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LIBERTY BOULEVARD

by

Susan Streeter Carpenter

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Department of English & Comparative Literature
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ABSTRACT:

Liberty Boulevard is a historical novel set in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1968. The primary characters are radical activists, members of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), increasingly aware of how the Vietnam war, the racism of Cleveland police, the poverty of inner city neighborhoods, and their own alienation as students are all part of the sick “system” which must be overthrown. Inspired by the Columbia University students’ takeover, they plan to ignite the revolution in Cleveland.

Ivy Barcelona, a twenty-year-old Case-Western Reserve student, adds the local draft resistance to her militant activities. Her boyfriend, Chuck Leggit, is putting himself through school at Cleveland State. After a lucrative summer bank job proves demeaning, he drops out to work full-time for revolutionary change – thus losing his draft deferment. With Jane Revard, the third major character, he starts an underground newspaper.

Jane is twenty-five, a seasoned activist who has worked on Ban the Bomb campaigns, registered voters in Mississippi, visited Hanoi on a peace mission, and helped organize a Welfare Rights group. She has also developed feminist consciousness which she transmits to Ivy.

Cleveland’s popular African American mayor, Carl B. Stokes, has calmed the black community after the King assassination and garnered financial support from Cleveland businesses. But in July, a lethal shoot-out between police and a small black nationalist group leads to widespread distrust of Stokes and a polarized city. Ivy, Jane, and Chuck are caught in the cross-fire. Before there is time to reflect on this experience of violent near-revolution they are in the streets of Chicago during the Democratic National Convention, running from tear gas and police clubs.

In the fall of 1968, some of their movement comrades decide to “bring the war home” and become urban guerillas. Ivy, Jane, and Chuck decide against violence – each for different reasons. They go separate ways, questioning, confused, scared, and uncertain about the future.

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LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter One

April 23, 1968

When the applause began, Ivy stepped backward and bumped into a picture frame, knocking it askew. She straightened it, and while the audience surged toward the candidate who stood near the fireplace, she studied the print. At the center a boy's body stretched across a rayed disk surrounded by furious action: a gold lion charged, a white stallion reared, great wheels spun. "Phaeton," said a neat, bald man in a navy blue blazer. "The boy who tried to drive his father's sun-chariot."

"He lost control of the horses and crashed," Ivy said. She'd had a book of Greek myths as a child. Now she was an art history major. "I like the French symbolists. Moreau?"

The man smiled assent. "1878," he said. "But the chariot did not crash. Zeus shot it down, so Phaeton couldn't do any more damage."

"Oh, here you are, with Mr. Levine." Ivy's Aunt Peg appeared, spiffy in beige silk that exactly matched her hair, a cup of draft beer in one hand. "Thanks so much for having this party. Mr. Gilligan's speech was terrific!" Her voice brightened, addressing Levine – the host, owner of the *Phaeton*. "To actually say it, out loud: *America must not be policeman to the world*. Such courage!" Aunt Peg said. "And they cheered! In Cleveland Heights!" She nudged Ivy. "Aren't you glad you came?"

“Of course.” Not wanting to offend, Ivy smiled at her aunt and Mr. Levine. Strangers filled the enormous room, everyone groomed with the suburban sheen that Ivy could never quite manage. “Have you seen Chuck?”

“Chuck? Oh, your boyfriend.” Aunt Peg looked around. “I’ll bet he’s near the refreshments. Have you had any? Unusual spread!” The last two words were for the host. She pointed Ivy to the table where a loaf of rye bread the size of a bed-pillow dominated whole salamis and blocks of cheese, each stuck with a wooden-handled knife. Wooden bowls offered pickles and both kinds of olives. Crystals dripped from the chandelier above the feast.

Ivy needed air. A hand pressed her shoulder, and Chuck’s voice rumbled in her ear. “We should go.” he said. “I’ve got your coat.” He held up the London Fog for her.

“Thanks so much,” she said to Aunt Peg and Mr. Levine. “Sorry we can’t stay longer. We’ve promised to eat dinner with Movement people in Glenville. See you soon! Bye-bye!” Chuck pulled her by the hand out through the heavy front door.

“Hand-carved oak, no less,” he grunted, pulling it closed. They were free in the cold damp night.

“Aunt Peg is shocked,” Ivy said. Glenville was the ghetto. Though not as bad as Hough, most white people did not go to parties there, even those who cheered an anti-war Democrat running for senate.

Chuck was so tall that Ivy could easily walk under his arm without stooping. His car was two doors away, past enormous lawns redolent of fresh earth. After the revolution, Ivy imagined, these mansions would be chopped into apartments or even communes. She would live in one room, which she pictured as a version of her father’s

library: books floor to ceiling and an old dark leather armchair, with a quilted bed in the corner. She slid into the long front seat of Chuck's Pontiac and slammed the heavy door twice to get it properly closed.

"What a relief to be out of there." Chuck ripped off his nametag and stuck it on the window-visor. He kissed her lips and eased out of the line of cars. Ivy pasted her tag next to Chuck's, so their names overlapped and cocked toward each other in a friendly way. After dinner, she would spend the night at Chuck's apartment, her first time on a week night. She was already dressed for class tomorrow – plaid skirt, pumps and stockings – so she didn't have to go back to her dorm where the housemother kept watch. She brushed Chuck's arm with her cheek as he turned the corner onto North Park.

"Did you see the giraffe?" he said. "A giant Steiff thing occupying the whole corner of – what was that, a drawing room? They've got too much house."

"The owner's got interesting taste," Ivy said. "I like that they served keg-beer."

"They had three kegs of imported lager," Chuck said.

"And it's cool that Gilligan came out against imperialism," she said. "He's more liberal than my university president."

"He was standing on an antique coal-hod," Chuck said. "Costly, I bet, and no coal in sight. It's okay for liberals to be against the war now. Ever since Tet, they've been worried about all that money poured into Vietnam, all those dead sons, all those GIs pissed off at the system. They're still not facing the connections. Did you see any black faces there?"

She hadn't. The road curved between a park and a school, then swooped downhill, out of the Heights into Cleveland proper. It was a Tuesday night. One siren rose and fell

in the distance. Cleveland had not burned after the King assassination, not like Detroit or Washington. Many cities were still smoldering. The difference was Cleveland's black mayor: handsome Carl Stokes had done a lot of talking to the right people, so the black community had stayed cool.

They passed the Case buildings; then Chuck turned left and drove between the art museum and Severance Hall. Ivy sighed – too slowly: her lungs were beginning to feel like balloons with the valves pinched shut. She hoped this wasn't another asthma attack. Not tonight. She had to save her inhaler. If she used it more than once every three hours, she'd mess herself up.

She'd spent spring break at her parents' home in Bloomington, and when the asthma had come she'd used up her inhaler. Her parents were medical – Dad, an obstetrician, Mum, a nurse. Her "wheezes" annoyed them. So as not to bother them, she'd quietly swallowed four aminophyllin tablets at once. All night she sat up with her heart pounding, trying not to vomit, waiting for her lungs to let go, which they did finally at sunrise. Neither parent had asked how she was. There were more important events – Johnson's abdication and Dr. King's murder, five days apart. Sick and furious that she'd not done more to stop the forces that killed King, Ivy resolved to work harder.

On the bus back to Cleveland she'd sat next to a white-haired man with a clerical collar, avoiding the greasers who made lewd lip-smacks at her. The priest turned out to be a Czech who spoke no English. He spoke German, however, and so did Ivy: she'd spent a summer in Stuttgart and was taking German lit this semester. And so, in German, she was the first to hear about the surge of democracy – "*eine kleine Revolution*" – in Prague. The revolution was international. From then on she had not slept more than four

hours at once, studying only in odd moments, thinking mostly about what to do next for the Movement.

They drove down 105th Street and turned onto Superior, where storefronts were gated and locked for the night; one had its windows covered with plywood. People swarmed around the door of a bar lit with pink and green neon. Deep inside a drugstore, fluorescent night lights glowed. Four or five young black men stood on the corner, skinny legs in tight pants. “There’s our turn,” Chuck said, and slowed to a stop.

Ivy pulled in air through her nose, let it seep out through her lips, keeping the demon at bay. She took her inhaler out of her coat pocket. She would not have an attack tonight.

Her parents did enough: they paid her drug store and doctor bills. They let her go to school in Cleveland only because Peg was nearby. Ivy liked Peg, but they didn’t see each other much. Tonight was the first time since last fall.

She sat up straight on the seat next to Chuck as he drove through darkness. Sitting straight gave her lungs more room.

* * * * *

Chuck was looking forward to food and a chance to talk about organizing Students for a Democratic Society on his own campus – Cleveland State, a new little university with no ties (that he knew of) to the war industry, no urban removal (yet) driving residents from their homes. All his group had done so far was demonstrate when military recruiters came around. Only ten students had gone to the Pentagon, funded by anti-war faculty who didn’t want to go themselves.

At the Pentagon Chuck had felt lost among a hundred thousand people, couldn't hear the speeches, didn't know where he was going. He longed for conversation. So when he came face-to-face with a man in uniform holding his rifle like a supercharged cock, he'd murmured, "Funny to be meeting like this." The soldier kept his lips pressed into a straight seam; his eyebrows clenched over his nose. "You must be tense, holding a loaded weapon like that," Chuck had said. "I bet it's hard not to fire. I use a .22 myself, for hunting squirrels in the woods at my grandfather's farm."

The feel of his own voice, calmed by mentioning the farm, kept a lid on Chuck's fear. He knew the soldier could not respond, but maybe he'd listen. The crowd was milling, not going anywhere. "I quit shooting squirrels a few years back," Chuck continued. "They looked too much like me. They use their paws like hands. You ever watched a squirrel try to get laid? Male squirrel comes up behind the female, gets her bushy tail over his shoulder, he's just about to let her have it, and she twitches out from under him. Then damn if she doesn't wait halfway up a tree for him to catch up and try it again. They can go for hours like that. Just like us humans." He nodded toward a couple who nuzzled each other on the steps, a few feet above where he and the soldier stood. He felt lonely watching their frosted breaths mingle. "So I switched to shooting at beer cans," he said. "Ever done that: stack up a big pyramid and then try to shoot the top can off without making the others fall? I wish I was there now; the farm's pretty this time of year. I bet you wish you were somewhere else, too. If I were you, I'd be pissed off at having to stand in line at attention while a bunch of kids run around not following anybody's orders but their own. I'd be even more pissed if I had to go to the other side of the world to shoot people who are more like me than squirrels are. So I guess you're

lucky to be here, huh?” He stopped talking and tried without success to get the soldier to meet his eye. This man was part of a line of armed men. Some of them were being talked to by other protestors. “We’re about the same age,” Chuck said. “Maybe your grandfather was in World War I, like mine. My dad was in the Battle of the Bulge. How about yours?” No response. “Don’t you want to know why I’m not in uniform?”

“I know why,” the soldier said. “You’re chickenshit. Now move along before I arrest you for assault with putrid halitosis.”

Chuck had gone – cupping his hands over his mouth to smell his own breath – before he realized he should have said, *I love my country; that’s why I’m here*. Disheartened, he’d chanted and shouted with like-minded strangers until afternoon slanted into evening and the buses began to groan and whine in the parking lot. Later he learned that three soldiers had been persuaded to switch sides. He still wondered what had been said to them.

By leaving the Pentagon early, he’d missed all the action, but he’d met Ivy on the bus going home. She was across the aisle singing “Hard Rain’s Gonna Fall,” the only singer who knew all the words to that long, bewildering song. When they pulled into Cleveland, Ivy was in the seat next to him, holding his hand, her head on his shoulder. He didn’t admit to himself that he loved her till New Year’s Eve, when she called him at his folks’ in Cincinnati. “I wish you were here with me,” she said. “It’d be less scary to start 1968 with you here.” In January he told her, when they met for coffee at Brewer’s, and she said she loved him, too. Then she came to his bed.

He steered the Pontiac onto 125th, looking for Lakeview Avenue. It wasn’t where it was supposed to be. “We’ve made a wrong turn or something.” He stopped the car.

Ivy picked up the paper scrap from the seat. "Says 'turn right on 123rd.' Did you?"

"Wasn't it 125th?"

"No." Her voice was small, reluctant.

"What's wrong?" he asked.

She was leaning forward, hands pressed beside her into the seat. He put his arm on her back, and she shrugged him off. Her shoulders were rigid. "I'm okay," she said. "Go on."

Asthma. When she slept with him, she kept a plastic container under her pillow; he'd seen her half-wake in the middle of the night, put it in her mouth, shoot a couple of times, then sink back to sleep. "Why don't you use your thing?" he asked.

"What thing?"

"That medicine you shoot into your lungs."

Ivy gave him a look of anger and desperation. Then she scooted to her door, shoved it open and stumbled out. "Wait!" he called. This was not a safe place for a woman alone. A shadowy couple walked by; he heard the sharp rap of heels on the sidewalk, a high laugh. He climbed out, clutching the keys.

She leaned against the car, coughing. Close up, he saw her tears. "How did you know?" she asked.

"I've seen you in the middle of the night."

She turned away from him and pounded the car. "Dammit!"

He put an arm around her. "Why are you crying?"

She whispered into his neck. "I'm ashamed." Her cheek was wet.

"No need," Chuck said, and kissed her, tasted her medicine.

“Oh, forget it.” She shook her head. “I’m fine now. Let’s go.” By the time they were back in the car, she was cheerful. “Who’s going to be there besides Marvin and Bert?” She’d whispered so softly; maybe he hadn’t heard her properly.

“A couple other organizers – Jane somebody. Revard.”

“I met Jane Revard,” Ivy said. “Last September. She borrowed my student ID to fly to New York.”

“Does she still have your ID?”

“I guess,” Ivy shrugged. “There she was, same color eyes and hair as me, four years older but she doesn’t look it, and without a student ID she’d have to pay double.”

He drove to 123rd holding Ivy’s hand, loving this girl who’d hand over her ID with a shrug so a community organizer could get to New York. Few, if any, of her classmates would visit Glenville, much less get out of a car alone in the ghetto at night. Such a mix of courage and naïveté called for admiration, and for his protection.

Lakeview appeared where Marvin’s directions said it would be, and Chuck turned the wheel. He kissed Ivy’s fingers, then the back of her hand, dark with smeared ink from the dates and phone numbers she kept there. Her almost-black hair gleamed, tumbling around her shoulders. She leaned forward slightly, lips parted, looking at house numbers. “Here we are,” she said.

* * * * *

Jane Revard did not see why she needed to meet a couple of students, but Bert Claymore had insisted. “You know the campus is where it’s at when Columbia students walk right through an audience to the podium ...” he dramatized the moment, prancing

across the floor, one hand in the air, “and smash a cream pie into the Selective Service director’s face.” He squinched his face to imitate a cream pie, so she’d laughed.

“But this not New York,” she’d said. “This is Cleveland. Armpit of the nation. Mistake on the lake.” As if Bert didn’t know.

The point is, we do things humbly here, she thought, driving along the Lake Erie shoreway in the white Valiant with one red door. Humble universities: Cleveland State held class in Quonset huts. Western Reserve and Case had been united for half a year, and only now had it become obvious that each institution had thought the other would have money to bail them out.

Jane didn’t dislike students; she’d been a student herself until 1965; she still wore the same clothes she’d worn at Ann Arbor, though she’d shortened all the skirts. She’d had no trouble impersonating a student last fall for the first leg of her trip to Hanoi. But students were cushioned and idealistic, and they couldn’t see their own privilege. After the Hough riots, the city had set aside money for housing and then spent most of it in University Circle, for dorms rather than for houses in the black neighborhoods.

She would be late to Bert’s and Marvin’s dinner because she’d promised to give a ride to Dora Williams, leader of the East Side Welfare Rights group. Jane should be going to the meeting, but Dora’s presence there was more important. Jane would keep her promise of a ride to Dora. They had worked together for three years, ever since Jane had come to Cleveland.

Interracial Movement of the poor: that had been the goal. White middle-class kids finished or fed up with college, they’d moved to the cities to organize welfare mothers and unemployed men, knocking on doors, frequenting street corners, bars, and

laundromats, talking to people – most of whom turned a deaf ear, not believing white kids could be so dumb as to live in the worst neighborhoods in the city for five dollars a week. Dora was one of the few who'd responded. Yes, she'd said. We welfare mothers need to know our rights. Help us figure out what those rights should be.

Jane, Bert, and Marvin were the only ones left on the East Side, except for Tessa Buchanan, who'd come from New York to help launch a free clinic. A year ago she'd started medical school, but she was coming to tonight's dinner. It would be good to see Tessa.

Jane parked in front of Dora's apartment on 123rd Street. Dark already. Dora had moved to the first-floor apartment last summer, after her third child was born. Jane pressed the bell. There was no ringing inside, so she pounded on the door until she heard footsteps.

The door was opened by a tall man who blocked the light. Dora's latest boyfriend: Stephen. "Spelled with a ph," he'd told Jane. "My name has *high* ph value." They'd met when Stokely Carmichael gave a speech at St. Paul's in the fall. Stephen was one of those skittish fast talkers, good-looking, with smooth brown skin and sharp cheekbones. He'd put up the poster of Huey P. Newton in his big wicker throne and roared "Power to the People!" to pump up his own manhood. Jane didn't trust him.

"She's not going," Stephen said. "Dora's done with that shit. You go on without her, tell the other women."

"Where's Dora?" Jane demanded. "I want to talk with her."

"She's busy," Stephen said. He blocked the doorway with his long arms; his Afro added inches to his height.

“Come on in, Janie.” Dora’s voice came from the kitchen. She was the only person in Cleveland permitted to use *Janie*. Jane ducked under Stephen’s elbow and forced her way in.

“Don’t you get all conversational,” Stephen called to Dora. “You don’t owe a thing to those welfare people, or to this white b...”

“Stop right there,” Jane said. “I fully understand that this city’s full of nasty racist white people, but that doesn’t mean you can call *me* names.” In the lighted room, she saw the bruises on his cheek and over one eye. One of his front teeth was chipped. Had it been chipped when they met before?

He glared at her with cold eyes. “If Dora wasn’t your friend,” he said. “If we wasn’t here, in her house, I’d *show* you somethin nasty.”

“You *quit* that talk.” Dora came in, baby on one hip. She wore pedal pushers, white sneakers, and full make-up. She’d stopped processing her hair, but it wasn’t yet an Afro; she’d pinned it up in a French twist. “Hi, Janie. I’m-a go to a Soul Power meeting tonight. That’s all.” She did not sit down, did not indicate that Jane should sit.

“Stephen’s group?” Jane asked. Dora nodded. “I hope you’re not ...” She stopped before she’d said *leaving me*. She knew young men like Stephen needed black nationalism. Women too – but not if they were coerced. She’d seen Dora confront middle-aged white men in suits, but she’d also seen her cave in to the whims of several boyfriends.

“I been meaning to tell you,” Dora said, rocking side-to-side to settle the baby. “My people – we got to look after our own interests. When I’m busy with Welfare Rights, I’m still accepting the authority of the colonizers, continuing the oppression. You

know what I mean.” Stephen nodded slightly, approving Dora’s rhetoric. He stood in one corner of the room; Dora stood in the center. Jane stayed near the entrance, with the couch between her and Dora. Cheerful white voices came from Dora’s bedroom where the children were watching TV.

“I know what you mean,” Jane said. She knew the police and many city councilmen hated Carl Stokes. Poor whites felt threatened when they saw Stokes get support from wealthy liberals and the business community. “The racial oppression’s getting worse.”

“I mean I’m sick and tired of white *people*.” Dora straightened, hoisting the baby to her shoulder. Her eyes blazed weariness and anger.

Jane backed toward the door. “Actually I wasn’t planning to go to the meeting either,” she said. “I’ve got to visit Bert and Marvin.”

“That’s settled, then,” Dora said. “I paid my phone bill this month. I’ll call Lillian.” She felt the baby’s diaper and turned to the phone on the counter which divided the kitchen from the living room. Lillian was a white welfare-mom firebrand, a mainstay of Cleveland Welfare Rights – and, Jane had thought, a good friend to Dora. She had thought *she* was Dora’s friend, too.

“Remember, you and Lillian and I were going to write a Welfare Rights Handbook?” Quite inappropriately, Jane felt like crying.

“So? You can still do that.” The baby fussed, and Dora put down the phone to cradle it, running her finger along the new gums. “Yeah yeah yeah, those teeth’ll be in soon,” she sang. “White ladies,” she spat the words. “They either ashamed of that welfare check, or they gonna push the rest of us out of the way.”

“You see why I’m not so excited about working with them,” Jane said. She held up the underside of her arm, frog-belly white. “If I could take a pill that would turn my skin dark brown tomorrow,” she told Dora, “I’d do it.”

“I know you would,” Dora said. “That’s *your* problem. *My* work is with the brothers and sisters.”

Stephen looked at his watch. “When’s your mother coming? We gotta move.”

If only Jane were sure that Dora wasn’t being a pushover for her boyfriend-of-the-month, she would offer to look after the kids until their grandmother arrived. But she wasn’t sure, and she was too upset to be around children. “I gotta move too,” she said. “I’m already late. See you around.” She left quickly, defeated and somehow at fault.

Jane had been closer to Dora than anyone – much closer than she’d been to black friends during Mississippi Summer; they’d stood in a circle at the end of each day, arms around each other singing. *Black and White together*, they had sung, often with tears running down their faces. *We are not afraid*. She’d lost touch with all of them.

