other suggestions. She hated San Francisco restaurants as much as Tom did, but she didn't want to disappoint Nessa. And she really wanted to go out for dinner. She told Nessa all about the curries in India and maybe they ought to go to an Indian place for a change.

Tom finished his cigaret and walked to the window while Dorothy was talking. He was thinking of the scandal he had caused in a restaurant once when he was a little boy. The waiter on that occasion had a cold or a broken nose and he spoke in a muffled, snuffling adenoidal tone. Tom had announced, very loudly and distinctly, "That man talks like he had hemorrhoids!" Everyone in the restaurant turned to stare; Tom's parents were beside themselves with shame and anger and mirth all combined. They reminded Tom of this incident, later, whenever they wanted to tease him about using big words at the wrong time, and to correct him for "talking out of turn." He looked out the window and chuckled to himself.

Dorothy said to him, "Well, *you* decide, if you think that *my* suggestions are so ludicrous!" She imagined that he was laughing at her, making fun of her.

"OK," Tom said. "We'll go down to that place in the Marina and eat pizza and eggplants and salad—that's good enough. Mama, you still like Italian food?"

"Well, if there aren't too many strong spices . . . "

Dorothy said, "If we have lots of wine with it, that will take

care of the spices. Don't worry. Tom and I will buy the wine, that will be our part of the dinner."

They drove to a place where a rich editor had once taken Dorothy and Tom to dinner. It was called Filthy Florian's. Plastic grape leaves and real oak branches and plaster fruit hung from a false arbor ceiling of redwood lumber. On the walls, pictures of Venice painted on black velvet alternated with photographs of opera stars and movie people. Quaint copper lanterns hung above tables decorated with red and white checkered cloths. Each table bore a sugar caster full of grated cheese and small flasks of red wine vinegar and of peanut oil, in addition to the usual salt and pepper shakers. There was a delicious smell of hot olive oil, burning pizza-crust, and melting cheese. These odors were mixed with less inviting aromas of cigaret smoke, stale beer, and the hair oils with which the waiters had anointed their hyacinthine locks. And a goodly crowd was there, and the jukebox played selections from highclass operas, and there was also a very popular recording of Mr. Jan Peerce singing "The Bluebird of Happiness."

Tom and his mother had a short argument about the propriety of drinking martinis before dinner. Nessa simply said, "I require a couple of martinis, my dear. It's time. You and Dorothy please order whatever you'd like to drink."

"But Mama," Tom said, quoting Max Lammergeier, "gin kills all the tastebuds."

"My tastebuds are going to have to look out for themselves," Nessa replied. "I want a drink."

Dorothy said, "Actually, I think martinis will be fine. I want a couple myself. You go ahead and order sherry, Angel." She gave Tom a brilliant toothy smile.

Tom ordered three double martinis on the rocks from the gleaming waiter. Then he made a serious effort towards making agreeable conversation.

Nessa cheered up when the gin arrived. Soon, she was telling about Prohibition and the Great Depression and the time she got loaded with Clark Gable. She became more relaxed and more amiable when it became apparent that there'd be time for at least one more large drink before their dinner would arrive. But it was just as well, Dorothy thought; the dinner would probably be inedible if they were sane and sober.

■ ■ ■

Clifford tried playing all the way through Franck's *Grande pièce symphonique* without looking at the score. The windowpanes of

the chapel rattled. He heard the door open and close, as it often did when he was practicing; he was used to hearing it and he didn't mind. In a Catholic place, he remembered, everybody drops in and out all the time, not like a Protestant meeting house, locked up tight every day except Sunday.

He could see the music in his head all unrolled like a map: ochre and rose and pale green, sky blue—there was a mountain range (dark brown wrinkles) here was a winding blue river. The organ clattered and laboured as Clifford massaged its keys and tromped up and down the pedal boards with his bare feet. Sometimes he shouted and sang a stave or so in a large passage of the music which particularly delighted him, one of those curious polychromatic knots which Franck had tied into the music that turned part of Clifford's head inside out whenever he played it or heard it—the musical equivalent of a trip through a Klein bottle. One such knot stopped him. He forgot, suddenly, where it was the separate strands were leading. Why did he forget.

He'd been thinking of Dorothy, of Idaho, of a stone wall outside the house where he'd lived when he was a boy and of the nasturtiums, a swaying green and orange yellow curtain in front of black crystal rock; of Mrs. Elliott, his piano teacher, telling him to keep his wrists level; of dancing with Betsy Jean Kramer at a highschool party and trying to persuade her to make love with him and she wouldn't quite; of the small round graham-colored pup which had arrived in the house by the stone wall, he was afraid of it, it was too fragile to play with, his father called it Spike, and after a week, it suddenly died and his father and mother were heartbroken, so Clifford couldn't keep any more pets, even though he wasn't interested in having any in the first place. He could remember everything quite well, nothing was wrong with his memory, the ice man came to the house in a horse-drawn wagon and he wore a complicated kind of leather apron that buckled around the legs like a cowboy's chaps, and a leather shield on his right shoulder where he carried the big blocks of shining ice caught in massive steel tongs, and the sound of those tongs clanking when they were empty, and he could remember the name of the older man with the same kind of leather apron who brought boxes of groceries up the back stairs to the kitchen while his horse and wagon waited in the alley, the man Clifford's father always referred to as "Old Sour Balls," that man's name was Mr. Dahlstrom.

Clifford sat still on the organ bench, his hands pressed together between his knees, trying to think his way back to César Franck

again. There was Frescobaldi and Pachelbel and Sweelinck and Rameau and Francis Poulenc and Olivier Messiaen and Leo Sowerby and Charles Ives and Marcel: Marcel Dupré, Marcel Duchamps, and Marcel Proust and Clifford's mother talking with the highschool girl who was going to stay with Clifford Wednesday night while his parents went to the movies, all about waterwaves being softer and more natural-looking than marcelled hair, and he could remember the smell of the magazine, and the faces in the ads for Palmolive soap, the magazine lay on a bright colored "Indian blanket" on the grass in the yard where his mother had been sitting in the shade, reading.

Clifford sighed and looked at the red pilot-light which showed that the organ was ready to operate. César Franck wrote something else, very like what it was that Clifford was trying to remember. Which place? Clifford reached out and played a few notes, a phrase from the Violin Sonata. That didn't work. He tried a bit of the string Quintet, a line from *Le Chasseur maudit* . . . he thought of *Psyché,* and the name handed him the chord progression he had been unable to remember a few minutes before. There was a near relation to it in *Psyché,* a long, otiose composition for chorus and orchestra.

He almost reached the end of the *Grande pièce symphonique* when his memory quit again. This time, he opened the score and played from it; he wanted to finish the piece, he wanted out of that universe. He came to the end at last, and turned off the organ and closed and locked its lid. He gathered up his music, put on his sandals and started walking out of the chapel. He saw Laura sitting alone in a pew at the back of the room. She was wearing a bright colored scarf over her hair. She looked very unhappy.

■ ■ ■

One fine day, Roy very slowly and completely realized that all his knowledge and learning were only worthless clumsy decorations that were quite insecurely glued onto an essentially trivial, nearly moronic mind. For many years he had persuaded himself that learning things was a value in itself. He had believed his parents and his teachers when they had told him that learning would raise him out of the nameless lower social class into which he had been born. He had believed that his accomplishments in learning, coupled with his ability to study and learn more, made him qualitatively different, made him quite a lot better than all but that happy few people that were as bright as or brighter than he was.

But now Roy discovered that he was able to stand aside and see that all his learning amounted to no more than a large catalog of information; it would make a book rather larger than an encyclopedia, for there was more detail—there were more diagrams and color plates and musical examples. (These last were also simultaneously accessible to the inner ear as sound in various timbres and colors and combinations.) Trees and mountains and flowers, the windowsill, the pen in his hand, all these became greater and stronger and clearer than he (there were birds outside, now—they and the leaves were becoming great presences, one of the birds was eating a red flower). Did he feel afraid. In this world of Thrones, Dominations, and Powers, its motions and colors a roaring flame and thundering music, each organ of his own body was a multitude of spirits in a whirlwind of singing and color, at once fearless and conscious of the reality and the powers of other beings . . . a multitude of universes he knew nothing about, but in which he was immediately participating: or which were, perhaps, nothing more than projections of his own metabolism, as the local gurus had always said. It was all this and more. All simultaneous, the birds a rapid succession of nerve explosions in his head or liver, and the notes of the song were different letters of the Devanagri alphabet and the Twelve Church Modes and the seven notes of Guido's Scale, the divisions of Pythagoras his Monochordion mirror of planetary singing.

"Unless I see that the world really is this way," Roy told himself, "a dancing, singing, raving collection of brilliant interpenetrating universes of horror and delight and knowledge and brainlessness, I'm *really* a failure. If I only see the windowsill, and not that it is also a street of dusty mud-brick houses in Baghdad blazing sun heat crowd of men women camels babies horses mules Chryslers and unset rubies and Coca Cola machines emeralds pearls brocades furs silver plate and filligree, great melons grapes marigolds lilies dates oranges pineapples mangoes and pomegranates, I'll have to turn in my suit and run for office in Wall Street Washington, D.C."

■ ■ ■

Sarah told Clifford, "There's something wrong with the idea that *everybody* in the world is cold and sick and wounded—but I see, sometimes, that it's really true and I hate it. I try to change it, I try to tell it 'NO!' but it continues, just the same. I think sometimes I'd like to have an expensive little apartment in Manhattan and a chinchilla coat and a thousand evening dresses. All I'd do is

sleep all day and go out every night with a different rich boy from Yale or Princeton to do the Watusi in expensive nightclubs and go to the opera all the time and to fancy restaurants and drink too much and get fat and noisy and die."

■ ■ ■

Tom Prescott found a job in Hollywood when he got out of the army. He had been drafted early in 1945 and he was discharged at Jefferson Barracks late in 1946. Six months before that, he had met Darlene Hawkins in Colorado Springs, where she had come to visit relatives. Darlene had a job as page girl in the CBS studios on Vine Street in Hollywood, and she was going to return there at the end of the week. After she left, she and Tom exchanged a great many letters.

When Tom was discharged, he spent a month visiting his mother and his friends in a small town in Iowa. Then he took off for Hollywood. He found Darlene as soon as he got into town. She looked like a movie star, in her smart page's costume. She had an elaborate upswept hair-do; she told him later that it cost most of her week's wages to keep her hair looking good, but it had to look right, she was meeting the public all the time—and who knows, this is Hollywood—Anybody Might *See* you.

Tom hung around the lobby, waiting for Darlene to get off duty.

She told him, "Go walk around and look at the village, why don't you? I still have two hours to go."

"I'll wait for you. I want you to take me around and show me everything. I want to see it all with you. They won't throw me out, will they?"

Darlene laughed and said, "Gosh, no. This is a public place. A million people will be going through here between now and midnight. Nobody will bother you. But I'll be busy guiding people around. You'll get tired of waiting. Go out and have a drink or some coffee or something."

"I've got my new camera along," Tom said. "I can try it out while I wait—there's all kinds of faces and lights."

Tom was hired by a small independent studio as a cameraman. The studio made short educational movies, film strips and television ads. Tom had received a fair amount of photographic training and practice in the army. He had a good eye and he used the camera intelligently. Soon he had a reputation for being a good worker.

Tom and Darlene married. Tom got a GI loan and bought a

brand new glass and plywood house in a tract of new homes in the San Fernando Valley, just north of the Hollywood Hills. Their son, Ted, was born the following year.

Darlene wasn't very pleased with her new life. She had to watch the baby, most of the time. She didn't see anyone except Tom and the young housewives who were her immediate neighbors. (She thought of them as dull, unambitious girls without any talent.) Darlene could sing, she could act; in highschool and college she had been in many plays and operettas. She dreamed of finding an agent in Hollywood whom she could trust, somebody who could arrange a break for her—an audition, a screen test.

She could play the piano well enough to accompany herself. In the afternoons when Ted was supposed to be asleep, he was usually awake and yelling. Darlene would tell him, "Wail, Sweetie. You and Momma are going to sing duets." Then she'd spend hours rehearsing songs from the latest Broadway shows. She would play the recording of a song fifteen or twenty times in order to learn the words and the singer's interpretation and intonation. Then she'd stand in the middle of the room and sing along with the record, smiling, gesturing, and working out simple dance routines. Later, she'd begin to work at the piano, picking out chords to fit the melody, plinking and planking and singing over and over again until she could play the song.

Darlene was young and healthy but not much of a beauty. She had a powerful voice and could sing on-key. Her singing effectively drowned out Ted's yelling. She kept asking Tom to find out who was really a good agent. She was convinced that there were lots of people in show business who had less than half her talent.

"MCA is a good agency, I told you before," Tom said. "They got a house full of them there."

"Yeah, but the trouble is they're an office—I need a real agent who gets around and people know him."

"Well, Honey, why don't you ask them if they've got one? I don't know any other way to do it. We get people from the Actor's Guild. We phone up the casting office and tell them what we want and they send us people. You could sign up with the Guild. Go ahead and try."

Darlene felt very sad. "What *you* do isn't really showbiz, though. You just don't believe that I've got any talent. I'm just a mouldy old housewife."

Tom gave her a big hug. "I think you're wonderful," he said. "No matter what you're doing. But for a while, anyway, Ted is going to need you pretty close by."

"He's going to be weaned pretty quick. Sylvia Morris has this highschool girl take care of their baby twice a week so she can work part of the time. I could get somebody like that."

"But Sugar, Ted is so little. And these baby-sitter kids aren't any too smart—suppose something happened?"

"They could always yell for Sylvia, right next door, or for Trini, just across the street or telephone the studio."

Tom and Darlene had a great many arguments about when would be the right time for her to really start pushing her career in show business. She kept saying that she must have an agent; she must get an agent soon, no matter what else they decided. Tom tried to calm her, but Darlene seemed to be about one quarter cuckoo on the subject.

One day, Tom told her, "Wednesday and Thursday of next week I don't have to work. I'll stay home with Ted and you go to town and find an agent."

"Oh Tom," Darlene said, "you know better than that—they have to find you."

"Listen: on Wednesday, or Thursday, you're going to go up to town. One of the guys told me that everybody's going over to NBC those two days to audition for a new TV show. The place is going to be full of actors and producers and agents. You go down there and do your stuff. You'll get a job or an agent or both. You're not going to get anyplace sitting home and fussing about it all the time."

Darlene went to the studio on the following Wednesday; they gave her a job singing in a chorus. She got a bit part in a TV drama. The TV director liked her work and began giving her longer parts in original TV plays. An agent approached her and offered to represent her; Darlene felt that she had arrived at last.

Ted Prescott was now being brought up by a team of highschool girls who lived in the neighborhood of his house. They were all fans of Darlene. They worked without pay in order to be able to tell their friends at school that they knew Darlene Del Mar and husband and all about them and their house and how the Prescotts were drifting towards a Tragic Divorce for sure. A cleaning lady was supposed to come and do the heavier housework on Saturdays, but she didn't have too much to do; Ted's foster mothers kept the house in fairly good order.

It made Tom nervous to come home and find the house full of kids every day. The baby sitters all had boyfriends and girl friends who brought *their* boy friends. They would slowly clear out when Tom would appear, after they had greeted him politely,

compassionately ("the Husband is always the Last to Know"). Tom seldom saw Darlene except when she was exhausted after a day's rehearsing or when she was in a mad rush to get out of the house in the morning in order to get back to work. She spoke urgently of having to move into Bel Air or someplace closer to town . . . maybe it would be easier if they got an apartment right in Hollywood.

Tom was unhappy. He wasn't doing anything exciting with photography and his home life was less than satisfactory. He wondered what he ought to do. He worried about it for six months, then one morning he packed up his suitcases and cameras and Ted's clothes and toys, loaded everything into his big station wagon, set Ted into the baby seat beside him and began driving north.

He returned to the house late that same night. He realized that he couldn't handle Ted all by himself and there was no place that he felt it would be good to leave him. Nessa was too goofy and too busy; Darlene's people in Colorado were too old to start raising a three-year-old boy.

Darlene was very upset when she saw him come in, but she was glad to see that Ted was all right. She and Tom had a long, sad talk. She would get a divorce. Darlene would keep Ted, would hire a trained nurse or an experienced governess of some kind for him. Darlene agreed that it would be better for the baby to have a more settled kind of life. She might re-marry sometime. Tom would always be welcome to visit Ted, whatever happened. Tom kissed her and drove away.

■ ■ ■

Roy made himself drunk. He drank *sake* out of expensive Japanese folk pottery, ate octopus arms, chicken giblets, and shrimp teriyaki. While he ate and drank, he read a new little magazine from New York. All those young people who might have been his own children had sent him their poems and plays, news from home. He was very drunk and very happy.

He aimed the small powerful reading lamp into the garden, the stone wash-basin under shrub leaves—where was he?—would he step out onto (the fallen twiglets and needles of hemlock and fir trees mixed with moss and vine maple leaves and old fern fronds) Mt. Baker National Forest? Into a Japanese village, a northern suburb of the Capital, Heian Kyo, founded eleven hundred years ago by the Divine Emperor Kammu, for coffee (known to the West for two hundred years) under three kinds of light fixtures,

Bessa Me Mucho by Muzak and blue gauze curtains blocking the neon trolley cars. "Why don't all the people employed by this outfit run stark raving gaga after a half hour on duty in this place? Which might as well be Canoga Park or Brentwood or Sherman Oaks, all desperately new and modern and nowhere fake crystal chandeliers and real chrysanthemums, true rubber trees, bromeliads and cycads of the Lower Carboniferous and a few doilies of machine-made lace all standing over what had been a handmade landscape garden of the earlier Muromachi period . . . as long as you are *inside* the building . . . outside are frogs in the rice paddies, the honey buckets' wild perfume. What a rhapsody of times and styles," Roy thought. "Not even Perez Prado, but a nameless rhumba band. And light from a Coleman lantern, wide band across the mountain top illuminates the eyes of a six-point buck, his forefoot on the second step of the stairs nosily searching for salt, for Perez, Mene and Tekel, for Paris mossy lichen granite under hoof, ten minutes after eight P.M. on Wednesday night—to the very day!"

