

'CESARE AND THE
CHINESE'

~~Il portatore~~ CESARE.

He's ~~good~~
that ~~white~~
delicately ~~white~~
perfectly ~~white~~
the ~~hair~~

Cesare was a slim, good-looking young man with black hair

and a delicate, slightly curved nose. He was quite tall, and moved softly and lightly. I used to see him in a trattoria ~~there~~ in Old Rome, usually with an American woman of Russian origin. He would smile towards our table most politely, with a little nod of his head. It was impossible to imagine him doing anything abrupt or harsh, or saying unkind things. In everything he seemed delicate and thoughtful, and a trifle ^{or} submissive. ~~He lacked the bountiful, rather plump-fleshed ease of so many Italians, and the blind, staring quality, as if the world moved round them) and their uncurbed ways.~~ Far from being blind or lost in his senses, he gave the impression of being ~~seemed "Inglese"~~ ^{meaning} in the Italian sense of the word, as formal and stiff. In fact, I often wondered whether he was wholly Italian, and where ^{he came} perhaps he came from the ~~northernmost part~~ northernmost part near the Alps, so that he presented more the Northern consciousness than the Italian. But he told me one day, when I asked him, that he was Roman 'born and bred'. His father had several shops in the fashionable shopping streets, and was quite well off. Cesare wasn't in fact a very young man. He was in his early forties. But he gave the impression of a youthful delicacy and shyness. I remember when he told me that during the war, after the Armistice between the western allies and the newly formed Italian government, he had walked from one side of Italy to the other, mostly along mountain paths, with no money, how this image I had of him, as innocent of all harshness and shyly withdrawn from the world, was sustained by his description, indeed encouraged, so that I saw him as a kind of romantic wanderer for a moment, his uniform in rags (he had been an officer), hatless, but still smooth of skin, strangely clean and beautiful, not sweating...

Chinese

dark

Chinese

like many rather ease of Italy

was a big landlord

blocks of flats in Naples and Palermo

divine

as he meant it to be, perhaps

divine

from ~~something~~ ~~with~~

of Romans,

(n.p.)

had been signed

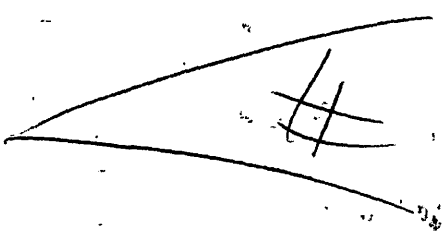
(being

imitation of the room any sense of intimacy at all.

to have ~~been~~ the

He and the Russian-born woman always sat in a corner of the trattoria, quietly, sometimes never ^{really} addressing each other, and they rarely joined another party. I took them for a married couple who had got bored and irritated with each other. But then someone told me they weren't married; and a little later he they invited me up to their flat. It was an awkward, cold-looking place---just two rooms. ~~They~~ Apparently he was an architect, and much of the room set out to be artistic, with rather useless beams here and there, and a bookcase sticking out into the middle with a settee in front of it, all jagged and devised, without that irresistible warmth and perfect naturalness of real art. The Russian-born woman was a pale, very thin creature with a ~~rather~~ cracked voice, and she spoke in planned, pretentious sentences, trying to use big words and to convey very complicated ideas. I couldn't concentrate on anything she said, and had a feeling of waste and sterility, all the time. She would talk about books, or pictures, or the latest film, and everything seemed syphoned through a dusty brain. The things she talked about didn't seem made out of life, or for people, but to have something with technique or performance or style or machinery of some kind. Her sentences were all jagged and disturbed like the

... because the language was alive & in any way.
She only gazed at Cesare from a distance, as his corrupt
Roman face making its kindly & delicate & logical mask,
and it was so strange and fascinating to her that she knew
she would never be able to leave him: and the machine-
language was the best way of describing the ^{peculiar} machinery
of his life, as it would have been to describe the ugly,
uncomfortable room he lived in, and the ^{fake} 'art' he
put on his walls. She felt an exquisite pain near
him, ~~while ^{but} belonging to a civilization that didn't share~~
~~her~~ ~~to~~ ~~pass~~ the exquisite pain came from the fact
that they were almost bodiless when together, ~~and~~ ~~the~~
not from love or power. She relinquished all power over
him, in fact: she grasped at nothing. And that was why
— in Christian terms — ~~he~~ ^{he} always remained in 2 pieces.
When they were together they were like ~~the~~ people ~~from~~ ~~of~~
sitting ⁱⁿ at the crazy ~~front~~ no-man's land between 2
religions. (Gripped by ~~fascination~~ ~~at~~ the spectacle of
the other, because unable to come to terms with his own.
Cesare had wanted to be a priest once, but, as he said
deceitfully, with a ~~self~~ flattened face downwards, 'passin'
had stood in his way.



A

Therese

~~At the same time, in a curious and Russian way,~~
she seemed to know everything about him, ~~even when he was~~ ~~was~~, and sometimes he looked like a child on her side. Apparently, she knew both his wives - ~~he'd been separated~~ he'd been divorced once & separated once. And she seemed to collect an encyclopedic knowledge about him, all the time storing it up in his peculiar ^{English} machine-language, which he may or may not have taught her himself. Even when she was away, he seemed to protect him, and people said that he never went a day without writing to her. Yet he couldn't tolerate a hint of criticism; at work, he screwed his nose up in disgust. It was an 'old' affair: it was stale. It didn't help him ~~but was sort of~~ ~~figure~~ help him any more. That was the impression he tried to give. But the affair had lasted longer than either of his marriages. ~~After his affair,~~ they were so ~~separate~~ separate from each other, so much opposite civilizations that, even while they were mutually loved and disgusted, they were fascinated, too: there was to some point in the other which gripped them. She really did ~~not~~ feel proud to use the sort of language he'd taught her: it was light, formal, timeless, like a straw western Buddhism, this machine-language. It wasn't ugly to her as it was to

2. room, and she kept referring to people being ~~sensitized~~ 'sensitized' to things or 'unsensitized'. She said she had a 'high degree of sensitisation to noise', meaning she ~~heard~~ ^{heard} the loud radios in the courtyard every day, but that she wasn't 'sensitized at all to human presence as obstruction of the psyche', meaning she could work with other people in the room. And she spoke in a dry, breathless way as if she couldn't get sufficient moisture into her mouth and as if she were trying to whip a dead heart into life again. All ~~the~~ richness seemed to have gone out of her

unfeminine

didn't like the

with only a reminiscence of the Chinese silk in the room

body. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ She had strangely hollow eyes, darker than the rest of her face, and she sat hunched up, her shoulders angular, and almost ~~totally~~ ^{totally} hollow in her chest. But I had heard that once she was 'the most beautiful woman in Rome'.

She had come to Italy during the war, with the American army, as some sort of Civilian Rehabilitation Officer, and she had stayed afterwards, because she could never forget that eternal and magic quality often bestowed on a place by war---by the presence round of death. ~~She had~~ ^{she had} lived in Italy during the war & had stayed afterwards, not of love for the city.

She talked to me about this. 'This was some city in the war---that's why I stayed---it's never been the same since---I'm certain it wasn't like it before, either---all the streets seemed different---

I said I thought this was the glow war often put on a place. I'd spent two days in Rome during the war, and the city I ~~had~~ ^{had} seen then had nothing to do with the city I knew now. It hadn't been real. It had been a sort of glowing scene, where I didn't have to make a daily life. When I returned to Rome some years after the war I hadn't recognised one of the streets. ~~I saw~~ ^{I saw} And all the fabulous quality had gone, and Rome - which ~~had~~ ^{had} just a diff. spell - was there.

She nodded and said, 'I guess I was looking for it to happen again, but short of another war it wouldn't. Anyway, it's been a gradual let-down ever since---' and she cast a slow, narrowed look, so dusty, across at Cesare, who sat talking to another young woman, his head back against the settee in a way that gave him a sweet and helpless, even frail look.

I asked when she had met him and she ~~said~~ ^{said} told me just after the war. Their work had become connected, as he was on some ~~architectural~~ ^{architectural} scheme, financed from America. They had worked for months in the same office---'Then...', she added with a smile, and shrugged her shoulders slowly.

There was a silence, and I looked across at him. 'We're talking about you', I said. 'How you met each other'. 'Oh, yes', he answered, in English. He spoke with a special delicate seriousness. For a moment, watching his face, I felt a rush of warm friendship towards him, for that Italian quality I had come to recognise of a certain clear-bright and dazzling, yet shadowy, burning intelligence. Then it disappeared, like a brief giddiness.

'I'd just come back from America.' 'Oh, were you in America?' 'China, Yoko in Hong Kong.' 'Yes.' 'I was two years at Harvard.' 'Oh, really? Studying architecture?' 'Studying architecture?'

He paused for a moment---nothing seemed to take him unawares, or disturb his delicate calm---and then nodded gravely.

We saw them several times after that, briefly, and they seemed to become more ~~more~~ ^{more} and more irritable with each other. Sometimes he would give her a cold, level glance, or not answer a question, and she would remain quite undisturbed, as if being rejected by him was a pleasure to her. She seemed to smile inwardly, and she would talk on in a droning voice, endlessly, as if he weren't in the room. They looked too tired ~~with each other~~ ^{with each other} to have a quarrel.

my wife,

connected with Shanghai

connected with Shanghai

my stencils

he said

A

INSBPT (A)

Wang: Study up on the P. there?

call time

dustily

Often she would go away, for weeks on end, to Austria or Switzerland, and he would eat in the trattoria alone. Then she went to America for many months, and he ~~became interested~~ ^{started up} with another woman.

couldn't say it.

This other woman was ~~also~~ American, of a lazy, indulgent, wry and sensuous disposition, with a ~~quite~~ handsome but nervous face and childish, light-blue eyes which she sometimes cast down in affected modesty and with the hint of a smile, as if she quietly approved of impropriety but had to make a little facial gesture against it. She was separated from her husband and for nearly four years had had one man after another, sometimes falling in love, or saying she fell in love, and sometimes treating it as a raw sensuous adventure. ~~And at this time~~ She had ~~firm, well-rounded hips and a full bosom, and seemed to grow more sensuous in body with each man.~~ She wasn't happy, and always said she wanted only to marry again and settle down. Every new affair seemed to her ~~was~~ the most important experience she'd ever had, and she always liked to talk about it to her friends. Then after a ~~week~~ time there would be an estrangement, she would have a crisis and look tired and ill, then there would be another man and the process would start again. She was interested in a man most when he showed a ~~certain~~ indifference towards her, but the moment he seemed to need her she cooled.

China

American

her second husband

gone also

all over

Cesare had known her for some years, ~~and must have heard about some of her adventures.~~ In the summer, when she went to the sea and got brown, she ~~looked~~ could look inviting and voluptuous. A few weeks after the Russian-born woman went to America he asked her to have dinner with him--not at the usual trattoria--and they were soon sleeping together. She had shown her willingness by talking to him more than usual ~~in the first few days after the Russian-born woman had left.~~ It was clear to him that she was free. And she told people openly that she was going to 'make a line for him'.

