קורס הכנה לבגרות באנגלית

פרק 21

Literature- Module F לתלמידי תיכון

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Module F – Introduction to Poetry:

Poem:

INTRODUCTION TO POETRY

By Billy Collins

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem's room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
waving at the author's name on the shore.

But all they want to do
is tie the poem to a chair with rope
and torture a confession out of it.

They begin beating it with a hose
to find out what it really means.

Billy Collins, "Introduction to Poetry" from *The Apple that Astonished Paris*. Copyright ⓒ 1988, 1996 by Billy Collins. Reprinted with the permission of the University of Arkansas Press.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) List TWO metaphors described in the poem.
……..... .

2) Name One thing the speaker asks his students to do.
……..... .

3) According to the poem, what do the students want to do?
……..... .

4) Who are the two communicating sides in the poem?
……..... .

5) Name TWO emotions that the author feels throughout this poem.
……..... .

HOTS:

1) What is the main message of the poem?
……..... .

2) Give TWO examples of personification in the poem. Why do you think Collins uses personification in "Introduction to Poetry"?
……..... .

3) What does the speaker think about the way poetry is studied at school?
……..... .

4) Why do you think that the poem is called "introduction to Poetry"?
……..... .

5) How does the imagery in the poem make the speaker's message clearer?
……..... .

Thinking skills:

1) Do you think that the writer of the poem, Billy Collins, would be happy that his poem is being analyzed in classrooms?
The thinking skill I chose: …….. .
……
……... .

2) Why do you think that this poem is called "Introduction to Poetry"?
Support your answer with information from the text.
The thinking skill I chose: …….. .
……
……... .

Module F – The Road Not Taken:

Poem:

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) Write about one way in which the roads are different.

…… .

2) Write about one way in which the roads are similar.

…… .

3) In your own words, what is the speaker's problem / dilemma?

…… .

4) When the speaker says that the roads equally lay, what does he mean?

…… .

5) What does the speaker say about returning to the point where the roads diverged?

…… .

HOTS:

1) What does the dilemma of which road to choose symbolize?

…… .

2) Why did the road chosen make "all the difference"?

…… .

3) Why does the speaker say he will be telling this "with a sigh"?

…… .

4) "And look down one as far as I could". What does he want to see?

…… .

5) "I doubted if I should ever come back". Why does he think this?

…… .

Thinking skills:

1) Do you think the last line of the poem, "And that has made all the difference," indicates that the speaker was happy with his decision?
NOTE: For this question use ONE of the thinking skills you have studied.
Write the thinking skill you chose and then answer the question.
……..
…… .

2) "The middle of the road is where the white line is – and that's the worst place drive."
What does Frost mean by this? What is the difference and the similarity between the road in the quote and the ones in the poem?
Make a connection between the above quote and the poem. Give information from the poem to support your answer.
……..
…… .

Module F – Rules of The Game:

Short Story:

"RULES OF THE GAME"

By Amy Tan

I was six when my mother taught me the art of invisible strength. It was a strategy for winning arguments, respect from others, and eventually, though neither of us knew it at the time, chess games. "Bite back your tongue," scolded my mother when I cried loudly, yanking her hand toward the store that sold bags of salted plums.

At home, she said, "Wise guy, he not goes against wind. In Chinese we say, Come from South, blow with wind-poom! North will follow. Strongest wind cannot be seen." The next week I bit back my tongue as we entered the store with the forbidden candies. When my mother finished her shopping, she quietly plucked a small bag of plums from the rack and put it on the counter with the rest of the items.

My mother imparted her daily truths so she could help my older brothers and me rise above our circumstances. We lived in. San Francisco's Chinatown. Like most of the other Chinese children who played in the back alleys of restaurants and curio shops, I didn't think we were poor. My bowl was always full, three five-course meals every day, beginning with a soup of mysterious things I didn't want to know the names of.

We lived on Waverly Place, in a warm, clean, two-bedroom flat that sat above a small Chinese bakery specializing in steamed pastries and dim sum. In the early morning, when the alley was still quiet, I could smell fragrant red beans as they were cooked down to a pasty sweetness. By daybreak, our flat was heavy with the odor of fried sesame balls and sweet curried chicken crescents. From my bed, I would listen as my father got ready for work, then locked the door behind him, one-two-three clicks. At the end of our two-block alley was a small sandlot playground with swings and slides well-shined down the middle with use.

The play area was bordered by wood-slat benches where old-country people sat cracking roasted watermelon seeds with their golden teeth and scattering the husks to an impatient gathering of gurgling pigeons.

The best playground, however, was the dark alley itself. It was crammed with daily mysteries and adventures. My brothers and I would peer into the medicinal herb shop, watching old Li dole out onto a stiff sheet of white paper the right amount of insect shells, saffron-colored seeds, and pungent leaves for his ailing customers. It was said that he once cured a woman dying of an ancestral curse that had eluded the best of American doctors. Next to the pharmacy was a printer who specialized in gold-

embossed wedding invitations and festive red banners. Farther down the street was Ping Yuen Fish Market. The front window displayed a tank crowded with doomed fish and turtles struggling to gain footing on the slimy green-tiled sides. A hand-written sign informed tourist, "Within this store, is all for food, not for pet." Inside, the butchers with their bloodstained white smocks deftly gutted the fish while customers cried out their orders and shouted, "Give me your freshest," to which the butchers always protested, "All are freshest."

On less crowded market days, we would inspect the crates of live frogs and crabs which we were warned not to poke, boxes of dried cuttlefish, and row upon row of iced prawns, squid, and slippery fish. The sanddabs made me shiver each time; their eyes lay on one flattened side and reminded me of my mother's story of a careless girl who ran into a crowded street and was crushed by a cab. "Was smash flat," reported my mother. At the corner of the alley was Hong Sing's, a four-table cafe with a recessed stairwell in front that led to a door marked "Tradesmen." My brothers and I believed the bad people emerged from this door at night. Tourists never went to Hong Sing's, since the menu was printed only in Chinese. A Caucasian man with a big camera once posed me and my playmates in front of the restaurant. He had us move to the side of the picture window so the photo would capture the roasted duck with its head dangling from a juice-covered rope. After he took the picture, I told him he should go into Hong Sing's and eat dinner. When he smiled and asked me what they served, I shouted, "Guts and duck's feet and octopus gizzards!" Then I ran off with my friends, shrieking with laughter as we scampered across the alley and hid in the entryway grotto of the China Gem Company, my heart pounding with hope that he would chase us.

My mother named me after the street that we lived on: Waverly Place Jong, my official name for important American documents. But my family called me Meimei, "Little Sister." I was the youngest, the only daughter. Each morning before school, my mother would twist and yank on my thick black hair until she had formed two tightly wound pigtails.

One day, as she struggled to weave a hard-toothed comb through my disobedient hair, I had a sly thought. I asked her, "Ma, what is Chinese torture?" My mother shook her head. A bobby pin was wedged between her lips. She wetted her palm and smoothed the hair above my ear, then pushed the pin in so that it nicked sharply against my scalp. 'Who says this word?" she asked without a trace of knowing how wicked I was being. I shrugged my shoulders and said, "Some boy in my class said Chinese people do Chinese torture." "Chinese people.do many things," she said simply. "Chinese people do business, do medicine, do painting. Not lazy like American people. We do torture. Best torture."

My older brother Vincent was the one who actually got the chess set. We had gone to the annual Christmas party held at the First Chinese Baptist Church at the end of the alley. The missionary ladies had put together a Santa bag of gifts donated by members

of another church. None of the gifts had names on them. There were separate sacks for boys and girls of different ages. One of the Chinese parishioners had donned a Santa Claus costume and a stiff paper beard with cotton balls glued to it. I think the only children who thought he was the real thing were too young to know that Santa Claus was not Chinese. When my turn came up, the Santa man asked me how old I was. I thought it was a trick question; I was seven according to the American formula and eight by the Chinese calendar. I said I was born on March 17, 1951. That seemed to satisfy him. He then solemnly asked if I had been a very, very good girl this year and did I believe in Jesus Christ and obey my parents. I knew the only answer to that. I nodded back with equal solemnity.

Having watched the older children opening their gifts, I already knew that the big gifts were not necessarily the nicest ones. One girl my age got a large coloring book of biblical characters, while a less greedy girl who selected a smaller box received a glass vial of lavender toilet water. The sound of the box was also important. A ten-year old boy had chosen a box that jangled when he shook it. It was a tin globe of the world with a slit for inserting money. He must have thought it was full of dimes and nickels, because when he saw that it had just ten pennies, his face fell with such undisguised disappointment that his mother slapped the side of his head and led him out of the church hall, apologizing to the crowd for her son who had such bad manners he couldn't appreciate such a fine gift.

As I peered into the sack, I quickly fingered the remaining presents, testing their weight, imagining what they contained. I chose a heavy, compact one that was wrapped in shiny silver foil and a red satin ribbon. It was a twelve-pack of Life Savers and I spent the rest of the party arranging and rearranging the candy tubes in the order of my favorites. My brother Winston choose wisely as well. His present turned out to be a box of intricate plastic parts; the instructions on the box proclaimed that when they were properly assembled, he would have an authentic miniature replica of a World War II submarine.

Vincent got the chess set, which would have been a very decent present to get at a church Christmas party, except it was obviously used and, as we discovered later, it was missing a black pawn and a white knight. My mother graciously thanked the unknown benefactor, saying, "Too good. Cost too much." At which point, an old lady with fine white, wispy hair nodded toward our family and said with a whistling whisper, "Merry, merry Christmas."

When we got home, my mother told Vincent to throw the chess set away. "She not wants it. We not want it." she said, tossing her head stiffly to the side with a tight, proud smile. My brothers had deaf ears. They were already lining up the chess pieces and reading from the dog-eared instruction book. I watched Vincent and Winston play during Christmas week.

The chessboard seemed to hold elaborate secrets waiting to be untangled. The chessmen were more powerful than old Li's magic herbs that cured ancestral curses. And my brothers wore such serious faces that I was sure something was at stake that was greater than avoiding the tradesmen's door to Hong Sing's. "Let me! Let me!" I begged between games when one brother or the other would sit back with a deep sigh of relief and victory, the other annoyed, unable to let go of the outcome.

Vincent at first refused to let me play, but when I offered my Life Savers as replacements for the buttons that filled in for the missing pieces, he relented. He chose the flavors: wild cherry for the black pawn and peppermint for the white knight. Winner could eat both.

As our mother sprinkled flour and rolled out small doughy circles for the steamed dumplings that would be our dinner that night, Vincent explained the rules, pointing to each piece. "You have sixteen pieces and so do I. One king and queen, two bishops, two knights, two castles, and eight pawns. The pawns can only move forward one step, except on the first move. Then they can move two. But they can only take men by moving crossways like this, except in the beginning, when you can move ahead and take another pawn." "Why?" I asked as I moved my pawn. "Why can't they move more steps?" "Because they're pawns," he said. "But why do they go crossways to take other men? Why aren't there any women and children?" "Why is the sky blue? Why must you always ask stupid questions?" asked Vincent. "This is a game. These are the rules. I didn't make them up. See. Here in the book." He jabbed a page with a pawn in his hand. "Pawn. P-AW-N. Pawn. Read it yourself."

My mother patted the flour off her hands. "Let me see book," she said quietly. She scanned the pages quickly, not reading the foreign English symbols, seeming to search deliberately for nothing in particular. "These American rules," she concluded at last. "Every time people come out from foreign country, must know rules. You not know, judge say “Too bad, go back”. They not telling you why so you can use their way go forward. They say, “Don't know why, you find out yourself”. But they knowing all the time. Better you take it, find out why yourself." She tossed her head back with a satisfied smile.

I found out about all the whys later. I read the rules and looked up all the big words in a dictionary. I borrowed books from the Chinatown library. I studied each chess piece, trying to absorb the power each contained. I learned about opening moves and why it's important to control the center early on; the shortest distance between two points is straight down the middle. I learned about the middle game and why tactics between two adversaries are like clashing ideas; the one who plays better has the clearest plans for both attacking and getting out of traps. I learned why it is essential in the endgame to have foresight, a mathematical understanding of all possible moves, and patience; all weaknesses and advantages become evident to a strong adversary and are obscured to a

tiring opponent. I discovered that for the whole game one must gather invisible strengths and see the endgame before the game begins.

I also found out why I should never reveal "why" to others. A little knowledge withheld is a great advantage one should store for future use. That is the power of chess. It is a game of secrets in which one must show and never tell. I loved the secrets I found within the sixty-four black and white squares. I carefully drew a handmade chessboard and pinned it to the wall next to my bed, where I would stare for hours at imaginary battles. Soon I no longer lost any games or Life Savers, but I lost my adversaries. Winston and Vincent decided they were more interested in roaming the streets after school in their Hopalong Cassidy cowboy hats.

On a cold spring afternoon, while walking home from school, I detoured through the playground at the end of our alley. I saw a group of old men, two seated across a folding table playing a game of chess, others smoking pipes, eating peanuts, and watching. I ran home and grabbed Vincent's chess set, which was bound in a cardboard box with rubber bands. I also carefully selected two prized rolls of Life Savers. I came back to the park and approached a man who was observing the game. "Want to play?" I asked him. His face widened with surprise and he grinned as he looked at the box under my arm. "Little sister, been a long time since I play with dolls," he said, smiling benevolently. I quickly put the box down next to him on the bench and displayed my retort. Lau Po, as he allowed me to call him, turned out to be a much better player than my brothers. I lost many games and many Life Savers.

But over the weeks, with each diminishing roll of candies, I added new secrets. Lau Po gave me the names. The Double Attack from the East and West Shores. Throwing Stones on the Drowning Man. The Sudden Meeting of the Clan. The Surprise from the Sleeping Guard. The Humble Servant Who Kills the King. Sand in the Eyes of Advancing Forces. A Double Killing without Blood. There were also the fine points of chess etiquette. Keep captured men in neat rows, as well-tended prisoners. Never announce "Check" with vanity, lest someone with an unseen sword slit your throat. Never hurl pieces into the sandbox after you have lost a game, because then you must find them again, by yourself, after apologizing to all around you.

By the end of the summer, Lau Po had taught me all he knew, and I had become a better chess player. A small weekend crowd of Chinese people and tourists would gather as I played and defeated my opponents one by one. My mother would join the crowds during these outdoor exhibition games. She sat proudly on the bench, telling my admirers with proper Chinese humility, "Is luck." A man who watched me play in the park suggested that my mother allow me to play in local chess tournaments. My mother smiled graciously, an answer that meant nothing. I desperately wanted to go,

but I bit back my tongue. I knew she would not let me play among strangers. So as we walked home I said in a small voice that I didn't want to play in the local tournament. They would have American rules. If I lost, I would bring shame on my family. "Is shame you fall down nobody push you," said my mother.

During my first tournament, my mother sat with me in the front row as I waited for my turn. I frequently bounced my legs to unstick them from the cold metal seat of the folding chair. When my name was called, I leapt up. My mother unwrapped something in her lap. It was her chang, a small tablet of red jade which held the sun's fire. "Is luck," she whispered, and tucked it into my dress pocket. I turned to my opponent, a fifteen-year-old boy from Oakland. He looked at me, wrinkling his nose. As I began to play, the boy disappeared, the color ran out of the room, and I saw only my white pieces and his black ones waiting on the other side. A light wind began blowing past my ears. It whispered secrets only I could hear. "Blow from the South," it murmured. "The wind leaves no trail." I saw a clear path, the traps to avoid. The crowd rustled. "Shhh! Shhh!" said the corners of the room. The wind blew stronger. "Throw sand from the East to distract him." The knight came forward ready for the sacrifice. The wind hissed, louder and louder. "Blow, blow, blow. He cannot see. He is blind now. Make him lean away from the wind so he is easier to knock down." "Check," I said, as the wind roared with laughter. The wind died down too little puffs, my own breath.

My mother placed my first trophy next to a new plastic chess set that the neighborhood Tao society had given to me. As she wiped each piece with a soft cloth, she said, "Next time win more, lose less." "Ma, it's not how many pieces you lose," I said. "Sometimes you need to lose pieces to get ahead." "Better to lose less, see if you really need." At the next tournament, I won again, but it was my mother who wore the triumphant grin. "Lost eight piece this time. Last time was eleven. What I tell you? Better off lose less!" I was annoyed, but I couldn't say anything. I attended more tournaments, each one farther away from home. I won all games, in all divisions.

The Chinese bakery downstairs from our flat displayed my growing collection of trophies in its window, amidst the dust covered cakes that were never picked up. The day after I won an important regional tournament, the window encased a fresh sheet cake with whipped-cream frosting and red script saying "Congratulations, Waverly Jong, Chinatown Chess Champion." Soon after that, a flower shop, headstone engraver, and funeral parlor offered to sponsor me in national tournaments. That's when my mother decided I no longer had to do the dishes. Winston and Vincent had to do my chores. "Why does she get to play and we do all the work," complained Vincent. "Is new American rule," said my mother. "Meimei play, squeeze all her brains out for win chess. You play, worth squeeze towel." By my ninth birthday, I was a national chess champion. I was still some 429 points away from grand-master status, but I was touted as the Great American Hope, a child prodigy and a girl to boot.

They ran a photo of me in Life magazine next to a quote in which Bobby Fischer said, "There will never be a woman grand master." "Your move, Bobby," said the caption. The day they took the magazine picture I wore neatly plaited braids clipped with plastic barrettes trimmed with rhinestones. I was playing in a large high school auditorium that echoed with phlegmy coughs and the squeaky rubber knobs of chair legs sliding across freshly waxed wooden floors. Seated across from me was an American man, about the same age as Lau Po, maybe fifty. I remember that his sweaty brow seemed to weep at my every move. He wore a dark, malodorous suit. One of his pockets was stuffed with a great white kerchief on which he wiped his palm before sweeping his hand over the chosen chess piece with great flourish. In my crisp pink-and-white dress with scratchy lace at the neck, one of two my mother had sewn for these special occasions, I would clasp my hands under my chin, the delicate points of my elbows poised lightly on the table in the manner my mother had shown me for posing for the press. I would swing my patent leather shoes back and forth like an impatient child riding on a school bus. Then I would pause, suck in my lips, twirl my chosen piece in midair as if undecided, and then firmly plant it in its new threatening place, with a triumphant smile thrown back at my opponent for good measure.

I no longer played in the alley of Waverly Place. I never visited the playground where the pigeons and old men gathered. I went to school, then directly home to learn new chess secrets, cleverly concealed advantages, more escape routes.

But I found it difficult to concentrate at home. My mother had a habit of standing over me while I plotted out my games. I think she thought of herself as my protective ally. Her lips would be sealed tight, and after each move, I made, a soft "Hmmmmph" would escape from her nose. "Ma, I can't practice when you stand there like that," I said one day. She retreated to the kitchen and made loud noises with the pots and pans. When the crashing stopped, I could see out of the corner of my eye that she was standing in the doorway. "Hmmmmph!" Only this one came out of her tight throat. My parents made many concessions to allow me to practice. One time I complained that the bedroom I shared was so noisy that I couldn't think. Thereafter, my brothers slept in a bed in the living room facing the street. I said I couldn't finish my rice; my head didn't work right when my stomach was too full. I left the table with half-finished bowls and nobody complained. But there was one duty I couldn't avoid. I had to accompany my mother on Saturday market days when I had no tournament to play. My mother would proudly walk with me, visiting many shops, buying very little. "This my daughter Wave-ly Jong," she said to whoever looked her way.

One day after we left a shop I said under my breath, "I wish you wouldn't do that, telling everybody I'm your daughter." My mother stopped walking. Crowds of people with heavy bags pushed past us on the sidewalk, bumping into first one shoulder, than

another. "Aii-ya. So, shame be with mother?" She grasped my hand even tighter as she glared at me. I looked down. "It's not that, it's just so obvious. It's just so embarrassing." "Embarrass you be my daughter?" Her voice was cracking with anger. "That's not what I meant. That's not what I said." "What you say?" I knew it was a mistake to say anything more, but I heard my voice speaking, "Why do you have to use me to show off? If you want to show off, then why don't you learn to play chess?" My mother's eyes turned into dangerous black slits. She had no words for me, just sharp silence. I felt the wind rushing around my hot ears. I jerked my hand out of my mother's tight grasp and spun around, knocking into an old woman. Her bag of groceries spilled to the ground. "Aii-ya! Stupid girl!" my mother and the woman cried. Oranges and tin cans careened down the sidewalk. As my mother stooped to help the old woman pick up the escaping food, I took off.

I raced down the street, dashing between people, not looking back as my mother screamed shrilly, "Meimei! Meimei!" I fled down an alley, past dark, curtained shops and merchants washing the grime off their windows. I sped into the sunlight, into a large street crowded with tourists examining trinkets and souvenirs. I ducked into another dark alley, down another street, up another alley. I ran until it hurt and I realized I had nowhere to go, that I was not running from anything. The alleys contained no escape routes. My breath came out like angry smoke. It was cold. I sat down on an upturned plastic pail next to a stack of empty boxes, cupping my chin with my hands, thinking hard. I imagined my mother, first walking briskly down one street or another looking for me, then giving up and returning home to await my arrival. After two hours, I stood up on creaking legs and slowly walked home.

The alley was quiet and I could see the yellow lights shining from our flat like two tiger's eyes in the night. I climbed the sixteen steps to the door, advancing quietly up each so as not to make any warning sounds. I turned the knob; the door was locked. I heard a chair moving, quick steps, the locks turning-click! click! click!-and then the door opened. "About time you got home," said Vincent. "Boy, are you in trouble." He slid back to the dinner table. On a platter were the remains of a large fish, its fleshy head still connected to bones swimming upstream in vain escape. Standing there waiting for my punishment, I heard my mother speak in a dry voice. "We not concerning this girl. This girl not have concerning for us." Nobody looked at me. Bone chopsticks clinked against the inside of bowls being emptied into hungry mouths.

I walked into my room, closed the door, and lay down on my bed. The room was dark, the ceiling filled with shadows from the dinnertime lights of neighboring flats. In my head, I saw a chessboard with sixty-four black and white squares. Opposite me was my opponent, two angry black slits. She wore a triumphant smile. "Strongest wind cannot be seen," she said. Her black men advanced across the plane, slowly marching to each successive level as a single unit.

My white pieces screamed as they scurried and fell off the board one by one. As her men drew closer to my edge, I felt myself growing light. I rose up into the air and flew out the window. Higher and higher, above the alley, over the tops of tiled roofs, where I was gathered up by the wind and pushed up toward the night sky until everything below me disappeared and I was alone. I closed my eyes and pondered my next move.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) How did Waverly get her name?
……..... .

2) How was Waverly introduced to the game of chess?
……..... .

3) Name a way in which things changed at home for Waverly after she began to win chess tournaments.
……..... .

4) Who was Lao Po?
……..... .

5) Why did Waverly run away?
……..... .

HOTS:

1) What is the art of invisible strength?
Why did Mrs. Jong teach this to her children?
……..... .

2) Explain why Waverly didn't realize that her family was poor while she was growing up, even though she was.
……..... .

3) Waverly says that one day she had a "sly thought" and decided to ask her mother "Ma, what is Chinese torture?
Why is this thought 'sly'?
……..... .

4) Who does Waverly believe her real opponent to be? Why?
……..... .

5) Although her brothers lose interest in chess, Waverly doesn't.
Why do you think that she was so attracted to the game?
……..... .

Bridging Question:

"If you can't change your fate, change your attitude".

Make a connection between the above quote and the story.
Give information from the story to support your answer.
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Module F – The Treasure of Lemon Brown:

Short Story:

THE TREASURE OF LEMON BROWN

By Walter Dean Myers

PART I:

The dark sky, filled with angry, swirling clouds, reflected Greg Ridley's mood as he sat on the stoop of his building. His father's voice came to him again, first reading the letter the principal had sent to the house, then lecturing endlessly about his poor efforts in math.

"I had to leave school when I was thirteen," his father had said, "that's a year younger than you are now. If I'd had half the chances you have, I'd…"

Greg sat in the small, pale green kitchen listening, knowing the lecture would end with his father saying he couldn't play ball with the Scorpions. He had asked his father the week before, and his father had said it depended on his next report card. It wasn't often the Scorpions took on new players, especially fourteen-year-olds, and this was a chance of a lifetime for Greg. He hadn't been allowed to play high school ball, which he had really wanted to do, but playing for the Community Center team was the next best thing. Report cards were due in a week, and Greg had been hoping for the best. But the principal had ended the suspense early when she sent the letter saying Greg would probably fail math if he didn't spend more time studying.

"And you want to play basketball?" His father's brows knitted over deep brown eyes. "That must be some kind of a joke. Now you just get into your room and hit those books."

That had been two nights before. His father's words, like the distant thunder that now echoed through the streets of Harlem, still rumbled softly in his ears.

It was beginning to cool. Gusts of wind made bits of paper dance between the parked cars. There was a flash of nearby lightening, and soon large drops of rain splashed onto his jeans. He stood to go upstairs, thought of the lecture that probably awaited him if he did anything except shut himself in his room with his math book, and started walking down the

street instead. Down the block there was an old tenement that had been abandoned for some months. Some of the guys had held an impromptu checker
tournament there the week before, and Greg had noticed that the door, once boarded over, had been slightly ajar.

Pulling his collar up as high as he could, he checked for traffic and made a dash across the street. He reached the house just as another flash of lightening changed the night to day for an instant, then returned the graffiti-scarred building to the grim shadows. He vaulted over the outer stairs and pushed tentatively on the door. It was open, and he let himself in.

The inside of the building was dark except for the dim light that filtered through the dirty windows from the streetlamps. There was a room a few feet from the door, and from where he stood in the entrance, Greg could see a squarish patch of light on the floor. He entered the room, frowning at the musty smell. It was a large room that might have been someone's parlor at one time. Squinting, Greg could see an old table on its side against one wall, what looked like a pile of rags or a torn mattress in the corner, and a couch, with one side broken, in front of the window.

He went to the couch. The side that wasn't broken was comfortable enough, though a little creaky. From the spot he could see the blinking neon sign over the bodega on the corner. He sat awhile, watching the sign blink first green then red, allowing his mind to drift to the Scorpions, then to his father. His father had been a postal worker for all Greg's life, and was proud of it, often telling Greg how hard he had worked to pass the test. Greg had heard the story too many times to be interested now.

For a moment Greg thought he heard something that sounded like a scraping against the wall. He listened carefully, but it was gone.

Outside the wind had picked up, sending the rain against the window with a force that shook the glass in its frame. A car passed, its tires hissing over the wet street and its red taillights glowing in the darkness.

Greg thought he heard the noise again. His stomach tightened as he held himself still and listened intently. There weren't any more scraping noises, but he was sure he had heard something in the darkness - something breathing!

He tried to figure out just where the breathing was coming from; he knew it was in the room with him. Slowly he stood, tensing. As he turned, a flash of lightening lit up the

room, frightening him with its sudden brilliance. He saw nothing, just the overturned table, the pile of rags and an old newspaper on the floor. Could he have been imagining the sounds? He continued listening, but heard nothing and thought that it might have just been rats. Still, he thought, as soon as the rain let up he would leave. He went to the window and was about to look when he heard a voice behind him.

"Don't try nothin' 'cause I got a razor sharp enough to cut a week into nine days!"

Greg, except for an involuntary tremor in his knees, stood stock still. The voice was high and brittle, like dry twigs being broken, surely not one he had ever heard before. There was a shuffling sound as the person who had been speaking moved a step closer. Greg turned, holding his breath, his eyes straining to see in the dark room.

The upper part of the figure before him was still in darkness. The lower half was in the dim rectangle of light that fell unevenly from the window. There were two feet, in cracked, dirty shoes from which rose legs that were wrapped in rags.

"Who are you?" Greg hardly recognized his own voice.

"I'm Lemon Brown," came the answer. "Who're you?"

"Greg Ridley."

"What you doing here?" The figure shuffled forward again, and Greg took a small step backward.

"It's raining," Greg said.

"I can see that," the figure said.

The person who called himself Lemon Brown peered forward, and Greg could see him clearly. He was an old man. His black, heavily wrinkled face was surrounded by a halo of crinkly white hair and whiskers that seemed to separate his head from the layers of dirty coats piled on his smallish frame. His pants were bagged to the knee, where they were met with rags that went down to the old shoes. The rags were held on with strings, and there was a rope around his middle. Greg relaxed. He had seen the man before, picking through the trash on the corner and pulling clothes out of a Salvation Army box. There was no sign of a razor that could "cut a week into nine days."

"What are you doing here?" Greg asked.

"This is where I'm staying," Lemon Brown said. "What you here for?"

"Told you it was raining out," Greg said, leaning against the back of the couch until he felt it give slightly.

"Ain't you got no home?"
"I got a home," Greg answered.
"You ain't one of them bad boys looking for my treasure, is you?" Lemon Brown cocked his head to one side and squinted one eye. "Because I told you I got me a razor."
"I'm not looking for your treasure," Greg answered, smiling. "If you have one."
"What you mean, if I have one." Lemon Brown said. "Every man got a treasure. You don't know that, you must be a fool!"
"Sure," Greg said as he sat on the sofa and put one leg over the back. "What do you have, gold coins?"
"Don't worry none about what I got," Lemon Brown said. "You know who I am?"
"You told me your name was orange or lemon or something like that."
"Lemon Brown," the old man said, pulling back his shoulders as he did so," they used to call me Sweet Lemon Brown."
"Sweet Lemon?" Greg asked.
"Yessir. Sweet Lemon Brown. They used to say I sung the blues so sweet that if I sang at a funeral, the dead would commence to rocking with the beat. Used to travel all over Mississippi and as far as Monroe, Louisiana, and east on over to Macon, Georgia. You mean you ain't never heard of Sweet Lemon Brown?"
"Afraid not," Greg said. "What…happened to you?"
"Hard times, boy. Hard times always after a poor man. One day I got tired, sat down to rest a spell and felt a tap on my shoulder. Hard times caught up with me."
"Sorry about that."
"What you doing here? How come you don't go in home when the rain come? Rain don't bother you young folks none."
"Just didn't." Greg looked away.
"I used to have a knotty-headed boy just like you." Lemon Brown had half walked, half shuffled back to the corner and sat down against the wall. "Had them big eyes like you got. I used to call them moon eyes. Look into them moon eyes and see anything you want."
"How come you gave up singing the blues?" Greg asked.
"Didn't give it up," Lemon Brown said. "You don't give up the blues; they give you up. After a while you do good for yourself, and it ain't nothing but foolishness singing

about how hard you got it. Ain't that right?"

"I guess so."

"What's that noise?" Lemon Brown asked, suddenly sitting upright.

Greg listened, and he heard a noise outside. He looked at Lemon Brown and saw the old man pointing toward the window.

PART II:

Greg went to the window and saw three men, neighborhood thugs, on the stoop. One was carrying a length of pipe. Greg looked back toward Lemon Brown, who moved quietly across the room to the window. The old man looked out, then beckoned frantically for Greg to follow him. For a moment Greg couldn't move. He found himself following Lemon Brown into the hallway and up the darkened stairs. Greg followed as closely as he could. They reached the top of the stairs, and Greg felt Lemon Brown's hand first lying on his shoulder, then probing down his arm until he took Greg's hand into his own as they crouched in the darkness.

"They's bad men," Lemon Brown whispered. His breath was warm against Greg's skin.

"Hey! Rag man!" A voice called. "We know you in here. What you got up under them rags? You got any money?"

Silence.

"We don't want to have to come in and hurt you, old man, but we don't mind if we have to."

Lemon Brown squeezed Greg's hand in his own hard, gnarled fist.

There was a banging downstairs and a light as the men entered. They banged around noisily, calling for the rag man.

"We heard you talking about your treasure." The voice was slurred. "We just want to see it, that's all."

"You sure he's here?" One voice seemed to come from the room with the sofa.

"Yeah, he stays here every night."

"There's another room over there; I'm going to take a look. You got that flashlight?"

"Yeah, here, take the pipe too."

Greg opened his mouth to quiet the sound of his breath as he sucked it in uneasily. A beam of light hit the wall a few feet opposite him, then went out.

“Ain’t nobody in that room,” a voice said. “You think he gone or something?”
“I don’t know,” came the answer. “All I know is that I heard him talking about some kind of treasure. You know they found that shopping bag lady with that load of money in her bags.”
“Yeah. You think he’s upstairs?”
“HEY, OLD MAN, ARE YOU UP THERE?”
Silence.
“Watch my back. I’m going up.”
There was a footstep on the stairs, and the beam from the flashlight danced crazily along the peeling wallpaper. Greg held his breath. There was another step and a loud crashing noise as the man banged the pipe against the wooden banister. Greg could feel his temples throb as the man slowly neared them. Greg thought about the pipe, wondering what he would do when the man reached them — what he could do.
Then Lemon Brown released his hand and moved toward the top of the stairs. Greg looked around and saw stairs going up to the next floor. He tried waving to Lemon Brown, hoping the old man would see him in the dim light and follow him to the next floor. Maybe, Greg thought, the man wouldn’t follow them up there. Suddenly, though, Lemon Brown stood at the top of the stairs, both arms raised high above his head.
“There he is!” A voice cried from below.
“Throw down your money, old man, so I won’t have to bash your head in!”
Lemon Brown didn’t move. Greg felt himself near panic. The steps came closer, and still Lemon Brown didn’t move. He was an eerie sight, a bundle of rags standing at the top of the stairs, his shadow on the wall looming over him. Maybe, the thought came to Greg, the scene could be even eerier.
Greg wet his lips, put his hands to his mouth and tried to make a sound. Nothing came out. He swallowed hard, wet his lips once more and howled as evenly as he could.
“What’s that?”
As Greg howled, the light moved away from Lemon Brown, but not before Greg saw him hurl his body down the stairs at the men who had come to take his treasure. There was a crashing noise, and then footsteps. A rush of warm air came in as the downstairs door opened, then there was only an ominous silence.
Greg stood on the landing. He listened, and after a while there was another sound on

the staircase.

“Mr. Brown?” he called.

“Yeah, it’s me,” came the answer. “I got their flashlight.”

Greg exhaled in relief as Lemon Brown made his way slowly back up the stairs.

“You OK?”

“Few bumps and bruises,” Lemon Brown said.

“I think I’d better be going,” Greg said, his breath returning to normal. “You’d better leave, too, before they come back.”

“They may hang around for a while,” Lemon Brown said, “but they ain’t getting their nerve up to come in here again. Not with crazy rag men and howling spooks. Best you stay a while till the coast is clear. I’m heading out west tomorrow, out to east St. Louis.”

“They were talking about treasures,” Greg said. “You really have a treasure?”

“What I tell you? Didn’t I tell you every man got a treasure?” Lemon Brown said.

“You want to see mine?”

“If you want to show it to me,” Greg shrugged.

“Let’s look out the window first, see what them scoundrels be doing,” Lemon Brown said.

They followed the oval beam of the flashlight into one of the rooms and looked out the window. They saw the men who had tried to take the treasure sitting on the curb near the corner. One of them had his pants leg up, looking at his knee.

“You sure you’re not hurt?” Greg asked Lemon Brown.

“Nothing that ain’t been hurt before,” Lemon Brown said. “When you get as old as me all you say when something hurts is, ‘Howdy, Mr. Pain, sees you back again.’ Then when Mr. Pain see he can’t worry you none, he goes on mess with somebody else.”

Greg smiled.

“Here, you hold this.” Lemon Brown gave Greg the flashlight. He sat on the floor near Greg and carefully untied the strings that held the rags on his right leg. When he took the rags away, Greg saw a piece of plastic. The old man carefully took off the plastic and unfolded it. He revealed some yellowed newspaper clippings and a battered harmonica.

“There it be,” he said, nodding his head. “There it be.”

Greg looked at the old man, saw the distant look in his eye, then turned to the clippings. They told of Sweet Lemon Brown, a blues singer and harmonica player who was appearing at different theaters in the South. One of the clippings said he had been the

hit of the show, although not the headliner. All of the clippings were reviews of shows Lemon Brown had been in more than fifty years ago. Greg looked at the harmonica. It was dented badly on one side, with the reed holes on one end nearly closed.

"I used to travel around and make money to feed my wife and Jesse - that's my boy's name. Used to feed them good, too. Then his mama died, and he stayed with his mama's sister. He growed up to be a man, and when the war come he saw fit to go off and fight in it. I didn't have nothing to give him except these things that told him who I was, and what he come from. If you know your pappy did something, you know you can do something too.

"Anyway, he went off to war, and I went off still playing and singing. 'Course by then I wasn't as much as I used to be, not without somebody to make it worth the while. You know what I mean?"

"Yeah." Greg nodded, not quite really knowing.

"I traveled around, and one time I come home, and there was this letter saying Jesse got killed in the war. Broke my heart, it truly did.

"They sent back what he had with him over there, and what it was is this old mouth fiddle and these clippings. Him carrying it around with him like that told me it meant something to him. That was my treasure, and when I give it to him he treated it just like that, a treasure. Ain't that something?"

"Yeah, I guess so," Greg said.

"You guess so?" Lemon Brown's voice rose an octave as he started to put his treasure back into the plastic. "Well, you got to guess 'cause you sure don't know nothing. Don't know enough to get home when it's raining."

"I guess…I mean, you're right."

"You OK for a youngster," the old man said as he tied the strings around his leg, "better than those scalawags what come here looking for my treasure. That's for sure."

"You really think that treasure of yours was worth fighting for?" Greg asked. "Against a pipe?"

"What else a man got 'cepting what he can pass on to his son, or his daughter, if she be his oldest?" Lemon Brown said. "For a big-headed buy you sure do ask the foolishness questions."

Lemon Brown got up after patting his rags in place and looked out the window again. "Looks like they're gone. You get on out of here and get yourself home. I'll be

watching from the window so you'll be all right."

Lemon Brown went down the stairs behind Greg. When they reached the front door the old man looked out first, saw the street was clear and told Greg to scoot on home.

"You sure you'll be OK?" Greg asked.

"Now didn't I tell you I was going to east St. Louis in the morning?" Lemon Brown asked. "Don't that sound OK to you?"

"Sure it does," Greg said. "Sure it does. And you take care of that treasure of yours."

"That I'll do," Lemon said, the wrinkles around his eyes suggesting a smile. "That I'll do."

The night had warmed and the rain had stopped, leaving puddles at the curbs. Greg didn't even want to think how late it was. He thought ahead of what his father would say and wondered if he should tell him about Lemon Brown. He thought about it until he reached his stoop, and decided against it. Lemon Brown would be OK, Greg thought, with his memories and his treasure.

Greg pushed the button over the bell marked Ridley, thought of the lecture he knew his father would give him, and smiled.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) What game did Greg want to play?
……. .

2) Why did the bad guys come into the abandoned building?
……. .

3) What did Lemon Brown do for a living when he was young, and how do you know?
……. .

4) Where did Lemon Brown say that he was going at the end of the story?
……. .

5) What happened to Lemon Brown's son?
……. .

HOTS:

1) How did Greg know that he would not be allowed to play for the community center after his father got the principal's letter?
……. .

2) Why do you think that Greg was no longer interested in the story his father told him about how hard he has worked to pass the test to be a postal worker?
……. .

3) What does Lemon Brown mean when he says that every man has a treasure?
……. .

4) How did meeting Lemon Brown change how Greg felt about his own father?
……. .

5) What did Lemon Brown believe to be a very important thing for parents to do? Why do you think that he thought this was important?
…….. .

Bridging Question:

Walter Dean Myers says that he's "not interested in building ideal families" in is books. How is this information reflected in the story?

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Module F – All My Sons:

ALL MY SONS

a play in three acts

By Arthur Miller

Characters:
Joe Keller (Keller)
Kate Keller (Mother)
Chris Keller
Ann Deever
George Deever
Dr. Jim Bayliss (Jim)
Sue Bayliss
Frank Lubey
Lydia Lubey
Bert

Act One:

The back yard of the Keller home in the outskirts of an American town. August of our era.

The stage is hedged on right and left by tall, closely planted poplars which lend the yard a secluded atmosphere. Upstage is filled with the back of the house and its open, unroofed porch which extends into the yard some six feet. The house is two stories high and has seven rooms. It would have cost perhaps fifteen thousand in the early twenties when it was built. Now it is nicely painted, looks tight and comfortable, and the yard is green with sod, here and there plants whose season is gone. At the right, beside the house, the entrance of the driveway can be seen, but the poplars cut off view of its continuation downstage. In the left corner, downstage, stands the four-foot-high stump of a slender apple tree whose upper trunk and branches lie toppled beside it, fruit still clinging to its branches.

Downstage right is a small, trellised arbor, shaped like a sea shell, with a decorative bulb hanging from its forward-curving roof. Carden chairs and a table are scattered about. A garbage pail on the ground next to the porch steps, a wire leaf-burner near it.

On the rise: It is early Sunday morning. Joe Keller is sitting in the sun reading the want ads of the Sunday paper, the other sections of which lie neatly on the ground

beside him. Behind his back, inside the arbor, Doctor Jim Bayliss is reading part of the paper at the table.

Keller is nearing sixty. A heavy man of stolid mind and build, a business man these many years, but with the imprint of the machine-shop worker and boss still upon him. When he reads, when he speaks, when he listens, it is with the terrible concentration of the uneducated man for whom there is still wonder in many commonly known things, a man whose judgements must be dredged out of experience and a peasant-like common sense. A man among men.

Doctor Bayliss is nearly forty. A wry self-controlled man, an easy talker, but with a wisp of sadness that clings even to his self-effacing humor.

At curtain, Jim is standing at left, staring at the broken tree. He taps a pipe on it, blows through the pipe, feels in his pockets for tobacco, then speaks.

Jim: Where's your tobacco?

Keller: I think I left it on the table.

Jim goes slowly to table on the arbor, fings a pouch, and sits there on the bench, filling his pipe.

Keller: Gonna rain tonight.

Jim: Paper says so?

Keller: Yeah, right here.

Jim: Then it can't rain.

Frank Lubey enters, through a small space between the poplars. Frank is thirty-two but balding. A pleasant, opinionated man, uncertain of himself, with a tendency toward peevishness when crossed, but always wanting it pleasantly and neighborly. He rather saunters in, leisurely, nothing to do. He does not notice Jim in the arbor. On his greeting, Jim does not bother looking up.

Frank: Hya.

Keller: Hello, Frank. What's doin'?

Frank: Nothin'. Walking off my breakfast. {looks up at the sky} That beautiful? Not a cloud in the sky.

Keller: {looking up} Yeah, nice.

Frank: Every Sunday ought to be like this.

Keller: {indicating the sections beside him} Want the paper?

Frank: What's the difference, it's all bad news. What's today's calamity?

Keller: I don't know, I don't read the news part anymore. It's more interesting in the want ads.

Frank: Why, you trying to buy something?

Keller: No, I'm just interested. To see what people want, y'know? For instance here's a guy is lookin' for two Newfoundland dogs. Now what's he wants with two Newfoundland dogs?

Frank: That is funny.

Keller: Here's another one. Wanted, old dictionaries. High prices paid. Now what's a man going to do with an old dictionary?

Frank: Why not? Probably a book collector.

Keller: You mean he'll make a living out of that?

Frank: Sure, there's a lot of them.

Keller: {shaking his head} All the kind of business goin' on. In my day, either you were a lawyer, or a doctor, or you worked in a shop. Now...

Frank: Well, I was going to be a forester once.

Keller: Well, that shows you. In my day, there was no such think. {Scanning the page, sweeping it with his hand} You look at a page like this you realize how ignorant you are. {softly, with wonder, as he scans page} Psss!

Frank: {noticing tree} Hey, what happened to your tree?

Keller: Ain't that aweful? The wind must've got it last night. You heard the wind didn't you?

Frank: Yeah, I got a mess in my yard, too. {goes to tree} What a pity. {turning to Keller} What did Kate say?

Keller: They're all asleep yet. I'm just waiting for her to see it.

Frank: {struck} You know? Its funny.

Keller: What?

Frank: Larry was born in August. He'd be twenty-seven this month. And his tree blows down.

Keller: {touched} I'm surprised you remember his birthday, Frank. That's nice.

Frank: Well, I'm working on his horoscope.

Keller: How can you make him a horoscope? That's for the future, ain't it?

Frank: Well, what I'm doing is this, see. Larry was reported missing on November twenty-fifth, right?

Keller: Yeah?

Frank: Well, then, we assume that if he was killed it was on November twenty-fifth. Now, what Kate wants...

Keller: Oh, Kate asked you to make a horoscope?

Frank: Yeah, what she wants to find out is whether November twenty-fifth was a favorable day for Larry.

Keller: What is that, favorable day?

Frank: Well, a favorable day for a person is a fortunate day, according to the stars. In other words, it would be practically impossible for him to have died on his favorable day.

Keller: Well, was that his favorable day? November twenty-fifth?

Frank: That's what I'm working on to find out. It takes time! See, the point is, if November twenty-fifth was his favorable day, then it's completely possible he's alive somewhere, because, I mean, it's possible. {he notices Jim now. Jim is looking at him as though at an idiot. To Jim, with an uncertain laugh:} I didn't even see you.

Keller: {to Jim} Is he talkin' sense?

Jim: He's alright. He's just completely out of his mind, that's all.

Frank: {peeved} The trouble with you is, you don't believe in anything.

Jim: And your trouble is that you believe in anything. You didn't see my kid this morning, did you?

Frank: No.

Keller: Imagine? He walked off with his thermometer. Right out of his bag.

Jim: {getting up} What a problem. One look at a girl and he takes her temperature. {goes to the driveway, looks upstage toward street}

Frank: That boy's going to be a real doctor. He's smart.

Jim: Over my dead body he'll be a doctor. A good beginning, too.

Frank: Why? It's an honorable profession.

Jim: {looking at him tiredly} Frank, will you stop talking like a civics book?

Keller laughs

Frank: Why, I saw a movie a couple of weeks ago, reminded me of you. Here was a doctor in that picture...

Keller: Don Ameche!

Frank: I think it was, yeah. And he worked in his basement discovering things. That's what you ought to do. You could help humanity instead of ...

Jim: I would love to help humanity on a Warner Brothers salary.

Keller: {pointing at him, laughing} That's very good, Jim.

Jim: {looking toward house} Well, where's the beautiful girl that was supposed to be here?

Frank: {excited} Annie came?

Keller: Sure, sleepin' upstairs. We picked her up on the one o'clock trains last night. Wonderful thing. Girl leaves here, a scrawny kid. Couple of years go by, she's a regular woman. Hardly recognized her, and she was running in and out of this yard all her life. That was a very happy family used to live in your house, Jim.

Jim: Like to meet her. The block can use a pretty girl. In the whole neighborhood there's not a damned thing to look at. {Sue, Jim's wife, enters. She is rounding forty, an overweight woman who fears it. On seeing her, Jim wryly adds:} except my wife, of course.

Sue: {in same spirit} Mrs. Adams is on the phone, you dog.

Jim: {to Keller} Such is the condition which prevails. {going to his wife} My love, my light.

Sue: Don't sniff around me. {pointing to their house:} And give her a nasty answer. I can smell the perfume over the phone.

Jim: What's the matter with her now?

Sue: I don't know dear. She sounds like she's in terrible pain. Unless her mouth is full of candy.

Jim: Why don't you just tell her to lay down?

Sue: She enjoys it more when you tell her to lay down. And when are you going to see Mr. Hubbard?

Jim: My dear, Mr. Hubbard is not sick, and I have better things to do than to sit there and hold his hand.

Sue: It seems to me that for ten dollars you could hold his hand.

Jim: {to Keller} If you son wants to play golf tell him I'm ready. Or if he'd like to take

a trip around the world for about thirty years. {he exits}

Keller: Why do you needle him? He's a doctor, women are supposed to call him up.

Sue: All I said was Mrs. Adams is on the phone. Can I have some of your parsley?

