

VITAL PARTS

SCREENPLAY

BY

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VITAL PARTS**INT. MEN'S ROOM - GINO'S RESTAURANT - DAY**

Our hero, CARLO (CARL) REINHART stands at the urinal reading a ball-penned note posted just above the flush button: MAKE LOVE NOT WAR AND MAKE IT WITH ME, signed, "Chuck." P.S. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, LEAVE YOUR NUMBER.

At the wash basin, a matter-of-fact GENT has just finishing cleaning his glasses and returning them to his face. He gives Reinhart a stern look, then turns to leave, but catches himself half way through the door. He looks again at Reinhart, his head back, at an odd angle.

GENT

Don't we know each other?

(nothing from Reinhart)

Sure, you're Reinhart...I'm Bob Sweet, we went to high school together.

INT. GINO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet are seated at a table in the middle of the half-filled dining room.

Sweet works on a steak, while Reinhart puts away his third or fourth Bloody Mary. A Chicken Potpie in front of him, untouched.

SWEET

It's just by chance you find me here today.
It's sheer luck. Choked carb on my
Comanche, otherwise I would be at lunch
in New York.

(Reinhart does'nt get it.)

My airplane.

REINHART

(thickly)

Yes, the congestion at our airports is
deplorable. Sometimes you are in a
holding pattern longer than the flight took.

SWEET

No. You haven't got the picture, I'm not
talking about the commercial carriers. I
own my own aircraft.

(Continued)

REINHART

You are doing well, your own plane.

SWEET

Excuse me. It's always 'airplane' or 'aircraft.' Listen to the pilot next time you're up.

(Reinhart is stung)

Nothing personal.

REINHART

Sweetie...Sweetie I tell you this. There isn't anything that isn't personal.

SWEET

My God, nobody's called me that in years. We're getting old Reinhart.

Silence reigns. Reinhart stares ahead, absorbed, ruminative. He mumbles one unintelligible word to himself.

SWEET

Excuse me?

REINHART

I was pursuing a train of thought.

SWEET

Acne, you said the word 'acne.' You were thinking of me as a kid. No, don't apologize. I don't mind in the least. I was the most wretched youth the world has ever known. I couldn't bear to look in the mirror. And I was yellow as a lemon. You remember how you and the other guys used to beat me up.

REINHART

I never touched you.

SWEET

(jovial)

Listen, you don't forget those things if you're on the receiving end. But have no fear, I don't want to settle accounts at this late date.

REINHART

(defensive)

Think you could take me now.

(Continued)

SWEET

You could jail me if I laid a finger on you.
I come under the law's provision for prize-
fighters. I won my black belt last year in
kung fu.

REINHART

(loudly)

Listen, Sweet...

(breaks into a huge idiotic grin)

Listen, I must admit I don't recall your first
name, but I can't keep saying Sweetie
because you don't have acne any more,
and you're rich and tough and own your
own airplane.

SWEET

Bob.

REINHART

Mine's Carl...now. Though my parents
named me Carlo, but my wife, whom you
might remember as Genevieve Raven,
she's younger than us and never lived here
when small but worked for Claude
Humbold, the realtor, she never liked the
name Carlo, said it sounded queer...

SWEET

Ok, Carl.

REINHART

Bob, you don't have to pull that karotty
stuff on me--

SWEET

(interrupts)

I hate to do it again, Carl, but it's 'ka-ra-tay,'
'Karlitty' is TV-talk.

REINHART

(quietly)

Well, Bob, that's all I've got. That's the only
excitement and color in my life--television.
And don't worry. Even if you were still
pimpled little skinny Sweetie you could
take me with one hand now...You could
also buy me from petty cash.

(Continued)

SWEET

Don't you think you should get some food into your stomach? Why don't I have that mess hauled away and get you a steak instead? Good red meat never hurt anybody.

REINHART

You married, Bob?

SWEET

I was. I may do it again when I get old.

REINHART

I am old. I'm forty.

SWEET

(frowns)

That's funny. You and I were in the same class, yet I'll be forty-five in November.

REINHART

All right, forty-four then. What does it matter? I'm finished, pal. I'm a living corpse.

(snaps his finger at passing waitress)

Hey, you, bring me another.

The WAITRESS skids, backs up, and states evenly.

WAITRESS

I don't have to take that sort of thing, sir. You can request but don't demand like I was your servant. I am a human being.

REINHART

(snickers)

I'm not.

SWEET

Get hold of yourself, Carl. There's no profit in that.

A heavy hand touches Reinhart's shoulder. He turns to look at the Mafia face of GINO, whose restaurant this is.

(Continued)

GINO
(courteously)
I wanna speak to yuh in private, sir.

Reinhart follows the short, but wide, with no fat where it counts, Gino, as he weaves through the tables and eaters.

INT. GINO'S OFFICE - DAY

Gino stands very close to Reinhart, breathing cigar fumes. A window air conditioner whirrs.

GINO
It isn't easy to get good waitresses nowadays and they don't come any better than June. If you was not in the company of that gentleman I would kick your stinking teeth out, you lousy slob. I don't want to never see you in my place again.

REINHART
There's been a misunderstanding, Gino. The young lady didn't catch what I said. There's a lot of noise out there...

GINO
Getchurass out of here.

REINHART
Tell you what I'll do, I'll write a nice tip on the bill.

GINO
(startled)
You sign here? Who are you?

REINHART
My name's Carl Reinhart, for God's sake.

GINO
Reinhart! So you are Reinhart, the biggest deadbeat on the list. Jesus Christ, Reinhart. He owes me a hunnert and eighty-three dollars. The collection agents can't find him. Where is he? In my fucking restaurant, eating my fucking food, signing more of my fucking checks!

(Continued)

REINHART

You'll get every penny of it.

GINO

(hoarsely)

You don't take another bite, see? You don't take a sip of ice water or wipe your hands on my napkin. You don't grab a toothpick or after-dinner mint on the way out. And you leave in five minutes flat.

INT. GINO'S DINNING ROOM - DAY

Reinhart makes his way to the still seated Sweet.

REINHART

I'm terribly sorry, but a call just came in reminding me of a one forty-five appointment and it is past that already.

EXT. GINO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet stand on a square mile of asphalt. The apron of a gigantic shopping center which traps and intensifies, by solar reflections off the white and pastel-colored facades, the tropical heat of July in southern Ohio. Add to this the thermal exhausts of a thousand cars and the steamy exhalations of countless cooked consumers.

Sweet glances at his black-faced Omega.

SWEET

The work on my aircraft should be finished by now, so I'll go straight out to the hanger.

REINHART

(puts his hand out)

Bob, I can't say how much I have enjoyed this. Let's do it again soon.

SWEET

This shopping center depresses me when I think of the fields that were here when we were kids. But things change every sixty seconds in life. Look at all that, Carl. That's money in motion, where we used to play Cowboys and Indians. You have to think of things that way or you'll be drowned by the

(more)

(Cont'd)

changes of time. Someone's always losing, and someone else is winning.

REINHART

Well I've had my ups and downs. There's a kind of rhythm to that too. I guess I drink too much once in a while and lose my sense of proportion.

SWEET

I'd drop you someplace but you obviously didn't walk here...

REINHART

As it happens an associate did drop me off here...

SWEET

Then that settles it. We'll have a few minutes more together.

A silver-gray limousine, with deep maroon fenders, glides through the vulgarity and stops silently before them.

REINHART

Good God. Is that a Rolls?

SWEET

Bentley.

Sweet stiff-arms Reinhart's attempt to open the door, when the uniformed chauffeur, an elderly man who is none too spry, comes anxiously around the trunk to furnish the service.

INT. BENTLEY - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet sit in the air-cooled back seat. Their buttocks deep in the luxurious leather.

SWEET

You can't get a young man to drive for you nowadays. And just as well. Allison is too old to run around in the car while I'm away, and he doesn't try to drag at lights.

REINHART

Yes, you can't get any kind of personal service these days. Everybody thinks he's too good for it...any kind of punk or moron.

(Continued)

SWEET

That's all right. You have to be elastic. You can't get a kid to cut your lawn, so you buy a power mower and do the job yourself. Well, take that one step further--and you retail mowers in a seller's market. Everyboby needs one. Where can I drop you, Carl? Is your office in the old business district? Hey, you near Molly Kruger's candy store? She can't still be there.

REINHART

Dead long since. You can let me out on the corner of Allen, if you remember it, then keep straight on to the thruway entrance, which feeds right out of main.

SWEET

Right by the American Legion home.

REINHART

That's gone, too, I'm afraid. The First National built there. A drive-in bank. I don't think they can handle you if you show up on foot.

SWEET

You know Carl, I used to hate you when we were kids, when you used to push me around.

REINHART

No, Bob, never. I tell you that was...

SWEET

No, no, it's over and done. Time never returns. The only reality is now. And you've convinced yourself that you are on your way out.

REINHART

You don't know the half of it.

SWEET

I can guess. You know, for one thing, you could still look pretty formidable if you stood upstraight, put on a clean shirt and had your suit pressed. That wash-and-wear material really does need an iron,

(more)

(Cont'd)

whatever the ads say. Don't believe what you read in print--that's for the mob...I've noticed, Carl, you stare like a sex maniac at teenage girls.

REINHART

Please...

SWEET

There is no more useless a thing on which to squander yourself than sex. Even drinking is better, because at least it can be pursued alone...And why teenagers. They are hard-fleshed, selfish and dry.

REINHART

What do you think being a lech is...if not alone?

SWEET

Sex is dependent on other human beings, and if it gets bad enough, it can't be satisfied even with them. In the end it becomes completely inhuman.

REINHART

(wistfully)

I suppose you get all the teenagers you want?

SWEET

Age is the last thing I consider in a woman. I have yet to get an erection from figures on a birth certificate.

REINHART

(an air of discovery)

Your passion is money.

SWEET

If so...it's not...its accumulation in cash. I don't worship statistics. I hire accountants for that. Only losers think in numbers.

REINHART

Then what is your secret?

SWEET

You know the old thing Morgan said when asked how much it costs to keep a yacht?

(Continued)

REINHART

If you have to ask, you can't afford one.

SWEET

How does that make you feel?

REINHART

Like shit.

SWEET

That was the idea. Now one way to avoid that feeling is to abandon all desire in a positive fashion. A monk is not a failure.

REINHART

Unfortunately, I am not religious.

SWEET

Neither are many of them. That has nothing to do with it. We are talking about respective strategies...

REINHART

But Bob, forgive me for the question. Don't you have to be pretty callous to play it your way?

SWEET

Callous...No, far from it. Nor hypocritical. I get mine. I am what I am, and I expect others to be the same.

REINHART

You're a Claude Humbold with class. He's the real-estate man I worked for years ago, except his ideas were ahead of their time. He's been in California for years.

(looks off)

You can let me off here.

Sweet raps on the partition and the silver-haired driver eases the car to the curb. As Reinhart moves towards the door, Sweet seizes his forearm with a Japanese-trained weapon-hand.

SWEET

One moment.

REINHART

Jesus, you're hurting me.

(Continued)

SWEET

You depress me. Your part of my past, after all. Look, is your pride too weak to let me help you?

REINHART

How about my coming along with you to New York? Have you got a driver there? I work cheap.

SWEET

Don't dodge the issue with fake humility. And if there's anything my ego doesn't need, it's an old schoolmate working for me as a flunky. I don't mean that at all...I have lingered here, for this sentimental motive. I have thrown you a few ideas...

REINHART

Maybe I went into computers too late in the early days, before the market was developed. Maybe I tried other things on the eve of various recessions, which I couldn't weather because of lack of capital. Maybe I had...

SWEET

Let's drop all profitless precedents. What do you have right now?

REINHART

The last thing I tried was a gas station on old state route 215. I didn't get a dozen customers in a week. Look, Bob, if you are serious about helping me, maybe you have a place in your organization.

SWEET

That's the trouble, I function essentially alone, except for lawyers and accountants. I don't have a plant to my name or even much of an office staff. I have to work quickly, often in a certain secrecy. What I had in mind was, frankly, a loan.

REINHART

No, I never borrow money from an individual. All I ask is to be allowed to earn an honest living.

(Continued)

SWEET

OK, give me a call when I get back.

Sweet writes down his number on a serrated quarter-leaf from a lizard bound pocket secretary, and gives it to Reinhart with one hand, while clasping him with the other.

EXT. REINHART'S HOUSE - DUSK

A middle-class dwelling in a suburban community. The houses are very close together. Reinhart comes from the corner, goes up the walk, and through the front door.

INT. THE HOUSE - DUSK

Reinhart crosses the small living room, walks down a short hall and enters a bedroom where he finds GENEVIEVE (GEN), his wife, napping on the bed. She is several years younger than he and in much better condition, both physically and emotionally.

REINHART

Gen...

(no response)

Big day at the shop, huh?

(more silence)

You just rest hon. I'll have dinner ready in a jiffy, and then we'll have a good talk.

I want the benefit of your thinking.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Reinhart is taking food from the refrigerator, when he sees something out the kitchen window.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Reinhart comes in quickly and bolts the door, gropes up to his shoulder in the laundry hamper, and comes up with a pair of 7 x 35 binoculars. He then trips the flush lever on the toilet and puts the binoculars to good use watching the neighbors teenage daughter, while she undresses. When the flush ends, he opens the cold-water tap in the bathtub, full throat, leaving the disengaged plug where it is and then returns to the peep show. When the girl gets to her underpants, she whisks them off and stands squarely in the frame of the window, shaking them at Reinhart, smiling shamelessly. There's a **banging** on the bathroom door.

(Continued)

GEN (O.S.)

Don't you have any consideration for others?

REINHART

(turns off the water)

One minute!

He quickly gets back to the binoculars while the tub starts emptying through its half clogged drain. The neighbor's daughter has been joined by a long-haired, nude young body, with its back towards the window. When it turns to be seen, it's a he. Reinhart is visibly shaken. He almost drops the binoculars.

INT. REINHART'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Reinhart and Gen both wear bathrobes. She sits on the couch. He paces back and forth. She smokes. He doesn't.

GEN

You have hounded that boy since he was born.

REINHART

Look here, this is not a subject for argument, Genevieve. That girl is underage, and Blaine was twenty-one last February.

GEN

All right, Mr. Cop, why don't you get your billyclub and pound the child's head to a bloody jelly.

REINHART

Genevieve, please. My son is naked and in the room of the girl next door with her parents away on vacation.

GEN

I am sure...

(crushes the cigarette out in the ashtray)

I am sure there is some reasonable explanation if he is there at all, which frankly I don't place any credentials in, as Blaine told me definitely when he left he was heading for the Heliotrope Thing.

(Continued)

REINHART

Will you at least come and look? Why should I tell such a vile lie?

GEN

Because you hate Blaine. You hate all young people. No, I will not go and peep through the window like a dirty perver. I am going to eat something, then go to bed, as I have a job to get up and go to every morning, which is more than I can say for you...

Gen rises from the couch and heads for the kitchen. Reinhart blows a kiss at her departing back.

INT. REINHART'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's later now, and a fully clothed Reinhart moves across the darkened room to the front door. He reaches for the knob, then jumps about a foot when the door is opened from the outside by WINONA, Reinharts sixteen year old daughter. She is quite chubby, but with flawless skin and beautiful eyelashes.

REINHART

(backstepping)

Sorry, Winona.

WINONA

Hi, Daddy.

She goes to the couch and dumps herself into the corner spot earlier vacated by Gen, throwing her fat red thighs wide and clasping both chins. After a moment, Reinhart sits down next to her and puts his heavy arm around her thick waist.

REINHART

(gently)

Did your friends give you the slip again?

WINONA

You guessed it.

REINHART

You want to talk about it?

(she shrugs)

It might help.

She drops her head on his shoulder.

(Continued)

WINONA

Ummm. Daddy, this is embarrassing.

REINHART

Not to me, Winona.

WINONA

Well...I always get a Coke before the movie on the way in, or a black cherry except that's usually empty. Beth has Seven-up and Carol drinks Tab, and sometimes Dodie won't have anything, but generally they all drink as much as I do and really we all go to the ladies' afterward but they take the booths first and I have to wait and-- well, when I come out they're gone.

REINHART

OK...OK...You have a problem. The first thing to do is...Look, remember how you always beat me at checkers? You distract me by sacrificing one of your pieces, thus getting me into a position where you can jump three of mine. Now what I suggest is that before the picture is over, you get up and go to the toilet.

WINONA

What's that got to do with checkers?

REINHART

I didn't mean literally. I meant a similar use of the unexpected.

WINONA

And miss part of the picture?

REINHART

You're giving up one thing to get a better.

WINONA

You don't know them. No matter when it was they would say it was the best part.

REINHART

What does it matter what they say?

WINONA

Then why, have them as friends?

(Continued)

REINHART

A good question, dear. Friends who are not friendly are not worth much. You are lucky to have discovered that this early. We all die alone, Winona. Though we are accompanied when we come into this world, living is a process of developing independence.

WINONA

Easy for you to say! You are big and strong and popular and successful.

REINHART

(a moment to recover)

Well, it hasn't been easy. The main thing is not to quit, dear, not to lose hope. Something wonderful may happen at any time, and you should be ready for it.

Winona frees herself, stands, and they exchange kisses on the forehead.

WINONA

G'night, Poppy, I love you.

REINHART

Likewise, dear. Now remember to take off your dress and put your pajamas on before hitting the sack.

WINONA

(mutters, but firm)

Promise me, you won't watch TV now.

Reinhart watches her leave, then stands and heads for the kitchen.

INT. REINHART'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It's later yet, and a somewhat amazed Reinhart sits in the dark room, lit only by the thirteen inch TV. He is watching Bob Sweet, a guest on the New York based Jack Alp Talk Show.

SWEET

No, Mr. Alp, this is no joke. Cryonics is a serious science. If a body is frozen within a certain time after what is known as clinical death...the cessation of heartbeats and brainwaves...but before any cellular

(more)

(Cont'd)

degeneration sets in, it can be maintained in that state of suspended animation interminably...Think of how man in the Dark Ages was helpless against the plague. A few years ago polio was a dreaded scourge. Perhaps a cure for cancer is just around the corner, yet people are still dying every day from it... Suppose such a victim is quick frozen and stored in a facility until the day when science has arrived at a cancer cure. At which time he is thawed out-- brought to life and treated with the new therapy...After another hundred years of research, who knows what will be possible? The refrigeration methods are ready now. Liquid nitrogen is almost two hundred minus zero Centigrade, and liquid helium even colder. Now...it is not my place, to go into the moral questions here. Surely they are complex. Nor can any of us who are working in this field make an absolute promise of success. But think of it this way...what does a corpse have to lose?

Suddenly, Reinhart's son, BLAINE appears in the doorway. Leaning one hip against the jamb, he wears a vest of sheepskin, over an otherwise naked torso. Far below his pinched navel is the waist band of gangster-striped pants. He stands in reversed-cowhide boots, with a flop hat, like Greta Garbo's, on top.

REINHART

(stares at him)

Well? Have you got something to say, or are you waiting for me to focus the camera?

BLAINE

I threaten you...just by standing here. That's fantastic, isn't it? Merely by living, I give off lethal rays.

REINHART

I'm trembling with fear. You might strangle me with one of your silken strands.

BLAINE

You look like you're going to spit catsup.

(Continued)

REINHART
(takes a deep breath)
Son, lets starts all over...did I ever mention
when I was in Berlin--

BLAINE
You mean when everyone else was
fighting in Viet Nam?

REINHART
All right, All right...One day you'll be where
I am and I'll be dead...What I want to say
now is when I was in Berlin, I was twenty-
one years old.