Sometimes he slept at her flat, and sometimes she slept at his. They had dinner together almost every evening, and often he took her to night-clubs. She would telephone him at his office, and he would show impatience if she made an appointment with another man. All this was secret. They never went to the usual trattoria, and she never mentioned his name to her friends, as she would normally mention the name of her lover. He asked her not to give him publicity, as she had done with her other men. For one thing there was the Russian-born woman, and for another he had a 'certain position' to keep up, being older than most of the other men she had known. As often at the beginning of the affair, she was quiet and demure, casting down her eyes a lot and never questioning him. But gradually she began to have anxieties. She gradually found that he was much the same sort of person as she was. He was most interested in a woman who felt cool towards him, and ~~at once felt the need to desert her if she showed too much~~ warmth. Also she began to find out that he had as many women as she had men. And he too had been married. I was very surprised to hear this, remembering ~~him in the trattoria--~~ for as she began to find out these things she began to give him publicity. Her usual way of giving a lover publicity was to ask a friend for advice. And I began to hear about Cesare from one of these friends.

When she rang him up a great many times every day, or

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Catherine

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privately
buffy

thought
up twice
we began to be
advice

oblong

China

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the waitress
the waitress
the waitress
the waitress

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was he

he

5 2

in He does

The usual publicity-service.

This voice we became fully conscious of at the beginning & that protestantism, in a way, was the result.

4. made a scene at his office, or waited outside the palazzo where he lived to see if other women went in, he was brusque and cold, and told her she was 'vulgar', and that he must have his freedom. But when she made other appointments and stayed out the whole night he would ring her flat continually and leave messages with the maid, and then shout at her furiously for being a 'whore'. Slowly her body changed. It had begun to do so even before her period of anxiety. She lost the round, fleshy look in her hips, and her chest began to look sunken. Her eyes took on a paler and dimmer look, and her hair seemed more straggly. She began to wear loose dresses rather in the Twenties style, and no longer the erotic, ^{rather} tight-fitting dresses she had always worn before. She spoke softly, and always seemed tired. She lost all sexual appeal, whatsoever, and looked schoolmarmish. People began to see that this must be his influence. It was very strange that the Russian-born woman had also been an attractive young woman. And he gave that impression: of delicately and clandestinely exiting a woman, and not giving her a direct, robust satisfaction. She had always been narcissistic, and could never quite forget herself with a man. And now this narcissism became desperate. She seemed to be looking at herself all the time, but more and more with shame and. She told her friend, that Cesare was always 'correcting' her. He could only bear her to wear certain pale colours, and thought most of her clothes 'crude'. And he didn't correct ^{her} do this in a condemning way. He flattered a woman delicately. He made her little gifts, which other men simply wouldn't think of. He had a way of looking at a woman with a secretly appreciative warmth in his eye, as if to tell her that he saw the goddess in her, unlike most of the other men. And he seemed to be looking at her face and body all the time in a marvellous way, as if to say, 'But how strange you haven't realised before---did you really not know you had these wonderful little gifts---is it really true that no one told you about them before...?' And of course no attractive woman was cool to this. She began to feel under his gaze eyes that she could do nothing that wasn't dazzling and exquisite. This correction he gave her was apparently due to her falling short of the exquisite image he had of her. She, knowing what spell-bound attention she had created at first, was of course terrified of losing it, and wanted to keep the image there. And he used it as a kind of blackmail. She did everything he suggested. She rushed out and bought the hideous colours he liked best. She even began reading the books he liked, especially Proust. He told her that he was essentially 'Proustian', and that there were certain vulgarities he couldn't bear. Also he was an 'artist'. And this explained his delicate sensibility. She began to talk more carefully, because he asked for wit and for more 'spiritual' forms of conversation. And he taught her how to treat her own body as a shrine. She told her friends that she had never had an a man like him, that he was 'perfectly marvellous' in bed. But she was human. Her other men had given her, in time, rounded hips and warm appetites. ^{Now} so she fell short of being a shrine, by being attractive. All day, the more he criticised her and threw up his hands at horror at some 'vulgarity', she felt the obscenity of having her own body, and talking as she did with hot breath, and of having lived hitherto in a kind of fleshly slough. Then for a few moments at night, when she was in bed with him, she was a shrine again, and sighed as she had never done before with a lover. ^{she seemed to} But when she showed how willing she was to do anything he thought best, Cesare cooled and made other appointments. He told her he had to work late at the office. Then she phoned the office and found he wasn't ~~in~~ there. Or that he was going to work at

not like
respectably
n.p.)

begin
to look

Cesare
towards
woman

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the correction
could be

For the gifts
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He 'spiritual'
side

In fact, he
was an
engineer

working the
softly and
delicately
demand was
always delayed, finally, she said, I wanted
it now I preferred

What could be more
Proustian than this?

one day

without
ever

correct

she was

by being
attractive

5.

home! Then she found he didn't return from the office until after midnight. She didn't know he was going out with other women. He always threw up his hands if she suggested it. But several things happened to make it obvious. Next Sunday he was going to the office on the day, and she saw him with a woman. He was seen at a night club with a Nigerian woman, a very striking Negress with thick hips and a provocative, burning gaze. Still she didn't believe it. He was so convincing when she saw him again! He would look at her as if to say, 'And you, with all those gifts I've so often told you about, really believe that I could be interested in another woman?' And, being flattered, her starved self-love inspired again, she promised not to spy on him again, or doubt his word. He would always say, 'Why yes, she chases me, she is in love with me, something, but I know my tastes!' And he would lean back and smile at her lazily, his eyes making a tiny dark sparkling movement, and put out his hand in a gesture of compassion---~~his~~ compassion for the other woman. It was impossible not to believe him, especially if you were inclined to believe that you were really a shrine; only other men hadn't appreciated the fact, and had despoiled you. She preferred to see him as a liar if she called him a liar it dethroned her as well! It dethroned ~~his~~ his little compliments.

But at the same time she played her own little game, too. Whenever he seemed to be lying she made an appointment with another man, and when ~~she~~ he seemed really cool towards her---meaning he didn't even trouble to pay her compliments, but looked at her with bitter disgust and said, 'My God, you look ghastly tonight!'---she would stay out the night. The spying became reciprocal and obsessive. They each began to realise that the other was a practised and incorrigible liar, and that until now they had always been lucky to meet morally better people than themselves. A woman who knew them both, after listening to one of her long stories about his lying and treachery, said with a smile 'Siete fatti l'uno per l'altro', you are made for each other.

They began to live like man and wife, out of mutual fear more than anything else. He would spend some nights at her flat, and she some nights at his. They agreed to try 'an experimental period of marriage', to see how far they were really compatible. But the struggle still went on. When he began to take her for granted, she took counter-measures, and when she leaned on him too much he withdrew. They kept each other's attention by blackmail and strategy. ~~But the same struggle went on.~~ They kept each other's attention by blackmail and strategy. She started to smoke a lot, heavily, which she'd never done before. She had always been too impatiently sensuous---greedy for the next moment, for little pleasures. She wandered round all day from friend to friend. Her face was sallow and drawn, and days at the sea made no difference. Late one night she rang up a friend and told him she had to talk to someone, and would be come round at once, otherwise she would throw herself out of the window. He said, no, he was tired and had to work the next day, but rather than throw herself out of the window why didn't she come round to see him for a few minutes? She said she couldn't because she had a temperature, then rang off. He began to get anxious and after an hour rang her back. But she seemed to have forgotten their conversation. She spoke lazily---Cesare had spoken to her, she

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the Austrian woman, #

said---and added a little curtly that she was tired now and wanted to sleep.

The Russian-born woman, then came back. Everybody expected a crisis, but apparently her affair with Cesare, which had gone on for over twelve years, was finished. She and Number Two had always been friends, and they remained so. They even breakfasted together at Cesare's flat, after he had gone to work, to the astonishment of his maid. They didn't talk about him, but both knew the other knew. Number Two remained in sole possession. But one morning, after spending the night alone at her own flat, she went to Cesare's 'just to check up', before the maid was due to arrive. No one was there, but under the bed she found a Chinese tissue-paper handkerchief, which she said only a woman, and probably an American woman, would carry about with her. Then she found the Russian-born woman's toilet equipment---including ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ a pessary and contraceptive tablets---in the bathroom. This wasn't necessarily a proof of anything, because she knew the other woman sometimes slept there, not having found a place of her own yet. And Cesare told her that his relation to her was now that of a 'brother'. Also it didn't seem likely that he would want her now, she having lost her looks. But the contraceptive apparatus worried her, and in the evening she tackled him about it. He gave her a still gaze and then said slowly and coolly, 'You are quite disgusting. I never wish to see you again.' She went home, and after an hour or so a taxi came with Cesare's maid, bringing back all her clothes and odd belongings. She at once retaliated by sending her maid with all his belongings. The affair seemed closed, but after two days he rang her up and invited her to dinner as if nothing had happened. The ~~experimental~~ period of the trial-marriage was over, and they were back at the lover-stage, seeing each other only a few times a week.

a Chinese Chinese

She spent the night with him again, at his flat, and next morning was just about to leave, after he had gone to the office, when his maid called after her casually, 'You'll be here tomorrow then?' She turned and, sensing something, said with unequal casualness, 'No, why?'

'Oh, it doesn't matter', the maid said, 'only Il Signore said to buy enough bread for two tomorrow.'

'For tomorrow's breakfast?'

'Yes.'

The maid didn't seem to realise what she had said, and Number Two murmured, 'Oh, he might have made a mistake.' Then she went home and decided to lay an plan, and catch him out once and for all.

She rang him in the evening because not doing so might have roused his suspicions. He told her he was going to work at home, on something very important, and she said she wouldn't disturb him, and would go to bed early herself. They spoke politely to each other and agreed to see each other the following day, when the worst of his work was over. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ She had the key to his flat, an extra one, and added she would give ~~it~~ ^{return it to} him the next day.

She was very sleepy and had an early dinner, quite alone, which was ~~most~~ unusual for her. She was silent and ~~XXXXXX~~ collected, without her usual ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ restless indecision. Then she went to bed, at about nine o'clock, and set the alarm for two o'clock in the morning. She went to sleep at once and woke up, perfectly clear and energetic, even before the alarm went off. She took a taxi across the river, and dismissed it a hundred metres or so before Cesare's palazzo. She did the rest on foot,

86
A week before the Chinese woman had committed the deed. He had deceived the Chinese woman, on the Chinese woman had had that mail a week before.

would be

in case he should see her from a window

keeping close to the massive stone buildings, ~~on his side of the narrow street.~~ She'd deliberately put on soft, low-heeled shoes. There was no light from his window, but she knew he took the precaution of always buying thick curtain material. She didn't take the lift up, in case the noise ~~wakawakawak~~ put him on guard. Outside his door, on the fifth floor, she waited and listened. There wasn't a sound, and no light showed underneath. She turned the key, and went in on tiptoe. There was no movement at all inside. She knew every corner of the flat and need no light to go straight to the bedroom. The door was open, as it always was at night, to make a breeze from the window of the sitting room. She went swiftly into ~~the room~~ and waited for her eyes to grow accustomed to the dim light. There were two people. Cesare was in his place, and the head next to him was black. She walked closer. It was the Nigerian girl, with ~~hugg~~ the sheets hugged up to her nose. They were both asleep. She stepped forward to make sure it was really her---there might be other black-faced women he slept with---and knocked over a big lamp at the side of the bed. It crashed down, and Cesare at once woke up. She ran to the door, but he had seen her. 'Vatene via', he said in a clear voice, 'e non fare una scena.' Go away and don't make a scene.

dark than her. In fact, it was black.