She’d felt comfortable with the Cleveland mothers; black and white together, they’d taken over the Welfare Department for a day and a night, Dora changing her baby boy on the director’s desk, saying, “What do I do with this dirty diaper?”

Lillian had said, “Put it in the director’s wastebasket, of course; it’s time he got some shit, he’s given us so much.” They were all in jail together for six hours, went in weeping and came out singing, *His eye is on the sparrow*. Late nights talking in the kitchen, drinking cheap red wine. Those days were over, and Jane was not ready.

* * * * *

The metal gate shrieked when Ivy pushed it open; it shrieked again as Chuck closed it behind him. She led the way over a broken cement trail across a yard either thickly planted or overgrown – hard to tell in the dark – and around to a side door to Bert’s and Marvin’s apartment upstairs. Ivy watched the toes of her blue pumps step ahead on the worn rubber treads. She wished she’d worn jeans; what would these full-time activists think of her? For now at least she could breathe.

Bert opened the door. “Oh good, you’re here; we can eat,” he said, stepping backward so they could enter the yellow-lit kitchen. He wore quilted mittens and an apron. The oven door was open. “I was just doing this.” He bent over and pulled out a roast chicken, golden brown. He set the pan tenderly on the counter and took off the mittens. Then he picked up a rope attached to the handle of the oven door and yanked it closed, looping the end around a large hook in the wall above the stove, fastening it with two slipknots. Charmed by the rope-arrangement and the novelty of a man who cooked, Ivy watched Bert study the chicken through his steel-rimmed glasses and poke it with a fork. Even in cowboy boots he was not much taller than she was, but he had muscles like a wrestler, with short, thick arms and legs. His brown hair had grown shaggier than it was at the SDS meeting in February. “Bert, this is Chuck,” she said. Chuck stepped forward with his hand out.

“So I figured.” Bert looked up at Chuck and shook his hand awkwardly. “Come on.” He led them into the next room, where a man and a woman came toward them.

“Hullo, Marvin,” Chuck said. Marvin wore a very white shirt, frayed around the collar. He was balding, with a curly beard and a mustache that reminded Ivy of shredded

wheat. He did a little European bow, pressing heels and knees together, inspecting Ivy over narrow gold-rimmed glasses worn low on his long, thin nose.

“I’m Tessa Buchanan.” The woman held up a half-gallon raffia-wrapped bottle. “Want some Chianti?” Ivy was not completely overdressed after all: Tessa wore a skirt and blouse – faded, but Villager – and loafers without stockings.

Marvin lifted two wine glasses off the pile of newspapers which covered the coffee table. A thick red candle had filled its pale green saucer with wax and dripped onto *New Left Notes*. Faint spiral ridges suggested an orange juice can had been the candle mold. Ivy settled into a corner of the couch with her wine. She was only twenty, too young to drink legally – but Chuck was the only one who’d know that. This small civil disobedience gave her courage. Two orange crates were crammed with paperbacks; above them on brown wrapping paper someone had drawn a black Magic Marker outline of the Terminal Tower; inside the lines cartoon-men – they looked like the millionaire in the Monopoly game – waved sheaves of paper with dollar signs. Their hands dripped red-marker blood. Spiky letters insisted, “Let the people decide!”

“Who’s the artist?” Ivy asked, pointing at the poster.

“Bert,” Marvin said. “Let’s sit at the table, even though Jane isn’t here yet,” He was drinking out of a jelly glass; Tessa’s wine half-filled a tumbler. Chuck and Ivy had the only two glasses with stems.

Bert set the chicken in the middle of the table and sat next to Ivy. “At the Stop ‘n Shop, beans have gone up seven cents a can,” he announced.

“That’s not news,” Tessa said, plopping a mixing-bowl full of rice near Marvin, a salad between Ivy and Chuck. “Every month, prices go up when welfare checks come.”

“Not the *beans*,” Bert said. “You can find excuses for raising prices on fruit and vegetables and meat. But cans of beans do not spoil; they do not grow scarce and increase in value. The rulers are getting audacious when they start messing with beans.”

“Still not news,” Tessa said, shaking her head.

“You’re at Western Reserve, right?” Marvin said to Chuck.

“*Case*-Western Reserve,” Tessa said. “I saw *Stop the Odious Machine* fliers at the med school this morning. Right next to *Vote against the war – vote Fred Halstead*.”

Ivy had spent most of the night putting up those *Odious Machine* fliers. A student from the Committee to End the War had followed her, putting up the others. Fred Halstead was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president.

“Actually, I’m at Cleveland State,” Chuck said. “We’re planning a big outdoor rally.” He hesitated. “*Planning* might be an overstatement. The whole scene is confusing. Nobody really listens to anyone else. I’ve been admiring your Community Union work.”

“Hah!” Bert bore down on the carving knife and a drumstick fell away. “The best thing I’ve done is learn to sing with the brothers on the street corner.”

“Jane Revard’s welfare rights group is the only successful interracial movement of the poor in three cities,” Tessa explained. “Pass that rice, Marvin. I’m starving.”

“Jane should have been here by now,” Marvin said. He passed the rice.

“She was going to take Dora Williams to a meeting on the West Side,” Tessa said. “Maybe something came up. Dora’s dating a guy I saw at the free clinic a week ago: police beat him up for the fun of it.”

“What does that *mean* – the fun of it?” Ivy’s urban sociology professor had said that police brutality had not been proven. She felt Chuck press her leg with his: not a

smart question. She didn't care. These were the most interesting, totally committed, unaffected people she'd ever met. She wanted to know everything they thought.

"Most police came up in the Polish neighborhood or the Czech neighborhood or the Hungarian neighborhood," Bert said. "For their whole childhoods, they ate racism with milk every morning for breakfast. Save a leg for Jane, okay?" The chicken platter was travelling from hand to hand.

"We don't have our rally planned at all," Ivy said. "Too much is going on." The president of Case-Western Reserve had till tomorrow to respond to a petition with fourteen demands. Another petition demanded that the Administration take a stand against the war, the draft, and racial oppression. "Nobody's going to class on Friday," Ivy went on. "Even the Young Republicans will strike, though they're calling it a moratorium. They want time for debates."

The entrance-door banged and footsteps came *tump tump tump* up the stairs. "It's Jane," Tessa said. "Pour her a glass of that wine."

* * * * *

Chuck watched Tessa walk toward the door. She was not pretty – her eyes came close to the bridge of her nose, her cheeks were scarred from acne, her hair dull brown. She wore a tight olive drab skirt and a loose blouse with a flower design; prickles of black hair showed on her bare legs. But she moved with a kind of wiry gracefulness, her body all-of-a-piece. Chuck thought of a fox he'd watched on his grandfather's farm, crouching and snuffling under a pile of leaves, jumping from one crack to another on springy forelegs. "Looking for mice to eat," Granddad whispered. The fox apparently heard the whisper: It trotted away softly and silently, then sped up to a lovely liquid

gallop, crackling the underbrush. Tessa having sex would be like the fox: she would have that loose skin, that sensitivity to a whisper, an animal mix of softness and gut-level energy, an animal smell.

Chuck didn't really want to sleep with her; he would sleep tonight with Ivy, who was deliciously pink and round, whose eyes were large, wide apart, and blue-green. He would wake up tomorrow and put his arms around her, and his heart would clench so hard as to bring tears to his eyes. He put his hand on her thigh, taut under the stocking, squeezed. She glanced up at him, glowing. She was having a good time.

Jane came in the door, a short thin girl with a braid that hung almost to her waist. "Sorry I'm late," she said, after she'd sat next to Chuck and swallowed a third of her glass of Chianti. "Dora's quitting the Welfare Rights group." Her voice edged pain. "She's joining a new group: *Soul Power*. Anybody heard of it?"

"Nationalist," said Tessa. "Less martial than the Afro-Set. Less cultural than the New Lybians. Stephen, right?"

Jane nodded, chewing. Then she swallowed. "She says she's tired of white people."

"I'm tired of white people too," Tessa said. "You can't blame her."

Chuck wished he'd been able to go south to work for civil rights, but before he could get it together, SNCC had kicked all the white people out. The conversation had broken up; while Tessa told Jane about the kid who got beat up for fun by police, Bert was using the bowl of rice to show Ivy the layout of Columbia University.

"Here's the bluff." He put the bowl on the table and held his fist over the rice: "Here's the university. On one side – the river between Manhattan and New Jersey. The

other: Morningside Park, which belongs to Harlem. Steep slope, trees and shit. And here's where they're putting the gym." He picked up a glass and clinked it against the Morningside Park edge of the bowl. "A fucking fortress, off limits to the citizens." Ivy watched Bert with her lips parted, her pink cheek cupped in one hand. She didn't know how pretty she was. Chuck knew she was just listening hard, but he could see Bert being sucked in.

"When were you there?" she asked.

"Last week," Bert said. "The administration keeps stalling. Big demonstration today."

Chuck admired the way Columbia SDS had no fear of authority. Because Columbia was Ivy League, no doubt. Working-class Cleveland State students would not risk arrest, no matter how smart and angry they were. Except perhaps for Greg Lambert from Maple Heights, a big guy, somewhere between muscular and lard-ass – and volatile: The group would talk about effective confrontation, and Greg would suggest painting *Fuck You, Selective Service* on the Federal Building or papering the campus with *Cleveland State Conspires with the War Machine*, though no one knew that was so.

"The factions were debating when I left," Bert was saying. "They got nicknames: praxis-axis, action-faction. Look here." He retrieved a gray sheet of paper from the coffee table. "Rudd's letter to the president. One of our people has a job in the library and a key to the Xerox machine." He passed it to Ivy.

Our people, Chuck thought. It felt good to be one of *our people*.

Jane leaned across, her hair close to Chuck's face, and said, "Hey, Ivy. Pass the rice?" She took the bowl and scooped a mound onto her plate. Columbia vanished from the table. "So you're Chuck what?" Jane asked. Finally she'd noticed him.

"Leggit," he said. "My parents were Arkies – Razorbacks. From Arkansas."

"Were?"

"They live in Cincinnati now."

"Oh. Mine are in Minneapolis. Do we have any more wine?" She took another bite of chicken and chewed. Marvin re-filled her glass.

"So what's Welfare Rights gonna do next?" Chuck asked Jane. Maybe he could help. Jane shook her head, swallowing. "I'm sorry, I can't be social right now." Her expression was sad, her eyes as well as her mouth drooping at the corners. "Don't ask," she held up her hand to stop his sympathetic murmur. "I'm sure you're a good person, and I just want to eat." She returned to her plate, shutting him out.

Ivy was listening to Bert again. Chuck picked up the Rudd letter. "Dear Grayson" it began. The phrases were satisfying: "disgusted by the society you rule ... meaningless studies ... repulsion with being cogs ..." Chuck could learn from this letter. He was too apt to be conciliatory. "We will take control of your world, your corporation ... mold a world in which we and other people can live as human beings ..." Chuck thought about the letter he had written, stamped and addressed to his draft board. He'd meant to mail it today, then had decided to think further. Or he'd simply had another failure of nerve.

He'd watched over his shoulder, walking toward the bus, as draft cards were lit on the Pentagon steps, first one, then another, then several at once hissing into flame among cheers. He half-regretted that he couldn't stay to burn his. He knew that a lot of guys

afterward turned around and accepted another card – easy to tell the draft board you’d misplaced it. He’d considered turning in his card with a mass of others, so many the Feds could never prosecute everyone. Accepting the student deferment was a cop-out; you were sending guys who needed jobs to war in your place. The only way to live with a 2-S was to work in the Movement.

Chuck’s grandfather liked to say, “Everyone’s a human being; treat them like you’d want to be treated and you’ll do fine.” Chuck had decided to treat his draft board officials as human beings. When he first moved to Cleveland he wrote to them about his change of address, calling them “Dear Uncle Sam.” He signed the letter “Your loving nephew.” They didn’t respond like human beings, just sent a new draft card and classified him as “deferred for study.”

So he tried again. The law required that he inform the Selective Service of “changes in status resulting from circumstances over which you have no control,” so Chuck had written a letter in January. There were two new circumstances out of his control – one was falling in love with Ivy; the other was the Tet offensive. It was evening as he wrote, the darkening of the mottled gray sky seemed to be a circumstance which influenced him – so he described for the draft board how his apartment had three big windows full of sky, how the sky was never the same from one hour to the next.

After the Johnson withdrawal and the King murder, he wrote another letter to explain how both circumstances had changed his status. He did not say how his mother had browbeat his father into giving him tuition for this semester, only that his father wanted the money back and Chuck was determined to pay. He worked at the library for minimum wage, but so far he’d been unable to save. He might have to quit school. In

which case, he told the draft board, he would need a special form for Conscientious Objectors. Could they please send him one? “Your loving nephew, Chuck Leggit.”

That was the letter he hadn’t sent yet. He’d talked with no one about becoming a Conscientious Objector, not even Ivy. The truth was, he’d spent several years of his childhood playing soldier, believing that he’d join one day. The truth was, he’d killed one squirrel, hidden his tears, and never shot at anything but beer cans after that. He was afraid of what he might do if he saw someone with a fixed bayonet heading for a person he cared about. And he was sure, even if he convinced his draft board this was a decision of conscience – which it was: his conscience was sore from all the fretting, trying to reconcile God and politics and fear and plain right-and-wrong – his parents would disown him. Granddad might not stick up for him either.

* * * * *

Chuck must be Ivy’s boyfriend, Jane thought. Nice shirt – yellow Oxford cloth, sleeves rolled neatly to just cover his elbows. Nice mustache. He kept his hand on Ivy’s shoulder while they listened to Bert explain about SDS trips to Cuba. Jane felt weary, but she couldn’t relax, even after two glasses of wine.

“I forgot to ask if you wanted coffee.” Marvin was putting down cups, some with the handles broken off. Two were thick-sided mugs from Woolworth’s lunch counter.

“Sure,” Jane said. She picked up her empty plate and piled it atop Marvin’s and Chuck’s to carry into the kitchen. “I’ll help you.”

He scraped the plates over a brown paper shopping bag while Jane ran water, and when she reached for the scraped plates, he was watching, head cocked back to see over the spectacles he wore far down on his nose because his eyes were changing and his

glasses were not; he hadn't had his eyes checked in years. He had light blue eyes that crinkled at the corners when he smiled.

"You look extremely discouraged." He handed Jane a dishtowel and the plate he had just washed.

"The trouble is: the job isn't finished," Jane said. "The mothers are still getting thirty-seven percent of what the New York mothers get, sixty-nine percent of the national poverty line, eighty-three percent of the State minimum. Seventeen percent under the Ohio minimum!"

"You think they don't know that?"

"Dora does. Lillian does. The others? I don't know. Racism is so fucking *ugly*. Of course Dora's tired of white people. I just don't want her to be tired of me."

"She may not be, you know," Marvin said. He reached into the dishwater and brought up forks and knives, bristling out of both hands.

"We had a handle in our grasp." Jane gripped the handle of the carving knife and shook it. Marvin put his hand on her wrist and gently moved the blade away from his face. "I'm afraid we've lost it."

"You haven't necessarily lost Dora's friendship, I mean," Marvin said.

"But how can I be friends with her?"

"Same way you'd be friends with anybody you don't work with. Like you're friends with Norman. No, scratch that. Norman's not a good example."

Yet other than Norman, who lived with Jane, whom she slept with every night though they often went days without a conversation, there were no other friends she didn't work with. Even her pre-Movement friends had been with her on the girls' council

or Junior Council on World Affairs. “I don’t know how to be friends without working together,” Jane said. “Or when. I’m always working.”

Marvin took the dishtowel from her and wiped his hands. “I wouldn’t jump to conclusions. Coffee’s done perking.” He picked up the pot from the stove. “Unless you want some more wine.”

“Let’s have more wine.” Tessa appeared with the bottle, and Jane nodded. She missed long talks with Tessa – common when they shared the apartment, increasingly rare since last spring, when Norman came to town.

She and Norman had become lovers during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when they were students at Ann Arbor. The very air that week seemed paralyzed, the maple leaves hysterically bright. No one would talk much beyond jokes about Khrushchev and his shoe-pounding, about the world ending any minute: *We’ll all go together when we go*. The professors kept on teaching English Lit., Spanish II, and Physical Chemistry (Jane was getting through her required courses) while terror and curiosity rose to flood-level. While the world needed to be rescued.

Norman was the one who would talk. They began over French fries in the cafeteria. Later they went to his dorm room, where an official metal fallout shelter sign hung over the bed with its arrow pointing downward. Diagonally across the black words on yellow ground, a sticker said: “In case of a nuclear attack this shelter would be useless.” They kept talking, lying on the bed next to each other until deep in the night, when they began kissing. At dawn Jane let him in – maybe the last dawn for both of them; in case of a nuclear attack, Norman’s bed would not save them. They rocked

together softly, reverently; having sex seemed just the right sacrament for two people who could not save the world, who might be bidding it farewell.

Then, since the world went on after all, they went on being lovers, together sometimes, apart sometimes. When people asked, they said, We approach the world differently: Norman documents it; Jane's changing it. Norman would not have considered coming to supper with the Movement. Right now he was riding in the back seat of a cop car somewhere; tomorrow morning he'd turn in his story to the *Plain Dealer*.

Tessa gave Jane a coffee-cup full of wine. While Marvin poured coffee for Ivy into the one cup with a matching saucer, she turned to Jane. "How was your time in New York?"

"New York?" Jane couldn't think for a second, then it clicked. "You mean that time I borrowed your ID? I went with a peace group to Bratislava. Want sugar or milk?"

Ivy looked puzzled. "I got it wrong, then. I was sure you went to New York."

"I flew to New York to meet the plane to Czechoslovakia," Jane said. "I didn't actually spend time in New York. But your ID helped me get there."

"So how was your time in Bratislava?"

"Fascinating." Jane thought back to the barren meeting room and the industrial samovars full of hot tea, to the faces and voices which seemed strange at first but gradually became familiar. As questions and answers were tossed back and forth, each bouncing through an interpreter as it went from American to Czech to Vietnamese and back again, she came to see and hear individuals, Thi Dinh, Thanh Van, and Marina, the Czech-English translator.

“Jane went from Bratislava to Hanoi,” Marvin said. “Saw bomb craters, took cover from American F-105s, everything.”

“Not everything,” Jane corrected him. “It was only eighteen days.”

Ivy was staring with her mouth open. “I can’t imagine what that would be like,” she said. “Did you actually see bombs falling?”

“Just the rubble afterward,” Jane said. If she’d stayed longer, she could have become friends with the Vietnamese women. “I saw daily life: children, schools, food stalls, hospitals.” No. She corrected herself. Thi Dinh and Thanh Van devoted everything to the war. They would be kind to a sympathetic American, but they couldn’t befriend her.

Ivy was urging her to say more. “The women I met,” Jane said. “They’re humble and proud and fierce. Also they’re winning. American bombs won’t change that. They’ll keep fighting till we’re gone, no matter how long it takes.” She’d come home from Hanoi feeling the shallowness of her own commitment, annoyed by the vague notions of revolution tossed around at the SDS conference. She’d given her hope to the mothers, thinking: this is the center of the American struggle. What would the Vietnamese Women’s Union advise her to do now? She almost envied the clarity of war.

“You mean to tell me,” Ivy said, “my ID went all the way to Hanoi and back?”

“I think I have it in my purse,” Jane said. Her wallet had come apart sometime during the winter. She gathered a fistful of cards and papers out of the bottom of the purse and spread them on the table. The ID was not much worse for wear. “Good thing it was laminated,” she said, handing the card to Ivy.

“There’s dirt from Hanoi on this card,” Ivy said. “I will never throw it away.”

Jane was touched. Usually she didn’t have much patience with wide-eyed innocents, but this girl was not gushing, not silly. She passed the ID from one hand to the other as if its Vietnamese dirt made it heavy.

The phone rang in the kitchen. “I’ll get it,” Bert said. He went.

“I didn’t bring a purse,” Ivy said. “Just my coat pockets. Do you know where the coats are? I want to put this card in a safe place.”

“Probably on one of the beds,” Jane said. “There or there.” She pointed to the bedroom doors.

“It really annoys me,” Ivy said, “that men’s clothes have pockets and women’s clothes don’t.”

“You’re right,” Jane said. The thought had never occurred to her, but she knew what Ivy meant. Men reached into their back pockets for wallets, into their front pockets for change. Their jackets had deep inner pockets for checkbooks. Men were supposed to walk around loaded with money and one folded handkerchief to hand you if you sneezed or cried at the end of a movie. Women’s skirts and pants had zippers at the hips, but not pockets. You were supposed to carry a purse, with a strap over one shoulder, or a little strap held in one hand, or no strap at all, under one arm. You never had both hands, so you were easy to rob. “Pocketlessness is a form of women’s oppression. Excellent point,” she said to Ivy. She liked the girl much better.

Bert’s voice rose in the kitchen. “Far fuckin oouuut!”

Ivy looked at Jane; she had turquoise eyes. Her face spoke curiosity and excitement – no anxiety. Jane thought of Bert's excitement when his street corner friends brought him a Molotov cocktail. Guffaws erupted from the kitchen.

"What *is* that?" Tessa's chin jerked toward the arch, yellow from the kitchen lights. The room around them had darkened except for the candle on the coffee table. Chuck was reading the paper by its light.