BLAINE
Only yesterday.

REINHART
It seems like it...Anyway I had this German
girl...She was only sixteen. She was sort of
a little whore. It was her idea, really.

BLAINE
(really puzzled)
What was her idea...? Really?

REINHART
I mean, we had relations.

BLAINE
So you fucked her...What does that prove?

REINHART
Why you dirty little...
(catches himself)
I'll say this for you Blaine. You are a very
successful provoker...Were you watching
television next door...tonight?

BLAINE
Yes I was.

REINHART
You were also walking around naked in
Julie's room.

BLAINE
Right again.

(Continued)

REINHART

You admit it?

BLAINE

I admit anything. Whatever you can dream up...I've done it. And so have you!

REINHART

What does that mean?

BLAINE

The German bimbo. And what, twenty years later, are you doing looking in Julie's window?

REINHART

My conscience is clean. And don't you forget, it is I who support you.

BLAINE

No, Mother supports us both, or all three counting Baby Whale.

REINHART

Well I'll tell you one thing...It takes a load off my mind...Until I saw you over there with her tonight, I always thought you were a dirty little faggot.

BLAINE

(cocks a hand on his hip)

Well maybe I am. Or perhaps I'm bisexual. Oh...to be ravished by the unshaven driver of an interstate semi, up on that shelf behind the drivers seat. Or to be buggered by the nightstick of a huge ape like cop, his bad breath in my ear...

Blaine neatly dodges his father's massive fist, which bruises itself on the door jamb. He ducks down the hall to his room, leaving Reinhart to nurse his sore hand.

INT. BLAINE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's much later. Reinhart enters on tip toe. Blaine is asleep. With no more than the dime-sized spot of a penlight and no finer instrument than a pair of Japanese-made desk shears, Reinhart cuts his son's hair to within approximately two inches of the scalp. During the operation Blaine murmurs occasionally, and when Reinhart gently lifts his head off the pillow and bends it forward to get at the back, the boy burbles like an infant.

(Continued)

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Reinhart flushes the shorn locks down the toilet.

INT. REINHART'S KITCHEN - MORNING

A bathrobed Reinhart stands at the counter eating cereal from a bowl. Blaine is hysterical, wrapped around his mother, his half-plucked chicken-head against her neck, sobbing into the collar of her housecoat.

GEN

I'll see you prosecuted for battery, and that's just for starters. I'll ask Daddy to consult the statutes with reference to sexual perversions.

REINHART

Gen you know damn well why I did it. Enough is too much.

Blaine howls into his mothers collarbone.

GEN

There, there, dear. I'm going to fix his wagon one for all.

REINHART

This is disgusting...When I was his age I was in the Army. If I ever tried hanging on my mother and blubbering about my troubles, she'd have punched me in the mouth.

GEN

That's where your insanity comes from, your mother. She's a crazy old lady. But not even she would have approached her child with a lethal instrument.

REINHART

Scissors... a pair of library shears, and none too sharp at that. That's why the job isn't so hot. He's lucky I didn't charge him.

Winona waddles into the kitchen, in the sort of charwoman outfit she wears to school.
(Continued)

WINONA

Hi.

GEN

Leave the room, Winona.

WINONA

Without breakfast!

BLAINE

Get out. Fat-ass

Winona leaves. Reinhart advances toward Gen and Blaine.

REINHART

I won't tolerate that kind of talk to your sister.

Gen picks up the breadknife in one hand and beckons to Reinhart with the other.

GEN

Come on. Make my day.

REINHART

Talk of legality. What you're doing constitutes assault, I believe.

GEN

You introduced violence into this house.

BLAINE

Why don't you die?

REINHART

Excuse me, Blaine. What I really can't stand about you is something that unfortunately I can't trim with a pair of shears. That is your outlandish rhetoric. You don't know what dying is.

GEN

You're finished, Carl. Can't you see that? Finished...If you were a dog the ASPCA would have to put you out of your misery long ago. You have become a menace to yourself as well as others. I suggest, in all kindness, that you turn yourself in to some public facility.

(Continued)

Reinhart puts his cereal bowl on the counter.

REINHART

Can I call a time out here, to collect my thoughts...? What you propose may have a certain justification from your perspective, yet all things being relative...You can all go and fuck yourselves.

EXT. YMCA - DAY

A city bus pulls up at the corner. Reinhart gets off, with suitcase in hand, goes up the steps and enters the building.

EXT. BLOOR BUILDING - DAY

A skyscraper that might be commonplace in New York, but it's the highest edifice hereabouts. Reinhart enters the building through a large glass door, and enters a nearby elevator.

INT. BLOOR BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

Reinhart exits the elevator, finds a door labeled CRYON FOUNDATION, and enters.

INT. SWEET'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Reinhart is confronted by the secretary EUNICE, a full bodied beauty whose age is anywhere from twenty-five to forty-three.

REINHART

I believe I spoke to you earlier on the phone ...I...

Reinhart is unable to continue, as he finds himself staring up her generous haunches all the way to the crotch.

EUNICE

Sir, are you well? Can I get you a glass of water?

REINHART

(gets it together)

No, No, I'm fine. Thank you.

(Continued)

EUNICE

My father gets those attacks.

REINHART

Yes, I'd like to see Mr. Sweet, if he's in.

EUNICE

He isn't. Really.

REINHART

Are you alone here?

EUNICE

(nervous)

People keep coming in. We aren't really organized yet. We don't even keep any petty cash on hand.

REINHART

Well, I hope we'll be colleagues soon.

EUNICE

Yes...It's lunchtime, and I have to go out now.

INT. BLOOR BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Reinhart exits the elevator and goes directly to a public phone, deposits a quarter, dials and waits for an answer. A nervous ten rings later he gets it.

REINHART

Hi, Gloria. This is your old pal Biggie.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Mmmpppff...Jesus, I was dreaming. What time is it? What year is it.

REINHART

It's Thursday, have I called at an inconvenient time?

GLORIA (O.S.)

Happy Thursday. Who'd you say you were?

REINHART

Biggie, you know.

(Continued)

GLORIA (O.S.)

Oh yeah. I haven't seen you for a while.
Have I?

REINHART

I was thinking of coming over. If you are not
engaged.

GLORIA (O.S.)

If it's noon I'm already late for the
hairdresser.

REINHART

Gloria, we're old friends are we not?

GLORIA (O.S.)

You know it, Big. I think about yours a lot.

REINHART

Look, what I was wondering was...well,
I'm stuck and can't get to the bank before
closing time. Would you take a check.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Would that be wise, Biggie? Your name is
probably printed on your checks, right? I
wouldn't want that responsibility, doll. I
mean it isn't me, Big. It's if I get busted
and they print your name in the paper. It's
when the canceled check comes through
and your old lady sees the endorsement.

REINHART

In view of your inconvenience, I could of
course be more generous.

GLORIA (O.S.)

What is your usual present?

REINHART

Twenty-five.

GLORIA (O.S.)

What were you thinking of upping it to, Big?

(Continued)

REINHART

Well, say another ten. The only detail is, Gloria...if you would accept a predated check. I mean, hang onto it a few days and then march...

GLORIA (O.S.)

Biggie, Biggie, Big...

Suddenly, all Reinhart hears is the dial tone.

EXT. BUDGET RENT-A-CAR - DAY

Reinhart can be seen in the office, getting a credit card out of his wallet.

EXT. COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAY

Reinhart drives his rented Honda Civic. He pulls into the Senior City parking lot.

INT. SENIOR CITY - DAY

Reinhart visits MAW in the West Lounge.

MAW

No siree. The man would not have expired. Grass cut by the help, and if your drains clog the house plumber comes with his suction cup. Maintenance drove your dad up the wall. I saw the light when he was gone. Gave our junk to the Goodwill and sold the old homestead to one of Them. Can you imagine our old home full of howling Africans.

REINHART

I don't know. I haven't been by there in ages.

MAW

Well, don't you go, unless you want to be picking banjo strings from your head. How's my grandson?

(Continued)

REINHART

That's in part what I wanted to talk to you about.

A spry old chap wearing a flowered shirt and chatreuse trousers doffs his sporty straw at them as he makes for the glass doors.

MAW

Lively old devil, he'll be dead in a year.

REINHART

Blaine, I'm afraid is--

MAW

He stole ten dollars from me last night.

REINHART

Blaine?

MAW

That Mr. Rumford, going there. This place is full of criminals.

REINHART

You should report him, Maw.

MAW

To who, Carlo? To who? He gives them a kickback in the front office. They are in cahoots with him and visa versa. This is a terrible place, a nest of thieves. It's awful of you to keep your old mom here.

REINHART

Thought you said it was great.

MAW

Now don't you put words in my mouth, Carlo. If you was the loving son you pretend to be you would defend your mother instead of letting a lot of old coots give her the business.

Suddenly, Maw takes off in an athletic lope and leaves the room. Reinhart is hard put to catch her.

(Continued)

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Reinhart tags alongside, sometimes behind, as Maw steers ruthlessly through the bright corridor, crowded with oldsters, dressed in pastel colors. One pink OLD GUY approaches Reinhart.

OLD GUY

Hi, bud! When did you check in? Glad to have you aboard. Pinochle's the game.

He throws out a hand, then moves away.

MAW

How's your wife?

REINHART

She threw me out today.

MAW

That makes sense. Now you can make something of yourself, Carlo, with that bitch off your back. I never said a word against her though until this juncture, and you know it. I have been the soul of diplomacy, but it sure cut my heart to see what she did to you.

REINHART

Well...I'm far from perfect.

MAW

Don't I know that! I put up with you for twenty-some years less your Army time, and it often took the patience of a saint, but I succeeded in raising you to be a decent man. You are a stupid goof, and you're disgustingly overweight. I expect you've told lies and done many a thing that won't pass muster, you may be a lazy atheist or what have you, but you're not nasty...I figure you have come to pick my pocket, as usual.

REINHART

I wish you wouldn't put it that way, Maw.

(Continued)

MAW

Your basic trouble is due to one thing, Carlo. I'd like to know where you got the idea you were a businessman.

REINHART

My training under Claude Humboldt taught me that the real challenges lay in business.

MAW

But Claude is the creative type. He has one of the biggest car dealerships in Southern Cal now, comes on the TV commercials all night long, I understand. I get a nice card from him every Christmas, along with a box of stuffed dates. But the point is, Claude's a born salesman. You've always been too much of a materialist for that. You should of gone into police work years ago, rather than run around with that colored fellow.

REINHART

Maw, how would you like to live forever?

MAW

I'm not about to turn up my toes, brother. So don't think my Will will save you.

REINHART

I'm not joking, Maw. What I am about to tell you is fantastic, incredible--

MAW

You mean that stuff about freezing, huh?

REINHART

(startled)

Did you see that show, too? Well, do you know who that man was?

MAW

I didn't catch the name, but he looked just like that kid you went to school with years ago, that little one with the pimples.

REINHART

Aw, Maw...You spoiled it.

(Continued)

MAW

And that's what you'll be if you let them pop you into a deep-freeze...spoiled. Why, you can't even keep a pork chop frozen for long.

REINHART

But, for the sake of argument, what if it worked?

MAW

The way I understand it, you wouldn't know for a thousand years whether you would be brought back to life or just stay like a snowman...Eternity...That's a long time, Carlo, for an experiment. You might as well be dead forever as for ten centuries. And who's going to pay for a pig in a poke?

REINHART

But, the preservation of the individual self, Maw. That's what fascinates me. Not to lose all this personal consciousness! It takes many years to make a man, and then as I believe George Bernard Shaw said, 'When that is finally accomplished, you die.'

MAW

You won't pass away for a while, Carlo, if that's what's bothering you. And if you keep on as you have been going, when the time comes to lay down, you will be mighty relieved. I'll tell you.

REINHART

Well, leaving me out of it, freezing seems to be the coming thing. Imagine if you'd had a chance to put a few dollars on the Wright Brothers.

MAW

I was waiting for the pitch. As I see it, you want some of my money to put into a business concerned with the freezing of bodies.

REINHART

I could stand up on my own two hindlegs if I had something to--

(Continued)

MAW

You're probably right that many suckers will go for it. If they shell out for junk to make their hair grow back and for monkey-gland injections in Switzerland and believe in flying saucers and other evasions of reality, why, I guess you can expect them to pay even more to be immortal.

REINHART

Of course, nothing is a sure thing. Not even death, now.

MAW

Listen, if I give you any money, it will be for the same reason as I have done in the past.

REINHART

Blood is thicker than water.

MAW

Precisely. I might also be afraid you would knock me off and claim the whole bundle before-time.

REINHART

Aw, Maw, don't joke about that sort of thing.

MAW

Don't be such a fool, Carlo? You're my sole heir. How would five suit you?

REINHART

Hundred, Maw?

MAW

(giggles)

Dollars...Five simoleons. You didn't tell me what that hag will demand in the divorce settlement. Whatever I give you, she'll shake you down for...don't you know that?

REINHART

Gen knows I don't have anything now, and when I make good she'll be glad to see me again. I understand that much about women.

A doddering OLD LADY is taking forever coming towards them. Maw calls to her.
(Continued)

MAW

Hey, Sal. Come and meet my son. Sal is ninety-two, Carlo. I expect she'll be a candidate for your freezer any day now. Let's go to my room. I'll give you a check for Five Thousand.

With that Maw quickly turns down yet another corridor, and Reinhart is once again hard put to catch up.

EXT. BUDGET RENT-A-CAR - DAY

Reinhart returns the Honda.

INT. REINHART'S YMCA ROOM - NIGHT

The room is tiny. It has a narrow single bed, a miniature desk and chair, a window with venetian blinds, and a bare light bulb in the middle of the ceiling. Reinhart sits quietly on the bed looking at the check from Maw.

INT. BOB SWEET'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

It's a strangely barren office, behind the switched-on reception office. Sweet sits behind his desk going through paperwork. Reinhart sits across from him in a red, waxed leather chair, with brass studs.

SWEET

I owe you nothing. If I chose to be sentimental at lunch, I may since have reviewed my feelings and found them indifferent to you. If you were not one of my tormentors years ago, as you claim, why should I help you now?

REINHART

Excuse me, Bob, but...Will you level with me for old times' sake?

SWEET

That's the way to get yourself lied to...I had a credit check run on you, Carl. It reads like the bill of indictment at a war-crimes trial.

REINHART

Now you hear me out dammit...I'm getting the runaround. I don't mind kissing your

(more)

(Cont'd)

ass up to a certain point, because that seems to me the role that fate has cast me in--

He's interrupted by a signal from the intercom, which Sweet levers over.

ENUICE (O.S.)

Bob, I've got a hot one. He's on Two.

Sweet quickly punches two buttons on the phone, while leaving it cradled.

SWEET

Please go ahead. You are speaking to Robert Sweet, president of the Cryon Foundation.

An amplified human sound emerges from a phone speaker.

CALLER (O.S.)

My father is near death. He is a crazy old man, and--

SWEET

First, may I express my sympathy.

CALLER (O.S.)

I promised the old man, you see. If it gives him hope...

SWEET

I understand.

CALLER (O.S.)

I...I never thought I'd say this, but are you in a position to freeze my dad when the moment comes? Now, I am not a wealthy--

SWEET

Sir...I am and I will. Furthermore, I will not accept your money.

CALLER (O.S.)

Please, don't try to con me.

SWEET

I am trying to explain that this is a nonprofit enterprise. If you permit this experiment to take place, you might have a part in history...

(Continued)

Suddenly Sweet loses his voice, he raises his eyes hopelessly to Reinhart, who rises to the occasion.

REINHART

(fervently)

You just give us your name and address, and where the patient can be found. We'll arrange the rest. Truth may change and Time itself...Life as we know it...It is crazy and frightening and brave and majestic... The whole idea of termination, of any sort, will be obsolete...Now, where can we find your father?

The voice starts to laugh in a regular rhythm, then stops suddenly.

CALLER (O.S.)

Greenwood Cemetery, he died in 1956.

Reinhart looks questioningly at Sweet.

REINHART

Well, sir...I don't think...Let me check with my associate.

CALLER (O.S.)

Don't bother. You are as full of shit as a Christmas goose.

A loud **click**. An even louder **dial tone**.

SWEET

Not the first hoaxer, and not the last. Don't give it another thought.

Enuice comes in, lookin' good in an orange jersey dress, thin as a Navy skivvy shirt.

EUNICE

What a jerk! People are dying every minute. Why can't we have one, just one?

SWEET

Enuice, Carl here is an old friend of mine, and you're the best secretary I have ever had. So, why don't you guys get to know each other?

REINHART

Look, Bob...Can we talk business?

(Continued)

SWEET

(to Eunice)

What do you think? Can we use this big hunk of a man? He is at liberty. He has no other current ties.

Eunice deliberately sizes Reinhart up.

SWEET

This healthy brute.

She frowns and gathers in her gums, then releases the lip-compression with a pop!

EUNICE

(a glorious show of teeth)

Umm...I happen to be free this evening.

Reinhart's eyebrows virtually meet his cheekbones. He squints out between.

SWEET

That will be all.

EUNICE

Ok, Bob.

She turns and breezes out. Sweet throws his head back and pantomimes a howl of mirth.

SWEET

Hell, why not.

REINHART

I just want a piece of the business, Bob.

SWEET

Come on, Carl, loosen up.

REINHART

You've changed since the other day, you know. Do you realize that?

SWEET

I want you to meet our scientific director. Have you got a minute? By the way, she's a nymphomaniac, Carl. Eunice that is.

INT. SWEET'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Eunice is plucking away at the typewriter, when Sweet and Reinhart enter.

(Continued)

SWEET

We're going out to see Streckfuss. Have Allison pick us up out front.

EUNICE

Sure, Bob.
(to Reinhart)
You can pick me up here when you come back.

She picks up the phone, while Reinhart follows Sweet into the corridor.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

As they move towards the elevator, Sweet gives Reinhart an elbow to the ribs.

SWEET

You're well padded, old fellow.

REINHART

I want to put one thing straight. I intend to return to Genevieve. But I have to go back as a winner...Am I in, Bob?

SWEET

We'll shake on it.

The elevator arrives and they step into the cab.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet have joined four others. THREE MEN and ONE WOMAN.

REINHART

Thanks, Bob. I really mean it, and I swear to you that you won't regret your decision. I'll write you a check as soon as we're in the car.

SWEET

(shakes hands quickly)
I can't offer you a piece of the business because we are a nonprofit organization. But a grant of money, such as we give to scientists for reserach projects, should be possible. And this could be paid in a lump

(more)

(Cont'd)

sum, or in installments like regular wages. I think we might manage...say, forty thousand. But perhaps before agreeing to any terms, you would want to talk to Streckfuss.

REINHART

Perhaps I should. Who is he?

REINHART

A genius.

EXT. BLOOR BUILDING - DAY

The Bentley waits at the curb in a no-parking, no-waiting, taxi stand, bus stop, fire zone, crosswalk, adorned with prohibitory stripes and signs, and a TRAFFIC COP who salutes Sweet, as he and Reinhart get into the car.

INT. THE BENTLEY - MOVING - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet ride in limmo luxury.

REINHART

Streckfuss, that's a German name, isn't it?

SWEET

Swiss, French-speaking, but he can get along in English.

REINHART

You lived in Europe?

SWEET

It was a special type of living. I spent some time at Streckfuss' sanatorium.

REINHART

Is that right? Not tuberculosis, as in The Magic Mountain by Thomas Mann?

SWEET

No, not TB...Time was my malady. Streckfuss is an authority on rejuvenation.

