

CORADI





# CORADDI

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## Clocks

I.

Forty cymbals cry holiday  
with saucy reeds  
and your stringed frame,  
O bright one,  
fraught with poignancy.  
But sing to me of drifting  
years, those petals  
wreathing narrow pools  
caressed by tendrils  
of green willow.

2.

Aching monuments of time . . .  
I can no other . . . clover  
blooming in the winter sun,  
mild days and drought.  
Unbridled age offers me  
no consolation for things  
which daily change and yet  
remain, remain . . .  
I can no other . . . never . . .  
the sea which runs to meet  
the sea, tablets worn  
by fond erasure, worn and still  
the same: signatures of wetness  
in the sand and wriggling  
life . . . transfiguring . . .  
I can no other . . .  
The clover smell lies faintly  
on my heart, mocking  
season out of season: the bees  
have gone. Yet once  
we children weaving clover  
bracelets and garlands for the hair . . .  
no more, no more, desist,  
for that was in the spring  
and that in another year . . .  
the after-reason of a troubled gain,  
success a child which gnaws  
my fists in lieu of milky  
breasts . . . these tangent  
chains bend head to lap . . .  
the clover sweet, flouncing in the sun,  
and seaweed on the tides embracing:  
I can no other . . . no other love.



3.

Horns of the chaste and crescent  
bowl spill winnowed grain  
and watery wine upon the sky,  
streaking the boughs  
with feigned laughter;  
while I, remembering thou  
who mothered me to life,  
her elder moon, a half-gnawed  
pear sorely bruised  
by this eager mouth,  
do weep that I so soon  
am weaned from satiety  
to abstinence.

4.

The hounds of the hours bark their lay  
beside my door and grovel  
for the chase, while drunken  
on the rug I toss, devising  
rhymes which tend towards you.  
The whelps grow loud with longing  
to wash their paws in the early dew,  
and, shyly, I grow full with longing  
after you and after ways to bait  
your untried lips to mine.  
Rude dogs, we all, who will not end  
this hunt of deciduous prey,  
but must persist and sniff the trail  
of bloody thorns till mortal  
repetition consummates infinity.

SYLVIA EIDAM

## Old Houses

Wintry dusk has fallen on  
These thin and straggling rows  
Of creatures half-alive:

These prim old virgins of a docile time,  
Genteelly poor, white-washed, black-shuttered still,  
And faintly lacy underneath the eaves,  
Surrounded with the dreary shadows  
Of spring's neat excess—naked shrubs;

Staunch matrons, full of breast, more full of self,  
Replete with birdbaths, idle swings,  
Enclosed by high and haughty walls  
Preserving the proud myth that here  
The world may never come;

And thin-haired derelicts, half-ghosts,  
Devoid of symmetry and cheer,  
With peeling paint and lattice, turret,  
Cupola, and shattered pane—

One apprehends an earlier season,  
Warm and bright with their beginnings,  
When spinsterhood was youth—  
And coquetry perhaps, if ladylike;

When matrons, in their opulence and rank,  
Were somehow slimmer, elegant and gay;  
The derelicts, without infirmity,  
Then standing almost-straight and glad  
To be great mansions for their shabby men.

SUSAN SETTLENIYRE



~~348007~~

## Of Flight and Freezing

White moth of the winter thaw,  
You danced like spring, and  
Could not see the snow clouds  
Fighting from the north. I saw  
And wondered if the land  
You trembled in was loud  
With fraud, your flight more  
Brave than I who waited  
With dull Winchester at hand  
For deer to come to orchard.  
But when the wind sang down it said  
This is no hollow, songless land.

And when I saw the moth track  
Nothing on the air, still flying  
In the dusk toward an evergreen,  
I rose and chose a different track.

And when the snow came in the night  
And stayed my earnest wandering,  
I wondered if the wind was right,  
And dreamed of flight and freezing.

HARRY HUMES

## My Bohemia

Fists in my torn pockets, I departed;  
My overcoat was ideal, too.  
I walked in the open-air, Muse, faithful to you;  
And oh! weren't the loves I dreamed of splendid!

My only pair of trousers had a hole. Little Tom Thumb,  
I dropped my rhymes along the way,  
And over Great Bear Tavern where I stayed  
My stars were rustling in the sky's black drum.

And sitting by the roadside I heard them,  
Those brisk September evenings as I felt a film  
Of dew upon my face, wine vigorous and tart . . .

Where rhyming among fantastic shadows  
I plucked for a lyre the knotted laces  
Of my wounded shoes, one foot against my heart.

By Arthur Rimbaud  
Translated from the French

MOLLIE HUGHES

## The Night Builders

Their crane swings round  
beneath a quartered moon, and heaves  
another stave in place; their specious  
crane like some new ride at county fair,  
with chains too clean and silver-lit.  
Daylight failed, they must construct  
by night, once held for sleeping  
that now contains no rest, and warm  
themselves this chill November eve  
with artificial sparks. The buckets  
filled with mortar come clanging down  
in dark, the bricks and lumber execute  
mathematic schemes beneath deficient  
starlight: While waking from a dream  
I watch their buzzing, hooking,  
fitting piece to piece, and never idle.  
I did not work nor build tonight; I slept,  
and previous to sleep, I loved. That  
this is best, and silver-helmeted Mercuries  
who walk those frozen beams are false,  
I cannot say. But yet it seems  
such building violates the night,  
which should belong to fools alone,  
or sleep, or love, and madmen in the woods  
or drinking by the fire.

SYLVIA EIDAM



## A Poem As Tree In Winter

A star is caught among the last few leaves,  
but will not stay its course for long:  
I am a tree, and lonely,  
growling coldly, groping for a speck  
of warmth that is no warmth at all:  
a mere purveyance of the mind.  
No one will sing sweet verses  
of my essential form, how pure,  
how clear without my green  
elaborations, how basic  
to the sky and proper for a fire.  
But were I evergreen for winter,  
snow, and polyphonic wind,  
then should I need no one to sing,  
sufficient unto myself,  
if I were evergreen. Yet such  
is not my way, nor will be:  
I must continue hawking my unlikely  
structure on the sky, and imaging a star.

SYLVIA EIDAM

## A Course In Abstraction

I've gotten weary of these patterned things,  
These blocks laid out at random for design,  
As though the germ might be engulfed by line,  
The Pegasus sprout wheels instead of wings,  
Born out of geometric offerings—  
This one, by friends called merry, I define  
As someone else's Christmas, never mine,  
This heartless plan of pyramids and rings;  
Where is the warmth, the setting sun that glows  
Against the ivied oaks that shape the sky  
As in some scene pastorale of Corot's,  
And where the woman of the handsome eye  
That Goya loved? These can withstand the blows  
That scatter patterned things without a cry.

SUSAN SETTLEMYRE





## I

These are two consecutive chapters from a novel-in-the-works, titled tentatively *The Wrath Bearing Tree*. The title is from T. S. Eliot's poem "Gerontion." The chapters begin the second of the novel's three sections and deal with the narrator-protagonist Peter Jones' first months at Harvard.

BY THOMAS MOLYNEUX

I had expected, if I had expected anything, it all to be smaller and more of a whole, and me more toward the centre of it. I had been there, and I fancied I knew my way around. I knew some of the landmarks: Soldiers Field, because I had seen Harvard beat Holy Cross and Tufts and U Mass there in past years; Widener Library, because it was so big; Lamont Library, because girls were not allowed. I had believed that I could answer people's questions with this information, and that people would know to ask me.

After all the tears and arguing were finished, and, bribed and overwhelmed, I had agreed to try it for a year—knowing full well that they all would come again if I did not go back the next year, for I had altogether surrendered and the stipulation was just a form to make the defeat less total and, thus, less bitter—I had felt that all questions were finished, too. And now, I saw that, no less here than elsewhere, the questions remained. There was nothing about me which said who I was and what I was like. And, though from the start I could divide the others into two—and later, more—groups, there was nothing about them that told me what I wondered. Still, there remained the need to go up and introduce yourself and say something that was not what you were thinking, that was not related to it even, but that would yet show that you were thinking something alike to them. I could not do it.

Even now, I do not know by what precise criteria I distinguished the groups. Certainly, then, I did not know. I did not know, even, I think, that I was grouping them. But I grouped them nonetheless, without

speaking to them and without knowing it.