He said it in an almost paternal way---firmly, ^{like a doctor's} ~~as if she were someone given to hysteria.~~ As it happened, it was the best tone he could have taken at that moment. It made her feel excluded and a wrong-doer. The Nigerian woke up and was sitting up, blinking, while Number Two ran to the front door and ~~shouted~~ ^{shouting} 'Bugiatio!' ---liar! ~~at the top of her voice.~~

prescription

Now she knew. And she began to piece together all the other lies he had told ~~about other women,~~ and wondered if he told the same lies about her to them. ~~When~~ After she had been back in her flat for an hour she decided to ring the Nigerian girl, whose number she happened to know. She was ~~at~~ ^{at} home, and didn't sound sleepy. But still a doubt came into Number Two's mind, as to whether it really had been her. For there were other dark-faced women in Rome, some of whom Cesare knew. So she said nothing and put the phone down. On the other hand, the Nigerian girl had had time to get from Cesare's to her own place. Cesare would probably have sent her home at once, knowing that Number Two had a key and might cause more trouble.

the other women
she sounded
as if she'd just arrived
Lohe.
(the family)

The following day she went to the ~~Italian~~ ^{came to} friend ~~whom she had threatened suicide.~~ She asked him for ^{more} advice. Should she ask the Nigerian girl point-blank whether she'd been sleeping with Cesare, or should she ask Cesare? On the other hand, if the Nigerian thought there was any doubt in her mind she would at once say no, and Cesare was in any case a liar. ~~The friend~~ told her to phone the Nigerian girl up and ask, even casually, 'Did Cesare say anything about me last night?' And if the other girl said, 'But we weren't together last night' she could easily reply, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I thought he was going to have dinner with you. He said something of the sort.' It was rather an ingenious plan. And it was effective.

The Nigerian girl answered at once, 'Of course he did! What do you think?' When Number Two asked how long it had been going on, she said, 'You'd better ask him that, darling.'

She left him alone that day, both at the office and at home. Instead, she phoned the Nigerian girl again in the evening, and told her with a rush how Cesare had been lying to her all these months, and how he had told her that she (the Nigerian

girl) had been chasing him and ~~was madly in love with him~~ seemed to be madly in love with him. The Nigerian girl laughed coolly at this, ~~and~~ without rancour, as if to say, 'The old rogue!' and then said, "He worried the life out of me. And he's been doing so for months. He used to ring me up all day." Then she added, "He told me the same about you. He said he wasn't interested in you at all really, but you kept worrying him, and he was afraid what you might do to yourself if he suddenly dropped you". They began to work on his character reciprocally. Evenings were pieced together over which he had lied either to one of them or to both of them. At the end the Nigerian girl said, "But in any case he ~~was always impotent when he was with me.~~ We never really made love, and I don't know why he went on trying." But people doubted this last piece.

When Two
 He was a
 she is a
 No 2.
 it

It didn't ring very true, first that Cesare would find the Nigerian less exciting than Number Two---or perhaps she was too robust?--- and second that the Nigerian girl would admit to another woman that any man was impotent with her. But it was the kind of story Number Two would make up to show people that while Cesare deserted her for another woman, he was still irresistibly under her sensuous sway, and couldn't bring himself to any degree of passion with another woman ~~also because because he was tired.~~ She was quite intelligent. Both she and Cesare were terrified at the thought of being dropped for another love. They had to be the droppers. And half the struggle between them was a struggle ~~to get to~~ to get to the finishing-post first, with another lover. He had got there, but her ~~story~~ story corrected matters a little. It seemed to say he would never find another shrine like her body---though she knew secretly that he had probably made all his women feel ~~this~~ like shrines.

Cesare

Bel. Bea.
 like shrines.

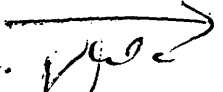

But on the other hand it was possible that the Nigerian girl had no excitement for him. She was new to Rome, and provocative, ~~and his vanity rather than his senses may have been excited.~~ She became quite well known among 'artists' and journalists, and her photograph was sometimes in the magazines and newspapers. She was colourful, and at his side she was decorative. He may have imagined himself

But on the other hand it was possible that the Nigerian girl had no excitement for him. She was new to Rome, and provocative, and his vanity rather than his senses may have been excited. She became quite well-known ~~among the artists and journalists as a 'colourful' personality, and at his side she would look decorative and unusual.~~ among the artists and journalists as a 'colourful' personality, and at his side she would look decorative and unusual.

and
 mid
 class
 middle

He may have imagined himself as part of a kind of Fleurs du Mal world, in nineteenth century Paris, delicate, pale, desabuse, with his 'dame creole aux charmes ignores,' the dandy of the Via del Corso. But she was broad-shouldered, tall, with massive breasts, and the image of that sensuous affront which he had destroyed in Number Two and perhaps in the Russian-born women. Perhaps it was true that the moment they were in bed he lost all passion, and apologised to her. Above all he seemed to want to destroy all suggestion of what was for him peasant-like---~~the sturdiness of body, loudness of voice, ribaldry, grossness of movement, slowness of movement, and in the Russian born woman and Number Two he had substituted a frail, wasted look, softness of voice, wit, elegance and bookish discourse.~~ In Italy it is impossible to exaggerate the closeness of the peasant to the city. He still gives the tone to life. He is still the majority. He swarms at the edge of the city, and into the city, giving even Rome a country air. And the middle class,

talk.

② describing the other track road to the entrance ^{the lower} proper of Koven's
^{could} time would be too complicated. However, since our car
was small, it would possibly squeeze ⁱⁿ between the ^{on one side} ~~in the middle~~ of the path and the precipitous gully in the
other ~~idea~~ I looked and judged, and said, yes, it ~~could~~ go.
So now we must say good-bye to the dog, and say
could he get back all right? Should it we take him? Oh,
no! He'd come out for a walk, he loved walking. The dog
needed a walk and loved nothing better, & good-bye and
good luck! We shook hands, and saw the lady, who
was small and plump, with a round, flushed face, suggest-
ed that she should squeeze in and come with us, as
these woods were so 'complicated' for a stranger. In the
squeeze, and we drove down into ^{the} gully, tumbling over
rocks, ~~and~~ sliding ^{through} in sand, ~~then~~ ^{and} turned left ^{was the} where
we suddenly saw a painted gate way. And there ^{was the} leap-
fence, and we hasten, ^{pumping with excitement} jumping with excitement
up a hill with excitement. ^{knowing} ~~what~~ things to come to.
On the other side of the house, were Koven and me ^{with names Schumpfi, whom I had already met in England} and
laughter, they rushed down the hill towards us and I got a
knack in the shoulder from Schumpfi while Koven rushed
and to the other side of the car to greet it. Drived! And
the ground rose ^{up} the steep hill behind them, the
plump lady to ^{jump} ~~jump~~ ^{with us} with us, with Koven & Schumpfi were
in front. There was the house ^{behind us} a tiny square building
with a garden table and chairs in front. 
we to pass this house to where we would be living 
(end here?)

smaller back of me, room and a kitchen' end of railway
- Deeper further along, in June, a little clearing in the
woods, named 'Our Paradise'. Two Wil was waiting for
us in his shirt-sleeves, a tall, sturdy-looking man with
a mustache and piercing but at the same time soft,
dark eyes. He pointed a way for the car, in silence,
and then said, "Garage," showing me a space under two
tall pine-trees. ~~Outside the car, it was had for a~~
~~bottle of whisky, two bottles of beer and some lemonade,~~
~~and the two itself, inside, was~~ → Outside, the two, but
the door on the grass by the door, Karen had ^{their} for a
bottle of whisky, two bottles of beer and some lemonade.
First there was the kitchen with an improvised table
by the window, with two benches, which Karen said
was wonderful for taking breakfast in, especially when
there was snow. The other room was piping hot, from the
stove, ^{which had been going} ~~with two bottles~~ since early morning, and everything
was laid out ready for us - a look for a bed at
the side of the bed, fruit, candles everywhere, a oil-
lamp hanging from the wooden boards above, a cupboard
full of the dark bread Karen knew we liked, and
milk, jam, tea, even a tea-pot and sugar. We could
be completely on our own if we wished, ~~cooked~~ for ourselves,
but the other house was there when we wanted to come,
Karen said, a few yards up the path. Our time had
been their first week-end house, nine or ten years ago,

and there was a saddle in the middle of the room just up
where the children had slept. There was a little table at one
end with a cloth on it, with a thick cloth on it, and the oil-lamp
burning on it, casting a warm, glowing light; behind it
was a table where had once been a vegetable-garden, enclosed
with a fence, broken-down now, which Kaven and Will use
for cultivating their fir-trees before transplanting them into
the grounds; there were few now, tiny, English-green
trees, not two hundred of them in all, and Kaven told
us that in the last few years they had planted over two
thousand trees in various places, ~~and had to break the~~

~~with roots with earth~~ The transplanting is quite a long
and delicate operation: the roots have to be shaken and
watered, then the tree has to be protected while it is
young against the deer who like to sharpen their antlers
on the lower branches. Next day, when we were walking
by near the ^{land,} ~~ground~~ we saw two different the wild
deer were from the cultivated ones: they looked thin and
skeletal, their branches bare of leaves, while the others
were full and robust. Many of the trees died last year
the drought; they need so much water, and this
land has no springs. In fact of their own that Kaven
will had cleared the trees and laid a lawn,
one Christmas tree in the middle, and on
either side of the lawn; the earth is black
thick with roots. In the evening we watched

rabbit looks out on to the lawn, stand quite still, and then
~~the~~ see the man; this game followed; everywhere the
earth ~~is~~ is pitted with rabbit-holes. Kaven's son ran
out to us the second evening and said that two deer
had pined within a foot of us; and he showed us
their hoof-marks, the digitated track marks in the earth,
like spear-marks. ~~It is said that there is a platform on the~~
~~top of the tree~~ } He also showed us a platform he'd
built at the top of a tree, by the edge of the property,
and said we could see across the woods to open fields
miles away; he would play at being a forester or
deer-keeper; they have similar hide-outs in the trees,
high up, and Kaven told us that they wait for the
deer to come out at dusk, and know every one of
them; they also shoot the sick ones so that illnesses
will spread. It is forbidden to hunt deer in the
woods. Will was efficient the first evening, not
showing himself very much. K. Ladiv described him as
an easy person but it was possible to deduce from his
description that he was. He sat in shirt-sleeves,
with canvas-slipper on his feet, and tucked his legs
up on to the couch. Their room was about the same
size as ours: the stove was high, a real tiled stove,
and there were two settees one on either side of a low
chimney-table: there were french windows leading out
to the garden, which sloped down, and from the
kitchen the ~~entrance~~ wood for fire is 20 miles away

could be seen, in the direction of the sea; the trees had
to be felled at the northern edge of the property to make the
view possible. After dinner I asked A. W. about his
practice: he is a doctor, and K. had been telling
in England what a struggle they'd had in the first
year after the war, when he came out of the army. He
has a great number of patients, a hundred and sometimes
a hundred and fifty a day, and this is for the visit
he makes in the afternoon. Now he has three days a
week free including Sundays — but he has to make
visits on these days. K. became ill with the strain
of ~~standing~~ helping to start a medical practice and
look after five children, all in a tiny house, and
had to go to a sanatorium, where she met A., in 1953.
W. was in Serbia and in the Russian front during the
war and was wounded three times; K. lost a brother
also in the Russian front. In the early part of the war,
when ~~W. was still in Stalder~~ ^{had qualified for his first hospital job,} they lived in Vienna;
W. had to go to England because the Viennese detested
Brazilians at that time, in 1938-1939, and that they
had had British accents. At first they lived in
London, then they found a flat. When the war
broke out W. ~~was not qualified as a doctor~~ ^{wanted to join the army, and he was taken in}
a doctor. After the war, when most of Germany was
destroyed, he decided to become a local general practitioner
instead of a surgeon, which he had always wanted to be:
had to find money to keep his family at ease, and

ing; but gradually, through the years, the work grew in time,
and now he couldn't do without it; he could see the value
his work every day; there was a tremendous pleasure and
satisfaction to be had from giving oneself to people, and
after the day, every day, in a kind of days of work
he was then beyond himself - there was no time for know-
ing his own conflicts. ^{He was a catalyst for others.} He was admired and liked locally
he had the gift of putting people at their ease when they walk
into his surgery; and he had to ~~maintain~~ ^{maintain} the pace of work in
order to ~~keep~~ ^{keep} his patients, there being six other doctors in
the district; ~~in the district~~ ^{in the district} his work would be a ~~reasonable~~ ^{reasonable} one
it had been at the beginning - they now had a ~~long~~ ^{long} operation
from the surgery, and he now had free days in the week.
Sometimes the continual stream of people was too much for
him, and he would then ~~take~~ ^{when} he found
his writing room full, with people standing in ~~the~~ ^{the} queue as
in the underground at rush hours, he would open his door
and call them everything under the sun, ask them where
he said they were doing there, they looked as healthy as
a cow himself, and whether they had ~~anything~~ ^{anything} better to
do at home; but they always smiled and laughed, and
when he saw this it made his work easier and he returned
to the surgery ~~in a better~~ ^{ready to work} ~~from a~~ ^{with his} ~~mind~~ ^{own}.