Keller: Yeah, sure. {Sue goes to parsley box and pulls some parsley} You were a nurse too long, Susie. You're too ... too ... realistic.

Sue: {laughing, pointing at him} Now you said it!

Lydia Lubey enters. She is a robust, laughing girl of twenty-seven.

Lydia: Frank, the toaster ... {sees the others} Hya.

Keller: Hello!

Lydia: {to Frank} The toaster is off again.

Frank: Well, plug it in, I just fixed it.

Lydia: {kindly, but insistently} Please, dear, fix it back like it was before.

Frank: I don't know why you can't learn to turn on a simple thing like a toaster! {He exits}

Sue: {Laughing} Thomas Edison.

Lydia: {apologetically} He's really very handy. {she sees broken tree} Oh, did the wind get your tree?

Keller: Yeah, last night.

Lydia: Oh, what a pity. Annie get in?

Keller: She'll be down soon. Wait'll you meet her, Sue, she's a knockout.

Sue: I should've been a man. People are always introducing me to beautiful women. {to Joe:} Tell her to come over later: I imagine she'd like to see what we did with her house. And thanks. {she exits}

Lydia: Is she still unhappy, Joe?

Keller: Annie? I don't suppose she goes around dancing on her toes, but she seems to be over it.

Lydia: She going to get married? Is there anybody ... ?

Keller: I suppose... say, it's a couple of years already. She can't mourn a boy forever.

Lydia: It's so strange. Annie's here and not even married. And I've got three babies. I always thought it'd be the other way around.

Keller: Well, that's what a war does. I had two sons, now I got one. It changed all the tallies. In my day when you had sons it was an honor. Today, a doctor could make a million dollars if he could figure out a way to bring a boy into the world without a trigger finger.

Lydia: You know, I was just reading...

Enter Chris Keller from house, stands in doorway.

Lydia: Hya, Chris.

Frank shouts from offstage.

Frank: Lydia, come in here! If you want the toaster to work don't plug in the malted mixer.

Lydia: {embarrassed, laughing} Did I?

Frank: And the next time I fix something don't tell me I'm crazy! Now come in here!

Lydia: {to Keller} I'll never hear the end of this one.

Keller: {calling to Frank} So what's the difference? Instead of toast have a malted!

Lydia: Sh! sh! {she exits, laughing}

Chris watches her off. He is thirty-two. Like his father, solidly built, a listener. A man capable of immense affection and loyalty. He has a cup of coffee in one hand, part of a doughnut in the other.

Keller: You want the paper?

Chris: That's all right, just the book section.

He bends down and pulls out part of the paper on porch floor.

Keller: You're always reading the book section and you never buy a book.

Chris: {coming down to settee} I like to keep abreast of my ignorance.

He sits on the settee.

Keller: What is that, every week a new book comes out?

Chris: Lots of new books.

Keller: All different?

Chris: All different.

Keller shakes his head, puts knife down on bench, takes oilstone up to the cabinet.

Keller: Psss! Annie up yet?

Chris: Mother's giving her breakfast in the dining room.

Keller: {looking at the broken tree} See what happened to the tree?

Chris: {without looking up} Yeah.

Keller: What's mother going to say?

Bert runs up from driveway. He is about eight. He jumps on stool, then on Keller's back.

Bert: You're finally up.

Keller: {swinging him around and putting him down} Ha! Bert's here! Where's Tommy? He's got his father's thermometer again.

Bert: He's taking a reading.

Chris: What!

Bert: But it's only oral.

Keller: Oh, well, there's no harm in oral. So what's new this morning, Bert?

Bert: Nothin'. {He goes to the broken tree, walks around it}

Keller: Then you couldn't've made a complete inspection of the block. In the beginning, when I first made you a policeman you used to come in every morning with something new. Now, nothin's ever new.

Bert: Except some kids from Thirtieth Street. They started kicking a can down the block, and I made them go away because you were sleeping.

Keller: Now you're talkin', Bert. Now you're on the ball. First thing you know I'm liable to make you a detective.

Bert: {pulling him down by the lapel and whispering in his ear} Can I see the jail now?

Keller: Seein' the jail ain't allowed, Bert. You know that.

Bert: Aw, I betcha there isn't even a jail. I don't see any bars on the cellar windows.

Keller: Bert, on my word of honor there's a jail in the basement. I showed you my gun, didn't I?

Bert: But that's a hunting gun.

Keller: That's an arresting gun!

Bert: Then why don't you ever arrest anybody? Tommy sad another dirty word to Doris yesterday, and you didn't even demote him.

Keller chuckles and winks at Chris, who is enjoying all this.

Keller: Yeah, that's a dangerous character, that Tommy. {beckons him closer} What word does he say?

Bert: {backing away quickly in great embarrassment} Oh, I can't say that.

Keller: {grabbing him by the shirt and pulling him back} Well, gimme an idea.

Bert: I can't. It's not a nice word.

Keller: Just whisper it in my ear. I'll close my eyes. Maybe I won't even hear it.

Bert, on tiptoe, puts his lips to Keller's ear, then in unbearable embarrassment, steps back.

Bert: I can't, Mr. Keller.

Chris: {laughing} Don't make him do that.

Keller: Okay, Bert. I take your word. Now go out, and keep both eyes peeled.

Bert: {interested} For what?

Keller: For what! Bert, the whole neighborhood is depending on you. A policeman doesn't ask questions. Now peel them eyes!

Bert: {mystified, but willing} Okay. {he runs offstage back of arbor}

Keller: {calling after him} And mum's the word, Bert.

Bert stops and sticks his head through the arbor.

Bert: About what?

Keller: Just in general. Be v-e-r-y careful.

Bert: {nodding in bewilderment} Okay. {he exits}

Keller: {laughing} I got all the kids crazy!

Chris: One of these days, they'll all come in here and beat your brains out.

Keller: What's she going to say? Maybe we ought to tell her before she sees it.

Chris: She saw it.

Keller: How could she see it? I was the first one up. She was still in bed.

Chris: She was out here when it broke.

Keller: When?

Chris: About four this morning. {indicating window above them} I heard it cracking and I woke up and looked out. She was standing right there when it cracked.

Keller: What was she doing out here four in the morning?

Chris: I don't know. When it cracked, she ran back into the house and cried in the kitchen.

Keller: Did you talk to her?

Chris: No, I... I figured the best thing was to leave her alone.

Pause.

Keller: {deeply touched} She cried hard?

Chris: I could hear her right through the floor of my room.

Keller: {after slight pause} What was she doing out here at that hour? {Chris silent. With an undertone of anger showing} She's dreaming about him again. She's walking around at night.

Chris: I guess she is.

Keller: She's getting just like after he died. {slight pause} What's the meaning of that?

Chris: I don't know the meaning of it. {slight pause} But I know one thing, Dad. We've made a terrible mistake with Mother.

Keller: What?

Chris: Being dishonest with her. That kind of thing always pays off, and now it's paying off.

Keller: What do you mean, dishonest?

Chris: You know Larry's not coming back and I know it. Why do we allow her to go

on thinking that we believe with her?

Keller: What do you want to do, argue with her?

Chris: I don't want to argue with her, but it's time she realized that nobody believes Larry is alive any more. {Keller simply moves away, thinking, looking at the ground} Why shouldn't she dream of him, walk the nights waiting for him? Do we contradict her? Do we say straight out that we have no hope anymore? That we haven't had any home for years now?

Keller: {frightened at the thought} You can't say that to her.

Chris: We've got to say it to her.

Keller: How're you going to prove it? Can you prove it?

Chris: For God's sake, three years! Nobody comes back after three years. It's insane.

Keller: To you it is, and to me. But not to her. You can talk yourself blue in the face, but there's no body and no grave, so where are you?

Chris: Sit down, Dad. I want to talk to you.

Keller looks at him searchingly a moment.

Keller: The trouble is the Goddam newspapers. Every month some boy turns up from nowhere, so the next one is going to be Larry, so...

Chris: All right, all right, listen to me. {slight pause. Keller sits on settee} You know why I asked Annie here, don't you?

Keller: {he knows, but} Why?

Chris: You know.

Keller: Well, I got an idea, but... What's the story?

Chris: I'm going to ask her to marry me. {slight pause. Keller nods}

Keller: Well, that's only your business, Chris.

Chris: You know it's not only my business.

Keller: What do you want me to do? You're old enough to know your own mind.

Chris: {asking, annoyed} Then it's all right, I'll go ahead with it?

Keller: Well, you want to be sure Mother isn't going to...

Chris: Then it isn't just my business.

Keller: I'm just sayin' ...

Chris: Sometimes you infuriate me, you know that? Isn't it your business, too, if I tell this to Mother and she throws a fit about it? You have such a talent for ignoring things.

Keller: I ignore what I gotta ignore. The girl is Larry's girl.

Chris: She's not Larry's girl.

Keller: From Mother's point of view he is not dead and you have no right to take his girl. {slight pause} Now you can go on from there if you know where to go, but I'm tellin' you I don't know where to go. See? I don't know. Now what can I do for you?

Chris: I don't know why it is, but every time I reach out for something I want, I have to pull back because other people will suffer. My whole bloody life, time after time after time.

Keller: You're a considerate fella, there's nothing wrong in that.

Chris: To hell with that.

Keller: Did you ask Annie yet?

Chris: I wanted to get this settled first.

Keller: How do you know she'll marry you? Maybe she feels the same way Mother does?

Chris: Well, if she does, then that's the end of it. From her letters I think she's forgotten him. I'll find out. And then we'll thrash it out with Mother? Right? Dad, don't avoid me.

Keller: The trouble is, you don't see enough women. You never did.

Chris: So what? I'm not fast with women.

Keller: I don't see why it has to be Annie.

Chris: Because it is.

Keller: That's a good answer, but it doesn't answer anything. You haven't seen her since you went to war. It's five years.

Chris: I can't help it. I know her best. I was brought up next door to her. These years when I think of someone for my wife, I think of Annie. What do you want, a diagram?

Keller: I don't want a diagram... I...I'm... She thinks he's coming back Chris. You marry that girl and you're pronouncing him dead. Now what's going to happen to mother? Do you know? I don't. {pause}

Chris: All right, then, Dad.

Keller: {thinking Chris has retreated} Give it some more thought.

Chris: I've given it three years of thought. I'd hoped that if I waited, Mother would forget Larry and then we'd have a regular wedding and everything happy. But if that can't happen here, then I'll have to get out.

Keller: What the hell is this?

Chris: I'll get out. I'll get married and live someplace else. Maybe in New York.

Keller: Are you crazy?

Chris: I've been a good son too long, a good sucker. I'm through with it.

Keller: You've got a business here. What the hell is this?

Chris: The business! The business doesn't inspire me.

Keller: Must you be inspired?

Chris: Yes. I like it an hour a day. If I have to grub for money all day long at least at

evening I want it beautiful. I want a family, I want some kids, I want to build something that I can give myself to. Annie is in the middle of that. Now ... where to I find it?

Keller: You mean... {goes to him} Tell me something, you mean you'd leave the business?

Chris: Yes. On this I would.

Keller: {after a pause} Well... you don't want to think like that.

Chris: Then help me stay here.

Keller: All right, but... but don't think like that. Because what the hell did I work for? That's only for you, Chris, the whole shootin' match is for you!

Chris: I know that, Dad. Just you help me stay here.

Keller: {putting a fist up to Chris's jaw} But don't think that way, you hear me?

Chris: I am thinking that way.

Keller: {lowering his hand} I don't understand you, do I?

Chris: No, you don't. I'm a pretty tough guy.

Keller: Yeah, I can see that.

Mother appears on porch. She is in her early fifties, a woman of uncontrolled inspirations and an overwhelming capacity for love.

Mother: Joe?

Chris: {going toward porch} Hello, Mom.

Mother: {indicating house behind her. To Keller} Did you take a bag from under the sink?

Keller: Yeah, I put it in the pail.

Mother: Well, get it out of the pail. That's my potatoes.

Chris bursts out laughing. Goes up into alley.

Keller: {laughing} I thought it was garbage.

Mother: Will you do me a favor, Joe? Don't be helpful.

Keller: I can afford another bag of potatoes.

Mother: Minnie scoured that pail in boiling water last night. It's cleaner than your teeth.

Keller: And I don't understand why, after I worked forty years and I got a maid, why I have to take out the garbage.

Mother: If you would make up your mind that every back in the kitchen isn't full of garbage you wouldn't be throwing out my vegetables. Last time it was the onions.

Chris comes on, hands her bag.

Keller: I don't like garbage in the house.

Mother: Then don't eat. {she goes into the kitchen with bag}

Chris: That settles you for today.

Keller: Yeah, I'm in last place again. I don't know, once upon a time I used to think that when I got money again I would have a maid and my wife would take it easy. Now I got money, and I got a maid, and my wife is workin' for the maid. {he sits in one of the chairs}

Mother comes out on last line. She carries a pot of string beans.

Mother: It's her day off, what are you crabbing about?

Chris: {to Mother} Isn't Annie finished eating?

Mother: {looking around preoccupiedly at yard} She'll be right out. {moves} That wide did some job on this place. {of the tree} So much for that, thank Got.

Keller: {indicating chair beside him} Sit down, take it easy.

Mother: {pressing her hand to top of her head} I've got such a funny pain on the top of my head.

Chris: Can I get you an aspirin?

Mother picks a few petals off ground, stands there smelling them in her hand, then sprinkles them over plants.

Mother: No more roses. It's so funny... everything decides to happen at the same time. This month its birthday, his tree blows down, Annie comes. Everything that happened seems to be coming back. I was just down the cellar, and what do I stumble over? His baseball gloves. I haven't seen it in a century.

Chris: Don't you think Annie looks well?

Mother: Fine. There's no question about it. She's a beauty... I still don't know what brought her here. Not that I'm not glad to see her, but...

Chris: I just thought we'd all like to see each other again. {mother just looks at him, nodding ever so slightly, almost as though admitting something} And I wanted to see her myself.

Mother: {as her nods halt, to Keller} The only thing is I think her nose got longer. But I'll always love that girl. She's one that didn't jump into bed with somebody else as soon as it happened with her fella.

Keller: {as though that were impossible for Annie} Oh, what're you...

Mother: Never mind. Most of them didn't waid till the telegrams were opened. I'm just glad she came, so you can see I'm not completely out of my mind. {sits, and rapidly breaks string beans in the pot}

Chris: Just because she isn't married doesn't mean she's been mourning Larry.

Mother: {with an undercurrent of observation} Why then isn't she?

Chris: {a little flustered} Well... it could have been any number of things.

Mother: {directly at him} Like what, for instance?

Chris: {embarrassed, but standing his ground} I don't know. Whatever it is. Can I get

you an aspirin?

Mother puts her hand to her head. She gets up and goes aimlessly toward the trees on rising.

Mother: It's not like a headache.

Keller: You don't sleep, that's why. She's wearing out more bedroom slippers than shoes.

Mother: I had a terrible night. {she stops moving} I never had a night like that.

Chris: {looking at Keller} What was it, Mom? Did you dream?

Mother: More, more than a dream.

Chris: {hesitantly} About Larry?

Mother: I was fast asleep and... {raising her arm over the audience} Remember the way he used to fly low past the house when he was in training? When we used to see his face in the cockpit going by? That's the way I saw him. Only high up. Way, way up, where the clouds are. He was so real I could reach out and touch him. And suddenly he started to fall. And crying, crying to me...Mom, Mom! I could hear him like he was in the room. Mom! ...it was his voice! If I could touch him, I knew I could stop him, if I could only... {breaks off, allowing her outstretched hand to fall} I woke up and it was so funny. The wind... it was like the roaring of his engine. I came out here... I must've still been half asleep. I could hear that roaring like he was going by. The tree snapped right in front of me... and I like... came awake. {she is looking at tree. She suddenly realizes something, turns with a reprimanding finger shaking slightly at Keller.} See? We should never have planted that tree. I said so in the first place. It was too soon to plant a tree for him.

Chris: {alarmed} Too soon!

Mother: {angering} We rushed into it. Everybody was in such a hurry to bury him. I said not to plant it yet. {to Keller:} I told you to...!

Chris: Mother, Mother! {she looks into his face} The wind blew it down. What significance has that got? What are you talking about? Mother, please... Don't go through it all again, will you? It's no good, it doesn't accomplish anything. I've been thinking, y'know? ...maybe we ought to put our minds to forgetting him?

Mother: that's the third time you've said that this week.

Chris: Because it's not right. We never took up our lives again. We're like at a railroad station waiting for a train that never comes in.

Mother: {pressing the top of her head} Get me an aspirin, heh?

Chris: Sure, and let's break out of this, heh, Mom? I thought the four of us might go out to dinner a couple of nights, maybe go dancing out at the shore.

Mother: Fine. {to Keller} We can do it tonight.

Keller: Swell with me!

Chris: Sure, let's have some fun. {to Mother} You'll start with this aspirin. {he goes up and into the house with new spirit. Her smile vanishes}

Mother: {with an accusing undertone} Why did he invite her here?

Keller: Why does that bother you?

Mother: She's been in New York three and a half years, why all of a sudden...?

Keller: Well, maybe... maybe he just wanted to see her.

Mother: Nobody comes seven hundred miles "just to see".

Keller: What do you mean? He lived next door to the girl all his life, why shouldn't he want to see her again? {Mother looks at him critically} Don't look at me like that, he didn't tell me any more than he told you.

Mother: {a warning and a question} He's not going to marry her.

Keller: How do you know he's even thinking about it?

Mother: It's got that about it.

Keller: {sharply watching her reaction} Well? So what?

Mother: {alarmed} What's going on here Joe?

Keller: Now listen, kid...

Mother: {avoiding contact with him} She's not his girl, Joe. She knows she's not.

Keller: You can't read her mind.

Mother: Then why is she still single? New York is full of men, why isn't she married? {pause} Probably a hundred people told her she's foolish, but she's waited.

Keller: How do you know why she waited?

Mother: She knows what I know, that's why. She's faithful as a rock. In my worst moments, I think of her waiting, and I know again that I'm right.

Keller: Look, it's a nice day. What are we arguing for?

Mother: {warningly} Nobody in this house dust take her faith away, Joe. Strangers might. But not his father, not his brother.

Keller: {exasperated} What do you want me to do? What do you want?

Mother: I want you to act like he's coming back. Both of you. Don't think I haven't noticed you since Chris invited her. I won't stand for any nonsense.

Keller: But, Kate...

Mother: Because if he's not coming back, then I'll kill myself! Laugh. Laugh at me. {She points to tree} But why did that happen the very night she came back? She goes to sleep in his room and his memorial breaks in pieces. Look at it. Look. {She sits on bench} Joe...

Keller: Calm yourself.

Mother: Believe with me, Joe. I can't stand all alone.

Keller: Calm yourself.

Mother: Only last week a man turned up in Detroit, missing longer than Larry. You read it yourself.

Keller: All right, all right, calm yourself.

Mother: You above all have got to believe, you...

Keller: {rising} Why me above all?

Mother: Just don't stop believing.

Keller: What does that mean, me above all?

Bert comes rushing on.

Bert: Mr. Keller! Say, Mr. Keller... {pointing up the driveway} Tommy just said it again!

Keller: {not remembering any of it} Said what? Who?

Bert: The dirty word.

Keller: Oh. Well...

Bert: Gee, aren't you going to arrest him? I warned him.

Mother: {with suddenness} Stop that, Bert. Go home. {Bert backs up, as she advances} There's no jail here.

Keller: {as though to say, "Oh-what-the-hell-let-him-believe-there-is"} Kate...

Mother: {turning on Keller furiously} There's no jail here! I want you to stop that jail business! {he turns, shamed, but peeved}

Bert: {past her to Keller} He's right across the street.

Mother: Go home, Bert. {Bert turns around and goes up driveway. She is shaken. Her speech is bitten off, extremely urgent.} I want you to stop that, Joe. That whole jail business!

Keller: {alarmed, and therefore angered} Look at you, look at you shaking.

Mother: {trying to control herself, moving about clasping her hands} I can't help it.

Keller: What have I got to hide? What the hell is the matter with you Kate?

Mother: I didn't say you had anything to hide, I'm just telling you to stop it! Now stop it! {as Ann and Chris appear on the porch. Ann is twenty-six, gentle but despite herself capable of holding fast to what she knows. Chris opens door for her}

Ann: Hya, Joe! {She leads off a general laugh that is not self-conscious because they know one another too well. Chriss, bringing Ann down, with an outstretched, chivalric arm} Take a breath of that air, kid. You never get air like that in New York.

Mother: {genuinely overcome with it} Annie, where did you get that dress!

Ann: I couldn't resist. I'm taking it right off before I ruin it. {swings around} How's that for three weeks' salary?

Mother: {to Keller} Isn't she the most ...? {To Ann} It's gorgeous, simply gor...

Chris: {to Mother} No kidding, now, isn't she the prettiest gal you ever saw?

Mother: {caught short by his obvious admiration, she finds herself reaching out for a glass of water and aspirin in his hand and ...} You gained a little weight, didn't you, darling? {she gulps pill and drinks.}

Ann: It comes and goes.

Keller: Look how nice her legs turned out!

Ann: {as she runs to fence} Boy, the poplars got thick, didn't they? {Keller moves to settee and sits.}

Keller: Well, it's three years, Annie. We're gettin' old, kid.

Mother: How does Mom like New York? {Ann keeps looking through trees}

Ann: {a little hurt} Why'd they take our hammock away?

Keller: Oh, no, it broke. Couple of years ago.

Mother: What broke? He had one of his light lunches and flopped into it.

Ann: {laughs and turns back toward Jim's yard} Oh, excuse me!

Jim has come to fence and is looking over it. He is smoking a cigar. As she cries out,

he comes on around on stage.

Jim: How do you do? {to Chris} She looks very intelligent!

Chris: Ann, this is Jim ... Doctor Bayliss.

Ann: {shaking Jim's hand} Oh, sure, he writes a lot about you.

Jim: Don't you believe it. He likes everybody. In the battalion he was known as Mother McKeller.

Ann: I can believe it. You know ...? {to Mother} It's so strange seeing him come out of that yard. {to Chris} I guess I never grew up. It almost seems that Mom and Pop are in there now. And you and my brother are doing algebra, and Larry trying to copy my homework. Gosh, those dear dead days beyond recall.

Jim: Well, I hope that doesn't mean you want me to move out?

Sue: {calling from offstage} Jim, come in here! Mr. Hubbard is on the phone!

Jim: I told you I don't want ...

Sue: {commandingly sweet} Please, dear! Please!

Jim: {resigned} All right, Susie. {trailing off} All right, all right... {to Ann} I've only met you, Ann, but if I may offer you a piece of advice... When you marry, never, even in your mind, never count your husband's money.

Sue: {from offstage} Jim?

Jim: At once! {Turns and goes off} At once. {He exits}

Mother: {Ann is looking at her. She speaks meaningfully} I told her to take up the guitar. It'd be a common interest for them. {they laugh} Well, he loves the guitar!

Ann, as though to overcome Mother, becomes suddenly lively, crosses to Keller on settee, sits on his lap.

Ann: Let's eat at the shore tonight! Raise some hell around here, like we used to before Larry went!

Mother: {emotionally} You think of him! You see? {triumphantly} She thinks of him!

Ann: {with an uncomprehending smile} What do you mean, Kate?

Mother: Nothing. Just that you ... remember him, he's in your thoughts.

Ann: That's a funny thing to say ... how could I help remembering him?

Mother: {it is drawing to a head the wrong way for her. She starts anew. She rises and comes to Ann} Did you hang up your things?

Ann: Yeah ... {to Chris} Say, you've sure gone in for clothes. I could hardly find room in the closet.

Mother: No, don't you remember? That's Larry's room.

Ann: You mean ... they're Larry's?

Mother: Didn't you recognize them?

Ann: {slowly rising, a little embarrassed} Well, it never occurred to me that you'd ... I mean the shoes are all shined.

Mother: Yes, dear. {slight pause. Ann can't stop staring at her. Mother breaks it by speaking with the relish of gossip, putting her arm around Ann and walking with her} For so long I've been aching for a nice conversation with you, Annie. Tell me something.

Ann: What?

Mother: I don't know. Something nice.

Chris: {wryly} She means do you go out much?

Mother: Oh, shut up.

Keller: And are any of them serious?

Mother: {laughing, sits in her chair} Why don't you both choke?

Keller: Annie, you can't go into a restaurant with that woman any more. In five

minutes, thirty-nine strange people are sitting at the table telling her their life story.

Mother: If I can't ask Annie a personal question ...

Keller: Asking her is all right, but don't beat her over the head. You're beatin' her, you're beatin' her. {they are laughing}

Ann takes pan of beans off the stool, buts them on floor under chair and sits.

Ann: {to Mother} Don't let them bulldoze you. Ask me anything you like. What do you want to know, Kate? Come on, let's gossip.

Mother: {to Chris and Keller} She's the only one is got any sense. {to Ann} Your Mother ... She's not getting a divorce, heh?

Ann: No, she's calmed down about it now. I think when he gets out they'll probably live together. In New York, of course.

Mother: That's fine. Because your father is still ... I mean he's a decent man after all is said and done.

Ann: I don't care. She can take him back if she likes.

Mother: And you? You ... {shakes her head negatively} go out much? {slight pause}.

Ann: {delicately} You mean am I still waiting for him?

Mother: Well, no. I don't expect you to wait for him but ...

Ann: {kindly} But that's what you meant, isn't it?

Mother: Well ... yes.

Ann: Well, I'm not, Kate.

Mother: {faintly} You're not?

Ann: Isn't it ridiculous? You don't really imagine he's ...?

Mother: I know, dear, but don't say it's ridiculous, because the papers were full of it. I don't know about New York, but there was half a page about a man missing even

longer than Larry, and he turned up in Burma.

Chris: {coming to Ann} He couldn't have wanted to come home very badly, Mom.

Mother: Don't be so smart.

Chris: You can have a helluva time in Burma.

Ann: {rises and swings around in back of Chris} So I've heard.

Chris: Mother, I'll bet you money that you're the only woman in the country who after three years is still ...

Mother: You're sure?

Chris: Yes, I am.

Mother: Well, if you're sure then you're sure. {She turns her head away for an instant} They don't say it on the radio but I'm sure that in the dark of night they're still waiting for their sons.

Chris: Mother, you're absolutely ...

Mother: {waving him off} Don't be so damned smart! Now stop it! {slight pause} There are a few things you don't know. All of you. And I'll tell you one of them, Annie. Deep, deep in your heart you've always been waiting for him.

Ann: {resolutely} No, Kate.

Mother: {with increasing demand} But deep in your heart, Annie!

Chris: She ought to know, shouldn't she?

Mother: Don't let them tell you what to think. Listen to your heart. Only your heart.

Ann: Why does your heart tell you he's alive?

Mother: Because he has to be.

Ann: But why, Kate?

Mother: {going to her} Because certain things have to be, and certain things can never be. Like the sun has to rise, it has to be. That's why there's Got. Otherwise anything could happen. But there's God, so certain things can never happen. I would know, Annie ... just like the day he {indicates Chris} went into that terrible battle. Did he write me? Was it in the papers? No, but that morning I couldn't raise my head off the pillow. Ask Joe. Suddenly, I knew. I knew! And he was nearly killed that day. Ann, you know I'm right!

Ann stands there in silence, then turns trembling, going upstage.

Ann: No, Kate.

Mother: I have to have some tea.

Frank appears, carrying a ladder.

Ann: {taking his hand} Why, Frank, you're losing your hair.

Keller: He's got responsibility.

Frank: Gee whiz!

Keller: Without Frank the stars wouldn't know when to come out.

Frank: {laughs. To Ann} You look womanlier. You've matured. You ...

Keller: Take it easy, Frank, you're a married man.

Ann: {as they laugh} You still haberdashery?

Frank: Why not? Maybe I too can get to be president. How's your brother? Got his degree, I hear.

Ann: Oh, George has his own office now!

Frank: Don't say! {funereally} And your dad? Is he ...?

Ann: {abruptly} Fine. I'll be in to see Lydia.

Frank: {sympathetically} How about it, does Dad expect a parole soon?

Ann: {with growing ill-ease} I really don't know, I ...

Frank: {staunchly defending her father for her sake} I mean because I feel, y'know, that if an intelligent man like your father is put in prison, there ought to be a law that says either you execute him, or let him go after a year.

Chris: {interrupting} Want a hand with that ladder, Frank?

Frank: {taking cue} That's all right, I'll ... {picks up ladder} I'll finish the horoscope tonight, Kate. {embarrassed} See you later, Ann, you look wonderful. {he exits. They look at Ann}

Ann: {to Chris, as she sits slowly on stool} Haven't they stopped talking about Dad?

Chris: {comes down and sits on arm of chair} Nobody talks about him anymore.

Keller: Gone and forgotten, kid.

Ann: Tell me. Because I don't want to meet anybody on the block if they're going to ...

Chris: I don't want you to worry about it.

Ann: {to Keller} Do they still remember the case, Joe? Do they talk about you?

Keller: The only one still talks about it is my wife.

Mother: That's because you keep on playing policeman with the kids. All their parents hear out of you is jail, jail, jail.

Keller: Actually, what happened was that when I got home from the penitentiary the kids get very interested in me. You know kids. I was {laughs} like the expert on the jail situation. And as time passed, they got it confused and ... I ended up a detective. {laughs}

Mother: Except that they didn't get it confused. {to Ann} He hands out police badges from the Post Toasties boxes. {they laugh}

Ann rises and comes to Keller, putting her arm around his shoulder.

Ann: {wondrously at them, happy} Gosh, it's wonderful to hear you laughing about it.

Chris: Why, what'd you expect?

Ann: The last thing I remember on this block was one word ... "Murderers!" Remember that, Kate? Mrs. Hammond standing in front of our house yelling that word? She's still around, I suppose?

Mother: They're all still around.

Keller: Don't listen to her. Every Saturday night the whole gang is playin' poker in this arbor. All the ones who yelled murderer takin' my money now.

Mother: Don't, Joe. She's a sensitive girl, don't fool her. {to Ann} They still remember about Dad. It's different with him. {indicates Joe} He was exonerated, your father's still there. That's why I wasn't so enthusiastic about your coming. Honestly, I know how sensitive you are and I told Chris, I said...

Keller: Listen, you do like I did and you'll be all right. The day I come home, I got out of my car ... but not in front of the house... on the corner. You should've been here, Annie, and you too Chris. You'd 'a seen something. Everybody know I was getting out that day. The porches were loaded. Picture it now.
None of them believed I was innocent. The story was, I pulled a fast one getting myself exonerated. So I get out of my car, and I walk down the street. But very slow. And with a smile. The beast! I was the beast ... the guy who sold cracked cylinder heads to the Army Air Force ... the guy who made twenty-one P-40s crash in Australia. Kid, walkin' down the street that day I was guilty as hell. Except I wasn't, and there as a court appear in my pocket to prove I wasn't, and I walked ... past ... the porches. Result? Fourteen months later I had one of the best shops in the state again, a respected man again, bigger than ever.

Chris: (with admiration) Joe McGuts.

Keller: (now with great force): That's the only way you lick 'em is guts! (To Ann) The worst thing you did was to move away from here. You made it tough for your father when he gets out. That's why I tell you, I like to see him move back right on this block.

Mother: (pained) How could they move back?

Keller: It isn't going to end till they move back! (to Ann) Till people play cards with him again, and talk with him, and smile with him ... you play cards with a man you know he can't be a murderer. And the next time you write him I like you to tell him just what I said. (Ann simply stares at him) You hear me?

Ann: (surprised) Don't you hold anything against him?

Keller: Annie, I never believed in crucifying people.

Ann: (mystified) But he was your partner, he dragged you through the mud.

Keller: Well, he ain't my sweetheart, but you gotta forgive, don't you?

Ann: You, either, Kate? Don't you feel any ...?

Keller: (to Ann) The next ime you write Dad ...

Ann: I don't write him.

Keller: (struck) Well, every now and then you ...

Ann: (a little shamed, but determined) No, I've never written to him. Neither has my brother. (to Chris) Say, do you feel this way, too?

Chris: He murdered twenty-one pilots.

Keller: What the hell kinda talk is that?

Mother: That's not a thing to say about a man.

Ann: What else can you say? When they took him away, I followed him, went to him every visiting day. I was crying all the time. Until the news came about Larry. Then I realized. It's wrong to pity a man like that. Father or no father, there's only one way to look at him. He knowingly shipped out parts what would crash an airplane. And how do you know Larry wasn't one of them?

Mother: I was waiting for that. (going to her) As long as you're here, Annie, I want to ask you never to say that again.

Ann: You surprise me. I thought you'd be mad at him.

Mother: What your father did had nothing to do with Larry. Nothing.

Ann: But we can't know that.

Mother: (striving for control) As long as you're here!

Ann: (perplexed) But, Kate...

Mother: Put that out of your head!

Keller: Because...

Mother: (quickly to Keller) That's all, that's enough. (places her hand on her head) Come inside now, and have some tea with me. (She turns and goes up steps)

Keller: (to Ann) The one thing you ...

Mother: (sharply) He's not dead, so there's no argument! Now come!

Keller: (angrily) In a minute! (Mother turns and goes into house) Now look, Annie...

Chris: All right, Dad, forget it.

Keller: No, she doesn't feel that way. Annie...

Chris: I'm sick of the whole subject, now cut it out.

Keller: You want her to go on like this? (to Ann) Those cylinder heads when into P-40s only. What's the matter with you? You know Larry never flew a P-40.

Chris: So, who flew those P-40s, pigs?

Keller: The man was a fool, but don't make a murderer out of him. You got no sense? Look what is does to her! (to Ann) Listen, you gotta appreciate what was doin' in that shop in the war. The both of you! It was a madhouse. Every half hour the Major callin' for cylinder heads, they were whippin' us with the telephone. The trucks were hauling them away hot, damn near. I mean just try to see it human, see it human. All of a sudden, a batch comes out with a crack. That happens, that's the business. A fine, hairline crack. All right, so...so he's a little man, your father, always scared of loud voices. What'll the Major say? Half a day's production shot... What'll I say? You know what I mean? Human. (he pauses) So he take out his tools and he ... covers over the cracks. Alright, that's bad, it's wrong, but that's what a little man does. If I could have gone in that day, I'd a told him... Junk 'em Steve, we can afford it. But alone he was afraid. But I know he meant no harm. He believed they'd hold up a hundred percent. That's a mistake, but it ain't murder. You mustn't feel that way about him. You understand me? It ain't right.

Ann: (she regards him a moment) Joe, Let's forget it.

Keller: Annie, the day the news came out about Larry he was in the next cell to mine...Dad. And he cried, Annie...he cried half the night.

Ann: (touched) He should cry all night. (slight pause)

Keller: (almost angered) Annie, I do not understand why you ...!

Chris: (breaking in, with nervous urgency) Are you going to stop it?

Ann: Don't yell at him. He just wants everybody happy.

Keller: (clasps her around the waist, smiling) That's my sentiments. Can you stand steak?

Chris: And champagne?

Keller: Now you're operatin'! I'll call Swanson's for a table! Big time tonight, Annie!

Ann: Can't scare me.

Keller: (to Chris, pointing at Ann) I like that girl. Wrap her up. (they laugh. Goes up porch) You got nice legs, Annie! ...I want to see everybody drunk tonight. (pointing at Chris) Look at him, he's blushin' (He exits, laughing, into the house).

Chris: (calling after him) Drink your tea, Casanova. (he turns to Ann) Isn't he a great guy?

Ann: You're the only one I know who loves his parents.

Chris: I know. It went out of style, didn't it?

Ann: (with a sudden touch of sadness) It's all right. It's a good thing. (She looks about) You know? It's lovely here. The air is sweet.

Chris: (hopefully) You're not sorry you came?

Ann: Not sorry, no. But I'm ... not going to stay.

Chris: Why?

Ann: In the first place, your mother as much as told me to go.

Chris: Well...

Ann: You saw that... and then you... You've been kind of...

Chris: What?

Ann: Well... kind of embarrassed ever since I got here.

Chris: The trouble is I planned on kind of sneaking up on you over a period of a week or so. But they take it for granted that we're all set.

Ann: I know they would. Your mother anyway.

Chris: How did you know?

Ann: From her point of view, why else would I come?

Chris: Well... would you want to? (Ann still studies him) I guess you know this is why I asked you to come.

Ann: I guess this is why I came.

Chris: Ann, I love you. I love you a great deal. (finally) I love you. (Pause. She waits) I have no imagination .... That's all I know to tell you. (Ann is waiting, ready) I'm embarrassing you. I didn't want to tell it to you here. I wanted some place we'd never been, a place where we'd be brand new to each other... You feel it's wrong here, don't you? This yard, this chair? I want you to be ready for me. I don't want to win you away from anything.

Ann: (putting her arms around him) Oh, Chris, I've been ready a long, long time.

Chris: Then he's gone forever. You're sure.

Ann: I almost got married two years ago.

Chris: Why didn't you?

Ann: You started to write me... (slight pause)

Chris: You felt something that far back?

Ann: Every day since.

Chris: Ann, why didn't you let me know?

Ann: I was waiting for you , Chris. Till then you never wrote. And when you did, what did you say? You sure can be ambiguous, you know.

Chris: (looks toward house, then at her, trembling) Give me a kiss, Ann. Give me a ... (they kiss) God, I kissed you, Annie, I kissed Anni. How long, how long I've been waiting to kiss you!

Ann: I'll never forgive you. Why did you wait all these years? All I've done is sit and wonder if I was crazy for thinking of you.

Chris: Annie, we're going to live now! I'm going to make you so happy. (He kisses her, but without their bodies touching)

Ann: (A little embarrassed) Not like that you're not.

Chris: I kissed you...

Ann: Like Larry's brother. Do it like you, Chris. (He breaks away from her abruptly) What is it, Chris?

Chris: Let's drive some place... I want to be alone with you.

Ann: No... what is it, Chris, your mother?

Chris: No... nothing like that.

Ann: Then what's wrong? Even in your letters, there was something ashamed.

Chris: Yes. I suppose I have been. But it's going from me.

Ann: You've got to tell me...

Chris: I don't know how to start. (He takes her hand)

Ann: It wouldn't work this way. (Slight pause)

Chris: (speaks quietly, factually at first) It's all mixed up with so many other things ...You remember, overseas, I was in command of a company?

Ann: Yeah, sure.

Chris: Well, I lost them.

Ann: How many?

Chris: Just about all.

Ann: Oh, gee!

Chris: It take a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little thing... but... That's the kind of guys I hd. They didn't die... They killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly. a little more selfish and they've been here today. And I got an idea ...watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of... responsibility. Man, for man. You understand me? To show that, to bring that onto the earth again like some kind of a monument and everyone would feel it standing there, behind him, and it would make a difference to him. (pause) And then I came home and it was incredible. I.... there was no meaning in it here. The whole thing to them was a kind of a ... bus accident. I went to work with Dad, and that rat-race again. I felt... what you said... ashamed somehow. Because nobody was changed at all. It seemed to make suckers out of a lot of guys. I felt wrong to be alive, to open the bank-book, to drive the new car, to see the new refrigerator. I mean you can take those things out of a war, but when you drive that car you've got to know that it came out of the love a man can have for a man, you've got to be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is really loot, and there's blood on it. I didn't want to take any of it. And I guess that included you.

Ann: And you still feel that way?

Chris: I want you know, Annie.

Ann: Because you mustn't feel that way anymore. Because you have a right to whatever you have. Everything, Chris, understand that? To me, too... And the money, there's nothing wrong in your money. Your father put hundreds of planes in the air, you should be proud. A man should be paid for that...

Chris: Oh Annie, Annie... I'm going to make a fortune for you!

Keller: (offstage) Hello ... Yes. Sure.

Ann: (laughing softly) What'll I do with a fortune? (they kiss. Keller enters from house)

Keller: (thumbing toward house) Hey, Ann, your brother... (They step apart shyly. Keller comes down, and wryly) What's this, Labor Day?

Chris: (waving him away, knowing the kidding will be endless) All right, all right.

Ann: You shouldn't burst out like that.

Keller: Well, nobody told me it was Labor Day. (looks around) Where's the hot dogs?

Chris: (loving it) All right. You said it once.

Keller: Well, as long as I know it's Labor Day from now on, I'll wear a bell around my neck.

Ann: (affectionately) He's so subtle!

Chris: George Bernard Shaw as an elephant.

Keller: George! ...Hey, you kissed it out of my head ...your brother on the phone.

Ann: (surprised) My brother?

Keller: Yeah, George. Long distance.

Ann: What's the matter, is anything wrong?

Keller: I don't know, Kate's talking to him. Hurry up, she'll cost him five dollars.

Ann: (takes a step upstage, then comes down toward Chris) I wonder if we ought to tell your mother yet? I mean I'm not very good in an argument.

Chris: We'll wait till tonight. After dinner. Now don't get tense, just leave it to me.

Keller: What're you telling her?

Chris: Go ahead, Ann. (With misgivings, Ann goes up and into house.) We're getting married, Dad. (Keller nods indecisively) Well, don't you say anything?

Keller: (distracted) I'm glad, Chris, I'm just... George is calling from Columbus.

Chris: Columbus!

Keller: Did Annie tell you he was going to see his father today?

Chris: No, I don't think she knew anything about it.

Keller: (asking uncomfortably) Chris! You... you think you know her pretty well?

Chris: (hurt and apprehensive) What kind of question?

Keller: I'm just wondering. All these years George don't go to see his father. Suddenly he goes... and she comes here.

Chris: Well, what about it?

Keller: It's crazy, but it comes to my mind. She doesn't hold nothin' against me, does she?

Chris: (angry) I don't know what you're talking about.

Keller: (a little more combatively) I'm just talkin'. To his last day in court the man blamed it all on me... and his is his daughter. I mean if she was sent here to find out something?

Chris: (angered) Why? What's there to find out?

Ann: (on phone, offstage) Why are you so excited, George? What happened there?

Keller: I mean if they want to open up the case again, for the nuisance value, to hurt us?

Chris: Dad... how could you think that of her?

Ann: (still on the phone) But what did he say to you, for God's sake?

Keller: It couldn't be, heh. You know.

Chris: Dad, you amaze me...

Keller: (breaking in) All right, forget it forget it. (with great force, moving about) I want a clean start for you, Chris. I want a new sign over the plant... Christopher Keller, Incorporated.

Chris: (a little uneasily) J. O. Keller is good enough.

Keller: We'll talk about it. I'm going to build you a house, stone, with a driveway from the road. I want you to spread out, Chris, I want you to use what I made for you. (He is close to him now) I mean, with joy, Chris, without shame... with joy.

Chris: (touched) I will, Dad.

Keller: (with deep emotion) Say it to me.

Chris: Why?

Keller: Because sometimes I think you're... ashamed of the money.

Chris: No, don't feel that.

Keller: Because it's good money, there's nothing wrong with that money.

Chris: (a little frightened) Dad, you don't have to tell me this.

Keller: (with overriding affection and self-confidence now. He grips Chris by the back of the neck, and with laughter between his determined jaws) Look, Chris, I'll go to work on Mother for you. We'll get her so drunk tonight we'll all get married. (steps away, with a wide hesture of his arm) There's gonna be a wedding, kid, like there never was seen! Champagne, tuxedos...!

He breaks off as Ann's voice comes out loud from the house where she is still talking on the phone.

Ann: Simply because when you get excited you don't control yourself... (Mother comes out of house) Well, what did he tell you for God's sake? (Pause) All right, come then. (Pause) Yes, they'll all be here. Nobody's running away from you. And try to get hold of yourself, will you? (Pause.) All right, all right. Goodbye.

There is a brief pause as Ann hangs up receiver, then comes out of kitchen.

Chris: Something happen?

Keller: He's coming here?

Ann: On the seven o'clock. He's in Columbus. (To Mother) I told him it would be all right.

Keller: Sure, fine! Your father took sick?

Ann: (mystified) No, George didn't say he was sick. I... (Shaking it off) I don't know, I suppose it's something stupid, you know my brother...(She comes to Chris) Let's go for a drive, or something....

Chris: Sure. Give me the keys, Dad.

Mother: Drive through the park. It's beautiful now.

Chris: Come on, Ann. (to them) Be back right away.

Ann: (as she and Chris exit up driveway) See you.

Mother comes down toward Keller, her eyes fixed on him.

Keller: Take your time. (to Mother) What does George want?

Mother: He's been in Columbus since this morning with Steve. He's gotta see Annie right away, he says.

Keller: What for?

Mother: I don't know. (She speaks with warning) He's a lawyer now, Joe. George is a lawyer. All these years he never even sent a postcard to Steve. Since he got back from the war, not a postcard.

Keller: So what?

Mother: (her tension breaking out) Suddenly he takes an airplane from New York to see him. An airplane!

Keller: Well? So?

Mother: (trembling) Why?

Keller: I don't read minds. Do you?

Mother: Why, Joe? What has Steve suddenly got to tell him that he takes an airplane to see him?

Keller: What do I care what Steve's got to tell him?

Mother: You're sure, Joe?

Keller: (frightened, but angry) Yes, I'm sure.

Mother: (sits stiffly in a chair) Be smart now, Joe. The boy is coming. Be smart.

Keller: (desperately) Once and for all, did you hear what I said? I said I'm sure!

Mother: (nods weakly) All right, Joe. (he straightens up) Just... be smart.

Keller, in hopeless fury, looks at her, turns around, goes up to porch and into house, slamming screen door violently behind him. Mother sits in chair downstage, stiffly, staring, seeing.

CURTAIN

Act Two:

As twilight falls, that evening. On the rise, Chris is discovered sawing the broken-off tree, leaving stump standing alone. He is dressed in good pants, white shoes, but without a shirt. He disappears with tree up the alley when Mother appears on porch. She comes down and stands watching him. She has on a dressing gown, carries a tray of grape juice drink in a pitcher, and glasses with sprigs of mint in them.

Mother: (Calling up alley) Did you have to put on good pants to do that? (she comes downstage and puts tray on table in the arbor. Then looks around uneasily, then feels pitcher for coolness).

(Chris enters from alley brushing off his hands) You notice there more light with that thing gone?

Chris: My aren't you dressing?

Mother: It's suffocating upstairs. I made a grape drink for Georgie. He always liked grape. Come and have some.

Chris: (impatiently) Well, come on, get dressed. And what's Dad sleeping so much for? (He goes to table and pours a glass of juice)

Mother: To his last day in court Steve never gave up the idea that Dad made him do it. If they're going to open the case again, I won't live through it.

Chris: George is just a damn fool, Mother. How can you take him seriously?

Mother: That family hates us. Maybe even Annie...

Chris: Oh, now, Mother...

Mother: You think just because you like everybody, they like you!

Chris: All right, stop working yourself up. Just leave everything to me.

Mother: When George goes home tell her to go with him.

Chris: (noncommittally) Don't worry about Annie.

Mother: Steve is her father, too.

Chris: Are you going to cut it out? Now, come.

Mother: (going upstage with him) You don't realize how people can hate, Chris, they can hate so much they'll tear the world to pieces.

Ann, dressed up, appears on the porch.

Chris: Look! She's dressed already. (As he and Mother mount porch) I've just got to put on a shirt.

Ann: (in a preoccupied way) Are you feeling well, Kate?

Mother: What's the difference, dear. There are certain people, y'know, the sicker they get, the longer they live. (She goes into the house)

Chris: You look nice.

Ann: We're going to tell her tonight.

Chris: Absolutely, don't worry about it.

Ann: I wish we could tell her now. I can't stand scheming. My stomach gets hard.

Chris: It's not scheming, we'll just get her in a better mood.

Mother: (offstage, in the house) Joe, are you going to sleep all day!

Ann: (laughing) The only one who's relaxed is your father. He's fast asleep.

Chris: I'm relaxed.

Ann: Are you?