Roy had finished his coffee; his head throbbed and sang. "Eleven years ago to the very day. It took three hours for the sun to go down; it quit, finally, twenty minutes ago, the glass in the windows on four sides of me totally black, the green paint of the woodwork gone grey, colorless under Coleman light anchored to rock top of mountain under thin boards under my feet under my sleeping ear tonight, floating on white rope net ferninst the lightnings of Heaven and Earth and Zodiacal Time: as I remember the place where I sit now was once the parking lot for the Mt. Hiei Taxi Company but if I walk a block and a half to more coffee in a place which also remembers the now non-existent parking lot, these blue plastic lights and gauze will (*o-shibori!* Boiled hot hand towel served up in limp plastic condom pops MERRY CHRISTMAS wet sprinkle fireworks) D I S - A P P E A R . Forever. Do I have any money in my pockets. Can I pay the bill."

Roy was still two-thirds drunk and uncomfortable; he wanted out of that condition. He would have more coffee. He staggered along beside the wide, nearly deserted street, to another coffee-ya, a small television joint where six Japanese taxi drivers were watching American soldiers "winning" what the local newspapers (Roy sourly noted) refer to nowadays as a remotely historical "Pacific War."

"At least one of these guys is old enough to have been there," Roy thought. "And so am I. The rest look too young to have known more about it than kids fifteen or sixteen years old may

have heard on the Imperial Radio. The curious thing about these men is that seem to believe what it is they're seeing right now as being immediately present, this reconstruction of what was happening twenty years ago. Now here we all are, drinking the same expensive coffee which gives us all the same expensive cardiac heebie-jeebies. Only the lady behind the counter doesn't care to look, she's busy making coffee. One boy turns the pages of a magazine while he watches. Sweet potato steam whistle cart passes by, beyond the black window and its machine lace curtain; station break tooth paste ads, and then the war continues. We've learned nothing. Sweet potato whistle. The only reality is mud swamp New Guinea death? Tarawa Kwajalein, the boy with the magazine raptly picks his nose. I wonder where they all are, I watch their watching faces, what connection has any of this fraudulent movie with any real experience, any life or hope or recollection: echoing gunfire, machine gun rattle and rifle ricochet—the film editor cuts back and forth from face to gun barrel to running squirming figures among vines, bamboos. The connection is the language. In this movie, both sides are speaking Japanese. I understand the American faces and gestures, but the voices are incomprehensible. The background music clews me in; we are winning: Whitey triumphs again (but he's talking Japanese)."

Roy felt too embarrassed to stay any longer. He went to another larger place further up the street where was the folk guitar Joan Baez Revolt of the intellectual young; the clientele was all university people drinking coffee and tea and discussing Hegel and Marx. They liked Joan Baez because her guitar sounded to them rather Japanese and like a koto; they hadn't any idea what she was singing, except that *Time* magazine said she was great and new and modern. Roy talked with some of the students in halting English and Japanese. They claimed that they were majoring in economics. It turned out that they knew nothing about the subject, but they were all communists. They knew nothing about communist theory, either, but they all agreed that it was European and progressive and that all the world, particularly China, was making great progress under the communist system.

This coffee shop also served everything out of folk pottery. There was a beamed ceiling and a fireplace and furniture of a kind which the maker imagined must inhabit Swiss chalets. There were lace curtains, an expensive stereophonic phonograph, potted rubber trees, cycads, a Cryptomeria tree masquerading as a Christmas tree with blinking lights, and Easter lilies blooming

in a big jar. Small vases of chrysanthemums stood on each table. The Joan Baez Revolution disappeared, to be replaced by Miles Davis & Co. The stereo loudspeakers trademarked *Chrysler* vibrated and throbbed and chimed *Bags Groove.* (Major Hoople remembering the Crimean War—"kaff, kaff! Egad!")

Roy woke up in the middle of the night. What did he want. Why was he afraid of the Grand Mahatma. Why should he feel that he was in a false position vis à vis that Figure. He was hungover, his head hurt a little bit, his ears felt full of water, but actually his head was full of light and the light had awakened him.

Roy went to the bathroom. He took two aspirin tablets. He saw from the study windows that there had been a fall of snow while he'd been asleep.

"All that the Grand Mahatma requires—or anybody else wants —is my sincerity?" Roy asked himself. "Where that at. I move from my own center which is a seated figure that doesn't move, needs not—but this is claptrap. Cold water with aspirin is more exactly what I 'did.' "

He wondered why he should feel afraid of the hour, then decided that he wasn't really afraid. He turned on the lights and sat down to accept the fact that he was awake in the middle of the night and that there was nothing wrong with being awake any time. He would keep the appointment that he had later that morning. He wouldn't oversleep, he wouldn't be late. The alarm clock was working just fine. He felt that it was quite important that he no longer felt unhappy or afraid. It wasn't a fit of insomnia, it wasn't a nightmare, it wasn't a "Dark Night of the Soul," he was just awake. The house was very cold; he might turn on the heat.

Later in the morning he was surprised to find no trace of snow or frost on the ground outside. He had made a mistake, seeing moonlight on the stones and moss.

▪ ▪ ▪

The Grand Mahatma says: "You got to pick up the brocade and look at the wrong side of it: what makes the pattern—nerves, bloodvessels, fluids—just as a child turns the mirror around, looking at the back of it, then into the glass again, a portable window: 'Who's that? Where did he go?' "

▪ ▪ ▪

Sarah told Clifford all about her funny bohemian time when she was a teenager. She'd been a model for a famous artist who was a refugee from the war in Europe. He was fond of draping her nude flesh with white strings which he had first soaked in honey. The strings divided her peachy skin into numerable, warped squares of reference. The man's pictures showed beautiful naked women performing curious tasks and ritual actions in a desert landscape. In the middle distance he would paint a fantasticated Byzantine ruin, while in the background rose the barren tan mountains of Spain. There was always a perfectly painted flat blue sky at the top of every painting, blue and exact as Piero Della Francesca might have made it. After each painting session, the painter enjoyed licking the long lines of honey off her skin and Sarah said she rather liked it, but the painter's wife felt that after all it was her own prerogative to be dipped in honey and licked, so Sarah was dismissed, with regret.

Sarah went to live in San Francisco, where she soon married a reasonably successful landscape painter called Max Gardner, a big white-haired old man with a beard. He had family connections with Old California but not much money. The family connections got him and Sarah invited, with fair regularity, to the more expensive houses in San Francisco. At their own place, they gave big wine and chili bean parties for all the starving young painters.

Max Gardner was acquainted with most of the American painters and writers of his own generation. He had studied in Paris in the late Twenties and early Thirties. He had met lots of famous people at least once. Whenever a gallery director from New York came to San Francisco, Max and Sarah gave a party and introduced him to the promising young painters they knew.

Quite unexpectedly, Max won a big painting prize. He and Sarah were able to make a trip to Europe, which Max hadn't seen since the Thirties. While they were in Italy, Max happened to meet his first wife, who was now a celebrated novelist. Soon it developed that Max and his ex-wife had a great many happy memories and a number of new interests in common. They decided that it would be a splendid thing to re-marry and spend their old age together in Europe. Max gave Sarah passage money; Sarah wanted to go back to New York. She would go to work again. There was a grand Roman farewell festival dinner and a tearful parting at the wrong railway station.

Sarah felt gloomy and hungover and a little upset, but when she got back to Paris, she met a woman whom she had known in school. They traveled back to New York together and set up an

apartment on St. Mark's Square. Soon Sarah was giving wine and chili bean parties for the Abstract Expressionists and all the museum and gallery directors and movie stars and musicians. (Margaret Gridley met Beefy Johnson at one of Sarah's parties.)

Sarah kept her good looks and she dressed in a very distinguished manner. Her hair was blond with some grey in it, and she had green eyes. She had a long-legged figure, but she wasn't boney and hollow-chested like a fashion model. She had a big smile and a straightforward manner. She always seemed to be having a fine time, at least as long as other people were around. She only complained about her life during the course of long complicated telephone conversations with close women friends.

The friend who was sharing the apartment decided that she was going to marry and move away. Sarah would have to find a new friend to share the rent, or take over the whole place by herself. To the surprise and dismay of all her friends and acquaintances, Sarah decided to join the Peace Corps and go to India. "I've never seen that part of the world, and I might be able to do some good while I'm at it," she told them.

"Don't you realize you can't *do* that? It's nothing but a big counter-Revolutionary army," Sarah's roommate told her.

"Oh, I'm tired of political theories," Sarah replied. "I want out of New York. You can tell everybody that I am an unfulfilled middleclass intellectual with vast guilt feelings if you want to. I'm going to go, anyway."

Sarah was taught how to purify water, how to teach birth control, first aid, and kitchen gardening. The Government also made her take courses in Asian Psychology, The Development of the Underprivileged Child, Selling America Overseas, and Simple Home & Public Hygiene. The training period was three and a half weeks. She also had to learn conversational Urdu at the Berlitz School. Then the Government sent her to Katmandu.

"I was supposed to go to India," Sarah complained to the airplane driver. "This is Nepal!"

"It's all the same, lady," he told her. "They's just folks here like everywhere else, need lots of help from Uncle. You be all right."

Clifford liked Sarah immensely well. She was very wise and very solid, rather saner than most of the women he'd known. But what did she think of being a mother and keeping house? He told himself that she might be a little too old to be interested in all that. Laura was a lot younger, but even she was in her late twenties. Clifford said to himself, "I must decide; I've got to pick one or the other, I'm getting old myself. Sarah's a great woman

—Laura is—Laura and I could probably have a whole different style of life. We could have lots of children, live in France or Italy if she wanted to. I suppose life with Sarah . . . but I have no business supposing: I have to decide what I want. I really want both of them, and more beside, that's what I really want, so what am I going to do?"

■ ■ ■

Dorothy felt sad. She had been working on her essay but it wasn't growing clearer or any longer. She had begun writing it because some recent articles in *The Review of Glottal Studies* had made her mad. The articles were written by professors and researchers of great learning and authority, but Dorothy felt that what they said was absurdly and outrageously wrong. Their statements must certainly start a lot of arguments and confusion among all the other workers in the same field, not to mention the untold numbers of imperfectly educated young people whom they were bound to mislead and to misinform. Dorothy felt that she must frame an immediate reply; she must enter a demurrer; she must try to correct the mischief which these articles were bound to cause.

She inspected her great treasury of filing cards. In a few minutes, she had extracted enough basic references to form the background for writing a paper. All she needed to do next was to check through a few of the current journals to find out who else had been worrying about the same problems, then she could begin to write her own article. She went to the university library for copies of such journals which were not regularly sent to her every month. There was one article in German; she wanted to consult with Max Lammergeier about it, to ascertain the correctness of her own readings. She telephoned him and he invited her to lunch.

They had a fine afternoon together, laughing and gossiping. Max was contemplating a rock-hunting trip to Nevada. "I've got to get out into the air for a few minutes," he told her. "I can feel myself eroding."

"Mother says that you're the most beautiful man in San Francisco," Dorothy said. "Maybe working a lot keeps you trim and polished."

"Yeah, all smooth and shiny and blank from the rubbing of so many faithful pilgrims, like the toes on St. Peter's image in Rome or whoever it is, all marble with a hole where they kissed the foot away.

"O Doc, Doc, Doc, they all come in to the Doc
The nervous into the nervous, the raging loony faces,
The kinks and crackpots, prominent professors,"

Max intoned.

Dorothy laughed. "We do all depend on your being here, even when we don't come in. We're all your invisible patients; that's really what erodes you," she said.

"Look, why don't you and Tom come rock-hunting? We'll make a grand combined expedition. You can study the native tongues of the Pawnee or whoever is in the desert . . . that should give you a good start for your paper."

"Tom's been in the darkroom all week," Dorothy said. "He should about ready to come out. If I start writing tonight, I can get myself organized, I suppose. When do you want to leave?"

Everyone had a fine time in the desert except for Tom, who suffered from hay fever and sinusitis. He complained bitterly and with much justification about being dragged through the dust which not only abraded his eyes and his brain but was also working its way into the mechanism of his pet camera. He and Dorothy had to leave the party rather sooner than they had planned. Tom had begun having attacks of asthma at night.

Dorothy, who loved outings of every kind, and who loved the desert in particular, was annoyed with Tom. She told him that he was self-indulgent and hopelessly neurasthenic and she called him a number of even less exact names.

Tom said, "Awright, awright. Just give me some air, some way, will you? I can't *breathe.*"

At home again, they had a fight about politics. Then Dorothy made some unwisely critical remarks about Nessa. That fight took a long time to get settled.

Tom submitted some of his photographs to an award show at the De Young Museum. All the pictures were accepted for showing and one of them got a small prize. While the exhibition was on view, Tom and Dorothy went to have dinner with the Sandersons. Dorothy made a couple of joking references to "Our Show" during the course of the evening. When she and Tom got home they had a really serious quarrel. Tom was very angry; Dorothy tried to apologize but Tom wouldn't listen to her.

Tom told Dorothy that she didn't know what she was talking about when they were at Mark's place, and that she ought to shut up now, because she still didn't. And another thing, how often had he asked her to quit taking those god-damned speedballs. Dorothy said she needed to take them in order to keep

herself going with her journal article. He told her to cut it out. Anyway, why should she take pills when she's got good old Maxie-boo to help her in his own person?

Dorothy felt angry and sad and hopeless and cold. She only said, "All right, Tom. Whatever you say. I'm going to eat some aspirins and go to bed, now. I have to work in the morning."

Tom shouted at her, she was a dirty Radcliffe slut and hurled his glass of brandy at her. He rushed out of the house.

Dorothy picked up the unbroken glass and took it out to the kitchen. She wondered where he was going. She couldn't really care, but she hoped that he wouldn't hurt himself. If the police found him, they'd bring him home again; he had a press card in his pocket.

She felt very tired and sad. And it made her sick to think that Tom should feel jealous of Max.

In the morning, she found Tom asleep, all rolled up inside the living room rug. Dorothy made a big pot of coffee, opened a couple of cans of tomato juice and dumped them into a big pitcher that she set in the refrigerator. She drank a glass of ginger ale, then filled a big mug with black coffee and carried it to her desk. She sat down and looked hopelessly at the neat stacks of three-by-five cards and the clutter of typed papers all scored and x'ed with black felt-pen marks.

She wondered when she was going to learn how to get along with her husbands instead of fighting with them all the time. Such questions lead right back to the psychiatrist, don't they, she told herself. The psychiatrist, even if it did happen to be Max, cost forty dollars an hour, and Max always said that the treatment wouldn't work unless the patient paid for it himself. She thought she might go to the group therapy sessions conducted by Max's friend, Dr. Givenchy—immutably young, with crew-cut hair, who so confidently believed that he was really hip, a kind of stale Tab Hunter—but she wasn't about to stand still for all that. She told herself that she was too old for all that kind of scene anyway.

"I could always go back into the Church and take the veil," Dorothy thought, "if all my lovely husbands would kindly drop dead first . . . but the Church is too bossy. I wonder what would happen if I were to write to Clifford—better yet, send him a cable—and say, 'I'm coming back, I'm arriving at Katmandu airport Thursday afternoon. Love.' "

■ ■ ■

Roy surprised himself. He turned out of his usual path directly

down Imadegawa Street and began to walk, instead, along the bank of the Kamo River. Blue sky was beginning to appear through big breaks in the heavy clouds overhead. Low thick ropes and garlands of darkness passed north-east above Hieizan where the river made its turn into the Columbia Gorge.

He felt a great elation, a great freedom. He would stay in Kyoto and wander about, writing poems; he didn't have to do anything anywhere else and it was beautiful walking right here, although the wind was cold.

He walked along the sandy embankment. A man and a woman were exercising an elephantine collie, all orange and white, broad hips and needle nose; it regarded Roy, for a moment, quite severely. Then the man called it; the dog ran to him instantly.

Roy hurried along; he decided to walk all the way into the middle of town and eat lunch there. He looked across the Kamo and saw the Harvard Business School rising above the stone-faced revetment of the farther shore, just as he had seen it while walking along the Charles. He was very happy. It would be quite possible for him to think of living in Boston or Cambridge, sometime in the future; the idea of a New England winter no longer seemed so appalling, now that he had survived a Japanese one.

He walked across the Sanjo Bridge, with its wooden 17th Century posts and rails rising above the concrete deck. The wooden parts appear in a Hokusai print, and the view of Mt. Hiei remains the same. Roy considered the idea of living in Kyoto "forever." He wondered why he had been bitching to himself so much about the difficulties and inconveniences of life in that city, and the impossibilities of trying to communicate in the Japanese language. What was wrong with him? Everything was going wonderfully well. Why did he want to go anywhere else? What would he be doing now if he were in Los Angeles, for example. His life there or in any other town must be much the same. But now he had lots to write, a place to live and food to eat. What difference did it make what the weather was doing or what was the name of this place.

"I been a lot of places, and there's still a lot of places I want to go," Roy thought, "but I bet that when I get there, the band or the Muzak or the jukebox will be playing those same records of *Adios Muchachos* and *La Comparcita* which I hear in every restaurant and coffee house in this town, just as I used to hear Xavier Cugat and his band playing them on the radio when I was a little boy in Washington, years ago."

■ ■ ■

Clifford told Roy, "My old man used to come home and tell my mother, 'I guess if I don't get a job pretty soon, I'll go down to the blacksmith shop and get myself fitted for a tin beak so I can go pick shit with the chickens on the manure pile.' "

Roy said, "My dad always had a job in the post office, a Civil Service deal. We lived in rented houses. I got a new pair of shoes when school started in the fall, and a pair of pants and a couple of shirts, all from J. C. Penney's. They had to last until the next spring. We always had a place to live and something to eat. I knew lots of guys in the army who had less than half of all that."

Clifford said, "I had a paper route. It took me months to save enough money to buy my own bicycle so I could handle a bigger territory, and then I got a magazine route in the afternoons after school. I was able to help buy my own clothes."

Roy said, "Well, anyway, it's funny to have been poor and still be poor, only here we are in Monterey and in International Society or something."

"You always had a lot of extravagant tastes," Clifford said. "No wonder you're poor. You can have my share of the society part, too—the middle class is just no fun, anywhere you happen to get mixed up with them."

"I expect that if getting mixed up with the middle class was like being married to Margaret, I was pretty well there," Roy said.

Clifford replied, "Dorothy had to train me or I never would have found out what socks to wear or when to drink the water in the finger bowls."

"How many shares of Coca Cola do you figure I own, anyway?" Roy inquired.