Christmas he got a number of presents - bottles of
wine, usually. There was now ^{voluntarily} a system among ~~the~~ ^{the}
doctors for week-end work - one of them did visit -
duties for all of them, so that they were free for six

in tiger white trousers and a white jumps, diving full motion
down a board, and behaving in a fawning and unnatural way
as if something special ought to be recognized in them by
the people without it being in their face, in their eyes
when in the way they were dressed; it seemed to be
in their motions which make a threatening was like an
airplane as they went off at the Hook of Holland. The
guy had no depth in his face, ~~and~~ his body ^{lacked}
softness, no real sex, perhaps because ~~the way~~
~~group and couldn't be moved and touched by engines~~
^{was unable to move by}
and threatening way ~~and~~ he kept clapping me &
the young men round the neck in an unnatural way
while the rest of the party laughed incessantly and
made absurd jokes. ~~I don't think I've ever seen~~
~~such false jollity.~~ One of the men had a flushed
~~face~~ face and a punch — the material, so
^{without either being there —}
to speak, I saw and jollity and he was casual
^{without the slightest affect of casualness.}
looks, but still it didn't go right through him and
his whole nature. It was all like a panic-
stricken performance before an invisible hostile audience,
nothing had to be done, time had to be a laugh, to
the performance, ~~and as central as a~~ ~~possible~~
~~the panic-stricken atmosphere~~ ~~in the~~
atmosphere — shed at Harwich ^{there had also been} a smoldered fire.

①

A Journey to the Hanging Heath

Down in the Hanging Heath

We got on board the Queen Wilhelmina at 11 o'clock
 in the morning in no way to Hanging, and watched
 pony, grey and stinn, being loaded into a narrow box
 on the quay side and strapped with various belts until
 he could hardly move; ~~then~~ suddenly he kicked his
 legs up and tried to clamber over the front; he
 tried again and again, pushing his head back, but
 couldn't; then the crane lifted him ^{high in the air} and ~~then~~
 lowered him ^{slowly} into the dark ^{of the ship.} ~~the~~ ~~thing~~ ~~that~~

~~that probably he taken me of the box and put into
 a kind of stable below the later I found we did
 wasn't so.~~

The carriage was ~~quite~~ empty, but we for
 a cabin and ^{didn't feel sick} ~~found that~~ lying down. ~~stopped the~~
~~van sickness.~~ Also ^{also we} ~~the~~ ~~lady~~ had found some pills from

the doctor, "Limonpatric medicine, ^{tiny pills made} for the tobacco,
^{was said to have} ^{after effects} ^{against sickness} ~~if it worked at all:~~
~~it was which ^{did} ~~last~~ ^{no} ~~sleepy effect~~ ~~if it worked at all:~~~~

~~it worked in with of us; and we were surprised how
 because we felt inside ~~instead of sleepy and dazed~~~~

~~with the more bromamine pills. ~~There was~~ ~~about~~
~~of people, all was except "young girl dressed~~~~

~~light white dress trousers and white pinstriping
 of so was ^{English} ~~delightfully~~ ~~well~~ ~~wanted~~ ~~of~~ ~~July~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~had~~
 watched a party of ^{one} ~~men~~, with ~~the~~ ~~young~~ ~~girl~~ ~~(dressed~~~~

~~one~~ ~~any~~ ~~of~~ ~~them~~ ~~(dressed~~

four. Two or three dock-walkers tried to ease him back after
pushing at his hump until they were back inside: the
lateral this slow pushing and bearing ^{for a time,} his head high
and ~~the same~~ ^{with} flashing look of dignity ~~and passion~~
in his eyes, as if to say, 'Very well. You can push. Push as
hard as you like. But you'll never get me down,' and there
was a gentle conviction in his gaze, something delicate
and just that had been ravaged. And ^{at} the moment
they succeeded in getting his hump inside he made a
head plunge again, with a vivid remembrance of ferocity,
and pushed them out again ^{exactly as before.} ~~when first~~. Again the
slow pushing back ~~repeated~~ took place. And again,
with even greater ferocity than before, nearly striking
one of the dockers in the head, he made a leap that
shook the whole box and this time for ~~the whole~~
~~of~~ his legs right up to his chest. Then a
dearly-looking man came along and calmly directed
the halter to be loosened; apparently, he was used to
this. The party, understanding, pulled back his hump and
peppered me in the box quietly and delicately, his head
moved unwatchedly and his tail and mane bedruffed;
he was dusky all over ~~for some reason~~ and his eyes had a
look of infinite relief and weariness. Someone led him by
the halter along the grey side where we were standing: I
was surprised how small he was, his ears so high then

~~and~~ Stimulating young man gaze at them in a somewhat
 affected way as they came towards him; and only when
 they had passed, taking no notice of him, did he look
 natural again. People are ^{driven in their nerves:} ~~so extraordinarily sensitive~~;
 I've noticed this again and again since we left Italy,
 where expressions of face are ~~so manifest~~

~~readily~~ taken as ^{an} index of feeling; I've noticed it in
 England and also here in Germany; so many people
 are careful of how they're regarded; a smile can put
 them at ease ^{at once} so easily. People are hurt and alone
 but are so many ^{people} floating ~~in~~ outside the class they were
 born in and the place they grew up in. (When we left)

the port of Holland it was sunny and quite warm, and we
 stood on the quay waiting for no cars to be unloaded.
 The poor pony was hauled ^{me} of the load again, and
 we saw that he'd been in the same box ^{throughout}
 the voyage, lasting six hours. He came swinging down,
 looking frightfully pale and worn-out. Apparently the
 crane swinging above him frightened him, and when
 it caught a car down quite near him he made a
 sudden plunge as he'd done at Munich and this time
 succeeded in getting his fore legs over the entrance
 of the box, so that he saw ^{astonishingly} ~~strangely~~ dignified
 with an exhausted and yet ^{with} his ~~eyes~~ ^{eyes} ~~staring~~ ^{staring} on the

and persistent look, ~~with~~ his ~~eyes~~ ^{eyes} ~~staring~~ ^{staring} on the

delicate like a young girl, graceful, especially in the last
stages and so made only the slightest clapping sound in
the corner; and ~~he would~~ now and then he would give the
large man at his side an intimate nudge as if he knew
he was from the country and could smell it ^{him} in the air; and
there was a simplicity in the man which we noticed when
he talked to us - he waited patiently while we fed ^{the pony} ~~the~~
the horse, and came back when we pulled up the net
of the bag, smiling and asking us, "Another one?"; animals
always know these things; in the way he nudged the man
there was complete know; they walked to, for along the
pass between the railway ^{lines} ~~tracks~~ and waiting
tanks, and it looked as though they were talking 'till this'
~~quietly~~ ~~with~~ the pony was telling ^{him} ^{in a matter of a few days,} ^{about} the voyage.

The parts of would be Western people come off with
a glow was as they'd driven in at Harwich; it was strange,
and of them was almost and just, really; it showed in
~~all~~ their faces; they had more ~~and~~ delicacy than
they wanted to be strong; and their peculiar, distorted
appearance of distorted features and false eyelids had
grown up between them like a third person.

We drove to Rotterdam and into there. I was
surprised ~~at~~ in the hue of the sky, like a blue and white
we stretched over the coast, as I'd never seen it before.
~~over, this is due to the flatness of the sky, everything~~
~~in the sky, the light comes from a reflection~~

③

my chest. We asked what he was found for, and the man
 looked at the label on his belt: it was a village near Rotterdam.
 Was he for killing - surely, no? No, certainly not,
 the man said, shaking his head with a smile. Perhaps for
 children: He now had a train journey before him, of perhaps
 2-3 hours. The pony was still hardly recovered, his head
 lolling, and ~~we~~ ^{we} fed him a whole apple, forgetting to break
 it up. ~~in case, he had to be taken of quickly.~~ He showed some
 interest in this and chewed for a long time without swallowing,
 forth pouring from his mouth on to the cobble. He'd obviously
 been sick during the voyage, and ~~according to it.~~ ^{low} was
 cleaning his stomach out. He looked all over the man's
 tins and shoes, and cried, ~~as if to be up~~ ~~retire~~
 sick. ~~He~~ ^{and he} ~~walked~~ ^{walked} off to the end of the quay. But
 he came back, this time ~~as a~~ ^{with} a full, peasant-
 like man with a muddied face and unshoes, bare arms:
~~He~~ ^{we} gave him carrots, breaking them up, and he
 nudged his head against ~~us~~, ~~rearing~~, and made a
 very grunting noise as if to tell us what the journey had
 been like: he was walking up, and blew through his
 nostrils, and when he continued the walk he went a
 few paces and stopped, pulling at the belt, so as to
 take himself free of the dust; already his coat was
 sticking together, but his poor tail hung down like old
~~of~~ ^{grey} cloth hanging together. His walk was steady and

it tasted ^{1/2 p.p.m.} ~~anyway~~ anyway of time was so much, in the hard taste
 due to being mixed. We reflected to each other that in an
 ordinary wine ^{100th} a year old you probably get a piece or so of
 a better chance of getting something pure than in ^{all} the
~~so-called vintage~~ ^{total} wines. We pido ourselves a what we know about wine,
 which isn't much. It was the first red wine we'd had for
 some time and it made us feel ~~delightfully~~ tired and heavy.
 So we decided to go to the next small town ~~and~~ ^{to} village
 and stay there for the night. The families sense of being
 a foreigner grew on us again. ~~But I'm used to it.~~ ^{In here:}
 a ~~comforting~~ ^{certain} sense of being ^{after 2} a visitor ⁱⁿ ^{on} ^{the} ^{way} ^{to} ^{the} ^{west} ^{and} ^{then} ^(off)