Chris: Look. (He holds out his hand and makes it shake.) Let me know when George gets here.

He goes into the house. Ann moves aimlessly, and then is drawn toward tree stump. She goes to it, hesitantly touches broken top in the hush of her thoughts. Offstage Lydia calls, "Johnny! Come get your supper!" Sue enters, and halts, seeing Ann.

Sue: Is my husband...?

Ann: (turns, startled) Oh!

Sue: I'm terribly sorry.

Ann: It's all right, I ... I'm just a little silly about the dark.

Sue: (looks about) It's getting dark.

Ann: Are you looking for your husband?

Sue: As usual. (laughs tiredly) He spends so much time here, they'll be charging him rent.

Ann: Nobody was dressed so he drove over to the depot to pick up my brother.

Sue: Oh, your brother's in?
Ann: Yeah, they ought to be here any minute now. Will you have a cold drink?

Sue: I will, thanks. (Ann goes to table and pours) My husband. Too hot to drive me to the beach. Men are like little boys... for the neighbors they'll always cut the grass.

Ann: People like to do things for the Kellers. Been that way since I can remember.

Sue: It's amazing. I guess your brother's coming to give you away, heh?

Ann: (giving her drink) I don't know. I suppose.

Sue: You must be all nerved up.

Ann: It's always a problem getting yourself married, isn't it?

Sue: That depends on your shape, of course. I don't see why you should have had a problem.

Ann: I've had chances...

Sue: I'll bet. It's romantic... It's very unusual to me, marrying the brother of your sweetheart.

Ann: I don't know. I think it's mostly that whenever I need somebody to tell me the truth, I've always thought of Chris. When he tells you something you know it's so. He relaxes me.

Sue: And he's got money. That's important, you know.

Ann: It wouldn't matter to me.

Sue: You'd be surprised. It makes all the difference. I married an intern. On my salary. And that was bad, because as soon as a woman supports a man, he owes her something. You can never owe somebody without resenting them. (Ann laughs) That's true, you know.

Ann: Underneath, I think the doctor is very devoted.

Sue: Oh, certainly. But it's bad when a man always sees the bars in front of him. Jim thinks he's in jail all the time.

Ann: Oh...

Sue: That's why I've been intending to ask you a small favor, Ann. It's something very important to me.

Ann: Certainly, if I can do it.

Sue: You can. When you take up housekeeping, try to find a place away from here.

Ann: Are you fooling?

Sue: I'm very serious. My husband is unhappy with Chris around.

Ann: How is that?

Sue: Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see?

Ann: Well, isn't that good?

Sue: Research pays twenty-five dollars a week minus laundering the hair shirt. You've got to give up your life to go into it.

Ann: How does Chris...

Sue: (with growing feeling) Chris makes people want to be better that it's possible to be. He does that to people.

Ann: Is that bad?

Sue: My husband has a family, dear. Every time he has a session with Chris he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research. As though Chris or anybody else isn't compromising. It happens with Jim every couple of years. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him.

Ann: Maybe he's right. I don't mean that Chris is a statue, but...

Sue: Now darling, you know he's not right.

Ann: I don't agree with you. Chris...

Sue: Let's face it, dear. Chris is working with his father, isn't he? He's taking money out of that business every week in the year.

Ann: What of it?

Sue: You ask me what of it?

Ann: I certainly do. (She seems about to burst out) You oughtn't cast aspersions like that, I'm surprised at you.

Sue: You're surprised at me!

Ann: He'd never take five cents out of that plant if there was anything wrong with it.

Sue: You know that.

Ann: I know it. I resent everything you've said.

Sue: (moving toward her) You know what I resent, dear?

Ann: Please, I don't want to argue.

Sue: I resent living next to the Holy Family. It makes me look like a bum; you understand?

Ann: I can't do anything about that.

Sue: Who is he to ruin a man's life? Everybody knows Joe pulled a fast one to get out of jail.

Ann: That's not true!

Sue: Then why don't you go out and talk to people? Go on, talk to them. There's not a person on the block who doesn't know the truth.

Ann: That's a lie. People come here all the time for cards and...

Sue: So what? They give him credit for being smart. I do, too, I've got nothing against Joe. But if Chris wants people to put on the hair shirt let him take off the broadcloth. He's driving my husband crazy with that phony idealism of his and I'm at the end of

my rope on it! (Chris enters on porch, wearing shirt and tie now. She turns quickly, hearing. With a smile) Hello, darling. How's Mother?

Chris: I thought George came.

Sue: No, it was just us.

Chris: (coming down to them) Susie, do me a favor, heh? Go up to Mother and see if you can calm her. She's all worked up.

Sue: She still doesn't know about you two?

Chris: (laughs a little) Well, she senses it, I guess. You know my mother.

Sue: (going up to porch) Oh, yeah, she's psychic.

Chris: Maybe there's something in the medicine chest.

Sue: I'll give her one of everything. (on porch) Don't worry about Kate... couple of drinks, dance her around a little... She'll love Ann. (To Ann) Because you're the female version of him. (Chris laughs) Don't be alarmed, I said version. (She goes into house)

Chris: Interesting woman, isn't she?

Ann: Yeah, she's very interesting.

Chris: She's a great nurse, you know, she...

Ann: (in tension, but trying to control it) Are you still doing that?

Chris: (sensing something wrong, but still smiling) Doing what?

Ann: As soon as you get to know somebody you find a distinction for them. How do you know she's a great nurse?

Chris: What's the matter, Ann?

Ann: The woman hates you. She despises you!

Chris: Hey... What's hit you?

Ann: Gee, Chris...
Chat happened here?

Ann: You never... Why didn't you tell me?

Chris: Tell you what?

Ann: She says they think Joe is guilty.

Chris: What difference does it make what they think?

Ann: I don't care what they think, I just don't understand why you took the trouble to deny it. You said it was all forgotten.

Chris: I didn't want you to feel there was anything wrong in you coming here, that's all. I know a lot of people think my father was guilty, and I assumed there might be some question in your mind.

Ann: But I never once suspected him.

Chris: Nobody says it.

Ann: Chris, I know how much you love him, but it could never...

Chris: Do you think I could forgive him if he'd done that thing?

Ann: I'm not here out of blue sky, Chris. I turned my back on my father, if there's anything wrong here now...

Chris: I know that, Ann.

Ann: George is coming from Dad, and I don't think it's with a blessing.

Chris: He's welcome here. You've got nothing to fear from George.

Ann: Tell me that... just tell me that.

Chris: The man is innocent, Ann. Remember he was falsely accused once and it put him through hell. How would you behave if you were faced with the same thing again? Annie, believe me, there's nothing wrong for you here, believe me, kid.

Ann: All right, Chris, all right. (They embrace as Keller appears quietly on the porch. Ann simply studies him)

Keller: Every time I come out here it looks like Playland! (they break and laugh in embarrassment)

Chris: I thought you were going to shave?

Keller: (sitting on bench) In a minute. I just woke up, I can't see nothin'.

Ann: You look shaved.

Keller: Oh, no. (massages his jaw) Gotta be extra special tonight. Big night, Annie. So how's it feel to be a married woman?

Ann: (laughs) I don't know, yet.

Keller: (to Chris) What's the matter, you slippin'? (He takes a little box of apples from under the bench as they talk)

Chris: The great roue'!

Keller: What is that, roue'?

Chris: It's French.

Keller: Don't talk dirty. (they laugh)

Chris: (to Ann) You ever meet a bigger ignoramus?

Keller: Well, somebody's got to make a living.

Ann: (as they laugh) That's telling him.

Keller: I don't know, everybody's gettin' so Goddam educated in this country there'll be nobody to take away the garbage. (they laugh) It's gettin' so the only dumb one's left are the bosses.

Ann: You're not so dumb, Joe.

Keller: I know, but you go into our plant, for instance. I got so many lieutenants,

majors and colonels that I'm ashamed to ask somebody to sweep the floor. I gotta be careful I'll insult somebody. No kiddin'. It's a tragedy: you stand on the street today and spit, you're gonna hit a college man.

Chris: Well, don't spit.

Keller: (breaks the apple in half, passing it to Ann and Chris) I mean to say, it's comin' to a pass. (he takes a breath) I been thinkin', Annie... your brother, George. I been thinkin' about your brother George. When he comes I like you to brooch something to him.

Chris: Broach.

Keller: What's the matter with brooch?

Chris: (smiling) It's not English.

Keller: When I when to night school it was brooch.

Ann: (laughing) Well, in day school it's broach.

Keller: Don't surround me, will you? Seriously, Ann... You say he's not well. George, I been thinkin', why should be known himself out in New York with that cut-throat competition, when I got so many friends here... I'm very friendly with some big lawyers in town. I could set George up here.

Ann: That's awfully nice of you, Joe.

Keller: No, kid, it ain't nice of me. I want you to understand me. I'm thinking of Chris. (slight pause) See... this is what I mean. You get older, you want to feel that you... accomplished something. My only accomplishment is my son. I ain't brainy. That's all I accomplished. Now, a year, eighteen months, your father will be a free man. Who is he going to come to, Annie? His baby. You. He'll come, old, mad, into your house.

Ann: That can't matter anymore, Joe.

Keller: I don't what that to come between us. (gestures between Chris and himself)

Ann: I can only tell you that that could never happen.

Keller: You're in love now, Annie, but believe me, I'm older than you and I know... a

daughter is a daughter, and a father is a father. And it could happen. (he pauses) I like you and George to go to him in prison and tell him... "Dad, Joe wants to bring you into the business when you get out."

Ann: (surprised, even shocked) You'd have him as a partner?

Keller: No, no partner. A good job. (pause. He sees she is shocked, a little mystified. He gets up, speaks more nervously) I want him to know that when he gets out, he's got a place waitin' for him. It'll take his bitterness away. To know you got a place...

Ann: Joe, you owe him nothing.

Keller: I owe him a good kick in the teeth, but he's your father.

Chris: Then kick him in the teeth! I don't want him in the plant, so that's that! You understand? And besides, don't talk about him like that. People misunderstand you!

Keller: And I don't understand why she has to crucify the man.

Chris: Well, it's her father if she feels...

Keller: No, no.

Chris: (almost angrily) What's it to you? Why...?

Keller: (a commanding outburst in high nervousness) A father is a father! (as though the outburst had revealed him, he looks about, wanting to retract it. His hand goes to his cheek.) I better... I better shave. (He turns and a smile is on his face, to Ann) I didn't mean to yell at you, Annie.

Ann: Let's forget the whole thing, Joe.

Keller: Right. (to Chris) She's likeable.

Chris: (a little paved at the man's stupidity) Shave, will you?

Keller: Right again.

As he turns to porch Lydia comes hurrying from her house.

Lydia: I forgot all about it. (Seeing Chris and Ann) Hya. (To Joe) I promised to fix

Kate's hair for tonight. Did she comb it yet?
Keller: Always a smile, hey, Lidia?

Lydia: Sure, why not?

Keller: (going up on porch): Come on up and comb my Katie's hair. (Lydia goes up on porch) She's got a big night, make her beautiful.

Lydia: I will.

Keller: (holds door open for her and she goes into kitchen. To Chris and Ann) Hey, that could be a song. (He sings softly) Come on up and comb my Katie's hair... Oh, come up and comb my Katie's hair.... Oh, come on up, 'cause she's my lady fair.... (To Ann) how's that for one year of night school? (he continues singing as he goes into kitchen) Oh, come on up, come on up, and comb my lady's hair....

Jim Bayliss rounds corner of driveway, walking rapidly. Jim crosses to Chris, motions him and pulls him down excitedly. Keller stands just inside kitchen door, watching them.

Chris: What's the matter? Where is he?

Jim: Where's your mother?

Chris: Upstairs, dressing.

Ann: (crossing to them rapidly) What happened to George?

Jim: I asked him to wait in the car. Listen to me now. Can you take some advice? (they wait) Don't bring him in here.

Ann: Why?

Jim: Kate is in bad shape, you can't explode this in front of her.

Ann: Explode what?

Jim: You know why he's here, don't try to kit it away. There's blood in his eye; drive him somewhere and talk to him alone.

Ann turns to go up drive, takes a couple of steps, sees Keller, and stops. He goes

quietly on into house.
Chris: (shaken, and therefore angered) Don't be an old lady.

Jim: He's come to take her home. What does that mean? (to Ann) You know what that means. Fight it out with him someplace else.

Ann: (comes back down toward Chris) I'll drive... him somewhere.

Chris: (goes to her) No.

Jim: Will you stop being an idiot?

Chris: Nobody's afraid of him here. Cut that out!

He starts for driveway, but is brought up short by George, who enters there. George is Chris's age, but a paler man, now on the edge of his self-restraint. He speaks quietly, as though afraid to find himself screaming. An instant's hesitation and Chris steps up to him, hand extended, smiling.

Chris: Helluva way to do; what're you sitting out there for?

George: Doctor said your mother isn't well, I...

Chris: So what? She'd want to see you, wouldn't she? We've been waiting for you all afternoon. (He puts his hand on George's arm, but George pulls away, coming across toward Ann).

Ann: (touching his collar) This is filthy, didn't you bring another shirt?

George breaks away from her, and moves down, examining the yard. Door opens, and he turns rapidly, thinking it is Kate, but it's Sue. She looks at him; he turns away and moves to fence. He looks over it at his former home. Sue comes downstage.

Sue: (annoyed) How about the beach, Jim?

Jim: Oh, it's too hot to drive.

Sue: How'd you get to the station... Zeppelin?

Chris: This is Mrs. Bayliss, George. (Calling, as George pays no attention, staring at house) George! (George turns) Mrs. Bayliss.

Sue: How do you do.

George: (removing his hat) You're the people who bought our house, aren't you?

Sue: That's right. Come and see what we did with it before you leave.

George: (walks down and away from her) I liked it the way it was.

Sue: (after a brief pause) He's frank, isn't he?

Jim: (pulling her off) See you later... Take it easy, fella. (they exit)

Chris: (calling after them) Thanks for driving him! (Turning to George) How about some grape juice? Mother made it especially for you.

George: (with forced appreciation) Good old Kate, remembered my grape juice.

Chris: You drank enough of it in this house. How've you been, George? ...Sit down.

George: (keeps moving) It take me a minute. (looking around) It seems impossible.

Chris: What?

George: I'm back here.

Chris: Say, you've gotten a little nervous, haven't you?

George: Yeah, toward the end of the day. What're you, big executive now?

Chris: Just kind of medium. How's the law?

George: I don't know. When I was studying in the hospital is seemed sensible, but outside there doesn't seem to be much of a law. The trees got thick, didn't they? (points to stump) What's that?

Chris: Blew down last night. We had it there for Larry. You know.

George: Why, afraid you'll forget him?

Chris: (starts for George) What kind of remark is that?

Ann: (breaking in, putting a restraining hand of Chris) When did you start wearing a hat?

George: (discovers hat in his hand) Today. From now on I decided to look like a lawyer, anyway. (He holds is up to her) Don't you recognize it?

Ann: Why? Where...?

George: Your father's... He asked me to wear it.

Ann: How is he?

George: He got smaller.

Ann: Smaller?

George: Yeah, little. (holds his hand to measure) He's a little man. That's what happens to suckers, you know. It's good I want to him in time... another year there'd be nothing left but his smell.

Chris: What's the matter, George, what's the trouble?

George: The trouble? The trouble is when you make suckers out of people once, you shouldn't try to do it twice.

Chris: What does that mean?

George: (to Ann) You're not married yet, are you?

Ann: George, will you sit down and stop...?

George: Are you married yet?

Ann: No, I'm not married yet.

George: You're not going to marry him.

Ann: Why am I not going to marry him?

George: Because his father destroyed your family.

Chris: Now look, George...

George: Cut it short, Chris. Tell her to come home with me. Let's not argue, you know what I've got to say.

Chris: George, you don't want to be the voice of God, do you?

George: I'm...

Chris: That's been your trouble all your life, George, you dive into things. What kind of statement is that to make? You're a big boy now.

George: I'm a big boy now.

Chris: Don't come bulling in here. If you've got something to say, be civilized about it.

George: Don't civilize me!

Ann: Shhh!

Chris: (ready to hit him) Are you going to talk like a grown man or aren't you?

Ann: (quickly, to forestall an outburst) Sit down, dear. Don't be angry, what's the matter? (He allows her to seat him, looking at her) Now what happened? You kissed me when I left, now you...

George: (breathlessly) My life turned upside down since then. I couldn't go back to work when you left. I wanted to go to Dad and tell him you were going to be married. It seemed impossible not to tell him. He loved you so much. (He pauses) Annie... we did a terrible thing. We can never be forgiven. Not even to send him a card at Christmas. I didn't see him once since I got home from the war! Annie, you don't know what was done to that man. You don't know what happened.

Ann: (afraid) Of course I know.

George: You can't know, you wouldn't be here. Dad came to work that day. The night foreman came to him and showed him the cylinder heads... they were coming out of the process with defects. There was something wrong with the process. So Dad went directly to the phone and called here and told Joe to come down right away. But the morning passed. No sign of Joe. So, Dad called again. By this time, he had over a

hundred defectives. The Army was screaming for stuff and Dad didn't have anything to ship. So Joe told him... on the phone he told him to weld, cover up the cracks in any way he could, and ship them out.

Chris: Are you through now?

George: (surging back at him) I'm not through now! (Back to Ann) Dad was afraid. He wanted Joe there if he was going to do it. But Joe can't come down... He's sick. Sick! He suddenly gets the flu! Suddenly! But he promised to take responsibility. Do you understand what I'm saying? On the telephone you can't have responsibility! In a court you can always deny a phone call and that's exactly what he did. They know he was a liar the first time, but in the appeal, they believed the rotten lie and now Joe is a big shot and your father is the patsy. (He gets up) Now what're you going to do? Eat his food, sleep in his bed? Answer me. What're you going to do?

Chris: What are you going to do, George?

George: He's too smart for me, I can't prove a phone call.

Chris: Then how dare you come in here with that rot?

Ann: George, the court...

George: The court didn't know your father! But you know him. You know in your heart Joe did it.

Chris: (whirling him around) Lower your voice or I'll throw you out of here!

George: She knows. She knows.

Chris: (to Ann) Get him out of here, Ann. Get him out of here.

Ann: George, I know everything you've said. Dad told me that whole thing in court, and they...

George: (almost a scream) The court did not know him, Annie!

Ann: Shhh! ...But he'll say anything, George. You know how quick he can lie.

George: (turning to Chris, with deliberation) I'll ask you something, and look me in the eye when you answer me.

Chris: I'll look you in the eye.

George: You know your father...

Chris: I know him well.

George: And he's the kind of boss to let a hundred and twenty one cylinder heads be repaired and shipped out of his shop without even knowing it?

Chris: He's that kind of boss.

George: And that's the same Joe Keller who never left his shop without first going around to see that all the lights were out.

Chris: (with growing anger) The same Joe Keller.

George: The same man who knows how many minutes a day his workers spend in the toilet.

Chris: The same man.

George: Any my father, that frightened mouse who'd never buy a shirt without somebody along... That man would do such a thing on his own?

Chris: On his own. And because he's a frightened mouse this is another thing he'd do... Throw the blame on somebody else in court but it didn't work, but with a fool like you it works!

Ann: (deeply shaken) Don't talk like that!

Chris: (sits facing George) Tell me, George. What happened? The court record was good enough for you all these years, why isn't it good now? Why did you believe it all these years?

George: (after a slight pause) Because you believed it... That's the truth, Chris. I believed everything, because I thought you did. But today I heard it from his mouth. From his mouth it's altogether different than the record. Anyone who knows him, and knows your father, will believe it from his mouth. Your Dad took everything we have. I can't beat that. But she's one item he's not going to grab. (He turns to Ann) Get your things. Everything they have is covered with blood. You're not the kind of girl who

can live with that. Get your things.
Chris: Ann... You're not going to believe that, are you?

Ann: (goes to him) You know it's not true, don't you?

George: How can he tell you? It's his father. (To Chris) None of these things ever even cross your mind?

Chris: Yes, they crossed my mind. Anything can cross your mind!

George: He knows, Annie. He knows!

Chris: The voice of God!

George: Then why isn't your name on the business? Explain that to her!

Chris: What the hell has that got to do with... ?

George: Annie, why isn't his ham on it?

Chris: Even when I don't own it!

George: Who're you kidding? Who gets it when he dies? (To Ann) Open your eyes, you know the both of them, isn't that the first thing they'd do, the way they love each other? ...J. O. Keller and Son? (Pause. Ann looks from him to Chris) I'll settle it. Do you want to settle it, or are you afraid to?

Chris: What do you mean?

George: Let me go up and talk to your father. In ten minutes, you'll have the answer. Or are you afraid of the answer?

Chris: I'm not afraid of the answer. I know the answer. But my mother isn't well and I don't want a fight here now.

George: Let me go to him.

Chris: You're not going to start a fight here now.

George: (To Ann) What more do you want! (There is a sound of footsteps in the house).

Ann: (turns her head suddenly toward house) Someone's coming.

Chris: (to George, quietly) You won't say anything now.

Ann: You'll go soon. I'll call a cab.

George: You're coming with me.

Ann: And don't mention marriage, because we haven't told her yet.

George: You're coming with me.

Ann: You understand? Don't... George, you're not going to start anything now! (She hears footsteps) Shhh!

Mother enters on porch. She is dressed almost formally. Her hair is fixed. They are all turned toward her. On seeing George, she raises both hands, comes down toward him.

Mother: Georgie, Georgie.

George: (he has always liked her) Hello, Kate.

Mother: (cups his face in her hands) They made an old man out of you. (Touches his hair) Look, you're grey.

George: (her pity, open and unabashed, reaches into him, and he smiles sadly) I know, I...

Mother: I told you when you went away, don't try for medals.

George: (laughs, tiredly) I didn't try, Kate. They made it very easy for me.

Mother: (actually angry) Go on. You're all alike. (To Ann) Look at him, why did you say he's fine? He looks like a ghost.

George: (relishing her solicitude) I feel alright.

Mother: I'm sick to look at you. What's the matter with your mother, why don't she feed you?

Ann: He just hasn't any appetite.
Mother: If he ate in my house, he'd have an appetite. (to Ann) I pity your husband! (To George) Sit down. I'll make you a sandwich.

George: (sits with an embarrassed laugh) I'm really not hungry.

Mother: Honest to God, it breaks my heart to see what happened to all the children. How we worked and planned for you, and you end up no better than us.

George: (with deep feeling for her) You... you haven't changed at all, you know that, Kate?

Mother: None of us changed, Georgie. We all love you. Joe was just talking about the day you were born and the water got shut off. People were carrying basins from a block away... A stranger would have thought the whole block was on fire! (they laugh. She sees the juice. To Ann) Why didn't you give him some juice!

Ann: (defensively) I offered it to him.

Mother: (scoffing) You offered it to him! (thrusting glass into George's hand) Give it to him! (To George, who is laughing) And now you're going to sit here and drink some juice... and look like something!

George: (sitting) Kate, I feel hungry already.

Chris: (proudly) She could turn Mahatma Ghandi into a heavyweight!

Mother: (to Chris, with great energy) Listen, to hell with the restaurant! I got a ham in the icebox, and frozen strawberries, and avocados, and...

Ann: Swell, I'll help you!

George: The train leaves at eight thirty, Ann.

Mother: (to Ann) You're leaving?

Chris: No, Mother, she's not...

Ann: (breaking through it, going to George) You hardly got here. Give yourself a chance to get acquainted again.

Chris: Sure, you don't even know us anymore.
Mother: Well, Chris, if they can't stay, I don't...

Chris: No, it's just a question of George, Mother, he planned on...

George: (gets up politely, nicely, for Kate's sake) Now wait a minute, Chris...

Chris: (smiling and full of command, cutting him off) If you want to go, I'll drive you to the station now, but if you're staying, no arguments while you're here.

Mother: (at last confessing the tension) Why should he argue? (she goes to him. With desperation and compassion, stroking his hair) Georgie and us have no argument. How could we have an argument, Georgie? We all got hit by the same lightning, how can you...? Did you see what happened to Larry's tree, Georgie? (She has taken his arm, and unwillingly he moves across the stage with her.) Imagine? While I was dreaming of him in the middle of the night, the wind came along and... Lydia enters on porch. As soon as she sees him:

Lydia: Hey, Georgie! Georgie! Georgie! Georgie! Georgie! (She comes down to him eagerly. She has a flowered hat in her hand, which Kate takes from her as she goes to George)

George: (As they shake hands eagerly, warmly) Hello, Laughy. What'd you do, grow?

Lydia: I'm a big girl now.

Mother: Look what he can do to a hat!

Ann: (to Lydia, admiring the hat) Did you make that?

Mother: In ten minutes! (she puts it on)

Lydia: (fixing it on her head) I only rearranged it.

George: You still make your own clothes?

Chris: (of Mother) Ain't she classy! All she needs now is a Russian wolfhound.

Mother: (Moving her head) It feels like somebody is sitting on my head.

Ann: No, it's beautiful, Kate.

Mother: (kisses Lydia. To George) She's a genius! You should've married her. (they laugh) This one can feed you!

Lydia: (strangely embarrassed) Oh, stop that, Kate.

George: (to Lydia) Didn't I hear you had a baby?

Mother: You don't hear so good. She's got three babies.

George: (a little hurt by it. To Lydia) No kidding, three?

Lydia: Yeah, it was one, two, three... Youve been away a long time, Georgie.

George: I'm beginning to realize.

Mother: (to Chris and George) The trouble with you kids is you think too much.

Lydia: Well, we think, too.

Mother: Yes, but not all the time.

George: (With almost obvious envy) They never took Frank, heh?

Lydia: (a little apologetically) No, he was always one year ahead of the draft.

Mother: It's amazing. When they were calling boys twenty-seven Frank was twenty-eight, when they made it twenty-eight, he was just twenty-nine. That's why he took up astrology. It's all in when you were born, it just goes to show.

Chris: What does it go to show?

Mother: (to Chris) Don't be so intelligent. Some superstitions are very nice! (To Lydia) Did he finish Larry's horoscope?

Lydia: I'll ask him now, I'm going in. (to George, a little sadly, almost embarrassed) Would you like to see my babies? Come on.

George: I don't think so, Lydia.

Lydia: (Understanding) All right. Good luck to you, George.

George: Thanks. And to you... And Frank. (She smiles at him, turns and goes off to her house. George stands staring after her).

Lydia: (as she runs off) Oh, Frank!

Mother: (Reading his thoughts) She got pretty, heh?

George: (sadly) Very pretty.

Mother: (as a reprimand) She's beautiful, you damned fool!

George: (looks around longingly, and softly, with a catch in his throat) She makes it seem so nice around here.

Mother: (shaking her finger at him) Look what happened to you because you wouldn't listen to me! I told you to marry that girl and stay out of the war!

George: (laughs at himself) She used to laugh too much.

Mother: And you didn't laugh enough. While you were getting mad about Fascism Frank was getting into her bed.

George: (to Chris) He won the war, Frank.

Chris: All the battles.

Mother: (in pursuit of this mood) The day they started the draft, Georgie, I told you you loved that girl.

Chris: (laughs) And truer love hath no man!

Mother: I'm smarter than any of you.

George: (laughing) She's wonderful.

Mother: And now you're going to listen to me, George. You had big principles, Eagle Scouts the three of you. So now I got a tree, and this one (indicating Chris) when the weather gets bad, he can't stand on his feet. And that big dope (pointing to Lydia's house) next door who never reads anything but Andy Gump has three children and his house paid off. Stop being a philosopher, and look after yourself. Like Joe was

just saying... You move back here, he'll help you get set, and I'll find you a girl and put a smile on your face.

George: Joe? Joe wants me here?

Ann: (eagerly) He asked me to tell you, and I think it's a good idea.

Mother: Certainly. Why must you make believe you hate us? Is that another principle? ...That you have to hate us? You don't hate us, George, I know you, you can't fool me, I diapered you. (Suddenly, to Ann) You remember Mr. Marcy's daughter?

Ann: (laughing, to George) She's got you hooked already! (George laughs, is excited)

Mother: You look her over, George. You'll see she's the most beautiful...

Chris: She's got warts, George.

Mother: (to Chris) She hasn't got warts! (To George) So the girl has a little beauty mark on her chin...

Chris: And two on her nose.

Mother: You remember. Her father's the retired police inspector.

Chris: Sargent George.

Mother: He's a very kind man!

Chris: He looks like a gorilla.

Mother: (to George) He never shot anybody.

They all burst out laughing as Keller appears in the doorway. George rises abruptly and stares at Keller, who comes rapidly down to him.

Keller: (the laughter stops. With strained joviality) Well! Look who's here! (Extending his hand) Georgie, good to see ya.

George: (shaking hands. Somberly) How're you, Joe?

Keller: So-so. Gettin' old. You comin' out to dinner with us?

George: No, got to be back in New York.

Ann: I'll call a cab for you. (She goes up into the house)

Keller: Too bad you can't stay, George. Sit down. (To mother) He looks fine.

Mother: He looks terrible.

Keller: That's what I said, you look terrible, George. (They laugh) I wear the pants and she beat me with the belt.

George: I saw your factory on the way from the station. It looks like General Motors.

Keller: I wish it was General Motors, but it ain't. Sit down, George. Sit down. (Takes cigar out of his pocket) So you finally went to see your father, I hear?

George: Yes, this morning. What kind of stuff do you make now?

Keller: oh, little of everything. Pressure cookers, an assembly for washing machines. Got a nice, flexible plant now. So how'd you find Dad? Feel alright?

George: (searching Keller, speaking indecisively) No, he's not well, Joe.

Keller: (lighting his cigar) Not his heart again, is it?

George: It's everything, Joe. It's his soul.

Keller: (blowing out smoke) Uh huh....

Chris: How about seeing what they did with your house?

Keller: Leave him be.

George: (to Chris, indicating Keller) I'd like to talk to him.

Keller: Sure, he just got here. That's the way they do, George. A little man makes a mistake and they hang him by his thumbs. The big ones become ambassadors. I wish you'd-a told me you were going to see Dad.

George: (studying him) I didn't know you were interested.

Keller: In a way, I am. I would like him to know, George, that as far as I'm concerned, any time he wants, he's got a place with me. I would like him to know that.

George: He hates your guts, Joe. Don't you know that?

Keller: I imagined it. But that can change, too.

Mother: Steve was never like that.

George: He's like that now. He'd like to take every man who made money in the war and put him up against a wall.

Chris: He'll need a lot of bullets.

George: And he'd better not get any.

Keller: that's a sad thing to hear.

George: (with bitterness dominant) Why? What's you expect him to think of you?

Keller: (the force of his nature rising, but under control) I'm sad to see he hasn't changed. As long as I know him, twenty-five years, the man never learned how to take the blame. You know that, George.

George: (he does) Well, I...

Keller: But you do know it. Because the way you come in here you don't look like you remember it. I mean in nineteen thirty-seven when we had the shop on Flood Street. And he damn near blew us all up with that heater he left burning for two days without water. He wouldn't admit that was his fault, either. I had to fire a mechanic to save his face. You remember that.

George: Yes, but...

Keller: I'm just mentioning it, George. Because this is just another one of a lot of things. Like when he gave Frank that money to invest in oil stock.

George: (distressed) I know that, I...

Keller: (driving in, but restrained) But it's good to remember those things, kid. The

way he cursed Frank because the stock went down. Was that Frank's fault? To listen to him Frank was a swindler. And all the man did was to give him a bad tip.

George: (gets up, moves away) I know those things...

Keller: Then remember them, remember them. (Ann comes out of house) There are certain men in the world who rather see everybody hung before they'll take blame. You understand me, George?

They stand facing each other, George trying to judge him.

Ann: (coming downstage) The cabs on its way. Would you like to wash?

Mother: (with the thrust of hope) Why must he go? Make the midnight, George.

Keller: Sure, you'll have dinner with us!

Ann: How about it? Why not? We're eating at the lake, we could have a swell time.

A long pause, as George looks at Ann, Chris, Keller, then back to her.

George: All right.

Mother: now you're talking.

Chris: I've got a shirt that'll go right with that suit.

George: Is Lydia...? I mean, Frank and Lydia coming?

Mother: I'll get you a date that'll make her look like a... (she starts upstage)

George: (laughing) No, I don't want a date.

Chris: I know somebody just for you! Charlotte Tanner! (he starts for the house)

Keller: Call Charlotte, that's right.

Mother: Sure, call her up. (Chris goes into house)

Ann: You go up and pick out a shirt and tie.

George: (stops, looks around at them and the place) I never felt at home anywhere but here. I feel so... (he nearly laughs, and turns away from them) Kate, you look so young, you know? You didn't change at all. It ... rings an old bell. (turns to Keller) You too, Joe, you're amazingly the same. The whole atmosphere is.

Keller: Say, I ain't got time to get sick.

Mother: He hasn't been laid up in fifteen years.

Keller: Except my flu during the war.

Mother: Huhh?

Keller: Well, sure... (To George) I mean except for that flu. (George stands perfectly still) Well, it slipped my mind, don't look at me that way. He wanted to go to the shop but he couldn't lift himself off the bed. I thought he had pneumonia.

George: Why did you say he's never...?

Keller: I know how you feel, kid, I'll never forgive myself. If I could've gone in that day I'd never allow Dad to touch those heads.

George: She said you've never been sick.

Mother: I said he was sick, George.

George: (going to Ann) Ann, didn't you hear her say...?

George: Id remember pneumonia. Especially if I got it just the day my partner was going to patch up cylinder heads... What happened that day, Joe?

Frank enters briskly from driveway, holding Larry's horoscope in his hand. He comes to Kate.

Frank: Kate! Kate!

Mother: Frank, did you see George?

Frank: (extending his hand) Lydia told me, I'm glad to... you'll have to pardon me. (pulling mother over) I've got something amazing for you, Kate, I finished Larry's horoscope.

Mother: You'd be interested in this, George. It's wonderful the way he can understand the...

Chris: (entering from house) George, the girl's on the phone...

Mother: (desperately) He finished Larry's horoscope!

Chris: Frank, can't you pick a better time than this?

Frank: The greatest men who ever lived believed in the stars!

Chris: Stop filling her head with that junk!

Frank: Is it junk to feel that there's a greater power than ourselves? I've studied the stars of his life! I won't argue with you, I'm telling you. Somewhere in this world your brother is alive!

Mother: (instantly to Chris) Why isn't it possible?

Chris: Because it's insane.

Frank: Just a minute now. I'll tell you something and you can do as you please. Just let me say it. He was supposed to have died on November twenty fifth. But November twenty fifth was his favorite day. That's known, that's known, Chris!

Mother: Why isn't it possible, why isn't it possible, Chris!

George: (to Ann) Don't you understand what she's saying? She just told you to go. What are you waiting for now?

Chris: Nobody can tell her to go. (A car horn is heard)

Mother: (to Frank) Thank you, darling, for your trouble. Will you tell him to wait, Frank?

Frank: (as he goes) Sure thing.

Mother: (calling out) They'll be right out, driver!

George: You heard her say it, he's never been sick!

Mother: He misunderstood me, Chris! (Chris, looks at her, struck)

George: (to Ann) He simply told your father to kill pilots, and covered himself in bed!

Chris: You'd better answer him, Annie. Answer him.

Mother: I packed your bag, darling.

Chris: What?

Mother: I packed your bag. All you've got to do is close it.

Ann: I'm not closing anything. He asked me here and I'm staying till he tells me to go. (To George) Till Chris tells me!

Chris: That's all! How get out of here, George!

Mother: (to Chris) But if that's how he feels...

Chris: That's all, nothing more till Christ comes, about the case or Larry as long as I'm here! (to George) Now get out of here, George!

George: (to Ann) You tell me. I want to hear you tell me.

Ann: Go, George!

They disappear up the driveway, Ann saying, "Don't take it that way, Georgie! Please don't take it that way".
Chris: (turning to his mother) What do you mean you packed her bag? How dare you pack her bag?

Mother: Chris...

Chris: How dare you pack her bag?

Mother: She doesn't belong here.

Chris: Then I don't belong here.

Mother: She's Larry's girl.

Chris: And I'm his brother and he's dead, and I'm marrying his girl

Mother: Never, never in this world!

Keller: You lost your mind?

Mother: You have nothing to say!

Keller: (cruelly) I got plenty to say. Three and a half years you been talking like a maniac...

Mother smashes him across the face.

Mother: Nothing. You have nothing to say. Now I say. He's coming back, and everybody has got to wait.

Chris: Mother, Mother...

Mother: Wait, wait...

Chris: How long? How long?

Mother: (rolling out of her) Till he comes. Forever and ever till he comes!

Chris: (as an ultimatum) Mother, I'm going ahead with it.

Mother: Chris, I've never said no to you in my life, now I say no!

Chris: You'll never let him go till I do it.

Mother: I'll never let him go and you'll never let him go!

Chris: I've let him go. I've let him go a long...

Mother: (with no less force, but turning from him) Then let your father go. (pause. Chris stands transfixed)

Keller: She's out of her mind.

Mother: Altogether! (To Chris, but not facing them) Your brother's alive, darling,

because if he's dead, your father killed him. Do you understand me now? As long as you live, that boy is alive. God does not let a son be killed by his father. Now you see, don't you? Now you see. (Beyond control, she hurries up and into the house)

Keller: (Chris has not moved. He speaks insinuatingly, questioningly) She's out of her mind.

Chris: (in a broken whisper) Then... you did it?

Keller: (with the beginning of plea in his voice) He never flew a P-40...

Chris: (struck. Deadly) But the others.

Keller: (insistently) She's out of her mind. (he takes a step toward Chris, pleadingly.)

Chris: (unyielding) Dad... you did it?

Keller: He never flew a P-40, what's the matter with you?

Chris: (still asking, and saying) Then you did it. To the others.

Both hold their voices down.

Keller: (afraid of him, his deadly insistence) What's the matter with you? What the hell is the matter with you?

Chris: (quietly, incredibly) How could you do that? how?

Keller: What's the matter with you!

Chris: Dad... Dad, you killed twenty one men!

Keller: What, killed

Chris: You killed them, you murdered them.

Keller: (as though throwing his whole nature open before Chris) how could I kill anybody?

Chris: Dad! Dad!

Keller: (trying to hush him) I didn't kill anybody!
Chris: then explain it to me. What did you do? Explain it to me or I'll tear you to pieces!

Keller: (horrified at his overwhelming fury) Don't, Chris, don't...

Chris: I want to know what you did, now what did you do? You had a hundred and twenty cracked engine heads, how what did you do?

Keller: If you're going to hang me then I...

Chris: I'm listening. God almighty, I'm listening!

Keller: (their movements are those of subtle pursuit and escape. Keller keeps a step out of Chris's range as he talks: You're a boy, what could I do! I'm in business, a man is in business. A hundred and twenty cracked, you're out of business. You got a process; the process doesn't work you're out of business. You don't know how to operate, your stuff is no good, they close you up, they tear up your contracts. What the hell's it to them? You lay forty years into a business and they knock you out in five minutes, what could I do, let them take forty years, let them take my life away? (his voice cracking) I never thought they'd install them. I swear to God. I thought they'd stop 'em before anybody took off.

Chris: Then why'd you ship them out?

Keller: By the time they could spot them I thought I'd have the process going again, and I could show them they needed me and they'd let it go by. But weeks passed and I got no kick-back, so I was going to tell them.

Chris: Then why didn't you tell them?

Keller: it was too late. The paper, it was all over the front page, twenty-one went down, it was too late. They came with handcuffs into the shop, what could I do? (He sits on bench) Chris... Chris, I did it for you, it was a chance and I took it for you. I'm sixty-one years old, when would I have another chance to make something for you? Sixty one years old you don't get another chance, do ya?

Chris: You even knew that they wouldn't hold up in the air.

Keller: I didn't say that.

Chris: But you were going to warn them not to use them....
Keller: But that doesn't mean...

Chris: It means you knew they'd crash.

Keller: It don't mean that.

Chris: Then you thought they'd crash.

Keller: I was afraid maybe...

Chris: You were afraid maybe! God in heaven, what kind of a man are you? Kids were hanging in the air by those heads. You knew that!

Keller: For you, a business for you!

Chris: (with burning fury) For me! Where do you live, where have you come from? For me! ...I was dying every day and you were killing my boys and you did it for me? What the hell do you think I was thinking of, the Goddam business? Is that as far as your mind can see, the business? What is that, the world of business? What the hell do you mean, you did it for me? Don't you have a country? Don't you live in the world? What the hell are you? You're not even an animal, no animal kills his own, what are you? What must I do to you? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth, what must I do? (With his fist he pounds down upon his father's shoulder. He stumbles away, covering his face as he weeps) What must I do, Jesus God, what must I do?

Keller: Chris... My Chris...

CURTAIN
Act Three:

Two o'clock the following morning, Mother is discovered on the rise, rocking ceaselessly in a chair, staring at her thoughts. It is an intense, slight, sort of rocking. A light shows from upstairs bedroom, lower floor windows being dark. The moon is strong and casts its bluish light. Presently Jim, dressed in jacked and hat, appears, and seeing her, goes up beside her.

Jim: Any news?

Mother: No news.

Jim: (gently) You can't sit up all night, dear, why don't you go to bed?

Mother: I'm waiting for Chris. Don't worry about me, Jim, I'm perfectly all right.

Jim: But it's almost two o'clock.

Mother: I can't sleep. (slight pause) You had an emergency?

Jim: (tiredly) Somebody had a headache and thought he was dying. (slight pause) Half of my patients are quite mad. Nobody realizes how many people are walking loose, and they're cracked as coconuts. Money. Money-money-money-money. You say it long enough it doesn't mean anything. (She smiles, makes a silent laugh) Oh, how I'd love to be around when that happens!

Mother: (shaking her head) You're so childish, Jim! Sometimes you are.

Jim: (looks at her a moment) Kate. (Pause) What happened?

Mother: I told you. He had an argument with Joe. Then he got in the car and drove away.

Jim: What kind of an argument?

Mother: An argument, Joe... He was crying like a child, before.

Jim: They argued about Ann?

Mother: (after slight hesitation) No, not Ann. Imagine? (Indicates lighted window above) She hasn't come out of that room since he left. All night in that room.

Jim: (looks up at window, then at her): What'd Joe do, tell him?

Mother: (stops rocking) Tell him what?

Jim: Don't be afraid, Kate, I know. I've always known.

Mother: How?

Jim: It occurred to me a long time ago.

Mother: I always had the feeling that in the back of his head, Chris... almost knew. I

didn't think it would be such a shock.

Jim: (gets up) Chris would never know how to live with a thing like that. It takes a certain talent... for lying. You have it, and I do. But not him.

Mother: What do you mean... He's not coming back?

Jim: Oh, no, he'll come back. We all come back, Kate. These private little revolutions always die. The compromise is always made. In a peculiar way. Frank is right... every man does have a star. The star of one's honesty. And you spend your life groping for it, but once it's out it never lights again. I don't think he went very far. He probably just wanted to be alone to watch his star go out.

Mother: Just as long as he comes back.

Jim: I wish he wouldn't, Kate. One year I simply took off, went to New Orleans; for two months I lived on bananas and milk, and studied a certain disease. And then she came, and she cried. And I went back home with her. And now I live in the usual darkness; I can't find myself; it's hard sometimes to remember the kind of man I wanted to be. I'm a good husband; Chris is a good son... He'll come back.

Keller comes out on porch in dressing gown and slippers. He goes upstage...To alley. Jim goes to him.

Jim: I have the feeling he's in the park. I'll look for him. Put her to bed, Joe; this is no good for what she's got. (Jim exits up driveway)

Keller: (coming down) What does he want here?

Mother: His friend is not home.

Keller: (comes down to her. His voice is husky) I don't like him mixing in so much.

Mother: It's too late, Joe. He knows.

Keller: (apprehensively) How does he know?

Mother: He guessed it a long time ago.

Keller: I don't like that.

Mother: (laughs dangerously, quietly into the line) What you don't like.

Keller: Yeah, what I don't like.

Mother: You can't bull yourself through this one, Joe, you better be smart now. This thing...this thing is not over yet.

Keller: (indicating lighted window above) And what is she doing up there? She doesn't come out of the room.

Mother: I don't know, what is she doing? Sit down, stop Bing mad. You want to live? You better figure out your life.

Keller: She don't know, does she?

Mother: Don't ask me, Joe.

Keller: (almost an outburst) Then who do I ask? But I don't think she'll do anything about it.

Mother: You're asking me again.

Keller: I'm askin' you. What am I, a stranger? I thought I had a family here. What happened to my family?

Mother: You've got a family. I'm simply telling you that I have to strength to think any more.

Keller: You have no strength. The minute there's trouble you have no strength.

Mother: Joe, you're doing the same thing again. All your live whenever there's trouble you yell at me and you thing that settles it.

Keller: Then what do I do? Tell me, talk to me, what do I do?

Mother: Joe... I've been thinking this way. If he comes back...

Keller: What do you mean "if"? He's comin' back!

Mother: I think if you sit him down and you... explain yourself. I mean you ought to make it clear to him that you know you did a terrible thing. (Not looking into his eyes)

I mean if he saw that you realize what you did. You see?

Keller: What ice does that cut?

Mother: (a little fearfully) I mean if you told him that you want to pay for what you did.

Keller: (sensing... quietly) How can I pay?

Mother: Tell him... You're willing to go to prison. (pause)

Keller: (struck, amazed) I'm willing to...?

Mother: (quickly) You wouldn't go, he wouldn't ask you to go. But if you told him you wanted to, if he could feel that you wanted to pay, maybe he would forgive you.

Keller: He would forgive me! For what?

Mother: Joe, you know what I mean.

Keller: I don't know what you mean! You wanted money, so I made money. What must I be forgiven? You wanted money, didn't you?

Mother: I didn't want it that way.

Keller: I didn't want it that way, either! What difference is it what you want? I spoiled the both of you. I should've put him out when he was ten like I was put out, and make him earn his keep. Then he'd know how a buck is made in this world. Forgiven! I could live on a quarter a day myself, but I got a family so I...

Mother: Joe, Joe... It don't excuse it that you did it for the family.

Keller: It's got to excuse it!

Mother: There's something bigger than the family to him.

Keller: Nothin' is bigger!

Mother: There is to him.

Keller: There's nothing he could do that I wouldn't forgive. Because he's my son.

Because I'm his father and he's my son.

Mother: Joe, I tell you...

Keller: Nothin's bigger than that. And you're going to tell him, you understand? I'm his father and he's my son, and if there's something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head!

Mother: You stop that!

Keller: You heard me. Now you know what to tell him. (Pause. He moves from her. Halts) But he wouldn't put me away though... He wouldn't do that... Would he?

Mother: He loved you, Joe, you broke his heart.

Keller: But to put me away...

Mother: I don't know. I'm beginning to thing we don't really know him. They say in the war he was such a killer. Here he was always afraid of mice. I don't know him. I don't know what he'll do.

Keller: Goddam, If Larry was alive, he wouldn't act like this. He understood the way the world is made. He listened to me. To him the world had a forty-foot front, it ended at the building line. This one, everything bothers him. You make a deal, overcharge two cents, and his hair falls out. He doesn't understand money. Too easy, it came too easy. Yes, sir. Larry. That was a boy we lost. Larry. Larry. (He slumps on chair in front of her) What am I going to do, Kate?

Mother: Joe, Joe, please... you'll be alright, nothing is going to happen.

Keller: (desperately, lost) For you, Kate, for both of you, that's all I ever lived for....

Mother: I know, darling, I know. (Ann enters from the house. They say nothing, waiting for her to speak)

Ann: Why do you stay up? I'll tell you when he comes.

Keller: (rises, goes to her) You didn't eat supper, did you? (to mother) Why don't you make her something?

Mother: Sure, I'll...

Ann: Never mind, Kate, I'm all right. (they are unable to speak to each other) There's something I want to tell you. (She starts, then halts) I'm not going to do anything about it.