"How would I know?" Jane shook her head, worried about damage.

"The revolution is on!" Bert leapt through the archway and threw his arms around her shoulders. "Columbia SDS, they fucking did it! They've barricaded themselves in – man oh man!" He raised his arms and stomped like a Flamenco dancer. "Hey hey hey, *pump don't work 'cause the vandals took the handle.*"

"The demonstration must've turned into a sit-in," Tessa said.

"Not a sit-in, a takeover!" Bert said. He emptied the wine bottle into his glass and swallowed half of it in a gulp. "They're in Low Library, sitting at Grayson Kirk's desk – smoking his fucking cigars!"

"Who was on the phone?" Jane asked.

"Mark Rudd. *Up against the wall, motherfucker!*" Bert grabbed her around the waist, lifted her and tried to turn her in a circle. She staggered and almost fell. "*This here's a stickup. We come to get what's ours!*" He gave it two syllables: "ow-ahs!"

"I met Mark Rudd," Tessa said, "at the last national conference. He went to Cuba in January."

"The blacks are in Hamilton Hall," Bert said, when they were all at the table, clinking glasses and cups. The Black Student Association had politely asked the SDS –

all white students – to leave. “So they went to Low. And other folks are still coming in. The women are staying overnight!”

Jane smiled. They’d occupied in the president’s office, the university control room. As good, in its way, as the mothers’ all-night sit-in at the welfare office. The news that the BSA decided on an all-black building meant something more, especially after three glasses of wine: Dora was thinking like Columbia’s black students. Bert kissed Jane, smearing his spit on her cheek. She would learn more tomorrow; for tonight it was enough to see how the Movement was changing shape, to know she was not alone, but with all the others, walking politely away from the blacks, leaving them room to grow powerful, making their own place.

Marvin came to sit on her left. “This is just so damned *interesting*.” He leaned on one elbow toward Ivy. “You said you needed another speaker at the rally on Friday. How about Jane? She’ll talk about her Vietnam trip.”

“Will you come, Jane?” She was so appealing, this kid.

“Sure,” said Jane. “I’ll have to brush up. I’ve been doing welfare rights, mostly.”

“Talk about Welfare Rights, too,” Ivy said. She was crying, and her turquoise eyes shone. “I’m not crying because you said you’d come,” she added. “It’s just been this amazing evening. I feel like we’re ...” She raised her hands in the air as if she hoped the right words would fall into them. “All here together. All together here.” she said. “And in Low Library at Columbia, too.”

Jane smiled at her. “Yeah.” This kid was twenty years old – Jane’s age during that summer in Mississippi. So much had changed. Why was it that this group tonight could

not get in a circle and sing with their arms around each other? It would seem simple-minded. There were too many conflicting currents.

It was past midnight when Chuck and Ivy found their coats and left. Marvin went to bed, saying that he had a meeting in the morning. Jane washed her face with cold water and looked in the mirror over the bathroom sink. Her hair was a mess, all the short ends coming out of the braid and loose around her face. Tessa had said something about wanting the Valiant for tomorrow. But the only person in the living room was Bert, watching a late-night movie on TV.

Jane sat down on the couch next to Bert. “*The Defiant Ones* – my favorite movie,” he whispered. “Sidney Poitier and Tony Curtis are escaped convicts. Shh. This is the best part.”

On the television screen Tony Curtis was dying, and the police were closing in. Sidney Poitier couldn’t get away because his leg was chained to Curtis’s. He looked up at the police, a smile on his handsome black face, and crooned off-key. “Bowling green, sewing machine, bowling green ...” Bert on the sofa leaned forward, mouthing the words with Poitier as the camera moved in; Jane saw his face, rapt, singing out with Poitier: “Sewing machine!”

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Two

May 2, 1968

Chilled by the Canadian wind that came across the lake and still half-asleep, Ivy walked under sky as gray and heavy as asbestos. She carried coffee from the student union with a plain doughnut on top of the Styrofoam cup to keep it warm all the way to art history class. At the art museum she climbed the marble stairs and stopped at the Thinker to sip coffee. Ivy liked the Thinker's company. He looked unsettled, still malleable, his hair swiped in blobs to one side, his eyebrows a ridge of perpetual worry, his outsized hands and feet ready to change position. He had no drapery, no props to show that he belonged to an era or a religion; he could be a caveman or some guy she knew, stripped and waiting for a draft physical. His big knobby feet toed in – like Ivy's own, when she sat at her desk, her feet wrapped around the rungs. Right now on her desk, her typewriter waited for her to work on the German lit. paper, due tomorrow. She'd meant to write most of it last night, but war stuff intervened.

Her mother's call had wakened her half an hour ago, at seven in the morning. "Where were you last night? You told me you'd be writing a paper."

"I got sidetracked," Ivy said. As if seeing the terrible ear and meeting with Bradley Wells had been small distractions. As if she really meant to stay on a track.

Mum's excuse for calling had been ridiculous: Maybe Ivy should attend a funeral: the grandmother of a boy she'd liked for a few weeks in tenth grade. "Of course not.

Much too busy,” Ivy had said. This was the second phone call from her mother in one week: the first had been to ask about Aunt Peg, who’d fed Ivy and Chuck dinner on Sunday. They were checking up on her. What did they think she was doing?

Peg had made an offhand comment: “Well, my dear, you do take risks. There’s always the possibility of your falling out a fourth-floor window, so to speak.” And when Ivy pointed out she wasn’t likely to jump out a window, even metaphorically, Aunt Peg had said, “But you never know when the window frame will give way.”

If Mum hadn’t called, she could have slept another half-hour. The Thinker loomed overhead, a black figure of perpetual worry. Ivy swallowed more coffee, put the doughnut back in place, and breathed, her lungs loosened by the rest and the coffee-steam. Awake now, chilly, and still early for class, Ivy trudged up the rest of the stairs into the museum. She passed the knight who rode an armored horse as if he’d been permanently interrupted on the way into battle. She admired the Guelph treasure in its case, pure gold, studded with cabochon jewels. Ivy could not look at the reliquary without thinking of serfs who mined and smelted, anonymous artisans who beat the gold thin and shaped it around a shard of bone, supposedly some saint’s. Armor, gold, bone of a saint: War stuff. Ivy stroked the head of the nearest red stone gryphon on the way down to the auditorium, where each blue plush seat had its own folding desktop. She settled into a seat near the back and prepared to concentrate on far eastern Art with Sherman Lee, who stood next to the podium and showed slides of Chinese paintings. Between bites of doughnut she wrote in her notebook: Sung Dynasty. *Lu Shan. Chu Jan. Tung Yuan*. On the screen, clouds and mountains swirled together, gray, brown, with tinges of green. “Streams and Mountains Without End,” Lee said in his easy dry monotone.

Ivy's eyes kept closing. She couldn't help it; after talking till midnight about the draft she'd taken several No-Doz and read Thomas Mann for another three hours. *Unordnung und Frühes Leid*. She turned over the words in her mind: *Disorder and Early Sorrow*. Chinese painters, Sherman Lee was explaining, used a wet-brush technique; they dipped their brushes in sorrow and mixed blood with wax for the signature stamps, which hurt pressing into the skin. Ivy felt sharp edges on the backs of her hands, on her neck, felt sorrow drip into her lap. ... Her coffee cup had tipped, spilling into her skirt. She jerked awake as Sherman Lee turned up the lights.

Oh well. She would read the textbook, written by Lee himself, and learn about Chinese brush technique before the exam. She balance-walked the marble rim along the path in front of the museum, crossed the road, skirted the tennis courts, and climbed four flights to her dorm room, stopping to catch her breath on the landings. Ivy had a wonderful room with a carpet, a dormer window, and a walk-in closet. She kept milk outside the window and Raisin Bran inside. When the milk soured in the sunshine, she added a little fake-maple syrup to make it palatable. She would eat, then sleep for awhile, then write her paper. She closed her eyes; her thoughts kept jabbering, stabbing, wailing to be sorted out. She needed sleep – oblivion. But events kept re-playing themselves.

Last night in the lavatory she'd heard the sound of vomiting inside a stall. Then Gail emerged, pale and staring. "You're sick," Ivy said. "What can I do?"

Gail lived on the fourth floor too, across from Ivy. "Thanks. You don't have to do anything," she said, dabbing at her mouth with a washcloth, filling her cup with water. "Freddy's come back from Vietnam. He's fine. Big hugs." She sipped water, swished, and spit it out. "But he's so ... I don't know the words to describe him. He *acts* like

nothing's changed. But then ..." her face crumpled. Ivy felt suspended, holding her own cup with the toothbrush and Colgate in it; she couldn't just brush her teeth. "Then he says, 'Here's a present from Vietnam,' and hands me a little box," Gail went on. "I think, Oh nice, a pin or a bracelet, you know, smile, untie the ribbon. Inside: an ear." She whispered, her lips rigid, staring at the frosted-glass window as though any second someone might crash through it.

"A human ear?" Ivy was aghast, disgusted, and she couldn't help being curious.

Gail soaped her hands, rubbing her palms, her wrists, each finger, each knuckle. "Freddy says, 'It's a trophy, get it?' I say, 'Was this some dead guy?' He says, 'He's dead now,' and grins."

"Do you have it here?" Ivy looked at Gail's plump make-up bag squatting on the ledge in front of the mirror.

"Are you kidding? I threw the thing in the bin outside the back door before I ran up here."

"What's it look like?" The word *ear* might send Gail back heaving into a toilet.

Gail shook her head. "I closed the box right away, didn't touch it." She soaped her washcloth and began to soap her face. "Freddy's down in the lounge right now, waiting for me to dress pretty and go drinking with him. I'd rather not put anything in my mouth for a while." She was wearing a sweatshirt and jeans. Her hair was disheveled; ratting showed at the back.

"Want me to go down and tell him you're sick and you need to stay in tonight?" Men were not allowed past the front hall and the two lounges. Whenever she heard male voices, Mrs. Cartwright, the housemother, would emerge from her private apartment,

rocking from side to side as she walked into the front hall, peering out from under her eyebrows rather than raising her head. Last winter Ivy's doctor had stopped in; Mrs. Cartwright had walked past, rocking and peering, as he pressed his stethoscope on Ivy's bare back, his hand under her shirt, listening to her breathe. Later she'd phoned Ivy's mother to find out if Ivy was contagious or had a drug problem. Whenever possible, Ivy avoided Mrs. Cartwright.

Gail leaned over the sink, scrubbing her teeth, as Ivy insisted it would be no trouble to deliver a message to Freddy. "No," said Gail. She spit into the sink. "I'll go down in a few minutes." She rinsed her mouth, spit again, and studied her hair, pulling the front points onto her cheeks. "I won't be squeamish. And I'm determined to get drunk. First I'll get pretty, and then I'll get really drunk."

"I'm sorry," Ivy said.

"For what?" Gail asked, attacking her hair with a wet brush. She went to work with comb and hairspray as Ivy brushed her own teeth, seeing each tooth in the mirror, feeling them with her large fleshy tongue. Her ears were fleshy, too; touching an earlobe made her feel a little sick. What could be going on in the head of a guy who'd slice off a man's ear and box it up for his girlfriend?

Rather than returning to her room, Ivy trotted out to the trash bin. She wouldn't have reached inside, wouldn't have looked if it was covered with anything slimy. But the gift box perched within reach on an empty pizza carton. She had to know.

It was brown, a little shriveled. Like a dried peach-half left out too long to be edible, but with bits of dark-brown blood along the edge that had been – yes, you could see it had been an ear, and had been cut. No wonder Gail threw up. The garbage in the

bin smelled obnoxious. Ivy closed the little box and held it. If she kept it, she'd have evidence of what the war had done to at least one Vietnamese man (and of course there were more) and to Freddy (and of course there were others). She'd have to put it in a drawer. It would probably rot and stink up her underwear. She tossed into darkness under the pizza carton, closed the bin and returned to her room.

She had tried to sit at her desk, but Mann's work had flattened into meaningless words on the page. Thomas Mann had been dead for thirteen years; the stories in this book had been written before the first world war. What a joke, to label this literature "contemporary." Ivy had nothing useful to say about it. All the thoughts she could muster were for Gail, trying to go through the evening as if Freddy had not done what Freddy had done. The war was a sewer, a quicksand spreading over the earth, sucking down young men.

She thought about her brothers. Randy had turned twenty-six, too old to be drafted, but Glen had lost his grad-student deferment when the law changed last summer. He'd applied to join the Peace Corps – but what if he was drafted first? He'd probably go. Chuck would not let himself be sucked in; would he? But then he might have to go to prison, which would warp him as combat had warped Freddy.

She could not rest, much less write. She had to do something, couldn't wait till the demonstration on Saturday. One act would be enough. She phoned Bradley Wells.

Bradley was head of the Cleveland Draft Resistance. They'd met after the rally last week. "Call me if you want to help," he said, and wrote his number on the back of her hand.

“I want to become a draft counselor,” she told him on the phone. “How do I start?” She’d expected Bradley would tell her there was a training session she could come to – in a few days, after she’d finished her paper, after the demonstration.

But he said, “I have to return a book to the library. I’ll come meet you in a half an hour.” So they’d met in the student union – loud with the Mamas and the Papas complaining about the gray sky and longing for California again, smoky from all the cigarettes cocked between fingers and resting in cheap foil ashtrays. Bradley Wells was very tall, with hair below his shoulders – big shoulders; he worked construction. “I’m glad you called,” he said. “I was thinking I’d like to work with you.”

Why would he think that? Ivy wondered. They’d just talked briefly. Maybe he needed more volunteers at Reserve.

He pushed a pile of information across the table. “You’ll need this,” he said. “Selective service law, and some pamphlets we made last fall. She opened a pamphlet. “Read it later,” he touched her hand. “You can take these with you.” His flannel shirt cuffs were frayed, his hands chapped. One of the pinky fingers was mangled, with a wrinkled stump of a nail. So ugly, Ivy squeezed her eyes shut.

“I was trying to disable myself,” Bradley said. “First I froze the finger; then I smashed it with a hammer. No good: I was still classified 1A.”

“So what did you do?” Ivy asked.

“Got my girlfriend pregnant,” he smiled. “Married her. Then the law changed.”

“I know – no more deferments for married men.”

“Unless they got married in ‘65 or earlier. Little guy born last month. I’m safe.”

Were they home, his wife and baby, wishing he was with them? She didn't ask: none of her business. He was telling her what she needed to know, about draft resistance meetings every Tuesday, how they still helped men to get deferments, how that wasn't enough anymore. He talked in a warm voice, smiling, bumping her hand with his to punctuate what he was saying.

"I saw a cut-off Vietnamese ear this evening," Ivy said. "That's why I called." She told him about Freddy. "He must've been close enough to see the Vietnamese man's eyes; he must've heard him scream," Ivy said. "What kind of person are you, if you can do that?"

Bradley shrugged and looked sad. "Crazy-mad, I guess," he said. "Maybe your best friend was killed that same day. Maybe he was tortured. And they often blindfold and gag prisoners. He didn't have to look the man in the eye." He sipped at his Coke. "You've got lovely eyes, incidentally."

Ivy looked away. It was disappointing, when you thought you were getting down to solid work and then a man threw in a compliment about how you looked. She couldn't help it that she had her mother's eyes. She did not want to be reminded of her mother. And she didn't want to lock onto Bradley's nice brown friendly gaze.

She saw the ceiling lights reflected in the disc of coffee in the cup between her hands and tried to steer the conversation toward things she could do. SDS could have a draft resistance committee. They could use med students to write letters that would declare men physically or mentally unfit. They could raise funds for people to get to Toronto.

Lying on her bed twelve hours later, Ivy reviewed the end of her conversation with Bradley. He'd lifted her chin gently with his battered hand, a gesture meant to be sweet, and smiled at her. She'd smiled back. "Hope I see you again soon," he'd said.

"Look forward to working with you." She shook his hand, an attempt to get out of this *thing* that had suddenly gone romantic on her. But Bradley's interest pleased her, even now. He thought she was special. Yet he should not leave his wife behind. And she should not be thinking of how delicious it would be to kiss him. She had Chuck to kiss. She loved kissing Chuck.

She heard the phone ringing in the stairwell. Surely her mother would not call again so soon. Why didn't one of the other girls answer? She had to get up anyway, had to write her paper, and the phone kept ringing, so she scrambled down the hall and answered. It was Chuck. "I'll pick you up early," he said. "We can get a snack and talk."

"Oh god, I'm sorry," she said. "My paper's due tomorrow by five."

"Oh babe, we got all these details to work out for the demonstration. I thought you were writing it last night."

"I was," Ivy said. "But I got stuck. I'll do the flyer tomorrow night. Just write down what you think it should say, and I'll type it, then run it off on the mimeograph machine at the church."

"Okay," said Chuck, dubiously. "You gotta do what you gotta do." The girls didn't chat on this phone; voices traveled in the stairwell, ricocheted off the ceiling, echoed down four floors, seeped into the hallways. She'd tell Chuck later about Bradley and draft resistance. She'd shove Bradley's sweetness out of her mind and concentrate on the pamphlets he'd given her. After she'd written her paper.

She filled her mug with water from the lavatory, plugged in the heating coil, and left it to boil while she looked at her notes. The theme suddenly grinned up at her: teeth. “In Mann’s short stories, teeth are harbingers of death,” she wrote at the top of a new page in her notebook. Yes, it would work. Ivy settled at the desk, notebook on her left, the books – one in German, one in English, and a dictionary – on her right. She was supposed to be working exclusively with the German version, but there was no time; the professor expected *Pünktlichkeit*. Teeth. *Zähne*. Sometimes they gleamed from the characters’ mouths; sometimes they rotted. It was easy to keep the image of a skull posted in her mind, grinning through every scene; even when Mann didn’t mention teeth, he made allusions to them. The pressure of time forced her fingers down on the typewriter keys.

* * * * *

Chuck locked the classroom door and climbed the stairs. It had been a good meeting – orderly, to-the-point, twenty-five people – enough to divide the labor. More would have made the meeting too long and too noisy.

The rally at Cleveland State had been noisy. Rain had driven them into Panel Hall, which filled to capacity. While Benjamin and Lisa sang with their guitars, a guy from the Conservative Union had walked around the stage behind them. Then a dozen or so – all white, all young, all men – walked down the aisle carrying pro-war, anti-communist signs. Chuck heard someone howl an obscenity and took the mike, trying to sound calm. “You want to argue, take your turn at the microphone.” He wasn’t calm. “We don’t shut you up, you don’t shut us up.” He shouted into the microphone. “It’s democracy, folks!” He handed the mike to the next speaker, who began to talk about

imperialism. The noise increased. There was a scuffle in the aisle, a sign ripped in half, the pieces waved by a guy with a blond buzz-cut and black plastic glasses. Greg Lambert.

A football-player-sized man grabbed the mike and yelled, “Don’t be fooled – they’re on the enemy’s side! Anti-war means Viet Cong! SDS is the same as NLF!” and a chant began in the crowd, “SDS is NLF!” Campus cops had to bust up the fight.

Attendance at the SDS meeting had more than doubled, however. Asked why he’d torn the conservatives’ sign and started a fight at rally, Greg had said, “I felt like it. Those guys are assholes.” But everyone had agreed to be peaceful on Saturday.

It was obvious enough that a regional meeting of ROTC units from three states needed to be welcomed by war resisters, as many as possible. SDS, draft resistance folks, and Committees to End the War would come in full voice.

Chuck hesitated on the sidewalk, considering a visit to Ivy’s dorm on his way home. She should have been at the meeting; the only Reserve student had been Arthur Cohen, who said he’d come for both SDS and the Committee. If Chuck gave Ivy the plan for the flyers tonight, she could get started thinking about the design and the wording. Also he could hold her in his arms and bury his nose in her hair.

Better not. He shouldn’t be annoyed that she was taking two nights to work on a paper. His own papers usually needed more. He’d grown accustomed to the way Ivy seemed to breeze through her studies without doing any homework at all, that was it. Chuck needed hours of silence and solitude at his desk. They’d tried to study together in the library, but even there he couldn’t sit next to her without touching her, and he couldn’t concentrate when he touched her.

He'd take the bus up Euclid, get off a stop early, and go around to the tennis courts. From there he could look up and see her near the window. But if she wasn't there, or her light wasn't on, he'd worry. Better just go home to his own desk. He was hungry, anyway. Chuck dug in his pocket for quarters and scanned the traffic. He would fix some soup in his apartment.

Greg Lambert caught up with him just as he was climbing on to the bus. At the meeting, Greg had volunteered to make signs, find a bullhorn, and post flyers all over the east side. Too eager, that's how Greg was. Odd, in a way that Chuck couldn't quite nail down. He seemed to be trying to become Chuck's pal; now from his seat on the aisle he thrust a McDonald's bag into Chuck's hands. "What's this?" Chuck opened the bag; the hot salty fragrance of French fries rose out of the paper.

"Supper," Greg beamed. "Three hamburgers, one for each of us and one to split. I would've bought four, but I didn't have enough cash, so I got fries. I have a knife; we can cut one hamburger in half." The knife was in a scabbard on his belt; before Chuck could stop him he'd pulled it out and waved its blade in the aisle of the bus.

"Put that thing away," Chuck said. "Thanks, I've got food at home."

"Where's your car?"

