(our copy)

MS

A ROMAN STREET

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AROMA

STREET.

Check ✓ with original.

1) No politicians nowadays. ✓
2) The traitors like 'all the glittering and exciting places me Lan ever known.'
3) The wine (Valletta)
4) Tasso – second page – 'the real earth of Rome.'

A second girl (or was it the next day) and called me a placadone 'Ciao!' to the first, then went and sat at the side. They began talking quickly together, what work — it seemed they were going to the same job, outside Rome.

It was a rather ramshackle bus, and we knew it didn't go to the centre. There was the question of how near Rome it would drop us. Then we saw that it was skirting the wall of the Vatican, which meant we only had to walk a few minutes to Rome. We (or rather the Piazza del Risorgimento) Piazza Risorgimento, an ugly jumble of buses and trams, with trucks parked by the kerb to the right, and walked towards the Ponte Castello Sant' Angelo, feeling flushed from the outing. Again we were surprised at how clear the air is in the brilliant sunlight; there was still a city smoke over all. It was still like a city put down in the countryside, with the sparkle of the fields and the sea in it. We dodged the traffic, taking note of the narrow medieval sidestreets that the Vatican overlooked when it tore down the area between the river and St Peter's, and tried to turn it into a massive fascist monument, and succeeded. Nothing is uglier than the approach to the St. Peter's square, and some day a kindly pope should tear it down and plant an avenue of trees. It could easily be done. The road is wide and bare. The old palazzi on either side have been kept, in the style. Only the unpleasant fascist marble and the street lamps, benches and raised pavements have to be removed, and one or two of the fascist fronts with their chimpanzee-dignity have to be refaced. Then the period of the church's collaboration with the greatest political buffoons since ancient times could be quietly set aside. As that fascist marble was to gaping peasants from the south. You still see them, gaping. They were children in that epoch. Its attitudes fused with their flesh. You can see them sometimes, the men stiffly dressed, their heads tilted, pointing slightly, trying to look haughty as if this were the imperial city indeed, then. Fascism was so successful in Italy because it was a recapitulation of Paganism: its harking back to ancient times was not an accident, much less a romantic or academic nostalgia; it was a real return to the heart of Italy, before its conversion; it always discouraged the Christian conversion

in people — the charity, mercy, almost all the acceptance. It tried to reinstate the pagan clatter and spectacle, which in heaven & the Italian taste. The interior dream of Christianity, any invisible flame, was decreed publicly non-existent. It was all gymnastics, games, competition, a haughty style of completeness — all the pride that the Christian conversion had laid low after the fall of the Roman empire. It told the people they must push. The whole art of life became rhetoric — which all Italian thought and art [illegible] Truth has always been sacrificed to effect.

Fascism didn't go out of our lives. It spread throughout Europe and the whole continent of America, in our lives, until there is almost nothing left but clatter and spectacle, and the tiny gem of truth gets lost all the time. People can't see it any more, in themselves. There is too much public clatter — they can't be alone enough to get at their own truth. It can hardly be printed [illegible] An invisible censorship has come over our lives. If anything, this is more true outside the race-fascist countries than in them. People who want to talk the truth are muffled. They may be muffled in a kindly way, and by neglect, but the fact remains. Hitler died to get into our homes. I know men whose [illegible] pastime of [illegible] has [illegible] hatred [illegible] of Hitler, [illegible] who have him in their bones, the more so as their hatred is [illegible] unforgiving. The whole of life has become rhetoric, but far removed from the first Italian tyranny, far more subtle, in the heaven of more complicated societies than the Italian or the German. Hitler doesn't need armies or allies any more, his children number millions. He doesn't even need evil. He needs no force. His children are already won to rhetoric by the use of twelve. They can't resist. It comes in through the mouth, the eyes, the ears, the senses. Loving the truth means a day-to-day struggle, it means a struggle for life. It means poverty and a tragic amount of mild derision and calculated indifference. It means loneliness. It means being completely and perfectly misunderstood. It means being seen as a fascist would see you — as a series of outward gestures, without inner meaning. In Europe, England and France must suffer from this most

And this is what is so difficult to understand. In our world, we no longer know the safety, the goodness of the nerves. Only the unconscious family, which we have lost — which has been dimpled in us — can provide it. It is behind the Italian state, which offends people sometimes when they come from abroad. The free is slow, even slowness by Northern standards: no effort has been made to shape it to public view, because it is safe — it is watching a fellow-creature of the family, in the drowsy state of the family, like ~~no mother~~ a man looking at ~~his mother~~. The rest of us, particularly the Americans, have been woken and shocked out of that drowsiness, and we seem too aware of things, by comparison. Italian nerves are really the strongest in the western world. To enjoy them to work with them to find this out. Their rhythm is quite undisturbed. Nothing is done by schedule, as in our world; and where there is a schedule it is not felt as such, but absorbed into the slow, human rhythm. Somebody will go out and get a tray of coffee and aperitifs just when you're feeling tired — at the very moment, sometimes. You ~~actually~~, in the ~~middle of~~ with a sudden tired feeling, ~~looking a sort of tired effort~~ up, and there it is. Somebody like Rosario, who works in the ~~art~~ sculptor's foundry. He may bring the tray at exactly eleven, twenty every morning: but he isn't going according to schedule, nor does he ever consult his watch. In Italy a whole world of natural time exists, embedded in the nerves, which has ceased to exist for ~~us~~ the a century in the rest of Europe. This is what gives Italy ~~its~~ power of influence and a totally hidden power to change others. It is an enormous invisible power which is never suspected even when its good effects are felt — because it cannot be seen. ~~Nothing, seeing nothing, people~~ ~~just don't know the effects of a sunny climate on the easy-going race. They~~ ~~see them as 'warm-blooded', whatever that means. In fact, Italians~~ ~~are cooler by each other than the rest of us are. Londoners find them~~ ~~unbearably cool people. They let others come and go, opportunities,~~ ~~lovers — also the very race according to them — come and go.~~ Their nerves can stand anything: noise, light, the constant presence of any number of people. Their nerves have a remarkable cool sanity, ~~in~~ remaining intact. In danger they react with extraordinary lightning

terribly, because they have the most intense society — the most evolved Christian congregation of habits and intimacies, [illegible] where publicity counts for least, they are the least rhetorical countries ~~in Italy, and Germany, are the~~ ~~Christendom, have suffered in solitude, to their people~~. The publicity-world is still to be taught its perfection; it is Italian rhetoric taken to the utmost point of madness, where it is so intimate that it has nothing to do with politics any more. Italy changed the whole scope of the twentieth century, in its ~~age,~~ converted the whole of Europe to Christendom centuries ago, without apparently striking a blow, and without apparently the power of a thought.

I can still remember the walks I used to take before breakfast every morning with the dog, five or six years ago, sometimes down to the other side of the river, where the prison is. I always did it with disgust. The [illegible] I seemed to be able to see were tired, unshaven, sweating faces — the people getting off the trams to go to their work, and the nothing. I loved cars, the piss that streamed down from the steps of the school by the river, where for some reason People used to urinate during the night, though there was a pissoir on the pavement opposite. I remember the posters, how they seemed to stare more than they do now; and the reckless clatter of the tram as it rushed by, which doesn't worry me at all now. Sometimes I used to walk along swearing to myself quietly. I felt a prisoner at that time. I thought I'd never get out of the city, or Italy, again. It was just at the time when I needed my own country, when I didn't really understand Italy (my own country), though I thought I did. At first, in Italy. You think you can see only selfishness and pushing, particularly in Rome: only a superficial, raw insistence. But then change your work in your ⊙ yourself. After some years — or perhaps it works quicker with other people — you reach a sense of where the order lies. Before, the lack of order baffles you, and think it must really be an order, as you had it all your life — but a bad, selfish, glistening one. But there is no order in no sense at all — there is no formal congregation of people joined by laws. This is because there can be disorder: I mean, disorder is possible; because of the family that lies behind everything, and which is understood, without awareness, by everyone. A family can show any amount of disorder without disruption inside.

Nights in Tuscany.

Tuscan Nights.

INSERT

I N.B. (Romans being distinct a people)

The Roman power & government: where this lies. in the Romans themselves – in their turning a stone to the world but in fact being more relevant than any other Italians. Take Nannina – the Florence, Lennon, patient suffering & the people's virtue. No action like the principle & empiricism.

They have no art. But they stir and stimulate it. No religion, but they stir and stimulate it.

II Museum of the Thermae. (Ancient monastery – cypress garden)

A Roman Street

We got back four or five months ago and it already feel like years. The flat ~~On the top~~ place always seems cool
cool when we ~~go~~ into it at first — after having been in England & Germany. The rooms are full and cozy, with plenty of carpets on the floor. The corridor from the front door
immediate gives the / cool impression: the floor-stones are uncovered, with the hot weather in mind. And then the big room
large, empty, overlooking the courtyard ~~at the back~~ seems ~~dark~~. too. at first: in winter it looks all right because we have the thick blue carpet down, which covers the whole floor,
long and there are the ~~interesting~~ yellow curtains. But in the summer we gradually get used to the cool floor, because
like the place would be ~~seen more~~ even if we had the carpets down. It is still on the top floor of an old
palazzo — one wing of which goes back to the fourteenth century and the other (our part) to the sixteenth; the flat
was built only about fifty years. ~~on the roof~~. and the
terrace on one side, overlooking the street, is ~~in fact for~~ the original roof,
~~that time~~. Until last year we had the original red-
flooring
brick ~~passing stones~~ on the terrace, which made a pleasant
floor in the summer, when we sat on there to eat in the
first cool air of the day: but ~~when we were in England the~~

owner
landlady decided to tear the whole lot up because they were leaking water through to the flat below, and put in their place the cheapest crushed-travertine Tiles she could find. So now we have that bare look on the terrace as well — like the new apartments in Rome. Have reminded us of their lavatories (!) with tiles of polished marble and travertine.

Being on the top floor, the rooms turn in the summer and either freeze or leak in the winter. This winter we had quite a big leak from the terrace above where the water-tanks are kept and where tenants have their washing. It made a grey, black and green patch of fungus over our curtains on the other, and we asked the man in charge of the whole house to look after it. The management of the house is called the condominio, which means a committee of all the flat-owners (mine only tenants) who pays & repairs and look after the porteria who sits in his office just near the big entrance-door below. There used to be no condominio, when our landlady owned most of the flats in the house: she kept everything in date, and you had to look after your own repairs. She was quite clear about it. She was a fine old woman in her nineties who wore a red wig and

eyes saying, 'Lei mi sta qui' — which ~~I suppose~~ means something like 'I'm stick in my throat!' or worse. Whereupon my neighbour, who is a young woman with a cool temper and the Sicilian reserve, said quietly, 'Take some bicarbonate & soda, Ter!' The plump lady jumped up from her chair and stood with the table — she has a wonderful swinging, circular walk with vast buttocks — and shouted, 'Ignorante!', then stood back to be seen again. The seed of discord was actually the lift, or rather, the projected lift, since there isn't one and it doesn't seem as if there ever will be. Our neighbour wanted a lift from the beginning, since she moved in two or three years ago, and offered to pay for it herself. So the condominio would pay to ~~and~~ do the rest gradually, if they didn't want to join in the scheme at once. The plump lady said she couldn't afford certainly immediate payment, so our neighbour suggested that all the entrances to the lift ~~everything~~ should be got ready on each floor, so that when/ ~~and the other~~ each tenant paid the landing entrance ~~they~~ ~~the~~ ~~could~~ would be opened to ~~pay~~. Then the plump lady suggested the lift and a door made. That the husband, an iron merchant, would do the installing — because, as the husband himself said, since he was an iron-merchant, ~~and craftsman~~, he would like to 'go into lifts', as a

a new enterprise, and this would be a good chance for him to learn, to create a reputation and also to make money. One neighbour, with his own reasons, said she didn't think it was a good idea to use the Lower as his experimental station. And that started it. The lift-project was snowballed from there (?) twice as. The plump lady said that if it was built only ~~when I was~~ there she would use it ~~every~~ daily, and then walk down to the new flat. So the lift is now those hundred things that are going to be done, and never only be done. But one day, when we're all thinking that something quite ~~completely~~, is different and the life has been forgotten, ~~by everybody~~. it will be started, ~~& completed in a month or so,~~ may suddenly

~~In the old days it was done better, by nothing~~ One grand landlady with her red wig ~~was~~ secretly hated the plump lady (in the old days) but ~~carpeted her~~ they ~~ignored~~ always somehow, ~~one giving way to the other, in an~~ ~~kind of~~ alternating egotism. Now our neighbours has maybe in an element of young, fierce pride from Sicily, and the give-and-take has ~~stopped~~ had to stop. Our landlady would sit in the big armchair and say to us, "I shall never send you away, my dear, although I know I could get twice the rent from other people. And I shall never pay a live penny towards ~~the~~ repairs. Now a ~~penny~~ live, So in the end we shall

spoke with a remarkable clarity which reminded me of eighteenth century ~~styles of writing~~ books. And her flat was in the eighteenth century style, too: she received one sitting in a small armchair with a rounded back and upright back, just big enough to sit in, and she would make you feel that a character in 'The School of Scandal' ~~was at least the importance of being Earnest~~. But now there's a committee and he's a lawyer, ~~sits in~~ speaks for her. She told her flat to a man with nine children, and he now occupies everything that's in the house: a wife, he dresses, but he says he will. He seems the right person for the type. Cameron Flint / the occupier. He belongs to an old Roman family — we're all the complete ones with ancient Roman faces, like Julius Caesar who have eaten too much, and sometimes Nero and Tiberiuses, but the hard-working, clean sort. There always seems to be the most tremendous fog in his place, when you go up the stairs: they always seem to be doing something exciting and completely absorbing. The same when they're walking along the street — the children skip along excitedly, with their arms and they all have their faces turned, wildly discussing something, as if the street around them was invisible. They have some wonderful old Greek pieces in their flat, chipped heads and torsos, and we heard they're a big Dilthey. The man told us that he told us on that his family had been collecting pieces for

generations, and that when she has [illegible] anything in mind we must
come and see them. Mike most installations of their own, in Italy,
~~that~~ it was is only petite, and if we ever see the stuff it will be
the day before we leave the palazzo for good. He is a tall man
with a black moustache and smokes one cigarette after
another, dangling them in a corner of his mouth so that they
~~have made~~ make a black patch on one side of his teeth and
lips. He is pleasantly quiet and chivalrous with women, in
a way you rarely ~~never~~ see in Rome nowadays. He seems to work
for Land, and his workers are always calling at the
flat with some message/ standing at the door.
~~for him seem very~~ respectfully ~~him.~~

~~as Roman are when they find somebody who works hard~~
~~and keeps his promises more or less.~~ for all his hard work,
Still, the ~~It~~ seems
~~kept his promise is~~ not ~~that~~ not. the Sicilian lady
~~neighbor~~

who lives next door to us
had to mend the part of the wall itself, which
amounted to a hundred and ten thousand lire, and
she still hasn't got it out of the condominio. Though
she is a member of it; ~~#~~ there is a feud between the Sicilian
~~between~~
woman who lives next door to us woman
and the plump ~~lady~~ two floors down, and at the
second floor woman
condominio meetings this ~~lady~~ announced that she
would obstruct anything suggested by ~~not~~ Sicilian neighbors even if
she liked the idea secretly. She struck the table with
the side of an outstretched hand and shouted with the

centuries, inside its own walls.

We got back when it was still hot, at the end of August, though the worst had passed. We came along the Via Emilia, from Arezzo, and entered Rome at one of its busiest points. This was always depressing — finding once again that Rome with was a real city, thick with fumes and a mass of ~~deafening~~ traffic, ~~Ten years ago it was much more like a country town than~~ it is now. I don't think it was much less noisy. Probably Rome has always been noisy; at least, Catullus complained about it — in this time the peasants used to drive cattle through the streets in the dead of night, and the wheels had wooden rims; these on ~~cobbles~~ the large cobbles of the kind you see in Ostia Antica, where parts of the ancient carriage-way is ~~still there~~ intact, must have been deafening.

I can remember the wide streets of Rome ten years ago with only a few cars passing here and there. I had a tiny room on the top floor of a palazzo near the Piazza Cavour, a commercial-looking baroque square that always reminded me of Paris, and I used to sit at a café table in the narrow pavement every day for a couple of hours of coffee and vermouth, without ever thinking of the traffic. I can remember the high yellow

do we fix ourselves. I'll go up there with a bucket of cement and sweep it on the bricks, and that'll be one more patch in hundreds of other made in the last four or five centuries. The view from the top is marvellous, when you have anything to do up there: you can see St. Peter's just across the river, like an immense grey canvas, with the Vatican behind it on the hill, blinking red, and there are the thick, dark-green trees of the Janiculum, which would make a nice park if there weren't a road going right through it; then the pastel colours of the new quarter of Monte Mario, on the highest hill in Rome, with, close by, more curious and fascinating of all, because they look like a natural landscape in the sun — a sort of desert — the innumerable terracotta tiled roofs, the colour of sand, and the arched brick walls, with the little balconies and terraces jutting out everywhere. We're remarkably near the country, and the other day when I was on the roof trying to mend our neighbour's water-pipes I could smell the cowdung from the fields, along the Via Aurelia, the coast-road to the north that leaves Rome just by the Vatican wall, on the other side of the river from us. Aurelia was a

We're on the side of Rome that is least built-up. Practically because of the Vatican city that has covered the same area of

~~For are those little~~ these tricked ~~with~~ are dug up ~~every~~
~~now and then~~, sometimes at night also once a month, ~~with spectacular glare as they~~
~~flare all through the night~~, under a sheet, to detect a water- ~~[illegible]~~ or gas-
leak. Most of the other narrow streets nearly ~~also~~ have had
their bricks ~~[illegible]~~ ripped up and ~~[illegible]~~ tar put down, with pave-
ments, whereas we have no pavement at all. ~~And I suppose a certain amount of historical~~
~~interest attaches to our street~~. Opposite us, providing cool
benches ~~for people to sit on~~ in the hot weather, are the huge
foundation stones of what was once a ~~[illegible]~~ have been a ~~[illegible]~~ of
justice (Tribunale) in the seventeenth century, stretching far along
~~along the street~~, ~~and~~ if this had actually been built out
Rome,
street would have become the ~~main street~~ centre of ~~the~~
much more than it does,
and the how the thing would ~~look~~ much closer the river as in Paris.
City would

One street used to be the main street of Rome in the
sixteenth century and has one massive palazzo all
Some owner
another (in ~~the~~) all its length, in the style of the late Baroque. ~~A family~~
a few doors away from us,
not long ago restored a tiny villa on ~~the other side~~
restored
and it has become a sophisticated look now, ~~and~~
of the street, perched among the other taller buildings as
if it had floated in from the country and settled
down, its huge foundation-stones, from the Tribunale, where torn up
~~Because~~ ~~there~~, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ restoration
~~have they jostled into the street~~. Eventually this
may happen to the whole street, as it seems to be
~~happen to all the others as well, because the street is~~
becoming chic, ~~it seems to be becoming~~ with Via dei

the enterprising neighbour who has taught not only our landlady's
first cousin & the flats above — because, he says, he has a
large family — is going to use these stairs again. We all
believe he wants to have the whole palazzo eventually.
He is an engineer, and there are the wealthy men nowadays.

There are rumours, from our neighbours, that we really do
landlady, or rather her sons, who have taken over the interests, I
want to throw us out now, after six years, because they
feel they can get a higher rent. They certainly could get
a higher rent because we ~~almost~~ rebuilt the place at
our own expense; we put a bath in and a proper kitchen,
overhauled the electrical system and straightened the
walls, which were ~~teasy and flaky~~ like the banks of
a sunken river. ~~when we first came in~~ The place is full
of light now, but when we first saw it it was dismal
and frowsy. Almost as soon as we'd done the alter-
ations, and given fully the walls several coats of oil-distemper,
our landlady ~~reminded~~ told us, in her cringing way, 'With these changes I
could get twice the rent.'

Down at the entrance, on either side of the
massive two-leafed door, there are still the stones used
for mounting horses, ~~like~~ like the old-fashioned hydrants
you used to see in London, thumped, ~~[illegible]~~ when you feel
right. And the street outside is still cobbled; or rather,

Sunlight falling across that ugly, dusty street of an afternoon and making it look deserted, with trams clattering along the middle. The noise of in my room from these trams was always ~~disturbing~~ influence, especially at night. But the room was cosy, which not many rooms in Italy are. I had a bed against the wall which was a real divan-bed and not of the these dreary iron bedsteads with a straw mattress that you usually see, and by the window I had a comfortable armchair and a little round table on which to put my papers. The flat itself formed a square round a narrow courtyard, more like the open well of a staircase, though there was a fountain far down below; ~~there~~ a balcony ran along three sides of this well, crowded with potted plants and ~~climbing~~ & small shrubs, so that when I was having lunch in the little dining-room all alone, and getting quietly ~~dogged~~ on the ~~little~~ carafe of white wine that came with my schnitzel (it was usually schnitzel), I looked out at the thick ~~plants~~ leaves of ~~with the sun drenching them~~, and at the sand-coloured ~~facade~~ roof with the sun drenching them, and at the roof alone, and always felt I was in the country, and yet in a special county because it floated, ~~above everything else~~ and there was the dim, exciting noise of the city outside. I knew no one in the city at that time — just a handful of acquaint-

ances, and there was the half-frightened excitement of entering a totally new life.

Our large room overlooking the courtyard is always for some reason like part of a monastery in the summer, when the shutters are drawn – perhaps because of the cracked brick tiles on the floor and the tall white walls, or perhaps because of the sounds that drift in from the street below and the courtyard, echoing slightly and making it seem remote like a church. The colours stand out brilliantly in the dimness, and usually there is a chorus of radios from the courtyard. Unluckily there are also ten windows from which radio and television noises can come; ~~to the right, and to the left~~ ~~are kitchen and bathroom windows, which makes it quieter.~~ But if there happen to be no radio noises at all you can hear the fountain in the courtyard below, sporting out of the wall under a ~~trellised~~ bower fig-tree. The wall behind it used to be painted – I suppose in baroque times – and you can still faintly see the figures, like sad ghosts, and even the colours. Now there is a small iron-framed window where the ~~garage – and originally the~~ carriage-doors ~~of~~ used to be.

There is still a room for the garage, leading from the landlady's flat – presumably for the servants. And leading from these rooms are a tiny stone staircase, also for servants – where empty suitcases and trunks from the whole palazzo, including ours, are now piled. But

himself a fashionable 'sports' car (good for accelerating
fast and ~~about all for~~ making a lot of noise) he went to
fat and now he has an enormous belly. He used
to talked about dropping hours, ~~and things like that~~. He
believed dropping hours should be the same as in
England, without the siesta-gap from midday until
four, because the present Italian working-day rarely ends before
eight and often nine or ten in the evening.
But, he, always said, the character of the Italian people didn't
permit it. They would all push off to the sea at
four or five o'clock sharp. Then they knocked off, and
the national morale would slump. They were better
to keep them at work. Otherwise they'd turn every day into a holiday.
He knew from his own workers — his apprentices and assistants
who helped him. He had to keep them at it, otherwise they took
advantage. Santino's eyes would bulge out of his head
when he got passionate in an argument and he would
spit when he talk, murmuring 'Scusi' and rubbing the
back of his hand across his mouth quickly & when he did so.
And he
would snap his orders at the boys — 'Forza, forza!' —
quickly! We met him first through seeing his dog
in the doorway of the shop; it was the same breed as our
own, a Belgian wolf. We wanted a mate for our

Cortona, like the antique dealers are. In the last
years or so, five antique dealers have opened shops here.
They never seem to do any business, but just
look pleasant in lurid under dim lights, with tilted
carpets. Now and then a luxurious ship outside
the shop window and I suppose this makes enough to pass for
a week's slackness. A sideboard that looks as if it has just been knocked
up for a few thousand lire will fetch an enormous price, something like two hundred thousand.
Santino, who makes antique furniture, took us
into his workroom in the little courtyard just below us for a few
months, and we could see him planing his wood a fortnight
at a table and drilling it with brand-new worm holes. He'd
been thrown out of his first shop, which was two streets
away, but he was paying his rent.
But now he's back in his original street again, but a few doors
down from where he was before. Yet he makes a lot of money.
'He's honest,' people say. 'A marvellous worker, but no character!'
I used to spend
At no time I spent hours
talking to Santino at his first shop. There
were four years ago he had a remarkably beautiful face;
anything to do with art once was completely
absent from it, and you feel you had seen him a dozen
times in the Masaccio murals, in Giotto and
and Masolino.
Uccello, and Francesco. But he married and maybe

straight
~~stroke~~, looking ~~ashamed~~ ashamed of himself.

Our Terrace has an intimate tropical look in the summer because of the straw ~~roof~~ hats we put up to protect it from the sun and all the year round there are straw mats ~~etc~~ along the railings, tied to them with wire, so that we should be naked to the windows on the other side of the road. In the evening when the heat is just abating the lights make a soft glow on the straw, ~~and~~ ~~in both a tiki~~ like the terra firma a cabin in the jungle — or in a film about the jungle. When there were red chicks for a glow this was much more so. Otherwise the evenings are a disaster. ~~And when there~~, In the first cool hours after dark, when we sit out in easy chairs with the straw above us, there is the din of television from across the road — from across three or four rooms of echoing like a loudspeaker in the middle of a huge arena. Sometimes we can see through the flicking figures through someone's window on the other side of the road from the entrance from the river ~~and almost see what the programme is about~~.

Suddenly, quite late at night, a shot echoes down the street — a scream — an angry voice — ~~the~~ music. But with all the noise of the battery next door, we can't keep our eyes open after nine; we stump to bed, the ~~cats~~ dogs sneak panting out of us, all the terrace-doors open, all the windows; and there we stay, often in the same position, until six or seven in the morning.

kitch, and his Pasotes was female, so we named them there + then,
with everybody looking on. The dog's name was
Black — or Blek, as the Italians always say.
He was a fine, strapping, affectionate
dog, very loud, and a real Roman. It didn't do to
touch him anywhere near the neck, because he would
suddenly get very fierce.
He despised Santino Pasotes wife for
abandoning him. Santino's wife put her foot down and
refused to have the creature in the house after she'd had
given birth
the first child. It was part of her jealousy. So he left it out in the street — luckily,
as
since by then he'd moved to the little
courtyard below us. We took Black — which
adored
Pasotes in and he loved it
so much, being with his first wife, and in the home,
that all he did was sit and grin
at us from the floor, all day, like this eyes blazing. Then
we found a home for him friend who took him, cleaned
him up and took him to America, the
time came to give him away to the American friend to take
When we first
he was frantic to get back to us;
a few nights later he did escape from his new home the place and
a mile down the river; he found his way back
across several busy streets, and we saw
him sniffing round the entrance-door at late one night
on

that have something glistening in them, ~~that~~ making the look French. A delicate face, with a fine, slim nose. And she always wears flat heels, rather worn-down. Sometimes she seems so tired that she can hardly look up: she wants to avoid all eyes. Then there is this little, half-repressed smile that touches her lips, like a frail Italian edition of the charm a whore is supposed to have. The second time I saw her I noticed a small, heavy, peasant-like man looking at her from across the road; and this confirmed the face that she was a whore to me: his look was hard, glistening with ~~a~~ disgust, ~~and~~ a mixture of contempt ~~and~~ familiar, gloating desire. She was just going into a shop. Her face averted from people. And I notice she doesn't raise her voice in the shop, ~~and~~ she lets other people take their turn before her. Her character seems broken. ~~And~~ She is one of the ~~very~~ few Italian women I have ever seen with a look of real ~~desire~~ in her face. She seems helpless, in this desire. This is why I say her character seems broken, because she looks ~~like~~ the helpless victim of ~~her~~ desire, that draws at her and haunts her. Yet there isn't conflict in her face. She seems totally passive. The other ~~women~~ whores are ~~not~~ jovial, heavy, challenging, often with something ugly in them, an ugly fearless. They haven't arrived at a proper state of their

9.

I am fascinated by a woman around the corner who I think is a whore. She is tall and walks a bit like the she-ass down by the square. Sometimes she makes a quick, washed half-smile when I look at her: I often see her in the cavernous shop, where I get three kilos of small logs and a kilo of box-wood to start it with. I have an idea I saw her first about two years ago, but can't be sure. I took a friend to a hotel which used to be the local brothel, before they were all closed down. Now it was tarted up with marble, and there was C. and C. in every room, but you had the feeling it was still basically a whorehouse. ~~The friend told me that parties of men came in during the night.~~ And this young woman was at the desk. I remember she said something rude and demure, about her not coming in too late ① ~~and looked disgusted~~. She was tired, unpainted, and kept yawning. ~~Perhaps~~ Only her way of looking round her was the same as this woman's. I was reminded of what Rimbaud said about whores being the guarantors of womanhood: without them there would be the respectable, the faithful, the sheltered women. She yields up the floor, in a compassionate, dead way: ~~the only real religious~~ this is ~~that was~~ the woman - by seeming beyond the floor. And that ~~was~~ the impression this woman gave me when I saw her first. I did know why, I immediately said to myself. 'She's a whore!' She ② has a pale, sometimes almost green face, and tired eyes

At one time I used to buy my wine and mineral water at a shop round the corner, in a busy street. But about two years ago I took my custom to a tiny shop two or three doors away from our palazzo. In the hot weather I can phone down and Sergio delivers it to my door. He is a pale young man called Sergio, and has been running the shop since his father died a year or two ago. He is very satisfied, one can see that. The tiny place is no longer used as a drinking parlour, with a few tables and chairs, as it was under his father. I remember they used to sing and show sometimes until after midnight: and he decided it was too much trouble. Now he deals out ~~loose wine~~ wine from the casks, and oil, vinegar, mineral water. He keeps a little blackboard on the wall where he chalks up a tally of all the little debts. Sometimes I pay, sometimes not. I don't buy the loose wine but only bottles — not even the cheaper flasks. I know the wine is not a good wine, then, even if it does come from where the label says it does. It is more expensive, but I prefer a glass of decent stuff to three or four of the liquor that nearly blinds you after one hour and seems — often, they say, has been — made from chemicals. As a matter of fact, I traced the wine I buy

me flesh, to the quality of desire and fluttering compassion
still
~~are~~ there. This woman has a French kind of subtlety in
her face. ~~There is a [illegible] pensive desire in her face~~
~~which makes her quite separate.~~

Rome is its people, And I suppose we live right
in the middle of them. There is a long canal of cobble-
like, medieval streets all around us. We always used to
how we cried / bear going ~~in Rome~~ crying but, with the other ~~there~~, as we did like ~~to~~
in ~~Europe~~ cities, ~~and this we is also the case in~~
Europe. It took us years to find our that it was the people.
But something kept us there. Every year we resolved to
leave, but one year led to another. Even now, with the
traffic making every narrow street a trap of fumes, with
~~the whole place~~ like an historical city dropped inside a
garage, we cling on. We have to lock the French
windows in the bedroom against the noise that goes on all
night: cars stop and start up again, outside the
door slam, calling up at the windows — to someone, and
there are voices / of people who live all night ~~and sleep~~
~~by day — an increasing population in the street below~~
~~unfortunately.~~ But the people are always the same. We know them
as well as now. That is, we know their names and
talk to / them by the door. But we don't know where their
lives, or they don't know ours. It seems irrelevant.

but even accounting for the volcanic soil in these hills, which usually upsets me as an element in the wine, it should have that effect. That effect comes from mixed wine, a from chemical wine.

One portress, in her tiny, damp office by the main door, often complains about the food and wine these days. She is fat plump and pale, and walks with a limp, and sometimes she sits at her table with her head on her elbow, propped up with a shawl, (when her leg gives her trouble.) whenever we go away for any length of time she calls us 'Crisbanti' (bastards) with a smile. She watches every movement in the house, not with a lingering, tired, uncensorious Roman eye, not in a prying way; and she gives me all the gossip — sometimes signalling me to come right into the office and close the door behind me, so that she can tell me something ripe in a thick whisper, with careful glances through the glass panels of the door. In this office there is a table where she puts out the mail in the morning and evening, in piles, and - chest of drawers with a mirror, a wardrobe where she locks all her money, a sewing machine or wide a marble slab where she eats — she usually has two or three favoured ones, out of the eleven or eight she lives in the courtyard — eat the scraps. The room-maid has lunches from the restaurant where she works, then there is a screen with

to the small village in Tuscany where we sometimes go and stay. I was astonished to see a lorry bearing the name on its way to the local vineyards. This accounted for the affinity & taste - I had been drinking the same wine for years, in Tuscany, without knowing it.

Sergio himself knows nothing about wine. Nor does he drink it. The sight & the mildest form & drunkenness seems to disgust him. He leans against the shop entrance looking sadly across the street in the afternoon. He has a northern face - you might think he was German or English. He always likes to hear me talk about the other countries we've been to - France, Austria, wherever it is: the likes to know the route we've taken if we go on a journey. His mother also sits in the shop, a tiny, shrivelled, pale woman with a wall-eye, who hardly ever speaks. All she does is to call out 'Sergio!' gruffly when we enter, because usually he is in the back part & the shop, which is in almost total darkness. I've been there, to try out some alcohol-measuring instrument we had bought, like a clean thermometer, but it didn't work, as for the wine in his vats was mostly water. I only had his 'loose' wine once, and it was like getting a smack across the head - it came into action about half-an-hour after being drunk. He told me he gets it from one & the castelli. The hills round Rome:

door, ~~with~~ a ~~thick~~ sturdy curtain ~~hangs~~ across ~~the~~ its façade at the top. You can sometimes get a glimpse of the entrance hall of the house — dim, paved in the same way as the one room, with faded red and white and terracotta tiles, and a curving wooden staircase, ~~of the kind~~ of a kind which one rarely sees in Italy. An old woman stands at the door this for hours every day, quite silent, watching everything closely but very intelligently. She has an impediment of the mouth. Sometimes you can see the praying in a bare room ~~by the hall~~ ~~when it is open and the window open: the lean of~~ at an old wooden prayer-stool, ~~and her~~ her eyes tightly closed, reciting quickly and silently, her face lifted towards a crucifix on the wall. Armenian priests with their long black beards, and occasionally (there is a cardinal), come and go in ~~their~~ limousines. ⊙

The church is rarely open — ~~the last time we've~~ only ~~seen it~~ once during the ~~other day~~ last five years. ~~once~~ twice ~~open~~ in the last five years. ~~once~~ recently I once found it open ~~on a Sunday afternoon~~ and went inside. ~~It is a~~ This, ~~wonderfully~~ intimate church, I think it may have been the day of S. Lucia because a great number of candles were burning, and the whole nave of the chancel glowed in their light. There were only a dozen or

behind it

~~In~~ an enormous double bed, which she shares with the other woman, who is ~~into everything~~ no less plump. The traffic thunders by just outside, the massive door opens and closes all ~~day~~ night long, ~~letting the people who sleep at night and letting people who sleep in the day.~~ letting the night-birds in and the morning-birds out. But they seem to sleep all night.

The office is damp and there is no heating, except from the tiny charcoal fire which is used for cooking in winter. We call the Mari – from Anna Maria. She never married, and has a ugly, good face with large eyes. Mari is a real woman of the people, a Roman. She tries to keep ~~the~~ shop, selling pasta, spaghetti, macaroni, ravioli and so on.

But that was long ago. Then, she says, she could drink wine without getting a headache. It was ~~that~~ fresh, sparkling and clear. In those days food was real food. Then. But nowadays you don't know what you're buying. Everything from the flour to the bread seems to have been interfered with; there are periodical cases when people are found making margarine or lard out of waste-products of Moroccan oil, and then you hear terrible things about the butter, the milk. It is 'An age of delinquency', she says. Everything has come down, there's no longer any family, no longer 'respect' in the world.

Opposite us, with its roof way below us, so that we can see the plants growing between the tiles, is the Armenian seminary, with the Armenian church immediately next

~~the most~~ any other, in Rumpelstilzchen, the moment the startled somebody came across and stopped him. But he seemed pleased to think that his voice could carry so far.

The various noises in the street have deciphered slowly. In the morning at about eight o'clock half-past there is the sound of chains and a tank of milk bottles being thrown down a chute and then in some way disappeared. There is the garbage truck ~~which is lifting the cans and~~ ~~has mechanically~~ which with its lifting the cans mechanically and lowers them again. Bed There is a similar noise, but more compact, which is Gaetano, the owner of the stores opposite, pulling up his shutters. Sometimes we can see him closing it at night, too, after he has pulled it down again: he turns the lock about eight times. Gaetano is perhaps the only Italian-looking man I-ally: he has a shining bald head and a ~~with~~ flushed face, with glasses, and could easily be German. Also he ~~spoke~~ very quickly, and weighs out the cheese and ~~sugar~~ bread with neat little movements, watching the scales with an unusual vigorous concentration through his glasses. ~~He is another center of the local gossip.~~

We get our cheese from him, and sometimes our eggs. And when we need something quickly, just before lunch— ~~or~~ a bottle of preserved tomatoes ~~from Salerno~~, or some

so pews. Over the entrance there is a tall, faded grill of leather that deadens all the sounds from the road and can be raised like a canopy against the sunlight. The church was traditional, intimate, glowing like a cluster of with candles when seen from the street.

Many rooms in this part of the College belong to the Armenian college. About three years ago there was a terrible wailing noise from across the road, which turned out to be a tenor practising. It began every morning and went on for two or three hours — usually four scales, and always flat. How the chap ever came to think he could sing I did know. Then he would try an aria, and that was flat, too. And he always sounded dead and tuneless. After about a month of it — I used to start whenever I heard his voice — I went across and hunted out his room. He turned out to be a Canadian, and was very pleasant about it. He said he'd close the window in future, though it would mean stifling. Then he asked me if I'd like to hear him sing. I said yes. So he sang the song he'd been torturing me with for a month or more. It was better at close quarters, but still not very pleasant. After that the noise stopped, and I think they all moved away.

Also the fact that in a country which made more noise than the Canadian was bitter

without ~~fences~~ from a garage below, the sudden deafening blast of a radio or television from a workshop next door to an entrance, the hammering of iron from the blacksmith in an courtyard, a kind of jukebox in use of the subsidiary courtyards (lunch-hours only), a brass band rehearsing from a disused church opposite every Tuesday evening (and Saturdays in the summer), the midday and evening traffic-block at the river which produces the deafening chorus of car-horns, the ~~building~~ decoration — hammering, sawing, hearing, demolishing, hole-making, hole-filling, drilling — that has ~~been going on in~~ ~~since we came here~~ for years in the ~~pulazzo~~ next door, apparently without result, the pounding of road-hammers on the street below & a gas-leak on an electricity-leak, the shouting, howling, moaning of brakes, the cries of children, and on Sunday/the motor-cycle parade ~~of lunatics~~ in the street below.

and the police-wagon didn't appear again. [redacted] The night was in the street outside!
always full of strange and disconnected happenings / Roman life
dreary
~~Rotten~~ / so much dirt at night as in some way to another form of
~~life~~. A different group of people seem to take over.

Among these were the car-robbers. We've had our car stolen twice, ~~in Rome~~ but not recently, not in the last three or four years: we seem to be accepted by the local underworld. The first time it happened we waited two days and then went out in search of it. In a city the size of Rome that seemed hopeless, but we found it almost a mile away in a tiny piazza you could only see normally, behind a ~~large~~ maze of narrow ~~medieval~~ streets. Nothing seemed to be wrong. They'd connected up the ignition-wire with the engine direct, which meant that somebody must have held the wires together while they were driving. The night it was stolen there was a robbery on the main Corso, street behind us, and we thought it might have been used for this, since it had a foreign number-plate and the police did inspect the movements of foreign cars on the whole: they blasted a hole in the pavement with dynamite and ~~got~~ removed the shutters ~~of the shop~~ that way. It must have made an ~~enormous~~ shattering noise, but they got away with everything.

At first ~~when the car was stolen~~, we were told to go to a young man called The Giant, who had a stall

pepper, & grated Parmesan ~~cheese~~ — we plonk down to him and the dog. Then up with his tail the boy ~~runs~~ comes to meet us. The son looks quite Italian, and always talks to his dog when we're giving him a walk. 'Isabella!' he calls out 'Isabella!' And the dog gives him a familiar side-glance. He is just about the age to be taught, by the mind. Younger than that makes him brash. At one time she barked whenever we went down into the street, because there were children playing ball & ~~going~~ ~~on~~ riding on bicycles: but now these children are in their 'teens and wear proper shirts, & smoke and groom it on their motor-cycles, making enough noise for an airport. INSERT

Sometimes when I slept badly in the hot weather I used to go out to the terrace in my pyjamas and look down at the street, (No dead Night). It always looked like a stage-scene when it was deserted, under the yellowish lamplights. There were pieces of newspaper and refuse, waiting for the bottle-shutters in the morning. Once all the lights were out & I was staying down. A police-car had just come along the road, moving very slowly, and had turned into the side-street opposite; and further down the road a car was parked on the ~~wrong~~ wrong side, partially with lights inside. In my inflamed state ~~through lack of sleep~~ I connected the three events, but then the light went up. the car moved away

I boys on motorcycles stopped and opened the truck, which had a new carpenter's vice inside, but they were frightened off by a woman opposite, who opened her window and shouted something at them. She told us she'd call next morning.

At one time I used to take the dog for a walk along the river every morning before breakfast. At I noticed was the squalor of the side streets, and the dog-tired look in people's faces. There was a school from ~~that~~ in Mussolini's time facing the river, and there would almost be a stream of urine from its main steps: for some reason it was used as a lavatory in the night. And people used to sit there, waiting for a tram. Sometimes there would be tramps, curled up in newspaper on the cold stone. The actual tracks were on a level with the road, behind a cobbled courtyard which must have been a street at one time. Along the river there are tall trees which used to look marvellous sometimes in the early sunlight, on a spring day: they had something misty and breathless about them, where the light touched their top leaves, suggesting massive spaces and countryside. The noise was always deafening: the traffic used to fly along on both sides, with two tram-tracks in between. Then they took the tram-tracks up and made the road one-way, with the result that the traffic became even worse.

at the local market. He was supposed to be in charge of the local underworld, and a word with him — indicating that you were a local yourself — would get the stolen goods back. But then London I knew per a stolen camera back that way. But we found the car ourselves instead. In any case, we were told the police were interested. come into the car-racket. His was the pelts that [illegible] take the whole thing. He'd steal from a car, but he wouldn't

the car-robberies were probably organised on a city-wide level — take [illegible] of that. We were also told that car-stealing, and secondly stealing from cars, was a thriving business, and had a technique all of its own. Two thugs would drive up in a motor cycle, cluster round the car as if they were in a friendly argument. and since friendly arguments in Rome are always noisy — in Rome it was easy for us, them & the car-door cried and slip inside. But they seemed to have the wire [illegible]

master-keys as well. One car is stolen from about once in six months: sometimes an umbrella goes, & a pair of shoes & that we never leave anything inside if we can help it. People have lost life-possessions that way. They come to Rome, leave the car outside for half-an-hour, when they go to a hotel, and return to find the top ripped open and the box forced, and the suitcase gone.

A few days after we got back last time we just escaped one of these little robberies: also underlies a couple

chief of the place, which was probably why he was called St. John. He had a clean moral influence on the others, and they felt/seemed to feel his eye a blessing. He found the electrician for us — an amateur who worked in the Questura: he made a mess of our electrical system, for now as much as it would have cost professionally, but at least he was cheaper and agreeable, and didn't make much of his errors himself. The light-attachments were always falling to pieces after he left. St. John always did little jobs for us after that. Or he would come and polish the wardrobe. His polishing was a special secret, of his, and if someone asked what his mixture was he ~~was~~ knowledge, and was as discreet as a freemason punctiliously honest person can be, by turning and turning the question round a bit so that there was always a misunderstanding. He said it was a mixture of 'this and that', or ~~but to multiply~~ what ~~was only~~ 'different things'. It had miraculous polishing and cleaning powers. He could make the furniture look new.

At that time he lived in a large, damp, shadowy room with his wife, who was in bed most of the time from rheumatism. ~~I think.~~ It was in a humped, crooked mediaeval house, with a fascinating stone staircase leading up to it. He paid hardly anything for this room, and kept his wood (planks) and potatoes under the bed and coal in the cellar) doing in the corridor outside. Sometimes, I am with/his wardrobe,

~~were now less~~ gone are mesh of fast traffic and ~~but~~ the fumes became suffocating, and dotted there was now a permanent blue mist hanging between the trees. This changed the city more than anything else: the mist of fumes that slightly distorted the air and took off the brilliant edge of the sunlight, and made the buildings - fractions less astonishing in their brilliant terracotta walls ochres, and sterilised the Roman air of its old, rich smells.

When we first moved to the flat, while the decoration came on work, we used to take breakfast at a small café round the corner. This was owned by two neighbours, a brother and sister, living with their old mother. That was before the Sicilian lady moved in, and the flat next door was simple, bare and unheated, with no straw roof against the sun. In the corner of the café men used to play cards in the afternoon and evening, tucked into a dark corner by the bar. And sometimes 'St. John', as he was nicknamed — San Giovanni — used to go there. He was a carpenter and had something biblical about him. He may have been Jewish. He had rather light, curly hair, and an aquiline nose, with soft, blue eyes. He talked endlessly, always in a quiet, reasonable voice, as if talking to himself. In that first month he really looked after us and kept us prevented from being exploited. He took me into work and worked there with an assistant at planing down the doors, building kitchens and a wardrobe for the bedroom. He became the moral

~~work~~. and we never ~~saw~~ got to the bottom of his wardrobe. He called once or twice, to say how sorry he was. ~~He was shocked, but he knew~~ ~~he would~~ ~~But he~~ ~~panicked~~ ~~the~~ the day he'd ~~would~~ finish it / ~~the~~ ~~work~~. But we knew he would. Now, when he hears we are in Rome, he avoids the old places, and also where we live. One day last year the porter downstairs spoke to him and said we'd like to see him (we were going to tell him to forget the debt and start some other work), but he said he had too much to do at the moment and would see us 'later'! This 'later' could be one, two, four years: but in the end Fr. John always came back. At one time, before he got into debt with us, he had a knack of calling just when we needed him; ~~for something~~: it might be a day after we got an estimate from somebody else — he would call and leave it, ~~for~~ ~~us~~. His work was marvellous; slow but subtle and sure. He never moved a joint. He walked, physically. He always had the same rhythm, and knew a certain peace with him. His monologues were terrible — they never stopped, & were always ~~sent us and up in the~~: the same finish, the same voice, but there was something dreamy about them, and ~~he that~~ you could talk a sleep if you wanted to.

It seems astonishing now that ten years ago I could have sat on a bench on the other side of the river, a few feet from the road. But I can remember doing it. I can remember looking up now and again when a tram passed, with its dazzling ~~a morning~~ creakings and whining

17.

Standing
~~The~~ bed is next to ~~the~~ his bed. His daughter wanted them to move to
a new flat in the outskirts, and one day
they did. The new place cost much more, but it had a bathroom and
a small terrace and plenty of wholesome air. But not long after he
moved in the damp began to appear on the walls here, too, and overall,
~~little things kept going wrong. At last~~, and he lost most of his
work. He had foreseen this. Old Rome he had picked up his
work every day, in the cafés and bars and in the little trattorie
where he took his sandwiches at lunchtime and played cards in
the evening. ~~And~~ People had called at his home with commissions.
But now that was changed. There was no community in the new housing estate —
~~it takes a bad time to grow~~. And even when he found work there
was no place for him to do it. In Rome he'd always been part
of a crowd of somebody's. Old. ~~to do his work~~ — there was always
a place for St. John. This face had been known for 30 or 40 years.
You could always find us where he was, at any given time, by asking at one of the cafés.
Or the trattoria ~~would know~~ where you'd been told you'd been there an hour
before, ~~or else you found him at the café, or he was in one~~ you found him
of the carpenters' shops. You could plot his route from what
you were told, and it seemed to follow the same circuit every day,
~~though not with the same order of call~~

At the time he moved us he was building an
addition to his wardrobe, and as usual we paid him in
advance, about forty thousand lire. Then his wife fell ill. He
had difficulties paying the new rent. A year passed ~~to~~

noise. Otherwise there would many disturbances. Of course, the pavement-bench doesn't exist any more. Nor do the trams. Nor, in fact, does the road. A tunnel has been dug there instead, to avoid the bottleneck at the crossroads, and now you step into a silver-lighted chasm. A kind of traffic-skeleton has been imposed on the city: a few wide roads have been converted into highways running round the centre of the city, and along these a high speed is maintained. It doesn't make the city look less picturesque but more so. The tunnels and smooth bridges and pedestrian crosses make the city look more like a painted scene and, if anything, cleaner. The much narrower streets are less noticeable. Changes in Rome always tend to the monumental, and probably always have done. Again and again the intimate life is torn up in order to stake an attitude. To see in the hideous approach to St. Peter's, which involved tearing down a mass of narrow, mediaeval streets to provide a vista. And the new roads and tunnels make vistas. But they are hideous. They are just clean, perfect channels, like a skeleton gripping the city.

The tobacconist-shop downstairs where we get our stamps and post mail used to be in the hands of a plump woman and her daughter. Sometimes a son called ~~there~~ a large secondhand Alfa Romeo car, and took them

Rome in N. He tried & disciple himself for the shop, and the girl, who was also fifteen, tried to look grand. She was sometimes disdainful, and learned stamps by pushing them along the counter perfunctorily with the sticky side & Lad to lick facing down. He mother sat with quick, peering eyes, breathing heavily, and was more polite. They seemed hardly Roman. But the more custom you gave them the pleasanter they were. Sometimes the girl came in the shop dressed in high-heeled shoes and a tight skirt, with painted lips. But it seemed strenuous, and didn't touch a certain commercial element that seemed to lie in her: there was a money-grubbing demon also in them both, ~~perhaps~~ ~~it was~~ just they seemed ambitious, especially the girl: she wanted higher things. And now they've gone. They never seemed to fit in the little world downstairs. Now the shop is in the hands of the most stupid young couple I've ever met. They know the price of nothing, take down & add up the simplest sums, and stare across the counter with a sort of primordial darkness. Sometimes their parents are in the shop, too, and you can see they are still peasanty. The couple have a large, new car, and the wife works in an office half the day, so they are probably comfortable. They fetch stand

~~Heard his step, his footsteps in the hall.~~ In the evening, two years ago. Before he husband left, she used to wake everybody up — night wailing and screaming. While he husband in his quiet, Viennese ~~peasant~~ voice asked her to keep quiet. He asked her again and again, why did she shout so? did she need an audience? He told us she did everything for an audience: nothing for itself — everything for its impact on other people. Nothing from inside. And when he came home late she wanted all the courtyard to know. ~~The~~ Her cries were heartrending. ~~sometimes~~ She would shout in German, 'I want to know! I want to know!' with a desperate, moaning cry ~~of~~ upstairs. She would fall down, try to push him off a chair, pummel his fists against his face. But though still playing to an audience. She was really moved and shattered, ~~however~~ ~~much~~ ~~moved~~ ~~the~~ ~~reaction~~. She seemed for Italian to the point of madness — everything was in piazza, in her every feeling, thought and sensation showed. And nothing stayed. ~~in the open,~~ repressed before it was purposely ~~experienced~~. One day had to be in the open, Brigitte changed, all the time. the husband was limping badly. He said she'd knocked him down. Yet she was tiny, half his size almost. He hardly spoke. He looked pale and thin, and slipped past the porters ~~lonely~~ like a ghost. The atmosphere in their flat was squalid and hopeless. They were usually asleep until noon or two in the ~~night~~ afternoon. The wife used to shout also — 'I must sleep! I must sleep!' But when he left she stayed up even later, seemed rarely to be in bed before dawn.

But now she's ~~alone~~ she seems to go to bed even later, while he husband, who lives alone on the other side of the river, goes to bed ~~earlier~~. ~~He was told that~~

So sometimes I begin trembling at the approach of bedtime — a mild fluttering inside, completely physical. This is the fear of the noise, mostly from the street. Cars down there, cars roar up and down, [de]stops and starts. Most of the small cars have had their engines tampered with, to make more noise — to consume less petrol. If I go to bed early this called sense of fear, like the intestines being ever so slightly twisted, diminishes. We try to go to bed soon after nine. Then we're usually starting to wake up at dawn. We keep the bedroom door closed, the shutters closed, and the curtains tight-drawn. The air has to come through the big room, from the courtyard, which means we feel a cliff dragged by the morning. In summer it is better; the noises seem paralysed.

Last night there was a terrific shouting in the middle of the night, about two or three. We woke up. I knew the word 'Pace! Pace!' being screamed indecently — peace, peace! I remembered the feeling of sympathy I had inside my sleep, [a few seconds before,] when I half-consciously heard this word. It was ~~Stefan~~ a woman on the ~~third~~ second floor, shouting up at the third floor. She and her son are being driven mad by [the] night-activities there. A young woman lives alone — her husband, an ~~American~~ Austrian, left her some time ago. She has a different escape every week, and never seems to be the same person. Her face, interests, expressions change together. She seems

shingles. She smokes heavily, and the spaces between her long teeth are jet black. I have always noticed she has hardly any lips. She is pleasing and friendly to talk to, and sometimes she shows a quick, incisive, passionate intelligence. She seems blind to the world. There are only attitudes, whims, poses in her. She seems a small person ~~in every way~~ obsessed in her expectations of the people. She has an understone of resentment, but she never says anything resentful. She is the centre of ~~all~~ ~~hatred~~ malice and outrage — never the cause of life happens to her. She talks from one experience to the other. She has no self-examination. She seems to tell you: This seems to me what gives her the blind, stupefied, blinking look sometimes. She feels enemies' hatred more and more, and without knowing it hastens it more and more the basis of ~~everything~~ what she does. Really she is torturing the people family underneath. Her defence is, 'They wouldn't complain about my noises if they had it' across pattern of this now to start with.' As she herself was kept awake night after night, so she keeps others awake now. ~~It seems she has to try & make the world pay the debts of suffering.~~ She talks about people as if they were in conspiracy against her. Her eyes narrow, and her lips look even thinner and paler. Yet she has passion.

20
She seems to have
got herself mixed up with some phoney theatrical group. They
close performances in the dead of night before an ~~worthy~~ expectant
audience — sitting on straw on the floor. The principal actor
writhes on the ground a lot, then someone says, 'Christ is
born. I wanna be free!' And the others ~~two~~ begin to peep ⊙
~~apparently looking deeply sometimes~~. There is also a 'shit-
men'; two we didn't hear what his function was. They end
with - 'last supper', when they throw pieces of pie at the
audience. This is Hall's 'avantgarde'.

They seem to be declaiming at night down there, ~~in the flat~~
downstairs, and playing music. The ~~young woman~~ tells the police ~~that~~
she's typing at night, that's all. But the family in the
flat below under the very ~~next person~~ a kind of party person.
~~every night~~ The ~~on the woman~~ underneath shouts up
terrible blasphemies, including one that is actually against
the law. 'defamation of the tomb' — It is called when you curse
defaming the dead
a another person. Then a speech is declaimed by the
acting group — a speech ~~that~~ including the name of the people family
underneath many times. They seem to even recorded, this speech ⊙
Or perhaps they deliver it through megaphones. The tiny
young woman looks sick. She has a rash on her cheeks, and
one day she showed me raw places actually under her
eyelashes, red like syphilitic chancres. But not suppurating ⊙
~~it came to a head~~ But she has had the nervous disease,

were blind to each other. It they were astonished as gradually being drawn a different person from the one they'd imagined in the other.

The ~~people~~ family in the second floor down were in the police also it, and the police down called on the flat, but they can find no basis for accusation. The give days the lives alone, and there is no evidence that the Hamlins - ~~family~~ actually sleep there. Perhaps they sleep on their straw.

I remember once the caught a mouse in the street outside and kept it in her pocket for two or three weeks. She were very ~~together~~ with it. Or night she kept it in the bath ~~and the sides were too slippery for it to get out~~. She was always losing it in people's room. She found it had a particularly fine hiding behind books, and she was always scrambling behind ~~people~~ her bookcase in search of it. It made frantic efforts to get away but she was always there in time, with her little hands. In the end it did get away, in her own kitchen, and she never saw it again.

Another time she caught a bird which seemed to have fallen from a nest. She kept trying to launch it from the window but it would flutter weakly until it fell the street below. Then she would run down and get it and start all over again.

She had two delightful cats, but one of them kept doing its ~~business~~ Turds on the floor, whereupon it felt very small

penetration to the truth — was dull herself.
And she has an occasional flashing ~~intelligence~~. (But A sort of
equals always round her, ~~who~~ always has done. She is not properly
in charge of herself. But, made them that, ~~she's a completely small~~
~~person, like a little toad~~, and anything she does seems to be
an attempt to create attention, / ~~which is finally~~ in terror against her own smallness.
wicked. She ends in ~~something~~ the putterest and evil recesses
She never really gets beyond herself — beyond only trying to makes
an impression. The impression she wants to make is seems to
be such rigid that what ~~she is capable of~~. herself is. ~~She wants to~~
~~make the impression of a big person, which she isn't.~~ Perhaps
this is why she never expresses resentment, ~~but religiously say,~~
~~the other people, and that they must be understood in their~~
difficulties because ~~she realises~~ it is / (the first sign of
vanity is when ~~it is the~~ developed beyond its capacities. If
the capacities were restrained, this would in time. But
the ~~only~~ is incapable of ~~things~~. She seems precluded from
real direct contact with the world. Her attitudes always
intervene — the sense of ~~the~~ / the rôle she is taking. Therefore
she ~~never seemed to~~ had no relation with her husband.
~~from the outside~~ Their marriage ~~started~~ started hopelessly for the
beginning. They didn't create good blood round them.
There was something unfitting between them. Really they were

all entering us. ~~Behind~~ In the miserable experience a well there was this dramatic ~~scene~~ background. The special light touched everything.

Sometimes at night there was an ~~sudden, deaf, silence~~ sudden, astonishing silence. When for a few second, the city seemed not to move, and only the leaves of the trees by the river stirred, and a car ~~moved~~ mewed in the country below. Then the clitter racket would start again in the distance — someone sounding his car horn impressively, a roar of engine, a shout. Years ago there was much more talking in the streets than there is now. Men used to sit on the curbing provided by the sidewalk ~~fat~~ fatigue below, and talk as if they were half-a-mile away from each other. Then there might be an invasion of boys whistling, throwing a ball — sometimes throwing a cat; they'd pick up a cat and sling it at each other. But you don't see that now. Partly the police tightened up, partly television and more money and more cars softened manners. The city has changed a lot. People stare at each other less, for one thing. There isn't the old leisurely, southern stare. The graciousness of certain middle-class people is more apparent. The living isn't reckless. A certain tense there used to be has died away. You don't hear sudden quarrels in the street below, with a crowd gathering. A certain amount of intimate life has been swept away from the streets. ~~The lights the~~

was missing and in demand. The flow reeked like a back-alley. There was always a pile of uncleared meals lying about somewhere. After a few months of this one took it ~~the bigger of the two~~ to a sort of cow-shed outside Rome, where charitable people brought the food: There are tiny houses made of wood, with arched openings for the cats to come in and out, and wire-meshing all round. The stink is terrific. There are dogs as well. The cats get an eye-disease in two or three days, and seemed completely stunned by being thrown out. It nearly went blind. One of the attendants took it home on her own pass, and very slowly it healed. It hated its owner with the fire, ~~contempt~~ outraged ~~hatred~~ contempt of animals for the heartless hospitals.

I remember a lot of silent suffering in these rooms. It affected one in a different way. Mine was mostly in sleepless nights, when I walked up and down the terrace, or sat in my room, or made tea. But it was all empty suffering. We were drawing something from the city all the time. It didn't will us. We used to listen to the voices down in the street sitting by the entrance. It was a long time before we learned the special necessary combination of surrender and tenacity. The colour of those rooms, the way the sunlight streamed through the shutters on to the floors, the silence in the corridor that suggested a monastery high-up, the sounds of cooking from the courtyard, and the dark dense blue of the sky on spring days, were

times on a hot Sunday, when nearly everybody ~~not~~ ~~has~~ has left Rome, you have the odd feeling. The streets are deserted again, and you can walk across them slowly.

Last Christmas they closed the ~~road~~ centre of Rome to the parallel streets to the Piazza di Spagna — to the traffic, and the effect of suddenly entering that zone was terrific. It was like going into a ~~completely~~ new — yet old and forgotten — experience. Time changed. This was the main thing; it became slower. The noises — in which time is rooted — were ~~all~~ calm. There was the echoing sound of talk, as if ~~there~~ indoors under a tall roof. And footsteps sounded. There was the muffled, exciting sound of ~~human existence~~ people still alive & real. presence.

This morning I noticed a soldier standing at one of the zebra-crossings with an orange armband marked 'Street education'. He motions people on & the crossing when they start to cross haphazardly, and the cars tend to respect the stripes more. Apparently 300 soldiers have been called into Rome for this, as a first step in turning Rome into a civic metropolis. But people are ~~much~~ softer than they used to be, & in themselves, without education. I ~~think~~ the presence of foreigners since the war — the millions of tourists — have helped this. They're usually mild/ and courteous, self-demeaning/ ~~and~~ people began to see that this kind of

~~In intimacy public intimacy there is~~ city I suppose this happened in London about the beginning of the century. People use to have stared, watched things in groups, talked & took the day pleasantly. after the ~~first world~~ 1914 war. You read about the old thriving life before then, in the streets.

Rome was actually bigger in ancient times. But it was ~~still~~ a huge town, not a city. Cities belong to the anonymous.

The light in Rome has changed. This is probably due to the fumes in the street. And the buildings use probably distrin. You rarely get that old splendid, fiery light on the buildings, in the evening; ~~and~~ or the dazzling sunlight like water in the early morning. You get it, but there is a touch of the city-dreamers now. The town has gone. It used to be a town, only a few years ago. But now there is just a touch of that sickening reserve ~~dust~~ of the city — a ~~certain~~ the equality of an intimacy broken and become ~~smelly~~ gesture; ~~and~~ the aching presence of too many strangers. In the summer, on a hot, still, sunny day. You used to have the feeling that the whole city lay silent and gleaming among other trees, with no part accessible and close to another. It felt one whole, with the fields outside. But now the old parts of the city seem inaccessible — behind a dense thicket of traffic and widened roads. The-

point in the park. The cat waits calmly, then leaps away fast in time and with three or four enormous soft bounds, like a gazelle climbs a tree. Cats like to challenge dogs.) They creep up to watch them, and if they find a dog chained up they like to irritate him. Both species are fascinated by the other, to the point of being paralysed genuinely glued to the ground. Our dog chases a cat as far as it wants to be chased. As soon as it stops and puts up its back she retires and seems to be doing something else. She never chases a cat that stands its ground. It seems to be a game agreed between the two of them.

Yesterday evening, on my way to the theatre, I met the younger brother of the couple I always think of as the 'ancient Romans'. They are a kind of thing. There parlour with a small desk and a curtain at the end, three or four doors away, and run a service for decorating churches on ceremonial occasions. They put in hedges of gilt chairs, masses of pink and white carnations and irises and roses, lay a red carpet down for the chancel to the main door and decorate the pillars. He is a small, broad, full-faced man with a clear, wide smile which shows a set of good teeth and makes his eyes glitter. More than this brother, he has the

mean they were suffering from self-defeat. Gracian behaviour even stated in the fashionable – the thing to do.

We've taken to walking in the garden of Sant Angelo now instead of the Borghese gardens, which are on the other side of the city and mean a twenty-minute drive through Roman fumes. The castle is built plumb inside the tomb of Claudius.[2] It has a sunk garden with paths and trees and a bit of lawn, lying in the bed of what used to be the moat, and a roadway that runs along the massive raised rim, like a wall, with another drop on the other side, presumably to an outer moat. It always reminds me of Oxford for some reason – and libraries like the Bodleian; and winter-evenings by cobbled lanes. Perhaps this is because the lawns and the vast thick walls and portcullis make it look like a college quadrangle. The advantage for us is that we can go there, either in the sunk park or in the road alone. Lots sit in the cafés there, going through their various rituals of being fiancés. Now and then you see a teenage couple really there in some fun together; and more rarely an older couple who are in a clandestine affair, and seem to want each other. But otherwise there are the usual family affairs, which seem to have no mystery.

Imperial square chin and straight nose, with generous cheeks. He was with a friend who hadn't shaved for two days and whose face was scraggy, with bloodshot eyes. We met in the dark sidestreet that runs by the side of this palazzo and I was dragged off to a coffee. He said they'd just eaten baccalà, dried cod, with some excellent white wine, and what - pity we hadn't met before as I could have joined them. They ate near the piazza, a few doors away for my brothers. They'd eaten spaghetti as a first dish, and promised to make me 'real spaghetti' one day - with no sauce in the usual way. Just oil and salted parmesan cheese and herbs, with garlic. And done 'al dente' - just hard enough to get the teeth into. As we stood in the long café at the corner of the main street he began talking about the whole problem of 'alimentazione'. He said people ate wrong in the West. Now an Italian could eat like a German - lots of pork. There were too many calories, the Italian climate was too warm and dry, and the calories couldn't be used up. So they disturbed the liver. The waste product = like the effluent is This was why pork was eaten very little, in Italy and then usually in a dry or smoked form, with the minimum fat. He said that when he was in Hamburg last year - he and his brother do 1 of 2 separate jobs each year to a foreign country, also - he ate pork nearly every day and didn't feel ill,

but when he (N is Viareggio, on his way down to Rome, he tried it again and it turned on him. It was like a car, he said — if you put petrol in and ran it very fast, it consumed the fuel. But if you didn't run it fast the fuel remained, but fuel couldn't remain. You had to evacuate it. So we (in diahhrea and things like that) ~~when the body went wrong.~~

I was dropped off carrying a book, by ~~an Italian, a Sicilian,~~ friend of ours — ~~translated into fiction,~~ a novel about Sicily. He asked if there were regional differences in England similar to those between Sicily and the Italian 'continent'. I said yes, but not as strong perhaps. He asked if there were the same jealousies and feuds between people that you find in Sicily. I said, no, but sometimes. The Irish were called the 'Neapolitans' in England; at which they laughed, because Neapolitans (~~in the north of Naples~~) are feckless and corrupt in a charming ~~and idle~~ way. He said they'd been talking about the Roman poets over their cod, those ..... and ..... who wrote in the Roman dialect, long balladic lines something wistfully mumsing, and heroic and graciously compassionate about them. A handsome looking man in a white coat came up to the table for his coffee, and my friend said to me with a smile, 'Here's the man who's your brother — you said you were going to the barber's'. But I had to remind him and I'll go on to the square. She said change I said ~~I'll go now~~ I'll go on to the square.

said, ~~because~~ convinced her I wouldn't understand him. He worked on my head with a gripped concentration, and ~~took away~~ scorched my scalp with the hot blower when he was drying it ~~my hair~~ under the net. In this shop (when someone pays) all the assistants say thank-you in chorus. To pay at a little desk and when the boss takes the money ~~the cries~~ And then disparagingly 'Thk yr!' out 'Mancia!' — tip! — provided to give one. The tips are shared.