"I ain't saying you got any. All I say is, you've always been a lot better off than I ever was, but you're always broke and you complain more. I can't figure it out," Clifford said.

"I can," Roy said, equably. "I spend whatever money there is, then there's isn't any more for a long time and I complain, and after while, more of it comes. I complain because it doesn't last. But last night, I was reading some translations of Sanskrit poems, all about girls and jewels and palaces and rare silks and elephants—a really luxurious kind of life that nobody can afford nowadays, not even rich people. I understood, all of a sudden, that I'll never be rich, I'll never have lots of money—more than I could spend in a day—but *I* am something else, something developing along its own line, a kind of being or entity which has a quality of experience that hasn't existed before. It's a gas to be this whoever it is, whatever it is, and I try to write it all down.

But it has nothing to do with money, it is free of the necessity, really, of money—it is happening to me, I am being this person, and this is what I really want. Maybe in another life I was or will be really rich, but that's a different career, a different story line, one that's already been exactly known and described and understood."

Clifford said, "Tell it to John Maynard Keynes."

Roy said, "Tell it to John Kenneth Galbraith."

Clifford asked him, "Did you ever read *A Sentimental Education*?"

Roy said, "I sure did—along with your edifying Leninist marginalia—I read your copy while we were at school. Let's have a little more gin."

"The trouble with you is, you drink too much," Clifford said. "You ought to switch to grass. It's a better trip in every way."

"The stuff never affects me," Roy said. "It just makes me thirsty and my hearing goes all funny. Then I have to eat a big bunch of candy or a lot of food and the candy makes my teeth hurt. A little booze makes me feel good and I always know right where I am."

Roy and Clifford laughed and yelled and rolled on the ground.

■ ■ ■

The worst thing that ever happened to Roy was the loss of a friend. They didn't have a big argument and a fight. The friend didn't die; he withdrew.

Roy met Jim in the Army. They had many exciting conversations about art and literature and music. Jim was the brightest man Roy had ever met: he could write and draw and sing and play the violin.

Jim went home on a furlough and married the girl he'd been going steady with before he got into the army. He wrote to Roy all about the wedding and Roy wrote a humorous reply and sent a present.

They wrote to each other when Roy went on furlough and later, after Roy transferred into other outfits. The letters were filled with sketches and poems and lists of books that had to be read immediately and of new recordings which must be heard and of new movies that must be seen. There was also a great deal of discussion about theories of creativity and of the intellectual bases of the arts in general and about the difficulties attendant upon making oneself into an artist.

Directly after the war, Jim invited Roy to come to his house

for a visit. Roy and Jim and Jim's wife, Gloria, had a splendid time together, hiking and swimming and playing music and sitting up all night talking about art and philosophy and sex and politics and the lives and times of great historical figures. Roy thought Gloria was very bright and pretty. He told Jim that he was really lucky to find her.

The next year, Jim and Roy were attending different universities in different parts of the country; neither of them had been to college before the war. They wrote to each other occasionally. Roy was supposed to make another visit to see Jim and Gloria, but he ran out of money and couldn't go.

The correspondence dwindled. Roy received a card whenever Gloria had a new baby. There were several babies and Roy sent a long congratulatory letter in response to each card.

Several years later, Roy got a letter from Jim; he and his family had come to live near Seattle, the city where Roy was living then. Jim invited Roy to come out for a visit, and although they had a delightful time together, Jim felt that it was necessary to apologize to Roy, as they were driving together to the bus station; they hadn't had much of a chance for a real talk. Roy said that they could get together oftener, now that they were living only thirty miles apart. Jim said that he and Gloria would probably be driving into Seattle soon to visit Roy.

They exchanged letters, shortly after this visit, but Roy realized that they were, in some way, strangers to each other now. They had lived different kinds of lives and had too many different kinds of problems and were involved in different kinds of societies. But Roy imagined that all these differences must gradually disappear, or at least become less important, once they began seeing each other more often.

Jim and Gloria never quite managed to visit Roy. Jim wrote a short note to say "hello" and to say they were sorry to have missed seeing him on this trip, but they'd be in again soon; watch out! That was the last Roy ever heard from Jim and Gloria.

When Roy's first book was published, he tried sending a copy to Jim. (Roy was in New York then: he sent the book to Jim's last address near a little town outside Seattle.) The book was returned, with a stamped notice, "Unknown at this address." Some time later, Roy wrote to Jim and addressed the letter in care of Jim's parents, in order to make sure that Jim would receive it, but there was no reply.

Roy wondered if Jim was mad at him; then it became plain to him, one day, that Jim was indifferent. Jim had received the

letter and didn't care to reply. When he realized that, Roy felt himself turning into a chunk of slag, a clinker, and the Earth, all green and splendid as ever, turned swiftly away and beyond the Sun with great indifferent speed on its determined orbit, and there in black space hung Roy Asteroid, cold space metal ore freeze. And the Sun also receded, and its little, circling planets, then the great flat nebular disk of the "home universe"—the Milky Way—swung slowly up and away into the dark and there he was, watching it go.

■ ■ ■

Tom mixed up a new batch of solution and poured a slug of it into a film tank and sloshed it around for a certain number of seconds, then drained the tank and set it under a flowing cold water tap. While the film was being rinsed, Tom carefully rolled a cigaret. He hung up the new negative to drip over the sink.

He took a pack of negatives and dealt them out on his light-table, and selected one and prepared to print it. He put the negative into the enlarger and projected it onto a sheet of white paper. It was the picture of a boy of about twelve or thirteen, leaning against the twisted polished branch of a big driftwood tree on some beach. The boy was blond and skinny, with big front teeth; he was just entering adolescence but the thin, white droopy jock he was wearing emphasized the fact that he was already very heavily endowed; he would grow into a powerful man.

Tom made six eight-by-ten glossy prints of this picture. Then he began with another negative. He worked slowly and very carefully. Each print was done exactly right; every detail of each clear, sharply focussed picture was exactly reproduced. Several hours later, he carefully packed the finished pictures and wrapped them for mailing to Kalifornia Kidviews at a post office number in Van Nuys.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy received a letter from Roy. She could make very little sense out of it, only bright, brainless babbling that went on and on. It annoyed her; she was busy trying to write her article, and here was this aimless nonsense interrupting her. She threw the letter into the waste-basket. She remembered it, later in the day and recovered it from the bin—what was he trying to tell her? Then she realized that he had been high on something or other when he wrote it. "That's why it sounds so cuckoo; he was blasted out of his skull!"

■ ■ ■

Six or seven months after Dorothy mailed them her manuscript, the learned editors of *The Review of Glottal Studies* returned it to her. They said it was of the greatest interest and would she please cut it down to about 2500 words, so they could print it in their next issue? Although it was one of the best papers they had seen in years, considerations of space compelled them to make this irksome request. Perhaps Dr. Prescott was aware that they were also going to print a very important piece by Dr. Bitteschoen which would occupy most of the same issue of the *Review*. There would be only his essay and Dr. Prescott's, if she could return her manuscript before a certain date. The editors were of opinion that simultaneous publication of their articles would be a truly important event for everyone who was now working in linguistics and philology and allied fields of investigation.

Dorothy was discouraged and dejected, at first; she had worked very hard at perfecting her article; she felt it was already condensed and compressed as much as she could make it. However, on the same day she had received this editorial message, Dr. Bitteschoen telephoned her. She had a little difficulty understanding him. (When he spoke English, his enunciation was very good; his accent was Oxford. His diction and grammar sometimes tended towards the creative, but the thought was always very plain.) Dr. Bitteschoen was excited and shouting into the telephone which warped and buckled and buzzed under the weight of his voice and he had lapsed into a mixture of English and the Münchener dialect of his earliest youth. Dorothy could just grasp the drift of his meaning.

"We're taking over the *Glottal Studies Review* next month," Dr. Bitteschoen hollered. "They wrote to me. You must edit your essay—you never showed it to me! I'll help you. We are winning at last! My theories are justified! We shall have it all published in time for the great Monterey Conference. We shall both go there and deliver addresses of lightning and thunder intensity which will fall upon these academical spaghettis like the Uhlans fell upon Austerlitz. I come to your house at once by taxi over the bridge immediately to luncheon. I burst in upon your sanctum like Darius upon the Thracian mainland. Please find lots more of the good herrings of the kind you so graciously provided the last time. I find the beers. Tell Tom I expect him to be at home to play pinochle with after lunch. Then we edit your article in a good quarter hour and so to dinner in the Chinese City as my guests. O.K. I come now. Look out!"

Dorothy told him that she'd be ready. She hung up the phone and yelled for Tom.

A muffled "NO!" issued from the darkroom in reply. Dorothy went to the sealed door and shouted her orders. "You've got to go to the store; I've got to vacuum everything, Louis is coming to lunch instantly, I've got to fix the house and the lunch, you've got to go to the store!"

"NO," Tom shouted back. "I don't got to do anything except keep that door shut seven more minutes. Start vacuuming and quit screaming, you'll shatter my chemicals!"

Dorothy was hollering at Tom about going to store again because there wasn't nearly enough sour cream when Dr. Bitteschoen arrived. He had dragooned an unwilling Berkeley taxi driver into lugging a case full of Lowenbrau bottles up the long stairway to Dorothy's front door. To her horror, Dr. Bitteschoen gave the man a twenty dollar bill and dismissed him. The cab man went grumping down the stairs.

"He's going away to spend the day in some low bar," Dorothy said. "Telling about crazy professors and his bad back. You're too extravagant. Kiss me."

"The university pays me such an extravagant honorarium," Dr. Bitteschoen said, and he obligingly gave Dorothy a hug and kiss. "You look beautiful, my eggplant! I love to spend money on beautiful girls, especially on you. Nobody seems to enjoy getting what I spend; all Americans are so serious and sad."

Dr. Bitteschoen continued talking while he took off his coat, shook hands with Tom and followed Dorothy into the kitchen where she gave him a big glass of beer and plate of crackers and cheese to work at while she finished preparing the lunch.

"We shall go all together to Monterey and devastate these yokels, these Backworldsmen. Tom shall expose them all with his camera by photographing them in interesting juxtapositions with motion picture stars from Hollywood. I shall read a paper which I commenced this morning in the bath to compose. I shall be never so subtly suggesting that the Dravidians are an expelled people from the borders of Egypt in Early Dynastic times, that they were thoroughly familiar with the major inventions and material culture of the Egypts, and they brought this learning to the Indus Valley with them. They were, of course, the people to whom the Egyptian record refers as inhabiting the Land of Punt. I shall introduce, in passing, a reference—only in a footnote—to a photograph of certain Pre-Dynastic Egyptian seals. The photograph itself will of course not appear in the article. And the Mohenjo Daro seals will by implication be inferred to be of African provenance. The effect of this hint upon the irritable (if regrettably undeveloped) sensoria of certain of your white

Anglo-Saxon Protestant colleagues should prove to be of some slight interest to observe. Likewise, our esteemed British friend, Dr. Trabshaw with his puerile notions about the Sumerian genesis of the Indus Valley cultures will find himself being slowly unfrocked before the enraptured gaze of the international scholarly community. Comes then Dr. Prescott's corrections and destructions! Or perhaps you have lately received some other new and shocking revelations which you can announce to penetrate for however brief a moment that marvelously wicked (but profitable—consider, after all, how much money now cascades and gushes through the American university system!) Acheronian fog that surrounds the academy and which provides as well the comfortable and downy safety wherein are hidden these herds of unlettered buffoons, these parochial mountebanks who pretend to scholarship. Yes, a new statement, to make your printed remarks even more outrageous. Yes, yes! You will find something and tell me before we part this day; for the rest, we shall reserve a suite at the Hotel De Los Conquistadores y Cojones in Monterey. Berthe will enjoy the sunshine and the swimming and take care of our files and preside at the typewriter. We shall eat abalone steaks and drink Rhine wines. Tom shall photograph the wise and worldly faces of the intellectual leadership of the West (Russia is an Oriental country, of course). I shall telephone Mr. Luce and suggest that he publish Tom's pictures in *Life* magazine to illustrate whatever fatuous article about the conference—we shall find someone who can write up a popular journalistic account of the proceedings which will show you and me as being the only persons of any consequence. It must be a family triumph."

Dorothy said, "I got their letter of invitation months ago, but I didn't think much about it, I was so busy. I hate Monterey. Besides, Clifford Barlow is going to be there, giving a seminar and probably a recital, as well—he never passes up the chance to grab the spotlight and command the admiration of the entire civilized world. Blah!"

"It doesn't look like there's going to be much left for anybody to take over, after you and Doc move in with your demolition crew," Tom said.

"Ah, we only build up and break down abstractions and theories," Dr. Bitteschoen said. "Only words and patterns of an extremely limited use and effect. Clifford's music operates upon a completely other level of reality. It assaults the heart, it engages the mind, it is the motion of the spirit upon the face of the waters."

"I thought Clifford would be talking about the geography thing or whatever it is," Tom said.

"Again, he deals there with living people, with persons and stones and plants and the weather," Dr. Bitteschoen said. "At best, we philologists are only making projections from philosophy, and as Whitehead told us, philosophy is no more than a footnote to Plato."

Dorothy said, "But language is people; it's what all of us really are. What do we think *with*, what do we handle, what do we see except words, after all? Even your darling old Plato is a *book*. The famous cave is a verbal image, is poetry—which is all that saves Plato from being a great big bore that nobody would be able to read, not even you, Louis, with all your patience. Those precious rocks and trees and mountains of Clifford's are words. Nobody has any real sense about it except dirty old Roy and what does he do besides run around drinking and fucking little boys and taking dope and starving and weeping in the mountains?"

Dr. Bitteschoen said, "Well, after all, Clifford truly has a genius . . . "

"Why do you always *defend* him, Louis?" Dorothy asked. She was getting very excited. "It's just because Clifford is a man! All of you stick together—all of you love each other—I hate you, all you dirty faggots! I have to go to the bathroom. Don't anybody say anything until I get back!" Dorothy precipitately left the room.

Tom and Dr. Bitteschoen laughed. "Let me get you another beer, Doc," Tom said. "There's still a lot left."

"Thanks very much, Tom. And when you come back you must tell me all about this Roy," Dr. Bitteschoen said. "And if there's another herring . . . "

"There's an immense quantity of herring," Dorothy replied, returning, "and it's all for you and Tom. I hate it. You met Roy the other night at that big party. He was babbling to you about Sanskrit poetry, of all things, and he knows nothing whatever about it, he's practically illiterate in four languages."

"The man who looks like Friedrich Schiller," Dr. Bitteschoen remarked.

"That's what you said at the time," Dorothy continued. "Roy can just barely write English, and then it's really sort of American . . . "

Tom objected. "Roy's a good poet," he said. "I get a kick out of what he writes. I can't read anybody else's poems and get anything out of them. Didn't you tell me he got some kind of award earlier this year?"

Dorothy said, "Oh, he got some kind of shitty little prize—$5 and a parchment certificate—I don't remember. Anyway, he's an idiot."

"How come you're so down on Roy today?" Tom inquired. "He's smarter than most of your famous friends. They ought to ask him to go to this conference thing."

"He can't go to places like that," Dorothy replied. "He needs the money. They have to give the money to all of *us* for being there because we're all reliable people who get big salaries from the university. You don't give money to poverty-striken poets, don't be ridiculous. Anyway, he doesn't have a Ph.D. You can't get in the door without one. And besides, he's just another great big faggot, just like you."

"Miss Faggot to you, if you please," Roy said, entering the living room. "Is there any beer left? I'm rich, I've brought you presents—cheese and salami from the Beach—Clifford sent me ten dollars for my birthday."

Dorothy said, "Sit down, Roy, and I'll get you a glass. I was just explaining why you can't go to the Monterey Conference because you're a big faggot without a Ph.D. You met Dr. Bitteschoen the other night."

"How do you do?" Dr. Bitteschoen said. He shook hands with Roy.

Roy told him, "I'm afraid I was kind of drunk when I was talking to you, last time."

"Ah, you said some very interesting things about poetry . . . what was it you were telling me about Holderlin? I was drinking a lot myself—"

"Roy loves Holderlin," Dorothy said, pouring a glass of beer and handing it to him with a fond smile.

"I'm afraid I don't really like any German poetry," Roy said, politely. "Dorothy's only trying to kid me."

"Roy loves Rilke," Dorothy said. "Rilke was a faggot."

"I don't enjoy the modern writers," Dr. Bitteschoen said. "I prefer Herder and the Minnesangers. Their language was more alive."

"I thought you were so crazy about Brecht—I remember you made me read him years ago," Dorothy said.

"Oh, yes, as an example of a metropolitan dialect—but that's not the true poetry, not the expression of a magnanimous soul, like Schiller."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "In the depths of the great Depres-

sion President Hoover used to say, 'The situation is fundamentally sound.' He is also reported to have advised his friends, 'Buy zinc.' "

■ ■ ■

Clifford walked out of town to visit an encampment of Tibetans. They were on their way to visit Bodh Gaya. They had set up their tents outside Katmandu in order to rest and to do a little trading—a few sheep for some salt and fresh vegetables and fruit, a few gauds and bangles of gold and turquoise jewelry for Indian rupees.

They seemed calm and cheerful. Tibetans always reminded Clifford of the American Indians who were his neighbors in Idaho when he was young. They had the same kind of reddish-tan skin and long black hair. Each individual was distinctly a separate person who knew his own powers and his own exact virtues. None doubted that he existed in a real world; none seemed worried; none seemed to experience feelings of inferiority or found it necessary to assert his superiority over other persons. Each individual attended to his own business. The men and women laughed and joked with each other. The children ran about everywhere, looking at everybody and everything, laughing and crying.

Clifford squatted on the ground and visited with a man who had some bronze images to sell. They drank tea together and blew up some bhang. Clifford asked about the high passes which the Tibetans had just crossed. The trader said that there was still lots of snow in the high cols. Clifford asked him if he'd seen any Chinese people in his part of Tibet. The man certainly had; he was from Lhasa. He said the Chinese people yelled a lot and gave a great many orders. The Tibetans assured them that in time their wishes would undoubtedly be carried out. The Chinese soldiers were impatient and had killed some people. Mostly the Chinese wanted gold and jewels, and as long as they got them, they were reasonably easy to get along with. The man smiled. He wore a big fur hat, a thick sheepskin jacket and several layers of homespun woolen cloth coats and gowns. His face was very wrinkled but his teeth were good. Like most Asians, Clifford noted, the man had very finely shaped hands.