"Sitting quietly at the curb, next to my apartment building, waiting for me to get paid so I can give it a tank of gas. It's very patient, that car." Chuck had skipped some work in the library, so his next paycheck would be small. He'd gone five days now on one dollar, weighed down by the secret of his pauperdom when he went with Ivy to her aunt's for supper. He could not reveal that he'd praised Peg's macaroni and cheese casserole extravagantly because he was so hungry, that he'd been subsisting on free

saltines, pickles and onions at the cafeteria, peanuts and bouillon cubes at his apartment. He should look for a job that paid more per hour, enough to eat and buy gas and save, so he could pay back his father. After Saturday, he'd promised himself.

"I need to talk about philosophy class," Greg said. "I bombed the mid-term, and Joseph's letting me do an extra project, but I don't understand what he wants, even after he explained it to me. You're doing really well in that class ..."

Chuck sighed. "So I get to earn my supper. Fair enough." Dr. Joseph's lectures came in a kind of language you had to sort of tune into. A dictionary was no help; Chuck had tried. "We'll talk about your project, but I gotta be studying by ..." he looked at his watch. "Eleven o'clock."

They stumped up the three flights to Chuck's apartment in The Monmouth; Chuck put his key in the lock, threw open the door, and saw Bert stretched out on his bed, propping his head up on one elbow. Next to him lay a girl in a pink ribbed sweater so tight her nipples showed. At least they were both fully dressed.

"Did you have to put your muddy boots on my bedspread?" Chuck said.

"Whoops." Bert raised one blue-jeaned leg toward the ceiling, almost over his head. The sole and heel of his boot were worn, but not muddy. "You know, you need a sofa." He sat up, picked his glasses off the nightstand, and cleaned them with his shirttail before putting them on. "Some beer would be nice, too. This is Shelly."

"Hi, Shelly," Chuck said. She flushed, leaning against Bert while she fished a cigarette out of her purse. "What brought you here?" he asked Bert. "How'd you get in?"

Bert grinned and held up a plastic American Express card. "Opens locks. Easy."

“Shit.” Chuck could not help grinning at Bert, who he was pretty sure had not broken into the apartment just to use the bed with Shelly. “This is Greg,” Chuck said. “He and I were about to eat a couple of hamburgers and discuss Immanuel Kant, and we’re too hungry to share, but there are a few peanuts left in the cupboard.” Maybe Bert would be sensitive and decide not to do whatever he had come here to do; Greg Lambert was enough disruption for one evening.

“I’m stuffed,” Bert said. “Shelly just took me out to the Crystal. We need to talk about Saturday’s thing.”

So much for sensitivity. “We’ve got a permit for the park across from the Public Auditorium,” Chuck said. “The word is out to the West Side and both campuses.” In the apartment below, the Supremes were singing *Let me be why don’t you, babe?*

“Look at this.” Bert held out a page of the *Cleveland Press*. “A marching competition, of all things. Dig it: Phalanxes of ROTC guys competing to see who can march tightest, straightest, fastest.”

“Maybe they’ll do the goosestep,” said Shelly.

“Maybe they’ll do the quickstep,” said Greg. He leered at Shelly, who leered back and blew her cigarette smoke in his face. Greg coughed, then laughed as though she’d done something alluring.

Chuck took a little envelope of French fries out of the McDonald’s bag and began to eat. He wished he could quit being so uptight. He also wished his refrigerator had the beer that Bert had suggested would be nice. “I’m going inside to stage a pretend napalm bombing.” Bert held up a bag of white balloons. “We’ll drop them from the balcony.”

“Cool,” said Greg.

“How will they know that the balloons are supposed to be napalm?” Chuck asked, “instead of some friendly kind of celebration?” He pictured white balloons drifting down, bobbing along starched and gold-braided shoulders, bouncing among uniformed students as they tried to maintain formation.

“Write ‘If this were napalm, you’d be dead now,’ on the balloon,” Shelly said.

“I have an idea.” Bert grabbed Chuck’s notebook from the top of a pile of books next to the bed, opened it to a blank page, and began to write.

“Bert said I should show you this,” Shelly said. She laid her cigarette on the table so its burning tip stuck out over the edge, walked to the corner of the room where she and Bert had dumped their jackets, and brought out a rolled-up poster.

It was one of those blown-up photographs: three women sitting on a couch wearing big hats. “Girls say yes to boys who say no,” it said. Their faces were serious. These women would not be pushed around. Two of them were barefoot, with smooth tan calves, high insteps, and long Californian toes, the kind of legs you’d want to stroke, but you’d ask first, and these two women might laugh at you. The third wore shoes and stockings and a white blouse with a high neck. Chuck suddenly recognized Joan Baez. She leveled her gaze at the camera, her *yes* a challenge, thrown down like a gauntlet. Chuck thought of his letter requesting a CO form, which he still had not sent. Baez would say, Don’t be a conscientious objector, just refuse induction and go to jail. Say no.

“The one in the middle is Mimi Fariña, Joan’s sister,” said Shelly. “I was going to mount it on posterboard and carry it on Saturday, but I can’t be there. Have to work.”

“My girlfriend would like it,” Chuck said. “Can I take it to her?”

“Listen to this.” Bert read what he’d written: “If this were napalm, you might not be dead, but you’d wish you were. Your skin would have burned off, and your flesh would still be roasting. Third degree burns cause the most excruciating pain known to humans. Recovery is never complete. Stop bombing Vietnam.”

“Ugghh!” said Shelly. “It’s fabulous, Bert.”

“You can’t write that on a hundred balloons,” Chuck said.

“Put it on paper, roll it up and stick it inside,” said Shelly. “No, you’d have to make tight little rolls, and no one could read it without breaking the balloon and taking the paper out.”

“The curious ones would rip the balloon to shreds, pick out the paper – and they’re the ones we want to reach. I like it,” Bert’s mouth curved up at the corners, not quite a smile.

“Make the message small, on little squares of paper, and tie each one on with string.” Chuck liked the image forming in his mind. “The paper would pull the balloons down, make them more like bombs. We’re meeting tomorrow night at the Church of the Covenant to make posters and flyers. If you bring the balloons, the string, and the messages – small, you understand – then the group can blow up balloons and attach ...”

“Uh-uh. Can’t do it,” Bert said. “It’s Friday night; I’ll be in Kent.”

“But you’re bringing a contingent from Kent to the demonstration, right? And you’ll get the stuff to me before you go?”

“Let’s get someone else to do it.” Bert turned to Greg, who was sitting quietly at the table, staring at something. “How about you? What the fuck are you doing?”

Greg had picked up Shelly's cigarette and was calmly burning a hole in his wrist. "Just a tad of the most excruciating pain known to humans." He smiled wanly, looking first at Bert, then at Chuck, then at Shelly, then back to Chuck.

"Give me that." Chuck held out his hand and Greg put the cigarette into it. Chuck took it to the sink, doused it in water, and dumped the soggy remnant in the trash. "Now, show me your wrist." The burn was small and deep. In his grimy pink bathroom Chuck looked through the cabinet under the sink. First the knife-flashing, now this. He had a bottle of peroxide, which should clean out the ash. He also had a few Band-Aids.

An hour ago everything had been settled: a peaceful demonstration, a little march, a few leaflets. Now Bert had introduced this balloon-dropping thing – okay: show the ROTC guys what they're involved with; but balloon-bombers were asking to be arrested for disruption, and there was no guarantee they'd get to the part where sympathy poured forth as it had for the Oakland Seven. If the balloons didn't fall just right, they'd all look like fools. And he had Greg on his hands, injured and dangerously loony.

Chuck poured the peroxide on to the red hole Greg had made in his arm. It fizzed and foamed. "*This* is the excruciating part," Greg gasped, forcing his mouth into a grimace apparently meant to be a smile. Chuck laid a BandAid carefully over Greg's wound and pressed it down. Greg went red, then pale.

"I think we're done for tonight," Bert said. "You can edit what I wrote, make the little papers and all that in plenty of time."

Chuck glared down at Bert. At least he was taller.

"Okay," Bert said. "I'll do the little papers. Get back to your hamburgers."

“Great,” Chuck said. Bert would take Shelly and his ideas out of here. “See you Saturday.”

“Wish I could come,” said Shelly. She handed Chuck the rolled-up Baez sisters saying *Yes*. “Don’t forget to give this to your girlfriend.”

Bert looked gravely, kindly, at Greg, who seemed even paler than he had been. “You think that wrist’ll be okay?”

“Of course it will.” Greg’s voice was strong. But when Shelly and Bert had disappeared he took off his glasses, sighed and fell back on the bed.

“Shall we go to the emergency room?” Chuck asked.

“No way.” Greg rolled his head side to side, his jaw set in refusal and probably pain. “I’ll be okay in a minute. Eat your hamburgers. Eat two – I’ve lost my appetite.”

The hamburgers were cold, but Chuck ate with gratitude, and when he’d swallowed the last, Greg was on his feet, swaying. “If you’ve got a couple dollars I can put gas in the car,” Chuck said, “and take you home.”

Greg gave him the money. He wobbled as they walked from the parking lot to his basement apartment, talking about how he’d bring balloons and string tomorrow night; he’d buy them at the hardware store on East Ninth. “I’ll come early,” he said. “I’ll open the basement door and start blowing balloons. Give me the key.”

“No, no,” Chuck said. That was his father’s voice. It frightened him to have his father’s voice in his own mouth. When he was a child, begging for a second helping of ice cream or another hour before bedtime, his father would say “No, no” in that slow singsong, free of judgment or anger. The voice was soothing then. Greg had to lean against the doorjamb as he worked his key. “You need to lie down,” Chuck said. “Get

some sleep. Is that a grenade-case?" Greg's desk stood in the center of the room with a pile of papers and a baseball-shaped metal thing on top.

"Not a case," Greg said. "It's fully loaded. If I pull the pin on it we'll be blown to bits in four seconds. I like having it sit there, waiting."

Live grenade on his desk, Chuck thought. Dear God, keep Greg Lambert a good distance away from me. He wondered what he meant by "Dear God," and decided to phone Ivy as soon as he got home, even though it meant having to let the phone ring and ring, to talk with her in that echoing stairwell. He needed her voice.

* * * * *

Jane pulled a glass from the stack of dirty dishes in the sink, turned on the tap, and waited for the water to get hot so she could wash the orange pulp out of the glass. She wished Norman would wash the dishes when he said he would wash the dishes. Two days ago he'd said, "I'll take care of the kitchen." Tonight, when she couldn't find enough counter space to make a sandwich, he'd said, "I agreed to take care of the kitchen and I *will*. Don't go pushing your schedule on me."

The water was hot. Jane scrubbed out the glass, rinsed, filled it with milk, and drank. The hot glass made the cold milk taste slightly sour. Norman was typing, sitting at what should have been the dining table with a stack of books propping his reporter's notebook so he could read and flip pages without slowing down. He typed astonishingly fast, pausing between pages only long enough to run his fingers through the dark curls on top of his head. Jane could talk to him during one of those pauses if she spoke quickly. She sipped her milk and waited. It was like playing jump-rope, waiting for the right instant to leap successfully.

There. He pressed the carriage return three times, took out the page, and Jane said, “I’ve got to go to the West Side. I’ll need your car.” Jane had agreed to meet Lillian to begin work on the Welfare Rights Handbook. tonight.

Her speech about Vietnam at the Western Reserve rally had not been good. The listeners had been restless, the applause weak. Afterward was better: Ivy took her to the dorm lounge; they began talking about women’s liberation, and Jane was deep in conversation with six young women when Norman came to pick her up. He’d double-parked, so she had to leave too abruptly.

Norman pulled at his hair and picked up a clean sheet of paper before turning to her. “I thought you had the Valiant.”

“Marvin’s using it tonight, to visit somebody from the social work school.”

“I don’t like being stuck here without a car.”

Their apartment was in East Cleveland, on a dead-end street off Euclid with its shops and buses. “You’re not exactly stuck,” Jane said. “I’d take the bus, but I don’t like to walk alone at night.”

“You’re right.” Norman turned to his typewriter and sat still. Then he slammed the table. “I don’t *like* you driving my car, especially to the near West Side.”

“Well, *I* don’t like ...” Jane stopped herself. She refused to nag about the dishes again, or the filthy bathroom floor where he’d left towels in a damp heap. “Just for tonight?” she said, hating the way her voice came out small and pleading.

“I don’t see why you can’t handle it over the phone. But if I must drive you, wait till I finish this story. And you’ll have to get a ride home from someone else.”

“Okay,” said Jane, but she seethed while she waited, pacing. She didn’t know how to explain to Norman her need to work at a table together, telling experiences and thinking out loud, coming up with the points you both wanted to make, watching together as an outline evolved on paper you both could touch. Breathing together, you could feel changes happen. Norman did all his writing absolutely solo, with such certainty that Jane couldn’t even say to him, “Don’t be silly; you don’t have to go anywhere tonight.” Nor could she simply take the bus to the West Side and walk a couple of blocks. That was part of the problem, wasn’t it: the neighborhood on the near West Side was not safe at night.

She picked up Norman’s typed pages to read. He’d been to the official kick-off for Stokes’ “Cleveland: Now!” campaign. Jane read the passage aloud to make sure she had it right: “‘one billion, five hundred million dollars over the next ten years.’ Stokes is trying to get corporations to pay for peace in the inner city,” she said, as Norman rolled the next sheet out of his typewriter.

“Cleveland: Now! is extremely popular,” Norman said. “No one but Stokes could pull this thing off.”

“He knows how to suck up to the Governor,” Jane said. “And he’s convinced big business there’s profit to be made.”

“Business loves him, but so does the black community,” Norman said. “Nobody else on the planet can reach both those groups.”

He was right about Stokes’ being loved in the black community. But what the black community needed – good houses they could afford, solid jobs and businesses of

their own, government of their own: yes, nationalism – wouldn't profit big business. "The people named in this article aren't going to give up control of their money," Jane said.

"Go ahead, be cynical." Norman was balancing on the back legs of his chair; it nearly tipped over and he rescued himself, slamming the front legs to the floor. "Yes, the city's trying to buy quiet. But the money is real. What the hell is it you want?"

The phone on the wall rang; Jane had to step around Norman to answer it. Tessa was calling about the demonstration on Saturday. "I'll get the Valiant, and we'll go together," she said. "You know what? There's the most amazing thing at Columbia – a women's issues study group, with a sociologist and an English lit specialist and twenty women students. Can you imagine, a whole month's conversation just about *women* in literature and society? I wish I could be there."

"Me too," Jane said. "What's happened to all the students who were arrested?"

"Most of them are out on bond," Tessa said. "It'll take awhile to get through 692 court cases. Listen, I've got to go to the clinic. See you Saturday at nine."

"Right," said Jane, and hung up. Norman was typing again, in the middle of another page. She needed work; that was why she'd wanted to go to the West Side tonight. Norman's lips moved as he typed, his brow furrowed, his fingers punching the keys. His fingers were powerful and tireless, wonderful when they made love.

When you don't know what else to do, run hot water and add soap. Her mother had said that. Repeatedly. Jane turned on the tap over the mound of dishes, streaked and mottled with tomato sauce and cheese blobs. Mold floated up from below. She picked up the sponge, soaped it, picked up a cup ... and then she threw it to the floor, where it smashed.

Norman stopped typing and turned to her. “What was that?”

To show him, Jane threw a jar. It sailed over Norman’s head and shattered high on the wall. The sound was very satisfying. Jane picked up a china plate, but Norman had popped out of his chair and was reaching for her. He got the plate before she threw it.

“I don’t need this, Jane,” he said. His fingers vise-gripped her wrist. “I’ve got a deadline. I’m willing to schlep you over to the West Side, but I don’t have time to deal with you trashing the kitchen for no reason.”

She looked at his tight, expressionless face. He was absolutely sure he was right.

“Jane, I understand that you’ve just got to be willful sometimes, but ...”

She thought the inside of her throat might rupture like a balloon. *Deadline. Schlep you. Trashing the kitchen. Willful.* She could feel tears under her eyes, but they could not spill. He would misinterpret them.

“A minute ago,” she said, carefully, “you asked what I want. It is this: I want Stokes to put Dora and Lillian on the Cleveland Commission for Economic Opportunity – and pay them well. I want to study the role of women in society. I want to be able to walk anywhere alone at night. And I want you to write what you know perfectly well about the need for fundamental change in the way the city’s run.”

“I thought you were a realist,” Norman said. His voice had a familiar condescending tone – *I’m very disappointed in you*, said her father, her eighth-grade science teacher, her field hockey coach, her college advisor. All the men who wanted her to be a good girl. She had tried. She really had. She felt sick from so much trying.

“I’m not,” she said. “I’ve decided to stop trying to be a realist. I’m sorry, Norman, that this decision came on the night when you had a double deadline, but I

couldn't postpone it any longer." She fetched another plate with her free hand (he still gripped her wrist) and flung it across the room; it sailed over the table and smashed on the wall next to the door.

Norman grabbed her other wrist and pulled her close. His thick forearms locked hers to his chest, and he looked down into her eyes, where tears floated but did not fall. Her anger was turning them to steam. Norman's jaw was very still as he said, softly, "I'm going to meet these deadlines and keep my job. In fact I'm going to try for a promotion. I'm going to write about Carl B. Stokes and whatever assignments I can get about Cleveland: Now! which I find exciting, hopeful, and a whole hell of a lot better than the police beat. And I'm going to do those things away from flying dishes. Call me when you've come to your senses."

He began to pack his typewriter into its case and fill his briefcase. She stayed in the bathroom listening as he walked to the bedroom and back to the kitchen. He would pack underwear, socks, a clean shirt. He would go to his brother's in Beachwood. He would come into the bathroom for his toothbrush, and they would look at each other sadly, as they usually did after a quarrel. She would not say she was sorry, this time. She heard his steps outside the bathroom door. He stopped for less than a second, then kept going. The door slammed.

Then Jane allowed herself to cry, bending over the sink, running hot water and soaping the washcloth. She washed her face and then her neck, her breasts – and then she decided what the hell and ran the bathtub full, adding dishwashing liquid because she had no bubble bath.

She would not go to the West Side tonight; Lillian would understand. She could not imagine the senses she would come to, but they were not what Norman thought they should be. What the hell *do* I want, she asked herself, sinking under the foamy clouds of soap, soaking her hair which lay over her shoulders like a shawl when she sat up again. She wanted to join the Black Panthers, to have dark brown skin and a badass mouth, to dance to bongos waving a rifle in one hand. Or to go to the university and study women's liberation. Or perhaps to become a cloistered nun, renouncing both money and men.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Three

May 4, 1968

Ivy scrolled the last mimeo master into the typewriter: no mistakes, this time. She'd typed the same paragraph a dozen times, at least. She felt as if her thoughts had grown fur – soft, gray, thick. Her lungs were stiff.

They'd been working all night in the Church of the Covenant basement. Pastor Joe Griever had given them five mimeograph masters, and they'd trashed four with arguments about the wording. Chuck kept trying to guess what a ROTC guy would think. Ivy's friend Susan Steiner kept trying to inject what she called colorful language. At eleven they got rid of *Are you prepared to commit murder by another name?* At one they threw out *You don't have to go – say No!* The last version, final only because they were too tired to keep arguing, began with *We are on your side* in block letters which Ivy had outlined and cross-hatched in ballpoint pen, carefully because she was so tired, but the pen slipped anyway. She'd used up the last of the gummy blue correction fluid.

She began to type. Behind her Chuck's staple gun cracked almost rhythmically, fastening posterboards to sticks. Arthur Cohen was painting a row of signs, "Support our troops – bring them home!" in big sloppy letters, singing to himself, "Bernadette!" Susan sat with Greg Lambert cross-legged in a cloud of white balloons, slapping palms every time they blew up another two. "Eighty-eight!" "Right on!" *Slap. Crack.* "Bernadette!" Ivy wished Arthur would pick another song, but if she asked him, he'd probably go back

to “Eleanor Rigby,” which she’d grown sick of before midnight; he sang flat, and went “hah-he hah-he hah-he” for the cello part.

The small windows near the ceiling were turning from black to gray when Ivy fed the finished master into the mimeograph machine and set it to spitting out flyers, *thump*, *cachunk*. Susan and Greg were tying messages onto balloon strings, and Chuck was trying to sleep at the desk, head on his arms. She fished the plastic pill-bottle out of her coat pocket and took the last two aminophyllin tablets, washing them down with a swallow of someone’s Coke. When she set the Coke bottle down she saw a cigarette butt in the bottom.

Three hundred finished flyers sat drying on the table when Ivy left the basement room with its heavy stone-and-plaster walls and came out into rainy dawn. Traffic was quiet; only an occasional car swished past, sending up a little fan of water from the pool on Euclid Avenue. Ivy sat on a curb in the parking lot, waiting for her pills to work, watching a dark blue van, rusty at the bottom, drive into a parking space.

Bert stepped out, saw Ivy, grinned and raised a V-sign with his fingers. “Boy am I tired,” he said, sitting next to her. “Got any coffee?”

“Dying for some,” Ivy said. “Won’t be any till the Union opens at eight. A whole ‘nother hour. How was Kent?” How did Bert know to find them here at 7 am? She didn’t ask. His thighs brushed hers as he shifted and stretched.

He leaned against her, head on her shoulder. “I’m dead,” he said. “It was a spectacular night. The Kent students are with us, they just don’t all know it. Those who do will meet us downtown in a few hours.” His voice was gravelly with weariness. “We

liberated the library basement, smoked Acapulco Gold in the stacks, performed anti-establishment rituals in the rain ...”