I saw Susan often. She carried herself with a small easy grace, as though she would never try hard enough at anything to be caught awkward. I saw her one afternoon, talking with some boys whom I had, however vaguely, associated with the goodies, with the group I wanted, people whom I would not feel uncomfortable drinking from the same glass with. When I passed, my eyes at hers, myself rigid, she said hello, and I heard my own hi, clipped and pitched and ludicrously the wrong word, and walked on, more rigid.

I walked through the yard, thin with the brown bareness of the trees and the light and vivid fallen leaves, and I tried to place, without staring, the passing persons. I knew who was the freshman football captain, and sometimes I nodded to him. More often, though, I would turn my head rigidly to the side and pass without speaking.

In the first days, I walked a great deal. Up Massachusetts Avenue by the Law School; across Weeks Bridge to the Business School and Soldiers Field; round and about the buildings, single and plopped atop the grass, bare like trees, and hollow seming. I did not know their names; I did not even know that the Law School was the Law School, though everyone knew the newness of the Business School. Nor did I think about their names, though I was aware of another ignorance: I could not distinguish their architecture. I had no labels for any of them. When I looked, I saw not their sameness, but their differences. I tried to remember that about each that struck me: the narrow brittleness of the high gabled doorways, the vastness of Widener, the block plunked brick of Memorial Hall. But though I saw their differences, I did not remember them.

I walked, really, to no purpose, except, perhaps, that, moving, I felt a part of it. When I stopped and studied the buildings, I felt like a tourist. But when I walked among them, unwatching and unknowing, I felt a part of it. I could not say that I was learning my way around, for I did not bother about the names. Nor, even, could I say that I was gathering impressions, that

I might paint a part of this, for there was nothing in it all for me to paint. It was too thin and bare and two-dimensional. It was too gradual. From none of it, did I feel a fullness or urgency that made me want to paint it. Besides, mostly I did not watch it.

More, I watched myself. Sliding past each other behind my eyes, like thin rigid file cards, hopes rose and disappointments settled and the many, more important, more complex reactions took their places. At the same time, elaborate formal stylised fantastic scenes took place there: People I did not know, for no reason, hit me. And I hit them back, and we had long, slow motion, relentless public fights. Professors singled me out for no reason to censure, and I parried with them in elaborate, logical sequences of repartee. Sometimes, as I walked along, involved in one of my fights, I would feint a shoulder, or my head would snap as though from a blow, and I would come aware of someone staring at me.

But, generally, I was aware of passersby through the film of my scenes, and the scenes would shut off as I came toward the people. I would stare at them, and, nearly physically, strain to be not seen, trying to place the person. Whenever I heard the laughter of a passed cluster, I assumed it was about me. And I walked still more rigidly, not looking back.

I recall one day, up toward Radcliffe, deciding to call Susan. I had thought before about calling her, but there was no phone yet in my room, and, by the time I got change and put on a coat and found a public phone, I had each time begun to wonder why was I calling and what would I say, and did not call. Now, I wanted to call her. But a girl was lolling in the booth. I loitered. Once, she stared out at me and caught my eye. She wore her hair short and rather ragged, like a duck. Her thick thighs and buttocks stretched her jeans. As she talked, she stared brutally at me, and her jaws chewed gum. After a while, I walked past, found another phone, and called. Susan was not there, and I left no message. As I returned toward the Yard, the cards sliding about behind my eyes, the girl came out of the phone booth. Again, she stared at me. I stared back. There was no question of passing unnoticed. She stood stocky against the booth, staring. Finally, I looked away.

"Think you're pretty hot stuff, don't you?" she said.

I did not answer.

"Well, don't you? Think you're something special?"

I had passed her now, and I kept walking. In my mind, notions of fighting her came alive and I pictured myself wrestling with her, trying to strike her breasts, wrestling with her in her jeans and jean jacket. I kept walking. Then I heard her long coarse wolf whistle and her short, still coarser laugh. I kept walking.

I could not put from my mind the thought that I should have hit her, that I should have answered her, that I had been afraid of her. I told no one about this, although, by now, of course, I knew some classmates, knew them enough to greet and to sit with at meals and to realize that I did not want to know them more. I had a roommate, a tall flat redhead boy named Robert from New Mexico, with a long beginning paunch, who hated New Mexico because the sun there blistered his red

and freckled skin. By his second day in Cambridge, I believe he knew the name and function of every building Harvard owned.

During the first week, Robert went to buy a sport jacket. He asked me to come with him, but I did not.

"It wouldn't hurt you, you know," he said, "to come and give me a little advice." He had bought a suit while he was still in New Mexico, but had saved the money for the jacket until he got to Cambridge.

"I'm going for a walk," I said. "Just go into Boston to Brooks. You can't go wrong there." I did not want to go into a clothing store with him.

"I want to buy it in Cambridge. It wouldn't hurt you to give up your walk."

"What do I know? You'll pick out something that will be good. Clothes have to be an individual thing, like art," I said.

"You could still advise me."

After a few days, he had annexed a group of friends, chatterboxes like himself, and he used to bring them to the room, with great pomp, after classes and in the evenings, for beers and for getting to know each other, which meant telling what they had done at what high school they had attended. I did not talk much to them, but Robert introduced them all to me. Sometimes, at meals, feeling strange to eat alone, I would sit with them. But often I sat alone, because it was at meals that grouping was easiest, because the groups all sat together.

Though when I sat with anyone I sat with Robert and his friends, I came to know the names and faces and stories of the others. There was a boy who had gone to Andover and whom Robert had sought out when he discovered that he, also, was from New Mexico, who knew all these things. Often, he sat with us, a soft boy with straight black hair so short and thin you could count the bristles, and told us what he knew. I am sure, however, that he was but one of many vaguer sources, and that I would have learned what I learned as quickly without him, for their names were something you did learn, like the names of the buildings, because they were the ones who did the wild things, and because they did not learn yours. Before I knew exactly where the poolroom in the Union was located, I knew which of them went to it regularly after dinner.

There was Dickie Prout and Bob Bingen and John Hadl, whom I recall always with his collar up and his shoulders rather hunched as though he were cold, and David Carter, all from New York. And there was Tony Villet, who was English. And Alec Smythe, who had a bad complexion and was also English. There was Whitney Franks and Jay Whalley, who had a long fine face with a decorative hardness about it and Mac MacIntyre and Sam Firestone from Philadelphia. There was Boy Dow from St. Louis, but he was thrown out in February. I do not know where Allen Ogden was from, though he had gone to Groton. He was tall and thin and haphazardly held together with a small head with baby round cheeks atop a long thin neck. It was said that, on weekdays, he did nothing except go to classes, eat, sleep, and watch television. He had not missed a lecture or a Brighter Day episode all year. Ogden was always talking about shagging

places—he would “shag history class” or “shag a right”—and this, indeed, was what he seemed to do; he stood with a slouch and he sat with a slouch and he even walked with an easy slouch—his long legs seeming to glide forward ahead of the slight rest of his body. He roomed with Allen Jeffreys, who looked like a little boy, and with Fatty Ronson, who was not fat, but rather, thickly clean and handsome. Then, there was John Kelley and John Prettimann, who was going to be a hockey hero, and Nick Biddle, and Maxwell Davies, who was southern, and Francis Dennis, whose mother was a movie actress. And, of course, there were more.

I knew who they were, and, after a while, because I stopped and talked with Susan when I saw her, they knew who I was. She wore everywhere a brown suede coat with wide loose sleeves; she wore it over jeans turtlenecks and short frail plain dresses. The first time I saw her in it, I complimented her. Whenever I saw her, I seemed to have something I wanted to say, and, though sometimes I would turn away wondering had I bored her, I always stopped her when she was alone.

One day, she said to me: “Have you been painting?”

“No,” I said. “There aren’t any courses.”

“Do you need a course? Can’t you just paint on your own?”

“Not really. Not here. There is too much to do. There are too many people who would see what I was doing.”

She was quiet for a minute. Then, she said, “You really ought to. Mrs. Levine says you could be really good if you would just work.”

“Mrs. Levine thinks anyone could be really good at anything if they would just work. It is her way of democratising art and of discounting talent,” I said.

“She doesn’t think that, you know.”

“Well, it doesn’t come to you from work,” I said. “Either it comes or it doesn’t. Either you have it or you haven’t.”