REINHART

Do you think that he might rejuvenate me?

(Continued)

SWEET

(chuckles)

Hans will be glad to freeze you.

EXT. WAREHOUSE AREA - DAY

A long, one-story, garage-like building of which the Cryon Foundation has one segment. An auto body shop, with guys welding and banging on bent fenders, occupies another section, as do a tire shop and a wholesaler in toys. Sweet's Bentley pulls up in front of the Cryon door.

INT. CRYON PLANT - DAY

The "facility" has walls and floors of unpainted concrete. A heavy hoist of thick chain hangs from an overhead beam. A crude table is made of boards laid across wooden horses. It is covered with lengths of pipe, wire, and boxes of Reynolds Wrap, some of which have fallen to the floor. An eight or nine foot high capsule stands vertical in a far corner. It is painted white and looks like a rocket or space ship. It is surrounded by a wood scaffolding, with a platform near the top. The wall behind the capsule is covered with an enormous photo-mural of the face of the moon.

Streckfuss, dressed in a lab type gown, is a man with a carrot nose, pitted cheeks, hectic, thick black hair, and obsidian eyes. He is shaking Reinhart's hand.

STRECKFUSS

You pronouce it "Shtreckfooss"...Enchante'.

(to Sweet)

Alors?

REINHART

Were you ever in Berlin?

STRECKFUSS

Jamais.

SWEET

Hans is fluent in English except when he's very tired.

REINHART

Jamais means "no," doesn't it?

STRECKFUSS

Neffar.

(Continued)

REINHART

I certainly meant no insult...I expect the world is full of lookalikes.

Streckfuss shrugs in a typical French gesture, and makes a typical French grunt.

STRECKFUSS

(to Sweet)

Il est tres gras, hein?

SWEET

(smiles)

Well, here we are, Carl. What do you think of our facilities?

REINHART

Very impressive.

(points at the capsule)

That's to hold the first frozen person right?

SWEET

A rocket ship into Time.

Streckfuss has perched himself on a high stool at an enamel table. Before him is a sort of rectangular glass Fishtank from which sprouts many wires and tubes.

REINHART

What if the power goes off?

SWEET

But no power is used, Carl. This is not a home-style deep-freeze. The body will be immersed in either liquid nitrogen or liquid helium.

REINHART

How about storing some frozen people in Siberia or, better, the Antarctic, which is empty and otherwise useless.

SWEET

(harshly)

The answer happens to be no. Not even Antarctica is cold enough. Can you grasp that?

REINHART

How do you explain freezing-to-death?

(Continued)

STRECKFUSS

(enraged)

Zis is no discussion! Vot are your credentials?

REINHART

I meant no--

STRECKFUSS

Silence! Pas de mot encore! Ray-olly, Bopp.

SWEET

He's high strung, Carl. He'll be all right in a moment...You see, no one has ever 'frozen to death.' Cold does not destroy, but rather preserves. Damage is not done by freezing, but in the existing procedures of thawing.

REINHART

I wouldn't mind freezing my son, and awakening him just a few years hence to show him what an ass he had been.

SWEET

If we could start a trend, Hans would have more bodies than he needs. If somehow we can make it attractive, people will line up to be frozen.

REINHART

If you could freeze and revive an animal, say--

STRECKFUSS

Has been done. Smith, of London, has frozen hamsters. Frozen hard as boards. When tawed, the little ahneemals were back on their wheels, revolving merrily, with bright beady little eyes.

REINHART

Why hasn't this been publicized?

SWEET

A considerable literature is available. Experimentation in cryobiology is by no means new. Hans has been working in the field since the end of World War II.

(Continued)

REINHART

(to Sweet)

Where did he spend the war?

STRECKFUSS

In Europe, of course. Vere else, for goodness sake?

REINHART

Just asking.

SWEET

I think this is enough for today, Carl. Suffice it to say that wonders are within reach as of this moment.

STRECKFUSS

Well. It could be vorse.

He pads to what looks like a closet door, opens it only far enough to admit his body, and sidles though.

REINHART

What's in there?

SWEET

His austere living quarters. An iron cot, bookshelves, high-intensity reading lamp, a tiny washroom containing a stall shower. I would give Hans anything, but that's all he wants.

Reinhart points at some shelves bearing smaller freezing capsules.

REINHART

Looks as if the professor has got a few animals of his own.

SWEET

Hans has never published the results of his own work.

REINHART

Are they filled? White mice? Hamsters?

SWEET

Monkeys...The next step is man.

(Continued)

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

It's dark, hard to see, but the music sounds like the end of a movie. The house lights come on. Reinhart and Eunice stand to make their way up the aisle.

REINHART

Do you think that the dog was an erotic symbol vis-a-vis the girl?

EUNICE

I hope not, unless as a joke.

In the crowd, Eunice is wedged against Reinhart's right shoulder, imprisoning his arm throughout its length. He turns his head getting a faceful of hair. Somehow Eunice gets a hand up from below and clears it, then manages to slip her fingers between his thick chest and fat arm, in which he immediately erects some muscle.

EUNICE

(sharply)
Don't do that.

REINHART

Do what?

EUNICE

(grinning)
Make it hard.

This has everyone within earshot looking at them in one way or another.

EXT. THEATER PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Reinhart and Eunice approach the car.

REINHART

Let's have the key.

EUNICE

(hurls her pelvis against him)
It's open...That's part of my thing. I don't want to keep anybody out of anywhere.

(he holds the door open for her)
You first. Same thing as in the theater. That's one of the old hangups, and I find it patronizing.

(Continued)

REINHART

Well, I find it difficult to slide under the steering wheel, if you know what I mean.

Eunice plunges into the car, while Reinhart plods around the trunk. The other door is locked. He bangs on the window, as she starts the engine, and the handle is torn from his grasp when she backs out. She accelerates off and turns right, behind the theater, which is apparently an island surrounded by the parking lot. Reinhart stands alone on the blacktop.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Reinhart trudges along with hands in pockets, near the back of the theater. As he rounds the corner, he sees the car parked, nose out, against the theater wall, with Eunice sitting casually at the wheel. When Reinhart gets close she toots the horn.

EUNICE

Going my way, stud?

REINHART

I thought you might have got in some trouble back here.

EUNICE

You must have a terrible image of society.

REINHART

(lying)

No, I meant a flat tire or other breakdown.

He climbs in ignoring her bare thighs in the dashboard lights.

REINHART

Tell me what you know about Professor Streckfuss?

EUNICE

I haven't ever seen him. He never leaves the lab, and I never go there.

REINHART

Just as well.

She starts the engine and drives out at a conservative speed.

(Continued)

EXT. MAMA MIA'S BISTRO - NIGHT

Reinhart and Eunice near the entrance.

EUNICE

This place used to be great when it first opened, but now it's just like all the rest of them, full of fakes. The food is still good though, because the Mafia runs the kitchen.

REINHART

(as they enter)

You don't mean gangsters are in there frying steaks?

INT. MAMA MIA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Low lighting. Lots of candles. Sort of romantic. Sort of dark. Reinhart and Eunice are sitting in a booth near a quiet corner. They have drinks before them, but no food as yet.

EUNICE

You want to talk about your marriage? Don't mind me. I'm the bold type.

REINHART

All right...I don't see any harm in it, especially in view of the fact that I've been married for almost as many years as you have been alive.

EUNICE

I don't understand that at all.

REINHART

Well, to start with, I have a son your age.

EUNICE

How does he dress?

REINHART

I find that an odd question. If you had mentioned your father or brother, I would ask, 'What does he do?'

EUNICE

What's your wife like?

(Continued)

REINHART

God almighty...

EUNICE

I used to make it with this black guy who was a third-degree black belt in karate.

REINHART

Bob Sweet does karate too. For all I know he studied in Japan.

EUNICE

I never heard that about Bob. But it doesn't sound like him...He's not well at all.

REINHART

You're kidding.

EUNICE

Streckfuss keeps him alive...But you can't turn back the clock, even with cellular therapy. Or at least I don't think so. Of course it's easy for me to say that because I'm young, young, young!

REINHART

Bob is a remarkable guy.

EUNICE

But he's forty-five. Isn't it about time he grew up?

REINHART

(real indignation)

Look here, young lady...I'll have you know I am almost that age myself.

EUNICE

But do you hang out in discos...and do you half kill yourself at tennis, and give demonstrations in water-skiing and otherwise compete with kids?

REINHART

I thought you said he wasn't well.

(Continued)

EUNICE
 Because of stuff like that.
 (see's something off)
 Hey, there's someone I know...

Eunice slides from the booth and starts across the room. Reinhart's eyes start following her but end up on his son Blaine, who is coming in through the front door. This causes Reinhart to make a bee line for the men's room.

INT. MAMA MIA'S MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Reinhart stands nervously by door and jumps a good two feet when a clean-cut IVY LEAGUE looking chap comes in. He wears a sack suit, regimental tie, with black wingtip shoes. Neat to a fault, he washes a pair of already impeccable hands. Reinhart cautiously opens the toilet door and, peeping out, sees something that makes him backtrack rapidly into a booth and, locking it, crouch down. He hears the rush of air as his son enters.

BLAINE
 Hi, man.

IVY
 Five.

BLAINE
 Shit, man, that's high.

IVY
 Gimme the bread or fuck off.

BLAINE
 I'm not saying I won't.

Reinhart looks over the door of the booth. He sees the back of Blaine's head and half of Ivy's face with a white parting of hair and one hazel eye. Which, in turn, sees Reinhart.

IVY
 (pushes Blaine violently)
 You bastard! I thought that slob looked like
 a bull.

Blaine's back strikes the door in front of Reinhart. Ivy dashes for the exit, but a BOUNCER type appears when he has a yard still to go.

IVY
 Wait a minute, guy!

(Continued)

BOUNCER

I thought I warned you a couple of times.

The Bouncer extends his right foot behind him and bends his knee. Ivy shuffles backwards.

IVY

Come on, I got the message.

The Bouncer pursues him in a strange dragging walk, in which his erect trunk and horizontal shoulder line do not alter. His fists are closed and held against his body, one high and one low.

IVY

You won't do it to me again.

Ivy brings out a knife from the flapped pocket of his jacket, switching open the blade en route. The Bouncer smiles radiantly, and takes from his belt two slender sticks joined top to top by eight inches of cord. Holding one, whirling the other through the air in a lateral figure-of-eight, he envelops the thrusting knife in an abstract design of motion terminating as the rod strikes the wrist. The knife falls skittering to the concrete. Blaine's back is heaving against the booth. Behind it, his father stands in absolute paralysis. Only the eyeballs move. The bouncer advances on Ivy.

BOUNCER

You don't learn. You just don't learn.

IVY

Then call the bulls...There's one in the toilet right now.

(cries to Reinhart)

Help me, man! I've got my rights to protection.

The Bouncer kicks Ivy high in the vest and when his head bows over he catches the chin on an upthrust elbow and the groin on a lifting knee. As the victim descends from the assault he is struck at least thrice by blurred fists on snapping wrists. The Bouncer turns to look at Blaine, who quickly throws him two wispy cigarettes and, crossing his arms and compressing his chin, he sinks to the concrete and makes himself into an unresistant ball.

BOUNCER

Don't you want to see my flying kick?

The Bouncer wades over Blaine and hands Reinhart the reefers.

REINHART

(shakes his head)

I'm just a person.

(Continued)

Reinhart sits down on the closed toilet, from which he can see part of Blaine's body under the door. The Bouncer pockets the two Joints and leaves. Blaine stirs. Reinhart rises and peeps out. Blaine is searching the unconscious pusher, but he finds nothing and leaves without a glance towards the booth.

INT. MAMA MIA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Reinhart arrives back at the booth, just as Eunice is returning from table-hopping.

REINHART

Turns out I'm off my feed. Let's get the check and blow.

EXT. MAMA MIA'S - NIGHT

Reinhart and Eunice are headed toward the car. At the debouchment of the alley into the parking lot stands the Bouncer, eating a Hero sandwich. Reinhart stops.

REINHART

Excuse me, do you know about something called kung fu?

BOUNCER

Chinese martial art.

REINHART

(turns to Eunice)

See, I told you Bob did karate.

(Eunice shrugs as they start to walk)

He said he got his black belt in kung fu.

BOUNCER

(over hears)

Bullshit, man. There isn't no belt system in kung fu, everybody wears a black **gi**. What I don't like about it is you wear shoes too.

REINHART

(as they near the car)

What's a **gi**?

EUNICE

A uniform. Bob's a pathological liar.

(Continued)

INT. EUNICE'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Eunice drives. Reinhart rides. Both are quiet for awhile. Finally:

REINHART

Nice car...What make is it?

EUNICE

I don't know. It's some Dodge or Ford or Buick or something. Look on the glove-compartment door. He gave it to me for graduation.

REINHART

Who?

EUNICE

Bob Sweet...My father...

(nothing from Reinhart)

Tell me about my father...When he was young, he said you went to school with him.

REINHART

I just ran into him by accident last week, hadn't seen him in years. We weren't close in school, but I certainly never beat him up as he claims. He is thinking of some of the other guys.

EUNICE

Oh, that's great! That's fabulous. Tell me all about it. Was he hurt? Did he cry?

REINHART

((in defiance))

So you're Bob's daughter...I can't get over that.

EUNICE

I wish I could.

REINHART

I guess your complaint is that he doesn't understand you.

(Continued)

EUNICE

Bob got custody of me. My mother lives in Hungary. She ran away with a defector. He was a rocket engineer.

REINHART

Take the next right. I'm staying at the Y.

EUNICE

You just don't like being with me, is that it?

REINHART

Look, I'm an old guy, and after a day with a specialist in rejuvenation and an evening of youthful pleasures, I feel twice the age I was to begin with.

EUNICE

I don't have anybody to talk to.

REINHART

I'll see you in the office tomorrow...You know, the freezer program puts a whole new complexion on human troubles. If it works nothing is permanent any more. If we are trapped in a situation, it is t for a limited term...Think of that...

EUNICE

I thought I could count on you.

REINHART

The thing I can't swallow is being given all this responsibility. You feed and clothe a child and expose him to your principles. What the hell else are you supposed to do? I never expected my parents to be perfect. My dad, for example, never gave me any useful advice his life long, and my mother criticized me incessantly. They might not have been the kind of people I would have chosen as friends, and I always felt superior to them, yet I managed to love and respect them as parents. Why then must my own son be a Blaine? Because I have failed in business? But he hates business. And my wife--

(he stops abruptly)

(more)

(Cont'd)

I'm sorry, Eunice. This is unforgivable of me. It's what happens in middle age. Another person's troubles only remind you of your own. When you get to really old age they please you by contrast. The old-timers at Senior City get a charge from the death of a colleague...another one is gone and I am still here, that sort of thing... Human beings are vile. That's the best advice I can give you. Like any other general rule it has as many exceptions as applications, but it is a useful position from which to start. Then you won't be disillusioned by swinishness on the one hand, while on the other you will be pleasantly suprised occasionally when decency appears unexpectedly.

After a moment of quiet:

EUNICE
(low but intense)
I'll drop you at the Y.

INT. BANK - DAY

Reinhart stands at a tellerless window. A half dozen people wait in line behind him. The TELLER finally shows up with Maw's check.

TELLER
I'm sorry Mr. Reinhart, but Mrs. Reinhart has stopped payment on this check.

REINHART
(dazed)
Stopped payment?

TELLER
Yes sir...Just this morning.

Reinhart takes the check and leaves.

INT. SWEET'S OFFICE'S - DAY

Eunice is not yet at her desk, as Reinhart passes thru into the inner office. Sweet's desk chair is empty. Reinhart raises his fist to knock, but he's arrived at an angle through which he can see a lighted strip of half of Sweet, standing before a washbowl in T-shirt and trousers. Sweet's head is crystal bald except for the sideburns. At the

(Continued)

Continued:

moment he's installing a complete set of dentures. Next, Sweet squeezes a dot of cream from a tube here and there on the inside of a toupee and places it upon his crown, pressing it to establish adherence. The upper margin of a stiff corset, rises above the waistband of his pants. He tugs at it before donning a shirt. Reinhart finds himself gliding backwards, away from the bathroom door, as silently as he had arrived. Sweet has not noticed him. A man putting himself together from scratch does not look for distractions.

INT. OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Reinhart sits with his head in his hands when Eunice comes in.

EUNICE

(cheerily)

Hi.

Reinhart looks up. Eunice has a new hairdo, ringlets altering, with dangly locks like truncated pigtails.

REINHART

When did you get that? I didn't know the beauty shops were open this early.

EUNICE

There's a guy named Reynard who's open all night. The hookers all go there. How does it look? I haven't really seen it.

At that moment, Sweet appears, the whole man, well arranged.

SWEET

(to Reinhart)

Good, you're here...Lets go. We have a candidate.

Eunice squeals in some sort of emotion. Reinhart leaps to his feet and gives Eunice a little salute of no particular significance and follows Sweet out.

INT. BLOOR BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

Reinhart catches up to Sweet.

REINHART

I gather you have reason to believe this is not a hoax.

The elevator gapes.

(Continued)

SWEET
(stepping in)
It's better than that. He's a black man.

INT. BENTLEY - MOVING - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet stare out the window as the car pulls up in front of a ramshackle house.

REINHART
I have been here before.
(sighs)
It must be his father. I met him once,
a damn nice guy.

SWEET
(suspiciously)
You know these people?

REINHART
Mainwaring?

SWEET
That's the name. Do you mind explaining?

REINHART
Don't you remember Splendor? He went to school with us, a year or two ahead. He was a star athlete, for one. Don't you recall the basketball team that went to the state finals? It was his touchdown that won the Thanksgiving game in '60 or '61. He won more letters than anyone, a record that probably still stands. He got good grades too. I believe Splendor was salutatorian of his graduating class.

SWEET
All I can recall are the guys who picked on me. Not an era I look back on with much sentiment, Carl.

EXT. OLD MAINWARING HOUSE - DAY

Reinhart and Sweet are en route up the cracked walk.

(Continued)

REINHART

It's a weird feeling. It has changed so little. I almost expect to see his sister open the door as she did the first time I ever came here. She was one of the most beautiful girls I have ever seen in my life.

(drops his voice)

But she seemed to be mute. I never heard her say a word.

They reach the front door. Sweet knocks. BRUNO STORM opens the door wearing military garb. It is black with white piping, and the pants are wide-winged breeches, flaring out of high boots. He has a boy's hips, a girl's waist, and a bull's chest.

SWEET

Mr. Mainwaring?

(Storm nods)

I am Bob Sweet of the Cryon Foundation, and this is my associate, Mr. Reinhart. I believe you called us about a certain sad matter.

STORM

I did. In a minute I will join you in your car.

He closes the door. Reinhart and Sweet start back to the car.

REINHART

God, that might be Splendor's son, and if so, it's probably Splendor who is dying.

SWEET

I don't know about the patient. But, that fellow happens to be Bruno Storm...A nom de guerre, I gather, since he answered to 'Mainwaring.' Didn't you recognize him from the newspapers and television?

REINHART

I'll be damned. Sure I have. My son told me Storm was invited to address the local bar association and began by addressing them as 'Scum' and said he looked forward to shooting them all and raping their wives, daughters, and mothers. He received a standing ovation when he finished...How can he get away with that, Bob?

SWEET

Don't worry about it, Carl?

(Continued)

INT. THE BENTLEY - DAY

Reinhart opens the door and Storm enters.

REINHART

Is it your father who is ill?

STORM

Yes, He's dying of cancer. Shall we get rolling?

SWEET

Which hospital?