A familiar wave of nausea signaled the medicine kicking in. Ivy’s lungs relaxed, she coughed, and her lower lobes sent forth stale mimeograph chemicals held captive for hours. “What anti-establishment rituals?” she asked.

“Sex, of course. After a woman has experienced free love, she’s an outlaw, instantly radicalized. You know.” Bert reached under Ivy’s hair and stroked the back of her neck with his thumb. It felt very good. “You don’t need to pretend to be so naïve with me,” he said. His hand moved down her back and gave her a short, hard scrub. How did he know she needed that? Then he stood up and scratched his chest with both hands. “You want to do the balloon drop with us, don’t you?”

She was afraid he wasn’t kidding about using sex to radicalize women. Sorry she’d let him touch her (and enjoyed it), she moved several feet away. “Hadn’t planned on it,” she said. Chuck had given her a very cool poster to carry, with Joan Baez on it. And Chuck had said the balloon drop involved too much risk for too little effect. “I’m not up for getting arrested.”

“We need help,” Bert said. “Every good revolutionary needs to be arrested at least once. It’s the second radicalizing experience. Pack your toothbrush in your purse, leave your money at home. Where’s everybody else?”

“Still in the basement. Chuck, Greg, Susan, Arthur – I think that’s all who’s left.”

“I’ll go on in, then.” He turned toward the church door.

“I’m going back to my dorm for a shower,” Ivy said to his back. “Tell Chuck I’ll be in the Union at eight.” She liked the idea well enough: *Drop balloons instead of*

bombs: a visceral way of jogging people's minds. You could ignore demonstrators walking around and around, carrying signs. You could crumple a flyer and throw it away, but you couldn't ignore a balloon that landed on your head and dropped a little tag in your face saying, "If this were napalm ...". She knew she should get arrested sometime; to be committed meant to put your body on the line. But she didn't want it today. She had six weeks of classes left, an art history midterm on Monday. Tomorrow was her only chance to study.

She sprinted through the puddles on the walk and across the wet grass to her dorm; her mouth was bitter and dry. Bert *liked* her; he could see she wasn't naïve. He didn't try to be sexual, just eased the stiffness where her neck met the back of her head. And he wanted her help. There must be a way to join the balloon drop and not get arrested. She felt good; the flyer was finished and she'd stayed up all night. The adventure ahead bouyed her up the Guilford House stairs, leading to a hot shower at the top. Her sneakers left wet marks on the linoleum.

An hour later, in the Union with coffee and a donut, Ivy felt clean and clear-headed. She'd dressed in pleats, stockings, and a Peter-Pan collar, her hair tied back with a black velvet ribbon – a good-girl disguise to face militarists, reactionaries, and police. She planned to smile sweetly as she handed out flyers, to be soberly reasonable in her conversation. If enough students would only do what her brother Glen had done – quit ROTC before they got sucked in – the war would have to stop.

Across the room Chuck and Arthur waved from the cafeteria line. Chuck was wearing slacks and a tie: his youth-minister look. Ivy liked Arthur, had worked in the Movement with him for a long time, had sung with him on the bus coming home from the

Pentagon the night she'd met Chuck. The two men picked their way between the tables. She felt them looking at her big eyes under dark bangs, her demure white blouse. She felt strong and beautiful. Quit it, she told herself, and pulled her legs together under the table, looked down at her shoes. Walking shoes, with laces – she'd be on her feet most of the day.

Chuck put his coffee on the table, pulled out the chair next to her and sat down. "Ham sandwich," he remarked, tenderly placing the thick triangle next to the coffee. Arthur settled on her other side and fussed with the top of his carton of chocolate milk.

"Where's Bert?" Ivy asked.

"With Greg," Arthur said, "in a van crammed with balloons, headed for the Public Auditorium."

"What was the final count?"

"Of balloons?" Arthur said. "More than a hundred."

"One oh six," Chuck said, chewing. He swallowed and said, "Car's loaded with signs. We gotta get going."

They drove down Liberty Boulevard, Chuck behind the wheel, Ivy between him and Arthur, and the sun came through the clouds. Arthur rubbed his hands together and slapped a little drum-roll on his thighs. "Who needs to sleep anyway?" He looked at Ivy. "We did good work, last night. We're comrades, right?"

"Yes," she said, "comrades." Had he and Chuck talked about her? "All three of us," she added. "You nervous?" she asked. She was not nervous in the least.

"Of course not," Arthur smiled, nodding, rubbing his thighs with his hands. "It'll be a good day." On their right, Lake Erie was dark blue, blown into white caps.

Across from the auditorium entrance, Chuck helped Ivy carry the signs, the bullhorn, and the flyers to the grass next to city hall. Then he drove off to park near the lake. Wind blew down the mall, and she buttoned her London Fog, murmur-singing, “*Anybody here who thinks that following the orders takes away the blame ...*”. Two yellow school buses drove past and rounded the corner onto Sixth Street; Ivy saw uniformed students through the windows, girls as well as boys. A dressed-up couple stopped nearby, preparing to cross the street. Another couple joined them. These people looked like parents. Ivy trotted over and handed a flyer to one of the men; he glanced at it barely long enough to read *We are on your side* and said, “This is filth.” He turned to the others. “Troublemakers everywhere, these days.”

“Hippies give me the creeps; they’re disgusting,” said one of the women. “We’ve got the light; let’s go.” They crossed the street.

Stunned, Ivy watched them climb the wide steps and go in through the ornate doors. They were dressed so nicely, but they were so ignorant. If they’d actually *seen* her, in her tan raincoat and her velvet ribbon, if they’d actually *read* her message – even if they’d argued with her, she might have been hurt. But they’d brushed her off like an annoying fly. She hadn’t expected that. She felt anger smoldering deep in her chest.

Glen would have hated it if their parents had come to one of his ROTC events – but Glen hated marching drill even before he turned against the war. Recently the FBI had been interviewing the neighbors about Glen, Mum had said – a background check, which meant he’d made the first cut for Peace Corps. “What a world we live in,” she’d said. “A mother is happy when her son drops out of Stanford to go halfway around the world, and when the FBI snoops after him.” Maybe the FBI would find out about Ivy’s

Movement work; would that ruin Glen's chance? She had not told her mother that thought.

Three planes at once, small military jets from the lakefront airport, screamed low overhead. Ivy handed a flyer to another couple, in silk coat and gray suit, turning away before they could refuse it or respond. She saw them drop it in the street as they crossed. She picked up a few signs that had fallen into the still-damp grass, stood them against a tree, moved the bullhorn under a bench. Another yellow bus disgorged students near the corner of Sixth and Lakeside. Girls and boys hurried into the building. A gull soared past. Ivy looked up the street, down the street, wondered what was taking Chuck so long. She couldn't leave this corner till he got here.

The blue van pulled to the curb; Ivy glimpsed balloons, bubbly white, against the windows. Bert stuck his arm out the window and waved her over. "How about you let us in?" he said. "There's a stage door near the loading dock off Sixth Street. We'll wait till enough buses have gone; then we'll unload the balloons."

"I'm waiting with this stuff till Chuck and Arthur come back," Ivy said. "When does the marching start?"

"Hell, I don't know. Maybe you can find that out, huh?" Bert patted Ivy's cheek.

"There's Chuck," Greg said, leaning out the passenger window, pointing at a walking figure on Lakeside, waving with his whole arm. "Hey, Chuck!"

"We're off," Bert said, revving the engine, rolling up the window. "See you at the back door in about ten minutes. If you're late we'll drive around and come back. Got it?"

“Got it.” Ivy’s excitement gave her deep adrenaline-fueled breaths. The van turned right on Sixth as, from the Mall, policemen on horseback came riding ten abreast. More antiwar people were arriving; there were Jane and Tessa.

“Hullo, babe,” It was Chuck. “We ran into some people Arthur knew. He’s with them.”

“I’m glad you’re here,” Ivy said. “I need to find a restroom.” She hugged him and ran to do her first true act of sabotage. People who called her words filth without reading them, who thought she was disgusting without looking at her, deserved to have balloon-napalm dropped on them. They hadn’t seen what Ivy had, in a cardboard jewelry box in the dorm trash bin. She scampered into the auditorium with a wide smile as if she couldn’t wait to see the show. Someone handed her a program, and she chirped, “Thanks so much!”

Inside, the public auditorium seemed even bigger than the city block it filled outside. Ivy walked through a warren of corridors, climbed several flights of stairs to the balcony entrance, then tried to retrace her steps so she could locate the stage door. She really did have to pee. The ladies room appeared at the end of one hallway. The stalls were empty – probably because the marching had started. Ivy could hear drums below. According to the program, they’d be marching till four this afternoon. Her feet toed in, and she straightened them. Then, on the front page, she saw why the students looked so young: they were *junior* ROTC. High school students. Some of them would be tenth graders. No wonder the audience was mostly parents. The Cleveland antiwar Movement had come out in force to confront the new Reserve Officers with the consequences and

implications of their marching, scream *Peace* at them, freak them out with fake napalm – and the attacks would land on high school students.

Ivy combed her hair at the mirror, refastened the rubber band and the black velvet ribbon, and looked at herself. “Fool,” she said. She’d been so damned eager to be radical – and to please Bert, who would be waiting for her on Sixth Street. Drums and marching feet thundered in the big hall.

It took a while to make her way between the teams of youngsters waiting to go on (she smiled, wishing them luck) and then to find the door next to the loading dock. “We drove around Public Square three times!” Greg said when the van pulled up.

“Don’t do anything till you’ve seen this.” Ivy pushed the program at him.

“What?” Greg glanced at it, shrugged, and passed it to Bert.

“*Junior ROTC!*” she yelled, leaning in the window. “What’re those high school kids supposed to do when the balloons drop with their dire little messages – right there with their classmates and their parents?” In college you were so much more autonomous than in high school, when you were constantly under surveillance by your peers, your teachers, and your parents. You couldn’t differ from them very much. Bert opened the van doors and began pulling out balloons by their strings. He gave a handful of strings to Ivy. The paper tags fluttered around her elbows. “Didn’t you hear me?” she demanded.

“Yeah. So?” He handed her more tangled strings. “What makes a high school student need to think any less about what he’s doing than a college student? C’mon Ivy, you gonna wake people up, start early. Hey Greg, next Saturday, you and me, we’ll go radicalize a nursery school!”

“Right on.” Greg’s voice was muffled by balloons; he knelt backwards on the front seat of the van, pulling out the ones wedged into corners.

“I don’t want to be part of this,” Ivy said. But she continued to hold balloons.

“You’re already part of it,” Bert said. “Help us get these babies inside and then you can join the demonstrators outside, congratulating each other on their enlightened views. Me, I’ve got no use for a scene where no one really confronts anyone. Greg, you take the van to the Lakefront parking lot.” He handed Ivy the rest of the balloons, dug the key out of his pocket and gave it to Greg.

“Let’s go,” Bert said. “What’s this?”

Ivy had blocked the door open with her inhaler. “Mine.” She took it from Bert and put it in her pocket. Then they backed into the building, carefully, surrounded by balloon-clouds. It was *right* after all, what they were doing. She led Bert away from a little throng in dark green uniforms and they climbed the stairs to the balcony. People of all kinds, it seemed, walked the halls, carrying folding chairs, pom-poms, banners, drums. No one stopped them.

Ivy crept behind Bert to the edge of the balcony, looking over a vast floor. A team in white uniforms with red and gold trim, their eyes hidden by cap visors, moved in a perfect rectangle that split, making two smaller rectangles. From here they were minuscule, their legs synchronized like a centipede’s. “We should’ve brought a thousand balloons,” Bert said.

“I feel bad for those kids,” Ivy whispered.

“Shut up,” Bert said. “Get out of here, if you feel that way. I mean it.”

“Shhhh,” a hiss came from the seats behind them. Then a murmur: the people in the seats nearby were bothered. “Excuse me, you’re blocking our view.” A woman appeared at Ivy’s side. “We’d appreciate it if you’d find a seat or leave.”

“In a minute,” Bert said. “We’re waiting till ...”

“You heard the lady,” a man’s voice came from behind Bert. Ivy couldn’t see through all the balloons. “My wife’s nicer than I am. You better move before Security gets here.”

“Let’s go,” Bert sighed, and swished his balloons over the barrier just before the marchers came under the balcony below them. The man and his wife had gone up the aisle. “Do it!” Bert pulled on Ivy’s arm. She flung her balloons and let them fall amid gasps and little cries. Then she turned and ran up the aisle without looking back. Trotting down the stairs, she pretended she was a sister of one of those high school students, in a hurry to get to the john. She went there, in fact, to hide out for a minute because she was crying a bit, angry tears – at Bert, at herself, at the ROTC students, whom she didn’t hate the way she hated their parents and the people who set up ROTC in the first place, who taught kids it was good to turn themselves into marching automatons, killing automatons.

That’s not all, she realized, washing her hands in the sink, splashing water onto her face and wiping her eyes with her fingers. The thing was, Bert didn’t like her now. And he hadn’t even given her argument a chance.

As she came into the lobby, policemen rushed past her toward the main hall. She peeked in and saw balloons on the floor; the marchers were still in formation, trying not to break stride as they kicked at the balloons. A boy marched toward Ivy. She glimpsed his red, grim face before he turned, precisely on time. One policeman was collecting

balloons, reading the little notes. Another was talking with an usher, who pointed to the balcony where she and Bert had been. *Get out of here*, Bert had said. Ivy forced herself to walk rather than run out the big front doors.

Outside, the antiwar crowd had begun to march past the auditorium, crossing the street to the park and down the sidewalk toward City Hall, crossing again just before they reached it. Chuck stood on the grass, talking with two men. Ivy walked with the crowd, near a couple who glanced her way: the man was Bradley Wells. He bulged as if he wore a rucksack strapped to his front, and had something under his chin: a fuzzy round head, his baby, in a carrier. His wife was very thin, with long hands, long legs, and bright green round-toed shoes. Ivy thought Bradley recognized her, a quick flash as their eyes met, but he turned without even smiling, as though he hadn't seen her at all. Maybe he hadn't. Across the street, one of the men near Chuck was playing the familiar guitar riff into "*I ain't a-marchin' anymore.*"

* * * * *

Whenever Chuck saw mounted police he had the desire to commandeer a horse. He imagined walking up to the cop's brown boot, all friendly, Nice horse you got mister, what's his name? Then he'd grab the reins, back the horse up till it reared and its rider fell off, swing up smoothly himself, and take off at a gallop. His fantasy didn't include the nightstick which he could see now in easy reach of the rider's black leather glove as a horse walked past him. Better to sneak to the stalls at night and free the horses, a colossal horse-jailbreak. Ride one of them bareback, gallop along the lakeshore. And then? Yes, that was a problem. Chuck had carefully restrained contempt for the police as a whole; toward mounted police he felt envy. Also, he missed Jesse James, his own horse, now on

his grandfather's farm. He'd begun riding Sneezer the pony at five, then progressed to Cody, the old cutting horse. Jesse was a fifteenth-birthday gift, half-Arab, a lean roan listening animal who galloped when you tightened your knees, slowed when you said *whoa* softly into his ear.

Chuck often rode horseback in dreams, thundering uphill or careening down a steep slope, fleeing malevolent pursuers. In one dream he'd tried to get Jesse James into the backseat of a car. In another, a horse he didn't recognize lay dying, its big head across Chuck's lap. Last weekend he'd dreamt he was looking for Jesse in the woods, calling, running into a field, calling, stumbling into the barn exhausted because he didn't want horse thieves to see him. He woke thinking he should phone his grandfather to see if his horse was all right. But Ivy lay next to him, bare-breasted, propped on her elbows, laughing because he was confused, and soon he was deep into other things. So he hadn't called.

He stood on the grass giving directions, handing out signs to marchers and bunches of flyers to people who wanted to pass them out. Jane and Tessa had run off with a hundred to distribute at Public Square. The march was growing by the minute as new protestors arrived.

Chuck had seen the van with Bert, Greg, and the hundred balloons. He guessed they'd done the deed. He appreciated the balloon drop. Most people on their way to the auditorium refused flyers; passersby looked away from the antiwar signs as if they were trying to make the demonstration invisible. The balloons could not be ignored nor mistaken, each with its little tag: "If this were napalm, you'd now be in excruciating

pain.” He hoped Greg and Bert had successfully bombed the marchers with their gentle reminders.

Benjamin the folk singer showed up with his friend Michael, another singer; Michael was Irish, with a round, pink face, thin greasy brown hair, and a goofy smile. Chuck was telling them about the permit limits when he saw four cops go inside the auditorium, with that quick, strong-armed rush policemen do when they’re not going to let anyone get in their way.

“We’ll just set up here on the grass,” Benjamin said. He unpacked his guitar and began to play, already in tune. Michael stood next to him holding a piece of notebook paper with the words.

Then Chuck saw Ivy on the curb, stepping into the street – she’d cross anywhere, blithely assuming drivers would slow down and let her through. Chuck watched her walk – quickly, determined, then hesitating, staring down the driver of a black Torino. It stopped. She waved, as if she were somebody every driver should know, and trotted the rest of the way. “Look at this.” She gave Chuck a folded paper – the ROTC program. “Bert dropped the balloons.”

“Four cops just went inside,” Chuck said. He looked at the program: “Junior ROTC,” it said. “Northern Ohio high schools.” Bert could be arrested for disrupting an event with kids and parents. “I’m glad as hell you’re here,” he told Ivy, handing her the *Girls Say Yes* sign. “Where’s Greg?”

“He went off to park the van, and I haven’t seen him since,” Ivy said. “I dropped balloons, too.” She looked slantwise at him, her lips pinched, her mouth quirked to one

side. "Then I ran away. I didn't want to miss my midterm exam on Monday." She raised her sign. Joan Baez stared firmly at Chuck.

Chuck pushed Baez to one side. "The dumping-balloons part took guts," he said. "The running-away is probably smart. I been thinking Bert's right: you gotta force people to notice what's going down."

Ivy sighed. "I'm glad. I was afraid of what you'd think."

"I think you're amazing." He put his arm around her and kissed her on top of the head. He had to worry; that was his job today. Arthur and Susan had climbed the steps and were trying to hand out flyers by the auditorium doors. The demonstrators had permission to hand out flyers, but not on the steps. Chuck thought of calling them back. The doors were a good place for flyers, though. Why not wait and see what happened? The police horses had formed two lines, one at either end of the block. The riders sat stony-faced on their backs.

Marvin appeared, his eyeglasses winking in the sun. "A hundred demonstrators so far," he said. Chuck scanned the crowd, recognizing a few Quakers and the elderly couple who owned Red Star Books on Euclid Ave. A dozen people carried a banner: "Kent State Students oppose the War."

Pastor Joe yelled through the bullhorn: "What do we want?"

"Hullo, it's the West Side contingent with Bradley!" Marvin stepped forward and clapped shoulders with a bearded longhaired fellow who carried a baby. "Bradley Wells, this is Chuck Leggit. Bradley does draft resistance," Marvin said. Bradley introduced his wife Vanessa, tall, with a long, pale face.

"Peace!" the crowd yelled. "Now!"

“I’ve met Ivy,” Bradley said. He shook her hand. So did Vanessa.

“We should take this march over to the draft board,” Bradley said. “The selective service office is right there, in the Justice Center.” He pointed to the new tower across the way. At the doors to the auditorium, Susan seemed to be arguing with a short-haired young man in a suit.

“Isn’t that the federal building, closed on Saturdays?” Chuck asked.

“Sure, but so what?” Bradley said. “Every man in this city between eighteen and twenty-six knows the draft board is up there. Some of them will see us, and they’ll understand perfectly.”

“We could leave the draft board a message,” said Vanessa.

“It’s a little late to plan,” Marvin scanned the crowd. “Besides, we’re not in charge any more.”

“We just organized it,” Chuck said, realizing Marvin was right. Organize, and then let go. See what happens, Marvin had said last Saturday. They’d met accidentally – Chuck was finishing work at the library; Marvin had come to do research – and had a long discussion about revolution: what the hell was it?

Marvin built a pyramid in air with his hands, layer by layer, with the most, the poorest folks at the bottom, the less poor on the next step up, and so on till you got one or two wealthy guys at the top with power over all the others. The revolution would turn the pyramid upside down.

“Aren’t you being simplistic?” Chuck had said.

“Well sure,” Marvin said. “It’s a construct; all constructs are simplistic. But think in local terms. Here, for example, the top layer is the Cleveland Trust Company, with George Gund at the apex.”

“Where’s the mayor?”

“About three layers down.” Marvin moved his hand back and forth a few inches under the fingertip where he’d just located George Gund. “Right alongside the chief of police, the city council president, and some others, jockeying for control.”

“Come the revolution,” Chuck rotated the invisible pyramid, point-down, “you got a pretty unstable structure. A lot of falling bricks.” His hands crumbled the pyramid into a pile of rubble.

“Mm hmm,” Marvin said. “Maybe that’s why Marx came up with ‘dictatorship of the proletariat.’ Hold the thing together.”

Since that discussion, Chuck had kept the pyramid in his mind. He knew the traditional steps up – get good grades, graduate, then work for a city councilman, then a congressman. The thought of that particular climb made him feel weak. The point was to change the structure – to a cube, maybe – so there were more routes upward, room for more people on top.