She always was willing that I stop her, though she never called to me. I doubt she would have called to anyone. Though still the littleness was there, in the fineness of her yellow hair, in the thin chic of her clothes, in Cambridge, more so than at the Levines’, I was aware of her toughness. Always, everything about her was in place, and there was evident a contempt for things and people out of place. Or perhaps it was only implied. Sometimes, while we were talking, boys of the boys I watched would stop and say hello. Susan seemed to know all of them, and they her. Then, it was only around her that I saw any of them wordy or exaggerated. But with her, beside the cleanness of her line and the silence of her bearing, they seemed all little boys. When they stopped, she introduced them to me, and that is how I first came to know them.

Sometimes, later, when I was eating alone, some of them would come and sit with me. Often, they had schemes. I recall Allen Ogden, one day, getting me to come with him while he tried to find the bookie on Massachusetts Avenue. He bought a copy of the *Telegraph*, and we went into all of the smaller shops that lined across from Wigglesworth-Leavitt and Pierce, and that newspaper store, and even into a barber shop. For a minute, we would browse in murmurs, and then Og-

den would say in a loud voice and ostensibly to me: “Boy, I sure wish I could place a bet on this one. Look, it’s a sure thing. I wish I knew someone to take a bet for me.” Then we would browse for a minute more, and go out.

“Damn it, Jones,” Ogden would say, “don’t look like such a little boy. I didn’t think you were the kind that got embarrassed,” and, “I know one of these places is a bookie. I know that.” But we did not find which one and, finally, he had to go off to a class.

I remember another of them, I think it was Ogden’s roommate, Jeffreys, who looked like a child, telling me that Susan wore no underwear.

“Everyone does,” he said. “Didn’t you?”

And I remember someone else, it was one in a group, saying, “I hear you met Susan Blair marching in one of these civil rights things?”

“Yes,” I said. “I did it once, to see what it was like.”

One evening in early November, a little past dusk, while I was sitting in my room, with a book in my lap, my mind occupied with the still elaborate scenes of which I then thought so much, the telephone rang. Robert answered it. He got to it before it had rung a second time. He always did.

“It’s for you,” he said. “A girl.”

All that he did had to be done with a megaphone.

“Just give me the phone,” I said.

I took the phone, wondering myself who it would be. Of course, I knew some girls, but it seemed unlikely that any of them would be so forward as to call me.

It was Diana.

“Hello,” she said.

“Hello.”

“I just wanted to call you,” she said. “I just wanted to talk to you.”

“Good, how nice,” I said.

“I saw Paul yesterday. He said that he hadn’t heard from you. What have you been doing?”

“Nothing much,” I said.

We talked like that, more clipped and timid than strangers, for some time. Twice, the operator came on and I heard the hollow clang as Diana inserted coins.

Finally, I said, “What’s on your mind, Diana?”

“I want to see you,” she said.

“I’ll be home for Thanksgiving,” I said. “It would be nice to see you.”

“No. I want to see you now.”

“How?”

“I could come into the Square,” she said. “I’m in Boston now. I could be in the Square in ten minutes.”

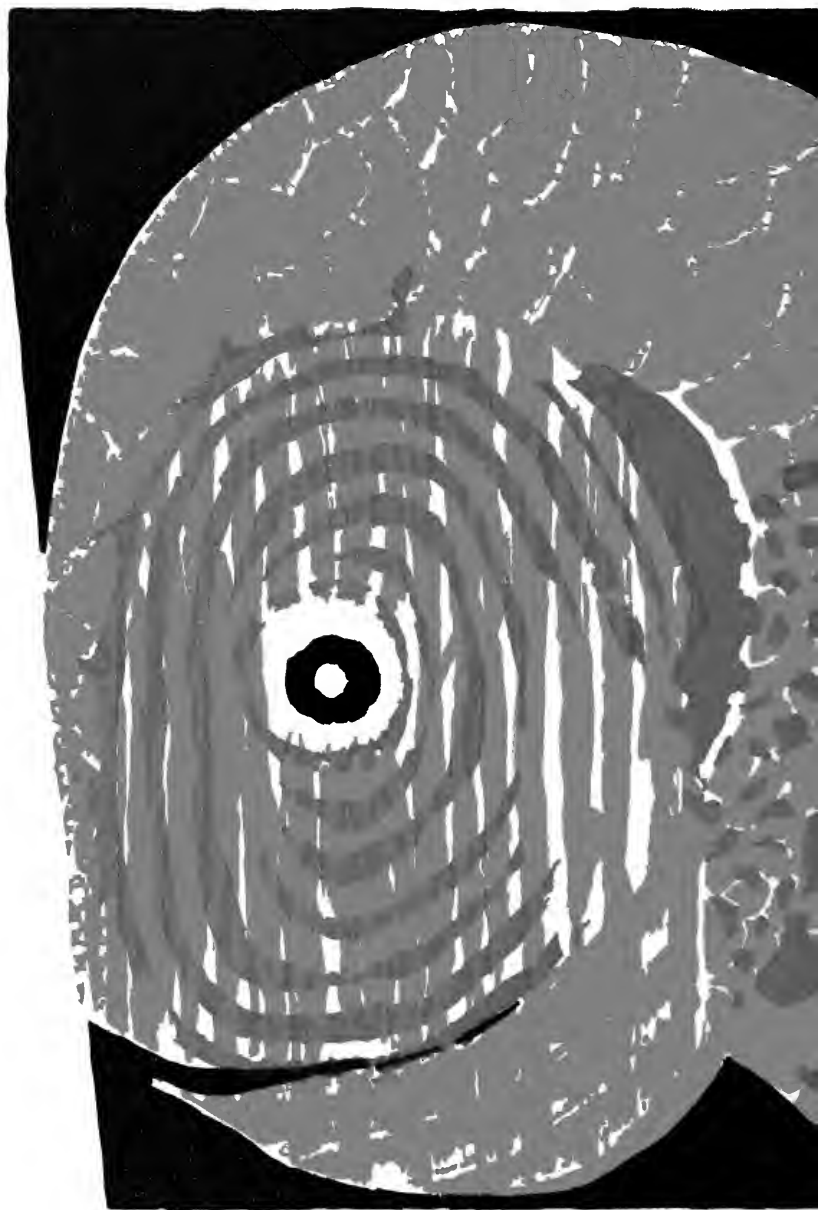
“No,” I said. “There’d be no place to go.”

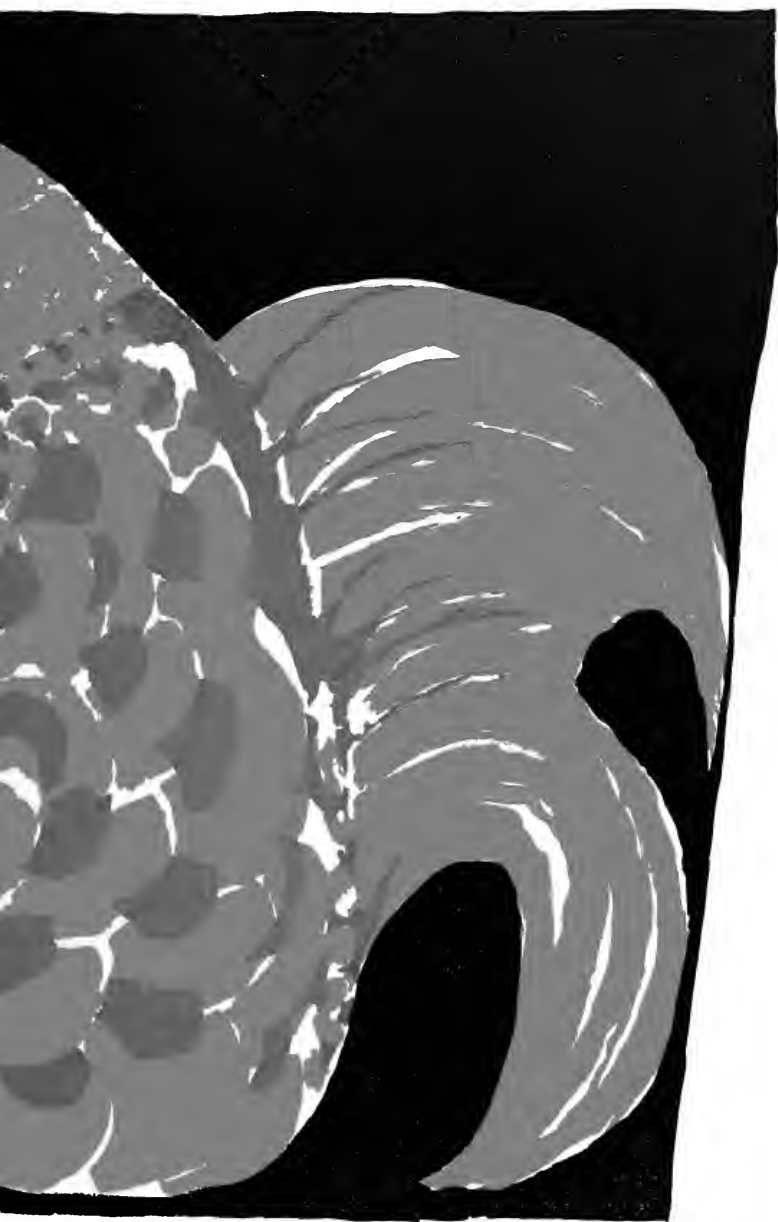
She said, “I want to see you, Peter, I want to see you.”