~~I sat~~ In the restaurant I tried to imagine what it would be
 like to come there every day; ~~and~~ I tried to sink into the
 real self of the place, there it had a certain particular
 faces; and I had a sense of atrophy that came from looking
 into a life I didn't know; there were only objects in this
 silence and tiredness; that is the sense of being a foreigner,
~~the~~ ^a ~~state~~ ^a ~~of~~ ^{which} ~~the~~ ^{we} ~~stand~~ ^{stand}
 states of visitor; and then all the little knots and
 nausea will have to be known, too, as in me, as life
 and locality; perhaps it was that I felt to a moment,
 swimming in time of me in the faded dancing of use and
 the ~~staring~~ ^{staring} ~~eyes~~ ^{eyes} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~place~~ ^{place} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city}. Being
 foreigner ^{you have} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~natural~~ ^{the} ~~freedom~~ ^{freedom} of self. ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city}
~~is~~ ^{is} ~~stuffed~~ ^{stuffed} ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~movement~~ ^{movement} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city}
 with personal struggle, in a ~~dangerous~~ ^{dangerous} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~city~~ ^{city}

The flatness of the land and the lack of trees makes the sky so important; everything is contained in the sky and touched by ~~the light~~ made gloomy & radiant according to ~~the light~~ ^{the weather} ~~in~~ like the case ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~England~~ ^{England} ~~there is~~ ^{there is} an undetected emerald quality in the light ^{as if from the surrounding fields,} ~~sometimes~~ like early-morning sunlight on sand, ~~with~~ ^{even} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ⁱⁿ ~~open~~ ^{open} ~~spaces~~ ^{spaces} ~~there~~ ^{there} was a pale evening sun with high, white clouds, and people were ^{about the} ~~trudging~~ ^{trudging} ~~turning~~ ^{turning} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~work~~ ^{work} ~~along~~ ^{along} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~high~~ ^{high} ~~straight~~ ^{straight} ~~roads~~ ^{roads} ~~there~~ ^{there} was always an embankment on either side of the road, so that we looked down on the fields. Rotterdam was a strange, with ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~modern~~ ^{modern} buildings shining like ~~magic~~ ^{magic} & a machine made of synthetic substances. Nearly everything was new. A few of the old streets with their ~~limes~~ ^{limes} ~~squeezed~~ ^{squeezed} light ~~lights~~ ^{lights}, and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~chimneys~~ ^{chimneys}, ~~often~~ ^{often} ~~under~~ ^{under} in ~~endless~~ ^{endless} rows, were still there. The ~~streets~~ ^{streets} had a gloomy ~~testament~~ ^{testament}, ~~but~~ ^{but} ~~sometimes~~ ^{sometimes} there was a light corner ~~where~~ ^{where} ~~there~~ ^{there} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~an~~ ^{an} ~~old~~ ^{old} ~~chair~~ ^{chair} taller and ~~coloured~~ ^{coloured} chairs, and restaurants with walls made of ~~plaster~~ ^{plaster}, such as you see ~~often~~ ^{often} in ~~German~~ ^{German} towns now. The place ~~since~~ ^{since} we ate ~~belonged~~ ^{belonged} to ~~old~~ ^{old} times, ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~too~~ ^{too} ~~was~~ ^{was} like ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~old~~ ^{old} ~~man~~ ^{man} ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~stable~~ ^{stable}, with ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~panelled~~ ^{panelled} ~~walls~~ ^{walls} ~~painted~~ ^{painted} with ~~ancient~~ ^{ancient} ~~figures~~ ^{figures} and ~~wooden~~ ^{wooden} ~~benches~~ ^{benches} seats, wooden with all backs, ~~and~~ ^{and} the tables thick and sturdy, with massive ~~the~~ ^{the} tiled stove reaching to the ceiling and ~~coloured~~ ^{coloured} dancing figures on the ~~wooden~~ ^{wooden} ~~panelled~~ ^{panelled} ~~walls~~ ^{walls} ~~and~~ ^{and} newspapers ~~affixed~~ ^{affixed} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~wooden~~ ^{wooden} ~~clapnet~~ ^{clapnet} ~~hanging~~ ^{hanging} ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~papers~~ ^{papers}, ~~and~~ ^{and} everything dark with cigar smoke. We looked for ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~waiter~~ ^{waiter}, dark & Italian-looking. ~~There~~ ^{There} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~that~~ ^{that} ~~they~~ ^{they} ~~are~~ ^{are} ~~good~~ ^{good} ~~young~~ ^{young} ~~Bohemian~~ ^{Bohemian} ~~boys~~ ^{boys} ~~which~~ ^{which} ~~we~~ ^{we} ~~took~~ ^{took};

Iran and paint work done. Then the bridge was lowered again
of ~~mechanically~~ ^{mechanically} ~~automatically~~ from inside the bridge. crane, and we were
in into the town. These were further dry, ugly, not sticks, all
the windows ^{with their curtains undrawn,} ~~mentioned~~ in the Dutch manner, everything is still
inside; and then to our surprise we came to the head of an
old town ^{with} ~~canals~~ ^{and} ~~remaining things~~ ^{with} a tall church, ^{the one}
square and a ~~striking~~ ^{late-medieval} massive ~~two-hall~~ ~~structure~~ ^{standing} alone in the
~~middle,~~ ^{square,} its shutters light red, its walls sloping, taller than all
the houses ~~round the square~~ ^{at the station} but ~~underfully~~ ~~striking~~ ~~and~~
unassuming, ^{with the} ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~front,~~ ~~the~~ ~~late~~ ~~of~~ ~~this~~ ~~style~~
Then we saw it, a tall, black shadow in the dusk, ^{these streets high, neat} ~~with~~ ~~the~~
red shutters ^{and} a spire, we felt the ^{old} ~~fantastic~~ relief of
finding a ^{real} ~~home~~ ^{place} for the night: ~~the~~ ~~strange~~, ~~weirdly~~ ~~along~~
a gothic medieval building does it; ~~it means~~

~~community~~ ~~the~~ ~~big~~ ~~grand~~ ~~stage,~~ ~~there~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~lack~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~
~~poor,~~ ~~entirely~~ ~~the~~ ~~town~~ ~~has~~ ~~gone~~ ~~stray~~ ~~and~~ ~~it;~~ ~~there~~
is this ~~center~~ ~~of~~ ~~sweetness~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~past,~~ ~~a~~ ~~special~~ ~~commune~~
there that ~~protects~~ ~~and~~ ~~protects~~. It was a relief after
the ~~attempts~~ ^{alone} ~~because~~ ~~every~~ ~~house~~ ^{had been} ~~separate,~~ ~~there~~ ~~will~~
to satisfy ~~some~~ ~~unknown,~~ in his immediate needs, ^{with} ~~with~~
~~nothing~~ ~~to~~ ~~bestow~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~people;~~ ~~and~~ ~~where~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~
all buildings in ~~the~~ ~~attempts~~ ~~they~~ ~~dominated~~ ~~and~~ ~~threatened~~
and ~~could~~ ~~give~~ ~~the~~ ~~cooling~~ ~~fact.~~ [The slopes and
uses wind the square glowed and twinkled, ~~to~~ ~~try~~
upward with the ~~the~~ ~~steaming~~ ~~shadows~~ in the middle.
found a tiny hotel in a side street, at the side
the church, ^{with} ~~above~~ ~~a~~ ~~canal~~ ~~lined~~ ~~with~~ ~~trees~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~middle~~
; ^{we} ~~we~~ ~~climbed~~ ~~a~~ ~~staircase~~ ~~so~~ ~~steep~~ ~~that~~ ~~it~~ ~~seemed~~ ~~to~~

③ ~~his~~ this anonymity can make it impossible to see life properly again, ^{it can take} ~~by taking~~ away all the illusions of locality - they become illusions; there isn't a place ^{you} ~~you~~ can go back to; all places have become gestures made in a thousand different ways amid trees and fields, and ⁱⁿ the silence of the weather this is the sadness, the growing inability of things to exercise their clarity, especially if they come from ^{unknown} ~~unknown~~ ^{the} weather, and face after ~~face~~ ~~that~~ ~~contains~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~.

We asked the waiter ~~him~~ for the next small town ~~village~~ was, on the way to the German frontier, and he told us Gonda, about half an hour's drive ~~from~~. He said nothing ^{more} about ~~the~~ place, only, ^{the} ~~that~~ people there probably went to bed early, ^{with a smile} ~~we~~ ^{arrived} ^{at} ^{Gonda} ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~ugly~~ ~~streets~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~identical~~ ~~treacher~~ ~~streets~~ ~~on~~ ~~rising~~ ~~ground~~, ~~with~~ ~~trees~~, at about ten, just after the sun went down. First we had to cross a canal and wait for the bridge to be lowered, as a barge was passing underneath. There was this wonderful silence of Holland, ^{coming from} like the flatness of the earth; ~~and~~ a barge, ^{with a long tub} ~~with a long tub~~ ~~was~~ ~~clean~~ ~~and~~ ~~polished~~, with a cargo in the hold, glided silently underneath, ~~with~~ ~~its~~ ~~engines~~ ~~making~~ ~~a~~ ~~perfect~~, smooth ^{motion} ~~motion~~, ~~with~~ its engines making the faintest noise in ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~bowel~~ ~~while~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~licked~~ ~~and~~ ~~obbed~~ ~~along~~ ~~its~~ ~~sides~~. A man was at the ~~bow~~, and after the bridge had been passed he handed the ~~wheel~~ ~~over~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~wife~~, in a tiny, stowing cabin where it

~~clear and emphatic~~ ^{or puritan, too;} ~~and he added that the hotel~~
in Gouda did serve beer and that, indeed, this one was the
only one which didn't ^(X) agree to operate with softness and
properly clear ~~and again to operate with softness~~
perfectly. ~~Knowned me to Holland for the first time, in broad the~~

~~Queen Wilhelmina, and I continued.~~ He then asked if we
were British and I was able to explain that ^{I was with my wife} ~~the~~ was
German by birth, American by upbringing, and English by
marriage when the opportunity passed, as is usually done;
~~the woman~~ ~~could be spoke again, this time to~~