Across the street the suit-man was giving Susan the finger and she was yelling something incomprehensible. Arthur and Jane had joined; Jane put her hand on Susan’s arm, and Susan shook the hand off. Susan was a friend of Ivy’s – skinny, excitable, a little crazy. Chuck turned to Marvin. “Let’s go disperse that quarrel, what do you say?”

Marvin surveyed the group on the steps. “Might be better than waiting for our friends the police to do it,” he said. They crossed with Ivy, who carried her sign aloft, and

the crowd surged across with them, violating the permit. The line of police horses took one step forward in unison. Chuck looked at the face of a mounted cop who wished him no good and felt his innards roil. Once on the sidewalk, the crowd stood, chanting. "Hell! No! We won't go!" But the mounted-police line held.

Susan and the others came down the steps. The quarrel near the doors had ended. "We quit fighting and started to talk about other stuff," Susan said. "Oh wow, I just figured out that building is the monolith in *2001*." She pointed at the Federal Building, where the draft board was on the fifteenth floor. "God, I loved that movie," Susan said. "And I do mean God." The suit-man concurred. He and Susan began an enthusiastic dissection of *2001*'s music, the monolith, the fetus-in-space.

The crowd had begun moving again, and Chuck followed them. Folks waved their signs, made Vs with their fingers, joined in singing "God on Our Side" with Benjamin and Michael. Chuck had organized, and he had let go, but he still felt responsible. He neither chanted nor sang.

"There's Ungvary's car," Marvin said, his voice low. He pointed to a pale-blue Ford rolling to a stop by the No Parking sign in front of the auditorium. Two men got out of the blue Ford. "Plainclothesmen," Marvin said. "The subversive squad."

"If God is on our side," Ivy sang next to Chuck. "He'll stop the next war."

Bradley Wells raised the bullhorn. He'd unloaded the baby and looked lean in his blue workshirt, open two buttons down. "Hell no!" He began the chant. "We won't go!" The crowd joined in. Chuck saw Greg come behind the horses who stood across Sixth Street; hurrying with his ungainly stride, he managed to slap the rump of the end-horse, which shifted its weight but did not move. The policeman lifted his nightstick, and Greg

put up his hands in a placating gesture. Then he burrowed into the crowd. Bradley, walking backward, calling through the bullhorn, suddenly changed his voice. “We’ve had a man taken by police!” he shouted. “Bert Claymore bestowed a few balloons on the marchers, and you know what a big threat that is.” He passed the bullhorn to Tessa who was walking next to him.

“He reminded the young officers of actual bombing,” Tessa yelled. “Let them be reminded: *Drop balloons, not bombs!*” The crowd picked it up, bobbing their signs. *Drop balloons, not bombs!* The police horses took another step forward; their front hooves lined the crosswalk. Cardboard signs brushed the horses’ noses; they shifted, but the line held. Jesse James would have bolted long before now. Chuck felt like bolting himself. He couldn’t. The crowd was roaring, raucous. He began to count them, but it was hard to do when he was moving, with Ivy and Marvin on either side, both of them cheerfully joining in – “Hell no, Nobody go! Hell no ...”

“Well, I’m off to see what can be done about bailing our friend out of jail,” Marvin said. He threaded his way through the oncoming streams of people, sauntered to the corner of Sixth and stood, jacket hooked over one shoulder, waiting for the light to turn. Bradley stood next to Michael and Benjamin, taller than both of them, six-three at least, waving the crowd forward down Lakeside, crossing in front of City Hall, and walking up past the auditorium to the Mall. Chuck stood on a bench and counted. One hundred eighty, at least, he decided. Tessa and a few others were doing the *Peace Now* chant. Then he heard Bradley shout, “Draft board!” and a group gathered at the corner of Sixth and Lakeside, next to the line of police horses.

“Let’s go.” Ivy reached for Chuck’s hand and pulled until he came down from the bench. She had the *Girls Say Yes* poster propped on her shoulder like a gun. The crowd swarmed past them toward the Federal Building. Chuck saw the police horses spin, all together, and face the other way. A man with a camera stepped out of the crowd and took a photo. Another man walked purposefully to Chuck. “Can I ask you a couple questions?” he asked.

He was a reporter for the *Plain Dealer*. Chuck explained the plan to welcome ROTC peacefully, but not passively, and said that most of the crowd were students against the war.

“What about the balloon incident?” the reporter asked.

“It was a stunt,” Chuck said. “We think it’s important to remind folks about what ROTC leads to.” The reporter scribbled and looked sympathetic. “The march to the draft board wasn’t planned,” Chuck said. “I’ve no idea what will happen.” He felt good being on the record.

“Are you on your way there?” the reporter asked. Only a few stragglers were left in front of the public auditorium; Arthur was handing out flyers to passersby. In twos and threes, a remnant of the antiwar crowd walked onto the mall and down Sixth Street, their signs lowered, done for the day. The second line of mounted police trotted down Lakeside toward the federal building. The reporter took off running after his cameraman.

“I’m going to stay and look after things,” Chuck said. He began to retrieve flyers from where they’d been dropped on the walk and the grass.

“The draft board is a better target than Junior ROTC, any day,” Ivy said.

“I want to be here when Marvin comes back, in case he needs help,” Chuck said.
“You go ahead, take your poster where it belongs.”

“I don’t want to leave you here alone.” Ivy put down the sign to pick up a paper cup and a newspaper folded to the comics page. Chuck watched her bend, her skirt moving up the backs of her thighs. My girl, he thought. *Sunshine on a cloudy day*. She’d been stupid and wonderful, helping Bert Claymore disrupt the contest, getting back here in time to shout for peace, and now look at her, picking up a half-sandwich someone had left, tearing it to scatter the bits for the pigeons, who wandered around the grass. The demonstration had been successful enough. He gathered a dozen signs people had left behind.

“We should lock this stuff in the car,” he told Ivy.

“Bradley invited guys to burn their draft cards at the selective service,” she said.

This would be Chuck’s first chance since the Pentagon. He thought about the crowd – Tessa, Jane, Bradley, even Arthur, the new kid with talent. Ivy’s friend Susan. The chance to hold his flaming card like a torch. Then Chuck thought of Greg Lambert, who wore his wrist-bandage like a trophy and would happily burn his own card, loudly welcoming Chuck to an incendiary brotherhood-against-the-state. Greg was not the only young man eager to hold fire in his hands. Chuck did not want an audience. “Got a match?” he said. “I’ll burn it here.” He reached for his wallet.

“What about the police?”

“If a policeman turns and comes riding down on me because I’m setting fire to a little piece of paper, he’s a fool,” Chuck said. He imagined the scene, the nightstick swinging as in footage from Selma. He’d wear his bruises like trophies. “The police are

all watching the demonstration down the street,” he told Ivy. “I want to get it over with, so I don’t have to feel messed up every time there’s a draft card burning.”

“I don’t have a match, anyway,” she said. He kissed her, put his arms around her, and felt with his thumbs along the line of her bra under her blouse. “We could just go home,” he mumbled into her ear. “Marvin has my phone number.”

“I’m hungry,” she said. “Let’s go get a hot dog.”

“Let’s go to that little place on Superior,” Chuck said. “I’m starved, now that you mention it.” They locked the signs in the car and walked to the café, which had matches as well as hot dogs. While they waited in the booth for the waitress to bring their food, Chuck lit his draft card. What a small flame it made; hardly anyone noticed. He crumbled the ashes in the ashtray. “I’ve got a letter waiting to go in the mail to my draft board, a request for a CO form,” he said.

“I thought you weren’t a pacifist,” Ivy said.

“I think where I am is called principled opposition to this particular war,” Chuck said. “But I’m not sure; I might be a pacifist. Let’s talk about other things.”

* * * * *

Jane counted the black windows to the fifteenth floor and saw how inaccessible the Cleveland selective service had made itself. A cluster of people stood near the front doors – Bradley Wells the tallest, Tessa the loudest – talking about what to do with the crowd gathered on the plaza and spilling into Ninth Street. Jane stood on the curb. She had lost herself in the crowd that made its amoeba-like way from the ROTC show. A few

crowd-members were shouting advice to the group on the steps, but Jane kept quiet; she had no idea what should be done. It frightened her to not know where she should go next, to have no one urgently needing her, to be so lonely.

She felt a touch on her back, a tug on her braid, turned to see who – but it was only the edge of a poster that had brushed against her. Her mouth tasted sour – loneliness; her armpits stank of it. She should slink away to a lunch counter somewhere and sit staring into a cup of tea. She didn't really want to drink tea; it would give her something to look at, that was all, besides the broad back of the woman in front of her, which made her want to cry because of the urge to lean into that motherly back.

The woman said, "What's happening, hon?" to the man standing by her. "You can see, and I can't." Jane didn't recognize either of them.

"You're wrong, I can't see anything either," he said. "Wanna sit on my shoulders?"

He bent over with his hands on his knees, and Jane turned away as the woman clambered up, lucky to have such strong shoulders to climb onto. Jane and Tessa had come on the bus because the Valiant had finally succumbed and was at the car repair place – a Movement friend's garage on the West Side. She wondered who had the van, since Bert was arrested and might have to stay in jail for the night; she could use a van to get her stuff from Norman's apartment to Tessa's, where she was living now. She wanted her books, her favorite cereal bowl, and her rocking chair. Then she would get back to work.

She moved forward through the crowd, slipping between people whose voices jabbered with excitement. She wanted to get close to Tessa and say something, if only

I'm headed back to the apartment, see you later, but Tessa was deep in a knot of talkers.

Bradley saw Jane first and pulled her to him gently by the braid. "There you are, Jane.

We need your calm voice to help settle this argument."

To Jane it was clear that her voice, calm or not, was the last thing they needed.

But it steadied her to be asked. Behind her the crowd was moving toward the steps.

"Didn't I see your baby and Vanessa earlier?" she asked Bradley.

"They're home now," he shrugged. "I'm free for a while." He pulled her into his arms. "Oh my darling, it's been so long," he said.

Swamped by his bigness, she gave him a teeth-baring grin. She'd bite him, if she had to, but she let him think she was kidding. Since she'd first met Bradley, when she was newly arrived from Ann Arbor, he'd been playing this Lothario game, even when Vanessa got pregnant, even after he married her. Jane liked Bradley, but the game was tiresome. "Quit fooling around. I need to talk to Tessa," she said.

Bradley dropped his arms. "Behind you," he said.

Jane turned. It was Norman, one foot on the step below her, reporter's notebook open, pencil aimed for the page. "I can't tell you a thing about what's going on," she said.

Norman brought up his other foot; now their eyes were level with each other. He stuck his pencil into the spirals of his notebook. "How are you?"

"Fine," Jane said. "Lonesome."

"Me too," Norman said. For a brief, wild second she thought he might say, So come back. He might say, Let's go away from here and talk about how to live together so we don't make each other mad all the time. His dear, familiar face was three inches from

hers. “I think I’ve got a balanced story, today,” he said. “But I could use another comment or two from the Movement.”

Ah, Norman was at work, after all, trying to use a personal connection to get a good quote. “Ask Bradley over there.” Jane nodded to the group Bradley had rejoined. “Or maybe Tessa will give you a statement. She’s good at being pithy.” She knew how Norman was: once he had a target in focus – a source, a fact, a story – he concentrated exclusively. They had spent a weekend at a cabin on Lake Michigan once, with five friends, gorgeous weather, a sailboat, and Norman hunched in a corner of the room typing. He would not join them till his article was done. She admired that persistence, could not emulate it.

“I don’t believe you,” he said. “We’re in the middle of a demonstration, and you have nothing to do with it? What do you take me for?”

“Very good question,” Jane said. “We should talk about this business of taking each other for things.”

“Yes, we should,” Norman said. “Call me. We’ll set an appointment.” He climbed past her, toward Tessa.

Yesterday, the morning after Norman left with his typewriter and his Carl-Stokes stories, Jane had gone on the bus to Tessa’s with her suitcase. She’d read *The Feminine Mystique* and could see how she needed to untangle herself from her conditioning. If she and Norman were ever to share a home again, everything about their relationship would have to change. But here, watching him in his rumpled shirt, his curly hair, his bulldog approach ... ah, look: he’d latched on to Bradley. Good choice, Norman, Bradley will tell you about about draft resistance, and because you’re male he’ll be civil, courageous,

idealistic, and extremely informative. Jane watched the two men walk to the sidelines as a dozen people trotted up the stairs, their posters hoisted high, chanting *Shut down the draft! Shut down the draft! Hell no we won't go!* Jane let them rush past and wanted to call out. Her throat ached from wanting to call Norman back; there was an empty space all around her that he belonged in. She loved him, in other words, and she knew better. If he came into that space again, she'd be smothered.

She sat on the steps to wait for Tessa; the demonstrators were about to be dispersed by policemen on horseback, trotting across the grass. Five police cars parked along Lakeside. Some of the crowd had made it into the echoey front hall of the Justice Center; Jane heard what sounded like "Universal Soldier" – Benjamin, with his guitar. Selfishly, Jane wished no one would resist, so it would be over soon. You never knew what would happen at a demonstration; today the crowd had been large enough to cause a stir, but nothing had happened worth fighting the Cleveland police, who hated demonstrators almost as much as they hated black people.

She got her wish for a quick dispersement. It was the end of the afternoon; people were probably hungry and thinking Bert's arrest was enough for all of them. "Bradley should have organized in advance," Tessa fumed, as they walked to the bus stop. "There was enough will and enough anger; they could have figured out how to get in and steal some draft files. But no, he pushed the individualistic thing instead, made a big deal over five guys burning draft cards. The police just took names and wrote tickets. As though they'd parked illegally or something."

"We knew that about Bradley," Jane said. "He's into avoidance as much as resistance. He'd rather help someone go to Canada or do alternate service than get into a

serious struggle against the System.” She was just saying what was obvious. “Don’t be miffed because you couldn’t force him in a new direction.”

“Yeah I guess,” Tessa said. “Times like this I wish we were in Oakland or Boston or New York, instead of Cleveland. City of mice.”

“Rats,” Jane said. “I saw one last night on the fire escape. It sat there gnawing on a chicken bone, didn’t run even when I yelled. We’ve got enough to do in this city without trying to launch a massive draft resistance. It’s not much use to the black Movement, for one thing.”

“Marvin’s rented a Movement office starting June first, you know that?” Tessa said. “Bring students into the community.” They were talking quietly, below the hearing of the others in line for the bus. A man in a black suit appeared. The Irish singer.

“Good evening, ladies.” He smiled with ruddy cheeks and spoke with an lilt. “Fine day, was it not?”

“You’re the guy singing “God on Our Side” with Benjamin,” Tessa said. “Michael O’Reilly.”

“O’Bryan,” he said. ““Patriot Game,” that song is, really. And you’re Tessa Buchanan and Jane Revard. I heard about you from my good friends the Berrigans.” The priests from Maryland who poured blood on the draft files. “It appears we’re taking the same bus,” Michael said, following them in. He sat behind Jane and next to Tessa, dropping names of people he obviously didn’t know very well – “my good friend Bradley, lovely man ... Bert Claymore, a brave lad” – in his lilting voice, making up a story that put the Cleveland Movement alongside Irish struggles against the English, as

though they were all heroes together. Tessa began to glow. “Not enough joy in the movement!” Michael cried, and Tessa agreed, tears in her eyes.

Jane saw the other bus-riders look up, amused or annoyed, she couldn't be sure. She was half-facing Tessa and Michael, caught in the epic of all the stalwart youths who'd confronted the System since David knocked out Goliath. Where was Michael's stop? Whom was he staying with? They transferred to another bus and he stuck with them as they rode into Glenville, Michael between them now on the back seat. An ex-priest, he had a wife and kids, but he'd been traveling alone for months, from one Movement site to another. “We'll converge in Chicago for the Democratic Convention,” he said. “Hordes of us, committing acts of joy and insanity throughout the city of Daley, who's ordered his minions to shoot to maim looters, ‘Shoot to maim,’ he said. Do you know Roddy McCorley?”

McCorley was not an activist, but a song. Suddenly Michael's voice was filling the aisle; three middle-aged black women twisted to listen, their lips pursed, their eyes knowing. Michael was so odd, so rude and so harmless; he urged them to join the chorus, “And young Roddy McCorley goes to die,” and they laughed, embarrassed.

Jane was no singer, but she sang anyway. It was fun, really, to be caught up in Michael's version of the Movement. Tessa was in full voice, joining in “Shoot me Like an Irish Soldier,” which lasted till their bus stop. It turned out that Tessa had invited Michael to spend the night.

He bought fried chicken and beer; they ate on the living room rug because it was too much trouble to clear the papers off the kitchen table, and because Michael wanted to lie flat (it was his back that hurt, he explained) for a time. “Do you not have something

stronger than this weak American beer?” Michael demanded, and Tessa dug a dusty half-empty bottle of tequila out of a low kitchen cabinet, brought out her three tea cups (bought at Good Will, with gold rims and yellow roses), and when Jane took the first swallow of her second cup, her head began to swim. She got up to clear away the chicken bones, the paper, and the beer bottles.

Norman would have used marijuana; it would be better to be stoned than drunk while listening to Michael’s story, the mounted police fierce as Cossacks, the balloons emblems of hellfire raining down on the innocent, Bert’s arrest a martyrdom, the rush to the draft board a spontaneous uprising for liberty by the people long-oppressed. When she returned to the living room she found them both flat on their backs, arms around each other’s shoulders. “Come join us!” Michael beckoned with his free arm, and Jane fell dizzily. He and Tessa began to sing – hum, really, a sweet old tune that sounded like Europe, like longing for meadows in limpid afterglow – and soon they were rolling, the three of them, their bodies closer and closer, over and over each other. Jane, on top, felt Tessa’s wiry arm around her, strong thighs underneath, then she rolled into Michael’s softer body and he pulled himself over her as Tessa lay close and then rolled onto Jane almost kissing her, it was a bliss of hugging suffused with alcohol breath.

“Let’s make up a bed for Michael now, on the couch,” Jane said, when he’d gone off to pee. “He probably expects to sleep with both of us at once.”

“Right,” Tessa said. “My bed’s not big enough for that, and I’m exhausted.”

“Me too,” Jane said. She was looking forward to her own mattress on the floor, in her own room with the door closed.

They put sheets and blankets on the couch, put a rolled-up towel in a pillow case, and showed Michael, who seemed to have sobered a bit. “Oh, don’t you think ...?” he looked at each of them in turn, a silent plea. Jane felt, in that instant, his loneliness. He’d been on the road for months, cut off from his family; perhaps something he’d done made it hard to go back. He was headed for Detroit in the morning.

She was seeing double by then, two Michaels, two Tessas, and they opened their arms to her and pulled her into a three-way embrace which felt five-way, or ten-way, who knew; Jane leaned into them and felt her legs give way.

“Good night,” Tessa said, and broke the embrace. Jane sagged against the wall.

“I love you,” Michael said.

“I know,” Tessa said. “I love you too. And Jane: I love you. Good night.” She vanished into her bedroom.

“Good night,” Jane said. He kissed her, his lips wet and hungry, and she cupped his red cheek in one hand, to show him she had no ill will. She considered coming into his arms but pulled away instead. She was too dizzy and sleepy for sex. “I’m sorry, but I’m dead tired,” she said. True enough. “And I think I’ll die if I don’t get to the bathroom.” She left him standing in the living room.

In the morning he was gone. The bedding was neatly folded on the couch. Neither Tessa nor Jane had heard him leave.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Four

June 10, 1968

Ivy sat in one lawn chair, her mother in the other. Between them, a rickety TV table held a pitcher of iced tea. The dark green lawn spread to a wooden fence lined with peonies, their pink round heads about to burst. Here under the trees, the afternoon air was just cool enough. Ivy lifted her bangs to let the sweat evaporate; her tea tasted the same as always, sweet and lemony. What if she were to suggest to her mother that they drink beer instead? There were four bottles of Miller High Life in the fridge. She wanted something other than this same-as-always backyard tea which seemed to wrap the afternoon in cellophane. A request for beer would puncture the surface.

She'd finished the semester and come home by Greyhound, tumbling off the bus and falling asleep in the car next to her father, unable to do more than mutter *Hello* at her mother on the way to bed for eighteen hours. Exam week had been grueling, confining; she was done, and ready for freedom, which would not be here in Bloomington. She'd decided to spend the summer in Cleveland. Her parents wanted her home.

"I intended to make you some biscuits," Mum said now, "but it slipped my mind until this moment. Do you want some?"

"Sure," Ivy said. But her mother showed no sign of moving toward the kitchen.

The pear tree laid its speckled shadow halfway across the yard. To be free was to stride alone through the city, no compulsion to be anywhere at a particular time, no one

expecting her to do for them. She felt liberated on the cracked cement surrounding Chuck's apartment building, where she could hear sirens, shouts, and explosions that might be guns. The shameful faraway war made her mother's pink-and-green garden seem obscene. It was as though Bloomington had become an island barely tethered to the planet, the bedrock underneath scooped away. The real world was a war place, where dread mixed with joy at being alive, and the president spoke lies.

"If you stay in Bloomington you can volunteer for McCarthy," Mum said. "Since Bobby Kennedy's no longer ..." her voice choked; she sipped from her glass to settle herself. Ivy's mother talked about the Kennedys as though they were her relatives, their assassinations a family tragedy. If she'd stayed in England, Ivy knew, she would have the Windsors as family, whereas in Ivy's mind they were all fantasy people. The Windsors had less swagger than the Kennedys, that was all. Too bad Robert Kennedy was shot, but Ivy'd heard about another shooting, the same day: Stephen, a black man in Glenville, was dead, and the Cleveland police were not even looking for the killer. Stephen's death, not Kennedy's, symbolized the shame of this country for Ivy.