+

~~We were trying to call the yesterday how rarely~~ how rarely in one
We/see the old type of traditional Italian beauty / now, it
~~the kind that~~ prevailed until the last war and may
still prevail in the very south. Of something near this
the dark beauty / ~~in women~~ ~~with~~ long, dense-black
hair and strong shoulders, or a plump and rather
square body with voluptuous breasts and wide,
full, wealthy hips. The Italian mannequin ~~incredibly~~
~~doesn't~~ ~~not a place~~) because she has one such
look sexlessness and a long way from this original, healthy model. Still in
its setting, more, more
provincial / ~~not exceedingly~~ / rejected in people towns like
villages and small towns. The educated men, especially
the photographers, cultivate skinny, pale, boyish women.
The well-fed, languorous women who belongs to sweltering
behind closed shutters
afternoons / seem to be disappearing. She's a bit unfashionable.

+

The lightest with the electrical guitar has started up
again on the other side of the road. I spotted where he was some

the habit I years so easily.

While we were there an elderly woman moved away from the bar to make room for us and said to the barmaid, 'leave the young men here', using the word 'gioventù'. Our ancient Roman smiled across at her and said "thank-you for the compliment," — it made him feel younger and happier, he said, this ~~was where we were all~~ called a ~~wolf~~ ~~[illegible]~~ young wolf ~~at forty~~. But she only scowled and turned away. ~~made a face at her~~

When I got to the barber's I found that the boy who has been cutting [illegible] and [illegible] mis-cutting my hair for years has been conscripted into the army. So the boss put me in his chair and gave instructions to an older man as to how I liked it. [illegible] Lately the boy had been taking it a bit too short, and leaving a tuft of hair sticking up near the crown, not because he was careless but because he'd forgotten that he had to use a razor on my hair to get it to lie down — and so had I. This older man went to work like a miner. He chopped here at a tremendous rate. But it was the better for the boy. He applied the razor, fixed the parting in the right place, and I got me with the kind of haircut you'd notice. ~~used to have 3 or 4 years ago.~~

He has a strong, dumb, thick-fleshed, sun-tanned face, and looks at one's hair all the time, as if it were a opportunity. ~~he is cutting it with a kind of~~ dawning surprise/ ~~sometimes.~~ ~~At first he seemed not to~~

~~Pablo~~ Paolo the head then runs in and an argument starts. About the tax on cars. He has a friend in London who pays tax on petrol consumption. This is the law in England, it is much more sensible: why shd. he pay a tax just because he has a more luxurious car? The man in the street says naturally. This is how life is made: it is the aristocracy / motorists. Those who can be the ones to afford luxuries & others less, and those that can shd. pay higher taxes, it is 'logical' and anything else is 'anti-social', a word he is always using. Paolo rises to this and begins flinging his arms about, his eyes starting out of his head; why shouldn't he buy a bigger car if he wants to, why shd. he be pressed down every time because he wants to eat a figure, to rise in life instead of lying in the mud all the time! Take the English again, they never descended, they always wanted to 'have il signore'. even if it meant everybody being one; surely that was better than this ugly chaos of everybody being pulled down into laziness and corruption, which was the case in Italy? The fact was that there was no discipline in Italy. And here the other man agrees. We are now joined by a third, a young man pale like a clerk, who sits in a corner, listening. Take the shops, how they remain open as long as people wanted,

Via Giulia

In the Dark Room.

Invited to drink red wine: Trigoria. From Lago Bolsena: near by — Monte...? A village. In a kind of beer bottle, brought from behind. Wife must also have some: not to waste. Because it is sweet. Tastes pure and natural, the first for months. New wine. Wife tastes a little - thanks him - must go because dance class covers are being delivered — 'Au revoir!', and leaves. When I give him copy of book he says the words 'book from the (18. Such a way of describing things. Precision, truthful, unlike these modern journalists, who always get their facts wrong: man who doesn't love his trade is careless. Must use a comma above, inside a word mean, I say, genitive. Yesterday did a wedding between an Italian princess and a young American. perhaps I know him: he looks for the photographs in the full cupboards but doesn't find them. 'Le decco' is outside - he walks him in to drink (from the 'Salvatorio' = the courtyard - but the wine came, he's going to eat, he makes a face, denotes disgust wine not. give him.

seven, sometimes earlier, the next morning: people who'd never known that discipline and social order meant 'il benessere' — prosperity. Paolo broke in and said that if there was the law in Italy, that everything closed at five o'clock, the Italians being what they are there would be a massive exodus every evening to the sea. The bars, cinemas, theatres, everything would depopulate quickly into chaos! It'd _be_ the working week was much like a holiday for the Italian! He couldn't get people to work properly. Their interests were smoking and drinking and banging. I said what about the north, the factories of Milan & Torino, surely they had regular hours, and work. Have we punched like factories everywhere! Ah, yes, indeed, Paolo said, jumping up, but I must explain there are _infinite_, _infinite_ differences between the North & the South. In the North, they worked; (as Mr. Menuhin (man at desk) deprecated this quietly, eg, Paolo, no, no, it was a frequently voiced idea, but not true. The Northerners were only poor & agricultural, they had depressed economically for so long that there was no

there was never a proper beginning or an end to work. They came up said 'I sing cheats', I answer. so there was always a little door at the back you could knock at. I ~~[illegible]~~ they were when sharp close in England, and I tell them five - five. thirty, and this they can hardly believe. 'Ma che bellezza!' Very sharp! Nearly every sharp. Sharp as that time? I said, yes, very sharp. so sharp that it made life sad sometimes. to see everything rotted and bored and working like clockwork. I said, even the man who wanted to remain open, the lover of his work, or to make more money, couldn't. And from the man at desk there was silent approval of this. He said, a principle is a principle, and where there are no principles there are no principles there are no rights either. Neither right or law have principles in Italy. I say, how are/working it is to be able to walk at almost any time - the evening and find letter - wire or whatever you want. And he said, yes, it was surprising perhaps to come from an over-disciplined world and see it. it was convenient, certainly, but think of the people serving, who come home late at night, leave home-life, and must be at work soon after

impo'!' But Bro Paolo isn't interested in this. No, he
has been talking of the real artistic madness, the
visionary madness, and said way that Leonardo da Vinci
was mad in the same way, he had ideas about everything,
he was useless as for using anatomy, and he designed
a gun, but it was a madness ~~of style~~ with a style
far beyond the useless madness which was only
derangement. But this artistic derangement was really
a path from of sanity. Hence, the tragedies — the
darkness you see in Caravaggio, the violente
bitter underground life you find described in some books,
that was all a sort of madness, but what a madness!
The desk-man slightly deprecates, as if there were ~~to~~
conventional thoughts, as Paolo had deprecated him just
now. Someone passes in a car, calls Paolo out, and
conversation reverts to time of closing. The first thing
man does of course there is a continual day — from eight
a.m. until five, isn't it, in England? and I tell him yes.
Down, ~~vuole~~ la siesta. But he prefers to work straight
away after lunch than in the evening. The desk-man
says the whole system of working in Italy is wrong. It isn't

under his bed – he would get a corpse from the hospital – dissect it, cut it up, and put the pieces under the bed – the stink was terrible. He did that when he was a boy! No, no, he did 2, one was in Florence & the other in the Vatican, a mere shadow, unfinished, it fascinated him for many years, just as one. He face of the madonna, and the bleeding Christ: one was done when he was young, & the other when he was old. In between these 2 you see the history of Michelangelo's art. Yes, there were many examples of madness in artists, but it shouldn't be called real madness, it was still common madness. More like a desperate vision. And then the doctor began to speak, quietly, about another extraordinary thing. There was a man in Rome who was regarded as a madman, and not only as a madman but a criminal, & he died in poverty, completely neglected, who succeeded in dissecting a corpse and keeping every nerve intact from the brain, so that the complete system of the nerves could be seen even today, because the dissected corpse was preserved at the clinic of Santo Spirito, preserved in a liquid. And it had done wonders for medicine: 'Pazzi'

a Roman pride in the name. The boy David and the St John Baptist – the ~~sensitive~~ sardonic-looking boy, like Caravaggio himself, like Rome, ~~Satan~~ a satyr, languorous, sensual, corrupt, mysterious, with a peculiar wisdom and, underneath, a peculiar unfathomable strength + power of survival! ~~Then~~ That was real work! Botticelli, Raffael, too sweet! Then was Leo Sternness – Caravaggio! Dramatic! And Michelangelo, Paolo said. What a massive strength! — and his shoulders and arms, which I can just or weigh since he married 2 years ago. Before he was a beautiful slim young man with the face + a Piero della Francesca, grew massive. And Masaccio, Ipswich, and Giotto, always the earlier ones, for a sternness and reality and calm. Yes, yes! Had they seen, I asked, the Masaccio in San Clemente? San Clemente — A Masaccio there? we we had heard + the church. Few people know of it (when we went the church was locked) But Michelangelo, Paolo was on! Almost madness! Did we know that he kept pieces of corpses

difference between northern + southern Italian seems
circumstantial ones; indeed, the northerner, even the
Sicilian, changed quickly into a northerner once he was
working in a Milanese factory + getting good money.
But Paolo was insistent: how you can see the differences +
the work, he said, it's obvious. Why was all the factories
+ the wealth + where does all the production start,
where all the engineers + architects + technicians?
Which is Rome, I said - wealth + south. And in every goddamn way -
South, south, in every respect! The wealth is better in
every way. Paolo cries — no, no, says Memmo — Paolo.
Lamps in his desk, better in every way except two —
First, he holds up a finger, 'fantasia di Lucca' —
they don't have the ideas. The second was even reached
because there were tears + Ecco! Ecco! From
Memmo — nothing could compete with Roman work in
some respects. Yes, there were treasures in Rome!
And how the conversation touched + rose. Take the
Caravaggio, Paolo said, in the Borghese gallery —
now there was work! Ah, Caravaggio! And there was

Pablo Picasso was interrupted: "But since the work done — the estimate, we that is to be unpaid? The work should be paid for — that is logical, surely? Would it logical that work done should receive its due price? Surely, that is the sound principle on which craftsmanship should be based! What, Pablo Picasso says, she? all work, even if ~~unasked~~ to be asked for, ought to be paid for. — But, the Pablo Picasso enthusiast with inquiring mind and vigorous unbridled disappearance, someone has asked for the work: someone has asked for an estimate, and a price — no matter how small — should be agreed beforehand; then if an estimate had been asked for, he would was a sort of gamble. To ask for a high estimate without the slightest intention of doing the work done — just out of curiosity. But, Pablo jumped up from behind the desk to stand by the youngster, take a couple, how was a waiter, the printer to me. To have this publication — agreed, he asks me. You have your publication? Agreed, for the sake of the argument. But the young man interrupts once — the case would arise, he says, because publishers have their own printing machines, they do not for estimates. No, I say to this, the analogy does hold because many, if not most, private publishers are really publishers, without their own printing facilities. Very well, Pablo Picasso — with the customary ~~sigh~~ Oh-h-h! Oh) ~~with the back of~~ Aw-o-w! an argument resolved, very well, then, I ask

based on the right social principles. Take the matter of preparing estimates. And here Paolo returns, throwing himself — the chair again. Take the matter of estimates. He has to take a journey across Rome to give an estimate, say, to someone who is organising a wedding ceremony. He has to take measurements, think how many flowers etc. are required, then make journey back, the waiting, the employment of a secretary to type out a letter, a whole morning if not more gone, and then a few days later a phone-call, when [redacted] you are told that some [illegible] somebody else, if you are lucky enough to get a phone-call. Some people get ten or a dozen estimates before they commission work. And this is wrong. Estimates should be paid for. And the point young man agrees, although it is clear he knows nothing about it: he is an employee, an employee, unlike the others, who are shop-people. Pa what? what? asks Paolo, are you mad! Pay for estimates? He also pays estimates, they are part of the costs of any overall scheme, but if he asked to be paid for his estimates he'd never have a client! Suppose a bill came to a hundred thousand, an estimate, and a man — quite rightly — took 10 estimates to find i) the best worker ii) the cheapest — in combination — this being the object of an estimate, would that do? Then the desk-man was called away — another car had drawn up outside, and [redacted] joined outside. And

they should; not in most cases. When it involves elaborate drawings and so forth, perhaps — like an architect asked for estimate for a house, ~~an estimate~~ he usually, for the ordinary estimate not. The decorator, for instance, wasn't paid for his estimate. Not that I had heard of. But what about the solicitor — the doctor, Mimmo cried, changing his sequence! One only had to walk into the office & ask a question to be presented with a bill! But that was quite different, one couldn't compare the doctor & the solicitor, Paolo said, they were paid for a consultation, not for an estimate. If you ask a doctor, say, a doctor, to tell you how much an operation would cost — you don't think he'd charge for the estimate, do you? He'd charge for the consultation! 'In the same way', Mimmo said

Paolo jumped up again and glanced at the watch on Mimmo's wrist — it was getting late — in the same way, estimates should be paid. They should be considered like an estimate. That's absurd! Paolo cried, absurd! As I explained when you were at first here, if I wanted ten estimates of a piece of work, how much do you think the work would cost if I had to pay for them? Say 10,000 an estimate — 100,000 lire for nothing done at all! No, no, that's absurd, you'll never get anybody

a city publisher asks for an estimate to print my book — he picks up a book from the desk — that is my book, let us say — he asks ten printers in order to find out who will do the work best for the cheapest price, though that may not be the cheapest estimate in pure money terms, it may be that he will prefer to pay the higher sum because he considers the printer more reliable. Well then, he asks, in an ordinary business man going about his work sensibly & economically, for ten estimates, and then makes his choice. Did they mean to tell him, Pablo, that the man should then pay — after settling the price of printing at 1 million — another sum, say 10,000 each estimate, a further 100,000 — no, no! that was absurd — it would put the price of printing & thus the price of the book, up by 100,000 lire! No, no — & soon the book-man came back — now Pablo was sitting behind his desk. & Nemmo took a chair by the quiet young man. no, no, I'm afraid your idea of the estimate is absurd! But that's the way they work it in the countries. Mimmo says quietly; surely! and he looks at me; surely — England people were obliged to pay for estimates? And I say, no. I think

were lucky enough to work and be reasonably paid: beyond that there were no rights. Only duties. If he worked one time the word 'Stravaganza' was written on his pay sheet without stipulating exactly how many times were 'Stravaganzas.' And he had no right to insist on there being pay days. He'd simply be told to find another job. There was no reason why the employer couldn't sack when he wanted to. So there were no rights! Basically, Mickey said, there were no 'trade unions' — he used the Rights word. There were no shop stewards to look after a man's grievance. For instance, he himself had a worker — he'd had it years — 30 years, to be exact. Now he had the ~~right~~ power to sack this man any time. And if was a right. The man would be deported, he'd probably find it difficult to another job at this time of life. There was no trade union to ask the reason why, and to withhold further labour until they were satisfied the reason was good. People didn't act together, I put in. It could be done if ordinary people acted together. Basically, he said, the fault is in the people, in their natures,

I agree to that! Then there was a special story of Mussolini's elder sister-in-law of his who had had to have a caesarian, a simple operation, and how the surgeon had charged a fantastic sum for it... He'd given no estimate for it beforehand. It was a good surgeon, so that you see two members of one profession did things compared with another. Pasolini listened politely and impatiently, and again he took Moravia's wrist and looked at his watch. The story was really irrelevant. When it was over Pasolini shook hands all round quickly and left, saying as he did so. But that affair of the criticism, that was really absurd! I was with them, stood together by the desk, waiting. Yes, said Moravia, the Italian people had no discipline. I saw people in the streets elbowing and pushing past each other, the first with the worst of the manners, and this was because they thought the other person nothing, just unimportant, like himself; and slowly they must realize that the individual was important if they did so. If they respected the people, because then the people would respect them. It all came, the young director said, from people having no rights. In Italy people had no rights. They

the renaissance? I ask. Mr yes, the Renaissance, and the Risorgimento too, both were the natural Italian genius, there was a natural Italian genius which for a few now and again, like a flame that rose and then died out, inspiring other people. This perhaps was the great Italian role. & inspire. ~~[illegible]~~ What about the church? I asked. Didn't that have a hand in maintaining a kind of slavery & ignorance? He pointed in disdain, & I was surprised & saw him say no, he thought the role of the church important. The first time I'd heard such a thing from an Italian! And I quickly realised that interests must be at work, offering, & Tino desired more of his income from the church. & thought the church & organised all the ~~weddings~~ grand weddings in the city. After all, he said, with the Roman objectiveness, as if suddenly the words were coming from someone else, the priest said, 'I can't say, what can I do.' and this was really quite true: it made sense. And there the Church was left intact. Presumably with its corruption intact,

in the Italian nature. They lived + worked for themselves, and they learned to join the people and the way of the world came to the world, and that was why there were no rights. If the people didn't agree that there was kind of... laws rights — yes. rights against each other of — but where were the rights to come from? The workers, the classe for ex. were considered <u>less</u> in Italy, whereas he should be considered what he was, the basis of society. the major majority, the most important factor. There, there were many reasons for this, Mimmo said, mainly historical. Italy had always been divided and held down by foreign invasions — the Austrians, the Spanish, the French, the Greeks, the barbarians from the north — not until quite recently did Italy become a nation at all, for hardly more than a century had Italians come to think of themselves as one people. So of course they didn't accept rights. They were used to being a slave-people. That Lord Acton this was historically, the slaves of foreign empires: after the ancient days of greatness, that is. That was

too — for if we benefited, if some of the crumbs fell from the rich man's table, they.... And [illegible] returned to the former theme, that if the Italians could realise that economic benefits social codes brought with it, that this was the most important lesson they now had to learn, because they were now a proper functioning part of Europe, then something marvellous, the pride of the whole world, would emerge from it, the Italian genius could be realised again, but would be another kind of nineteenth, out of the whole people, and beneficence going with it, too. This was like a farewell lecture drawing us all together. He stood there small & dark, like an ancient Roman soldier or senator, talking in the drowsy quietly, his lips rather thin and his brow heavy, his skin dark, standing quite still, planted there in a solid way, while the young man, pale & delicate, nodded, and then we shook hands, and I went out into the lights and noises of the narrow street.

Smile only flickered over his mouth and he tried to look solemn:
~~She could tell if she's really a~~ ~~She~~ ~~steady~~ (which meanwhile) has no key.
~~Contessa or a courtesy title~~ One doesn't know if she's really a contessa or not. She could just call herself that for fame, or she may be a high-class whore. Anyway, the people in the palazzo seem flattered to have a contessa among them.
This is the second time the flat has been completely emptied in a year, without anybody living in it.

As to the noise, we can't make it out at all.
It sounds like the squeaking of ~~iron~~ wheels on a rail of some kind. ~~And~~ Or several rails. And the wheels seem to be whirling round the room ~~next~~ down on a mad rail. It could be a sort of indoor train, the rails attached to the walls and going round in a spiral, with the wheels fixed to them in some way. What this could serve I don't know. We're not even going to enquire, because some mysteries are best left alone.
An electrical guitar is different. That's a specific and obvious thing. It ~~seems to~~ fines my room jaundice. Everything looks sickly and frayed ~~on the~~ while that blasted guitar is going on. ~~To make everything un-~~
~~mentionably sad.~~

Our dog gave birth to seven puppies recently and five are now only three left, waiting to be sold. We might keep one, giving ourselves two dogs. They are making hell of the terrace and you can hear their wild, happy yapping and

~~weeks~~ ago. Then with the cold weather he closed his windows and it stopped. Being amplified the instrument it makes a piercing noise that seems to come from two yards away, and rises above the traffic © ~~which is something~~. I glimpsed him playing it, immediately by the window. And yesterday he was standing up and down with it in his arms. He troops and ta-das with it — he seems to be imitating the crooner, too. I imagine he works in a night club. He is an amateur, obviously — he's too good. Though it hurts me to say it this face is He has a pale face and I imagine him with he seems to have pimples and bad breath; ~~and he has~~ there is always a cigarette dangling from his mouth, ~~which he plays~~ I suppose I shall have to go across one day and appeal to his conscience, as I did to the tenor's. But the tenor was Canadian, and this man is Italian, which might mean his conscience is less amenable to appeals. But he seems to be in the same flow as the tenor was, so he may be Armenian.

He is in the latest in our long list of noises. That come from next door, in the new palazzo. They are still redecorating there; building and decoration seem to go on all the time in Rome, and almost never are you free from hammering. The administrator here who runs the palazzo, the Hon. Mrs Heath told me that a contessa was ~~starting~~ rebuilding ~~that~~ in the 'Japanese style'; under me the best architects in the city. I laughed at this and said, 'If she wants to live in the Japanese style, why does she not go to Japan?' But a little

terrace steeply and fall on to their sides if they concentrate too much. We've put an advertisement in the paper, and people stand the morning to look at them. Only in Rome do people seem to buy looks. We tried an advertisement in Florence the week before last and nothing happened. A man from Florence told us that the Roman Romans buy the dogs as a snobbery. Probably it's because they have more money. Rome seems to be produce excessively money. People are always advising me to pay tomorrow rather than change a big note — at the newspaper kiosk, the tobacconist, the dairy. Then they forget and we have to remind them. Quite often I will spend twenty minutes bargaining for something, give way and then at the very end hear the man say mildly, 'All right, take it at your price!' We had a girl come in recently to do the flat once a week, and her husband did a repair job for us, being a carpenter. He charged nine thousand lire for the work, which wasn't much, and sent his wife round to collect it. For some reason we didn't give it to her all at once and there was still two or three thousand to pay. She was an unusually pleasant and good-looking young woman, with a young child, and we used to give him chocolates and coo at him. But I always felt there was something not exactly undefined, because neither one of the husband had anything positive about them: it was just a decently crooked element which I felt in them. They could have been professional crooks — friendly and

squealing from the street below. The maid + the Sicilian lady next door nearly went mad when she saw me carrying one of the puppies upstairs: it looked just like a little black bear. She screamed with delight and clasped her hands together and clung to the puppy, kissing it and holding it off, sniffing its fur with her nose. An young and defenceless thing, are lucky in Italy.

I left a message with this maid the other day and the didn't deliver it, as I found out later, because she didn't understand it. She can't read or write, and refuses to learn; what's the point? She understands one's position in the mind happily. She is pale and a little plump, with a nice, friendly face, and comes from the Marche, one of the sad neglected (province, church) where what most people call Italy has never existed. When she goes down the stairs she thunders down on her heels, and the whole massive palazzo shakes. She hasn't learned how to walk on stairs.

The puppies have tipped the earth out of one flower-pots and use it to pee in, which is quite useful. They scrap and bite each other and roll, and their coats are covered with dirt. The white crushed-travertine tiles are almost black. They have a kennel with a soft straw mattress inside but they don't seem to use it, even when it's cold. They huddle in a corner of the terrace, in a tangle heap. Instead, they use it in the day, and stare out at the

Townsend, in fact. It was like a pleasant little gift from them. When they first came to see us they always asked downstairs for 'gli Americani' — a word readily interchangeable in Italy for gullible and mild. Then they seemed to see us more and more as real people.

The portiera is complaining of pleurisy and the state of the liver. But she survives remarkably well, seeing she only has a tiny, damp room with no window giving on to a narrow street full of cart-horses, and no fire to heating us all. She has even a strip of carpet.

She has when we had cold a year, when she loses her voice and enjoys saying everything in a hoarse whisper, even for a few days after she has her voice back. She wraps a dark shawl round her head and neck and her mouth, like a peasant, and sits huddled up in her chair. 'The pain in my leg!' she says hoarsely. 'Un certo dolore — a certain pain!' And she shakes her head dumbly. She has large, dark, pure eyes, and a loose, rather pale skin. She is married. She goes to the church just down the street nearly every morning, but not always to communion. The few, unpopular ladies in our palazzo, in the second floor, accused her recently of not going to communion often enough after her cousin — a portiera near us — died last year. But she says

open people. On New Years night, when most people were out of their houses, I noticed when we (or back from strolling in the market there somebody had tried to force the door with a crowbar. Perhaps it had been done long before and I had'nt noticed it. We'd left me flat to some friendly men individuals in the part, and as they might have left their key inside and had to force a way in. But I never connected it with the pleasant girl. She had come to the flat several times just to visit, in the late afternoon, child in hand; and once she asked me to type out an estimate for her husband. I connected the two events, and couldn't help feeling that the carpentry work was some sort of cover. They always seemed to be short of money, and when we visited the tiny shop once a week they told us, 'Oh, those! they never keep their promises!' I had the impression that they found impossible to work. We were always one step ahead. And this produced a feeling with them. They were very pleasant and casual with us. Then the girl did a day's work with the people down stairs, or rather promised to: she asked for some money for some soap, and one of the tenants, a foreigner, gave her five thousand. And she never appeared again. The foreigner did nothing: she probably had'nt police-permission to stay in the country, which is the usual reason if a foreigner stays away from the police. So we came off lightly; we gained what two

their dog.

We aren't keeping a puppy for ourselves, as we'd thought. Two kitchen would be too much of a handful. But we're keeping one of a few days for the English lady.

When I was with Sergio in the workshop the other day a letter came for him from Milan. He looked at it mysteriously without opening it, until he'd fathomed out who it came from. It was somebody in Milan — he just dimly remembered. He opened it and there was a tiny thread inside, attached to a note. It was somebody he'd given money to almost a year before — a stranger who said he'd lost his wallet and had tried to phone his wife in Milan, to get her to send him the price of the train-fare back. Sergio — while he was phoning — started eating his lunch at the back of his shop, in the dark, cavernous part, which made the Milanese man say wistfully how lucky! — how we beat. Lei! — to be sitting down to a meal in his own home, served by his own wife. This pricked Sergio's fellow-feeling, as perhaps it was meant to do, and he forked out 2000 lire right away, as this would cover the rail-fare. The man left the address with Sergio said this was a threat of good faith, because he had to find the man's face. Some

smoking in an amateurish way, ~~as if they were [illegible] and throw off~~ They've put the gramophone just by the window so that we presumably get more of the music than they do. This seems to be the idea. Also they seemed to have vague ideas of doing in their party was drawing attention to themselves. We often have a recital at about lunch time - always the same tuneless music - but when the window is opened for dusting and cleaning. ~~in the morning.~~

Oh the puppies that we have (one now. For nearly a week they yapped, squealed and tore up the potted plants, and woke us at dawn. We were desperate to get rid of them. ~~[illegible]~~ I said, 'In Rome things happen in a few minutes, all together!' And that was the case. We for very few replies to our advertisement on Sunday. But next day an English lady came to tea, then a couple appeared, someone else phoned, all in the space of a few minutes. And by the evening all the puppies had gone, and the terrace was like a battlefield afterwards. In Rome there seems to be this collective mystical decision which operate invisibly. It is just no use going by the logic of a situation, and to work things by rules or the will. We tried to get rid of the puppies for two weeks, then it was suddenly all over in the space of half an hour. And the people who took them away seemed to be connected mysteriously. The man who phoned up said he was a friend of the couple who were at that moment choosing

in their pass. ~~to share and so on.~~

Always when we [applies to pass] ~~to pass~~ the little dog ~~she~~ when she is eating she calls me to her, 'Vuol favorire?', which means, 'May I offer you some?' but is a pure convention, to which one answers with a thick nod, 'Thank you! Buon appetito!'

~~then this afternoon I~~ ~~the clarinet note I had just been practising~~ ~~on the bus.~~ For some months we've been used to cars that play three or four notes in quick succession, shrill and rather like a trumpet. But this afternoon I heard the [whole of the first two bars of a Sousa march, [the one in Bridge on Sea? — with Alec Guiness] without ~~an~~ a note ~~out~~ ~~in perfect tune~~ It was [just] like a solo-piece in an orchestra. ~~wrong.~~ Some years ago there was a spate of jokes from a former orchestra. Some years ago there was a spate of jokes — old men croaking, farts, sheeyes. ~~The car sped up the road by the river.~~

Today is a brilliant early spring day, and the jinke-box — it sounds like a jinke-box but is just a very loud gramophone — is blaring from one of the tiny courtyards below our window. It is so deafening that you have to walk to the window to make sure ~~that~~ it isn't in the room. There are teenage girls down there, and one ~~evening~~ afternoon recently they have a little party. But all they did was stand by the open windows and look up at our palazzo, ~~with the tinny music blaring~~ [thundering] ~~between the~~

this a calumny, and that she was ill to do ~~every~~ in the early morning at the time. She is scrupulously honest, and resigned in everything; she watches people observantly and with curiosity, but without judgement. A real Roman of the people.

~~She shakes the tiny woman with a~~ The woman who used to she shakes her head

come with

complain about her health, but seems changed now, since we came back the last time. She looks older and more tired this year, and walks more heavily. And she seems absent-minded. ~~Before~~, she was always alert and sharp, and had a slightly cynical turn of tongue. The portiers used to shake her head at her sometimes ~~to me~~ and say she liked her wine too much, and that she was more than patience could bear, ~~now and then~~. The expansion ~~started~~ comes across from the restaurant each evening — at what time is the ~~return~~ afternoon and then again at eleven or so at night. The cats in ~~the~~ our courtyard all know the woman's step, and gather like an audience to watch her come in. They amuse themselves ~~finally~~ entirely, and there are also nine or ten kittens who have nearly my mouth. Them. But ~~they never get more numerous than that~~ (from time to time) the ~~because~~ a car disappears very steadily ⊙. The portiers say they are knocked over by cars, but as their bodies are never found and as only the most beautiful (the ones she has farmed), ones disappear, I think they're caught ~~by people~~ and sold

fork it we right away!' Then he said, with a curious slight smile: 'Today has been strange - full of good events. There was days like that...'

We were drinking White vermouth, in heavy glasses with thick stems. The ancient Roman sat at the ally stool in the place, smiling and looking youthful. He always drew the [illegible] of showing good will; there seems to be more ~ forethought in him we all. Sergio is in years a good bit younger. But he's sad and a little absorbed. I didn't know he was married until a few days ago, when he mentioned his wife. I always thought she was his sister. She seemed hardly more than a student - pale, given to plumpness, with glasses, always saying in in an inactive [illegible] way. I sometimes seeing in the shop doorway staring across the street listlessly, smiling now and then to someone. Her pride seems to be the little bird in a cage above the counter. She says in a weak way, 'The bird always wonders me when I whistle.' But it doesn't seem to - not when she wants it to, at any rate. They have no children yet. Last year, she was less plump and less pale. They seem to have a little more money now - people are spending more on wine and oil. But it only fills her out - it doesn't develop her as a woman. Except in working and child-bearing, the woman is held back, in a

than that, they'd become friends in a way — the man had often come to drink something in the shop, in the previous few days, and there seemed to be a natural ~~they'd struck off~~ a real sympathy between them. ~~He went part of it on then the [illegible] story~~ ~~to Rome~~ And the man came back to Rome after that without calling on him: that was the worst part. He knew he'd come back to Rome because he enquired in a few of the shops elsewhere. And here was the money. The letter with it was in epistolary Italian, almost gibberish, and very flowery, saying that the wife had always borne him kindness in mind and had always thought of him as one of the common men: he'd been meaning to write to him for some time etc etc. Sergio's wife joked on his Roman policy. Then there was a discussion between the three of us — Sergio, the ancient Roman and me. It was also whether you should lend money like that. The ancient Roman said he'd do it once — the fellow was still round the corner — and had never got it back. But that we had known and had never got it back. But that we had known bad character: and what was [redacted] anyone to do if the man asked for a money, in pathetic circumstances? Sergio went on — But I believed in this one so much. We really struck up a friendship; it was just as if one of us came into the shop and asked for a shoe. I'd have lent my money — of course. He'd put his hand in his pocket and

he cuts, more even than the fascists did. — There ~~has been~~ is too much misery and disaster in the Italian background for this 'vitality' and 'passion' to be possible, assuming that these words mean more than middle-class affectation nowadays. The real vitality and passion (which always wear a wooden face, which you see in ~~the peasants~~ primitive people) are still there in the peasantry, unspoiled even by the church. ~~But they don't know what is meant by Italian 'vitality' and 'passion'.~~ But they don't recognise it as such, in our world.

The moment he departs from this invisible and dumb rhythm, really the rhythm of the earth, the Italian becomes spurious. 'An Italian is a charlatan', Magrì said. Real seriousness eludes them. Yet this gives them sanity, and perhaps the soundest nerves of any civilised people. The most broken and specious Italian can be recalled to this original sanity and simplicity. For him it is easy — the 'north' is where you can return. This is one of this most serious failures to understand the foreigner — that for us the north is lost, and this loss is half the subject of our art, hunger and nostalgia for it.

passive and helpless role. They rarely take responsibility outside their spheres; their hand strokes are often loose and flabby. But when they are flung out of this slightly, by reality or education, they rely substitute a nervous and unharmonious activity, in which all the supposedly male activities are still unreal and academic for them, a kind of joke or affectation, only they now join the joke. The flesh underneath is untouched: they rarely learn sex, from the Italian frigidity. Sex can't be learned as another basically foreign joke. You can't do it by putting on a certain kind of hat, or looking haughty, or staying up late. There has to be a seriousness underneath, which means tenacity. And in a terrible way this is impossible in the Italian soul. It is broken up into moments. There is no real interior existence. Which is why only what flashes and scintillates can be appreciated. ~~What rests on the invisible — all that sustains the surface~~

The tenacious sense of one's own identity, and of the identities to which one is akin, which is the heaven of real sexual fascination, can't exist. The myth of Italian 'vitality' and 'passion' which followed fascism, and was encouraged by the mass of foreign tourists every year, is wearing thin even for the Italian intellectual — the most present of Italian life, who lives by the figure

opposite of 'modesty' which Nile food lacks 'salt'-like) —
last summer. When the train was just on the move, and a
slim Frenchwoman passed. ~~He made some sexual sign~~
~~of action to her~~, He made a sort of sexual gesture at me,
and then drew in to say that she was too thin for his
taste: he liked a bit of substance in a woman — he
~~drew~~ liked plenty of pasta, washed down ~~by plenty~~
with a good wine. But when one of the married women
passed — a ~~really substantial~~ young woman with luscious lips
and breasts — she nodded a solemn good-morning
to me, and we nice talked when something else. He
has the same reverence towards my wife, too. Only now
is he beginning to talk to her in the street: he
seems to understand that a foreign husband doesn't
mind if you do this. I left her alone with him for
- few minutes last year, standing in the street, while
I slipped into the wineshop to change some money,
and she told me he almost panicked. He said a
few hurried mumbled words about how he had worked
to do and desired [illegible] his shop-partners. Now he
seems to have put two and two together ~~and came to~~
~~the conclusion that~~ and seen that women were just
cooks, waiters and slaves for us.

He doesn't need half the things we need. He denudes a room, removes much furniture and cooking there is. He strips a house of everything – its grandeur, intimacy, colour. There are just the four walls and the fact that he is eating, or drinking, or talking. He doesn't need the other things. His world is safe – it doesn't need props. He can understand either the anguish or the joy of a foreigner. Both threaten him and fling him out of this sad, safe world. But they are only another spectacle for him; ~~a spectacle which he twists and takes seriously~~ foreigners make this spectacle in order to mitigate the sadness of life. This is his ~~bigger~~ error of all.

~~And I don't know the Italian~~

While we were standing in Sergio's flat, a priest came in and took a small case he had left by the window, saying thank you in a tired, sad kind way. ~~And then Sergio seemed~~ And Sergio seemed to take this as another bit of good fortune, I don't know why. He made a little smile and said, 'we seem to be having ~~bad~~ Roman attachment luck today.' Perhaps this is an ~~ancient~~ old priests. But I don't think so.

The two ancient Romans always seem very deferential to the local married women. ~~I~~ I was standing with the older one – who then ~~a~~ louder and more striking ~~and~~ manner (Italians would say the last more 'resonance' –

He and his brother went married but they seem to have quite a number of women. One evening when we were coming back home and we saw the young man step into his car, after coming out of the palazzo next door to us. And he could barely look at us. He hung his head and said a very respectful and hushed good night. He looked as if he'd been upstairs with a whore and had shot his load in every way - this load of self-respect ~~as well~~. The older one wouldn't be shamefaced like that. He is less troubled by the world perhaps because he's older brother. He told me the other day that we had a cold ~~though he~~ night. He waved his arms about making love ~~to the~~ in this car ~~to say taking town~~ to describe the shaking of the car.

We walked in the centre the other day and though now and it was fun to be still living here. We tried to be wise and parked the car just outside the periphery of the centre. We walked through the narrow sidestreets by the Piazza Borghese towards Piazza di Spagna then up the wide Tritone. There was one vast mass of hard, shining, stinking cars all the way. We were invisible almost we are. ~~with~~ suffocated, dry throats. We had to walk up the Tritone to the office of the Messaggero, to put an advertisement in the paper about our puppies. It was all mad and monstrous. We hadn't

realised that there was just no town life, even the little that had been left a few years ago. It was ~~a~~ the work of an idiotic and blind epoch, working time for the latter generations. The place was a garage; (I couldn't call it Rome) ~~stinking~~ ~~deserted~~. The air wasn't Roman ~~anymore~~, ~~London~~ but that stinking, Mediterranean liche. ~~It~~ Nor that the cars in this garage were serving any purpose at all. They were going slower than we were. So I had the idiotic spectacle of people sitting inside machines stopping the people walking, in order to go slower than walking pace themselves. This is the absurdity of every city; only Rome shows it with an open hand. It isn't tragic any more. Even a feeling of shame as former has passed. There is no terror — there's nothing to be afraid of in the mass of traffic, or in the tumult, or in the death of intimate life which it has involved, or in the languishing, tired, sunken looks that it produces. It's just absurd; brutal. ~~and~~ ~~it also~~ because it has no relevance any more — it can't go on for much longer; the whole city will get paralysed, and the cars will have to be drawn out backwards. It relieves the paralysis in the centre. Again, this is the same in every city. It is the nineteenth century in its last idiotic fling, showing

that either we do something, either we move into an new epoch, or we perish. These are the real problems — the problems of famine, and ~~stagnation~~ towns languishing from waste and immobility, the problem of mass-diseases politely called virus-diseases, which feed on the medicines that are supposed to destroy them; the problem of doctored food and irregular hours of sleep: the problem of vast, blind ~~famine~~ populations which have ~~lost~~ ~~this habit~~ lost the knowledge of how to live, the victims of the nineteenth-century myth that there is no such thing as a right and natural way to live, only interests and plans which must be put into effect. It was all right at the beginning when a small privileged class ate rich food and kept late hours and rode round in a carriage and four; it was all right when the class became larger, and the carriage and four became a car. But excepting ~~a few~~ pieces, when the class became ~~very many~~ everybody, and a massive class of privileged individuals, each living on the expense of the other. ~~And the~~ The principles on which we live are dead and stale; politics is a publicity-parade & exhibitionism — now & then dare to cope with the real and living problems. But the problems are going to get the better of them. Instead of talking and balance of trade, in the nineteenth-century terms of peace and war, and

notions, and ideologies. they are living in face ~~such as~~ the simple question of survival, which will make present politics look like a stale essay ~~on~~ in the past. This question of survival is the question, how to avoid the mass degeneration of ~~the whole race~~ human creatives — the degeneration of hands, bones, tissues, brain, intimacy, desire, dreams. Slowly this will force itself on to politics as the only ~~real~~ theme, and men will fight this platform on this theme. A civilisation that has lost sound nerves (the cradle of health) has lost everything. At best it can live with the signs and dreams of the past. We live in an interim epoch in which all the so-called 'leaders' are ~~safe motivators~~ men copying ~~past~~ past attitudes in fact a mirror: a publicity-epoch — nothing has any depth or real meaning, only the brief persuasive power of ~~publicity~~ rhetoric ⊙

Really what we've done in our flat is make a tiny village-house. This is what a friend said once. 'It's a village up here!' The long terrace makes it full of light, especially in the spring and autumn. The noises from the distance are hushed and muffled, in a way that reminds you of the country. There are the ancient roofs round the courtyard, the sound of the

fountain below which seems really deafening sometimes in the dead of the night. And really no city of Greek below is a village. You could take away all the rest of the city, leaving the river, and it wouldn't be much different. But the light is effected now. The air hasn't that limpid brilliance any more, except on exceptional days when the old Roman light forces itself through. The thrill of different smells — of the trees among the ancient ruins, a patch of green, something cooking in a restaurant, coffee being ground, the hot dusty ~~temple & cause stand~~ ancient smell of the stone — has all gone.

But perhaps the Rome we look back on never did exist: perhaps the Rome we look back on is the real Rome, which isn't the actual city. The actual city has always been a mess. This is probably why most Italians seem to despise it so much. The city has always had that raw clamour, and something fevered and blatant. It has never been comfortable. Each little epoch produces its own special discomfort of the same and bearable. But the Rome you look back is a kind of inner Rome. This is why you get it undistilled and clearest in the people. Really there inner Rome is a unity of all the moments you can remember — the dazzling, rich light on terracotta walls, the scents and the Etruscan and ancient Greek statues, the broken pieces of arch and column, the churches packed together from ancient Roman and the mediaeval, and the renaissance, and then the Baroque.

This is why people who would thrive in Rome hate it after a visit: ~~the~~ too much fuss and vulgarity. The visible is only one of the moments. There has to be time for the senses to be filled. But now the senses can't get their fill: there is a change. Rome always reflects the foreign world in senses (~ noises).

So we're discovered we can't make-believe any more. We have to get into the country, quick. We're country-people, we know that. But in the previous Rome we could live and survive. It was a town set in the country, close to the sea. But now it reflects the enormous degeneration, by 'visas' and halved history in Cold Blood, and wrecked livers, and people's eyes like lenses looking out of cold brains. The city swarms in foreign charlatans and ~~fakes~~ posers — lots of bearded creatures with hollow, frightened eyes who are probably architects, engineers, surveyors. ~~Instead~~ ~~artists are respectable and modest creatures, they have too much to think about and observe to go in for fun~~ ~~they can afford the time for fun~~

Rome has the international publicity, and people flock to it from all over the world to whom she can never be true

fire. She has nothing to do with the visible, the spectacular. If Lucy & Aelle people knew that all she had to offer was ~~the~~ religious inducement of the invisible, ~~there~~ and, on a second stage, initiation & Christ, they'd pack up their traps and be off in an hour. Or perhaps they wouldn't.

I remember the fears with which I used to return to the flat, especially in the summer. Night, the time & privacy, seemed to state the lack & privacy more vividly. The cars made a hard, deafening noise through the street that was like a tunnel for the trapping & noises. The radios and televisions would be blazing. It all seemed - seems, raw, blatant activity. In spring it was worst & all, when the windows opened, people stopped & talk in the street more, and the whole city seemed to celebrate the new heat with a blatant relief, after the chill. Really I had to reform my life, to cope with it. If your nerves can see through that lot, I think they can see through everything. You have to have a lot & sleep. I start with. And you have to cling to the privacy & your tiny home. So you learn to be a peasant, in order to resist the city-life all round you. There are no disguises in Rome. I could never live in London now - though I was born there: perhaps the disguises — the palliatives to make life bearable for a population stuck so close together, with trains and roads substituting for real,

human movement – are the reason. They make life dim. The real intimate life, inside, becomes dim. But Rome isn't like that. There are no palliatives. There will soon have to be, to make life bearable, as the last vestiges of an intimate town disappear. But there will be obviously palliatives. They will sink into the subconscious, as a grim discipline that springs from inside, as in the big western cities. ~~To call the contradiction and peculiarity before of cloaks:~~ They will lie over the city like a skeleton, until they are thrown off, at the appearance of a new epoch. The intimacy will have to return, to prevent mass-degeneration: because in dreams or visions – the substance with which the future of all civilisation are built – are possible without intimacy. Our real hopes and plans spring from private life. If private life is discredited, humanity dies to run down. It will for a long time run down. Perhaps we shall be known as the last of the same (an odd thought – for us). There will have to be a scramble for intimacy: a smile – tears – the touch of somebody's hand will be more precious than ~~a million nuggets~~ a thousand flights across the earth or a thousand nuggets of gold. [June 19 spent its time smashing it all up: its climax was America. Now we have to start building it again. We have to reform every little action – from sipping a cup

We walked in the centre of Rome and realised we didn't know what sort of city we were really living in. It seems the most grotesque madness to hang on. We went through the narrows side-streets by the Villa Borghese towards Piazza San Silvestro, then up the wide Tritone. There was one flat board of hard, shining, stinking cars all the way. We were irritable almost at once, and had dry throats from the fumes. The cars moved along at less then walking pace. Therefore we couldn't advance because of the cars and the cars couldn't advance because of each other.

the same way. Speech is cheerful, and people's eyes are keen, optimistic' cenions, as you never find in Trastevere, the real ancient popular district of Rome. ~~'Sun' is really the wrong word for Trastevere and the area by the Vatican wall. The women are clean and bright.~~

people's district of Rome.

This is the only real working district in Rome. The streets have the same combination of bleakness and warmth as a slum in London. And there is the same glow in people's faces: the same honesty and directness; the same intimacy between couples, which I've seen nowhere else in Italy. Solidarity between the common people is unknown in Italy: but here you see it, they call each other per me and don't crowd at market. Romans usually do. They're quite different from the market-people in the square of Santa Lucia: they also are a family, but a Roman family, in a kind of sweating, humiliated, gentle relationship. The people on the Vatican wall are more in the open: their colours are clearer and more cheerful; their children are mechanics, shop-assistants, electricians, builders. They aren't Roman specifically. They are working people as you find them everywhere. They make Saturday night exciting — it reminds me of the markets along Battersea Rise, and at Tooting Broadway, at Wandsworth High Street, Clapham Junction, in childhood. There is the same hustle — the children cling to their parents in the same way. Faces are clean in

It was the most wonderful mass we'd ever been
to. Because it was completely devout, in the Italian way.
Their way of the people like children. The people came
to the Church already, the rich & children — and the
Holy Family Christ Mother and Babe there. It is
something they can understand. The old priest had a bad
cold and a red nose, and besides all that a thick Roman
accent, which is nasal anyhow. He talked about the birth,
the simply the physical conditions: There was the inn where
Mary stayed — it was like an inn in Trastevere; he said how
crowded it was, & how cold outside; and they were tired,
and Mary was able to give birth & It was the family
story. The priest seemed to have been it happening — a beloved
story.
The story made the immense concave Byzantine mosaic
behind him, with its shining blue and gold, and the great altar
chancel with its pillars, and the thick candles that had been lit in
the side chapels, come together in one exciting glow like a bath

We walked in the centre of Rome and realised we didn't know what sort of city we were really living in. It seems the most grotesque madness to hang on. We went through the narrows side-streets by the villa Borghese towards Piazza San Silvestro, then up the wide Tritone. There was one flat board of hard, shining, stinking cars all the way. We were irritable almost at once, and had dry throats from the fumes. The cars moved along at less then walking pace. Therefore we couldn't advance because of the cars and the cars couldn't advance because of each other.

a night lit by a lamp.

the dusk is huffed all round with
medieval lane like horrors, indestructibly.

a cold and a red nose, which made his Roman accent even thicker and more throaty. He talked about the cloth, about the actual physical conditions: everything he said was simple — the inn where they tried to stay, how it was crowded, and how cold it was, how they had to put up with it in a barn, among the animals. It was like telling a story in a family. He seemed to have seen it happening just now. And the story made the immense concave Byzantine mosaic behind him, with its shining gold and blue, and the great hollow church with its pillars, and the thick candles that had been lit at the side-chapels, glow in an exciting way. The church seems to be ringed all round with medieval lanes like burrows, indestructibly.

The market by the Vatican wall belongs more to the nineteenth century, when these tenement houses were put up. You can imagine how the blazing, naked electric lights on every stall, slung up on wires and improvised poles, were not long ago replaced by gas-jets. There is the fish-market, meat-market, vegetable and fruit market, and then, on the main road where the trams still run, the stalls displaying sausages, cheeses, pork cutlets (which are new sold at butchers in Italy, only in general provision shops). Endive they can be like perhaps because they are a seasonal food, hardly ever eaten in

ntea to going to the lavatory. We have to concentrate on ourselves. Then we can inherit the earth. But we can't inherit the earth if we have no senses, ~~[illegible]~~ intimate powers to understand it by.

Some Saturday nights we go to the market on the other side of the river, near the Vatican wall. The streets are tall and gloomy there, with one crooked Tenement house after the other, but the feeling is always good. This is Rome's working-class district. There is the atmosphere of clean, cosy homes, and even the lighted Christmas displays look healthy. It reminds me of the past of London Street I was born, with the shops brilliantly lighted, and women with deep shopping bags crammed full, and husbands behind them helping with the children. Trastavere isn't working-class, in the proper sense. It is Old Rome, with the real Roman people surviving all, mostly, the Old trades. You can see these, too, ~~as~~ used to. And the whole quarter is like an intricate, mediaeval village with winding, narrow, vaulted streets and tiny piazzas. You get the best, mediaeval Rome there: perhaps it really is the heart of Rome, not just in a sentimental way. We went to Christmas mass there last year, at S. Maria, sitting among the American students at the back, and it was cold, with loud singing; yet it was ~~[illegible]~~ the most marvellous mass we'd ever been to; the Old priest had a

sanity. For him it is the easiest thing in the world---a return to the 'mother'. For us, the most difficult. This is the basic error the Italian makes about our world:

We were in Santa Maria in Trastevere for this year's Christmas mass. It was cold, with bad singing. There were American students there, some of whom had (in themselves up dramatically, and were like people waiting for the photographer — a neat beard, a black lace kerchief too southern a Sicilian coat to be seen in Italy since the war, a rigid look as if the Man was a ~~play~~ drama ~~tragedy~~ that had to be followed closely and sympathised with, and the artistic paraphernalia. The ~~nave~~ mediaeval streets outside were mostly deserted now. There were few Romans in the church, as the fashionable place for Midnight Mass are now Santa Maria in Maggiore and Sant Anselmo in the Aventino. And then, men are rarely seen in Italian churches these days. It is a woman's business now, and incidentally an old woman's, though the family ceremonies are always respected. The men stay outside, dark and still in the 'galleria', the talking-place that every Italian town has. ~~Here~~ are 'communists', which means in the whole that they want a better deal for the workers, peasants, above all the latter.

We walked in the centre of ~~the city~~ Rome today and realised we didn't know the city we are now living in! It seems the most interesting [illegible] of a.

with

Sketching trip to the [illegible]

1) Trastevere - all the time

the summer), and all kinds of salami and mortadella, which some people say is made of horsemeat — explaining its brown ~ reddish colour — and some say is pork. Either way, it disagrees with me, but I like its hot spicy taste. The vegetables and fruit are much cheaper than at our local shop, or even our local market; so is the meat. The latest time to buy is near closing time, about eight o'clock, when all the prices are being lowered and the electric wires rolled up. One street is devoted to fish entirely, but we never buy fish in Rome. If we really want it we drive to Fiumicino, the tiny fishing port north of Ostia, and buy at the stalls in the street, just after the fleet comes in. One ~ two restaurants have a good reputation for fish: they probably do the same, having it sent up from the coast every day. Otherwise, I've heard, much of the fish eaten in Rome comes from the other side of Italy, on the Adriatic coast, and has to be transported along the winding Via Salaria, the salt-road of ancient Rome which is still there, ending in Ascoli Piceno, in the Marche. Last week we took a chance and bought a large sole, but it stank the place out while it was frying, and we threw it away. It wasn't really red enough under the gills, which is supposed to be a sign of freshness.

At the fruit stalls there are little plastic baskets

and you take one and pick up your own fruit, & then give
it to the woman to weigh. Sometimes we get all the oranges, apples and
for the week this way, and the more we buy the cheaper it
seems to be. But outside a short period in the winter,
oranges are expensive. The best Italian oranges seem to be abroad.
The vegetables this year were ruined by the abnormal frosts
and snow, which were on for two months, even in Sicily.
So prices were higher than normal, but the vegetables were still good. People said they came from Tripoli. The artichokes were
especially good, with that pleasant iron taste, fur inside.
Quite often we have them cold in the evening, with oil,
with only the hard outer leaves taken off: ~~we cook~~ the
stems and the choke of the core are eaten, because they
are picked young. If they are chopped up and put into a
cheese soufflé, they taste rather like mushrooms. Hardly
a year ago I disliked artichokes and almost never ate
them. Then suddenly I discovered how good they were cold,
with plenty of ~~pepper~~ pepper and olive oil, and sometimes goat cheese at
the side of the plate. But they are excellent fried in
a batter, and clean in half, Ingrowing, so that the
stem is ~~it~~ still there. But artichokes spoil wine. The
thickest, most sweetly scented black wine from Tuscany tastes
like vinegar after a mouthful of artichoke.

In the winter we used to walk on EUR, the
new city outside Rome, on the way to Ostia. This started

out of the Olympic games – a lot of the events were held here, the water-events, for instance, and the boxing (for which a closed stadium was built which is supposed to be the biggest concrete dome in the world) Trees were planted, pleasant blocks of flats were designed, new villas; whole lawns were laid, needing constant hosing in the summer months. Not many years ago it was all parched grassland with a road to the sea going through it. The lake can be used for boating – the little ~~pedal~~ paddle-boats which are like riding a tricycle. There are cafés at the water-edge, and a stall marked Barbecue where you can get sandwiches. ~~A beer~~ Hills have been put there. There are wide new streets with chic shops and a supermarket. There are massive tall office-buildings, some of them mostly glass: like intricate boxes sticking up above everything else – if they were small you would feel like ~~jigsaws~~ jigsaws/~~jigsaw~~ and with them, the glass windows, the shutters, the jutting roofs, the desks and metal cupboards and calculating machines that you can see moving from outside, the clusters and lights and heating tubes, the little brick designs and the ~~solar~~ sculptured walls; it wouldn't mean anything, it would be just

in fascist times, ~~the~~ and for years was just a group of exhibition-buildings round a square. They always looked strange and unused, like buildings in the middle of the desert put up for a rich Sheikh who couldn't know what to do with them. They never were for effect, and that was all there was to them — the work of the best architects in Italy, people say: effect. One of the buildings, standing alone, was especially strange, and it can still be seen, queerly illuminated from inside, as you drive along Mussolini's private road to the city, called the Strada del Lido, which now leads to the airport. It seems to be a sort of temple, but a temple without an inside. There are layers of arches, one on top of the other, and lights come from each arch in the evening, making it look like a wedding cake. You don't quite know what you're meant to think. Yet it isn't ridiculous. It isn't even ugly. Just an attitude — like a rich Sheikh's attitude. And this goes for the new city as well, which has come into being in the last few years. At first it looks extraordinary. An enormous artificial lake has been sunk in the middle, with a bridge across it, and infernal fountains which do a sort of dance with colours in the evening sometimes, when the machines are put on. This new EUR really grew

with noise and the Via Piazza-life. But there's a kind of internal hold on the city. There are too many foreign civil servants. The streets are called 'Viale Shakespeare' and 'Viale Cairo' — that sort of thing: very dignified. Life in Italian is invisible. A ~~a minute.~~ service ~~is robust~~. Suburbs are impossible in Italy. A local life always grows up — the shops ~~begin to~~ start getting their regular customers and ~~[illegible]~~ sell good article, names ~~start to~~ get known, the square gets its ~~be~~ cronies. You can't stop it. A suburb is an emanation of fears and neuroses that just don't exist in an Italian. His nerves are completely different from those of other people. For one thing, they're still scared, as all our nerves ~~are~~ would be (before we were born) ~~are now, if before also the [illegible]~~ But that isn't backwardness. It's a destiny.

We used to take the path round the lake, with the lights from the office-buildings all round us, and the coloured reflections in the water from the café signs, a floating fog and the dim lamps that were among the trees, making them look like a park. It was still very Italian in look at, especially in the winter. It was like an Italian version of the foreign world — the grandness, simplicity and order which are half really there in the foreign world, and half-imagined like a film-set. There was something something in it all after the noise and fumes of Rome. And there was a sort of clean, visual brilliance that made us gasp at first — the long vistas, the strangely

jiggering, like a Reichl playing with his toads. And near the lake there is ~~the only underground railway in Rome~~ a railway station — the only underground line, leading to the main station in Rome. The trains look smooth and clean, and seem hardly to make a sound. It all looks like a dream. But in the end you feel it isn't a dream to enjoy and relish — but a dream to impress. In the end — though you see no traces of fascism in the architecture, only modern good taste — the city is ~~full of~~ as it first established itself as a fascist ~~city~~ just ~~a fascist one~~ an fascism itself was a fast & the Italian craving for dignity — for making a grand impression. ###

The city also presents another need — the need and civil servants of politicians for cool and clean air in the summer. Ministries have been put there, and international conferences are held there. So the city has an air also of strained respectability. It is like a new civic Rome — she pushed out this scrubbed, well-behaved little child, rather than remodels her on pure completely by becoming civic as well. The people seemed used to the new quiet and decency. If it was completely Italian it wouldn't last two weeks — the whole place would get into a sort of new swing, and the angles would be rubbed smooth

captured for a moment, all its elements clear because they are seen from a great distance, with the coolness and in a neat spirit whose passion has been evolved into meticulous hard work, but not nerve-consuming work. There are the outlines of the 'future' — conceived like a film. In this actual town of the future there will be too much rough and tumble for those actual clean lines to be quite possible. But it is Italy's version of the modern world — a painless version: ~~and therefore~~ by being a version without problems. In this sense everything is easy for the Italian: his world begins easy — it poses no problems or distresses for the nerves. He rarely sees those far we have travelled from the natural and unproblematic life of the family. We long ago left the family behind. We are conceived in problems. Our world is broken from the beginning. We struggle towards the safety which for him is (once his mind is awakened) freedom and dreariness. If we stand in front of him silent and inactive, we risk being taken for empty: the basic reality of every creature for him is emptiness and a dark, dreary silence of known family-relations, and for all thought, etc, even work in the end (if it is more complicated than working the fields) is an act to relieve the monotony, and therefore a game. The whole foreign world is, right inside, a game. There are

shaped villas that stood on the peaks of the artificial hills,
the lights that shone sometimes from inside the fountains,
the office buildings like delicate rocks that nearly had a
reason for being there but not quite. Then it began to seem
dreary, and hollow underneath: some of the hollowness of the
foreign school was caught — pure order and nothing else,
silence and nothing else, like a monument made by mutual
agreement but not necessity, much less passion. It imitated
all the ~~rage~~ avoidance of passion (which is nothing but
hard necessity in the end) in the foreign world. You could
see wooden-looking, dark, frowning peasants from the south,
gaping at it all as they were meant to. It was Italy's
civic dream — which is always much more delicate and
subtle than real civic order ever is. But it could
never be inhabited, for that reason. It was just a scene, as
thin as a backdrop in the theatre. It was only a backdrop.
It didn't connect with anything in Italian life except the
need to dream and the incapacity to dream. As foreign
life is a dream, compared with Italy. And Italy imitates
the lines and curves of the dream, and actually
produces something more convincingly modern and smooth-
-running and perfectly clean than any town we have or
will be; just because the scene is a thin, ~~of the theatre~~

any inner order. This is what the sense of Christianity has absorbed — to a small extent, as in Germany, or to a great extent, as in France and the Anglo-Saxon countries. And we are quick to recognise the invisible order in things, which the Italian isn't. He is blind to Italy. He has to have a sign. This is especially true in the provinces. In Rome it is least true. Only in Rome is there anything close to that inner sense, ~~the ability to see in deeper lines~~, and so Rome has given Italy whatever order it has had from time immemorial. Rome isn't liked or admired in Italy, in my experience. There is a grudging kind of ~~self~~-side-glance towards it, awed and at the same time respectful — and disdainful as well: an odd combination. Rome has the only real dignity in Italy, historically. It is the classical hated mater, but at the same the Christ-slave. It taught the first straight roads, and then the first soothing light of the gospels — it gave something the common people could embrace, in their own lives, better than slavery to egotists. When you see the crowd leaving the provincial churches with sprigs of olive in their hands, on the Sunday before Palm Sunday, to be burned on Good Friday at home, after being blessed, that is Rome. But Rome is 'rozzo' — rough, vulgar, pathetic — in the eyes of northern Italy. The Tuscan recoils from her. In Tuscany was one of the homes of fascism — the effort to cut out vice and to allow the charity and reverence inherited through Rome from Judah, in a new order.

fascinating games, from television to writing books. Painting, sculpture, architecture — they are games to embellish the world, to express self. to make the essential dark monotony of life more bearable. The problems are missing. And this makes for everything that is gracious, or disarming, or plainly charlatan, or subtle, or brilliant, or pathetic — but never, except once or so in a hundred years (Dante. Verga. Verdi. Mangoni) for the problematic. Michelangelo

There is rarely the presence of the invisible — the mark of art that makes no general impression at all to speak of. There are gaiety — flashing — subtle — clattering exteriors. But the real inner silence is never touched — where there is no figura, nothing that flashes and sparkles, only the fatally comfortable, dreary, unruffled long evening of family-life. What stands stark and resolved, above all silent — all real art — makes Italy shudder.

Right underneath, this is ignorance of the Passion. This may seem a strange thing to say, because in Italy the effects of the Passion — the pity and subtle, unwavering charity and simplicity in people, their recognition of la miseria, their surrender in matters of power — are stronger than elsewhere. But the whole Passion — the whole inheritance, problem — has not absorbed into life. It has gone, in its effects, into the tissues of feeling. But it has not touched the real actions of life — the daily gestation of conscience. It has, above all, rendered

45. (85)

And perhaps it failed largely because of Rome. When Mussolini danced alone on the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia and asked the immense crowd in the square whether they preferred guns or butter (an incomprehensible question to any Italian) they the Roman latter (as inescapable question to any Italian) they the Romans of course shouted 'Cannoni!' — it sounded better, and the word butter had no ring at all. It was perhaps too long 'burro', meaning the wooden, dull peasant fare of the south, and the word 'gun' had proper associations with the pricks. But what happened afterwards wasn't meant at all. The northern Italians would have made the guns, with their finesse and application. Rome ~~would~~ prior ~~was given~~ gave a loud shout, [illegible] to clear the throat, ~~and got back to its news by the~~ ~~on the pavement, as the economy watching the traffic~~ and then closed butter, because [illegible] could eat it. The only thing I have heard from any Roman about the war was that he was a bit hungry. He 'starved' — he makes a big face: meaning he didn't eat enormous meals for a few months. People say he didn't eat because of the lack of food the Roman people dwindled by 40,000 in the last war.

This morning, Easter Sunday, we tried to listen to the St. Matthew Passion on a record, but the juke-box ~~was~~ sounded like a clanking fan, ~~from~~ the courtyard ~~was~~ was so loud that even with ~~the window~~ closed windows ~~we could hardly~~ it was impossible, ~~to properly~~. That you felt the desperate loneliness of people. At first it felt rather disorder — in the ~~room~~ people, in your nerves — it may even turn you wild, ~~in frustration~~, unless you keep on to yourself very tight, like a man people are trying to push off a precipice. There is the saying 'Un Inglese

italianizzato è il diavolo incarnato' — the Italianised Englishman is the devil incarnate. But this is only the first stage. Then the lesson is slowly learned, if you wait long enough. You see some of them clearing out (the precious: American, English, Australian: French: the first) raw wilderness, the collapse of all the civic understanding, and then the flight back to order. You have to learn where your own order lies. You really must always be a foreigner. You become in fact more of a foreigner: but in being consciously and deliberately so, in knowing what you have chosen — by inheriting (a a) full consciously (forced) the order which you (simply always) took for granted before, and which was for that reason incomplete and easily dislodged — You ~~have~~ get closer to Rome than ever ~~before~~ ~~You~~ In the provinces you would get too much involved in figures: there ~~must~~ is too much apparent order, & you ever can't arrive at the truth. The leaven of humour, and the peculiar detachment which people outside Rome take for hardness, make Rome an island, ~~in the Italian peninsula~~ whatever Italian form ~~of existence~~ there is. In ~~Italy~~ and the seed of the provinces, in Tuscany and the Romagna and the Veneto, there is much more spectacle — people have much more to show, there is wit and society, of a provincial kind. But it isn't the truth of Italy. It is all effort, all ~~the~~ strain, whether in Florence or Venice.

But the Roman has a blank stare. The stares out of la miseria and makes no bones about it. He dresses so in the figures - the any from of society or wit or gaiety or any sort of group - adventure. And people ask (in Italy), 'Well then, how can you enjoy that?' The answer is, because it's the truth. It: the Italian truth ⊙ not the Italian only the Roman has made a life whole with the truth — only he has incorporated the combined Italian misery and dreary foreboding underneath, the loneliness of creatures who have no command of the sensations that seem through them, and made them into a complete authentic life which, for from imitating from deriving it: seeing, the foreign world, draws the foreign world of and still remains inwardly the capital of Christendom. The only people apart from the Italian I have real power, as opposed to quick worldly power, rests on a sense of the sadness underneath all figures — only show; the pain, of the gnawing life-problem, underneath show is what the Roman has seen first. Inwardly he is the imperial master. The rest of Italy accepts him as a master, grudgingly. He knows how to involve people, how to bide his time, how to persuade without speech, and enclose without any attempt at sparkle — this is real power. Real power is always the power to surrender, underneath. The only people with a kind of also to have anything like the effortless perpetuation of the Englishman and I know, always surrendering and compromising in details and accepting the corrupt bargain, are the Romans. But who are

the Romans? You can't even say they are a people. ~~You might~~ ~~Romans if you can even talk about that~~ Yet Rome is its people. There are obvious Romans — with the clear Roman head. There is the accent, which fills me with ~~a~~ accent which is now a ~~sort of~~ dong for me when I hear it. I get great nostalgia ~~for it~~ when I'm outside Rome. In the country I feel foreign: I'm aware of being in a foreign land, away from my own people. But that isn't true in Rome. There is a Roman people, a nucleus ~~which some people say is in Trastevere and old Rome, and then say is disturbed~~ which you find in Trastevere, for instance. But Trastevere is only the common people — it doesn't include the ~~corrupt~~ monstrously detached upper classes. ~~Rome is dotted all over Rome, in different pockets where accent still~~ at all like the ~~popular one~~. Rome finally is an extraordinary inheritance — a kind of initiation open to every one. But very few can pass through it ~~as~~ simple and unswerving ~~as~~ the truth. It is easier to make a romance of it, or a ~~warehouse~~ (though this would take some doing), still, ~~if you have supported by foreign money~~ behind you, Rome will do you any service), or a museum; ~~and~~ then pass on — to the other city where you belong. Oddly, the road to Rome leads ~~out~~ to the country. No city-person can really settle in Rome — even with Rome in its present state, ~~a stinking garbage~~ every Rome wears the grotesqueness of ~~a~~ nineteenth-century epoch like a coat — the frowsy

model at present in vogue ~~for San Francisco to the Archipelago~~ sits on the head quite comfortably — She never lets things pinch. One day she'll clear the striking savage always, and there'll be something else just as grotesque and unbearable.