~~Amate my wife~~ ~~Amate~~ and said that if we had time the following
morning we should visit the church, only a few yards
away, which had the most wonderful stained glass windows
imaginable. Without waiting for an answer he returned
to his seat by the bar, where there was a coffee-urn

steaming, and began reading. His back straight and
his fingers ^{frankly} ~~(around the)~~ look ^{like a vice} ~~uniform~~ and tidy
~~way~~ ~~look with~~ ~~as if~~ ~~should see~~ ~~strange~~
~~hieroglyphics in it,~~ The woman was bare, with

a face window like that of a shop, and ^{the} ~~had~~ ~~with~~.
^{bloomy} plastic lips. We left well and found in the morning
that ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ~~leaf~~ of the ^{downstairs} ~~room~~ ~~white cover~~ ^{white cover} ~~on~~
the tables; ~~and~~ ^{it was} ~~was~~ dining room ~~on the guests' desk,~~

and cosy, ^{only the} ~~white~~ daily costumes saw next day, drink-
ing coffee and smoking cigars. I had ^{had} - orange
cream in which someone spread - a lunch -
lodging, which consisted only of one room, with

be ~~of~~ a ~~time~~; the man, pale, ~~and~~ thin ~~with~~ lined, ~~and~~ ~~with~~
skill eyes, told us with a quick, jerky smile, in a breathless
way, that many sailors had slept in these rooms ~~in~~ ^{me} the
the years and they were used to climbing to the ^{crow's} ^{nest}
^{nest}, which was what they had always called these rooms.
~~nest~~, which was the ~~total~~ ~~wick~~ ~~name~~ ~~the~~ ~~face~~ to the
rooms above. It was simple, clean and bare. First we
were shown a tiny little room with a balcony overlooking
~~the street~~ ~~and~~ the canal, but that ~~seemed~~ ^{was} ~~very~~ ~~because~~
of the ^{tin} ^{trucks} and ~~noise~~ ^{cycles} like this ~~was~~ ~~and~~ ~~colored~~ ~~part~~
~~through~~ ~~the~~ ~~door~~ ~~below~~, and we asked for two single
rooms instead, one of which gave me ~~by~~ a high window
which one could reach with one's hand - ~~in~~ ~~to~~ the end-
yard of a hospital, and the other ~~which~~ ~~had~~
no window at all, ~~only~~ ~~a~~ ~~funny~~ ~~light~~ ~~which~~ ~~the~~ ~~man~~,
~~said~~ with another smile, ^{told us it} provided all the air we needed
'for the night'. We went downstairs again, having put the
car into a garage, ~~half way~~ ~~along~~ ~~the~~ ~~side~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~
~~canal~~, and I asked if I could have a beer. No,
there was a temperance hotel. ~~the man said~~; there was
no licence for beer or anything else alcoholic; ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ^{the man}
nodded his head, his eyes ~~stare~~ pale, ~~and~~ ~~at~~ ~~us~~ ~~here~~
concentrated closely on anything, ~~with~~ ~~a~~ ~~quick~~ ~~and~~ ~~a~~
defending, ~~a~~ ~~attitude~~ ~~or~~ ~~would~~ ~~just~~ ~~ridiculous~~ ~~and~~
~~mean~~, ~~I~~ ~~was~~ ~~on~~ ~~that~~ ~~attitude~~ ~~an~~ ~~attitude~~ ~~we~~
found cynical and odd; there was a wildness in
his voice and the way he looked at us, but at the
same time there was perfect assurance, and something

already there was the German emphasis and downrightness; it was in the ^{shape of} ^{even} road, the way people walked, their clothes, the sign-posts; the mildness of England and ^{Holland} ^{was gone} ^{with tall, shading trees} ^{in gills} ^{in the} ^{east} everything had a decayed and lusterless look. There had been no sunlight since the morning, and it was bitterly cold with heavy ~~dark~~ cloud; we needed winter clothes, things I had ^{my wife} ^{said} ~~had~~ ^{had} near the border ^{because} spoke with a Dutch accent, so that she could hardly understand them. In a few hours we drove along quiet, straight roads with trees on either side, then there was the intervals for the road.

~~the road~~ stretched a 200 kilometres, before we reached the ^{heart} ~~sandy~~ near Hamburg where we ~~stayed~~ ^{were} to stay. Our hosts A's friends.

~~Karen and Willy~~ ^{to wait} were waiting for us; when we arrived at a ~~certain~~ ^{point} we came to ^{some} ~~the~~ ^{the} house two times; this was because most other people when they ^{in the heart} arrived did it three times. They waited all day, from ~~mid~~ ^{mid} ~~noon~~ ^{noon} onwards, and ran down on to the sandy track under their trees - dozen times or more before we arrived in the evening. On those houses - some of them, like Karen and Willy, stacks made of wood with two or three rooms - and week-end miles, in the heart, as it is called, near Hamburg, an immense area of ^{pine} ~~fir~~ woods, originally 'beather'; 'red leather, green trees, white ways'. Karen kept repeating: 'white paths that go through the woods, perfectly right, cut through the leather and pine-forest, like new tracks, are soft and white from the pine needles that have fallen on them and turned to dust. More and more work in Hamburg. Karen said, also, taking a building there

through and made the lanes and sandy track of stream; then a dark
cloud would pass, and the shadows under the trees would seem to be
drawing everything into them. We found when we thought was
the right track, though we saw no hunting lodge; up we
went over thick tree-wood on the path so narrow and
narrow; we were to pass some kind of concrete pile and a
painted gateway, but instead there was only dense
young pine-woods and tiny timber half-hidden in their
shadows. We came up to the top of a hill, where the
path ~~was~~ went no further, and found two lanes on either
side of the courtyard, built of brick and stone with tiled
roofs, unlike the other. ^{They seemed to be a sort of clinic, judge from the industrial}
~~houses I had seen later that these~~
~~parents made a thirty-year contract when they~~

~~rented out the land, and it was stipulated that the lanes~~
~~built must be of wood so as to be easily dis-~~
~~wanted; but these lanes belonged to a ~~strange~~ diet~~
~~clinic, and the land under them had been empty, un-~~
~~anted. Anyway, we'd taken the wrong track, that was~~

clear. A few girls came running up, and then an older
woman. They looked at our map and couldn't make head or
tail of it. Their suggestion was that we return to the
bottom of the hill where the church was and begin again from
there.

No one had ^{heard} of ~~Kates and Wily~~ ^{no friends} ~~was~~ ^{was} of this
houses, though they ^{were certainly less than 100 yards away,} realised they ~~could~~ ^{could} be ~~at~~ ^{at} most
~~hundred yards away;~~

~~to be clear from each other that~~ ~~we~~
and thought they decided ^{the} ~~one~~ of the girls should go with

never heard the name. What were the houses called? 'Noch's
bedicht' and 'Unser Paradies' - 'Auster's story' and 'Our Paradise'
that was worse. ^(they laughed & we laughed) No, they'd never heard of those houses. They
studied no map. Yes, they knew the course of course. And
there was the hunting lodge; and here was the path leading
up from the hunting lodge; we'd come ~~correctly~~ ^{correctly} we had
come too far, ^{perhaps} ~~they included~~ But what did the cement
floor and the painted gateway mean! They certainly were
along the path we'd just travelled by; ~~so~~ we had
come too far! ~~the map was wrong~~ → Then the map was wrong. The best
thing was to go by a description of the people we were after,
and the kind of house they lived ⁱⁿ. The man, ^{we called him} we said,
was a doctor; his wife ^{was} described in some detail -
blonde, ~~fair looking~~ ^{rather unattractive} - ^{good looking} - ^{or, blonde, blonde!}
anyone they knew. Then we ^{studied} ~~re-examined~~ the map ^{in their writing},
that ~~the~~ ^{with} part of land ^{marked as} was ^(next to) that of another
doctor; Dr. Shack! Ah, Dr. Shack. Yes! Now
we lived further along the track, ^{in the same way}, ^{in the same way}, which
led into the woods, ^{in the same way}, ^{in the same way}. So that, having
reached the top of the hill as we had done just now, we
should have turned left and not right. And, now they
came to think of it, surely they did know the gentleman
we were looking for - Dr. ^{William} ~~Shack~~? Yes, that was ^{well-known} ~~the~~
name on this hill-side, but they couldn't think in what
direction! Yes, ~~that is a right~~ the two doctors lived
side by side; it had often been remarked by people locally.
We should certainly find the house if we went along this

us, as she lived on the bottom of the hill and must return home in any case. She was a plump, smiling girl of about sixteen and squeezed in beside us. We must return to the church and she would show us from there. She would show us the hunting lodge. We found we'd taken the first ^{the many} ~~of several~~ tracks ^{of which I should have taken the second;} leading into the woods and had to go ~~just~~ ^{just}; here was the hunting lodge, a simple, new building standing alone at the foot of the woods, closed, its windows without curtains; and some distance from it there was a track into the woods, it was this ^{track} the girl said, we had to take; and she ^{for us of the car to go long} ~~for us of the car to go long~~ ^{was very jolly} ~~was very jolly~~ ^{energetic} ~~energetic~~ by we went on again; the path narrowed like the other one, going into the denseness of the woods, with thick with ferns, and also like the other one it came up at the top of the hill; still we saw neither cement ^{port} ~~port~~ nor painted gate, only tiny stumps half-hidden among the trees. On this time there was an open space; the track led into several others; we had a choice of three and, regarding the map, which now told us nothing, we took the one going right, where we saw two men walking with a dog. This path, wider than the others, led down into dense woods, where there appeared to be no tender. We decided we'd come much further than the map directed. ~~So if we did have to go along~~ Also if this path was right the map must be so wrong as to be mad ⁽⁺⁾ ~~mad~~ ~~say that Raven wouldn't read.~~ So we asked the two men. 'Why?' they asked. We repeated the reason. No, they'd

as new comers. Now, here was a house. But no women
pills and no painted gateway. ^{narrow} A path led down to
another quite large house, of brick and tile like the
diner; and a woman stood before ^{it}, was that my friend
No, ^{my wife} ~~that~~ said. Oh, dear! Then it could be this
path at all. We should turn the house three perhaps four
times, and they might come running down. One, two, three
four, a hideous echoing noise which caused the dog to
bark, his eyes streaming and his tail wagging. He
always ~~did~~ ^{bark too} ~~there~~ when he heard a car ^{from} ~~from~~ inside
the car, the man side. Because that was ^{low} signalled
his approach to the house on week-end, like every one
else who had a place here; and of course the ground —
though he, ~~was~~ like everyone else, only did it three
times — went ~~from~~ ~~and~~ ~~was~~ ~~for~~ the dog and 100s of
fun after a week in the city. ~~But~~ ~~she~~ ~~should~~ ~~ask~~ ~~this~~
poor lady who was coming down ^{the path} ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~house~~ ~~forward~~, ~~or~~
~~there~~ ~~are~~ ~~friends~~, ~~was~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~found~~. He jumped ^{up} ~~up~~
Dr. W — ? Did she know where he lived? Indeed,
she did; they were neighbours! And ^{in Boston} ~~there~~ had stood
that morning to look out for anyone 100. She might
be he guess from England. So here we came! But
was ^{we} ~~was~~ ~~to~~ ~~go~~ ~~from~~ ~~this~~ ~~house~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~house~~. ^{path to the house? that was difficult, she said} ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~house~~. ^{holding to it} ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~house~~.
but the house four times again! So I did. ~~There~~
~~is~~ ~~no~~ ~~more~~. The path ~~was~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~known~~ had
in the middle to stop car, and the woman said,

same path, only in the other direction. (We turned round and
waved ^{their} good-bye. The map was ^{we told each other - better to} ~~use it,~~ ~~at all~~ ~~right~~ we travelled along the same kind of path as
before, only in the snow on the hill, and without trees on
either side, only leather. Then we came to a fork: one
path led downwards, back into the area we'd just left,
~~and~~ the other forked into the woods, ^{into darkness & space,} away from the houses.
We took the latter one, and found that, ~~the tracks increased~~
there were further ^{or the sandy tracks increased, (there were)} ~~forks,~~ and ~~to~~ ~~more~~ ~~houses,~~ only leather
and ~~spare~~ ~~tools~~ ~~⊗~~ We looked all round us. Silence ⊗ we
could easily be lost if we went in! ⊗ we turned round
and we now found no two men with the dog. What, we
kind found no houses as yet! Then we must have taken
the path into the woods! ~~and~~ ~~then~~, The other (the dog,
a thin ~~for~~ ~~feared-looking~~ man with ~~the~~ ^{genial} reflective eyes,
would come with us: could we squeeze him in? Indeed,
we could! But ~~the~~ ^{this} dog! Oh, we were used to dogs, and
~~this~~ was so tiny, this little white fellow with the fluffy
tail and huge eyes, that he could go on the floor at
the man's feet. The other man was left behind - the
dog-owner's guest for the week-end, and nodded to us
as we drove off, with a perplexed smile. Was I Dutch,
the dog-owner asked ^{anyway} ~~As~~ as we drove along; he had
ever us talk a foreign language? No, English.
map. More reconnaissance, between the three of us, about
map. What an almost map! (Some should've drawn
map! ^{our} ~~houses~~ ~~land~~ ~~seen~~ the thing as we would see

1.
CESARE, AND THE CHINESE,

Cesare was a slim, good-looking young man with dark hair and a delicate, slightly curving nose. He was quite tall, and moved softly and lightly. I used to see him in a trattoria, usually with a woman of Chinese origin. He would smile towards our table most politely, with a little nod of his head. It was impossible to imagine him doing anything abrupt or harsh. In everything he seemed delicate and thoughtful, and perhaps a bit submissive. He lacked the blind, staring quality of other Romans: far from being lost in his senses he seemed inglese, in the Italian meaning of the word--rather cool and formal. In fact, I often wondered if he was wholly Italian, and if perhaps he didn't come from the Veneto or the Alps. But he told me one day, when I asked him, that he was a Roman 'born and bred'. His father was a big landlord and owned several blocks of flats in Naples and Palermo.