She couldn't explain to her mother. "No one would think of assassinating the Queen," she said instead.

"England is not violent like America," her mother said. "They don't carry guns."

"They do if they're in the military," Ivy said. "And people go shooting in the country, don't they?"

"Only the posh folk," Mum said. She'd come from Hexham, in the north of England, where everyone loved the working man and hated the upper classes – excluding the royal family. Mum's permanent was growing out; rather than poufing smoothly, her

short dark hair grew flat on the top of her head and ribbled on the ends, wisping in odd directions below her ears. Ivy felt sorry that her mother had such hopeless hair. “I’m going back to Cleveland Wednesday,” she said. “If I dawdle too long, the summer jobs will all be snapped up.”

Mum’s eyes turned on Ivy, a blue-green flash. “But you could have a job here,” she said. “Didn’t your father tell you? His receptionist is about to have a baby and wants the summer off. He’s hoping you’ll take her job. You could volunteer for McCarthy on the side.”

“I don’t want to work for McCarthy,” Ivy said. “He’s still part of the System.” She could not stand her parents’ plans for her: days in a sterile doctor’s office, evenings and weekends licking envelopes for McCarthy, a succession of late afternoons on the green lawn.

“Oh, you and your system,” her mother said. “As if there were some giant machine lurking in the clouds, operated by an evil cabal pushing mind-control buttons. This is not 1984, you know.”

“That’s not what I think at all, Mum. The System is how power is rigged, and now, *right now*, the thing is to expose it, then to challenge it and ...”

“People can vote,” her mother went on, heedless. “That’s the democratic way. We have a functioning political process you can *use*. It works. One step, then the next; you’ll learn how to get things changed.”

Parents and professors always said that – *you’ll learn*. As if the Movement were an infantile tantrum to be grown out of. “On my campus this spring, the students tried for

months to get one little change – parietal hours, boys and girls visiting in each others' rooms, that was all."

"If it's such a little change, why bother working on it for months?" Mum asked.

"Everyone got involved – student government, interdorm council. The administration kept stalling – not quite no, never yes. Use the proper channels, they said."

"So you wrote memos and had solemn little meetings over – what? The right to cuddle? I must say, I don't know whether to laugh or cry at that college of yours."

"Actually, I didn't do anything but sign the petitions," Ivy admitted. "I was trying to get the university to repudiate the war."

"Oh, the administration must have loved that."

"Mother!" The sarcasm irritated like sand in the mouth. Ivy's point was to show the System. Why couldn't her mother see – her own mother, the person from whom she'd learned to talk?

Hetty walked to the rose bushes and leaned over them, tweaking a leaf here and there. Even now Ivy had the urge to rush over, put her arms around the sturdy waist, lean her head against the flowered blouse, pet her mother's frazzled hair, promise to do whatever her parents wanted to make them happy with her. Love was such a trap.

She was hungry, but she didn't want to mention the biscuits, which Mum had forgotten again. She didn't belong here, in this fake-English garden, that was the thing. She belonged with Chuck, in his apartment. The building was seedy, over the big front door its name – "The Monmouth" in carved letters – now an ironic sneer.

Ivy had found out about Bobby Kennedy's assassination and the killing in Glenville simultaneously, in the student union during exams. "If you'd told me *France*,"

said a boy in line ahead of her to his companion, “had declared war on us, I wouldn’t be surprised. *Nothing* will surprise me, ever again.” The two told Ivy about the assassination in Los Angeles while she accepted her coffee and selected a donut. Then she joined the Movement table, where Arthut sat with four comrades, all rapt at the presence of this black nationalist, who’d come from the ghetto to tell them.

“One of my brothers has been killed,” the young man said. “A few blocks from here. Shot in the back.” He straddled a reversed chair, one arm resting on the chair’s back, spinning his black beret around one finger.

“He calls himself Wolf Bey,” Susan whispered to Ivy. “He’s in the Afro-set.”

“Who did the shooting?” Arthur asked.

“Some junkie working for the police,” Wolf Bey said, “don’t want nationalists messing with his territory.” Things were heating up among the militant groups – the Afro-set, the Republic of New Lybia. “We’re allies against the white colonizer,” said Wolf Bey. The Black Panthers had a small group here, too.

They kept him talking, bought him a sausage sandwich and two Cokes as he told them how the promises from the mayor’s Cleveland: Now! campaign turned out empty, a shiny box with gold ribbon, open it up, here’s ashes. “Brother Stephen walking to the park with his baby sister when they got him, blood running down the brother’s face, still holding his sister’s hand, she crying, no police in sight. A sweet man, loved his mama, shot by a punk.” After the ambulance carried away his friend’s body, Wolf Bey said, he didn’t know which way to turn. He started walking, ended up at the student union twenty minutes later.

What could the students do besides pay for his food? They were all studying for exams. Pressed by her own horror and helplessness, Ivy had sneaked away to study Asian art, thinking *I no longer have the right to imagine I live in a non-violent world*. In the Chinese landscapes, men with daggers lurked invisible behind the trees and in the crags of the mountains.

Men with guns could be creeping along right now behind the wooden fence beyond the peony bushes. Ivy took a final swallow of her tea. “I want a job in the city,” she told her mother, “tutoring, playground supervising, something. I’ll learn more in Cleveland than if I stay sheltered. The rest of my life will be about working for social change. I should start.”

“Like your brother Glen, wanting to help the less fortunate,” her mother said.

“That’s one way to put it.” No point in mentioning the bloody hands of the more fortunate. No point in reminding Mum why Peace Corps was one of Glen’s few choices. He was about to report for training. He might still have to go to war; a lot of candidates were rejected during training.

Hetty put one arm around Ivy in a half-hug. “Believe me, I understand how you feel,” she said. “Why do you suppose I went into nursing?” She retrieved the pitcher and carried it into the house. Teatime was over.

Ivy set the two glasses into the soft black earth of the rose bed while she folded the tray flat against its legs. Her mother had been a girl her own age, with her very own war, right there in England. A necessary, clear-cut war, citizens and the government and the military all working together. How solid, how uncomplicated that would be. Also the

war zone would have been more interesting than Hexham – an empty place with tiny roads and fields all closed in with dry-stone dikes. Ivy had seen it: no excitement at all.

Old photographs showed how her mother's hair had been long during the war, braided or wrapped into a bun. When Randy was a baby she'd had it cut to a long pageboy curling below her shoulders. By the time Glen was born it just covered her neck, and in Ivy's baby pictures the sleek dark hair brushed Hetty's earlobes.

"But aren't you glad you did it?" Ivy found her mother rummaging through kitchen cupboards. "Worked in the war, I mean."

"I suppose so," Hetty said. "I met your father."

"But to be a nurse for the soldiers – didn't you feel like you were doing the one thing that made sense?"

Hetty put the Bisquick box on the counter. "Look," she said. "Here were all these blokes, healthy and strong, nineteen, twenty years old, fit to climb mountains, sail a boat single-handed to Spain, play rugby, anything they wanted to do, and when I met them they were in bed with no legs, or their intestines shredded, or half a brain. All in two seconds that happened to them. Same with Mr. Kennedy – one moment he's prime candidate and he'd be a fantastic president, you know he would. Next moment his brains are leaking onto a kitchen floor. And you're trying to make *sense* of things?" She opened the refrigerator door. "Do you want some eggs?"

"Don't bother, Mum. I'll eat later."

"But you haven't eaten since yesterday, and your father and I are going out for dinner – the Oliphants' garden party. Will you come along?"

“I have to stay here; Chuck’s calling.” Ivy watched her mother return the eggs to the fridge and take the nested mixing bowls down from the cupboard. How much had Hetty changed in the past thirty years? Ivy couldn’t know. She couldn’t hear her mother’s English accent, but she knew that tea and biscuits in Hexham would have been hot tea with milk and dry whole-wheat cookies called digestive biscuits. In her great-aunt’s chilly bungalow Ivy’d eaten one. And a scone, her first. She’d felt like a visitor to a distant past.

Now she felt like a visitor to her own past, watching as her mother, with wispy hair, in a skirt and blouse and sneakers with little ankle socks, poured Bisquick into a bowl, added milk. “I guess,” her mother said, cradling the bowl and stirring with a fork, “you’ll have to find out for yourself. Make your own mistakes. But you do understand, don’t you?” She gave Ivy her I’m-looking-through-you stare and sighed, as though discouraged by what she’d seen. “I don’t want you to be hurt.”

“I’ve been in Cleveland three years, Mum. I know how to take care of myself.”

“It’s different when you’re not in school. Whom will you live with? Peg’s place is much too small.”

“I’ll live with Chuck.” Ivy had meant to wait with the news until she felt comfortable. Now it was out.

“Oh.” Her mother stopped, a blob of dough in her left hand, wooden spoon in her right. “Are you telling me you plan to be married?”

“No,” Ivy said. She felt a cringe as her mother’s face changed – lips pressed together, eyes travelling overhead, as if she were looking for something on the wall. “I

guess I'll be living in sin," Ivy said. It was meant to be a joke. Her parents were liberals; they did not believe sex was a sin.

Hetty set the spoon on the counter, dipped her right hand in flour and began with a teaspoon and her thumbs to shape the biscuit dough into a disc. Ivy had loved these biscuits when she was a little girl. "Let me help, Mum."

"Not now," Hetty said, jerking the bowl away. "You'll have your own cooking to do, soon enough." She tucked the round puck of biscuit carefully into the pan. "Cooking, cleaning, and doing his laundry. You get to handle his dirty socks; aren't you lucky. 'Living in sin' sounds romantic – and it will be, for about two days. Then you'll have to get groceries, and you'll not have the money for fresh fruit and lovely things from the bakery, and the romance is gone. Ta-ta!" Her voice rose, almost shouting.

"Oh gees, Mum, it's common for people to live together, these days."

"Common," her mother said, giving the word its dirty English connotation. "I suppose you've already had, eh, *relations* with this young man?"

"You *know* him, Mum, he's Chuck." Ivy said. She pulled a paper towel off the roll to wipe her nose and eyes. "Listen, most of the girls I know sleep with their boyfriends. And they do these elaborate lies to their parents. You answer the phone in Guilford; you say she's not here right now, or she's still asleep, and then you call them up: hey Gail, phone your parents. I will not lie, Mum, to you or to Dad. I won't."

"And what happens" – Hetty slammed the teaspoon on the counter – "when you get pregnant?"

“I won’t get pregnant. I’ll get birth control pills.” Ivy had meant this discussion to go slowly, gradually, as her parents realized, of course, their daughter was doing what people do. At least Mum hadn’t asked what the neighbors would think.

“Oh, you’ll just go to the birth-control-pill store and buy a dozen or two? It’s a bit more complicated than that, my girl.” Mum was sarcastic now, her mouth a bitter gash across the bottom of her face. *My girl* meant she was angry.

“I know,” Ivy said, miserable. She slunk to a chair at the kitchen table, kind of hoping her mother would sit across from her. “I guess I thought that Dad ...”

“You’re planning to ask your *father* to help you have illicit relations?” Hetty pushed the pan half-full of biscuits to the back of the counter, ran water over her hands, dried them with two swipes of a towel and crossed to the door. “Excuse me,” she said, in her strained, most-English voice. “I feel a bit ill. I need air.” She went out.

Then the tears came, and sobs. Ivy crossed her arms over her stomach and bent forward till her hair closed over her face, *I’m sorry I’m sorry I’m sorry*. If she didn’t hold herself tight she might crack open, and she had to rock, too; she’d handled it wrong, all wrong, no one should hurt her parents this way. She’d have to leave – maybe not forever, please God not forever, but for a long time. She’d find a doctor in Cleveland to prescribe the pill – it would be hard, because she wasn’t married, but it couldn’t be that hard. She felt so stupid. Coming home in itself was wrong, a lie about her intentions, as though she were a child who didn’t know what she was doing. When Chuck phoned tonight she’d tell him she was coming tomorrow. She’d take the first bus.

She wiped her face with a cloth napkin left over from breakfast, spreading butter and toast crumbs onto her cheeks. The kitchen was quiet except for the clock’s ticking,

the refrigerator's hum. The old Toby mugs in a row on their shelf, the pencil container she'd made in school out of a tin can and painted macaroni still in its place by the telephone, the fraying rag rug on the floor by the sink – everything was precious and about to vanish from her life.

She decided to finish the biscuits, taking care to make the dough into perfect rounds with as few deft touches as possible. She was fitting the last one into the pan when her mother came back, closing the door tidily behind her. “Well, I’ve had a small think,” she said. “We’ll not discuss your plans with your father. I take it you’ve not told Glen or Randy.”

“I told Glen,” Ivy said. She held out the pan. Glen had phoned last week, the night before her urban sociology final. He’d been in Bloomington picking up their father’s old car, planned to go camping with a girlfriend, wanted to take Ivy’s sleeping bag. What was she doing this summer? Moving in with Chuck, she’d said. Getting a job in the city.

“Oh,” Glen had said. “Groovy.”

Mum did not touch the biscuits. “Put them in the oven then,” she said. “Set the timer for eight minutes. I trust Glen was ... reasonable?”

“He didn’t think it was a big deal.” Ivy shoved the pan into the oven and set the timer.

“I mean,” said her mother, “I hope he knows to keep quiet about it.”

There it was, after all: *What will people think?* So much for Ivy’s hope that her mother was above worrying about public opinion.

“Well then.” Hetty sat in the chair Ivy had wept in. “Here’s what we’ll do,” she said. “Before you return to your summer of glorious romance and filth, you’ll have a

proper gynecological exam. You'll see my gynecologist; he can fit you with a diaphragm."

"I was planning to go on the pill," Ivy said.

"I'm a bit wary of the pill; it's too new." Her mother was using her crisp, emotionless nurse-voice. "There's no knowing what changes those things make in your body. But" – she took a deep breath – "you'll have to decide for yourself. I see that now. Talk with the doctor about the pill. Mind he tells you everything, all the possible side effects."

Days would go by before the gynecologist could fit Ivy into his schedule. She'd be stuck under the cloud of her mother's disapproval. And her father's. "Dad will have to find out, eventually," Ivy said.

"Don't tell him; I'll do it after you've gone. Or Peg will. Somehow I think the news might come better from his sister. You've told her, I suppose."

"Not yet," Ivy confessed. She hadn't even phoned Aunt Peg to thank her for supper, back in May. "But I will. I guess she has to know how to get me by phone. Mum?" Her mother was staring out the window, her arm and shoulder blocking the rest of her body. Tree shadows had lengthened and sharpened, striping the lawn. "I'm sorry," Ivy said.

Her mother turned, and Ivy saw her eyes were wet. She'd seen her mother cry only once before, at the death of the great-aunt in Hexham. "I suppose it's to do with war," Hetty said, her voice as level as if she weren't crying at all. "When they might go off and get killed, you think differently about sex." She pulled a handkerchief from her

pocket and pressed it to each eye, then blew her nose. “Your father will get irrational for a bit, I’m afraid, but he’ll settle down and help us minimize the damage.”

“Minimize the damage! Mother, I’m fine. I’m in love with Chuck. He loves me better than – he loves me *so well*, Mummy ...” She wouldn’t say, He loves me better than you do.

“That’s what Peg thought. And she didn’t have a diaphragm, much less the pill.”

“Aunt Peg? She had a lover?” If she’d thought about it at all, Ivy realized, she would have guessed. Of course Aunt Peg had once had a lover.

“She had a sweetheart and a baby,” Hetty said. “The man vanished, and the baby was put up for adoption. Broke Peg’s heart, of course. I didn’t know her then, but I knew your father. He went into a rage, wanted to go to battle for his sister’s honor. Lucky for Peg’s man that we were in England.” The timer went off. Hetty leapt to the oven.

“It does sound like a soap opera when I tell it that way,” she said, returning to the table with the biscuits on a plate. “Peg’s made a decent life for herself, but it’s smaller and meaner than it should have been. And people haven’t changed, not that much.”

“I won’t get pregnant,” Ivy said. “If I did, I’d get an abortion.”

“Oh dear Lord.” Her mother dropped her forehead into her hand. “The things you think you can just go get: birth-control pills. An abortion. It’s not pretty, my girl. And it’s damned expensive. You’d have to go to Mexico or Sweden.”

“I know.” Ivy pulled at a biscuit, burning her fingertips. Mexico and Sweden bloomed in her mind as colors – the first a hot rainbow of pink, mustard-yellow, and orange, the second a chilly palette of ice, pale green, dark ocean blue. Both countries seemed attractively far from her mother’s flint-edged voice. Ivy pulled out her biscuit’s

soft center and tucked it onto her tongue. Her mother had as good as told her: not only Aunt Peg but her parents had had sex before marriage. They hadn't had the pill. And they'd been trapped by *what people think*.

Her mother sighed. "How long have you known Chuck?"

"A long time. Eight months." It was thirty-three weeks since she'd noticed Chuck on the bus in the middle of the night, sitting alone, his back against the window. By then she was hoarse with singing. He had a gentle voice, a handsome bumpy face. She'd told him how she wished she could have stayed. He'd told her she'd have plenty of other chances to get arrested.

"Hmph," Mum said. "Your father and I were engaged after we'd known each other six weeks. But it was wartime."

"It's wartime now, Mum," Ivy said. How different, though, her mother's thoughts and hers. Getting engaged was an absurd idea. "Not the same kind of war, I guess." She wondered if her parents had had sex before or after their engagement.

"You'd be surprised how much is the same," her mother said.

But there had never been an international youth Movement, not like hers. Ivy considered telling her mother how close she'd risked arrest, pushing those balloons over the balcony of the public auditorium. Bert had finally been sentenced to ten days in jail for trespassing. He was about to be released, and she hadn't been able to go to the jail during finals. If she went to Chicago in August for the convention, she might get arrested there. Not that she wanted to, exactly. The thought of actually being in jail was repellant, like the thought of never returning home.

“Obviously we’ve a good deal to discuss,” Mum said. “Your father’s home, and we must be off to the Oliphants. I’ve still to bathe and dress.” Ivy heard her father’s car in the drive, heard the familiar crunch of the car door’s closing. “Suit yourself for supper,” her mother said, already on her way up the stairs. “There’s ham salad in the fridge.”

Ivy should run and greet him, Hi Daddy big hug, but the thought of what came next (“What have you and your mother been talking about?”) sent her running to her room. In promising not to tell her father the most important move she’d ever made, she’d become a hostile alien in the house. She closed her door carefully, making as little sound as possible, furious at her mother for making her promise, furious at (of course, and it always came back to this, didn’t it?) herself. She was wheezing slightly.

When they were gone, she would wash the clothes she’d brought home bundled in Chuck’s bed sheets, now in the middle of the floor. She’d already stowed a box of books and a duffel-bag full of stuff at his apartment. She rolled the laundry into a corner, smoothed the striped Madras spread over her bed, plumped the pillow in its crisp square-edged case, lined up the Navajo rug parallel to the floorboards and the wall-molding. She settled in the big soft chair, her favorite spot for homework when she was in high school, with her feet on the ottoman, and heard her father climbing the stairs. He rapped on her door. “Hey girl, you decent?”

“No,” she said. She needed to wash her face and take an aminophyllin.

“You were out cold this morning when I left,” he said, “and your mother tells me I have to hurry up and get casual for the garden party. See you later?”

“Yeah,” Ivy said. “See you later, Daddy.” Her eyes flooded with indecent tears.

Her bookshelf still held her childhood friends: *The Princess and the Goblin*, *The Singing Tree*, the biography of Davy Crockett she'd bought with her own two dollars. She pulled out *The House at Pooh Corner*. She knew many of the words by heart – *Coddleston, coddleston, coddleston pie* – and read them anyway, hearing her parents' cheerful voices on the stairs, hearing the back door close.

At seven o'clock she'd eaten her ham salad sandwich and finished the first load of laundry. Chuck hadn't called. What was he doing up there in Cleveland? He'd said he was looking for work, but now it was night; he wouldn't be looking for work at night.

Nine o'clock came and he still hadn't called. He could have gotten a job tending bar, could already be mixing Black Russians. He might have been mugged, might be all alone bleeding in an emergency room or in an alley. The subversive squad could have picked him up for questioning. If his grandfather had taken ill, he'd rush to Cincinnati – but still he'd call, wouldn't he? Perhaps he'd gotten reclassified 1A. Perhaps some of his Cleveland State friends had come along in a VW bus. *Hey Chuck, we're on the way to Canada, wanna come?* Sure, Chuck would say, climbing over the tents and fishing gear, curling up in the back, ready to duck down when they crossed the border. He wouldn't be able to call till sometime next week. If then. He'd never be able to come back to the States; she'd make her way to Cleveland and find his apartment rented to someone else. She'd sleep on the floor of the Movement office till she found a job and a place to live. She hoped Glen would return her sleeping bag.

Perhaps Chuck's old Cincinnati girlfriend had come to visit him. They'd be drinking wine. Ivy didn't know that Chuck had an old Cincinnati girlfriend; but now in the dark it was unthinkable that he didn't. The fact that he hadn't told her could mean

they were still attached. They might be smoking grass, getting all turned on; he'd forget about Ivy.