That joke-box from the vestry was really a standstalking. Italy is the slave with her head in no time for inner order — there are too many things outside to do, on the crack of the whip. The slave is with unity in the pagan world. Sensations noted in an trim, there wasn't even the time for silence or recollection than the animal has. The slave is humiliated; the time in frightened self-disgust. The outside world is all storms for him, snatches of sensations, ecstatic moments of nothing, but no theme or truth. nothing constant joining one moment to the next: no order. And Rome took all this for material and used it for the Christianity it treasonalised by means of original sin, and perpetuated the frightened self-disgust and the snatched horrified sex which bears the stain of decay and wrong doing. Rome taught the soothing light — and enslaved Italy to it. That was the only way it knew. But in face there was no other way. A lot of advanced Catholics hate Rome: this is the fashion abroad, ~~the advanced~~ too corrupt, you know. Since the church - bad reputation. But I, as a protestant, can see where they're wrong, and where they live in the corruption themselves and profit from it. and therefore are corrupt two times over, unlike even the worst

Vatican reactionary. The point was Rome is that it recognises the ambiguity of power — the permanent stain: that all power corrupts. Power can't be exercised well. Power is always intoxic. All power is evil. Good intentions behind power are only a greater blindness than bad ones. Sometimes for a self more inflexibility and hardness in a man who has worked his way to power than in a man who has worked his way to power) corrupts,

The way to change Rome is to influence too, by becoming part of her. But most of the advanced people couldn't do that because they would have to renounce their motives to power ('reform') Like the Protestant reforming catholics I [illegible] outside Italy and to me in my mind bullies and underneath, especially the cloth. Given power — unlike the Vatican reactionaries — they would be absolutely merciless. I'm sure: because they've never had the courage to doubt whether they themselves were really right and good. Of course, that is the famous self-abasement you get in the Catholic world: I know a man who habitually crosses his hands on his chest and makes a little bow as if to say, 'I'm nothing' — the truest a bag of worthless hatred, which he knows really the', but then he's never been able to examine and master, through the words self-examination' are on his lips all day. Really, he has used God as a support for his hatred — for spite and justification for all sorts of bitterness

~~Contempt of people.~~ While we scan the ~~Papal~~ Vatican policies a shade troubled about what's going to be done with him at the end of it all — he can feel the flame licking his feet between the lines in a world that ~~Papacy~~ Southern Italy. 'Goodness' is no sense ~~in the sense~~ of helping a damned fool to ~~Rome~~ Hell. In ~~Rome~~ saintliness is a very few indeed — there is no protestant world we are all angels of it have a shot at it. This is what astonishes the Italian when the foreign world and ~~makes~~ puts him ~~in fact~~ once it ~~has~~ comes to ~~it~~. This 'goodness' — the hopes for ~~of~~ foreign ~~tourists~~ cars to see him cross the road when there is no policeman standing by. ~~Expects the~~ At first the thought the foreigner was a damned fool who came to Italy to be milked of his worldly belongings. But he's no longer quite so sure. He begins to see the chance of a better world than his own. He begins to imitate. ~~And in the end goes to Rome to dinner stopping to look~~ He started ~~Pedestrian~~ Years ago ~~the Roman Empire~~ to realise that when foreign motorists stopped for him it was only because he was afraid of him, so wanted to ingratiate himself with him: so ~~and~~ he stopped giving the motorist a hard, triumphant, martial stare and then walking across the road as slowly and imperially as possible to drive the triumph ~~home and trembling~~ home...

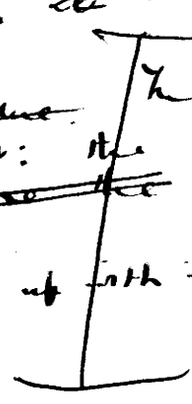
The strength of ~~Italy~~ Rome in Christendom is that she understands no pagan rot, and therefore has a command of the whole repertoire and history of ~~no~~ no intentions and desires which no other people has ~~or ever have~~ ©

Last night, Easter Saturday, at about midnight when we were in bed, I thought I heard the bells of St. Peter's through the closed windows. But in a half-sleeping state I thought it was a recording, a kind of luxury, might be a recording, a televising of the midnight mass there. But if this is the real bell, the bell I know so well, I thought drowsily, so sombre that it seems to me right through the soul, then it's an extraordinary luxury. Then I fell asleep. Nowadays they're relaying tapes of bells from church-towers, instead of the bells themselves. In a place we know in Tuscany you see the cow of a cook and the bark of a dog thrown in as well, every Sunday morning at about half-past nine, with sounds of oscillation and atmospherics, screeching across the countryside. This is a great advance for the peasant. The bell itself is nothing — just a way of calling him to church.

The bell of St. Peter's sounded pure and deep as it did when the last Pope was lying in state and crowds were pouring into the church every night. Sometimes we could hear it all, but on clear nights, when the wind carries it, the vast bell drifts across the city like a dream (a) from St. Angelo like a most primitively intimate dream.

At the moment, Easter Sunday, just after one o'clock (in the afternoon), all the cars that have tried to press into the square of St Peter's for the Pope's appearance on the balcony —

the people's homage, ~~Rome~~ now a sort of game (perhaps it always was) we are trying to get us again. There are three lanes, one is on narrow street below, one on the road by the river ~~this side~~, and one on the far side of the river. When there are ~~eight~~ lanes, the drivers keep their hands on their horns (with the intimate conviction that a dammed fool ~~not~~ in front is causing it all), and ~~there~~ are three masses of trumpet-notes deafening up to us through the ~~all~~ dangling ~~of~~ light sunshine. One a million Romans are supposed to have left Rome ~~for~~ this Easter Holiday - a good fifth of the population. So there are probably people from outside Rome. Then ~~it~~ will die down, after a ~~hour~~ or two, there will be the usual wrestling policemen blowing their whistles and waving desperately, ~~the~~ ~~kept~~ there will be the little trumps between by one car ~~to~~ another, with the two drivers ~~who~~ jumping out simultaneously on to their ~~feet~~ like Jacks-in-the-box and standing yelling at each other, while the traffic piles up ~~more~~ behind them; and then the afternoon will the ~~gate~~ suns and clear, with the street below a canvas of warm sunlight, with us ~~not~~ we are alive, as we used to see [illegible] Rome of ten years ago. Before the city ~~lost~~ its ~~vital~~ physical splendour (and the sun could actually touch her ~~all~~ over the centre, with ~~most~~ of Rome in it. So ~~really~~ Rome languishes under it all like - ~~but~~ ~~for~~ tortured ~~beast~~: the dirty, noisy, suffocating nineteenth century can catch up with it at last.



But There has just been a sharp bang, a yell and a clatter of glass ~~from the street below~~. I go to the balcony and see a red motorcycle lying on its side in front of a small car: no body hurt — the youth down from the small car embraces the youth from the motorcycle in a dramatic way, and they both go into Sergio's wineshop, where their livers will be knocked also a bit by his cognac or, worse still, his white vermouth. The cycle is removed, the car driven to the side of the street, when I can no longer see it. Face at the balcony, with the warm spring sun pouring down, I can't see anything again. Five stood on three leaning on the iron railings for hours & may life, it seems. [Two young women walk past below with bare arms and light dresses — tourists believing it's summer. The ~~Italian~~ Roman must put on summer clothes for at least two months yet. The woman with a pale, cracked face and fuzzy grey hair who always calls me dog *Lonsiere instead of Isabella sits down in her usual place on the stone coping outside the provision-shop opposite — the foundation stones of the immense Tribunale that was never built in the seventeenth century. Those stones have been so useful to us all since then. One can lie full length on them, sit and watch people's knees on them; they are always cool.

Another foreign couple walk by from the other direction — in spring clothes again. The puts his arm round her waist and clasps her hand, in the belief that this is

+ painting
painting-up in the corpse was in, when the doors of the church were closed for a few days hours. Before the queues formed again. He was treated like a possession — a stern, holy, silent puppet, like the saints you see under glass from mediaeval times, skeletons covered with black parchment skin. And that presence, permeating every ~~soft~~ shuddering pool of the bell, ~~hung on Rome and Bob, rumbling stones.~~ was part of the bell, seemed to caused the strange nightly storms, and to hang in the air, like the sour smell of the canvas from the square.

I saw it on the corner of the street behind us, near the pole always pass, then. when the ~~pole~~ is like a ~~then~~ end of

I remember that well after the death of the last pope.
~~My wife [illegible] was away for a few days & I was alone in the~~ IV
came drifting mysteriously across the river while vast crowds gathered
in St. Peter's Square. The weather was strange at that time. There
were menacing thunderstorms, and sudden ~~[illegible]~~ flashes of lightning,
all night. I went to the square one evening, during the lying-
-in-state, and there was an air of half-merry excitement, as always
over the death of a great figure. There was an endless queue waiting
to go into the church. And the half-merriment seemed to be
combined with fear and anger. The Roman is cynical of the
church; the Holy Ship disgusts him, he's making money out of it.
The church is the greatest (and laziest) ~~[illegible]~~ of all, who has
to be kept and fed like a prince, and has the power to wreak you.
So at this death there was a mysterious combination of feelings —
superstitious presentiment, fear and also something progressive towards
the dead pope himself. The feeling was mediaeval. He was
owned, with a kind of ancient sternness and relentlessness, by the
people. His death was everywhere — in the bars and cafés. Unlike other
~~the~~ Italians ~~of the provinces~~ the Roman are aware of the pope,
whether grudgingly or not doesn't matter. Like the English monarch,
he may be detested, but he belongs to the people. The scandal
that broke loose involving the pope's doctor ~~who published memoirs~~
~~of the pope immediately~~ was part of this: the body 'exploded' while
the journalists were looking at it, though in having embalmed it
in a new system he'd evolved & wanted to try out. And then
the pope's body was borne from Castel Gandolfo at a slow
march, wrapped in a great bag of cellophane, perhaps to preserve
the remains for the lying-in. There were stories that a nightly

We walked in the centre of Rome and realised we didn't know what sort of city we were really living in. It seems the most grotesque madness to hang on. We went through the narrows side-streets by the ~~Piazza~~ villa Borghese towards Piazza San Silvestro, then up the wide Tritone. There was one flat board of hard, shining, stinking cars all the way. We were irritable almost at once, and had dry throats from the fumes. The cars moved along at less then walking pace. ~~Therefore we couldn't advance because of the cars and the cars couldn't advance because of~~ neither we nor the drivers could walk each other.

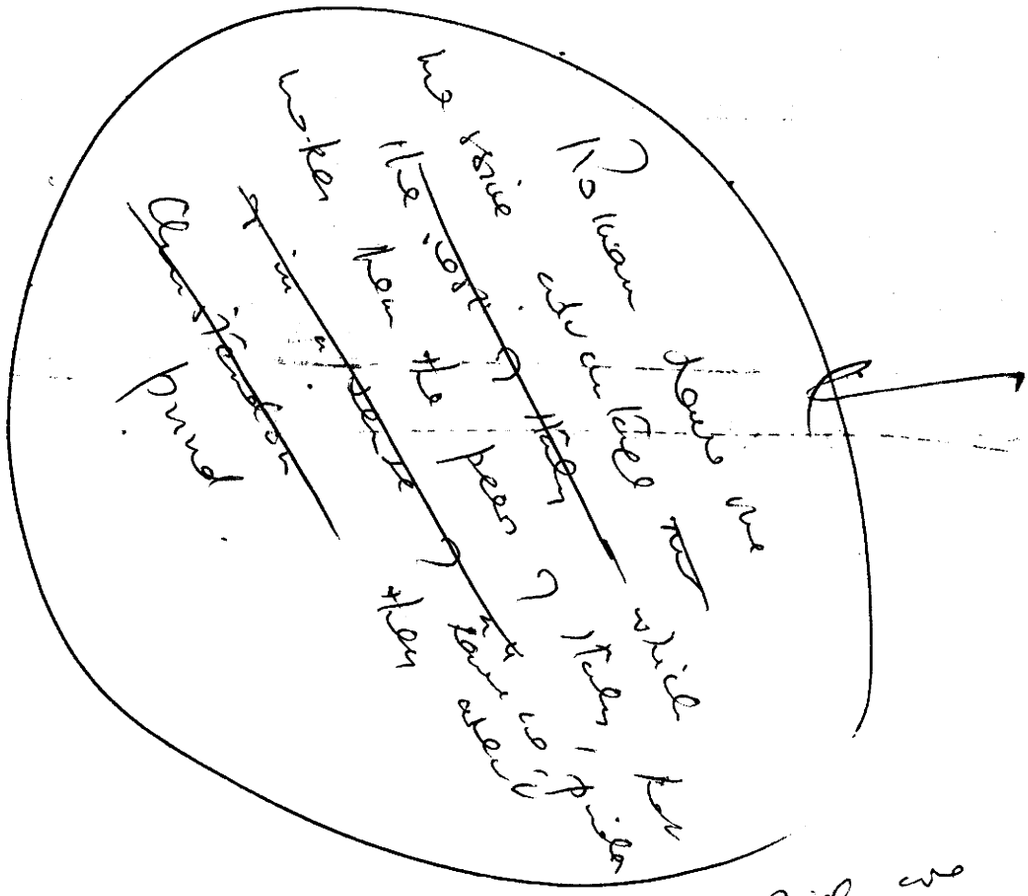
Therefore neither we nor the drivers could go forward.

the place where Caecilius first made use of its mouth

The peasants who produce the food know their only the city people die. But diseases will reach them. The so-called civic diseases will feed - the moment - cure them.

their — & the moment - the

(and the city-people who play at our farming)



If you look at the 2 towers which are called 'the twins' in San Gimignano you will see that one of them had a great crack taken out of it to allow a new window to open outwards in the next-door house.

a proximate city. the Italians a carefree people. the smiles and loves a. happy go lucky in a way even when he nearly walks into ~~a~~ a taxi. He looks like a scientist & some kind. He needs— the untidy hair— & recuperate. A few men walk along, colliding with each other. A radio blares from across the road. A girl's voice sings the tune with it. There are birds singing — with it her feet in the country because they are all shot. I can just see the Tiber — it always seems to run fast: it will take the road to Ostia, and end up at the port of Fiumicino, near the place where the emperor Claudius (?) first turned it to use for shipping. Paolo, the antique-furniture maker who is one of our friends at the Trattoria where we eat once a week or so, ~~is fascist~~ across the river, does his freshwater-fishing along this stretch of the river. He is a small, wizened man, much younger than his age. looking more like an Anglian worker than a Roman. He has a swift, shy smile, and his teeth gleam. while the deep wrinkles in his face ~~deepen~~ spread and deepen. He has spent twelve years of his life in prison, for various petty robberies, and says those are the best people he knows, the men in prison; they are the most honourable and straight. Prison was a very sheltered life, he says. He always got on well with the authorities, and at one time was in charge of the catering ~~side of~~ arrangements in his prison. The people on top always had a good word for him. He doesn't think any more. He decided years ago to go straight. Now you could leave a ~~complete~~ thousand lire in the street under his mind no one would touch

would'n touch it. There are jokes about his being a queer, though he's married with children. And he smiles a bit sheepishly. When we met him he was in the wagon, only drinking Coca-Cola. Now he's back in wine, and tackles it every day. He gets wild-drunk sometimes. ~~He was hilarious last night, on the beginning of the evening, and he was already slightly tired, then a trifle more, and he was singing in the side-street, which excited everybody.~~ Everybody was amazed when he went in the wagon. He never allowed himself more than a glass of beer. Then, the moment everybody accepted him as a sober person, he went back to the wine and spent two days drinking it non-stop.

I was surprised this afternoon to see that the swifts have come back. They fly low on the terrace and wheel about in the sky, with their shrill twitter which is similar to (like the) cool, floating movement of their bodies. Sometimes they sweep down to within a few feet of the terrace-railing. Last year they disappeared, before the summer was over, and the dawn was quite silent and uncanny. Some people said it was due to the earthquakes in southern Italy, which wrecked part of Naples. I wondered if it was the car-fumes. But here they are, suddenly, again. They were there at the normal time. Now the sun was just beginning to go down. They come at dusk, and notice when the hour of the day starts. ...little swallows. They float about in the first evening darkness, and for a moment they get confused with the bats.

They make the same manoeuvres. At dawn this morning —

Easter Monday - there were three again. Sky actually sparkling —
sky — they delineate its endless blue spaces with their wild, ~~[illegible]~~
piercing twitters, ~~[illegible]~~ they wheel also like the sky in action,
floating and turning ever so slowly, with tiny, awkward flaps of the
wings.

This time of year is the best. Today there is a cool
breeze from the sea side of the city, and the sunlight is
clear, dazzling + warm ~~[illegible]~~ with the sky so
blue and high and still, like an
immense sea without a ripple, ~~[illegible]~~. Over the
dome and golden cross of St. Peter's, and the mellow terra cotta
walls ~~[illegible]~~ look like
sceptres put in the middle of the countryside, connected with the hills,
and the sea ~~[illegible]~~ outside. The million-odd Romans who
have left Rome for Easter are apparently still away, because there are still
few cars. The are almost no cars parked in the street below.
It has gone back to its proper state — a narrow, cobbled vault where
the heat and light collect like something captured by special
arrangement with the sky: the heat and light are stored there,
between the walls, and it feels like walking down a street that
leads into the past, where something is still going on — the old
meals, and the old smell of wine-casks — only you don't know what it is.
Once, until this century, the street was blocked at the other end
by a fountain, near the bridge of Angels that crosses overhead from
the palazzo Farnese. Now the fountain has been turned around,
intact, to face the road from a side-wall. The little bridge
of Angels was at first intended to be the first arch in a vast

ridge that would go right across the river to the Gianicolo — actually is a church on the other side? (?) But it was never built, ~~take that out~~

This flat fills with light in the spring. It seems to ~~be~~ open to the sky at first — it seems to belong to the sky more than to the street below. The whole terrace gleams and sparkles with yellow light, and the courtyard on the other side is like a bright well containing warmth. In the spring I like to go on to the terrace very low and then from the room and take the sun. Then I go back into the slightly chilled darkness again. All our terrace flowers have been killed this year by the frost — unusual frost. Three we gave the 2 lilac-trees left, and the oleanders which we have pruned down to a bush. The lilacs have been near death so often in the summer droughts when we've been away. They leave us astonishing sturdiness. They push up buds from nowhere, ~~all the year round~~ after a drop of water. I also give them tea and coffee, to keep the earth rich. But it's no good. The oleander which we brought from the country looks like a different plant from what it used to be: the dull, moist green is all gone now, the leaves still, fertile insistence, and the branches did push me with their tortile insistence, and the branches get hard and knotted like old men's hands.

Rome must have been like this in classical times, when the sun made the stones a blinding white and the birds sang among the columns, and the grass, fresh from the winter rains, was bright-green like a lawn. Then the sea must have seemed much closer, and its sparkling brightness must have

been seen in the Rome sky. The Tiber is like Rome's connection with the sea, bringing towards it, and like the Thames it seems to promise the sea, in this case the blue and green, ruffled Mediterranean, with light yellow sands, where the ancient city of Ostia used to stand like an Arab town, parched and glittering, with narrow straight lanes paved with massive granite-blue cobbles, and tall cypresses and perhaps palms. Italy was much closer to Africa and to the biblical countries: it was still easy in the African sea like a marvellous long island offering springs and fresh hills. The whole of it was much more like Sicily then. And Rome must have faced the sea, in a distance, but inside the misty of its overpowering, ecstatic light, cuddled inside it, still like a flashing valley of marble. The air must have been sandy in the summer, like desert air, with astonishing breaths from the sea all the time, disturbing the curtains in the flat houses that let the light penetrate right through, with a secret, dim courtyard in the middle where the fountain was, cool and totally remote from the town outside, as you see in Turkish houses now, with little balconies looking into the darkness, like something dreaming, in the long, silent afternoons. A last actual physical glimpse of that Rome must have been available in the first half of the nineteenth century, when not only grass and bushes but massive trees sprouted out of the ruins of the Caracalla. Shelley describes sitting there in

absolute stillness, with birds singing round him, remote from the Roman streets, among the tall, strange arches of the old baths. And you see it in Goethe's drawings. The old Appian way, cobbled, with ancient memorial stones on either side, and fine fields, ~~and~~ which have been deserted as you only find paths now in the outskirts of Frascati or Palestrina. I can remember being driven along that road when ten years ago, it was more or less ~~stopped~~ deserted, nearly no cars on the road to Albano, and ~~not~~ didn't meeting a soul, not Sunday, much less another car. The strong, fertile warmth of southern Italy was still there inside Rome, even then. Even today you feel it. The sky simply comes down on the city and takes charge. Everything looks drawn into the vast, light-blue, hazy ~~space~~ sky, which is also drawing power from the sea all the time.

When we came back from Tuscany last week the first person I met in the empty street below was the ridiculous ancient Roman, with 2 days' growth of beard on his chin. It was after two o'clock and all the shops were closed. I'd come downstairs to get a bottle of wine from Sergio, but he was closed in mid-afternoon and I went into the courtyard under his flat and called up 'Sergio! Sergio! ~~Angelino~~!' No, no one there and I met my ancient Roman as I was walking out of the long, tunnel-like passage from the courtyard. He was 'intossicato', he said — he'd eaten some pecorino cheese and it had made him ill in a rash all over his body. I laughed and said it sounded

like something else – too many women. He should cut down on the women, I said, it was bad for the blood. He smiled slightly, with dry lips, and said, 'Hell! What else is there left to do, if you take away women? Nothing! Nothing on earth, except eat and drink. No excitement, nothing to look forward to! Cut that out, and you cut out everything!' I said I'd bring him a bottle of medicine for the liver – something that was doing me good; it was called an elixir, and you took it before breakfast every morning — tasted like the bitter sarsaparilla, in fact that was its taste. He nodded and said he thought he knew it. It would be the next day. 'I'm off to wine' Then the old woman who sometimes looked after Sergio's looked out of the upstairs window, into the silent half-sunlit street, her face dry and cracked – the same one who always calls her dog Lorna instead of Isabella — and told us that Sergio was further down the road in a bar on the right hand side. 'Let's drive there, in my car,' the ancient Roman said, 'I've nothing to do.' So we jumped in and drove a couple of hundred yards down the road to a [illegible] bar no bigger than a railway-compartment. There was Sergio and his wife, sitting opposite the bar facing in front of them, saying nothing. At first he wanted us to come in and enjoy a first-class coffee – the man was a friend of his, he said, and made excellent coffee. But I said I'd already eaten and wanted wine. He pulled a big key out of his pocket, like the key to St. Peter's, and thrust it into the ancient Roman's hand – 'Give him the wine!' He

said, 'he knows where to find me!' But the ancient Roman dislike like this
He said, 'No, of course!' I smiled — 'Why, are you afraid he'll say
to take something!' (I knew this was the reason — Italians have great
caution in this sort of thing), to which he replied, 'No, it is not
that — I would know where to find the wine!' 'But he knows!'
Sergio cried, getting into the car. (We drove off, and Sergio
looked me with a smile from the back row) long ago we'd agreed —
'About half-an-hour ago,' I said. 'We started at seven this
morning.' 'And no wine?' he asked, 'Have you had no wine for
the whole day this time?' 'No, I couldn't be bothered.' 'Next time do
lunch the bottle for me!' he said with a laugh. When we (at
to the dock, Phill stop) he gave me 2 bottles on tick and I
offered the ancient Roman a white vermouth. 'No, no!' he
said, screwing up his face. 'I couldn't touch anything alcoholic!'
At which Sergio laughed — 'You can have a coffee or beer!
Come and have a coffee from my friend — he really knows how
to make it!' And they drove off together, after Phill locked up
the shop carefully.

I carried off my two bottles of wine, wrapped in white
tissue paper, and went into one of the cafés for some
water at the fountain. I'd bought an empty fiasco bottle. I met
Nannina there, straining water through a saucepan filled with
potatoes and large chunks of baccalà, dried cod-fish. Had
we had lunch, she said — late today because she didn't feel
hungry. She has a good, round, plump, pale face, and everyone
says of her, 'What a very religious woman.' She simply gives that

impression — of a steady character derived from religion. One couldn't imagine her doing anything dishonest — not the slightest unseen act. When there is this goodness in Italy it is close to a saint's — in the sense that it is single and clear, very much a facet of one inimitable character, and also soft and yielding. Goodness always has the woodsmoke background. There isn't the rebel-good — the fervent indignation. Nannina isn't sentimental, and she talks harshly about people sometimes, but only when the goodness has been sucked and traded on, for instance by the plump lady on the second floor. She is also as thin like a girl. She still is in a family. Though this is vague and generalised now: only the feeling is still there; you see it all once in the tiny, poor room — it makes the street outside and the new courtyard, the arched entrance from the massive door through which carriages and horses used to roll once, to a stable on the track where an iron lamp has now set up shop. She makes it all mysterious and intimate, even with one eye after another turning by a few feet away and sending in a cloud of fumes. Every year she has a cold or two, sometimes 'flu, when she sits by the table with her head wrapped in a great woollen scarf, her chin on her hand, saying in time to her tiresomely, her soft lips parted. When you drop in and ask how she is she frowns and raises her eyes to the sky. She shakes her head. 'Bad, bad' — in a whisper, because her voice has gone. 'Bad, bad.' And the pain in her leg, which is due to the fact that she has to wash out her clothes kneeling on the pavement, in the coldest months, because her wretched padrona — the woman who used to own most of the palazzo, before the engineer came — refuses to give her even a washing board, much less a basin in the room with running water, or a carpet for

for her feet, & an electric stove. The only heating she has in the winter is what she makes when she cooks, twice a day, over a tiny brazier-fire of charcoal. Otherwise there is no stove, no carpet, and a biting wind comes through the door every time someone opens it. Also the rent paid. But where else should she go? She has no home. What she gets she gets from the kindness of tenants. She has no family left, no home to visit. And so it goes on, in a pleasant siege, because she isn't really and finally unhappy. She gets quite a lot of intimate and unexpected excitement from the coming and going of the tenants, from keeping the street door open on long extra if someone is giving a 'reception'; for sending on mail if one of us is away, for talking to Gaetano, the storekeeper opposite, & the deaf old woman who looks after the flat of the Armenian priests by the church. And the friend, who stays to bed, works on the restaurant all day and comes back loaded with titbits for the cats, who knows the footstep at night - at about eleven o'clock - and gathers round in a curious, wide-eyed way like people waiting for a speech. The friend is a nuisance - she makes too much noise when she comes in at night, then also she's very selfish: nothing seems to matter to her unless it's the cats, and her cats are the reason why Nankin is always being avoided by the tenants, because there is always much a stench on the staircase and sometimes cat-excrement as well. She has to crawl up the stairs with her leg, and clean up the mess if there is any. How can she control the cats? But it's true Nankin is in love with them. 'If you stay to tea,' 'I told Lou Nankin is in love with them. If you stay to tea,' she'll give you a quick conniving glance and beautiful blue eyes!' she'll give you a quick conniving glance and

say, 'Do you know, the way she comes in at night and pushes her head against me and meeows, you'd think she was a child saying mamma, mamma!' She always keeps me a few of the very finest looking ones in the pots, in the room. They jump in and out of the window from the street, and sometimes sit among the potted flowers staring at the traffic. There was one particularly beautiful one, a tall male with a fine grey-and-white coat and thoroughly innocent, unblemished eyes, who used to sit among these pots with his paws hanging down simply rather like a king on a throne whose elbows were on the armrests so that his hands hung down in an easy, delicate, aristocratic way. He disappeared ~~[illegible]~~ as all of them do in time, and Nanuma requested him more than all the others, because she had taught him to drink milk when he was a little ball of fluff. ~~[illegible]~~ ~~pet~~ As I say, they are probably killed by people who want their fur for the glove-shops. As soon as their fur is fresh and clean and gleaming, though good food, they disappear. I would like to be a fly on the wall sometimes, to see what goes on in the street below in the cool of night. There is everything from rats to the rise of cats to car-thefts.

Well, I got my water. I asked if it was really drinkable, and she said yes. She'd been drinking it for some months now, and she believed it came direct from an underground spring. Someone from the water board had come along recently and made it safe. It was real fountain water, ~~and probably was healthy~~ for the right. Several of the

flats in the palazzo Lawr pipes leaks running from it and special taps on the sinks. But we Lawr. I told her we no longer drank the bottled mineral water because we had heard it was ~~genuine~~ genuine. I wondered if this was why Nanninna never seemed to get really ill like the friend, ~~and took change~~ or if it ~~was~~ did get some change in any way, year in and year out, the friend is visibly older and frailer, but Nanninna has a soft, yielding tenacity, which seems to grow through the eyes, ~~which~~ these for ~~the~~ liquid and faint, without any sharpness, as if the tenacity in her is completely interior and not connected with the body, so that the body grows in it and keeps its freshness and grace, pale bloom, and throws off sickness by yielding to it ~~religiously and devoutly and to~~ ceremoniously and devoutly, though always detached.

The trattoria where we go is in a jumble ~~warren~~ of narrow medieval streets on the other side of the river and has a courtyard under wisteria at the front. Inside there is a long tunnel-shaped room leading straight from the kitchen, where we go in the winter. And through a glazed door there is the restaurant proper, where all but the regular clientele go — we haven't been there so far. The smoke from the kitchen, and sometimes the stink of stale fish frying, drifts through the room and gets into one's clothes. Where we always sit I can see the kitchen — Enzo, the owner, usually sits at a table just in front of the thick pizza-bar, reading comic-strip magazines & smoking, & dozing with his head in his hands,

stumped on the table, and there is also his wife, a tall, solemn, red-cheeked woman with a quick, dimpled smile who dresses in a white coat for the restaurant and supervises the bills, as well as taking a hand in the kitchen. "We always keep amazed at kitchens — how well they function. However many people go into the restaurant next door, and however many sudden orders are shouted through, there never seems to be a rush in the kitchen. There is one cook, Angelo - a quick, pale, dark, silent young man who always Good night! ~~when you go~~ ~~Good~~ when you come in and Good morning! when you go out; then there is an old woman who lives near by and seems to do most of the washing-up — enormous piles of it which, even so, never seem to take more than half an hour at a time, because the sink is so long and everything is so well-arranged; and then a three waiters — the head man being Renato, who can arrange several orders in his head at a time and sometimes has the kindest smile in his dry, pale lips; he is always ~~seems~~ ready to spring up, ~~to~~ ~~any~~ ~~to~~ ~~~~somebody~~~~ and he never seems to change — he ~~~~supervises a steady attention to the~~~~ has a steady attention, inside a thick body, with dark and sometimes slightly gleaming eyes. The place opens at nine in the morning, and between meals wine or beer is always being drunk, and cards played. Everybody lives within a few yards of the entrance, in the jumble of ancient streets, except us. On the houses are from the fifteenth century or earlier. The

would used to be much lower, and now the houses had ~~their cellars~~ what were now their cellars on the ground floor at one time. They are low, arched doorways and massive walls, tiny windows and tall wooden doors ~~like the~~ for the what used to be the cattle-shed & stables on granary, in the style of ~~Italian farmhouses~~ ~~Tuscan houses~~ where only the upper floors ~~are~~ have rooms. ~~inhabited~~ It is all hidden from the rest of Rome.

This morning a policeman in blue came - his fourth or fifth visit, but the first to find us at home. He belongs to that part of the police called the 'delegazione', and they exist largely for getting information about the movements of people, if they're being looked for. We were being looked for. It was a fine, he said, from years ago, and he couldn't tell us what the fine had been for. He only knew it hadn't been paid. He was a tall, clean, straight-backed with a slim face and a neat, black moustache and fine eyes. I'd just been down to a shop and found him at the door. We asked, 'what sort of fine? for the car? How long ago?' But he couldn't say. All he knew was what was written down on the printed form which he carried neatly clipped on to a board. In Italy, he said with a smile, one often didn't know such things! What he could say was that the police summons - whatever it was - had been removed, and the sum I was off being asked for, about two thousand five, were paper costs. But I couldn't pay it here and now. I had to wait for an 'invitation' from this branch two streets away, and in this invitation it would be written how and exactly I was to go about paying. All he could tell me was that the fine had originated from a

place called San Benedetto in Trento. There we understood – I guess! – that when about five years ago – one day had nipped a small child in the beach and we'd driven the child to hospital with the mother to get anti-tetanus injections in case the dog should have rabies, which it didn't. We had taken a beach just a day, in the heart of the Adriatic coast, which doesn't have the sort Mediterranean creepers: when I ~~the dog~~ it ran off in the hospital ground walking up and down, while a doctor was sent for. Luckily the mother was sensible and thought Ralph didn't scream and yell as she might have done. There is an unholy terror of dogs in Italy, or was at that time, especially in the peasant districts. You could hardly see the bite – hardly any blood had been drawn at all: it looked more like a scratch. The injections were very much more painful and make the child ill for a day or so afterwards. And the parents were good enough to ask the police not to impose a fine, which could have been anything up to thirty or forty thousand lire.

Anyway, there it was. And now we had to pay for the paper-work involved – the postage from San Benedetto to Rome, and several interviews. The policeman said we had to get used to such things in Italy. A piece of paper could wander round looking for somebody for years, and if you didn't pay the fine, he said, 'we're so constituted' that ~~people don't~~ authorities would be sent along to take any article of possessions that looked as if would fetch the amount of the fine, and they'd take it away, even if it was not your dog. And with that he walked off, saying 'Arguri!' – my compliments – with a smile, and then, 'I hope I haven't disturbed you!'

At ~~the~~ Trattoria Angelino the cook ~~~~ stands at the pizza-bar, ~~~~ to the first part of the evening, because this is when the regulars — as opposed to the restaurant-crowd who do their ordering, and the orders for pizza usually for a pizza. I like them sometimes when I'm very hungry. The ones I prefer the Neapolitan kind, which are thicker and have a fluffier pastry, these seem to make a hard ball in the stomach afterwards, and this combined with the heady white wine, from the Velletri district, isn't comfortable. The wine, which is almost certainly genuine, has an extraordinary effect on me, and if I drink more than a quarter of a litre at a time I'm in my knees the next day. It has that ~~~~ thick, very oily taste of the Castelli wines, perhaps because of the volcanic soil you get outside Rome. It reminds me of Frascati, which used to disagree with me in the same way, ~~~~ with a mild effect ~~~~ the liver, something violent and raw, like the dog is ibely. Real Tuscan wine never has that effect on me: the ~~~~ white is much less densely yellow and thick, and ~~~~ as for the red you can't make a comparison on so little) it is grown in the Roman vineyards. The trattoria does produce a red - from its own vineyards - but this is mostly bottled and is too sweet and heavy. each mouthful ~~~~ a meal in itself. The white goes down easily, too easily, and if you're not careful you suddenly find yourself walking like a sailor.

11 stairs me's work. Paolo the freshwater fisherman, and Palmyro's brother who works the lift at me's the Tip Hotel in Rome. Have permanently strained voices, and their work seem to have oil in them, and rub up against each other smoothly.

Palmyro looks like a footballer, with a neat working man's face and hair thick as the scalp, and muscular shoulders. His smile always seems to make his face fat, suddenly, and he wears the same sort of shirts as I do, without a tie, the buttoned up at the neck. I saw the first person I met at the station, on my first visit, in the heat of the winter, and I remember it well. The tunnel-like room was crowded, and there was steam all over the windows. A family of what ten had a table at the far end, near the glazed door leading into the restaurant. The noise was immense. You had to shout to get yourself heard over your table. We drank white wine and I ate a pizza, and I remember the night it didn't have an effect on me. Palmyro sat opposite me, stocky and muscular, with his glazed eyes — they have a kind of grey film over them that comes from years smoking — fixed on mine. He told me he was only interested in sport, and only read the sporting papers. And mostly football, at that. I reminded him of a famous English footballer — he couldn't remember his name, but he owned one day. Somebody else at the table said he was a terrible in cards, too — saying that he played it for three-quarters of every day. Yes, he also liked a game of cards. He worked on the

slaughter-house, two mornings a week, and came back with choice pieces
of meat - the best cuts - such as you never get at the butcher. For this
he only sells five thousand lire a week, hardly enough for a man
to live 2 days alone, let alone a family for a week. But his wife
works hard, sewing and things like that. She is a small, dark,
plump woman, very much the peasant-girl in appearance, and [illegible] Lombardian
in the evening she comes to the trattoria with a pot of stew & boiled
meat and dishes it to them and their small daughter, this
is quite usual in any part of the trattoria, & they all own land
and just buy the bread and wine. Palmyro seems to play cards
all afternoon. He described to me how they slaughtered the beasts —
with a kind of electric pistol which is levelled at the forehead.
Sometimes the bullocks stampede — and he described how their
movements were limited, by a system of barricades, and how he
stood at the barricade with his pistol, waiting. At once, after
the slaughter, the beast is cut open, & release the blood, and
the skinning and cutting begins. I suppose that must be [illegible]
in order to his family compendiums - like for the small pay.
And they pay hardly any rent. I think his pay just covers
the rent for the month. He also told me how he and his
brother, the lift-operator, had been in a German concentration
camps in the war, one of them Dachau, and how they had
escaped from German military camps twice. This is strange —
nearly all of the men of this age who come to the trattoria
were in German concentration camps. It seems that all the
Italian manhood was taken off in the war. But, being real

Romans, they all came back too. What saved a Roman is that he never
gave in to false heroics. They escaped to get home - to eat better and
have a roof over their head - not to be heroic. And when they were too
tired and hungry they gave themselves up. Since they were Italians
- discounted by the Germans - they were treated quite well, through
indifference. He told me how they had escaped in Austria, he
and his mother, with a third Roman, and had walked all the
way down to the edge of Italian alps, past Villach and Klagenfurt,
before they gave up. But they had to, as it was moving and
they had to shoot left to right, and the third Roman still ill
and could hardly stand. When they gave themselves up they got a
warm welcome from the local peasant-people at the police station. The
same with Renato, the head-waiter: he was in a German camp
as well. This attitude to Germany is not careful forbearance.
Palmyro told me that while he took the Germans too relaxed -
they were good enough singly - the ~~pack-mind~~ muddle mind of an
army they sank into the sea and were never heard of again.
He said it without malice. 'Mali jsou Italové, ale' he said.
'Per certo mio' He disliked not other people to feel the same. But
in fact as the were the Germans could as easily disappear off
the face of the earth. Palmyro always repeats himself, in a
thick, throttled Roman accent of ancient in the Louvre all round,
and he has a limited repertoire of themes - sport, the stupidity
of women, German prison camps and two escape-stories; the other covers
all. After that it is slow, mostly silent games of cards, played
by the hour, and the sipping of white wine.

I noticed then some pleasant-looking German
youths were talking at me & the other tables, in the usual —
group girls and two or three boys, very much absorbed in themselves,
their leader close together, hardly ever looking from their group to
the outside world — Renata watched them for a while, talking quickly,
narrowing his eyes now and then, smoking quickly,
and saying something to the men near by. The prospect
of women they called and served them politely. It only seemed
then the I found German disturbed him. But he could see
the different feelings played in his eyes. Under
their youthfulness, these creatures
were just people, after all. It was their table. They were
in a different world. In any case, we're all alike, after
underneath. In the Italian there is this sudden compassion and
equality & natural as breathing. After a time Renata turned
away and was arguing about something. this argument was
always a delightful business. Once he argued with the men he was
sitting with there was a dog and four puppies & seventeen
puppies, at most; and I said I'd like to do, definitely,
he said. When we passed this table on the way out he
the old man put his arm out to me and said, 'I wish,
two many puppies does your dog manage at one time — Renata
two says she just with to seventeen once! I says that's
impossible!' I told him, at most seven or eight. Two
are only ten puppies in a dog, and two of them are
unused. So there's only room for eight. Two! The old man
made a cry & triumph. Just what I said! And Renata looked

a rib sheepish. 'I said seventeen...' he said, and nodded, with a quick flounce up we me and a slight shrug.

On Easter Sunday we would die in the forecourt of the Trattoria for the first time. The sun was on the roof above when we arrived, in the late afternoon, and had left its warmth in the courtyard, with a breeze that came down and shifted it pleasantly every now and then. Apparently there is always this breeze — c'è sempre aria qui, there's always air here — even in the dog days. The wisteria blossom was just out, a very pale blue, with petals like drops of water, on its heads, and we sat close to its thick gnarled trunk. It was planted fifty years ago, two tiny little shoots, and its branches have been twisting and winding overhead ever since, supported by steel beams from one roof to the other. ~~Around the~~ Above, through the light blossom, we could see the balconies, rough, crumbling walls, and yellow tiled roofs, and on a terrace behind us, for over our heads, dresses and coats had been hung out on a line to take the first spring sunshine. Pulingro and his brother, and two other of his friends, were at the table when we got there, and several of the other tables were full. Enzo and his wife sat by the entrance to the Trattoria, and Renata sat with a group who were playing cards. Pulingro moved away from us a little, and gave his chair to me. He wanted to play table tennis with Enzo, the owner. They kicked a large, crowded child's ball between them lightly, making hardly a sound. The atmosphere was drowsy and utterly silent, after the heavy lunches. And we almost

fell asleep on the table, hardly saying a word to each other. Palugyai's brother talked about the swifts who were just getting active as the sun was on its way down. There are called rondoné, Gino told me time he said, before there was traffic, when he was a child, there were rondinelle, swallows. But now you hardly see a real swallow. They used to sweep down in the same way, but in much greater masses. A flight of them — forty or fifty — always ended up in a certain woman's apartment, on the Gianicolo, he said: on the same hour every day. 'We used to watch them as children', he said. She loved the birds and they would swarm into her room. They had nothing to fear from 'hunters'. You had to pay five lire and ten centesimi cents in those days — 'we used to say 5/10' — if you were caught shooting them in Rome. That would be about five hundred lire nowadays.

A child of three — another Sergio — came up to us and sat on Palugyai's brother's knee. He was the son of Sergio's sister, who sat on the other side of the forearm at a table with her husband, who was dressed in an office-suit, with a tie. Nearly everybody was brilliantly dressed, in being Easter. The mechanic from the garage next door came in with his wife to say hullo to a workmate, and looked embarrassed to be dressed so superbly. He had a dazzling white collar and a tilly tie on a coarse thick neck. And his wife, an attractive woman in the early thirties, who sits with him sometimes when he drinks in

the evening — an unusual thing — was in black, her hair combed and slightly oiled in a way that reminded me of the old days for some reason. Then they went. Slightly waving good bye to everyone. A family came, with an old man who is one of the regulars: he has tiny eyes behind their wrinkles of flesh, and — nearly always — two days growth of grey beard. He always gets very excited, and good will makes him call us ridiculous things in purple. He is just tremendously excited to be there, nearly always. And on other times he sits alone, inside, reading a paper, with a glass of wine in front of him. But one person has to come, or his family, and he gets excited. Sometimes he plays cards, too, flicking the cards down sharply, in the way of the peasants.

Little Sergio was carefully dressed, ~~with a woollen shirt and his face~~ with clear, large, sober blue eyes and a rather pale face, with determined lips and a quick smile that makes him at once look like Sergio, the one, whose nephew he is. Renato the waiter called out to him jokingly 'Corna!', meaning literally 'horns', the horns of the cuckold. One might translate it 'To hell with you!' (?) At once the child shot back at him, as if it were mechanical by now, 'Up your Arse!' — for it calls! People put their hands up to their mouths and laughed. Renato jumped up and with a mock frown took the child in his arms and offered him to our dog to eat. The child glanced down anxiously — a quick, craning look — when the dog's nose touched his trousers for a moment. Then he (or on to Palazzo's

mother's knee again and said quietly to him, 'I can say that now I think here, in the Madonna can see me!' The Madonna could only see him in church, he said, and this was still church. At which Palagrot mother laughed, so that he face became red, and he raised his eyebrows at the child, giving him a kiss on the forehead and saying, 'Oh, so the Madonna can't see you, eh!'

Then the child got up and went to a pile of clothes on another chair: he found some sort of stick there, threw it quickly on the ground under the tables, and came back to Palagrot mother's lap. 'What did you do that for?' the mother asked. 'My mother is coming soon,' the child said, 'and I don't want him to see any sticks around, or he'll start beating me!' He speaks in a clear, soft voice, though only three. He is the same as everybody else in the courtyard, only younger and smaller in body. This is how he will grow up. Nothing outside will be forbidding for him. All the faces will be known, and they will be distinct from him by virtue of what they are in themselves, not by their age. There is no such division — of age-groups — in his world. He will grow up with nothing changing. And probably he'll marry one of the well-known faces. And then there more faces into the world, to swell the group. So it goes on, in a family that goes two beyond the actual single family-unit of man and wife and children. That doesn't really exist in Italy, as in our world. The family is an unbounded thing stretching whole fields, or whole streets. Underneath there is one family. And people carry about this family with them from town to town, even abroad, in the form of sound, unburied nerves.

INSERT

The Swift:-

What happens to them all night, whether they or some sleep on the wing, nobody knows.

[The question of these not having been swallows in their place]: I wonder if this is true, as swifts and swallows belong to quite different families. But their flying and feeding habits are the same, so it might be. You never see a swallow now. I haven't seen one in town or country, in Italy!

This process is especially wonderful in the morning, people say, when the sun ~~rises~~ is low and the mist along with a clear, fresh, sparkling light. Later on, when the spring has finished, the wisteria blossom gives way to thick leaves, and these make a complete shade from the sun. The process is like the slithering and exciting places we have once known — like their small and centre places in London, in Kent and Hampshire, in the Isle de France and the Mesopotamian desert, in Austria and Germany and Amsterdam, an amalgam of all the clear, hopeful mornings we have known, before and after journeys, dreaming of strange places, with their peculiar giddy hope of youth when the whole world seems designed in a certain way, towards a certain ecstatic climax. On one side of the process there is a dirty advertisement of some kind — I think it's a drink, from years ago — and it seems to contain all this excitement with the light shining on it. And the branches of the wisteria, the rough wooden chairs with their wicker seats, the wooden tables and the tall glass windows of the restaurant, the low doorway leading into the kitchen and the [illegible], the swifts that wheel about beyond the tumbled, yellow rooftops, the clash of the cards on a specially cloth-covered table, the running of the child, the noisy laughter from one the table, the sparkle of the white wine in tall-stemmed glasses, the scrape of a match as someone lights a cigarette, the breeze that slips down every now and then like a reminder from the sea — then the tinkling sound of a bell from the small chapel nearby — make a dream so complete that it is reality, and you can hardly tell

the difference, the boundary-line, between your own body and the whole world.

The first evening an Sicilian neighbour came in to see us, and drank a small glass of whisky. She'd just come back from Sicily, and said that the first splendid days of spring had started, after a terrible winter. And this splendour would grow until the sky was still and golden, and a massive heat poured down, making the palm trees in a strange way dazzling and misty to the eye, so that they seemed to be melted into the sky. She talked about the orange-tree. How strange it was. She believed it was the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. Apples would grow in biblical countries, too, but originally Greek ? taken in Latin the word which is 'poma', for apple. In translations, meant actually fruit — the orange, she said, has all the marvel and splendour of the forbidden, which the apple doesn't. An orange-tree can't grow from seed, wild, but has to be planted and cared for by men. There aren't forests of orange-trees — they are always grown, carefully looked after. No insects trouble the orange-tree, because of the thick coating of alcohol and oil in the orange-skin. And oranges, to ripen perfectly, can be left on the tree nine months — the same period as human conception. In that time they don't rot, as other fruit does. And before the appear, in the period of blossom, there are long spikes on the branches to protect the tree, hidden and sharp, which fall off when the blossom has strengthened into fruit. The orange-tree needs a climate, warm climate, with plenty of water — as near to paradise as possible, with constant sun and yet unparched earth. The fruit is juicy and magnificent, and full of goodness for the human

Godey. When the trees are old and bear no more fruit, the wood of their trunks preserves its odd aroma indefinitely, and only fire can destroy it. The perfume will be there after a hundred years or more. The life of a tree is also the life of a man — sixty or seventy years. The leaves of the tree form a complete umbrella ~~the fruit~~ so that rain falls all around it and nourishes the earth without scaring the fruit. There is a wild orange-tree, from which the orange was cultivated, the fruit is too bitter to eat and grows harder and harder until when it falls it is like hollow wood; and then new blossoms form, in the same way as the orange, after nine months. The wild orange is flying like a mandarin. Perhaps there was some sin in working up to the powers of the earth and altering them to advantage. By working the bigger, juicy, sweet orange, ~~by~~ by covering the wild fruit with some thing else, and working a carefully fine and moist soil. Perhaps it was a first step towards the overstep of the earth, from the paradisiacal consciousness to the human, with its endless strain. The fruit is red and glorious. It lies in the bosom of the thick green leaves like a marvellous sun. It reflects the sun in shape and glow.

The day before yesterday we went to L. Velletri, south of Rome on the road that runs round Albano with the heights of Frascati and Castel Gandolfo on the left, among the hills that lead finally to the mountains of the Abruzzi. Ergo. the owner of our trattoria, had visited us out, and we were in two cars. He is a slow, quiet, balding young man with dark eyebrows and an easy, soft face with a winning smile and is exactly like that of his little nephew, Sergio. And he has the same softly inquisitive and yet dreamy eyes, and a tendency to fall asleep in the same way, where he sits. Ergo believes greatly in America,

which is his name for an orderly society where people have civic respect for each other. He dislikes the corruption ~~and thee~~ in Italy, but he doesn't go beyond that. He leaves it to his father, a much more fluent man who attacks priests, tax-collectors and politicians with a zest and gusto unkind to several, especially after ~~a~~ a few glasses of wine. The father looks after the ~~the~~ vineyards near Velletri, which provide the trattoria with white wine all the year round. They have a house there (as well as the middle of the vineyards) and visit it every Tuesday in good weather — the day when the trattoria is closed.

In the front car there was Sergio, driving, his mother, an elderly, very brown-faced woman with ~~a~~ the piercing eyes and the same tendency to a quick smile as her son, then his wife, the tall, rather young woman who always dresses in white for the kitchen, and his sister with ~~her~~ her child, Sergio, ~~and an old lady, a relative, then~~ ~~two children~~ and finally Sergio's mother-in-law. Behind [illegible], a girl belonging to Sergio, of about twelve. Behind them, in my car, we were only two, [illegible] with a dog. We took the old road out, through the Porta S. Sebastiano along the first stump of the old Appian way and then the road that runs close by it, between high, ancient walls and grass verges, and trees, almost quite deserted because there are other roads easier for traffic nearby. It was the first really warm day of the spring, with a very strong sun and a slight breeze which the weather men had said seemed to promise rain later in the week. ~~The sun~~ ~~blazed~~ down in a prematurely fierce way. Sergio drove less wisely, which was good for the nerves, and we kept behind him. Along most of the way — as beyond Albano — there was

the old tramline to the right of the road, as you used to see it on the road to Bellhaven, running from Ballyhoo to the palace. I always liked these tramlines on the side of an open country road exciting, perhaps because they reminded me of country trips in sparkling weather as a child. I can remember taking that tram one or two years ago, and ending up at the terminus close to the palace, where the trees are kept. There was a storm and everybody had to sit in the ~~wooden~~ (domed) café by the road. It seemed with each clap now - the long wait in damp clothes, the wooden floor, the sound of the trees outside, the tram that didn't ~~went~~ intend to run home and then rocked wildly all the way back to the city, with people's ~~talk~~ and laughter nearly drowning its clatter, and hands clutching the leather straps. There were almost no cars, and the road seemed deeper in the country for me then it has ever done since, now that the tram has gone and cars are parked five deep in a clearing of the woods.

Enzo stopped three times, to pick different things for lunch. The first time we stood facing him by mistake in the crowded interests of Rome, near the English cemetery, and I had to turn back and look at him. He was leaning against his car looking quite unmoved. I'd better keep behind him, he said, or we'd get lost. We bought some huge Sicilian oranges at a stall by the road, and this time they led to wait for us. Then we moved off slowly again, up the smooth wide road between trees, that runs near the Caracalla, then through the crumbling, intimate arches of S. Sebastian, into the old road that at one time ran

the only country road leading us from Rome to the castelli. We didn't pass by the vast lake of Albano, ~~which resembles a deep~~ that lies deep in a volcano, a menacing blue, with steep, wooded slopes, but through the town itself, with its sheer drop on one side, which makes it look ~~as though it was~~ like a town on the rim of the universe ~~Beyond~~ On the other side, the immense rich cliffs, by the sea. ~~Beyond~~ To one side, the immense valley of the Lazio stretches right out towards the sea, a misty, spacious, ~~bright~~ sunny plain dotted with houses & the dazzling white ~~of~~ standing out sharp in the vagueness, making an ecstatic promise of Rome as it must have been a thousand years ago, like a plateau set there deliberately as a fertile garden to feed and please the city that shone in the north, like an endless marble palace.

Albano itself reminded me of all the places I'd known as a child near where we lived — Bishop Mitcham, the High Street in Croydon, Wimbledon and even, though with nothing of the splendor, Tooting Broadway. They've the same narrow roadways bustling with people, and tall, nineteenth shops from the time before the 1914 war, and the tram line, no longer used, and then the market, with exactly the same kind of stalls and canvas roofing. I can remember a train trip out to Croydon, on the same kind of sparkling, vividly yellow day. ~~After that~~ When there were all these same details. We aren't so far away, after all. We come from this world.

At Velletri, in one of the bustling, narrow streets where the trees had all been pruned down to their trunks, and it seemed like a different universe from Rome, already on the edge of the real south, or with an optimism and intensity taken for the capital, we stopped and Lugo and his mother

got out & they went. We saw them talking in the shop, smiling, and two of the waitresses shook hands with them. Bruno, on the second day of the visit, came to our car and said, 'Up there, in the fine above the kitchen, used to be my home.' But it seemed to me that only the day before I saw Bruno put a child absently — the hand, and the child's eyes were sleepy and dreamy for a moment as he gazed at us in the street, quite lost. Then we turned round and went it again: home was a few minutes away. It was now quite hot, like on early summer day, and we took off our top layers. On the road to Allano, where the railway track still ran, we had stopped and Bruno said, they used proper flour — the wheat — that had come down through the generations, and baked in a wood-stove, not with electric or gas, which made the bread delicious. When we ate it later we found it had quite a different taste from the usual Roman bread — it was crisp and not over-salted, and its soft white middle didn't form a heavy, indigestible pellet of dough; nor was it spongey. In Italian bread stands for as Glen is.

When Velletri was behind us we took a narrow, sharply cobbled path that must have been laid down in Renaissance times, & judging by its serenity and the natural way in which the fields lay on either side, seeming not to have been disturbed in their shapes for hundreds of years. Here were neatly vineyards, with wheat crop, and it had the look of quiet, careful, very hard work that you feel in the Isle de France, in the heart of the French farming country. Everything was neat and clear, with the [illegible] between the rows of earth filled and hoed so that not a weed showed through. The vines were straight and strong, and the short vine-sticks were tied [illegible] securely. Being in a plateau these vines stood between

tall sticks, with wires joining them, not in terraces as you see in Tuscany, or in the form of single trees spreading their branches overhead. An old man in a mountain village near Lucca told me that he had always favoured the overhead type of growth, where the branches grow like a roof, and the grapes huddle thickly under the leaves, with the maximum cover. He said that the grapes were in the light and air, yet well-protected, and he believed his wine was better than the best in Tuscany.

There were small houses on either side, among the vineyards, and we saw one of these, larger than the rest, with two columns on the roadway and a gate, with a long drive we turned in. Bruno's father was already there, sitting in the side-courtyard mending a copper-sulphate sprayer. In the Maltese he always has a collar and tie on, and a ~~white~~ blue suit, with a trilby hat over his eyes, for now he was dressed in overalls and his face was ruddy from the sun. He said that the vineyards were irrigated from a 90-metre well - he pointed it out to me in the middle of one of his fields - which worked mechanically, but that would necessary until the summer, ~~droughts~~, and meanwhile it was enough to spray them with water. This ~~sp~~ sprayer, which is strapped on the back and has a long pipe at the end of a tube, is usually used, in March, for spraying the ~~branches and~~ naked vine-trunks — as well as the peach-trees — with copper sulphate, the late it is used in the ordinary water-sprays. It is green all over, like an old sponge, from the copper.

The women got on with their bags of food, and I took the boards out of the back of the car. On the right of the courtyard there were two cellars for the wine, one consisting of

vessels higher than a man, and the other 3 closed tanks which took up the whole length and breadth of the cellar apart from a passageway in the middle. The grapes were pressed and put into the vessels of the first fermentation, then passed through into the tanks, where the last stages take place. I sniffed for a bottle of chemical or something that might account for the headache the wine always gave me, but I could find nothing. Perhaps the wine is just too heavy for me, because of something in the soil. The first shoots were already visible on the vines, and, in embryo form, tiny green clusters of the first grapes, the size of a thumb-nail, fuzzy and fringed round with a leaf. The almost daily cold winds didn't hurt the vines at all — cold rarely does — though it killed off the vegetables throughout Italy and burned many of the trees. Even the lemon-trees in the courtyard had withered leaves, and some of the shrivelled lemons were black. Only a May frost can hurt the vine — by burning the shoots — and the spring air is already warm enough to make this impossible. But it happened — four years ago, and whole vineyards were ruined in one night. The tiny shoots were burned away at their most sensitive time.

Enzo's father said he felt the wealth would 'mature' in the sun was too strong for this time of year, and its heat was made by humidity in the air. But, at worst, it would be rain: not, he hoped, frost, though one would never tell in this troubled world.

He was sitting on a half-rotten stool, and looked up at me shy in a hesitant way. He seemed to be the one who directed things, whereas usually the women take that role, as for a the house for. He put his spray down and took me into the vineyard below the house, where he had dug cement posts, talking a bit ugly and industrial, into the earth on either side of the pathway. These posts wound

that the vines remained stable throughout the summer, as the creeping ashes of the vines and the clusters of grapes weighed on them. He had worked in two or three times a week, and all the earth was well-turned. It was a brown, valuable-looking soil, and produced ~~plenty~~ fine grapes, he said. You could drink the wine happily, glass after glass, without feeling the effects, but suddenly you might find yourself wobbling: it didn't go to the head right away, like some wines, but it was certainly powerful. He pointed out the limits of his fields, and showed us a slope where he kept a few olive trees. The sea glayed down to our heads, but there was a constant breeze from the sea, which was only twenty miles or so away: on clear days you could see it glittering in the distance. Inland a vast plain stretched on for us the hills, which were vague and blue, with villages shining white on them, in the very distance. It reminded me of England for a moment — some of the wide valleys near the south coast, on a hot summer day, with everything still. We couldn't hear a sound. Velletri sat in the middle of the plain, raised slightly, its large town hall standing out like a regular place, in the centre, facing the sea. The sunlight made it an island of yellow and white stone, shining in the blue mistiness of the hills behind. And dotted everywhere were small towns. The castelli of Rome - Frascati and Grotta Ferrata and Castel Gandolfo - were now hidden, north, on the other side of the hills, and we had the feeling that here we were on the doorstep of the real south, where the classical world had begun. I remembered the same light - ~~later~~ specially yellow, sparkling and yet also misty sunlight - from the time I lived near Frascati, about eight years ago. There seemed a special light south of

Rome, perhaps because of the conjunction of sea, fertile plain and hills. The Mediterranean gives an extraordinarily open light to the coast, quite different from the Adriatic, which offers the closed and intimate light of a vast, torrid lake with the dog Balkan mountains on the far side. This plain leading to hills also reminded me of the country round Naples, where the hills go abruptly into mountains; I can remember sitting against a haystack one scorching mid-summer day and watching Vesuvius in the distance, far south, sending up its strange column of smoke, high as one could see.

As we walked round a voice came from the house – Engo's mother. 'When you've finished coming then up here!' Everyone was so friendly, agreeable. And the massive silence of the plain surrounded everything and sucked it in as one, every voice, every hen-cluck. Engo showed us their doves in a cage the size of a room, and also three pheasants, two females and a brightly-coloured male, trailing their tail-feathers. The house itself was quite large and we trooped up the outside staircase, as all the shutters and windows were pushed open to let in the warmth. It all smelt clean and fresh. The rooms were, as always in Italy, bare and uncarpeted, with just a bed or two, a chest-of-drawers in them, or a tall wardrobe. The beds were high, brass-postered affairs, with a crucifix or a picture of the Madonna on the wall at the head. And in the middle of the room, above the stairs, there was a kind of hallway that didn't quite serve for anything. No real living was done up here. There were just rooms to sleep. One lived downstairs, mostly in the little side courtyard, and in the dark, mysterious-looking room that led straight off the courtyard, separated from the house by

a shed, to a single storey, but perhaps the oldest part of all, the original one-roomed house that had served for whole families of peasants all the time, and which was still the cosiest place. There was an old-fashioned chimney, with the hearth & stone grate raised a foot or so above the floor, and the flue coming down low outside the wall, like a big funnel turned upside down, where the pot was put for the spaghetti, or a fire of faggots. Then there was a rough dresser, with plates and wine-glasses behind its windows, and a sink near the door with a portable gas-stove where the rest of the cooking was done. And in the middle there was a long table with a dozen or so chairs, where we were going to eat. Engo said we should take a 'toccone' with them — a mouthful — and then drive back to Rome via the sea, through Nettuno.

From the upstairs room the plain looked extraordinary, and we could have leaned on the sill looking out all morning. There were no trees yet, from the earth. The air was pure warming up from the hard, wet winter. And the sun made an unbroken piece of glare, as if it was determined to bring in the spring nice and full, though the masses of rain-cloud, that still clustered over the mountains in the further distance.

The women started getting the food ready, and Engo's father went back to his spray. He removed a piece of string that had been tied round a joint in the spraying tube, where a kind of tap should go, and said to me, 'Look at the way they do things. That's your workers nowadays!' I brought him a piece of heavy repair-tape from the car, but he said he would find a new tap and fix it in. He sent Engo to find me, in the cellar, and then carefully twined cord round it, to secure it as the

tube, looping one end over the other like a thread, with minute care. Sergio stood watching him lazily, then he went off with the fourteen-year old nephew in the car, to visit someone. He'd be back for lunch, and meanwhile Ivo said he would take us down the road to a tiny house we must see, also belonging to the family. There was talk of our renting it, then it fell free at the end of the year. It had no water or electricity, but we said we didn't mind that. As long as it was quiet and we could work there, it didn't matter.

We were to have artichokes for lunch, among other things, and Sergio's wife was preparing these with the help of the sister-in-law. There were the big, expensive artichokes called 'romaneschi', grown in the Lazio near the sea. They were to be cooked 'alla matricella' (?) — first the spiky tips of the leaves had to be cut off, then a few cloves of garlic and chopped mint had to be stuffed down into the soft middle, without removing anything from inside. The stems were left intact. It could only be done in the country, because the artichokes had to be stood upright in the embers of a wood-fire, outside, and then left there for twenty minutes. They were delicious, everybody said, and with very dry white wine they did you good, too. They were healthy.

Sergio's mother was ready and with a smile beckoned to us to go with her up the drive. It was really like an early summer's day now, apart from the cool tall-pale breeze from the sea. We turned left on the ancient cobbled road, facing the hills and Velletri, shining and shimmering in the middle. There was a slight, middle-aged woman working in one of the fields with

a boy, and Ango's mother called out to her 'Maria!' And the other woman turned slowly: 'O-ho-ho-ho!', in a sort of rather wailed greeting. It was a cousin of hers — or rather, relative, since the word cugini is used for almost everyone. On the houses we could see, to left and right, she said, belonged to relatives of hers. The whole area, we could say, belonged to the same family. She called out to Maria that we could stop today as the land visitors. And further on there were two more relatives working, two grandson men. She called out with a slight laugh and said 'Working!' and the sharper-looking of the two, with piercing, grey eyes and a dark, leathery face, answered quietly with a smile, 'I'm tending my vines!' He was bending down tying the first stiff branches on to the wires and inspecting the first green shoots that had come with the warmth. Then, after two or three hundred yards, we turned right, off the road. Slightly downhill, between two fields that had been completely cleared and their soil turned. A primitive drive of sand and stones went in the middle of these bare fields and ended in a tiny two-roomed house, with two barns close by. It looked pleasant and intimate. A long table with ~~chairs~~ logs for chairs stood under a tree in the courtyard, and Ango's mother ~~went to fetch the~~ ~~with the first tender grapes~~ of a loaf because her cousin was afraid of dogs. A small woman, wiping her hands, came out to shake hands with us, and they spoke quickly together. Ango's mother told me that all the old vines had been taken away in the 2 fields, and new ones had been planted. She could just see them peeping through tiny stumps with green shoots, very close to the earth, in rows. It would take 2 or 3 years for them to bear heavy fruit. Then there would be tall vines every summer, clustering

round the house. She showed us a tunnel that went right under the earth, ~~that was entrance~~ with steps down in it, and pointed me an air-vent in the middle of the field, where the tunnel stretched to. It was for storing the wine. In the war they had used it as a hiding-place for families, which had stayed in Rome - one of the refugees there. They had slept there when all this area was a battlefield, for the invasion of Anzio, which was only a few kilometres away. There was a terrible mess afterwards, she said, and nearly every house had been wrecked in some way, including theirs. Or the roof had been wrecked in some way, including theirs. Or the roof had been wrecked in some way, including theirs. She had pointed me a place on the grass verge where two Germans had lain dead for some days - 'young, good-looking' she said.

The house itself had a tiny kitchen, immediately inside the door, and beyond it, dark and cool, a large square room with high stuccoed walls which had always been used as the bedroom. It had a tiny window with bars across it which let in hardly any light. And there was a great double-bed with the usual brass posts, and the madonna on the wall behind, with a sprig of blessed olive attached. Her great-grandparents had lived and died there, Brigo's mother said. He grandmother had died there, too. It had always been in the family, until they moved on to the other house. Then she took us into the barn, attached to those rooms, with the usual loft of wooden floor and an unpaved floor. Here all the old vine-branches had been piled, dark, twisted and gnarled, for firewood. A bus passed on the road above, in the sunlight, sounding its double horn, which always reminds me of when I used to live near Frascati, along the main Frascati-Rome road, whose bigger buses used to dash along several times an hour, with this same echoing trumpet-sound. This was a much smaller and primitive bus, and only came, Brigo's mother said,

nice on bread, and were to Velletri and back. It had to be a small one, anyway, because of the narrowness of the road. In places the width of the road had been pushed into almost vertical walls by ice and the weight of ~~the lava~~ lava. In parts it was like black volcanic deposit that had set in waves.

We told her we thought it was a nice spot but she took us [illegible] because [illegible] had no water or electricity. In fact, there was plenty of water in the land: at least three wells, as in the one field. It was all good drinking water. ~~I don't~~ We tried some she was getting. With it in the dark, cool kitchen. It was lyrical and pure to the taste, and had the special coolness of something from under the ~~deep~~ earth. By that time the radio was blaring - it was hidden behind a curtain close to the hearth, and there was one squalid, tuneless song after the other. It was all the work of dead, unimaginative people. The children of peasants, working in the vineyards, could have done much better. The singers were awful - you could imagine their pimples and bad breath. The rhythms were dead. There was none of the syncopation sentiment that you get in the old songs - that would have been better. There wasn't anything real at all, only an absent-minded adherence to the usual rhythms, the usual ~~words~~ cliches, the usual tawdry antipathy underneath. Once an old type of singer came on - one of the Neapolitan songs, with a real tune and a real voice, high-pitched and sickly-sweet, the genuine like the sickly-sweet desserts when the south turns on sometimes. We moved outside into the sun of the precinct again, taking our chairs with us. Ezio's father, who was still working in the orange, said. ~~That's right. It's better out here.~~ "If that radio's annoying you, we'll switch it off. It makes me angry. Nowadays like everything else, they're no good. The songs are no good.

intelligence. 'I do know what pests we're all supposed to be!' And he called to Virgo's sister as he passed, 'Switch that thing off, will you?' And she said, 'Sorry,' and went quietly into the room and did so. The silence was ~~pleasant~~ marvellous afterwards. The sound of the crickets flooded back, with a real rhythm that we could never hear in the heart of the chuck of the hens as they moved about the courtyard pecking. The endless cooing of the doves in their cage, and the strange croaking cry of the pheasants. Virgo's father said he thought rain was on the way, the ~~tomorrow or the day after today, tonight~~ after, because the pheasants rarely called otherwise. His daughter disagreed with him and said that they made the same sound all the way through the summer, but he said nothing to this. He was right — but whether he did or not the next day, and he stood.