Mother: She's a good girl! (To Keller) You see? She's a ...

Ann: I'll do nothing about Joe, but you're going to do something for me. (Directly to Mother) You made Chris feel guilty with me. I'd like you to tell him that Larry is dead and that you know it. You understand me? I'm not going out of here alone. There's no life for me that way. I want you to set him free. And then I promise you, everything will end, and we'll go away, and that's all.

Keller: You'll do that. You'll tell him.

Ann: I know what I'm asking, Kate. You had two sons. But you've only got one now.

Keller: You'll tell him.

Ann: And you've got to say it to him so he knows you mean it.

Mother: My dear, if the boy was dead, it wouldn't depend on my words to make Chris know it... The night he gets into your bed, his heart will dry up. Because he knows and you know. To his dying day he'll wait for his brother! No, my dear, no such thing. You're going in the morning, and you're going alone. That's your life, that's your lonely life. (she goes to porch, and starts in)

Ann: Larry is dead, Kate.

Mother: (she stops) Don't speak to me.

Ann: I said he's dead. I know! He crashed off the coast of China November twenty fifth! His engine didn't fail him. But he died. I know...

Mother: How did he die? You're lying to me. If you know, how did he die?

Ann: I loved him. You know I loved him. Would I have looked at anyone else if I wasn't sure? That's enough for you.

Mother: (moving on her) What's enough for me? What're you talking about? (She grasps Ann's wrists)

Ann: You're hurting my wrists.
Mother: What are you talking about! (Pause. She stares at Ann a moment, then turns and goes to Keller)

Ann: Joe, go in the house.

Keller: Why should I...

Ann: Please go.

Keller: Lemme know when he comes. (Keller goes into house)

Mother: (as she sees Ann taking a letter from her pocket) What's that?

Ann: Sit down. (Mother moves left to chair, but does not sit) First you've got to understand. When I came, I didn't have any idea that Joe... I had nothing against him or you. I came to get married. I hoped... So I didn't bring this to hurt you. I thought I'd show it to you only if there was no other way to settle Larry in your mind.

Mother: Larry? (snatches letter from Ann's hand)

Ann: He wrote to me just before he... (mother opens and begins to read letter) I'm not trying to hurt you, Kate. You're making me do this, now remember you're... Remember. I've been so lonely, Kate... I can't leave her alone again. (a long low moan comes from Mother's throat as she reads) You made me show it to you. You wouldn't believe me. I told you a hundred times, why wouldn't you believe me!

Mother: Oh, my God....

Ann: (with pity and fear) Kate, please, please...

Mother: My God, my God...

Ann: Kate, dear, I'm so sorry... I'm so sorry.

Chris enters from the driveway. He seems exhausted.

Ann: Where were you? ... You're all perspired. (mother doesn't move) where were you?

Chris: Just drove around a little. I thought you'd be gone.

Ann: Where do I go? I have nowhere to go.

Chris: (to Mother) Where's Dad?

Ann: Inside lying down.

Chris: Sit down, both of you. I'll say what there is to say.

Mother: I didn't hear the car...

Chris: I left it in the garage.

Mother: Jim is out looking for you.

Chris: Mother... I'm going away. There are a couple of firms in Cleveland, I think I can get a place. I mean, I'm going way for good. (To Ann alone) I know what you're thinking, Annie. It's true. I'm yellow. I was made yellow in this house because I suspected my father and I did nothing about it, but if I know that night when I came home what I know now, he'd be in the district attorney's office by this time, and I'd have brought him there. Now if I look at him, all I'm able to do is cry.

Mother: What are you talking about? What else can you do?

Chris: I could jail him! I could jail him, if I were human any more. But I'm like everybody else now. I'm practical now. You made me practical.

Mother: But you have to be.

Chris: The cats in that alley are practical, the bums who ran away when we were fighting were practical. Only the dead ones weren't practical. But now I'm practical, and I spit on myself. I'm going away. I'm going now.

Ann: (going up to him) I'm coming with you.

Chris: No, Ann.

Ann: Chris, I don't ask you to do anting about Joe.

Chris: You do, you do.

Ann: I swear I never will.
Chris: in your heart you always will.

Ann: Then do what you have to do!

Chris: Do what? What is there to do? I've looked all night for a reason to make him suffer.

Ann: There's reason, there's reason!

Chris: What? Do I raise the dead when I put him behind bars? Then what'll I do it for? We used to shoot a man who acted like a dog, but honor was real there, you were protecting something. But here? This is the land of the great big dogs, you don't love a man here, you eat him! That's the principle; the only one we live by... it just happened to kill a few people this time, that's all. The world's that way, how can I take it out on him? What sense does that make? This is a zoo, a zoo!

Ann: (to Mother) You know what he's got to do! Tell him!

Mother: Let him go.

Ann: I won't let him go. You'll tell him what he's got to do...

Mother: Annie!

Ann: Then I will!

Keller enters from house. Chris sees him, goes down near arbor.

Keller: What's the matter with you? I want to talk to you!

Chris: (pulling violently away from him) Don't do that, Dad. I'm going to hurt you if you do that. There's nothing to say so say it quick.

Keller: Exactly what's the matter? what's the matter? you got too much money? Is that what bothers you?

Chris: (with an edge of sarcasm) It bothers me.

Keller: If you can't get used to it, then throw it away. You hear me? Take every cent

and give it to charity, throw it in the sewer. Does that settle it? In the sewer, that's all. You think I'm kidding? I'm tellin' you to do it, if it's dirty then burn it. It's your money, that's not my money. I'm a dead man, I'm an old dean man, nothing's mine. Well, talk to me! What do you want to do.

Chris: It's not what I want to do, it's what you want to do.

Keller: What should I do? (Chris is silent) Jail? You want me to go to jail? If you want me to go, say so! Is that where I belong? Then tell me so! (Slight pause) What's the matter, why can't you tell me? (Furiously) You say everything else to me, say that! (Slight pause) I'll tell you why you can't say it. Because you know I don't belong there. Because you know! (with growing emphasis and passion, and a persistent tone of desperation) Who worked for nothin' in that war? When they ship a gun or a truck outa Detroid before they got their price? Is that clean? It's dollars and cents, nickels and dimes; war and peace, it's nickels and dimes, what's clean? Half the Goddam country is gotta go if I go! That's why you can't tell me.

Chris: That's exactly why.

Keller: Then... Why am I bad?

Chris: I know you're no worse than most men but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man. I saw you as my father. (Almost breaking) I can't look at you this way, I can't look at myself!

He turns away, unable to face Keller. Ann goes quickly to Mother, takes letter from her and starts for Chris. Mother instantly rushes to intercept her.

Mother: Give me that!

Ann: He's going to read it! (She thrusts letter into Chris's hand) Larry. He wrote it to me the day he died.

Keller: Larry!

Mother: Chris, it's not for you. (he starts to read) Joe... go away...

Keller: (mystified, frightened) Why'd she say, Larry, what...?

Mother: (desperately pushes him toward alley, glancing at Chris) Go to the street, Joe, go to the street! (she comes down beside Keller) Don't, Chris... (pleading with her

whole soul) Don't tell him.

Chris: (quietly) Three- and one-half years... talking, talking. Now you tell me what you must do... Thesis how he died, now tell me where you belong.

Keller: (pleading) Chris, a man can't be a Jesus in this world!

Chris: I know all about the world. I know the whole crap story. Now listen to this, and tell me what a man got to be! (Reads:) "My dear Ann: ...", you listening? He wrote this the day he died. Listen, don't cry.... Listen! "My Dear Ann: it is impossible to put down the things I feel. But I've got to tell you something. Yesterday they flew in a load of papers from the States and I read about Dad and your father being convicted. I can't express myself. I can't tell you how I feel... I can't bear to live any more. Last night I circled the base for twenty minutes before I could bring myself in. How could he have done that? Every day three or four men never come back and he sits back there doing 'business'.... I don't know how to tell you what I feel.... I can't face anybody... I'm going out on a mission in a few minutes. They'll probably report me as missing. If they do, I want you to know that you mustn't wait for me. I tell you, Ann, if I had him there now, I could kill him..." (Keller grabs the letter from Chris's hand and reads it. After a long pause) Now blame the world. Do you understand that letter?

Keller: (speaking almost inaudibly) I think I do. Get the car. I'll put on my jacket. (he turns and starts slowly for the house. Mother rushes to intercept him)

Mother: Why are you going? You'll sleep, why are you going?

Keller: I can't sleep here. I'll feel better if I go.

Mother: You're so foolish. Larry was your son too, wasn't he? You know he'd never tell you to do this.

Keller: (looking at letter in his hand) Then what is this if it isn't telling me? Sure, he was my son. But I think to him they were all my sons. And I guess they were, I guess they were. I'll be right down. (exits into house)

Mother: (to Chris, with determination) You're not going to take him!

Chris: I'm taking him.

Mother: It's up to you, if you tell him to stay, he'll stay. Go and tell him!

Chris: Nobody could stop him now.
Mother: You'll stop him! How long will he live in prison? Are you trying to kill him?

Chris: (holding out letter) I thought you read this!

Mother: (of Larry, the letter) The war is over! Didn't you hear? It's over!

Chris: Then what was Larry to you? A stone that fell into the water? It's not enough for him to be sorry. Larry didn't kill himself to make you and Dad sorry.

Mother: What more can we be!

Chris: You can be better! Once and for all you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it, and unless you know that, you threw away your son because that's why he died.

A shot is heard in the house. They stand frozen for a brief second. Chris starts for porch, pauses at step, turns to Ann.

Chris: Find Jim! (He goes on into the house and Ann runs up driveway.

Mother stands alone, transfixed.

Mother: (softly, almost moaning) Joe... Joe... Joe... Joe... (Chris comes out of house, down to Mother's arms.)

Chris: (almost crying) Mother, I didn't mean to...

Mother: Don't dear. Don't take it on yourself. Forget now. Live.

Chris stirs as if to answer. Shhh.... She puts his arms down gently and moves toward porch. Shhh... As she reaches porch steps she begins sobbing.

CURTAIN

Question:

Act One – LOTS:

1) What happened to the apple tree?

…… .

2) What do you know about Larry?

…… .

3) Why did Anne return to her old neighborhood?

…… .

4) What dream does Kate have in Act 1?

…… .

5) How did Joe get released from jail?

…… .

Act Two – LOTS + HOTS:

1) Why does George return to the neighborhood?

…… .

2) Why is Chris avoiding telling his mother that he is going to marry Ann?

…… .

3) Why does Sue consider Chris a bad influence on Jim?

…… .

4) Why doesn't George believe that Steve was responsible for sending the damaged cylinders?

…… .

5) What serves as proof to George that he is right about Joe?

…… .

Act Three – HOTS:

1) Why does Jim mention "private revolutions" and what does he mean by this expression?
…… .

2) What are the differences between how Joe sees the world and how his son Chris sees it?
…… .

3) What is the deal that Ann has for Joe and Kate after the truth about Joe's guilt becomes known?
…… .

4) Give two turning points in Act 3.
(1) …….. .
(2) …….. .

5) How does Joe feel after he finds out what is written in Larry's letter, and what is his reaction?
…… .

Bridging Questions:

1) Arthur Miller's family lost everything in the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and Miller's life changed dramatically. He went from living a wealthy lifestyle to delivering bread every morning after school to help the family make ends meet.

Make a connection between the above information and the text.
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2) Arthur Miller's plays address social and political issues and are often concerned with the individual's response to the pressures of family and society.

How is this information reflected in the play?

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3) "You can't eat the orange and throw the peel away – a man is not a piece of fruit."

Make a connection between the above quote and the text.

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4) "Maybe all one can do is hope to end up with the right regrets."

Make a connection between the above quote and the text.

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5) "Don't be seduced into thinking that that which does not make a profit is without value."

Make a connection between the above quote and the text.

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Module F – A Summer's Reading:

Short Story:

A SUMMER'S READING

By Bernard Malamud

George Stoyonovich was a neighborhood boy who had quit high school on an impulse when he was sixteen, run out of patience, and though he was ashamed every time he went looking for a job, when people asked him if he had finished and he had to say no, he never went back to school. This summer was a hard time for jobs and he had none. Having so much time on his hands, George thought of going to summer school, but the kids in his classes would be too young. He also considered registering in a night high school, only he didn't like the idea of the teachers always telling him what to do. He felt they had not respected him. The result was he stayed off the streets and in his room most of the day. He was close to twenty and had needs with the neighborhood girls, but no money to spend, and he couldn't get more than an occasional few cents because his father was poor, and his sister Sophie, who resembled George, a tall bony girl of twenty-three, earned very little and what she had she kept for herself. Their mother was dead, and Sophie had to take care of the house.

Very early in the morning George's father got up to go to work in a fish market. Sophie left at about eight for her long ride in the subway to a cafeteria in the Bronx. George had his coffee by himself, then hung around in the house. When the house, a five-room railroad flat above a butcher store, got on his nerves he cleaned it up - mopped the floors with a wet mop and put things away. But most of the time he sat in his room. In the afternoons he listened to the ball game. Otherwise he had a couple of old copies of the *World Almanac* he had bought long ago, and he liked to read in them and also the magazines and newspapers that Sophie brought home, that had been left on the tables in the cafeteria. They were mostly picture magazines about movie stars and sports figures, also usually the *News* and *Mirror*. Sophie herself read whatever feel into her hands, although she sometimes read good books.
She once asked George what he did in his room all day and he said he read a lot too. "Of what besides what I bring home? Do you ever read any worthwhile books?"
"Some," George answered, although he really didn't. He had tried to read a book or two that Sophie had in the house but found he was in no mood for them. Lately he couldn't stand made-up stories, they got on his nerves. He wished he had some hobby to work at - as a kid he was good in carpentry, but where could he work at it? Sometimes during the day, he went for walks, but mostly he did his walking after the hot sun had gone down and it was cooler in the streets.

In the evening after supper George left the house and wandered in the neighborhood. During the sultry days some of the storekeepers and their wives sat in chairs on the thick, broken sidewalks in front of the shops, fanning themselves, and George walked past them and the guys hanging out on the candy store corner. A couple of them he had known his whole life, but nobody recognized each other. He had no place special to go, but generally, saving it till the last, he left the neighborhood and walked for blocks till he came to a darkly lit little park with benches and trees and an iron railing, giving it a feeling of privacy. He sat on a bench here, watching the leafy trees and the flowers blooming on the inside of the railing, thinking of a better life for himself. He thought of the jobs he had had since he had quit school - delivery boy, stock clerk, runner, lately working in a factory - and he was dissatisfied with all of them. He felt he should someday like to have a job and live in a private house with a porch, on a street with trees. He wanted to have some dough in his pocket to buy things with, and a girl to go with, so as not to be lonely, especially on Saturday nights. He wanted people to like and respect him. He thought about these things often but mostly when he was alone at night. Around midnight he got up and drifted back to his hot and stony neighborhood.

One time while on his walk George met Mr. Cattanzara coming home very late from work. He wondered if he was drunk but then could tell he wasn't. Mr. Cattanzara, a stocky, baldheaded man who worked in a change booth on an IRT station, lived on the next block after George's, above a shoe repair store. Nights, during the hot weather, he sat on his stoop in an undershirt, reading the *New York Times* in the light of the shoemaker's window. He read it from the first page to the last, then went up to sleep. And all the time he was reading the paper, his wife, a fat woman with a white face, leaned out of the window, gazing into the street, her thick white arms folded under her loose breast, on the window ledge.

Once in a while Mr. Cattanzara came home drunk, but it was a quiet drunk. He never made any trouble, only walked stiffly up the street and slowly climbed the stairs into the hall. Though drunk, he looked the same as always, except for his tight walk, the quietness, and that his eyes were wet. George liked Mr. Cattanzara because he remembered him giving him nickels to buy lemon ice with when he was a squirt. Mr. Cattanzara was a different type than those in the neighborhood. He asked different questions than the others when he met you, and he seemed to know that went on in all the newspapers. He read them, as his fat sick wife watched from the window.
"What are you doing with yourself this summer, George?" Mr. Cattanzara asked. "I see you walkin' around at nights."
George felt embarrassed. "I like to walk."
"What are you doin' in the day now?"
"Nothing much just right now. I'm waiting for a job." Since it shamed him to admit he wasn't working, George said, "I'm staying home - but I'm reading a lot to pick up my

education."
Mr. Cattanzara looked interested. He mopped his hot face with a red handkerchief.
"What are you readin'?"
George hesitated, then said, "I got a list of books in the library once, and now I'm going to read them this summer." He felt strange and a little unhappy saying this, but he wanted Mr. Cattanzara to respect him.
"How many books are there on it?"
"I never counted them. Maybe around a hundred."
Mr. Cattanzara whistled though his teeth.
"I figure if I did that," George went on earnestly, "it would help me in my education. I don't mean the kind they give you in high school. I want to know different things than they learn there, if you know what I mean."
The change maker nodded. "Still and all, one hundred books is a pretty big load for one summer."
"It might take longer."
"After you're finished with some, maybe you and I can shoot the breeze about them?" said Mr. Cattanzara.
"When I'm finished," George answered.

Mr. Cattanzara went home and George continued on his walk. After that, thought he had the urge to, George did nothing different from usual. He still took his walks at night, ending up in the little park. But one evening the shoemaker on the next block stopped George to say he was a good boy, and George figured that Mr. Cattanzara had told him all about the books he was reading. From the shoemaker it must have gone down the street, because George saw a couple of people smiling kindly at him, though nobody spoke to him personally. He felt a little better around the neighborhood and liked it more, though not so much he would want to live in it for ever. He had never exactly disliked the people in it, yet he had never liked them very much either. It was the fault of the neighborhood. To his surprise, George found out that his father and Sophie knew about his reading too. His father was too shy to say anything about it - he was never much of a talker in his whole life - but Sophie was softer to George, and she showed him in other ways she was proud of him.

As the summer went on George felt in a good mood about things. He cleaned the house every day, as a favor to Sophie, and he enjoyed the ball games more. Sophie gave him a buck a week allowance, and though it still wasn't enough and he had to use it carefully, it was a lot better than just having two bits now and then. What he bought with the money - cigarettes mostly an occasional beer or movie ticket - he got a big kick out of. Life wasn't so bad if you knew how to appreciate it. Occasionally he bought a paperback book from the new-stand, but he never got around to reading it, though he was glad to have a couple of books in his room. But he read thoroughly Sophie's

magazines and newspapers. And at night was the most enjoyable time, because when he passed the storekeepers sitting outside their stores, he could tell they regarded him highly. He walked erect, and though he did not say much to them, or they to him, he could feel approval on all sides. A couple of nights he felt so good that he skipped the park at the end of the evening. He just wandered in the neighborhood, where people had known him from the time, he was a kid playing Punchball whenever there was a game of it going; he wandered there, then came home and got undressed for bed, feeling fine.

For a few weeks he had talked only once with Mr. Cattanzara, and though the change maker had said nothing more about the books, asked no questions, his silence made George a little uneasy. For a while George didn't pass in front of Mr. Cattanzara's house any more, until one night, forgetting himself, he approached it from a different direction than he usually did when he did. It was already past midnight. The street, except for one or two people, was deserted, and George was surprised when he saw Mr. Cattanzara still reading his newspaper by the light of the street lamp overhead. His impulse was to stop at the stoop and talk to him. He wasn't sure what he wanted to say, though he felt the words would come when he began to talk; but the more he thought about it, the more the idea scared him, and he decided he'd better not. He even considered beating it home by another street, but he was too near Mr. Cattanzara, and the change maker might see him as he ran, and get annoyed. So, George unobtrusively crossed the street, trying to make it seem as if he had to look in a store window on the other side, which he did, and then went on, uncomfortable at what he was doing. He feared Mr. Cattanzara would glance up from his paper and call him a dirty rat for walking on the other side of the street, but all he did was sit there, sweating through his undershirt, his bald head shining in the dim light as he read his *Times*, and upstairs his fat wife leaned out of the window, seeming to read the paper along with him. George thought she would spy him and yell out to Mr. Cattanzara, but she never moved her eyes off her husband.

George made up his mind to stray away from the change maker until he had got some of his softback books read, but when he started them and saw they were mostly story books, he lost his interest and didn't bother to finish them. He lost his interest in reading other things too. Sophie's magazines and newspapers went unread. She saw them piling up on a chair in his room and asked why he was no longer looking at them, and George told her it was because of all the other reading he had to do. Sophie said she had guessed that was it. So, for most of the day, George had the radio on, turning to music when he was sick of the human voice. He kept the house fairly neat, and Sophie said nothing on the days when he neglected it. She was still kind and gave him his extra buck, though things weren't so good for him as they had been before.

But they were good enough, considering. Also, his night walks invariably picked him up, no matter how bad the day was. Then one-night George saw Mr. Cattanzara coming

down the street towards him. George was about to turn and run but he recognized from Mr. Cattanzara's walk that he was drunk, and if so, probably he would not even bother to notice him. So, George kept on walking straight ahead until he came abreast of Mr. Cattanzara and though he felt wound up enough to pop into the sky, he was not surprised when Mr. Cattanzara passed him without a word, walking slowly, his face and body still. George drew a breath in relief at his narrow escape, when he heard his name called, and there stood Mr. Cattanzara at his elbow, smelling like the inside of a beer barrel. His eyes were sad as he gazed at George, and George felt so intensely uncomfortable he was tempted to shove the drunk aside and continue on his walk.
But he couldn't act that way to him, and, besides, Mr. Cattanzara took a nickel out of his pants pocket and handed it to him.
"Go buy yourself a lemon ice, Georgie."
"It's not that time any more, Mr. Cattanzara," George said, "I am a big guy now."
"No, you ain't," said Mr. Cattanzara, to which George made no reply he could think of.
"How are all your books coming along?" Mr. Cattanzara asked. Though he tried to stand steady, he swayed a little.
"Fine, I guess," said George, feeling the red crawling up his face.
"You ain't sure?" The change maker smiled slyly; a way George had never seen him smile.
"Sure, I'm sure. They're fine."
Though his head swayed in little arcs, Mr. Cattanzara's eyes were steady. He had small blue eyes which could hurt if you looked at them too long.
"George," he said, "name me one book on that list that you read this summer, and I will drink to your health."
"I don't want anybody drinking to me."
"Name me one so I can ask you a question on it. Who can tell, if it's a good book maybe I might want to read it myself."
George knew he looked passable on the outside, but inside he was crumbling apart Unable to reply, he shut he eyes, but when - years later - he opened them, he saw that Mr. Cattanzara had, out of pity, gone away, but in his ears he still head the words he had said when he left: "George, don't do what I did."

The next night he was afraid to leave his room, and though Sophie argued with him he wouldn't open the door.
"What are you doing in there?" she asked.
"Nothing."
"Are you reading?"
"No."
She was silent a minute, then asked, "Where do you keep the books you read? I never see any in your room outside of a few cheap trashy ones."
He wouldn't tell her.

"In that case you're not worth a buck of my hard-earned money. Why should I break my back for you? Go on out, you bum, and get a job."
He stayed in his room for almost a week, except to sneak into the kitchen when nobody was home. Sophie railed at him, then begged him to come out, and his old father wept, but George wouldn't budge, though the weather was terrible and his small room stifling. He found it very hard to breathe, each breath was like drawing a flame into his lungs.

One night, unable to stand the heat any more, he burst into the street at one a.m., a shadow of himself. He hoped to sneak to the park without being seen, but there were people all over the block, wilted and listless, waiting for a breeze. George lowered his eyes and walked, in disgrace, away from them, but before long he discovered they were still friendly to him. He figured Mr. Cattanzara hadn't told on him. Maybe when he woke up out of his drunk the next morning, he had forgotten all about meeting George. George felt his confidence slowly come back to him.
That same night a man on a street corner asked him if it was true that he had finished reading so many books, and George admitted he had. The man said it was a wonderful thing for a boy his age to read so much.
"Yeah," George said, but he felt relieved. He hoped nobody would mention the books any more, and when, after a couple of days, he accidentally met Mr. Cattanzara again, *he* didn't, though George had the idea he was the one who had started the rumor that he had finished all the books.

One evening in the fall, George ran out of his house to the library, where he hadn't been in years. There were books all over the place, wherever he looked, and though he was struggling to control an inward trembling, he easily counted off a hundred, then sat down at a table to read.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) Why did George drop out of school?
…… .

2) List TWO things that you know about Cattanzara.
(1) …… .
(2) …… .

3) Where does Mr. Cattanzara work?
……..…. .

4) What is the lie that George tells Mr. Cattanzara?
……..…. .

5) Why did Sophie stop giving George pocket money?
……..…. .

HOTS:

1) Why is the story called "A Summer's Reading," though George only sat down to read his 100 books in the fall?
……..…. .

2) Why do you think that Georg feels better walking around the neighborhood at night?
……..…. .

3) Why does George feel that he needs to lie to Mr. Cattanzara about what he is doing over the summer?
……..…. .

4) How is the word "reading" metaphoric in the title?
……..…. .

5) What was Mr. Cattanzara trying to show George when he gave him a nickel to buy a lemon ice?
…….. .

Bridging Question:

As the son of Jewish immigrants, Barnard Malamud said: "There comes a time in a man's life when to get where he has to go – if there are no doors or windows he walks through a wall."

Make a connection between the above quote and the story.

Module F – The Enemy:

Short Story:

THE ENEMY

By Pearl S Buck

Part I

Dr. Sadao Hoki's house was built on a spot off the Japanese coast. As a little boy he had often played there. His low square stone house was built above the narrow beach. His father had taken him often to the islands not far from the shore. He would say to the serious little boy at his side.
"Those islands out there are the stepping-stones to the future of Japan."
"Where shall we step from them?" Sadao had asked.
"Who knows?" his father had answered. "Who can limit our future? It depends on what we make it."
Sadao had paid attention to this as he did everything his father said. His father never joked or played with him. However, he gave all his attention to his only son. Sadao knew that his education" was the most important thing in the world to his father. For this reason, he had been sent at twenty-two to America to learn all that could be learned of surgery and medicine. He had come back at thirty. Before his father died, he had seen Sadao become famous not only as a surgeon but as a scientist. Sadao was now working on an important medical discovery, so he had not been sent abroad with the troops. He also knew there was a chance the old General might need an operation. This was another reason why Sadao was being kept in Japan.
The weather had been surprisingly warm for the past few days. There was heavy fog at night.
The door opened and Hana looked out. She was wearing a dark-blue kimono'. She came to him affectionately. She put her arm through his, smiled, and said nothing. He had met Hana in America, but he had waited to fall in love with her until he was sure she believed in traditional Japanese values Otherwise, his father would never have received her. He thought about how lucky he was that he had found her by chance really", at an American professor's house.
The professor and his wife had been kind people. They wanted to do something for their few foreign students". The students, though bored Sadao had often told Hana that he had almost not gone to Professor Harley's house that night.
But he had gone and there he had found Hana, a new student. They had not married carelessly in America. They had finished their studies and had come home to Japan. After his father had seen her. The marriage was arranged in the old Japanese way,

although Sadao and Hana had talked everything over before. They were perfectly happy.
She laid her cheek -against his arm. It was at this moment that both of them saw something black come out of the mists".

It was a man. He was thru out of the ocean by a wave". He staggered a few steps, his arms above his head. Then the mists hid him again.
"Who is that?" Hana cried. She dropped Sadao's arm and they both leaned over the railing' of the Now they saw him again. The man was on his hands and knees crawling". Then they saw him fall on his face and lie there.
"A fisherman perhaps." Sadao said, "Washed from his boat." He ran quickly down the steps. Behind him Hana came, her wide sleeves flying. A mile or two away on either side, there were fishing villages.
Somehow the man had managed to go through the rocks. He must be badly hurt. They saw that the sand on one side of him was red.
"He is wounded-." Sadao exclaimed. He hurried to the man. He lay there without moving. His face in the sand. An old cap stuck to his head. His clothes were wet rags. Sadao stooped. Hana at his side, and turned the man's head. 'He saw the face.
"A white man!" Hana whispered.
Yes, it was a white man. His wet yellow hair, long, as though had not been cut for many weeks. On his young and tortured- he had a rough yellow beard. He was unconscious. Sadao remembered the wound and with his expert fingers began to search for it. Blood flowed freshly" at his touch. On the right side of his lower back Sadao saw that a gun wound had been reopened. The flesh was black. Sometime not many days ago, the man had been shot and had not been saved. It his bad luck now that a rock had struck his wound.
"Oh, how he is bleeding!" Hana whispered again. The mists lid them completely now. At this time of day no one came by. The fishermen had gone home.
"What shall be do with this man?" Sadao said.
But his hands seemed to have a will of their own. They worked to stop the bleeding. The man moaned with pain but he did not awaken".
"The best thing that we could do would be to put him back in the sea," Sadao said, answering himself.
Now that the bleeding was stopped for the moment, he stood up and dusted the sand from his hands'".
"Yes. That would be best," Hana said. But she continued to look at the man.
"If we sheltered a white man in our house we would be arrested. But if we turned him in as a prisoner, he would certainly die," Sadao said.
"The kindest thing would be to put him back into the sea," Hana said. But neither of them moved.
"What is he?" Hana whispered. "There is something about him that looks American," Sadao said. He picked up the cap.

"A sailor," he said, "from an American warship." He spelled it out: "U.S. Navy." The man was a prisoner of war! "He has escaped" Hana cried softly, "and that is why he was shot in the back," Sadao agreed.

They hesitated, looking at each other. Then Hana said, "Are we able to put him back into the sea?" "If I am able, are you?" Sadao asked. "So." Hana said. "But if you can do it alone ..." Sadao hesitated again.
"The strange thing is," he said, "that if the man were whole, I could turn him over to the police without difficulty. I care nothing for him. He is my enemy. All Americans are my enemy. -And he is only a common fellow. You see how foolish his face is. But since he is wounded ..."
"You also cannot throw him back to the sea," Hana said. "Then there is only one thing to do. We must carry him into the house."
"But the servants"?" Sadao asked.
"We must simply tell them that we plan to give him to the police. And we must, Sadao. We must think of the children and of our position1. It would endanger all of us if we did not give this man over as a prisoner of war."
"Certainly," Sadao agreed. "I would not think of doing anything else."

Part II

Together they lifted the man. He was very light. They carried him up the steps and into an empty bedroom. It bad been the bedroom of Sadao's father. Since his death it had not been used. They laid the man" on the floor mat. Everything here had been Japanese-to please the old man. Sadao's father would never in his own home sit on a chair or sleep in a foreign bed Hana went to the wall cupboards and slid back a door) and took out a soft quilt. She hesitated. The quilt was covered with flowered silk.
"He is so dirty," she whispered.
"Yes, he had better be washed," Sadao agreed. If you will bring hot water, I will wash him."
"I cannot bear for you to touch him," she said. "We shall have to tell the servants he is here. 1 will tell Yumi now. She can leave the children for a few minutes and she can wash him."
Sadao thought a moment. "Yes," he agreed. "You tell Yumi and I will tell the others."
The whiteness of the man's face moved Sadao to feel his pulse. It was faint" but it was there. He put his hand against the man's cold chest". The heart too was still alive.
"He will die unless he is operated on," Sadao said. "The question is whether he will not die anyway."
Hana cried out in fear. "Don't try to save him! What if he should live?"
"What if he should die?" Sadao replied. He looked at the motionless man. This man must be very healthy or he would have been dead by now. He looked so very young.
"You mean die from the operation?" Hana asked.

"Yes," Sadao said.
Hana thought about this and when she did not answer, Sadao turned away.
"In any case something must be done with him," he said, "and first he must be washed."
He went quickly out of the room and Hana came behind him. She did not wish to be left alone with the white man. He was the first she had seen since she left America. He seemed to have nothing to do with those whom she had known there. Here he was her enemy, a threat, living or dead.
She turned to the nursery and called, "Yumi!"
The children heard her voice. She had to go in for a moment and smile at them and play with the baby, now nearly three months old.
To Yumi she said, "Come with me!"
"I will put the baby to bed," Yumi said. "He is ready."
She went with Yumi into the bedroom next to the nursery. She stood with the boy in her arms while Yumi spread the sleeping quilts on the floor and laid the baby between them.
Then Hana led the way quickly to the kitchen. The two servants were frightened at what their master had just told them.
"The master ought not to heal the wounds of this white man,"
The old gardener said to Hana. "The white man ought to die. First, he was shot. Then the sea caught him and wounded him, with her rocks. If the master heals what the gun did and what the sea did, they will take revenge on us."
"I will tell him what you say," Hana answered politely. But she herself was also frightened, although she was not superstitious as the old man was. Could it ever be right to help an enemy?
Nevertheless, she told Yumi to bring the hot water to - the room where the white man was. She went ahead and slid back the partitions". Sadao was not, there yet. Yumi, following, put down her wooden bucket". Then she went over to the white man.
"I have never washed a white man," she said, "and I will not wash one so dirty now."
Hana cried, "You will do what your master commands you!"
"My master ought not to command me to wash the enemy," Yumi said stubbornly.
The look upon Yumi's round dull face made Hana feel afraid.
What if she should report" something that was not as it happened?
"Very well," she said with dignity. "You understand we only want to bring him to his senses so that we can turn him over as a prisoner?"
"I will have nothing to do with it," Yumi said. "I am a poor person and it is not my business."
"Then please," Hana said gently, "return to your own work."
Yumi left the room. But this left Hana alone with the white man. She might have been too afraid to stay, but her anger at Yumi gave her courage".
"Stupid Yumi!" she said. "Is this anything but a man? A wounded helpless man!"
She untied the rags that covered the white man. She dipped a small clean towel into the

steaming hot water and washed his face carefully. She kept on washing him until his upper body was quite clean. But she dared not turn him over.

Where was Sadao? Now her anger was disappearing and she was anxious again. She got up and wiped her hands. She then put the quilt over him so he wouldn't be cold. Sadao!" she called softly.
He had been about to come in when she called. She saw that he had brought his surgeon's emergency bag" and that he wore his surgeon's coat.
"You have decided to operate then!" she cried.
"Yes," he said shortly. He turned his back to her and unfolded a sterilized towel and put his instruments out upon it.
"Bring towels," he said.
She went obediently, but anxiously now, to the shelf and took out the towels.
"Help me turn him," Sadao commanded her.
She obeyed him without a word, and he began to wash the man's back carefully.
"Yumi would not wash him," she said.
"Did you wash him then? Sadao asked.
"Yes," she said.
He did not seem to hear.
"You will have to give the anesthetic if he needs it," he said.
"I?" she repeated. "But I never have!"
"It is easy enough," he said impatiently.
The blood began to flow more quickly. He looked into the wound.
"The bullet is still there," he said with cool interest. "Now I wonder how deep this rock wound is. If it is not too deep it may be that I can get the bullet. But he has lost much blood."
At this moment Hana choked'. He looked up and saw her face - the color of sulfur.
"Don't faint," he said sharply.
He did not put down his instrument. "If I stop now, the man will surely die."
She clapped her hands to her mouth" jumped up and ran out of the room. Outside in the garden he heard her retching. But he went on with his work.
"It will be better for her to empty her stomach," he thought. He had forgotten that she had never seen an operation. The fact that he couldn't go to his wife made him impatient and angry with the white man.
"This man," he thought, "There is no reason under heaven why he should live."
He worked quickly. The man moaned.
"Groan," he muttered, "groan if you like. I am not doing this for my own pleasure. In fact, I do not know why I am doing it."

Part III

The door opened and there was Hana again. She had not stopped even to smooth back her hair.
"Where is the anesthetic?" she asked in a clear voice.
"It is good that you came back," he said. "This fellow is beginning to wake up."
She had the bottle and some cotton in her hand. "But how shall I do it?" she asked.
"Simply saturate" the cotton and hold it near his nose," Sadao said working as he spoke.
"When he breathes badly", move it away a little." She looked into the sleeping face of the young American. The man was suffering whether he knew it or not. Watching him she wondered if the stories they heard sometimes of the sufferings of prisoners were true. In the newspapers the reports'" always said that wherever the Japanese armies went, the people received them gladly", with cries of joy at their liberation. But sometimes she remembered such men as General Takima, who at home beat his wife cruelly'. No one talked about that after he fought such a victorious battle in Manchuria. If a man like that could be so cruel to a woman in his power, wouldn't he be cruel to one like this?
She hoped anxiously that this young man had not been tortured. It was at this moment that she saw deep red scars on his neck, just under the ear. "Those scars," she murmured, lifting her eyes to Sadao.
But he did not answer. At this moment he felt the tip of his instrument strike against something hard, dangerously near the kidney". All thought left him. He felt only the purest pleasure. He probed with his fingers, gently. He was familiar with every atom of this human body. His old American professor of anatomy had made sure he would have that knowledge.
"Ignorance of the human body is the surgeon's cardinal sin, sirs!" he had shouted at his classes year after year.
"It is not quite at the kidney, my friend," Sadao whispered. It was his habit to whisper to the patient during an operation.
He always called his patients "my friend," and so now he did, forgetting that this was his enemy.
Then quickly, with the cleanest and most precise incision1', the bullet was out. The man quivered", but he was still unconscious.
He said a few English words.
"Guts," he muttered, choking". "They got my guts ..."
"Sadao!" Hana cried sharply.
"Hush"," Sadao said.
The man went again into such a deep silence. Sadao took up his wrist" hating the touch of it. Yes, there was still a weak pulse enough, if he wanted the man to live, to give hope.

"But certainly I do not want this man to live," he thought.
"No more anesthetic," he told Hana.
He thrust a needle into the patient's left arm. Then, putting down the needle, he took the man's wrist, again. The pulse under his finger grew stronger.
"This man will live in spite of all," he said to Hana and sighed.
The young man woke. He was weak and terrified when he realized where he was. Hana felt she had to apologize. She served him herself, for none of the servants would enter the room.
"Don't be afraid," she begged him softly.
"How come you speak English?" he gasped.
"I was in America for a long time," she replied. She saw that he wanted to say something, but he could not. She fed him gently from the porcelain spoon. He ate unwillingly, but still he ate.
"Now you will soon be strong," she said, not liking him, but wanting to comfort him.
He did not answer.
When Sadao came in the third day after the operation, he found the young man sitting up. His face was white.
"Lie down," Sadao cried. "Do you want to die?"
He forced the man down gently and strongly and examined the wound. "You may kill yourself if you do this sort of thing," he scolded.
"What are you going to do with me?" the boy asked. He looked just barely seventeen. "Are you going to hand me over?"
For a moment Sadao did not answer. He finished examination and then pulled the silk quilt over the man. "I do not know myself what I shall do with you," He said. "Of course, I ought to give you to the police. You are a prisoner of war" "no, do not tell me anything."
He put up his hand as he saw the young man about to speak. "Do not even tell me your name unless I ask it." They looked at each other for a moment, and then the young man closed his eyes and turned his face to the wall.
"Okay," he whispered.
Outside the door Hana was waiting for Sadao. He saw at once that she was in trouble.
"Sadao, Yumi tells me the servants feel they cannot stay if we hide this man here anymore," she said. "She tells me that they are saying that you and I were in America for so long that we have forgotten to think of our own country first. They think we like Americans."
"It is not true," Sadao said, "Americans are our enemies. But I have been trained' not to let a man die if I can help it."
"The servants cannot understand that," she said anxiously'.
"No," he agreed.
As the days passed the servants were as polite as ever, but their eyes were cold.
"It is clear what our master ought to do," the old gardener' said one morning. "My old

master's son knows very well what he ought to do," he said. "When the man was so near death, why did he not let him bleed?"
"The young master is so proud that he can save a life that he saves any life," the cook said.
"It is the children of whom we must think," Yumi said sadly. "What will happen to them if their father is punished as a traitor?"
They did not try to hide what they said from Hana, who was arranging flowers on the veranda. She knew they wanted her to hear what they said. She knew that they were right. But there was another part of her which she herself could not understand. It was not that she liked the prisoner. She had come to think of him as a prisoner. She had not liked him even yesterday when he had said, "Anyway, let me tell you that my name is Tom."
As for Sadao, every day he examined" the wound" carefully. The last stitches had been pulled out" this morning. In a fortnight he would be nearly as well as ever. Sadao went back to his office and carefully typed a letter to the chief of police reporting the whole matter. He typed: "On the twenty-first day of February an escaped prisoner ... ". Then he opened a secret drawer of his desk and put the unfinished report into it.

Part IV

On the seventh day after that, two things happened. First, the servants were leaving. When Hana got up in the morning nothing had been done. The house had not been cleaned and the food had not been prepared, and she knew what it meant. She was afraid, even terrified, but her pride as a mistress would not allow her to show it. Instead, when they came into the kitchen, she paid them off and thanked them for all that they had done for her. They were crying, but she did not cry. The cook and the gardener had served Sadao since he was a little boy in his father's house.
Yumi cried because of the children.
"If the baby misses me' too much tonight, send for me'. I am going to my own house and you know where it is."
"Thank you," Hana said smiling. But she told herself she would not send for Yumi no matter how much the baby cried.
She made the breakfast and Sadao helped with the children. Neither of them spokes of the servants. But after Hana had taken morning food to the prisoner, she came back to Sadao.
"Why is it we cannot see clearly what we ought to do?" she asked him. "Even the servants see more clearly than we do.
Why are we different from other Japanese?"
Sadao did not answer. But a little later he went into the room where the prisoner was and said, "Today you may get up on your feet. I want you to stay up only five minutes at a time. Tomorrow you may try it twice as long. You must get back your strength as

quickly as possible."
He saw the flicker of terror on the young face that was still very pale.
"Okay," the boy said. "I feel I ought to thank you, doctor, for saving my life."
"Don't thank me too early," Sadao said coldly. He saw the terror again in the boy's eyes. The scars on his neck were bright red for a moment. Those scars! What were they? Sadao did not ask.
In the afternoon the second thing happened. Hana, working hard, saw a messenger come to the door in official uniform.
Her hands went weak and she could not breathe. The servants must have told already. She ran to Sadao, gasping", unable to speak. But by then the messenger had simply followed her through the garden and there he stood. She pointed at him anxiously ".
Sadao looked up from his book.
"What is it?" he asked the messenger, and then he got up, seeing the man's uniform.
"You are to come to the palace'?" the man said, "The old General is in pain again."
"Oh," Hana breathed, "is that all?" "All?" the messenger said. "Is it not enough?"
"Indeed it is," she replied. "I am very sorry."
When Sadao came to say goodbye, she was in the kitchen, but doing nothing. The children were asleep and she sat resting for a moment. She was more tired from her fright than from work.
"I thought they had come to arrest you," she said.
He looked down into her anxious eyes. "I must get rid of this man for your sake," he said in a worried voice. "Somehow I must get rid of him."
"Of course," the General said weakly, "I understand. But that is because I once took a degree in Princeton. So, few Japanese have."
"I care nothing for the man, Excellency," Sadao said, "but since I operated on him with such success..."
"Yes, yes," the General said. "It only makes me feel you are even more important to me. It is clear that you can save anyone.
You say you think I can stand one more such attack" as I have had today?" "Not more than one." Sadao said. "Then certainly I can allow nothing to happen to you," the General said with anxiety. His face showed he was in deep in thought.
"You cannot be arrested"," the General said, closing his eyes. "What if you were condemned to death" and the next day I had to have my operation?"
"There are other surgeons", Excellency," Sadao suggested. "None I trust." the General replied. The General suddenly felt weak. "It is very unfortunate" that this man was washed up on your doorstep"," he said irritably. "I feel it so myself,"
Sadao said gently. "It would be best if he could be quietly killed," the General said.
"Not by you, but by someone who does not know him. I have my own private assassins. What if I sent two of them to your house tonight-or better, any night?
You need know nothing about it. It is now warm-what would be more natural than for you to leave the white man's room open while he sleeps?"

"Certainly it would be very natural," Sadao agreed. "In fact, it is left open every night."
"Good," the General said, yawning. "They are very good assassins. If you like I can even have them take the body away."
Sadao thought about this. "That perhaps would be best, Excellency," he agreed, thinking of Hana.
He left the General and went home, thinking over the plan. In this way the whole thing would be taken out of his hands. He would tell Hana nothing. She would not like the idea of assassins in the house. Of course, such persons were necessary in a country like Japan. How else could rulers deal with those who were against them?
He struggled to think logically as he went into the room where the American was in bed. But to his surprise he found the young man out of bed, getting ready to go into the garden.
"What is this!" he exclaimed. "Who gave you permission to leave your room?"
"I'm not used to waiting for permission," Torn said happily. "I feel pretty good again! But will the muscles on this side always feel stiff?"
"Do they?" Sadao asked, surprised. He forgot about everything else.
"Now I thought I had taken care of that," he said. He lifted the man's shirt, and looked at the scar". "Massage" may do it," he 30 said, "if exercise does not."
"It won't bother me much," the young man said. His face was thin under the blond beard". "Say, doctor, I've got something I want to say to you. If I hadn't met a Jap" like you-well, I wouldn't be alive today. I know that."
Sadao bowed but he could not speak.
"Sure, I know that," Tom went on warmly. "I guess if all the Japs were like you there wouldn't have been a war,"
"Perhaps," Sadao said with difficulty. "And now I think you had better go back to bed."
He helped the boy back into bed and then bowed. "Good night," he said.
Sadao, slept badly that night. Time and time again' he woke, thinking he heard footsteps.
The next morning he went into the guest room. When he opened the door he saw at once that last night was not the night.
There on the pillow was the blond head. He could hear the peaceful breathing of sleep and he closed the door again quietly.
"He is asleep," he told Hana. "He is almost well to sleep like that."
"What shall we do with him?" Hana whispered.
Sadao shook his head. "I must decide in a day or two," he promised. But certainly, he thought, the second night must be the night. There was a wind that night, and he listened to its sounds. Hana woke too. "Shouldn't we go and close the sick man's partition?" she asked. "No," Sadao said. "He is able to do it for himself."