STORM

I took him out. White medicine was killing him.

REINHART

Doesn't your dad live here anymore?

STORM

(snorts)

No, he has a lovely little house in Whitetown. I bought it for him...and I'll tell you why. A man ought to achieve his aim before he dies, even if it is to be a lickspittle to white values. I don't blame him. He is a product, not a maker. If you are treated like a thing all your life, you become one.

REINHART

Look, the Splendor I knew kissed the ass of no man. He stood by and for himself. It seems, somethings are missed, especially by sons.

STORM

Naturally you would say that. You are white.

REINHART

I'm getting tired of the word.

STORM

You're getting tired of it!

(Continued)

SWEET

Let's get going. What's the address.

STORM

4926 Mockingbird--

REINHART

God almighty...That's my parents' old house.

EXT. MAINWARING'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

The NURSE, a stout walnut-colored woman in whites opens the door before anyone knocks. Storm, Sweet, and Reinhart enter the house in that order.

INT. MAINWARING'S HOUSE - DAY

A hospital bed stands in a far corner of the living room. Upon it lays SPLENDOR MAINWARING, a waisted old brown man.

SPLENDOR

Carlo...How terribly nice. I am touched by your grief, old fellow. But is it misplaced. I may die, but in the words of the late great militarist, I shall return.

REINHART

You certainly shall, Splendor.

There is a **knocking** at the front door. The Nurse opens it to reveal the small figure of Streckfuss, who is grinning obsequiously. As he scampers in:

STRECKFUSS

Ah, Bopp!
(looks at Splendor)
Are you the afflicted?

SPLENDOR

(amiably)
No doubt about it.

STRECKFUSS

Alors! Intestinal malignancy?

REINHART

Must we talk of these things now? You can go over the whole situation with his doctor.

(Continued)

SPLENDOR

You are a principal in this project, Carlo?

REINHART

Splendor, I would of come as your friend, you know that...but I was not aware until the call came in. May I say this is not a profit-making venture.

SPLENDOR

(to Streckfuss)

You can tell that by looking at my face? Great God, you must be gifted. Yes, it is my colon.

STRECKFUSS

I expect zey wanted to remove it surgically. Surgery has no blace in medicine. I call it carpentry! It is but a hobby, did you know? But practiced on living tissue.

SPLENDOR

They were at a loss.

STRECKFUSS

Of course zey were. So anoizzer living person is taken to pieces.

SPLENDOR

Listen to that, Raymond.

STORM

I am forced to.

SPLENDOR

Raymond is a mechanistic rationalist.

REINHART

Splendor, I think, we should get a hold of your doctor. He may take some convincing if he is the conservative sort.

SPLENDOR

Carlo, we live in a remarkable time. The phony is constantly turning into the real, and visa versa. God knows what the world will be when I am revived.

(Continued)

REINHART

I hope when you return to the world the people of all races will be living like brothers.

STORM

(howls)

I knew he'd get around to saying that sooner or later. A black man lies there eaten up by white disease, cheated and lied to by white doctors, in a white house for which we had to pay a white owner three times what it was worth, listening to white quacks promise him eternal life, and sure as shit one of them will talk about brotherhood.

SPLENDOR

Raymond, if you must use foul language it will not be in my presense.

STORM

I'm leaving.

(at the door he blurts boyishly)

I'm sorry, sir.

Storm goes outside to the porch.

SPLENDOR

He's a good boy, but he is inclined to talk too much.

REINHART

He's a fine-looking fellow.

Splendor seems detached from Streckfuss' rummaging about on him.

STRECKFUSS

I must have a speciman of your your-reen. I can make you comfortable meanwhile. Do not please take any more of zeze poisons.

(points to the medication on the table)

And zis nourishment is useless.

(the hanging bottle)

I shall replace it with something else. But if your physician knows about zis he will undoubtedly object. Therefore discharge him.

(Continued)

SPLENDOR

In view of my condition that won't be simple.

STRECKFUSS

It is your damned life, is it not?
(an abrupt change)

Yes, it would look suspicious. Above all, my presence must not be made know.

(peers violently around the room)

Mr. Mainwaring, I must tell you I am not licensed to practice medicine in this country. Are you troubled by zis disclosure?

SPLENDOR

Not much...You see, I'm dying.

STRECKFUSS

Perhaps...

REINHART

Freezing is not illegal. Bob has that all checked out. As far as law is concerned, the body is dead...forgive me, Splendor, talking this way, but--

SPLENDOR

I want the details. Squeamishness is for those who plan to stay deceased.

REINHART

Old friend, everthing's going to come out all right. By the way, I don't know whether you know it, but this happens to be the house in which I was raised.

SPLENDOR

Yes, I know that. It gives me a feeling I suppose you could call serenity.

He closes his eyes, and the Nurse returns to show out the trio from Cryon.

INT. MAW'S ROOM - SENIOR CITY - DAY

Reinhart stands while Maw sits on the couch that makes into a bed.

REINHART

That check you gave me bounced.

(Continued)

MAW

Far from accidental, buddy-boy.

REINHART

I'm a little confused, Maw. So much happened to me in the past couple days, I'm a little slow on the draw.

MAW

That's rich. When were you speedy?

REINHART

Look, all you had to do was refuse if you didn't want to give me the money.

MAW

Carlo, you misrepresented your situation the other day. I have often known you to be a fool, but not a liar. You have degenerated, boy. I expect you are on your way to the gutter. People homeward bound from a hard day's work will see your body slumped against a wall, an empty wine bottle nearby and the flies buzzing around your mouth...That's how sex maniacs invariably end.

REINHART

Maw, do you intend to explain this assault on my integrity?

MAW

I'll talk turkey with you, Carlo. Hardly had you left here the other day when your son made his appearance and showed me how you went at him with shears. I consider that a vicious stunt--

REINHART

He's lucky I didn't cut his throat. My conscience is clean towards that boy. I have given him everthing, and he has turned out completely rotten. He has bad blood in him from his mother's side. That's the only explanation. I never used to believe in heredity, but I see it working in him. And...What bearing does this have on your bad check, Maw?

(Continued)

MAW

Yeah, the check, you are quite the monomaniac on some subjects. Which brings me back to sex. See, I know about the little teenybopper next door. She's a child, Carlo. Even I never thought you'd come to that. You could be locked away in the penitentiary for fifty years.

REINHART

Maw, that bathroom screen never fits properly, and you know how sloppy workmen are today and how--

MAW

You are warped worse than I thought, Carlo. I have a mind to go to that telephone across the room and call the cops down on you. Yapping about window screens at a time like this, when that little girl is carrying your child.

REINHART

The teen-ager next door to the house where I used to live?

(Maw nods smugly)

Where I lived until a couple of days ago?

(Maw scratches her chin)

This girl claims I--

MAW

I think I would be capable of murdering you with my bare hands would it not make the scandal known. Also, did I not think that person you married was responsible in part. Which doesn't lessen your guilt one whit, you filthy, disgusting hog. But it was her that got you into sex in the first place. I can't forget that. You never knew what it was until she got hold of you. It's like drinking...You take a sip, and you are hooked for life.

REINHART

This girl has made certain accusations--

(Continued)

MAW

I wouldn't waste your breath, short as it is...
Little Blainey somehow in that house of evil
grew up to be a saint, don't ask me how...
But Blaine is marrying this child to give **her**
child a name. And that is why I cut off your
five thousand and gave it to him.

REINHART

I see...He told you the whole story himself.
That figures. The whole thing makes
beautiful sense. I predict that you and Gen
will even make your peace one of these
days. But what I will never understand is why
you all hate me so much. I am really a
likable guy. In every other case on record,
people have been fond of the man who
never gets anywhere, especially if he's fat.

MAW

The world is changing, Carlo.

REINHART

You won't believe a word of this, but I'm
going to say the turth if it kills me. Not me,
but my saintly son Blaine got that girl
pregnant, and he will use your five grand
not to get married on, but to buy marijuana.
And you Maw...you are hardly one to get
morally sanctimonious, when you skinned
the Mainwarings on the sale of the house.

MAW

(laughs)

I sure did, Carlo. The best way to make
anybody equal is to rub their nose in the
facts of life. I set a certain price and would
have sold it to anyone who coughed up the
loot, including a little green Martian with
aerials on his head. It so happened those
colored people were the only ones who
would meet it. I bet the neighbors could
kill me.

REINHART

We have reached a crisis...I am afraid, Maw,
that unless you reject this vile accusation
against me, I shall not be able to see you
again.

(Continued)

MAW

It's real twisted when you think about it,
Carlo. To this coming child you will be both
father and grandad.

(yawns)

Time for my nap now. Kindly close the door
gently when you leave.

Maw's eyes close and her head falls slowly towards her lap.

EXT. CRYON PLANT - DAY

Two, young, black, men, TYRONE and CANDY are throwing a football in the big parking lot, in front of the tire shop. They see the Bentley when it pull up in front of the Cryon door, but they can't see Reinhart, as he gets out, alone, on the other side of the car. Reinhart moves around a, tethered, skinny, goat, to open the door.

INT. CRYON PLANT - DAY

It is cold and dark after the sun. Streckfuss, emerges from a chilly shadow, and advances on Reinhart with an enormous hunting knife.

STRECKFUSS

En garde!

He crisscrosses the air with vigorous slices. Reinhart shrinks aside, and Streckfuss passes into the outdoors with a derisive laugh. Sweet, stands near a laboratory table, wearing a long white coat to match Streckfuss'.

REINHART

Bob, you certainly make a convincing doc.

SWEET

(points)

Get yourself a coat and mask from the
autoclave.

REINHART

Me? Is this a joke? I'm at a loss when it
comes to science, and I think I might get
sick to the stomach if I have to watch you
prepare to freeze that goat.

SWEET

Nonsense. You're talking like a schoolgirl,
Carl.

(Continued)

Sweet also wears rubber gloves. He is lining up a rank of steel instruments on an enamel stand.

REINHART

Are you always Hans's assistant in these things? Isn't that unorthodox?

SWEET

Naturally. Unorthodoxy is Hans's great strength. Orthodox medicine abandons the patient at the time of clinical death.

REINHART

But surely we have to clear the way legally--

SWEET

For a goat...? Don't worry, my lawyers are all set for the moment we get a human body....If we ever do.

REINHART

What do you mean?

At this point Streckfuss comes in, dragging the goat on its neck rope.

STRECKFUSS

(to Reinhart)

Help me get him up on zeze table.

Between Reinhart and Sweet they manage to get the goat onto the table.

STRECKFUSS

Still hold it!

Streckfuss cuts its throat with a scalpel and starts catching its blood in a pail.

SWEET

There is no other way. Any kind of injection might permeate and corrupt the cells. Hans is not a cruel man. As a trained physician his knife is swift and sure. The goat has given up his life to save your friend's. I should say that is sufficient moral justification.

(Continued)

Next Streckfuss makes one vertical and one horizontal slash, spreads the flaps of the skin, and plunges both hands into the squirmy viscera and rummages around as if he were looking for the odd sock in a laundry bag. Reinhart manages not to faint as Streckfuss serially emerges with several organs and drops them into basins, which Sweet carries away. Streckfuss snips off the testicles. Above the gauze mask Sweet's eyes are more than businesslike when they slide like oiled olives across his basin.

SWEET

There is a test called Aberhalden, performed on the urine of the patient. Hans is one of the few men in the world, and the only one in America at present, who have mastered its analytic intricacies. In brief, this test indicates whether the organs are functioning properly, and if not, which are at fault. Hans has determined that your Mainwaring suffers from a malfunction of the liver, specifically in the production of bile, which plays an essential role in the digestion of fats in the intestines.

REINHART

I see, so that when Splendor is thawed, he can get a liver-transplant too.

SWEET

No, no, We are not going to freeze Mainwaring, at least not yet. Hans thinks he might be able to save him.

Streckfuss is furiously busy at another table, chopping some organic-looking substance into a glass dish.

REINHART

I tell you, Bob--

SWEET

God knows I am myself Exhibit A. Of course Mainwaring's degeneration is well advanced. Too bad Hans couldn't have got to him earlier. But once this biliary malfunction is straightened up, he should be back on his feet, a better man than before...in fact...rejuvenated.

(Continued)

REINHART

Do you have to be dying to get this treatment?

SWEET

Old age is a disease, and can be arrested right now, cured altogether perhaps...In this light, **nothing else** is serious.

REINHART

Chemicals. I know, are the big things now--

SWEET

No...Not chemicals but the basic unit of life, the cell, capable of infinite regeneration. We are not solid, Carl. We are assemblages of cells adhering together.

STRECKFUSS

(calls)

Bopp.

Streckfuss holds aloft an enormous syringe, of the kind used by veterinarians on people in comedies. Sweet strides to the table, opens his surgical gown at the back-parting and gets his hand inside. The hypodermic is filled with a slippery, gooey mess, with the texture and form of orange caviar. Sweet's pants and shorts collapse around his ankles. He lifts one side of the gown and Streckfuss drives the needle into the ham so presented, and begins slowly to depress the plunger.

REINHART

Which organ are you getting?

SWEET

Testicles...After this, Hans will go to Mainwaring's and shoot the poor devil full of chopped goats liver.

Reinhart has passed out on the floor. "Testicles," being the last word he heard.

EXT. CRYON PLANT -- DAY

Sweet and Streckfuss have placed the passed out Reinhart on an aluminum stretcher of the kind on which they freeze bodies, and they are maneuvering him out the door into the fresh air. Tyrone and Candy, stop playing catch and come over.

CANDY

That one them frozen dudes?

(Sweet smiles and nods)

Won't he melt out here?

(Continued)

TYRONE
How long's he been frozen?

SWEET
Two years.

Reinhart begins to stir.

CANDY
Watch out, man. He's alive.

TYRONE
Whoa...! How do you feel?

REINHART
Huh? Oh, I'm...

Candy flicks some drops of water off Reinharts face.

CANDY
You're still thawing.

SWEET
Are you OK, Carl?

REINHART
(starts to sit up)
I'm not at my best.

TYRONE
What do you expect?
(feels Reinhart's face)
He's just as warm...

CANDY
(feels, too)
Damn if he's not.

SWEET
Well, gentlemen, you have seen the future
and it works.

Streckfuss helps a shaky Reinhart to sit up straight.

EXT. HUGE SHOPPING MALL -- DAY

Reinhart steps off the escalator and heads towards the purple facade of Flan's Flair's, a dress shop.

(Continued)

INT. FLAN'S FLAIR'S - DAY

Reinhart sticks his head in and speaks to a passing SALESGIRL.

REINHART

Would you tell Miss Raven I am waiting for her, please.

In one revolution of eye the girl assesses and dismisses him.

SALESGIRL

OK.

EXT. FLAN'S FLAIR'S - DAY

Reinhart waits. GUS KRUSE an auto-parts retailer bumps into him.

GUS

Hi, Carl. How they hangin'?

REINHART

Gus. How's business?

GUS

I'll live. I regard the big boys in the shopping center as a challenge, though they hurt me the first year. What are you doing these days?

REINHART

Oh, things.

GUS

Listen, Carl. If you need something to tide you over, I could take on another man in the stockroom.

REINHART

Gus, why don't you take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut?

GUS

(peers closely)

You are quite the skunk, aren't you?

Off he goes, as Gen emerges from the shop, wearing a suit of lime-green linen. Her hair pulled back so tight as to make her forehead smooth as metal and her eyes slanted.

(Continued)

GEN

Where to?

REINHART

I thought Al & Grace's. There's not much choice down here.

GEN

Al & Grace's has been closed for six months since the fire. We could take the car and go to Gino's.

REINHART

That's a thought.

GEN

Not a happy one. Gino called the house last night, and it wasn't to give you a medal.

REINHART

OK, let's go to Gino's anyhow. You think I haven't got the nerve. I'll show you.

INT. GINO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Seated near the front, where Gino greets comers and goers alike. Gen has a plate of lettuce leaves intermingled with boiled shrimp. Reinhart has opted for a simple egg dish.

GEN

Let's get down to business, and after this... all communications will be conducted through our respectful lawyers. You can rest insured that while I don't want to do you any favors, I am no more anxious for publicity than you are in this area.

REINHART

Genevieve, the language is not friendly to you. I haven't a clue to what you are trying to say.

GEN

The problem is of course what you could provide. You don't own anything. But if you have some money stashed away I mean to find it.

(Continued)

REINHART

Genevieve, do you really suppose me the kind of person who would hold out on you?

GEN

Don't get me started on the list.

REINHART

I'll give you a hundred dollars to tell me one instance.

GEN

There! I knew you had secret funds. I've always known it, you bastard, for all your poor-mouthing, so you could sneak over to see that whore.

REINHART

Don't try to impress me with your filthy talk. I'm clean as Sir Galahad.

GEN

(recites)

Gloria, apartment Nine-C, the Stuart Arms, 386 Windolph Avenue, phone 425-8305. Visits on May twenty-seventh, June eighteenth, June twentieth, July third, usually during the middle of the afternoon, though once in early evening...At twenty-five per bang, that's not a tidy sum.

REINHART

You've been sold a bill a goods, Genevieve, by some unscrupulous private detective. That's a racket, didn't you know? He takes your money and makes up a report out of the whole cloth. I'm surprised you would be so naive. You're scarcely a young girl any more.

GEN

I'll outlive you, you bastard.

REINHART

Of course we could sit here all day and be bitchy. Or we could act like mature persons who have shared quite a bit of life together, good times and bad. I am certainly willing to admit that I am not perfect.

(Continued)

GEN

What's gets me, is...you have had half my life...half my goddam life! Only my childhood was my own. You got everything else, mister...But, for all the reasons I have to hate your guts, I still only feel sorry for you. Sorry, for Christ's sake! How do you like them apples?

REINHART

I'm going to startle you, Gen. I'm going to admit you are right in many respects. But look here...I have never done anything in malice.

GEN

Why, you pompous son of a bitch! Who do you think you're talking to? I'm not a prostitute.

REINHART

Will you listen? I'm not arguing. And, you've got whores on the brain today--

GEN

Actually, I shouldn't make too much of that if I were you. You'll never break me, don't you realize that? You'd be surprised how cool I am.

REINHART

No, I wouldn't...You see, I've been to bed with you.

GEN

(laughs coarsely)

Naturally I knew about your spyglass for months. But I never made the connection. Well frankly, I couldn't care less...Oh, there were times long ago when I was quite embarrassed to be in the company of a sex fiend, but then I decided to consider the source or else I would go crazy. That must have been a thrilling sight for her, but with your enormous belly hanging down, how did you expect her to see it?

REINHART

Pardon?

(Continued)

GEN

When I was twelve, a paperhanger working in our house showed me his business. You know what? I laughed out loud, I really did.

REINHART

Let me get this straight. You are accusing me of exposing myself to the girl next door?

(Gen makes a surly gesture)

It so happens, my dear Genevieve, that the bathroom window is four feet above the floor. To show myself there below the midpoint of my chest would require remarkable acrobatics or a stepladder.

GEN

Now, it's common knowledge that the kind of man who recourses to whores is basically a homosexual. Added to that, this exposing...I've done some thinking lately. Does the subject of costume parties ring a bell?

REINHART

Do you remember when I went as Hermann Goering? And Blainey asked, 'Who's'--

GEN

Frankly, what sticks in my mind, is the time Randy Hines came dressed like Shirley Temple, and you were fascinated with him.

REINHART

No, Gen...That won't work.

GEN

You don't think I thought you would admit it? It's a pity, though, you wasted all that time on call girls and exposing yourself.