The artichokes were now ready, in a plastic bowl by the kitchen-door, standing against each other on their stems, the white tips of garlic and the bright green mint just visible at the top, among the leaves. We walked down into the vineyard, between the tall cement posts, and ate an orange. The rich, brown earth between the vines was so clean that I hesitated to throw orange peel on it to, and took the peel in with my toe. There were dense storm-clouds, rather low, coming from the direction of Rome but not interfering with the sunlight. Virgo's wife said that there could be possibly be rain today. Then. From the bottom of the vineyard, close to a rough path that ran at right angles to it, completely remote from the rest of the countryside, shaded by young trees, we saw that Virgo had turned back, and we walked up slowly. At the back of the house, where a hunting dog was chained to a long wire which gave it a run of several yards, his wife had set a heap of vine-branches ablaze and together with his friend

father, a slim, good-looking old man of eighty-four, with clear blue eyes, was watching it die down to embers. Then, when there were no more flames, only a glow, smouldering mass that reddened in places with each gust of wind, she put the artichokes in upright, stooping the others round them so that only the flat tops became visible. After that she brought a little can of olive oil with a spout and poured some over each one, letting it soak down among the leaves. The dog was scared of the heat and stepped back gingerly. Tio Lead turned to one side. Diego's sister, who sat on a stone ledge close to the fire, told me to be careful of the cushions she'd deposited on the ground. She seemed to be keen on Diego it. She said to the daughter, 'Look at what the Soggone (?) filthy the/water- has done. Some nice things!' She was a very quiet woman, the mother of the little child Sergio, and always said things in a succinct way, hardly moving that pale, slightly plump face. She seemed to have a sad curiosity about everything. There seems a lot of intelligence in the family, from the father, perhaps. The grandfather says hardly a word, only draws the little child to him with a slight smile and carefully deposits a heavy kiss on the side of this face, at which the child writhes ecstatically, with a smile across at us. The dog is chained up because, being a hunting dog and used to running free, he did a lot of damage in the vineyards last year, especially at this time when the young shoots were just appearing. It only needed a twist of his tail, a clumsy paw, and a dozen clusters of grapes were lost. At this stage the vines have to be tended like delicate children. Once the whole grape is formed not much can harm them, short of a violent hail-storm, which happens now and then in the summer and can ruin up to half the yield.

At the entrance to the drive, along the whole width of the garden, there was tall rose trellis just coming to end. Diego's mother

told us that in the early summer there was a mass of colour from them, and every sort of rose was among them. Along the drive ~~were~~ three were pear-trees, on the left the summer-yielding ~~blooming~~ ones and on the right the winter-yielding, their branches still bare. And there were a few standard peach-trees in blossom, their trunks still bright with copper-sulphate.

We watched the asticlots smouldering in the fire, their spiky outer leaves hard and black, while the fluffy centers blew about in the wind. The dog wanted to be made a fuss, because he was used to being free, and because of an Irish, which he could smell on us. He lay with his head on my lap, being scratched, gazing across the yard with a dreamy, self-pitying look, the whites of his eyes showing because of the way his brows hung low. Then he ran back to his food, in a deep pot full of bones and scraps of meat and spaghetti from the trattoria. He would well-fed often, but not many dogs are in the Italian countryside. ~~They~~ ~~are credited with real being.~~ ~~Or perhaps they are~~ They seem to be seen as equals in a struggle for existence which the humans are determined to win. They're disgusting as human creatures would be who dropped their turds anywhere. Dogs only came in as pets in Italy - largely in the cities - through fashion and prosperity. A dog became the thing to have. He graduated from being a chained-up beast useful for warning of strangers. This is why most Italians are still afraid of dogs, seeing them as free.

That was a cry from Luigi's wife that lunch was ready, and Luigi called me — I'd gone to the end of the drive and was standing on the road, looking towards the sea. On the vents of spring were beginning. The leaf was drawing them out, and

I picked up a handful of grass and wild lavender from the ditch and put my nose in them, with the pleasure of smelling the country side after such a long, dark winter. In all those months the sun hardly shone in Italy. The peasants said it was the stop frost. Other people said it was a freak winter that happens regularly, in a cycle. The last winter of that kind in Italy was supposed to be four hundred years ago. There was a very still year in 1928, (some people say 1924, others 1929). But even then there was not the deep snow lasting two months or more, with cold winds and mountain-snow continuing into April, as there was this year. We stood outside the southern gate of San Gemignano a few weeks ago, at the beginning of April, and the wind that came across the valley was freezing, with the uncanny and disturbing force of the wind which is not of season.

We all sat down in the dark kitchen, the two and his father, of us at the end close to the door with Bingo/ ~~the dog sunlight streaming in and lighting it warmth across the room~~ while the women and children clustered at the other end. Lunches and dinners always amaze me in Italy. Nothing seems to happen and suddenly there are, on cardboard mats. To see nothing but suddenly they are there, on cardboard mats. To see nothing but a small gas-stove, and you wonder how they can feed eleven mouths. And the women seem idle. They come and go, and everything seems to unfold in a dream. Then suddenly there is a call to the table, and a pile of spaghetti covered with a ~~tomato sauce~~ sauce sits on each plate. ~~We tucked into it, with a shout~~ We tucked into

this, with a chunk of bread each – the bread we had bought in the week, which was really good, especially with the artichokes that came later on. The first few mouthfuls were in silence, after the muttered 'Buon appetito!' and 'Altrettanto!' (the same to you) – then was the sound of quick, interested eating. The children chewed thoughtfully, with dark concentration. But the boy of thirteen didn't want his share of pasta – he withdrawn his plate after the first small helping, and he seemed the lover the same detached dissatisfaction of his father, which hardly broke even for food. When the wine was poured, very clear and light. I/we rarely ~~ate little~~ spaghetti, but when this is done ~~we~~ have it with a good sauce that has simmered for an hour or more, made with the sun-shrivelled tomatoes from the vine. I like ~~dough~~ with ~~one~~ – the two ~~they seem~~ suppers each of, the one drying the other up as far as the others with the first, and so a until all you want to do is ~~[illegible]~~ push back in a bed. But it makes the second and third course difficult this big plunge into starch at the beginning. Then with a healthy outdoor appetite it all goes. We had one – that with the first day of spring, a long drive and some walking in the cool sea-air. ~~Had~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~came down from Nothing~~ ~~[illegible]~~ of spaghetti seemed to make no difference at all, even with two chunks of bread, and in the meantime Bingo' (the host) had been grilling steaks over a charcoal-fire in the hearth, fanning the embers with a straw brush. Meat is very seldom served in Italy, and it has a little fat and grease a possible when it reaches the table, unless you want it al Marsala or in one of the fancy ways with cheese or bacon or both. Italian food is perhaps

the leathiest food for the kids in Europe — there is always a chunk of lemon to eat when grease remains. Plenty of vegetables, ~~and~~ salads are cooked to bloody, seldom fried, and then fresh salad. This time we had no salad — the artichokes replaced them. We ate our steaks with pieces of bread in one hand and forks in the other, tearing off mouthfuls. And then, with the wine and the firm layer of starch inside, the talk and shouting began. Wagstaffs', pressure a little tonight, and Ingo's, for the bloody-flushed after his mooning in the sun. The child Sergio pursed lips as a fan and then sprinkled Parmesan cheese on it. His mother tried to get him to sit on his chair but he would sit, and Ingo's father quietly laughed at him. The grandfather sat silently at the end of the table, mostly staring across at the child with glistening eyes, and I noticed then the ale no pasta, only a tomato instead. The tomatoes were still expensive, but big and delicious, and probably ~~were~~ often come from ~~Africa, in~~ Tripoli, sent to the ~~here.~~ ~~in Italy.~~ The sun streamed through the doorway, a front to the rough stones of the entrance, and when we turned to look out it we could see right down the drive to the silent road outside. Ingo's father said he'd bought a villa at Velletri recently, and was thinking of one day turning it into a hotel. But the kids know. Velletri was an agricultural town, not at all, though it was on the sea. And it had no trace of spectacle. Perhaps. But it could be developed. Meanwhile he just hung on to the villa. He might open a restaurant, like the one in Rome — a trattoria. But these days, with everything uncertain except the lack of any encouragement from the so-called

authorities, who were living their own pockets, you never knew what
was going to happen. The women listened to this in a dream, saying either
as if they were far away from practical matters. And Bingo would
talking his food, with a mumbled 'yes' now and then. I think he
would really like to go away, far away, and perhaps finds that he
never will. Why I think he dreams about it, and says little. He seems
to dream about the life he might have had, like an ~~[illegible]~~
alter ego ~~[illegible]~~ he can see moving at his side. He seems to understand
freedom. He seems to recognise it. But he belongs to his family. He
doesn't want exciting unbalancing. It is like his living — very
slow and casual, like ~~[illegible]~~ American living: he's at home with
the machine, he doesn't want to play jokes with it. Like a
provincial. I'm sure he could be lost in America in a moment —
fall into his new life at once. Why he seems to know that his
would only be to himself alone, and that it would bring the
same good to his wife and children. In a strange way he
seems to know the whole American story and to advise it respect-
fully, to himself alone, in a dream.

We were already full enough at the end of the steak
but the artichokes were too good to miss. Bingo's father said in a
soft voice, staring at them mildly as they were put — also tenderly
by them — on a great plate at the table, that they didn't seem quite
done. He always spoke with this dreamy, watchful clearness, as if
nothing passed his perceptions. And he was right. Bingo's wife agreed
that they could have done with another few minutes. The fire had been
too hot, Bingo's father said, it should have burned slower, and the
leaves would have remained large. As it was, they had been tough
black on the outside but the inner leaves were tender, and had the

delicious flavour of the garlic and wild mint soaked right through to the centre, where the soft, pulpy flesh is. But it didn't stop us eating and eying them. First we took away the hard, tattered leaves on the outside, like small flakes of charcoal, flicking them off with our nails, then we ate them in the French way, leaf by leaf, sucking on them, until we were at the centre. I was surprised to find that the wine went well with it, because artichokes leave such a disastrous effect on all red wine, and all white that isn't very dry, turning it into a metallic tasting sort of vinegar. But this wine was made for them artichokes — they both grew up in the same area, after all. ~~On the second artichoke, we tasted what might have been~~ like just one artichoke inside us and were then pressed to another, which was even more delicious than the first because the garlic and mint had soaked right through. But the flesh of the leaves would soft enough, and Enzo's father kept saying, 'Eat, eat' on the plate, a big chunk of bread in his hand. 'They are cooked.'

Then the last item was fetched in, a large box of 'pizza romana', a tall, flat-topped sugary cake which is fluffy inside, with large currants. Great portions of it were cut off, and only Enzo's father refused, with a kind of tired scorn, hardly looking at it. The grandfather sat up and left the table, to sit outside in the shade, saying nothing, only staring before him, and the children left too, to chase each other and take turns to stand on a broken, three-legged stool so as to break it altogether. The rest of us sat dozing and dreamier, except Enzo's father, who stayed across at the doorway, his mild face dreaming. Enzo dropped his head on his arms, as he always does at the trattoria when he is left

late, and began to snore. Ango's father smiled warm at us and asked if we'd like to take a seat, as there were plenty of bedrooms. Ango's wife, flushed from so much food and drink, disappeared, probably into the kitchen. His sister went, too, while his mother leaned her face on me & her hand, and fell asleep in the middle of a sentence. Ango's father murmured in a kindly, precise way. 'They would both do better to go upstairs to bed.' At which his wife murmured, ~~without~~ hardly opening her eyes, 'Soon as you do that you wake up — as soon as you touch the bed — it always happens.' And her husband nodded, smiling mildly, his face a bright red from the wine, and murmured, 'Yes, it's true!' & then one of the cats was growling under the table, but the told me, no, it was Ango, snoring. 'He', he said, 'he should go to bed and have a real good sleep.'

We began talking about the village, and he said that perhaps Nettuno might never be developed as much — Anzio, since they were close together, always joined. It was a question of the history of each place — Anzio was a port, and had always had its beach, and its fish restaurants, whereas Nettuno was just a town on the sea, with a castle, an agricultural supply-town. The point was that there was a lot of free beach outside Nettuno, and this might be used. But at the same time he doubted it. He spoke in a sighing, disappointed way. Italy, said he, could be a paradise, what with a wonderful climate — the envy of the world — and a fertile soil. But it had never been a paradise, though it had often been a hell and still was in parts: the history of Italy was the history of misery, and it sadly stopped just. A few people got the money, and the poor worked and paid the taxes. The people accepted it. That was that. They didn't change things. One man didn't care what another. So you got the amazing situation today, of a rich and fertile agricultural country being ruined, & the profits of a few selfish men, into

an industrial country, and of the peasants drifting into the cities and factories, and being given good incentives - such as regular hours of work, good holidays, good wages, and pensions at the end - to do so, while the land languished and the farmers, already hard-pressed with taxes and were helped with subsidies, could hardly keep themselves going. The result was bad food at impossible prices - you could no longer tell what you were eating - the oil, wine, cheese, bread was all bad. And if it was possible to adulterate the vegetables it would be done. The whole pride of being a farmer, and having a clean, wholesome job of work, was gone. He could quite believe half the wine was chemically made, and that margarine and imitation butter were manufactured, as he'd heard, from the waste products of Moroccan oil; that what sold as olive oil was sometimes animal fat refined, and that the bread had no substance, no real grain in it at all. I told him that we'd been on one of the vineyards in Tuscany, ~~where~~ in the heart of the Chianti country, and had been astonished to see so many abandoned fields and terraces, with no-body working on them, and with more olive groves than wine-fields about. And we'd been told by one of the biggest growers in the district that he could no longer find the workers, ~~they have left~~ all moving to Florence or places like Montevarchi, an small industrial town on the road from Florence to Arezzo. The cellar lay empty and half-ruined. It was little wonder that much of the 'Chianti' we drank was said to come from Apulia and Sicily, and to be mixed and watered down before being sent out as authentic Tuscan wine. Ergo's father nodded and said, 'An old story now.' And what did the government do about it? It angled for more votes and imposed more taxes. The rich and corrupt provided the votes - the politicians got the votes - and evaded the taxes. For Italy read Greece, Portugal

from top to toe, with its splendid crops and vineyards and vegetable industries, that has the most fruitful climate in the world, where things sprouted and flowered at a touch. It could have an orderly and good agricultural life with people living on the land willingly. There was plenty to do, if the work was done strongly, and there was fairness. But there was something in the Italian character which accepted that things happened. That a ridiculous thing. It was fertile land, under a rich, exotic sun, and yet the feeding, as the city-populations seemed to be living more and more, was of this and from preserved food; when there was food and natural produce it should be had for less work than anywhere else, ~~the weather went wrong sometimes, in it and one this would be a waste~~ ~~a high price for a ton of vegetables, that should be stored for~~ ~~very frequent, and even then something was~~ ~~year. How for the vegetable crop~~ I caused the intense the wine then year; the intense old hadits touched the vine-roots, theyd and the yield of olives.

He began cursing the priests quietly, while he stayed me into the courtyard, dreamy, his eyes almost closed. They were the men who taught the rot to the wretched, who hardened the people and caused the misery from one generation to another, and lived on it, perpetuated ignorance and thrived by it. They were the men who made my real work impossible, and my pride and virtue in work. They started the process of corruption, it spread from them. He cursed them quietly and intimately, almost in a friendly way, so that it was like a curse there came on the poor into their mouths and had hardly anything to do with him. Again we started talking about Nettuno and the possibilities, and suddenly, leaving the word Nettuno, 'Ezy!', to the woke up with a start and began talking about the town as if she'd been in the conversation all the time. 'Oh,' she said, 'there's Angelina, at the Lotto a the corner, Fulvio's cousin, he's just bought a piece of land in Nettuno, she

told me last week, he paid them hundred lire a year each. The husband stayed sat there with mild, indifferent eyes: 'What has that got to do with it?' he said. 'What are you talking about? Who cares if Angelo buys it some land?' And she promptly fell asleep again, in exactly the same position. Then Olivia propped against the palm of her hand, and her head falling forward. Enzo was still snoring. Slumped into his arms on the table. Only Vito, father of the wedding guests, watchful, with the tenderness that goes with a good mind plus wholesome work.

He again asked if we'd like to rest upstairs in one of the rooms, and again we said no, we wanted to go to the sea, to have a sniff of the sea-air at Nettuno, and then return to Rome as the first train roared. He nodded and said, 'Yes, a little bit of sea-air does one good!' He described the road again, turn left, then right, and I told him the Enzo had already drawn a little map for me and we should find it easily. It was in the edge of what used to be marshland, in a kind of semicircle round Nettuno, and it was flat all the way, so that we could see the sea shining in front of us. It was partly this flatness that made the marvellous, sparkling light, because it fixed the earth to the reflection of the sea.

At last we got up, and the old woman shook herself awake, while Enzo gazed up at us with heavy eyes. Then collapsed again into his arms. We laughed, and the other woman came. We shook hands with them, then with Enzo, as he was still slumped in his seat. Then the old man astride, sitting in a box, gazing before him dimly and mildly, but with amazingly bright and piercing eyes. The children were playing somewhere close. Enzo's father came out and we shook hands with him last, 'We'll be coming to

beach partioned off for different cafés and private ones. On the whole Italians are miserable & the wonder of their cruelty. They are too much part of it to wonder consciously. It runs inside them. They need do with Italy exactly what the English did with England in the nineteenth century, if they had the chance. They would willingly wreck all the old towns and let them fall into decay. They admire much more a flimsy tin & Hollywood house made of lath & plaster and stucco, set in the middle of the of their vineyards, than anything old and solid. They can see no to them. nothing that glitters. And anything that glitters is gold & only after - completely. wards they'd cry. Unlike the English they unbuild me in half & the moment it began to affect their bodies, wreck ruin this nerves, they would stop. City-life is madness for them. They love town-life — Naples, Rome as it used to be, Venice, Florence. They love to congregate. But when congregation begins to mean madness, as it does in the northern world, they will have it. They need men, like the Englishmen, doggedly suffer the mutilation of bodies, fields, wives, minds, children, and leave the desires, all the carnal, entwined Either hopes of the flesh, the passions and lazy yearnings, & the One & dream, especially daydream. In Italy there are no daydreams. The struggle that led to daydreams is simply not understood in.

We got to the outskirts of Nettuno — a flat like those of a French town, smoke and deserted, with closed shutters — it was twenty minutes, and drove straight to the sea. Above the castle was. We left the car on a cobbled promontory overlooking the beach and walked down. There was no real beach, only the backs of tall houses giving on to a stretch of sand, with huge square embedded in the edge of the sea as breakwaters. A narrow path ran alongside these

boulders. The heavy, dusty blue cloud from the north had held off, and the sun was still shining, hot and misty in the way that promises bad weather. Children were playing, and people were sitting on the sand, leaning against the vast walls that upheld the back of the town. There were nuns everywhere, white and black, their cloth flowing out in the breeze. Some of them sat down in a boat on the sand, and looked strangely like pelicans, in their black and white, with starched edges to their hoods. Then a southern-looking man, brown and thickset, came and asked them politely not to sit there, with a smile that showed the fierce white of his teeth. They got up delicately, and stood talking to him for a time, and he said goodbye to them with that false awe combined with familiarity which people seem to feel towards the church.

We were tired after our heavy lunch and had [illegible] in the massive boulders, under the sun. The flat, hard, spiky granite seemed to relax the muscles and more immediately than a bed. A child raced past us, [illegible] the narrow pathway, on a bicycle and made as if to go over the edge into the sea at full speed, only pulled up suddenly and swerved as his friend called from the beach in the distance, 'Le frein!' — the brakes! — with a laugh.

We got back to Rome in less than an hour, and slept deeply for a few minutes, completely exhausted. Our faces tingled from the first real sun of the year, and the wine still ladies were off.

As the weather gets warmer the swifts swoop down from and further into the street, grazing the corners of the buildings and the roofs, knowing just where to swerve. They come [illegible] down into the well of the courtyard; [illegible] then waddle about on the roofs [illegible] awkwardly, tipping their wings

the Valtenesi next week-end, Saturday or Sunday,' he said, 'we'll meet them!' We jumped into the car, and Enzo appeared in the doorway waving limp. They waved as we turned, and we drove out into the warm, bright air of the road, which was deserted and silent, in the afternoon pause that reminded us of the summer. Everything was very green — the grass was lush and thick, the trees were well leaved and thrown and the first vines were forming; some of the vines, we saw, in sheltered positions nearer the sea, were even more advanced than Enzo's, and had thick fleshy leaves clustering round the first embryo grapes. It was all very serious farming land. You see it in France, where the work is done carefully and promptly. The land had the abandoned and negligent look that you have in the parts of Italy. The vine-rows were straight and regular, the earth was thoroughly tilled, the barns and roofs were in good order, the few animals we saw looked well-kept. Above all, there were people working, in nearly every vineyard. This was one of the great supply-areas of Rome, which naturally made the market safer and therefore more profitable than elsewhere. I had always heard that the wine from Velletri, in the volcanic hills of the Castello wines, from the hills further inland, and ten of the others. It was like the water — clear and light. Only to touch, the wine is 'worked' nowadays. What exactly is done to it I don't know, and perhaps too much sulphur is used. You can't say this is adulteration, but it takes away from the purity. Something may be done to preserve the wine longer, by giving it a higher alcohol content. Wine-doctoring is a widespread knowledge — in all the wine countries — that people think of it as a natural part of wine-making. This — and the mixing from different regions — is what gives the headache. I've never been upset in any way by a real, 'sincere' wine. A real wine soothes, pleases, and warms the whole body. It has to be made with natural

and care. The vines have to be tended every year as if they were delicate children. No great quantity of real wine can ever be made. It has to be done by small areas, with their own hand.. The only real wine I've tasted, that seemed to come out of the subtle darkness of the earth like a special juice, full of mysterious suggestions and secrets, bringing legends and dreams, was always from a small vineyard, made conscientiously and proudly by one man, and kept mostly for his own use. If it can be done subtly, and with leisurely care all the year round, it should be done simply and naturally, — the grapes pressed, left to ferment in the open vats for a few days, pushing the floating skins down frequently to prevent souring. Then poured into the barrels and left all year until the end of the February moon, when it can be transferred into demijohns and bottles. Then you get a pleasant wine without anything strange, mysterious — strange something strange from the earth.

What that care can produce a good wine because there are so many different things to consider — the type of grape, the age of the vine, the quality of the soil, the amount of irrigation, the manner. Men who went a decent wine will empty their human sewage into the earth all round the vines, and I've heard that the must scraped from the wine-barrels is good as well.

The roads towards the sea were pleasant and narrow, reminding us of some of the old, broken roads further north, between Rome and Castel Fusano. There were rich grass verges on either side, and old trees. But when the old marshland started the road became ugly, with new, stupid cottages, no trees, and refuse everywhere. This also meant the approach to the coast, too — because of the coastline near Rome has drawn to it speculation-building, and most of it is an ugly mess, with bits of

~~up and down~~ to balance themselves. [I notice they can bring their forked tails together, in the front, when they are flying, and also fill the space between them with a kind of web, like an extra wing. [This morning there was a tremendous thunderstorm, mostly without rain, and it didn't seem to trouble them. They seemed to know when it was passing me — like most of the bad weather, except the Scirocco, that reaches Rome. The rats there they did was to collect together after a time and go higher and higher over the river, in the morn, just as the rain came. Perhaps the insects were there. At first the storm seemed to excite them — they went in sweeping dives into the street and making their wild, shrill, fervent twitter, which is really a strangled whistle in one note.

A priest with a long, pointed beard came to hear the flat, ~~[illegible]~~ some time ago a notice was put up in the entrance corridor saying that he would be on this round on the first Thursday after Easter. He nearly missed him. He was next door with the Sicilian neighbour, admiring her puppet-warriors that hang in the hall, ~~[illegible]~~ the sight of a small child, with white ~~[illegible]~~ mother. Up, surprised at himself to find so anxious to be blessed. ~~[illegible]~~ The portiere told us, 'He's up there!' Now Henry! so we came down for him. He dived straight into the first room, where I opened our door, and ~~[illegible]~~ there was the priest, like a ~~[illegible]~~ Father, ~~[illegible]~~ at the foot of his bed, ~~[illegible]~~ his prayer book holding a candle in each hand, lighting it at the beginning and ~~[illegible]~~ each word. The lady in the second floor, a great church-goer and bishop-lover, was waiting to be done, probably with a nice glass of Marsala and a piece of cake. He turned round as soon as he had sloshed a little water out of his scaphe (?) and asked, 'Are you Italian?' We said, 'No, English,' and he replied (in English) 'Oh, I've been in London for two years — near Streatham, quite near the Crystal Palace.' 'I do not know where I am now!' I said. I made a dive at Peter to make sure and he called out from the corridor, 'Don't worry!', again in English. He kept on saying, 'Oso' — the German word, preparatory to getting a kiss near Peter. I put two hundred lire in the priest's box, and the priest

with a ringing English 'Good bye!' He must have been German — or at least not Italian. No Italian priest would have said so. 'Dio sobe!' ~~[illegible]~~ in a question of money.

Yesterday morning I met the owner of the flat, in the street below, walking slowly as always, leaning on a stick rather like the old Queen Mary. And she has the same regal turn of head and gracious smile when she says hullo. She had obviously come to collect the rent from the shop below — for by the entrance to the palazzo there is a cash-dispensing shop, which she owns together with our flat: they are her only possessions left now, apart from a villa, the building of four floors with servant-entrance, courtyard, room for stables and carriage. I shook hands with her and she gave me her regal, unbending and yet very little smile. The ladies aged us all. The hard white ladies touched up. The wig shone yellow under the sun, and the lips were painted. As always, there was a faint aroma of scent from her clothes hung loose, reminding me of Edwardian clothes. Some say she's four eighty and some say she's well on ninety. She has a strong, indomitable character with great charm, culminating in pitiless-ness and grace that perhaps make for good nerves and survival. Her nerves are marvellous. The gentlewomen of the eighteenth century must have been like that. She is always perfectly upright, and her sentences are clear and unhesitating, even with cars roaring past her and sending up fumes in her face. She speaks not of cabs — the shaded drawing room has never been disturbed, the family has never been threatened. Big events have been much stronger people in the eighteenth century, in themselves. Their nerves were made strong by peace, early in childhood. Her she has lost her husband, her daughter, both suddenly; she has had to sell most of the palazzo, and finally to our flat. Her daughter helped us: I leave the old place, and take a high new flat near the piazza del popolo:

She didn't want to, but in the end she did, and the daughter died a few days after they moved in. She looked shattered and grave for months afterwards. But now she has the old, firm, bright-cricked look. And she has a watchful curiosity about things. They say she listens in a flicker girl. She appreciates other people's jokes. ~~She has an easy, rebold laugh,~~ and follows everything said literally and closely. Confused by harassed people nowadays. Their thoughts always too many for them. She seems a monumental creation - long, difficult preparations went into making her. There isn't the time for making people like carefully now. People are sketches, slapdash line-drawings. Of what they need to be. When you speak to her you feel that no new process is ever achieved in all - that the story of liberation everywhere is just nebulous. People are liberated into being slaves. She has nothing slavish at all. The servants obey her naturally and completely, so does Nunnina, the portion, who says she hates her. And they do it for next to nothing. I remember how Nunnina used to eye the door of the little office quickly to see if she was coming, and then say, 'That one! She'll never die!', with a kind of tired admiration. The old woman would scold her about the cats in a sharp, scratchy, pitiless voice, making the words together so that they seemed all aspirate, like tiny knives, and Nunnina would cry afterwards slumped in the chair. The cats in the courtyard would be hidden away for a few days, mee-owing inside - kind of garbage-hole with a lead-plated door. Then they would come out again. And the scolding would be forgotten, until ~~the cats started striking the stairs~~ ~~with their claws in the old fashion~~ ~~when the cat stunk was unbearable again~~ during the next mating. Nunnina used to keep - little by little - a box of kittens in her room when one of the females gave birth, and show them to us secretly. 'If she caught me! She would kill me!' she'd whisper, 'she'd kill the cats and me!'

Whenever we go into the street we seem to meet Elvisabella, who is in the habit of making us a little bow and telling us cruelly what she has been doing, or is about to do. "Good morning!" she says, with her quick little bow and her dark glance that has something momentarily familiar about it, "I'm just off to church!" Or, "I'm going to mend my sister's dress — I got the material this morning and I can get it done in a few minutes." Or, "I'm going to the market — for a little salad and some tomatoes if they have any. Though they're not in season yet." Or "I'm going to buy some coke for the stove." Or "I've just put some coffee on the boil and have to get some sugar, it won't take me a minute!" She is married, now has children. She might have been a whore at one time. She has that slightly jiggish and miaowing side. She came once or twice last winter to do our washing and ironing, and used to get drunk in a strange submissive way, without speaking, after she'd gone. She would never take instead, then a bite to eat, but she used to take long swigs on the red wine and filled the bottle with water. I scotched this by offering her a full glass one morning, and then hiding the bottle, which seemed to please her. Elisabella is the one who showed a tiny room with her sister in the palazzo opposite, and that once she nearly died through asphyxiation, by leaving the coffee on the charcoal stove while she slept, and the tiny window closed. She had not enough energy to crawl to the window and fling it open again; the stove has no flue of any kind. Sometimes she looks quite wretched, with her black, familiar, sunken eyes and pale face, and she's too fat. Her diet seems to be spaghetti and bad wine. She does odd jobs in this palazzo, but she tires easily and slowly and used to housework. So on the last half we each had. After that we decided to do it all ourselves and now we have a routine of — a division of labour which works quite well. Flora, who lives further down the road in no 1 the plebeian side — collects the laundry, we also do the rest, at one time. She used to do the shopping, and two or three hours of housework every day. For the laughter in

more dirt than she took me. Sometimes she came in late after a fight with her husband, looking bruised and shaken. He was a drunk – a man with one leg and a crutch – and in old, perilous, diving stance when he talked, jerking his head forward like a bull, his face puckered and creased with fat and loose skin – and she was always threatening to have him put into hospital again. Then was quite normal, & him to be sent to a hospital, after he had fallen badly, which he nearly always did when he got too drunk. She said he was no > the strangest man she knew: he was never ill, never had a cold, and wine was his natural food and drink; it was all the nutriment he seemed to get, since he hardly ever ate. He had long since given up work. He hated and feared being sent to hospital because they didn't let him drink there. If he fell and had to be helped to his feet outside his own home he knew his number was up: the ambulance would come. Only his wife could prevent him going, and this gave Italia a bit > a whiphand over him. He went at her with the carving knife once > twice, but she always threatened hospital and he stopped. She used to stop into the house with a heavy cry every morning, and after washing the kitchen floor walk about in it with muddy shoes: the plates were never quite clean when she went, and the kitchen floor was usually black. She always told us she had been excommunicated from the church, for being a communist. A 'monsignor' came and told her a few years ago, 'Die go to church again, you may consider yourself excommunicated and damned for eternity!' The actual incident, she says (always with a slight trace of fear in her strong voice), was when she went into church one morning with her children in her arms, and one > the children made a noise while the priest was talking. He stopped and turned & her, and asked her either to control her children > leave the church. She started swearing at him in the top > her voice, asking if this was not the house > God, and was the little children were the children > God:

The arguments went round the ~~table~~ the rosary, ~~[illegible]~~
singing through the place, where what for the excommunicated 'Hell,' she said, 'with the priests' eyes tugging me behind me!' And she smiled, only with the slightest trace of regret: 'He'd never heard anything like that in a church!' She would add. 'But I say, while I hate and despise the church, I believe in God, and that's the important thing, not those little men, who would rob you of the coal on your back, and send your children barefoot through the streets, I dare to say.' Still, the monsignore — years after this, it must have been — found her room and a good job at the Vatican as a bricklayer. That kept him a lot of money, she said. But it was casual work, not permanent at all. The children would have good jobs, she said, as they were always told: 'why is your mother a communist?' The word 'communist' in Italy doesn't really mean a person with a fixed political ideology: it tends to mean anyone who refuses the status quo, absolutely. It means, basically, defiance of the priest. But even then the communists send their children to church for communion, and marry in church. There are few, very few indeed, who cut off this deeper public connection of family-life, which has for centuries been the only source of advice and leadership, however painful, of the poor, in anything more than words. Scepticism is everywhere. I don't know anybody who'd even upstart is to admit a priest to bless the place, as we did: only foreigners — the men who grew up feeling they weren't important enough for anybody's blessing. 'A blessing! I can give you a blessing — just give me a little water, and pay me five hundred lire and I'll do it for you!' the men say, with a disabused, hard gleam in their eye. They know the hard, hilltop land of the church, they lie behind. But they fear it as well. Outside Rome people seem not to like mentioning the Pope. He is passed over grudgingly and quickly, like

We make a quick visit to the market in the early morning just as the stalls are setting up,

Now we leave no one to help us, which leaves us with more money at the end of the month, and also a clean flat. ~~The washing we used to a laundry that was started up by Americans,~~ And ~~cost~~ the washing for is a laundry by ~~which~~ that) was started ~~running by~~ with Americans) a few years ago, and calling itself La Lavanderia Americana.

~~division of taking the~~ There are no longer sheets hanging on the terrace under the mat-rolling, and the bathroom ~~and~~ needs only a bleach-mixture every week. There are no anxieties in the morning as to whether she is going to come or no more visits with medical supplies ~~and~~ as she is in bed with flu, no hours gossiping ~~with the~~ about the sick people in the palazzo ~~on~~ information gleaned for other helps. The silence in the morning is marvellous, ~~the extra hours at~~ and you can still anywhere in the flat without getting into fascinating conversation that hold up your work for an hour or more.

We wanted ~~one~~ three decided us. It was the last ~~taste~~ of Sardinian food – they were good workers – and

a burden they want to forget when first because they know it will always be
love. I have seen well-to-do church-going men in Italy: those who do
go to church half a dozen there, & go with their wives and children as an
example, to keep them in the right road sexually. This is where the Church
counts, in the intimate fibres of life. The men have turned their backs on it,
completely and absolutely. The women and children keep it alive. They keep
it alive for the men, by a sort of proxy. The men do nothing whatever
the communists, because they prefer their wives and children in the shadow
of the church than lost — choosing their own morality — outside.

On Sunday morning we went to the Terme Diocletian's Baths — museum near
the station. It was a warm, bright morning, the first hazy and
really safe-feeling spring day. And it was Rome's birthday, April 21st,
which she seemed to know, as she always does. There was little
traffic, it being a holiday, and the trees by the way were thick
with their first light-green leaves of the year; the air was soft
and mellow, and the sky, as on all the next days in Rome, was
like the very sweetest suggestion, warm and downy, from the sea;
everything shimmered and sparkled against the purest blue sky imagin-
able, and yet there was a sleepy layer of mist as well, like a
veil laid over the city; she seemed to languish and half-hide
under the veil, with the Etruscan haunted smile that perfectly lies
under the city, in its seed; she was like a woman in the full
maturity of her form, lazy and full of pleasure, with soft, olive-
-skinned, languorous arms. The traffic police wore gold braid.
There were tourists everywhere, half of them foreign, half Italian. There
were soldiers sitting on the benches near the station, under the trees.
The first embryo-heat of the summer came off the massive walls of
the Terme, outside, where the lawns and gravelled paths are. We didn't

have to pay. It being Sunday, only an 'Affaire', in the form of stamps. The arches inside were massive – as always, that was the first thing that struck me: the walls so thick that they seemed to span beyond humanity. The sun poured down between them into the open courtyards so that there seemed to be no city outside but something locked into the real earth of Rome, which will survive the present city. We went to the café across the first courtyard, where they've put comfortable chairs and ~~settees~~ settees, so that tourists can rest their feet in the shade. The man at the bar was plump, and getting in- stalled at ease the order suddenly flowing in. But we struck up conversation and this look of being threatened in a sea of foreigners ceased. ~~One~~ One of the attendants was standing at the bar, too, and the other man pointed to him and said, 'Look, he's a Sicilian – the finest race on the earth – they'd rob you of the shoes you walked in!' And they both laughed. 'A noble race! A noble race of robbers!' The Sicilian, with his thin, tanned face and piercing black eyes, his straight back – quite different in shape and posture from the Italian, and especially the Roman – smiled so much that his eyes almost disappeared, leaving a brilliant, dark sparkle between the eyelids. 'If a Sicilian disagrees with you,' the man went on, pulling the levers of the coffee-machine, 'he doesn't shake his head. He pulls a knife in your back! Not that he does it himself. He's too noble. Besides, he doesn't want to be found out. He gets the Mafia to do it. A few words with the Mafia and you're dead!' The Sicilian laughed quietly, showing his regular, white teeth. 'But he's a good man, this Sicilian! He comes from a place where nothing important takes place in the open – it's all hidden. One man knows and the man who knows won't tell you what you want him to do, if you leave the money to pay. No laws! They're too noble to have laws!' Then the coffees are ready, and we stand drinking silently, while the plump, harassed man gets fancy trays of coffee and milk ready for the sitting foreigners, smiling between sips of life, suppressing his kindliness for the comic effect. 'All criminals!' he

gods on, hastily & hesitatingly, wiping the counter with a damp cloth and then shoving me some cups under the cold tap. 'You've all committed a crime!' 'Why are they allowed free, then!' I ask. 'Free!' he shouts. 'Because we said — they know how to work it! Somebody is serving the prison sentence — as a present! He always somebody else who has to pay. But the Sicilian, he's too noble to pay for his crimes. I'm not! I never pay! That's why he's free!'

After the coffee we walked through to the other rooms, with polite nods and 'Good morning!' We could hear him say behind us, 'The Sicilians!' The sunlight was drenching the inner courtyard, which is the part of the museum I like best, with its cloistered garden, and the pillared arches all round the four sides of the square, like a monastery. The bushes and trees were already beginning to look luscious, drinking in the brilliant light and cancelling it in the deep darkness. The statues, and bits of statues, in the long open passages that ran round it, were so grimy that they looked as if they'd been deliberately sprayed with soot. There were portraits of ancient Romans, short haired, coldly cropped clean, like Americans, with the same clean, searching, joyless look that comes from a world built on spectacle and success. There was nothing of the mystic that doesn't show and doesn't speak, that keeps itself to itself, that exists and wills and is tortured. I wonder what the lonely, tortured Roman face was like, as yet the lonely, tortured American face, the victim with torn nerves! They never sculptured it. He would have been a slave. Or Messalina discovered by Claudius, and shamed. All the classical pagans were slaves, inside. That was why their emperors and chiefs had happily slaves. It was in their passion to organise the physical form of things — the roads and water-ducts, and sewage-pipes, and tall, straight towers, and the clear code of law. The pagan has no form. He sees no form in the world. Every sensation, every change of weather, every new friend and striking personality, every fresh vision, makes him its slave. There is no theme in the pagan. There is no persistent character. Therefore he clings to the concrete, material form, & the code and the index of authority. That was this Jewish. That was the Roman's first step from paganism — the passion

to achieve form, in the only way a pagan knows — physically, in a way he can see and touch. Only Christ knew real — invisible — form, that was carried about by every man. He settled the sky down, so to speak — he made it predictable and safe, he made the outside form, that is all visible at all, known to people, by giving them the Jewish knowledge. He calmed the whole Roman world. All the spectacle and screen — the enormous importance and self-importance of the Roman world — the astounding projects and schemes and passion for scale and monumental size and intercontinental proportions — ~~which is repeated exactly in the~~ passed away before the work of one man who had been completely silent, apart from one phrase, during his trial. It was completely beyond pagan expectations that an insignificant man, belonging to a kind of fanatic, one of the wretched on the Mediterranean coast of Africa, could achieve, not the conversion of the people round him, but the conversion of people he had never seen, never perhaps heard of, whose language he couldn't talk, for generations and generations. For the pagan, what is silent sleeps: it is dead. The sky is dead, unless it growls. A man is dead, unless he speaks. The power inside a man is invisible to the pagan: watching Christ (as Pontius Pilate watched him) he would have said, at the trial, when he was being asked if he really thought he was the son of God that Christ was a pathetic, wretched man — a slave — who had given in. What Christ did was to make this silence speak — after his death. That was what he bequeathed: the power of silence. A pagan can't pray. He can only bribe or threaten imaginary eternals. But prayer is silence. So the mania for making ~~figures~~ images in Italy, for the brilliant and glittering, for the performance and the posture, has a pagan root. This is why Italy continues to offer the very picture we have today of the act of conversion to Christianity, because the pagan lies there clear and indelible, under the Christian: and

this will always be so, while there is an Italy. Whereas we have [illegible] pagan root. We are the complete children of Christianity. That is what Englishness consists in: people, in the civilisation we know. We had no civilisation before, whereas the Romans did. We have inherited Christ through Roman organisation: Christ came into our lives because we were part of the Roman empire. & there is always in our civilisation the Christian and the flattening, organising Roman part, giving loyalty, indissolubly. Hence you get the similarity between the Roman and the American head. But the paganism has gone out of us. Basically, the Italian — though not so much the Roman, whether he is a Roman by birth or adoption — does not see into us when we are silent. He can't tell, by intuition, as we can tell in each other, whether we're trustworthy or gifted or penetrating or rather cheap, except by what we say and do. His intuitions are probably better than ours. By Latin had the enormous crippling blows that come from a society organised for production like ours. He sees clearly and purely, on the whole. But in the latter resort his excellent intuitions [illegible] is pagan. His love of fear of the silence is pagan, [illegible] critical demonstrations of feeling is the same. Everything has to be spoken and explained; which is also healthy and safe. Really, the 'Jesus' is closer to the idiot, in Italy. But idiots are loved and always worshipped in the family. The strength of Christ is only visible to the complete Christian who — by his distance from the pagan root — is always in danger of losing anything but mental affiliation to Christ and mental resolves. He is, he becomes a virtuous citizen lost and damned, in a kind of city, nightmare. But in the Italian the moment of conversion, fresh and surprising, and very much in the flesh, is always there.

I believe love was a force, even before Christ, when a kind of natural peace existed, something quite spontaneous and undeliberated, like a

marvellous family that comes into being and then dies out — the Etruscans. The smile on their gods is the first sign of peace. I know when that I'm in a particularly peaceful state, just before I fall asleep at night, I become aware of the same slight smile in my lips. And you see it in the Egyptians. It was like a permanent sign of the possibility of joy, which the Romans and the subsequent civilisation drove out. The Etruscans chose the site of Rome — the most marvellous place on earth: near the sea, with warm, clement breezes coming in; cradled all round by hills; in the middle of fertile lands; a quick, powerful river running through ~~the~~ cool mountains, massive, soothing lakes, fresh springs and wooded hills near by. The first Kings were supposed to be Etruscan. Only the archaeologists can't find the link between the Etruscans and what they call the Romans. So they say the Romans defeated them in battle. But the Etruscans must have been a people working the land — not only cities. There is nothing in history to say that the Etruscans were a different tribe on one side and the Romans a distinct tribe on the other. It may be one of the problems of ~~academic books~~ historical thinking — not to see life. The Etruscans as they came to be known to us lived their lives, towns gave way, slowly, to another form of life. But they cultivated have disappeared from the face of the earth. I believe that they were the birth of Rome, the first seed and placenta. And their peace — the slight, unmoving smile — lies underneath it, right underneath. You can get the Etruscan ~~face~~ features in Rome: you get it in Siena, in the countryside north of Veii, perhaps; the long head and the wide, staring eyes, the rather long trunk, stocky shoulders; whereas in Rome you have the classical Roman face, again and again — the imperial stamp. The Etruscans had nothing imperial or monumental, which is why their art is called provincial by the connoisseurs. It lacked the fission — the dearness. You might say — of the so-called 'great'

classical & Roman art. It seemed sketched, intimate, a moment's passing thought, like all real art. It took the moment of joy. There was all the sun and the perfectly untamed movement of the body in it. This is what you get in the wall-paintings, and in the mysterious, smiling Apollo of Veii that stands with a hole in its back in the Villa Giulia — the truth of a moment that passes for all time, which is art. It was more art, really, than the late Greek. It belongs to the early Greek, where the same half-invisible smile is seen, like someone glimpsing another life. The late Greek, and certainly the Roman, living in the hard, finished work that was the model for the renascence. Whereas the first Greek and the Etruscan is always veiled and — for the professional mind — unfinished, 'provincial.' Nothing looks so much like a dark or a masterpiece (the Ludovisi throne) which is a French painter once said. You get it in the birth of Venus & in the Diocletian museum — there you have the veil, the goddess rising from the water, which is also wet paint water, but an element was it: light as well, or dust, so that she seems to be dancing slowly into wakefulness. And in the Etruscan this invisible water & light & dust & the other world is sparkling and hot and blinding, full of the noise of pipes. It is less golden and evanescent than in the Greek world, there is less of what the Jew, and Christ, absorbed from the Greeks — the sense of the disappearance, always, of the flesh. One can imagine how the Roman world — the grace and joy gone — grew out of the first long Etruscan dream: how the clutter and blinding heat of the light went to the point, nearly, of madness. You can still see the huge feet and the huge fragments of hands of the ghastly pagan statues in the Michelangelo's courtyard in the Capitoline: there you get the real pagan, who clings to what can be touched and seen. But the other paganism, of the first Greek and the Etruscan art, has the tenuosity and silence of real form — the attempt to achieve religion, which is all form is, in the end.

But, in a way, they weren't looking for the theme and order of religion. They had it already, in their peace, they were the achieved objects of religion, themselves, making religion in no sense, as striving and always breaking new ground, unnecessary. They seem like people actually rocked in the godhead, making prayer unnecessary. Their bodies and their pipes, their long phalluses are the sun and light; they are so hence the embodiment of the created, actual world, and this world is so glorious, that they are beyond it, rocked in the invisible, which shows in their smile. The strain and the fearful guilt, the horror of nakedness, and the ache to exploit the sensations of a body which is now dead, entire with the Roman epoch. The early light of innocence — not as innocence, but passion that needed no special movement, only the smile, in silence — was gone. The long hair of the Etruscans was no longer seen. The joy and humility — which mean complete naked surrender to life, with the phalluses showing, in erection — were clipped and shaved off; ~~you see it in the Roman [illegible] epoch~~ ~~[illegible]~~ there is hence any more — this is taken for death; a peculiar inself-like sort of movement comes in, ~~all external~~ with the softness and yielding intimacy of the bared genitals ~~power~~ and the transparent wedding-veil gone, with the dancing gone, or rather, only its fragments left. Instead, with there is horror of ~~the~~ intimacy, an atticism torture and darkness and disease; until you get Tiberius, ~~a hermaphrodite~~ sickly creative with sores and pimples, ~~and wretched~~ and mean, lascivious lips, who used his phallus to abuse and debase ~~[illegible]~~ cruelly, to find the dirt, ~~vaginal~~, and who was stifled under a pillow at the end, secretly, because he shared a horrid tenacity even in the last stages, with ~~his hope~~ sickeningly ~~homosexuality~~. Here you get the history of Rome from its birth to its darkness, before it was rescued by Christianity: a peace that was captured at first, by those unexpecting graces, like a family that suddenly flourishes after a confirmation of seed which no one has arranged

of thought about that which, in being a pure accident, is clearly the climax of a long inner process; time = first this dawn, and then the long travail of the pagan to get that early joy again, in the only way he understands, by means of the visible, the success; and then — the story of success everywhere — the dawning defeat and humility, deep inside, which yearns for the invisible as a man tortured by noise yearns for quiet, and are the preliminary of conversion, deliberate and conscious this time.

When the conversion took place, and the old Roman empire was finished, except for the enormous heathen family of races it had left behind all its troops, the first Christian art (which you can see today, faded and timid, in the crypt of S. Clemente, the 4th basilica) looked back not to the Roman but to the Etruscan, — if Etruscans were still there among the people, and had really been touched by the movement of armies and the changes of power. You get the long hair again, the dancing, the soft, humble grace — for the first time in hundreds of years. You see the old Etruscan light, but with Christian feeling now. ~~the tomb, the fish, good, dove~~ the subject of these frescoes might be the ascension or perhaps the assumption of Mary — it isn't clear: but you get the dearly marked eyes of the Etruscan, and the expressions which are a sketch, nearly a caricature; you get the same thing in the tiny shrine of this basilica, hidden in darkness under the main church — the figure with long hair and the slight smile. Roman art was all commissioned art. It astounded and awed but left no intimate mark.) ~~It bibbed down the body~~ and

It breathed power, and this other art did — the Etruscan smile remains long afterwards, like a breath — you don't know how the breath could stir so much life — you can't understand it, but it did. The pagan pride could surrender again, in Christianity: and naturally it looked back to the dawn of Rome, before) pride had come into being.

Again, in the second and fourth-century frescoes in the Roman villa underneath the church of Saints John and Paul, you get the long hair, and graceful male figures dancing with garlands, naked — as if it had all been preserved in the people. ~~Later on, that these frescoes were painted~~ This is the way John and Paul are supposed to have been imagined, is probably the ~~by Christians to be their~~ clearest link we have between the pagan and Christian worlds. In these frescoes there we the new dawn which has more pain and terror than the Etruscan dawn; the blinding, that glow has gone, the innocence has been chosen, not inherited. The figures are soft, frail, quiet, naked with an ~~all~~ unwording evanescent loveliness. Even the Etruscan veil is there, ~~clipped~~ clasped to the neck and showing the naked body underneath.

And I think this is what went into mediaeval art: the imagination is free again, there is the constant dawn of understanding which is never quite realised, ~~the~~ the same apparent indifference to detail and polish (~~but which~~ really a proper attention to the things that count), ~~the~~ the same humility and stillness; a sense of waiting on the invisible. The Roman, and much of the renascence work, does not. The figures are pinioned in fragment, defeated, victorious, proud, regal. It achieves itself: there is nothing beyond. Everything is expressed. I think this might have been Michelangelo's ~~life long struggle~~ — to get through them; ~~to the power of capturing the invisible,~~ to escape the misery and imprisonment of self-expression, and to achieve the existence and ~~peace~~ stillness which would ~~to worship~~ demonstrate all the movement possible in life, by seeming to wait; ~~Michelangelo~~ to get beyond the pagan in himself, the 'sculptor' to give his work intensity, not power; to get beyond the understandable.

There can be no self in art, [therefore no self-expressing] because self is pride. The Etruscan frescoes, the great Greek art, the mediaeval paintings, have no self. Every face is ape. In the tragic, late art of Greece, you get self; and in the Roman. You get pain, fear, beauty, dignity, strength, but you get no index to the invisible. Everything can be understood, felt. It is passing. Art is never ~~passing~~ in a way real. Art is ~~things~~ surrendered to, not to the pleasures and pains and problems of self (~~passing~~) but

the invisible that offers no rewards. This peculiar surrender in
all real art is incomprehensible to the pagan: being all contained inside without
a visible work – being all immanent, not expressed at all – he can't see it.
understanding.
A couple, in love, must be clasped together. To the pagan: if they are falling
outwards, one of from each the, he can see nothing. Religion is the demonstration
of the invisible; not of the endlessly thwarted effort to capture this form.
form in like
or self-
expression. And this form has as little to do with polish and finish,
— whether careful or blind — as the
Commissioned monument has to do with the crucifix. Art is all care and
attention, so as to lay bare the subject-matter for the entrance of the light
from beyond, which can never be planned or worked towards, only prepared
for. (for) patients, like opening sores in the ceiling. A king (4c) who may never
Come. So there is always this fragile and amateurish element in the art
that survives. The poet knows nothing to do – — dumb.

There was hardly a sound or traffic in the inner court of the
museum, where the thick bushes and trees were, and Francis were sitting –
the low stone walls between the cloister and leaning against the pillars. In the
centre middle, by the inside a cluster of pines, there is a fountain and stone
basin full of fish which looked gold from no angle, a bright gold from
another and a sandy yellow from another, in the flickering sunlight;
there were some white fish, too, plump and slow-moving, diving through
the shadows of the water, their fins twitching. And by the basin there is an
immense, ancient pine-trunk, the amalgam of many trees, grasped and
twisted together, and still alive in the form of a single clean trunk rising
out of the sea, – pine-tree in leaf. I noticed an attendant from the Hôtel
Dieu and he said, 'The whole courtyard was designed by Michelangelo,
trunk was and he said,' and he planted that tree himself with his own hands.' I said before Fabrizi,
and he planted that Tree himself with his own hands. 'Are you sure of that?' But
in 1855!' I said, 'That is over three hundred years ago, isn't it?' He
he shook his head vigorously, a big chunk of ham-and-roll in his hand,
which he was still chewing, and said. 'No, no! It was 1855. Ask anybody!
'But Michelangelo didn't live then.' 'Oh yes, he did! The date of that tree was

1855, that's all I know!' And he smiled at me, with a quick, kindly nod. I shook nodded too. I accepted it. He was like the man at ~~the~~ Veio, ~~with a Rome~~ the caretaker at the museum there, who told us that when you said 'fifth century Before Christ you meant a hundred years before the fifth century Before Christ. It made quite a puzzle. I argued that the fourth century B.C. was after the fifth century B.C. But he wouldn't have it, and as I'd been drinking he was voluble and fluent. 'No, no!' he said. 'Look at it whichever you like, four is a lower number than five. Therefore the fourth century before Christ came before the fifth century. It stands to reason!' Ask anybody!' And he gave me the same kind of patient, kindly smile as this man. The deeper you get in an argument like that the less sure you feel of your own position. So this time I left it, and nodded, 'All right, 1855!' 'Yes!' the man said, 'go over to that door leading into the museum' he pointed — 'and you'll see a plaque on the wall referring to it. You'll read the date there — 1855.' I walked over to see I could find above the door was a sign reading 'Divieto di fumare. Défense de fumer, ~~Rauchen Verboten~~, No smoking.' And no date.

†

I realise how fragile our peasant-routine, I had before ten and up soon after dawn, is when we have to break it. The whole madness outside flooded in. We see the city as she really has become. But which in a way has nothing to do with her. Some friends came from the north of Italy and we stayed up, eating late (for us) at the trattoria. That was all right, with food and drink and clever talk, at a table, with about ten people from various countries. In Rome you can always go into a dream of your own if you want to, mumbling something when you feel like it, taking a sip of wine, calling out for some cheese, eating a piece, shifting in your chair, saying good evening to someone drowsily, picking at your teeth with one of the toothpicks in the table, yawning, scratching your head, watching cats crawl over the roofs. Listening to the conversation at the next table, shifting in your chair again, taking another sip of wine, throwing away the toothpick, yawning, laughing at something I've

can see how it was done, as he walked towards the exit, with nowhere to retreat. At least, this is what one of our friends said. This was the first we'd heard of it. The story might be apocryphal, but the place looks murderous; for ever dim and yet illuminated, behind the grating, with people peering in silently night after night. And the vast ruined Forum lurks at the bottom of the hill.

The Forum, too, with her bare bare columns and humped, half-ruined walls, her smooth green patches and long marble steps that suddenly come to an end, was illuminated. We stared down from the Capitoline hill, leaning on the wall; we've been coming to this spot for years, showing people the town, and a strange silence always seems to fall on them here, as they lean their elbows on the low wall and stare into the ruins below, ~~on the other side of the road,~~ where everything is silent and still; they speak in hushed voices, and the dark sky seems close; one can see right across the town towards the flat Campagna, with part of the shell of the Colosseum, terrible and aloof, sticking out on the way.

first heard from someone at the table, actually speaking - sentence or two, yawning again, tapping your glass up with mineral water, tearing off - piece of bread and chewing it, shifting in your chair, in a long, silent conspiracy (in which all the muscles join) to relax after the fatigues of the day, if there were any, and to do the same if there aren't. I'm yet to do this in Tuscany, or anywhere north of Rome. Up there the Roman is rough - rude and vulgar. To have to make a performance of a lot of singing, pointed conversation, & lively and scintillation goes right up there: it makes me sick. Only at least among the educated. Every man to his taste.

On the other hand, the peasants in Tuscany are the same: you can pass a splendid and lively hour with them saying absolutely nothing, doing absolutely nothing except sipping your wine, scratching your head, picking your teeth and so on. It takes resolved people to do that, and to get the splendour. ~~The hour of the Italian proved deadly~~

As I say, I didn't mind that part of the evening. Six of us. With our friends wanted to see a bit of the town. One of them, a boy of eighteen who is a Tuscan born and bred, had never been to Rome before and wanted to see the Capitoline Hill. So we drove there, hardly able to keep our eyes open, and all our muscles aching. The usual thing: bright lights, the slam of car-doors, Rome's middle class — some looking pleasant and curious after a good dinner, others corrupt. Others boorish, with thick voices of authority — but always with some mitigating grace inherent, getting in and out. Then the walk down the steep hill to the place under the Old Capitoline where St. Paul is supposed to have been imprisoned, and the spot, underneath where I have since, shown to me marble, where Julius Caesar was murdered. We didn't know about the Julius Caesar past until that evening, as we stared through the grating at the lighted, bare hall inside: one of the friends pointed it out — there, right in the centre of the middle row. The elevator came from all round him as he walked along — they came behind the arches, so that he had no way of escape. CHECK Then we looked across at the dimly lighted forum with its bare columns and its lumped, half-ruined walls, its smooth grass patches and its long marble steps that suddenly come to an end. It all

looked so mysterious in the dim light, and so deliberately mysterious and the artfully placed arc lamps, that it would any more. It was the background of a film. So many tourists had looked down on it, from this spot. But that is itself Oriental matter. Centuries change, but not a place. ~~But the Forum~~ It doesn't. Just the Holy Way up to the Pantheon, or the amphitheatre at Epidaurus. But the Forum does belong to mysterious evening-light, of any kind. It may belong to a storm full moon, when it would stick out of the earth in a blatant and yet strangely natural way. Or it might lie in the total darkness, like a treasure resting, not even fierce or watchful. The Forum really belongs to blazing, hot days when a slight cool breeze comes in from the direction of the sea and just ruffles the trees on the top of the Palatine. The vast, grassy space of the Palatine itself, completely held up above the city, far away from it, still locked in ancient times, with the classical and Greek light still visible there, somehow huge tremendously spacious and endless, and deserted in such a way that it seems to be part of the sky, and intimate with it (the loneliness of Greece is partly this - the strange, moving intimacy with the sky, and the fact that the sky always seems gloriously populated), is like the last word of the whole area of the Forum, the last surrender to the blazing, golden, still air. ~~Up above~~. Back up the steep hill to the Campidoglio flittering and falling asleep under the bright lamplights. The windows of the museum on one side and the cinéma on the other, where marriages are held, always look enticing and intimate, because they are old, with long, heavy shutters and the old cinema, hand-cut glass. The tiniest things like this, coming from the human hand, bring back the intimacy of the past. And since words could say how this peculiar effect of the human presence came about, and lingered on in the things it produced, ~~the nineteenth~~ since it had to remain a pure mystery, the nineteenth century couldn't bear to keep it. It had to know, and be able to explain, everything.

We were so tired we could hardly walk straight, and all our muscles ached. It was still a pleasant tiredness, as we often have in Rome, when the air softens and begins to part. The car-doors banged shut, like little idiot-shots that never wounded anybody, & were lost in anything but random vacancy; the long cars shone in the brilliant lights; somewhere below,

a pow devil of a wolf lies in his cave, behind bars, when he's fed & heartbreak by bars. There are people moving to and fro in the big salon of the museum upstairs, which is used for state and Vatican reception sometimes, with beautifully crude baroque frescoes on the walls and a ridiculous carpet marked SPQR, though it's still all a receptacle in a homely way, not so unharmonious that it breaks with nature; and the corridors stride, the flaying azaleas in the stone sarcophagi, the still, dim courtyard of Michel-angelo where, for some reason, children always want to play, hiding behind the huge feet and hands, are nice; they have all the proportion of a good version of Nem-This is finally what people come to Italy for, if they come for anything more than the stones. They come for what they can never quite capture, and it's never quite lost.

When we got home we stayed up talking for a few minutes — my watch said half-past nine or so. But we kinds were telling a different story. A few minutes I saw it had stopped, and it was nearly midnight. Even when we went to bed I couldn't sleep. My body ached with the wrong kind of fatigue. It was like having had a glimpse of the city inside it. Shining, metallic, clattering self that appeared, strangely, most at night, and had a false sparkle, against the mellow background of terracotta walls and layers of the thin, long tricks from ancient times. It was what we were living in, while being hidden from it, by our routine. We were just going to bed at the time when the folly and the brittle, wild madness of the city came into its own. We never slept, at the time when all the nightmares and wounds, the sentences regretted the next day, came into being. I could remember so well those terrible evenings, mostly spent in talk — they were like pictures in my mind that always seemed to take place in a bleak, lighted room, with strangers all around, joined by nothing except the words that came out of their mouths, so that word seemed the only thing that existed, and the body as it sat slumped in a chair, being administered little pleasures like coffee or a drink — rarely any moral or evil, because that would have argued care and attention to the body, and therefore to real and not city-life — which was always dead, ceased to exist, and then was a pure thought, by the mind. It lived, in the silence that trundled upstairs & across the city

seemed to estrange everything from everything else, in the close, tall, narrow streets, where even the swifts were no longer. And certain distraught faces seem to come out in the city at that time: they were distraught in the northern way, with the ache and fear of death; they only have a reflection of the madness — but it shines like a scene, really this is a place, imitated from abroad. Of course, Rome has no night-life. There is no city, Rome. The night-life is so deep, underneath, that nobody can see it. Really it can only be seen in sleep. It has to come in through the nerves and bowels. If you attack the nerves in Rome, you see a distorted — and imported — city. This glimpse we had made us feel sick, with the realisation that we were living in a city after all. But all the people around us, ~~except those damned by education, usually~~ ~~and not incomplete me in that — all the people~~ in the ~~thing~~ narrows and tunnels of the mediaeval houses crowded together ~~next to~~ near by, face it: live in the city, too. They do its work, and sleep through its night, when the false heart comes out. And so they die under the pain in their eyes, as the fretting minority do. You can see the fret and impatience in ~~their~~ people's eyes if you go to the Via Veneto, where the rich are supposed to go. Actually, it isn't the rich, either. The minority who make the death-city, in the silence of night, are a truce from all over the world: they're trying to explore Rome for what she will only give them if they stop exploring. In the end, they get tired and clear out. Rome offers the most terrible menace to the self-appointed traveller — family, the hot, dark corners of family-life. When they find this out they run away. Nothing 'happens' in Rome, they discover. This is what takes the madness out of the clatter and flurry at night, when the well-fed go sightseeing. There is only folly — like that of an addled ocean. This is why it shines, like a reflection. There is nothing sordid. There are no haunting, deathly appetites; there would

the fortune eyes that you get in northern cities, with their suggestion of cruelty which is really only fear on the defence. Everything is neat and clean, instead. Eyes are clear, even if they're cleverly corrupt. The cars shine so much, they aren't allowed to get dusty a look old — that cuts a bad figure. Clothes are nice, in low and rich. That is an air of intimate wholesome taste.
And the Old Things of the Campidoglio, the lighted Colosseum like a vast ring them, send down this message—
signpost at the edge of the real city, the long steps of the Trinità dei Monti, the brooding Palazzo Farnese, with the two vast Roman Gothe
& the square before her, green with age, and the challenging, somber, scarred Castel Sant' Angelo, with the bronze angel flourishing a sword from
from high up, — the balcony Tosca threw herself down, while
thousands clapped and sang and rocked to the music at these performance — and
the crumbling pillars by the theatre of Marcellus, the oldest in Rome,
four of them standing side by side like things weeping, the former like
a bowed head that Luke is he touched any more, and the cupola of
St. Peter's that never quite succeeds in being innocent and impersonal,
the pagan, domed Pantheon that always seems ashamed of itself. Trying
to hide and forget itself inside the narrow streets, and the ancient gate of the
city that still seem to have the dust of the open country on them. Caught in
by travellers, at the Piazza Fiume, at the edge of the Borghese Gardens,
as Piazza del Popolo, and on the road that used to lead to Tarquinia,
all of them lumped and stern, like a first warning; travellers and
the gate that stands alone, in the Forum, (marked Senatus Populus Que Romanus) an entrance to nothing very
much. Can't forget where to put itself and feel asleep while the
few of people moved somewhere else; and the Aventine, the Hill of
convents and monastery-gardens; and the four Tiber Hills nobody notices,
the bridges, ancient tiled roofs, the steeples everywhere, the silence that no one has
been able to break with all the available noise in the world.

Our neighbors came in a Sicilian wine Tabarro which we drank last Sunday
with lunch. There was lamb roasted with fresh garlic, laid on top and whole
bay-leaves, sprigs of rosemary, with cloves of garlic inside, plenty of oil; peas cooked

slowly without oil, and spinach and potatoes. These five of us and we started off with a red wine from Tuscany — at least, it tasted good and, even if it comes from Apulia and is mixed with wine from the Veneto, it doesn't give me a headache — and then, when we had settled ourselves nicely, ~~[illegible]~~ tackled the white from Sicily. It was so marvellous, so pure and cool, that it seemed to alter all of us; you could feel that it was made with care and sedulity; it was five years old and had that subtle, hesitating, catchy taste of the good Mosels, when they haven't been sugared and mixed. And after the meal we all fell asleep like babies, some on beds, some on chairs, silent and lost, in the sleep that makes you feel you are waking into a new body afterwards. The only one who didn't sleep was Lindy who drank it. And, like all real wine, it acted on us like a tonic. It made a pause in the day, like a sudden dark when body would have planked, and seemed to soothe everything inside us. We all felt the same. Somebody else came in for tea and seemed a stranger to this wine-community that had come into being silently. And we only realized much later, that morning when we were going to bed, that it was a marvellous wine, and it had caused these effects. It was like drinking something direct from the sky and earth. It had a classical straightness. I don't imagine getting drunk on it. You'd fall asleep long before. Whether that wine is still produced I don't know. The vineyard may have been the pride of centuries. I've heard of vineyards in Sicily, kept by poor men, which were the envy of the people in the big houses: they used to come down themselves for a demijohn or barrel, and see it came out of the cellar themselves, to be sure of it. And the balmy and rare air in the world could produce that coincidence of soil with slope with wind with vine with sheltering trees near by. Sometimes a marvellous wine is struck. You get one bottle, then it's lost. But then it may not be the liquid, pure and simple: wine seems like music — you need the occasion, the temperature, the performance. If I cooked for that wine you'd probably swallow it taste the same. The more I drink wine, the more mysterious it becomes for me. And the less I drink in quantity.

but in its passage from Italy to much has been
transmuted into prestige, ~~and stands about~~
~~English~~ the humble word poetica becomes the

mineral water

wine, the more mysterious it becomes for me. And the less I drink in quantity.

A wine can be crude and bestial, like the man who owns it. It can be modest, self-effacing. It can have good, strong nerves, like the real Chianti such as is never drunk outside Tuscany itself. All the snob-talk about wine originated from real taste: from people drinking wine in their own vineyards, and trying other people's. In its passage north from Italy so much has been transmuted into prestige over the centuries: the humble word portiera becomes the humiliating 'porter'. And it's the same with the wine.