Part V

But the next morning the American was still there.
Then the third night of course must be the night. The wind changed to quiet rain. Sadao slept a little better, but he woke at the sound of a crash5 and leaped to his feet.
"What was that?" Hana cried. The baby woke at her voice and began to cry. "I must go and see." But he held her and would not let her move. "Sadao," she cried, "what is the matter with you'll" "Don't go," he said, "don't go!"
He was terrified and stood breathless, waiting. There was only silence. Hana took the child in her arms and together they crept back into the bed, the baby between them.
Yet, when he opened the door of the guest room in the morning, there was the young man. He was very gay and had already washed and was now on his feet. He had asked for a razor yesterday and had shaved himself. Today there was a faint color in his cheeks.
"I am well," he said joyously.
Sadao drew his kimono around his tired body. He could not, he decided suddenly, go through another night. It was not that he cared for this young man's life. No, simply it was not worth the strain.
"You are well," Sadao agreed. He lowered his voice.
"You are so well I think if I put my boat on the shore tonight, with food and extra clothes in it, you might be able to rows to that little island' not far from the coast'! Nobody lives there. You could stay there until you saw a Korean fishing boat pass by. They pass quite near the island."
The young man stared" at him, slowly understanding. "So I have to?" he asked.
"I think so," Sadao said gently. "You understand-it is known that you are here."
The young man nodded. "Okay," he said simply.
Sadao did not see him again until evening. As soon as it was dark he had brought the boat down to the shore. He put food, bottles of water and two quilts into it. There was no moon and he worked without a flashlight.
When he came to the house he entered as though he were just back from his work, and so Hana knew nothing. "Yumi was here today," she said as she served his supper. "She cried over the baby," she went on with a sigh, "She misses" him so."
"The servants will come back as soon as the foreigner" is gone," Sadao said.
He went into the guest room" that night. He carefully checked the American's temperature. The wound and his heart and pulse.
"I realize you are saving my life again," he told Sadao.
"Not at all," Sadao said, "it is only inconvenient to have you here any longer." He had hesitated" about giving the man a flashlight". But he had decided to give it to him after all. It was a small one, his own, which he used at night when he was called.
"If your food runs out before you catch a boat," he said, "signal me two flashes just when the sun goes down. Do not signal in darkness, for it will be seen. If you are all

right but still there, signal me once. You will find fish easy to catch but you must eat them raw. A fire would be seen."
"Okay," the young man said.
He was dressed now in the Japanese clothes which Sadao had given him, and at the last moment Sadao wrapped a black cloth about his blond head.
"NOW," Sadao said.
The young American, without a word, shook Sadao's hand warmly. Then he walked down the step into the darkness of the garden. Once-twice-Sadao used his flashlight to find his way, but that would not be suspected. He waited until there was one more flash. Then he closed the partition. That night he slept.
"You say the man escaped?" the General asked faintly. He had been operated upon a week before. It was an emergency operation and Sadao had been called in the night. For twelve hours Sadao had not been sure the General would live. Then the old man had begun to breathe deeply again and to demand food.
Sadao had not been able to ask about the assassins. So far as he knew they had never come. The servants had returned, and Yumi had cleaned the guest room thoroughly" to get the white man's smell out of it. Nobody said anything.
But after a week Sadao felt the General was well enough for him to talk about the prisoner.
"Yes, Excellency, he escaped." Sadao said in a way that showed that he had not said all he might have said, but that he did not want to disturb the General. But the old man opened his eyes suddenly.
"That prisoner," he said with some energy, "did I not promise you I would kill him for you?"
"You did, Excellency," Sadao said.
"Well, well!" the old man said in a tone of amazement", "so I did! But you see, I was suffering" a lot. The truth is, I thought of nothing but myself. In short, I forgot my promise to you."
"I wondered', Your Excellency," Sadao whispered.
"It was certainly very careless of me," the General said. "But you understand it was not because I am not a good Japanese." He looked anxiously at his doctor. "If the matter should come out, you would understand that, wouldn't you?"
"Certainly, Your Excellency," Sadao said. He suddenly understood that he had the General in the palm of his hand. And therefore, he himself was perfectly safe. "I can swear to your loyalty, Excellency," he said to the old General, "and to your zeal against the enemy."
"You are a good man," the General said and closed his eyes. "You will be rewarded."
But Sadao, searching the darkness in the sea that night, had his reward. There was no flash of light. No one was on the island. His prisoner was gone. Sadao was sure he was safe.
He stood for a moment on the veranda'" looking out to the sea from where the young

man had come that other night. Into his head, although without reason, there came other white faces he had known. There was the professor at whose house he had met Hana. He remembered his old teacher of anatomy and his fat landlady".
It had been hard to find a place to live in America because he was a Japanese. The Americans were full of prejudice. It had been hard to live among such feelings". It was hard because he knew that as a Japanese, he was superior" to Americans. How he had hated the ignorant and dirty old woman who had agreed to rent him a room in her miserable Home!
He had once tried to be grateful to her, but it was too difficult. In his last year, she had taken care of him when he was sick. He thought she was disgusting, even though she was kind to him. But then, white people were disgusting, of course. It was a relief to be openly at home with them at last. Now he remembered the young, tired face of his prisoner- white and disgusting.
"Strange," he thought, "I wonder why I could not kill him."

Questions:

LOTS:

1) How do we know that Sadao was a successful surgeon?
…… .

2) Where are Sadao and Hana from?
…… .

3) Who is Yumi?
…… .

4) What was Sadao's connection to the General?
…… .

5) How does Tom escape at the end of the story?
…… .

HOTS:

1) Why is it important to the story that Sadao and Hana spent time in America together?
…… .

2) How did the servants in the household react when they understood that the enemy is being treated there?
…… .

3) How does Tom feel about Japanese people?
…… .

4) There are many conflicts in this story between many of the characters. Choose one conflict, explain it, and its solution.
…… .

5) The story is called "The Enemy", but the author has specifically said that the enemy is neither Tom, nor Sadao.
According to your understanding, who is The Enemy?
………………………………………………………………………………………… .

Bridging Question:

"I refuse to allow any man-made differences separate me from being human". (Maya Angelou)

Make a connection between the above quote and the story.
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Module F – The Split Cherry Tree:

Short Story:

THE SPLIT CHERRY TREE

By Jesse Stuart (1906-1984)

I don't mind staying after school," I says to Professor Herbert, "but I'd rather you'd whip me with a switch and let me go home early. Pa will whip me anyway for getting home two hours late."

"You are too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, "and I have to punish you for climbing up in that cherry tree. You boys knew better than that! The other five boys have paid their dollar each. You have been the only one who has not helped pay for the tree. Can't you borrow a dollar?"

"I can't," I says. "I'll have to take the punishment. I wish it would be quicker punishment. I wouldn't mind."

Professor Herbert stood and looked at me. He was a big man. He wore a grey suit of clothes. The suit matched his grey hair.

"You don't know my father," I says to Professor Herbert. "He might be called a little old-fashioned. He makes us mind him until we're twenty-one years old. He believes: 'If you spare the rod you spoil the child.' I'll never be able to make him understand about the cherry tree. I'm the first of my people to go to high school."

"You must take the punishment," says Professor Herbert. "You must stay two hours after school today and two hours after school tomorrow. I am allowing you twenty-five cents an hour. That is good money for a high-school student. You can sweep the schoolhouse floor, wash the blackboards, and clean windows. I'll pay the dollar for you."

I couldn't ask Professor Herbert to loan me a dollar. He never offered to loan it to me. I had to stay and help the janitor and work out my fine at a quarter an hour.

I thought as I swept the floor, "What will Pa do to me? What lie can I tell him when I go home? Why did we ever climb that cherry tree and break it down for anyway? Why did we run crazy over the hills away from the crowd? Why did we do all of this? Six of us climbed up in a little cherry tree after one little lizard! Why did the tree split and fall with us? It should have been a stronger tree! Why did Eif Crabtree just happen to be below us plowing and catch us in his cherry tree? Why wasn't he a better man than to charge us six dollars for the tree?"

It was six o'clock when I left the schoolhouse. I had six miles to walk home. It would be after seven when I got home. I had all my work to do when I got home. It took Pa and I both to do the work. Seven cows to milk. Nineteen head of cattle to feed, four mules, twenty-five hogs, firewood and stovewood to cut, and water to draw from the well. He would be doing it when I got home. He would be mad and wondering what was keeping me!

I hurried home. I would run under the dark, leafless trees. I would walk fast uphill. I would run down the hill. The ground was freezing. I had to hurry. I had to run. I reached the long ridge that led to our cow pasture. I ran along this ridge. The wind dried the sweat on my face. I ran across the pasture to the house.

I threw down my books in the chipyard. I ran to the barn to spread fodder on the ground for the cattle. I didn't take time to change my clean school clothes for my old work clothes. I ran out to the barn. I saw Pa spreading fodder on the ground to the cattle. That was my job. I ran up to the fence. I says, "Leave that for me, Pa. I'll do it. I'm just a little late."

"I see you are," says Pa. He turned and looked at me. His eyes danced fire. "What in th' world has kept you so? Why ain't you been here to help me with this work? Make a gentleman out'n one boy in the family and this is what you get! Send you to high school and you get too onery for th' buzzards to smell!"

I never said anything. I didn't want to tell why I was late from school. Pa stopped scattering the bundles of fodder. He looked at me. He says, "Why are you getting in here this time o' night? You tell me or I'll take a hickory withe to you right here on the spot!"

I says, "I had to stay after school." I couldn't lie to Pa. He'd go to school and find out why I had to stay. If I lied to him it would be too bad for me.

"Why did you have to stay after school?" says Pa.

I says, "0ur biology class went on a field trip today. Six of us boys broke down a cherry tree. We had to give a dollar apiece to pay for the tree. I didn't have the dollar. Professor Herbert is making me work out my dollar. He gives me twenty-five cents an hour. I had to stay in this afternoon. I'll have to stay in tomorrow afternoon!"

"Are you telling me th' truth?" says Pa.

"I'm telling you the truth," I says. "Go and see for yourself."

"That's just what I'll do in th' mornin'," says Pa. "Just whose cherry tree did you break down?"

"Eif Crabtree's cherry tree!"

"What was you doing clear out in Eif Crabtree's place?" says Pa. "He lives four miles from the county high school. Don't they teach you no books at that high school? Do

they just let you get out and gad over the hillsides? If that's all they do I'll keep you at home, Dave. I've got work here for you to do!"

"Pa," I says, "spring is just getting here. We take a subject in school where we have to have bugs, snakes, flowers, lizards, frogs, and plants. It is biology. It was a pretly day today. We went out to find a few of these. Six of us boys saw a lizard at the same time sunning on a cherry tree. We all went up the tree to get it. We broke the tree down. It split at the forks. Eif Crabtree was plowing down below us. He ran up the hill and got our names. The other boys gave their dollar apiece. I didn't have mine. Professor Herbert put mine in for me. I have to work it out at school."

"Poor man's son, huh," says Pa. "I'll attend to that myself in th' mornin'. I'll take care o' 'im. He ain't from this county nohow. I'll go down there in th' mornin' and see 'im. Lettin' you leave your books and galavant all over th' hills. What kind of a school is it anyhow! Didn't do that, my son, when I was a little shaver in school. All fared alike too."

"Pa, please don't go down there," I says, "just let me have fifty cents and pay the rest of my fine! I don't want you to go down there! I don't want you to start anything with Professor Herbert!

"Ashamed of your old Pap are you, Dave," says Pa, "after th' way I've worked to raise you! Trying to send you to school so you can make a better living than I've made.

"I'll straighten this thing out myself! I'll take care o' Professor Herbert myself! He ain't got no right to keep you in and let the other boys off just because they've got the money! I'm a poor man. A bullet will go in a professor same as it will any man. It will go in a rich man same as it will a poor man. Now you get into this work before I take one o' these withes and cut the shirt off your back!"

I thought once I'd run through the woods above the barn just as hard as I could go. I thought I'd leave high school and home forever! Pa could not catch me! I'd get away! I couldn't go back to school with him. He'd have a gun and maybe he'd shoot Professor Herbert. It was hard to tell what he would do. I could tell Pa that school had changed in the hills from the way it was when he was a boy, but he wouldn't understand. I could tell him we studied frogs, birds, snakes, lizards, flowers, insects. But Pa wouldn't understand. If I did run away from home it wouldn't matter to Pa. He would see Professor Herbert anyway. He would think that high school and Professor Herbert had run me away from home. There was no need to run away. I'd just have to stay, finish foddering the cattle, and go to school with Pa the next morning.

I would take a bundle of fodder, remove the hickory witheband from around it, and scatter it on rocks, clumps of green briers, and brush so the cattle wouldn't tramp it under their feet. I would lean it up against the oak trees and the rocks in the pasture just above our pigpen on the hill. The fodder was cold and frosty where it had set out in the stacks. I would carry bundles of the fodder from the stack until I had spread out a

bundle for each steer. Pa went to the barn to feed the mules and throw corn in the pen to the hogs.

The moon shone bright in the cold March sky. I finished my work by moonlight. Professor Herbert really didn't know how much work I had to do at home. If he had known he would not have kept me after school. He would have loaned me a dollar to have paid my part on the cherry tree. He had never lived in the hills. He didn't know the way the hill boys had to work so that they could go to school. Now he was teaching in a county high school where all the boys who attended were from hill farms.

After I'd finished doing my work I went to the house and ate my supper. Pa and Mom had eaten. My supper was getting cold. I heard Pa and Mom talking in the front room. Pa was telling Mom about me staying in after school.

"I had to do all th' milkin' tonight, chop th' wood myself. It's too hard on me after I've turned ground all day. I'm goin' to take a day off tomorrow and see if I can't remedy things a little. I'll go down to that high school tomorrow. I won't be a very good scholar for Professor Herbert no how. He won't keep me in after school. I'll take a different kind of lesson down there and make 'im acquainted with it."

"Now, Luster," says Mom, "you just stay away from there. Don't cause a lot o' trouble. You can be jailed for a trick like that. You'll get the Law after you. You'll jist go down there and show off and plague your own boy Dave to death in front o' all th' scholars!"

"Plague or no plague," says Pa, "he doesn't take into consideration what all I haf to do here, does he? I'll show 'im it ain't right to keep one boy in and let the rest go scot-free. My boy is good as th' rest, ain't he? A bullet will make a hole in a schoolteacher same as it will anybody else. He can't do me that way and get by with it. I'll plug 'im first. I aim to go down there bright and early in the mornin' and get all this straight! I aim to see about bug larnin' and this runnin' all over God's creation huntin' snakes, lizards, and frogs. Ransackin' th' country and goin' through cherry orchards and breakin' th' trees down atter lizards! 0ld Eif Crabtree ought to a-poured th' hot lead to 'em instead o' chargin' six dollars fer th' tree! He ought to a-got old Herbert th' first one!"

I ate my supper. I slipped upstairs and lit the lamp. I tried to forget the whole thing. I studied plane geometry. Then I studied my biology lesson. I could hardly study for thinking about Pa. "He'll go to school with me in the morning. He'll take a gun for Professor Herbert! What will Professor Herbert think of me! I'll tell him when Pa leaves that I couldn't help it. But Pa might shoot him. I hate to go with Pa. Maybe he'll cool off about it tonight and not go in the morning."

Pa got up at four o'clock. He built a fire in the stove. Then he built a fire in the fireplace. He got Mom up to get breakfast. Then he got me up to help feed and milk. By the time we had our work done at the barn, Mom had breakfast ready for us. We ate our breakfast. Daylight came and we could see the bare oak trees covered white with frost. The hills were white with frost. A cold wind was blowing. The sky was clear.

The sun would soon come out and melt the frost. The afternoon would be warm with sunshine and the frozen ground with thaw. There would be mud on the hills again. Muddy water would then run down the little ditches on the hills.

"Now, Dave," says Pa, "let's get ready for school. I aim to go with you this morning and look into bug learning, frog learning, lizard and snake learning, and breaking down cherry trees! I don't like no such a foolish way o' larnin' myself!"

Pa hadn't forgot. I'd have to take him to school with me. He would take me to school with him. We were going early. I was glad we were going early. If Pa pulled a gun on Professor Herbert there wouldn't be so many of my classmates there to see him.

I knew that Pa wouldn't be at home in the high school. He wore overalls, big boots, a blue shirt and a sheepskin coat and a slouched black hat gone to seed at the top. He put his gun in its holster. We started trudging toward the high schoo1 across the hill.

It was early when we got to the county high school. Professor Herbert had just got there. I just thought as we walked up the steps into the schoolhouse, "Maybe Pa will find out Professor Herbert is a good man. He just doesn't know him. Just like I felt toward the Lambert boys across the hill. I didn't like them until I'd seen them and talked to them. After I went to school with them and talked to them, I liked them and we were friends. It's a lot in knowing the other fellow."

"You're th' Professor here, ain't you?" says Pa.

"Yes," says Professor Herbert, "and you are Dave's father."

"Yes," says Pa, pulling out his gun and laying it on the seat in Professor Herbert's office. Professor Herbert's eyes got big behind his black-rimmed glasses when he saw Pa's gun. Color came into his pale cheeks.

"Just a few things about this school I want to know," says Pa. "I'm tryin' to make a scholar out'n Dave. He's the only one out'n eleven young ones I've sent to high school. Here he comes in late and leaves me all the work to do! He said you's all out bug hunting yesterday and broke a cherry tree down. He had to stay two hours after school yesterday and work out money to pay on that cherry tree! Is that right?"

"Wwwwy," says Professor Herbert, "I guess it is."

He looked at Pa's gun.

"Well," says Pa, "this ain't no high school. It's a bug school, a lizard school, a snake school! It ain't no school nohow!"

"Why did you bring that gun?" says Professor Herbert to Pa.

"You see that little hole," says Pa as he picked up the long blue forty-four and put his finger on the end of the barrel, "a bullet can come out'n that hole that will kill a schoolteacher same as it will any other man. It will kill a rich man same as a poor man.

It will kill a man. But atter I come in and saw you, I know'd I wouldn't need it. This maul o' mine could do you up in a few minutes."

Pa stood there, big, hard, brown-skinned, and mighty beside of Professor Herbert. I didn't know Pa was so much bigger and harder. I'd never seen Pa in a schoolhouse before. I'd seen Professor Herbert. He'd always looked big before to me. He didn't look big standing beside of Pa.

"I was only doing my duty," says Professor Herbert, "Mr. Sexton, and following the course of study the state provided us with."

"Course o' study," says Pa, "what study, bug study? Varmint study? Takin' youngins to th' woods and their poor old Ma's and Pa's at home a-slavin' to keep 'em in school and give 'em a education! You know that's dangerous, too, puttin' a lot o' boys and girls out together like that!"

Students were coming into the schoolhouse now.

Professor Herbert says, "Close the door, Dave, so others won't hear."

I walked over and closed the door. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. I thought Pa was going to hit Professor Herbert every minute. He was doing all the talking. His face was getting red. The red color was coming through the brown, weather-beaten skin on Pa's face.

"I was right with these students," says Professor Herbert. "I know what they got into and what they didn't. I didn't send one of the other teachers with them on this field trip. I went myself. Yes, I took the boys and girls together. Why not?"

"It jist don't look good to me," says Pa, "a-takin' all this swarm of youngins out to pillage th' whole deestrict. Breaking down cherry trees. Keepin' boys in after school."

"What else could I have done with Dave, Mr. Sexton?" says Professor Herbert. "The boys didn't have any business all climbing that cherry tree after one lizard. One boy could have gone up in the tree and got it. The farmer charged us six dollars. It was a little steep, I think, but we had it to pay. Must I make five boys pay and let your boy off? He said he didn't have the dollar and couldn't get it. So, I put it in for him. I'm letting him work it out. He's not working for me. He's working for the school!"

"I just don't know what you could a-done with 'im," says Pa, "only a-larruped him with a withe! That's what he needed!"

"He's too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, pointing at me. "He's a man in size."

"He's not too big fer me to whip," says Pa. "They ain't too big until they're over twenty-one! It jist didn't look fair to me! Work one and let th' rest out because they got th' money. I don't see what bugs has got to do with a high school! It doesn't look good to me nohow!"

Pa picked up his gun and put it back in its holster. The red color left Professor Herbert's face. He talked more to Pa. Pa softened a little. It looked funny to see Pa in the high-school building. It was the first time he'd ever been there.

"We were not only hunting snakes, toads, flowers, butterflies, lizards," says Professor Herbert, "but, Mr. Sexton, I was hunting dry timothy grass to put in an incubator and raise some protozoa."

" I don't know what that is," says Pa. "Th' incubator is th' new-fangled way o' cheatin' th' hens and raisin' chickens. I ain't so sure about th' breed o' chickens you mentioned."

"You've heard of germs, Mr. Sexton, haven't you?" says Professor Herbert.

"Jist call me Luster, if you don't mind," says Pa, very casual like.

"All right, Luster, you've heard of germs, haven't you?"

"Yes," says Pa, "but I don't believe in germs. I'm sixty-five years old and I ain't seen one yet!"

"You can't see them with your naked eye," says Professor Herbert. "Just keep that gun in the holster and stay with me in the high school today. I have a few things want to show you. That scum on your teeth has germs in it."

"What," says Pa, "you mean to tell me I've got germs on my teeth!

"Yes," says Professor Herbert. "The same kind as we might be able to find in a living black snake if we dissect it!"

"I don't mean to dispute your word," says Pa, "but I don't believe it. I don't believe I have germs on my teeth!"

"Stay with me today and I'll show you. I want to take you through the school anyway! School has changed a lot in the hills since you went to school. I don't guess we had high schools in this county when you went to school!"

"No," says Pa, "jist readin', writin', and cipherin'. We didn't have all this bug larnin', frog larnin', and findin' germs on your teeth and in the middle o' black snakes! Th' world's changin'."

"It is," says Professor Herbert, "and we hope all for the better. Boys like your own there are going to help change it. He's your boy. He knows all of what I've told you. You stay with me today."

"I'll shore stay with you," says Pa. " I want to see th' germs off'n my teeth. I jist want to see a germ. I've never seen one in my life. 'Seein' is believin',' Pap allus told me."

Pa walks out of the office with Professor Herbert. I just hoped Professor Herbert didn't have Pa arrested for pulling his gun. Pa's gun has always been a friend to him when he goes to settle disputes.

The bell rang. School took up. I saw the students when they marched in the schoolhouse look at Pa. They would grin and punch each other. Pa just stood and watched them pass in at the schoolhouse door. Two long lines marched in the house. The boys and girls were clean and well dressed. Pa stood over in the schoolyard under a leafless elm, in his sheepskin coat, his big boots laced in front with buckskin, and his heavy socks stuck above his boot tops. Pa's overalls legs were baggy and wrinkled between his coat and boot tops. His blue work shirt showed at the collar. His big black hat showed his gray-streaked black hair. His face was hard and weather-tanned to the color of a ripe fodder blade. His hands were big and gnarled like the roots of the elm tree he stood beside.

When I went to my first class, I saw Pa and Professor Herbert going around over the schoolhouse. I was in my geometry class when Pa and Professor Herbert came in the room. We were explaining our propositions on the blackboard. Professor Herbert and Pa just quietly came in and sat down for a while. I heard Fred Wutts whisper to Glenn Armstrong, "Who is that old man? Lord, he's a rough-looking scamp." Glenn whispered back, "I think he's Dave's Pap." The students in geometry looked at Pa. They must have wondered what he was doing in school. Before the class was over, Pa and Professor Herbert got up and went out. I saw them together down on the playground. Professor Herbert was explaining to Pa. I could see the prints of Pa's gun under his coat when he'd walk around.

At noon in the high-school cafeteria Pa and Professor Herbert sat together at the little table where Professor Herbert always ate by himself. They ate together. The students watched the way Pa ate. He ate with his knife instead of his fork. A lot of the students felt sorry for me after they found out he was my father. They didn't have to feel sorry for me. I wasn't ashamed of Pa after I found out he wasn't going to shoot Professor Herbert. I was glad they had made friends. I wasn't ashamed of Pa. I wouldn't be as long as he behaved. He would find out about the high school as I had found out about the Lambert boys across the hill.

In the afternoon when we went to biology Pa was in the class. He was sitting on one of the high stools beside the microscope. We went ahead with our work just as if Pa wasn't in the class. I saw- Pa take his knife and scrape tartar from one of his teeth. Professor Herbert put it on the lens and adjusted the microscope for Pa. He adjusted it and worked awhile. Then he says: "Now Luster, look! Put your eye right down to the light. Squint the other eye!"

Pa put his head down and did as Professor Herbert said. "I see 'im," says Pa. 'Who'd an ever thought that? Right on a body's teeth! Right in a body's mouth. You're right certain they ain't no fake to this, Professor Herbert?"

"No, Luster," says Professor Herbert. "It's there. That's the germ. Germs live in a world we cannot see with the naked eye. We must use the microscope. There are millions of them in our bodies. Some are harmful. Others are helpful."

Pa holds his face down and looks through the microscope. We stop and watch Pa. He sits upon the tall stool. His knees are against the table. His legs are long. His coat slips up behind when he bends over. The handle of his gun shows. Professor Herbert pulls his coat down quickly.

"Oh, yes," says Pa. He gets up and pulls his coat down. Pa's face gets a little red. He knows about his gun and he knows he doesn't have any use for it in high school.

"We have a big black snake over here we caught yesterday," says Professor Herbert. "We'll chloroform him and dissect him and show you he has germs in his body, too."

"Don't do it," says Pa. "I believe you. I jist don't want to see you kill the black snake. I never kill one. They are good mousers and a lot o' help to us on the farm. I like black snakes. I jist hate to see people kill 'em. I don't allow 'em killed on my place."

The students look at Pa. They seem to like him better after he said that. Pa with a gun in his pocket but a tender heart beneath his ribs for snakes, but not for man! Pa won't whip a mule at home. He won't whip his cattle.

"Man can defend hisself," says Pa, "but cattle and mules can't. We have the drop on 'em. Ain't nothin' to a man that'll beat a good pullin' mule. He ain't got th' right kind o' a heart!"

Professor Herbert took Pa through the laboratory. He showed him the different kinds of work we were doing. He showed him our equipment. They stood and talked while we worked. Then they walked out together. They talked louder when they got out in the hall.

When our biology class was over, I walked out of the room. It was our last class for the day. I would have to take my broom and sweep two hours to finish paying for the split cherry tree. I just wondered if Pa would want me to stay. He was standing in the hallway watching the students march out. He looked lost among us. He looked like a leaf turned brown on the tree among the treetop filled with growing leaves.

I got my broom and started to sweep. Professor Herbert walked up and says, "I'm going to let you do that some other time. You can go home with your father. He is waiting out there."

I laid my broom down, got my books, and went down the steps.

Pa says, "Ain't you got two hours o' sweepin' yet to do?"

I says, "Professor Herbert said I could do it some other time. He said for me to go home with you."

"No," says Pa. "You are going to do as he says. He's a good man. School has changed from my day and time. I'm a dead leaf, Dave. I'm behind. I don't belong here. If he'll let me, I'll get a broom and we'll both sweep one hour. That pays your debt. I'll help you pay it. I'll ask him and see if he won't let me help you."

"I'm going to cancel the debt," says Professor Herbert. "I just wanted you to understand, Luster."

"I understand," says Pa, "and since I understand he must pay his debt for th' tree and I'm going to help him."

"Don't do that," says Professor Herbert. "It's all on me."

"We don't do things like that," says Pa, "we're just and honest people. We don't want something for nothing. Professor Herbert, you're wrong now and I'm right. You'll haf to listen to me. I've learned a lot from you. My boy must go on. The world has left me. It changed while I've raised my family and plowed the hills. I'm a just and honest man. I don' skip debts. I ain't learned them to do that. I ain't got much learning myself but I do know right from wrong after I see through a thing."

Professor Herbert went home. Pa and I stayed and swept one hour. It looked funny to see Pa use a broom. He never used one at home. Mom used the broom. Pa used the plow. Pa did hard work. Pa says, "I can't sweep. Durned if I can. Look at th' streaks o' dirt I leave on th' floor! Seems like no work a-tall fer me. Brooms is too light or something. I'll just do th' best I can, Dave. I've been wrong about th' school."

I say, "Did you know Professor Herbert can get a warrant out for you for bringing your pistol to school and showing it in his office! They can railroad you for that!"

"That's all made right," says Pa. "I've made that right. Professor Herbert ain't going to take it to court. He likes me. I like 'im. We just had to get together. He had the remedies. He showed me. You must go on to school. I am as strong a man as ever come out'n th' hills for my years and the hard work I've done. But I'm behind, Dave. I'm a little man. Your hands will be softer than mine. Your clothes will be better. You'll allus look cleaner than your old Pap. Just remember, Dave, to pay your debts and be honest. Jist be kind to animals and don't bother th' snakes. That's all I got agaist the school. Putting black snakes to sleep and cuttin' 'em open."

It was late when we got home. Stars were in the sky. The moon was up. The ground was frozen. Pa took his time going home. I couldn't run like I did the night before. It was ten o'clock before we got the work finished, our suppers eaten. Pa sat before the fire and told Mom he was going to take her and show her a germ sometime. Mom hadn't seen one either. Pa told her about the high school and the fine man Professor Herbert was. He told Mom about the strange school across the hill and how different it was from the school in their day and time.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) Why does Dave get up many hours before school starts?
…… .

2) How did the cherry tree split?
…… .

3) What was Dave's punishment?
…… .

4) Why is Luster against killing the black snake?
…… .

5) Who are the Lambert Boys?
…… .

HOTS:

1) How and to who does Professor Herbert function as a guide in The Split Cherry Tree?
…… .

2) Why do you think that in the time of the story it was accepted to whip or hit children until they were 21?
…… .

3) What do you think that Luster tried to achieve by bringing his gun to school?
…… .

4) What is a sign in the story that Professor Herbert cares about Dave?
…… .

5) Who do you think is the main character in the Split Cherry Tree and why?
…… .

Bridging Question:

"Teacher's don't just teach; they can be vital personalities who help people understand the world and themselves." (Charles Platt)

Make a connection between the above quote and the story.

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Module F – The Wave:

THE WAVE

By Todd Strasser

Foreword

The Wave is based on a true incident that occurred in a high school history class in Palo Alto, California, in 1969. For three years afterward, according to the teacher, Ron Jones, no one talked about it. "It was," he said, "one of the most frightening events I have ever experienced in the classroom."

"The Wave" disrupted an entire school. The novel dramatizes the incident, showing how the powerful forces of group pressure that have pervaded many historic movements and cults can persuade people to join such movements and give up their individual rights in the process-sometimes causing great harm to others. The full impact on the students of what they lived through and learned is realistically portrayed in the book that follows.

In addition to the novel, *The Wave* has been made into a one-hour television show for ABC by Virginia L. Carter, an executive director at Tandem Productions and T.A.T. Communications Company.

Chapter One

Laurie Saunders sat in the publications office at Gordon High School chewing on the end of a Bic pen. She was a pretty girl with short light-brown hair and an almost perpetual smile that only disappeared when she was upset or chewing on Bic pens. Lately she'd been chewing on a lot of pens. In fact, there wasn't a single pen or pencil in her pocketbook that wasn't worn down on the butt end from nervous gnawing. Still, it beat smoking.

Laurie looked around the small office, a room filled with desks, typewriters, and light tables. At that moment there should have been kids at each one of those typewriters, punching out stories for *The Gordon Grapevine*, the school paper. The art and layout staff should have been working at the light tables, laying out the next issue. But instead the room was empty except for Laurie. The problem was that it was a beautiful day outside.

Laurie felt the plastic tube of the pen crack. Her mother had warned her once that someday she would chew on a pen until it splintered and a long plastic shard would lodge in her throat and she would choke to death on it. Only her mother could have come up with that, Laurie thought with a sigh.

She looked up at the clock on the wall. Only a few minutes were left in the period anyway. There was no rule that said anyone had to work in the publications office

during their free periods, but they all knew that the next edition of *The Grapevine* was due out next week. Couldn't they give up. their Frisbees and cigarettes and suntans for just a few days in order to get an issue of the paper out on time?
Laurie put her pen back in her pocketbook and started to gather up her notebooks for the next period. It was hopeless. For the three years she'd been on staff, *The Grapevine* had always been late. And now that she was the editor-in-chief it made no difference. The paper would be done when everyone got around to doing it.
Pulling the door of the publication's office closed behind her, Laurie stepped out into the hall. It was practically empty now; the bell to change classes had not yet rung, and there were only a few students around. Laurie walked down a few doors, stopped outside a classroom, and peered through the window.
Inside, her best friend, Amy Smith, a petite girl with thick, curly, Goldilocks hair, was trying to endure the final moments of Mr. Gabondi's French class. Laurie had taken French with Mr. Gabondi the year before and it had been one of the most excruciatingly boring experiences of her life. Mr. Gabondi was a short, dark, heavyset man who always seemed to be sweating, even on the coldest winter days. When he taught, he spoke in a dull monotone that could easily put the brightest student to sleep, and even though the course he taught was not difficult, Laurie recalled how hard it had been to pay enough attention to get an A.
Now watching her friend struggle to stay interested, Laurie decided she needed some cheering up. So, positioning herself outside the door where Amy could see her but Gabondi could not, Laurie crossed her eyes and made an idiotic face. Amy reacted by putting her hand over her mouth to keep from laughing. Laurie made another face and Amy tried not to look, but she couldn't help turning back to see what her friend was doing next. Then Laurie did her famous fish face: she pushed her ears out, crossed her eyes, and puckered her lips. Amy was trying so hard not to laugh that tears started to roll down her cheeks.
Laurie knew she shouldn't make any more faces. Watching Amy was too funny-anything could make her laugh. If Laurie did any more, Amy would probably fall out of her seat and roll into the aisle between the desks. But Laurie couldn't resist. Turning her back to the door to create some suspense, she screwed up her mouth and eyes, and then spun around.
Standing at the door was a very angry Mr. Gabondi.
Behind him Amy and the rest of her class were in hysterics. Laurie's jaw dropped. But before Gabondi could reprimand her, the bell rang and his class was suddenly spilling out into the hall around him. Amy came out holding her sides in pain from laughing so hard. As Mr. Gabondi glared at them, the two girls went off arm in arm toward their next class, too out of breath to laugh anymore.

In the classroom where he taught history, Ben Ross crouched over a film projector, trying to thread a film through the complex maze of rollers and lenses. This was his

fourth attempt and he still hadn't gotten it right. Frustrated, Ben ran his fingers through his wavy brown hair. All his life he had been befuddled by machinery-film projectors, cars, even the self-service pump at the local gas station drove him bananas.
He had never been able to figure out why he was so inept in that way, and so when it came to anything mechanical, he left it to Christy, his wife. She taught music and choir at Gordon High, and at home she was in charge of anything that required manual dexterity. She often joked that Ben couldn't even be trusted to change a light bulb correctly, although Ben insisted this was an exaggeration. He had changed a number of light bulbs in his life and could only recall breaking two in the process.
Thus far in his career at Gordon High-Ben and Christy had been teaching there for two years-he had managed to hide his mechanical inabilities. Or rather, they had been overshadowed by his growing reputation as an outstanding young teacher. Ben's students spoke of his intensity-the way he got so interested and involved in a topic that' they couldn't help but be interested also. He was "contagious," they'd say, meaning that he was charismatic. He could get through to them.
Ross's fellow faculty members were somewhat more divided in their feelings toward him. Some of them were impressed with his energy and dedication and creativity. It was said that he brought a new outlook to his classes, that whenever possible, he tried to teach his students the practical, relevant aspects of history. If they were studying the political system, he would divide the class into political parties. If they studied a famous trial, he might assign one student to be the defendant, others to be the prosecution and defense attorneys, and still others to sit as the jury.
But other faculty members were more skeptical about Ben. Some said he was just young, naive, and overzealous, that after a few years he would calm down and start conducting classes the "right" way-lots of reading, weekly quizzes, classroom lectures. Others simply said they didn't like the way he never wore a suit and tie in class. One or two might even admit they were just plain jealous.
But if there was-one thing no teacher had to be jealous of, it was Ben's total inability to cope with film projectors. While perhaps brilliant otherwise, now he only scratched his head and looked at the tangle of celluloid bunched in the machine. In just a few minutes his senior history class would arrive, and he had been looking forward to showing them this film for weeks. Why hadn't his teacher's college given a course in film threading?
Ross rolled the film back into its spool and left it unthreaded. No doubt one of the kids in his class was some kind of audiovisual whiz and could get the machine going in an instant. He walked back to his desk and picked up a pile of homework papers he wanted to distribute to the students before they saw the film.
The marks on the papers had gotten predictable, Ben thought as he thumbed through them. As usual, there were two A papers, Laurie Saunders's and Amy Smith's. There was one A-, then the normal bunch of B's and C's. There were two D's. One was Brian Ammon, a quarterback on the football team, who seemed to enjoy getting low marks,

even though it was obvious to Ben that he had the brains to do much better if he tried. The other D was Robert Billings, the class loser. Ross shook his head. The Billings boy was a real problem.
Outside in the hall the bells rang, and Ben heard the sounds of class doors banging open and students flooding into the corridors. It was peculiar how students always left class so quickly but somehow arrived at their next class at the speed of snails.
Generally, Ben believed that high school today was a better place for kids to learn than it was when he went. But there were a few things that bothered him. One was his students' lackadaisical attitude about getting to class on time. Sometimes five or even ten minutes of valuable class time would be lost while students straggled in. Back when he was a student, if you weren't in class when the second bell rang, you were in trouble.
The other problem was the homework. Kids just didn't feel compelled to do it anymore. You could yell, threaten them with F's or detention, and it didn't matter. Homework had become practically optional. Or, as one of his ninth-graders had told him a few weeks before, "Sure I know homework is important, Mr. Ross, but my social life comes first."
Ben chuckled. Social life.
Students were starting to enter the classroom now. Ross spotted David Collins, a tall, good-looking boy who was a running back on the football team. He was also Laurie Saunders's boyfriend.
"David," Ross said, "do you think you could get that film projector set up?"
"Sure thing," David replied.
As Ross watched, David kneeled beside the projector and went to work nimbly. In just a few seconds he had it threaded. Ben smiled and thanked him.
Robert Billings trudged into the room. He was a heavy boy with shirttails perpetually hanging out and his hair always a mess, as if he never bothered to comb it after getting out of bed in the morning. "We gonna see a movie?" he asked when he saw the projector.
"No, dummy," said a boy named Brad, who especially enjoyed tormenting him. "Mr. Ross just likes to set up projectors for fun."
"Okay, Brad," Ben said sternly. "That's enough."
A sufficient number of students had arrived for Ross to start handing out the homework papers. "All right," he said loudly to get the class's attention. "Here are last week's papers. Generally speaking, you did a good job." He walked up and down the aisles passing each paper to its author. "But I'm warning you again. These papers are getting much too sloppy." He stopped and held one up for the class to see. "Look at this. Is it really necessary to doodle in the margins of a homework paper?"
The class tittered. "Whose is it?" someone asked.
"None of your business." Ben shuffled the papers in his hand and kept handing them out. "From now on, I'm-going to start lowering grades on any papers that are really

sloppy. If you've made a lot of changes or mistakes on a paper, make a new, neat copy before you hand it in. Got that?"
Some members of the class nodded. Others weren't even paying attention. Ben went to the front of the classroom and pulled down the movie screen. It was the third time that semester he'd talked to them about messy homework.

Chapter Two
They were studying World War Two, and the film Ben Ross was showing his class that day was a documentary depicting the atrocities the Nazis committed in their concentration camps. In the darkened classroom the class stared at the movie screen. They saw emaciated men and women starved so severely that they appeared to be nothing more than skeletons covered with skin. People whose knee joints were the widest parts of their legs.
Ben had already seen this film or films like it half a dozen times. But the sight of such ruthless inhumane cruelty by the Nazis still horrified him and made him feel angry. As the film rolled on, he spoke emotionally to the class: "What you are watching took place in Germany between 1934 and 1945. It was the work of a man named Adolf Hitler, originally a menial laborer, porter, and house painter, who turned to politics after World War One. Germany had been defeated in that war, its leadership was at a low ebb, inflation was high, and thousands were homeless, hungry, and jobless.
"For Hitler it was an opportunity to rise quickly through the political ranks of the Nazi Party. He espoused the theory that the Jews were the destroyers of civilization and that the Germans were a superior race. Today we know that Hitler was a paranoid, a psychopath, literally a madman. In 1923 he was thrown in jail for his political activities, but by 1934 he and his party had seized control of the German government."
Ben paused for a moment to let the students watch more of the film. They could see the gas chambers now, and the piles of bodies laid out like stove wood. The human skeletons still alive had the gruesome task of stacking the dead under the watching eyes of the Nazi soldiers. Ben felt his stomach chum. How on God's earth could anyone make anyone else do something like that, he asked himself.
He told the students: "The death camps were what Hitler called his 'Final solution to the Jewish problem.' But anyone-not just Jews-deemed by the Nazis as unfit for their superior race was sent there. They were herded into camps all over Eastern Europe, and once there they were worked, starved, and tortured, and when they couldn't work anymore, they were exterminated in the gas chambers. Their remains were disposed of in ovens." Ben paused for a moment and then added: "The life expectancy of the prisoners in the camps was two hundred and seventy days. But many did not survive a week."
On the screen they could see the buildings that housed the ovens. Ben thought of telling the students that the smoke rising from the chimneys above the buildings was from burning human flesh. But he didn't. The experience of watching this film would

be awful enough. Thank God man had not invented a way to convey smells through film, because the worst thing of all would have been the stench of it, the stench of the most heinous act ever committed in the history of the human race.
The film was ending and Ben told his students: "In all, the Nazis murdered more than ten million men, women, and children in their extermination camps."
The film was over. A student near the door flicked the classroom lights on. As Ben looked around the room, most of the students looked stunned. Ben had not meant to shock them, but he'd known that the film would. Most of these students had grown up in the small, suburban community that spread out lazily around Gordon High. They were the products of stable middle-class families, and despite the violence-saturated media that permeated society around them, they were surprisingly naive and sheltered. Even now a few of the students were starting to fool around. The misery and horror depicted in the film must have seemed to them like just another television program. Robert Billings, sitting near the windows, was asleep with his head buried in his arms on his desk. But near the front of the room, Amy Smith appeared to be wiping a tear out of her eye. Laurie Saunders looked upset too.
"I know many of you are upset," Ben told the class. "But I did not show you this film today just to get an emotional reaction from you. I want you to think about what you saw and what I told you. Does anyone have any questions?"
Amy Smith quickly raised her hand.
"Yes, Amy?"
"Were all the Germans Nazis?" she asked.
Ben shook his head. "No, as a matter of fact, less than ten percent of the German population belonged to the Nazi Party."
"Then why didn't anyone try to stop them?" Amy asked.
"I can't tell you for sure, Amy," Ross told her. "I can only guess that they were scared. The Nazis might have been a minority, but they were a highly organized, armed, and dangerous minority. You have to remember that the rest of the German population was unorganized, and unarmed and frightened. They had also gone through a terrible period of inflation that had virtually ruined their country. Perhaps some of them hoped the Nazis would be able to restore their society. Anyway, after the war, the majority of Germans said they didn't know about the atrocities."
Near the front of the room, a young black youth named Eric raised his hand urgently. "That's crazy," he said. "How could you slaughter ten million people without somebody noticing?"
"Yeah," said Brad, the boy who had picked on Robert Billings before class began. "That can't be true."
It was obvious to Ben that the film had affected a large part of the class, and he was pleased. It was good to see them concerned about something. "Well," he said to Eric and Brad, "I can only tell you that after the war the Germans claimed they knew nothing of the concentration camps or the killings."

Now Laurie Saunders raised her hand. "But Eric's right," she said. "How could the Germans sit back while the Nazis slaughtered people all around them and say they didn't know about it? How could they do that? How could they even say that?" ·
"All I can tell you," Ben said, "is that the Nazis were highly organized and feared. The behavior of the rest of the German population is a mystery-why they didn't try to stop it, how they could say they didn't know. We just don't know the answers."
Eric's hand was up again. "All I can say is, I would never let such a small minority of people rule the majority."
"Yeah," said Brad. "I wouldn't let a couple of Nazis scare me into pretending I didn't see or hear anything."
There were other hands raised with questions, but before Ben could call on anyone, the bell rang out and the class was rushing out into the hall.
David Collins stood up. His stomach was grumbling like mad. That morning he'd gotten up late and had to skip his usual three-course breakfast to make it to school on time. Even though the film Mr. Ross had shown really bothered him, he couldn't help thinking that next period was lunch.
He looked over at Laurie Saunders, his girlfriend, who was still sitting in her seat. "Come on, Laurie," he urged her. "We have to get down to the cafeteria fast. You know how long the line gets."
But Laurie waved him to go without her. "I'll catch up later."
David scowled. He was torn between waiting for his girlfriend and filling his growling stomach. The stomach won, and David took off down the hall.
After he was gone, Laurie got up from her seat and looked at Mr. Ross. There were only a couple of kids left in the room now. And except for Robert Billings, who was just waking up from his nap, they were the ones who seemed the most disturbed about the film. "I can't even believe that all the Nazis were that cruel," Laurie told her teacher. "I don't believe anyone could be that cruel."
Ben nodded. "After the war, many Nazis tried to excuse their behavior by claiming they were only following orders and that they would have been killed themselves if they hadn't."
Laurie shook her head. "No, that's no excuse. They could have run away. They could have fought back. They had their own eyes and their own minds. They could think for themselves. Nobody would just follow an order like that."
"But that's what they said," Ben told her.
Laurie shook her head again. "It's sick," she said, her voice filled with revulsion. "Just totally sick."
Ben could only nod in agreement.

Robert Billings was trying to sneak past Ben's desk.
"Robert," Ben said. "Wait a minute."
The boy froze, but could not look his teacher in the eye.

"Are you getting enough sleep at home?" Ben asked.
Robert nodded dumbly.
Ben sighed. All semester he had been trying to get through to this boy. He couldn't stand seeing him picked on by the other students and it dismayed him that Robert didn't at least try to participate in class.
"Robert," his teacher said sternly, "if you don't start participating in this class, I will have to fail you. You'll never graduate at this rate."
Robert glanced at his teacher and then looked away again.
"Don't you have anything to say?" Ben asked.
Robert shrugged. "I don't care," he said.
"What do you mean you don't care?" Ben asked.
Robert took a few steps toward the door. Ben could see that he was uncomfortable about being questioned.
"Robert?"
The boy stopped, but he still could not look at his teacher. "I wouldn't do any good anyway," he mumbled.
Ben wondered what he could say. Robert's case was a tough one: the younger brother wallowing in the shadow of an older brother who had been the quintessential model student and big man on campus. Jeff Billings had been an all-conference pitcher in high school and was now in the Baltimore Orioles farm system while he studied medicine in the off-season. In school he'd been a straight-A student who excelled at everything he did. The kind of guy even Ben had, despised in high school.
Seeing that he could never compete with his brother's achievements, Robert had apparently decided it was better not even to try.
"Listen, Robert," Ben said, "no one expects you to be another Jeff Billings."
Robert glanced quickly at Ben and then started chewing nervously on his thumbnail.
"All we're asking is that you try," Ben said.
"I have to go," Robert said, looking down at the floor.
"I don't even care about sports, Robert," Ben said. But the boy had already begun to move slowly toward the door.

Chapter Three

David Collins was sitting in the outdoor courtyard next to the cafeteria. He had already wolfed down half his lunch by the time Laurie arrived, and he was beginning to feel like a normal human being again. He watched Laurie put her tray down next to his and then noticed that Robert Billings was also headed for the courtyard.
"Hey, look," David whispered as Laurie sat down. They watched as Robert stepped out of the cafeteria carrying a tray, looking- for a place to eat. True to form, he had already started eating and stood in the doorway with half a hot dog sticking out of his mouth. There were two girls from Mr. Ross's history class sitting at the table Robert chose. As Robert set his tray down, they both stood up and took their trays to another table.

Robert pretended he hadn't noticed.
David shook his head. "Gordon High's very own Untouchable," he mumbled.
"Do you think there's something really wrong with him?" Laurie asked.
David shrugged. "I don't know. He's been pretty strange for as long as I can remember. Then again, if people treated me like that; I'd probably be pretty strange too. It's just weird that he and his brother could come from the same family."
"Did I ever tell you that my mother knows his mother?" Laurie asked.
"His mother ever talk about him?" David asked.
"No. Except I think she told me once that they had him tested and he really does have a normal I.Q. He's not really dumb or anything."
"Just weird," David said and went back to eating his lunch. But Laurie only picked at hers. She seemed preoccupied.
"What is it?" David asked.
"That film, David," Laurie answered. "It really bothers me. Doesn't it bother you?"
David thought for a moment. Then he said, "Yeah, sure, as something horrible that happened once, it bothers me. But that was a long time ago, Laurie. To me it's like a piece of history. You can't change what happened then."
"But you can't forget it," Laurie said. She tried a bite of her hamburger, then made a face and put it down.
"Well, you can't go around being bummed out about it for the rest of your life either," David said. He eyed Laurie's uneaten hamburger. "By the way, you gonna eat that?"
Laurie shook her head. The movie had left her without much of an appetite. "Help yourself."
Not only did David help himself to her burger, he finished off her fries, salad, and ice cream as well. Laurie looked in his direction, but her eyes were distant.
"Hmm." David wiped his lips with a napkin.
"Would you like anything more?" Laurie asked.
"Well, to tell you the truth ..."
"Hey, is this seat taken?" someone behind them said.
"I was here first!" said another voice.
David and Laurie looked up to find Amy Smith and Brian Ammon, the quarterback, both heading for their table from opposite directions.
"What do you mean you were here first?" Brian asked.
"Well, I meant I wanted to be here first," Amy replied.
"Meaning to be first doesn't count," Brian said.
"Besides, I have to talk to Dave about football."
"And I have to talk to Laurie," Amy said.
"What about?" Brian asked.
"Well, about keeping her company while you talk about boring football."
"Stop it," Laurie said. "There's room for two."
"But with them you need room for three," Amy said, nodding at Brian and David.