REINHART

Genevieve, I prefer men. That's the way I'm made, I'm afraid. Go on...Tell me more about my passion for Randy Hines.

(Continued)

GEN

What I hadn't counted on was that you would still build up this hatred for me no matter what I did. Why? Simply because I was the nearest female. How dumb I was. But then you got me when I was a virgin--

REINHART

No matter how violent we have ever quarreled, Genevieve, I have never challenged that goddam lie of yours, but why should I suppress it any more, with the kind of crap you're trying to pull on me now? Blaine got the idea from you that I will take infinite punishment and never fight back. Well, I cut off his lousy hair. And to you I say...I remember very clearly the first time I had you, and I want to tell you something, Miss Phony Virgin...it was like falling into a well.

Before Gen can say a word, Reinhart jumps up and beats a hasty retreat toward the Men's Room.

INT. GINO'S MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Reinhart is splashing water on his face, when Gino walks in, shaking his head.

GINO

You take the cake, my friend, for sheer gall. I don't care the little lady settled your bill in full. I would still cream you if you wasn't escorting her tuhday.

INT. GINO'S DINING ROOM - DAY

Gen is gone when Reinhart returns to the table, and the WAITRESS is smearing a wet gray rag across the Formica. Reinhart gets out his wallet.

WAITRESS

She picked it up.

REINHART

Thanks for another wonderful eating experience.

WAITRESS

Give people the best, and they'll come back.

(Continued)

EXT. GINO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

When Reinhart exits, Gen is there, waiting for him in the car. Reinhart squares his shoulders and strides around to the drivers door.

REINHART

Move over. I'm taking the wheel.

He moves the seat back, then guns across the blacktop, maneuvering easily among the other vehicles.

REINHART

Genevieve, I want to make two points. First, whatever you think, I have always been sympathetic to your plight. I know it hasn't been enough for you to be just a wife and mother, and it's useless to bring up the time when people were content to be housewives. Remember that feminist group you belonged to a couple of years back. Well, it may surprise you to know I read your literature thoroughly, and it was far from being altogether idiotic, though perhaps, for polemical purposes, the message was put in an exaggerated form. To get attention today you have to be outlandish.

(gives her a quick glance)

Combination janitor, chauffeur, and whore, as I remember, is how they characterized the American wife...

(they ride in silence for awhile)

If you remember, you went into a long depression after Blaine was born. I don't pretend to know what it's like to give life to a new person, but I am sure the strain is remarkable. But then, once Blaine was ready to go to kindergarten you believed you would miss having a baby to look after, so we had Winona.

(more silence)

Look...I've started this new job at forty thousand per annum, which is actually some sort of grant that according to Bob is tax-free. This is guaranteed...

(puts his hand on her knee)

This is a sure thing...Because I'm not running it.

Gen begins to melt. She puts her hand on top of Reinhart's.

(Continued)

GEN

You know, Carl. I'm not the worst person
in the world.

REINHART

You're the best wife I ever had.

GEN

But, there is someone else.
(absolutely nothing from Reinhart)
Somehow I knew you'd understand.

REINHART

I suppose you wouldn't want to tell me who.

GEN

All right, then. You'd know eventually
anyway. Harlan Flan.

REINHART

He's under thirty still, isn't he?

GEN

Imagine...Falling in love again.

The title of Marlene Dietrich's biggest hit.

EXT. TOP OF BLOOR BUILDING - DAY

Reinhart stands at the parapet of the observation tower looking down. When he looks up, he sees a SECURITY GUARD, some thirty feet away, keeping an eye on him.

REINHART

(very loud)

Well sir, you can see for miles and the
people look like ants and the view is really
something.

(looks down again)

And it's a long way down.

The Guard walks towards Reinhart.

GUARD

Though every prospect please, and only
man is vile.

REINHART

Hey, I know that one. Only isn't the first
word **Where?**

(Continued)

GUARD

(firmly)

No...

(brings up a book and reads)

What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile'
Bisop Heber, 1782-1826.

REINHART

Is that right. I would have said Dryden or possibly Pope, I don't know why.

The Guard leafs through the book.

GUARD

Here's the Pope... 'The vulgar boil, the learned roast an egg.' I don't get that... Who was the other guy you mentioned...? ...Drysdale?

REINHART

Dryden... Those names are always linked, Pope and Dryden. Like Shelley and Keats.

GUARD

Billy Jones and Ernie Haire, the Interwoven Pair. I never went to college.

REINHART

I hardly get around to reading poetry any more. I guess it is a great thing to kill time with up here.

The Guard flashes the cover of the book.

GUARD

This isn't poetry. It's quotations. Somebody left it here. They leave all kinda of things here, you wouldn't believe it, though it ain't as bad as the bus. I used to drive a city bus. I found a truss the other day... you know, for a rupture. You find dirty jockstraps, false teeth, a dozen new shirts still in cellophane, a dead parrot, a live turkey--

(Continued)

REINHART

I suppose this fence is to keep people from jumping over?

GUARD

Naw...To keep jerks from throwing things down. You drop a penny and it would go through some character's head like a bullet.

REINHART

Well, we're all alone up here today.

GUARD

It's still early. In summer you get groups, like Girl Scouts and such, and they toss their garbage down if you don't stop them. People are pigs.

REINHART

I'm going around on the sunny side.

As Reinhart crosses a clean ruthless angle of shadow, he is smothered by a white blanket of sun. Under an Indian-scout hand across his eyebrows, he sees another PATRON of the observation deck, a slightly built youngish chap, with carrot hair, freckles, and all-American smile.

PATRON

Hi there!

Reinhart returns the greeting with a wave, then he notices that the lad has before him, on a high tripod, a quite realistic-looking rifle equipped with a telescope sight. In this light it could be something else.

INT. SWEET'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

As usual, Eunice is typing, when Reinhart enters.

EUNICE

How are you, Carl?

REINHART

I was just up on top of the building with an idea of jumping off but was sidetracked.

EUNICE

(typing away)

Why?

(Continued)

REINHART

Would you mind telling me what it is you're always typing? We never seem to do any ordinary business.

EUNICE

The scenario for a blue movie.

REINHART

Is Bob in yet?

EUNICE

Bob's in Berne.

REINHART

Switzerland?

EUNICE

If you say so. I never could read a map.

REINHART

When do you expect him back?

EUNICE

Never. I put a bomb in his attache case...
Hey, the silence in here is deafening.

She does something to a little black transistor radio.

RADIO

'...has yet not been identified...'

EUNICE

Which could be said of us all.

Eunice switches the radio to **hard rock**. Reinhart escapes into Sweet's office. He looks outside and notes the floor of a neighboring building in which all the windows are broken but one. That one shatters before his eyes and a human figure behind it goes over like a silhouette of cardboard. He dashes back and seizes Eunice's radio.

RADIO

'...known dead and sixteen wounded at least at the latest count. Police snipers have been sent to the top floors of surrounding buildings, but none of these is as high as the Bloor Building, forty-seventh tallest edifice in the continental United States and constructed in 193--'

(Continued)

REINHART

There's a madman with a rifle on the observation deck. I thought it was an advertising stunt. I took the elevator and--

(the radio goes dead, he shakes it)

He's killing people from up there! Jesus Christ. He said 'Hi' to me, looked like he wouldn't say 'Shit' if he had a mouthful.

EUNICE

Look here, Carl. I don't like that kind of talk.

REINHART

Shooting people down in the next building! Which one is that? The Ecumenical? My dad's old outfit.

EUNICE

You might at least apologize.

REINHART

Oh. I'm sorry, Eunice. I beg your pardon. You see, I went to the roof--

EUNICE

(laughs)

You're really intense aren't you? I never knew anybody I could put on so easy. I'm really wild about you.

She rises without warning and engulfs Reinhart in an asphyziating embrace, opening her mouth sufficiently wide to block all his air intakes. She then frees herself and runs into Sweet's office. When Reinhart gets there she has most of her cloths off and is falling onto the couch.

EUNICE

Do me...Do me and do me again.

INT. SWEET'S OFFICE - DAY

It is very quiet now, except for the occasional soft pop of a distant gunshot. Eunice's body covers Reinhart. Her mouth very close to his ear.

EUNICE

My generation never knew a time before the Bomb.

(strokes his face)

Most of Bob's money is in numbered accounts in Swiss banks.

(Continued)

REINHART

You wouldn't know, when I am supposed to get my first paycheck? And shouldn't we get dressed in case somebody walks in? ...My wife is getting married to a guy who is fifteen years younger than she, her boss, in fact. The strange thing is that though I am forty-four I have a feeling I have not got started in life.

Eunice lightly bites the end of his nose. Reinhart pinches her earlobe affectionately. She hurls herself off the couch and walks naked to the window.

EUNICE

Hey, the cops are shooting back from the roof of Ecumenical.

She puts her fingers on her hips and does a bump and grind at them, then turns around, blinding Reinhart with sheer nudity in sunshine.

EUNICE

Why, are you so kind to me?

REINHART

I like you. There is something awfully nice about you. You are friendly. That may not sound like great praise on the face of it, but the fact is that the world seems hostile to me nowadays. I don't meet many people I like.

EUNICE

I know what you mean. Everybody has always hated me. People stare at me in the street...Some old woman in carpet slippers shuffled past me yesterday, muttering "You stupid cunt."

REINHART

A crank, undoubtedly. They're everywhere these days. People driven mad by the pressures of life, talking to themselves.

EUNICE

Are you just saying that to make me feel good?

REINHART

Certainly not!

(Continued)

Reinhart sits up and Eunice sits down next to him. He puts his arm around her waist and leans his old head against her young back.

EUNICE

I'm going to kill myself on the last day of my twenty-ninth year.

REINHART

What kind of talk is that? That's the loser's way.

EUNICE

But I **am** a loser!

(pushes him down and begins to punch his chest)

And I don't want to win, and I don't want your sympathy, and I'm going to punish you for your arrogance.

He immobilizes her with overlapping limbs. There is a confused mass of hair and squashed features against his face.

EUNICE

(into his cheekbone)

What do you have to complain about?

REINHART

My wife is leaving me after twenty-two years of marriage. I have never been a raving success at business, and it has been years since we got along well. But is that any excuse? I am a guy with a strong sense of home and family, far stronger in fact than my instinct for a profession. Do you think that makes me effeminate? Maybe. But I don't have a home now. Do you know how that makes me feel? And the funny thing is that at last, in this association with Bob, I have a successful connection.

EUNICE

You wanna bet...? I regard it as only a matter of time before Bob is indicted.

REINHART

Look, life is various and complex. I assume that any successful businessman is something of a crook by a certain rigid definition if not often by a loose one.

(Continued)

EUNICE
And you condone this.

REINHART
I...? What the hell difference does it make
what my position is? I'm not Secretary Of
Commerce.

EUNICE
Do you know something? I don't believe
in love. I mean on a personal level. I don't
believe in the validity of individuals, which
just means exploitation of the weaker by the
stronger.

REINHART
(sardonically)
You wouldn't expect it to be the other way
around?

EUNICE
Why do you make fun of me? I'm doing the
best I can.

REINHART
Well. I'll tell you, that's certainly good
enough for me.

EUNICE
(her head sinks)
Oh.

REINHART
Don't you think we should get up?

EUNICE
Why?

REINHART
(sighs)
What a strange morning I've put in. I have
made the same reflection on many recent
days. I suppose unusual experiences if
frequent enough can come to seem routine.
For example, we are being very cool about
the mad sniper on the roof. People are
being shot down, and what do we care?

(Continued)

Reinhart takes one hand away from her sacroiliac and snaps his fingers. Eunice breaks free from his remaining arm and begins to beat him up again. Even under the rain of blows Reinhart manages to see that a MAN has entered the room. This person is armed with an Instamatic camera. A flash-cube clicks around until it exhausts itself, and the Man departs with as little warning as he had come.

REINHART

Obviously a detective in the employ of my wife. I guess there's no point in getting dressed now.

Then another MAN, small and very fair, comes in.

MAN

(odd accent)

Where could I find Doctor Streckfuss?

Eunice raises her head off Reinhart's chest.

EUNICE

Sorry, but we are not permitted to give information about our personnel. Company policy.

The Man shrugs and leaves.

EUNICE

Bob told me to say that. He is manic about invasions of privacy.

She rises and swiftly puts on her pants. Reinhart take the cue, and starts to dress.

REINHART

Why would anyone be looking for Streckfuss? That's suspicious, isn't it? You don't suppose he could be a war criminal?

EUNICE

I hate war.

REINHART

Nazi doctors performed all kinds of experiments on the inmates of concentration camps.

EUNICE

So did the doctor at the camp I went to as a kid. He wasn't a real medical doctor, but a shrink, a psychosexual existentialist with

(more)

(Cont'd)

bulging eyes and a funny smell like mustard. I think he was queer for my T-shirt...you know, with Camp Fuckaduck written across the boobs.

REINHART

I can't get over the idea that Streckfuss looks familiar to me.

EUNICE

He wanted to marry me, but an oppressive society would have persecuted us. I was fourteen and he was fifty-eight.

REINHART

Please Eunice, this is serious.

EUNICE

(giggles)

You just don't get it do you? I have always had this thing for older men. I can't make it with anybody else. And you're fat besides!

REINHART

All right, all right. But I should have stopped that guy and got his story. I have thought Streckfuss a sinister character ever since I laid eyes on him. The trouble with science is that it's amoral.

EUNICE

That is positively brilliant, and I love you.

EXT. CITY STREET NEAR THE YMCA - NIGHT

Dark. Windy. Scary. Reinhart walks fast. When he reaches the end of the block he can see three dark figures coming toward him. On such a night everybody is black. Reinhart crosses the street on a long slant. When opposite he sees that they are THREE WHITE PRIESTS. Reinhart stops at a pay phone. An island of light in an otherwise black sea. He drops a quarter in the slot and dials. Winona answers:

WINONA (O.S.)

(through a mouthful)

Hi, Darry...Hold on. This pizza is dripping...Hi! There's an anchovy on the phone!

(giggles)

There, it's off. What can I do for you?

(Continued)

REINHART

How are you, darling? Is your mother there?

WINONA (O.S.)

I'll call her. But, Daddy, will I ever see you again in all my life?

REINHART

You certainly will, dear. I'm going to get my own apartment any day now, and the first thing I'm going to do is make a big potful of chili con carne and--

WINONA (O.S.)

With spaghetti?

REINHART

Sure, if you want it, and grated cheese and chopped onions and a fried egg on top. Then strawberry shortcake to follow.

WINONA (O.S.)

Bread pudding! Please, Daddy.

REINHART

You name it, Winona.

WINONA (O.S.)

Golly, I love you, Daddy. I'll get Mother.

But a male voice comes on next. It is Gen's father, RAVEN.

RAVEN (O.S.)

Sir, you are an unmitigated scoundrel.

REINHART

One good thing has come out of this. I don't have to be polite to you any more, you yellow skunk. The next time I see you, Raven, and I don't care how old you are, I am going to hit you on the mouth with all my might and watch what happens to your front teeth.

RAVEN (O.S.)

(clears his throat)

There's no reason why we can't conduct ourselves like gentlemen. In fact, it will be easier on all parties if your lawyer handles

(more)

(Cont'd)

it. I say that for your own good, Carl. I have never considered myself your enemy.

REINHART

I know it was you who told Gen about a certain Gloria, but sending that photographer today was lower than I thought even you could sink.

RAVEN (O.S.)

I reject that allegation. I sent no cameraman anywhere. I can state that without fear of contradiction.

REINHART

You knew about Gloria because you are a whore's lawyer. That in my opinion is worse than being a client, any old day.

Suddenly, a veritable monster of a black man, JAMES, looms up out of the dark glowering at Reinhart, who hangs up the phone immediately.

REINHART

I am unarmed and nonviolent.

JAMES

I am sorry, but my wife is pregnant and about to deliver and my car has broken down.

He is seething with worry.

REINHART

That's OK. She will be just OK. Don't you worry. Everything will come out just fine.

Reinhart sits down on some steps and watches James talk anxiously into the phone. When he hangs up, James crosses to Reinhart.

JAMES

Are you all right?

REINHART

I'm a little heat-sick I think. Did you get an ambulance?

(Continued)

JAMES

My brother-in-law is coming right over. You can always count on him. I must get back. You take care of yourself, you hear?

(walks backwards)

Go home and put a cold rag on your forehead.

Reinhart watches James disappear into the night.

INT. SWEET'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

For a change, Eunice is reading something when Reinhart enters.

REINHART

Listen. I am out of funds. Can't you cable Bob to authorize some money for me?

EUNICE

Do you know that Sikhs must live by a number of rules? For example they must always carry a comb. And they never undress completely their life long. So they bathe with one arm still in their underwear.

REINHART

Listen, can I sign a chit for petty cash? Ten bucks would help.

EUNICE

Our petty cash is down to an airmail stamp and a Brazilian cruzeiro, but if you want to talk to Bob, why don't you? Are you aware, Carl, how easily you tend to lose all control? Really, is it worth it?

In annoyance Reinhart marches into the inner office, slamming the door behind him, and there sits Sweet.

REINHART

Back from Switzerland? In one day?

SWEET

It could be done, but of course I didn't. What are you talking of, Carl?

REINHART

Eunice, told me yesterday that you were in Berne.

(Continued)

SWEET

Berne is a little town forty-five miles northwest of this city. I have some interests there.

REINHART

(remembers)

Oh yeah. We used to play basketball against their team. I went up once to see a game...a bunch of guys in that old Ford of Billy Wright's. We had flat pints of drugstore wine and cheap cigars, and Specks Cunningham had to stop and get out to puke.

SWEET

(eyes narrowed)

Two of the guys who used to pick on me.

REINHART

No, not Specks and Billy. They were idiots, but pretty good guys. Specks got killed in the Army...on maneuvers in the States, oddly enough. He apparently camouflaged his sleeping bag so well that a Jeep ran over it with him inside--

SWEET

Spare me the details, please.

REINHART

(slightly stung)

Look, Bob. I hope you won't think it bad taste if I ask you when I will get paid. I am hard up at the moment. I owe my rent at the Y, for one thing.

SWEET

I thought you had five grand. Did not you offer to put five grand into the business?

REINHART

It's a sordid tale. My son slandered me to my mother, who stopped the check.

SWEET

You stood still for this?

(Continued)

REINHART

What could I do? She was always a harsh critic of me and now she verges on senility.

SWEET

Are you her principal heir?

REINHART

Unless she changes her will, which she probably wants to do now.

Sweet rises and begins to stride slowly about the room.

SWEET

Carl, I'm going to talk turkey to you. I don't know if you are aware that nature is ruthless. Animals, for example, with the exception of a few domesticated creatures, are totally self-concerned. Kindness, pity, honor, and so on, are purely intellectual constructions, and as we know, beasts are incapable of abstract reasoning. For example, the whole concept of incest is uniquely human. An ape will still have relations with his sister, and we won't. But we will deify the illegitimate son of a carpenter whose preaching consists simply of advising us to be losers in every transaction. Can you find an animal who would turn the other cheek? Do you see a lesson in that.

REINHART

Yes, but one that I reject. That old Army saying...'If you can't eat it or fuck it...piss on it.'

(snickers)

We're not animals, Bob.

SWEET

I quite agree. There is no lesson in animals, in fact. I brought up the subject so as to dispose of it. There are those who whine about why we have wars when animals don't. Well, neither do we screw our close blood-relatives. The truth is that men have made themselves from scratch. We have invented our ethical codes, and they have nothing to do with instinct. They are, in the

(more)

(Cont'd)

truest sense of the term, unnatural. And have got more so throughout the centuries, arriving at the present when we have at last abolished death.