“I’d like to see you, too,” I said.

After a while, I agreed to meet her on Saturday at our rock. I did not know what I would say to her then, but the rock would be fine. We had been there before in the cold. The colours and the crisp colour slide precision of bright autumn would be fine.

When finally she hung up, I went back and sat again with my book and thought about it. In my mind, I heard the tired, quiet, pleading, and apologetic voice she had used. I did not know what we would talk about.





but that seemed not to matter. I thought what she would be finally ready to give, and I knew that I would take it.

And then, the telephone rang again. Again, Robert answered it too quickly.

"For you again," he said. "Another girl."

"Don't raise your voice," I said.

I took the telephone, and this time it was Susan.

"Peter," she said, "can you do me a favour? Can you take me to the football game Saturday if I pay for the tickets?"

"Yes," I said, "Of course. Why?"

"Allen Ogden asked me and I told him I couldn't because I was going with you."

"Yes," I said. "I'd like to go. But you don't need to pay. What time shall I pick you up?"

We did not say any more, though after we had hung up I thought of the things I ought to have said. And then, also after we had hung up, I remembered that I could not do it.

I sat again in the chair. The room was bare, ascetic. Harvard had supplied desks and some stiff plain wooden chairs and bookshelves, and we had added an old serge couch. From the ceiling, on a stiff thin pipe, hung a huge fishbowl of a light that glared milky yellow. I stared at the facts of the room. In my mind, I saw the vividness of the rock. Also, I saw and heard the football game, Susan in her suede coat and the people who knew us stopping and saying the logical patterns which no one ever said. After a couple hours, I had Robert call Diana's, so that her father would not know.

"Diana," I said. "I can't come. I forgot all about it, but I have a class Saturday."

"Can't you come after?"

"No," I said. "It's in the afternoon."

"Can you come Sunday?"

"I think not. I'll tell you what: I'll write. I'll write to you at Paul's and you can stop there and pick them up. Okay?"

"All right," she said. Here voice was flat. I knew the welling fullness of her face.

"Goodbye," I said.

"Yes," she said.

"Sorry," I said, and hung up.

I took Susan to the football game. I wanted to bring her first to the room for a drink, but Robert was having some of his friends, so I could not do that. Instead, I mixed a bowl of vodka and apple cider, and, with a flask of this bagging right and left in my jacket pockets, I went out through the vivid blue after shave smell of the dormitory, and walked to Radcliffe. I felt clean and new and looked-at in the sharp air. The leaves were richest now, and I walked through and beneath their golds and yellows and reds. I was glad and excited. I do not like patriotism, but still the Star Spangled Banner excites me and, before a World Series game—though I do not either like baseball—it can send a stupid genuine shudder into me. I felt this way now: as though there were something vast, and I a part of it.

Susan was ready when I arrived at Radcliffe, and, almost immediately, she came into the room. She wore a soft yellow turtle neck sweater that came down tightly

and showed the simple frail fineness of her body. I could sense the attention of the other men waiting in the room. I held her coat for her, and, as we went out into the blue and yellow picture post card sparkle of the day, she took my arm.

We walked like that, talking easily for there was always something I wanted to say to her, until we had passed through the Square. Then, as we reached Weeks Bridge, she let go my arm and we walked more efficiently. Efficiently, then, we passed through the crowd, beneath the greetings and shouted party announcements, around and past the bright colours and the stagnant clusters, the towel hooded peanut hucksters and the bleareyed policemen, crossing the street through stopped cars with their arrogant ebullient anonymity of the crowd, together in our hastes, keeping an eye one on the other.

We came through the gat, and again the crowd stuttered and thinned, and I took Susan's hand. Together, we hurried.

"Hey you two, whats the big hurry?"

I looked back and saw Ogden and Jeffreys and Bidle and Kelly. Ogden was carrying a gallon jug of milky yellow liquid, rather the colour of the bare fishbowl light globe in my room.

"Slow down and have a drink," he said. "What's the hurry?"

"I just always hurry when I'm in a crowd," I said. "I like to hurry, I'm impatient."

"What about you Susan, are you impatient too?"

"Yes," she said. "I like to hurry too."

"Well then you wont have any time for this." He held out the jug at arm's length.

"We won't have any need for it," I said. I lifted the flasks so that they showed past my pockets.

"Aha. A two gun man," he said. "If you want to come back after the game, we're having a few drinks."

"Thanks," I said. "Maybe we will."

Susan and I moved off along the corridor of the huge tan cracked stadium. While we were walking there, through the people in the dull covered corridor, trying to find our portal, Robert stopped us. He announced a resounding hi, and stood there soft and cream and orange, and I had to introduce him. He stuck forth his round, stubby nailed hand and Susan shook it briefly. Then we stood there quiet for a second. Finally, Robert said, "The rooms all cleaned up if you want to go back there after the game. I'm going over to Miller's."

"Yes," I said.

He moved off. I remember thinking that at least he had not winked, but I did not say it.

The game was against Dartmouth. Though Harvard scored first, they lost. I told Susan that Harvard had a lousy coach. We were squashed in very tight on the cold bare seats, and I resented the forced touching, the vulgar pressing. A girl behind me kept letting a pennant dangle onto my hair. I would shake my head and she would lift it up, but in a few minutes it would be dangling there again, like a persistent horsefly. I was afraid that one of the rigid kneed, squeezed together persons behind me was going to spill a soda on Susan. When Harvard scored, a couple in front of us stood up and kissed. They were still standing, kissing, when Har-



vard missed the extra point. Then someone behind made a loud wet smack with his lips and all the people around laughed. I smiled and did not look at Susan.

We drank the first flask in the first quarter and the second in the second. I tried to explain to Susan why the Harvard coach was so lousy. By midway through the third quarter, Dartmouth was leading 34 to 6, and Susan said, "Can we go?"

"Of course," I said.

I followed her, stomach pulled thin, along the row of people.

When we were out again on the street and walking toward the Yard, I said, "Don't you like football?"

She said, "I like it when we win and there's a lot of cheering and singing. But I don't like it the way it was today."

"Harvard's got a lousy coach," I said.

"I don't mind that. I don't know what it's all about anyhow."

I was hesitant, now, to take her hand. Another couple walked draped round themselves on the other side of the bridge. After a bit, Susan put her arm through mine. I liked that way of walking. A boy in a sweat suit pedaled past us on a blue bicycle. At the far end of the bridge, a final huckster stood, popping his hands together in front of himself. By his side stood an oblong board, most of its white shelf paper covering showing now, but with still a few buttons on it. On the other side, at his feet, sat a wicker basket filled with bags of peanuts. The man wore a faded khaki parka, and, beneath the hood, which he wore up, peeked the white of a towel. His face was crisp red in the cold, and his breath stood white away from him. On the sidewalk, already looking old, were the green letters that someone had painted the night before: Ray Indians, beat the Harvard boys. I had not noticed them on the way to the game. As we came toward the huckster, Susan said, "Let's get some peanuts."

"How much are they?" I said, stopping.

"For you, fifteen cents," he said, already stooping to his basket. Still stooped, he said, "How many?"

"Two," I said. "Oh no, make it three. And let's have one of these buttons."

"Harvard or Dartmouth?" he said.

"One of each," I said.

"You want a Columbia one, too?" he said. "I got some of them left."

"No, just Dartmouth and Harvard."

I took the buttons and turned away.

"One for God and country," I said. "And one for success."