"Hardy har har," Brian grunted.
David and Laurie slid over, and Amy and Brian squeezed in next to them at the table. Amy was right about room for three-Brian was carrying two full lunch trays.
"Hey, what are you doing with all this food?" David asked, patting Brian on the back. Although he was the team's quarterback, Brian was not very big. David stood a full head taller than him.
"I gotta gain some weight," Brian said as he started to wolf down his lunch. "I'm gonna need every pound I've got against those guys from Clarkstown on Saturday. They are big. I mean, huge. I hear they got a linebacker who stands six three and weighs two-twenty."
"I don't see what you're worried about," Amy said.
"No one that heavy can run very fast."
Brian rolled his eyes. "He doesn't *have* to run, Amy.
All he has to do is squash quarterbacks."·
"Will you have a chance on Saturday?" Laurie asked. She was thinking about the story they would need for *The Grapevine.*
David shrugged. "I don't know. The team's pretty disorganized. We're way behind on learning our plays and stuff. Half the guys don't even show up for practice.
"Yeah," Brian agreed. "Coach Schiller said he was gonna throw anyone who didn't show up for practice off the team. But if he did that we wouldn't even have enough guys to play."
No one seemed to have anything more to say about football, so Brian bit into his second hamburger.
David's thoughts drifted to other pressing matters.
"Hey, is anyone here good at calculus?"
"Why are you taking calculus?" Amy asked.
"You need it for engineering," David said.
"So why not wait till college?" Brian asked.
"I heard it was so hard you have to take it twice to understand it," David explained, "So I figured I'd take it once now and once later."
Amy nudged Laurie. "I think your boyfriend is strange," she said.
"Talk about strange," Brian whispered, nodding toward Robert Billings.
They all looked. Robert was sitting alone at his table, engrossed in a Spiderman comic book. His lips moved as he read and there was a red streak of catsup on his chin.
"You see him sleep through the whole movie?" Brian asked.
"Don't remind Laurie," David told him. "She's upset."
"What, about that movie?" Brian asked.
Laurie gave David a dirty look. "Do you *have* to tell everybody?"
"Well, it's true, isn't it?" David asked.
"Oh, just leave me alone," Laurie answered.
"I can understand how you feel," Amy told her. "I thought it was just awful."

Laurie turned to David. "There, you see? I'm not the only one that it bothered."
"Hey," David said defensively. "I didn't say I wasn't bothered by it. I just said it's over now. Forget about it. It happened once and the world learned its lesson. It'll never happen again."
"I hope not," Laurie said, picking up her tray.
"Where're you going?" David asked her.
"I have to go work on *The Grapevine,"* Laurie said.
"Wait," Amy said, "I'll go with you."
David and Brian watched the two girls go.
"Gee, she really is upset about that movie, isn't she?" Brian said.
"Yeah." David nodded. "You know, she always takes stuff like that too seriously."

Amy Smith and Laurie Saunders sat in *The Grapevine* office talking. Amy wasn't on the newspaper staff, but she often hung out with Laurie in the publication's office. The office door could be locked, and Amy would sit inside by an open window, holding a cigarette outside and blowing the smoke out. If a teacher came in, she could drop the cigarette to the ground and there would hardly be any smell of smoke in the room.
"That was an awful movie," Amy said.
Laurie nodded quietly.
"Are you and David having a fight?" her friend asked.
"Oh, not really." Laurie couldn't help smiling slightly. "I just wish he would take something besides football seriously. He's - I don't know - he's such a jock sometimes."
"But he gets good grades," Amy said. "At least he's not a dumb jock like Brian."
The two girls giggled for a moment and then Amy asked, "Why does he want to be an engineer? It sounds so boring."
"He wants to be a computer engineer," Laurie said.
"Did you ever see the one he has at home? He built it from a kit."
"Somehow I missed it," Amy said facetiously. "By the way, have you decided what you're doing next year?"
Laurie shook her head. "Maybe we'll go somewhere together. It depends on where we get accepted."
"Your parents will be thrilled," Amy said.
"I don't think they'd mind that much," Laurie said.
"Why don't you just get married?" Amy asked.
Laurie made a face. "Oh, Amy. I mean, I guess I love David, but who wants to get married yet?"
Amy smiled. "Oh, I don't know, if David asked *me*, I might consider it," she teased.
Laurie laughed. "Would you like me to drop a hint?"
"Come off it, Laurie," Amy said. "You know how much he likes you. He doesn't even look at other girls."
"He'd better not," Laurie said. She noticed that there was a wistful note to Amy's voice.

Ever since Laurie had started dating David, Amy had wanted to date a football player too. It sometimes bothered Laurie that underlying their friendship was a constant competition for boys, grades, popularity, almost everything one could compete for. Even though they were best friends, that constant competition somehow prevented them from being really close.
Suddenly there was a loud knock on the door and someone tried the doorknob. Both girls jumped. "Who is it?" Laurie asked.
"Principal Owens," a deep voice replied. "Why is this door locked?"
Amy's eyes went wide with fear. She quickly dropped her cigarette and started digging through her pocketbook for a stick of gum or a mint.
"Uh, it must have been an accident," Laurie replied nervously, going to the door.
"Well, open it immediately!"
Amy looked terrified.
Laurie gave her a helpless look and pulled the door open.
Outside in the hall were Carl Block, *The Grapevine's* investigative reporter, and Alex Cooper, the music reviewer. They were both grinning.
"Oh, you two!" Laurie said angrily. Behind her Amy looked like she was going to faint as the two biggest practical jokers in the school stepped into the room.
Carl was a tall, thin guy with blond hair. Alex, who was stocky and dark, was wearing earphones connected to a small tape player. "Something illegal going on in here?" Carl asked slyly, making his eyebrows bounce up and down.
"You made me waste a perfectly good cigarette," Amy complained.
"Tisk, tisk," Alex said, looking on disapprovingly.
"So how is the paper coming?" Carl asked.
"What do you mean?" Laurie asked in exasperation.
"Neither of you has handed in your assignments for this issue."
"Oh-oh." Alex was suddenly looking at his watch and backing away toward the door.
"I just remembered I have to catch a plane to Argentina."
"I'll drive you to the airport!" Carl said, following him out the door.
Laurie looked at Amy and shook her head wearily.
"Those two," she mumbled, making a fist.

Chapter Four

Something bothered Ben Ross. He couldn't quite put his finger on it, but he was intrigued by the questions the kids in his history class had asked him after the film that day. It made him wonder. Why hadn't he been able to give the students adequate answers to their questions? Was the behavior of the majority of Germans during the Nazi regime really so inexplicable?
That afternoon before he left school, Ross had stopped at the library and taken out an armful of books. His wife, Christy, would be playing tennis that evening with some friends, so he knew he would have a long period of uninterrupted time to pursue his

thoughts. Now, several hours later, after reading through a number of books, Ben suspected that he would not find the real answer written anywhere. It made him wonder. Was this something historians knew words could not explain? Was it something one could only understand by being there? Or, if possible, by recreating a similar situation?
The idea intrigued Ross. Suppose, he thought, just suppose he took a period, perhaps two periods, and tried an experiment. Just tried to give his students a sampling, a taste of what life in Nazi Germany might have been like. If he could just figure out how it could be done, how the experiment could be run, he was certain it would make far more of an impression on the students than any book explanation could ever make.
It certainly was worth a try.

Christy Ross didn't get in that night until after eleven o'clock. She'd played tennis and then had dinner with a friend. She got home to find her husband sitting at their kitchen table surrounded by books.
"Doing your homework?"
"In a way, yes," Ben Ross replied without looking up from his books.
On top of one of the books Christy noticed an empty glass and an empty plate with a few crumbs from what once must have been a sandwich.
"Well, at least you remembered to feed yourself," she said, picking up the dish and placing it in the sink.
Her husband didn't answer. His nose was still stuck in the book.
"I bet you're just dying to find out how badly I beat Betty Lewis tonight," she said, kidding him.
Ben looked up. "What?"
"I said I beat Betty Lewis tonight," Christy told him.
Her husband had a blank look on his face.
Christy laughed. "Betty Lewis. You know, the Betty Lewis who I've never won more than two games in a set from. I beat her tonight. In two sets. Six-four; seven-five."
"Oh, uh, that's very good," Ben said absently. He looked back down at the book and started reading again.
Someone else might have been offended by his apparent rudeness, but Christy wasn't. She knew Ben was the kind of person who got involved with things. Not just involved, but utterly absorbed in them to the point where he tended to forget that the rest of the world existed. She'd never forget the time in graduate school when he got interested in American Indians. For months he was so wrapped up in Indians that he forgot about the rest of his life. On weekends he'd visit Indian reservations or spend hours looking for old books in dusty libraries. He even started bringing Indians home for dinner! And wearing deerskin moccasins! Christy used to get up some mornings wondering if he was going to put on war paint.
But that was the way Ben was. One summer she'd taught him to play bridge, and

within a month not only was he a better bridge player than she, but he was driving her crazy, insisting that they play bridge every minute of the day. He only calmed down after he won a local bridge tournament and ran out of worthy competitors. It was almost frightening, the way he lost himself in each new adventure.
Christy looked at the books scattered about the kitchen table and sighed. "What is it this time?" she asked. "The Indians again? Astronomy? The behavioral characteristics of killer whales?"
When her husband didn't answer, she picked up some of the books. *"The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich? Hitler's Youth?"* She frowned. "What are you doing, cramming for a degree in dictatorship?"
"Not funny," Ben muttered without looking up.
"You're right," Christy admitted.
Ben Ross sat back and looked at his wife. "One of my students asked me a question today that I couldn't answer."
"So what else is new?" Christy asked.
"But I don't think I ever saw the answer written anywhere," Ben told her. "It just may. be an answer they have to learn for themselves."
Christy Ross nodded. "Well, I can see what kind of night this is going to be," she said. "Just remember, tomorrow you have to be awake enough to teach an entire day of classes."
Her husband nodded. "I know, I know."
Christy Ross bent down and kissed him on his forehead. "Try not to wake me. *If* you come to sleep tonight."

Chapter Five

The next day the students drifted in slowly as usual. Some took their seats, others stood around talking. Robert Billings was by the windows, tying knots in the blind cords. While he was doing that, Brad, his incessant tormentor, walked past and patted him on the back, sticking a small sign that said "kick me" to his shirt.
It looked like just another typical day in history class until the kids noticed that their teacher had written in large letters across the blackboard: STRENGTH THROUGH DISCIPLINE.
"What's that supposed to mean?" someone asked.
"I'll tell you just as soon as you're all seated," Ben Ross answered. When the kids were all in their places, he began to lecture. "Today I am going to talk to you about discipline."
A collective groan went up from the seated students.
There were some teachers whose classes you knew would be a drag, but most of the students expected Ross's history class to be pretty good-which meant no dumb lectures on stuff like discipline.
"Hold it," Ben told them. "Before you make a judgment, give this a chance. It could be

exciting."
"Oh sure," someone said.
"Oh sure is right," Ben told his students. "Now when I talk about discipline, I'm talking about power," he said, making a fist to accentuate the point. "And I'm talking about success. Success through discipline. Is there anyone here who isn't interested in power and success?"
"Probably Robert," Brad said. A bunch of kids snickered.
"Now wait," Ben told them. "David, Brian, Eric, you play football. You already know it takes discipline to win."
"That must be why we haven't won a game in two years," Eric said, and the class laughed. It took their teacher a few moments to calm them down again. "Listen," he said, gesturing toward a pretty, red-haired student who appeared to be sitting taller in her chair than those around her. "Andrea, you're a ballet dancer. Doesn't it take ballet dancers long, hard hours of work to develop their skills?"
She nodded, and Ross turned to the rest of the class.
"It's the same with every art. Painting, writing, music-all of them take years of hard work and discipline to master. Hard work, discipline, and control."
"So what?" said a student who was slouching down in his chair.
"So what?" Ben asked. "I'll show you. Suppose I could prove to you that you can create power through discipline. Suppose we could do it right here in this classroom. What would you say to that?"
Ross had expected another wisecrack, and he was surprised when it didn't come. Instead the students were becoming interested and curious. Ben went behind his desk and pulled his wooden chair in front of the room so that all the students could see it.
"All right," he said. "Discipline begins with posture.
Amy, come up here for a minute."
As Amy rose, Brian mumbled "Teacher's pet." Normally that would have been enough to start the entire class laughing, but only a few chuckled. The rest ignored him. Everyone was wondering what their teacher was up to.
As Amy sat in the chair at the front of the room, Ben instructed her on how to sit.
"Place your hands flat across the small of your back and force your spine straight up. There, can't you breathe more easily?"
Around the classroom, many of the students were imitating the position they saw Amy taking. But even though they were sitting straighter, some couldn't help finding it humorous. David was the next to try his hand at a joke: "Is this history, or did I come to phys ed by mistake?" he asked. A few kids laughed, but still tried to improve their posture.
"Come on, David," Ben said. "Give it a try. We've had enough wise-guy remarks."
Grudgingly David pushed himself up straight in his chair. Meanwhile their teacher walked down each aisle, checking the posture of each student. It was amazing,
Ross thought. Somehow, he'd hooked them. Why, even Robert ...

"Class," Ben announced, "I want everyone to see how Robert's legs are parallel. His ankles are locked, his knees are bent at ninety degrees. See how straight his spine is. Chin tucked in, head up. That's very good, Robert."
Robert, the class nerd, looked up at his teacher and smiled briefly, then returned to his stiff upright position. Around the room the other students tried to copy him.
Ben returned to the front of the classroom. "All right. Now I want you all to get up and walk around the room. When I give the command, I want you to return to your seats as quickly as possible and assume the proper seating posture. Come on, everyone, up, up, up."
The students stood up and started wandering around the room. Ben knew he couldn't let them go too long or they'd lose their concentration on the exercise, so he quickly said, "Take your seats!"
The students dashed back to their seats. There were bumps and grunts as a few ran into each other, and around the room some kids laughed, but the dominant sound was the loud scraping of chair legs as the kids sat down.
In the front of the room, Ben shook his head. "That was the most disorganized mess I've ever seen. This isn't duck, duck, goose, this is an experiment in movement and posture. Now come on, let's try it again. This time without the chatter. The quicker and more controlled you are, the faster you will be able to reach your seats properly. Okay? Now, everyone, up!"

For the next twenty minutes the class practiced getting out of their seats, wandering around in apparent disorganization and then, at their teacher's command, quickly returning to their seats and the correct seated posture. Ben shouted orders more like a drill sergeant than a teacher. Once they seemed to have mastered quick and correct seating, he threw in a new twist. They would still leave their seats and return. But now they would return from the hallway and Ross would time them with a stopwatch.
On the first try, it took forty-eight seconds. The second time they were able to do it in half a minute. Before the last attempt, David had an idea.
"Listen," he told his classmates as they stood outside in the hall waiting for Mr. Ross's signal. "Let's line up in the order of who has to go the farthest to reach their desks inside. That way we won't have to bump into each other."
The rest of the class agreed. As they got into the correct order, they couldn't help noticing that Robert was at the head of the line. "The new head of the class," someone whispered as they waited nervously for their teacher to give them the sign. Ben snapped his fingers and the column of students moved quickly and quietly into the room. As the last student reached his seat, Ben clicked the stopwatch off. He was smiling.
"Sixteen seconds."
The class cheered.
"All right, all right, quiet down," their teacher said, returning to the front of the room.

To his surprise, the students calmed down quickly. The silence that suddenly filled the room was almost eerie. Normally the only time the room was that still, Ross thought, was when it was empty.
"Now, there are three more rules that you must obey," he told them. "One. Everybody must have pencils and note paper for note-taking. Two. When asking or answering a question, you must stand at the side of your seats. And three. The first words you say when answering or asking a question are, 'Mr. Ross.' All right?"
Around the room, heads nodded.
"All right," Mr. Ross said. "Brad; who was the British Prime Minister before Churchill?"
Still sitting at his seat, Brad chewed nervously on a fingernail. "Uh, wasn't it-"
But before he could say more, Mr. Ross quickly cut him off. "Wrong, Brad, you already forgot the rules I just told you." He looked across the room at Robert.
"Robert, show Brad the proper procedure for answering a question."
Instantly Robert stood up next to his desk at attention. "Mr. Ross."
"Correct," Mr. Ross said. "Thank you, Robert."
"Aw, this is dumb," Brad mumbled.
"Just because you couldn't do it right," someone said.
"Brad," Mr. Ross said, "who was the Prime Minister before Churchill?"
This time Brad rose and stood beside his desk. "Mr. Ross, it was, uh, Prime Minister, uh."
"You're still too slow, Brad," Mr. Ross said. "From now on, everyone make your answers as short as possible, and spit them out when asked. Now, Brad, try again."
This time Brad snapped up beside his seat. "Mr. Ross, Chamberlain."
Ben nodded approvingly. "Now that's the way to answer a question. Punctual, precise, with punch. Andrea, what country did Hitler invade in September of 1939?"
Andrea, the ballet dancer, stood stiffly by her desk.
"Mr. Ross, I don't know."
Mr. Ross smiled. "Still, a good response because you used proper form. Amy, do you know the answer?"
Amy hopped up beside her desk. "Mr. Ross, Poland."
"Excellent," Mr. Ross said. "Brian, what was the name of Hitler's political party?"
Brian quickly got out of his chair. "Mr. Ross, the Nazis."
Mr. Ross nodded. "That's good, Brian. Very quick.
Now, does anyone know the official name of the party?
Laurie?"
Laurie Saunders stood up beside her desk. "The National Socialist"
"No!" There was a sharp bang as Mr. Ross struck his desktop with a ruler. "Now do it again correctly."
Laurie sat down, a confused look on her face. What had she done wrong? David leaned over and whispered in her ear. Oh, right. She stood up again. "Mr. Ross, the National

Socialist German Workers Party."
"Correct," Mr. Ross replied.
Mr. Ross kept asking questions, and around the room students jumped to attention, eager to show that they knew both the answer and the correct form with which to give it. It was a far cry from the normally casual atmosphere of the classroom, but neither Ben nor his students reflected on that fact. They were too caught up in this new game. The speed and precision of each question and answer were exhilarating. Soon Ben was perspiring as he shouted each question out and another student rose sharply beside his or her desk to shout back a terse reply.
"Peter, who proposed the Lend-Lease Act?"
"Mr. Ross, Roosevelt."
"Right. Eric, who died in the death camps?"
"Mr. Ross, the Jews."
"Anyone else, Brad?"
"Mr. Ross, gypsies, homosexuals, and the feebleminded."
"Good. Amy, why were they murdered?"
"Mr. Ross, because they weren't part of the superior race."
"Correct. David, who ran the death camps?"
"Mr. Ross, the S.S."
"Excellent!"
Out in the hall, the bells were ringing, but no one in the classroom moved from their seat. Still carried by the momentum of the class's progress that period, Ben stood at the front of the room and issued the final order of the day. "Tonight, finish reading chapter seven and read the first half of chapter eight. That's all, class dismissed." Before him the class rose in what seemed like a single movement and rushed out into the hall.

"Wow, that was weird, man, it was like a rush,"
Brian gasped in uncharacteristic enthusiasm. He and some of the students from Mr. Ross's class were standing in a tight pack in the corridor, still riding on the energy they'd felt in the classroom.
"I've never felt anything like that before," said Eric beside him.
"Well, it sure beats taking notes," Amy cracked.
"Yeah," Brian said. He and a couple of other students laughed.
"Hey, but don't knock it," David said. "That was really different. It was like, when we all acted together, we were more than just a class. We were a unit.
Remember what Mr. Ross said about power? I think he was right. Didn't you feel it?"
"Aw, you're taking it too seriously," said Brad behind him.
"Yeah?" David said. "Well then, how do you explain it?"
Brad shrugged. "What's to explain? Ross asked questions, we answered them. It was like any other class except we had to sit up straight and stand next to
our desks. I think you're making a big deal out of nothing."

"I don't know, Brad," David said as he turned and left the pack of students.
"Where're you going?" Brian asked.
"The john," David answered. "Catch up to you in the cafeteria."
"Okay," Brian said.
"Hey, remember to sit up straight," Brad said, and the others laughed.
David pushed through the door to the men's room.
He really wasn't sure if Brad was right or not. Maybe he was making a big deal out of nothing, but on the other hand, there had been that feeling, that group unity. Maybe it didn't make that much difference in the classroom. After all, you were just answering questions. But suppose you took that group feeling, that high energy feeling, and got the football team into it. There were some good athletes on the team, it made David mad that they had such a bad record. They really weren't that bad they were just undermotivated and disorganized. David knew that if he could ever get the team even half as charged up as Mr. Ross's history class had been that day, they could tear apart most of the teams in their league.
Inside the john, David heard the second bell ring, warning students that the next period was about to begin. He stepped out of a stall and was heading to the sinks when he saw someone and stopped abruptly. The bathroom had emptied out and only one person was left, Robert. He was standing in front of a mirror, tucking in his shirt, unaware that he wasn't alone. As David watched, the class loser straightened some of the hair on his head and stared at his reflection. Then he snapped to attention and his lips moved silently, as if he was still in Mr. Ross's class answering questions.
David stood motionless as Robert practiced the move again. And again.

Late that night in their bedroom, Christy Ross sat on the side of the bed in her red nightgown and brushed her long auburn hair. Near her Ben was pulling his pajamas out of a drawer. "You know," he said, "I would have thought they'd all hate it, being ordered around and forced to sit straight and recite answers. Instead they took to it like they'd been waiting for something like this their whole lives. It was weird."
"Don't you think they were just playing it like a game?" Christy asked. ·"Simply competing with each other to see who could be the fastest and straightest?"
"I'm sure that was part of it," Ben told his wife.
"But even a game is something you either choose to play or not to play. They didn't have to play that game, but they wanted to. The strangest thing was, once we started, I could feel them wanting more. They wanted to be disciplined. And each time they mastered one discipline, they wanted another. When the bell rang at the end of the period and they were still in their seats, I knew it meant more to them than just a game."
Christy stopped brushing her hair. "You mean they stayed *after* the bell?" she asked.
Ben nodded. "That's what I mean."
His wife looked at him skeptically but then grinned.

"Ben, I think you've created a monster."
"Hardly," Ben replied, chuckling.
Christy put down her brush and rubbed some cream into her face. On his side of the bed, Ben was pulling on his pajama top. Christy was waiting for her husband to lean over for their customary goodnight kiss. But tonight it was not forthcoming. He was still lost in thought.
"Ben?" Christy said.
"Yeah?"
"Do you think you'll go on with it tomorrow?"
"I don't think so," her husband replied. "We've got to get on to the Japanese campaign."
Christy closed the jar of cream and settled comfortably into the bed. But on his side Ben still had not moved. He had told his wife how surprisingly enthusiastic his students had been that afternoon, but he had not told her that he too had gotten caught up in it. It would almost be embarrassing to admit that. he could get swept up in such a simple game. But yet on reflection he knew that he had. The fierce exchange of questions and answers, the quest for perfect discipline-it had been infectious and, in a way, mesmerizing. He had enjoyed his students' accomplishment. Interesting, he thought as he got into bed.

Chapter Six
For Ben, what happened the next day was extremely unusual. Instead of his students straggling into class after the bell had rung, it was he who was late. He'd accidentally left his lecture notes and book on Japan in his car that morning and had to run out to the parking lot before class to get them. As he rushed into the classroom, he expected to find a madhouse, but he was in for a surprise.
In his room were five neat rows of desks, seven desks to a row. At each desk a student sat stiffly in the posture Ben had taught them the previous day. The room was silent, and Ross surveyed his class uneasily.
Was it a joke? Here and there he saw a face on the verge of smiling, but those were clearly outnumbered by faces at stiff attention, staring straight ahead, concentrating.
A few students glanced at him uncertainly waiting to see if he'd carry it further. Should he? It was such an experience and so different from the norm that it tantalized him.
What could they learn from this?
What could he learn? Tempted by the unknown, Ben decided it was worth finding out.
"Well, okay," he said, putting away his notes.
"What's going on here?"
The students looked at him uncertainly.
Ben looked toward the far side of the room.
"Robert?"
Robert Billings quickly rose beside his desk. His shirt was tucked in and his hair was combed. "Mr. Ross, discipline."

"Yes, discipline," Mr. Ross agreed. "But that's just part of it. There's something more." Then he turned to the blackboard, and underneath the large "STRENGTH THROUGH DISCIPLINE" from the day before, he added, "COMMUNITY."
He turned back to the class. "Community is the bond between people who work and struggle together for a common goal. It's like building a barn with your neighbors."
A few students in the room chuckled. But David knew what Mr. Ross was saying. It was what he'd thought about yesterday after class. It was the kind of team spirit the football team needed.
"It's the feeling that your part of something that's more important than yourself," Mr. Ross was telling them. "You're a movement, a team, a cause. You're committed to something."
"I think we ought to be committed all right," someone mumbled, but the nearby students hushed him.
"Like discipline," Mr. Ross continued, "to understand community fully you have to experience it and participate in it. From now on, our two mottos will be, 'Strength Through Discipline' and 'Strength Through Community.' Everyone, repeat our mottos."
Around the room, students rose beside their desks and recited the slogans: "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community."
A few students, including Laurie and Brad, did not join them, but sat uncomfortably in their chairs as Mr. Ross had the class repeat the mottos again. Finally, Laurie rose, and then Brad. Now the entire class stood beside their desks.
"What we need now is a symbol for our new community," Mr. Ross told them. He turned back to the board and, after a moment's thought, drew a circle with the outline of a wave inside it. "This will be our symbol. A wave is a pattern of change. It has movement, direction, and impact. From now on, our community, our movement will be known as The Wave." He paused and looked at the class standing at stiff attention, accepting everything he told them. "And this will be our salute," he said, cupping his right hand in the shape of a wave, then tapping it against his left shoulder and holding it upright. "Class, give the salute," he ordered.
The class gave the salute. Some hit their right shoulders instead of their left. Others forgot to hit their shoulders entirely. "Again," Ross ordered, making the salute himself. He repeated the exercise until everyone had it right.
"All right," their teacher said when they'd gotten it.
Once again the class could feel the resurgence of power and unity that had overwhelmed them the day before.
"This is our salute and our salute only," he told them.
"Whenever you see another Wave member, you will salute. Robert, salute and give our mottos."
Standing stiffly-beside his seat, Robert performed the salute and replied, "Mr. Ross, Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community."
"Very good," Ben said. "Peter, Amy, and Eric, salute and recite our motto with

Robert."
The four students obediently saluted and chanted, "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community."
"Brian, Andrea, and Laurie," Mr. Ross commanded.
"Join them and repeat."
Now seven students joined in the chant, then fourteen, then twenty, until the whole class was saluting and chanting loudly in unison. "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community." Like a regiment, Ben thought, just like a regiment.
In the gym after school, David and Eric sat on the floor in their football practice jerseys. They were a little early for practice and were having a heated debate.
"I think it's dumb," Eric said as he tied the laces on his cleats. "It's just a game in history class, that's all."
"But that doesn't mean it couldn't work." David insisted. "What do you think we learned it for, anyway?
To keep it a secret? I'm telling you, Eric, this is just
what the team needs."
"Well, you're gonna have to convince Coach Schiller of that," Eric said. "And I'm not going to tell him."
"What are you scared of?" David asked. "You think Mr. Ross is gonna punish me because I tell a couple of people about The Wave?"
Eric shrugged. "No, man. I think they're gonna laugh."
Brian came out of the locker room and joined them on the floor.
"Hey," David said, "what do you think of us trying to get the rest of the team into The Wave?"
Brian tugged at his shoulder pads and thought about it. "You think The Wave could stop that two-hundred and-twenty-pound linebacker from Clarkstown?" he asked. "I swear, that's all I think about. I keep picturing me calling for the snap and then this thing appears in front of me, this giant thing in a Clarkstown uniform. It steps on my center; it squashes my guards. It's so big I can't go left, I can't go right, I can't throw over it ..."
Brian rolled on his back on the floor and pretended someone was bearing down on him. "It just keeps coming and coming. Ahhhhhhhhhh!" Eric and David laughed, and Brian sat up. "I'll do anything," he told them. "Eat my Wheaties, join The Wave, do my homework. Anything to stop that guy."
More players had gathered around them, including a junior named Deutsch, who was the second-string quarterback behind Brian. Everyone on the team knew that Deutsch wanted nothing more in the world than to steal Brian's position from him. As a result, the two of them didn't get along.
"I hear you say you're afraid of the Clarkstown team?" Deutsch asked Brian. "I'll take your place, man, just say the word."
"They let you into the game and we'll have no chance at all," Brian told him.

Deutsch sneered. "The only reason you're first string is cause you're a senior," he said.
Still sitting on the gym floor, Brian gazed up at the junior. "Man, you are the most conceited bag of no talent I've ever seen," he said.
"Oh yeah, look who's talking," Deutsch snarled back.
The next thing David knew, Brian had jumped to his feet and had his fists up. David lunged between the two quarterbacks. "That's just what I was talking about!" he yelled as he pushed them apart. "We're supposed to be a team. We're supposed to support each other. The reason we've been so bad is because all we've been doing is fighting with each other."
More football players were in the gym now. "What's he talking about?" one of them asked.
David turned. "I'm talking about unity. I'm talking about discipline. We have to start acting like a team. Like we have a common goal. Your job on this team isn't to steal another guy's position. Your job is to help this team win."
"I could help this team win," Deutsch said. "All Coach Schiller's got to do is make me the first-string quarterback."
"No, man!" David yelled at him. "A bunch of self-serving individuals don't make a team. You know why we've done so bad this year? Because we're twenty-five one-man teams all wearing the same Gordon High uniforms. You want to be first-string quarterback on a team that doesn't win? Or do you want to be second-string on a team that does win?"
Deutsch shrugged.
"I'm tired of losing," said another player.
"Yeah," said someone else. "It's a drag. This school doesn't even take us seriously anymore."
"I'd give up my position and be a waterboy if it meant winning a game," said a third.
"Well, we could win," said David. "I'm not saying we'll be able to go out and destroy Clarkstown on Saturday, but if we start trying to be a team, I bet we could win a few games this year."
Most of the members of the football team were there by this time, and as David looked around at their faces he could see that they were interested.
"Okay," said one. "What do we do?"
David hesitated for a moment. What they could do was The Wave. But who was he to tell them? He'd only learned of it the day before himself. Suddenly he felt someone nudging him.
"Tell them," Eric whispered. "Tell 'em about The Wave."
What the hell, David thought. "Okay, all I know is you gotta start by learning the mottos. And this is the salute …"

Chapter Seven

That evening Laurie Saunders told her parents about her last two days of history class. The Saunders family was sitting at the dining room table finishing dinner. Through most of the meal, Laurie's father had given them a stroke-by-stroke description of the 78 he'd shot in golf that afternoon. Mr. Saunders ran a division of a large semiconductor company. Laurie's mother said that she didn't mind his passion for golf because on the course he managed to get out all the pressures and frustrations of his job. She said she couldn't explain how he did it, but as long as he came home in a good mood, she wasn't going to argue.

Neither was Laurie, although listening to her father talk about his golf game sometimes bored her to death. It was better that he was easy-going, rather than a worry-wart like her mother, who was probably the brightest and most perceptive woman Laurie had ever encountered. She practically ran the county's League of Women Voters by herself and was so politically astute that aspiring politicians seeking local offices were always asking her to advise them.

For Laurie, her mother was lots of fun when things were going well. She was full of ideas, and you could talk to her for hours. But other times, when Laurie was upset about something or was having a problem, her mother was murder-there was no way to hide anything from her. And once Laurie had admitted what the difficulty was, she wouldn't leave her alone.

When Laurie started telling them about The Wave at dinner, it was mostly because she couldn't stand listening to her father talk about golf for another minute. She could tell her mother was bored too. For the last quarter hour Mrs. Saunders had been scratching a wax stain out of the tablecloth with her fingernail.

"It was incredible," Laurie was saying about the class. "Everyone was saluting and repeating the motto.

You couldn't help but get caught up in it. You know, really wanting to make it work. Feeling all that energy building around you."

Mrs. Saunders stopped scratching the tablecloth and looked at her daughter. "I don't think I like it, Laurie.

It sounds too militaristic to me."

"Oh, Mom," Laurie said, "you always take things the wrong way. It's nothing like that. Honest, you'd just have to be there feeling the positive energy in the class to really get what's going on."

Mr. Saunders agreed. "To tell you the truth, I'm for whatever will make these kids pay attention to anything these days."

"And that's what it's really doing, Mom," Laurie said. "Even the bad kids are into it. You know Robert Billings, the class creep? Even he's part of a group. No one's picked on him for two whole days. Tell me that isn't positive."

"But you're supposed to be learning history," Mrs. Saunders argued. "Not how to be part of a group."

"Well, you know," her husband said, "this country was built by people who were part of a group-the Pilgrims, the Founding Fathers. I don't think it's wrong for Laurie to be learning how to cooperate. If I could get some more cooperation down at the plant instead of this constant back-biting and bickering and everyone trying to cover his own you-know-what, we wouldn't be behind in production this year."
"I didn't say that it was wrong to cooperate," Mrs. Saunders replied. "But still, people have to do things in their own way. You talk about the greatness of this country and you're talking about people who weren't afraid to act as individuals."
"Mom, I really think you're taking this the wrong way," Laurie said. "Mr. Ross has just found a way to get everybody involved. And we're still doing our homework. It's not like we've forgotten about history."
But her mother was not to be appeased. "That's all very well and good. But it just doesn't sound like the right thing for you, Laurie. Babe, we've raised you to be an individual."
Laurie's father turned to his wife. "Midge, don't you think you're taking all this a little too seriously? A little bit of community spirit is a terrific thing for these kids."
"That's right, Mom," Laurie said, smiling. "Haven't you always said that I was a little too independent?"
Mrs. Saunders was not amused. "Honey, just remember that the popular thing is not always the right thing."
"Oh, Mom," Laurie said, annoyed that her mother would not see her side of the argument at all. "Either you're being stubborn or you just don't understand this at all."
"Really, Midge," Mr. Saunders said. "I'm sure Laurie's history teacher knows exactly what he's doing. I don't see why you should make this into a big deal."
"You don't think it's dangerous to allow a teacher to manipulate students like that?" Mrs. Saunders asked her husband.
"Mr. Ross isn't manipulating us," Laurie said. "He's one of my best teachers. He knows what he's doing, and as far as I'm concerned what he's doing is for the class's good. I wish some of my other teachers were as interesting."
Laurie's mother seemed ready to keep arguing, but her husband changed the subject. "Where's David tonight?" he asked. "Isn't he coming over?" David often came over in the evening, usually on the pretense of studying with Laurie. But inevitably he'd wind up in the den with Mr. Saunders talking about sports or engineering. Since David hoped to study engineering just as Mr. Saunders had, they had lots to talk about. Mr. Saunders had also played high school football. Mrs. Saunders had once told Laurie that it was surely a match made in heaven.
Laurie shook her head. "He's home studying tomorrow's history assignment."
Mr. Saunders looked surprised. "David studying?
Now *there's* something to be concerned about."

Because Ben and Christy Ross both taught full time at the high school, they had grown accustomed to sharing many of the after...school chores around their house-cooking, cleaning, and running errands. That afternoon Christy had to take her car into the shop to get the muffler replaced, so Ben had agreed that he'd cook. But after that history class he felt too preoccupied to bother cooking. Instead he stopped at the Chinese take-out place on the way home and picked up some eggrolls and egg foo yung.
When Christy got home around dinnertime, she found the table not covered with plates for dinner, but with books, again. Looking over the brown paper take-out bags on the kitchen counter, she asked, "You call this dinner?"
Ben looked up from the table. "I'm sorry, Chris. I'm just so preoccupied with this class. And I've got so much to do to prepare for it, I didn't want to take time to cook."
Christy nodded. It wasn't as if he did this every time it was his turn to cook. She could forgive him this time.
She started unpacking the food. "So how is your experiment going, Dr. Frankenstein? Have your monsters turned on you yet?"
"On the contrary," her husband replied. "Most of them are actually turning into human beings!"
"You don't say," said Christy.
"I happen to know that they're all keeping up on their reading," Ben said. "Some of them are even reading ahead. It's as if they suddenly love being prepared for class."
"Or they're suddenly afraid of being unprepared," his wife observed.
But Ben ignored her comment. "No, I really think they've improved. At least, they're behaving better."
Christy shook her head. "These can't be the same kids I have for music."
"I'm telling you," her husband said, "it's amazing how much more they like you when you make decisions for them."
"Sure, it means less work for *them.* They don't have to think for themselves," Christy said. "But now stop reading and clear some of those books away so we can eat."
As Ben made room on the kitchen table, Christy set the food out. When Ben stood up Christy thought he was going to help her, but instead he started pacing around the kitchen, deep in thought. Christy went on getting the meal ready, but she too was thinking about The Wave. There was something about it that bothered her, something about the tone of her husband's voice when he spoke about his class-as if they were now better students than the rest of the school. As she sat down at the table she said, "How far do you plan to push this, Ben?"
"I don't know," Ross answered. "But I think it could be fascinating to see."
Christy watched her husband pace around the kitchen, lost in thought. "Why don't you sit down?" she said.
"Your egg foo yung's going to get cold."
"You know," her husband said as he came to the table and sat down, "the funny thing is, I feel myself getting caught up in it too. It's contagious."

Christy nodded. That was obvious. "Maybe you're becoming a guinea pig in your own experiment," she said. Although she made it sound like a joke, she was hoping he'd take it as a warning.

Chapter Eight

Both David and Laurie lived within walking distance of Gordon High. David's route didn't necessarily lead past Laurie's house, but ever since tenth grade he'd always gone out of his way. When he first noticed her, as a sophomore, he used to walk down her street on the way to school every morning, hoping that he would pass her house just as she was leaving for school. At first, he managed to run into her only about once a week. But as the weeks passed and they got to know each other, he began to catch her more frequently until, by the spring, they walked together almost every day. For a long time, David thought this was just a matter of luck and good timing. It never occurred to him that from the beginning Laurie had waited at her window, watching for him. At first, she had only pretended to "run into" him once a week. Later she "ran into" him more often.

When David picked Laurie up to walk with her to school the next morning, he was bursting with brainstorms. "I'm telling you, Laurie," he said as they walked along a sidewalk towards school. "This is just what the football team needs."

"What the football team needs," Laurie told him, "is a quarterback who can pass, a running back who doesn't fumble, a couple of linebackers who aren't afraid to tackle, an end who-"

"Stop it," David said irritably. "I'm serious. I got the team into it yesterday. Brian and Eric helped me. The guys really responded to it. I mean, it's not like we improved in only one practice, but I could feel it. I could really feel the team spirit. Even Coach Schiller was impressed. He said we were like a new team."

"My mother says it sounds like brainwashing to her," Laurie said.

"What?"

"She says Mr. Ross is manipulating us."

"She's crazy," David said. "How could she know?

And besides, what do you care what your mother says?

You know she worries about everything."

"I didn't say I agreed with her," Laurie said.

"Well, you didn't say you disagreed with her either,"

David said.

"I was just telling you what she said," Laurie replied.

David wouldn't let it drop. "How does she know, anyway? She can't possibly understand what The Wave is about unless she's been in class to see it work.

Parents always think they know everything!"

Laurie suddenly felt an urge to disagree with him, but she restrained herself. She didn't want to start a fight with David over something so petty. She hated it when they

quarreled. Besides, for all she knew, The Wave might be just what the football team needed.
They certainly needed *something.* She decided to change the subject. "Did you find help for calculus?"
David shrugged. "Naw, the only kids who know anything are in my class."
"So why not ask one of them?"
"No way," David said. "I don't want any of them to know I'm having trouble."
"Why not?" Laurie asked. "I'm sure someone would help you."
"Of course they would," David said. "But I don't want their help."
Laurie sighed. It was true that lots of kids at school were competitive about grades and class standing. But few took it as far as David did. "Well," she said, "I know Amy didn't say anything at lunch, but if you can't find anyone else she could probably help you."
"Amy?"
"She's incredibly smart in math," Laurie explained.
"I bet you could give her your problem and she'd have it figured out in ten minutes."
"But I asked her at lunch," David said.
"She was just being shy," Laurie said. "I think she likes Brian and she just doesn't want to intimidate him by seeming too brainy."
David laughed. "I don't think she has to worry, Laurie. The only way she could intimidate him was if she weighed two hundred pounds and wore a Clarkstown uniform."

When the students arrived in class that day, there was a large poster in the back of the room with a blue wave symbol on it. They found Mr. Ross dressed differently than usual. Where before he'd come to class in casual clothes, today he wore a blue suit, white shirt, and a tie. The students went quickly to their seats as their teacher walked up and down the aisles passing out small yellow cards.
Brad nudged Laurie. "It's not time for report cards," he whispered.
Laurie stared at the card she'd received. "It's a Wave membership card," she whispered back.
"What?" Brad hissed.
"All right," Mr. Ross slapped his hands together loudly. "No talking."
Brad sat up straight in his seat. But Laurie understood his surprise. Membership cards? It must have been a joke. Meanwhile, Mr. Ross had finished distributing the cards and stood in the front of the room.
"Now you will all have membership cards," Mr. Ross announced. "If you turn them over you 'will find that some of them have been marked with a red X. If you have a red X you are to be a monitor, and you will report directly to me any members of The Wave who do not obey our rules."
Around the room students were scrutinizing their cards and turning them over to see if

they had a red X. Those who had them, like Robert and Brian, were smiling. Those who didn't, like Laurie, seemed less pleased.
Laurie raised her hand.
"Yes, Laurie," Ben said.
"Uh, what's the point of this?" Laurie asked.
There was a silence around the room and Ben did not answer right away. Then he said, "Aren't you forgetting something?"
"Oh, right." Laurie got up and stood next to her desk. "Mr. Ross, what's the point of these cards?"
Ben had expected someone to question him on the cards. The reason for them would not be apparent immediately. For now he said, "It's just an example of how a group might monitor itself."
Laurie had no other questions, so Ben turned to the blackboard and added another word to "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community."
Today's word was "Action."
"Now that we understand Discipline and Community," he told the class, "Action is our next lesson. Ultimately, discipline and community are meaningless without action. Discipline gives you the right to action.
A disciplined group with a goal can take action to achieve it. They *must* take action to achieve it. Class, do you believe in The Wave?"
There was a split-second hesitation, and then the class rose in unison and answered in what seemed like a single voice. "Mr. Ross, yes!"
Mr. Ross nodded. "Then you must take action!
Never be afraid to act on what you believe. As The Wave you must act together like a well-oiled machine.
Through hard work and allegiance to each other, you will learn faster and accomplish more. But only if you support one another, and only if you work together and obey the rules, can you ensure the success of The Wave."
As he spoke, the class members stood beside their desks at attention. Laurie Saunders stood with them, but she did not feel the high energy and unity she'd felt on previous days In fact, today there was something about the class, something about their singlemindedness and absolute obedience to Mr. Ross that she would almost describe as creepy.
"Be seated," Mr. Ross ordered, and instantly the class sat. Their teacher continued his lesson. "When we first began The Wave a few days ago I felt that some of you were actually competing to give the right answers and to be better members than others. From now on I want this to end. You are not competing against each other; you are working together for a common cause. You must conceive of yourselves as a team, a team of which you are all members. Remember, in The Wave you are all equals. No one is more important or more popular than anyone else and no one is to be excluded from the group. Community means equality within the group.

"Now your first action as a team will be to actively recruit new members. To become a member of The Wave, each new student must demonstrate knowledge of our rules and pledge strict obedience to them."
David smiled as Eric looked over at him and winked. This was what he'd needed to hear. There was nothing wrong with turning other kids on to The Wave. It was for the good of everybody. Especially the football team.
Mr. Ross had concluded his talk on The Wave. He intended to spend the rest of the period reviewing the assignment he'd given the class the night before. But suddenly a student named George Snyder was raising his hand,
"Yes, George."
George sprang from his seat to attention by his desk.
"Mr. Ross, for the first time I feel like I'm part of something," he announced. "Something great."
Around the room, startled students stared at George.
Feeling the eyes of the class upon him, George began to sink back into his chair. But then Robert suddenly stood.
"Mr. Ross," he said proudly, "I know just how George feels. It's like being born again."
No sooner had. he returned to his seat than Amy stood. "George's right, Mr. Ross. I feel the same way."
David was pleased. He knew that what George had done was corny, but then Robert and Amy had done it too, just so George wouldn't feel foolish and alone.
That's what was good about The Wave. They supported each other. Now he stood up and said, "Mr. Ross, I'm proud of The Wave."
This sudden outburst of testimonials surprised Ben.
He was determined to get on to the day's classwork, but suddenly he knew he had to go along with the class a little longer. Almost subconsciously he sensed how much they wanted him to lead them, and it was something he felt he could not deny.
"Our salute!" he ordered. Around the room students jumped to attention beside their desks and gave The Wave salute. The mottos followed: "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community, Strength Through Action!"
Mr. Ross was picking up his class notes when the students burst forth again, this time giving the salute and chanting their motto without prompting. Then silence fell over the room. Mr. Ross gazed at the students in wonderment. The Wave was no longer just an idea or a game. It was a living movement in his students. They *were* The Wave now, and Ben realized that they could act on their own without him if they wanted. That thought could have been frightening, but Ben was confident that he had control as their leader. The experiment was simply becoming much more interesting.

At lunch that day all The Wave members who were in the cafeteria sat at a single long table. Brian, Brad, Amy, Laurie, and David were there. At first Robert Billings seemed tentative about joining them, but when David saw him he insisted he sit at the table,

telling him they were all part of The Wave now.
Most of the kids were raving about what was going on in Mr. Ross's class, and Laurie really had no reason to argue with them. But still she felt odd-all that saluting and chanting. Finally, during a pause in the conversation, she said, "Does anyone feel kind of strange about this?"
David turned to her. "What do you mean?"
"I don't know," Laurie said. "But doesn't it feel a little weird?"
"It's just so different," Amy told her. "That's why it feels weird."
"Yeah," Brad said. "It's like there's no in-crowd anymore. Man, the thing that bugs me the most about school sometimes is all these little cliques. I'm tired of feeling like every day's a big popularity contest. That's what's so great about The Wave. You don't have to worry about how popular you are. We're all equal. We're all part of the same community."
"Do you think everyone likes that?" Laurie asked.
"Do you know anyone who doesn't?" David asked.
Laurie felt her face grow flushed. "Well, I'm not sure I do."
Suddenly Brian pulled something out of his pocket and held it up to Laurie. "Hey, don't forget," he said.
He was holding up his Wave membership card with the red X on the back.
"Forget what?" Laurie asked.
"You know," Brian said. "What Mr. Ross said about reporting anyone who breaks the rules."
Laurie was shocked. Brian really couldn't be serious, could he? Now Brian started to grin, and she relaxed.
"Besides," David said. "Laurie isn't breaking any rule."
"If she was really against The Wave she would be," Robert said.
The rest of the table became silent, surprised that Robert had said anything. Some of them weren't even used to hearing his voice, he usually said so little.
"What I mean is," Robert said nervously, "the whole idea of The Wave is that the people in it have to support it. If we're really a community, we all have to agree."
Laurie was about to say something, but she stopped herself. It was The Wave that had given Robert the courage to sit at the table with them and to join in the conversation. If she argued against The Wave now, she would really be implying that Robert should go sit by himself again and not be part of their "community."
Brad patted Robert on his back. "Hey, I'm glad you joined us," he said.
Robert blushed and then turned to David. "Did he stick anything on my back?" he asked. Everyone at the table laughed.