REINHART

(winces)

Isn't that a premature claim, Bob?

REINHART

(seizes Reinhart's lapels)

Yesterday Hans thawed a monkey that had been frozen for six weeks. Last night it ate a banana. This morning it was seen masterbating.

INT. CRYON PLANT - DAY

The MONKEY gives Reinhart a quick, peevisish look and then avoids his eyes, while Sweet pours champagne into laboratory beakers.

SWEET

I know you don't drink, Hans, but surely this once.

He hands a vessel to the little scientist and another to Reinhart, then hoists his own.

SWEET

To Professor Doctor Johann Streckfuss!

(to Reinhart)

You are a man of words, Carl. Here is your opportunity to utter a few that will be historical.

REINHART

I am?

(memory whirrs)

If he has seen farther than most, it is because he is standing on the shoulders of a giant.

STRECKFUSS

Isaac Newton, no?

REINHART

I believe so...No offense. I really don't know what to say. I really find it incredible.

SWEET

Bottoms up.

(Continued)

Reinhart is about to comply when the monkey clutches his wrist.

SWEET

Isn't that cute. Does he have a name?

STRECKFUSS

Otto.

REINHART

Shall I give him some champagne? He has, after all, come back from the dead. What a story he would have tell, if he could speak.

STRECKFUSS

That I doubt. Undoubtedly, like most of zuh human race, he would speak in platitudes.

He puts his own champagne down untasted and walks to a steel table full of vessels and wire. Reinhart plucks the monkey fingers off his forearm. Sweet pours some more champagne, then gives the cork to the monkey.

SWEET

Hans is something isn't he? He is not the least excited by his triumph.

REINHART

Well, of course, scientific discoveries come so frequently nowadays that they seem almost routine. Since I was a boy--

He is struck in the nape by the champagne cork.

SWEET

Hans won't be satisfied until he has frozen a man and thawed him. It's as simple as that. Let's have your glass, Carl. You seem strangely calm. Some contrast with your usual gung-ho personality.

REINHART

Me?

SWEET

Yes, you. You always had a lot of life, even back in school. Remember how you used to come up and bruise a guy and shout?

(Continued)

REINHART

There you go again, Bob. I tell you..you are confusing me with other people. Warren First was the one who did that.

SWEET

Show your shoulder-cap and say, 'Look where the horse bit me,' while ramming your knuckles into somebody's crotch.

REINHART

I tell you that was Warnie First. He died just last year. He was a three-pack-a-day man.

SWEET

You don't smoke, do you, Carl? And you certainly don't drink much. You may be somewhat overweight, but I imagine that if you haven't had any indications to the contrary your internal organs are all functioning well.

REINHART

(flattered)

Well, seriously, I guess I haven't done too badly. Whenever I have a bit of heartburn I suspect it's an ulcer, but the X-rays don't lie. My teeth could use some work. Sporadically I do a bit of boozin, but switched from bourbon to vodka some years ago. Fewer esters, I read, or a different kind anyway...not as damaging to the system. My blood pressure is high, which is inevitable in a man of my weight, and I don't get enough exercise...Also, should cut down on fats and carbohydrates--

He is jerked backwards. The monkey has seized his coattail. His beaker smashes on the concrete floor.

REINHART

Sorry.

SWEET

Why? To be in good health, with all your parts functioning?

(Continued)

Sweet hurls his empty beaker at the opposite wall. Streckfuss sweeps a rack of test tubes onto the floor.

STRECKFUSS

Merde!

SWEET

I was born a bastard, you know.

REINHART

No, I didn't.

Reinhart moves beyond the monkey's arm-length.

SWEET

I doubt that my real parents were in the top drawer of society. I was squirted as a drop of scum out of one tube into another, grew into a blob of humanity, was pulled out, struck, began to breathe, and was abandoned soon thereafter. I spent my first three years in a public orphanage. The Sweets then adopted me.

REINHART

I never knew that in the old days.

SWEET

Neither did I, for years. And when I did find out, I can't tell you how exhilarated I was. Robert Sweet, Senior, was the original Weak Willie. He actually sang in the Methodist choir. His wife was always knitting. Every Saturday morning the two of them would vacuum the **basement!**

REINHART

Routine people, with all their little rituals, are what makes the world go round.

SWEET

No, they are not...They don't make anything do anything. I can't tell you how happy I was to learn that I did not owe life to the Sweets. I could afford to ignore rather than hate them.

(Continued)

REINHART

But that's not all there is to families. My dad was a pretty mediocre guy, too, and my mother has always been something of a crank without an aim, so far as I can see. Not everybody cares about power. It's probably a basic difference in taste. Most people want merely to live. Or anyway they used to. Nowadays you are assaulted from every direction by people who want to do something with, or to you.

SWEET

The family as an institution will probably have disappeared by the time the frozen are revived, along with war and poverty. The poor may always be with us as statistics, but an impoverished man, as individual, will have centuries in which to improve his lot. One might be hungry, but no longer can he die from starvation. Wars may occur, but no longer will anyone be killed in them. They will in fact turn into games.

Reinhart turns to look at the monkey.

REINHART

Six weeks you say? Shouldn't you call the newspapers and Life magazine?

SWEET

Not till we have our man. Not till he has been there and come back and can tell about it.

REINHART

Just a moment, Bob. Aren't you forgetting something? It is only a theory that the body can be revived in the distant future. Whereas if you had some kind of proof... Photographs...If Hans has more monkeys he should film them while they are still in the frozen state, then when they are thawed. Movies, really, are what you should have.

SWEET

I notice you keep saying 'you.' Carl. Are you dissociating yourself from this project?

(Continued)

REINHART

Just a way of talking. I feel a bit shy at this point. I am beyond my depth when it comes to science.

SWEET

Or anything else. One might say bluntly that you are redundant in the logistics of life.

REINHART

(bridles)

It is shameful to use a man's self-criticism against him. That's the technique of women and politicians. How much humiliation do people want of me? I was once a young man, and had some good ideas. I have never knowingly been mean or false. That's a quotation from David Copperfield...I forget the rest of it--

SWEET

Have you really lived by slogans, Carl? You lack authenticity. You are a product of other people's passions and choices. You might one day be killed by someone else's statement to the effect that you do not exist. Is it really the role of a man to be inoffensive?

Reinhart stares wildly about, then his eyes land on the point where Streckfuss' neck hair touches the collar of his lab coat.

REINHART

I suppose it's preferable to be a Nazi doctor, performing experiments on the inmates of concentration camps. The Israelis are looking for him, Bob.

SWEET

Of all things to say. Hans was a prisoner for years in Buchenwald. He survived only because the SS officers preferred him to their own doctors.

REINHART

He's a Jew?

(Continued)

STRECKFUSS

(turns)

No, I tried zat once and it almost got me killed. I disclaim any ethnic, national, or political identity.

REINHART

(looks between his shoes)

What can I say?

STRECKFUSS

Nussing which would concern me. I take no interest in morality. I regard even myself as an organism, of which the constituent parts are replacable. I have no desires, and do not understand anyvun who has. I have spent zuh lahst fifty years in that condition and I prefer it.

He puts some test tubes into a machine and throws the switch. It whirrs.

SWEET

Carl...How about it? Nothing would be more convenient than if you took a vacation at full pay.

REINHART

I know it's vulger of me, in view of all this, but I am down to my small change. I do have to pay that room rent soon.

SWEET

There you are, living at the YMCA at your age. Why don't you book a suite at the Shade-Milton Hotel and charge it to the firm? They have a heated pool and a sun club. You could meet girls there.

REINHART

Look, Bob, I want to say I have acted like a gentleman with Eunice. I wouldn't want you to think I took liberties with your daughter.

SWEET

My daughter?

(laughs)

That idiot? If she was my daughter I would freeze her. Her father's Barker Munsing, that psychoanalyst at the end of our hall.

(more)

(Cont'd)

If indeed it had been such, would I tell you my daughter was a nympho?

Reinhart stops to think for a moment.

REINHART

I suppose there would be no pain?

SWEET

Absolutely none. That's an assurance you could not get if you were to jump off the Bloor Building.

REINHART

There was this guy who came looking for Professor Streckfuss.

SWEET

A dealer in laboratory equipment, he had our office address. He delivered that new centrifuge that Hans is using right now.

REINHART

You see how I am. I ignored the fellow who turned out to be the sniper, and thought this guy an Israeli undercover agent. But those photographers...who were they? My father-in-law disclaims all knowledge of that stunt.

SWEET

Eunice has a pretty scummy crew of friends. What did they do, want to sell you some pornographic snapshots?

REINHART

No, they depicted me in some.

SWEET

There's a lot you would be escaping, and that's putting it at the worst. At the best there is international celebrity. There's What's-his-name, the South African dentist with heart transplant, formerly anonymous, now a household word. And for the book and magazine people you could write your own ticket, not to mention the movies.

(Continued)

REINHART

Yes, that undiscovered bourne from which no traveler returns...Let me ask you one question, was this your plan for me from the beginning?

SWEET

Not really. When I saw you at Gino's what I remember thinking of immediately was a vengeful ambition I had as a boy. I always swore I would get you back for that bullying.

REINHART

Goddammit, Bob!
(hits the table behind him)
I am guilty of many things, but that's not one of them, I tell you.

SWEET

Carl, Carl, do you seriously think I have nothing better to do than hold a childish grudge? You are probably right...it was two other guys--

REINHART

I don't know what you do. I don't know how you made your money or even where you live. You couldn't prove by me that you own anything but that Bentley.

SWEET

Nor that...I hire it in fact at three hundred dollars a day. I live at the Shade-Milton. I own very little, and lease what I need because of the tax advantages..I speculate in commodity futures...That's what I was doing in Berne. I lease storage facilities there...Cocoa...

Sweet goes to the monkey's cage and begins to unfasten the door.

REINHART

He's going to be a son of a bitch to catch if he gets out.

Sweet pulls the monkey from his cage.

SWEET

Here you go, Carl.

(Continued)

He tosses the monkey to Reinhart, and it immediately cuddles up to him.

REINHART

Maybe I should have gone into a profession that dealt with animals. Contrary to what you might think, what I like about them is their selfishness.

SWEET

Better watch yourself, Carl. I doubt he's housebroken.

REINHART

Oh, everybody shits on--

SWEET

Don't say it! As to when I formulated a plan for you, I did not. If you are offering yourself to be frozen, it must be your decision alone. You must sign a legal waiver. We will make no promises whatever. Your blood will be drained and replaced with glycerol, your body will be suspended in liquid nitrogen. You will be dead to the world.

The monkey puts its face into Reinhart's neck below the ear.

REINHART

(strokes its hair)

I have been alone most of my life, even or especially when accompanied. I have often made that observation. I doubt that it is original. When I was young I had all sorts of exciting ideas about morality, government, business, love. In time I discovered that if they were any good, I had plagiarized them from some great thinker. If genuinely original they didn't work. In fact, they didn't even seem to work when they were the intellectual property of the great philosophers. Socrates was poisoned, if you recall, and Nietzsche lost his mind.

The monkey gives Reinhart a kiss on the earlobe. Streckfuss comes up silently on his rubber soles.

(Continued)

STRECKFUSS

Mister Reinhart...As a philosopher, you must know Aristotle...'No one can understand nature fully nor miss it altogether, but as each makes his contribution there arises a structure that has a certain grandeur.

REINHART

OK...OK...**You got your Boy.**

SWEET

Good man, Carl.

STRECKFUSS

Vonderful, Now, I want that in the next fortnight you do not over excite your nervous system, also that you avoid all ordinary foodstuffs, take no medicines or drugs, exercise moderately but not to the point of fatigue, and sleep as much as possible.

REINHART

Two weeks?

STRECKFUSS

In fact, you must reside in this place. We will make a bett for you here. Mine, indeed. You may use it. I seldom sleep.

SWEET

I'll check you out of the Y, Carl, and bring your effects. We'll get the papers drawn up. Take my advice and do not inform your family. You would have certain rights as a missing person. They won't be able to get into your safe-deposit box.

Streckfuss produces a stethoscope from the pocket of his lab coat.

STRECKFUSS

Remove your clozing.

REINHART

Just a minute. I can't stay here just like this. I've got things to do.

(Continued)

SWEET

What? What things? You would hardly have volunteered if that were so. And you did volunteer, didn't you, Carl?

REINHART

There's no question, Bob, and you know it. But this is a bit abrupt, on the one hand, and long-drawn-out on the other.

SWEET

Like life itself.

REINHART

I'm glad you mentioned that. It's mine, isn't it? My own damned life.

SWEET

Far be it from me, Carl--

REINHART

I don't intend to live in this mausoleum for what may be the last two weeks of it, either. I'm going to call you on that offer of a suite in the Shade-Milton, and I also want a good car.

(to Streckfuss)

I intend to eat rich foods and drink expensive wines. The effects are your problem. You can flush me out when I am unconscious.

STRECKFUSS

(mutters)

Ah...Ah...

He puts away the stethoscope. Sweet's neck has gone rigid.

SWEET

Anything you say, Carl. You're the boss.

INT. BENTLEY - MOVING - DAY

Reinhart's mood is up. Sweet's is more quiet.

REINHART

I'll need some spending money, Robert.

(Continued)

SWEET

Sure, Carl. But you can put the car and hotel on the company, and I have accounts at several restaurants.

REINHART

No, I don't want that. I will pay as I go. I'm sick of bills, installment plans, pay-now-fly-latter, credit cards, and all the rest of that shit. I want genuine, hard cash, such as you hardly ever see any more. I want to crumple a twenty-dollar bill and throw it at some insolent headwaiter and have him kiss my ass. I want to overtip the embittered hoodlums who work at parking lots and hear them thank me. I want to be stopped for speeding and bribe the cop and get saluted. And most of all, I'd like to stop some bitch of a teenager and ask her price ...you name it, five hundred, a thousand--

SWEET

Sure, Carl, sure.

REINHART

--And when I reached it, give her the money and leave her untouched.

EXT. BLOOR BUILDING - DAY

Reinhart pulls up in his brand new, silver, Vette, and parks it in the No Parking, Standing, Fire, Taxi, Bus, Zone. The same Traffic Cop salutes Reinhart, this time, as he emerges from the car and heads for the building's front doors. Reinhart looks entirely different. He is dressed in a smart linen jacket, navy-blue knitted shirt, and paisly cravat. Reinhart meets up with Eunice as she exits the elevator, and they start back towards the Vette.

INT. VETTE - MOVING FAST - DAY

They are going at least 100 miles per hour. Eunice is strapped in and taut. Reinhart steers with one hand, and holds the car phone to his ear with the other. Sweet is on the other end of the line.

SWEET (O.S.)

(wails)

Thirty-seven thousand.

(Continued)

REINHART

This car has value, and it will still be here when I'm gone.

(laughs boisterously)

I'll need some more money soon. That makes almost forty-five I've gone through already, and the day is far from over.

SWEET

Carl, if you are going to smash yourself up, the deal is off.

REINHART

I know that, you'd be surprised how concerned I am for self-preservation. Being liberated is different from being reckless, Bob...You see, my nightmare has been faced and conquered. I realize that my trouble has been essentially a fear of death. Even getting license plates, usually a vile experience with lazy and insolent public employees, was flawless...A motherly vehicles clerk smiled and wished me good morning.

He hangs up abruptly, then grabs Eunice's thigh.

EUNICE

(shouts)

Hey...Hey!

Eunice gathers herself into the seat, reinforcing the safety belt with crossed arms.

REINHART

What's the matter? Let's live a little.

She pinches her eyes shut. They are overtaking a three-car spread on a tri-laned highway. However, a generous strip of grass defined by concrete curbing, rounded and too low to burst Reinhart's tires as he shoots over it, getting nicely past the trio, and cutting back down on the pavement without the use of brakes or loss of rpms.

REINHART

You see...No cause for alarm. Fast driving is not necessarily reckless. The great Stirling Moss, who won many a Grand Prix for England, would go ninety on glare ice and yet maintain more control than a little old lady in her wheelchair. Precision is the answer, Eunice.

(Continued)

EUNICE

Carl, lets just calm down. Please! I should get back to work. It's not five o'clock yet.

REINHART

Eunice, I am all that the Cryon Foundation has going for it. When you are with me, you are still working...Why...Why in the world did you tell me Bob Sweet was your father? And that preposterous story about your mothers defecting.

EUNICE

It seemed like the thing to say at the time.

The engine's hoarse roar climbs in pitch through howl to scream. The oncoming road becomes a continuum of immaterial substance, smoke or mist or utter illusion. One hundred, three-four-five-fifteen. Bugs explode in white and yellow bursts of liquid against the windshield. 125...130.

REINHART

One hundred thirty fucking miles an hour. Faster than a speeding bullet, Carlo Kent.

Eunice starts screaming as loud as she can, Reinhart almost has a heart attack. He slows down as fast as he can. The screams continue. Eunice opens the door and swings her legs into rushing space. Reinhart claws at her, but she eludes him and runs down the highway. The car is quite at rest in the center of the road. Reinhart piles out as TWO YOUNG GUYS in a mustang pass and shout to the effect that he can go copulate with himself. Up ahead, Eunice tries to hitch a ride with them, but they hoot derision at her and speed up. Reinhart chases Eunice along the shoulder, down a drainage furrow full of beer cans, and into a field of fuzzy-topped weeds. She runs on the toes of high-heeled shoes, wobbly but evasive. Though he overtakes her soon enough, he can not for some distance put a hand on her, and eventually there is nothing for it but to launch a flying tackle, at the conclusion of which their two large bodies lay prone upon crushed weeds. Reinhart sits up and addresses her back.

REINHART

Aren't you the silly one.
(she shivers)

There was no danger at all. The car is made for that kind of speed.

He grasps Eunice under the arms and get hers up to a sitting postion. She is limp and very heavy. He looks up to see an old Cadillac, traveling at about seventy, strike the Vette in the back, run it ahead for a hundred yards, and finally shunt it off into the drainage ditch. It tumbles onto its back, with an indecent show of steel genitalia. The Cadillac keeps on going. Reinhart, lets Eunice collapse, sits down beside her and laughs till his eyes run. HARPER, a bald old man in a new car stops near them.

(Continued)

HARPER

(through the passenger window)
Can I get you to a hospital or should I send
back an ambulance.

REINHART

A lift would be fine. She's just sick to the
stomach. Nothing serious.

Reinhart gets Eunice into the back seat and stretches her out, then climbs into the
passenger seat, and they take off.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

Harper is not a fast driver.

REINHART

You're sure taking a chance. We could be
faking it...How do you know we're not
Bonnie and Clyde?

HARPER

I saw Johnnie Dillinger's father once. He
went around in vaudeville, giving lectures.
Made a lot of money. Name is Ray Harper.
Would shake your hand if I wasn't driving.
Been driving since '36 and never had a
bang up nor a ticket and mean to keep it
that way. Put sixty-seven thousand miles
on this buggy and you can't tell it. I been
retired for fifteen years and some say you
don't have anything to do, but they are
wrong. There is always plenty of fools to
look at.

(They pass the overturned Vette)
I wish I seen that crackup.

REINHART

Looks like it was a doozer.

Reinhart glances back at Eunice, who is breathing through her mouth and staring
glassily at the dome light.

HARPER

You eloping? I buried my old woman last
year. If I ain't out in this machine, I'm home
watching the fools on color TV. I never eat

(more)

(Cont'd)

nothing but canned stuff. I haven't had a banana since 1916, and I call salads rabbit food. I still got most of my teeth. I'm going to take the next exit onto 203.