Cesare wasn't a very young man. He was in his early forties. But he gave the impression of a youthful shyness and insecurity. I remember when he told me ^{once} that, ~~during the war, after the armistice had been signed between the allies and the newly formed Italian government, he had~~ walked from one side of Italy to the other, ^{in the war} mostly along difficult mountain paths, with no money, ^{the} ~~I remember~~ ~~that the~~ image I already had of him--as innocent of any harshness, and shyly withdrawn from the world--was sustained by his description, as he ^{had} meant it to be perhaps, so that I saw him as ^a kind of romantic wanderer for a moment, his uniform in rags (he'd been an officer), hatless, but still smooth and trim-looking, strangely beautiful, not sweating or hungry or irritated ^{as the rest of us} ~~or anything like~~ ~~that~~ ^{would be.}

He and the Chinese woman always sat in a corner of the trattoria, quietly, sometimes never once addressing each other;

and they rarely joined another party. I took them for a married couple who were a bit bored with each other. But then someone told me that they weren't married. And a little he invited us up to his flat. It was an awkward, cold-looking place--- just two rooms. These set out to be artistic, with useless imitation-beams across the ceiling and a bookcase sticking out in the middle of the room with a settee in front of it, all jagged and devised, without any intimacy at all. The Chinese woman was a pale, thin creature with a cracked voice, and she spoke in painfully complicated sentences, trying to use big words and convey pretentious ideas. I couldn't concentrate on anything she said, and had a feeling of sterility from her. She would talk about books or pictures or the latest film, and everything seemed syphoned through a dusty brain. The things she said didn't seem to come from life or people but to be connected with technique or performance or style or machinery of some kind. Her sentences were all jagged like his room, and she kept referring to people as being 'sensitised' to things or 'unsensitised'. She said she had a high degree of sensitisation to noise, meaning she couldn't stand the radio in the courtyard; she wasn't sensitised at all to human presence as obstruction of the psyche, meaning she could work with other people in the room. She spoke in a breathless way all the time as if she couldn't get sufficient moisture into her mouth and was trying to whip a dead heart into life again. She had strangely hollow eyes with only a reminiscence of the Chinese in them, darker than the rest of her face; and she sat hunched up, her shoulders angular, her chest caved in. We heard that she'd once been one of the loveliest women in the city, with a plump, rich body that made the Romans gape wherever she went. She'd come to Rome in the war, and had stayed afterwards out of love for the city.

She talked to me about this.

* 'It was some city in the war---it's never been the same since---I'm sure it wasn't like it before, either---the streets seemed different---'.

I said I thought this was the glow war put on things. It made everything a glowing scene---the background of death.

She nodded and said, 'I guess I was looking for it to happen again, but short of another war it wouldn't. Anyway, it's been a gradual let-down ever since---', and she cast a slow, narrowed look, so dusty and tired, across at Cesare, who sat talking to my wife, his head back against the settee in a way that gave him a helpless and even frail look.

I asked her when she'd met him and she said just after the war---a long time ago now (with another dusty sideglance at him). Their work had become connected: he was on some trading scheme that involved Shanghai, where she was born. They'd worked for months in the same office---'Then...,' she added with a smile, and shrugged her shoulders slowly without adding anything.

There was a silence, and I looked across at him.

'We're talking about you,' I said. 'How you met.'

'Oh, yes' he answered in English, with the same slight American accent as the Chinese woman. For a moment, watching his face, I felt a rush of friendship towards him, for that Italian quality I had come to recognise of a certain clear-bright and dazzling yet mysterious intelligence. Then it disappeared, like a brief giddiness.

'I'd just come back from China'.

'Oh, you were in China, too?'

'Yes. For about two years. In Hong Kong.'

'Really? You met Buwei there?'

He paused for a moment---nothing seemed to take him unaware or disturb his delicate calm---and then he nodded gravely. He

4.
could as easily have met her on the street in Naples---I had a sudden impression of him as a liar.

In a curious---perhaps eastern---way the Chinese woman seemed to know everything about him. Sometimes he looked like a child at her side. Apparently, she knew both his wives well---he'd been divorced once and separated once. She even seemed to collect an encyclopedic knowledge about him, all the time storing it up in her peculiar English machine-language, which he may or may not have taught her himself. He liked her to speak in English, we heard: Italian seemed 'vulgar' to him sometimes, and he knew no Chinese. Even when she was away from Rome she seemed to be protecting him still, and people said that he never went a day without writing to her: even, that he kept a diary for her of his most intimate doings, in symbol-language.

Yet he wouldn't tolerate a mention of her when she was away. He screwed his nose up slightly, with disgust. It was an 'old' affair: stale. Yet it had proved itself stable. It had lasted longer than either of his marriages. The two of them seemed so separate from each other---~~at~~ the root, in religion and civilisation---that even while they were mutually bored and disgusted they felt some fascination, holding them together. That was how it seemed, anyway---they never talked about each other if they could help it, except to show a little sign of disgust. Perhaps she felt proud to use the odd language he'd taught her: it was light and timeless, like a strange western Buddhist tongue---perhaps that was it; it wasn't ugly for her as it was for us, since the language wasn't alive for her in any case.

She gazed at Cesare from a distance, at his corrupt, Roman face making his kindly or delicate or boyish mask, according to the needs of the moment (that is, what kind of woman there was in

5.

the room). Perhaps the machine-language was the best way of describing the peculiar machinery of his life, as it would have been to describe his room, and the fake art he put on his walls. She seemed to feel an exquisite power over him, but being Chinese she had no taste for power in our sense: she wasn't deliberately exercising anything. He was simply an exquisite experience. In fact, she relinquished whatever power she had over him every day, every hour: she grasped at nothing. She stayed in his flat when he wanted her to; left it when he gave the word. The stay might last a week, six months, hardly a day. They led a strange life.

I used to think of them as two people sitting in the crazy no-man's-land between two religions, so gripped by what lay on the other side of the frontier than they never came to terms with what lay on their own. Cesare had wanted to be a priest once, but, as he said, demurely, with a flattered glance downwards, 'passion' had stood in his way.

+ + + +

We saw them several times after that, and they seemed to get more and more irritated with each other. Sometimes he gave her a cold, level glance, or deliberately didn't answer a question, and she ^{was} always ^{quite calm.} ~~remained undisturbed, as if his rejecting her was a pleasure now.~~ She seemed to smile inwardly, and talked on in her droning voice as if he weren't in the room. They looked too tired of each other even to have a quarrel.

Often she would go away, for weeks on end, to Austria or Switzerland for the cool mountains, and he would eat in the trattoria alone. Then she went to China for many months, and he started up with another woman.

This new woman was a friend of ours: she came from Greece and had a lazy, self-indulgent, morbidly sensuous character, with a handsome but nervous face and childish, light-blue eyes which she sometimes cast down in affected modesty, with the hint of a wry smile, as if she quietly approved of any impropriety but couldn't tell you as much. She was separated from her ~~kusshany~~ husband, and for nearly four years now she'd been going about with one man after another, sometimes falling in love, or saying she fell in love, and sometimes treating it as a raw sensuous adventure. She had firm, well-rounded hips and a full bosom, and seemed to grow more sensuous in body with every man: until she met Cesare.

Every new affair was always the most important experience she'd ever had, and she liked to give her friends all the details. Then there would be an estrangement, a crisis during which she would look tired and ill, then there would be another man and the process would start all over again. She was interested in a man most, it seemed, when he was fed up with her, but the moment he seemed to need her she cooled.

Actually she and Cesare had known each other for some years, but not on ^{intimate} ~~casual, bed-going~~ terms. A few weeks after the Chinese woman left he asked her to dine with him---not at the usual trattoria---and they were soon spending the night together at his flat. She had told people openly that she was going to 'make a line for him'.

Sometimes he slept at her flat, sometimes she slept at his. They had dinner together almost every evening, and often he took her to night-clubs. She would phone him at his office, and he would show impatience if she had made an appointment with another man. Then their affair suddenly became secret. They never went to the usual trattoria and for weeks she said nothing about him. He had asked her not to give him publicity, as she'd given it so

generously to the other men. For one thing there was the Chinese woman, who mustn't hear of it, and then he had a certain position to keep up. He was shrewd enough to see that her publicity wasn't always flattering.

As always at the beginning of an affair she was demure and girlish, casting her eyes down a lot and looking quietly---even theatrically---happy. But gradually it was clear that anxieties had started. The trouble, it seemed, was this: he was so much like her, in his character. He was most interested in a woman when she was cool to him, and ~~wasn't~~ deserted her when she was warm. ~~xxxx~~ His wives, she said---the publicity-service was starting up again---had made the mistake of showing warmth. And also she began to find out that he'd quite as many women as he'd had men. I was surprised to hear this, remembering him in the trattoria, so meek and retiring.

Her usual way of giving a man publicity was to ask her friends for 'advice'. And she began to ask us for advice. When she rang Cesare up a great many times in the day, sometimes once every three minutes for three hours or more---there was a lazy persistence about her---or made a scene at his office, or waited outside the palazzo where he lived, to see if other women went in, he was brusque and cold with her, and told her not to be 'vulgar', that he must have his freedom. But when she made other appointments and stayed out the whole night he would ring her flat repeatedly and leave messages with the maid, and then shout at her furiously for being a 'whore'.

Slowly her body changed. She had lost the round, fleshy look in her hips, and her chest began to look sunken, in the same way as the Chinese woman's. Her eyes took on a paler and dimmer look, and her hair seemed more straggly. She began to wear loose dresses in the Twenties style, no longer the tight,

erotic, Roman dresses she'd worn before. She spoke softly, always seemed tired. She even began to look schoolmarmish, with flat, healthy walking shoes and buttoned blouses.

She told us that Cesare was always 'correcting' her. He could only bear her to wear certain pale colours, and thought most of her clothes 'crude'. But he didn't correct her in a condemning way: he made her little gifts which subtly suggested the correction he was after. He had a way of looking at a woman with a secretly appreciative warmth in his eyes, she said, as if to tell her that he saw something in her that no other men had seen. He seemed to marvel at her, to say, 'But how strange you haven't realised before---didn't you really know that you had all these wonderful little gifts---is it really true no one told you about them...?' And of course no attractive woman could be cool to that. She began to feel under his gaze that she was dazzling and exquisite, especially if she followed his directions.