The tea was awful. Clifford had never been able to get used to the taste and texture of it, thick foamy rancid butter soap tea.

■ ■ ■

Roy hadn't intended to get drunk. He had gone to North Beach to buy a book, and he met Mark Sanderson in a bookstore. They hadn't seen each other for months. Mark was on his way to keep an appointment. Like all musicians, he had a very long daily schedule of lessons and rehearsals and work at his own compositions and the duties of a husband and father to be accomplished. His day needed 36 hours, but he managed to get everything done, more or less, in 18; however, he was always behind schedule, always more or less late. He had to spend a lot of time on the telephone while he was in one place, explaining to someone why he was going to be late in arriving someplace else.

Mark and Roy went to a little Italian bar. They had an energetic conversation about their work, about music, about the lives of all their friends. Roy was very happy to be having a friendly drink not too early in the afternoon. While Mark was making a phone call, Tom Prescott came into the bar and sat down next to Roy while Roy happened to be looking the other way, talking to the barman.

Tom said, "Tell him to give me a martini on the rocks."

"Hey, Tom!" Roy yelled.

"What are you celebrating?" Tom inquired.

"I got my Income Tax Refund!" Roy shouted orders at the barman.

Mark joined them. He told about his trip to the Venice Festival where he'd been invited to conduct some of his own compositions.

"At the end it was really scary," Mark said. "Everybody was yelling and screaming. The manager said I was supposed to greet the audience and take a bow, then he shoved me out onto the stage. It was like the Reign of Terror or something; they were really wailing. I could see some of them winding up to throw things, so I began doing a quick fade—but it all turned out to be flowers and pieces of candy wrapped in tinfoil. They really liked the music, but I was scared; I thought they were going to attack the stage. Now I've really got to go—these people out at the auditorium are waiting for me to get there for a rehearsal. Call us up and come over sometime soon!"

Mark rushed away. Tom sat and drank with Roy for a while. He was very unsettled. He was worrying about whether he should marry Dorothy. Roy told him he should: she was a great woman and great women are few.

"How come you never married her yourself," Tom asked.

"She had signed up to marry Clifford when I met her," Roy said.

"She thinks a lot of you, you know," Tom said.

"I love Dorothy. She knows that," Roy told him. "We sorted all this out a long time ago."

"We've been fighting about everything again," Tom said.

"You mean you've been crazy enough to pay attention to what she *says*? Don't take all that stuff seriously. She says a lot of things, most of it is just talking."

"Well, there are lots of complications," Tom said. "She's as undecided as I am. She keeps fussing around about Clifford and what he said and what he's going to say and about her mother and about her hair and about her work and about getting older all the time—"

Roy said, "All that's bullshit. If you want to marry her, move in and get started. Start living together."

"I haven't found a place yet where I can fix up a darkroom," Tom said.

"For Christ's sake, get yourself a real estate agent, have him find you a place and make Dorothy move into it. Cut out all the nonsense!"

"Yeah, I guess you're right," Tom said. "I've got to get to work, whether I can get her to move in with me or not. I can't keep goofing around the way I'm going. It's driving me crazy."

Tom had one more drink with Roy, then he went away. The bar was fairly quiet during the dinner hour. Roy drank very slowly and talked with the barman; he played the jukebox and the pinball machine. He felt happy and relaxed. He didn't need to do anything except go to the toilet once in a while.

Roy wondered what had really happened between Dorothy and Clifford. He had thought they were very well suited. Now it had come all unstuck. O.K. Unstuck, uckstuck, fuckstick—why not.

Later, Roy was gradually surrounded by a group of his former students and current disciples and other solemn woolly types. He was well oiled and speeding along very happily, free to begin speaking out at last. For six hours he discoursed passionately and pointedly upon the works of W. B. Yeats. He spouted enough ideas and cross references and learned asides to supply a university professor with material sufficient for teaching a four year course in the life and writings of Yeats. One of the six hours, for example, was devoted to a description of the works and character of A. P. Sinnet and the effect of his writings upon Yeats and the members of Yeats's circle of friends.

By closing time, Roy was gloriously weeping. He was pleading with a furry young man to eschew the false teachings of the nefarious P. D. Ouspensky. Roy's friends gently eased him out of

the bar and into the back of an old truck parked in a nearby alley. In the laps and arms of several beautiful lady beatniks, Roy wept and sang and prophesied while the old truck roared through the foggy streets and across the great orange bridge above the Golden Gate to a shack among the eucalyptus hills of Marin County.

The rest of the night and most of the early morning, they all played music and made love and took dope and sang and danced while Roy continued to speak with the tongues of men and angels until exactly nine thirty A.M., when he fell off his chair onto the grassy floor where beautiful arms and legs and bodies received him and he slept.

Somebody with a beard came in later and said, "Say, who's he, anyway," pointing at Roy.

Someone answered, "I don't know man, but the old fart sure can talk."

Another said, "Don't you know who that is? . . . well, you can't see his face right this minute . . . that's Roy Aherne, the poet."

The one with the beard said, "Shit. Who are you trying to con?"

"I'm not putting you on; that's who it is."

"Listen," the bearded one said. "Roy Aherne is in Ceylon at some buddhist monastery."

"You're cuckoo," another bearded personage remarked; he had arrived in time to hear the other's closing remark. "Roy Aherne is in Italy at that big poetry conference they're having for Ezra Pound's birthday."

"Who's this guy, then?" Somebody inquired.

"How do I know," asked the original beard. "Probably the C.I.A."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy told Beth Sanderson, "I never seem to get anywhere. I keep trying to work but it's probably all pointless—Clifford always said I didn't have any ideas. What do *you* do? I mean *how* do you do everything?"

Beth said, "I'm too busy to get anything done, what with the kids and the house and music—I just barely keep the entire scene from collapsing and falling down around my ankles so that I can't move at all. *You're* the only really successful woman that I know. You get to travel all the time and talk to all sorts of famous people, Tom is a famous photographer—he's happy, isn't he?"

"I don't know," Dorothy said. "We don't really seem to think in terms of happiness or unhappiness any more; we both go on sort of independently, but we spend our evenings together—we stay home a lot—I suppose if I could bring myself to think in those terms again, that funny psychological vocabulary, I'd soon be going to see Max again for treatment or take the veil or something—but I'm just babbling. Tell me what you did yesterday, for example."

Beth clutched her forehead. "My God! I don't know," she said. "What didn't I do? I can't remember, my schedule was all thrown out of whack, I had to take Sidney to the dentist, the cat threw up in the baby's crib and it had to be all taken apart and washed and rebuilt, Mother phoned to say she was going to Salem to take care of Aunt Myrtle again. In the afternoon I had to go over to the campus to rehearse the Schütz oratorio we're supposed to put on next month. I had to pick up the kids after school and then give a piano lesson because Mark was too busy right then, and I made five hundred cookies for the Bluebirds and wrote a letter about saving the Bay and sent it to Senator Engle—I was tired at the end of it, that's all I know about yesterday. But I always think of you doing all the things that you do very calmly and deliberately and *quietly* (there's so much sound here—the kids yelling, the telephone, music going on all the time) in your beautiful house where there's nobody to bother you or drag you away from what you're trying to do."

Dorothy sighed. "Maybe Louis Bitteschoen is right," she said. "He always says that the main thing is the style, the quality . . . "

Beth's daughter, Deedee, ran into the room; Sidney could be heard roaring in the distance.

"Mama, Sidney has taken the tumble-beans out of the play telephone and is feeding them to Terwilliger Panda and he won't give them back." Such was Deedee's breathless message.

"Deedee, I'm not the least bit sorry for you," Beth calmly replied. "You shouldn't come tattling to me about everything that Sidney does, he's always doing something, I know that already. He'll be doing something else pretty soon, and then you can play the tumble-beans. If Sidney is difficult, find something you can do by yourself. Practice your new piano piece or start knitting a sweater for Terwilliger or write—yes: that's what you must do right now; you must write a letter to your grandmother."

"Ah, I don't want to," Deedee said, pulling her hair down over her face.

"Put your hair back. You must write to her immediately. It can be a very short letter, but you must write it yourself and say

thank you for the beautiful birthday present. And put on some clothes or you'll catch cold." (Deedee was wearing only a few yards of orange-dyed cheesecloth and spangles draped haphazardly about herself; she was barefoot.) "Now I'm going to talk to Aunt Dorothy. You run along, now."

Dorothy said, "If Sidney misbehaves, whop him one. That's what I used to do to my brother."

Deedee said, "OK," quite happily, and ran out of the room, but she returned a few seconds later, much distressed. She couldn't find Sidney in order to whop him.

Dorothy said, "Oh dear. I should have kept my big mouth shut. I keep forgetting that everybody tends to take me literally."

Beth laughed at her. "Don't worry," she said. "Sidney is very tough. Excuse me a minute while I get this one fixed up with a piece of paper."

■ ■ ■

The first time that Roy met Margaret Gridley they had a big noisy argument. Dorothy was giving a small dinner party to welcome Margaret to San Francisco, and since Roy was in town, she invited him to meet Margaret, her old friend from happy Radcliffe days. There was a cocktail party to while away the hours between sunset and supper time, and since Roy hadn't had any lunch that day, the gin soon began to illuminate his active brain. He also found the presence of Margaret Gridley mildly intoxicating.

Roy saw a small, round-eyed woman with straight blond hair and a pouting mouth. She had a habit of rolling her great blue eyes upwards while delivering herself of some acidulous remark. She seemed to Roy to be very witty; she had an attractive figure as well. She made no effort to dominate the conversation—Dorothy and her other guests were all expert talkers—but Margaret's account of her early life in the rustic suburbs of Eugene, of the latest jazz and dope news from New York, and of the intrigues and excitements of life in the Karl Jung Institute at Zurich managed to keep the attention of the party focused on herself.

Dorothy rushed about filling glasses, fetching ice and hors d'œuvres from the kitchen, opening bottles. She was delighted to have something happening in her own little apartment. She complained to Roy, later, however. "Why did you have to be so snotty all evening? You and Margaret were both awful. What got you started, anyway?"

"I was drunk, that's all," Roy said.

Dorothy impatiently refused to accept this excuse. "You're always drunk," she said. "What got it all going?"

"It didn't amount to anything," Roy said, rather sheepishly. "It was all about *The New Yorker*. Margaret was trying to tell me how we all owe it to ourselves to read each page of every issue with devotion and fidelity, ads and all. I told her that the entire magazine is written weekly by two old aunties who had been roommates at Yale, except for the fiction, which is all done by a team of anonymous workers at the Walt Disney Studios in Hollywood. They use a number of pseudonyms—"

"Oh stop it!" Dorothy said. "Really?"

"Sure I did. She got mad."

"Come on. Margaret was just needling you from the start. She never reads anything except mystery stories and *Vogue*. She was just putting you on and you fell for it. Hah!"

"Anyway, she was mad," Roy said.

"Margaret? She told me you were the only attractive man in San Francisco and she's going to seduce you."

"Oh yeah?"

"There you are, Mr. Smarty-pants Roy."

Roy laughed. He said "Oh yeah?" again, but he felt very interested and excited by Dorothy's account of Margaret's impression of him. He wondered if Dorothy was putting him on, however, all unbeknownst to Margaret, simply in order to stir up a little mischief. Contrariwise, he thought, Dorothy was very busy with getting ready to join Clifford in Ceylon. It was rather late in the day for her to want or to need any more fuss and excitement than she already had to deal with.

At this period, Roy had been busy trying to simplify his own life. For years he had had the ambition of being able to pack everything that he needed into a large suitcase. He ought to be able to unpack the suitcase anywhere, set up his portable typewriter, and there would be home, a place to work and live. But he also needed hiking gear and a couple dozen books. The answer had come to his problem, in the shape of a little second-hand English car which one of his students sold to him for a very small sum. The hiking equipment had to be stored at Max Lammergeier's house, but the big suitcase, the portable typewriter, and the two dozen books almost fitted into the little car. (The single suitcase was, in actuality, a large old Air Corps B-4 bag almost as large as the car. Somebody told him he ought to put wheels under the suitcase and forget the automobile.) Roy believed that if it was necessary, he could sleep in the car, too. Quite often, lately, he

was having to do just that. He was drinking a lot of the time, and he couldn't afford to keep up his drinking and pay rent as well. When Margaret Gridley appeared on the scene, Roy was living, rather crummily, in his little car.

Margaret Gridley wouldn't ride in it. She had her own car, a 1933 Packard sedan, black and square. The plush upholstery was beautifully kept and there was a pair of silver-mounted cutglass vases on the doorposts.

Margaret Gridley enjoyed drinking gin. Roy spent lots of time with her, drinking and talking. At last he had found someone who could drink as much (or more) than he could and who liked it, and who had style and brains that he could respect. Margaret made Roy laugh a great deal, but they sometimes had very serious arguments.

Margaret had begun trying to write. She hadn't written anything since she was in college, but now she wanted to make a clear and exact statement about the life and times of Beefy Johnson. She liked to wake up early in the morning and drink coffee in silence and solitude, trying to see again how Beefy looked and what he did and how he sounded when he talked, and then trying to make up exact sentences which would convey this knowledge to a reader.

Roy told her that he himself kept working all the time, morning, noon, and night, asleep or awake. He wrote down what he couldn't stop remembering. He wrote it only after he could see and hear the complete poem in his head. He'd look at it after it was written, to see what his eyes thought about it, how did it look as something to be read. He always remembered what he had written.

Roy hated schedules. He wanted to be free to go out and pick flowers all morning if he felt like it, or stay in bed. He was sure that the world would be better if more people stayed in bed most of the morning. As it was, everyone was up at seven, screaming down the freeways a hundred miles an hour between eight and nine A.M., in order to go sit in cold nasty drafty stores and offices all the rest of the day, composing duns, making out bills, threats of lawsuits, foreclosures, tax penalties, and summonses to traffic court.

Margaret contended that the pale wretched light of sunrise was the only medium by which one could possibly see the world or oneself as they actually are. Even then, it is necessary to look fast and look closely. All intelligent people, Margaret told him, take naps later in the day. The most intelligent sleep instead of eating large, fattening lunches. (Nice people seldom eat

any time.) In the evening was the time for cocktails and a little supper and a little fond affection and love. The evening ended promptly at 1 A.M.

Roy said she was anal-compulsive.

Margaret said he was enfantine. (She got the word from Henry James.)

The two of them drove (in Margaret's car) to Carson City. They shot up a lot of methadrine and stayed awake four days, gambling with some money Roy had received for a poetry prize. They drove down Highway 395 to look at the scarp of the Sierra. They visited the Mammoth Hot Springs. They got married in Reno. They ate lunch for the first time in days in a beerhall on Donner Summit. They bought new distributor points in Auburn, whilom capital of California. They quarreled about whether to visit Sacramento. They ate an expensive fish dinner in Berkeley. They went home to Margaret's apartment and went to bed.

For a couple of months, they attended the parties that their friends gave for them. Margaret and Roy were always the first to arrive and the last to leave. At one party they quarreled and broke things. At another party, they pursued each other from room to room, from conversation to conversation. One would be sitting or standing, talking to other guests, when the other would silently arrive and begin slowly giving gentle but persistent and intimate caresses.

One evening, Margaret went home before Roy realized that she had left the party. He arrived at her side, drunk, hours later, to wake her up.

"What's the big idea of leaving me all alone?"

Margaret wrapped the blankets over her head and said nothing.

"What's the matter, sweet baby?" Roy inquired.

"Nothingthmatter" issued from under the blankets.

"What?"

Margaret uncovered her mouth and said very distinctly, although it was a great effort for her to do so, "Nothing's the matter, dear heart, I took some nembies and now I'm asleep. Please come to bed and shut up."

Roy said, "Oh." He stood looking at the lump in the bed for a couple of minutes. He hadn't remembered yet who or where he was, what was happening. Then he turned off the light and left the bedroom. He found some gin in the kitchen, but somehow he couldn't begin to perform the operation of making himself a drink. For a long time he stood up, hanging onto the red formica counter in the kitchen, looking at the frosted glass bottle under

the bright white lights.

Margaret seldom visited the center of the city, but one day she did happen to walk through Union Square and there was Herbert Wackernagel, gawking at the lady on top of the monument to Admiral Dewey. Margaret said, "Well, Herbert, if she only knew it was you—"

Herbert looked at Margaret and grinned. The gold tooth sparkled. He said, "Hello, Maggy," and gave her a large warm gentle hug and kiss.

Margaret tried to explain to Roy why it was that she must now go away and spent the rest of her life with Herbert Wackernagel. Roy said that he could understand perfectly well why, but that he still felt that he had a prior claim to her attention and services, being that he was her husband.

Margaret said, "Oh, come on, Roy."

"Childhood sweethearts are just keen if they're children," Roy said. "Later on, there's dirty old Roy. I need you. I love you. I deserve to keep you." He continued in this vein for some time. He was eloquent and persuasive, but in the end, Margaret told him, "We're too much alike, we both want the same parts of the same world, we agree too much. I think you're a great poet. I love you even now, in a way. Your only real defect is that you are not Herbert Wackernagel."

Roy said, "I've got three gold teeth."

"Roy, I mean it. Even if you contested the divorce, it wouldn't do any good. I'll be living with Herbert from now on, that's all. Except for the six weeks I'll *have* to be living in Reno being a legal citizen of Nevada."

Roy hit her several times. He cried. He broke things. He would kill himself. He would re-enlist in the army. He would have Margaret committed: she had obviously lost her mind. He would castrate Herbert Wackernagel. Margaret mustn't go away.

Margaret told him that he was only making it harder for himself to face reality. Roy screamed inarticulately and fell to the floor where he squirmed and rolled and wept.

Roy got drunk for three weeks in North Beach and then Max Lammergeier blotted him up out of bar and took him for a hundred mile hiking trip in the Sierra.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "The Christians tell us that the reason why all of us do the things we do is called Original Sin."

■ ■ ■

After Beefy Johnson graduated from the university, he organized his own group. They worked hard, traveled around the country playing in small clubs in big cities. In a few years, they started getting good notices in the newspapers and magazines. Beefy was a good musician; he wrote funny and interesting arrangements; his group worked together well. Other musicians who heard them told everyone that Beefy Johnson and his men were the best new sound going.

Beefy and the group cut a record for a San Francisco company and the record became a minor hit with the disc jockies. Then Beefy made an entire album, and got money enough to go to Europe.