Chapter Nine

Ben Ross wasn't quite sure what to make of The Wave. What had begun as a simple history experiment had become a fad that was spreading outside his classroom. As a

result, some unexpected things had started to occur. For one, the size of his daily history class was beginning to expand as students from free periods, study halls, and lunch came to be part of The Wave. The recruiting of more students for The Wave had apparently been far more successful than he had ever expected. So successful, in fact, that Ben began to suspect that some students were cutting other classes to sit in on his. Remarkably enough, though, even with the larger class size and the students' insistence on practicing the salute and motto, the class was not falling behind. If anything, they were covering their assigned lessons even faster than usual. Using the rapid question and answer style that The Wave had inspired, they had quickly covered Japan's entrance into World War Two.

Ben noticed a marked improvement in preparation for class and in class participation, but he also noticed that there was less thinking behind the preparation. His students could glibly spit back answers as if by rote, but there was no analysis, no questioning on their part. In a way he could not fault them, because he himself had introduced them to the ways of The Wave. It was just another unexpected development in the experiment. Ben reasoned that the students realized that to neglect their studies would be detrimental to The Wave. The only way they could have time to spend on The Wave was to be so well prepared that they only needed half the regular class to cover their assigned lessons. But he wasn't certain this was something to be pleased about. The class's homework assignments had improved, but rather than long, thoughtful answers, they wrote short ones. On a multiple choice test they might all do well, but Ben had his doubts about how they'd do on an exam consisting of essays.

To add to the interesting developments in his experiment was a report he'd heard that David Collins and his friends Eric and Brian had successfully infused The Wave into the school's football team. Over the years, Norm Schiller, the biology teacher who also coached the school's football team, had become so soured by wisecracks about the team's continual losses that during football season he practically went months without speaking to another teacher. But that morning in the faculty lounge Norm had actually thanked him for introducing The Wave to his students. Would wonders never cease?

On his own, Ben had tried to find out what it was that attracted students to The Wave. Some of those he asked said it was just something new and different, like any fad. Others said they liked the democracy of it -the fact that they were all equals now.

Its pleased Ross to hear that answer. He enjoyed thinking that he had helped break down the petty popularity contests and cliques that he felt often preoccupied too much of his students' thinking and energy. A few students even said they thought the idea of increased discipline was good for them. That had surprised Ben. Over the years, discipline had become an increasingly personal responsibility. If the students didn't do it themselves, their teachers were less and less inclined to step in. Maybe this was a mistake, Ben thought. Perhaps one of the results of his experiment would be a general rebirth of school discipline. He even daydreamed about a story in the education section of *Time* magazine: *Discipline Returns to the Classroom: Teacher Makes Startling*

Discovery.

Laurie Saunders sat on a desk in the school publications office, chewing on the end of a pen. Various members of *The Gordon Grapevine* staff sat on desks around her, biting their nails or chewing gum. Alex Cooper was wearing his Sony radio and was bopping to the music through his earphones. Another reporter was wearing roller skates. This was *The Grapevine's* excuse for a weekly editorial meeting.
"Okay," Laurie told them. "We've got the same problem as usual. The paper is due out next week, but we don't have enough stories." Laurie looked at the girl wearing roller skates. "Jeanie, you were supposed to do a fashion story on the latest clothes. Where is it?"
"Oh, nobody's wearing anything interesting this year," Jeanie replied. "It's always the same thing: jeans and sneakers and T-shirts."
"Well then write about how there are no new styles this year," Laurie said, then she turned to the reporter who was bopping to his radio. "Alex?"
Alex kept bopping. He couldn't hear her.
"Alex!" Laurie said more loudly.
Finally someone near Alex gave him a nudge. He looked up, startled. "Uh, yeah?"
Laurie rolled her eyes. "Alex, this is supposed to be an editorial meeting."
"Really?" Alex replied.
"Okay, so where's your record review for this issue?" Laurie asked.
"Oh, uh, yeah, record review, right, uh yeah," Alex said. "Well, uh, you see; it's a long story. Uh, like I was going to do it but, uh, remember that trip I said I had to take to Argentina?"
Laurie rolled her eyes again.
"Well, it fell through," Alex said. "And I had to go to Hong Kong instead."
Laurie turned to Alex's sidekick, Carl. "I suppose you had to go to Hong Kong with him," she said sarcastically.
Carl shook his head. "No," he replied seriously, "I made the trip to Argentina as scheduled."
"I see," said Laurie. She looked around at the rest of *The Grapevine's* staff. "I suppose the rest of you have been too busy hopping around the globe to get anything written as well."
"I went to the movies," Jeanie said.
"Did you write a review?" Laurie asked.
"No, it was too good," she replied.
"Too good?"
"It's no fun writing reviews of good movies," she said.
"Yeah," said Alex, the globe-hopping record reviewer. "It's no fun doing a review of a good movie because you can't say anything bad about it. The only time it's fun to review something is when it's bad. Then you can tear it to shreds, he, he, he." Alex

started rubbing his hands together as he went into his mad scientist routine. Alex had the best mad scientist routine in school. He also did a great imitation of a wind surfer in a hurricane.
"We need stories for the paper," Laurie said resolutely. "Doesn't anyone have any ideas?"
"They got a new school bus," someone said.
"Whoopee!"
"I heard that Mr. Gabondi's going on sabbatical next year."
"Maybe he won't come back."
"Sonie kid in the tenth grade put his fist through a window yesterday. He was trying to prove that you could punch a hole in a window and not cut yourself."
"Did he do it?"
"Nope, got twelve stitches."
"Hey, wait a minute," said Carl. "What about this Wave thing? Everyone wants to know what it is."
"Aren't you in Ross's history class, Laurie?" another staff member asked.
"That's probably the biggest story in school right now," said a third.
Laurie nodded. She was aware that The Wave was worth a story, and maybe a big story at that. A couple of days ago it had even occurred to her that something like The Wave was probably just what the sluggish, disorganized staff of *The Grapevine* itself needed. But she had set the idea aside. She couldn't even explain her decision consciously. It was just that creepy feeling she'd begun to get, the feeling that maybe they should be careful with The Wave. So far, she'd seen it do some good in Mr. Ross's class and David said he thought it was helping the football team. But still she was cautious.
"Well, what about it, Laurie?" someone asked.
"The Wave?" Laurie said.
"How come you haven't assigned that story to us?"
Alex asked. "Or are you just saving the good ones for yourself?"
"I don't know if anyone knows enough about it to write about it yet," Laurie said.
"What do you mean? You're in The Wave, aren't you?" Alex asked.
"Well, yes I am," Laurie replied. "But I still ... I still don't know."
A couple of the staff members scowled. "Well, I think *The Grapevine* still should have a story reporting that it exists, at least," Carl said. "I mean, a lot of kids are wondering what it is."
Laurie nodded. "Okay, you're right. I'll try to explain what it is. But in the meantime, I want you all to do something. Since we still have a few days before the paper has to come out. Try to find out everything you can about what kids think of The Wave."

* * *

Ever since the night she had first discussed The Wave with her mother and father at dinner, Laurie had purposely avoided the subject at home. It didn't seem worth creating any more hassles, especially with her mother, who could find something to worry about in everything Laurie did, whether it was going out late with David, chewing on a pen, or The Wave. Laurie just hoped her mother would forget about it. But that night while she was studying in her room her mother knocked on the door. "Babe, can I come in?"

"Sure, Mom."

The door opened and Mrs. Saunders stepped in, wearing a yellow terrycloth bathrobe and slippers. The skin around her eyes looked greasy, and Laurie knew she'd been putting wrinkle cream on.

"How're the crow's feet, Mom?" she asked in good-natured humor.

Mrs. Saunders smiled wryly at her daughter. "Someday," she said, wagging a finger, "someday you won't think it's so funny." She walked over to the desk and peered over her daughter's shoulders at the book she was reading. "Shakespeare?"

"What'd you expect?" Laurie asked.

"Well, anything except The Wave," Mrs. Saunders said, sittirig down on her daughter's bed.

Laurie turned to look at her. "What do you mean, Mom?"

"Only that I met Elaine Billings at the supermarket today, and she told me Robert is a completely new person."

"Was she worried?" Laurie asked.

"No, she wasn't, but I am," Mrs. Saunders said.

"You know, they've been having problems with him for years. Elaine has talked to me frequently about it. She's been very worried."

Laurie nodded.

"So she's ecstatic about this sudden change," Mrs. Saunders said. "But somehow I don't trust it. Such a dramatic personality change. It almost sounds like he's joined a cult or something."

"What do you mean?"

"Laurie, if you study the types of people who join these cults, they're almost always people who are unhappy with themselves and their lives. They look at the cult as a way of changing, of starting over, of literally being born again. How else do you explain the change in Robert?"

"But what's wrong with that, Mom?"

"The problem is that it's not real, Laurie. Robert is safe only as long as he keeps within the confines of The Wave. But what do you think happens when he leaves it? The outside world doesn't know or care about The Wave. If Robert couldn't function in school before The Wave, he won't be able to function outside of school where The Wave doesn't exist."

Laurie understood. "Well, you don't have to worry about me, Mom. I don't think I'm as crazy about it as I was a couple of days ago."
Mrs. Saunders nodded. "No, I didn't think you would be, once you thought about it for a while."
"So what's the problem?" Laurie asked.
"The problem is everyone else at school who still takes it seriously," her mother said.
"Oh, Mom, you're the one who's taking this too seriously, do you want to know what I think? I think it's just a fad. It's like punk rock or something. In two months, no one will even remember what The Wave was."
"Mrs. Billings told me that they're organizing a Wave rally for Friday afternoon," Mrs. Saunders said.
"It's just a pep rally for the football game on Saturday," Laurie explained. "The only difference is they're calling it a Wave rally instead of a pep rally."
"At which they will formally indoctrinate two hundred new members?" Mrs. Saunders asked skeptically.
Laurie sighed. "Mom, listen to me. You're really getting paranoid about this whole thing. Nobody's indoctrinating anyone. They're going to welcome new members to The Wave at the rally. Those people would have come to the pep rally anyway. Really, Mom, The Wave is just a game. It's like little boys playing soldier. I wish you could meet Mr. Ross because then you'd see there's nothing to worry about. He's such a good teacher. He'd never get into anything like cults."
"And you're not disturbed by it at all?" Mrs. Saunders asked.
"Mom, the only thing that disturbs me is that so many kids in my class could allow themselves to get caught up in something so immature. I mean, I guess I can understand why David is into it. He's convinced that it's going to turn the football team into a winner. But it's Amy I can't understand. I mean, well, you know Amy. She's so bright and yet, I see her taking this so seriously."
"So you *are* worried," her mother said.
But Laurie shook her head. "No, Mom. That's the only thing that bothers me, and that isn't much. I promise you, Mom, this is a molehill and you're looking for a mountain. Really, trust me."
Mrs. Saunders rose slowly. "Well, all right, Laurie.
At least I know you're not involved in this situation. I suppose that's enough to be thankful for. But please, babe, be careful." She leaned over, kissed her daughter on the forehead, and left the room.
For a few minutes Laurie sat at her desk but did not go back to her homework. Instead, she chewed on a Bic pen and thought about her mother's concerns. She really was blowing it way out of proportion, wasn't she? It really was just a fad, wasn't it?

Chapter Ten

Ben Ross was having coffee in the faculty lounge when someone came in and told him Principal Owens wanted to see him in his office. Ross felt a tremor of nervousness. Had something gone wrong? If Owens wanted to see him, it had to be about The Wave.

Ross stepped out into the hall and started down toward the principal's office. On the way more than a dozen students paused to give him The Wave salute. He returned them and continued quickly, wondering what Owens was going to say. In one sense, if Owens was going to tell him that there had been complaints and that he should stop the experiment, Ross knew he would feel some relief. Honestly, he had never expected The Wave to spread this far. The news that kids in other classes, kids in other grades even, had gotten into The Wave still amazed him. He simply hadn't intended it to be anything like this.

And yet there was another consideration, the so-called losers in the class-Robert Billings, for example.

For the first time in his life, Robert was an equal, a member, part of the group. No one was making fun of him anymore, no one was giving him a hard time. And the change in Robert was indeed remarkable. Not only had his appearance improved, but he was starting to contribute. For the first time he was an active member of his class. And it wasn't just history. Christy said she was noticing it in music too. Robert seemed like a new person. To end The Wave might mean returning Robert to the role of class creep and taking away the only chance he had.

And wouldn't ending the experiment now also cheat the other students who were taking part in it? Ben wondered. They would be left hanging without a chance to see where it would eventually lead them. And he would lose the chance to lead them there. Ben abruptly stopped. Hey, wait a minute. Since when was he leading them anywhere? This was a classroom experiment, remember? An opportunity for his students to get a taste of what life in Nazi Germany might have been like. Ross smiled to himself. Let's not get carried away, he thought, and continued down the hall.

Principal Owens's door was open, and when he saw Ben Ross enter the anteroom, he motioned him in with a wave.

Ben was slightly confused. On the way down to the office he'd somehow convinced himself that Principal Owens was going to chew him out, but the old man appeared to be in a good mood.

Principal Owens was a towering man who stood over six feet four inches. His head was almost completely bald except for a few tufts of hair above either ear. His only other noteworthy feature was his pipe, always present, which protruded from his lips. He had a deep voice, and when he was angry, he might instill instant religion in the most hardened atheist. But today it seemed as if Ben had nothing to fear.

Principal Owens sat behind his desk, his large black shoes propped up on one corner, and squinted slightly at Ben. "Say, Ben, that's a good-looking suit," he said.

Owens himself had never been seen around Gordon High in less than a three-piece, even at a Saturday football game.
"Thank you, sir," Ben replied nervously.
Principal Owens smiled. "I can't recall seeing you in one before."
"Uh, yes, this is something new for me," Ben allowed.
One of the principal's eyebrows rose. "Wouldn't have anything to do with this Wave thing, would it?"
Ben had to clear his throat. "Well, yes it does, actually."
Principal Owens leaned forward. "Now, tell me, Ben, what this Wave thing is all about," he said.
"You've got the school in a tizzy."
"Well, I hope it's a good tizzy," Ben Ross replied.
Principal Owens rubbed his chin. "From what I've heard it is. Have you heard differently?"
Ben knew he had to reassure him. He quickly shook his head. "No sir, I've heard nothing."
The principal nodded. "I'm all ears, Ben."
Ben took a deep breath and began. "It started several days ago in my senior history class. We were watching a film about the Nazis and ..."
When he finished explaining The Wave, Ben noticed that Principal Owens looked less happy than before, but not as noticeably displeased as Ben had feared he, might be.
The principal removed his pipe from between his lips and tapped it on an ashtray. "I must say it's unusual, Ben. Are you sure that the students are not falling behind?"
"If anything, they're ahead," Ben replied.
"But there are students outside your class that are now involved with this," the principal observed.
"But there have been no complaints," Ben said. "In fact, Christy says she's even noticed an improvement in her classes because of it." This was a slight exaggeration, Ben knew. But he also felt it was necessary because Owens was overreacting to The Wave.
"Still, Ben, these mottos and this saluting bother me," the principal said.
"It shouldn't," Ben replied. "It's just part of. The game. And also, Norm Schiller-"
"Yes, yes, I know," Owens said, cutting him short.
"He was in here yesterday raving about this thing. He says it's literally turned that football team of his around. The way he was talking, Ben, you would have thought he'd just drafted six future Reisman Trophy winners. Frankly, I'd just like to see them beat Clarkstown on Saturday." The principal paused momentarily and then said, "But that's not what I'm concerned about, Ben. I'm concerned about the students. This Wave thing seems too open ended for my liking. I know you haven't broken any rules, but there are limits."
"I'm completely aware of that," Ben insisted. "You have to understand that this

experiment can't go any further than I let it go. The whole basis for The Wave is the idea of a group willing to follow their leader. And as long as I'm involved in this, I assure you it can't get out of hand."
Principal Owens refilled his pipe with fresh tobacco and lit it, for a moment disappearing behind a small cloud of smoke while he considered Ben's words.
"Okay," he said. "To be perfectly frank about this, it's so different from anything we've ever had around here that I'm not sure what to think. I say, let's keep an eye on this thing, Ben. And keep your ears open too. Remember, Ben, this experiment, if that's what you want to call it, involves young, impressionable kids. Sometimes we forget that they are young and haven't developed the, uh, the judgment we hope they'll someday have. Sometimes they can take something too far if they're not watched. Understand?"
"Absolutely."
"You promise me I'm not going to have a parade of parents down here suddenly shouting that we're indoctrinating their kids with something?"
"I promise," Ben said.
Principal Owens nodded slightly. "Well, I can't say that I'm crazy about this, but you've never given me cause to doubt you before."
"And I won't now," Ben told him.

Chapter Eleven
When Laurie Saunders got to the publications office the next day, she found a plain white envelope on the floor. Early that morning, or late the afternoon before, someone must have slipped it under the door. Laurie picked it up and closed the door behind her. Inside the envelope was a handwritten story with a note attached.
Laurie read the note:

Dear Editors of *The Grapevine*,
This is a story I have Written for *The Grapevine*.
Don't bother looking for my name because you won't find it.
I don't want my friends or other kids to know I wrote this.

Scowling, Laurie turned to the story. At the top of the page the anonymous author had written a title:

Welcome to the Wave-or Else.

I'm a junior here at Gordon High. Three or four days ago me and my friends heard about this thing called The Wave that all the seniors were getting into. We got interested. You know how juniors always want to be like the seniors.
A bunch of us went to Mr. Ross's class to see what it was. Some of my friends liked

what we heard, but some of us weren't sure. It looked like a dumb game to me.
When the class was over, we started to leave. But this senior stopped us in the hall. I didn't know him, but he said he was in Mr. Ross's class and asked did we want to join The Wave. Two of my friends said yes and two said they didn't know and I said I wasn't interested.
This senior started telling us how great The Wave was. He said that the more kids who joined, the better it would get. He said almost all the seniors at school had joined and most of the juniors too.
Pretty soon my two friends who said first they didn't know changed their minds and said they wanted to join. Then the senior turned to me. "Aren't you going to stick with your friends?" he asked.
I told him they were still my friends even if I didn't join. He kept asking me why I didn't want to join. I just told him I didn't feel like it.
Then he got mad. He said pretty soon people in The Wave wouldn't want to be friends with people who weren't in it. He even said I'd lose all my friends if I didn't join.
I think he was trying to scare me.
But it backfired on him. One of my friends said he didn't see why anyone had to join who didn't want to. My other friends agreed and we left.
Today I found out that three of my friends joined after some other seniors talked to them. I saw that senior from Mr. Ross's class in the hall and he asked if I had joined yet. I told him I didn't intend to. He said if I didn't join soon it would be too late.
All I want to know is: Too late for what?

Laurie refolded the story and put it back in the envelope. Her thoughts about The Wave were beginning to come into focus
.
As Ben left Principal Owens's office, he saw several students putting up a large Wave banner in the hall. It was the day of the pep rally-the Wave rally, Ross had to remind himself. There were more students in the halls now, and he seemed to be making The Wave salute nonstop. If this kept up for much longer he was going to have one sore arm, he thought.
Further down the hall, Brad and Eric were standing at a table handing out mimeographed pamphlets and shouting, "Strength Through Discipline, Strength Through Community, Strength Through Action."
"Learn all about The Wave," Brad was telling passing students. "Here's a pamphlet."
"And don't forget the Wave rally this afternoon," Eric reminded them. "Work together and achieve your goals."
Ben smiled wearily. The untethered energy of these kids was tiring him out. There were Wave posters all over school now. Every single Wave member seemed to be involved in some activity-recruiting new members, disseminating information, preparing the gym for the rally that afternoon. Ben found it almost overwhelming.

A little further down the hall Ben had a funny sensation and stopped. He felt as if he was being followed. A few feet behind him stood Robert, smiling. Ben smiled back and kept going, but a few seconds later he stopped again. Robert was still behind him.
"Robert, what are you doing?" Mr. Ross asked.
"Mr. Ross, I'm your bodyguard," Robert announced.
"My what?"
Robert hesitated slightly. "I want to be your bodyguard," he said. "I mean, you're the leader, Mr. Ross; I can't let anything happen to you."
"What could happen to me?" Ben asked, startled by the notion.
But Robert seemed to ignore that question. "I know you need a bodyguard," he insisted. "I could do it, Mr. Ross. For the first time in my life I feel ... well, nobody makes jokes about me anymore. I feel like I'm part of something special."
Ben nodded.
"So can't I do it?" Robert asked. "I know you need a bodyguard. I could do it, Mr. Ross."
Ben looked into Robert's face. Where there had once been a withdrawn and unconfident boy, there now stood a serious Wave member, concerned for his leader. But a bodyguard? Ben hesitated a moment.
Wasn't that going a little too far? More and more he'd begun to recognize the position of importance his students were unconsciously forcing upon him-the ultimate leader of The Wave. Several times over the last few days he had heard Wave members discussing "orders" he had given: orders to put posters up in the halls, orders to organize The Wave movement in the lower grades, even the order to change the pep rally into a Wave rally.
Except the crazy thing was, he'd never given those orders. Somehow, they'd simply evolved in the students' imaginations, and once there, they automatically assumed he'd given them. It was as if The Wave had taken on a life of its own and now, he and his students were literally riding it. Ben Ross looked at Robert Billings. Somewhere in his mind he knew that by agreeing to let Robert be his bodyguard, he was also agreeing to become a person who required a bodyguard. But wasn't that what the experiment required as well? "All right, Robert," he said. "You can be my bodyguard."
A wide smile appeared on Robert's face. Ben winked at him and continued down the hall. Perhaps having a bodyguard would be helpful. It was essential to the experiment that he maintain the image of leader of The Wave. Having a bodyguard could only enhance that image.

Chapter Twelve

The Wave rally would be in the gym, but Laurie Saunders stood by her locker, uncertain that she wanted to go. She still couldn't put into words exactly what bothered her about The Wave, but she could feel it growing inside her. Something was wrong. The anonymous letter that morning was a symptom. It wasn't only that a senior had

tried to bully a junior into joining The Wave. It was more-the fact that the junior hadn't put his name on the letter, the fact that he'd been afraid to. It was something Laurie herself had been trying to deny for days, but it just wouldn't go away. The Wave was scary. Oh, it was just great if you were an unquestioning member. But if you weren't ...
Laurie's thoughts were interrupted by a sudden flurry of shouts out in the quadrangle. She quickly went to a window and saw that two boys were fighting while a crowd of kids stood watching and yelling at them. Laurie gasped. One of the fighters was Brian Ammon! She watched as they threw punches at each other and then awkwardly wrestled to the ground.
What in the world?
Now a teacher ran out and separated the two fighters. Grabbing each tightly by the arm, he started tugging them inside, no doubt to Principal Owens's office. As he went, Brian shouted, "Strength Through Discipline! Strength Through Community! Strength Through Action!"
The other boy shouted back, "Aw, shove it."
"You see that?"
The sudden sound of a voice so close to her startled Laurie, and she jumped around to find David beside her.
"I hope Principal Owens lets Brian attend The Wave rally after this," David said.
"Were they fighting about The Wave?" Laurie asked.
David shrugged. "It's more than that. That kid Brian was fighting, he's this junior named Deutsch who's been after Brian's position all year. This thing's been brewing for weeks. I just hope he got what he deserved."
"But Brian was shouting The Wave motto," Laurie said.
"Well, sure. He's really into it. We all are."
"Even the kid he was fighting?"
David shook his head. "Naw, Deutsch is a jerk, Laurie. If he was in The Wave, he wouldn't be trying to steal Brian's position. That guy's a real detriment to the team. I wish Schiller would throw him off."
"Because he isn't in The Wave?" Laurie asked.
"Yeah," David replied. "If he really wanted the best for the team, he'd join The Wave instead of giving Brian such a hard time. He's a one-man team, Laurie. He's just on a big ego trip and he's not helping anyone." David looked down the hall at a clock. "Come on, we've got to get to that rally. It's gonna start in a second."
Suddenly Laurie made a decision. "I'm not going," she said.
"What?" David looked shocked. "Why not?"
"Because I don't want to."
"Laurie, this is an incredibly important rally," David said. "All the new members of The Wave are going to be there."
"David, I think you and everyone else are taking this whole Wave thing a little bit too seriously."

David shook his head. "No, I'm not You're not taking this seriously enough. Look, Laurie, you've always been a leader. The other kids, they've always looked up to you. You've got to be at that rally."
"But that's exactly why I'm not going," Laurie tried to explain. "Let them make up their own minds about The Wave. They're individuals. They don't need me to help them."
"I don't understand you," David said.
"David, I can't believe how crazy everybody's gotten. The Wave is taking over everything."
"Sure," David said. "Because The Wave makes sense, Laurie. It works. Everybody's on the same team. Everybody's equal for once."
"Oh, that's terrific," Laurie said sarcastically. "Do we all score a touchdown?"
David stepped back and studied his girlfriend. He hadn't expected anything like this. Not from Laurie.
"Don't you see," Laurie said, mistaking his hesitation for a glimmer of doubt. "You're so idealistic, David. You're so intent on creating some kind of utopian Wave society full of equal people and great football teams that you don't see it at all. It can't happen, David. There will always be a few people who won't want to join. They have a right not to join."
David squinted at his girlfriend. "You know," he said, "you're just against this thing because you're not special anymore. Because you're not the best and most popular student in the class now."
"That's not true and you know it!" Laurie gasped.
"I think it is true!" David insisted. "Now you know how the rest of us felt listening to you always giving the right answers. Always being the best. How does it feel not to be the best anymore?"
"David, you're being stupid!" Laurie yelled at him.
David nodded. "All right, if I'm so stupid, why don't you go find yourself a smart boyfriend." He turned and walked away toward the gym.
Laurie stood behind and watched him. It's crazy, she thought. Everything is going out of control.
From what Laurie could hear, The Wave rally was a giant success. She was spending the period in the publication's office down the hall. It was the only place she could think of going where she would be safe from the questioning looks of kids wondering why she wasn't at the rally. Laurie did not want to admit that she was hiding, but it was true. That was how crazy this whole thing had become. You had to hide if you weren't part of it.
Laurie took out a pen and chewed on it nervously.
She had to do something. *The Grapevine* had to do something.
A few minutes later the turning of the doorknob shook her from her thoughts. Laurie caught her breath. Had someone come to get her?
The door opened and Alex bopped in to the beat of the music coming through his

earphones.
Laurie sank back in her chair and let out a big sigh.
When Alex saw Laurie he smiled and pulled the earphones off his head. "Hey, how come you're not in with the troops?"
Laurie shook her head. "Alex, it's not *that* bad."
But Alex just grinned. "Oh yeah? Pretty soon they're gonna have to change the name of this school to Fort Gordon High."
"I'm not amused, Alex," Laurie said.
Alex scrunched up his shoulders and made a face.
"Laurie, you must learn that nothing is above ridicule."
"Well, if you think they're troopers, aren't you frightened of being drafted too?" Laurie asked.
Alex grinned. "Who, me?" Then he swiped through the air with several fierce-looking karate chops. "Anyone hassles me and I'll Kung Foo them into chopped suey."
The door of the publication's office opened again and now Carl slipped in. Seeing Laurie and Alex there, he smiled. "Looks like I've stumbled into Anne Frank's attic," he said.
"The last of the rugged individuals," Alex said.
Carl nodded. "I believe it. I just came from the rally."
"They let you out?" Alex asked.
"I had to go to the bathroom," Carl answered.
"Hey, man," Alex said. "You got the wrong place."
Carl grinned. "This is where I went after the bathroom. Anyplace but that rally."
"Join the club," Laurie said.
"Maybe we should give ourselves a name," Alex said. "If they're The Wave, we could be The Ripple."
"What do you think?" Carl asked.
"About calling ourselves The Ripple?" Laurie said.
"No, about The Wave."
"I think it's time we put out that issue of *The Grapevine,"* Laurie said.
"Excuse me for injecting my own not always serious opinion," Alex said, "but I think we ought to put it out fast before the rest of the staff gets carried away by The Mighty Wave."
"Pass the word around to the other staff members," Laurie said. "On Sunday at two o'clock we'll have an emergency meeting at my house. And try to make sure only non-Wave members are there."

That night Laurie stayed alone in her room. All afternoon she'd been too preoccupied with The Wave to allow herself to feel anything about David. Besides, they'd had fights before. But earlier in the week David had made a date to take her out that night, and here it was ten-thirty. It was obvious he wasn't coming, but Laurie couldn't quite

believe it. They'd been going together since sophomore year and suddenly something as trivial as The Wave had broken them up-only The Wave wasn't trivial. Not anymore.
Several times during the evening Mrs. Saunders had come up to her room to ask if she wanted to talk about it, but Laurie said she didn't. Her mother was such a worry-wart, and the problem was that this time there really was something worth worrying about.
Laurie had been sitting at her desk trying to write something about The Wave for *The Grapevine*, but so far the page of paper before her was empty, except for a few water marks where a tear or two had fallen.
There were knocks on her door, and Laurie quickly wiped her eyes with the palm of her hands. It was no use; if her mother came in she'd see that she was crying. "I don't want to talk, Mom," she said.
But the door had started to open anyway. "It's not your mom, babe."
"Dad?" Laurie was surprised to see her father. It wasn't that she didn't feel close to him, but unlike her mother, he usually didn't get involved in her problems.
Unless they somehow concerned golf.
"Can I come in?" her father asked.
"Well, Dad," Laurie smiled slightly, "considering the fact that you're already in ..."
Mr. Saunders nodded. "I'm sorry to barge in, babe, but your mother and I are both worried."
"She told you David broke up with me?" Laurie asked.
"Uh, yes, she did," Mr. Saunders said. "And I'm sorry about that, babe, I really am. I thought he was a nice boy."
"He was," Laurie said. Until The Wave, she thought.
"But, uh, I'm concerned about something else, Laurie. About something I heard on the golf course this evening." Mr. Saunders always left work early on Fridays to play nine holes of golf in a twilight league before the sun went down.
"What, Dad?"
"Today after school a boy was beaten up," her father said. "Now I got this story secondhand, so I don't know if it's all accurate. But apparently there was some kind of rally at school today, and he had resisted joining this Wave game or said something critical about it."
Laurie was speechless.
"The boy's parents are neighbors of one of the men I play golf with. They just moved in this year. So the boy must have been new at school."
"It sounds like he would have been a perfect candidate for joining The Wave," Laurie said.
"Maybe," said Mr. Saunders. "But Laurie, the boy is Jewish. Could that have had anything to do with It?"
Laurie's jaw. dropped. "You don't think … Dad, you can't believe there's anything like that going on. I mean, I don't like The Wave, but it's not like that, Dad, I swear it isn't."

"Are you sure?" Mr. Saunders asked.
"Well, I, uh, I know everyone who was originally in The Wave. I was there when it began. The whole idea was to show how something like Nazi Germany could have happened. It wasn't for us to become little Nazis.
It's … it's-"
"It sounds like it's gotten out of hand, Laurie," her father said. "Has it?"
Laurie just nodded. She was too shocked to be able to say anything.
"Some of the men were talking about going to the school on Monday to talk to the principal," Mr. Saunders said. "Just, you know, to be on the safe side."
Laurie nodded. "We're going to put out a special issue of *The Grapevine.* We're going to expose this whole thing."
Her father was quiet for a few moments. "That sounds like a good idea, babe. But be careful, okay?"
"I will, Dad," Laurie said. "I promise."

Chapter Thirteen
For the last three years during football season, sitting with Amy at Saturday afternoon games had become a habit for Laurie. David, of course, was on the team, and while Amy didn't have a steady boyfriend, the guys she dated were almost always football players. By Saturday afternoon, Laurie couldn't wait to see Amy; she had to tell her what she'd learned. It had surprised Laurie that Amy had gone along with The Wave so far; but now Laurie was certain that as soon as Amy learned about the boy who was beaten up, she would quickly come to her senses. Besides, Laurie sorely needed to talk to her about David. She still couldn't understand how something as dumb as The Wave could have made David break up with her. Maybe Amy knew something she didn't know. Perhaps she could even talk to David for her.
Laurie got to the game just as it was starting. It was by far the best turnout of the year, and it took Laurie a moment to spot Amy's head of curly blond hair in the crowded bleachers. She was way up, almost at the top row. Laurie hurried to an aisle and was about to start up when someone yelled, "Stop!"
Laurie stopped and saw Brad coming toward her.
"Oh, hi, Laurie, I didn't recognize you from behind," he said. Then he did The Wave salute.
Laurie just stood there without moving.
Brad frowned. "Come on, Laurie, just give me the salute and you can go up."
"What are you talking about, Brad?"
"You know, The Wave salute."
"You mean I can't go up into the stands unless I give The Wave salute?" Laurie asked.
Brad looked around sheepishly. "Well, that's what they decided, Laurie."
"Who are they?" Laurie asked.
"The Wave, Laurie, you know."

"Brad, I thought *you* were The Wave. You're in Mr. Ross's class," Laurie said.
Brad shrugged. "I know. Look, what's the big deal.
Just give me the salute and you can go up."
Laurie looked up at the crowded stands. "You mean everyone in the stands gave you the salute?"
"Well, yeah. In this part of the stands."
"Well, I want to go up and I don't want to give The Wave salute," Laurie said angrily.
"But you can't," Brad replied.
"Who says I can't?" Laurie asked loudly. Several students near them looked in their direction.
Brad blushed. "Look, Laurie," he said in a low voice. "Just do the stupid salute already."
But Laurie was adamant. "No, this is ridiculous.
Even you know it's ridiculous."
Brad squirmed slightly. Then he looked around again and said, "Okay, don't salute, just go ahead. I don't think anyone's looking."
But all at once Laurie didn't want to join the people in the stands. She had no intention of sneaking anywhere to join The Wave. This whole thing had just gone insane. Even some of The Wave members like Brad knew it was insane. "Brad," she said. "Why are you doing this if you know it's stupid? Why are you a part of it?"
"Look, Laurie, I can't talk about it now," Brad said.
"The game's starting, I'm supposed to let people into the stands. I got too much to do."
"Are you afraid?" Laurie asked. "Are you afraid of what the other Wave members will do if you don't go along with them?" ·
Brad's mouth opened, but for a few seconds no sounds came out. "I'm not afraid of anyone, Laurie," he said finally. "And you better shut your mouth. You know, a lot of people noticed that you weren't at The Wave rally yesterday."
"So? So what?" Laurie demanded.
"I'm not saying anything, I'm just telling you," Brad said.
Laurie was aghast. She wanted to know what he was trying to say, but there was a big play on the field.
Brad turned away, and her words were lost in the roar of the crowd.

Sunday afternoon Laurie and some of the staff of *The Grapevine* turned the Saunders' living room into a newsroom as they put together a special edition of the paper devoted almost entirely to The Wave. Several
members of the newspaper were not there, and when Laurie asked those present why, they seemed reluctant to answer at first. Then Carl said, "I have a feeling a few of our comrades would prefer not to incur the wrath of The Wave."
Laurie looked around the room at the other staffers, who were nodding in agreement with Carl's assessment.

"Sniveling, spineless amoebas," Alex shouted, jumping to his feet and raising his fist above his head. "I pledge to fight The Wave until the end. Give me liberty, or give me acne!"
He looked around at the puzzled faces. "Well," he explained, "I figured acne was worse than death."
"Sit down, Alex," someone said.
Alex sat and the group returned to the job of putting together the newspaper. But Laurie could sense that they were all acutely aware of the absent members.
The special edition on The Wave would include the story by the anonymous junior, and a report Carl had done on the sophomore who'd been beaten up.
It turned out that the boy had not been hurt badly, only roughed up by a couple of hoods. There was even some uncertainty over whether it was over The Wave, or whether The Wave was just an excuse the hoods had used to start a fight. However, one of the hoods had called the boy a dirty Jew. The boy's parents told Carl they were keeping him out of school and planned to visit Principal Owens personally Monday morning.
There were other interviews with worried parents and concerned teachers. But the most critical article was an editorial Laurie had spent most of Saturday writing.
It condemned The Wave as a dangerous and mindless movement that suppressed freedom of speech and thought and ran against everything the country was founded on. She pointed out that The Wave had already begun to do more harm than good (even with The Wave, the Gordon High Gladiators had lost to Clarkstown 42 to 6) and warned that unless it was stopped it would do much worse.
Carl and Alex said they'd take the paper to the printer first thing the next morning. The paper would be out by lunchtime.

Chapter Fourteen

There was one thing Laurie had to do before the paper came out. Monday morning, she had to find Amy and explain to her about the story. She still hoped that as soon as Amy read it, she would see The Wave for what it was and change her mind about it. Laurie wanted to warn her in advance so she could get out of The Wave in case there was trouble.
She found Amy in the school library and gave her a copy of the editorial to read. As Amy read, her mouth began to open wider and wider. Finally, she looked up at Laurie.
"What are you going to do with it?"
"I'm publishing it in the paper," Laurie said.
"But you can't say these things about The Wave," Amy said.
"Why not?" Laurie asked. "They're true. Amy, The Wave has become an obsession with everyone. No one is thinking for themselves anymore."
"Oh, come on, Laurie," Amy said. "You're just upset. You're letting your fight with David get to you."

Laurie shook her head. "Amy, I'm serious. The Wave is hurting people. And everyone's going along with it like a flock of sheep. I can't believe that after reading this you'd still be part of it. Don't you see what The Wave is? It's everybody forgetting who they are. It's like *Night of the Living Dead* or something. Why do you want to be part of it?"
"Because it means that nobody is better than anyone else for once," Amy said. "Because ever since we became friends all I've ever done is try to compete with you and keep up with you. But now I don't feel like I have to have a boyfriend on the football team like you. And if I don't want to, I don't have to get the same grades you get, Laurie. For the first time in three years I feel like I don't have to keep up with Laurie Saunders and people will still like me."
Laurie felt chills run down her arms. "I, I, uh, always knew you felt that way," she stammered. "I always wanted to talk to you about it."
"Don't you know that half the parents in school say to their kids, 'Why can't you be like Laurie Saunders'?" Amy asked. "Come on, Laurie, the only reason you're against The Wave is because it means you're not a princess anymore."
Laurie was stunned. Even her best friend, someone as smart as Amy, was turning against her because of The Wave. It made her angry. "Well, I'm publishing this," she said.
Amy only looked up at her and said, "Don't, Laurie."
But Laurie shook her head. "I already have," she said. "And I know what I have to do."
Suddenly it was as if she was a stranger. Amy looked at her watch. "I gotta go," she said, and walked away, leaving Laurie standing alone in the library.

Copies of *The Grapevine* had never been scooped up faster than they were that day. The school was abuzz with the news. Very few kids. had heard about the sophomore who was beaten up, and of course no one had heard the story by the anonymous junior before. But as soon as those stories appeared in the paper, other stories began to circulate. Stories of threats and abuse directed at kids who, for one reason or another, had resisted The Wave.
There were other rumors going around too, that teachers and parents had been to Principal Owens's office all morning complaining, and that the school counselors had begun interviewing students. There was an air of unease in the halls and classrooms.
In the faculty lounge, Ben Ross put down his copy of *The Grapevine* and rubbed his temples with his fingers. Suddenly he'd gotten a terrible headache. Something had gone wrong and somewhere in his mind Ross suspected that he was to blame for it. The roughing up of this boy was terrible, unbelievable. How could he justify an experiment that had such effects?
He was also surprised to find himself disturbed by the football team's embarrassing defeat by Clarkstown. It seemed odd to him that although he didn't care the least about high school athletics, this defeat would bother him so. Was it because of The Wave? During the last week he had begun to believe that if the football team fared well it

would be a strong argument for the success of The Wave.
But since when did he want The Wave to succeed?
The success or failure of The Wave was not the point of the experiment. He was supposed to be interested in what his students learned from The Wave, not in The Wave itself.
There was a medicine chest in the faculty lounge, stocked with just about every brand of aspirin and nonaspirin headache remedy that had ever been invented. A friend of his had once remarked that while doctors as a group suffered from the highest incidence of suicide, teachers had to have the highest incidence of headaches. Ben shook three tablets from a bottle and headed for the door to get some water.
But just as he reached the faculty room door, Ben stopped. Outside in the hall he could hear voices Norm Schiller's and another male voice he didn't recognize. Someone must have stopped Norm just as he was going into the faculty lounge and now, he stood outside the door talking. Ben listened from inside.
"No, it wasn't worth a damn," Schiller was saying. "Sure it got them psyched up, made 'em think they could win. But out on the field they couldn't execute. All the waves in the world don't mean a thing next to a well-executed quarterback option. There's no substitute for learning the damn game."
"Ross really has these kids brainwashed if you ask me," the unidentified man said. "I don't know what the hell he thinks he's up to, but I don't like it. And none of the other teachers I've talked to do either. Where does he get the right?"
"Don't ask me," Schiller said.
The faculty room door began to open and Ben quickly backed away, pushing through a door into the small faculty bathroom that adjoined the lounge. His heart was pounding rapidly and his head hurt even more. He swallowed the three aspirins and avoided looking at himself in the mirror. Was he afraid of who he might see? A high school, history teacher who had accidentally slipped into the role of a dictator?

David Collins still couldn't understand it. It didn't make sense to him why everyone hadn't joined The Wave in the first place. Then there never would have been these hassles. They all could have functioned as equals, as teammates. People were laughing and saying that The Wave didn't help the football team at all on Saturday, but what did they expect? The Wave wasn't a miracle drug. The team had known about The Wave for exactly five days before the game. What had changed was the team spirit and the team attitude.
David stood outside on the school lawn with Robert Billings and a bunch of other kids from Mr. Ross's class looking at *The Grapevine*. Laurie's story made him feel a little sick. He hadn't heard anything about anyone threatening or hurting anyone and for all he knew, she and her staff had made it all up. An unsigned letter and a story about a sophomore he'd never heard of. Okay, he was unhappy that Laurie refused to be part of The Wave. But why couldn't she and the people like her just leave The Wave alone?

Why did they have to attack it?
Robert, beside him, was getting really upset over Laurie's story. "These are all lies," he said angrily. "She can't be allowed to say these things."
"It's not that important," David told him. "Nobody cares what Laurie's writing or what she has to say."
"Are you kidding?" Robert said. "Anyone who reads this is going to get the completely wrong idea about The Wave."
"I told her not to publish it," Amy said.
"Hey, relax," David said. "There's no law that says people have to believe in what we're trying to do. But if we can keep making The Wave work, they'll see. They'll see all the good things it can do."
"Yeah, but if we don't watch out," Eric said, "these people are going to ruin it for the rest of us. Have you heard the rumors going around today? I heard there are parents and teachers and all kinds of people in Principal Owens's office complaining. Can you believe that? At this rate no one will get a chance to see what The Wave can do."
"Laurie Saunders is a threat," Robert stated bluntly. "She must be stopped."
David didn't like the sinister tone in Robert's voice.
"Hey, wait-" he began to protest.
But Brian cut him off. "Don't worry, Robert, David and I can take care of Laurie, right, Dave?"
"Uh..." David suddenly felt Brian's hand on his shoulder slowly guiding him away from the rest of the group. Robert was nodding in approval. "Look, man," Brian whispered. "If anyone can get Laurie to stop, you can."
"Yeah, but I don't like Robert's attitude," David hissed back. "It's like we must wipe out anyone who resists us. That's the exact opposite of how we should approach this."
"Dave, listen. Robert is just a little overenthusiastic sometimes. But you have to admit he has a point. If Laurie keeps writing stuff like this, The Wave won't have a chance. Just tell her to cool it, Dave. She'll listen to you."
"I don't know, Brian."
"Look, we'll wait for her after school tonight. Then you can go talk to her, okay?"
David nodded reluctantly. "I guess."

Chapter Fifteen
Christy Ross was in a hurry to get home after choir that afternoon. Ben had disappeared from school halfway through the day, and she had a feeling she knew why. When she got home, she found her husband hunched over a book on Nazi youth.
"What happened to you today?" she asked.
Without looking up from his book, Ben answered irritably, "I left early. I, uh, wasn't feeling well. But I need to be alone now, Chris. I have to be prepared for tomorrow." ·
"But honey, I need to talk to you," Christy implored.

"Can't it wait?" Ben snapped. "I've got to finish this before class tomorrow."
"No," Christy insisted. "That's what I have to talk to you about. This Wave thing. Have you any idea what's going on at school, Ben? I mean, let's not even dwell on the fact that half my class has been skipping just to go to yours. Do you realize that this Wave of yours is disrupting the entire school? At least three teachers stopped me in the hall today to ask what the hell you're up to. And they're complaining to the principal too."
"I know, I know. And that's because they just don't understand what I'm trying to do," Ben answered.
"Are you serious, Ben?" his wife asked. "Did you know that the school counselors have begun questioning students in your class?" his wife asked. "Are you sure *you* know what you're doing? Because frankly, no one else in school thinks you do."
"Don't you think I know that?" Ben replied. "I know what they're saying about me. That I'm crazy with power ... that I'm on an ego trip."
"Have you thought that they may be right?" Christy asked. "I mean, think of your original goals. Are they still the same ones you have now?"
Ben ran his hands through his hair. He already had enough problems with The Wave. "Christy, I thought you were on my side." But inside, he knew that she was right.
"I am on your side, Ben," his wife answered. "But I've seen you these last few days and it's like I don't even know you. You've become so involved in playing this role at school that you're starting to slip into it at home. I've seen you go overboard like this before, Ben. Now you've got to turn it off, honey."
"I know. It must look to you like I've gone too far. But I can't stop now." He shook his head wearily. "Not yet."
"Then when?" Christy asked angrily. "After you or some of these kids do something, you'll all regret?"
"Do you think I'm not aware of that?" Ben asked.
"Do you think it doesn't worry me? But I created this experiment, and they went along. If I stop now, they'll all be left hanging. They'd be confused, and they wouldn't have learned anything."
"Well, let them be confused," Christy said.
Ben suddenly jumped to his feet in frustrated anger.
"No, I won't do that. I can't do that!" he shouted at his wife. "I'm their teacher. I was responsible for getting them into this. I admit that maybe I did let this go too long. But they've come too far to just drop it now. I have to push them until they get the point. I might be teaching these kids the most important lesson of their lives!"
Christy was not impressed. "Well, I just hope Principal Owens agrees with you, Ben," she told him. "Because he caught me as I was leaving today and said he'd been looking for you all day. He wants to see you first thing tomorrow morning."

The Grapevine staff stayed late after school that day to celebrate their victory. The issue on The Wave had been so successful that it was almost impossible to find

an extra copy anywhere. Not only that, but teachers and administrators and even some students had been stopping them all day and thanking them for revealing "the other side" of The Wave. Already they had heard stories that some students were resigning from The Wave.

The staff had realized that a single issue of the paper was not enough to stop a movement that had gained as much momentum as The Wave had that past-week.

But at least they had struck it a serious blow. Carl said he doubted there would be any more incidents of threats against non-Wave members-or any more beatings.

As usual, Laurie was the last one to leave the publications office. One thing about *The Grapevine* staff- they were great party-ers, but when it came time to clean up somehow, they all disappeared. It had come as a shock to Laurie earlier that year when she realized what having the top position on the paper, editor-in chief, really meant: having to do every little stupid job no one else wanted to do. And tonight, that meant cleaning up after the rest of the staff went home.

By the time she finished, Laurie realized that it had already grown dark out, and she was practically alone in the school building. As she closed the door of *The Grapevine* office and turned off the light, that nervousness she'd felt all week began to return again. The Wave was undoubtedly smarting from the wounds *The Grapevine* had inflicted, but it was still strong in Gordon High, and Laurie was aware that as the head of the paper, she . . . no, she told herself, you're just being silly and paranoid. The Wave was nothing serious, just a classroom experiment that had gotten slightly out of hand. There was nothing to be afraid of.