"Which do you want?" Susan said.

"Success," I said.

"Me, too."

The huckster called after us: "How much time left?"

"About a quarter," I turned round, still moving forward as I said it.

"Shit," he said.

We walked on in the cold and fading afternoon. Though, of course, people were in the stores and around on the streets, the Square felt empty. I felt that Susan, too, had this feeling.

"Will you come to my room and have a drink?" I

said.

"Of course."

I had left some of the cider and vodka, and I poured what remained into four large glasses, and gave two of them to Susan and kept two of them myself.

"Do you want to go over to Allen's later?" I said.

"Let's wait and see."

"Yes, sure. Why didn't you want to go with him?"

I said, "You don't have to answer that, but I wish you would."

"Why?"

"Because you surprised me. I was very glad and flattered, but you surprised me. Why would you prefer to go with me?"

"Because you're not him."

She sat erect in the chair, with her ankles crossed. On her lap, she held the first glass. The other was on the floor at her side. She seemed all of a piece, sitting there, in the taut yellow sweater. She seemed to fit with the bareness and plainness of the room.

"That's little of an answer," I said.

"Yes, I know, but it's all I have. I didn't want to go with Allen Ogden because I don't like Allen Ogden. And I said your name, I don't know why. Maybe to surprise him."

We both took a drink.

"Which would you really prefer?" she said.

"Which what?" I asked.

"Of the buttons. God and country or success?"

She looked very serious. I did not want to be serious.

"Both," I said and laughed. "That's why I bought both."

"Me, too," she said.

After a while, we had emptied the first glasses and were drinking the second.

"Will you come in here?" I said.

"Yes," she said.

We went into the bedroom. The room had a bunk bed, and though the lower bunk was Robert's, I sat down on it and put out my hand for her. Though I watched only the bright paleness of her, rabbit slight and hesitant, I knew the objects of the room about us and was glad for its bareness. I had brought a picture of Diana with me, but I had never put it out. I kissed her, and, at first, her small thin mouth seemed hesitant. And then we made love.

I say it that way, shortly and simply, because that is how we did it. Or, at least, that is how she did it. She did not hesitate or plead or even once say no. Only, at the end, she uttered a fine small gasp. And then we were done.

I remember at first having been surprised, and then glad, and then sure.

She lay beside me afterwards, bare and little, pure and pale.

"Was I good?" she said.

"Yes, yes," I said. "I love you."

"Let's not do that," she said.

"I love you," I said. I moved my hand along the pale easy flesh of her. "I love you," I said. "I want to marry you."

She said nothing.

"No," she said.

I said nothing. I did not believe her.

After a while, she said, "You were good."

Later, I thought that perhaps that was how she said it. But, of course, it was not. She meant no more than what she said. There was that in her which knew and insisted that she could not be held responsible for what she did not say.

We lay there for a while, talking little, she naked and fine and I with still my socks on. A part of me was happy and satisfied, and glad to lie beside her, seeing her and smelling her and touching her. And, yet, a part of me was dissatisfied. I felt that she was lying. And I felt, too, that she did not credit my love. I believed that if I could convince her of its truth, then she could say her own.

At one point, I said, "What do you feel?"

She said, "I feel good."

I said, "That isn't what I meant, you know."

And she said, "Yes, but that's what you should mean."

Then, again, we did not talk.

After a while, I kissed her again on the mouth. And I felt her hands, small and slipping, on my back. And I said, over and over, "Susan, I love you, I love you, I love you," not a prayer now, but a song, proud and glad and yet still with the need and the hurt in it. "I love you, Susan, I love you." My voice tight and not my own. And once more, we made love.

We lay after on the bed, moving only softly, as though in slow motion. Still, she would not say love, and I felt not finished and her not mine at all. Nothing had changed.

It was gray and still now in the room. I could make out no longer the dust floating in the rays of light. Beside me, Susan rested on her elbow. She moved her hand along my chest and arms and chin. It was as though we had been here, like this, many times before.

"You are good," she said.

That is not enough, I thought. It is not enough.

Outside, male voices in short bursts asserted and insisted upon no special thing. Two voices sang together, "We lost because we're terrible, oh we lost because we're terrible." And another shoutd, I guessed to some townies, "Hey, dollink, where's the party? Hey, dolling, can I come?" And still another blared, "Goddam Cambridge on Saturday nights."

I knew that soon Robert would be back.

"Do you want to go to Orden's?" I said.

"No," she said. "Do you?"

"Not really," I said. "It's probably over by now."

We got dressed in the dim room. The light in the sitting room was still lit, and we blinked and looked at each other under its naked milky glare, Susan had a brush from somewhere, and, as I watched, she pulled it through her yellow hair. She looked very white under the light. I drank the dead remainder of my drink. As we went out into the chill of the night, she let me put my arm around her shoulder. We walked like that, stumbling tired unknown stragglers among the solid shadows of other stragglers, through the yard, and into the noise and electric light brightness of the Square.

We went to Cronins and we had onion rings and shrimp cocktails and hamburgers and beers. Through the constant high thud of the place, we heard each

other easily. The other noises mingled and, without a singleness, did not intrude. No one was talking about us. The heads and eyes had turned and watched with reflex curiosity as we came past. But they did not know us or anything about us. And it occurred to me that if they did know, they would care no more about it than to repeat it in some dull conversation, that it could be no more for them than another fact. If I sat down with one of them and said, Look here, I've just made love to this beautiful girl, and I've said that I love her and must somehow now make her say that she loves me, I knew that what they would say, whoever they were was Do you really think she's beautiful?

I ordered a second round of beers, but Susan did not touch hers. Then, we went to a movie, and, through a part of it, I held her hand. The opening scene was a fight, so we sat through that a second time, and then walked, between the spreading intermittent streetlight sources and the fallen leaves, around the dark and one piece people, back to Radcliffe. At the dor, she gave me her mouth in a still and sterile kiss.

I called her the next morning.

"Can I see you, today?" I said.

"No. I've got to study."

"Can't we study together?"

"No, I study best alone."

"When can I see you?"

"I don't know. Call and see."

"I am calling."

"But I can't today."

"What about Friday?"

"I don't know. I'm not sure. Can you call tomorrow?"

"Yes, of course," I said. Then: "Did you have fun yesterday? Was yesterday good?"

"Yes, I had a very good time yesterday."

I hung up then and went to lunch. I sat alone at an end of a table in the still-seeming, high-ceilinged, heavy-aired Union. At the other end of the table, three boys I did not know and did not want to know were talking about blind dates they had had the night before. I listened to them as I ate.

I got up and got more ice cream. When I returned, Ogden, Jeffreys, Kelley and Biddle came over and slid their trays down beside mine.

"Have fun, yesterday?" said Ogden.

"Yes," I said. "She's a good girl."

"You should have come over after. Of course, I didn't really expect you to."

"Well, we were going to, but we got talking and I didn't know what happened."

"I can guess," said Kelley. He was a still, heavy boy from Boston, with a wide long nose and small busy eyes. I knew him little. Though I later saw him loud, then he seemed usually quiet and truculent, as though all human associations were a demeaning duty. He laughed now hoarsely, and his busy eyes skittered among the other three of us.

I said nothing.

Finally, he said, "Well, did you?"

"Did I what?"

"Did you screw her?"

I looked back at his heavy imperious belligerent face. "Did I what?" I said.

"Screw her. You know, man, fornicate. A male and a female. You know, man. Everybody does."

"Everybody does what?"

"Everybody does screw her. Everybody screws Susan Blair!"

"Have you?" I said.

"No," he said.

"Well then, everybody doesn't, do they?"

"Oh, man," he said. "Don't quibble. You know what I mean. Did you?"

"I thought it would be clear that I'm not about to answer that."

"He did," he exclaimed, with a gruff, bellicose warwhoop of a snort. "I told you, Ogden, he did."

"No," I said. "I didn't."

"Don't lie, man. Nobody's going to tell on you," he said.

"There is nothing to be told," I said. "I didn't."

I finished my ice cream, and then I sat with them until they had finished, and we got up together and left.

They sat regularly with me now. All of them knew who I was, and they sat down, presupposing introductions, and talked. Ogden, especially, made himself my friend. I took to watching television with him, and, though I was not good, playing billiards. We made another effort to locate the Harvard Square bookie.