He traveled alone. He visited Leipzig and the Thomaskirche. He attended the big festivals at Bayreuth and Salzburg. He toured in Italy and got high with Mark Sanderson in Venice. He married a young Italian movie actress who wanted to come to America.

Beefy enjoyed himself in Europe but he was homesick all the time. Other Americans told him, "I never knew what it was like to live without The Problem. You won't catch this baby running back there any too soon." Beefy laughed and said, "All you need at home is a good lawyer. I got one right in the family. It's nice here, but nothing's happening, there's no jazz. I've got to go back, I've got to be on the ground, I've got to hear what people are saying; otherwise, I can't work."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "Art—real art—is really outrageous, actually beyond the Pale: extravagant, exorbitant. Craftsmanship may come into it, but there's a point beyond merely doing a thing expertly, completely, or correctly. There's creation, which is the manifestation of a man's vision: his necessity to speak and explain himself—more than a response. There's a direct voluntary statement, which is a complete declaration of a man's feeling/knowledge/being. Form and craftsmanship (and the audience as well), the craft, the world—all are different, all are changed, after the occurrence of this creative action: changed from the dead things that they have been. There's another life."

■ ■ ■

Clifford received a letter of invitation from the First Interdisciplinary Forum for the Study of the Basic Humanities. This

organization wanted him to participate in seminars, to lecture on whatever subject he chose, and to take part in panel discussions. There were to be brush-up courses and banquets, outings and junkets and balls. All this was to take place during the month of August in Monterey, California, U.S.A. The Forum proposed to pay Clifford's plane fare and all the expenses for a month plus what they apologetically called "a modest honorarium": the sum of $1500.

Clifford showed the letter to Laura. "You'll go, of course," she said. "I wish that such an organization existed in France and that they'd invite me to Deauville for the summer or some such fashionable watering-place. *Merveille*!"

"Why don't you come with me?" Clifford asked her, trying to keep his voice from trembling.

"If I had that kind of money, to fly about in airplanes, I should keep it in the bank and not go flitting off to California. When I get back to Paris, I'll buy clothes, if I have any money left. All my things are completely out of fashion. I have only a little time left on my present visa. I shall be required to leave Nepal very soon, and I must continue collecting specimens and preparing to have them all shipped back to France . . . no, not America today, thank you." She laughed, then.

"You know what I mean," Clifford said. "I want you to marry me."

"Oh. Oh, Clifford, what shall I say? I like you so much, I respect you, you have a maturity, a splendid mind—but marriage: that is a very serious notion. And your former wife . . . " Laura stopped. She seemed for once to be inarticulate.

"Are you really that good a Catholic?" Clifford gently inquired. "I thought the Church was a little more liberal, these days . . . "

"You supposed that I was more 'modern'? More 'scientific'? Oh, yes, I am a scientist, a rationalist, if you like; but after all, one feels certain things, one has been brought up in a certain way. I must make an effort to believe. This is very difficult to talk about in English . . . excuse me."

Clifford was quite shaken by her response. He had difficulty speaking, himself. He could only look at her.

"I'm very sorry, Cliff. I am very fond of you. I love to be with you. I will always remember your loving and that I love you also . . . "

Clifford suddenly kissed her on the cheek and ran away. It was impossible to talk with her about it any more.

■ ■ ■

Roy took Dorothy to lunch in a small Dalmatian restaurant on Sutter Street. They ate petrale fried in butter and drank Guinness's stout.

Dorothy said, "I like this place. I've only been here with you; I never can find it if I look for it, and then it reappears when we go out to lunch together."

"Well, well," Roy said. "You'll soon be in Ceylon, eating barbecued alligator and roasted monkey stuffed with mangoes."

Dorothy looked vaguely sad. "I suppose so," she said. "I don't want to go to India, but Dr. Bitteschoen says I've got to in order to help him with his collection of Singhalese-Dravidian-Tamil phonemics. I told Clifford I'd come and we'd get married. I don't want to marry Clifford. Uk. I have to study and make a mess of more languages and read Pali inscriptions for Dr. Bitteschoen. Who did you make it with while you were in New York? I bet that Gigi Fiske had her hand down the front of your pants the minute you got to town."

"I told you in a letter that I saw her at a big party, but she brought her own man, some kind of giant Yaley—more precisely, he came to the party sort of wearing Gigi Fiske like some kind of weird costume. She stuck to him all the time, only her head would poke out now and then to make some cheery conversation."

"Did you see Margaret Gridley?"

"I still haven't met the celebrated Margaret Gridley," Roy said. "People told me that she was in the hospital with hepatitis. Everybody in New York was getting it, shooting meth with dirty needles."

Dorothy said, "Someone was telling me the other day—who was it?—that Margaret had written a letter from Switzerland. She was at Dr. Jung's place in Zurich. She was totally unhinged when Beefy Johnson got killed."

Roy said, "Everybody in New York had a different story about all that. One said Beefy was shot by a rejected faggot boyfriend, another said the Black Muslims got him for betraying the movement to the CIA—somebody else said that the Mafia did it because he pulled some kind of dope swindle on them—his grand piano, stuffed with heroin, was flown direct from Ankara to New York and Beefy was going to get half the proceeds, but he tried to get it all. Somebody said his ex-wife, that movie actress, was in on it."

Dorothy said "Mmmm" into her glass of stout. Then she suddenly drank all that remained in the glass. "What would you do if you got a girl pregnant?" she asked.

Roy sighed. "Leave town, I suppose," he said. "Oh, I don't know—I like babies. I'd probably marry the girl. Why?"

"Oh, I just wondered. Margaret never was," Dorothy said.

Dorothy and Roy went to the San Francisco Museum and looked at the very latest new paintings from New York and at a show of Matisse's cutouts until they were tired.

Dorothy said, "I'm getting dizzy. Let's go to your place and have something good to drink."

They went to Roy's place and had a couple of drinks and played a few records and went to bed.

■ ■ ■

Clifford dreamed that he was lying in a big square bed on the floor of a big room with a very high ceiling. Margaret Gridley was beside him, talking, but Clifford was lying on his side or anyway had his head turned away from her. It was very light in the room and he felt wonderfully comfortable. The blanket over them was bright red and there were pink reflections from the red blanket on the bright yellow and white walls of the room.

Margaret said, "She wants to know why you keep seeing her, after all." (Margaret was talking about Dorothy.)

Clifford looked up at the ceiling where there was a painting: it was actually a number of different messages painted in large letters and different handwritings, each message was written by a different person. The words of the messages were mostly illegible, but the signatures were quite clear, they were the names of Clifford's friends who were painters. All the letters and scrawls and signatures together on the ceiling made a beautiful painting.

Clifford said, "Because I love her, of course."

"She wants to know why you keep coming to see me," Margaret said.

The light and space in the room, the high ceiling with its painting, the bright walls and the sense of there being other spacious rooms beyond the one where they were lying—all these things contributed to Clifford's feeling of ease and security. Above all, the calm, solid presence of Margaret Gridley herself was soothing and pleasurable.

"Because you're a woman, of course," Clifford answered. Then he turned his head and saw that Margaret was lying on her stomach and writing on a big legal-size sheet of paper whereon the questions she'd been asking him were beautifully handwritten in vermillion ink. She was busy recording Clifford's answers in

black ink. The page of writing looked very beautiful, no matter what the words said or meant or implied, no matter how damaging his answers might be when they were read by Dorothy.

Clifford understood that this paper was a letter that Margaret was writing to Dorothy. He suddenly felt a shudder of guilty fear and shame, the previous feeling of security went away; he was happily married to Dorothy, whom he loved, and he was two-timing her with Margaret and soon Dorothy and everybody else would know it. He felt scared. In the next couple of seconds, the feeling of security was restored: he had decided to ignore the shame fear guilt scare. If Dorothy read Margaret's letter and knew that Clifford was in bed with Margaret, Dorothy might be temporarily upset but she'd get over it and they'd all be friends and somehow Clifford would be able to sleep with both of them without there being any trouble.

Margaret's hair looked golden brilliant light, her flesh was a luminous chalky white and the red blanket humped up over her shoulders cast ruby highlights on her white skin. It worried Clifford to watch her writing down his words; she seemed to be feeling quite impersonal about it. At the same time, he understood that he and Margaret had a very clear and solid kind of realization of each other and of their relationship. They had been lovers for a long time and they were right now very quietly happy to be together and they would be staying for some time in that very comfortable bed with the red blanket in the big light room. And so the dream gently faded away and Clifford awoke.

Later he walked out of town and climbed a little mountain from which he could see the Himalayas. He didn't want to leave Nepal, but he wanted to talk with all his friends who would be in Monterey, and there would be people there whom he had not yet met in person, but whose books he had read or whose friends he had already met. What were they like. What did they think about Mozart and Halford Mackinder?

Clifford was upset, still, about Laura's refusal to go with him. Few women had ever declined an invitation from him. He wondered if he was getting old and smelly. He had a couple of bad teeth which tasted funny.

The sky was a flat precise blue overhead. There was a low-lying cloudbank, indicating the location of the Gangetic Plain, to the south. The weather was beginning to work its way northwards out of India. The sky reminded him of the sky over Arizona and New Mexico.

He walked swiftly down the mountain. The light was beginning to pass. Rhododendrons blossomed high overhead among pines

and deodars. A great deal of the time it seemed to him as if he might be walking in the high country somewhere north of Yosemite. Then he began meeting Nepalese lumberjacks and solitary Tibetans on the trail and he knew that he wasn't exactly in California.

■ ■ ■

Flora McGreevey telephoned Dorothy.

"Have you given any thought to my question about that piano?" Flora inquired. "I've promised it to the Middle Fillmore Neighborhood Improvement Association Center. I don't need it myself, I don't have time for it, but it's mine to give away if I want to, and I think it will do a world of good for those youngsters at the Center."

Dorothy obediently replied, "All right, Mama, I'll call Mark. But we really ought to think of a way of getting another one for Mark—he has to have one, and you know they don't have money enough for big things like pianos, with all the children and everything."

"I should think that by this time he could afford to have one of his own," Flora said. "Or at least be able to rent one. If he can afford to go flying all over Europe when I can't manage to get to Nassau for a couple of weeks, he can certainly afford his own piano. Really poor artists don't race around the world like that; they stay home and starve and work to make their art things. And anyway, I thought that he was *Clifford's* friend."

"Now, Mother, the school paid for his trip. He and Beth haven't a dime between them."

"Oh, Dorothy, I'm tired of hard-luck stories. I hear them all day, every day, and I tell a good number of them myself. Mark Sanderson gets a good salary from that university. He can afford to rent a piano or use the ones in the music department. I've been over there—I know they've got them. You can rent a little upright piano for nothing. The Goodwill Store and the Salvation Army practically give them away for the asking, they've got so many pianos."

Dorothy was annoyed with her mother's exaggerations. "Mother, why do you say those things when you know they aren't real? A piano costs hundreds of dollars wherever you buy it."

"Well, comparatively speaking," Flora said, as carelessly as ever. "Why don't you come downtown and have lunch with me? We can go to the Palace Hotel and try out my new credit card thing that gets you into all the nice restaurants without a reservation or waiting or anything, you just show it to them and the

bank pays for it all, later."

Dorothy didn't feel like disillusioning her mother about her new magic. She simply said, "I'd love to, Mama, but I have to work all day on my article. And I'll call Mark for you. But if you see anybody rich today, who wants to get rid of a piano, tell them they must give it to a struggling young composer you know all about and how he deserves all kinds of help and encouragement."

"Just please get my piano back for me," Flora said. "I'll come to see you tomorrow for cocktails at five and you can tell me what progress you've made."

"But Mother—" Dorothy wailed. She tried to invent some fib to tell which would prevent her mother from descending upon her at a critical point in the day, but in this emergency, Dorothy's usually swift imagination failed her.

Flora sensed the collapse and her natural magnanimity took over. "A little after five," she said. "I'll bring you some of that good Plymouth gin. They've got it on sale right now at Goldberg Bowen's—you and Tom ought to have a case of it—it's practically a steal at only $59.95."

■ ■ ■

Roy felt himself beginning to run batty. While he'd been doing all the things that he demanded of himself every morning—getting up before ten, taking a bath, shaving, washing his teeth, combing his hair, getting dressed in reasonably clean clothes, making the bed and creating a small but hot breakfast—he kept remembering a line of poetry. He thought he knew whose poem it was, but where had he most recently seen it quoted? The line appeared in the midst of some prose book that he'd been reading.

When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander.

Roy left his hot breakfast before he'd eaten half of it, in order to begin looking for the source of that quote. He was sure that it was from some play-within-a-play in an Elizabethan comedy. Roy scouted about within a copy of Ben Jonson's plays, imagining that he'd find the line in the puppet-play section of *Bartholomew Fair*. He looked next into Beaumont & Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle,* since there was an imitation of the *Spanish Tragedy* there. He found the line on his next try, right where it has always been (with, nevertheless, thanks to Thomas Kyd) in the Fifth Act of *Love's Labour's Lost.*

Roy finished his breakfast, washed the dishes, took the garbage out, and burnt all the wastepaper. Where in God's name had he seen that Shakespearian tag used? He looked through *The Paris Review Interviews,* both volumes. He tried to reason with himself: "How much difference does it make where I saw it?" He decided that it wasn't important; nevertheless he would be unhappy and bothered until he knew. Then he recalled, for a split second, the look of that page of prose with a line of poetry in a wide space, down towards the bottom of a page of fairly large type—Caslon or Schoolbook face. He looked all through *The Road to Xanadu,* which he had been re-reading. He searched a book of essays by Ezra Pound, in which he had been loking up something else, a few days before. He realized that his memory, his brain, might actually have collapsed his time sense, and that he was perhaps remembering something that he'd seen months ago instead of only a day or so before. Contrariwise, the mental image of the page he was hunting for was so clear and fresh and certain, that it could only be a recent impression. He could remember that he'd been very busy reading when someone had interrupted him, just as he was on the point of trying to remember to look up something else . . . what had he been reading on that occasion?

Roy wanted to go outside. He had to get a haircut. He was going to be teaching that evening, and there were letters he had to answer before he had to go to work. He was getting more irritable and annoyed with himself. Why couldn't he remember? Why was he so hung up with the necessity for remembering? Why must he keep searching for this one out of the several millions of pages that he must have read in his life—reading that had done him not the slightest bit of good anyhow, except to unfit him for any kind of real human life. ("That's an operatic lie," Roy told himself, interrupting his previous train of thought.)

He brooded over an old *Life* magazine at the barber's shop. He was very cranky with the barber. In the street, he screamed curses at a Volkswagen that had nearly run over him as he was trying to cross the street against the light. Then he hurried home. He had remembered another book that he'd been looking at yesterday; he'd go search that.

He went to the school and lectured to his class about Coleridge and dope and the life of Hartley Coleridge and English Unitarianism and the Evangelical Movement in England and John Livingston Lowes in the United States. After he got home, he found himself opening one book after another, obsessively hunting and searching. He cursed himself. It was time to go to

sleep. What book was it?

Just after he got into bed he remembered that he'd recently been reading one of the volumes of Leonard Woolf's memoirs, a book he'd borrowed from the library earlier that week, read, and returned almost immediately. He'd only spent a few hours with it; he'd go to the library tomorrow and look at it again.

In the morning, Roy wrote a letter, looked through half a dozen books which he'd already gone through twice before (including the Lowes book), then he hurried off to the library. He found the Leonard Woolf book which he wanted and examined it carefully, even though he was in a hurry—he was supposed to meet Clifford for lunch. The quote wasn't there.

That evening, Roy came home and put the teakettle on the stove to boil. He was wondering what book had that page he'd been looking for. He squatted before the bookcase and pulled out *The Allegory of Love.* The book fell open at the beginning of the chapter which carries Shakespeare's line for an epigraph:

When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander.

Roy felt such a sense of relief and ease that he nearly collapsed into a witless heap of joy on the carpet, never to rise again. Then he got up in a hurry to turn off the gas in the kitchen; the teakettle had ejaculated its water all over the stove and the floor and the bottom of the pot was nearly burnt away.

▪ ▪ ▪

Clifford began to pack for his journey to Monterey. He had already lugged a number of small boxes of books and musical scores to the post office, where he had mailed them to Mark Sanderson in Berkeley. Mark stored all of Clifford's heavier gear in the attic of the garage behind his house. The garage had once been a carriage house and stable; it had a high dry loft where hay and feed used to be stored.

Long before he began the task of getting ready to leave, Clifford consulted a large map in order to determine the exact physical location of Monterey. He had gone to the town many times in the past, but it had been some length of time since his last visit. It now seemed like a distant magic land that he had never really seen. He had a set of US Geodetic Survey maps of California. He got out the 15-minute series chart for Monterey and spread it out on his table and spent an hour reading it carefully.

(Dorothy used to say that Clifford wouldn't go to the corner

store for a pack of cigarets without first consulting a street map of the city in order to determine the positions of the house and the store with some accuracy.)

Clifford always checked the map in order to find out whether he might walk to the place that he wanted to go. If he were a prehistoric man or an Indian, he asked himself, what path would I follow? From Katmandu, for example, he could walk out through Siberia and cross the Aleutian Chain to North America. Or by island-hopping, with the help of a small coracle made of skins and wood, he might make it across the North Atlantic.

He thought fondly of Monterey. He could remember fairly well the big park where the Army Language School is, the big Spanish plaster hotels from 1927 movie star days, the long dusty rooms in the white adobe house where Robert Louis Stevenson used to live, and the old Territorial capitol building. The air was soft there and the bougainvillaea bloomed and the sidewalks were warm and dusty under the pines and cypresses. Then there was the big open space along the shores of the Bay, and the messy part of it which Steinbeck wrote about, and then there was Pacific Grove, with its big houses that looked out across the blue water. Further south began the 19 Mile Drive, where giant pink Moorish villas lurked among the pines, and tourists in automobiles had to pay a dollar for the privilege of driving (no stopping) down the road and seeing the distant roofs and garden walls belonging to the happy few. The tourists, having spent their dollars, wouldn't have money enough left to stay in a Carmel hotel overnight; they must camp out in the redwoods of the state park several miles down the road towards Big Sur.

There was a little train which ran from San Francisco to Monterey called the Del Monte Special. Clifford rode on it once, to find out how it felt not to be hitchhiking, and also to figure out exactly what route the railway followed—was any part of the line an Indian route? He was shocked by the price of the ticket.