Italian wine is rarely like drinking someone's civilisation, as good French wine is. Only the Tuscan comes near that. And this Sicilian wine that we drank; ~~Perhaps it is because~~ the Bourbons were once in Sicily, after all, and ~~eighteenth-century~~ the Enlightenment penetrated there more than it did on the continent of Italy, under Frederick. Italian wine is wasteful, casual, to be slopped over the table; never precious. And almost never for sale. like everything else in Italy it serves a definite purpose, usually to do with the body. It is to make people sparkle, not to lose the tongue, or to help digestion, but to wash the food down & settle the nerves.

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A wine can be crude and bestial like the man who owns it. Or it can modest, pleasant, self-effacing. At the end-talk about wine originated from real taste, at one time; it came from people drinking wine in a private way. In England I gradually lose my taste for wine. It doesn't seem real, as I know nowadays. I think this is partly because France and England were politically divided from each other as they never were before the nineteenth century. The two countries were branches of the same family before then, and claret was a natural English drink. But now the reality isn't there. I ~~[illegible]~~ they are just bottles with printed labels. The Italian wines can't compete with French wines for taste. But they still come from the work of one or two men, except in the areas of industrialised ~~wine~~ — the Chianti country, for instance. There isn't any excitement in Italian wine. It washes down food, nearly always. It isn't like drinking somebody's subtlety and civilisation, as good French wine is. Only the Sicilian wine came near that, perhaps because the Bourbons were once in Sicily, and because eighteenth-century enlightenment did reach there, under Frederick, which it never did in Italy proper. Italian wine is wasteful, casual, to be stopped on the table; never precious. And almost never for sale.

Every morning when I take the dog for a walk in the narrow sidestreets I see fine pieces of furniture being made in dark workshops; tables, long settees, chairs and sideboards, some of them bevelled and inlaid, some of them old pieces being stripped and cleaned. When they're ready — they seem to leave the shop before they're stained or varnished — they will be called everything from renaissance Venetian to eighteenth-century English. A year ago you only used to see regular chairs and tables being made; fragile, fiery little things for the flea-market. But now the antique trade is spreading. An old peasant sideboard, picked up in the country for five or ten thousand lire, will start off at about a hundred and eighty thousand. I saw a wonderful inlaid desk being made this morning. It only needed the staining and polishing. The worker was just standing back to have a look at it, not to admire it — I've hardly ever seen a working man do that, with his own produce — but to see

if the flap worked smoothly. He had a plump face and his eyes quite still, in the shadow of the workshop. They seem to work with extraordinary speed. The furniture changes every day. And along this road antique shops are starting up – there have been five or six new ones this year. They concentrate on lighting and the arrangement of carpets, candle-holders, vases and statues etter. You don't see clients, but it would only need one transaction a day to pay for the rent, the well-deserved attendant, and a fair salary for the owner. I used to watch Paolo make this antique furniture and he couldn't work fast enough to cope with demand. ~~satisfy the demand of the shop.~~ He made enough to buy himself a big car and keep a mistress. Even then he ran into debt. Money is to be spent in Italy. Only the minority of people at the top, with black polished shoes and tight suits, are careful and tight about it. The money in Italy is crumpled, dirty – you could throw it away easily as rubbish. It still isn't a possession in itself, as in the northern world; it still has to show a presence in itself. It is real: dirty, temporary, just an exchange-note. The reality is still the home that provides everything: the field outside, the bag of grain, the demijohn of wine ~~bought~~ home in the back of a tiny car, the sack of sugar. This is so even in the most industrial districts where there is no field outside and where everything is bought in a shop: that basic reality is still there, behind. You can still lay your hands on the sources of life. If you lose your job you still do have everything: you can reach at the slaughter-house: basic subsistence. Take Amintore, working two afternoons a week, the man has enough to pay the rent, and to play cards at the Trattoria with a glass in front of him before that ~~which~~ always full of wine; ~~drinking~~; and this is all he wants. Money isn't really a passport to a new life in Italy, the only time it is a passport is when it ~~returns to town for provisions~~ draws a pension at a miserable bottle like theatres, travel, books. The meals get bigger, the wine better. There may be a new sideboard for the dining room but the dining room remains exactly as it was before. The family remains the family is the form and shape of Italy. Any organisation outside, from a night-club to a concert or parliamentary meeting, ~~is basically a fake~~ is

quite in earnest, there is always the element of travesty and performance. Strangers, even lifelong friends, are rarely invited home: only relatives. Perhaps only foreigners are invited home regularly in Italy — as a safe adventure. Palmiro is still surprised, in himself, that my wife is always with me when I come to the trattoria, as an apparently equal basis, and that I think nothing of her shaking hand with the freshwater -fishermen & the bald, joyful old man who always sits in the corner, and with his own brother, the hotel-manager. His own wife comes in the evening with their food in a dancer's purse covered with a towel, and he jumps up from his cards and goes to a table alone with her and his child. This is changed now — he no longer thinks it surprising to see both of us together, nor does anyone else: but this is the only big difference which has once drawing us into the family of the trattoria, so that we are a kind of relative, in so far as any couple can be. The woman takes an equal place, like Palmiro's wife is equal to him, and the hotel-manager's wife speaks to us across the table freely, and always shakes hands. We could go home and watch television as Palmiro's place, but we would do so as relatives: no speech would be necessary, no preliminaries or entertaining of any kind. And we really do speak to each other. We have nothing to say. If he talked about his work he'd ruin the subject in two minutes, as he only gives two afternoons a week to it. And the play cards the rest of the time, while he is still reading the sports' news. So we nod good-evening and if we are sitting at the same table occasionally top up each other's glass with wine. They are family-gestures.

The day after the Sicilian wine we decided to see our friends on the road back to Tuscany by driving to Lake Bracciano, along the Cassian way, and having lunch there. Their car would follow behind our car. First I walked to the bank to get some money, and the sun beat down in the vault of the Corso as it did sometimes in the early morning of summer days. I was hot inside my tweed jacket and I was still wearing long underpants from the winter — this was the first time I'd worn them in Italy, at the time of the freeze-up, when all the fountains were fixed white. The lake would be cool, with that massive silence that always hung over it, summer and winter, even when the surf-boats were careering round near the coast. We were to leave between ten and eleven,

take a walk in Bracciano before lunch and take a look at some land we'd once found on the edge of a lake, the perfect position for a house, looking down into a steep wooded slope, with the lake still and blue beyond it, cupped in the trees, if only we'd had the money to buy it. We used to go there in the evenings sometimes, dreaming about it – planning the house to be here, under this rock for shade and coolness, with a few trees there – we could keep the pencil-tree, it would stand just outside the kitchen-door – we could plant further at the top of the slope so that we had the illusion of looking there down into the lake etc. etc.

I went downstairs to start the car but it wouldn't. I turned the key but nothing happened. By good fortune – though it turned out not to be exactly that – the car was always parked opposite a repairs-garage where I was known. I called out and one of the mechanics, a heavy, round-faced man with very black hair and a black face, with stumpy, thin fists as plump as a pomegranate, and oily stubs for fingers, came nothing out. Then the boss came – the younger of the two of the man who runs the garage as well away – and asked what it might be. It was probably the starter itself, the burly man said. He sat heavily in the side the car, leaving his grease – he seemed all grease – on the seat. He unscrewed the little starter on the panel and said, 'We'll have to get a new one!' 'But there's current!' the boss said in a mild, wondering way; 'you can see that, because when you turn the key the petrol-gauge shows.' Still, matters pointed to the starter as the cause, and the burly man went away to the spare-shop just by our own door, to get a new starter. Our friends came down – 'The car won't start!' It might mean a little wait: it didn't seem complicated. Meanwhile there was nobody at the car. We walked up and down. We talked together, separated, leaned on the car, yawned, looked up at the sun, packed the other car with suitcases. I went to the burly man, inside his cave full of half-cars and quarter-cars, and said, 'How are the starters?' 'No' coming – two' I put to force me – he didn't have one in stock.' So we waited again. Rosanna, the Tuscan boy who works as a sculptor's

formly, stayed with me. That it was an electrical matter was very clear. But it could be either the starter or what they call the 'motoring', which is down in the body of the car and needs some dismantling: in the first case we could get away in an hour, in the second we would get away at all, not in that car, in that day. There was some waiting, as the sun got stronger and the thought of the lake, where there were no fumes and no engine-noise, became more and more pleasant. Then the starter-man arrived. The boy who was errand for the spares-shop in a small wagon built on to a motor-cycle came across and leaned in to the car with the burly man, who tried first one and then the other, and said that neither would do. Then there was a little argument there. Though the car had a foreign number plate, it was an Italian car, and one of these starters would certainly do. So it was then decided that the first of these starters would do after all, except that it still didn't work. Which indicated that no starter was all-round new starter-motor needed. The new starters were then sent back to the shop, minus the screwing mechanism (as I found out later, when I saw it on the car-seat). Then, for some reason, the burly man wanted to look at the battery. He opened the bonnet and began to get irritated in a strange way, without any warning. He started tearing down on the battery like a bull. While Rosanna watched him with more and more cynicism. Perhaps this cynicism— based on the idea that he had no more idea of what he was doing than we did— made him irritable. But I didn't realise this at first — before he started the battery.

One of the points on the battery was badly corroded and this seemed to madden him, for the sight of grey and yellow corrosion mingled on the cable-end. First he started pricking at it with a screwdriver, and since the only physical result — the only possible one — was the bits of the corrosion were chipped away, and so things really mechanical happened, he threw the screwdriver on to the ground and rolled off back to his car to look for other tools, muttering under his breath. Rosanna looked at me, and I looked at him, and we were both cynical. We waited, and he returned, this time with a pair of pliers. He tried to prise the cable-end off, before

it was free of the corrosion. Nick clung to it like ivy. It would not come away. So he tapped it ferociously with the screwdriver and said in a little way, as if the battery carried a load of human blame, 'This is the cause.' Rosanno took his head silently — ~~and~~ it had been proved that there was electrical current, and if the battery ~~was not really the cause~~ was wrong there could have been ~~nothing~~ anything else. But before he said anything the burly man, tired of clipping and ~~poking~~ prising — his stubby fingers would not suit for that — suddenly put his screwdriver under the cable-end and wrenched the whole thing away, with part of the battery as well! 'Accidente! Accidente!' he swore, and then down on his screwdriver for the second time. 'Porca miseria! Puttana la madonna!' Then he'd finished, ~~denying~~ denying the immaculate conception I said. 'You've broken it! Did'ja see you've broken it!' And Rosanno muttered, 'He has. And it can't be the battery. So he's made double work.' Then followed another rolling walk to the cave — this time it unfolded before Rosanno ~~and~~ / took because he'd brought out all the equipment ~~with him~~ already. picked up the cable in this delicate way and with a very slight lisp — new in the centre — for it free of the battery-point. 'There!' he said quietly. 'He could have done it like that at the beginning.' I went into the cave, where the burly man was rummaging wildly inside a tool box, still swearing, and throwing steel bits and pieces to one side and another. 'It's done,' I said; 'We've done it.' 'R. you've done it!' he wished with a sudden fervid look in his eyes. 'Ah!' And he followed me out to the Street again.

Now he had to dismantle the battery. 'Ecco la causa! Ecco la causa!' he said — this is the cause! Just as if speaking it had proved his point better. Now he had to carry the battery inside the cave and somehow for the tiny head of the pin back into it. Otherwise the current wouldn't flow. He stood it on his workbench — no other, where you might his grungy bench, because there was hardly room for a matchbox. Somehow, with a bit of quiet swearing, he got it stood firmly among the other things, then he began drilling into it to make a hole deep enough to permit the cable of a long screw. It was a strange process. First a hole drilled into the battery,

then a hole of the same width drilled into the battery - point the head of it. Then a screw would be driven into both, and they would therefore be gripped together. But the battery-point was tiny: far from being able to drill into it, I could hardly hold it. I had to use the vice. He screwed the vice home - a little drilling and then, 'Managia! Managia la misericordia!', it slipped. He started again: the vice screwed home, a little drilling and again, 'Managia, forza la misericordia!' If he screwed the vice home too hard the whole thing would crumble into pieces. So patience and delicacy were, so to speak, forced on him: they did this for him very well. He sang a Neapolitan song in a screeching, hard voice, aware that we were watching every move he made. 'Il sole — amore mio! A-mo-re! Il mare del — mio — CUORE!' And then, under this musical cover, the work was done. There were two holes. Now a screw had to be found. There was some impatient flicking of fingers inside a screw-box, and a short screw emerged. He put it in the tiny point — it seemed to fit; and again the vice was screwed home. The screw went in — the vice was unwound — the point with screw attached was placed on the battery and, voilà! it wasn't long enough. Again the complete repeating of Italian curses — 'Madonna la misericordia — Managia — madre di dio!' And the little point had to be unscrewed again: first the vice, tightened, the screw unscrewed, and the point was back in its precious state. More flicking of wild, jabby stub-fingers in the screw-box and then, after the bitter repetition, a longer screw emerged. The process was repeated again, the point was attached and this time the screw went so deep into the battery that Jim wondered if the cells inside were going to be taken. He screwed it home, and it was finished, looking rather ridiculous — the silver head of a screw preposterously large for the car battery. Mario broke for the cafe, he sweating and heaving under the weight of the battery. This time, while it was being re-assembled in the car, Rosario and the other Sicilian went to the cafe' on the corner for something to drink: the final cafe' we

Lucy went to ~~when~~ we moved here, because it was owned by an old
neighbour, before the Sicilian lady moved in. I would follow them a bit
later. But I followed them almost as one — it was little ~~to~~ waiting.
But as I walked along the sidestreet to where the café was I heard
a familiar sound behind me, and an impatient honking. I couldn't
really identify it, but I knew it was familiar. Then I turned round and
saw our car, with the lucky one driving it. He didn't look at me, but
just drove past, towards the electrical repair-shop, which is two or three
doors away from the café. Rosanna told me that all the mechanics
had given it a push, and it had started. So I strolled along to the
electrical workshop, where I knew they worked well. What was the
trouble! I asked. "It was the motorino. I would take at least
two hours to fix. 'Why didn't you say it straight to me!' the
mechanic said with a cheeky smile. 'I could have told it right
away — motorino!' 'Because I'm an idiot,' I said. Anyway,
there it was. The car wouldn't be ready for a couple of three hours, it
was now about half-past twelve, and the mechanic wanted his lunch.
So we gave up the idea of Bracciano. On the way, we didn't
feel like staying in Rome. After a morning spent like that, the
whole district felt like a garage. We wanted to get out. One friend
suggested, 'Come with us in our car, and take a train back!' But no,
it was too complicated. We'd arrive back at most-hours, probably
at the railway terminus, and it would be the devil to get
getting back home. So we felt like going. We wanted to see
the lake. When we had been to it a year, since the last weather we
the end of the summer. So we ate and drank our coffee, and
orange squashes. The sun poured in through the doorway. Then we the
clatter and roar of cars in the narrow street outside. And all of a
sudden we decided we must go. But without the dog. A pity —
one would look doubtful — but we couldn't take him on a train. So we

for into the other car and drove off.

~~When we got to~~ At the edge of Rome, where the roads forked, the country looked a marvel, though there was only a glimpse in between lots of rubbish - new blocks of flats stuck alone in the middle of fields, and semi-detached one-storey houses, with yards in front. But the trees were already beginning to look lush, and the sunlight to be soaked into their darkness and heat. We realised how starved we felt of the countryside, though of the last three months we've spent at least six weeks in Tuscany, with quite a number of visits out-side Rome. But it only takes us a day or two to feel suffocated of the light and air. Yet the air isn't bad in Rome, especially where we live, within sight, the beginning of the Aurelian way, where little building has been done so far. You realise this when you come back to Rome — you expect to see the air thick with smoke and fumes, but it isn't. There is always the breeze in from the sea, and the clean sunlight. Only on bad days, when there is a low-hanging mist, usually in the winter, or else scirocco, does the air look thick and squalid.

The drive was slow and easy, but it wasn't pleasant for Rosanna and me in the back because we'd left the rear window slightly open by mistake and the fumes came through. So the engine seemed to have lost power there was a discussion as to whether the car was going wrong as well. But after ten kilometres or so it picked up, after we'd turned off the busy Cassian way on to the winding, hilly road to the lake. I said something about what a nuisance it had all been, but the driver, a priest from Turin, said that perhaps God had required it [like that], for our good, and had wanted to delay the journey. 'We never know,' she said in her emphatic, dark, throaty way that is sometimes like a god — perhaps a pagan god — speaking. That was a comforting idea, that we were driving under God's eye, and it made one nerves easier. We were silent for a bit, gazing at the fields, on either side. There was this Italian silence that is like a pause in the creation, when all creatures are staring and drowsing, and for a moment the heart outside beats the same beat as the human heart.

We passed the familiar village which always looked inviting though it was just a few houses and a wall, little more than a cotton shoes stopped.

The country looked Etruscan — wide-sweeping, hilly and dry. The Etruscans knew how to hide themselves, and perhaps they chose this country for the reason. The town which since former times has been called Tarquinia used to be — before the fine building since the war — hidden from the sea, especially from a southerly approach along the Aurelian way. It perches, hidden, on the top of a kind of bare cliff, and the invading army seaborne coming up from Rome, could have been seen without seeing. It was the same at Veii, where there are only the ruins of the Temple of Apollo now, with its flat sacrificial altar; it is reached by a path that goes round a cliff like that of a quarry, and you come on it suddenly, in the middle of fields, without the slightest warning. And I've heard it said that this was why the Etruscans chose the whole area round Siena, because, besides being hot and largely waterless, it is on no great line of approach from north or south, and in the whole interior and invading pirates would pass by it. In everything the Etruscans seemed to make a marvellous natural choice. The country round Siena has an astonishing silence, deeper than anything else in Italy, unbroken by the ripple of a stream.

The fields near Bracciano looked greener than we'd seen them before, because of the wet winter and early spring; we remembered them parched and brown like cornfields, their sticks hollow and dead. Sometimes it seems that nothing has been done to this countryside since Etruscan times, because nothing needed to be done. It seems to have an ancient form, in the shape of the fields and the way the road and pathways curve, and in the copses and thick woods. One of the most ecstatically lovely stretches of country lies between Bracciano and the sea, with roads that seem to go between the fields like natural rivers, and sudden, humped, strange-looking hills and quarried slopes, and fields so few that they seem to be lying naked to the ravished by the sky.

We got to Bracciano late, when half-past one, and drove straight down to the lake. First there was the long straight drive uphill into the town itself, with the castle and the immense blue lake on the right, then the intricate and close-knit town itself, clustered at the foot of the castle in a rather flurried way, as if the castle's stern look had discouraged the builders. Then, taking the sudden dip down to the lake, the realities

How high above sea-level the town is, and the lake lies spread out before you, a huge oval expanse of silent blueness, with luscious fields all round it, and yellow reeds at the edge, and a shimmering dim/ town on the other side, and in the furthest distance the vaguely blue hills, lying inland. 'Ah!' the friend from Trieste said, as we turned the corner and the lake suddenly came into view, 'as if we'd been woken up to find ourselves in a flight,' as Rosanno may be from — powers Italia! — but it's beautiful, isn't it! By God, it's beautiful!

We drove slowly down the steep, narrow, winding lane, with the flat blue water drawing nearer and nearer to us. The bushes and trees were thicker on either side, and clustered richly together, still and dusty under the sparkling sunlight, in the pause of midday. At the lake we knew of a place to eat — it had an open wooden cabin built out over the water, made of wood, with a number of tables; we used to sit there in the heat, sometimes in our bathing costumes, leaning against the flaking wooden rails and staring down into the clear water where there was every sort of refuse, tins, orange-peel, paper bags, and watching the surf-riders out in the lake. There were cabins as well, and a tiny smooth, grey beach. The water always felt extraordinary after the sea, much cooler, and cleaner, without the clinging salt, and seemed to have silence deep inside in it, like the flat, shimmering shores all round, without the trace of a sound; there was always this tremendous silence, in which you could float, staring at the dusty trees and the hills near by, and the massive, frowning castle. At the height of the season there was usually a jolly-boy drowning once or twice, the lakeside cafés, where the peasants still went, but you only had to see a throat a little out of it, the water to lose it. Once a few years it seemed, and you couldn't see a thing: yet you might see the dark-faced men sitting there quite clearly, and even watch them fishing their shoulders out in time to the music, but you couldn't see anything. The water — about 150 metres deep in the middle — had absorbed everything. Once we took a tour right out to the northern edge, and ate our sandwiches among the reeds, shaded by a tree; the water lapped quietly against the bank, and the fields began abruptly, at the edge; it was mysterious and quiet, with fleckled and dappled sunlight;

we could see cars passing on a distant road, silent. We swam in the clear water between the sharp, tiny rocks. But there's nothing really intimate in the Italian earth — I mean, not to the human creature. It clears too much of its stain. Wherever you find a cool hollow, a stretch of smooth trunk like this one, the Italian hand has used it for a crap. That was always the same experience — you'd see a cool, sheltered place, then go for the peculiar, half-sweet stink, and see the crumpled page; usually just one or two turds lay dotted all on the place like a lavatory, with big flies hovering over it. To get the same in Rome — along the deserted banks of the river, under the bridges, in the tunnel like passages leading from the trunk of Castel Sant' Angelo to the original road — an open sewer crawling with flies.) ~~To really get the true sense of~~ To get this whenever there was ~~a protest~~ war, ~~which was~~ ten centuries of misery: you get in the Arab countries. The land is to be used, as its animals are to be killed & eaten; & else crapped on. To don't get a sense of the earth as belonging intimately to people, as it is in the north. You even get an anger towards the land, because of the back-breaking misery in the past. You can see it in feeling of vengeance. ~~respect attitude~~ People engage in battles in defiance, mocking mood, as if an angry god lay in the earth who hated & let them go. The earth has no joy in Italy; no intimate appeal — no form, really. And this is deeply interior, inside the people, not linger into consciousness at all, molecules and layers of bitter, dry, pointless enslavement. I think the land could be described like a scrap of dirty paper by the people living on it in Italy; what would stop them would be their own bodies — a message from inside. This is where nature lies, in Italy: inside people's bodies. But the pleasures of 'nature' in the northern sense — as something that lies outside — don't exist.

The owner of the lakeside trattoria had obviously made a lot of money, because he had built a shelter of glass and cement between the kitchen and the lake, with neat tables and chairs inside. But the old wooden cabin with the sloping roof was still there. The wood behind — also hardly more than a few yards from the edge of the lake — was deserted, and no other cars were parked. We got out into the silence and the glittering, still

sunlight, stretching. Then we strolled towards the cement-and-glass extension. The owner was eating inside with his family, and jumped up when he recognized us, his mouth full. No one else was there. We noticed the men having their wooden cabins altered as well, behind the little stretch of beach, in preparation for the summer. They'd taken away a pleasant little platform of planks that one could sunbathe on and hang one's clothes. Everything old had to go — like a whole era past. Even the peasants knew now to replace it with cement and plastic shades: but the old natural taste may prevail; I can imagine them ~~substituting~~ replacing that — which is after all the first — a throw-back later on, to interior taste — with something glowing and intimate [illegible] with Tyrolean — spotted a check tablecloth, little shaded lights, a lot of wood; something very slightly suburban, but in an Austrian or Bavarian way. An intimacy comes into countryside — making it 'nature' — when there is money getting around. Peasants put up trees, not just firs or cypresses, but ancient trees, pines to look at — elms, oaks, plane-trees. The angry sod under the earth flees away.

We order our meal. But no fish, they say. It is still the season for lake-fish. As we came for this roasted anguilla this is a disappointment. He's a small man, with a still, tanned face and a large mouth with a moustache, a peasant with a trace of gleaming curiosity in his eyes for the world beyond. He wants to improve himself. We went with his younger brother in a small motor vessel, to net eels in the lake. Two years ago, and with the same kind of still face and gleaming eyes he told us also how he'd like to get away, but in so many words. He while talking also other things, even also the beauty of the lake — it was a certain dirge in his voice, all the time. And he watched us bathing in the same wistfully. When I said, half-way out, 'It must be sad in the winter', meaning the water sometimes, he said at once, 'Oh, yes! yes! It's sad, certainly, terribly sad!' And he looked up at the hills in a troubled, dismayed way. Lakes seem to be melancholy for Italians — they seem to prefer the sea. With all the opportunities for sailing round the lake, there is little or none.

'But,' the man said, 'I could take the boat me – see what fish there is! It wouldn't take him more than a few minutes,' he added. 'What we like is come! Rosanna and I would. And this tiny child, who was lifted into the boat and put in a special sheltered box where he always, in an official and authoritative way. Lol saying a word or looking from left to right.

The man stood up to row, pushing on the oars with short, hard jerks of the body. I didn't understand at first what we were doing. The boat couldn't move by moving to the other side of the lake where there were fishing boats – that would take the best part of two hours. Then I realised we were moving towards a square piece of cork, floating in the water, about three hundred yards out. There wasn't another boat in sight, except those at anchor, and in the silence, while we moved smoothly along, with only the drip-drop of water from the oars and stern, the man told us how fertile the fields all round were, and what a plentiful of vegetables you could get. The soil was excellent. And I remember how, last year and the year before, we always used to buy vegetables at Bracciano, before going back to Rome, because they looked so fine and marvellous – the tomatoes, ~~[illegible]~~ beans, peppers, egg-plants ~~[illegible]~~, and the cos-lettuce. Then he said it was always quiet here, even in the season – sempre tranquillo, very different from sea-places like Viareggio, when Rosanna had said he came from – near there, anyway. We drew near the cork, and the oars were pulled in. Then the rope attached was pulled up, some metres of it, until a cylindrical, cooped net appeared. He looked into it closely and lifted it clear of the water. At the bottom there was one large fish — large, by comparison, to one bigger than a small red mullet – and dozens of tiny silver fish, the smallest no greater imaginable. He tipped them carefully into a bucket, and they began to fling themselves about in the dry air, the big one with long hopeless leaps, flinging himself from side to side, his fins sliding and falling desperately, in a panting way. This stared at me of this head; then there would be a long pause, when we would think him dead, he suddenly he would fling himself to the other side of the bucket and lie there, his fins working all the time, with their soft, panting, hopeless motion of something dying. Meanwhile nearly all the tiny fish had died, and only a few twitched – the smallest. But the big one

fought and persisted all the way back to the bank, and when the man caught hold of the bucket to take it into the kitchen he was still alive, and his fins were still working. The child was annoyed when he was told he wanted to take the bucket to the table in the cabin, to show the others, and kept clinging to it and shouting 'No, no!' with tears in her eyes. It was the manifestation of a taste for privacy which I'd never seen in Italy before. The father smiled and pulled at the bucket in a kindly way, while the fish continued to make its last heavy leaps. 'Now let me show the ladies! Just to show them!' But it was hopeless — we all took a quick look and let the child have their way. He walked away with his father, the hand on the side of the bucket in a ring, proprietary gesture like a king's, and then disappeared into the little cage of cement and glass.

There was a cool wind but the sun was warm, and we decided to eat at a table away from the water, where it was warmer. We were to have spaghetti with meat sauce first, then the fish and a few potatoes; we'd tried to get a decent wine, but there was only the common, ordinary stuff, which had given me a number of headaches the previous year. The waiter said he unfortunately couldn't have his own vineyard and had to buy what he was sold. It was all a bit mean nowadays, he said, only no one told the wine sold. It was all a bit mean nowadays, he said, only no one told us what and when to buy: we just didn't know how things were administered.

It was a very nice meal. The spaghetti was good — it always was, there. But in the wind it was cold almost at once. Only by eating though it in what for mouthfuls, like Rosanna did — knowing how easily spaghetti cooled — could you enjoy it. The wine tasted and smelled in a Mediterranean, but it was watery, and unless the complete, full-bodied taste is there you can't tell that you're drinking. Rosanna made a face, and then shrugged. Then the fish came — all the long beasts fried, in a great yellow and brown heap, with their heads and tails and insides and all. First, when the owner had gone back to the kitchen, there was a debate on it whether you should eat the heads as well — the table was divided. Though the verdict was no, as I began leaving the heads on the side of the plate. But apparently I was wrong: Rosanna was eating the whole of the fish with relish. She said they were nothing

to sea-fish, for flavour. We all laughed, because of his professional attitude to fish. I stopped eating mine because they were bitter. I said what a pity it had been to kill all these creatures for nothing. A bit of cheese would have been nicer. When the waiter came with the potatoes we told him we weren't enjoying it, and he said that it was definitely a taste you had to have — white wine together with the slightly bitter fish. 'What a pity!' he said. 'I'm so sorry!' And he began scraping the fish we'd left back to take away. Rosanna watched this and didn't like the idea of so much food going to waste. With a swift gesture, pointing to his own plate, he said. 'Give them to me. I'll eat fish, no fear. I've known what fresh. Let me eat them. I hate waste!' 'Here!' the waiter said. 'Here you!', and he poured them on to Rosanna's plate. The potatoes looked old and smashed, and they didn't taste good, either. And the April wind combined badly with the strong sunlight. This is how you catch chills. And a week later we were all down with a different kind of chill. When Rosanna had finished we laughed and said. 'We'll better leave! This table's a menace!' I had toothache, from the wind, and the coffee we took in a bar opposite, thick and too strong, didn't help it. In the spring, somebody said, all your aches and pains come out.

We drove up to the town and found we had been a bus ride to Rome in half an hour, which left just enough time to go and see the land we'd dreamed of buying. The sun was still warm in the square, where the pruned palm-trees stood, clipped like shaving brushes. Their outer leaves rustled black by the recent frosts, but inside in the crevices there was a cool breeze. We had to go down the hill, in & towards the lake, and turn left along a rocky path, by a convent, with the massive stone castle just behind us to the east. But we took the wrong path and ended up a little field, also overlooking the lake, which had been for sale due which we hadn't liked as much. There had been a young boy, disgruntled and bored, pottering about around a shuttered-down hut, and he had called his father — the owner of the piece — in a rasping and insulting way, and

hated the land, the sheep belonging to his father, the fields, the lake, the town, and especially the people in it. 'The end of the world here!' he said. 'The end of the world!'

Now it was too late to look for the other piece and we had to ~~turn round~~ go back for the bus. Our friends could imagine how lovely that piece of land was, they said, and perhaps it was better to see it. One could see how it runs down to the enormous still lake beyond, and there was a shady bank full of trees, and a quiet field with a rock in it, made the house — rock also for the foundations. That was important, too. Worth of us had really wanted to see it. Perhaps that was why we took the wrong path.

seemed I knew the signs of Twin. He clearly wanted Ewin to stay + talk, and clearly he expected him to procreate, which he did. The sky kept humping itself for Twin with low groans, crowding up on the sky. He hated the land, hated the sheep, hated the fields, the lake, the town, and above all the people in it. The man who was with us Colin summed it himself in one word to the pieces of land,' The end of the world here — end of the world' but that can never understood anybody wanting to come and live in the country. It means desolation and squalor for him. This is why the peasants inevitably drift into the towns when they can, and go to the pictures every day.

So all we did was to turn the car round and go back, as it was now nearly time for the bus. Our friends said they understood Burl Ives underfoot piece of land as never we, they could imagine it, with the immensely blue lake lying flat between the trees, far below, and the sky vast overhead, and little rocks pitting here and there, with a sheep wooded sickness prior in part. In a way it was better for us to see it. Neither of us really wanted to. It was like going back to a depleted period, when we thought we were within an ace of achieving something, and were then much further away. Working seemed to have changed/ in the last year. There were no more trees than before. People had taken little pieces of land in a sudden craze and then had left them, waiting for somebody else to [illegible] the building to break the silence. A tanker in procession had [illegible] a stanley laid the concrete in his house; they had stood here for two years or more. / and since then A retreat for low. [illegible] a start of three. Natives dive for pearls. [illegible] On the entry, Paul looking for my reflection [illegible] they converge naturally in the piazza. [illegible] the lake. / Near were plans for — Hotel on the lakeside. A new road. But nothing has happened. The roads would probably have been terrible — a tinkling little [illegible] Or with the peasants going down from the top of the hill, in groups. So perhaps it wouldn't. Perhaps there would have been a kind of European sparkle, even with the cement and

Stop lighting, and handsome sons of peasants dressed as waiters.

We said goodbye in the square and our friends drove off. There were only a few men standing about, taking the sun. The shops were closed, in the heart of the afternoon. Elections were coming to a close, and leaflets floated down from the sky, from aeroplanes. Tiny cars passed, and a hand-reel horse not a hundred of them. An old man stopped down stiffly and slowly to pick me up. He looked me over, still bending down, his mouth open, and then folded it carefully and put it in his pocket. A small child with no shoes collecting all the leaflets she could find, and putting them neatly together, perhaps on toilet paper. to start the fire with.

Then the bus came, empty, and we got in. The little curtains gathered at the windows reminded us of summer, when we drew them across and steadied them with one's elbow, sweating. Outside seemed to need the coolness; our bodies cried out for it. People pass us in Rome in cars, to the coast, the moment there is a slight breeze. And they even bathe in the sea – in the first days of May. Ten (twenty) years ago bathing in the sea was unthinkable to most Italians. And even now few people go in until July to do it. But this year there is a real starvation. People cluster on the sea like ants, filling round the cafés and trattorie.

~~The bus made everything look exciting. Drink it never seem to look~~

We jumped down the hill, and at each stop there were more people, from a car which until the bus was alive with talk. The young conductor pursued down the gangway taking money and clipping tickets with an impressive, one-oh face; he only seemed to awaken once, when a pretty girl got on. He jumped up the bus to let her in, swinging in the door, and she smiled at him as if they knew each other. Then she passed down the gangway with her head lifted high and her eyes half closed as if it was already too hot and the body was already leaning to rest itself a little as possible. And when the young conductor next came down the gangway he had his eyes fixed in the direction, placidly, like a man following a star. Then, after taking her ticket, he seemed to force her and started to walk down the driver

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One suddenly feels restless in Rome. She seems to scowl at me. Time is locked in here, and it is always your turn always comes in time. You feel the scowl around you like an invisible wave. Nothing happens particularly, but you're darkened. Time is in depression, nothing sad. In Rome, you live in a sort of eternity: time doesn't move; the sad reminders of time don't exist here; there are only facts. But she is tired sometimes, and puts out a sudden, heavy paw, and draws blood. She wounds you. Then she rests again, and you drew to her, and everything is the same as before; you're in the family sleep. And then your time will come again: you don't belong. She make you feel this; nobody does belong. ~~This is why those in~~ Everyone's a prisoner. And yet, in that, by belong, and so she lets them sleep under the paws that could kill; you have to behave in your deepest self; you have to keep yourself in line with the truth. Her vengeance is terrible otherwise. She might not do it herself. She uses you as the instrument. She makes you destroy yourself.

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the more so as they are unforgiving. The whole of life has become rhetoric, but this is far removed now from Italian bravura, far more subtle, in the leaven of more complicated societies than the Italian and German. Hitler doesn't need armies or agents any more, his children number millions. He doesn't even need evil. He needs no force. His children are already won to rhetoric by the age of twelve. It is all they know. They can't resist. It comes in through the mouth, the eyes, the ears, the senses. The publicity-world they are brought up in is Hitler brought to perfection. It is Italian rhetoric taken to the utmost point of madness, where it is intimate that it has nothing to do with politics any more. The countries that suffer most from this are those with ancient societies, like England and France, where there is the most evolved accumulation of Christian habits and intimacies, and where publicity counts for least. These are the least rhetorical countries.

Italy changed the whole scope of the twentieth century, as centuries ago it converted the whole of Europe to Christianity, without apparently stirring a foot, and without apparently the power of a mouse.

mistress. This nervous harmony is the only order they have. This is their strength and limitation. When the order is broken, as in the intellectuals you see a sickening formlessness, touched with treachery and disintegration. The creatures who achieve an order beyond this basic nervous harmony have to be great. It means the discipline and self-denial of a lifetime.

Yesterday I had one of my periodical long talks with the porters of the inmates of the palazzo. The woman married to the tenant has been having abscess of right-breast ~~for years~~ lately. Now I see an 'artichoke' with a beard and a limp ~~up the stairs~~, then another 'artichoke' with waves of red hair and a velvet suit in an endless succession all day and, probably, most of the night. The people in the attic have been complaining again: they say that there are rumours of 'moving' all night, until about half-past six in the morning — like furniture being pushed. From one side of the room to the other. There is a theory that these people belong to a phoney theatrical group, and are rehearsing all night. Suddenly a door is closed with a smashing bang. Then a melody starts. A laugh. A window opens and closes smartly. ~~The~~ People leave the flat, others arrive. Talking in the stairs. Of course, there's another theory, too: ~~that~~ They sleep all day, and receive men at night. D'Annunzio. How could they be coming one of to the other's ~~flat~~ as we know who sleeps there — how many, and where. Sometimes she sends me an order to the café for six or seven coffees at about the time she wakes up. Then they are 'negroni' — Campari and gin. She makes a dark face, pouting — with beards, too. She makes a washing movement with her face, as if hand still were there. It denotes the beard. While she is talking to me she strokes flowers gingerly round the cone. Yesterday, just as she was telling me about the latest 'artichoke', someone turned into the entrance and suddenly, and she started. But it was only the boy from the café bringing her a small bottle of Malvatizzo. 'Ah,' she said to him with a slight smile, 'professor, thank you.' And she put the bottle down a few little faith.

I notice that there are [illegible] house-martins, a few of them flying

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among the swifts. They seem to come later, when the wild ones go. They are less like
a swallow to look at, though in fact they belong to the swallow-family, while the swift
does not. They have the same fairy shining blue of the swallow, like satin, and
a touch of white, ~~which we see distinguished them from the swift~~. They have a
shorter and less sustained flight than the swift, and are dumpier. I also
saw what looked like swifts, only with white bellies and throat. These might
be alpine swifts, as their way through is down the north.

I noticed an owl for the first time ~~this year~~ Yesterday, as I came in in the
evening. It was a barn owl, and made its screech from the roof. I remember
seeing one perched on the roof in the outskirts of Rome some years ago, staying
down, a little white ghost with staring eyes. It never makes a sound when
on alight, because of its specially soft pinions. I can hear its screech for
me after, then immediately from one then ~~it flies indeed & they screech~~ as the city stops, its dark
~~to distract the prey & then they~~ for a moment.

Yesterday after an early lunch we went for an old walk in
Attica Antica, not in the ruins themselves but by a gravel path that cuts
straight through the country towards the sea, between tall, rich trees.
The sun was ~~actually hot, though~~ there was a strong cool breeze coming in from
the coast. I saw the first time a shimmering number of days this year,
the grass in either side was tall, brilliantly lush and green, like ~~with tall grasses, like~~
English fields. ~~in the autumn~~ near the gate, ~~the~~ ~~was~~ because of the heavy rainfall.
The large farmhouse on the left, painted a deep terracotta, no longer stood
out clearly, with the ruins of the ancient city behind it, but was hugged
all round with leafy trees and this year fat grass. The wide path was
speckled with hot, dazzling light. There were the first warm, dusty
scents of summer — the open country and silos, the crowding and drying soil.
We took the usual path right, going parallel to the sea, which was hidden
behind trees. Everything has an orderly and neat look here, because this is
probably the nearest vegetable nursery to Rome. The fields are laid out
carefully, and yesterday they were lying piped across them for summer irrigation.
Straight canals between young trees have been cut, and there are water-
hydrants at every corner. The houses stand alone among their new trees,
painted and designed uniformly now in the old style of an arched entrance

seeming to know the sound now — of a large bird that never threatens to devour them.

People begin to look more healthy, as the heat grows. The sun tints our skin, features sharply, deepens their eyes. It seems to open the skin. You can see the spring growing in them, dragging them awake. It has a strange, unseen, startling effect on the nerves. Two nights I slept restlessly, half-awake all the time; suddenly, after dozing off, I was startled awake, as if something had kept me standing awake all night. There was a quiet, a stillness, that needed me alert. The spring alters, soothes, awakens. It creaks down the old mill, and brings the chrysalis & the new one, in the first shy sunlight. The breeze is cool — sometimes, in the dead of the night, cold. Last week there was a sudden renewal of the winter frost, & after two days: the wind became biting, and there was snow again in the mountains; the winter) [illegible] took wells, like an old man who would give up. The 'snowman', they call him in England — he comes in the first days of May.

We're all ready to go, and it's just a matter of getting straw mats for the terrace, as a way to protect the heat down — the drumming, & keep the floor, so that it doesn't get too hot inside. We shall need one or two of the rugs in the room, and a chair or two — the collapsible ones we use on the terrace. [illegible] Nanking will call us 'Volant!' — rascals — for going away so long. We shall shake hands with the ancient Romans, and when we come back they'll tell us where this trip abroad, to Greece, to Hamburg, or Israel. We may not return for long this time. We may be the country for good, now. We never did intend to live in a city, and now Rome seems to want to become me. But it will, probably. This is only its current disadvantage. In each period it has a disadvantage, that makes it not really bearable. It always has had, since ancient times. Morally now, with the one-way traffic system, it is quieter than it ever was, since Catullus, who complained about the deafening streets at night as carts and herds of cattle were driven through, over uneven cobbles. Rome has always been reluctant to be bearable. I wonder why that is.

and a long beam as an integral part of the house. In the winter we came here to get milk, straight from the cow, which is forbidden — both by the government and by the man who owns all the land in the area. We had to talk the peasants into it, and go there several times until we'd proved we weren't spies for the state. The milk was so thick and creamy that we had to take nearly half of it away to thin it for cheese. This is probably because the cows aren't fed up to pasture. The remain stall the whole time in the barn, eating from their troughs. We had to go in the evening, at milking time, at about eight o'clock.

I noticed that the sapling trees were all burned black and brown from the winter frosts. It has never happened before in living memory, so close to the sea. But they might survive. There are a few green leaves on them. They stand shivering in the wind like old men, rattling their dead leaves. We had a tremendous yearning for the country. We shall be away soon, for the whole summer. Going back into the city is more and more of a let-down — we belong up in the flat, where there is no substitute for country sights, sounds, among the crops.

Those paths are always deserted. The sea-breeze goes through the trees like something ancient — as if it was coming out of the time when Ostia was a dazzling marble port, shining at the edge of the sea, with boats pulling in from Africa, Greece, Malta, Sicily, Egypt. The water has receded now, leaving the ruins of the city far inland. And the earth has been reclaimed, so that what you get is a farming area more deliberately ordered than anywhere else in Italy. It has the element of English countryside, which is perhaps why we like it here so often. The paths are straight, and lie at right angles to each other. It looks like the south coast of England on a hot, hot day, when the crops are golden yellow and there is a breeze in from the sea, cutting across them. Only this is flatter, with no hills or mountains in sight, unless you turn right round and face Rome, where you might catch sight of the castelli to the south, or the Abruzzi mountains, hazy-blue in mist. Now there is the big international airport at Fiumicino, and jets rise over the fields all the time. The birds seem to be excited then and geese rise over the fields all the time. The birds seem to be excited then, they make their way in taking off: they collect and swoop and dive about,

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I had come in at London airport, but the drive into town gave me the pip that I stayed on the bus as far as Victoria station and checked in my luggage there as if I'd arrived by train. It was evening, with that misty chill on the air which I hadn't sniffed for years. People were muffled in the same way as I remembered, making little blowing noises that were unnecessary, phewing and going b-f-f-f-f like engines that were enjoying it. The profusion of lights was marvellous. There were the red and green neon signs and dim yellow lamps along the station platforms. The tall glass roof echoed with whistles, clangs and the meeting of train-buffers out in the shunting section where I remembered Mr Horne had worked, retiring to the station buffet every hour for a glass of mild-and-~~sometimes a guiness.~~ I saw him a day or so before he died. He gave me a goodbye look, without saying anything. He could only talk in a whisper as he had cancer of the throat. ~~He was lying in the front room because it was more convenient to be the factory, and his wife didn't have to take the stairs every time she brought him a meal. Afterwards she told me he'd been in agony but he gave no sign of it.~~ Mr Horne always used to walk silently. He would pad into the house when he was on early turn and you couldn't even hear him turn the key in the lock: he suddenly walked in the door, it opened like a door worked by electricity, and we would all be playing whist. There was the same joke every time---'Creeping Crawford.' I don't know why Crawford was funny, ~~but it was.~~ One of those little references lost in time. I used to see him walking across the station with his big lamp in his hand, his eyes steady as he did his creep-creep-creep. Sometimes he saw a train out. If I happened to be on it he came up level with my compartment and did a special big whistle and held his red flag up ~~like the signal~~ for an army to advance. He wouldn't look at me when he did that, being on duty. He once gave me a military cane which he'd had in the first war. I kept looking at the cane and worked myself into a fury about war: I said to myself he shouldn't have been in the war, he should have refused. Those ideas you get at fifteen are quite special, like visions: they are the most unforgiving ideas you ever have. They try to give the wreckage a basis in strength: I mean, they try to send a theme shooting through life, to make it one thing. A slender hope.

What gave me the pip about the ride from London airport was all those factory buildings they ought to cover with a white cloth and say a prayer over. ~~Instead on which they [illegible]~~ Still, there's the consolation that what is put up in a spirit of destruction ~~goes~~ ~~has to go~~ down in it too.

I had checked in my two suitcases with nothing clear in mind but I now decided to stay put and find a hotel. I knew enough about life now not to expect answers from my surroundings: but to settle the liver and the intestines first, to lie full length on a bed stretching limbs, until ~~surroundings~~ circumstances were miraculously different.

Itvtakes ten years of the life you want to lead to find out that circumstances are inside. Some people say that noise is all inside too. But Iêve never been able to swallow that. Which is why I wear ear-plugs, even in the country. I know what they say is true but I can't stop my inside being noisy.

I remembered a hotel at the side of the station which had made me feel an impostor ten years before and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ now ~~xxg~~ found that it was an ordinary hotel with a bigger foyer than usual. I staked everything on comfort and got a room with a bath; the only one available was a double room, whkch they gave me for the price of a single as it was late in the evening. There were women dressed in black frocks and starched collars, with bunches of keys, and one of these showed me to my room with a nice smile. I realised what a wise person I was. A man brought up my two bags and put them on a stout oaken stand, and we said good evening to each other. Hearing the city outside I was more thrilled by it. There were lights flashing. I thought of theatres. The sound of taxis. Certain friends who had changed their lives and above all their wives. I was back in the city of my birth.

I decided to consider my liver above everything and phoned down to the management for something to eat and a wine list. To my surprise they agreed and even began to read out a menu to me, memtioning vol au vent and friaasee, which were just the sort of mess I wanted to avoid. I asked for a piece of grilled veal and salad and if possible brown bread. They surprised me even more by asking, 'Wholemeal?' To which I said yes. The room was one of those fluffy rooms you rarely see nowadays: carpet, pile cloth on the table in the corner, lamp with tassles, a settee and two armchairs with thick pile, and heavy curtains to the floor supported by white lace behind. It was like a suite with a bed thrown in, which was just what I wanted. There was a phone by my bed which I swore not to use. I was trying---not to piece the past together, but to make a past whkch would be coherent to me and carry me through the city in the morning. In the morning, in a week from now--- I rushed the thought oñt of my mind---I would need more than a past: I would need money. Meanwhile I could manage five days of comfort. I had been much more penniless in my life and I wasn't going to let it get into my nervous system. Which really means that I felt safe: who doesn't who has a home? I had a home and that was lying inside me as I took off my shoes and propped up the pillows behind me. If the experiment failed I could go back. Those are riches.

I eyed the phone for the possibility of a long-distance call but refused that too. I lay back and sighed, ~~watched the lights through the lacer of the window.~~ Stretched my legs out and did what the Buddhists call whole breathing ~~they probably don't and I'm mixing it up with~~: namely, a slow deep breath ~~xxxxx~~ through the nose so that the abdomen rises and gradually the ribs are filled out too, then ~~letting~~ a ~~it~~ slow ~~xxx~~ through the mouth so that you seem to be getting rid of air from every part of your body down to your feet. The Buddhists say it should be like a stone falling ~~xxxxx~~ right through you. A few of these and my thoughts were clearer. They were so effective that a knock came on the door and the nice woman appeared with a wine list. Strange that we were the same nationality and I would understand everything she said, even little swearwords and half-spoken things. Knowing that people at ease produce other people at ease I didn't move from the bed but took the list from her with a smile. I turned first to the burgundy, wanting my

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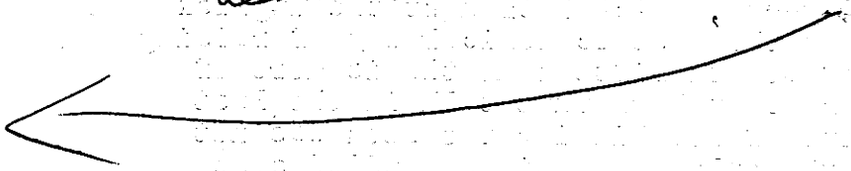
~~I decided to ring [illegible] my liver above all else and~~ I phoned down to the management for something to eat and a wine list. ~~To my surprise they agreed and even began to read out a menu, to me,~~ mentioning vol au vent and friesaspe, which were just the sort of mess I wanted to avoid. I asked for ~~a piece of~~ grilled veal and salad and ~~if possible brown bread.~~ They surprised me ~~even more~~ by asking, 'Wholemeal?' To which I said ~~yes.~~ The room was one of those ~~stuffy rooms~~ you rarely see nowadays: ~~carpet,~~ a pile cloth on the table ~~in the corner,~~ a lamp with tassles, a ~~settee and two armchairs with thick pile~~, and heavy curtains ~~to the floor supported~~ by white lace behind. ~~It was like a suite with a bed thrown in, which was just what I wanted. There was a phone by my bed which I swore not to use. I was trying—not to piece the past together, but to make a past which would be coherent to me and carry me through the city in the morning.~~ In the morning. In a week from now—— I rushed the thought out of my mind——I would ~~need more than a pound. I would need money.~~ Meanwhile I could manage five days of comfort. I had been much ~~more penniless~~ in my life and I wasn't going to let it get into my nervous system. Which really meant that I felt safe: who doesn't who has a home. I had a home and ~~that was~~ lying inside me as I took off my shoes and propped up the pillows behind me. If the experiment failed I could go back. Those are riches.

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also without help. I noticed his stance wasn't very good: curved neck and chest-out in the military fashion. He got the bottle between his legs and uncorked it, remarking that that was a nice sound, eh, to which I replied, it certainly is. He wiped the mouth of the bottle with his napkin and set it in the ridiculous basket again. A napkin by my knife and fork, looking very white in the dim light from the ~~corner~~ corner of the room. I looked forward to travelling slowly through that bottle. A last glass for when I was in bed. No watering down, as it was French. ~~If the wine was no good though I would water it down.~~ He gave a last look at the table. "I think that's everything? Yes. We smiled at each other and if ~~our~~ language had anything like bon appetit in it he would have said it, whereas he just said, 'Well, ring if there's anything else ~~you want.~~

I hadn't a great appetite but I wanted clean food in my mouth and something other than plane-memories in my blood stream. I sat down at the settee, which was very soft like something from a salon before I was born, and tied up my shoe laces before drawing the table nearer. I gave the lace curtains and the twinkling lights outside another glance. ~~One thing I was missing was a newspaper but I suddenly remembered what they were like in this country and didn't regret it.~~ ~~One more stretch of the legs, under the table. I rubbed my eyes. You rub the lower part of the forehead in a circular motion, or the top of the nose downwards, and the headache of modern times disappears.~~ I lifted the dish cover; ~~and~~ the veal was white, ~~than I'd seen it for a long time, which meant that the animal was killed young.~~ ~~when I thought the English ate veal by the~~ Not the most economical way of raising livestock. The bullock of ten to fifteen months is more of an investment. I had heard enough of that talk in the last few years. The real virtue of not killing too soon was not killing youth. I mixed the salad up a bit and added some dressing. What the oil was I couldn't tell but I was sure it hadn't even started off as an olive. I smelled it and held it up to the light. Refined to hell with no colour at all. A faint yellow, not a good sign. Maize oil perhaps, or even peanuts. When I bought olive oil it was so thick and so green that it looked like the skin of the actual olive. ~~The veal was good, not tasteless to tenderness whitened in vinegar.~~ I seized on the wholemeal bread. There was butter, The first genuine butter I'd seen for a ~~very~~ long time. ~~The crust of the wheat had been left in the bread so that it was rough, which I liked. They'd done something to the crust, smeared some sort of grease or saltened stuff on it, so I cut the crust off. I could have asked for some nice white toast, I realised, just two slices to appease the refined taste, to take with cheese. That was another thing, England was the land of cheese. I should like English cheese, and I hadn't even thought about it. Cheddar. I wondered if this would be enough for me.~~ I poured the wine. Smelled it. Looked at it against the light. Clear. Not that I'm happy with great clearness: it can be done too easily. I held the bottle up to the light and was satisfied to see grounds at the bottom. You can't fake those limp, telltale lumps of grape. I smelled it again. The warm, flowery smell of the French cask. ~~I put the glass to my mouth but thought better of it. I'd have another mouthful first.~~ Then I drank. A long, long draught. ~~It went down not in carpet slippers, as the merchants say, but in satin socks, and~~ I thought

Now → There was one thing I was missing and that was a newspaper. But then I remembered what they were like in this country. Either tittle-tattle or they lived on fear. I remembered a tabloid with red headlines. Or was I mistaken?



1.

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you might have made a mistake, and it was hardly past midnight. This time I didn't stretch myself and look at the time and listen for the dogs to start barking, as a signal for me to get up. ~~I remained~~ I lay exactly where I was with my eyes closed. I wanted to hear what the city sounded like at its best hour: at least, I'd decided before I was twenty five that London was best at dawn, though by that age I hadn't walked the streets at dawn with a sticky feeling, or dragged a girl out of a gas-oven naked and waited for the ambulance in the first dim light; or watched the light creep over the roofs opposite like dust and begin to illuminate my empty room.

The first thing I heard was the clanging of milk crates, perhaps from an early train, perhaps from a passing van. That happened for years. I listened for it again but it didn't come. The idea of milk being delivered was cosy. I liked my bed. It was soft---too soft for permanent wear, but all right for a night; or would I make it two nights, to really find my feet? There was the sound of shunting, sad because I remembered it from Greenwich together with the hollow graveyard sound of ship's hooters from the river; what grudge I held Greenwich I couldn't remember, except that I'd slept there twice a year in a tall, dark house and one night screamed my head off because I had a nightmare, to the shame of my parents who said they thought I was too grown-up for that sort of thing; the Greenwich branch of the family was jolly---nothing to scream about in them. The sounds of the hooters was like being warned of something terrible, and the water helped it float into your dreams with a nasty insidious ease. My uncle was a lighterman and caught TB from the river mists, and died of it; he had a thick voice and a heavy, bulbous face that creased like a pudding when he smiled. He and his wife had the jolliest laugh of the family; another aunt had the most ribald; another the most hilarious; my mother had the most musical. The family had a chorus of laughs that were gradually put out, one by one, in the gentle dilapidating way God has.

I thought of phoning my wife long-distance but then realised we had no phone at home. It felt as if she was inside me, breathing and listening like I was, and knowing all the sensations that went through, just as I knew the sensations that were going in her at this moment in our bed, as the dogs began to bark and the cart with the mule came down the hill over the boulders and made a noise like stout sticks being knocked together. It was useless to say we were two people any more. But unless you're like this you aren't even one. An unmarried man is half a man.

The hotel wasn't stirring and even now the light hadn't started to come through. But I could see the room more clearly, and there was a chilly mist across it. The lights were still on outside, blinking. There were some clanging noises from the station, and buses began to pass. I half-dozed again. The dinner things were still on the table by the settee, and when I opened my eyes again I could make out the empty bottles of wine. I started to think in terms of breakfast. The clangs grew and a deeper humming noise of traffic throughout the whole city started; activity was the word now. It sounded as if a massive journey to a new place was being prepared. I yawned and looked at my watch. I could just make out the hands---a quarter to seven. I realised how noisy it must have been all night, but they were noises without personal labels like the ones I was used to. I thought of the girl in the

gas ~~stove~~ oven and tried to ~~put it out of~~ rid my mind of it again, but the dawn-light ~~that would refused to make a plain announcement of day~~ brought it back. ~~Her name was Jill,~~ I hardly knew her; ~~it was a good many years ago and by that memory of all the thousands of others should step forward I don't know.~~ She didn't ~~even~~ die, and is even happily married now, I think. ~~I remember~~ We put her in the corridor outside, ~~the first~~, where cold wind ~~was coming~~ through an open window; ~~and~~ she ~~was~~ groaning with long, difficult breaths; ~~and~~ she seemed to be crying as well. ~~Two of us~~ found her. Just in time. She had sealed the windows carefully. Left a note. There is quite a routine for these things. The notes all over the city, and in the cities of the world, probably say the same thing... ~~The man I was with had said a sharp word to her. That was all. She wasn't even in love with him. She just respected him. Her body had been slighted often enough, but this was the first time her whole person had been. She seemed to expect the slight to come after sex, with the result that it always did. But she couldn't stand that it should come just from some person.~~ We sat at the hospital waiting for her to pull through, while the ~~ghastly~~ ghastly light grew outside. There was a young doctor on duty who must have nearly decided to be an actor: ~~he was~~ but chose the Belsen of hospital life: he was bellowing into her ear like a hundred methodists. ~~That~~ She had better not try that again! Did she hear? ~~Did she hear?~~ Don't you dare to do that again! Don't you dare! ~~He was shouting in her ear: this is the thing you do in suicide cases to plant a shame of ever doing it again; you start it as they're waking up. His voice was like two hundred voices in a methodist meeting.~~ And he came out to us ~~quietly~~ and asked which of us was the ~~one connected with her~~. Neither. ~~She'd been jilted badly by a man in Paris, the other man said. The doctor was pale with~~ too much flesh round his mouth, due to love of pork sausages perhaps; ~~and~~ Reluctantly he accepted us as decent people; though I wonder if we ourselves would have agreed... ~~There was a time pattern in my mind, a memory of a time when I had said, Don't you dare do that again, don't you dare, to her. The walls were plain and the floors made of stone; so his voice echoed like a seed that couldn't find soil. We were dying for breakfast, and I took him back to where I lived. We never said a word to anyone about it. Not a soul knew, and a short time after that she married.~~

To my surprise nothing short of strong sunlight was peeping through the lace curtains when I opened my eyes again, ~~and the city was once more from before twenty-five years of age.~~ I heard something tinkle in the corridor outside, and it seemed that water was running. I realised I hadn't hung my suits up, expecting my wife to do it. ~~And~~ She'd given me a special suitcase so that they didn't crease. You hung them up inside, and got tangled in pockets and hangers and zips, and all your studs fell out on the floor. My shoes I'd forgotten to leave outside the door. That was probably the noise I'd heard--- Boots bending and gathering up the shoes into a basket, marking ~~them~~ on the soles ~~with~~ the room-number with chalk. I thought of wine vats, knocking in the cork=stop with a wooden mattack, watching the colour through a candle as it spurted out, in the dimness of ~~the~~ cellar. I found my suits ~~weren't~~ creased, ~~after all~~, and for the thousandth time thought what a good packer my wife was. There was the mark of very red earth on ~~one~~ of my trousers. My own earth. Went into the cellar with my good clothes on to get something, one Sunday afternoon.

I left decisions until after breakfast; ~~was inside room~~

He looked hurt as if we'd deprived him of further material for speeches.

over

some very strong tea, an boiled egg ~~and~~ and white toasted bread with marmalade. ~~He whole meal this time, meant.~~ ~~I intended to buy some outside, with butter and some~~ fresh dairy cheese, and a wicker bag to putnit all in, and a knife, also a plastic plate if I could find one. That rendered me independent of the catering ghouls. Lock your door, spread your meal out on a towel, uncork the wine you've bought at a shop-price, use your tooth-glass; and I swear you ~~xxxxxx~~ enjoy it better than anything brought up steaming under silver lids. Then you wash your plastic plate, knife; put your towel back, slip your wine and basket into the cupboard; open the door again. Sucking the crumbs out of your teeth with a comfortable noise.

No wholemeal, this time. I intended to buy some outside with some dairy cheese + other healthy food, ~~in a little plastic bag~~

~~It was still early when I got out into the street, and~~ Victoria ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Street had the same repulsive thrill as always. I missed buying a newspaper again, after a glance at the headlines---something about TV. There was a Lyons teashop on a corner which I remembered from years before because I'd been with a queer as we passed it and he looked at a boyscout's legs as we others look at women's. The misty sunny light on the tall front was the same, and queers from every part of the globe must have passed here since. I remember the taste in my mouth as he did it, and a sense of desolation as guardsmen, tired women-clerks, bus conductors and students passed in a sexual heap, their little eyes moving like mice behind bars at legs and bosoms and lips and trouser-crutches. That was still a sexual corner for me and there seemee the same people doing the same things, in a non-stop show all ~~day, even now. And at the end of the road there was the mysrety of Westminster.~~

I had

~~I decided I wanted to think to no one that day, even to make appointments. Well, there was one appointment to make,~~ with Mr ~~I had his name in a little diary and bought~~ Chandler-Williams, Mr Chandler Williams with some initials behind his name that included something military, I couldn't remember ~~exactly~~ what. ~~Or perhaps he was called Captain.~~ And the other directors either had initials after or titles before. ~~It sounded a real clip-company.~~ And if I knew anything about post war England he himself would be a craven mediocrity, and a very nice man. I'd known some of them personally---the boys who collared jobs for themselves after the war that they were uselsss for and didn't even trouble to profess an interest in. Wellington, don't you know, Marborough, a friend of a schoolfriend, an uncle, a word with him, and he a word with the board... To put this down in writing now, at the edge of world calamity, seems most unreal. But that was the unreal world I started to live in, and then cleared out of when I saw that it wasn't being taken as a joke. Sometimes they came out to stay with us, the English schoolboys with amused leers on their faces. That was some years ago. A dirty lot of buggers, I mean, in the physical sense. Untrustworthy. Real twisters, in the meanest and pettiest way. They shone at night clubs, or playing the drums in a jazz group, or seducing the secretary, but at their work they were lazy, inept, completely mindless i nonentities who had to be protected against the truth by a staff of miserable and thwarted prople who were their betters in every way. What the social explanation for this is I don't know and don't care---seeing that their little world fell to pieces as it must. And now I had to meet one of them. I

h.p.

~~Rebecca~~ was.

Whom I'd never set eyes on.

'Now where in the name of hell did you get these ideas?' he said. He laid a hand on mine. 'I don't say I disagree. But how did you get them?'

'By using the eyes in my arse,' I said.

That made a great hit and the Professor ~~xxx~~ spluttered and coughed ~~his way through a laugh~~.

'Listen, what paper do you work ~~for~~?' he asked.

I told him the name of the agency, ~~or the lure name Palermo had mentioned.~~

'Well, you sound quite a crew,' he said. 'First you fake ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ a call from the Times, then your boss seduces my wife down the phone. ~~Hey,~~ that was about the randiest phone conversation I ever heard, what do you say, Louise?'

'I'm keeping quiet,' she said, with a modest blink ~~that showed that sex was still a serious and sane matter for her.~~ towards me which was too deliberate for real modesty.

~~'Hey,' she said, turning to me again, 'your ideas are fantastic~~ think they're true but we mustn't let you have it all your own way, I'd just like to say you wouldn't be here to tell the truth unless we'd done the dirty work for you. There needed somebody to take on the dirty role, and I agree ~~xx~~ by God it is dirty, and it's murderous too, but make no mistake, Glen, you live by it just as much as we do, and you keep your hands clean too, which is more than we can afford.'

'You worked for your interests, don't make it out a virtue, what people have always done.'

'Sure. You're one of our interests. That's why we kept you alive---'

'You kept me alive?'

'We ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ won the war, that's what I mean,' he said.

'Oh, don't talkballs!' I said. 'There were Poles, Canadians, New Zealeanders, Austrialians, Indians, Irish, Jews, all sorts in the last war, Sotuh Africans, and above all there were Russians.'

'That's right, but none of that would have been any use without our supplies and our ships and our planes and our work back in the States. History doesn't have favourites, Glen, and history chose us, and it chose us for a dirty job, and we took it on, we may even be a little crazy but we did something, we didn't sit stewing in the past and liking it.'

'Is that what England's supposed to be doing? If it is, it's because we haven't had a life of our own since you got in among the ruins and played the saviour---at an interest rate of five or six perdent because don't think you ever gave anythign away, you came over here to set up an armed camp and keep the war out of God's own land.'

'God's own land?' Louise dsaid.

'He means America,' he said to her with a slight scowl.

'In any case,' I said, 'does taking part in a war like evrybody else give you the right to occupy other people's countries for twenty years and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ buy up teir governments and put your secret service in?'

'Oh, is that what we do? I didn't know,' he said, mildly swilling his drink round again.

~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

'That's all true and right, Glen,' the Porfessor said quietly, 'and it's what I've been saying for two decades or more, in fact it's what every sane American says and knows, there's nothing new about it, or original, it's what we've been living with all these years, we don't like the sight of a uniform any more than the British people do, in fact a darn sight less, we know the dangers of the military mind, we know there's a faction in the States that would drop the bomb tomorrow if they could. Ther's nothing new in that. That's just what I say, Glen, we've been living with these problems for twnety years, we're trying to fight them out all the time, and I don't see people over here doing the same, maybe you are---I think in a way you are, but I don't anybody else w o is, there may be plenty but I haven't met any of them in the Senior Common Rooms yet.'

'Would you recognise them? What would they have to do to prove they're fighters? Perhaps they're just polite. Or they don't want to shoot their mouths all off all the time like I do.'

'Perhaps they're polite,' he said. 'Or asleep. My impression is that they're asleep.'

'But they may be awide aw ke and it lookto you like sleep because you're American, you have to see things all the time to know they're t there, you've got to hear them talked about, otherwise you say they're not there, you don't realise that things have to be plain in a country where nobody's quite sure how he stands with the next man, like America. You just don't realise we don't think or feel like that at all. We know t ings are there without hearing or seeing them all the time.'

'Well, I don't quite get that,' he said, 'but let it pass. All I know is I see Americans worrying, and worrying themselves to hell, caught up in the rat race and crumbling before they're sixty, I see that and I don't see anything like it here, and you can't tell me you don't <u>see</u> if a man's going through hell.'

'No, you don't see it always, if ever. Going through hell is a very intimate and secret business,' I said. 'It's people who go through a bit of hell, and are really quite comfortable and secure, who <u>look</u> so awful.'

'And you may be right there,' Louise said.

'Can I ask <u>your</u> name?' I said to the Professor.

'Why, sure,' he said with a happy smile. 'My name's Jeff. That's nothing to waht my wife calls me.'

There was the sound of slightly false laughter-making in his voice, which Americans had made famous all over the world: it produced a kind of ~~[illegible]~~ sheepishly sentimental result, an artificial substitute for an intimacy that couldn't ~~exist between people like them.~~

she 'Listen,' ~~Louise~~ said. 'Can you stay to dinner? ~~Everybody's so damned formal in this country---~~ It's nice to have somebody to talk to---'

'I'd love to,' I said, thinking of Palermo with---so I noticed suddenly---a trace of fear. ~~Then I realised he wasn't really as~~ ~~bored as I thought he was.~~

'I'll tell the girl,' she said, rising. 'The food's simple but wholesome, she's Irish.' And she left the room by the hall-door, and disappeared down another corridor. It seemed quite an immense apartment.

~~'Do the US information services run places like this?' I asked~~ ~~him.~~

'Pardon me?' he said, blinking and staring into his drink with puzzlement.