At the same time, I was trying to see Susan. She was at once friendly and evasive. I needed to talk to her, and finished always dissatisfied. She would not go out with me two nights in a row. She saw many other people, not friends of mine, but people I knew nothing about — graduate students, political people. I knew that most of them were what other girls — though not Susan — would have called just friends, but I knew also, because Susan told me, that she slept with some of them, and I never knew which was which. We saw each other often in the afternoons. Sometimes, we would make love. And others, without explanation but insistently and definitely, she would only kiss me. Sometimes, she would not do that. I recall her thin retreating mouth under mine, turning scared when I pressed and asked too hard, and my knowing the strength and the smoothness that was in her, having had her and seen her naked, and always unable to remember enough of it.

One day, we were in my room talking. We were talking about politics, I believe. We talked a lot about politics then, Susan and I, and Ogden and I, but I did not know enough. I had resolved to read the Times every day, but I did not. Whenever I read it, I felt that I was tuning it in the middle. There were too many of the names and places that I did not know. I thought it would be easier if I could catch a crisis right at its inception and then follow it through to its conclusion. Then I would be right there, ready for the next one to begin. But, though I tried, I did not read the Times, and so, I did not know enough, and after I had said what I believed, I grew bored.

Susan wore a pair of dark, rather man cut slacks and a black turtle neck and no make up. Her head was popped a little forward, and her frail voice was insisting, about politics or whatever, and I was watching her

mouth. I went across and, when she paused for breath, kissed her. All of her tightened, and she turned her head past my kiss.

"Why did you do that?" she said.

"Why do you do anything?"

"That's what I'm asking: Why did you kiss me then? And why do you bother with Allen Ogden and Kelley and all of them? Why do you do anything that you do? Why must you say you love me?"

"Because I want to," I said. "Because it is natural."

"No," she said. And then, after a moment: "Why won't you ever tell me the truth about what you think?"

"That is the truth," I said.

"No," she said. "It can't be."

But, of course, it was; or at least, it was as much of the truth as I knew, and more than I said to anyone else. More certainly than I said to the people who were becoming my set.

I felt myself very active then, and the days seemed to pass quickly. And yet, I remember that when I went home for Thanksgiving, I realised that only three weeks had passed, and already it seemed like always.

It was not richness that I coveted, not, at least immediately, covet that I did to whatever it was that was not richness. Rather, I enjoyed the knowledge of it. I enjoyed the whole concept of vast wealth and its possibilities, and its nearby personification in these people who seemed all to take it for granted. And, of course, I enjoyed being associated, as I was in the eyes of Robert and his friends, with this vague vastness. I knew to condescend to certain richness, and some of those I cared for were less rich than some I snubbed. And yet, I could not yet comprehend wealth. Among those people who became my set, I made none but personal distinctions, for I could not credit the real vastness and, without that, the degrees of wealth. I was not yet astute enough to realise the rather awesome fact that there were people of my own age looking for subtle ways to spend their money.

I spoke with them, then, without distinctions, and, except for Ogden, I spoke to each of them in the same short question and answer manner and about the same subjects: football and television, and Susan and courses. I almost never told them stories. They were not interested; they did not know the people who did the doings of my stories, and, I realised, they would not care to know them.

Kelley would have told me so. He was the first of them I learned to dislike. And, I think, he was the only of them for whom my dislike so hardened that, even when he was charming me — for they all could do that — I still knew I disliked him. He was a rather cumbersome boy, with large features, who patronized everything and everyone. He would have liked, I think, to have been a feudal lord. Never a knight, but certainly a lord. When he ate, he wiped his mouth with his forearm. There was that about whatever he did: He insisted upon his right to be a little gross and a little rude as though to say he knew so well better that he had not to care. He never voiced the feudal beliefs I claim for him. Rather, belligerently and arrogantly, he voiced the same far right notions that I was coming, less spe-

cifically, to accept.

He fought with Ogden steadily about these. They were the only two who argued publicly about politics or economics.

Ogden would say, "You just don't see, do you, Kelley?"

And Kelley would say, "No, man, I just don't see. I don't see all this about peons. I don't think you see it either. Man, you just can't believe that crap."

Then Ogden: "Christ, you are unbelievable. You nouveau boor. You are just unbelievable."

And Kelley would say, "Better nouveau riche than never rich, man."

They would keep up like that, angry past arguing and too angry too stop, until finally someone, Jeffreys or Ronson or someone, would say, "Can't you two talk about anything else? We've heard all that before."

And then the noise and persistence would drain, and the conversation would once more be slow and broken by easy silences. They seemed to talk most about the night before. Someone had always done something the night before that everyone knew about and could talk about. For a long time, there was an every night poker game, and they talked a great deal about that. I played a few times, but I had to care too much about winning, and so, could not match the nonchalance of their betting, and lost. For them, it did not seem to matter who won — though there were steady winners and steady pigeons — just so long as there was a game.

I was a quiet one of them, because often I did not know what had happened the night before. They asked me a great many questions that I did not answer about Susan. Someone was always seeing us together. Jeffreys was especially fascinated by the idea of her, and he voiced eager questions which asked exactly what he wanted to know. Ogden, too, was intrigued, though he was more brief and more cynical in his questions. They all presupposed, like introductions, that I was making love to Susan, and though I did not acknowledge this, I no longer denied it, because to do so made more noise than to keep still.

I believe that I learned more about Susan from them than they did from me, because they knew more about her. They knew for facts the things that I had not suspected, and they knew the facts of the specific times and people that Susan herself told me about in only cloying general statements. But what they knew was no more real to them than facts, and it was finally only through me that they could believe in her.

Still, I could not learn enough. I remember saying one night to Ogden that I thought I loved Susan.

He said only, "You oughtn't to."

He did not like to talk about her when there were no others around. Then, when we were alone, mostly in his room, with the noise and the flash of the television that he kept always lit but did not watch, dancing behind our talk, we talked sometimes of others, but mostly of that about which he and Kelley argued. Ogden, like Susan, knew more facts than I, and what he said was more insistent and more believed in. Sometimes, in the middle of the talk, he would laugh or exclaim at the television, and always there was its static babble heard and seen in the background. He

would talk about giving Negroes the vote, and social security, and welfare, and medicare; they were all one in his mind, and he was for them.

I would say, "I don't mind a Negro voting. I just object to paying his cab fare to the voting booth."

And he would say, "Don't you see that that is what this country has: wealth. Just plain brute overwhelming wealth and nothing more. And he has got to have some of it."

And I would say, "No, he has not got to have some of it. He has got to have only a chance to get it."

Then he would start again, and I would be quiet. It was like religion: Either you believed it or you did not, and all the facts were ultimately irrelevant and all the talk pointless. But it all seemed so clear to me, and as he talked, I would sit there, hearing his voice, like the television, behind my thoughts, thinking:

You are like Rockefeller, who lives in the house that his grandfather built away from everything and everyone because he had robbed and crushed so many people he was afraid for his life, and who, living in that house and on that money, like his grandfather still crushes people, supporting legislation that will not let anybody ever again make that much money. Who imposes the noblesse oblige that took two generations of his grandfather's ill-gotten money to create on people who haven't got that money, and to such an extent that they will never have that money. Who insures that he and his will be the last like them, by crushing out opportunity in the very name of opportunity, imposing the product of vastness upon people of little, and thereby shut off the possibility of such vastness ever again. Who makes everyone support his noblesse oblige, at the cost of ever feeling its ethic themselves, while he lives in his grandfather's hideout amid the art that he can buy with his grandfather's ill-gotten money.

Thinking:

It is easy for you, who already have what you will have — however it was procured — there and sure and coming to you, beyond the touch of any but token taxes. It is easy for you, because you can afford to do fine things and never once sacrifice having fine things. Because this distinction is possible for you: Work is the only dignity, but work for money is the ultimate indignity. You could afford to be an artist if you wanted. But what about me? How am I ever going to get a place so big and so vast that only the people I choose can get in? What is going to be left for me, when you get done making starving impossible? When you get done making it so that to struggle and strive and work at what you are good at puts you all alone, below even the dumbest worker?

Thinking:

Do you think about that? Do you think about me?

## II

We were all of us very drunk. Robert had got with us somewhere, and, though he told me next day that he had been sober while all the others said how drunk they had been, he was drunkest of all. He kept saying, "C'mon, let's do something, you son of a bitches. let's

do something," in a high heavy voice. I knew that the others were blaming him on me.