REINHART

Sounds like you've got everything under control.

HARPER

Call me anything but late for breakfast. Where would you like to be dropped, son?

REINHART

Is Berne around here? Miss Munsing and I are associates with the Robert Sweet firm, with warehouses there.

HARPER

That's my neck of the woods. I used to own and operate the grain-and-feed store there. I sold it to a Hebrew gentleman in 1954, but he turned out to be a real nice fellow. I don't want to call you on it, but I never heard of any Sweet being thereabouts. Them old warehouses is on a railroad siding, but they closed down the Mount Whipple spur in '56 and there isn't no trains coming through town any more. You want a train, you drive to Babson

REINHART

Well then, you can drop us anyplace we can rent a car.

HARPER

How'd you get way out where I picked you up without one?

REINHART

That was it in the ditch.

HARPER

You just leaving it there?

REINHART

Sure, it is just so much useless junk if it doesn't work. I have contempt for useless gadgets.

(Continued)

HARPER

Now, is that right?

(a thin whistle)

Look here, if you ain't got anything better to do, I'd be proud if you would come and have supper with me. It won't be like when the old woman was living, but I can fill your gut.

REINHART

I'm a little short on time, but thank you anyway.

HARPER

Well then, we can do it when you bring the machine back.

REINHART

Huh?

HARPER

I'm loaning you this here automobile. It won't do you a thing to decline. There ain't noplac in the whole township where they will rent you one.

REINHART

You would lend your car, which you have maintained so perfectly, to a man who just wrecked and abandoned another?

HARPER

I'm insured. Anyway, all my life I've worked on hunches. I had a hunch a yellow-haired young girl would work out for a wife and I married her and lived with her for forty seven years. We fought all the time, but that was all right. I had six boys. One died when he was little, and another deserted from the Army. The second one became a shyster lawyer. Alfred was some kind of moron and is in a home...you couldn't put up with him, except at holidays like Halloween, where he would stand all day at the gate holding a little jack-o-lantern. What's that leave? There's Henry, he sells combines upstate. And then Wallace, he become a cop in San Diego, California. I got eight grandchildren. Anyway, I got a hunch about you, and I don't even know your

(more)

(Cont'd)

name. You got spirit. I like that. I never all my life knew a man who would discard a machine, unless it was an old junker, but even then they would strip off the usable parts.

REINHART

They do the same nowadays with human beings.

HARPER

Your girl is mighty quiet.

REINHART

(looks back)

She's sleeping, I think. Hey, Eunice...

(to Harper)

I might throw her away, too.

HARPER

Yes sir, you are something.

REINHART

I guess you think I'm pretty ruthless. I am. I have no principles. I have a family somewhere, who I abandoned years ago when my children were babies. At age twenty-one I beat up my sick old dad, robbed my mom's purse, and left forever.

EXT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

As it travels through Berne, which turns out to be the typical little rural-American village of pizzeria, Cantonese restaurant, Maserati showroom, cat hospital, and stereo center in the business district. A Rose Bowl-sized football field with a million-dollars' worth of illumination for night games. A residential area where sunlight is filtered through the sycamores and old houses are skirted in green latticework below their spacious verandas. Then comes a tract of beastly ranch houses.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

Eunice is still out for the count.

HARPER

They sell a lot of filth now in the drugstore. You mentioned Bonnie and Clyde. They got a paperback with a pair of young fellows on the cover who look like girls...call it Donnie and Claude. Couple of Percies.

(Continued)

REINHART

God, I haven't heard that word in years.

HARPER

Cover shows 'em kissing each other on the mouth.

They approach a park full of trailers--mobile homes--mounted on foundations of cinderblock, surrounded by little picket fences enclosing growing plants, even birdbaths, iron animals, and mirrored balls. Harper turns in and drives the car into a slot beside a sort of refrigerator car of glistening aluminum. The next trailer is a peagreen affair with turquoise awnings over the airplane-type windows. Reinhart opens the door wide and sees a four-year-old girl in a bikini bottom writing **fuck** on the wall. Reinhart takes the crayon away from her and makes it **book**. He decides not to wake Eunice, and follows Harper up a little stair.

INT. HARPER'S TRAILER - DAY

As Reinhart and Harper enter.

HARPER

I got a flush toilet here, in case you have to take a trot on the china horse.

He opens a metal door, reaches in, and soon a recognizable gush is heard. He then fills a kettle at a little stainless-steel sink and puts it on to boil.

HARPER

Anything you want...hot coffee, tea, or ice-cold pop. Now for this stew of mine, I slice up baloney, take a can of White Rose creamed corn--

REINHART

It sounds great, but coffee will be fine. I'm anxious to hit the road again. Listen, while the water is heating I'll just nip out and find a public phone...there must be one here... and call a cab.

HARPER

Not on your life. I told you to take my car. I don't need it till you bring it back, with the story of all the adventures you have in it. Or if you wreck it and throw it away, take me a photo first.

(Continued)

EXT. HARPER'S TRAILER - DAY

Reinhart comes out to find Eunice is gone from the back seat. The moppet from the trailer next door has grown into a long-haired SYLPH of sixteen.

REINHART

Hey...Did you see a girl leave this car?

SYLPH

Yeah. She hitched a ride a couple of minutes ago.

REINHART

What kind of car?

SYLPH

A panel truck.

REINHART

Thanks.

Reinhart gets into Harper's car and starts it up. The Sylph wrinkles her little sun-kissed nose, lifting her upper lip so as to reveal only the very tips of her incisors.

SYLPH

You wanna?

REINHART

No thanks. Go tell your mother she wants you.

He backs out, and pulls away.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

Reinhart motors serenely along back roads.

EXT. OLD WAREHOUSE AREA - DAY

Reinhart parks near some grass-grown railway tracks, to the right of several long sheds, sheathed in undulating panels of iron that have lost their galvanization to orange rust. Reinhart opens the car trunk, and finds a jack handle. He inserts it between jamb and hasp and rips the latter off with a scattering of screws. Sure enough, loaded gunnysacks fill the dusky interior. Reinhart withdraws his little pocketknife-nail file and slashes one bag. A stream of pebblelike particulars clatter onto the wooden floor. With left hand, Reinhart gathers a palm-load of cocoa beans, takes them outside, to the platform, for assaying in the light of the sinking sun, and sees a handful of gravel.

(Continued)

INT. HARPER'S CAR - DUSK

Reinhart drives through the outskirts of town.

EXT. CITY STREET - PAY PHONE - NIGHT

Reinhart has stopped to call Gloria.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Hello.

REINHART

Biggie here.

GLORIA (O.S.)

Oh, hi, Big. Did you get over your summer cold?

REINHART

Actually, my name is Carlo Reinhart.

GLORIA (O.S.)

(howls)

I don't want to know it!

She hangs up. Reinhart spends another quarter.

REINHART

Sorry about that. It's just that I'm on a fearless-truth kick. I forgot it would work both ways. Look, Gloria, I want to come over, and all I want to do is just talk a while. Now don't hang up! You can name your price.

GLORIA (O.S.)

I don't know, Big. I've never been much for the freaky stuff. I got another client who might come over in a little while and if he don't I promised my sister I would baby-sit for her so she and her old man can see Planet of the Apes.

REINHART

How's a hundred sound, Gloria? For whatever conversation we can get in between the customers who make you work hard for twenty-five bucks a throw?

(Continued)

GLORIA (O.S.)

I don't stand for dirty talk. You know that, Biggie.

REINHART

I promise to honor all your scruples and niceties.

GLORIA (O.S.)

You got to leave when he buzzes.

REINHART

Agreed.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - NIGHT

Reinhart drives to the Stuart Arms. When he arrives, he parks the car in front of a fireplug, and goes upstairs.

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Gloria wears a linen suit similar to Gen's. When Reinhart steps in from the hallway, she leads him into the bedroom, and puts her hands at the top of his zipper.

GLORIA

C'mon...A quick Frenchy OK? Damn if I want to get dressed again.

Reinhart pushes away and closes himself.

REINHART

I wasn't kidding about wanting to talk.

GLORIA

(narrows her eyes)

Biggie, don't you think you can shake me down. I pay plenty for protection already.

REINHART

I'm not a detective.

GLORIA

You telling the truth?

REINHART

I'm no cop, for Christ sake.

Gloria crouches to look in the triptych mirror of her pinkskirted vanity table.

(Continued)

GLORIA

Oh, damn! My face has to be done over.

She sits down on the matching stool. Reinhart takes a seat on the bed.

REINHART

How do you feel about legalized prostitution, Gloria? Isn't it a rotten thing that a girl can be harassed for practicing an age-old trade for which there is always a need?

GLORIA

I'm against it. It represents a breakdown in morality, Big, as I see it. And it's hard enough to come out even nowadays, what with all the freebies on the streets. Of course that's what the Commies want. No, Biggie, the old world has turned a long time and while it isn't perfect by a long shot, you can't give it back to the animals.

REINHART

You are pretty well satisfied with the status quo, then?

GLORIA

I could use a few more hundred dollar tricks. You know, I'm in the life only till my little girl gets through college. Then I'm going to get married and settle down in the country someplace.

REINHART

How old is she now?

GLORIA

Eleven.

REINHART

I have heard that a prostitute gets many proposals of marriage.

GLORIA

Biggie, you wouldn't believe it. Hardly a week goes by. I could have my pick, lawyers, professors, well-to-do businessmen, and doctors with every specialty under the sun. That's who you will have to leave for, any minute...a

(more)

psychiatrist. You might just pay up now so there won't be any delay.

REINHART

A psychiatrist. Is that right?

GLORIA

An analyst. Mine, to be exact.

REINHART

I always thought of you as the soul of normality...as those things go. You must not have much trouble with sex repression

GLORIA

Nothing to do with sex. It's money. I got a funny attitude towards money. I lose it. I don't even spend it. I drop it everywhere. I get up in my sleep and burn ten-dollar bills without waking up. I shred money in the Dispose-All. I send clothes to the cleaners full of money, and tuck it into the coffee grounds and eggshells in the garbage. Which reminds me, I think you said a hundred just for talking, isn't that right, Biggie? That's what made me suspicious, because time and again in the past you tried to jew down from twenty-five for turning a trick. You got it, haven't you, baby?
(sits down next to him)
Lay back, sweetie, and Gloria will make you happy. We got time. You are always quick.

REINHART

(stands up)

I don't expect you to understand, but I reached a turning point recently--

GLORIA

Hell, it happens to the best of them, Big. That's what friends are for. Trust little Gloria. I'll get you up.

REINHART

No, that all seems superficial. I had a girl of twenty-two who would give me all I wanted. But man does not live by pussy alone, with all respect to your career. I'm making a big change. Gloria, preparing myself for a long journey.

(Continued)

GLORIA

Don't do it, Big. Don't turn fag. Take my word for it, it's only worse trouble. They're always fighting like cats, and bitchier than any woman, and when they get old they commit suicide.

A raucous buzzer sounds.

GLORIA

Oh Jesus, there he is.

She runs out through the living room to the entryway intercom, and presses the button. Infected by her nervousness, Reinhart has come along behind. He presses one hundred dollars into her hand of many rings.

REINHART

I'm gone.

GLORIA

You're all right, Biggie. I had you all wrong. Listen, sometimes peeping will help your problem. Watch somebody else's troubles, B because they all have them, everybody who comes here.

(grins)

If you want to watch, go over behind that Chinese screen in the corner and slide the picture aside and you'll be looking through the back of a two-way mirror into the bedroom. I'll take him right in. When you have seen enough, tiptoe and let yourself out quietlike.

(lightly squeezes his testicles)

For free, on the house, and don't say Gloria never gave you nothing.

INT. GLORIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is a little later. Reinhart sits behind the screen, on a worn red hassock. At his feet, is a Kodachrome enlargement of Old Faithful in hourly eruption. The spyhole seems to have been rammed through the wall with the end of a baseball bat, and the glass on the other side is a bit filmy. Gloria and her CLIENT, a tall, comely man have almost completely exchanged clothing. He's in hers. She's in his. Gloria shuffles over and embraces the client from behind, her ardent hands on his imaginary breasts. He throws back his head to take her male mouthings. Reinhart quietly replaces Old Faithful over the spyhole, then heel-and-toes silently across the living room. He lets himself out, then bangs on the door.

(Continued)

REINHART (O.S.)

(shouts)

Police!

Reinhart projects himself into the bedroom. Gloria has a briar pipe halfway to her lips, when she sees Reinhart.

GLORIA

I finally get a big spender, and he turns out to be a cop. That's the story of my life. Gloria the born loser.

REINHART

Gloria, you will oblige me by canning the self pity. I'm not after you. Sit down and have a quiet pipeful. Are you Dr. Barker Munsing, with offices in the Bloor Building, and father of a young woman named Eunice?

MUNSING

Officer, I could have your badge for this intrusion on a private session of therapy. You must know the patient-doctor relations are sacrosanct.

(crosses his legs, matted hair under the nylons)

But for my part I am aware of the pressures you must be under these days, as a class upwardly mobile--

REINHART

Knock off the crap, you weirdo. Are you or are you not Eunice's father?

MUNSING

She is a free personality.

(smugly, toying with an earring)

If you seek to establish some owner-chattel implication, an image of me in spurred boots as a totalitarian colossus astride--

REINHART

That's all I wanted to know. I'm making an arrest.

Gloria begins to cry. Munsing shakes his head, the earrings swinging.

(Continued)

MUNSING

It is I, who could have you jailed, but I am a healer, not an enforcer. You are sick...For God's sake, man, accept that, admit it, and you will have taken the first giant step.

REINHART

That's what you think. But we're not going to talk about me. People have been doing that all my life, and seldom helpful...Here you are, dressed like a girl. And Eunice is wandering around someplace, practicing nymphomania.

MUNSING

(to Gloria)

In the lower left pocket of my jacket you will find a vial of tablets. Give it to me, and fetch a glass of water.

(to Reinhart)

A mild sedative.

(back to Gloria)

And if you have an empty paper bag in the kitchen.

(again to Reinhart)

You must breathe into it. You are in danger of hyperventilating. God knows what you might do in your present condition.

Violence is never the answer.

Gloria hands Munsing the vial and leaves the room.

REINHART

On the contrary, I can't think of an instance in recorded history when it hasn't worked. But I don't intend to employ it now, if that's your worry, and I don't know why it should be anyway, when you are as big as I and in a lot better shape.

MUNSING

Thank you. But the paranoid fear of being assaulted in the streets has been inseminated into a naive populace by those at the top of the power structure, for obvious reasons...People naturally love one another unless their minds are poisoned... The true purpose of the space program is to

(more)

(Cont'd)

abolish the orgasm, to cow the individual into impotence. How can he match the great, roaring, flaming ejection of a Saturn rocket?

REINHART

Which comes out the wrong end.

MUNSING

Going to the moon is a classic homosexual fantasy. Men without women, in a barren landscape, an anti-paradise where nothing flowers.

Gloria returns with the water and the paper bag. Munsing gulps down a handful of pills, then pours out at least a half dozen tablets and hands them to Gloria, along with what is left of the water.

MUNSING

Take these at once.

Reinhart blows up the bag and pops it. Gloria swallows the pills.

REINHART

What I don't understand, is what you two were going to do when you got down to the nitty-gritty, what then? I read once that Jean Harlow's husband had a rubber dildo but it didn't work and she went out and picked up truckdrivers in all-night cafes to fill her void.

MUNSING

Truckdrivers...Interesting how that example springs to your mind...brawny, coarse, sweating manipulators of mighty engines.

GLORIA

I feel funny.

Reinhart sits down alongside her.

REINHART

(to Munsing)

I'm going to wait until you have run out of bullshit, and then I'm going to propose a deal.

(Continued)

Munsing's tan face blanches. He seizes the water glass from Gloria's failing hand and swallows several more pills.

MUNSING

Blackmail, is it? I have nothing to hide.

REINHART

You seem to have done a pretty good job with your dong.

Gloria keels over backwards onto the bed.

MUNSING

Do you have the authority to question my therapeutic techniques? Prostitution is a serious symptom.

REINHART

I thought it was a thing-in-itself.

MUNSING

You are wrong if you think Eunice was ever neglected. No doors were ever closed to her, including those of our bedroom and toilet. She was often present when my wife and I had relations, and never put a question that was not answered or demonstrated. That sex should be discreet and that privacy is a good are facist lies inculcated in children by generations of fools and/or scoundrels. In fact she used to climb in with us. I suppose that shocks you. The capacity to be shocked is a symptom--

REINHART

Do you know something, Munsing? If you took wing and flew out the window I wouldn't bat an eye.

MUNSING

Gloria, is on an identity-quest. At puberty she was faced with this overwhelming question...'My body tells me I am a woman, but my self cannot accept that...'And then a curious experience at age thirteen reinforced the confusion. She was molested by a **younger** boy, much smaller than she, a lad of ten. It seems they were coasting down a hill on a red wagon and ran into a

(more)

(Cont'd)

tree. Pretending to be checking on whether she had been hurt, he pulled her panties down and said...'Gee, you're hurt bad. Your peepee has been knocked off and you are bleeding!' It was of course her first menses, for which her mother, an ignorant woman, a maniacal puritan in fact, had not prepared her...Memories of wagons often appear in childhood reminiscences. It is significant that they are always colored red.

REINHART

Just as in real life...Look, I was crapping you before, with the stuff about Eunice. I couldn't care less what she is or what your responsibility, because if I did, I would have to question my own association with her. Whatever, I suspect she will live out her life without any major disasters. Most people do these days, even with the bomb, snipers, assassins, mobs, crime in the streets, the everlasting wars...In fact, as you know, the life-expectancy rate is at an all-time high, and the long-range problem is overpopulation...Now there is even a scheme afoot to freeze a corpse at the moment of clinical death and preserve it for eventual reviving.

MUNSING

Bob Sweet's Cryon Foundation, you mean? Bob is a former patient of mine. You should have seen him when I first got hold of him. He was totally impotent for one.

REINHART

I understood that you were not supposed to talk about your patients.

MUNSING

Another of the misconceptions regarding psychiatry. My work is my life. Does not a lawyer, a salesman, a plumber discuss the events of his day? I play golf with a priest and we deride our respective patients and confessees for eighteen holes. You'd go crazy if you didn't, in our game.

Munsing gulps more of the pills that have laid Gloria low but seem to have no effect on him.

(Continued)

REINHART

About this deal...I work for Cryon, and we are ready to perform a major experiment. Are you an M.D.?

MUNSING

(crosses his legs again, swinging a high-heeled shoe)

That's a laugh. I am barely able to peel the protective paper off a Band-Aid. I could not tell one end of a stethoscope from the other, let alone perform an abortion. But let me put you onto the man Eunice uses, Charlie Wilhelm. He's in the book...Northdale, I think.

REINHART

Could you sign a death certificate?

MUNSING

Frankly, I don't know. I burnt my AMA card at the last convention. Symbolically, that is...what I actually touched a match to was a Charge-a-Plate for Eisenstein's department store. It was celluloid and stunk. But it got me on TV, if you remember.

REINHART

You don't mean, after I've gone through all this, that you're useless to me?

MUNSING

I put you onto Wilhelm. If you are a cop you can go and bust him.

REINHART

If I were a policeman, I would have arrested myself long ago. Wilhelm, you say, in Northdale?

MUNSING

(begins to hum a tune)
Say I referred you.

REINHART

OK, proceed with your treatment. I'm history.

(Continued)

MUNSING

You'd be surprised that such simple truths
as you and I would never question are
precisely what the sick reject.

REINHART

(in the doorway)

Such as?