'Didn't they find you the papartment?'

'The information services? Hell, no. I'm on a private visit. Where did you get that idea?'

'That's what the University lodging bureau or whatever it's

'Now where in the name of hell did you get these ideas?' he said. He laid a hand on mine. 'I don't say I disagree. But how did you get them?'

'By using the eyes in my arse,' I said.

That made a great hit and the Professor spluttered and coughed his way through a laugh.

'Listen, what paper do you work?'

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'Oh, is that what we do? I didn't know,' he said, mildly swilling his drink round again.

'Russia did more fighting than anybody esle in the last war, she was literally wrecked by the war, her land was burned, the Germans hung the menfolk wherever they went and burned the villages, I talked to a German once andhe said he wondered the Russians hadn't wiped out Eastern Germany for what the Nazis had done, he'd seen the villages burn with his own eyes and miles and miles of corps. Does that give the Russians to occupy Poland a nd Hungary and Rumania and citate their policies? You call that aggr ssion. And so it is. And that's why you're the two biggest agressors ever known.' But I was getting flat---hot round the corner and in danger of becoming insulting. So I smiled at them both and said, 'I'm talking like an American.'

'That's all true and right, Glen,' the Porfessor said quietly, 'and it's what I've been saying for two decades or more, in fact it's what every sane American says and knows, there's nothing new about it, or original, it's what we've been living with all these years, we don't like the sight of a uniform any more than the British people do, in fact a darn sight less, we know the dangers of the military mind, we know there's a faction in the States that would drop the bomb tomorrow if they could. Ther's nothing new in that. That's just what I say, Glen, we've been living with these problems for twnety years, we're trying to fight them out all the time, and I don't see people over here doing the same, maybe you are---I think in a way you are, but I don't anybody else w o is, there may be plenty but I haven't met any of them in the Senior Common Rooms yet.'

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'That's what the University lodging bureau or whatever it's

don't know, but I said, 'Are you?'

This made the dark woman say, 'Good!', while he made a smile that might have been genuine or carefully defensive.

'Do I look as if I was?' he asked.

'To be quite frank, yes,' I said. How I let this Englishism out of my mouth I don't know either, but he caught hold of it. I could have bitten my tongue out.

'To be quite frank,' he said to Myra, imitating me with the same smile as before. 'They're priceless, aren't they?'

'Well,' I said, ' if you will walk round in fancy dress, I mean--- how am I supposed to know you're not im fashion?' That was a bit of a mouthful, and not quite clear: indignation was clogging my throat.

'Take it easy, Glen,' he said in quiet voice, and then winked at me. It was such a friendly and intimate wink that I burst out laughing And with relief he smiled, too.

'How do you know my name?' I asked.

'See the lady over there?' he asked, still holding Myra's shoulder while he tipped his head towards the settee where he'd been sitting before. 'Well, she's Jeff's secretary.'

'What about that?' I asked, with my share of defensiveness.

At that moment Louise walked past and noticed us together. She stopped at once and said to no one of us in particular, 'I hope you're getting on?'

'Like a house on fire,' I said with a smile, and after a doubtful blink towards the officer she went on.

I had the familiar sensation of being an island to myself---familiar from hours and days of American company in Naples. At first it offered you an illusion of a freedom such as you had never known before---above all freedom from the intimate coils of self and country in which lay the hidden springs of speech and love, with their hurts as well; and then you realiwed that you had cut yourself loose only to float, and you yearned for the intimacy that bound all creatures except these strangers of the earth together. Yet it was always refreshing: there was always the chance to say what you thought, you could always awake something from their loneliness, which is the spring of thought; like you, they were looking for somewhere to anchor themselves; but unlike you they could never find it because they had had no training in intimacy, there were some things that could not be learned. ONly the Europeans who fled back to Europe after an American child hood could recapture it: and resolve never to suffer that terrible chill again, of people who had no home. Those who have no home can always look down on the rest of us, and seem to observe, and feel freer than us, and delude themselves with wider responisbilities than us, and spuupport themlesve on the myth of the wanderer, but the fate they are moved to is one of self-destruction, because that is how we are formed by nature, [illegible] to campaign against life if we lack a home, until it governs us.

When I looked round the room I could see one face after another that seemed byan effort of mind to have deserted its real home, so that while it was provided with German or French or English or Irish or Rumanian creases and folds and lines it was smoothed out towards an abstraction of interest that withered the intimacy which had fed those creases and folds and lines in the first place. There was the self-destruction, necessary and inevitable, and perhaps our role in life was to wait until this vast destructive movement had spent itself, and to prevent it destroying the whole world as it clearly intended to do, and to have ready a form in ourselves and our children by means of which to succeed the Afterwards. For weren't these epople in whom nationalism flowed as naturally as blood the instruments and vehicles of the Afterwards, those whose job it had been to bring it into

being? to reduce the lone human creature in his strength and marvel to a relic of the Before? to enter into all the corners and bye-leanes of intimacy wherever they were found in Africa and the Pacific Islands and the English counties and on the banks of the Tiber and smooth it over with the film of Abstraction that never went anywhere without its bride Comfort, ot perhaps its whore, perhaps pimp and procurer, on a vast system of bribery where those disgusted by the fruits of their own intimacy---the stink-horrified minority in every land---would sell themselves and join the intricta eways of evil which are never clear to the good and have to be fathomed slowly. Well, it had taken us twenty odd years to fathom it, and to see what was going on without fear. I remembered when the presence of an American made me tremble, without me knowing why: as an enemy, as The Enemy, I had always recognised him even---or especially---when he was my friend whom I would defend. But wasn't that Englishman with his wine- and prok-swollen gills only another American, who had made the same choice and kept his passport because that was his task in England, to keep the life down---to hold it back---to keep the clock permanently still---for the pleasure and power of his real countrymen who penetrated everywhere, mostly unseen? Wasn't he an American without pasport? Wasn't that what the [illegible] remnants of the English ruling classes, compounded half of money and half of blood, disgusted by their own country and their own common poeple, haunted by stinks, especially their own, had done at the end of the last war---become the pimps and procurers for their real cojntrymen across the Atlantic whose land had come into being in the name of reaction, and had remained the home of and consolation of the natural reactionary from all over the earth; feeling more themselves in the land of the Afetewards because the Before to which they belonged could be acted out to heart's content like a gimmick, without responsibilities, and accents that were too strident and too burdened with cruel memories in their own country were now in the Land of Abstraction pleasant and mellow and vivid and authoritative echoes of the past, something more---together with the same thing from every other country on the globe---to fill the scene with, to make a plastic backdrop for a performance that took place from the terrib le moment of waking in the morning to the drunk or deluded or suicidal moment of sleep at night, in the Land of Afterwards.

After all, these English Americans with the wrong passport, who woke in New York and dined in London, had supported every vile war undertaken from the Land of Afterwards and edesigned to root out the naked face of intimacy wherever it was, especially if it was yellow or brown or black, the filthy face of reviled sex; had supported in private sober statements and government sober statements every napalm bomb that boiled on the body of the victim from the tiniest spot and increased its cleansing fire until the reviled life was consumed, every mass-bombing to winkle out guerillas, every poison gas that temporarily and most humanely paralysed the senses of the enemy who was not named and never really known but always happened to be men, women and children perplexed by what they had never suspected the sky of being capable of raining down on them---yes, they hadn't even attributed that power of hatred and evil to God; every programme of forced labour and torture and sterilisation of land and mass-removals of population and decimation of villages and concentration camps, in the climax of Hitlerian foreign policy conducted even without the visionary gleam that the Germans had still been passionate enough to muster; every explosion that polluted the air perhaps for generations, every missile that wrecked the natural seasons; not only Hiroshima, which was the Murder that opened the path to endless further murders and now to Nemesis, but Nagasaki too; only the third Murder did England gib at, and advise against. There would have been no return. 'I am in blood Stepp'd so far,' said Macbeth, 'that should I wade no more Returning were as tedious as [illegible] go o'er.' The millions killed in the Nazi camps

were soon equalled, in ten or twenty years: on other people's lands, with other people's lives. The Clean Man himself didn't dirty his hands. He thought, like Macbeth, and like all successful murderers, that he bore a charmed life and that nothing could touch him: 'I bear a charméd life, which must not yield To one of woman born.' That was the hope---that nothing of woman born would be heard again, but only the sounds and sirens of power, exercised by unmoving faces, until the moon herself that had charmed and governed us in our frailty for so long had been vanquished, ruined: 'Why should I play the Roman fool and die On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives, the gashes Do better on them.' And the Englishman, with his head stcuk idiotically in the Before and telling himself frantically that things were quite authentic as they were, his arse stuck in a chillier sea than any other (a whispered AMERICAN order could [illegible] his whole island tnd thus history in less than a second), went down and down holding the murderer's bloody hand and kissing it, until they were at the brink, when with a last recapitulation of intimacy---even this American Englishman---he drew back and let the other go alone, because it was after all his destiny. So the Clean Man went on to play the Roman fool after all, and die on his own sword, and remove the last persistent stink, that of himself, under his own nostrils. I reckoned that this was what was happening now.

And here, in this room, were the perpetrators of this vastest scheme of fratricide every visualised, and they were as innocent of their destiny (not of their objectives, as they themselves thought) and even as brave as Macbeth: somewhere along the line---before they were born--- they had been misled; they only needed words to convince---any veil would do to cover the deed itself; their innocence was that of people who knew no war, who lacked the knowledge that covered the rest of the globe, and absolved the rest of the globe, :, and its innocence that was really a grotesque and inexcusable ignorance, written in each face, of people who had urged and cajoled and blackmailed and dragooned and financed and stocked others into war, but had yet to know the meaning of the Murder itself, yet to catch up with the rest of the globe and settle into real life.

It was mostly the unAmerican Americans I had known in Naples, those for whom all this was true, and who indeed had opened my eyes for the first time to much of it---whent ehri wives weren't present to smooth over and whitewash and create the lie of a peaceable soceity much like any other that had ever existed. It was strange---they all knew, and claimed, that there was nothing like the United States, but they constantly adjusted their minds to recomposing it as another country which in the normal evolution of history had inherited imperial responsibilities. They themselves hated these imperial machinations---but you couldn't help feeling they were secretly and negatively proud of them. They were victims, they cursed and complained, they came to hate the American accent in all its variety and try to talk differently, they sunk themselves further and further into the provincial world round them in Campania ot Aulia or Calabria or wherever it was, but without losing for a moment the moral tenets on which they had been brought up. That is, their complaining and cursing had something of the high moral level about it: it excluded the people they tried to live with---the foreigners; due mostly to their wives, they rarely did curse or complain in front of foreigners; the fight against the United States was something only they could do, and of course the fight was on behalf of the whole Contemporary World; like the American they hated and were fighting, they still represented in their own minds the moral climax of Christian history, and even their hurts nad a special flavour which the hurts of other peoples lacked. They never saw that they wrere simply blind to the

hurts of others, and had understanding enough only for their own. I knew their psychology so well, after ten or fifteen years of it: Its one fatal lapse---which cut them off from all other peoples, and from history, and even from the power which others had amassed for them, in terms of blood and a daily misery which they had no inkling of---was in its failure to see that life everywhere and always is improvised, minute by minute, by everyone; that really nothing is inherited, except perhaps a weight of sorrow, and that all that they took for the inherited civility and [illegible] taste and last [illegible] aristocratic flickers of the Old World was as deliberately and consciously improvised as anything in their own country. They created a false moral picture, without the smallest suspicion that they had freated a picture at all. To a greater or lesser degree they saw all the rest of us, from the Chinese to the famers of the Midi, as asleep in a kind of inherited cradle which we had never questioned and off which we were the blind executors and spokesmen. This invested them with the illusion of fr edom---the more callew and narrow they were, the more they felt it (and the more they felt your lack of it): yet unlike free people they never infected you with freedom; they never for a moment made you feel invested with a higher stature, which is one of the effects of freedom; they never for a moment infected you with joy---which is freedom's chief vehicle---for the very simple reason that they never felt any. How often I had been looked at with pity by one of them, as he listened to my English voice---a crooner he might be, a rubber-goods salesman, as crap-iron entrepreneur working near an American barracks. That special look which invested with not quite [illegible] the credentials for being Contemporary: you were simply a talking and gesticulating, if dec orative, even usefully wise, inheritance. I was only allowed into the audience of their curses and complaints because of the one credential I did have--- an American wife.

They simply could not see that the form round our lives, even its absurd frills and jargons, was as painfully improvised as anything thay had known. That is, they could [illegible] not see another human being.

Only a negro could sometimes see you, because he had come from a real country as far from the United States as any other in the world. But he was fast dying out. oThere were almost no American negroes now, o ly Americans, with their increasinf moral unforgiveness. But at least their intimacy was intact, now and then. The smell of a person stikl failed to provoke them to detachment, that grossest of all American evils. I remember Bob, slow and tall, with his long stride, and his long stories. I always listened to an American, rarely talked. I was aware that nothing I could say could do more than fill in the lines of a caricature. He told me more than anytone. The blackmail that had started as soon as America had entered the last war. How at 10 Downing Street in 1941 they had been afraid to lay on too much apainfu,,yl painfu lly improvised luxury in case the an emissary went back to the States with the story that They weren't pulling their weight; how the beaches of Salerno had been gloriously taken after bitter fights by an American Army, excaept that this army consisted of two English divisions ... And so on, in an endless documentation of power accumulated by means of power used to browbeatand deprive, until by ten years after the war in which English, New Zealanders, Austrialians, Poles, Canadians, French, Sihks, Moroccans, South Africans, had fought it was quickly established bg world wide publicity services that America had won the war and thefefore desrved its fruits, even to the point of garrisoning its allies and bringing them within the hidden grip of its secret service. That was Bob. He talked quietly, and chuckled in the most divine way. But after twenty years in Naples he didn't ghve up his passport. He

even went on reading the American newspapers, with their sober glorifications of some war or other in the Far East, or some explosion, or some rocket-emplacement in somebody else's land. But there was something right in this. He was offered time and time again a trip to Africa, even well-áid jobs. But he said no, with a chuckle. He told me frankly he was afraid of Africans. 'They might eat me,' he said. When I laughed at this he went on, 'Np you can't trust those tribes.' And he said they would see he was American at once. He knew he was no negro in that sense. So he kept his passport in the naif hope that his home would one day be habitable again on his own terms. He had the pathetic hope of all other Americans that her problems could ever be resolved. He really did think that the black-white struggle was a definitive struggle in itself which would end some day, and not simply one more expression of the American life-horror which would never end because it was the rock on which America had been founded.

The wives were like Lady Macbeth. They recalled their men to what in fact they were. They reminded them that the money in their pockets, their visits to the Naples PX for cheap whisky and canned corn and home cured hams, on the Veteran Officer's ticket, nand the fat incomes that fell into their laps if they thought of turning to art or literature for a few months, on the GI Bill, ax and the deals they could put over through the military network that wound its way like thorns through every country's life, even to the barren fields of Calabria, they reminded them that this came out of power, and power wrung from the unfortunate and [illegible] crushed, battenting on blood and ruins. One of the most moral of them had made a big scoop through a series of filthy currency deals between Switzerland and Germany a [illegible] few years after the war: he landed in Europe on Tuesday, and by Wednesday he was sucking the blood of starving and homeless people. The wives only kept faith to this sitatuion by saying, 'Art thou afeard To be the same in thine own act and valour AS thou art in desire?'

Bob had first opened my mind to the Murder. He had told me that the first atom bomb could have been dropped into the sea, as a demonstration. Not on a cit y, without a previous word. He said that in the appalling aftermath of that first act, which had wrecked the life of its perpretartor, there art least should not have been a second. That a second confirmed the path of murder indelibly---'from this instant There's nothing serious in mortality.' He told me that the men in America who had made this bomb had put a memorandum on the President's desk imploring him to cease its use and manufacture at ence, and that the me morandum had not been opened. He told me that the path of murder had been chosen instead: the bomb had been used to keep and extend power, its secrets had been deliberately kept from the other side of the woel d , which put the other side of the world on the path of murder too, though it was all but dead from war. The path had been clearly and freely chosen, against the advice of the men who had laid that power in their hands. The story was put about that the other wisede of the world was rearing for war, and this was a base and idiotic lie for eh simple reason that the other wise of the world had been burned and ravaged in war t the point of exhaustion. All peoples bu the Americans had the stigmata of one or two world wars on their lives. [illegible]

I thought it was a pity I couldn't say this to the general or captain or whatever he was sitting in front of me, but he was talking affably to the dark young woman, and even including me in the conversation, with the modest attention [illegible] nearly all Americans give to those they think have attacked them.

'Lou tells me you're a liar,' she said to me suddenly, turning my way.

'How's that?' I asked while the army man chuckled, trying with a hug to recallher to politeness.

'She says you don't know the difference between a grape and a a blackberry.'

As I didn't answer she explained to the man, 'He told me he grm grew wine. Lou says he's paid for telling lies. Don't you think he's a scream?'

As there seemed nothing hostile in this, and as the whisky was beginning to knock me out, I said nothing to this either, and they talked together again, making me feel in a most uncomfortable way that I was a minor. They would think me unmarried, too. The Englishman's group on the other side of the room had got smaller and more feminine: he was qwas now quieter, and a woman who might also have been English, with some lace at the neck of her dress, was talking. All of a sudden Grigg himself appeared in the doorway. I had no idea how much time had passed, only that the room was getting hotter and hotter and that as soon as I finished one long glass of whisky and soda another was put down at my side by the waiter. Dimly I began to suspect that I was being doctored with the stuff, but Palermo and shady deals had fallen into a dim background and there were only my desires left, which were to see my land and to be with my wife, and never to see this room again. Grigg went round to the other groups in the room, but seemed to avoid ours, with a gingerly glance at the army officer,s back: whether he saw me or not I could not say. He seemed to have grown taller during his journeys, and his stride more loping and authoritative, and his creases, that marked his face like reckless pencil mmrkm lines, were deeper. The young man with ginger hair was altohether lost now. The room was roaring with talk, and the couple a foot or so from me, hiw epaulets touching her shoulder, were alughing as if they were quite alone.

Not only was the room hot enough from the central heating but Louise Grigg, too familiar with every one now to turn and even nod at us, began piling more logs on the fire, making sparks fly into the chimney. Her friend Myra seemed to understand the meaning of this and uttered a strange cattish howl, evoking a wink from Louise as she went away.

I had noticed a little corner in the hall outside, comprising a settee and two armchairs round a coffee table, with a dim light, and thought I would go there for coolness. But just as I was getting up the dark young woman put her hand on my knee, leaning forward, and said, 'You ought to talk to this guy. He's fucking ignornant and they say the dopes go in the army but he says the funnisest things.'

This made the arm y man chuckle and wink at me again.

'I wouldn't talk to him if you put the thumb screws on me, ' he said. ' Not from what I've been hearing.'

'Well,' the woman said almost to herself, 'I reckon an English rat is near an American rat.'

'Meaning?' he said.

' I don't know know what the hell I mean,' she said with a slight sad moan, her eyes diving downwards as if she was going to fall asleep. 'All I know is I've taken too much of this stuff and I hate my husband's guts. Hey,' she said to me for the second time, 'you and him should get together. He wants to buy Italy. How much are they selling themselves for these days?' And she lifted up her chin and made the most delightful laugh which showed her teeth and almost closed her eyes.

'Well, Myra,' I guess I'd better git,' the army man said.

'Your lecture?' she asked with mocking curiosity.

'A date, as a matter of fact.'

'You exciting feller.'

Grigg passed again, and again did not look at us. But the moment the army man got up he turned to him, and th ey walked into the hall together.

'He says the screamiest things,' Myra went on. 'He says his wife went to the top of the Eiffel tower and tried to throw her two babies off, and they shipped her over to one of the nicest hatches in the States, where they positively like you to be mad.'

I looked at her. 'Is that funny?'

'Well, isn't it? Here, give me a cigarette.'

'Idon't.'

'Well, of course it's funny. To go through the trouble of having babies and then throw them off the Eifeel tower.'

'She did throw them?'

'Np, she didn't. He's a high-ranking man. He:s a general.'

'A general?'

'Yes. He has orders to gas all [illegible] winegrowers in Europe in the event of a nuclear catastrophe.' She made her felightful laugh again. 'Winegrower! I heard all about you. You're like that poor sap ever there, they call him David the Double.'

'Which one?'

'The ginger one.'

I still couldn't see him but this interested me. 'Why [illegible] am like him?'

'Well, he---' She gave me a quick look with what seemed a touch oh grim contempt in it. 'Oh, come off it, what are you doing here in the first place?'

'How do you mean?'

'You wouldn't know why they call him Double?'

'No.'

'Like hell you wouldn't.' And she ruen turend turned away.

'Listen,' I said a little rudely---it had the effect of alerting her attention, '---what are you talking about?'

'Well, all I'm saying is you cotttoned on to the Griggs pretty fast, just one day after arrival---oh, don't worry what I think, I've lived in this country long enough not to be too simple about such things, and my husband isn't in fashion every hour of the day, I mean as you can see he knows quite a few embassy people and all that---'

'Are these embassy people?'

'Some of them, innocent.'

'But why am I like that ginger man?'

'Because you put your nose anywhere where's there's dirt, as long as it's dirt with a political background...'

'Political?' I asked with astonished eyes.

'Well, I'm not saying you're a spy, and I'm not saying he's a spy, but I can tell you all his movements are known.'

'Aren't you saying too much?' I said, feeling sober under the weight of a sudden fear.

'No. You wouldn't print that. Nobody would. Nobody could. But you can say what you like in private conversation. Don't think I give a damn for one side or the other, though I do think when I'm sober which is as rarely as possible that the Americans are bringing a fresh blast of air in some pretty dark corners of the earth, including this particular one.'

'Their explosions, you mean?'

'OK, funny.' And to my surprise she made her delightful laugh,

and squeezed my knee.

'As a matter of fact,' she said, 'I loath the States and love your policemen.'

'Did Louise say I was a spy?'

'Of course she didn't, silly. She said you were about the most squalid [illegible] editor's tout in Fleet Street.'

'But not a fool,' I said, aware that I wasn't hurt in the least by what she had said.

'That makes you even more diabolical,' she said with a straight look.

'As you can probab ly tell,' she went on, 'I see the funny side of the most horrible things. I have to. Otherwise I'd go insane.'

'Why?'

[illegible]

The central light, a chandelier in the ceiling, went out, and nobody seemed to bother about it. There were enough side-lights to see from.

Myra at once slipped off her shoes. 'Here we go,' she said.

'Go where?'

'She knows you're married, and your wife walked out on you,' she said, stretching her stockinged feet.

'What?'

'Wow,' she said with a sympathetic yet mocking sideglance at me, 'doe s the truth hurt: It's been hurting me for twenty years!'

'Who told her that?' I said úgnaciously, leaning forward.

'Lou, probab ly.'

I got up at once and walked across the room to the hall, passing epopeli who I saw vaguely were sitting on the floor, the women with their shoes kicked off in the same way as Myra. I heard her laugh behind me, or thought I did. The lights were just bright enough to see by: only a blush would not be seen.

Grigg was sitting in the little alcove in the hall, all alone. The General seemed to have gone. I peeped in at the kitchen at the end of the corridor and found [illegible] only the butler, sweeping some broken glasses into a dust tray: no Louise. Grigg didn't greet me, only sat wringing his hands together as if something was on his mind. I walked past him again to return to the room, wondering why the indignation I had felt an instant ago had gone into a sort of absurd realm where only words remained, and I heard him call me quietly.

'Glen, come and sit down.'

'Oh, hullo. You back?'

'Come and sit down.'

I sat down on the settee at his side, in the dim, intimate corner.

'Was that you called me the other nig ht, at my hotel?' I asked.

'Not me.' I had no way of telling, from his deep creases that hid all tbut the deepest reactions, if this was the truth.

'I'm glad you could come,' he said. 'How's the party?'

'Too many whiskies.'

'Lou always does the same. I tell her, you lace the drinks too much, but you know how women are, You're married, I hear.'

'That's right.'

'Hard lines.'

'I'm happily married.'

'Yes, I know,' he said with a yawn. 'Which is why your wife is never with you. I wish I was happily married like that.'

that the by now familiar cool sweat started between our skins and my hand lay passively on one of her legs.

'I hear you have things tosay about my wife,' I said to her with a smile, turning to look at her so that our faces almost touched and I felt her breath on my upper lip when she replied.

'Not me. She ran out on you, that's all I know. I thought that was common knowledge.'

'Only I don't know about, it, it seems.'

'That girl told me, at the Pal's club.' And she peered at me again. 'She could be a liar, I suppose. But you've proved yourself a better one---a professional one.'

'Which girl?'

'She's married to a bank-rob ber. She clinked him for touching her in bed.' And she made a wheezy laugh, hugging me jokingly for a moment.

'Not that creature who gave me a terrible night?'

She laughed again. 'Jeff's dead right. You play this hell game with such a poker face!'

'Her name's Jean de Lisle Swiburne,' I said.

'ThatIs right. And a damned nice girl, as a matter of fact. It's about what I'd do with my husband if he went out and robbed a bank every night.'

'But what did she tell you?'

'That your wife couldn't stand it any more.'

'Stand what?'

'The kind of work you did.' She laughed again. 'And, boy, oh, boy, it's some work! When I told Jeff he [illegible] just looked grim. And it takes a lot to shock that bag of sin.'

'What work do you mean?'

'ThatIs it!' She gave me a quick, laughing kiss. 'I'm going to make a friend of you. [illegible] I'd be a fool to make an enemy of you, wouldn't I?' she asked with a sudden serious expression.

And she added, 'You'' take money for anything, won't you? You'll even be a West End whore.'

'It was Palerme asked me to take this friend out to dinner---'

This made her laugh again. 'Listen, Glen, do you want to know why you're here tonight?'

'Yes. I wondered.'

'I'll tell you why. There's not one card the devil ever offered you that you haven't played. But it isn't that. There are plenty of smear reporters, and procurers, and male whores. I realised, by the way, that you procured me for Palerme. You were dead right. I was just the type and my legs went weak the minute I clapped eyes on him.'

'Who told you that?' My state was a strange way, chillded and clear, whereas it should have been indignant and frightened. But I had become so removed from my own experience that any reference to me was like statistics. Only in appraisal afterwards would they be fearful.

'Listen, Glen,' she said, pulling me with ever so slight a hug closer to her, 'there isn't a thing I haven't wheedled out of the Pal. A woman has a right to that. He had a neat description of me the morning after you came to dinner. It enflamed his fancy, he said, and he used those words.'

My partner Nancy walked past with a drink, unaccompanied, and Lou said to her quietly, in such a way as to keep her at a distance, 'Hi, Nance.'

'I haven't done anything,' shesaid in a high voice like a girl. And she shivered, while gooseflesh appeared on her arms and the top of her legs. She watched him, quite still. And I was aware of the flat suspended weight of fear at the pit of my intestines. I realised how badly I wanted to pass water.

I was also bitterly ashamed---not, stangely, for being found naked with Loud, but for having been numb to her little attentions, so as neither to turn them another way nor to accept them: a double failure to acknowledge the greatest gift of simplicity ever given, a woman's, which I had learned to be as momentous as Christ's.

He still looked at me, his teeth tight together. And he slowly came into the kitchen. He didn't troub le to close the door and I could see other guests, drowsy and unaware of what was going on.

Still looking atme, he said to her in a murmuring voice, 'I knew it was one or the other. Tell you the truth, I thought this one was too normal for your tastes.'

And he stood directly in front of me.

'Know what I'd like to do?' he said to me, his legs astride.

'No,' I replied with a sheepish crack in my voice.

'Can't you guess?' And when I still look puzzled he made a motion that suggested a man pissing---all over me.

'Go ahead,' I said with an attempt at a smile, thought smiling under that gaze was out of the question: it was a gaze not of brutality but suffering taken beyond the capacity to care.

'She's right, by the way,' I said.

'If you keep your mouth shut you can make me happy,' he murmured. And with a cool movement he stood on toptoe and took a vast iron saucepan of the old-fashioned type down from a hook on the wall. It was so heavy and massive that it was only used as an ornament. People didn't cook like that nowadays.

'Now, Jeff,' Lou said in a whisper. Her terror told me that he was quite capable of bringing it down on my head, and I wondefed whether I should try for the door or just wield off the blow when it came. As I was terrified myselr, I did nothing but sit there. I didn't really believe a nice man could be violent. Yet I'd been in front-line warfare. It depends how you're brought up! to study the violence in men or the peace.

But he seemed to have no idea of knoking me over the head. Instead, with a sullen look at me, his lips pursed into a disgusted expressiom like that of a man who has just driven a nail through his own hand, he placed the saucepan over my head in such a way that I was now in darkness, with the damned iron rim of the thing resting on my shoulder-blades. If I'd known he was going to do <u>that</u> I could have jumped up and made a getaway. As it was I was fixed in my chair---no longer by Lou's soft flesh but by about twenty pounds of iron wielded by her nhusband.

'Jeff!' She had her voice raised this time, and by the sound of it he was capable of doing odd things with this saucepan.

And indeed he started pushing it down by the long handle that was gripped in both his hands. I found myself bowed under the 2eight, then almost doubled up under it, then pushed slowly down so that my feet scraped and slid desparately on the floor, trying to sustain my weight.

'Son of a bitch,'cI heard him murmur to himself, 'dirty two .timing male whore...'

Lou now approached him, and I wasaware of a slight struggle, which releasedsome of the weight on me. Taking advantage of it

'Have you been waiting?' he asked me absently, looking at some sheets Pat had just typed.

'No. I've just come.'

'Where from upstairs?'

'No,' I said, ' from the bank.'

'Oh.' He laid the sheet down again and made a familiar smile at me, going to his overcoat by the door. 'You must have a packet, [illegible] ordering a carpet like that for your floor. I sprinkled a few drops of whisky on it by way of blessingb'

'Thanks.'

'I left my bottle up there, by the way. Get it back tonight.'

We walked down the siairs together, he behind me, seeming to study the back of my head.

'It inspired confidence in Chandler Williams,' he said.

'What did?'

'The magic carpet. When I teld him.' And as we got into the street he added half to himself, in a murmur, 'Out of nothing , nothing comes. But you've got...' And he winked at me, while I answered him with an idiotic expression that didn't know whether to plump for perplexity or simple tired appeal. 'We'll take a taxi', he added, 'and you pay, being the wealtheir of the two.'

I had thirty pounds in my pocket, which felt a huge amoub. I kept involuntarily feeling the bulge at my breast. He gave the address to the driver, somewhere in the City, in fact only a block from where I had cashed the thirty pounds.

[illegible]

[illegible]

'What was all this about photographs Lou was talking ab out?' I asked him suddenly in a disgruntled voice. 'Is that what I'm supposed to have taken? I'm still a thief in your eyes, am I? And what the hell do you mean by telling her all that cock about my wife---?'

I gave him an unforgiving look in the dimness of the taxi, my teeth clenched together.

He blinked and smiled slightly, his bombast absent, whether by policy or not I couldn't tell.

All he said in reply was, 'Well, you must admit there's a lot of money somewhere.'

'Where?' I screwed my eyes up at him, leaning forward.

'Not so shirty. And I never breathed a word about your wife. Some mistake there. You've had a bad night. He laces his drinks, famous for it.'

'She does it, not him.' And I remembered at that insatant that Lou had spoke n of Jean de Lisle Swiburne in connection with dirt about my wife, not Palermo.

'Yes,' he said, studying with me with what I thought was a trace [illegible] of fear and, for the first time, real dislike (because of the fear), 'we're shirty today. Still, I won't be provoked. Could say a lot. Ticker forbids me today. Saving myself up for tonight. Grateful to you for <u>that</u>, anyway.'

'What money did you mean just now?'

He narrowed his eyes in a most unplesant way and said in a low voice, 'For the carpet. Somebody's paying. It might not be you.'

'I didn't order it. It just came.'

'I know exactly where it came from. That's what I mean. I

I'm not trusting you, you bastard. That's why you're staying my partner. Not to let you out of my sight.'

'Who did the carpet come from?' I asked with real curiosity which—I could see at once—became a look of hard challenge to his eyes.

'Where do bears go in the winter time?' he said with a leer, and turned away.

'Which photographs was Lou talking about, then? You can at least answer that.'

His eyes were suddenly like two blind white spots. 'Shut up about photographs! Listen,' he said, leaning forward with a springing movement that made him seem as light as a child, 'I live on a shoestring. I don't know what you live on. This—' He pointed to his nose— 'keeps just above water. You do your own swimming, I'll do mine. I'm hanging on a lifebelt, so are you for all I know. But don't splash about so much, that's all, smart guy, you're rocking the boat!'

His tone of fear spurred by hatred made me remember the morning again, and sent a cold warning through my body. Here was somebody saying the words that had gone through my head, actually saying them: to be careful, not speak too much, not create attention. But it seemed that every time I opened my mouth it was a breech of this newly discovered code over my life. It even changed the expression on my face from one of curiosity—innocence—to belligerence.

'Yes,' he said with that final look of triumphant exclusiveness that had always frightened me more than any other human expression, 'you're rocking the boat! Don't rock the boat!' And he leaned back folding his arms, looking out of the window at the banks and exchanges with pursedlips.

'And here's some news,' he went on more quietly. 'I'm a photographer. I mean, I know how to take a studio photograph. So what's so strange about having photographs?' He looked at me with the blind white spots of eyes again: 'Anything wrong? Eh?'

I shrudgged and he went on, 'Nothing wrong? You're sure about that?' And only after boring into me with his eyes for longer than was comfortable for me did he turn away again. It reminded me of the way a couple used to look at me in Naples, whenever they found themselves in the same company. As if they said to each other, 'Look at him under you make him drop his eyes, that'll show you how guilty he is.' I always did drop my eyes.

After we had got out of the taxi and I'd paid the meter he stopped and put his face so close to mine that our noses touched for an instant. 'And who told you this was about photographs?'

'What?'

'Don't keep saying what! Who told you?'

I stood peering into his face and asked again, 'You mean Lou?'

'She told you we were coming here?' he asked with astonishment.

'Coming where?'

'Here, here!' He pointed to a tall entrance with concrete pillars.

'No.'

'You said she did.'

'No, I didn't. What's here, anyway?'

He studied me for some time as we stood in the biting wind. It seemed he was trying to find the motive behind every crack and cell in my face, and I left it open for his inspection. He turned away and then to my surprise took my arm.

from Klydonhall by provocation, so to speak. Klydonhall rocked up and down in his chair making violent coughing noises, with shere relief at us being playful dogs again, while Palermo made conforming moans and croaks of laughter, clearly feeling like death.

'Ah, ah!' shouted Selsey, writihing round the room, 'got you, got you! OH WHERE DID YOU GO LAST NIGHT?' he sang, sancing round the room. 'Ah! Ah!' Palermo's croaks were louder, Klydonhall bounced, I made hopeless imitation roars, crossing and uncrossing my legs like an acrobat.

'No,' he said in my direction at last, hissing like a soda syphon, not really addressing me, 'I was <u>not</u> there last night! I was <u>not</u>!' And there were more winks and ha-ha-has, and a sudden bending down that I thought would land flat on the carpet.

'He saw you as Adam,' Palermo said to me, turning round with a matter-of-fact expression.

'As <u>what</u>?'

All the answer I got to that was a menacing wild expression, with melodramatically bared teeth, tout of view to the others.

'Isn't that wonderful?' came the huge voice, bounding aleng like a bear, 'he doesm't remember! These artists have such a full life!'

'Actually how that got through I shall never know,' Klydonhall said, with his faint Bostonian ~~xxxxx~~ slurr. 'It was about the first, that's why it made history.'

'Nice of you to say so,' Palermo said.

'I don't think the British public was <u>quite</u> prepared for it,' said the writihing man, 'I heard some pretty-juicy——' (Pronounced in a staccato way)——'remarks. But it won through. You're quite right, playmate.'

I forced my way back into the conversation. 'What was that?'

'He still doesn't know? I shall accuse you of affectation, Mr Glen,' the writher said, serious for a moment; and this seriousness brought a certain menace into his face.

Klydonhall setepped to my rescue: 'It brought in a whole new class of picture, though,' he added with a polite glance at Palermo, ' I believe it didn't seel many apples.'

'Oh,' the writher said with a look of contempt in my direction, like a byullying lawyer in cross examination, 'an artists wouldn't take account of <u>that</u>.' And he walked swiftly to his desk, bending and unbending spasmodically, then flinging himself down into a chair like a soack of potatoes, shaking the floor.

Understaniding at last, I felt numbed and slew. It suddenly seemed right that I should be given a chair on the periphery. ~~xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ I yawned and no lenger tried to take an equal part in the talk. The result of this was that I missed nearly the whole thing. There was some mention of the printing works in Edgare Road where Palermo and I had gone together. And Palermo was pressed for a decision. The other men had their eyes on him. And Palermo gave his answer, 'A week from now, even if it kills me.' He turned to me, so suddenly that I jumped with fright: 'All right by you, Glen?'

'Yes.'

Everybody got up, and after a few handshakes we were outside again. The tiny reeeptionist didn't accompany us to the door. She seemed to know what Palermo had done. She had her head lowered over a book.

I thought I heard the writher say, just before we left, 'See you later, then?' And I was firmly excluded from the goodbyes. Only Klydonhall nodded to me, his eyes flickering sensitively.

He had saved the day for me---I really would have walked out otherwise.

We decided to walk back to the office. 'He seems a nice chap.'

'Who?'

'Klyonhall.'

'With all that power, he'd better be.'

And he said nothing more. In a subtle way Selsey had destroyed my status: I shuffled along at Palermo's side accordingly, feeling like his office-boy.

'What was the idea of calling me your stooge?' I asked roughly.

'I thought we were realistic about our work. Tomorrow I might call you my boss. What ever fits. As Jack Ryan says, the world we live in was made by Marx and Engels, with Hitler doing the soufles. Opportunism governs, Glen, and I'd like to see an exception to that. You're not trying to tell me <u>you</u> are?' he asked with a nasty look sideways.

I shrugged.

'What I thought was a real dirty trick was not following my lead,' he went on. 'You nearly wrecked <u>that</u> little commission.'

'You didn't brief me beforehand.'

'I made a mistake there. But you're such a shady bastard I get the feeling you don't need briefing, especially when you said you already knew about the deal.'

' I <u>didn't</u> know about the deal!'

'Then why talk photographs in the cab? That must have been leading somewhere.' He added before I could speak, 'But you recognised Klydonhall, didn't you?' He stopped, facing me.

'I've never seen him before.'

'The way you nodded to him, boy, it was clear as daylight you knew who he was.'

'I didn't.'

'Well, don't try and hold anything over <u>that</u> one, he can move mountains, I'm warning you, Glen. I told you some time ago, don't get your fingers burned.' He went on, striding along again, 'Don't lay with fire.'

And he kept his mouth shtu for the rest of the way back. [illegible] His fingers fluttered ever so slightly now and then, pale and slim, darting up to his collar and then diving into a pocket unnecessarily, as he stared at the pavement before him, his lips tight together. There were dark rims under his eyes which I hadn't noticed earlier in the afternoon. I noticed one thing---whenever he rasped and hissed at me the effects on him seemed to be as painful. It made me feel I was a kind of inner enemy he was fighting off: even, a part of himself. His eyes didn't really see me, and in a most strange way I didn't feel included in the conversation when the subject was me. It was a hypothetical me for which my face and speech only supplied the pretext.

At the foot of the stairs I said, Come to my room and have a drink,' and to my surprise he turned to me with a smile, rather like someone waking up slowly, and replied in an absentminded voice, 'Well, I wondered when you were going to thaw.'

He called out for Pat but she wasn't there. 'Bitch,' he murmured, 'I tell these girls, never leave the office empty---'

'I'm up here!' came Pat's irritated voice---from my room.

'What, drinking my hooch?' he said, more cheerfully: and we

went straight up.

'By the way,' he said to me on the stairs, 'I want you to look at this Adam and Eve thing.'

'The poster?' I asked him.

He turned to me with an exasperated expression: 'Don't you ever listen? I mean the preface!'

'Oh.'

'I thought you were bloodily well dreaming this afternoon. No wonder old Selsey held his nose and pulled a lavatory chain with his right hand when you were going this afternoon.'

'When was that?'

'Well, you wouldn't have seen it, it being behind your back.'

'I'll pull his chain, if he's not careful...'

'Not while we're making money out of him,' he said as we got to my room and found Pat sitting on my bed with a glass of whisky in her hand.'Well, blimey, this is ripe, who told you you could swill my booze all hours of the day, Mrs Siddons?'

Pat took not notice of this but addressed me: 'I bought you some glasses.'

'Oh, that's nice of you.' There were five on the chest of drawers, and she was sipping from one.

Palermo and I sat on the bed like her, one on either side, as there were no chairs in the room. Withoug a word she got up and with a yawn prepared our whiskies, while Palermo winked at me and pointed at her rear quarters with an obscene gesture.

'All right, funny, ' she said quietly, 'I've got as many eyes in my arse as you.'

He smiled at this, showing his strong white teeth. Some of the his other self---one hesitated to say real self, in case this frail partner was his real self---came back.

'We saw Klydonhall,darling,' he said.

This made her turn, the two glasses in her hands. 'Honest, you did?'

'I thought that'd shake you.'

'Has he been to see Muriel?'

'Well, of course.'

There was silence while shr brought the glasses to us, rather thoughtfully.

After a sip he said to her, 'I bet you'd like a lick off that barrel.'

'Not me.' She sat down with a sulky movement.

'?NO? I can't read poppet's faces.'

'You can't read mine.' She gave him a steady look, suddenly with the earnestness of a girl.

With the first gulp of whisky inside him he took out a cigarette and lit it, with that thoroigh movement of the hands and lips that seemed to try to tidy all the broken bits of the day, and cut through them, sucked in cleanly through lips formed like atube and then emitted in one straight but fine shaft, after a hissing sound in the teeth, and narrowed eyes, everything in his face sharp for a moment. And it seemed appropraite that this cutting symbolic gesture should be with a poison, which brought a grey film across his eyes. His satisfaction as he sucked the smoke in was so clear that it might have been an act of sex indulged against his sane judgement, with helpless ecstasy, and so private that it only showed as a tiny greay light in the eyes, like the fear plus cunning you see in

animals sometimes.

'Well,' he said, studying the tiny glowing point that had supplied the painful pleasure, 'you can keep out of the club tonight because I don't want you and Muriel tearing each other's eyes out.'

She pouted at this, staring into her glass with unnecessary closeness, swirling the whisky round quickly: 'We'd most likely tear yours out.'

'You'd rue the day,' he snarled at her quietly.

She turned to me again: 'I think you need a nice table on that carpet.'

'It's some carpet,' Palermo said, leaning back and gazing at it.

'It makes a nice room to come up to,' Pat said. 'Humanises the place.'

'I'd like some curtains,' I told her. 'And I think I'll fix that door downstairs, you never know who might come in. That noise I heard in the middle of the night---'

'That's probably the police,' she said. 'They check up on open doors in the night.'

Palermo xaid to me with a quick look, '<u>Was</u> it the police?' I shrugged and he went on, 'It's an idea.' He bit his lip and fluttered his fingers on the side of his glass. 'Did you lose anything?'---to Pat.

'No.'

'Sure?'

'Yes.'

'Listen,' he said with a fixed, merciless look. 'I'm asking you, did you lose anything?'

'No, ' said !' she shouted.

'Anyway,' he said quietly, 'I don't believe it was the police. Could have been.' And he went on fluttering his hands.

'Do you need Pat?' I asked him. 'She could help me buy some curtains.'

'Out of whose money?'

'Mine.'

'Oh, I don't mind <u>that</u>. Why don't you try and find me a carpet, too?' he asked with a crafty look. 'On the same terms.'

'What terms?'

'O.K., Glen, we won't bander words, take this mouse and see she keeps away from the club tonight, that's all. And you be there by seven o'clock sharp because there's people to meet.'

'We could look for a table,' Pat said.

She got up obediently, seeming only a pawn for my or Palermo's whims. The whisky had made her llook tired and pale, and she stood waiting for me, a young girl whose face was strangely swollen beyond its innocenetn proportions, with a rim of tan make-up round her neck, showing the starved pallor of her actual skin.

'Do you know where to go for vurtains?' Palermo asked her with an unusual paternal care, scrweing up his eyes.

'I think so,' she said helplessly, at the door, her bag in her hand.

'Go to Heal's or somewhere like that. A small shop won't do it in under six weeks, and by that time I'll have kicked out of his job, I hope.'

'I'll take the curtains with me, then,' I said.

'If I have my way, you'll walk out between two flicks from Scotland Yard, and your curtains'll be held for your

release in ten years' time.'

I laughed and sia d as I was going, 'I might break out.'

'What's that?' He spoke so sharply and hissingly that I turned.

'I said I might break out of prison,' I said with a smile.

'You'd better keep your mouth shut, Glen. Hear me?' He looked at me with his caught expression. 'I said, do you hear me?'

'Oh, come on,' Pat murmured, leaning against the doorpost.

'Of course, i hear you. I was having a joke.'

'I know your class of jokes, boy, but all I'm going to say is, if you know anything you'd better unknow it right away. There's a hell of a a lot of money behind thais.'

'Behind what?'

'Take him away, for Christ's sake , Pat, He frightends me.'

My smile was wobbly, then as I walked down the stairs it disappeared. I found my extremities suddenly cold, and my cheeks were trembling with a violent involuntary movement.

'What was he talking about?' I asked her when we got into the street.

She shrugged and put her arm in mine, 'I keep out of these thinbs.'

'He's always saying things I don't understand!'

She said nothing to this, only hummed. I wondered if she was being careful and looked at her. But her face plumply told nothing. I steered her in the opposite direction vrom Parson's shop, where I had a nervous feeling that I could find a perfect tab le for the asking. I resolved to go to that shop as soon as possible and find out where I stood. Now that I tried to remember the conversation I'd with that man Parosons I couldn't, and therefore what there could possibly be of the incriminating in it I no longer knew. Of course he would preent me with a bill---this was a sane world, after all---and the bill would be immense. That I had allowed the thing to lie on my floor for an hour was astonishing, since it belonged in a museum. And that Pealermo thought it suspicious was suddenly understandable. There was the chest of drawers, too. The price had been absurd. But perhaps he would give as absurd a price on the carpet, too? And with what conditions? unspoken ones---what were they? My mind refused absolutely to remember the suitcase he had mentioned: the frontier, the visit I must make to him before leaving. But had he really mentioned these things? I had the delirious impression as I walked along the Strand with an arm in mine belonging to a total stranger that life was pulling me along and I was no longer even trotting behind, I was being wrenched by my arms and my feet were dragging, and the nature of the sacrifice would soon become clear to me. There being an element of nightmare in this, something that didn't belong to sane and predictable life as I had been brought up to believe in , there seemed to me no way I could halt the process, my will was as limp---not quite, quite dead---as in that dream when you try frantically to run and your legs remain still. If I could have had a moment's pause from this peculiar gathering routine of events it might have been all right, but I saw the possibility of pausing nowhere, having asked this girl to come shopping with me, having agreed to be at Palermo's club (where was it, by the way?) that evening... Yet what obligations did these things constitue? None at all. Then there was something in me that needed them. What was that need? I had three hundred pounds in the bank, I could go to a hotel tonight and never see that miserab,e narrow house of two storeys again, I could take the next plane out, buy my

ticket right away, have enough in my pocket when I arrived at Milan airport to wire my wife and prepare her for a week's holiday, say, at Santa Margherita away from our farmhouse which could be rather grim in the winter months... But were the three hundreds pounds arrived at---were they got by false pretences? that is, how had they been got? I stumbled and hesitated and wondered. But how could you stop people putting money in your account? opening an account on your behalf? That wasn't it, however. You had to be ab le to explain the money you had. To whom? Well, you nefer knew. It might be necessary, an explanation, one day. Well, he put the money in as an advance. Yet nothing about an advance was mentioned in the contract. Where was the contract, by the way? Had I signed it? I could no longer remember that. It had talked about a loose association. And what was my work? What was the llooose association for? What questions could I answer about that? What were my motives? What had I come seeking? Those qere all questions on which I could fumble endlessly. Then why did I stsay? I thought I was so sane, you can't fumble if you run a vineyard as big as mine... Then what had gone wrong? It occurred to me, as I went blindly down to the Tube at Pat:s side, that I really did believe in the sanity of the world round me, I believed that its coils would turn out to be embraces, things were all right. And it was insanity to sdo so.

'Tht'a s one thing he'd never do, think of making a room nice,' Pat said.

We went to one or two big stores, and managed to get a premise of two weeks for the curtains. They would send a man round the next aff ernoon. They would cost a good bit more than I'd thought.

'You pay for the name,' Pat told me. And I could have sent that to me wifeé A hot panic swept over me. Two weeks---did I mean to be here for another two weeks?

After that we looked aofr a man to fix the door downstairs, but were unsuccessful. A local man, everybody told us. A carpenter and joiner would do it. Just a matter of planing down the bot tom of the door. If we had a plane we could do it ourselves.,. Pat and I were looked at like a young couple---she persisted with her arm in mine, even in the stores: it made my skin tingle in an actual sensation of falsity, the body trying to fly physically out of the situation it didn't fit.

And just before we said cheerio to each other, after taking a cup of coffee at a bar, I asked her, 'Where's this club of Palermo's?'

'Oh, don't you know it?---it's the . You turn round as if you was on your way to Covent Garden Tube....'

And even though I did the best I could, in a ridiculous denial of what both left and right hands were doing, to shut out the directions she was giving, they were clearer in my mind than any directions that had ever been given me, like a map that stayed clearly in my mind and would be there until the tall doors of the club---she described them---closed behind me.

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~~The moment I entered the club my reluctance to go ahead was just surprising but unmistakable. Because there it was so clearly~~

'Isn't this where royalty comes?' Grigg asked with a great grin, stooping his tall body to get out. A man was waiting with a vast umbrella---'Evening, sir, evenig, madame,' in a strong voice.

We strolled into the dim, carpeted entrance while Palermo went on upstairs. Everything was in a great luxurious hush, curtained and carpeted as if against not only impetuous noises but all desires. There were women coming from the powdering room, talking quietly together, giggling, just begfore going up the wide staircase which was once statelyand now looked tired and gilded, with only nights to remember. The air was suffocating, dusty: not an inch of surface that wasn't damasked or covered in some way: a round table stood in the middle of the ent5ance, [illegible] draped over with heavy velvet. Waiters bustled round us, taking our coats, looking into our eyes with mocking expectation, their night-experiences making them waiser than us. They all seemed to know Muriel and paid her special attentions, as to an equal, asking her quedtions under their breath, with little glances at the rest of us. One of them paid a silver [illegible] platter on the table in front of me when I mentioned paying the entrance fee. And, despite my moral conclusion in the cab that I was a lesser person than Palermo and couldn't perform these rituals properly, I thrust a handfull of notes on to the tray with just that suggestion of violence that brought a twinkle of recognition into the man's eyes and made him nod respectfully, with a 'Ta very much, sir'---from one professional to another. I stood there a little staggered at myself. And I was treated to the same glance of appreciation from Grigg as my boss had got a few moments before. Much of my comfortable moral position had come from thinking myself different from them, belonging to another world. And in this gesture of my hand pushed roughly down on to a silver tray with more pound notes than I spent in a month at my vineyard I vindicated my right to be one of them, and thus my obligation to share their---I was going to say guilt, but this mild twinge of agenbite of inwit from the Before isn't enough for our Afterwards, which needs strong rushes of feeling if its dead scenery is to be moved at all, like the hot blush of shame, momentary, unseen, un expected, quickly passed, irrelevant, but so hot that it shakes the whole foundations. Grigg took my [illegible] arm as we walked up the soft stairs, leaving the women behind to spruce themselves again.

'I don't say you have an easy life, Glen,' he murmured, leaning on me slightly. 'Take a lot of from your boss, eh?' And he looked at me with an inquisitive frown.

'What's that?'

'Your boss---' He was a little out of breath. 'Not so easy to bear with, sometimes, eh?'

'No. He's all right, I suppose.'

'Listen,' he said, 'when did you leave last night, exactly?'

'Just about dawn.'

'You went on the river with Charles and the rest, on that crazy punting party?'

'No.' I looked at him with surprise: 'You don't remember me leaving?'

'Well,' he answered a bit gruffly, 'there were about fifty guests.'

'You were crying, in bed.'

'I remember you mauling Lou about in the kitchen, that's all.'

'I didn't touch her.'

'More fool you,' he said as we passed into the long room that was all immense chintz curtains to the floor and pillared corners

ary. She did the usual thing, fell in love with him. He's so damned ugly you wonder what he was doing when they were handing out faces. She got through that, OK. Well, it's worth every dollar, Glen, because I couldn'thold my job down without it. We're down to once a week now. Some people take their analysrs with them, but they're in the presidential class. I had to explain that to her, though,' he grumbled. 'She said, let's take the doc with us, Jeff---' (imitating her in a highpitched voice'. 'I said, like hell. We 're a professor and his wife.'

'You go to this analust every week?' I said.

'We went in for this group therapy at first,' he said. 'And, b oy, I was getting more neurotic every day. We go singly now. I tried to steal his notebook once.'

'You did?'

'tried to find out who she was havingan affair with. [illegible] Know what he said to me next time? He said, look through my notes on your wife. Take the whole damn lot, he said. And I said, I will. I spent the whole week going through them. And I found myself. Yes, that's just what I found---myself. The same damned desires, the same everything. The only difference was that she thought about men and I thought about women. I mean, that was the only difference. And do you know what she said to me at the end of the week? How did you like my note-books? You have to get used to that when you go into analysis really and trult. I reckon I learned more about honesty than I'd ever done before. So we sat down and talked over about half the personality problems we thought were secrets. That helped. I mean it helped the therapy. He said it was a stage, and a stage he wanted to arrive at. I came to the clonclusion I hate her so much because she s me.'

'You were never honest enough to tell her you hated her, though.'

'It's so damned obvious we don't have to put it into words.' He looked me in the eyes. 'Inow what? She gets a kick out of your columns on me.'

'She does,.'

'I said to her one day, I said,, who the hell's side you on? No, you're dead right, Glen. There s no honesty between us. We're like two sieges. Mustn't go too close else we get boiling lead in our faces. But that protracted discussion of personality problems--- I reckon it lasted a couple of eyears---cleared the undergrowth, in front of the hatred. Now we just face each other. All that needed clearing away.' He leaned away from me and looked at the grimy, lifeless ceiling. 'If we could come on the earth with all the undergrowth cleared away, wouldn't that be marvellous? We could inherit the earth, Glen. We really could.'

Selsey went and sat in Muriel's place, and began talking to Palermo across Lou, his flushed, massive face in his hands, so heavy that it seemed beyond the control of any nervous system he might contain in his body. He was frowning xown at the floor as Palermo talked, and it seemed to me that he was hearing about Grigg. the new contact. It stirred me with excitement dimly, even though I might possibly be mashed in them, to hear the grinding of these wheels of power---influence and pressure and alliance in their relentlessly tiny movements, always over [illegible] lunch tables or in clubs. I heard Selsey murmur the name Junior once or twice; and Lou stifled a yawn, glanced stealthily across the table at her husband. I guessed that she had slept all day, because of the clearness of her dark eyes, and the way her shoulders sloped away from her bneck, not slumping.

If anything, the club was fuller than before: it must be close on three in the morning. I wanted to leave, but the chair was too comfortab le and my legs felt they would never unstick themselves until light came through, with a smell of morning air. I began to think of the vineyard, watching the house from the first hill, behind which Luigi lived with his family. Sometimes---only two or three times--- I had drunk with him and Ercole and ~~xxxxxxx~~ the 'Sicilian' (he was only called that, being a stranger from the Abruzzi) after the women had gone to bed and then walked back before the first birds had started, and stood on that hill waiting for the first traces of light like the finest dust to show at the end of the vineyard, and the house to appear below in its humped and sprawling array, with courtyard and pigeon loft and pump and cement platform for compost.

'Seems to me you've wrecked your life, too, Glen,' Grigg said quietly, close to my shoulder again, gazing ahead. 'There's talk about your wife but---?' He shrugged. 'Lou said best not to enquire. That bitch is good at the implied smear OK, and that's God's truth,' he growledx into my ear.

I said nothing to this, only noticed that he waited for a reply, with a little glance at me sideways, and then gave up.

'This Junior guy,' he murmured. 'Quite some man. Your boss has the biggest coup of his life in front of him.'

'How?'

'Wouldn't you like the Klydonhall accou t---?' He winked at me richly. 'Just supposing you was interested in money.'

'What's that?' I found I could keep him in focus now, and his words made more meaning than before, but I was hopeless for innuendoes and would be afor a good many hours.

'Well, it's common knowledge, so Charles was telling me, that ~~xxxxxx

not particularly at me but at---all God's creatures made like me.

'She was right,' he whispered, 'I should have hired a dozen analysts and brought 'em over at this rate. You see what happens,' he asaid anxiously, with the sweat pouring down his face suddenly, 'when we're let loose? I get all tied up, I can't stop myself thinking, I can't make out who's my friend and who's not, here I am talking to you like I talked to you last night, but I know you're a skunk, I know you jumped my wife last night in the kitchen, I know you two slimy bastards got me down to London to bribe me with proposals from Klydonhall and get me fixed up with this poor damned whore Muriel for the night, I know you used my own friend Charles Dornelling for the purpose, the best guy I ever knew and the closest friend I ever had, and you use him---!' He was close on tears again, and I wondered when Lou would notice. But instead she got up coolly and went in front of Palermo towards the dance floor.

This act made Grigg look up with a shocked expression, his mouth gaping. And he came to.

'You're dry, old chap,' Selsey said to him, and poured whisky into his glass. Then, with a chuckle, 'Look at that one,' nodding towards Cahrles Dornelling, who had fallen asleep and had his legs stretched out, making not a sound, his face in the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ utmost repose.

'Why don't you pour me some, too,' I said to Selsey wit h a narrow look that made him flinch, 'unless you hate pleasing sewage rats?'

'No, not at all,' he said in the most matter-of-fact way, 'I'd be delighted.' And he poured me the last in the bottle.

Grigg took his glass at once and drained it, gasping. 'I needed that,' he said. And then, with a frowning glance round, 'Where's Mouse?'

'Dancing with Junior,' Selsey said, too tired at this hour to writhe any more. And he added to me, 'Why, surely people in your line don't have thin skins, do they?'

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pseudo-order which we call the obvious. Pseudo-science will give way to its own findings---that the universe, like the body, knows its own business without guidance from the brain. A science of truth---that is observation---may even then be possible.

And then the last explosion will have been heard. But it might destroy all life. That is the question. The explosion was the first statement of pseudo-science, as it will be the last. That is still, and must be, its whole basis---the explosion of the combustion engine, the explosion of steam in harness, the explosion of the jet, the explosion of rockets, the explosion finally of the nucleus of created matter, in an illusion that destruction tears a hole in nature through which we may peer into the secrets of birth... But we peer with eyes. You always come back to that. Through space and time. You <u>can</u> escape space and time, yes---in a final act of impatience with the stillness outside you put an end to yourself: That's an effective end of space and time: you destroy the eyes and desires and doubts that filter through them. If space and time are ours only, then they can be ended by ending us': so that you leave the stillness outside to go on as before, beyond space and time... <u>That</u> is the question being weighed in the Afterwards, this deadly pause of human life: to be or not to be.

No wonder that we seemed to wait, the five of us at this table in the gloom of night, one of us alsleep, not for decisions of eternity but for each other's. As I looked across at Selsey I had the illusion that-- perhaps for having insulted me---he had the key to our behaviour, or a little part of it. And Mureiel had another part. Even Charles Dornelling groaning in his chair, his wine-gills so flushed that they looked mauve and dangerous, was waiting for further developments from the rest of us. Grigg was waiting for---his wife? his enemy dancing with her? I looked for guidance all the time: I wondrered how these other men were connected with each other, what they required me to do: I had wondrede continually since arriving in London what my role was. But why should I have a role? Why should they be connected with each other? Why should they require me to do anything when they themselves---yes, surely!---were asking the same thing of me: what does he require of me? For the moment we came before each other it seemed to transpire that we were a plan of some kind. We c lapped eyes on a man, and he seemed the non-stop unfolding of a plan. One day we would see it in completion, but we never did. And he himself knew nothing of such a plan. What were we doing wrong then? We were waiting for each other. And we should be attending to ourselves. We should ne making our own dalogue with eternity, but we had been taught that the only dialogue open to us was that with men. Why didn't I jump to my feet and go back to the bed I'd prepared for myself with so much trouble? But wasn't that another dialogue, with yet another man---the bed? I thought with a chilled foreboding of what I might have got myself into there: the carpet, the delicious chest of drawers... Yet wasn't it absurd? How could I have got myself <u>into</u> anything? Wasn't that only my assumption that the other man, breathing heavily in his shop, had a plan? And what was the plan? There was none. Yet I couldn't believe this. Then let me take the chest of drawers back, the priceless scarpet... But I wouldn't. I could, I wanted to, but I would be precevented by not wishing to see what degree of hold he had over me. Perhaps he had none, but I didn't wish to test the matter. I would rather leave it and hope at the end---when I left London, because that I did mean to

do---God forbid that that should be prevented---no!---at the end when I had my bags in my hands again on the way to the station... I would hope him to be nice enough, civil enough, gracious enough, not to press me for the pound of flesh I had given... That was my degree of freedom! That was what I'd come in search of!

I felt so sick and numbed, and gnawed with irritation, that when Selsey nudged Charles Dornelling awake and murmured good night to us I said and did nothing, though Grigg got up and shook hands, bending his tall body towards Selsey's vastness. Muriel went with him. As far as I could gather they were going to follow Junior to keep him out of his mischief. I had the irritated feeling that he practised this mischief for attention. He got himself into the wrong parties, Charles explained with a bland yawn, and had to be extricated from the hands of police, or gangs, or card-sharpers, you never knew which. Muriel looked impatient, with a sharp, pale face: a wife with her man on the loose would have looked no less so. She played with her hand-bag nervously. And I sat in the bowels of my chair glowering at them. Dornelling gave me a gingerly look, seeming to expect no better than I gave him, while Selsey went through an extra-civil goodbye with Grigg, shaking his hand and saying in a professional undertone, 'You won't forget tomorrow, will you? I know he's looking forward to seeing you.'

Muriel said to Grigg when they were moving away, 'I'll be back.'

He had sat down again now and simply growled at her, without riaising his voice, 'You'd better be.'

Grigg

'Yes, Glen,' he said to me when they were gone, 'unless I'm mistaken this is hell itself, and you expect a man to cry, don't you?' I nodded without in terest. 'Well, all I try and tell people is, go through it with your eyes open. You're in hell, the whole god-damn bunch of you?'

'You might be more in hell than they are.'

'Could be. But going by the looks on their faces, that's crap.' He spat the word at me in a final way, still looking ahead. 'No, people don't want to have their eyes open, that's the truth. I'll tell you what I'm going to do tonight, Glen---I'm going to sleep with that whore, and my wife is going to---well, she'll do some-thing. That's the truth and it's hell all right because I don't even like the girl, I mean she's a nice kid and all that, but she still treats sex like heaven, I can tell that, and that'sno good when you're not up there. At least my wife don't do that. I can tell you another thing, that's why your boss goes for her. She does things like in hell. No fancy business. I'm being clear, Glen. That's all I talk about or write about. If you're walking into hell and there's no other path, well, get to know it. They don't like me for it. They don't like me saying there's ways of making war and find out what they are before the you do 'em because you'll do 'em anyway. If you'll do 'em anyway, may as well make a good job of it.'

'Why?'

'Want to make a bad job of it? I challenge that, Glen---I challenge any man to sincerely want to do a bad job on anything.'

'I'd want to do a bad job of mudrder.'

'No, you wouldn't. You'd want to a do a clean , quick job, you wouldn't to have the scfeams protracted, people dying of fall-out exposure slowly over five or ten years. Is that what you would want?'

'No.'

extermination, those alliances would not have seemed so indispensable to them?) The Professor put the whole matter succinctly when he said at the end, 'We have substituted the obsolete European expression balance of power with the far more effective balance of terror. In this day and age that is the only way to preserve peace.'

I wandered back into the other room and threw the newspaper down sulkily. He watched me with a slight smile, his mouth open, nodding with irony.

'I suppose that's all my fault,' I said.

'Well, the smear in it's your fault.'

'I tell you I didn't know who I was talking to. Anyway, I don't give a damn any more.'

'You never did. I could see that on your facethe first day.'

I gave him a questioning look but his face was in repose, as after a simple statement of fact. I wondered if he was right, qnd if not caring had given me the power to get this job. For I did have a job: I had a cheque for fifty quid in my pocket. It was paying well.

'I haven't done a damn stroke today,' he murmured, casting a tired sideglance through to the other office. 'If every night was like that I'd be pensioned off.'

'I'm supposed to have a drink with him tonight, shall I go?' I asked.

'Who?'

'Grigg.'

'You know which side your bread is buttered.'

'I don't known anything any more, ' I said.

'How much did he give you?'

'Who?'

'Jack Ryan.'

'Fifty,' I said.

'Icould have got you double. That's a damned good story, by the way.' I noticed the admiration in his face, for a moment.

'No phonecalls?' I said.

'No.'

'Not from Lou?'

'Lou! She won't be alive till this evening, not after that.'

A change had happened in my feelings, which I realised only now, as I sat by the window again gazing down at the street: I was glad that story had appeared. It was like engaging in war. War against Grigg was something after my heart. So——as I watched a filthy van loading up with empty crates——I found a purpose in this life which I had no control over. At least, in my tired state when thoughts no longer connected with the body, it seemed a purpose: it cleared me of shame and made me feel I would know what I was doing for the rest of the day.

'I'm going to feed Jack Ryan with all the stories I can,' I said.

'You just try. Klydonhall's got interested.'

'What's he got to do with it?'

'You ask Jack Ryan.'

It started to rain outside and I began to think of my vines again, praying that there wouldn't be another spring like last year, when the sap failed to rise from the roots and the grapes refused to flower in June, because of the cold and furious winds. I, that went on I was ruined. No more consolation even there. They've got you by the

avalanches of rain and the

helped me a lot, Glen. That's how I know you've been in the business longer than you say. You had that man eating out of my hand.'

'I thought he was eating out of mine.'

'Well, that should be the same thing,' he said with quiet reproff, 'if we're in partnership.'

'As a partner I don't see what we want with the Orangery.'

'I have to have someone on the artistic side, Glen. I can't have chaos again like there was on that Wonder Apple ad. He could have saved me all that.'

'How?'

'Wait till you see him at work.'

'As long as he doesn't interfere with me,' I said.

'You don't have to worry about that. He's never been taken in the nude in his life. He told me himself.' I looked at him with surprise and he nodded confirmingly, 'I got interested in a bushy beard plus nudity, I thought it struck off that unlikely and fainty unwholsesome contrast that the human being is interested in. But he wasn't having any. Besides his paunch, which for his age is a public disgrace.' And he added, 'Oh, bbby the way I heard you're dead set against tails and riding boots?'

'Against what?'

'The Mouse told me this morning when I checked that she'd concluded formal arrangements with Grigg last night. Well, I don't mind. Your taste is probab ly better than mine. She tells me you haven't seen the Preface, by the way.'