We had begun in Ogden's room — Ogden and I, and Ronson, and Jeffrey, and Kelley, and Biddle, though, somewhere, Ronson had dropped out — with a bottle of tequila and a salt shaker stolen from the Union to celebrate the Brighter Day marriage of James and Mary. Later, when no one seemed to know what we were talking about, some of us switched causes to the death, by fire, of Archbishop Cranmer, though Ogden remained loyal to James and Mary.

When the tequila was gone, we had some beers. And then we went to dinner. Someone went out and got two bottles of red wine and we all put on tuxedos — Ogden lent me his old one; Robert was not with us yet — and we all went over in the near dark, past the thick shadows and lighted libraries, to the Union for dinner.

But the head serving lady would not let us in.

"My dear charming lady," said Ogden.

"Give me one good reason," I said.

She said we could not have wine in the Union. She said we were drunk. She said she would have to call a proctor.

"I think it is obvious that we are not wanted," said Ogden. "I will not eat where I am not wanted."

"I've been thrown out of better places," said Kelley.

We returned to Ogden's room, and he put on the television. Ronson had dropped out.

Then we were in Elsie's trying to explain to the woman about our sandwiches. We went by my room on the way, so that I could get some money — I got lots of money, crumpled all together — and I suppose that that is where Robert got with us, for he was with us at Elsie's.

The sky was purple, and bright as though some vast light shone through it from behind. The streetlights and silver poles stood out brightly and singly. We walked in a bunch. We had gotten drinks at my room — scotch or bourbon, because they were brown — and we had the glasses with us and swore whenever we spilled any. People had to walk into the street around us. Robert



kept calling to the people until Kelley told him that you do not talk to people who walk around you.

Elsie's was empty for Elsie's, and most of us got seats. In the corner, behind the pinball machine, a girl with long dark hair and very white skin was talking on the telephone. She looked hard faced over toward us when we entered. Robert went over and leaned across the pin ball machine and said something to her. Then he looked back toward us. She turned her back to him.

The woman came and I ordered two pastrami sandwiches and a BLT with chicken and mayo to go. The man beside me was eating pie a la mode, and I asked for a bite. He did not answer.

Kelley ordered a roast beef special, but he did not want Russian dressing on it. He made the woman repeat his order to him to be sure she had understood.

"What you boys going," she said. "To a prom?"

"No," said Kelley. "White jackets are for proms. You know, with red carnations."

"Oh," she said.

"Yes, oh," said Kelley. "Are you sure you understand that order. No Russian dressing."

"We must be quiet," said Ogden. "We must keep our dignity. Otherwise this will be an insult to James and Mary."

I told the man beside me that this was the anniversary of the death, by fire, of Archbishop Cranmer.

Biddle said that if we were not more quiet, someone would call the police; Jeffreys kept looking around and seconding Biddle.

"Yes," said Ogden finally. "If you're not quiet, Jones, she won't put any mayo on your BLT."

"Who's your friend?" said Kelley. He jerked his thumb toward Robert, his soft rump arched up as he leaned across the machine toward the girl.

"He's not my friend, he's my room mate," I said.

"Well does he have to be with us?" said Kelley.

"All who wish to celebrate are welcome," said Ogden.

"Will you please be quiet and let me talk," said the girl.

"I was only trying to be nice," said Robert. He looked toward us. "I was only trying to be friendly," he said.

She said, "Little boy, aren't you too young to be so drunk?"

"Drunk?" he said. "My good woman, I have not yet begun to drink." Which was the truth.

The sandwiches came, and we took them and went back in a bunch along the narrow brick walk toward the Yard. When we passed the Andover Shop, Robert said, "That's where I should have bought my jacket. That's where I'll buy my next one." We went back to Ogden's room, and he switched on the television, and we opened the wine and had our dinner. Biddle broke off one of the corks, so that we had to push it down into the wine, and Kelley called him an ass and refused to drink from that bottle.

I wanted to talk about Susan. And I wanted Robert to be gone. He kept saying, "Aren't you guys going to do anything?" No one paid any attention to him except Kelley, who made a point of paying no attention to him.

I said, "You're not that drunk, Robert. Stop acting."

He said, "Drunk? I have not yet begun to drink."

Kelley said, "Man, I know some girls and three of us could go over there."

Jeffreys said, "Nobody wants to go over there, Kelley." Jeffreys wanted to go to the movies. "You just sit around that damned redhead with the long nails, what's her name, Carson, starts telling about how Huntington Hartford wants to take her to Nassau."

"You don't have to come," said Kelley. "Nobody asked you. I just thought three of us might go over. Jones might like to meet them. You know, man, in case he gets tired of what he's got."

I wanted to talk to Susan. I wanted to be with her. Jeffreys said, "That one from Texas has rotten teeth."

Robert said, "Let's go. Let's do something."

Kelley said to Jeffreys, "Well, have you got a better idea?"

I wanted Susan to see me.

Then we were in the south end, looking for girls. It had been Ogden's idea, and we had come in his car. We passed a cluster of Negroes, standing in a doorway, spotlighted under the yellow neon of a bar sign. Though it was November, three of the four men were in shirt-sleeves. There were two girls, their rumps tight under the thinness of their dresses. We saw them briefly and uneasily. One of the girls wore a white dress which stretched very thin across the haughty thrust of her rump. Even in the time of the furtive quick look I cast them, I could see that she was smooth and that she looked out to us, like Susan, starkly and independently. They stared openly at us.

It was a main street, and the streetlights shone down in wide sharp whiteness.

Two girls passed us.

Robert said, "Hello, there."

Kelley said, "Shut up, damn you."

I wanted to be with Susan. I wanted to explain to her how fine we were together. I wanted her to acknowledge that we had room and need, one for the other, and I believed I could make it all clear to her if I could just be with her now.

We walked along the row of small wooden porches, lined together like splintery inadequate playpens. We passed another bar, with another cluster of Negroes in the doorway. From inside, we could hear music, and, past the spotlighted forms in the doorway, could see the dim haze of the place and the thin neon bar lights in its centre.

We walked past, wanting to see in but not wanting to be seen looking. Jeffreys said something. And then Ogden. On the street, bright like a movie, people turned their heads and stared openly at us.

Robert called, "Hey you guys, why don't we go in here?"

We turned around. He was standing in front of the bar door.

One of the Negroes said, "Cause you're not old enough, boy."

We watched Robert standing there, saying nothing. The Negroes were looking from him to us.

Ogden said, "Come along, Robert, it is clear you're not wanted there."

Robert caught up with us. We began walking again. Robert said, "Why didn't we go in there? There were plenty of girls in there."

Never looking around, Kelley said, "From now on, man, you just be quiet. Just walk right with us and don't say anything at all. Because you are stupid."

Ogden said, "We're not going to find anything here. Not on a main street."

At the next corner, we turned and went back along a side street. Still, there were the row houses and the small sameness of the wooden porches. But now the street was darker and quieter.

Ogden said, "There are three whorehouses down here. I know that."

Jeffreys said, "But how are we going to find one?" "They'll find us," said Ogden. They know what we're looking for."

Three girls went past. One wore a coat with an immense white fur collar.

Ogden said loudly, "I wish we could just find some girls."

The girls kept walking.

At the end of the street, we came to a long flat faced wooden building. In it, there was a closed grocery store, and, next to that, a white lit place with its door open. Over the door, there was a red light. Higher on the flat front of the place, two long fluorescent lights shone bleaching down along its face. ETERNAL HOPE IN CHRIST MISSION read painted blue letters.

"This is it," said Ogden. "I remember now. This is one of them."

"It's a church," said Jeffreys.

"Oh, man," said Kelley. "Do you believe everything you read?"

"Yeah," said Robert. "Don't you see the red light?"

"I thought you were going to shut up," said Kelley. We went through the dark doorway, Ogden and I first. There was another door inside, and it was closed.

"Well, open it, man," said Kelley.

Ogden opened the door and I went inside. He followed me. We stood there, the two of us just inside of the doorway, and Kelley, looking over our shoulders from behind, and Robert and Jeffreys bunched against him, and Biddle somewhere behind.

The room was dim and not very large and filled with wooden funeral parlor chairs. As we came through the doorway, about forty Negroes, sitting toward the front, turned round in the chairs and stared at us. In the front, stood a huge Negro, flat in the glare of two spotlights. There was no stage. He stood there with a book in his hand, the light blue of his shirt pushing past the dark, almost black, blue of his jacket, his huge head lolling easily above his shoulders. He was talking when we came into the doorway, shouting really, and he continued for a minute. Then he stopped, and his head became still, and he also stared toward us.