The corridors were darkened now as Laurie headed to her locker to drop off a book she would not need that evening. The silence of the empty school was eerie. For the first time she heard sounds she'd never heard before: the hums and buzzes of electrical current running to and from alarms and smoke detectors. A bubbling, splashing sound coming from the science room where some overnight experiment must have been left brewing. Even the unusually loud, hollow echo of her own shoes as they rapped the hard corridor floors.

A few feet from her locker, Laurie froze. There on her locker door, the word "enemy" was painted in red letters. Suddenly the loudest noise in the corridor was the quick, insistent beating of her own heart. Calm down, she told herself. Someone is just trying to scare you. She tried to get control of herself and started to do the combination of her lock. But she stopped in midturn. Had she heard something? Footsteps?

Laurie backed slowly away from her locker, gradually losing her battle to suppress her own growing fright. She turned and started walking down the hallway towards the exit. The sound of footsteps seemed to be growing louder, and Laurie quickened her pace. The footsteps grew even louder, and all at once the lights at the far end of the hall went out. Terrified, Laurie turned and peered back down into the dark hallway.

Was that someone? Was there someone down there?

The next thing Laurie knew she was running down the hallway toward the exit doors at

the end. It seemed to take forever to get there, and when she finally reached the double metal doors and banged her hip against the opening bar, they were locked!
In a panic, Laurie threw herself against the next set of doors. Miraculously they opened, and she flew out into the cool evening air, running and running.
It seemed as if she ran for a long time, and finally she lost her breath and had to slow down, clutching her books to her breast and breathing hard. She felt safer now.

David sat waiting in the passenger seat of Brian's van. They were parked near the all-night tennis courts because David knew that when Laurie came home from school after dark, she always took this route, where the bright lights from the courts made her feel safe. For almost an hour now they had been sitting in the van. Brian was in the driver's seat, keeping his eye on the sideview mirror watching for Laurie, and whistling some song so out of tune that David had no idea what it was. David watched the tennis players and listened to the monotonous plunk-ka-plunk of tennis balls being hit back and forth.
"Brian, can I ask you a question?" David said after a long while.
"What?"
"What are you whistling?"
Brian seemed surprised. " 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game,'" he said. Then he whistled a few more bars.
Coming from his lips, the song seemed completely unrecognizable. "There, now can you tell?"
David nodded. "Sure, Brian, sure." He went back to watching the tennis players.
A moment later, Brian sat up in his seat. "Hey, here she comes."
David turned and looked down the block. Laurie was coming down the sidewalk, walking quickly. He reached for the door handle. "Okay, now just let me take care of this alone," he said, pulling the handle.
"Just as long as she understands," Brian said.
"We're not playing around anymore."
"Sure, Brian," David said and got out of the van.
Now Brian was starting to sound like Robert too.
He had to jog to catch up with her, all the while uncertain of how he should handle this. All he knew was that it was better that he does it than Brian. He reached her, but Laurie did not stop, and he had to walk quickly to keep up with her.
"Hey, Laurie, can't you wait up?" he asked. "I've got to talk to you. It's real important."
Laurie slowed down and glanced behind him.
"It's okay, nobody else is coming," David said.
Laurie stopped. David noticed she was breathing hard and clutching her books tightly.
"Well, David," she said. "I'm not used to seeing you alone. Where are your troops?"
David knew he had to ignore her antagonistic remarks and try to reason with her.
"Look, Laurie, will you just listen to me for a minute, please?"

But Laurie didn't seem interested. "David, we said everything we had to say to each other the other day. I don't want to rehash it now, so just leave me alone."
Against his will, David felt himself getting mad. She wouldn't even listen. "Laurie, you've got to stop writing stuff against The Wave. You're causing all kinds of problems."
"The Wave is causing the problems, David."
"It is not," David insisted. "Look Laurie, we want you with us, not against us."
Laurie shook her head. "Well, count me out. I told you, I quit. This is not a game anymore. People have been hurt."
She started to walk away, but David followed her.
"That was an accident," he insisted. "Some guys just used The Wave as an excuse for beating that kid up. Don't you see? The Wave is still for the good of the whole. Why can't you see that, Laurie? It could be a whole new system. We could make it work."
"Not with me, you can't."
David knew if he didn't stop her, she'd get away. It just wasn't fair that one person could ruin it for everyone else. He had to convince her. He had to! The next thing he knew, he had grabbed her arm.
"Let go of me!" Laurie. struggled to get free, but David held her arm tightly.
"Laurie, you've got to stop," he said. It just wasn't fair.
"David, let go of my arm!"
"Laurie, stop writing those articles! Keep your mouth shut about The Wave! You're ruining it for everyone else!"
But Laurie kept resisting. "I will write and I will say anything that I want to, and you can't stop me" she yelled at him.
Overcome with anger, David grabbed her other arm.
Why did she have to be so stubborn? Why couldn't she see how good The Wave could be? "We can stop you, and we will!" he shouted at her.
But Laurie only struggled harder to get out of his grasp. "I hate you" she cried. "I hate The Wave! I hate all of you!"
The words struck David like a hard slap in the face.
Almost out of control, he screamed "Shut up!" and threw her down on the grass. Her books went flying as she fell roughly to the ground.
David instantly recoiled in shock at what he had done. Laurie lay still on the ground and he was filled with fear as he dropped to his knees and put his arms around her.
"Jeez, Laurie, are you all right?"
Laurie nodded, but seemed unable to talk as sobs filled her throat.
David held her tightly. "God, I'm sorry," he whispered. He could feel her tremble and he wondered how on earth he could have done something so stupid. What could have made him want to hurt the girl, the one he really still loved. Laurie pushed herself up slightly and sat sobbing and gasping for breath. David could not believe it. He felt almost as if he were coming out of a trance. What had possessed him these last

days that could cause him to do something so stupid? There he'd been, denying that The Wave could hurt anyone, and at the same time he'd hurt Laurie, his own girlfriend, in the name of The Wave!
It was crazy-but David knew that he'd been wrong.
Anything that could make him do what he'd just done was wrong. It had to be.
Meanwhile, moving slowly down the street, Brian's van passed them and disappeared into the darkness.

Later that night, Christy Ross went into the study where her husband was working.
"Ben," she said firmly, "I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I've been thinking, and I have something important to say."
Ben leaned back in his chair and looked at his wife uneasily.
"Ben, you've got to end The Wave tomorrow," Christy told him. "I know how much this means to you and how important you think it is for your students. But I'm telling you it must end."
"How can you say that?" Ben asked.
"Because, Ben, if you don't end it, I am convinced Principal Owens will," she told him. "And if he has to end it, I promise you your experiment will be a failure. I've been thinking all evening about what you've been trying to accomplish, Ben, and I think I'm beginning to understand. But did you ever consider, back when you began this experiment, what might happen if it didn't work? Did it ever occur to you that you're risking your reputation as a teacher? If this goes wrong, do you think parents are going to let their kids into your classroom again?"
"Don't you think you're exaggerating?" Ben asked.
"No," Christy replied. "Did it ever occur to you that you've not only put yourself into jeopardy but me as well? Some people think that just because I'm your wife that somehow, I'm involved in this Wave idiocy too. Does that seem fair, Ben? It breaks my heart that after two years at Gordon High you're in danger of ruining your job. You're going to end it tomorrow, Ben. You're going to go into Principal Owens and tell him that it's over."
"Christy, how can you tell me what to do?" Ben asked. "How can I possibly end it in one day and still do the students justice?"
"You have to think of something, Ben," Christy insisted. "You just have to."
Ben rubbed his forehead and thought about the next morning's meeting with Principal Owens. Owens was a good man, and open to new ideas and experiment, but now he had immense pressures on him; On one side parents and teachers were in arms over The Wave, and pressure was growing on the principal to step in and put a halt to it. On the other side there was only Ben Ross, pleading with him not to interfere, trying to explain that to stop The Wave abruptly could be a disaster for the students. So much effort had gone into it. To end The Wave without explanation would be like reading the first half of a novel and not finishing it. But Christy was right. Ben knew The Wave

had to end. The important thing wasn't when it ended, but how. The students had to end it themselves, and they had to understand why. Otherwise the lesson, the pain, all that had gone into it, was for nothing.
"Christy," Ben said, "I know it should end, but I just don't see how."
His wife sighed wearily. "Are you saying that you're going to go into Principal Owens's office tomorrow morning and tell *him* that? That you know it should end but you don't know how? Ben, you're supposed to be The Wave's leader. You're the one they're supposed to follow blindly."
Ben did not appreciate the sarcasm in his wife's voice, but again he knew she was right. The students in The Wave had made him more of a leader than he had ever wished to be. But it was also true that he had not resisted. In fact, he had to admit that before the experiment had gone bad, he had enjoyed those fleeting moments of power. A crowded room full of students obeying his commands, the Wave symbol he'd created posted all over the school, even a bodyguard. He had read that power could be seductive, and now he had experienced it. Ben ran his hand through his hair. The
members of The Wave were not the only ones who had to learn the lesson power taught. Their teacher did, as well.
"Ben?" Christy said.
"Yes, I know, I'm thinking," he replied. Wondering was more like it. Suppose there was something he could do tomorrow. Suppose he did something abrupt and final. Would they follow him? At once, Ben understood what he had to do. "Okay, Christy, I've got an idea."
His wife looked at him uncertainly. "Something you're sure will work?"
Ben shook his head. "No, but I hope it will," he said.
Christy nodded and looked at her watch. It was late and she was tired. She leaned over her husband and kissed him on the forehead. The skin was damp with perspiration.
"You coming to bed?"
"Soon," he said.
After Christy went into the bedroom, Ben went over his plan again in his mind. It seemed sound and he stood up, determined to get some sleep. He was just shutting off the lights when the doorbell rang. Rubbing his eyes with weariness, Ross trudged to the front door.
"Who is it?"
"It's David Collins and Laurie Saunders, Mr. Ross."
Surprised, Ben pulled the door open. "What are you doing here?" he asked. "It's late."
"Mr. Ross, we've got to talk to you," David said.
"It's real important."
"Well, come in and sit down," Ben said.
As David and Laurie entered the living room, Ben could see that both of them .were shaken up. Had something even worse happened because of The Wave?
God forbid. The two students sat down on the couch.

David leaned forward.
"Mr. Ross, you've got to help us," he said, his voice filled with agitation.
"What is it?" Ben asked. "What's wrong?"
"It's The Wave," David said.
"Mr. Ross," said Laurie, "we know how important this is to you-but it's just gone too far."
Before Ross could even respond, David added, "It's taken over, Mr. Ross. You can't say anything against it. People are afraid to."
"The kids at school are scared," Laurie told him.
"They're really scared. Not only to say anything against The Wave, but of what might happen to them if they don't go along with it."
Ben nodded. In a way, what these students were telling him relieved him of part of his concern about The Wave. If he did as Christy told him and thought back to the original goals of the experiment, then the fears Laurie and David spoke of confirmed that The Wave was a success. After all, The Wave had originally been conceived as a way to show these kids what life in Nazi Germany might have been like. Apparently, in terms of fear and forced compliance, it had been an overwhelming success-too much of a success.
"You can't even have a conversation without wondering who's listening," Laurie told him.
Ben could only nod again. He recalled those students in his own history classes who had condemned the Jews for not taking the Nazi threat seriously, for not fleeing their homes and ghettos when rumors of the concentration camps and gas chambers first filtered back to them. Of course, Ross thought, how could any rational person believe such a thing? And who could have believed that a nice bunch of high school students like those at Gordon High could have become a fascist group called The Wave? Was it a weakness of man that made him want to ignore the darker side of his fellow human beings?

David yanked him from his thoughts. "Tonight, I almost hurt Laurie because of The Wave," he said. "I don't know what came over me. But I do know that it's the same thing that's come over almost everyone who's in The Wave."
"You've got to stop it," Laurie urged him.
"I know," Ben said. "I will."
"What are you going to do, Mr. Ross?" David asked.
Ben knew he could not reveal his plan to Laurie and David. It was essential that the members of The Wave decide the matter for themselves, and for the experiment to be a true success, Ben could only present them with the evidence. If David or Laurie went to school the next day and told the students that Mr. Ross planned to end The Wave, the students would be biased. They might end it without really understanding why it had to end. Or worse, they might try and fight him, keeping The Wave alive despite its

obvious destiny.
"David, Laurie," he said, "you have discovered for yourselves what the other members of The Wave have not yet learned. I promise you that tomorrow I will try to help them toward that discovery. But I have to do it my way, and I can only ask that you trust me. Can you do that?"
David and Laurie nodded uncertainly as Ben rose and showed them to the door. "Come on, it's too late for you kids to be out," he told them. As they went through the door, however, Ben had another thought.
"Listen, do either of you know two students who have never been involved in The Wave? Two students who Wave members don't know and wouldn't miss?"
David considered for a moment. Amazing as it might be, almost everyone he knew in school had become a member of The Wave. But Laurie thought of two people. "Alex Cooper and Carl Block," she said.
"They're on *The Grapevine* staff."
"Okay," Ben told them. "Now, I want both of you to go back to class tomorrow and act as if everything is fine. Pretend we haven't talked, and don't tell anyone that you were here tonight or that you spoke to me.
Can you do that?" ·
David nodded, but Laurie looked concerned. "I don't know, Mr. Ross."
But Ben cut her short. "Laurie, it is extremely important that we do it this way. You must trust me, okay?"
Reluctantly Laurie agreed. Ben bade them good-bye, and she and David stepped into the dark.

Chapter Sixteen
The next morning in Principal Owens's office, Ben had to pull his handkerchief out of his pocket and pat the perspiration off his forehead. Across the desk, Principal Owens had just slammed his fist down. "Damn it, Ben! I don't care about your experiment. I've got teachers complaining, I've got parents calling me every five minutes wanting to know what the hell's going on here, what the hell are we doing with their kids. You think I can tell *them* it's an experiment? My God, man, you know that boy who was roughed up last week? His rabbi was here yesterday. The man spent two years in Auschwitz. Do you think he gives a damn about your experiment?"
Ben sat up in his chair. "Principal Owens, I understand the pressure you're under. I know that The Wave went too far. I ..." Ben took a deep breath. "I realize now that I made a mistake. A history class is not a science lab. You can't experiment with human beings. Especially high school students who aren't aware that they're part of an experiment. But for a moment let's forget that it was a mistake, that it went too far. Let's look at it right now. Right now, there are two hundred students here who think The Wave is great. I can still teach them a lesson. All I need is the rest of the day, and I can teach them a lesson they will never forget."

Principal Owens looked at him skeptically. "And what do you expect me to tell their parents and the other teachers in the meantime?"
Ben patted his forehead with his handkerchief again. He knew he was taking a gamble, but what choice did he have? He had gotten them into this and he had to get them out. "Tell them that I promise it will all be over by tonight."
Principal Owens arched an eyebrow. "And exactly how do you intend to do that?"
It didn't take Ben long to outline his plan. Across the desk, Principal Owens tapped out his pipe and considered it. A long and un comfortable silence followed.
Finally he said, "Ben, I'm going to be absolutely straight with you. This Wave thing has made Gordon High look very bad, and I'm very unhappy about it I'll let you have today. But I have to warn you, If it doesn't work, I'm going to have to ask you for your resignation."
Ben nodded. "I understand," he said.
Principal Owens stood and offered his hand. "I hope you can make this work, Ben," he said solemnly. "You're a fine teacher and we'd hate to lose you."
Outside in the hall Ben had no time to dwell on Principal Owens's words. He had to find Alex Cooper and Carl Block, and he had to work fast.
In history class that day Ben waited until the students had come to attention. Then he said, "I have a special announcement about The Wave. At five o'clock today there will be a rally in the auditorium for Wave members only."
David smiled to himself and winked at Laurie.
"The reason for the rally is the following," Mr. Ross continued. "The Wave is not just a classroom experiment. It's much, much more than that. Unbeknownst to you, starting last week, all across the country teachers like myself have been recruiting and training a youth brigade to show the rest of the nation how to achieve a better society.
"As you know, this country has just gone through a decade in which steady double-digit inflation has severely weakened the economy," Mr. Ross continued.
"Unemployment has run chronically high, and the crime rate has been worse than any time in memory. Never before has the morale of the United States been so low. Unless this trend is stopped, a growing number of people, including the founders of The Wave, believe that our country is doomed."
David was no longer smiling. This was not what he had expected to hear. Mr. Ross didn't seem to be ending The Wave at all. If anything, he seemed to be going more deeply into it than ever!
"We must prove that through discipline, community, and action we can turn this country around," Ross told the class, "Look what we have accomplished in this school alone in just a few days. If we can change things here, we can change things everywhere."
Laurie gave David a frightened look. Mr. Ross went on: "In factories, hospitals, universities-in all institutions-"
David jumped out of his chair -in protest. "Mr. Ross, Mr. Ross!"

"Sit down, David!" Mr. Ross ordered.
"But, Mr. Ross, you said-"
Ben cut him off urgently. "I said, sit down, David. Don't interrupt me."
David returned to his seat, unable to believe his ears as Mr. Ross continued: "Now listen carefully. During the rally the founder and national leader of The Wave will appear on cable television to announce the formation of a National Wave Youth Movement!"
All around them students started cheering. It was too much for Laurie and David. Both rose to their feet, this time to face the class.
"Wait, wait," David pleaded with them. "Don't listen to him. Don't listen. He's lying."
"Can't you see what he's doing?" Laurie said emotionally. "Can't any of you think for yourselves anymore?"
But the room only grew quiet as the class glared at them.
Ross knew he had to act quickly, before Laurie and David revealed too much. He realized he had made an error. He had asked Laurie and David to trust him, and he had not expected them to disobey. But instantly it made sense to him that they would. He snapped his fingers. "Robert, I want you to take over the class until I return from escorting David and Laurie to the principal's office."
"Mr. Ross, yes!"
Mr. Ross quickly walked to the classroom door and held it open for Laurie and David. Outside in the hall, David and Laurie walked slowly toward the principal's office, followed by Mr. Ross. In the background they could hear steady, loud chants emanating from Mr. Ross's room: "Strength Through Discipline! Strength Through Community! Strength Through Action!"
"Mr. Ross, you lied to us last night," David said bitterly.
"No, I didn't, David. But I told you, you would have to trust me," Mr. Ross replied.
"Why should we?" Laurie asked. "You were the one who started The Wave in the first place."
The point was a good one. Ben could think of no reason why they should trust him. He only knew that they should. He hoped that by evening they would understand.
David and Laurie spent most of the afternoon waiting outside Principal Owens's office to see him. They were miserable and depressed, certain that Mr. Ross had tricked them into cooperating with him so that they could not prevent what now appeared to be the final hours before The Wave movement at Gordon High joined the national Wave movement, which had been growing simultaneously at high schools all over the country.
Even Principal Owens seemed unsympathetic when he finally got around to seeing them. On his desk was a brief report from Mr. Ross, and although neither of them could see what it said, it was obvious that it must have stated that Laurie and David had disrupted the class. Both of them pleaded with the principal to stop The Wave and the five o'clock rally, but Principal Owens only insisted that everything would be all

right. Finally, he told them to go back to their classes.
David and Laurie were incredulous. Here they were trying to prevent the worst thing they'd ever seen happen in school and Principal Owens seemed to be oblivious.
Out in the hall, David threw his books into his locker and slammed the door shut.
"Forget it," he told Laurie angrily. "I'm not hanging around here anymore today. I'm splitting."
"Just wait for me to put my books away," Laurie told him. "I'll join you."
A few minutes later, as they walked down the sidewalk away from school, Laurie sensed that David was getting depressed. "I can't believe how dumb I was, Laurie," he kept saying. "I can't believe I really fell for it."
Laurie squeezed his hand. "You weren't dumb, David. You were idealistic. I mean, there were good things about The Wave. It couldn't be all bad, or no one would have joined in the first place. It's just that they don't see what's bad about it. They think it makes everyone equal, but they don't understand that it robs you of your right to be independent."
"Laurie, is it possible that we're wrong about The Wave?" David asked.
"No, David, we're right," Laurie answered.
"Then why doesn't anybody else see it?" he asked.
"I don't know. It's like they're all in a trance. They just won't listen anymore,"
David nodded hopelessly.
It was still early and they decided to walk to a park nearby. Neither wanted to go home yet. David wasn't sure what to think of The Wave or Mr. Ross. Laurie still believed it was a fad that the kids would ultimately get bored with, no matter who organized it or where. What frightened her was what the kids in The Wave might do before they grew tired of it.

"I feel alone all of a sudden," David said as they walked through the trees in the park. "It's like all my friends are part of a crazy movement and I'm an outcast just because I refuse to be exactly like them."
Laurie knew exactly how he felt, because she felt it too. She moved close to him and he put his arm around her. Laurie felt closer to David than ever.
Wasn't it odd how going through something bad like this could bring them closer? She thought back to the night before, how David had forgotten entirely about The Wave the second he'd realized he'd hurt her. Suddenly she hugged him hard.
"What?" David was surprised.
"Oh, uh, nothing," she said.
"Hmmm." David looked away.
Laurie felt her mind drifting back to The Wave. She tried to imagine the school auditorium that afternoon, filled with Wave members. And some leader somewhere speaking to them over the television. What would he tell them? To bum books? To force all non-Wave members to wear armbands? It seemed so utterly crazy that

anything like this could happen. So … suddenly Laurie remembered something.
"David," she said, "do you remember the day this all started?"
"The day Mr. Ross taught us the first motto?" David asked.
"No, David, the day before that-the day we saw that movie about the Nazi concentration camps. The day I was so upset. Remember? No one could understand how all the other Germans could have ignored what the Nazis were doing and pretended they didn't know."
"Yeah?" David said.
Laurie looked up at him. "David, do you remember what you said to me at lunch that afternoon?"
David tried to recall for a moment, but then shook his head.
"You told me it could never happen again."
David looked at her for a second. He felt himself smiling ironically. "You know something?" he said. "Even with the meeting with that national leader at the rally this afternoon-even though I was part of it, I still can't believe it's happening. It's so insane."
"I was just thinking the same thing," Laurie said.
Then an idea struck her. "David, let's go back to school."
"Why?"
"I want to see him," she said. "I want to see this leader. I swear, I won't believe this is really happening until I see it for myself."
"But Mr. Ross said it was for Wave members only."
"What do you care?" Laurie asked him.
David shrugged. "I don't know, Laurie. I don't know if I want to go back. I feel like … like The Wave got me once and if I go back it might get me again."
"No way," Laurie laughed.

Chapter Seventeen

It was incredible, Ben Ross thought as he walked towards the auditorium. Ahead of him, two of his students sat at a small table in front of the auditorium doors, checking membership cards. Wave members were streaming into the auditorium, many carrying Wave banners and signs. Ross couldn't help thinking that before the advent of The Wave, it would have taken a week to organize so many students. Today it had taken only a few hours. He sighed. So much for the positive side of discipline, community, and action. He wondered, if he was successful in "deprogramming" the students from The Wave, how long it would be before he'd begin seeing sloppy homework again. He smiled. Is this the price we pay for freedom?
As Ben watched, Robert, wearing a jacket and tie, came out of the auditorium and exchanged salutes with Brad and Brian.
"The auditorium is full," Robert told them. "Are the guards in place?"
"They are," Brad said.

Robert looked pleased. "Okay, let's check all the doors. Make sure they're all locked."
Ben rubbed his hands together nervously. It was time to go in. He walked toward the stage entrance and noticed that Christy was there waiting for him.
"Hi." She kissed him quickly on the cheek. "I thought I'd Wish you luck."
"Thanks, I'll need it," Ben said.
Christy straightened his tie. "Did anyone ever tell you you look great in suits?" she asked.
"Matter of fact, Owens said that the other day." Ben sighed. "If I have to start looking for a new job, I might be wearing them a lot."
"Don't worry. You'll do fine," Christy told him.
Ben managed a slight smile. "I wish I had your faith in me," he said.
Christy laughed and turned him toward the stage door. "Go get 'em, tiger."
The next thing Ben knew, he was standing near the side of the stage, looking out at the crowded auditorium filled with Wave members. A moment later Robert joined him there.
"Mr. Ross," he said, saluting, "all the doors are secure and the guards are in place."
"Thank you, Robert," Ben said.
It was time to begin. As he strode to the center of the auditorium stage, Ben glanced quickly toward the curtains behind him and then up at the projectionist's booth at the back of the room. As he stopped and stood between two large television monitors that had been ordered from the AV department that day, the crowd burst spontaneously into The Wave mottos, standing at their seats and giving The Wave salute.
"Strength Through Discipline!"
"Strength Through Community!"
"Strength Through Action!"
Before them, Ben stood motionless. When they had finished their chants, he held up his arms for silence. In an instant the huge roomful of students went silent.
Such obedience, Ben thought sadly. He looked out over the large crowd, aware that this was probably the last time he would be able to hold their attention so firmly.
Then he spoke.
"In a moment our national leader will address us."
And turning he said, "Robert."
"Mr. Ross, yes."
"Turn on the television sets."
Robert turned on both sets and the picture tubes grew bright and blue, with as yet no image. Throughout the auditorium, hundreds of eager Wave members hunched forward in their seats, staring at the blank blue tubes and waiting.

Outside, David and Laurie tried a set of auditorium doors, but found them locked. They quickly tried a second set, but found those locked also. But there were more doors to try, and they ran around the side of the auditorium looking for them.

The television screens were still blank. No face appeared on the screen and no sounds came from the speakers. Around the auditorium students began to squirm and murmur with anxiety. Why wasn't anything happening? Where was their leader? What were they supposed to do? As the tension in the room continued to build, the same question passed through their minds over and over: What were they supposed to do?
From the side of the stage, Ben looked down at them, as the sea of faces stared back at him anxiously.
Was it really true that the natural inclination of people was to look for a leader? Someone to make decisions for them? Indeed, the faces looking up at him said it was. That was the awesome responsibility any leader had, knowing that a group like this would follow. Ben began to realize how much more serious this "little experiment" was then he'd ever imagined. It was frightening how easily they would put their faith in your hands, how easily they would let you decide for them. If people were destined to be led, Ben thought, this was something he must make sure they learned: to question thoroughly, never to put your faith in anyone's hands blindly. Otherwise ...
From the center of the audience a single frustrated student suddenly jumped up from his seat and shouted at Mr. Ross, "There is no leader, is there!"
Shocked students around the auditorium quickly turned as two Wave guards rushed the offender out of the auditorium. In the confusion that followed, Laurie and David were able to slip in through the door the guards had opened.
Before the students had time to think about what had just happened, Ben strode to the center of the auditorium stage again. "Yes, you have a leader!" he shouted. That was the cue Carl Block had been waiting for as he hid backstage. Now he pulled back the stage curtains to reveal a large movie screen. At the same moment, Alex Cooper, in the projection room, flicked on a projector.
"There!" Ben shouted at the auditorium full of students. "There is your leader!"
The auditorium was filled with gasps and exclamations of surprise as the gigantic image of Adolf Hitler appeared on the screen.
"That's it!" Laurie whispered excitedly to David.
"That's the movie he showed us that day!"
"Now listen carefully!" Ben shouted at them. "There is no National Wave Youth Movement. There is no leader. But if there was, *he* would have been it. Do you see what you've become? Do you see where you were headed? How far would you have gone? Take a look at your future!"
The film left Adolf Hitler and focused on the faces of the young Nazis who fought for him during World War Two. Many of them were only teenagers, some even younger than the students in the audience.
"You thought you were so special!" Ross told them.
"Better than everyone outside of this room. You traded your freedom for what you said was equality. "But you turned your equality into superiority over non-Wave members. You accepted the group's will over your own convictions, no matter who you had to

hurt to do it. Oh, some of you thought you were just going along for the ride, that you could walk away at any moment. But did you? Did any of you try it? "Yes, you all would have made good Nazis," Ben told them. "You would have put on the uniforms, turned your heads, and allowed your friends and neighbors to be persecuted and destroyed. You say it could never happen again, but look how close you came. Threatening those who wouldn't join you, preventing non-Wave members from sitting with you at football games. Fascism isn't something those other people did, it is right here, in all of us. You ask how could the German people do nothing as millions of innocent human beings were murdered? How could they claim they weren't involved? What causes people to deny their own histories?"

Ben moved closer to the front of the stage and spoke in a lower voice: "If history repeats itself, you will all want to deny what happened to you in The Wave. But, if our experiment has been successful-and I think you can see that it has-you will have learned that we are all responsible for our own actions, and that you must always question what you do rather than blindly follow a leader, and that for the rest of your lives, you will never, ever allow a group's will to usurp your individual rights."

Ben paused for a moment. So far, he'd made it sound like they were all at fault. But it was more than that.

"Now listen to me, please," he said. "I owe you an apology. I know this has been painful to you. But in a way it could be argued that none of you are as at fault as I am for leading you to this. I meant The Wave to be a great lesson for you and perhaps I succeeded too well. I certainly became more of a leader than I intended to be. And I hope you will believe me when I say that it has been a painful lesson for me too. All I can add is, I hope this is a lesson we'll all share for the rest of our lives. If we're smart, we won't dare forget it."

The effect on the students was staggering. All around the auditorium they were slowly rising from their seats. A few were in tears, others tried to avoid the eyes of those next to them. All looked stunned by the lesson they had learned. As they left, they discarded their posters and banners. The floor quickly became littered with yellow membership cards and all thoughts of military posture were forgotten as they slunk out of the auditorium.

Laurie and David walked slowly down the aisle, passing the somber students filing out of the room. Amy was coming toward them, her head bowed. When she looked up and saw Laurie she burst into tears and ran to hug her friend.

Behind her, David saw Eric and Brian. Both looked shaken. They stopped when they saw David and for a few moments the three-teammates stood in an awkward silence.

"What a freak-out," Eric said, his voice hardly more than a mumble.

David tried to shrug it off. He felt bad for his friends. "Well, it's over now," he told them. "Let's try and forget it … I mean, let's try not to forget it … but let's forget it at the same time."

Eric and Brian nodded. They understood what he meant even if he hadn't exactly made

sense.
Brian made a rueful face. "I should've known it," he said. "The first time that Clarkstown linebacker broke through and sacked me for a fifteen-yard loss last Saturday. I should've known it was no good."
The three teammates shared a short chuckle and then Eric and Brian left the auditorium. David walked down toward the stage where Mr. Ross stood. His teacher looked very tired.
"I'm sorry I didn't trust you, Mr. Ross," David said.
"No, it was good that you didn't," Ross told him.
"You showed good judgment. I should be apologizing to you, David. I should have told you what I was planning to do."
Laurie joined them. "Mr. Ross, what's going to happen now?" she asked.
Ben shrugged and shook his head. "I'm not sure I know, Laurie. We still have quite a bit of history to cover this semester. But maybe we'll take just one more period to discuss what happened today."
"I think we should," David said.
"You know, Mr. Ross," Laurie said. "In a way I'm glad this happened. I mean, I'm sorry it had to come to this, but I'm glad it worked out, and I think everyone learned a lot."
Ben nodded. "Well, that's nice of you, Laurie. But I've already decided this is one lesson I'm going to skip in next year's course."
David and Laurie looked at each other and smiled.
They said good-bye to Mr. Ross and turned to leave the auditorium.
Ben watched Laurie and David and the last of the former members of The Wave leave the auditorium.
When they were gone and he thought he was alone, he sighed and said, "Thank God." He was relieved that it had ended well, and thankful that he still had his job at Gordon High. There would still be a few angry parents and incensed faculty members to smooth over, but in time he knew he could do it.
He turned and was about to leave the stage when he heard a sob and saw Robert leaning against one of the television sets, tears running down his face.
Poor Robert, Ben thought. The only one who really stood to lose in this whole thing.
He walked toward the trembling student and put his arm around his shoulder.
"You know, Robert," he said, trying to cheer him up, "you look good in a tie and jacket. You ought to wear them more often."
Through his tears, Robert managed a smile.
"Thanks, Mr. Ross."
"What do you say we go out for a bite to eat?" Ben said, leading him off the stage. "There are some things I think we should talk about."

Questions:

LOTS:

1) What is the setting of the story The Wave?
…… .

2) What did the students say that they didn't understand about the film?
…… .

3) Give 3 ways Mr. Ross integrated The Wave into his classroom?
…… .

4) What did the football coach think about The Wave at first, and how did this change by the end of the novel?
…… .

5) What was the main problem with Laurie and Amy's friendship?

HOTS:

1) What was the reason that Mr. Ross felt that he needed to create and carry out an experiment such as the Wave could help his students understand The Holocaust?
…… .

2) In the end, Ben says he thinks that the experiment with the students might have been "too much of a success". Why does Ben feel this way? Explain.
…… .

3) Ben tells everyone in the auditorium, "… it has been a painful lesson for me too." Explain what he means by this.
…… .

4) After seeing the movie in class, Laurie tells David how much it disturbed her and he replies, "Well, you can't be bummed out about it for the rest of your life either". Explain how reactions like these convinced Ben Ross to start the experiment.
…… .

5) Explain one advantage and one disadvantage of the experiment at Gordon Hight School. Give examples and information from the novel.

…… .

Quotes Questions:

1) "This is not a game anymore. People have been hurt."
Who has been hurt? Why is this quote important in regard to the lesson Ben is trying to teach his class?

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2) "I might be teaching these kids the most important lesson of their lives".
Who says the quote and what lesson are they being taught through The Wave?

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3) "I'm not afraid of anyone, Laurie … And you'd better shut your mouth.
You know, a lot of people noticed you weren't at the rally yesterday".
What does Brad imply by saying this to Laurie?

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Bridging Questions:

1) Write 80-100 words on the following topic.

"The Third Wave" was a classroom experiment that took place in Palo Alto, California. In 1967, Ron Jones created a week-long project for his History class that was studying Nazi Germany. The experiment was designed to explore the question: how was it possible that the people of Germany could allow the rise of Fascism and the terrible crimes committed by the Nazis? Jones' Third Wave experiment showed how Fascism could raise its ugly head even in a free society.

Make a connection between the above quote and the novel, The Wave.
Support your answer with examples from the novel.

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2) For change to occur, the change will make us sacrifice a former belief, habit or lifestyle, and this can be scary but … we have two choices in how to respond. (Serena Buckley, Essays on The Wave)

Make a connection between the above quote and the novel, The Wave.
Support your answer with information from the novel.

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3) "It is the first responsibility of every citizen to question authority".
(Benjamin Franklin, writer of the Declaration of Independence)

Make a connection between the above quote and the novel, The Wave.
Support your answer with information from the novel.

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Module F – Mr. Know All:

Short Story:

MR. KNOW ALL

By W. Somerset Maugham

I was prepared to dislike Max Kelada even before I knew him. The war had just finished and the passenger traffic in the ocean-going liners was heavy. Accommodation was very hard to get and you had to put up with whatever the agents chose to offer you. You could not hope for a cabin to yourself and I was thankful to be given one in which there were only two berths.

But when I was told the name of my companion my heart sank. It suggested closed portholes and the night air rigidly excluded. It was bad enough to share a cabin for fourteen days with anyone (I was going from San Francisco to Yokohama), but I should have looked upon it with less dismay if my fellow passenger's name had been Smith or Brown.

When I went on board, I found Mr. Kelada's luggage already below. I did not like the look of it; there were too many labels on the suitcases, and the wardrobe trunk was too big. He had unpacked his toilet things, and I observed that he was a patron of the excellent Monsieur Coty; for I saw on the washing-stand his scent, his hair wash and his brilliantine.

Mr. Kelada's brushes, ebony with his monogram in gold, would have been all the better for a scrub. I did not at all like Mr. Kelada. I made my way into the smoking-room. I called for a pack of cards and began to play patience.

I had scarcely started before a man came up to me and asked me if he was right in thinking my name was so and so.

"I am Mr. Kelada," he added, with a smile that showed a row of flashing teeth, and sat down.

"Oh, yes, we're sharing a cabin, I think."

"Bit of luck, I call it. You never know who you're going to be put in with. I was jolly glad when I heard you were English. I'm all for us English sticking together when we're abroad, if you understand what I mean."

I blinked.

"Are you English?" I asked, perhaps tactlessly.

"Rather. You don't think I look like an American, do you? British to the backbone, that's what I am."

To prove it, Mr. Kelada took out of his pocket a passport and airily waved it under my nose.

King George

has many strange subjects. Mr. Kelada was short and of a sturdy build, clean-shaven and dark skinned, with a fleshy, hooked nose and very large lustrous and liquid eyes. His long black hair was sleek and curly. He spoke with a fluency in which there was nothing English and his gestures were exuberant. I felt pretty sure that a closer inspection of that British passport would have betrayed the fact that Mr. Kelada was born under a bluer sky than is generally seen in England.
"What will you have?" he asked me.
I looked at him doubtfully. Prohibition was in force and to all appearances the ship was bone dry. When I am not thirsty I do not know which I dislike more, ginger ale or lemon squash. But Mr. Kelada flashed an oriental smile at me.
"Whisky and soda or a dry martini, you have only to say the word."
From each of his hip pockets he furnished a flask and laid it on the table before me. I chose the martini, and calling the steward he ordered a tumbler of ice and a couple of glasses.
"A very good cocktail," I said.
"Well, there are plenty more where that came from, and if you've got any friends on board, you tell them you've got a pal who's got all the liquor in the world."
Mr. Kelada was chatty. He talked of New York and of San Francisco. He discussed plays, pictures, and politics. He was patriotic. The Union Jack is an impressive piece of drapery, but when it is flourished by a gentleman from Alexandria or Beirut, I cannot but feel that it loses somewhat in dignity. Mr. Kelada was familiar. I do not wish to put on airs, but I cannot help feeling that it is seemly in a total stranger to put mister before my name when he addresses me. Mr. Kelada, doubtless to set me at my ease, used no such formality. I did not like Mr. Kelada. I had put aside the cards when he sat down, but now, thinking that for this first occasion our conversation had lasted long enough, I went on with my game.
"The three on the four," said Mr. Kelada.
There is nothing more exasperating when you are playing patience than to be told where to put the card you have turned up before you have a chance to look for yourself.
"It's coming out, it's coming out," he cried. "The ten on the knave."
With rage and hatred in my heart I finished.
Then he seized the pack.
"Do you like card tricks?"
"No, I hate card tricks," I answered.
"Well, I'll just show you this one."
He showed me three. Then I said I would go down to the dining-room and get my seat at the table.

"Oh, that's all right," he said, "I've already taken a seat for you. I thought that as we were in the same stateroom we might just as well sit at the same table."
I did not like Mr. Kelada.
I not only shared a cabin with him and ate three meals a day at the same table, but I could not walk round the deck without his joining me. It was impossible to snub him. It never occurred to him that he was not wanted. He was certain that you were as glad to see him as he was to see you. In your own house you might have kicked him downstairs and slammed the door in his face without the suspicion dawning on him that he was not a welcome visitor. He was a good mixer, and in three days knew everyone on board. He ran everything. He managed the sweeps, conducted the auctions, collected money for prizes at the sports, got up quoit and golf matches, organized the concert and arranged the fancy-dress ball. He was everywhere and always. He was certainly the best hated man in the ship. We called him Mr. Know-All, even to his face. He took it as a compliment. But it was at mealtimes that he was most intolerable. For the better part of an hour then he had us at his mercy. He was hearty, jovial, loquacious and argumentative. He knew everything better than anybody else, and it was an affront to his overweening vanity that you should disagree with him. He would not drop a subject, however unimportant, till he had brought you round to his way of thinking. The possibility that he could be mistaken never occurred to him. He was the chap who knew. We sat at the doctor's table. Mr. Kelada would certainly have had it all his own way, for the doctor was lazy and I was frigidly indifferent, except for a man called Ramsay who sat there also. He was as dogmatic as Mr. Kelada and resented bitterly the Levantine's cocksureness. The discussions they had were acrimonious and interminable.

Ramsay was in the American Consular Service and was stationed at Kobe. He was a great heavy fellow from the Middle West, with loose fat under a tight skin, and he bulged out of his ready-made clothes. He was on his way back to resume his post, having been on a flying visit to New York to fetch his wife who had been spending a year at home. Mrs. Ramsay was a very pretty little thing, with pleasant manners and a sense of humor. The Consular Service is ill paid, and she was dressed always very simply; but she knew how to wear her clothes. She achieved an effect of quiet distinction. I should not have paid any particular attention to her but that she possessed a quality that may be common enough in women, but nowadays is not obvious in their demeanor. It shone in her like a flower on a coat.

One evening at dinner the conversation by chance drifted to the subject of pearls. There had been in the papers a good deal of talk about the cultured pearls which the cunning Japanese were making, and the doctor remarked that they must inevitably diminish the value of real ones. They were very good already; they would soon be perfect. Mr. Kelada, as was his habit, rushed the new topic. He told us all that was to be known about pearls. I do not believe Ramsay knew anything about them at all, but he could not resist the opportunity to have a fling at the Levantine, and in five minutes we were in

the middle of a heated argument. I had seen Mr. Kelada vehement and voluble before, but never so voluble and vehement as now. At last something that Ramsay said stung him, for he thumped the table and shouted.
"Well, I ought to know what I am talking about, I'm going to Japan just to look into this Japanese pearl business. I'm in the trade and there's not a man in it who won't tell you that what I say about pearls goes. I know all the best pearls in the world, and what I don't know about pearls isn't worth knowing."
Here was news for us, for Mr. Kelada, with all his loquacity, had never told anyone what his business was. We only knew vaguely that he was going to Japan on some commercial errand. He looked around the table triumphantly.
"They'll never be able to get a cultured pearl that an expert like me can't tell with half an eye." He pointed to a chain that Mrs. Ramsay wore. "You take my word for it, Mrs. Ramsay, that chain you're wearing will never be worth a cent less than it is now."
Mrs. Ramsay in her modest way flushed a little and slipped the chain inside her dress.
Ramsay leaned forward. He gave us all a look and a smile flickered in his eyes.
"That's a pretty chain of Mrs. Ramsay's, isn't it?"
"I noticed it at once," answered Mr. Kelada. "Gee, I said to myself, those are pearls all right."
"I didn't buy it myself, of course. I'd be interested to know how much you think it cost."
"Oh, in the trade somewhere round fifteen thousand dollars. But if it was bought on Fifth Avenue, I shouldn't be surprised to hear anything up to thirty thousand was paid for it."
Ramsay smiled grimly.
"You'll be surprised to hear that Mrs. Ramsay bought that string at a department store the day before we left New York, for eighteen dollars."
Mr. Kelada flushed.
"Rot. It's not only real, but it's as fine a string for its size as I've ever seen."
"Will you bet on it? I'll bet you a hundred dollars it's imitation."
"Done."
"Oh, Elmer, you can't bet on a certainty," said Mrs. Ramsay.
She had a little smile on her lips and her tone was gently deprecating.
"Can't I? If I get a chance of easy money like that I should be all sorts of a fool not to take it."
"But how can it be proved?" she continued. "It's only my word against Mr. Kelada's."
"Let me look at the chain, and if it's imitation I'll tell you quickly enough. I can afford to lose a hundred dollars," said Mr. Kelada.
"Take it off, dear. Let the gentleman look at it as much as he wants."
Mrs. Ramsay hesitated a moment. She put her hands to the clasp.
"I can't undo it," she said, "Mr. Kelada will just have to take my word for it."
I had a sudden suspicion that something unfortunate was about to occur, but I could think of nothing to say.

Ramsay jumped up.
"I'll undo it."
He handed the chain to Mr. Kelada. The Levantine took a magnifying glass from his pocket and closely examined it. A smile of triumph spread over his smooth and swarthy face. He handed back the chain. He was about to speak. Suddenly he caught sight of Mrs. Ramsay's face. It was so white that she looked as though she were about to faint. She was staring at him with wide and terrified eyes. They held a desperate appeal; it was so clear that I wondered why her husband did not see it.
Mr. Kelada stopped with his mouth open. He flushed deeply. You could almost see the effort he was making over himself.
"I was mistaken," he said. "It's very good imitation, but of course as soon as I looked through my glass, I saw that it wasn't real. I think eighteen dollars is just about as much as the damned thing's worth."
He took out his pocketbook and from it a hundred dollar note. He handed it to Ramsay without a word.
"Perhaps that'll teach you not to be so cocksure another time, my young friend," said Ramsay as he took the note.
I noticed that Mr. Kelada's hands were trembling.
The story spread over the ship as stories do, and he had to put up with a good deal of chaff that evening. It was a fine joke that Mr. Know-All had been caught out. But Mrs. Ramsay retired to her stateroom with a headache.

Next morning, I got up and began to shave. Mr. Kelada lay on his bed smoking a cigarette. Suddenly there was a small scraping sound and I saw a letter pushed under the door. I opened the door and looked out. There was nobody there. I picked up the letter and saw it was addressed to Max Kelada. The name was written in block letters. I handed it to him.
"Who's this from?" He opened it. "Oh!"
He took out of the envelope, not a letter, but a hundred-dollar note. He looked at me and again he reddened. He tore the envelope into little bits and gave them to me.
"Do you mind just throwing them out of the porthole?"
I did as he asked, and then I looked at him with a smile.
"No one likes being made to look a perfect damned fool," he said.
"Were the pearls real?"
"If I had a pretty little wife I shouldn't let her spend a year in New York while I stayed at Kobe," said he.
At that moment I did not entirely dislike Mr. Kelada. He reached out for his pocketbook and carefully put in it the hundred-dollar note.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) When does the story take place?

…… .

2) Why was Mr. Kelada sailing to Japan?

…… .

3) Where did the speaker believe Mr. Kelada was born?

…… .

4) Why did Mrs. Ramsay give Mr. Kelada $100 at the end?

…… .

5) Why was Mrs. Ramsay's face so white when her husband and Mr. Kelada made the bet?

…… .

HOTS:

1) What kind of behavior led to Mr. Kelada being given the name "Mr. Know All" on the ship?

…… .

2) What is it that Mr. Kelada understands from the look on Mrs. Ramsay's face when they started to speak about her pearls?

…… .

3) What can we understand from what we learn about Mr. Kelada at the end of the story?

…… .

4) In the story "Mr. Know All", nothing is what it appears to be. Explain how.

…… .

5) Explain how the narrator's opinion of Mr. Kelada at the end of the story reflects the story's main message.

…… .

Bridging Question:

Write 80-100 words on the following topic.

Somerset Maugham was an early twentieth century British writer. His works often reflect the widespread prejudiced and racist views held by the British colonists, prevalent during the period in which he wrote.

Make a connection between the above quote and the story "Mr. Know All".
Give information from the story to support your answer.

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Module F – Count That Day Lost:

Poem:

COUNT THAT DAY LOST

By George Eliot

If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went -
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay -
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face -
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost -
Then count that day as worse than lost.

Questions:

LOTS:

1) List two ways the speaker suggests you can brighten up someone's day?
(1) …….. .
(2) …….. .

2) Give an example of a metaphor used in the poem.
……... .

3) A day "worse than lost" refers to:
i. wasting time.
ii. being unkind.
iii. not brightening up someone's day.
iv. doing something useful every day.

4) What is a "glance most kind"?
……... .

5) What is the main message of the poem?
……... .

HOTS:

1) Why does the writer believe that even very small deeds can make someone feel good? Give an example from the poem.
……... .

2) What does the speaker mean when she says that it costs nothing to make someone feel good?
……... .

3) "That fell like sunshine where it went".
What, according to the speaker, feels like sunshine?
Why would it feel like sunshine?
…….....
……... .

4) Compare the phrases "a day well spent" and a day "worse than lost".
What is the difference between them and how do these phrases reflect the message of the poem?
…….....
……... .

5) Why does the speaker believe that even very small deeds can make someone feel good? Use one of the thinking skills.
……... .

Bridging Task:

Write 80-100 words on the following topic.
"What do we live for, if not to make life less difficult for each other?" (George Eliot).

Make a connection between the above quote and the poem.
Give examples from the poem to explain your answer.
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