The gifts he attributed to women were always exquisite---on the 'spiritual's ide; and of course the Greek woman began to fall short of the image. Knowing what spell-bound attention she'd created at the beginning, she was terrified to lose it; and it had only been a step more for him to use it as blackmail, even supposing he hadn't designed it as blackmail from the beginning. She did everything he wanted. She rushed out and bought the hideous 'artistic' colours he suggested. She even began reading the books he liked, especially Proust. He told her that he was essentially 'Proustian'; apparently, there were certain vulgarities he couldn't bear, and what could be more Proustian than that? She began to talk more carefully, as he asked for more 'spiritual' forms of conversation.

She told her friends that she'd never had a man like him. He exhilarated and excited her without ~~was~~ ^{precisely} satisfying her:

something like that. Her other men had given her rounded hips and warm appetites, but she didn't appear to want this any more. By being attractive, now, she fell short of being a shrine. The more he criticised her and threw up his hands at some 'vulgarity' she'd committed, the more she felt the obscenity of her own person and tried to correct it, as if she'd lived in ~~xxxxxx~~ a fleshly slough until ~~xxxxxx~~ now. And the pleasure in this was that the moment they were in darkness together again, even if it was only a few moments, she was a shrine again. It was the most tremendous boon her vanity had ever had.

But when she showed how willing she was to do anything he thought best, he cooled and made other appointments. He told her he had to work late at the office. She phoned the office and found he wasn't there. Or he said he was going to work at home; and she found he didn't return home until after midnight that day. She wasn't sure he was going out with other women; he always threw up his hands if she suggested it. But several things happened to make it obvious. He was seen at a nightclub with a woman from Bechuanaland, the wife of an official. She was a striking woman with thick hips and a provocative, burning gaze. Still the Greek woman didn't believe it. He was so convincing when she saw him again! He would look at her as if to say, 'And you, with all those gifts I've told you about, you really believe I could be seen out with her?' And, being flattered again, the shrine came back into its own, especially if they then spent the night together.

And she would promise not to spy on him or doubt his word. He would say, 'Why yes, she chases me, she's in love with me, but I know my tastes!' And he would lean back and smile at her lazily, his eyes making a tiny dark sparkling movement, and put out his hand in a gesture of compassion---compassion for the other

(and)
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woman. After all, if she called him a liar, she dethroned herself as well---there was that to think of. It dethroned every little compliment he'd made.

But at the same time she played her own game as well. Whenever he seemed to be lying she made an appointment with another man, and when he seemed really cool to her---meaning he didn't even trouble to pay her compliments, but looked at her with bitter disgust and said, 'My God, you look ghastly tonight!--she would stay away for a day or two. The spying became reciprocal and obsessive. They began to realise that the other was as practised and unscrupulous a liar as they themselves were. A woman who knew them both, after listening to one of her long stories about his lying and treachery, said with a smile, 'Siete fatti l'uno per l'altro'---you are made for each other.

They began to live like man and wife, out of mutual fear more than anything else. He spent nights at her flat, and she nights at his. They agreed to try 'an experimental period of marriage' to see how far they were really compatible. But the blackmail and strategy went on. She began smoking a lot, which she'd never done before. She wandered round from friend to friend. Her face was sallow and drawn, and days at the sea made no difference. Late one night she rang us up saying she had to talk to someone, could we come round at once, otherwise she would throw herself out of the window. I said, No, we were tired and had to work the next day, but rather than throw herself out of the window why didn't she come round to us for a few minutes? She said she couldn't because she had a temperature, and rang off. I began to get anxious and after a few minutes rang her back. But she seemed to have forgotten our conversation. She spoke lazily---Cesare had just talked to her, she said---and she added a little curtly that she was tired now and wanted to

sleep.

Number One then came back from China. Everybody expected a crisis, but apparently her affair with Cesare, which had gone on for twelve years now, was at last over. Or so it was thought. But someone who knew her well pointed out that this had often been thought before. Anyway, she and the Greek woman met and found they'd known each other long before, in a vague way. They even breakfasted together at Cesare's flat, after he'd gone to work---to the astonishment of his maid. They didn't talk about him, but both knew the other knew. Number Two remained in sole possession. Or so she thought. The Chinese woman had nowhere to stay yet---she hadn't found a flat, and was constrained to sleep there, fixing up a divan in the sitting room.

One morning Number Two, after spending the night at her own flat, went to Cesare's 'just to check up', before the maid was due to arrive. No one was there, but under the bed she found a Chinese handkerchief, which she said only a woman, and probably a Chinese woman, would carry about with her. Then she found Number One's toilet equipment---including a pessary and contraceptive tablets---in the bathroom. This wasn't necessarily a proof of anything but, as she said, it went 'a damned long way.' But then Cesare had told her that his relation with Number One was like that of a brother. Also it didn't seem likely to the Greek woman that he would want her now---after all, she had lost her looks. But the contraceptive apparatus worried her, and in the evening she tackled him about it. He gave her a still gaze and then said slowly and coolly, 'You're quite disgusting. I never wish to see you again.' She went home, and after an

hour or so arrived from Cesare's flat with all her belongings. She at once retaliated by sending her maid with all his belongings. The affair seemed closed, but after two days he rang her up and invited her to dinner as if nothing had happened. The period of the trial-marriage was thus over, and they were back at the lover-stage, seeing each other secretly a few times a week. There was the old thrill of seeming to deceive the Chinese woman. As she said, it was better than the trial-marriage.

She spent one night with him at his flat, when Number One was in Torino for a few days, and next morning she was just about to leave, ~~when~~ after he'd gone to the office, when the maid called after her casually, 'You'll be here tomorrow then?' She turned and sensing something said with equal casualness, 'No, why?'

'Oh, it doesn't matter,' the maid said, 'only il signore said to buy enough bread for two tomorrow.'

'For tomorrow's breakfast?'

'Yes.'

The maid didn't seem to realise what she'd said---or perhaps she did. Number Two murmured, 'Oh, he might have made a mistake.' Then she went home and decided to lay a plan, and catch him out once and for all.

She phoned him in the evening because not doing so might have aroused his suspicions. He told her he was going to work at home, on something very important, and she said she wouldn't disturb him, and would go to bed early herself. They spoke politely to each other and agreed to see each other the following day, when the worst of his work would be over. She had the key to his flat, an extra one, and added that she would return it to him the next day.

She was very sleepy and had an early dinner, quite alone, which was unusual for her. She was silent and collected, with-

out her usual restless indecision. Then she went to bed, at about nine o'clock, and set the alarm for two o'clock in the morning. She went to sleep at once and woke up, perfectly clear and energetic, even before the alarm went off. She took a taxi across the river, and dismissed it a hundred metres or so before Cesare's palazzo. She did the rest on foot, keeping close to the massive stone ~~walking~~ walls in case he saw her from his window. She'd put on soft, low-heeled shoes. There was no light from his window, but she knew he took the precaution of always buying thick curtain material. She didn't take the lift up, in case the noise put him on guard. Outside his door, on the fifth floor, she aited and listened. There wasn't a sound, and no light showed underneath. She turned the key, and went in on tiptoe. There was no movement at all inside. She knew every corner of the flat and needed no light to go straight to the bedroom. The door was open, as it always was at night, to make a breeze from the window of the sitting room. She went swiftly in and waited for her eyes to grow accustomed to the dim light. There were two people. Cesare was in his place, and the head next to him was dark. In fact, it was black. She walked ~~straight~~ closer. Was it the woman from Bechuanaland? She stepped forward to make sure it was really her---there might be other black-faced women he was interested in---and knocked over a big lamp at the side of the bed. It crashed down, and Cesare woke up at once. She ran to the door, but he'd seen her.

'Vatene via,' he said in a clear voice, 'e non fare una scena.' Go away and don't make a scene.

He said it in a paternal way---firmly, like a doctor ordering a prescription. As it happened it was the best tone he could have adopted. It made her feel ashamed---dethroned and deshrined. The Bechuanaland lady---if it was the Bechuanaland lady---sat up,

blinking, as Number Two ran to the front door shouting 'Bugiardo!'---liar! at the top of her voice.

Now she knew. And she began to piece together all the other lies he'd told her, wondering if he told the same lies about her to the other women. After she'd been back in her own flat for an hour she decided to ring the Bechuanaland lady at her home. Well, she was there, thought she might just have come in: she didn't sound sleepy. Had it been her after all? There were other dark-faced women in Rome, and the bedroom ~~had~~ curtains had been drawn. So she said nothing and put the phone down. Yet the Bechuanaland lady had certainly had time to leave Cesare's flat and reach home in a taxi. Or did she have a car? Cesare would probably have sent her home at once, knowing ^{still} that Number Two/had a key and might cause more trouble. So her reflections went on.

The next day she came to us for 'advice'. Should she ask the Bechuanaland lady point-blank whether she'd slept with him, or should she ask Cesare himself? On the other hand, if the Bechuanaland lady thought there was any doubt in her mind she would ~~at once~~ at once say no, and Cesare was in any case a liar. So neither of those plans would do. Then she hit on something else: she would phone the Bechuanaland lady and ask her casually, 'Did Cesare say anything about me last night?' And if the other woman said, 'But we weren't together last night,' she could easily reply, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I thought he was going to have dinner with you. He said something of the sort.' It was rather ingenious. And it was effective.

The Bechuanaland lady replied at once, 'Of course he did! What do you think?' When Number Two asked how long it had been going on, she said, 'You'd better ask him that, darling.'

She left him alone that day, both at the office and at

home. Instead she phoned the Bechuanaland lady again in the evening and told her with a rush how Cesare had been lying to her all these months, and how he'd told her that she (the Bechuanaland lady) had been chasing him and seemed to be madly in love with him, though she would never betray her husband. The Bechuanaland lady laughed coolly at this, without rancour, and said, 'He worried the life out of me. And he's been doing so for months. Ever since his Chinese woman went away. He used to ring me up every day.' Then she added, 'He told me the same about you. He said he wasn't interested in you at all really, but you kept worrying him, and he was afraid of what you might do to yourself if he suddenly dropped you.'

They began to work on his character reciprocally. Evenings were pieced together over which he had lied either to one of them or to both of them. ~~XX~~ They even compared him as a lover and reached the ^{same} conclusion: he 'tried to satisfy many because he never satisfied one.', a neat phrase. They found the poor man's diary, which he kept for the Chinese woman, listing his intimate doings. They were certainly intimate. By hard work the two women found the key to the code he was using, to the strange hieroglyphics: the diary carefully recorded the women he'd met, those he'd kissed and those he'd spent the night with, using different symbols for each stage. S meant success, they discovered. ZHU meant two unsuccessful hours; ZHUN meant two unsuccessful hours with Natalie, the Greek woman; ~~SXN~~ SMSN meant three successful minutes with Natalie. How they found the key nobody knew: they said they did it by following his character as they knew it. They had put certain dates---one SMSC~~xxx~~ (C meant Cynthia, the Bechuanaland lady)---together and looked at their own appointment books. His mistake was to use initials like that. Sometimes there was simply the letter S, with the words che gioia!

written after it---how wonderful! And Natalie began to give the book all the publicity she could.

To solve matters, the Chinese woman moved back to his flat completely: she answered all calls for him, and with inscrutable tact laid false trails for him, telling people that he was away from Rome when he was in his office, and in his office when he was sitting at home. The Greek woman couldn't penetrate the Eastern barrier she put round him, and gave up soon. Number One could talk her machine-language again: 'the cohabitative urge which in the frustrated ego can become obsessive', a sly dig at Cesare, this.

Again he was in the trattoria sitting mildly at her side, hardly saying a word, only giving her a look of disgust now and then.



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And, of course, the next step was that she began to be frightened of his image, and it was only one step more for her to use it

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