He said, his voice heavy and as from far away, "Are you looking for salvation?"

We stood there. The congregation stared. Behind him, spotlighted also, was a sheet with a blue cross painted on it.

"Come in, my friends," he called. "Come in and welcome. Are you looking for salvation?"

"No," I said. "We are looking for a whorehouse." And then we were running.

We ran back along the dark street, and, skittering around the corner and onto the main street. Robert fell as we came around the corner. We ran down the street. Ogden said, "You simple son of a bitch." Robert was calling, "Hey you guys, wait up. I tore my pants. Wait up." We ran past the still dim porches and the bright bars on the bleached flat street, hearing ourselves and seeing each other's flailing backs and arms, scared.

We came to the car and got in. After Ogden had started the motor. Robert caught up, calling, "Wait, wait you guys," and Kelley pulled him, headfirst and horizontal, into the back seat. We drove away, down along the wide blanched main street.

"Why did we run?" said Robert. He was sprawled across Kelley and Biddle and me.

"Well, you see," said Ogden. "We were scared."

"What are we going to do now?" said Robert.

"Were going back to our rooms," said Kelley. "You to yours and we to ours."

Robert bumped about to a sitting position and squeezed down between Kelley and me.

We drove without talking. I knew that we were just going back to Harvard, and that it was all over until we would talk about it tomorrow. I recalled the four Negro men and two fine Negresses spotlighted flat under that neon. That was what there was to paint: that quick time when they stared out at us, stark under the garish light, hard people, neither defiant nor curious, but as though they knew all about us and were just looking, just being sure; that moment, that glare, and those rumps. But I had not been able even to look back at them. Now when I tried, I could recall no features, except the cocky firm rumps of the girl in white.

I wondered was she a whore. Could I have gone up to her then and said Five bucks? No, I could not. Not with all the others, hers and mine, there. But had I been alone, would she have come up to me? Would she have chosen me?

I wondered how many men would she take her clothes off for tonight. And what would they be like? And what would she be like? What would she think, with a man she did not know inside her? Would she just close her eyes and think of someone smooth and young and hard like her? I believed the four men standing with her knew all these things, as they knew that anyone could have her, that they could have her, and that later, one of them would. Yet, knowing that, they could just stand there, leaning in the doorway, and talk.

How? What were they thinking? Were they thinking only what they said? And where did the love fit? What place was left it?

As I thought of her, I thought she was fine and wanted to know her and be with her. I wanted to talk with her. But I could not talk with her, and I could not be with her long enough. I could just be naked with her and then go away, and I would know no more than before. I would not know about her any more than I would remember her nipples or her hips. There was no way to know. She would not tell me. She could not tell me. I could not be with her ever long enough to know.

Robert said, "I tore my pants."

No one answered.

We were on Storrow Drive now, and nearly to Harvard.

I thought of Susan. When I got back to my room, I called her.

"Hello," she said.

"Hello," I said.

Robert was stretched out on the sofa.

"I've been celebrating," I said.

"Yes," she said. "I know."

"I've been celebrating the anniversary of the death, by fire, of Archbishop Cranmer."

"Isn't that a rather strange thing to celebrate?"

"Mourning it, then," I said. "Celebrating; mourning. I've been acknowledging it. Acknowledging and commemorating the anniversary of the death, by fire, of Archbishop Cranmer."

Robert was still on the sofa.

"Will you leave the room?" I said. "So I can talk."

"It's my room, too," he said.

"Just leave. I want to talk."

"Talk, then," he said. He got up and went into the bedroom. "I tore my pants," he said. "But I could change them and we could go back."

"Just go to bed, Robert. I've got to talk."

Susan said, "Are you still drunk?"

"I never was drunk." I said.

"Why do you bother with those people?" she said.

"Because I like them. Because I'm like them."

"No," she said. "You're not. You're not, Peter."

"No," I said. "No one's like anyone. But I'm more like them than anyone else."

"No," She said.

"What do you know about me?" I said.

"I don't know."

I was not telling her what I wanted to tell her. I was not telling her that I was right for her.

"Do you know what I did tonight?" I said. "I went down the south end looking for a whore."

"Good for you."

"Good for you, good for you. You're so above it all, aren't you? So too good and alone for it. Good for you. Don't worry, we didn't succeed. We just looked. But I saw some. There was one in white. Let me tell you about the whore in white."

"Peter, I think we'd better finish tomorrow."

"No. We've got to talk about it now. I've got to say it now."

"We'll only fight, Peter. Call me, tomorrow."

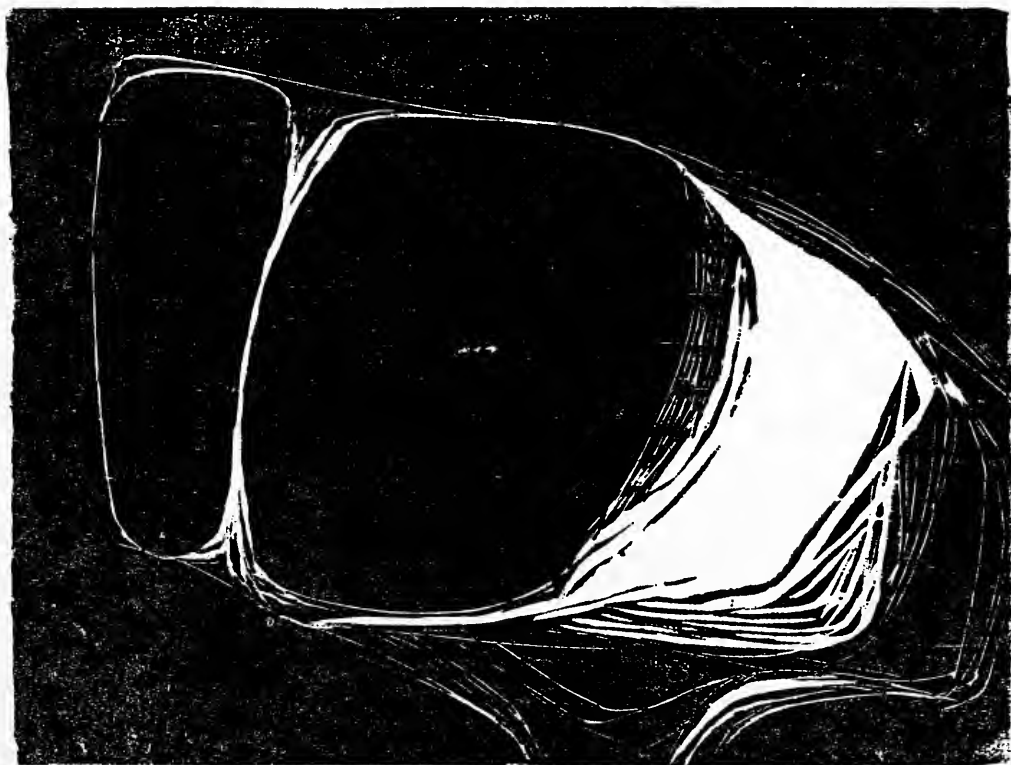
She hung up.

"Bitch," I said.

I dialed again, but when she heard my voice, she hung up right away.

I had not said any of it. I had not even said I love you.





SUBMISSIONS DUE  
FOR  
THE TWENTY-THIRD ART'S  
FESTIVAL WRITERS' FORUM

A group of distinguished writers and critics have been invited to the college to discuss the poetry and fiction selected for publication in the Twenty-Third Arts Festival Writers' Forum Coraddi. The speakers will include X. J. Kennedy, Eudora Welty, Stanley Kunitz, Robert Watson, Fred Chappell, and Peter Taylor.

Students who wish to submit manuscripts should observe the following.

1. Only clean first copies, double-spaced, typewritten, will be considered.
2. Verse of any length and complete prose pieces of not over 8000 words are acceptable.
3. Manuscripts should arrive at the University not later than February 15, 1966, addressed to Coraddi, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, 27412.
4. Manuscripts will be returned only if a self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed.

We will consider works which have been published or are to be published in other literary magazines. Notations should be made if the work is previously published, magazine and publisher. Those students whose work is selected for publication will be notified in early March, 1966.