Once Clifford had gone with Roy to find Robinson Jeffers, but they got too drunk in a tavern between Monterey and Carmel to find anybody or anything. Roy said he needed a little juice in order to keep up his nerve. He was a great admirer of Jeffers' poetry and plays, and he wanted to visit the man and tell him so, but Roy was shy—he had the idea that Jeffers was a fierce and refractory creature who might turn them away from his door. Roy had a letter of introduction from a friend of Jeffers, everything was quite correct; the writer of the letter had assured Roy that Jeffers was a very kind, shy, and retiring man, gentle and

wise. Nevertheless, Roy couldn't really get going, and Clifford berated him for his cowardliness and silliness in having come all this way to see somebody that he very much wanted to see and then finding that he was too embarrassed to do anything besides hide in a bar and get loaded. But no matter how much Clifford tried to encourage him or shame him or kid him, Roy wouldn't leave the bar, and soon he was clearly too drunk to be taken to meet shy poets whom he had not previously been introduced to. It seemed unlikely that Mr. Jeffers would appreciate a visit from a potted stranger.

Clifford checked out A. L. Kroeber's *Handbook* to make certain exactly which Indians had lived at Monterey and what language they spoke. He already had a reasonably clear recollection of the shape of the Bay and how the hills and the Coast Range lay behind the town, and how the great valley lay, in turn, behind the eastern mountains.

Because he was supposed to arrive there fairly soon, Clifford decided to fly to California. He thought he'd fly directly to San Francisco and then hitchhike to Monterey. After the expensive horrors of the airplane journey, it would be a relief for him to walk and stand on the shoulder of a highway in California. At this time of the year, the weather would be warm and quiet, and the air would feel soft and sexy, but fresh from the sea.

He packed his rucksack very carefully. It must carry all that he would truly need, except for the little Swedish portable typewriter. He had carefully planned what clothing he would wear: the suit he had on was of a wash and drip-dry plastic material, as were his shirts, underwear, and socks. One pair of each item of clothing went into the rucksack. He packed a pair of blue jeans and a wool shirt that he'd wear while walking in the mountains or at the beach on chilly evenings. (He'd pick up a pair of hiking boots at Mark's house.) Here was a sewing kit in case a button should fall off or the blue jeans should tear. Here was a first aid kit in case he hurt himself—a reasonable possibility. The first aid kit also contained a package of prophylactic appliances in case he should be required to treat a female patient. There was a tin cup of the kind made famous by John Muir. In the pocket of the top flap which closed the rucksack were a set of Geodetic Survey maps of the Sierra Nevada, a protractor made of thin plastic, a spare compass, a thin notebook with a small pencil attached to it by a thin cord, in case the notebook that he usually carried in the wool shirt pocket were to run out of paper or get lost. Into the rucksack went a lightweight waterproof poncho to keep out the rain and a very expensive lightweight

down sleeping bag all squeezed and condensed into a little nylon sack the size of a peanut butter jar. There was a set of spare bootlaces and a hundred feet of parachute cord. There was a big hunting knife, useful for cutting salami and cheese and fruit and string. There was a tiny can opener and a harmonica and there was a plastic waterproof envelope containing a supply of toilet paper.

Clifford used to tell Dorothy, "I don't know how anybody can go anyplace without a rucksack." Dorothy, however, believed in steamer trunks, leather-over-aluminum alloy "airplane luggage," and hand-woven Peruvian baskets. She had an entirely different set of notions about why and how a person should travel. Her ideas were many and vague, Clifford said; just as his own (superior) ideas on the same subject were few and exact and soundly based upon historical principles.

"I am right," Clifford told Dorothy. "You'll find that out one of these days I'm right. You can't travel anyplace, the way you try to go about it. You get nervous and in a hurry and lose things, or lose track of them. You've got to sit down and think of a simpler way of doing it. You must not try to take so many things with you. Make lists."

Dorothy said, "Women are different. They need more and different kinds of things than men do. You'll never understand that, naturally. However many girls you know or have known, you'll never learn, will you?"

■ ■ ■

Tom went into his darkroom and smoked rather more hashish than he had intended—at any rate, he found that he was soon quite incapacitated. He had planned to do some enlarging and printing, and he always had supposed that he could see everything more sharply and exactly if he had pre-arranged a few of his brain cells. But on that particular day, his resistance was low or his volition was uncertain or the hashish was of a higher grade than usual—whatever the reason, he found himself translated into a swift succession of peculiar universes. His body was disconnected, as if he had been pithed like a frog in a biology class. In the red glow of the darkroom lamp Tom tripped out to the inside of his liver, kidneys, the backs of his eyes, then out into the brilliant dusty sunlight of Algiers and squalling music flabby drums and camel fur and suddenly back with a nerve shock tingle of his body which he realized again was quite numb then out to nighttime Maya temple colored feathers jade and marching jaguars in flat hook-nosed procession of warriors and

priests with feather bead ankles and feather jade spears blowing conch horns and ringing golden bells

(TELEPHONE??/PARANOIA DOORBELL?
where's Dorothy? Flying horse ladies above a ring of fire where she lies gold asleep.)

Tom suddenly left the darkroom and came into the living room, a totally new and glorified locale. There was the carpet butter wool, there was a Tibetan *tanka*, there was a faceted Chinese pewter flask set with gem stones, there was a tank world full of exotic raving monster fishes, there was a shimmering Siamese buddha corruscating and curly gold, there was the window and flashes of different color slices between Venetian blind slat mirrors. The telephone bell transformed both his ears into polychrome cauliflowers with flashing colored lights inside them changing and blinking. There was a heavily grained photograph of Dorothy standing before a gate of carved stone, somewhere in India; she was holding her hands loosely clasped in front of her breast, as in the Man Ray photograph of Gertrude Stein. Dorothy looked straight out over the head of the cameraman. The telephone rang. If he answered it what would he hear. And how could he answer it if he couldn't talk. As he watched it, the telephone turned into a kind of South American animal that is seldom seen in North American or European zoos. Tom couldn't move to pick it up—he didn't really want to touch . . . that . . . in any event. The Tibetan *tanka* (or big reproduction of Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights*?) flashed on and off in different colors when he looked at it. All the figures on it were sounding as well as wriggling and blinking—some kind of extremely fast Archie Shepp music. He watched and listened to all that for several weeks. Then he lay down in the middle of the yellow fur living room rug and watched the big-screen movies on the ceiling, a seven-second feature: *The Life of Semiramis Queen of Assyria, Shewing also the Creation of the Celebrated Hanging Gardens of Babylon.* There were many painted elephants and beautiful slave maidens who wore nothing but extravagant jewelry, flowers, and colored plumes. Semiramis was Margaret Gridley in a kinky black wig diadem all hung with golden flowers and leaves of gold and plaques of lapis lazuli as discovered by Sir Leonard Wooley in the Royal Tombs of Ur. There were a lot of horns blowing and trumpets shouting, antique cymbals, fast work on the side-drums and tambours, lots of chimes and bells and tambourines while a great chorus of human voices, several thousands of people all sang.

O—Ahhhhhhh!
A—Ohhhhhhh!
O—Ahhhhhhh!

while the camera panned about through scenes of revelry by night orgy and prancing. Dwarf slaves with huge golden trays of roast sucking pig passed among the throng; others bore trays of swans and peacocks and pheasants all served up in their own gorgeous feathers. Golden vessels of wine were carried about by beautiful Nubian ladies. Wine slopped over jeweled hands, naked bellies, gold, fruit, veils, brocades, and velvets, asses, tits, bellies, hands, shoulders, eyes, fantastic head dresses, mouths, big eyes above transparent jewel veils, arms and legs glistening with sweat oil, mouth eyes—Tom could feel them all under his hands and belly and shoulders, he swam joyfully out among them, his penis visiting here a pretty momentary cunt, there a pretty mouth, a pretty ass, his mouth working over tit and tongue and clitoris and navel and cunt, tireless and insatiate, one sensation succeeding another, each one more beautiful and poignant than the last, a liberation of each impulse, every dream, a silent lake where he floated among lilies and lotuses, alone in silence of summer night, then Dorothy was floating with him, quiet and understanding, everything resolved, all peace.

Angela Lansbury stood looking down at him. "Why are you lying on the floor, Tom? Are you drunk or does your back hurt today?" For when Tom had smashed up his car on the Waldo Grade, something bad had happened to his back; it had never been the same since that time. Sometimes it hurt, and he could make it feel better if he lay flat on the floor, and, with his toes hooked under some very solid, unmoving piece of furniture (as for example, the combination radio-TV-phonograph cabinet) stretched his heels "downwards."

■ ■ ■

Clifford stood outside Halfmoon Bay for a long time before a car pulled up ahead of him and stopped and a young State Motor Patrolman stepped out of it. He was very large and he looked like a movie star. He towered over Clifford and the rucksack.

"No you don't," the patrolman said. "Just a minute. OK." The officer had taken his gun out of its holster, but he aimed it at the ground. "OK. Now go ahead and open that rucksack. I know what you got in there. You beatniks think you can break the laws and laugh at officers and dodge the Draft. You bring all that nar-

cotics stuff over the Border in your socks. Come on. Dump it out."

"I've got letters here to show where I'm going," Clifford said. "I just got back from Nepal, and I've been visiting friends in San Francisco."

"I know where you've been. You got on that plane down in Mexico, didn't you. You should have stayed on it until you got to Frisco. You shouldn't have come out here on the highway with your little bundle of hay."

Another car pulled up and stopped behind the first one. A larger, fatter, older cop got out of it. He brought his riot gun with him.

"What you got, Charley?" the old cop asked. He gave Clifford a look out of one colorless, bloodshot eye that tried and condemned and executed the suspect all in a single glance.

"We got the messenger from Cloud Land here, Willie," the young one announced.

"OK," Willie said. "I got him covered."

They hauled Clifford to the county jail in San Mateo, where they searched his rucksack by ripping up all its seams and inspecting the various pieces of cloth and leather one by one. The metal frame was sliced open to see what was inside it.

Clifford had to take off all his clothes and be x-rayed, let a "doctor" peer into his ears and nose and mouth with a flashlight and run a long greasy finger into his anus, searching for a fingercot, a vial, a cap.

Afterwards, the policemen were all very polite and apologetic. They told him that there really was a law against hitchhiking in California, and against walking or standing on state highways, because hitchhiking is very dangerous. You never know what kind of people are going to pick you up, they might be all kinds of criminal types and sex fiends and like that. These laws are made for the protection of the public. Thousands of motorists every day are attacked and robbed and raped and murdered and have their cars stolen by monster hitchhikers. And if he really was going to Monterey he ought to have been standing on the other side of the road. (Clifford had been away for so long, that he had forgotten temporarily that traffic moves on the right in America.)

The policeman told him that he should always take a plane or a bus or a train wherever he was going, if he didn't feel like driving. All these forms of public transportation were, they assured him, fast and convenient and the fares are remarkably economical.

Clifford had to leave all his belongings at the police station

while he went out and bought himself a cheap canvas handbag from the J.C. Penney store and a Greyhound ticket to Monterey. He felt really bad about the rucksack; it was a good European one that he'd carried for years.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy got out of bed. When she stood up, all the nasty yellow green black marble internal organs groped and crawled slowly over each other and her brain slanted, a heavy mercury pool. She sat down again right away and poured herself a glass of water from the thermos jug which stood on the bedside table. Lots of light blared into the room because the blinds had not been closed the night before. She drank a sip of cold water and felt it spread thin and heavy across the slow moving lumps of marble inside. There was only one or a dozen things to do. She must take a shower at once. With luck, she wouldn't fall and break a leg.

At distressingly frequent intervals she found herself recalling with great vividness and clarity one or another of her speeches of the night before, to whom it was addressed, and who were the people that were standing nearby, listening, and what was their relationship to the person addressed, to each other, and to Dorothy herself. Furthermore she could imagine exactly how each of them must have taken her disordered and outrageous remarks. Dorothy felt that it would be impossible for her ever to meet any of those people again, anywhere or any time; it would be overwhelmingly embarrassing to her. She had covered herself with obloquy. She had been worse than an idiot. She blushed in the shower as she again heard herself saying—never mind what!—to someone to whom she had only recently been introduced—a person she found it impossible to like, he was too conventionally handsome. Her most outrageous oration had been addressed directly to him. All too directly.

Why did she let herself drink so much. Why had she eaten a whole 15mg spansule of Deximil. She nearly fell down in the shower because her brain lurched heavily in an unexpected north-easterly direction.

Instead of telephoning to Dr. Bitteschoen, as she had planned to do, she had stopped into a bar to have a drink with Max Lammergeier, even though they were planning to go to the same party that evening. She had managed to meet Tom within twenty minutes of the time that they had planned to eat dinner, to quarrel fitfully for a little while, drive home and change clothes all in good time to arrive fashionably late at the large and elegant party.

Dorothy told Tom, "We can't stay more than an hour. I have to get back home and read a little while before I go to bed *early*. Anyway, it isn't a bit stylish to stay all night at one of these parties; everyone ends up dancing without their shoes at the Fairmount and then running barefoot across the Bridge to have breakfast on some yacht in Tiburon."

Tom agreed. He had a headache and was feeling cranky. "Just don't give me no bad time when I come around and tell you that it's time to go home."

The party turned out to be wonderfully diverting, in Dorothy's opinion. Waiters plied the guests with strong drink and delicious hand-made Swedish kickshaws and tidbits. When Tom told her that it was eleven o'clock, Dorothy looked at him with her eyes all out of focus, a mad grin on her face.

"It really is, isn't it, Tom. It's eleven o'clock. Well, I'll just finish this drink and then we'll go. This isn't such a high-class party, after all. The waiters aren't wearing gloves. That one with the marvelous hair is going to go through all the rest of his life with a gooey canapé stuck to his left thumb."

Tom said, "Sure, Baby." He was feeling much better, and he was inclined to be indulgent towards Dorothy; she looked happy, and he could tell from the melodic lilt of her voice that she was having a good time and would not leave just then; she'd probably stay until the last possible moment. He asked her, "Do you have money enough for a cab?"

Dorothy said, "Don't be silly."

"All right," Tom said. "Don't say I never asked you." But by then, Dorothy was involved in a conversation with several other people, although she was clinging tightly to Tom's arm. When she let go of him to make some magniloquent gesture, he went away and got his coat and went home.

By midnight, Dorothy was introducing Dr. Bitteschoen to everyone.

"This is my father, Dr. Bitteschoen, who is also my first or third husband. He taught me everything I can't remember. He singlehandedly invented Singhalese-Dravidian-Tamil phonemics. He's really awfully bright."

Dr. Bitteschoen was happily drunk and having a splendid time. He was glad to see Dorothy having a good time, and he was accustomed to her American extravagances of speech. He was feeling so good that he hadn't been speaking English for many hours. Dorothy chatted and joked with him in elegant literary polite Berlinese. There were several other guests who were near his own age, Europeans with whom he had a fine time talking

about the old days before the war. One of them had been in the Masaryk cabinet.

Dr. Bitteschoen escorted Dorothy to her front door in a taxi. When she saw a clock she panicked. It read 3:45 A.M. Dorothy somehow blundered her way into the house and into bed without breaking her neck or any of the frangible pottery in the hallway. She thought, "I've really *got* to find another place for those Peruvian things. If somebody else doesn't break them, I'm going to. I wonder what it is I've got against dogs?"

■ ■ ■

Roy was broke again. The part-time job had folded for the summer. Nobody had bought any poems from him for a long time. His belongings were stored away in the attics and cellars of his friends' houses. He was temporarily sleeping on the couch in the living room of a friend who had a big house and a big family, but Roy kept worrying about where he was going to stay next, because he couldn't expect his friend to house him much longer; Roy had already been there a couple of months.

Most days, around noon, he went out and asked a different one of his friends to feed him. Sometimes he was invited to stick around for supper as well. Some days he felt too ashamed to go ask anyone for lunch or to stay in the house where he was sleeping when meal times came around; at the same time he worried about the people who were helping him—he was adding to their already large burdens of responsibility.

Roy felt that what he had to do was write down what he knew and what he kept "discovering." But he was feeling cold and angry and afraid all the time. He was disgusted with himself, and with his unwillingness to try doing anything more to help himself get food and a place to live. He had begun writing a long prose book and he wanted to go on writing it. He didn't want any other job; and he felt, right then, that he couldn't do anything else: he had a job of writing to do and it was taking all the time and energy he could find to do it. "Now I'm doing my job," he told himself. "This is the only work I really believe in, the only harmless and necessary work I've ever done."

His friends told him, "It's all right, Roy, quit stoning yourself. Come around when you're hungry; we've always got some food, anyway—we may not have much else to help you, but we can give you something to eat." But Roy was alternately writing and raging at himself and wishing for independence from his own mad ambition and from his friends, and this made him feel bad

because he loved his friends and they were helping him and he felt guilty about wanting away from them. He wanted a private life. He hated to be bothered and he hated bothering other people. He hated most of all to be continuously worrying about food and shelter and booze. He didn't get more than twenty or thirty pages of his long prose book written.

Roy had a tab at a little bar in North Beach. He had always eventually paid it off from time to time in the past, and the bartender was a friend. Roy brought in a certain amount of business with him, he had lots of friends and acquaintances and admirers who came every night to the bar to see Roy and talk with him.

People who were interested in poetry but who lived in other cities, thought about how great it would be to visit San Francisco and go to that bar to see Roy and all the poets and hear what they all said and watch them do all the funny things that people said that the happy artists do. Quite a number of people from out of town actually made the pilgrimage: hairy, goggle-eyed students from upstate junior colleges who traveled with guitars and girlfriends who had long blond hair and sleepy eyes. Most of these young persons were either manic and babbling from injections of methadrine or they were smiling and goo-goo eyed from blowing up too many catnip cigarets. There were shy, bespectacled crypto-faggot highschool teachers from Nevada, and there were sack-suited, crew-cut sharpies who had "temporarily" been working for the J. Walter Thompson Agency for the past eight years. There were lady verse-weavers and word-jewelers from the polite bedroom towns of the Peninsula. There were reporters from national magazines who had already grown large mustaches and small beards, who had almost finished paying for that extra color TV set and their second divorce and who actually had manuscripts to show Roy, and they drew maps to indicate the location of the little mining town in the northern Sierra where they were very soon going to hide themselves away from bill collectors and ex-wives and *Newsweek*. From there would shortly commence to pour streams of art & culture, because several of the guys had already bought or were building weekend places up there in the mountains. Wild poems, shocking plays, revolutionary symphonies and oil paintings and titanic sculpture and wiggy architecture would soon be issuing from the dark & secret heart of Stanislas County.