'No, I haven't,' I said, again hiding my ignorance in case it stopped a cheque coming my way.

'Have a look at it overlunch, it's real art, Glen. I mean, as the Junior says, you've got to have some values going, believe in something, and well, I mean it's not just nudes we're doing...'

'Nudes again,' I growled, hiding my head in my hands and yawning.

'Selsey said to me this morning he forgives an artist everything, even what you said to him last night.'

'What did I say to him?'

'You said he had no brains.'

'He hasn't.'

'What's that got to do with it?' Palermo said, giving me a little scowl in his turn.

'I'm nervous,' he said, jumping and clapping his hands on his jacket-pockets as if he'd lost something. 'As who wouldn't be when Lisle Swiburne gets on loose. She'll be having hysterics.'

'Who?'

'His wife.'

'Is that anything unusual?' I asked.

'Wait till you see it. Pat told me she was on the phone this morning, three or four times. I said I was out for the next week. Still in the States.'

'Wise of you.'

'And that you'd taken over the office temprarily,' he added with a twitching little smile.

I looked up at him, trying to divine what this meant. 'I'm not supposed to talk to her, am I?'

'Well,' he said, going to the door, still making that clapping motion of his hands, 'just see what she has to say, out of kindness.' And he went downstairs. 'See you after lunch,' he called out. 'We shoot at four o'clock precisely.'

filthy studio off Gerrard Street, with just an oil-stove to heat us. Naturally I was Adam and Muriel was Eve again. We insisted on Mike leaving before we, in the words of the preface, 'devested'. Palermo had raced me there in a taxi, swearing and giving me his little silver glances of anger, smoking hurriedly, with puffs that sounded like dry kisses,

'What s the hrry?' I asked him.

'Junior wants this on the market in three weeks flat, that s why.'

'Did you get his account, by the way?'

'What else do you think? I'm launching him as an artistic type, which he is in a way. I mean, we've got to cover his association with this weapon.'

'What weapon?'

'You were there last night, weren't you? The idiots call it Massacre 11. Dornelling's been selling it to Junior for a twelve month, and now---through me, because I choose to be ana amateur--- they've roped in Grigg. Well,' he added with exhaustion, 'I got something out of it. Not only cash. I was determined on that. By Christ, that woman must have done research on it...'

'You're smoking again.'

'Yes. He said the ticker was facing up nicely to all the demands being made on it. He said he could guess what they were. Artful old bugger, my quack.'

'Oh, I was wondering, who wrote that preface?'

'I did.'

'You?'

'Clever , isn't it? Yo see what kind of man you're looking down your nose at. One word I couldn't get over and that was randiness, then Selsey told me that word concupiscence.'

'Is that going in front of the photographs?'

'Yes, but I won't sign it. I'll get some poor mutt with a name to sign it. Give him a hundred quid. It covers us against obscenity.'

'What does?'

'The preface. We were thinking of an obscenity trial, you make a hell of a packet that way, but we decided against it because Klydonhall wants to give his reputation a face-lift, it needs it, he'd make love to drainpipes if his cronies let him.'

'I'm Adam, am I?'

'That's right. If you don't mind me saying so, you look like him too. Tp the life,' he said, we as got out of the taxi.

'What is Massacre KK 11?' I asked him as walked to the studio.

'It's one of these things that achieves limited descrtuction. That s what they're trying to perfect now. I mean, they don't want to destroy the world each time.'

'It's nulcear, then?' I said.

'Oh, yes. An Anglo-American things---at least, that's Dornelling's idea. You know, America supplies the bomb and the motors and Christ knows what else and we supply the compass on the nose. But don't think there isn't money in it. Klydonhall might work the contract his way---he's got armamment interests in the States. Dornelling gets a commission, an no chicken feed either.'

'Wheels within wheels,' I said.

'That's right. But I make them go round.'

'Does that make you feel good or bad?' I asked him.

'I didn't come on this earth to be either. I came to survive.' He added as we went down the basement stairs, 'Yes, an obscenity trial would have sold us about a million copies. But there's the laywyers, and months of briefs and then I'd have had to be stood bail or some-

husband is. You can tell her that. Tell her the French police may know, as he probably bribed them to let him make a break. Of course she s mad. She's in a state of terror, Glen, and I haven't got time to look after all mad mice at once, Muriel s bad enough.'

'What am I to say to her? I hardly know her. I don't know her husband. She doesn't like me. She makes me turn my back on her and then look at her through my fingers.'

'What are you talking about?'

'I have to sit there looking at her with my eyes closed.'

'Sounds to me you two belong together,' he said, and slammed down the phone.

I ran upstairs and changed quickly, back into my dark suit, with a fresh shirt, a midnight-blue tie and, this time, cufflinks of tiny yellow buttons which had once been on a Regency waistcoat. That I was seeing a woman, however mad, was a relief. I made my bed carefully, so that I could throw myself into it when I returned. I wanted to lock my door from the outside but couldn't find the key. It was exciting to know that somebody wanted my presense. Or had Palermo palmed me off on her? Well, it was said that ~~xxxxxx~~ we are fascinated by those we hate: and perhaps she was fascinated by me. I hurried down to the Strand, through the biting, dry air again, and found a taxi at once. I had over twenty pounds in my pocket. It had refused to diminish, that sum I got from the bank. Nobody seemed to want me to pay. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ And I:d be getting at least fifty a week from Grigg. Should I take a story in to Ryan tonight, for the early edition? It made me feel professional, and the lights outside---from the Vaudeville and then the Adelphi, like the dark hump of Charing Cross station and the broad hushed Trafalgar Square, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ seemed united professionally, ine one comprehensible unit, for people like me, speeding between the traffic in their ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxxx~~ taxis, steadying themslves with the strap while their minds fulfilled another professional plan for the nourishment of the city, which gratefully and greedily gnawed all day and spewed out more lights and meetings in hotel rooms and offices smelling of contracts. I walked into the foyer of the hotel and straight up the stairs, since I remembered the number of her com. That she was waiting in her room seemed to mean something.

I knocked on the door. A man yelled 'What?' harshly and I opened it, suddenly frightened of a plot. He was vast, dressed in evening clothes with a white silk scarf as if he'd just thrown himself into an armchair after the theatre, and he looked at me with such an enormous frown that my sense of the professional went pop like the weasle and I realised I wasn't one at all.

'I thought I told you people no visitors,' he said, still frowning.

'Miss de Lisle Swiburne told me to call.'

'What, on me?'

'Well, here.'

'I don't who in the name of hell Miss de Lisle is but you can tell her from he she s got a damnec heek. Now get out.'

'Isn't she living here, then?'

He no longer looked at me. Apparently he was reading something. All he said was, 'Get out, ponce. Boy, if I can't recognise your type anywhere! Do they run a service in this hotel, then?' And he flapped at his ear with his index finger, denoting just what he said, a ponce.

'You stupid old bugger,' I said, quietly, 'I'm looking for a lady.' But he didn't hear this as I had partly closed the door. I wished I had the assurance to say it loudly to his face. In the corridor again I felt giddy. There were simply doorways, and carpetting. No one

shut my mouth firmly and kept it like that.

'You see, Palermo and George---'

'Whose George?'

She closed her eyes with irritation and was about to go on when she seemed to understand my question for the first time. 'Oh,' she said, 'that's my husband. He's a nice guy. But he got mixed up with your boss, I'm afraid, and that started a downhill trend.'

'I thought your husband broke into banks?'

'Oh, now, Glen, come on, come on.' And she smiled at me in such a peculiar way that I nearly burst out laughing.

'Why, doesn't he?'

'Of course he does. But he wouldn't have gone back to that if these people hadn't made him feel he was cock of the walk. There's a man who always laughs at me, I can't stand to be in his company, name of Klydonhall, now George picked up with him, you see, and , hell, I didn't like that. Can you understand me?'

'Yes.'

'I think George brought off that last big tickle in Toulouse just to let Vivien Klydonhall read about him in the papers. Oh, he often dreamed about that particular tickel, Glen. He had maps and routes lined up, for an escape through Spain to Lisbon. And on to Tangiers where he has contacts.'

A knock came at the door and she made a jump, putting her hands up to her mouth. She motioned me to silence and went to the door on tiptoe.

'Who is that?' she asked, trembling.

'The wine you ordered, madame.'

'Go over to the other wall.'

'I beg your pardon, madame?' came the voice from the other side of the door.

'Go and stand over by the other wall. Go on, quick.'

She then bent down and looked through the keyhole. 'It's the waiter, OK,' she said, and unlocked.

'Oh, ' I said with a laugh, 'I wondered why you did that!'

She gave me an impatient look and hurried the waiter with his tray into the room ,locking the door again for the short interval that he was with us. He gave her one or two gingerly looks, and stared at me too.

Suddenly she asked him, standing close behind him so that he gave a start, 'What's my name?'

'Eh?' He turned and looked at her in an alarmed way. 'Mrs Newman.'

'That's right. What I'm paying out to sweeten these people is quite something,' she said to me, sitting on the bed again.

'You could change hotels, couldn't you?' I said.

'Didn't I ask to keep your mouth shut?' she answered politely, at which the waiter nearly dropped the bottle in his hand. And he gave me a very peculiar look.

He had two glasses and in a most professional way swilled the top of the wine into it and set it aside for throwing waway, as I had only seen it done in Italy, once. Then he poured my glass and handed it to me.

'I've only seen that done once before,' I told him.

'Here, listen.' Jean said, getting up and almost pushing him out of the room, 'this isn't a smoking lounge.'

I heard him say something that I thought was Neapolitan on the other side of the door, and there was silence again.

'Aren't you having any of this?' I asked her, taking another

great plain now, only the plain is thousands of miles of sky, you see it won't be a lonely place any more, ~~you'll get the feeling that there are people everywhere, who make the earth a marvellous place to live in for the first time—I'll tell you how because they make it really small for the first time, so small it isn't worth a cuss fighting for anything on it, and, boy, if anybody wants to fight, I mean in the old-fashioned sense, he'll get something, there are people floating round the earth to keep him in order and he might find himself paralysed or something before he raises a hand.~~ As for raising an army, that's going to be a joke!——nobody'd dare, their guns might be radioactive inside thirty seconds. Nobody seems to have thought of it before, Glen, but we've got to make security on this earth, ~~and that's the only way to do it,~~ to have the whole thing watched night and day, we've got to live with the fact that we're alone, there's nobody up there watching, nobody seeing after us, we've got to do our own security—'

'But I thought you believed in God?' I asked him in a surprised voice.

'What's God got to do with it, Glen?' he asked, ~~with a chuckle,~~ drinking off half his tea and ~~then~~ smacking his lips. 'He's there to look after the universe, not our interests. He's been trying to drum that into us for thousands of years, 'Look after yourselves,' 'see to your own seucrity, that's what I gave you a mind for!' ~~Why else do you think he gave us a brain—just to sit and spin and think up new things to talk about? He just keeps his do it all, and then blame him when something goes wrong?~~ No, Glen, what you're talking about is the old notion of fate and that has nothing to do with religion. While we're in this life we 've got to look after ourselves, we're alone, so damned alone we could ~~just~~ kill ourselves quietly one day and ~~then~~ nobody'd notice, ~~just~~ out of shere damned misery and hating all the smells, and the ~~the god damn~~ sweat,' ~~and...?~~ ~~He was silent for a moment, then gave me a wink and finished his tea. In this moment I had an odd impression that though he was talking sincerely he was also like a character that had been rehearsed: there was no pose, but something that missed the xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx real flavour of life all the time, so that I had the sense of only my brainworking, and of an immense loneliness round me which I had never experienced before in this city, not a loneliness of such objectivity immenisity, that didn't involved my private feelings at all.~~

'How's Lou?' I asked him, hoping to get him off the lecture.

'Oh,' he said after a pause, not connecting at first, 'er——' ~~a broad smile——going through hell like me.' And he returned to his own thoughts.~~ 'Yes,' he said, leaning back heavily in ~~the~~ his soft chair, 'Klydonhall's quite a kid. You know he's a great adherent of this ~~idea of what~~ they call abandonment.'

'What's that?'

'Well, ~~it means abandoning your local problems, which we all have, to a larger area of government. Call it the Atalantic world if you like but it's a damned silly name because the Atlantic's only a part of what's going to be realised.~~ It spells the end of countries, ~~It means abandoning yourself to a bigger concept. No France, no England, and——in the end——no America. That's abandonment.~~ At the beginning it arouses rsesenment, Glen, as he was saying last night. ~~Resphxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

mean pride

in the sky, ~~circling the earth night and day,~~ what does a little freedom mean, what ~~is~~ are the deliberations of a chamber of deputies ~~in Rome or Berlin or London amount to, weighed in~~ or house of congress in the reality of such vast events?

~~'You mean these satellites?' I said.~~

~~He chuckled, presumably at the expression of innocence on my face, because he then chucked me under the chin.~~ 'Glen!' he said. 'Glen! No wonder you've been smearing me since the day I touched dock! You don't know what the hell I'm talking about! ~~And that's why you're better placed than anybody else I know to repair the image of the big bad wolf and bring me down to the dimensions of a thinking mind. I have one, you know. That's right, Glen, satellites.~~'

, presumably because of my look of innocence.

'Won't that

~~'Do you think they~~ interfere with the weather?' I asked him.

'I've noticed in Italy---'

'Terrestrial weather, you mean?' he asked ~~carefully~~.

'Well, that's the weather we have,' I said. ~~'The only one, too.'~~

We'll have the freedom of the skies. Our little freedoms won't be needed any more. Laboratories, white lecture-rooms, TV units, research groups - they'll be circling round the universe!'

~~'And that's just what I mean by your old-fashioned styles of thought, Glen. It's the weather we have, at the moment; and the only one, at the moment. The answer to your question, Glen, is~~ 'Why, it could be, yes, ~~probably. I think we've messed about with some radioactive bolts, and~~ It seems that just about anything you do two hundred miles up, even a mild fart, has some effect the earth is going to feel sooner or later. These are problems, they mean ~~big~~ changes. ~~They mean changes, Glen,~~ mostly in people's concepts, and that's what I've chosen as my job, to help do the changing. If you can mess up terrestrial weather, you can make it good too! These things come slowly, Glen, but not so damn slowly as all that, seeing what we've done in the last ~~ten and~~ twenty years.'

~~'But~~ 'What's the point of getting to the moon?' I said. ~~'What are you going to do there?'~~

'The moon?' he said. ~~'Here, listen, kid, I feel~~ I ought to ~~have you in tow all the time, and~~ charge you tuition fees! What you don't know is wonderful. You sound as if you read the papers! Listen, when you put all those smears in the paper about me and mine, do you believe 'em? Of course you don't! Do I? Of course I don't! Yet you believe any crap they put out to keep you dazed. ~~Now I disagree with that crap. I think we've got to take the plunge and get the people's minds reorientated.~~'

~~'What crap do you mean?' I said.~~

~~About heroes getting to the moon and~~ dancing ~~about in space~~ on the moon and wondering if Dante was right and there are white souls up there, whiter than the white of the moon!' He laughed. 'Yes, I should think not! ~~No, Glen, that's a cover story, the moon~~ Oh, you could send someone there. A station may be, in time. But ~~it's~~ damned expensive. ~~And a~~ radio-telescope can tell you more or less what's there. No, Glen, ~~what you don't notice, and what the papers put in small print, because advertisers like you haven't been called in to work on it, is that a few days after our heroes mess about in space the real thing goes up, and~~ the real thing is a laboratory ~~that is going to hold in a very few months from now~~ with a panel of men ~~able to~~ who can see every aspect of the earth from the military point of view ~~and control~~ nuclear explosions and prevent ~~them and for exercises.~~ That's the security I was talking of! That's your moon! ~~But~~ you've got to ~~advertise for~~ the millions of crumbs all over the ~~death~~watching television ~~like lazy apes. I don't agree, myself. I think they ought to be told.~~ But apparently they need moon stories. Well, you can't blame ~~us~~ if they believe ~~'em!~~

I should guess.

and taken pretty pictures

too!

sitting in their lazy arses

Moonshine for

me

nothing new ever came about without it. The first stuttering accents of the babe are speech in embryo, that's what I always say.'

I had no answer to this either. I sat there trying to think of something to say but the more I forced myself the emptier I was. So I drank my tea, looked at the other people who---in their English world, where I belonged---sat remote from us, speaking an unintelligble language. Everything around us seemed abolished. There were no sights or sounds, only thoughts countering thoughts. Yet alone I would have been comfortable, enjoying the tea, listening to snatches of cosy talk from the other tables, reading the paper, dreaming myself slowly from the afternoon to glittering evening, in a rhythm so different from the one I was in now, under the domination of will and brain and plan, as to be a different world. And how could I say to him, I belong to a different world? What meaning could those words have for the person addressed? But finally that was all that could be said.

I decided all at once to say them. 'I suppose we just live in different worlds...'

'You're damned right we do. But not for long.'

He looked at me sideways. 'We all ive in different worlds. Your poet just about summed that up when he said, 'Every man's an island.''

'He also said for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for me. Meaning we're islands but we know what it feels like being an island, therefroe we are the same, we aren't separate at all.'

He nodded. To judge from his face, registering with deliberate solemn appreciation what I had just said, he was now in a state of non-answering.

'Glen,' he said, putting his hand on mine for a moment, 'I'm so damned unhappy I---' He looked into my eyes, and again I found myself in the same state as with Jean de Lisle Switburne the previous evening: his feelings were as remote from me as toys.

'Why?'

'Oh, well.' He shrugged and got up. 'I can see by her face,' he whispered as I got up too and he took my arm, guiding me towards the door, she's getting more out of it than ever before in her life. I thought it was a game and it was OK at first, but she's up in her room all day waiting for dark, they're at it all night, Glen--- what the hell do they do? Does he talk to you about it?' he asked, facing me, in the foyer with the first real suffering I had seen in his face, not recognize at all. with a wildly imploring look.

'Who, Palermo?' He nodded, waiting impatiently. 'No, Why don't you get her back to Cambridge?'

'I'm so damned scare of losing that I can't speak---I mean, I knew she'd refuse, she did it once before in the States, I couldn't stand that. But the time she did it before, that was chickenfeed to this; She's eating that man, up every day, Glen, she sits and thinks about it, sex is protruding out of her all sides, when I try and get some on my own account she kind of wrenches it out of me, if you know what I mean---she seems to have enough for ten women--- she treats me like I was anyone, and that excites me, Glen, and the more I'm excoted the more I think about her---it's getting so as I don't sleep at nights, even when I'm in my bed---that's why I talk

Insert

We sat there for a time in silence, sipping our tea and saying nowt.

~~Well, he said, I reckon~~

~~Then, he said~~

'Well,' he said, 'I reckon that's enough for one day!' And after a pause he added, 'Then, do you mind if we talk about my personal affairs? I think it'd help me.'

'Go ahead,' I said

~~To my surprise he spoke~~

'I can see...'

n.p. ~~a little crazy sometimes~~ When she comes in round six in the morning I'm red hot and it seems she can go on where she just left off, she don't need the sleep, she gets up at two in the afternoon as fresh as a girl---what would you do?'

'Let her have her fill,' I said, 'and get back to Cambridge yourself. At least you can sleep there and do some work and have a few friends in.'

n.p. ~~But the only thing that keeps me going~~ 'All I've got is the Mouse,' ~~I mean~~ he went on. 'Playing around with a kid that doesn't interest me ~~even~~ enough to get a stand. ~~It~~ is all the revenge I can take, ~~I mean not revenge exactly but it makes her think I'm having a hell of a good time too, so she doesn't lose her respect for me.~~ I pray sometimes, so fervently, Glen, I wonder there can be a God, because he doesn't answer me.'

~~We were standing in the middle of a crowded foyer, he holding on to my arm still and speaking in an urgent voice, while people passed us by closely and glanced in our direction with unusual timitidity, hearing words of feeling.~~

'How long will it go on, can you tell me that?' ~~He asked.~~ He stared into my eyes, ~~I noticed his were bloodshot~~ 'I mean, what's usual with him? How long does he run an affair?'

'I don't know. But he gets tired of things.'

'He does?'

'Why don't you go back to Cambridge?'

The repetition of this advice seemed to waken him. ~~He removed his hand from my arm and said,~~ 'OK, Glen, I'll give you a call.' Half-turning from me he added, 'Thanks for listening to my junk. Oh, and look after the Mouse, won't ya?'

~~'Why?'~~

'She gets some funny ideas, ~~you know,~~

~~'What about?'~~

'Well, she's been having some routine visits from the police. Your boss ~~has been~~ keeping out of his flat for that reason.'

~~'That's why he's always in my bed.'~~

He whispered to me, putting his face close to mine for a moment, 'I've stood outside in the street looking up at your window for hours on end, Glen, knowing they're inside---! And they make a noise too. It seems heaven is taking place up there!'

'But what are these police visits?'

'Oh,' he shrugged. ~~'She's just a kid.~~ Good night, Glen.' And he held out a strong hand.

'Good night.'

~~'I'll give you a call.'~~ ~~He~~ He went swiftly up the main staircase, looking distinguished. ~~Again I walked out into the dazzling lights, this time clear in the head. I was determined not to have Palermo in my big bed to night, anyway.~~ The words E la sua voluntate è nostra pace kept turning in my head. I hurried home through the sidestreets. Tonight I would ~~leave~~ my body ~~for~~ God, ~~to take,~~ in silence and sleep, so that He could work on the glands ~~and valves~~ and veins and tissues, ~~and I would wake up more myself---that is, more His---in the morning. At the moment I walked without knowing whose feet they were, and I seemed to be looking at the dry, hard pavements with somebody else's consciousness.~~

That's

To my surprise he had waited for me up, & to do so too.

like it.

'It's her job.

lease

by taking a 'good night' sex

I was determined not to have Palermo in my bed tonight.

bring them back to sanity

each new shock, and wondered about it, then consoled ourselves when it died down that we were living after all in the Before, with homes and friends and countries of our own, and places to go to, and real thoughts to have, and the shock receding into the past after only two or three days---the sun came out, a breeze came from the sea, the cafés put their tab les out again---seemed not to have been there at all, only a state of our nerves. And so we made life in the Afterwards bearab le to ourselves, by becoming dreamers.

Even what had happened this morning, in my room, under the arc lamps, with Palermo focussing and refoucussing while the Mouse and I yawned and shifted and took a sip of beer, was in the Before, it gave the illusion of a life that had meaning and continuity. But in fact it had none. It was only [illegible] the act of going through certain motions. That was all our life amounted to. If we were at the mercy of things we didn't understand and which we never saw, if we could never predict from one moment to the next our little destinty, if even the weather could no longer be predicted from the state of the sky, if even what was happening to us at this very moment in the intimacy of our own bodies was unknown to us, then far from being our own masters we didn't properly exist at all, we only lived in the scenery from the past, consisting of other people's experiences and other people's real thoughts, but not our own. Our own lives were bids for reality, but not reality themselves.

And if Grigg was right all the earth would become a no man's land with people in lab oratories circling and watching night and day, so that we could never really and truly rest, we would have to dream rest, imagine ourslves in the past, whereas we would be under sufferance every second of the day and night. We would have achieved, as a climax to this brief Drak Ages, perfect slavery. Sooner or later our energeies would die down under this sufferance, we could no longer make believe every moment of the day: it would be the end. Our Afterwards would give place not to Reality again, as we now hoped, ~~but would simply be a dying prelude to Curtain.~~ Fade

If only we could return to our lives... I lay thinking of this with my eyes closed, the little red diary still open in my hand. It seemed so absurd being frightened of small things like the door downstairs, or Mr Parsons, or Tan. That all had a sweet mediaeval ring. The house was quite silent. It seemed to me that if the door had suddenly been pushed open and George de Lisle Swiburne had stood there ready with his smiling knife, I could have fought him off with a glance. What importance did our little knives have, our pleasant dramas, in the dome of the dreadful populated sky?

[illegible]

Millions of 'needles' had been flung into space, years ago, to help a military communications system that girdled the earth. I had read about that. They had been flung into the strtosphere without the slightest knowledge of what effects they might have: just as if life and the universe from which our life comes were different sealed-off compartments, like the nineteenth-century version of the body as the Liver, The Circulation, The Heart, The Kidneys, The Brain, all requiring departmental treatment while the whole went to the dogs... Could I hope---dare to hope---that these needles were

From 357 to 377 MISERERE

From 357

n.p.

~~the cause of the violent weather, and not the rockets to the moon, not the missiles in outer space, not the satellites? My thoughts were absurd, in half sleep. Could I dare to hope that the needles were dying down in their effect? just as man made radioactivity died slowly, unlike that made by the Mystery?~~ Could I dare to hope that ~~after this~~ Italy would have ~~its~~ classical weather again, and again would be visibly and patently the womb of our civilisation, and the blue sea would stretch out to the gods in the sky, to Greece and ancient voyages, and the Mystery outside us would spread itself safely round again and produce its balanced world whose intricate adjustments we ~~didn't understand and~~ could never even in the smallest miniature reproduce except by destruction? ~~How horrible to make our own lives. What excitements we missed, never to be puzzled or captivated or enchanted except by our own poor, miserable efforts that next to God's were like old men picking their noses. Yes, I believed Dante was right, that those who looked at the soil and the sun and still were not satisfied, went to hell, they were in hell already.~~ ~~Many often as I was as a child as I was as a child as I was as a child

Join Insert

Insert (A)

And in the margins I had recorded the dates of spatial experiments, as they'd been published: 'Ranger rocket launched from US to hit moon'; Russians launch satellite with two men on board, military missile from US, Russian rocket to encircle moon.'

~~Insert~~

Insert B

I lay ~~took up~~ there with my eyes closed, the little red book still in my hand. It seemed absurd being frightened of small things, like the unlocked door downstairs, or George Sumpine, or Mr Parsons. If the door had been pushed open somehow, and there with his smiling knife, I think I'd have fought him with a stranger, but importance did these pleasant little dramas have now.

~~De Lisle.' She pronounced it 'deelizl'.~~

'Why should they?'

'I thought they wanted information, but they keep on asking about Grigg.'

~~'The police?'~~

~~'Yes.' [illegible]~~

I sat up, ~~and saw the terror in her eyes.~~ 'What for?'

~~'Why, you look funny.'~~ 'I'm frightened, Glen. Tell me what they want.'

~~'But why should they frighten you?'~~

~~'They keep coming every day.'~~ She began crying, and leaned in her head on my shoulder, wetting my pyjamas, ~~like~~ one of the poses we had tried so often, ~~without tears, sighing and drinking beer, that day.~~

~~'What sort of questions?' I asked her.~~

~~'They want to know why I'm a friend of his, I said, I can't tell them I got tongue-tied. I said I was introduced to him but they know who I am. They know I've been with George and that's enough.'~~

~~'Why?'~~

~~'Well, they know the connections. And I can't tell them why.~~

'I know they're trying to frame me,' she said. 'They want to know why I'm ~~She looked into my eyes with a desperate questioning look, like a child, and~~ I realised how unsuited I was to help her, because I had so far only read the words 'frame me', not heard it spoken with tears in the eyes, while a trembling hand held mine.

'Glen, they came and talked to you once, didn't they?'

'Yes. About Jean de Lisle Swiburne, ~~They wanted to know what I was doing with her. I told them Palermo introduced me.~~'

'And they didn't ~~say~~ ask about Grigg?'

'No.'

'How do you know it wasn't really about Grigg?' she said.

'~~They didn't say a word about~~ They didn't mention him.'

'They want to know all about what we talked about one night, that's what they're always asking questions about, when ~~Junior~~ Percy was there, we were at the ~~Marquis~~ club, the three of us. They were talking about ~~this thing of theirs called~~ Massacre.'

'Oh, yes.'

'Well, I couldn't help knowing what they said.' She spoke in a whisper, ~~with a glance at the door,~~ while the house lay silent like a listener. 'They're never satisfied. And I mustn't talk to anybody. I can't stop Grigg talking to me, can I?'

'What, he talks about ~~this~~ Massacre ~~thing~~?'

'Yes.'

'About ~~the~~ stars and laboratories?'

'All that kind of thing, and I don't want to understand it. Then they ask me what he said. I told him they came---'

'Told who?'

'Grigg. And he wasn't bothered. He said it was routine visits.'

'~~And where does Junior come in?~~' 'What is Massacre, exactly?' I whispered

~~She shrugged. 'I don't know. They only talk about Massacre. They know~~ I know it's something to do with ~~a satellite, and putting a bomb inside, and they~~ guide the bomb on to a small target. I can't tell them I don't know, I couldn't stop my ears. But they aren't satisfied with that. Sometimes I think they're trying to get

heard

a friend) his: 'What can I tell them.'

'Friend) who's?!'

'Grieg's.'

'I'll say!'

There was a long silence. I saw that it was a grey morning, and I only now became conscious of the traffic outside, and the opening of shutters.

'What's the time?' I asked.

'Past nine. Time for work. But,' he added, 'I've so rarely seen that mouse happy I'm going to leave till she wakes. And don't you move either. I reckon you've filled her with the holy spirit, apart from other more substantial things. I hope it doesn't get to Grigg's ears.'

'Why, does he own her---or me?'

'Both, yes. I've always said, be careful of ~~the~~ ye olde American cousin, he has secret service ten deep behind him.' And he winked at me again.

'You never said it to me.'

'~~As you might have been one of the secret service I didn't care to.~~'

~~'Me?'~~

~~'That face again! You're wonderful!~~ As Lou says, you've got a mask for everything. ~~By the way, can you give me your bed tonight?~~' ~~He asked this in a whisper, looking at Muriel.~~

'You've got one of your own, haven't you?'

'The police are up there three times a day. Lou can't afford to have herself known.' He added, 'By God, Glen, it gets worse and worse. I mean better and better. We'll eat each other if we're not careful. We only have to get in a room and we just take one jump and it's blessed oblivion till dawn peeps through. I'm finished, all but finished, Glen. I tell you, that was the finest thing you ever did, land me that girl.'

'I didn't do it.'

'Well, it happened. And it wouldn't have without you.'

'You can't have the bed anyway. I'm not walking the streets all night.'

'You might be for all you know.' I paid no special attention to this, but his voice had a note---or perhaps this was my imagination---of warning.

'He'll be cut up not seeing a story,' he went on. 'Your date's for dinner tonight. At the club.'

'What date?'

'With your boss. He wants to give you a briefing on this Massacre thing. Leornard Michael Selsey hates the trousers you ~~walk in, but Grigg insists on having his boy with him. He says you're the only person he can talk real sense with.~~'

~~'God, is that real sense?'~~

We sat in silence ~~again~~ while Muriel slept on, like a child, her breathing deep. ~~Like one contented sigh after another.~~ (Mouse has

'I'm fond of that girl,' he said, looking at her. ~~She's~~ had a bad deal. ~~Well, she might have found her partner.' He smiled at me again.~~

~~'What are the police after?' I asked him.~~

~~'I'll tell you this much, they managed to get her away from Klydonhall---well, I say 'they', Geogre de Lisle managed it, and then she lands herself with Grigg. That was my fault. I don't feel good about that. I'm the reason the police want her three times a day. You might be another reason for all I know.~~' I sacrifieed her for Lou. I had to have Grigg occupied. ~~That was something a man pays a heavy price for,' he said seriously, the skin under his eyes very dark.~~ That was a rotten trick, Glen.' He sat quite still, looking at her.

~~I tried to follow this but couldn't. I shook my head at him~~

→ He smiled. 'But he husband won't hear a word against you. He says you're contemporary —'

'Oh, God — all those things he talks!'

'In fact, Celia, you're a survivor. So much so that you're dining with him this evening in exclave — ~~you're his adjutant, Celia, it'll make you feel very~~ good — ~~Harvard~~ Selsey's. Dazzling we're up to be there, so you can imagine how much of a compliment he's paying you. Now work your magic on Lord as you can, Celia,' he said seriously, 'get Selsey on your side, you've been doing fine so far.'

I lay there with Muriel. Lead still on my shoulder, and he gazed at her, yawning and rubbing his eyes.

'Celia,' he whispered, 'before we wake up, I need this bed tonight.'

'What?'

'I know, I know. There are police watching my place. She's going back to Cambridge tomorrow, it won't happen again. I need it like a drug. Be a good chap, eh? The whole night...'

I shrugged, not looking at him. → 'It's your house.'

dumbly.

'I won't say more,' he said. 'Only to show you I'm not in the dark completely.'

'I am in the dark,' I replied.

'You get by pretty well, Glen, for a man in the dark.'

After a pause he added, 'They'll give George about ten sdays to put his affairs right, then they'll ship him back to France.'

'Who, the police?'

He nodded.

'Why shouldn't she be with Klydonhall?' I asked. 'She thought she was going to marry him.'

'Well,' he said, turning away with a slight ~~irr~~ look of irritation, 'I expect you can imagine wahat George'd say if all his girls thought that. It just isn't cricket, or perhaps in your strange world it is.'

'I've never met this George, so I don't know. I've only listened to his wife gibbering.'

'That was cool, too,' H eaid. 'What you did. The porter downstairs said you could hear her screams across the road.'

'He said that?'

'What's one girl's mdedicine,' he said with a nod towards Muriel, 'is another girl's paradise, as we can see. Only thing is, she's now got herself mixed up with someone even the police can't fathom.'

'Meaning me?' I said with my eyes wide.

'But, by God, if you touch this mouse I'll settle you, boy,' he said between his teeth, 'I really will.'

This threatening tone, though in a whisper, woke Muriel up and she blinked against the light, with a groan, looking blindly from Palermo to me, and then back again. It was a long time before she was really awake. She gazed for a long time at the window, then she said quietly, 'Well, are we starting work?'

'You ran out on Grigg last night, honey,' Palermo said to her with a smile.

'He talked about Lod all the time. What else was I to do?' She spoke differently from in the middle of the night. She gave Palermo a hard, sneering look.

'OK, OK,' he said mildly, holding his delicate hands up. 'Nothing said!'

'He's prowling round all night, spying on you,' she went on. 'It gives him a kick. Apparently, I don't. So what am I there for? And who put me there? You or George? What's George going to say about it? Eh?' She narrowed her eyes at him. 'Have you ever thought about that?'

'I don't even know where George is,' he said nervously.

'You will. I bet the police do. I bet he's tipping them off. I don't know what they want all day, asking me questions. I don't know about these scientific things and I don't want to,' she said with the same leering face. 'So you can get me out of it as you got me into it. You tipped Junior off against me, so you can do the same with Grigg. Only you're too damn low, John Palermo, you want to hang on to his wife, that's what. The police don't like me lsistening in to Mr Grigg's talk, that's as c:ear as daylight. So get me out of it. Are you going to?'

'Yes. I'll get you out of it. If George see s me I'll tip him off it was my fault. He left his affairs in my hands, partly. I'll see Grigg tomorrow and fix it up.'

'See him today.'

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→ "Yes"

~~The Mother~~ ~~Neither of her said anything for some time~~ Then the aeroplane moved forward casually and took a small notebook ~~from~~ his pocket.

'Do you know about this book, Glen?' he asked.

'Yes, it's mine.'

~~'Are you interested in that kind of thing?'~~

'It's your handwriting, eh?'

'Yes.'

He flipped through it, glanced at several pages.

~~'What kind of thing?'~~

~~'Listen,' he said with an angry look at me that made his eyes seem yellow with hatred, 'you give me any lip and I'll fix you. Get it?'~~

I said nothing to this.

~~'Now, he said,~~ 'you can tell me what this is about?'

'Our plan in Italy.' It's all the weather we've been having.'

'Oh?' ~~What else do~~ Do they make in the mountains? The mountains make the weather?

'That's what I was wondering — I keep a note of the weather.'

He laid the little book down on the desk and stood quietly, while the desk ~~with~~ ~~hateful eyes~~ stared at me.

the aeroplane

As first I attached no importance to this than I noticed ~~at first~~ ~~something~~ in the ~~strange~~ way he was playing about with it. It was my own little red diary.

'OK, have it your own way.'

all the while, 'Did pick it up. You can't have it.'

'It's mine.'

'But you can't have it.'

It lay on the table between us, reminding me of the room where I had sat writing it, with apricot trees outside.

'~~Did you~~ I know Professor Griggs long, don't I?'

'No.'

'Who introduced you to him?'

'Palermo.'

'Is that true?'

'Yes.'

'Did you have dinner with the professor in Cambridge on the 28th of last month?'

'Yes. At least, I suppose that was the date. I had dinner with them, anyway.'

'And you arrived in Cambridge on the 3.59? ~~two-seven?~~'

'Yes.'

Again he was silent, looking down, while the dark one entwined with his ~~fingers~~ eyes.

'Did you come to England to contact Prof. Griggs?'

The Grand one stood suddenly, turning his eyes full on me too.

'No,' I said. 'I'd never been heard of him.'

'Do you know an American called Alexander Parsons, living in Naples?'

'~~I met them~~ Yes.'

'A friend of yours?'

'Yes.'

~~'I've given rise to a lot of speculation, Cater,~~

~~that why.~~'

The dance me spoke: ~~suddenly~~: 'Did you bring it embark on subjects of defence ~~especially when drunk~~, with the prisoner's wife?'

'No.' ~~Why is the one the says?~~

'Were ~~mind what he says~~' He moved forward ~~slightly in his chair as if he would like to hit me~~ and ~~the~~ ..... asked in a mild voice, ~~subsiding in his chair again~~. 'Were you aware when you went to a party given by the prisoner a few days ago that you'd be meeting people connected with defence?'

'No.'

'Did you speak to General Headley?'

'Yes.'

'Can you remember your conversation?'

'No, we hardly ~~spoke at all~~ had one word together!'

'Were you aware of the existence of Mr Charles Dorrelling at the party?'

~~[illegible]~~

at the time.

'Not / Only ~~Afterwards~~ afterwards!

~~[illegible]~~

~~They seemed to have no more questions, and~~

~~looked at each other.~~ [The Wood no nodded towards the little host and said, 'You can have it now.'

~~'would you like to keep it.' I asked him.~~

~~'I told you, two / you tip, didn't I?' the~~

said.

~~The dark one took up the questions again.~~

'Do you / or Germany?'

'Yes.'

'Did you go there once this year, twice / an, each visit lasting at least 10 days!'

'Yes.'

'Why?'

'Our women'

+/ 'The Women!'

'Wine!'

'/ that's / women! the blond one put in,

'What are you doing here!

3.

'What are yr doing in England? Why did yr come?'

'I wanted a change!'

~~life in Italy is~~ ~~seem to think~~

'Did yr speak with Alexandr Pushkin before leaving Italy?'

'No.'

'Did the aggron the trip?'

'No.'

'Are yr aware of the military installations in Naples?'

'Not much, no!'

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out of fashion hat, like a county womam, and a light-blue two-pice suit. I gazed at her while she moved slowly round, her eyes drowsy with sadness, touched with bitterness. She collected some photographs---none of the professional ones; and his cigarette case which he'd left in a drawer. She nodded good bye and went, hardly glancing at me.

. with their ridiculous intimate appeal.

he liked bistecca al pepe---we spoke Italian together. And a bottle of burgundy. ~~All these scenes from the Before came to my mind. But in fragments. Slowly I would have to piece the fragments together again, I would telegraph her to come to Naples, book a hotel room, as many times before when I:d gone on a wine-trip. There, in the room looking down on the sea, so high that no noises could penetrate, only the washing of the water, the piecing together would begin. I wondered about Muriel. There was no trip south for her. Perhaps she d gone back to her mother. Or perhaps she d chosen to join Palermo. He had shown her the way.~~

~~The little prayer-weheel went round and round. Round and round it went, in the air, in the smooth train south, and only stopped when I had in my hand, and found its tiny creaking as always before, in the bedroom where thw walls were so thick that we said an earthquake wouldn't move us.~~

I comforted myself with these things. I told myself that everything was as Before... But I knew these were only the outsides of things — now.

I would telegraph my wife to come to Naples, she would book a room there & wait for me. We'd done that many times before, after I'd made a wine-trip ~~to Germany, the~~ north. The room looked down on the sea, from a height where noises didn't penetrate, only the washing of the waves at night & the sound of ships' ghosters. ~~Ships~~ Ship-lights twinkled and shimmered in the darkness.

I wondered about Muriel. No trip south for her. Perhaps she'd chosen to follow Palermo: second time lucky. He had shown her the way. I remembered them together.

The little prayer-wheel went round & round: in the train, in the taxi to the darkness. It only stopped when I had it in my hand. Everything had changed:

My wife had had [illegible] adventures too. The vineyard - lay in ruins. Terraces were broken down — stakes, wires, everything. A 'cyclone', as they called it locally — a series of tremendous whirlwinds — had torn everything & wrecked, whatever it touched. The outhouses had collapsed. One ~~Only the house left~~ But even that would need many hours renovated, dried and aerated.

[illegible] of the morning I had made.

My Luigi's walk had split like cardboard.

Carbon

instead,

the universe

great plain now, only the plain is thousands of miles of sky, you see ~~It~~ won't be a lonely place any more, ~~you'll get the feeling that there are people everywhere, who make the earth a worthwhile place to live on~~ for the first time--I'll tell you how, because they make it really small for the first time, so small it ain't worth a cuss fighting for anything on it, and, boy, if anybody wants to fight, I mean in the old-fashioned sense, he'll get something, there are people floating ~~round the earth to keep him in order and he might find himself paralysed or something before he raises a hand.~~ As for raising an army, that's going to be a joke!---nobody'd dare, their ~~arms~~ guns might be radioactive inside thirty seconds. Nobody seems to have thought of it before, Glen, but we've got to make security on this earth, ~~and that's the only way to do it, to have the whole thing watched night and day,~~ we've got to live with the fact that we're alone, there's nobody up there watching, nobody seeing after us, we've got to do our own security--'

on the earth,

going

'But I thought you believed in God?' I asked him in a surprised voice.

'What's God got to do with it, Glen?' he asked, ~~with a chuckle,~~ drinking off half his tea and ~~then~~ smacking his lips. 'He's there to look after the universe, not our interests. He's been trying to drum that into us for thousands of years, "Look after yourselves," ~~"~~see to your own security, that's what I gave you a mind for!" ~~Why else do you think he gave us a brain--just to sit and spit and think up new things to talk about? ~~xxx~~ just ~~leave~~ him do it all, and then blame him when something goes wrong?~~ No, Glen, what you're talking about is the old notion of fate and that has nothing to do with religion. While we're in this life we've got to look after oursleves, we're alone, so damned alone we could ~~just~~ kill ourselves quietly one day and ~~nobody~~ nobody'd notice, ~~just~~ out of shere damned misery and hating all the smells, ~~and the the god-damn sweat, and....~~' He was silent for a moment, then gave me a wink and finished his tea. In this moment I had an odd impression that though he was talking sincerely he was also like a character that had been rehearsed: there was no pose, but something that missed the ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ real flavour of life all the time, so that I had the sense of only my brainworking, and of an eimmense loneliness round me which I had never experienced before in this city, not a loneliness of such objectivity immenisity, that didn't ~~involve my private feelings at all.~~

he says,

~~'How's Lou?' I asked him, hoping to get him off the lecture.~~

~~'Oh,' he said after a pause, not connecting at first, 'er---' a broad smile---'going through hell like me.' And he returned to his own thoughts.~~

h.p.

'Yes,' he said, leaning back heavily in ~~the~~ soft chair, 'Klydonhall's quite a kid. You know he's a great adherent of this ~~idea of what~~ they call abandonment.'

this thing

'What's that?'

'Well, ~~it means abandoning your local problems, which we all have, to a larger area of government. Call it the Atalantic world if you like but it's a damned silly name because the ATlantic's only a part of what's going to be realised.~~ It spells the end of countries, for one thing

e.c.

~~It means abandoning yourself to a bigger concept. No France, no England, and---in the end no America. That's abandonment. At the beginning it arouses resentment, Glen, as he was saying last night. ~~People~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

circling the earth night and day, what does a little freedom mean, what do the deliberations of a chamber of deputies in Rome or Berlin or London amount to, wieghed in the reality of such vast events?'

'You mean these satellites?' I said.

He chuckled, presumably at the expression of innocence on my face, because he then chucked me under the chin. 'Glen!' he said, 'Glen! No wonder you've been smearing me since the day I touched dock! You don't know what the hell I'm talking ab out. And that's why you're better placed than anybody else I know to repair the image of the big bad wolf and bring me down to the dimensions of a thinking mind. I have one, you know. That s right, Glen, satellites.'

'Do you think they interfere with the weather?' I asked him. 'I've noticed in Italy——P

'Terrestrial weather, you mean?' he asked carefully.

'Well, that s the weather we have,' I said. 'The only one, too.'

'And that's just what I mean by your old-fashioned styles of thought, Glen. It's the ewather we have, at the moment; and the only one, at the moment. The answer to your question, Glen, is yes, probably. I think we've messed about with some radioactive belt, and it seems that just about tanyth ing you do two hundred miles up, even a mild fart, has some effect the earth is going to feel sodoner or later. These are problems, they mean big changes. They mean changes, Glen, mostly in people s concepts, and that's what I've chosen as my job, to help do the changing. If you can mess up terrestrial weather, you can make it good too. These things come slowly, Glen, but not so damn slowly as all that, seeing what we've done in the last ten and twenty years.'

'But what's the point of getting to the moon,' I said. 'What are you going to do there?'

'The moon?' he said. 'Here, listen, kid, I feel I ought to have you in tow all the time, and charge you tuition fees. What you don't know is wonderful. You sound as if you read the papers! Listen, you put all those smears in the paper about me and mine, do you believe 'em? Of course you don't! Do I ? Of course I don't! Yet you believe any crap they put out to keep you dazed. Now I disagree with that crap. I think we've got to take the plunge and get the people :s minds reorientated.'

'What crap do you mean?' I said.

'About heroes getting to the moon and dancing about in space and wondering if Dante was eright and there are white souls up there, whiter than the white of the moon!' He laughed. 'Yes, I should think not! No, Glen, that's a cover story, the moon. Oh, you could send someone there. A station may be, in time. But it s damned expensive. And a radio telescope can tell you more or less what s there. No, Glen, what you don't notice, and what the papers put in small rpint, because advertisers like you haven't been called in to work on it, is that a few days after our heroes mess about in space and taken pretty pictures, the real thing goes up, and the real thing is a laboratory that is going to hold in a very few months from now a panel of men able to see every aspect of the earth from the military point of view and crontrol nuclear explosions and prevent them and foresee them. That's the secirurity I was talking of! That s your moon! But you've got to advertise for the millions of crumbs all over the reathwatching television like lazy apes. I don't agree, myself. I think they ought to be told. But apparently they need moon stories. Well, you can't blame us if they believe them!'

a litrle crasy sometimes---when she comes in round six in the morning I'm red hot and it seems she can go on where she just left off, she don't need the sleep, she gets up at two in the afternoon as fresh as a girl---what would you do?'

'Let her have her fill,' I said, 'and get back to Cambridge yourself. At least you can sleep there and do some work and have a few friends in.'

'But the only thing that keeps me going is the Mouse, I mean playing around with a kid that doesn't interest me even enough to get a stand is all the revenge I can take, I mean not revenge exactly but it makes Lou think I'm having a hell of a good time too, so she doesn't lose her respect for me. I pray sometimes, so fervently, Glen, I wonder there can be a God, because he doesn't answer me.'

We were standing in the middle of a crowded foyer, he holding on to my arm still and speaking in an urgent voice, while people passed us by closely and glamced in our direction with unusual timitidity, hearing words of feeling.

'How long will it go on, can you tell me that?' he asked. As he stared into my eyes I noticed his were bloodshot. 'I mean, what's usual with him? How long does he run an affair?'

'I don't know. But he gets tired of things.'

'He does?'

'Wh don't you go back to Cambridge?'

The repetition of this advice seemed to wakenhim. He removed his hand from my arm and said, 'OK, Glen, I'll give you a call.' Hafl turning from me he added, 'Thanks for listening to my junk. Oh, and look after the Mouse.'

'Why?'

'She gets some funny ideas! [illegible]

'What ab out?'

'Well, she's been having some routine visits from the police. Your boss has been keeping out of his flat for that reason.'

'<u>That's</u> why he's always in my bed---!'

He whispered to me, putting his face close to mine for a moment, 'I've stood outside in the street looking up at your window for hours on end, Glen, knowing they're inside---! And they make a noise too. It seems heaven is taking place up there!'

'ut what are these police visits?'.

'Oh,' he shrugged. 'She's just a kid. Good night, Glen.' And he held out a strong hand.

'Good night.'

I'll gi e you a call.' And he went swiftly up the main staircase, looking distinguished. Again I walked out into the dazzling lights, this time clear in the head. I was determined not to have Palermo in my [illegible] bed to night, anyway. The words <u>E la sua voluntate è nostra pace</u> kept turning in my head. I hurried home through the sidestreets. Tonight I would leave my body for God to heal, in silence and sleep, so that He could work on the glands and valves and veins and tissues, and I would wake up moremyself--- that is, more His---in the morning. At the moment I walked with out knowing whose feet they were, and I seemed to be lookeding at the dry, hard pavements [illegible] with somebody else's consciousness.

nothing new ever came about without it. The first stuttering accents of the babe are speech in embryo, that's what I always say.'

I had no answer to this either. I sat there trying to think of something to say but the more I forced myself the emptier I was. So I drank my tea, looked at the other people who---in their English world, [illegible] where I belonged---sat remote from us, speaking an unintelligble language. Everything around us seemed abolished. There were no sights or sounds, only thoughts countering thoughts. Yet alone I would have been comfortable, enjoying the tea, listening to snatches of cosy talk from the other tables, reading the paper, dreaming myself slowly from the afternoon to glittering evening, in a rhythm so different from the one I was in now, [illegible] under the domination of will and brain and plan, as to be a different world. And how could I say to him, I beleng to a different world? What meaning could those words have for the person addressed? But finally that was all that could be said. [illegible]

I decided all at once to say them. 'I suppose we just live in different worlds...'

'You're damned right we do. But not for long.' [illegible] He looked at me sideways. 'We all ive in different worlds. Your poet just about summed that up when he said, 'Every man's an island.''

'He also said for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for me. Meaning we're islands but we know what it feels like being an island, therefroe we are the same, we aren't separate at all.'

He nodded. To judge from his face, registering with deliberate solemn appreciation what I had just said, he was now in a state of nonm-answering.

'Glen,' he said, putting his hand on mine for a moment, 'I'm so damned unhappy I---' He looked into my eyes, and again I found myself in the same state as with Jean de Lisle Switburne the previous evening: his feelings were as remote from me as toys.

'Why?'

'Oh, well.' He shrugged and got up. 'I can see by her face, Glen,' he whispered as I got up too and he took my arm, guiding me towards the door, 'she s getting more out of it than ever before in her life, I thought it was a game and it was OK at first, but she's up in her room all day waiting for dark, they're at it all night, Glen--- what the hell do they do? Does he talk to you about it?' he asked, facing me in the foyer with the first real suffering I had seen in his face, not juvenile at all.

'Who, Palerme?' He nodded, waiting impatiently. 'No. Why don't you get her back to Cambridge?'

'I'm so damned scsre of doing that I can't speak---I mean, I know she'd refused, she did it once before in the States, I couldn't stand that. , But the time she did it before, that was chickenfeed to this, she s eating that man up every day, Glen, she sits and thinks about it, sex is protruding out of her all sides, when I try and get some on my own account she [illegible] wrenches it out of me, if you know what I mean---she seems to have enoug for ten women--- she treats me like I was anyone, and that excites me, Glen, and the more I'm excoted the more I think about her---it's getting so as I don't sleep at nights, wven when I'm in my bed---that's why I talk

each new shock, and wondered about it, then consoled ourselves when it died down that we were living after all in the Before, with homes and friends and countries of our own, and places to go to, and real thoughts to have, and the shock receding into the past after only two or three days---the sun came out, a breeze came from the sea, the cafés put their tab les out again---seemed not to have been there at all, only a state of our nerves. And so we made life in the Afterwards bearab le to ourselves, by becoming dreamers.

Even what had happened this morning, in my room, under the arc lamps, with Palermo focussing and refoucussing while the Mouse and I yawned and shifted and took a sip of beer, was in the Before, it gave the illusion of a life that had meaning and continuity. But in fact it had none. It was only [illegible] the act of going through certain motions. That was all our life amounted to. If we were at the mercy of things we didn't understand and which we never saw, if we could never predict from one moment to the next our little destinty, if even the weather could no longer be predicted from the state of the sky, if even what was happening to us at this very moment in the intimacy of our own bodies was unknown to us, then far from being our own masters we didn't properly exist at all, we only lived in the scenery from the past, consisting of other people's experiences and other people's real thoughts, but not our own. Our own lives were bids for reality, but not reality themselves.

And if Grigg was right all the earth would become a no man's land with people in lab oratories circling and watching night and day, so that we could never really and truly rest, we would have to dream rest, imagine ourslves in the past, whereas we would be under sufferance every second of the day and night. We would have achieved, as a climax to this brief Drak Ages, perfect slavery. Sooner or later our energeies would die down under this sufferance, we could no longer make believe every moment of the day: it would be the end. Our Afterwards would give place not to Reality again, as we now hoped, but would simply be t a dying [illegible] prelude to Curtain. [illegible]

If only we could return to our lives... I lay thinking of this with my eyes closed, the little red diary still open in my hand. It seemed so absurd being frightened of small things like the door downstairs, or Mr Parsons, or Ten. That all had a sweet mediaeval ring. The house was quite silent. It seemed to me that if the door had suddenly been pushed open and George de Lisle Swiburne had stood there ready with his smiling knife, I could have fought him off with a glance. What importance did our little knives have, our [illegible] pleasant dramas, in the dome of the dreadful populated sky?

[illegible]

Millions of'needles' had been flung into space, years ago, to help a military communications system that girdled the earth. I had read about that. They had been flung into the strtosphere without the slightest knowledge of what effects they might have: just as if life and the universe from which our life comes were different sealed-off compartments, like the nineteenth-century version of the body as the Liver, The Circulation, The Heart, The Kidneys, The Brain, all requiring departmental treatment while the whole went to the dogs... Could I hope---dare to hope---that these needles were

the cause of the violent weather, and not the rockets to the moon, not the missiles in outer space, not the satellites? My thoughts were absurd, in half-sleep. Could I dare to hope that the needles were dying down in their effect? just as man-made radioactivity died slowly, unlike that made by the Mystery? Could I dare to hope that after this Italy would have its classical weather again, and again would be visibly and patently the womb of our civilisation, and the blue sea would stretch out to the gods in the sky, to Greece and ancient voyages, and the Mystery outside us would spread itself safely round again and produce its balanced world whose intricate adjustments we didn't understand and could never even in the smallest miniature reproduce except by destruction? How horrible to make our own lives. What excitements we missed, never to be puzzled or captivated or enchanted except by our own poor, miserab le efforts that next to God's were like old men picking their noses. Yes, I believed Dante was right, that those who looked at the soil and the sun and still were not satisfied, went to hell, they were in hell already. [illegible]

I went to sleep as I was, with the light still on. And it was so deep that a great silence seemed to have entered my body and turned it into the same element as the bed and the room, to which I was now joined, final and still, [illegible] without even the power to dream.

My body was awqre of a long time passing: this I realised when I woke. Suddenly I was wide awake, looking into the eyes of Muriel as she sat on the side of the bed, gazing down at me, dressed in her overcoat. I hadn't time even to be frightened. The little red book was still in my hand, open where I had leff off reading. It must be very late. She looked pale and her hair was dishevelled. I tried to focus my eyes on her, shielding them against the light.

'Hullo,' I whispered.

She nodded and smiled slightly, without saying anything.

'What's the time?' I asked her.

'About four.' God had done his work in my organs and nerves: I felt fresh and calm.

'What's the matter?' I asked.

'Oh.' She made a pouting movement of her lips and looked down at the bed. Her ear-rings shook as she did so, giving her the old-fashioned look I had noticed before, with its hint of graciousness [illegible] badly used. 'I didn't like the flat any more.'

'Palermo's?'

'Yes.'

'Have you been with Grigg?'

She nodded, and I went on, [illegible] 'Where's he?'

'All I did was cry so he went.'

'He said something about police visits,' I said. 'Is that true?'

'Yes! They've been every day for a week. They don't want Palermo,' she said with tears in her eyes. 'They didn't ask about George!'

'George who?'

'De Lisle.' She pronounced it 'deeleel'.

'Why should they?'

'I thought they wanted information, but they keep on asking about Grigg.'

'The police?'

'Yes!' [illegible]

I sat up, and saw the terror in her eyes. 'What for?'

'Why, you look funny——I'm frightened, Glen! Tell me what they want!'

'But why should they frighten you?'

'They keep coming every day!' She began crying, and leaned her head on my shoulder, wetting my pyjamas, like one of the poses we had tried so often, without tears, sighing and drinking beer, that day.

'What sort of questions?' I asked her.

'They want to know why I'm a friend of his. Well, I can't tell them I get tonguetied! I said I was introduced to him but they know who I am. They know I've been with George and that's enough.'

'Why?'

'Well, they know the connections. And I can't tell them why. I know they're trying to frame me.'

She looked into my eyes with a desparate questioning look, like a child, and I realised how unsuited I was to help her, because I had so far only read the word 'frame', not heard it spoken with tears in the eyes.

'Glen, they came and talked to you once, didn't they?'

'Yes. About Jean de Lisle Swiburne. They wanted to know what I was doing with her. I told them Palermo introduced me.'

'And they didn't say ab out Grigg?'

'No.'

'How do you know it wasn't really about Grigg?'

'They didn't say a word about him.'

'They want to know all about what we talked about one night, that's what they're always asking questions about, when Junior was there, we were at the Marquis, the three of us. They were talking about this thing of theirs called Massacre.'

'Oh, yes.'

'Well, I couldn't help knowing what they said.' She spoke in a whisper, with a glance at the door, [illegible] while the house lay silent like a listener. 'They're never satisfied. And I mustn't talk to anybody. I can't stop Grigg talking to me, can i?'

'What, he talks about this Massacre thing?'

'Yes.'

'About the stars and laboratories?'

'All that kind of thing, and I don't want to understand it. Then they ask me what he said. I told him they came——'

'Told who?'

'Grigg. And he wasn't bothered. He said it was routine visits.'

'And where does Junior come in?'

She shrugged. 'I don't know. They only talk about Massacre. They know I know it s something to do with a satellite, and putting a bomb inside, and they guide the bomb on to a small target, I can't tell them I don't know, I couldn't stop my ears, but they aren't satisfied with that, Sometimes I think they're trying to get

'I'll say!'

There was a long silence. I saw that it was a grey morning, and I only now became conscious of the traffic outside, and the opening of shutters.

'What's the time?' I asked.

'Past nine. Tome for work. But,' he added, 'I've so rarely seen that mouse happy I'm going to leave till she wakes. And don't you move either. I reckon you've filled her with the holy spirit, apart from other more substantial things. I hope it doesn't get to Grigg's ears.'

'Why, does he own her---or me?'

'Both, yes. I've always said, be careful of ~~them~~ ye olde American cousin, he has secret service ten deep behind him.' And he winked at me again.

'You never said it to me.'

'As you might have been one of the secret service I didn't care to.'

'Me?'

'That face again! You're wonderful! As Lou says, you've got a mask for everything. By the way, can you give me your bed tonight?' He asked this in a whisper, looking at Muriel.

'You've got one of your own, haven't you?'

'The police are up there three times a day. Lou can't afford to have herself known.' He added, 'BY God, Glen, it gets worse and worse. I mean better and better. We'll eat each other if we're not careful. We only have to get in a room and we just take one jump and it's blessed oblivion till dawn peeps through. I'm finished, all but finished, Glen. I tell you, that was the finest thing you ever did, land me that girl.'

'I didn't do it.'

'Well, it happened. And it wouldn't have without you.'

'You can't have the bed anyway. I'm not walking the streets all night.'

'You might be for all you know.' I paid no special attention to this, bu t his voice had a note---or perhaps this was my imagination--- of warning.

'He'll be cut up not seeing a story,' he went on. 'Your date's for dinner tonight. Ar the club.'

'What date?'

'With your boss. He wants to give you a briefing on this Massacre thing. Leornard Michael Selsey hates the trousers you walk in, but Grigg insists on having his boy with him. He says you're the only person he can talk real sense with.'

'God, is that real sense?'

We sat in silence again while Muriel slept like a child, her breathing deep, like one contented sigh after another.

'I'm fond of that girl,' he said, looking at her. 'She's had a bad deal. Well, she might have foind her partner.' He smiled at me again.

'What are the police after?' I asked him.

'I'll tell you this much, they managed to get her away from Klydonhall---well, I say 'they', Geogre de Lisle managed it, and then she lands herself with Grigg. That was my fault. I don't feel good about that. I'm the reason the ~~Paris~~ police want her three times a day. You might be another reason for all I know. I sacrificed her for Lou. I had to have Grigg occupied. That was something a man pays a heavy price for,' he said seriously, the skin under his eyes very dark.

I tried to follow this but couldn't. I shook my head at him

dumbly.

'I won:t say more,' he said. 'Only to show you I'm not in the dark completely.'

'I am in the dark,' I replied.

'You get by peretty well, Glen, for a man in the dark.' After a pause he added, 'They:ll give George about ten sdays to put his affairs right, then they'll ship him back to France.'

'Who, the police?'

He nodded.

'Why shouldn't she be with Klydenhall?' I asked. 'She thought she was going to marry him.'

'Well,' he said, turning away with a slight irx look of irritation, 'I expect you can imagine waht George'd say if all his girls thought that. It just isn't cricket, or perhaps in your strange world it is.'

'I've never met this George, so I don't know. I've only listened to his wife gibbering.'

'That was cool, too,' H eaid. 'What you did. The porter downstairs said you could hear her screams across the road.'

'He said that?'

'What's one girl's mdedicine,' he said with a nod towards Muriel,'is another girl's paradise, as we can see. Only thing is, she's now got herself mixed up with someone even the police can't fathom.'

'Meaning me?' I said with my eyes wide.

'But, by God, if you touch this mouse I'll settle you, boy,' he said between his teeth, 'I really will.'

This threatening tone, though in a whisper, woke Muriel up and she blinked against the light, with a groan, looking blindly from Palermo to me, and then back again. It was a long time before she was really awake. She gazed for a long time at the window, then she said quietly, 'Well, are we starting work?'

'You ran out on Grigg last night,honey,' Palermo said to her with a smile.

'He talked about Lou all the time. What else was I to do?' She spoke differently from in the middle of the night. She gave Palermo a hard, sneering look.

'OK, OK,' he said mildly, holding his delicate hands up. 'Nothing said!'

LHe's prowling round all night, spying on you,' she went on. 'It gives him a kick. Apapparently, I don't. So what am I there for? And who put me there? You or George? What's George going to say about it? Eh?' She narrowed her eyes at him. 'Have you ever thought about that?'

'I don't even know where George is,' he said,nervously.

'You will. I bet the police do. I bet he s tipping them off. I don't know what they want all day, asking me questions. I don't know about these scientific things and I don't want to,' she said with the same leering face. 'So you can get me out of it as you got me into it. You tipped Junior off against me, so you can do the same with Grigg. Only you're too damn low, John Palermo, you want to hang on to his wife, that's what. The police don't like me lsistening in to Mr Grigg's talk, that's as c:ear as daylight. So get me out of it. Are you going to?'

'Yes. I'll get you out of it. If George see s me I'll tip him off it was my fault. He left his affairs in my hands, partly. I'll see Grigg tomorrow and fix it up.'

'See him today.'

he liked bistecca al pepe——we spoke Italian together. And a bottle of burgundy. All these scenes from the Before came to my mind. But in fragments. Slowly I would have to piece the fragments together again, I would telegraph her to come to Naples, book a hotel room, as many times before when I'd gone on a wine-trip. There, in the room looking down on the sea, so high that no noises could penetrate, only the washing of the water, the piecing together would begin. I wondered about Muriel. There was no trip south for her. Perhaps she'd gone back to her mother. Or perhaps she'd chosen to join Palermo. He had shown her the way.

The little prayer-wheel went round and round. Round and round it went, in the air, [illegible] in the smooth train south, and only stopped when I had in my hand, [illegible] and found its tiny creaking as always before, in the [illegible] bedroom where thw walls were so thick that we said an earthquake wouldn't move us.

and the counter-argument that America had done the dividing, with the clear idea of doing the leading. There was the argument that Russia ~~Communism (one of the ...)~~ had been hungry to invade the war-tired states of western Europe: and the counter-argument that Russia ~~was~~ had the most war-tired of all, and only America had energies for conquest at that time. There was the argument that ~~the atom bomb dropped on~~ Hiroshima had prevented a prolonged war in Japan and thus many deaths, and the counter-argument that a warning bomb could have first been dropped in the ~~ocean~~ sea. There was the argument that the man who had dropped this bomb had gone mad: the counter-argument ~~was~~ that he had simply spoken his conscience, and been certified as mad ~~by frightened and guilty authorities,~~ to keep him quiet. ~~There was the argument that nuclear bombs had been developed for fear of the other side getting them: the counter-argument that the scientists who developed the first one implored the president of that time to cease production at the end of the war and call a world conference on the subject, and their letter lay unopened on his desk.~~ There was the argument that America had won the war, and thereby saved humanity: the counter-argument that she had won it with other people's lives, in other people's lands. There was the argument that America had been generous: the counter-argument that she had introduced the largest system of bribery ever known in the world. There was the argument that her generosity had revived life everywhere: the counter-argument that it had ~~revived~~ used the bad to thwart the good, the mediocre to thwart the gifted. There was the argument that she had trusting allies: the counter-argument that she had satellites whose independence she had subtly suppressed with the system of bribery. There was the argument that she had inaugurated a new era in the countries under her influence: the counter-argument that she had turned their clocks back fifty years to a rebirth of laiser-faire capitalism. There was the argument that she was the mecca of the downtrodden: the counter-argument that she was the haven of the ~~reactionary.~~ rich. There was the argument that she was governed on sound representative principles: the counter-argument that ~~she w had a~~ constitution was two hundred years out of date. There was the argument that she was beyond nationalism: the counter-argument that she was the most obsessively nationalist power ever to have existed. There was the argument that she was peaceful: and the counter-argument that during the period of her ~~peace~~ leadership she had been responsible for more unthinkable cruelty than ever before in the history of the world.

So they went on, as we dozed, woke again, had another drink.

The ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ venom generated was sometimes fearful. ~~It was especially bad between the unAmerican Americans and the~~ 'loud-mouthed' kind who came to Italy in timber shirts and shouted, 'Come over here, Emily, take a look at this,' in Pompeie. I found that the hatred was always that of the victim towards the poppressor: only the top Americans, whom we rarely saw---high ranking officers, embassy attaches, big business men, the executive types...lacked this peculiar victim's corrsovie anger; instead, they had the defensives kind, critcism made them narrow their eyes and grit their teeth, and remark on the critic's person, his lack of funds, virility or success. AGainst these three judgements the critic had amazingly little defence: they were apparently of desvastating importance to both sides. I knew no American, apart perhaps from negroes, who weren't defeated by the idea that they were---cdefeated. They seemed to know---apart from the negroes---of no special Christian mercy that resevres the highest places in heaven for the failure.