MUNSING

Being...Existence...

In a strong baritone he begins to sing the lyrics of the song he's been humming...
Baby, won't you light my fire.

INT. SHADE-MILTON PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - NIGHT

Reinhart is on the phone.

REINHART

Dr. Wilhelm, I'd like to come see you
tomorrow. Referral is by Dr. Barker
Munsing.

WILHELM (O.S.)

I'm afraid I don't have an open appointment
for three weeks, and then I'm going to
Vaparaiso, Chile, where their winter is in
progress.

REINHART

(gangster style)

You ain't going nowhere, noplac, notime.

WILHELM (O.S.)

I am afraid I do not offer the sort of
treatment you seem to need.

REINHART

You are speaking to a robust man. Yet I
expect to die suddenly. I am toying with the
idea that life is the disease, and death the
cure. This is in accord with Christian
theory.

WILHELM (O.S.)

Dr. Munsing must have given you a
number to call if you needed help while he
was away.

(Continued)

REINHART

Yes, yours. But you still don't understand.
I am not a patient of his, but a colleague.

WILHELM (O.S.)

A physician? Why didn't you say so? I'm a
busy man, Dr. Reinhart, and it is one
thirty in the morning. We G.P.'s don't keep
the banker's hours of you fellows.

REINHART

And we can't cure a soul with an aspirin.
But I suppose you have had your failures
too, and buried them. I'd like to consult
with you on a professional matter
tomorrow.

WILHELM (O.S.)

How would two o'clock be, at my office?

REINHART

Thank you, Doctor.

WILHELM (O.S.)

Thank you, Doctor.

REINHART

And, I don't want to split the fee. It's all
yours.

He hangs up and paces back and forth. There's a **knock** on the door.

REINHART

(shouts)

It's open.

A BELLBOY comes in. He's about thirty years old.

BELLBOY

Hi, guy?

REINHART

Let me tell you something. If you are a
bellman, I am 'sir.' If I am 'guy,' you are
back to bellboy. I am spending my
money for luxury accommodations.
I don't expect obsequiousness, but I do
demand courtesy.

(Continued)

BELLBOY

I got my rights, too. I am human, you know.

REINHART

That's exactly what I am saying, am I not? This is the Age of Science. For every action there is an equivalent reaction.

BELLBOY

You're the boss. You got the money.

REINHART

By living fifteen years or so longer than you have, and by dying sooner.

BELLBOY

(whines)

We got to pay income tax on our estimated **tips**.

REINHART

I doubt you report the kickbacks you get from hookers.

BELLBOY

(smiles)

I thought so. I can always tell. You learn a lot about people, in this job.

REINHART

I doubt it.

BELLBOY

Listen, I could tell you--

REINHART

Yeah, what apparently respectable and even distinguished personages do behind closed doors, and what male singer, famous for his virility, is privately a roaring faggot, and which venerable actress, who plays Mother Superiors and Queens of England, was stinking drunk in this suite and tore your fly open.

BELLBOY

(grins)

Oh, I told you already?

(Continued)

REINHART

No, I can see through the deceptive veil men call reality.

BELLBOY

She'll be here sometime during the next half hour.

He puts his hand out.

REINHART

Blonde, brunette, or carrot-topped?

BELLBOY

Whoever they send. It's an answering service. But they're all women, and they'll do anything you want. Just relax, and leave it to me.

REINHART

No, I won't. If I get no choice, I'd rather play with myself. Is this the way it's always worked?

BELLBOY

Brother, if you got to pay for it, then you can't call your shots.

REINHART

I can. And I want her dark.

BELLBOY

The house dick won't let a spade in the elevator at this hour.

REINHART

Bullshit...You know fucking well that you always pay off the house detective every time you get a girl for anybody, and he goes around and collects from guys who bring in underage girls and from people who have orgies and smoke pot and from anybody who does anything he suspects of being illegal and is always right about.

BELLBOY

Hey...You a bull?

(Continued)

REINHART

I always get asked that. You can use my phone.

BELLBOY

And show you the number? In a pig's ass.

REINHART

All right. I'll shake the dew off my water lilly.

Reinhart goes into the bathroom, as the bellboy dials.

REINHART (O.S.)

I suppose you're too young to have heard of 'Calling Philip Morris.' They used to hire midgets for your job and make them wear pillbox caps. I wonder what became of all the midgets?

INT. REINHART'S SUITE - NIGHT

It's later. Reinhart sits on the couch, in repose. Another **knock** on the door.

REINHART

It's open.

She is a chocolate doll--what else. Wearing a summerweight white jersey dress, white shoes, and her name is CANDY. Reinhart follows the high buttocks to the bedroom, where she lifts the superior margins of five-star spread, underlying blanket and sheet, draws them to the footboard, and, with a supple sleight of wrist, makes them ripple and fall folded upon themselves like a closing accordion.

CANDY

What would you like?

REINHART

I would like to kiss you.

CANDY

I'll put my mouth anywhere but on a john's lips.

REINHART

May I ask why?

CANDY

I save that for my boyfriend.

They both sit on the bed.

(Continued)

CANDY

Roll over, and I will rub your back.

REINHART

No, I don't like that.

CANDY

You want me to dominate?

REINHART

No.

CANDY

You want me to kiss it?

REINHART

No thanks. And you don't have to say anything else, if you don't want to. I know the dialogue by heart. 'Have you got protection?...Leave a little slack at the end or it'll break...Higher...Wait a minute, I'll put a pillow under me...'

CANDY

You want to **make** or have fun?

REINHART

For me it has always been an obligation, to prove something. Or a treatment to relieve a kind of strain, like going to the toilet. That's it, fun. I guess I never had any in this way...Do you do it for fun?

CANDY

I do it for money.

REINHART

Are you supporting a child or putting yourself through night school?

CANDY

No, I am buying a Lincoln Continental and a closetful of clothes for my boyfriend.

REINHART

You like to do that?

(Continued)

CANDY

No question of liking, I love him. It is my life, and I can do as I please with it. That's what I'm getting paid for, I **think**.

So they have fun, or anyway, he does.

INT. REINHART'S SUITE -- NIGHT

Afterward, as Reinhart and Candy exchange quizzical but friendly looks.

REINHART

Do you believe your whole life passes before your eyes when you are dying?

CANDY

I hope not.

REINHART

Maybe if it does, it appears as a series of jokes, which are not necessarily funny-haha. What would you order if it was your last meal on earth?

CANDY

That's not funny, either. I had a brother who went to the electric chair.

REINHART

(calmly)

What did he eat?

CANDY

It's a lie that they give you anything you want. You get what **they** want, same as always. Fish, which he hated all the time. Baked apple for dessert. He never ate a bite.

REINHART

He was a murderer?

CANDY

I don't know about that. All I can remember is he was black.

REINHART

Well, how about you? What would you have?

(Continued)

CANDY

I'm going to tell you! Lobster. Cold, boiled lobster with mayonnaise, and potato chips, and sliced tomatoes-and-onions on the side.

REINHART

(grabs for the phone)

You got it.

CANDY

Why, you going to kill me?

REINHART

You drop a peeled peach into a glass of champagne. You drink the champagne with your meal, and eat the peach for dessert. I read that in a story once.

(into phone)

Room service, please.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

Room service? It's now one a.m. They close the kitchen at ten.

REINHART

Look at your board. This is the suite where Eisenhower stayed in 1956. I too am a veteran, and I am paying four-fifty a day.

INT. HARPER'S CAR - DAY

Reinhart is on his way to see Dr. Wilhelm.

INT. DR. WILHELM'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Reinhart stands near a window. There's an OLD MAN, staring rheumily at his spotted knuckles capped upon a cane, a TWELVE-YEAR-OLD with his ankle in plaster, and a shriveled SPINSTER who climbs up the opposite sofa arm when Reinhart sits down at the other end. Reinhart picks up a magazine, drops the magazine, gazes idly out the window, and leaves.

EXT. WINONA'S SCHOOL - DAY

School's out. Student's of every shape, age, size, and color, move past the waiting Reinhart. Winona's face lights up when she sees her father.

WINONA

Hi Daddy. I've been wanting to talk to you so much, but I didn't know where to find you.

(Continued)

REINHART

Well, I must have heard you wanting...I've missed you.

They start to walk. Winona gives Reinhart a searching look.

WINONA

What about, Daddy, if I became a nurse-nun? Would you hate me for that?

REINHART

(takes a moment)

Well, you might think quite seriously about that, dear. I have always thought that when it comes to religion, the only genuine one, all wool and a yard wide, is the Catholic Church. It is responsible for most of the culture of Europe. If I had it to do over again I might very well become a priest or monk, myself.

WINONA

Then that does it! I always wanted to help people, to be as nice as I could, even when it hurts...and it sure does hurt sometimes, and you wonder whether you have done the right thing, but you are repaid by the knowledge that you relieved somebody's distress.

REINHART

That's right...that's right...Of course, you can't live only for other people, though. If, being human, they deserve help, so, being human yourself, do you. I mean, your own self is sacred too. That's why, I think, the Church calls suicide as great a sin as murder.

WINONA

But if someone wants you to do something they cannot do for themselves, and it has to be done or they will go crazy, well, don't you have to be pretty nasty not to help them out?

(Continued)

REINHART

It is certainly something to think about, dear, being a nun. But you might check into the various orders, Winona...You might find you prefer the serenity of some secluded convent. You do see a lot of ugly sights around a hospital.

WINONA

(giggles)

I don't mean that, Daddy. It's kind of embarrassing, really. But at first he reminded me of you...you know how sometimes when you have worked terribly hard and all sorts of big business deals are on your mind, you look so sad? Well, so did he, standing there in the lobby looking at the stills for coming attractions. I waited about twenty minutes for the girls to come out of the ladies', before I realized they had slipped out the back exit. He had the nicest boyish voice, like yours, you know, Daddy, and was about the same age. He said, 'I trust you won't think me forward, miss, but if you don't have anything better to do, I would call it a fabulous event right now if I could buy you a milk shake.' So I said, 'If you could wait a minute while I check the ladies' lounge and see if my friends are there.' But he said, 'I have such a fear that if you leave me I will never see you again.' Well, Daddy, I guess you have never had the experience, but when everybody else in the world makes you feel useless, and then suddenly somebody seems to require you for an important purpose...

(Reinhart nods)

He had a beautiful car. He gave me the keys and said, 'Would you like to drive, my treasure?' 'I have trouble operating a bicycle,' I said. He said, 'Nonsense, dearest! You just never have had the right instruction.' He had your manner, Daddy, but what bothered me was that you never had suggested I learn to drive. He said, 'Your Dad is too busy for that.' 'You know him?' 'I certainly do. He's one of the people I admire most,' he said. 'I've even tried to model myself after him, but that's not easy. He's one great guy.'

(Continued)

REINHART

You got his name then.

MAW

Sure, it rhymed...Gordon Horton.
'Remember me to your Dad when you get home,' he said. 'Gordon Horton.' He told me to call him Gordie, and he lives in Delaware, I think he said, which is why he hasn't seen you for a while. I saw the license plate and it said 'Delaware.'

REINHART

Happen to get the number?

WINONA

I'm hopeless at numbers, Daddy. Wait a minute, I think the Delaware plate was on the car ahead. We never did go for the milk shake. Maybe you won't believe it, but for once I wasn't interested in treating my sweet tooth. So he said, 'Lets just sit here for a while and talk. I seldom get a chance to talk to a beautiful and intelligent girl. Girls have always made a fool of me.' The poor man, he began to cry then, the way you did when Grandpa died and I'll never forget that as long as I live. 'I have **never** loved,' he said, 'never in my life.' I gave him my handkerchief. I carry two in this hot weather, one to wipe the sweat off my face. He buried his face in it and said, 'What is this heavenly fragrance?' 'Only Fab with enzyme-active borax, I think,' I said. Isn't that the soap you use in the wash machine, Daddy?

REINHART

New blue Cheer.

WINONA

Then I was wrong.

REINHART

Well, not very.

(Continued)

WINONA

Well, nobody had been that nice to me in all my life. I mean, nobody but you of course. I knew he was just being kind. I'm not beautiful for gosh sakes, and I am anything but brilliant, that's for sure. I am fat and I am stupid. I can't get a date, and I flunked geometry and barely squeaked through social studies. I know I can get by if somebody shows me what they need. Those girls **need** someone to ditch. If I wasn't good for that, they wouldn't ask me to come with them. They would get somebody else, and I would not have anyplace to go. You see, the way I have figured it out, I actually am popular. So when he asked me, I said OK, if that's what would make him happy.

REINHART

You're a good person, Winona. And the really good are--

WINONA

(quickly)

No, I'm not, Daddy...I didn't like it...It hurt... And I got to thinking--I got to hating--you, Daddy, you of all people. He was your friend, you see. You were both men. Oh, I was pretty rotten, and it's not easy to confess this, but if you love someone you can hate him temporarily, can't you, if in the end you come back to loving him? I mean, it would be bad only if it was permanent, wouldn't it?

REINHART

Yes, dear.

WINONA

(breaths heavily)

That's a weight off my conscience...So everything's just fine now, isn't it, Daddy? Just let things take their course, and they will come out all right, like you have always said. Only, I wish you still lived at home.

(becomes reflective)

I guess you are still the only person I can talk to.

(Continued)

REINHART

How would you like to live with me until you go off to the nunery? In the Presidential suite of the Shade-Milton for a few days until we can find a nice little apartment?

WINONA

I wouldn't get in your way, Daddy. If you had business to discuss I would go to my room...You could even watch TV after I went to bed, and I wouldn't complain next morning.

REINHART

Darling, that's the best offer I have ever had.

INT. CRYON PLANT - DUSK

Reinhart comes in through a wide-open door. Sweet shouts.

SWEET

Carl! I've been trying to get hold--

REINHART

I'm looking for you, too. The phone number here is unlisted, and I didn't have it.

(Sweet begins to speak)

The deal is off, Bob. It turns out that I am worth more alive than frozen.

SWEET

(agitated)

Carl--

REINHART

It's no use, Bob. I know about the sacks of gravel. If you told me they were cocoa beans, it figures you have allowed other people to assume the same thing. Like the bank that gives you loans on them. It might seem impossible that a professional financial institution, would not carefully inspect the collateral, but then I remember a couple of years ago some guy in the salad-oil business filled his storage tanks with water and bilked half of Wall Street, including the First National City Bank of New York and the American Express Company. I guess all it takes is nerve.

(Continued)

SWEET

Carl, that doesn't matter now.

REINHART

Right. I am disaffiliating. I don't want to be frozen, at least not for some years and not then unless you get somebody who seems more reliable than a Swiss-German fanatic. Even though he was in a concentration camp.

Sweet seizes Reinhart's lapels, but the big man breaks the hold with a jujitsu thing he must of learned in the Army.

REINHART

And, furthermore, there's no such thing as a black belt in kung fu. That was another of your alterations of truth. If I pushed you around in high school, I'm sorry. But, Jesus Christ, that was in 1959 or '60. How long can you hold a grudge?

SWEET

Carl, Carl!

REINHART

No, Bob, I won't listen to any more of your cunning. Also, I don't intend to return what is left of the money, and I'm going to stay at the Shade-Milton on the company account until I can find another place to live. My daughter is going to join me there. I'll have them open up the door to the bedroom next door where the Secret Service men slept when Eisenhower stayed there.

(he grabs Sweet, pulling him close)

Do you know, all this while I thought the big problems were my wife and son. Not so... nasty people are easily handled. I mean, it may not be easy to accept the fact that your wife of twenty-two years is and has always been a bitch...not under the aspect of eternity, or anything like that, but simple vis-s-vis me, who am all I can speak for. And the reason she is has largely, I am certain, to do with my own character. To Harlan Flan she may very well be a yielding, receptive sort of woman.

(Continued)

Sweet is struggling. Reinhart has him imprisoned, a big hand on each of Sweet's slender arms.

REINHART

And Blaine, the way it has worked out is a total standoff...we each defy absolutely the other's idea of what we should be. Something clean and perfect about that. We are such total enemies that if either of us did not exist, the other would have to invent him. We may be, in fact, figments of each other's imagination as is. Everybody needs a red herring to throw pursuers off his trail.

Sweet breaks away and throws an ineffectual left that grazes Reinhart's temple. Reinhart knocks him to the lab floor with a blow to the solar plexus.

REINHART

So both of them, Gen and Blaine, are seen as taking their place as figures in the rich tapestry, as the fellow says. Life would not have been the same without them, but can be lived in their absence. Does that sound heartless?

(Sweet grunts)

It is. It is virtually impossible to be absolutely generous to someone you love... the time will always come when their interest is served only at the cost of yours. If you acquiesce in it, they will have contempt for you. The old power play. The world is made up not of winners and losers, but of followers and leaders. The divine right of kings is a much more natural principle than that all men are equal. The really sinister person is the saint. With whom every association insures your being further damned. If you think I pity Winona, you are wrong. She is utterly devoid of a sense of evil. I don't know how she got that way. Gen and I are both masters of malice. She scares me. She makes me feel more inadequate than Blaine ever did. She will stumble through life, corrupting many a soul with her goodness, mine first of all. I expect eventually to burn in hell, so it would be copping out to begin it at this point, deal or no deal.

(more)

(Cont'd)

(laughs)

You see, already, because of her I am welching on my word, my Dad's idea of the worst sin a man could commit, but then, unlike me, he was a man of honor.

(helps Sweet to his feet)

Sorry about that. You might be a crook, but I know you are serious about the freezer program, the end of which may indeed justify the means...some do. I don't question your good faith. I'll tell you what I'll do...I'll make up a will by which my body will be donated to you when I die a natural death. If I don't outlast you, that is. But now I need Winona. She doesn't need me, make no mistake about that. In a profound way she is invulnerable.

SWEET

(bent over)

We got...our man.

(gingerly straightens up)

Mainwaring...He didn't make it. Gone too far before the cell therapy. If Hans had got him a few weeks earlier, maybe days, he would have brought him around. The large intestine, you see--

REINHART

He was dying anyway. You did him no harm. You tried.

SWEET

No time to stand around and snivel, Carl. His head is packed with ice cubes from the refrigerator now, and they are rapidly melting. We need some dry ice. I came here to find Hans's supply has evaporated. Otto apparently let himself out of his cage and broke open the insulated crates.

REINHART

He needed a hammer or crowbar for that. Imagine, he can use tools!

Reinhart looks around for the animal.

(Continued)

SWEET

All the dealers are closed. I've been calling everywhere. The head is at present wrapped in a plastic laundry bag full of ice cubes. Carl, we need your aid. Unless that brain is frozen while it's still vital, we've lost. Hans has a portable iron heart going, to maintain blood circulation...But the head must be packed in dry ice before we can bring the body over here.

REINHART

Look...You know who'd have a whole truckful of dry ice? It's still early evening. There may still be some ice-cream vendors making their rounds...There's your answer ...send Storm out to hijack a Mr. Softee truck.

SWEET

Carl, you have proved your worth to this organization.

(points to the wall phone)

Would you mind? He might listen to you.

REINHART

Splendor was my friend. You know he never mentioned the pain, not once. It must have been indescribable. I never knew him as well as I should have.

SWEET

You can make up for it in the next century, when you are both thawed out.

REINHART

But that, may be more than a century from now. Meanwhile, we won't know if it works. Also, it supposes that I too will be successfully revived. But what if I live another forty-four years, am then frozen, and...

SWEET

Carl, there are times when you can be petty. This is a serious matter, and when did you ever know anything serious that was absolutely certain?

Reinhart reflects on this interesting question while he dials the number.

THE END