Roy denounced and discouraged and enraged and blessed these who came to him, just as the spirit moved him. He couldn't figure out why they should lay the mantle of Elijah upon him, but since they were foolish enough to do so, he'd give them the straight

replies that went with that costume. He told them that they were losers and phonies and self-deceivers. He told the highschool teachers that they could teach nothing unless they went to bed with their students, whether one at a time or in group orgies was a matter for opportunity and ingenuity to decide. He advised the magazine and advertising and TV people to go kill themselves, for they had so degraded and debased their souls that they could never be artists of any kind; their attempts at writing and the other arts were only going to cause them endless pain and suffering from which death would be the only release. He advised the young to rob and lie and cheat and steal until they had enough money to get away to Europe or South America in order to preserve their lives and sensibilities: America would kill and eat them if they weren't careful, if they didn't escape.

All these people who came to hear Roy bought a great number of drinks for themselves, for Roy, and for each other. (The more sensitive among them moved on to other bars or went home.) Some would become intoxicated and converted by Roy's exhortations and prophecies; they would hang around until closing time and then haul the raving poet to their home where he might give them personal instruction.

One month Roy decided to turn himself completely loose and see where he'd end up on any particular morning. He began a book of *aubades,* following the French form strictly at first, then breaking away into strange patterns of his own. He spent several days in a giant Spanish hacienda palace villa made of pink stucco and imported Moorish tiles; it was located near Pebble Beach and it had a marble swimming pool, but there were too many other bums hanging around the place; Roy felt there was too much of a distracting atmosphere.

One morning, just after waking up, Roy nearly fell headfirst into San Francisco Bay from the twenty-seventh floor of a Russian Hill apartment building. Another time, he awoke in a high, light room with yellow walls and a skylight. There were rare plants growing in pots and boxes; they produced strange and gorgeous flowers. Brilliantly colored tropical birds—some in cages, some chained to open perches, some flying at large among the plants and trees and vines—all whistled and sang and argued with the new day. Suspended from the ceiling, standing on pedestals or reclining on the floor were many works of contemporary sculpture. Disturbed by a draft or the wind from a gaudy wing, or by the proximity of a viewer, some of these sculptures moved, chimed, spun, whirred, blinked colored lights or waved colored glass reflecting jewels or muttered electronic stutters and groans and whines.

Roy never saw who lived in that place, and he couldn't remember how he got there. He looked around the room at all the wonders, then he discovered the way to the bathroom. Afterwards, he opened all the other doors in the place. One of them led into a bedroom. There was no one inside. The sun shone brilliantly through a window which was dressed in beautiful translucent curtains and brocade drapes. The large bed was neatly made up. On a chiffoniere there stood a picture in a silver frame; it was a photograph of an elderly couple; they were standing on the steps of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The man looked as if he might work there; he held a briefcase under one arm and was very well dressed. The woman was somebody's mother.

Roy went into the kitchen and found a note on the table; it was addressed to him. The swiftly written block-print letters read,

> Dearest Roy, Here is a dollar for ciggy-boos. I've got to drive Mama to La Jolla tomorrow, today I mean—early, anyhow. I'll see you when I get back tonight. Help yourself to whatever you want to eat or drink. Love, N.

Roy couldn't imagine who "N." was, or why she (he?) had left him a dollar. He helped himself to a quart of milk from the refrigerator. He drank it all from the carton because he didn't want to bother looking for a glass nor to bother washing it afterwards. The kitchen was beautifully new and clean; everything was carefully put away in drawers and cabinets.

Roy wrote a note on the back of N.'s note to him:

> Dear N., Thanks for the party. Thanks for the dollar. I'll see you later. Now I've got to go to work. Love, Roy.

Roy set the note on the table and put a jar of cardamom seeds on it so that it wouldn't blow away. He wondered whether the birds had been fed. He supposed that N. must have arranged with somebody to take care of them. N. seemed to be a thoughtful type. Then Roy wondered whether he himself might not have volunteered (while in his cups) to be the caretaker, the bird-watcher. He went back into the big room. The seed and water dishes were in reasonably good order and in case that the water supply should run low, there was more to be had from the big glass aquaria which stood about the room. If the birds get thirsty, let them drink out of the fish bowls, Roy thought. If they

get hungry they can eat flowers or the bugs and insects which doubtlessly afflict all these plants. Roy picked up his notebook and put on his dark glasses. He left the apartment and was surprised to find himself in the marble-lined corridor of an office building. He took an elevator down to the street level and walked out into the white foggy sunshine of the financial district.

■ ■ ■

Margaret Gridley telephoned to Dorothy from Eugene:

"Hi, Dotty, I'm coming to see you right away. I have to come down to the city and shop for some fashionable maternity garments."

"No!" Dorothy incredulously replied.

"It's all really true," Margaret drawled. "I'm coming on the electric fan company airplane. I'll meet you for lunch at Swann's Oyster Depot; I've got to eat nothing but protein from this moment forward."

"How's Herbert," Dorothy inquired.

"Fine. He shot this seven hundred pound bear in the wilderness behind our house. We've been living on it for weeks. I'll bring some for you and Tom."

Dorothy was laughing and choking and gasping. At last she was able to ask Margaret, "What did he really do?"

"I'm telling you," Margaret said. "Herbert brought back this animal. His mother fixed it all up for the deep-freeze. He gave lots of it to his relatives and to all his friends—about two hundred pounds of it.

"Margaret, you're making it all up!" Dorothy said.

"And we still have about three hundred pounds of it left and a lovely fur rug for Herbert's office or the spare bedroom . . . wouldn't you like to have a big bearskin rug?"

"No! I'm in a horrible rush, trying to fix my wonderful essay," Dorothy told her. "I have to get ready to go to the thing in Monterey and I don't have anything decent to wear and my hair is standing out all over my head and my shoes are all old and funny-looking . . . "

"Then we'll be able to go *everywhere*," Margaret exclaimed. "To all the stores. I'll help you. I'll stay three days. Is Tom all right?"

"He's fine. Dr. Bitteschoen got him appointed official photographer for the Conference."

"It's going to quite a family party," Margaret said.

"Even pukey old Roy's going," Dorothy continued, "I suppose

that Clifford Barlow made them ask him."

"Clifford Barlow? I thought he was in Iowa or someplace," Margaret said. "Are you going to talk to *him*? I wouldn't if I were you. He's bad for you."

"Clifford? Don't be ridiculous. He'll be too busy being the center of attention and the pompous expert. I'm not afraid of him—in fact, I have to see him and find out what he's been doing in Katmandu with that Sarah Gardner."

"Be sure to let me know," Margaret said. Her tone indicated a profound indifference. She disliked Sarah Gardner. "Have you read about my show?" Margaret asked.

"Oh, Margaret, where? I didn't know!" Dorothy replied.

"It's only the Whitney Museum in New York," Margaret told her. "I keep telling you that you *have* to read *The New Yorker* faithfully and entirely, every week. There were even a few sales . . . "

"Oh, Margaret!"

"I'll tell the world. It certainly helps right now. Young Wilberforce can have a decent debut."

"How do you know it's a boy?" Dorothy asked.

"Don't be silly," Margaret said. "I know what I'm doing. Herbert expects it."

"The big faggot," Dorothy cried.

"Isn't it so," Margaret said. "Well, I'll be there at noon tomorrow. Warn Tom and air out the guest room. I'll bring some gin. And the baby."

■ ■ ■

Roy got a postcard from somebody called Tom Prescott, who said he wanted to take Roy's picture. He proposed to meet Roy on a certain day in front of a North Beach bookstore. Roy appeared at the stated time. Tom Prescott was standing in front of the store; it was quite apparent that he was a photographer. He was wearing two cameras on leather straps around his neck. There was a battery pack on the ground beside him. There was a carrying bag for the flashlight over one of his shoulders and slung on the other shoulder was another case containing a collection of filters and lenses and a collapsible tripod and exposure meters and lens shades and an old Kodak folding camera which made postcard-sized photographs in case all the other equipment should fail to work.

The pockets of Tom's big Air Force jacket were full of more equipment—more light meters, lens dusters, cleaning tissues and fluids, a tape measure, pocket magnifying glasses, prisms, optical

mirrors, and a square piece of fine black cloth to use as a hood when he wanted to look into the view finder on the big Kodak.

Tom Prescott was wearing a pair of blue whipcord officer's pants, a blue plaid wool shirt and a pair of Pivetta walking boots. His yellow hair was cut close to his big round head and his big red ears hung out on either side of it. He had very thick blond eyebrows growing across a heavy supraorbital ridge. He had a big crooked nose (it has been wrecked in a football game) and a big square jaw. No matter how often he shaved and washed it, his face always looked rocky and a little grubby.

Standing in front of the bookstore, Tom didn't seem to be too interested in the scene; he appeared to be a big photographer with a round head just standing around waiting for sombeody. But he was holding a small camera with a very big lense and it was photographing all the people who came up or down the street; Tom was working the film winder and the shutter very fast and without looking at the camera and without (seemingly) focusing it. People who saw him were more interested in looking at all the paraphernalia that he had hanging from him and only a few of them were aware he was really taking pictures with the little camera he seemed to be adjusting or playing with.

When Roy came up to him, Tom said, "Let's go get some coffee. I have to reload my handgun and it's easier to talk if we sit down and have something for the nerves."

Roy thought that Tom was rather abrupt and commandeering, but he didn't want to argue. He was used to the curious arrogance of photographers and movie people. He watched and listened while Tom reloaded the little camera and told Roy all about the Cuban Revolution, which he had recently been photographing. Tom didn't drink much of his coffee; he kept talking to Roy and photographing the waiters and the man who was running the espresso machine and all the other customers and sometimes the people who were passing in front of the big plateglass window near which he and Roy sat. Sometimes he aimed a big portrait lens at Roy, but it seemed that Tom never worked the shutter of the camera that he happened to be looking through.

Roy thought that Tom was very cool and collected. Nobody seemed to realize that Tom was really photographing them; he moved very slowly and deliberately. He never spoke very loudly. While they sat inside the coffee shop, Tom shot up a whole roll of film with the little camera and reloaded it again. Occasionally he consulted a light meter with the same kind of gesture as an old-time railroad man uses when he looks at his watch. Quite often Tom would reach the end of a paragraph or anecdote and

stop talking. It didn't seem to embarrass him to sit silently for five minutes at a stretch.

Roy asked him about himself, where he was from, where he grew up and Tom answered at length, unhurriedly, with details, and with a pause at the end of each paragraph in case Roy should wish to make a comment or to change the subject. He told Roy about the Air Corps and about Darlene and their son, about football and traveling and his present project. Tom was traveling all around America in order to make photographs of writers and artists. He figured that he'd be able to sell some of the pictures to magazines or to submit the best ones in competitions —while the whole collection would make an interesting one-man show in a gallery.

Tom and Roy swapped stories about the people Tom had already photographed. They spent the rest of the day walking around the city together; Roy wanted Tom to see his favorite parks and buildings. At last Roy asked him, "Do you turn on? I'd like to get a little high and then go eat dinner."

Tom felt flattered. He hadn't been in town long enough to locate a connection, and he hadn't had any grass since he had left Los Angeles. He recognized it as a compliment from Roy that he'd asked him to turn on. Lots of times, Tom's professional manner offended people. He was often described as a square by some of the younger people that he'd met in his recent travels. They tended to imagine that a man with so many cameras must have sold his ass to Henry Luce or the Government in order to buy them. Tom had had to do a lot of scuffling to buy his equipment; he still owed money on a lot of it. Although a few of his photographs were beginning to be published, there hadn't as yet been any real rush from editors and publishers to buy his work.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says: "We sometimes learn—and it comes as a shock to us—that the gift we gave to somebdy else wasn't ours to give, nor was it in our power to bestow it. For some time we had been congratulating ourselves on our own generosity: now, we realize, there wasn't really any gift nor was anything received, and the whole affair has been a great delusion from the start. Perhaps we might try to credit ourselves with having had good intentions for once in our lives—but this is only a hasty fumbling among the gravel in search of consolation . . . that piece of water-worn glass which isn't a gem stone."

■ ■ ■

As he came up the walk and into the small Gothic chapel, Clifford could hear the organ. He was both intrigued and annoyed. The organ was supposed to be reserved for him to practice on at this hour; who was this ham-handed type, messing around with the *C Minor Passacaglia*?

He found a man called Roy Aherne seated at the console. Roy was an aged freshman, newly graduated from the army. He had come to Bull Run College in order to have time to read a few books, write a novel, and meet some beautiful rich young lady who would take care of him for the rest of his life. The G.I. Bill was making all this possible for him; otherwise, he was as penniless as Clifford, who was at Bull Run on a meagre scholarship. Clifford was having to pose for art classes on campus and at the museum school downtown. He also had a job as a hasher in the college commons in order to help pay for his board and room and other necessities.

Clifford was upset by Roy's total ignorance of keyboard technique.

"Look at the little numbers beside the notes. They tell you where to put your fingers: put them there. You read the music just fine, you understand the time" (Roy was playing again) "but *read*, right there, hey! Stop a minute! 5-1-4—5-1-4! you're trying to go 5-1-3 and right away you run out of fingers to do it—, see? Try again."

Roy laughed. He said, "I know, I know, I never learned right, and I'm too nearsighted to see the little numbers. I can just about see the notes from here. I have to do most of it by ear and fake the rest. My feet don't hit the right pedals, either. How do you learn how to do that?"

"You know where they are, if you think about it. Hit the black ones with your toe and the white ones with your heel; that way you can feel right where all the notes are if you practise a little bit. Try to play some easier Bach things to learn the pedal board. Memorize the score."

"Oh, I can see OK, it's just hard at that distance," Roy said.

Clifford kept trying to teach Roy from time to time, but Roy didn't make any progress. He didn't practice regularly; he said that he was too busy flunking all his courses and working on his book.

"I started too late," Roy told him. "I've got too many untrained reflexes. Just like trying to be a student in this beanery . . . If I was your age, maybe it would be different, maybe I'd be able to take it seriously."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy went to Reno to act as a witness in Margaret's divorce when it came on for trial in the Washoe County Courthouse. She had a hard time of it, trying to look like a respectable and responsible citizen. She had a hangover and all her nerves were frying in a bath of methadrine that she'd taken in order to get over her hangover fast. She was trying to be a good sport and help Margaret. She felt responsible for the marriage in the first place. But she hoped that Margaret would forget all the things that they'd been talking about the night before.

They couldn't sleep in Margaret's smelly motel room with its short twin beds and its *moderne* decor. They went to one of those low-ceilinged clubs which appear to have been carved out of solid red plush. The club had no external walls; a barrier of gas heat prevented whatever chill airs of evening from attacking the guests "inside" the place. Gambling machines clashed and tinkled. Voices of croupiers and dealers, powerfully amplified by expensive electronic equipment gently but authoritatively penetrated the din. Somewhere in the red empyrean, above all the other sounds and voices a velvet curtain of Muzak gently floated and billowed. The plush floor and walls and thickly upholstered furniture, coupled with the presence of a large crowd of people was supposed to keep the noise level bearable. Theoretically it did.

Dorothy and Margaret drank gin and talked most of the night. They hadn't seen each other for several weeks and a great deal had happened within that span of time.

Margaret asked Dorothy, quite un-apropos of anything, "How did it happen that you married Clifford instead of Roy?"

Dorothy answered, quite candidly, "Clifford asked me first. Then he went to Ceylon and then Dr. Bitteschoen wanted me to be there. Besides, Clifford Barlow was famous and good-looking and sort of marvelous—I had made up my mind to marry Clifford long before I met Roy. When I first knew Clifford I thought he was really something special."

"Were you preg that time you had appendicitis before you went to Ceylon?" Margaret asked.

"Of course. But it all went away by itself; I was sick in the hospital for only a little while and they took out my appendix, but the pregnancy took care of itself—I'm Rh negative or some delightful thing like that, I forget. Type B?"

"You really ought to have married Roy," Margaret said. "He's still cuckoo about you; I'm sure of it."

"Don't be insane," Dorothy said. "Roy's an old faggot."

"How did you get pregnant that time? Did you sit on the wrong toilet seat?"

Dorothy took a drink. She sighed and played with her glass. Then she told Margaret, "He didn't want to marry anybody, he wanted to run around writing poetry. Clifford was his oldest friend, he had to—oh, I don't know what all. Anyway, I had to marry Clifford like I said I would; it was a decision I had made and I had to believe in it."

"You never got pregnant by anybody else, did you," Margaret said.

There was a crash and a roar and a blare of music from one corner of the room. A four-bit machine was paying off: elderly ladies in capacious Capri pants were squealing and hopping arthritically up and down; strong men standing near the laboring machine slavered as a flood of silver coins gushed from the little door.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "I live entirely for my own pleasure; this may explain why I have lived to be so old. The wicked must live through many lives in many worlds before they become fortunate enough to hear about the possibility of escaping from the fixed rounds of existence.

"But am I really wicked? I've certainly been illogical. And I've lived to see the beautiful, the talented and the wise disappear from all these many worlds: all the persons that we need most are gone. The least intelligent, the least virtuous and the least attractive remain here in this puddle where I chirp and paddle."

■ ■ ■

Roy told Dorothy, "You know, it used to bother me a lot when people would ask me, 'What do you write about?' or 'What's your new book about?' "

"You take everybody so seriously," Dorothy said. "What do you care about what all these fools ask or say?"

"Yeah . . . but this really monumental answer came to me while I was in the shower this morning," Roy said. "Listen," and at this point his voice assumed a portentous, theatrical tone: " 'I write of man's forward, endless, hurtling flight from the inexorable, implacable, incomprehensible mystery—' " Roy paused in mid-career, holding a forefinger in the air. "You have to imagine 'mystery' as being capitalized," he explained, then continued: " 'Of God's infinite mercy and love and joy.' Isn't that great?" Roy inquired, dropping his Papal tone. "I love 'implacable.' "

Dorothy laughed. She was pleased to see him happy for once, but she told him, "You won't be able to remember all that. And anyway, you know what anybody's going to tell you if you hand them all that—they'll just look at you and say, "Huh?" or "How very nice. Won't you take a little more tea?"