To P. 223(c)

'I can never forgive that' was a phrase I heard more often in their company than ever before in my life. Under their relentless moral gaze people were often represented as monsters, and being represented as monsters seemed to become them. The words used about other people often had a relentless flavour: people whose behaviour didn't suit you were often 'sick': arguments you disliked were part of someone's 'complex'. Arguments were evaded in this way. An argument was never quite sound---never totally objective: interests, insecurities of a personal kind always intruded. All our friends had a certain loneliness which gave them a weakness for cosy or popular or easy arguments. None of them had what I'd grown up to think of as a mind. If they did argue objectively it was with a juvenile element: as if they were playing at being psycho-analysts, and had confused objectivity with indifference. It seemed that they couldn't achieve for themselves a settled identity: without which a mind is impossible.

Ambition seemed terrifically strong in them---to a point that made it seem hardly worth while. You could see plans for the next morning's work operating in their faces even while they smiled and nodded at something you were saying. Ambition was the vindication of the scorned, beaten, neglected creature: its achivement was the achivement of an identity: it put you back in history. Success had the most staggering humanising effect on them---to the point, sometimes, where they lost every ambition they had had, and every idea.

Only the Hundred Percent Americans, as they were called locally, that is Germans, Italians, Englishmen who had forfeited their own passports for American ones, were absolved from these waves of hatred and resentment. Even the most unAmerican Americans were all politeness to them. These people were hors de combat: just enough inside the camp not to become the dreaded (and fascinating) enemy, and just enough outside not to remind them of themselves. The cleverest of the Hundred Percenters were aware of this and spent half the year inside the States and half the year out ('We'd be in America all the time, only we have our business over here.') Thus they steered clear of the agony of both worlds, and neatly profited from both. Above all, they restored the morale of Americans proper, even the unAmerican Americans: they were the ones who, when the Americans were in an agony of self-examination over a war or a scandal, brutal political murder or nation-wide racket, came forward and said, 'You have the finest country in the world.' They were the ones who said what a 'big' country America was---just when Americans were beginning to feel the smallest creatures in the world. Even the fact that 'you couldn't walk across Central Park nowadays for fear of attack' was turned into a little homily about how, yes, the Americans were a little 'wild', they always had been, it was a sign of their vitality. The Hundred Percenter, putting it in his cool English voice, or with that slight German accent, made it seem much better, in fact quite a picnic.

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thing seized a town. But it had nothing to do with things you could touch. All you got, from the newest town under the sun, was simply the faithfully painted scene of the dreadful play---comedy?--- you had tried to shun. You got its face staring at you without delicate interpolations from the past like this lawn and this chapel and this bridge of sighs.

And then---'England'. I had come back to 'England'. But what England was there here, in this most English scene, where the river [illegible] loitered between two bright banks and the light in the sky had that special heady excitement of two seas close by, flashing together, like sparks of intimacy, cherished on an island? My shoe moved slightly over the gravel path, making a fine, sharp little sound in the morning silence; a song-thrush sang briefly behind me as if it was spring. An aeroplane with two conventional engines, probably from the military airport near by, went over, making the air throb as if it was twenty, thirty years ago: not even a turbo-prop, let alone a jet, so that it suggested the last previous lazy and bee-humming world of a war where only TNT had been dropped! So thoroughly and conclusively had that world been sealed from us that its instruments of murder seemed not only mild but evocative of drowsy moods, belonging to what is heard on summer days, on trips from the city. Yet there was only my testimony for it,— That this island-light was no longer that of a home, That it was no more a home to itself, with its own concerns. But my testimony counted. I wasn't mad. Or even very bad. That was it: the testimony of men no longer counted; it no longer formed the life all round; it no longer joined the air in words, it remained a private testimony, which meant to say---again---that there was no England, no hubbub of testimonies rising to crescendos and then dying in a proper rhythm. Something was missing. I always felt it. Something deprived the scene of full authenticity. Well, the island no longer belonged to the occupants: that was reason enough, you might say. Its interests and policies were formed elsewhere. But in itself it wasn't enough to take away all light of authenticity. You could fight an occupying force. The defiance might make an even more secure home, guarantee the intimacy. It was something that surpassed single countries. It was what I had felt in Italy, in Germany, in Paris and Toulouse and Rimini and Nauplion and Munich: only in the desert, in parts of the Sinai and on the dedge of Syria, even in the fertile hills outside Beirut, had I not felt it, had the exp,osion not quite come. But elsehwere the waiting at the edge of life, in front of the safety curtain, was the same. People, being hopeless dreamers, came to Italy, especially to the south of Italy and saw us as rwapped in the language of the past, tilling the fields and cutting down the wine in an enviably blind absorbtion in the past. They overlooked that the wine they drank was less than thirty-percent grape-juice, when it was good, and that there was no peasant in the area who didn't know how the chemical components of necessary for making tourist wine, they overlooked the communist party, the mass-produced feed for the cattle that fattened them prematurely, thw powders for the tenderisation of meat, the artificial insemination of cows, the 'sophist action' as it was called of butter, milk, mineral water--- in a massive and wilful onsalught on natural life that put even the industrial world of the north in the shade. These were the brave tillers from the past who grinned at you and bowed and

dandled their children infront of you, because they had knew the requirements of the dream you carried in your head. They could see you, but you couldn't seemthem. So each country looked at every other, through little binoculars provided by the agencies, for two weeks, three: and so the Before was kept alive, as a painted scene, because people needed it, otherwise they would go mad. They had come to my farm and smiled and minced and coyly shown interest, taking me for a sotuhern ghoul: not only Americans from three thousand miles, but other Italians---from three hundred!

Everybody believed that everybody else was living ~~the authentic, closed, self-sufficient~~ real life, and only he was out in the cold. And everybody was wrong.

We were facing the same blank, all together, at last.

Things no longer counted, in our own lives. There was something outside us all the time---not even constantly drawing our attention, but always there, like the asky: but not the sky. It was a light, a blank. But something men had done. We were g facing it. They kept on telling us---the last children of the nineteenth century---that nothing had happened, that there were governments, arguments, wars, revolutions, intimacies and discoveries as before. But we knew better. Over everything there was a mask of the Before: just the painted scene, ~~and x x x

→ what appalling things might have to be done,
and by whose permission, in whose name?
What was government if it didn't come from us,
if it got no ~~from~~ sanction from us?
...

→ we now knowing what could befall us at the
whim ~~of~~ ~~evil~~ of people unknown to us, for inscrutable
& unexplained reasons, & any or no reason, importance
that stretched across all our lives, rendered everyone
academic, redundant. It was this that tore up our
history in a stroke.

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We were facing the same blank, all together, at last.

Things no longer counted---I mean little celebrations, pleasantries: all a deliberate hoax, which we knew we needed, while recognising them as a hoax. There was something outside us all the time---not even constantly drawing our attention, but always there, like the sky: but not the sky. It was a light, a blank. Something men had done. We were facing it. They kept on telling us that nothing had happened, that there were governments, arguments, wars, revolutions, intimacies and discoveries as before. But we knew better. Over everything there was a mask of the Before, ~~behind~~ beyond which we must not see. So all the time we talked it was secondary talk. Every time we decided, a counterfeit decision. Every time we planned, a wishful plan. A fool, nowadays, was one who took the painted ~~drop~~ d for reality and actually believed what he read in the papers. We weren't inside (italics) life any more.

Look at this soaring chapel, firm and precise in the sky, touching space itself, pointing to past and future: or rather, it should point to past and future, away from the here-and-now, but it didn't. It used to. But now it soared towards---what future? We couldn't be secure about that. It wasn't ours. So there could be no past, either. It sealed us off into ourselves, sealed us even from the meaning of tangible objects, this lawn, the natural river, the whitening buttresses of stone. That aerodrome, for instance, a few miles from where I was sitting---if it still existed... ~~It was an old story now:~~ the personnel sealed off even from groundstaff, forbidden all contact with local natives; replaced every two weeks by completely new personnel flown ~~from the States~~ from a foreign land---with what orders? for what reason? what trigger might have to be pulled? ~~what sort of~~ what appalling thing might have to be done, ~~but~~ and by whose permission, in whose name? What was government if it didn't come from us, ~~and~~ got no sanction from us? In our now knowing what could befall us at any minute, ~~according~~ due to whims unknown to us, and interests unexplained to us, lay our real impotence, that stretched across all our lives and rendered everyone academic, redundant. It was this that tore up our history in one ~~motion~~ movement. It meant we had no future, because we had no power to form it. And if the aerodrome was no longer there would it necessarily mean a change? or only that the same matter could be adequately looked after by the pressure of a button, no longer requiring aerodromes, staffs, mental ~~quarantine~~ quarantine: thereby rendering our ignorance the greater, as the mechanism was more abstract.

Insert X 284(a) overleaf

from Klydonhall by provocation, so to speak. Klydonhall rocked up and down in his chair making violent coughing noises, with shere relief at us being playful dogs again, while Palermo made conforming moans and croaks of laughter, clearly feeling like death.

'Ah, ah!' shouted Selsey, writihing round the room, 'got you, got you! OH WHERE DID YOU GO LAST NIGHT?' he sang, sancing round the room. 'Ah! Ah!' Palermo's croaks were louder, Klydonhall bounced, I made hopeless imitation roars, crossing and uncrossing my legs like an acrobat.

'No,' he said in my direction at last, hissing like a soda syphon, not really addressing me, 'I was not there last night! I was not!' And there were more winks and ha-ha-has, and a sudden bending down that I thought would land flat on the carpet.

'He saw you as Adam,' Palermo said to me, turning round with a matter-of-fact expression.

'As what?'

All the answer I got to that was a wild expression, with melodramatically bared teeth, tout of view to the others.

'Isn't that wonderful?' came the huge voice, bounding along like a bear, 'he doesm't remember! These artists have such a full life!'

'Actually how that got through I shall never know,' Klydonhall said, with his faint Bostonian ~~xxxgx~~ slurr. 'It was about the first, that's why it made history.'

'Nice of you to say so,' Palermo said.

'I don't think the British public was quite prepared for it,' said the writihing man, 'I heard some pretty-juicy---' (Pronounced in a staccato way)---'remarks. But it won through. You're quite right, playmate.'

I forced my way back into the conversation. 'What was that?'

'He still doesn't know? I shall accuse you of affectation, Mr Glen,' the writher said, serious for a moment; and this seriousnesz brought a certain menace into his face.

Klydonhall setepped to my rescue: 'It brought in a whole new class of picture, though,' he added with a polite glance at Palermo, ' I believe it didn't seel many apples.'

'Oh,' the writher said with a look of contempt in my direction, like a byullying lawyer in cross examination, 'an artists wouldn't take account of that.' And he walked swiftly to his desk, bending and unbending spasmodically, then flinging himself down into a chair like a soack of potatoes, shaking the floor.

Understaniding at last, I felt numbed and slow. It suddenly seemed right that I should be given a chair on the periphery. ~~xxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ I yawned and no longer tried to take an equal part in the talk. The result of this was that I missed nearly the whole thing. There was some mention of the printing works in Edgare Road where Palermo and I had gone together. And Palermo ~~was pressed for a decision. The other men had their eyes on him.~~ And Palermo gave his answer, 'A week from now, even if it kills me.' He turned to me, so suddenly that I jumped with fright: 'All right by you, Glen?'

'Yes.'

Everybody got up, and after a few handshakes we were outside again. The tiny reecptionist didn't accompany us to the door. She seemed to know what Palermo had done. She had her head lowered over a book.

I thought I heard the writher say, just before we left, 'See you later, then?' And I was firmly excluded from the goodbyes. Only Klydonhall nodded to me, his eyes flickering sensitively.

p.284 (a) (1)

Insert [Klydshall, Selsey, Palermo, Glen.]

'The point about Palermo,' the writing man said with a great diving movement, laughing and hissing, 'is he's an amateur. Right, John?'

'Right, indeed,' Palermo said with a smile that showed the gold of his side-teeth. 'I'd never heard him called John before,' he flattered was he looked at Hedley, either.

And Klydshall replied with his slaughter-English look, saying nothing, only nodding encouragingly at Palermo.

~~'What I mean, John,~~ the writing man, walking up and down, his hands behind his back, 'is these companies big enough have all the tendencies of the ~~Tax-form~~ — ' A laugh — ' and the sum of things — what we would is a man working alone, and naturally, thought of you.'

'You see, Junior,' he said, turning to Klydshall again, 'it does depend on people in the end. You simply can't handle this kind of thing ~~with PR firms who~~ though ~~most~~ times there are for 100,000 dollars on the nail, and ~~it's~~ (there

~~'you in TV presentations ... you ... holding ... baby ... spend it ... TV presentations ... the ... need ... amateurs, and this ... me.'~~

~~'I've ... a ... the writing Selsey ...~~

~~'... man. the writing Selsey ...~~

~~'Comic ... Office ... head.'~~

~~and then~~ a lot of bloated TV presentations'.

More writing and listing. 'Well, John,' he went on, 'Percy & I have studied the books & we've come, ~~to~~ and, ~~oh —~~ and, oh, by the way — is this? ' And he made a gesture towards me, blankly, not including me in it personally.

'Mate right,' Peterson said, also not giving me so much as a glance.

'Well, I might say,' Selsey said with a rich grin, 'you do pick 'em up!'

And then, it seemed, on the end of me.

'Now, as ye know, John,' Selsey said, flinging himself with an almighty crack into his chair behind the desk, then as quickly rising again as if it had bitten him, 'we're interested in this ... I mean, ye know of things on the brink of a series.

know as well as I ~~know, that~~ do, we are not in get into the publishing line, and it may as well be something artistic to kick off with. We ~~must~~ must lose money, John.'

'I'm telling you.'

'We will lose money. Now if you like to take this thing on your shoulders, ~~I mean, explore~~ ~~probably~~. ~~To the finest market in town, to start~~ some ~~with~~ — OK. But it has to be further than anything you've done before.'

'I know.'

'Are you, Percy?' the writing man asked the other.

'Yes.' His voice was clear and resolute like his face: ~~he~~ direct, nothing tremulous at all; there was no youthful ambiguity the moment he spoke.

'And, Marco, John, keep us known out of it. But if you can launch us safely, and see the imprint Rumm, you'll make a packet. I can promise you that.'

'I'd better,' Palermo said, with a vengeful force of strikers, having achieved his conviction.

'Should there be something written?' Klydenhall said asked in his level – almost fearfully level – voice.

'I don't think so,' Selsey replied a little dangerously. 'Then and I have two old race who for years, eh, John! And if we start playing these games with each other now, the whole boat rocks, & both of us – because we happen to be in the same one!' And he broke into an easy, untying laugh that waved away all the danger there had been.

'All right,' Klydenhall said with his youthful smile and nod, glancing politely at me as if to include me in the ~~intelligence~~ cleverness of it all, 'that's all right.'

'Now as to the other thing,' John, Selsey said, 'it depends on chance. I've only met him once. I've been ~~John~~ Percy here the whole ~~Klydenhall~~ time.' ~~He seemed to like Klydenhall.~~ ~~(He seemed to like Klydenhall.)~~ 'He seemed interested.'

Klydenhall showed no response to this, only stayed in front of him.

Pelorus said, 'Good. It might be my field, really. I was approached, that's all. He'll let me have an idea to-day or to-morrow.'

284(a) (3)

'Well, Percy, agreed to that,' Selsey said. 'Naturally, he knows Charles's work. Matter of fact, Charles & I were at school together. He never met. He was a crack shot in the range. I seem to remember' ~~and~~ There was silence, and the influence — to judge by the ~~meantime~~ deliberate way Selsey & Rhydderch looked before them — seemed to be ~~the topic Selsey had done with~~

Palermo understood at once. 'I jumped up. ~~to be~~ 'At the club, then,' he said.

'That's right,' Selsey replied, as we all shook hands again. 'I just thought we might be ~~[illegible]~~ ahead. By the way, I don't think you need Percy beforehand. Professor's had a very hard day since he came over.'

'Oh,' Palermo said, 'he'll feel better for me.'

'I bet he does,' Selsey said with a wink. ~~From today on, Foos~~ 'Once you get working on it!' He looked to see with an abstracted smile. ~~I have two left.~~ 'Cheers,' he said. 'I only know you in this mode, I'm afraid.'

And the door was closed.

'What did he mean by that?' I asked as we walked by the reception desk.

'Nothing.' ~~He was biting his lip.~~ ~~thinking of something else~~ He shook his head, wasn't really aware of my question.

On the street he said with excitement, staring back at the building for a moment with his eyes narrowed, 'Well, we've got in.... INSERT 284(a) 4 marked

Insert 28(a) (4)

~~'Well, Fatsmo said it in the street, his eyes narrowed with excitement~~ ye've just met the reason for Muriel trying to commit suicide-

~~'Ghod?' I asked.~~

'Klydonall,' he said. 'By God, I've (or I: the top now, boy. I've seen him at the club. I've watched him steal the wind the dancefloor as the 1810, but I didn't know I'd actually ~~seen~~ be shown it him. I reckon I worked there well! ~~By God~~, I did' He hunched his shoulders higher, shivering, with cold + excitement. "I'm a cripple from now on, ~~they'll give me~~ he'll sign me a cheque as in bed time I turn over" fast, "I see if he does it. Old Selsey worked there, I know he would. I've been watching that pot-bellied old ~~cunt~~ for years, trying to squeeze a really good contract out of him, + I've (or it now, by God. Next Klydonall ~~will~~ ~~loop of lightbulb~~ ~~will~~ spend his ~~five percent of the stakes.~~ time running between Wall Street + Threadneedle Street, + ~~the~~ they call him Ariel sometimes, ~~Stoppard does~~ here's sick + pie a with side of the Atlantic he can't just hit

fingers in, And my fingers again in well, now. No wonder I've always felt sympathetic to that bloody Atlantic alliance. By God—!

He rubbed his hands again and made a peculiar fixed smile. 'I'd anybody'd told me this morning I'd have laughed in his face. Come in, Charlie! I'll treat you to a taxi! This time, today, by me, boy. We've made it, we need never look back, I'm in the money, and so are you, there'.

Nobody in the world smiled like he knew me now. I'll make everybody ~~I'd like to see the back of like~~ ~~in a month time.~~ ~~the whole place is going to~~ ~~this time it is~~ green with envy ~~filled with~~ I'll be eating them, ~~the~~ ~~verdigris~~, ~~like verdigris~~, comedic their jests.

In the taxi he told me, 'Did think of Lawrie played a part. He knew. He's worth all that 300 quid, and twice as much again. I'll tell you the key-name to all this, and it's Charlie Donelly.'

'Who's he?'

'Father's here,' he asks,' Paloma said, gazing out of the window with a fervent gaze. ~~His eyes shut~~
'He came at his first call might.'
'What?'
He gave me an infantile look. 'In Carlisle!'
'Oh!'
'Now he's not a pet-project. I've got a pet-project. And all I had to do was join the 2 together, I did it by accident, I rang up Ad Lightly, talked shop with in the same breath, Selsey talked shop with in the same breath, of course I knew it was a diversion. Steel, he's ~~after~~ for most of his fingers in oil. He wants a branch out. I mean. ~~I'll do~~ ~~this for~~ he's not an ocean of money. But he'll do anything to add just a few drops.'
'What projects?' I asked him.
'Well, if keep your mouth shut & your eyes open, & you'll learn something. It's dangerous being alive, Helen. By God, I've learned that.

I might even be practised life, rather lived it. Well, now I'm at the peak, & Chandler-Williams had better watch out how he talks to me. 'Cos I've taken it, my line, Glen, but I made it. I did. By God! I did!'

He was silent, still staying out of the way, offered him explanation of some kind.

'You know, Glen,' he said quietly, 'a woman always has something deep when she's still thinking, & this something always makes you think afterwards that she really was thinking, which is fine — she was, but not with the brains. She was thinking something else, pretty between her legs. And I've just dropped his name, like a penny.

'Charles,' she said. And I happened to know that Charles had a project he'd give his right hand to

~~Sx plick. And I knew it was only a matter of time before Craigs got interested too — find the power, with the power I've now. & Ha Jon & your Klydnell. Well, the power I've now. & Ha Jon & your Klydnell. Let me then sit in my hands lucky.' He smiled at me. 'And it doesn't even be a scrap...~~

Know what I'm going to do?' (6)

'No?'

'I'll have Percy Jeffs Grigg-Kingsmill interviewed within six hours from now. That's what!' → Insert P. 285 here.

In a subtle way...
... pretext.

INSERT · P. 285 (a)

'By the way,' he said, 'Percy Kingsmill is a lord. Did you know that?'

'No!'

~~Ever since he became an~~ He dropped the title very soon. But since he became American, anyway.'

'He's an American?' I said.

He looked at me. 'Why not?' Any objections?' He studied me with a kind of comical amusement. ~~He remarked~~ 'I told Cecily not to bother any dark thoughts about Percy.' 'You know,' he said, 'for not to gnaw the hand that feeds you. Because he's certainly big is feed in the next few months,

perhaps you can.'

At the foot of the stairs I said to him, '... as on P. 285, bottom.

~~Why did Muriel~~

'What's Muriel got to do with it?' I asked.

'Much! You know those girls. They get ideas after a couple of dances!' And he said no more.

He had saved the day for me---I really would have walked out otherwise.

We decided to walk back to the office. 'He seems a nice chap.'

'Who?'

'Klyonhall.'

'With all that power, he'd better be.'

And he said nothing more. In a subtle way Selsey had destroyed my status: I shuffled along at Palermo's side accordingly, feeling like his office-boy.

'What was the idea of calling me your stooge?' I asked roughly.

'I thought we were realistic about our work.? Tomorrow I might call you my boss. What ever fits. As Jack Ryan says, the world we live in was made by Marx and Engels, with Hitler doing the soufles. Opportunism governs, Glen, and I'd like to see an exception to that. You're not trying to tell me you are?' he asked with a nasty look sideways.

one, are you?'

I shrugged.

'What I thought was a real dirty trick was not following my lead,' he went on. 'You nearly wrecked that little commission.'

'You didn't brief me beforehand.'

'I made a mistake there. But you're such a shady bastard I get the feeling you don't need briefing, especially when you said you already knew about the deal.'

'I didn't know about the deal.'

'Then why talk photographs in the cab? That must have been leading somewhere.' He added before I could speak, 'But you recognised Klydonhall, didn't you?' He stopped, facing me.

'I've never seen him before.'

'The way you nodded to him, boy, it was clear as daylight you knew who he was.'

'I didn't.'

'We::, don't try and hold anything over that one, he can move mountains, I'm warning you, Glen. I told you some time ago, don't get your fingers burned.' He went on, striding along again,

'Don't play with fire.'

And he kept his mouth shtu for the rest of the way back. His fingers fluttered ever so slightly now and then, pale and slim, darting up to his collar and then diving into a pocket unnecessarily, as he stared at the pavement before him, his lips tight together. There were dark rims under his eyes which I hadn't noticed earlier in the afternoon. I noticed one thing---whenever he rasped and hissed at me the effects on him seemed to be as painful. It made me feel I was a kind of inner enemy he was fighting off: even, a part of himself. His eyes didn't really see me, and in a most strange way I didn't feel included in the conversation when the subject was me. It was a htypothetical me for which my face and apeech only supplied the pretext.

At the foot of the stairs I said to Rosin, 'Come to my room and have a drink,' and to my surprise he turned to me with a smile, rather like someone waking up slowly, and replied in an absentminded voice, 'Well, I wondered when you were going to thaw.'

He called out for Pat but she wasn't there. 'Bitch,' he murmured, 'I tell these girls, never leave the office empty---'

'I'm up here!' came Pat's irritated voice---from my room.

'What, drinking my (our) hooch?' he said, more cheerfully: and we

went straight up.

'By the way,' he said to me on the stairs, 'I want you to look at this Adam and Eve thing.'

'The poster?' I asked him. 'I'm in it!'

He turned to me with an exasperated expression: 'Don't you ever listen? I mean the preface!'

~~'Oh.'~~ I thought you were bloodily well dreaming this afternoon. No wonder old Selsey held his nose and pulled a lavatory chain ~~with his right hand~~ when ~~you were going~~ this afternoon.'

~~'When was that?'~~

~~'Well, you wouldn't have seen it, it being behind your back.'~~ I grumbled. 'I'll pull his chain, if he's not careful...'

'Not while we're making money out of him,' he said as we got to my room and found Pat sitting on my bed with a glass of whisky in her hand. 'Well, blimey, this is ripe, who told you you could swill my boose all hours of the day, Mrs Siddons?'

Pat took no notice ~~of this~~ but addressed me: 'I bought you some glasses.'

'Oh, that's nice of you.' There were five on the chest of drawers, and she was sipping from one.

~~Palermo and I sat on the bed like her, one on either side, as there were no chairs in the room.~~ Without a word she got up and with a yawn prepared our whiskies, while Palermo winked at me and pointed at her rear quarters with an obscene gesture.

'All right, funny,' she said quietly, 'I've got ~~as many eyes in my arse as you.~~' my arse, you know.'

He smiled at this, showing his strong white teeth. Some of the his other self---one hesitated to say real self, in case this frail partner was his real self---came back.

'I met ~~We saw~~ Klydonhall, darling,' he said.

This made her turn, the two glasses in her hands. 'Honest, you did?'

'I thought that'd shake you.'

'Has he been to see Muriel?'

'Well, of course.'

There was silence while she brought the glasses to us, rather thoughtfully.

After a sip he said to her, 'I bet you'd like a lick off that barrel.'

'Not me.' She sat down with a sulky movement.

'NO? I can read poppet's faces.'

'You can't read mine.' She gave him a steady look, suddenly with the earnestness of a girl.

With the first gulp of whisky inside him he took out a cigarette and lit it, with that thorough movement of the hands and lips that seemed to try to tidy all the broken bits of the day, ~~and cut through them~~, sucked in cleanly through lips formed like a tube, and ~~then~~ emitted in one straight but fine shaft, after a hissing sound in the teeth, and narrowed eyes, everything in his face sharp for a moment. And it seemed appropriate that this cutting symbolic gesture should be ~~with a poison~~, which brought a grey film across his eyes. His satisfaction as he sucked ~~the smoke in~~ was so clear that it might have been an act ~~of sex~~ indulged against his sane judgement, with helpless ecstasy, and so private that it only showed as a tiny ~~gravy~~ light in the eyes, like the fear plus cunning you see in

animals sometimes.

'Well,' he said, studying the tiny glowing point that had supplied ~~the~~ his painful pleasure, 'you can keep out of the club tonight because I don't want you and Muriel tearing each other's eyes out.'

She pouted at this, staring into her glass with unnecessary closeness, swirling the whisky round quickly: 'We'd most likely tear yours out.'

'You'd rue the day,' he snarled at her quietly.

She turned to me again: 'I think you need a nice table on that carpet.'

'It's some carpet,' Palermo said, leaning back and gazing at it.

'It makes a nice room to come up to,' Pat said. 'Humanises the place.'

'I'd like some curtains,' I told her. 'And I think I'll fix that door downstairs, you never know who might come in. ~~That noise I heard in the middle of the night——~~

~~'That's probably the police,' she said. 'They check up on open doors in the night.'~~

~~Palermo said to me with a quick look, 'Was it the police?' I shrugged and he went on, 'It's an idea.' He bit his lip and fluttered his fingers on the side of his glass. 'Did you lose anything?'——to Pat.~~

~~'No.'~~

~~'Sure?'~~

~~'Yes.'~~

~~'Listen,' he said with a fixed, merciless look. 'I'm asking you, did you lose anything?'~~

~~'No,' said~~ she shouted.

~~'Anyway,' he said quietly, 'I don't believe it was the police. Could have been.' And he went on fluttering his hands.~~

'Do you need Pat?' I asked him. 'She could help me buy some curtains.'

'Out of whose money?'

'Mine.'

'Oh, I don't mind that. ~~Why don't you try and find me a carpet, too?' he asked with a crafty look. 'On the same terms.'~~

~~'What terms?'~~

O.K., Glen, ~~we won't bandy words,~~ take this mouse and see she keeps away from the club tonight, that's all. And you be there by seven o'clock sharp ~~because there's people to meet.'~~

~~'We could look for a table,' Pat said.~~

~~The whisky had made her~~ She got up obediently, seeming only a pawn for my or Palermo's whims. The whisky had made her look tired and pale, and she stood waiting for me, a young girl whose face was strangely swollen beyond its innocent proportions, with a rim of tan make-up round her neck, showing the starved pallor of her actual skin.

'Do you know where to go for curtains?' Palermo asked her with an unusual paternal care, screwing up his eyes.

'I think so,' she said helplessly, at the door, her bag in her hand.

'Go to Heal's, ~~or somewhere like that.~~ A small shop won't do it in under six weeks, and by that time I'll have kicked out of his job, I hope.' He didn't even wink at me to make it a joke.

'I'll take the curtains with me, then,' I said.

~~'If I have my way, you'll walk out between two Scotland Yard flicks from Scotland Yard, and your curtains'll be held for your~~

when we'd finished our drinks.

with all your faculties alive. A great night is ahead of us. And listen, Glen—' I stopped. 'From now on we only sing Rylands praise for Professor Jefferson loves it. Id you know anything bad,

Kim

about him, keep it clean up. Face, keep your mouth clean up altogether!

release in ten years' time.'

I laughed and said as I was going, 'I might break out.'

'What's that?' He spoke so sharply and hissingly that I turned.

'I said I might break out of prison,' I said with a smile.

'You'd better keep your mouth shut, Glen. Hear me?' He looked at me with his caught expression. 'I said, do you hear me?'

'Oh, come on,' Pat murmured, leaning against the doorpost.

'Of course, I hear you. I was having a joke.'

'I know your class of jokes, boy, but all I'm going to say is, if you know anything you'd better unknow it right away. There's a hell of a a lot of money behind thsis.'

'Behind what?'

'Take him away, for Christ's sake , Pat, He frightends me.'

My smile was wobbly, then as I walked down the stairs it disappeared. I found my extremities suddenly cold, and my cheeks were trembling with a violent involuntary movement.

'What was he talking about?' I asked her when we got into the street.

She shrugged and put her arm in mine, 'I keep out of these thinbs.'

'He's always saying things I don't understand!'

She said nothing to this, only hummed. I wondered if she was being careful and looked at her. But her face plumply told nothing. I steered her in the opposite direction from Parson's shop, where I had a nervous feeling that I could find a perfect table for the asking, I resolved to go to that shop as soon as possible and find out where I stood. Now that I tried to remember the conversation I'd had with that man Parsons I couldn't, and therefore what there could possibly be of the incriminating in it I no longer knew. Of course he would present me with a bill---this was a sane world, after all---and the bill would be immense. That I had allowed the thing to lie on my floor for an hour was astonishing, since it belonged in a museum. And that Palermo thought it suspicious was suddenly ununderstandable. There was the chest of drawers, too. The price had been absurd. But perhaps he would give us double a price on the carpet, too? And in what conditions? Unbroken ones---what were they? My mind refused absolutely to remember the suitcase he had mentioned: the frontier, the visit I must make to him before leaving. But had he really mentioned these things? I had the delirious impression as I walked along with an arm in mine belonging to a total stranger that life was pulling me along and I was no longer even trotting behind, I was being wrenched by my arms and my feet were dragging, and the nature of the sacrifice would soon become clear to me. There being an element of nightmare in this, something that didn't belong to sane and predictable life as I had been brought up to believe in, there seemed to me no way I could halt the process, my will was as limp---though not quite, quite dead---as in that dream when you try frantically to run and your legs remain still. If I could have had a moment's pause from this peculiar gathering routine of events it might have been all right, but I saw the possibility of pausing nowhere, having asked this girl to come shopping with me, having agreed to be at Palermo's club (where was it, by the way?) that evening... Yet what obligations did these things constitute? None at all. Then there was something in me that needed them? What was that need? I had two hundred pounds in the bank, I could go to a hotel tonight and never see that miserable narrow house of two storeys again, I could take the next plane out, buy my

Pat

and even some curtains too.

carpet

more than

me now.

what was I being bribed to do? Must that too take its place in the chest of secrets being hoarded on my behalf?

these secrets formed one pattern, which wd. be a total indictment of me in the end.

Pat's

it

ticket right away, have enough in my pocket when I arrived at Milan airport to wire my wife and prepare her for a week's holiday, ~~say,~~ at Santa Margherita ~~away from our farmhouse which could be rather grim in the winter months...~~ ~~But were the three hundred pounds arrived at---were they got by false pretences? that is, how had they been got? I stumbled and hesitated and wondered, But how could you stop people putting money in your account? opening an account on your behalf? That wasn't it, however. You had to be able to explain the money you had. To whom? Well, you never knew. It might be necessary, an explanation, one day. Well, he put the money in as an advance. Yet nothing about an advance was mentioned in the contract. Where was the contract, by the way? Had I signed it? I could no longer remember that. It had talked about a loose association. And what was my work? What was the looose association for? What questions could I answer about that? What were my motives? What had I come seeking? Those were all questions on which I could fumble endlessly. Then why did I stay? I thought I was so sane, you can't [illegible] if you run a vineyard as big as mine... Then what had gone wrong?~~ It occurred to me, as I went blindly down to the Tube at Pat's side, that I really did believe in the sanity of the world round me, I believed that its coils would turn out to be embraces, things were all right. ~~And it was insanity to do so.~~ And wasn't this insanity nowadays?

'That's one thing he'd never do, think of making a place nice,' Pat said.

We went to one or two big stores, and managed to get a promise of two weeks for the curtains. They would send a man round the next afternoon. It would cost a good bit more than I thought.

'You pay for the name,' Pat told me. And I could have sent that sum to me wife. A hot panic swept over me. Two weeks---did I mean to be here for another two weeks?

After that we looked for a man to fix the door downstairs, but were unsuccessful. A local man, everybody told us: A carpenter-and-joiner would do it. Just a matter of planing down the bottom of the door. If we had a plane we could do it ourselves... Pat and I were looked at like a young couple---she persisted with her arm in mine, even in the stores: it made my skin tingle in an actual sensation of falsity, the body trying to fly physically out of the situation it didn't fit.

And just before we said cheerio to each other, after taking a cup of coffee at a bar, I asked her, 'Where's this club of Palermo's?'

'Oh, don't you know it? ~~It's the . You turn round as if you was on your way to Covent Garden Tube....~~'

And ~~even~~ though I did ~~the~~ best ~~I could, in a ridiculous denial of what both left and right hands were doing, to shut out~~ the directions she was giving me, they were as clear ~~to me in my mind than any directions that had ever been given me, like a map that stayed clearly in my mind and would be there~~ until the tall doors of the club---she described them ~~exactly~~---closed behind me.

~~The moment I entered the club my reluctance to go seemed not just superficial but [illegible] because [illegible] was so clear~~

'Isn't this where royalty comes?' Grigg asked with a great ~~grin~~ smile, stooping his tall body to get out. A man was waiting with a vast umbrella---'Evening, sir, evening, madam,' in a strong voice.

We strolled into the dim, carpeted entrance while Palermo went on upstairs. Everything ~~was~~ lay in a ~~great~~ luxurious hush, curtained and carpeted as if against not only impetuous noises but ~~[illegible]~~ desires. There were women coming from the powdering room, talking quietly together, giggling, just before going up the wide staircase which had ~~was~~ been once stately and now looked tired and gilded, with only nights to remember. The air was suffocating, dusty: not an inch of surface that wasn't damasked or covered in some way; a round table stood in the middle of the entrance, ~~[illegible]~~ draped over with heavy velvet. Waiters bustled round us, taking our coats, looking into our eyes with mocking expectation, their night-experiences making them wiser than us. They all seemed to know Muriel and paid her special attentions, as to an equal, asking her questions under their breath, with little glances at the rest of us. One of them laid a silver ~~[illegible]~~ platter on the table in front of me when I mentioned paying the entrance fee. And, ~~despite my moral conclusion in the cab that I was a lesser person than Palermo and couldn't perform these rituals properly~~, I thrust a handfull of notes ~~on to the tray with just that suggestion of violence that brought a twinkle of recognition into the man's eyes and made him nod respectfully, with a 'Ta very much, sir!---from one professional to another.~~ I stood there a little staggered at myself, ~~And I was treated to the same glance of appreciation from Grigg as my boss had got a few moments before.~~ Much of my comfortable moral position had come from thinking myself different from them, belonging to another world. And in this gesture of my hand pushed roughly down on to a silver tray with more pound notes than I ever spent in a month ~~at my vineyard~~ I vindicated my right to be one of them, and thus my obligation to share their---I was going to say guilt, but he ~~this mild twinge of agenbite of inwit from the Before isn't enough for our~~ Afterwards, ~~which~~ needs strong rushes of feeling if its dead scenery is to be moved at all, ~~like~~ such as the hot blush of shame, momentary, unseen, unexpected, quickly passed, irrelevant, but so hot that it shakes the whole foundations... Grigg took my ~~[illegible]~~ arm as we walked up the soft stairs, leaving the women behind to spruce themselves again.

'I don't say you have an easy life, Glen,' he murmured, leaning on me slightly. 'Take a lot ~~of~~ from your boss, eh?' And he looked at me with an inquisitive frown.

'What's that?'

'Your boss---' He was a little out of breath. 'Not so easy to bear with, sometimes, eh?'

'No. He's all right, I suppose.'

'Listen,' he said, 'when did you leave last night, exactly?'

'Just about dawn. Don't you remember?'

'You went on the river with Charles and the rest, on that crazy punting party?'

'No.' ~~I looked at him with surprise~~ You don't remember me leaving?' ~~[illegible]~~

'Well,' he answered ~~[illegible]~~ gruffly, 'there were about fifty guests. An

~~You were crying, in bed.~~

'I remember you mauling Lou about in the kitchen,' ~~that's all.~~

'I didn't touch her.'

'More fool you,' he said as we passed into the long room that was all immense chintz curtains to the floor and pillared ~~corners~~.

lay

been

heavily on 'is this way

with such professional ease

that the man responded just as the commissionaire had with Palermo.

and thought Grigg's glance might have been ironical

'How's that?' I asked.

313 'Analysts are damned expensive, because they've damned necessary. She did the usual thing, fell in love with him. ~~He's so damn lovely you wonder what he was doing when they were handing out tact.~~ She got through that, OK. Well, it's worth every dollar, Glen, because I couldn't hold my job down without it. We're down to once a week now. Some people take their analysts with them, but they're in the presidential class. I had to explain that to her, though,' he grumbled. She said, Let's take the doc with us, Jeff---' (imitating her in a highpitched voice) --- 'I said, Like hell. We're a professor and his wife, I said. You know, Glen, you go to this and-just every week?' I said.

'We went in for this group therapy at first,' he said. And, boy, I was getting more neurotic every day. We go singly now. I tried to steal his notebook once.'

'You did?'

'Tried to find out who she was having an affair with. [illegible] Know what he said to me next time? He said, look through my notes on me. Take the whole damn lot, he said. And I said, I'll. I spent the whole week going through them. And I found myself. Yes, that's just what I found. Myself. The same damned desires, the same everything. The only difference was that she thought about men and I thought about women. I mean, that was the only difference. And do you know what she said to me at the end of the week? How did you like my notebooks? You have to get used to that when you go into analysis really and truly. I reckon I learned more about honesty than I've ever done before. So we sat down and talked over about half the personality-problems we'd thought were secrets. That helped. I mean it helped the therapy. He said it was a stage, and a stage he wanted to arrive at. I came to the conclusion I hate her so much because she's me.'

'You were never honest enough to tell her you hated her, though.'

'It's so damned obvious we don't have to put it into words.' He looked me in the eyes. 'Know what? She gets a kick out of your columns on me.'

'She does.'

'I said to her one day, I said, Who the hell's side you on? No, you're dead right, Glen. There's no honesty between us. We're like two sieges, Glen. Mustn't get too close else we get boiling lead in our faces. But that protracted discussion of personality-problems---I reckon it lasted a couple of years---cleared the undergrowth in front of the hatred. Now we just face each other. All that needed clearing away.' He leaned away from me and looked at the grimy, lifeless ceiling. 'If we could come on the earth with all the undergrowth cleared away, wouldn't that be marvellous? We could inherit the earth, Glen. We really could.'

Selsey went and sat in Muriel's place, and began talking to Palermo across Lou, his flushed, massive face in his hands, so heavy that it seemed beyond the control of any nervous system he might contain in his body. He was frowning down at the floor as Palermo talked, and it seemed to me that he was hearing about Grigg, the new contact. It stirred me with excitement dimly, even though I might possibly be mashed in them all, to hear the grinding of these wheels of power and pressure and alliance in their relentlessly tiny movements, always over lunch tables or in clubs. I heard Selsey murmur the name Junior once or twice; Lou stifled a yawn, glanced stealthily across the table at her husband. I guessed that she had slept all day, because of the clearness of her dark eyes, and the way her shoulders sloped away from her neck, not slumping.

'Don't we come on the earth like that?' I asked, but he was not listening.

n.p. If anything, the club was fuller than before: it must be close on three in the morning. ~~I wanted to leave, but the chair was too comfortab~~ ~~le and my legs felt they would never unstick themselves until light came through, with a smell of morning air.~~ I began to think of the vineyard ~~watching the house from the first hill, behind which Luigi lived with his family.~~ Sometimes ~~only two or three times~~ I had ~~drunk with him and Ercole and Antonio~~ the 'Sicilian' (he was ~~only called that, being a stranger from the Abruzzi~~) after the women had gone to bed, ~~and~~ then walked back before the first birds had started, and stood on ~~that~~ hill waiting for the first traces of light ~~like the finest dust~~ to show ~~at the end of the vineyard~~, and the house to appear below in its humped and sprawling array, with courtyard and pigeon-loft and ~~pump~~ and cement platform for compost.

'Seems to me you've wrecked your life, too, Glen,' Grigg said quietly, close to my shoulder again, gazing ahead. ~~'There's talk about your wife but---?' He shrugged. 'Lou said best not to enquire. That bitch is good at the implied smear OK, and that's God's truth,~~ ~~he growled into my ear.~~

~~I said nothing to this, only noticed that~~ He waited for a reply, with a little glance at me sideways, ~~and~~ then gave up.

'This ~~Junior~~ guy,' he murmured. 'Quite some man. Your boss has the biggest coup of his life in front of him.'

'How?'

'Wouldn't you like the Klydonhall account---?' He winked at me richly. 'Just supposing you was interested in money?'

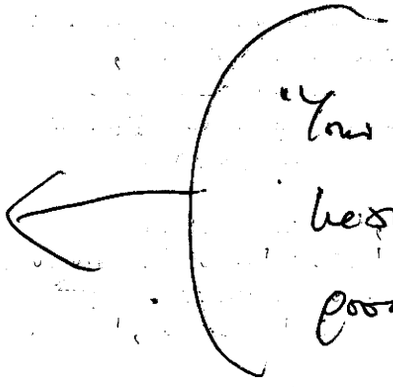
'What's that?' I found I could keep him in focus now, and his words made more meaning than before, but I was hopeless for innuendoes — and would be for a good many hours. more.

'Well, it's common knowledge, so Charles was telling me, that ~~Klydonhall's got~~ Klydonhall's got his eyes open for the right man to do a kind of J. Walter Thompson job in London.'

'Who's J. Walter Thompson?'

At this he made a hissing kind of chuckle, hunching his shoulders together humorously, and said, 'They paint the gold on angels' wings! How else do you think the gold gets there?' And he gave me a ribald wink that made me no wiser.

'It seems to me I'm damned slow,' he went on. 'I need a guy to look after my personal publicity, too.' He turned and looked at me. 'If I had the money I'd do it.' He added with a stern nod, still looking at me, 'Yes, I would. Doesn't sound like a university man, does it? But it's facing up to the epoch. If you have to cover as many techniques as I have to, why, to leave the most basic one of all open---your public image---seems just asking for trouble. Listen, my lectures are advertising campaigns for certain ideas---all right, I know that doesn't sound very academic and I've had a few to drink, but, Glen, look, isn't that ~~the~~ God's truth? isn't it true when we try and persuade to save his life or for God's sake to get wise to what's ~~going to~~ happen in the world, like I do, that ~~you're~~ trying to sell something? And are you a salesman? Yes, ~~OK,~~ you are, your boss over there is. That's your job. And I bellyache about you, I even bribe you because you're trying to sell me as a bad man and I want to be sold as ~~I am.~~ Wouldn't I have done better to walk into your office and say, the first day I arrived in London, here's a thousand bucks on account, I want a sweet press ~~instead of getting hit on the head until I got wise?~~ In Chicago, so they say, you get your shop messed up if you don't pay protection money. Well, this is protection money ~~legitimate, though.~~ My lecture fees are the public's prot-



"Your wife's never seen around. Don says best not to enquire. She's certainly good at the implied smear, that one."

not particularly at me but at all God's creatures made like me.

~~'She was right,' he whispered, 'I should have hired a dozen analysts and brought 'em over at this rate. You see what happens,' he said anxiously, with the sweat pouring down his face suddenly, 'when we're let loose?~~ I get all tied up, I can't stop myself thinking, I can't make out who's my friend and who's not, here I am talking to you ~~like I talked to you last night~~, but I know you're a skunk, I know you jumped my wife last night in the kitchen, I know you two slimy bastards got me down to London to bribe me with ~~propos-als from~~ Klydonhall and ~~get me~~ fixed up with this poor damned whore Muriel for the night, I know you used my own friend Charles Dornelling for the purpose, the best guy I ever knew and the closest friend I ever had, ~~and you use him~~--!' He was close on tears, ~~again,~~ and I wondered when Lou would notice. But instead she got up coolly and went in front of Palermo towards the dance floor.

This act made Grigg look up with a shocked expression, his mouth gaping. And he came to.

'You're dry, old chap,' Selsey said to him, and poured whisky into his glass. Then, with a chuckle, 'Look at that one,' nodding towards Charles Dornelling, who had fallen asleep and had his legs stretched out, making not a sound, his face in the ~~maskxxxxxxx~~ utmost repose.

'Why don't you pour me some, too,' I said to Selsey with a narrow look that made him flinch, 'unless you hate pleasing sewage rats?'

'No, not at all,' he said in the most matter-of-fact way, 'I'd be delighted.' And he poured me the last in the bottle.

Grigg took his glass at once and drained it, gasping. 'I needed that,' he said. And then, with a frowning glance round, 'Where's Mouse?'

'Dancing with ~~Junior~~,' Selsey said, too tired at this hour to writhe any more. And he added to me, 'Why, surely people in your line don't have thin skins, do they?'

~~[illegible]~~

'They have brains enough to see through people like you, anyway,' I said, not quite sure what I meant.

'Brains?' he said with rather an abashed smile. ~~Unpleasantness gone this far already dismayed him.~~ 'Does showing your arse to a camera need brains?'

At this Grigg laughed and said, 'Is that in his day's work too?'

~~I was silent, not because I lacked an answer for Selsey but because I had a sudden desire to burst into tears.~~ Again the sensation was strangely separate from me, as if it was my past that would cry, or a photograph of me that had been taken, or somebody else on my behalf. It was all I could as I stared at Selsey to prevent the tears gushing down my face while my expression remained exactly the same, as you see tears at a circus. And again the dome of the night drew everything we said, ~~and all~~ our ~~vile cowering~~ motives and divisions, ~~from us,~~ into the air far away where morning was bring prepared, together with a fresh chance to begin, which we were given every day and for which reason the prayer I had heard so often in the tiny church at the end of our valley ~~x~~ said, Confutatis maledictis, Flammis acribus addictis... ~~The bad are damned, surrounded by licking flames... And then, Voca me cum benedictis... Oh, Give me light, Give us light!~~

Klydonhall and Muriel separated on the dance floor and I watched her comeback to the table alone, while he went towards one of the dark, curtained exits.

As soon as she got to us she called a waiter over and told him to

pseudo-order which we call the obvious. Pseudo-science will give way to its own findings---that the universe, like the body, knows its own business without guidance from the brain. A science of truth--- that is observation---may even then be possible.

And then the last explosion will have been heard. But it might destroy all life. That is the question. The explosion was the first statement of pseudo-science, as it will be the last. That is still, and must be, its whole basis---the explosion of the combustion engine, the explosion of steam in harness, the explosion of the jet, the explosion of rockets, the explosion finally of the nucleus of created matter, in an illusion that destruction tears a hole in nature through which we may peer into the secrets of birth... But we peer with eyes. You always come back to that. Through space and time. You <u>can</u> escape space and time, yes---in a final act of impatience with the stillness outside you put an end to yourself! That's an effective end of space and time: you destroy the eyes and desires and doubts that filter through them. If space and time are ours only, then they can be ended by ending us': so that you leave the stillness outside to go on as before, beyond space and time... <u>That</u> is the question being weighed in the Afterwards, this deadly pause of human life: to be or not to be.

No wonder that we seemed to wait, the five of us at this table ~~in the gloom of night, one of us asleep, not for decisions of eternity but for each other's.~~ As I looked across at Selsey I had the illusion that-- perhaps for having insulted me---he had the key to our behaviour, or a little part of it. And Mureiel had another part. Even Charles Dornelling groaning in his chair, his wine-gills so flushed that they looked mauve and dangerous, was waiting for further developments from the rest of us. Grigg was waiting for---his wife? his enemy dancing with her? I looked for guidance all the time: I wondrered how these other men were connected with each other, what they required me to do: I had wondrede continually since arriving in London what my role was. But why should I have a role? Why should they be connected with each other? Why should they require me to do anything when they themselves---yes, surely!---were asking the same thing of me: what does he require of me? For the moment we came before each other it seemed to transpire that we were a plan of some kind. We clapped eyes on a man, and he seemed the non-stop unfolding of a plan. One day we would see it in completion, but we never did. And he himself knew nothing of such a plan. What were we doing wrong then? We were waiting for each other. And we should be attending to ourselves. We should ne making our own dalogue with eternity, but we had been taught that the only dialogue open to us was that with men. Why didn't I jump to my feet and go back to the bed I'd prepared for myself with so much trouble? But wasn't that another dialogue, with yet another man---the bed? I thought with a chilled foreboding of what I might have got myself into there: the carpet, the delicious chest of drawers... Yet wasn't it absurd? How could I have got myself <u>into</u> anything? Wasn't that only my assumption that the other man, breathing heavily in his shop, had a plan? And what was the plan? There was none. Yet I couldn't believe this. Then let me take the chest of drawers back, the priceless acarpet... But I wouldn't. I could, I wanted to, but I would be precevented by not wishing to see what degree of hold he had over me. Perhaps he had none, but I didn't wish to test the matter. I would rather leave it and hope at the end---when I left London, because that I did mean to

do---God forbid that that should be prevented---no!---at the end when I had my bags in my hands again on the way to the station... I would hope him to be nice enough, civil enough, gracious enough, not to press me for the pound of flesh I had given... That was my degree of freedom. That was what I'd come in search of.

I felt so sick and numbed, and gnawed with irritation, that when Selsey nudged Charles Dornelling awake and murmured good night to us I said and did nothing, though Grigg got up and shook hands, bending his tall body towards Selsey's vastness. Muriel went with him. As far as I could gather they were going to follow Junior to keep him out of his mischief. I had the irritated feeling that he practised this mischief for attention. He got himself into the wrong parties, Charles explained with a bland yawn, and had to be extricated from the hands of police, or gangs, or card-sharpers, you never knew which. Muriel looked impatient; with a sharp, pale face: a wife with her man on the loose would have looked no less so. She played with her hand-bag nervously. And I sat in the bowels of my chair glowering at them. Dornelling gave me a gingerly look, seeming to expect no better than I gave him, while Selsey went through an extra-civil goodbye with Grigg, shaking his hand and saying in a professional undertone, 'You won't forget tomorrow, will you? I know he's looking forward to seeing you.'

Muriel said to Grigg when they were moving away, 'I'll be back.'

He had sat down again now and simply growled at her, without raisijng his voice, 'You'd better be.'

'Yes, Glen,' he said to me when they were gone, 'unless I'm mistaken this is hell itself, and you expect a man to cry, don't you?' I nodded without interest. 'Well, all I try and tell people is, go through it with your eyes open. You're in hell, the whole god-damn bunch of you. So let's face it!'

'You might be more in hell than they are,' I said.

'Could be. But going by the looks on their faces, that's crap.' He spat the word at me in a final way, still looking ahead. 'No, people don't want to have their eyes open, that's the truth. I'll tell you what I'm going to do tonight, Glen---I'm going to sleep with that whore, and my wife is going to---well, she'll do something. That's the truth and it's hell all right because I don't even like the girl, I mean she's a nice kid and all that, but she still treats sex like heaven, I can tell that, and that's no good when you're not up there. At least my wife don't do that. I can tell you another thing, that's why your boss goes for her. She does things like in hell. No fancy business. I'm being clear, Glen. That's all I talk about or write about. If you're walking into hell and there's no other path, well, get to know it. They don't like me for it. They don't like me saying there's ways of making war and find out what they are before the you do them because you'll do 'em anyway! If you'll do 'em amyway, may as well make a good job of it.'

'Why?'

'Want to make a bad job of it? I challenge that, Glen---I challenge any man to sincerely want to do a bad job of anything.'

'I'd want to do a bad job of mudrder.'

'No, you wouldn't. You'd want to a do a clean, quick job, you wouldn't to have the scfeams protracted, people dying of fall-out exposure slowly over five or ten years. Is that what you would want?'

'No.'

helped me a lot, Glen. That's how I know you've been in the business longer than you say. You had that man eating out of my hand.'

'I thought he was eating out of mine.'

'Well, that should be the same thing,' he said with quiet reproff, 'if we're in partnership.'

'As a partner I don't see what we want with the Orangery.'

'I have to have someone on the artistic side, Glen. I can't have chaos again like there was on that Wonder Apple ad. He could have saved me all that.'

'How?'

'Wait till you see him at work.'

'As long as he doesn't interfere with me,' I said.

'You don't have to worry about that. He's never been taken in the nude in his life. He told me xhaxxm himself.' I looked at him with surprise and he nodded confirmingly, 'I got interested in a bushy beard plus nudity, I thought it struck off that unlikely and fainty unwholsesome contrast that the human being is interested in. But he wasn't having any. Besides his paunch, which for his age is a public disgrace.' And he added, 'Oh, bbby the way I heard you're dead set against tails and riding boots?'

'Against what?'

'The Mouse told me this morning when I checked that she'd concluded formal arrangements with Grigg last night. Well, I don't mind. Your taste is probab ly better than mine. She tells me you haven't seen the Preface, by the way.'

'No, I haven't,' I said, again hiding my ignorance in case it stopped a cheque coming my way.

'Have a look at it over lunch, i6's real art, Glen. I mean, as the Junior says, you've got to have some values going, believe in something, and well, I mean it's not just nudes we're doing...'

'Nudes again,' I growled, hiding my head in my hands and yawning.

'Selsey said to me this morning he forgives an artist everything, even what you said to him last night.'

'What did I say to him?'

'You said he had no brains.'

'He hasn't.'

'What's that got to do with it?' Palermo said, giving me a little scowl in his turn.

'I'm nervous,' he said, jumping and clapping his hands on his jacket-pockets as if he'd lost something. 'As who wouldn't be when Lisle Swiburne gets xx loose. She'll be having hysterics.'

'Who?'

'His wife.'

'Is that anything unusual?' I asked.

'Wait till you see it. Pat told me she was on the phone this morning, three or four times. I said I was out for the next week. Still in the States.'

'Wise of you.'

'And that you'd taken over the office temprarily,' he added with a twitching little smile.

I looked up at him, trying to divine what this meant. 'I'm not supposed to talk to her, am I?'

'Well,' he said, going to the door, still making that clapping motion of his hands, 'just see what she has to say, out of kindness.' And xxxxxxxxxxxxxx he went downstairs. 'See you after lunch,' he xxxxxx called out. 'We shoot at four o'clock precisely.'

filthy studio off Gerrard Street, with ~~[illegible]~~ an oil-stove to heat us. ~~Naturally I was Adam and Muriel was Eve, again.~~ We insisted on Mike leaving before we, in the words of the preface, 'divested'. Palermo had raced me there in a taxi, swearing and giving me his little silver glances of anger, smoking hurriedly, with puffs that sounded like dry kisses.

'What's the hrry?' I asked him.

'~~Junior~~ wants this on the market in three weeks flat, that's ~~why~~.'

'Did you get his account, by the way?'

'What else do you think? I'm launching him as an artistic type, which he is in a way. I mean, we've got to cover his association with this weapon.'

'What weapon?'

'You were there last night, weren't you? The idiots call it Massacre 11. Dornelling's been selling it to Junior for a twelve month, and now--through me, because I choose to be an amateur--they've roped in Grigg. Well,' he added with exhaustion, 'I got something out of it. Not only cash. I was determined on that. By Christ, that woman must have done research on it...'

'You're smoking again.'

'Yes. He said the ticker was facing up nicely to all the demands being made on it. He said he could guess what they were, ~~too, the old bugger, my quack.~~ And he smiled ruefully.

'Oh, I was wondering, who wrote that preface?'

'I did.'

'You?'

'Clever, isn't it? To see what kind of man you're looking down your nose at. One word I couldn't get over and that was randiness, ~~then Selsey told me that word concupiscence.~~'

'~~Is that going in front of the photographs?~~'

'~~Yes, but I won't sign it.~~ I'll get some poor ~~mutt~~ devil with a name to sign it. Give him a hundred quid. ~~It covers us against obscenity.~~'

'~~What does?~~'

'~~The preface.~~ We were thinking of an obscenity trial, you make a hell of a packet that way. But we decided ~~against it because~~ Klydonhall wants me to give his reputation a face-lift. It needs it. He'd make love to drainpipes if his cronies let him.'

'I'm Adam, am I?'

'That's right. If you don't mind me saying so, you look like him too. To the life,' he said, we as got out of the taxi.

~~'What is Massacre XX 11?' I asked him as walked to the studio.~~

~~It's~~ one of those things that achieves limited destruction. ~~That's what they're trying to perfect now.~~ I mean, they don't want to destroy the world each time. They have a war. Stands to reason.'

'It's nuclear, then?' I said.

'Oh, yes. ~~An Anglo-American thing--at least, that's Dornelling's idea. You know,~~ America supplies the bomb and the motors and Christ knows what else and we supply the compass on the nose. But don't think there isn't money in it. Klydonhall might work the contract his ~~way--he's got armament interests in the States.~~ Dornelling gets a commission, and no chicken-feed either.'

'Wheels within wheels,' I said.

'That's right. But I make ~~them~~ go round.'

'Does that make you feel good or bad?' I asked him.

'I didn't come on this earth to be either. I came to survive.' He added as we went down the basement stairs, 'Yes, an obscenity trial would have sold us about a million copies. But there's the laywyers, and months of briefs, and then I'd have had to be stood bail or some-

'What's the hurry?' ~~[illegible]~~

Insert 'This has got to be ~~the~~ naked in 3 weeks flew,' he said. 'That's the hurry. Selsey's orders.'

'What did your doctor say?' I asked him, watching him smoke.

'He said the ticker was facing up to all the demands being made on it. And he said he bet he could guess what they were, too. Nice old bugger, my quack...' And he smiled to himself, looking out of the window.

'How did you like my preface?' he asked me suddenly, with a modest flick of his eyes. 'You thought it was wonderful, didn't you?'

~~'I thought it was wonderful.'~~

~~'Exactly so.'~~

'Yes, I did.'

~~'How you know who you're dealing~~

~~down~~ 'But I will sign it.'

Insert 2

→ with my personal magic produce the man to wear it for him.

Massacre 2 is one of those...

overleaf

husband is. You can tell her that. Tell her the ~~French~~ police may know, as he probably bribed them to let him make a break. ~~Of course she's mad.~~ She's in a state of terror, Glen, and I haven't got time to look after all mad mice at once, Muriel's bad enough.'

'~~What am I to say to her?~~ But I hardly know her; ~~I don't know her husband.~~ And she doesn't like me. She makes me turn my back on her and then look at her through my fingers.' I said.

'What are you talking about?'

'I have to sit there looking at her with my eyes closed.'

'Sounds to me you two belong together,' he said, and slammed down the phone.

I ran upstairs and changed quickly, ~~back~~ into my dark suit again, with a fresh shirt, a midnight-blue tie and, this time, cufflinks of tiny yellow buttons which ~~had~~ once belonged to a Regency waistcoat. That I was seeing a woman, however mad, was a relief. I made my bed carefully, so that I could throw myself into it when I returned. I wanted to lock my door from the outside, but couldn't find the key. It was exciting to know that somebody wanted my presence. ~~Or had Palermo palmed me off on her?~~ Well, it was said that ~~people~~ we are fascinated by those we hate: ~~and~~ perhaps she was fascinated by me. I hurried down to the Strand, through the biting, dry air again, and found a taxi at once. I had over twenty pounds in my pocket. It had refused to diminish, that sum I got from the bank. Nobody seemed to want me to pay for anything. And I'd be getting at least fifty a week from Grigg. Should I take a story in to Ryan tonight, for the early edition? It made me feel professional, and the lights outside ~~from~~ at the Vaudeville and then the Adelphi, ~~Ellis~~ the dark hump of Charing Cross station and the broad hushed Trafalgar Square, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ seemed united ~~professionally~~ in one comprehensible unit, for people like me, who spending ~~between the traffic in their taxis~~ taxis, ~~steadying themselves with the strap~~ while their minds ~~fulfilled another~~ professional plans for ~~the nourishment of~~ the city, which gratefully and greedily gnawed them all day and spewed out ~~mass~~ lights and meetings in hotel-rooms ~~and in offices smelling of contracts.~~ I walked into the foyer of the hotel and straight up the stairs, since I remembered the number of her room. ~~That she was waiting in her room seemed to mean something.~~

I knocked on the door. A man yelled 'What?' harshly and I ~~opened it, suddenly frightened of a plot.~~ He was vast, dressed in evening clothes with a white silk scarf as if he'd just thrown himself into an armchair after the theatre, ~~and~~ he looked at me with such an enormous frown that my sense of ~~the~~ professional ~~went pop like the measle~~ and I realised I wasn't one at all. being disappeared at once.

'I thought I told you ~~people no visitors,~~' he said, still frowning.

'~~Miss de Lisle Swiburne told me to call.~~'

'What, on me?'

'Well, here.'

'I don't who in the name of hell Miss de Lisle is but you can tell her from me she's got a damned cheek. Now get out.'

'Isn't she living here, then?'

He no longer looked at me. Apparently he was reading something. All he said was, 'Get out, ponce. Boy, if I can't recognise your type anywhere! Do they run a service in this hotel, then?' And he flapped at his ear with his index finger, denoting just what he said, a ponce.

'You stupid old bugger,' I said, quietly, 'I'm looking for a lady.' But he didn't hear this as I had partly closed the door. I wished I had the assurance to say it loudly to his face. In the corridor again I felt giddy. ~~There were simply doorways, and carpetting.~~ No one

(He took a newspaper at his side, began reading with a scowl. ~~Get me, ponce.~~ I can't

~~recognise ye type maybe! And he tapped his ear with his index finger.~~ He then looked up ~~with~~ in a tired way and said, 'Would yu let me alone, please?'

There was no point in pursuing that conversation, so I ~~went down to the desk and asked~~ closed the door again. (It reminded me!) The clerk ~~had changed rooms~~.

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nearly ran for it. If this was her husband...

'Well, come in!' he shouted,

I opened the door. He was,...

shut my mouth firmly and kept it like that.

'You see, Palermo and George---'

'Whose George?'

She closed her eyes with irritation and was about to go on when she seemed to understand my question for the first time. 'Oh,' she said, 'that's my husband. ~~He's~~ A nice guy, ^ But he got mixed up with your boss, I'm afraid, and that started a downhill trend.'

'I thought your husband broke into banks?'

'Oh, now, ^ Glen, come on, come on.' And she smiled at me in ~~such~~ a ^ peculiar way ~~that I nearly burst out laughing.~~

'Why, ~~does~~n't he?'

'Of course he does. But he wouldn't have gone back to that if these people hadn't made him feel he was cock of the walk. There's a man who always laughs at me, I can't stand to be in his company, name of ^ Klydonhall, now George picked up with him, ~~you see~~, and, hell, I didn't like that. ^ Can you understand me?'

~~Yes. I think so~~

'You know, ~~I think~~ George brought off that last big tickle in Toulouse just to let ^ ~~Vivien Klydonhall~~ read about him in the papers. Oh, he often dreamed about that particular ticket, ^ Glen. He had maps and routes lined up, for an escape through Spain to Lisbon. And on to Tangiers where he has contacts.'

A knock came ~~at~~ the door and she made a jump, putting her hands up to her mouth. She motioned me to silence and went to the door on tiptoe.

'Who is that?' she asked, trembling.

'The wine you ordered, madam.'

'Go over to the other wall.'

'I beg your pardon, madam?' came the voice from the other side of the door, in an Italian accent.

'Go and stand over by the other wall. Go on, quick.'

She then bent down and looked through the keyhole. 'It's the waiter, OK,' she said, and unlocked.

'Oh, ' I said with a laugh, 'I wondered why you did that.'

She gave me an impatient look and hurried the waiter with his tray into the room, locking the door again for the short interval that he was with us. He gave her one or two gingerly looks, and stared at me too.

Suddenly she asked him, standing close behind him so that he gave a start, 'What's my name?'

'Eh?' He turned and looked at her in an alarmed way. 'Mrs Newman.'

'That's right. What I'm paying out to sweeten these people is quite something,' she said to me, sitting on the bed again.

'You could change hotels, couldn't you?' I said.

'Didn't I ask to keep your mouth shut?' she answered politely, at which the waiter nearly dropped the bottle in his hand. And he gave me a very peculiar look.

He had two glasses and in a most professional way swilled the top of the wine into ^ ~~it~~ and set it aside for throwing away, as I had only seen it done in Italy. ~~Then~~ Then he poured my glass and handed it to me.

'I've only seen that done once before,' I told him.

'Here, listen.' Jean said, getting up and almost pushing him out of the room, 'this isn't a smoking lounge.'

I heard him say something that I thought was Neapolitan on the other side of the door, and there was silence again.

'Aren't you having any of this?' I asked her, taking another

Johnny Palermo answers. 'Isn't the fate?' '~~Perhaps~~ It could be.'

as I say.

Mr

most

Percy

Percy

Mr

That's why I put him inside again. I saw the photographs of his girls, and, boy, ~~that~~ was I mad!

'What girls do you mean?'

'Well, your boss was in on it, too, so you should know. And Claire Lavigne isn't much of a stretch from the same thing. Only the other way round, that's all. Here,

one of them

what I've got myself mixed up in. I pick up the photo and have a look, and

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I just want to know your price, that's all.'

'What price?'

'Listen, I'm right, aren't I? Percy Kilgarrhall's given in for me. I can tell by his face, every time he smiles like that when I walk in the door. I took his measure one away. Now, am I right he's going to use you to do it?'

'I don't know what you're talking about.'

'If George finds out I came to you, like in a kind of procurer, he'll never let me see it. He thinks I'm the most moral person in the world, and that'd be the end of my marriage, Celia. Will you help me once and for all - I know it sounds silly and perhaps I'm all twisted up - but has Percy been talking to you?'

'I've only met him once! And then I didn't speak to him.'

'OK,' she said with exhaustion. 'You win.

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you can <u>say</u> Ameri a is the most fascist country in the world,' the Hundred Percenter said, 'shows what a free country you have. I wish the same degree of self-criticism existed in the rest of the world.' [illegible] This did a lot to subtly isolate any rebellion in the umAmeri an American, and to turn it into a victim's 'sick' outcry. And the Hundred Percenters returned to their villas to take a quick dip in the pool,. [illegible]