■ ■ ■

Clifford and Roy sat together on the edge of a swimming pool in Monterey. They were enjoying the sunshine and the spectacle of many beautiful young persons disporting themselves in and about the pool.

Clifford said, "Anyway, I am right."

Roy said, "Oh yes. OK. What else?"

"You'll have to find out for yourself, some day, that's all," Clifford said, magisterially. "Now I'm going to swim the length of the pool underwater and then I have to go play music."

"I guess I'll stick around while it's still warm," Roy said. "The fog will be coming in, pretty soon."

"Don't get sunburned," Clifford told him. "Remember you don't have any skin. I'll see you at my place for drinks, around six. Fare thee well," Clifford said, and then he dove into the pool.

Roy watched him zoom along under the green water like a sealion, a flickering blue-green shadow. Here we are, Roy thought, at the end of the world at the end of our lives, both of us alone. But Cliff is right and I am wrong and neither of us has Dorothy. He believes in his own righteousness and goes on leading and instructing—trying to force everybody else into believing in their own righteousness—so that the entire universe will be engaged in the production of right? Why not. The world has just about exhausted itself producing wrongs and wickedness and evil. It's time for a change. For a beginning, I must figure out a way to forgive Cliff for his goofiness and bossiness and righteousness. How do you do that. But it has to be done.

Roy stood up and adjusted his shorts. Shall I dive in, he wondered. The water was very likely freezing cold. It has to be done, but there isn't really any *doing* about it. There is only this feeling I have now, associated with the idea of forgiving or the word is the feeling or the idea is the doing, let it alone. It's a mess, it's all candy, like John Dryden sang:

All, all of a piece thoughout;
Thy Chase has a Beast in View
Thy Wars brought nothing about;

Thy Lovers were all untrue.
'Tis well an Old Age is out,
And time to begin a New."

Roy dove into the pool. The water was exactly the right temperature.

■ ■ ■

Dorothy told Roy, "I'm having all kinds of trouble with dreams again. I keep remembering them in the morning and in the afternoon. The memories of what people did and said and what I did and said in the dream are as clear as other memories, so that I'm getting confused, now, about what have I really said or what really has happened."

Roy said, "It doesn't matter; it's all the same."

"You're a big help," Dorothy said. "I wonder if I ought to go see Max Lammergeier. But he always keeps telling me the same thing—as long as you're getting your work done, you're fine. *Naturally* I get my work done—compusively, obsessively, just like I'm supposed to, every day. I'm going to marry Tom Prescott, we're desperately in love with each other, we're going to have a complete new life. Then I'm going to go right straight out of my head and Clifford will kill himself or me or Tom or somebody. What are we going to do?"

"Let's have a little more gin," Roy said. "You take too many of those funny pills. You ought to drink more."

Dorothy shouted, "More? My God, I'm practically an alcoholic already! And alcohol is composed exclusively of calories, and I'm grotesquely huge now. Anyway, I have some new pills that Ed Bancroft gave me—they aren't as fizzy as the old ones. Do you want to try one?"

"Sure. Anything for a change," Roy said. "I'll take it in the morning when I'm feeling sad."

■ ■ ■

Basil Johnson was called Beefy partly because of his first two initials—B.F., for Basil Frederick—and partly because of a natural steatopygia. When he was a boy, his friends called him King Freddy, because one day when they asked him, "Basil? What kind of a name is that?" Beefy all innocently told them what his mother had told him:

" 'Basil' is from an ancient Greek word that means 'king.' I named you that because I want you to grow up to be a king

among men. You'll be called lots of other things because you're black, but you must always remember to be as great and noble as your name. Then no matter what people say about you, no matter how dark you are, the greatness and the beauty inside of you will shine through. Always try to remember that."

Beefy had a number of fights about his name, but he won most of them, and so he had a new name: Beefy. A very few of his oldest friends were allowed to call him "King." The dossiers which were kept on him by the FBI, the Treasury Department, Army Intelligence and the local police (among other agencies) listed "King Basil" as one of Beefy's official aliases. "We know all about him," a T-man said.

By the time that Basil was nineteen, he was cutting records with a jazz group. He attended the university during the day. He had always enjoyed reading, and now he had discovered that it was easy for him to write essays and examination papers and the knowledge excited him. He was playing many different kinds of music with the campus orchestra. In his spare time, he used to get a kick out of trying to play on all the different orchestral instruments in the music department building. He studied harmony and counterpoint and orchestration with Mark Sanderson, who thought that Beefy was the best young musician he'd seen in years. Beefy studied very hard; he had to know all the things on paper that he could already do when he was working with a group of musicians.

The local narcotics squad arrested him not long after the beginning of his senior year at the university. The citizens of the Bay Area were convinced that all the university students were taking dope and fucking each other, right on the campus, which is State Property. The police imagined that they must do something about this dread condition which the newspaper said that everybody was worried about. Who was more likely to be the Big Connection and Mother on the university campus but this Negro kid musician who hung around with all the heads in the Fillmore? While they questioned Beefy, they said they were having an officer inspect his car. An officer came in, a few minutes later, to show Beefy several little brown seeds which, he said, had been found in Beefy's car—seeds of the hemp plant, source of the Killer Drug, marijuana! These little seeds would make it possible for the police to put Beefy away for a long time.

Beefy said, "Are you serious?" but he didn't see which one of them it was who slapped him very hard across the side of his head, it happened so fast.

"Talk respectful when an officer asks you something, Basil,"

one of them said.

Beefy asked, "Can I call my lawyer?"

"Maybe you can, later, after you've told us where you got all the pot and who you've been selling it to. You're going to tell us a lot, King Basil."

It was only by the merest fluke of chance that Beefy's father happened to visit the jail that day in order to see one of his clients. Everyone was embarrassed all around, and the police were extremely apologetic, there must have been some kind of mistake, and surely Mr. Johnson realized how important it was to follow every possible lead that might help them to apprehend the despicable criminals who were engaged in the monstrous narcotics traffic which was (as Mr. Hoover teaches us) all a part of the international communist conspiracy: dope is a means of undermining the moral fabric of America in order to make the country a pushover for the Russians and the Chinese. There was, of course, no charge pending against Basil, and it was quite clear that there had been a regretable error in identification—Basil wasn't the boy whom they thought they had found, the one they thought would be able to help them.

Edwin Johnson said, "Well, Sergeant, Johnson is a very common name."

"I fell down in the elevator," Beefy said. His nose was still bleeding. "Can we leave, now, Papa?"

■ ■ ■

Roy wondered, "When am I going to quit trying to justify myself to all my friends and before all the world? I'm tired of explaining that writing is a full-time job, that whatever time I have left I like to use for relaxing and talking and drinking and then it's time to write again. Why don't I just go ahead and do what I want to do? They don't really care. And why am I afraid that everybody will stop loving me? Why should every man, woman, child, cat, dog, and seagull in the world love me? What did I ever do for them, that they are bound to give me their total admiration and approval?"

Then he sighed and answered his own question. "Because I love all of them, every one. Why don't they be nice to me?" But he corrected himself immediately. "I don't really love them, I love their beauty. The trouble is that I don't love just one single person. If I really loved one, I wouldn't be interested in the judgments of all the others, nor would I be seeing all the others as judges: only as individuals who were as loving and gentle and

kind as that love which I was experiencing. I wouldn't confuse them any more with my parents or with the police. And there, at last, is that. I've managed to realize eighteen million rare and wonderful things—maybe a few that nobody else has thought of before—but I've never really known that I'm a separate, adult individual and that my childhood is truly over and that I no longer am required to believe everything that I'm told, no longer obliged to obey the commands of my parents or wait for orders from some other superior officers."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy told Roy, "It's marvelous to have running water and electricity. Living in Asia is so hard all the time. And toilets that flush! I never want to go anywhere west of Hawaii again. Everything here is awful but I don't care, I'll get used to it again, soon: all the big cars and billboards and noise. But the American faces! You've no idea how funny we look, a boatload of *Us*, a streetcar full of Americans: all the madness and bitterness and hatefulness that shows in our faces. At first I hated the blank sort of stare, the fake politeness and the smooth lazy hopelessness of India. Now I miss all those people—they were beautiful to look at, no matter how crazy or weird or dishonest they may have been. I can't *look* at Americans. Have some more gin."

Roy helped himself from the frosty bottle. "What really happened with you and Clifford? Why are you leaving him? You really broke with him before you ever met Tom, didn't you?"

"It's none of your business, Mr. Nosey. We found that we were mutually incompatible and mentally cruel to each other."

"Come on," Roy said.

"He's a liar and a phony and a kink and I hate him," Dorothy broke out. "He cares for nothing but running after other women. He was interested in me for the first week we knew each other, years ago, and he was interested again when we were first married. (He really wants a family, you know.) When I didn't get pregnant right away, he let me know that his real interests are music and scholarship and he had his schedule and I had mine—and of course, I was to take care of the household in accordance with his old-maid ideas, cook all the meals to conform to his nutty notions about proper diet and nutrition, practice music two hours a day so he could teach me that, too (although I admit I learned a lot about music that I didn't know—he can't play a flute, himself, but he knows exactly how it *ought* to be played) and he's right—he's always right."

"As usual," Roy said.

"But it's all fake, all false, all that he's really interested in is different women—everything else is window dressing," Dorothy went on. "He even fools himself, for hours at a time, about being a great intellectual and a great authority in his field—a great authority: he can certainly give orders, all right, he's great at that. I don't think that he realizes (or maybe he really does, which I don't want to think about; it would make him even worse than he is—or better—or something—I hate him!). Maybe he doesn't really know that he's a satyr, an insatiable wandering stiff cock and nothing more."

Roy said, "But that's a whole universe, too—of connections and highs and feelings and losses which makes all the rest worth anything. The learning and the arts are only momentary flashes of abstract, mental beauty. The *real* is our affections, our holding each other, our naked loving—"

"It's all because you're a man that you defend him," Dorothy cried. "It's what you really want, too—it's *all* of you: childish, self-indulgent, narcissistic—you don't love anybody but yourselves and each other—no woman's got a chance—all of you really *are* a bunch of dirty old faggots, that's the real truth. All your ideas and big muscles and mountain climbing are phony. All you want is to scare each other to death with your big cocks and how you can do it with more women than any other man—how you can coax and wheedle more dumb women to sleep with you than the other one can. You're all insufferable. Why don't you go home. I hate you."

Roy said, "Very well, I'll take my gin and go." He remained seated in his chair, holding onto his glass.

"Oh, don't go," Dorothy said. "Tell me about everything. How are Mark and Beth? How is Max?"

"Everybody's about the same," Roy said. "All of us are older. All of us ought to get out of town, I suppose. We're all such fixtures here. I wish I could travel for a while and see if there really is any more to the world than just USA."

"You'd love it in India," Dorothy told him. "You ought to go there, if anybody should. Get a job for a while and get some money and go. It isn't hard."

"I've already got a job," Roy wearily repeated. "I haven't got time to work for somebody else."

"Clifford Barlow says everybody must work. It's bad for people to have money, it spoils their natures. We must work very hard all day every day. Clifford always makes a garden, wherever he's living and he works very hard in it. The flowers are always

beautiful and the tomatoes are superb. He talks to all the vegetables and flowers in order to make them grow *right*. They don't dare disappoint him."

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "They ask me all the time, 'Why is the world this way? Why is it all messed up?' And I shock them with my answer:

"Somebody's making a pile of money out of it, that's why. The present world is an extremely profitable enterprise being operated by a few extremely rich and powerful men and women. Karl Marx was a maniac: communism is another invention for keeping the yokels quiet and working on the inside of a gloomy factory fourteen hours a day instead of letting them make love and pick flowers and paint pictures and write poems and play music and take dope and build stately pleasure domes.

"You come around here asking me questions about the Soul and the Higher Consciousness—you're nothing but a potential dollar in the Gross National Product. You're no more than a possible casualty in some phony 'brush-fire' war against some fake brand of 'Under-developed' communist. You're nothing but a little row of figures in a ledger down at the Bank of America. Get away from me. I'm tired of looking at you and hearing your tiresome little voice.

" 'Why?' Why, indeed! Why not? Why shouldn't you get precisely what you deserve, whether it's a question of lives or worlds or answers?"

■ ■ ■

Roy was very happy. He had just received a letter from Dorothy. She sounded happy and excited about traveling and Tom was much better and she had been invited to teach at the university when they got back from wherever it was they finally decided to go.

He was glad that Dorothy was getting along so well. He took a certain amount of credit for introducing her to Tom. In a way, it repaired the blunder which he'd committed when he told her to go and marry Clifford. That had been a real mistake, Roy thought —no doubt Origen must have thought something very like that, just after he had performed his celebrated home-surgery act.

Roy walked under the plane trees in Golden Gate Park while the band played *Gems from "Zampa."* He was very nearly killed when he tried to cross the road near the aquarium; a large municipal bus was barreling along the narrow street between

the giant head of Beethoven and the grand monument to Giuseppe Verdi: the driver was gazing dreamily at Robert Emmet's roaring effigy.

■ ■ ■

The Grand Mahatma says, "Say, I need help. I hurt. Isn't anybody going to come and help me? Isn't there any human being around here to give me a hand? I hurt! Why don't you get me a doctor? Why don't they take me to the hospital? Why don't they give me a shot of something? Say, what kind of outfit is this, anyway? I'M ALL IN THE DIRT AND ON FIRE OR SOMETHING, G E T M E O U T O F H E R E."

■ ■ ■

Dorothy and Tom drank hot chocolate and ate delicious whipped cream pastries in a famous Viennese coffee house. They had been to the American Express to pick up their mail, and afterwards they had retired to this mellow cave of dark mahogany and plush to read their letters by the light of the real crystal chandeliers. It was snowing outside. The Muzak inside was playing a series of Argentine tangos. Tom was humming along with the music,

"Adios, muchachos, compañeros de ma vida . . ."

He looked up, at last, and asked Dorothy, "Well, what's the dope?"

"Oh, it's only Mother," Dorothy replied. "She's fussing about the Blind Babies' Bargain Bazaar and she wants her piano."

Kyoto
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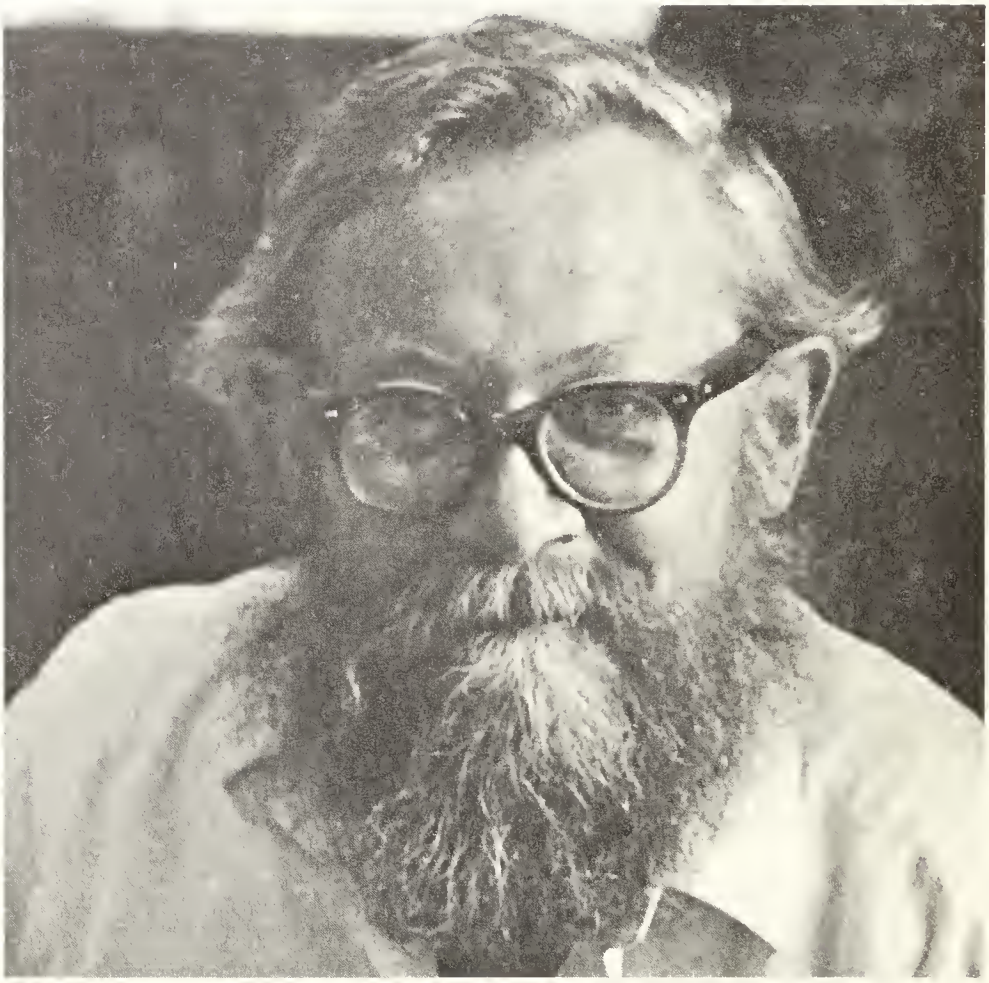

PHILIP WHALEN was born in Portland, Oregon, 20 October 1923. Commenced poet at an early age; entered showbiz 1929 (appendectomy). Public gradeschool and highschool, The Dalles, Oregon. US Army Air Corps, Radio Operator & Mechanics Instructor, 1943-1946. B.A. in Literature and Languages, Reed College, 1951. Began current series of public readings from his own poems, 1955. Contributor to many anthologies and little magazines, USA, Europe, Asia. Poets Foundation Award, 1962. Grant-in-aid, National Academy of Arts & Letters, 1965. Grants from the Committee on Poetry, 1969-1971. Short TV film in the series *Poetry: USA*, for National Educational Television, 1965. Tape recordings of poems for numerous colleges and universities and the Library of Congress, since 1955. First novel, *You Didn't Even Try*, 1967 (composed 1963). Residence in Japan, 1966-1967, during which *Imaginary Speeches For A Brazen Head* was composed. Visit to USA, return to Kyoto, 1969-1971. California since summer, 1971.

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