In the last chapter of *The House at Pooh Corner*, Christopher Robin had to explain to Pooh, who couldn't understand, that he was about to lose interest in his bear forever. Ivy was crying again; she hated this crying. Dammit, Chuck, why didn't you call before I came to this part?

She needed to talk to him on this of all nights, when she'd thrown over her parents for him; without Chuck on the phone she was completely alone, trapped on an island where everyone assumed that men used and abandoned women.

Chuck would not abandon her. He was probably somewhere dull and ordinary. He'd tell her, and she'd say, Oh why didn't I think of that?

Where was he?

Mum would tell Dad tonight. Dad would ask, "What's wrong, Hetty?" He'd say, "Tell me – out with it." That's what Dad said when you were bothered by something. He wouldn't let it rest, even at the dinner table when your brothers were there and the thing that bothered you was stupid – something your friend had told you a boy had said about you, or a bad grade on a quiz, or a pen you'd borrowed and lost.

Ivy would be sitting here in the living room at eleven when her parents came home, and she would have to say that Chuck had not called, and all her plans would spill out and be ruined. Her father would force her to stay in Bloomington for the summer; she'd work in his clinic, where he'd watch her all day long. She'd have to pretend at being their good girl; she'd have to sneak out even to find the Movement at IU.

She stumbled up the stairs, went into their dark bedroom for a Kleenex, and crashed into her mother's night-table. Thick curtains made the darkness total. The phone jangled to the floor. Ivy pulled the switch and set the phone back in the circle of light under Mum's lamp with its blue pleated shade. Maybe Chuck was asleep – it could be that simple; he'd gotten a job in a factory, or in construction, and he'd exhausted himself working. She picked up the phone and dialed. By the time the phone bill came, she'd have the money to reimburse her parents for the call.

No, she couldn't tell them she'd called Chuck long distance without permission, revealing that he'd failed to phone her. If she called collect, she'd at least hear his voice. But when the operator asked for Chuck's number, Ivy couldn't answer; she was sobbing. She glimpsed herself in her mother's mirror – swollen-eyed, blotchy-faced. She could not call Chuck this way. Grabbing a pillow, holding it close in both arms, she sank down into her mother's side of the big bed, a baby again, making little screaming cries without words, without thought. There was only the desolation of being borne away, as if she were on a raft headed for the empty sea.

Eventually she heard the kitchen door open and shut: her parents were home. She managed to straighten their bed and flee to her own bed before they saw her. Much later she heard the phone, and then Mum rapping hard on the door. "Ivy! You've a call. Take it downstairs, and tell your friend not to phone so late!"

He'd driven out to Gates Mills to rescue a friend whose car had broken down; they found a mechanic, but he'd refused to begin work till they'd made a down payment. So they'd driven around in Chuck's Pontiac taking up a collection. Anyway, Chuck was home, and he missed her, and he was sorry she hadn't gone to the dinner party. "I got a

little crazy,” Ivy said, because she was embarrassed to have made such a melodrama out of his not calling exactly when she’d expected him to.

He thought it was great that Hetty had offered to get Ivy a gynecological exam. “Do it,” he said. “The park jobs are probably filled already – and I’m not sure they’re that good, anyway.”

“I’d rather find my own gynecologist in Cleveland,” Ivy said.

“You won’t have the referral your mother can give,” he said. “You can’t trust the kind of doctor who’ll give just any college girl the pill.” He had a job selling Polaroid cameras, making phone calls in the morning, going door-to-door in the afternoon. He hadn’t sold a camera yet, but when he did he’d get a hundred dollars’ commission.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Five

June 12, 1968

Among the group on the basement floor, Chuck looked Tessa, who stood on the stairs above them; she kept one foot up behind her as she talked about Domhoff's theory of the Yankees and the Cowboys and ate a cup of pink yogurt with her index finger, dipping it in and licking it off between phrases. The Yankee capitalists, grown filthy rich in New York, Boston, and Europe (dip, lick), were being overtaken by cowboys, Texans and Californians whose money came from oil in the Middle East, fruit and coffee in Latin America. And the arms trade.

Chuck thought of the family he'd visited in Nicaragua, the summer he was sixteen. They lived in a house with a courtyard and flowering trees, surrounded by a wall with broken glass along the top. There'd been some business connection between the Managuan father and his dad, but he'd never learned what it was. Now he wondered, as Tessa laid out the military-industrial connections: Cowboys earned big profits from war.

People on either side of him muttered. Oh yeah, I get it, far out. Johnson was a cowboy; the Kennedys were Yankees. Nixon, a cowboy. McCarthy: a Yankee. Tessa's finger dipped again and came up dripping pink. She wore a T-shirt dress that emphasized her bust; her muscular legs were bare and summer-tan; her hair hung loose over her shoulders. She answered someone's question, scraped her finger around the inside wall of the cup and licked off the last of the yogurt. Her analysis was made luminous by this

moment: the T-shirt dress, the sandals, the shaft of light coming down the basement stairs, the bulb overhead, the yogurt eaten with a finger.

Chuck looked at his watch – seven thirty, an hour till Ivy’s bus came into the Greyhound station. He had to be careful not to brush against the wall in his white shirt and his best gray slacks. He needed to wear these clothes to work again tomorrow. He had come here straight from there – his first day on the job at the savings & loan.

“I’m done,” Tessa said, crushing her yogurt cup and wiping her hand across her thigh. “I gotta go do something.” She sprinted upstairs to the Movement office, and everyone else surged up behind her.

The office was stifling, much hotter than the basement; the light was dim. Marvin and Bert were hammering plywood over the front window, shattered that morning by rocks. “How’re you doing, Bert?” Chuck asked. Bert had finished his ten-day jail sentence on Sunday; Chuck had not seen him till now.

“What we need,” Bert said, “is a fucking big fan.”

“He’s still putting the word *fuck* into every sentence,” Marvin said.

“Someone should have figured out the neighborhood,” Tessa said to Marvin.

“We haven’t been here two weeks yet,” Marvin said. “You can’t expect me to know everyone right away.” Sweaty from hammering plywood, he faced her with his thumbs hooked in his belt. Marvin had chosen this storefront on Euclid Avenue where black neighborhoods and white neighborhoods met – though they didn’t exactly mingle – in East Cleveland. A sign saying “Movement for a Democratic Society” had hung in the window but now stood against the wall. The front of the room was furnished with a couch, a table and some folding chairs. A bench piled with literature stood against the

intact window. Ten people were still in the room – most of them strangers, talking with each other. Browsing the literature table was a black man Chuck had seen at the coffee house once or twice. He smoked a pipe with Cherry Blend tobacco. Like the others, he wore suburban clothes – khakis and loafers.

“I am fucking hot,” Bert said. “Jane’s been sitting there working the fucking phone all afternoon. Hey Jane, who’d you see this afternoon?” he called toward the back of the office, where Jane sat under the sick yellow glow of a bulb on the ceiling.

Jane spun the chair, stood up and stretched. “A few curious boys,” she said. “Kids out of school. They asked to be paid a half-dollar apiece to sweep the broken glass off the front walk. I said no.”

“White or black?” Tessa asked. “The kids, I mean.”

“White.” Jane came to the front. “I saw the black gang, but they didn’t come in. They were hanging around the old gas station across the street. Whoops – that’s for me.” She ran to get the phone.

“Extortion, I bet,” Bert said to Tessa. “You watch – the little fuckers’ll be back tomorrow expecting us to pay them not to break the other window.” He picked up his hammer and began to pound as if he had a personal grudge against each nail.

Chuck opened the front door and felt cool air on his face and forearms. “Good analysis-sharpening session,” he said to Tessa. She’d been sweating; damp patches spread from under her arms and made a vee at her neckline.

“Read Domhoff,” she said. Her face was shiny, and she had a faint mustache.

“We’ve got another program tomorrow,” Marvin said. “Friend of a friend of Jane’s; he’s got slides of Vietnam, taken last March. Spread the word.”

“I will. Now I gotta pick up Ivy.” Chuck walked down Euclid thinking about Nicaragua, where the family had introduced him to the Spanish language and gracious living. Their son Eduardo, his age, introduced him to good Scotch.

One evening Chuck and Eduardo, cool and well-dressed, had walked along a city street. Chuck could not remember why; probably they were going to a bar. What he remembered now was the woman sitting against the wall in a narrow strip of shade. Chuck met her intelligent, curious eyes. She was not old, not young. Her bare legs and feet stretched out in front of her; there would have been room, if Chuck had stepped left, but he didn't. He was staring at the woman, allowing her to stare frankly at him, and Eduardo kicked her leg without breaking stride, as though she were trash that blocked the path. She cried out, surprised.

“Why did you do that?” Chuck asked.

“Her feet were in the way,” Eduardo said. He was not even annoyed. “She should not be here; she should go to the plaza by the cathedral. That is where beggars belong.”

“Why do you assume she's a beggar?” They spoke English to keep the conversation private. Eduardo had to search for words to explain what was obvious to him but never spoken about, even in Spanish.

“Because she looks like a beggar,” he said slowly. “Because if she is not a beggar, she is in the market, or in a bar. Because of the baby.”

Chuck hadn't noticed the baby in the woman's lap. All he'd seen was her interesting face, her calm stare.

He'd returned with a loathing for the Thing – it seemed to be in the air – which allowed his friend to casually kick a woman's bare leg as though the path belonged only

to him. Chuck had suggested Eduardo go back, apologize to her, and Eduardo got angry. “A *loco* idea,” Eduardo said. “If you mention it again I’ll tell my father, and you’ll be in big trouble.”

Had he stayed longer than ten weeks in Managua, Chuck knew he would have learned to kick, as he learned to avoid the eyes of the lower classes. Back home in Cincinnati he noticed for the first time the same Thing in the air. At bus stations and in the park by the river were people whose eyes he knew should be avoided. Instead, he began to look them in the face and allow himself to be looked at. “Class hostilities,” Tessa had said, “arise out of economic conflicts.” But the Thing that made a basically nice guy like Eduardo behave brutally was somehow bigger than “class.”

The evening air was moist, the sky lowered, tensed for a thunderstorm. Ivy climbed out of the bus as he walked toward it, her hair tied in a tail at the nape of her neck, her body like a ripe apple. At the car he put his arms around her, felt the back of her neck hot under his fingers, her cheek wet on his lips. “I’m so glad to see you,” she said. She talked lavishly as Chuck drove up Carnegie into rain and darkness. He felt her thighs next to his, stroked the back of her hand with his thumb, and half-listened: her brother Glen was in Peace Corps training; she’d been working as a receptionist in her father’s clinic; she’d seen her mother’s gynecologist.

“He asked me about school with his fingers on my cervix,” Ivy said. “I told him I love classical Indian sculpture – especially this one temple where all the statues are having sex. He blushed. Then he asked if I liked math.” She had a prescription for the Pill, but it wouldn’t work for a couple of weeks. “So have you sold any cameras?”

“Nope,” Chuck said. “I got another job.”

“That was quick,” Ivy said.

“Yup,” Chuck said. He’d figured out the camera scam when he arrived at the little Ninth Street office on Tuesday, bopping cheerfully to the desk, ready to follow up on two promising phone calls. His contact cards were gone. The receptionist explained that Geoff, his supervisor, had already made both the sales. Chuck could start calling a new list of people, or he could go back to the rundown neighborhood where he’d been the day before. A couple there had liked the demonstration, gratefully accepted the Polaroid snapshots Chuck took (he’d paid for the film himself) and admitted that they couldn’t afford such a camera. Three people had refused to let him in; one made noisy threats. He leaned over the desk until the receptionist looked at him. “Geoff will steal every one of my leads, won’t he?”

She nodded, her stiff hair moving with her head. “Not stealing,” she whispered. “Seniority.”

“Right,” Chuck said. And left. Furious that he’d wasted two good weeks and more money than he wanted to add up, he’d wandered among the shops in the Arcade wishing he could buy things – flowers, jewelry, fruit, a box of chocolates. He felt crippled without money; it hurt to walk.

He had to get it together to be independent, that was all there was to it. He’d run out of time. Mom had sent all the money she could. If he didn’t reimburse his father for last semester’s tuition he might as well forget going home. Forget school.

Outside Higbees stood a preacher, a short red-faced man above an eager crowd who pressed close, their bodies hiding whatever he was using as a platform. The preacher shrieked, pointing with one hand into the air, pointing down at his Bible, the words

garbled by his accent – Slavic, maybe. Chuck squeezed between coat-shoulders and shirtsleeves, trying to understand, drawn in by the preacher's passion.

“He was absolutely certain, clear-through,” he told Ivy, parking in front of The Monmouth. “Here we are. Let's go upstairs and have a drink.” He didn't want to explain yet how he'd phoned his grandfather, who'd called a friend, who'd given him a perfunctory interview and put him to work at the savings & loan. Just like that.

When they got inside, Ivy came into his arms and pressed her mouth against his. “I feel like I've crossed a big river or something,” she said. This was what he wanted, perhaps all he wanted: to unbutton her skirt and feel it fall, to lift her sweater and unhook her bra. He didn't want Tessa, didn't want flowers or jewelry or candy, didn't want to think about money or his parents, or anything.

June 13, 1968

Ivy was still sleeping when Chuck went out the door at seven the next morning, in time for the downtown bus. At the savings & loan he tried out ease: strolled through the revolving door, sharpened several pencils, and greeted the tellers. Then he settled at the desk in plain sight of everyone looking for loans. That was the point: they'd come to him thinking they were talking to a man who could help. He'd ask a page-full of questions, filling in the answers. If they fit one set of guidelines, he'd send them to the junior loan officer; if they got into the more exclusive group, he was supposed to send them to the senior. If they didn't qualify at all – that is, if they had no money and badly, badly needed some – he was supposed to escort them to the door with a line that went, “We'll consider your case, and someone will be in touch.” He hadn't yet shown someone the door; when he did, he planned to suggest trying somewhere else. “Watch out for loan

sharks,” he planned to say. “They’ll give you interest rates so stiff you’d be in debt for the rest of your life.”

He hadn’t seen a dark face yet. He was hoping to. If he got to interview a black person he’d send him forward. He imagined the junior officer saying, Are you *sure* this person qualifies? Chuck would say, Your institution wouldn’t discriminate, would it? Junior would say, Oh, of course not. When the applicant (Chuck pictured a black man with an extremely white shirt, rather like the man who smoked cherry blend in his pipe – Sheldon, that was his name) was turned away for a bogus reason, he would expose the savings & loan publicly.

Maybe he should invite Sheldon to apply for a loan. He’d get to know Sheldon better first, of course. He could say it was a test. He wouldn’t want Sheldon to think he would actually get a loan, and buy a house or a big car, because of Chuck’s invitation. If he wasn’t careful, when the loan application got rejected, Sheldon could hold Chuck responsible. And Chuck would be guilty as hell.

A staple-end bit into his finger. What Chuck was actually doing, while he thought about Sheldon, was staple-removal. He had a stack of paper on his left, the toothed staple remover in his right hand, and a good view of the clock, brass and ebony, with Roman numerals on its white face. It was barely eight-thirty; the day would be long. When he’d finished removing staples, he’d check arithmetic on a stack of pages to his right. He wished someone would come in to be interviewed before he got to the arithmetic.

Three women – secretaries, he didn’t know their names yet – greeted him as they walked by, their heels clicking on the marble floor. He smiled and waved the staple remover at them. They knew he was a flunkie in a suit.

By noon he'd interviewed two young men who wanted to open a car wash, a woman in the midst of a divorce who wanted to buy her husband's half of the house, and a man who had debts to pay off. The car wash guys went to a senior loan officer; the divorcee went to Junior, and the man-in-debt would have gone to Junior, too, but one of the senior officers recognized the debtor and invited him to the top office. Chuck was so eager to get away from the desk he was glad to be errand boy at lunch time. He also had to stop at Western Union, where his grandfather had wired fifty dollars to tide him over till pay day.

Among the outsized doorways and towering sandstone walls of downtown Cleveland, he felt himself small, a little man. He found Davis bakery and stopped: in the window was a stranger he barely recognized as his own reflection, tall and slim, his hair and mustache trimmed, wearing one of his grandfather's ties. A young man on the way up. Till this moment he'd enjoyed the novelty of being well-dressed, classier than his father, who wore bright blue suits with white shoes in the summer. But he didn't much like the man in the window.

He went into the Arcade, where the shops were small and grubby and fragrant – leather, sandalwood, hair oil. He bought a French mint for Ivy at Fanny Farmer. She'd be out hunting jobs by now. He hoped she'd find something quick.

He picked up sandwiches from the delicatessen and hiked to Western Union. He wished he could stop to listen to the preacher, who was in Public Square again, pulling a the crowd with the sheer strength of his belief. Three businessmen walked past Chuck into the street to get around the preacher's crowd. They wore suit coats, yet they seemed cool and relaxed, as though they traveled in a cloud of their own chilled air. "A new

Porsche,” said one, a foot from Chuck’s ear. He imagined them lingering in a restaurant with white tablecloths and tall glasses of dark lager.

When he got back to the Savings & Loan he was sweating. He ate his egg salad sandwich at his desk while he did arithmetic, careful to keep the egg away from the papers and his clothing. He’d save money by denying himself cookies, washing down lunch with water from the fountain. By four o’clock he’d sent seven more applicants (all white) to the junior officer, and he was wondering if he could last two months.

Ivy was not at the apartment when he returned. Chuck hung his jacket and slacks in the closet, threw shirt and underwear onto the pile on the floor, and took a bath. Then he re-made the bed with the sheets Ivy had washed. His dirty socks emerged from the bedcovers. So did Ivy’s underpants – pink nylon, with a faint yellow streak. He rubbed the slick fabric between his fingers, smiling. This was living together. He shoved her underwear into the pillow case along with his socks and T-shirts – white, with v-necks, meant to go under his dress-for-work shirts. He was a white collar worker, even if he wore light blue or yellow sometimes – a worker, not a bourgeois, a savings & loan employee who would take his shirts to be washed, starched, and ironed. He was still naked, poking around the laundry, when Ivy buzzed, and he’d barely buttoned his jeans before she pounded on the door. “I need to make you a copy of my key,” he said, letting her in.

“No shit, Shakespeare,” she said. “I wandered around the art museum till I was sure you’d be home. That was after I got my job.” Her lips were buttoned over the secret of her job – already! Just like that! – her eyes wide and bright.

“What?” he demanded, hands on her waist, hoping she’d raise her arms. She did, hugging him round the neck.

“The Big Penny.” She grinned. “I start tomorrow at eleven.” The diner across the street: she could roll out of bed and go to work. Not a good place for tips; he’d never left more than a quarter. She’d probably get treated like dirt. But transportation was not a problem. She kept smiling, eager for his approval. “Aren’t you pleased?”

“Sure,” he said. “What happened to the city park jobs?”

“Just what we thought,” Ivy said. “Taken. I phoned at nine: all positions full. So I put my name on the waiting list, went across the street, and got hired. You and Jane and Bert have been telling me to get with the working class, the engine of the revolution and all, so I said, yes, see you tomorrow at eleven o’clock. Then I went to the art museum.”

“I see,” Chuck said. He hadn’t expected her to settle for a waitress job, but he shouldn’t be surprised she’d escape to the museum. She was barefoot – her flats stood pigeon-toed near the door – almost dancing around the table, talking about wearing a uniform, an apron, and a little paper cap. For a month he’d looked forward to her moving in – sex all the time, that’s what he’d imagined. Now here she was and his thoughts surprised him: Respectability. Money.

The senior loan officer had said today, “Do the job right, Leggit, and you can keep working here. There’ll be a job for you after graduation. A smart clean-cut fellow like you, with a college degree, can get into management quickly.” In a small craven corner of his mind, Chuck had been pleased.

“If The Big Penny doesn’t work out,” he said, “you can quit without notice.”

“I thought of that,” Ivy said, throwing herself into the big chair by the window with her legs spread; he could see her underpants. “I’ll try to find something else, too; they just want me three days a week for now – I won’t start at eleven every day. How’s the Movement office?”

“Got a busted window,” Chuck said. “There’s a slide show tonight, pictures of Vietnam. We’re going.”

When Chuck and Ivy arrived, Jane was outside, holding the door open for two men carrying the slide projector, a bedsheet, and a snarl of extension cords. One man had a soldier’s short hair, the other had long hippie-locks, but they were dressed alike in jeans and boots. The soldier-type wore a white T-shirt; the other wore a singlet that showed off his round tan shoulders.

“Who are those guys?” Chuck asked Jane. She looked tired and soft around the mouth, like she might smile or cry. She’d been to Vietnam, Chuck remembered. Maybe she was stirred up about the slide show.

“The one with hair is Jimmy Fulero,” Jane said. “The veteran’s a high-school friend of Jimmy’s; I didn’t catch his name. He got discharged a couple of weeks ago and just came home. Jimmy talked him into showing us his slides.”

“Did he take the photographs?” Ivy asked.

Jane shrugged. “I guess so. Jimmy says they’re dynamite. Not what you’d see on TV or *National Geographic*.”

“Maybe you’ll see someone you recognize,” Chuck said. “Or a place.”

“Hardly,” said Jane. “American soldiers aren’t in the North, and they wouldn’t come near the people I met. Unless they defected.”

“They say some soldiers have defected,” Ivy said. “Is it true?”

“No knowing what’s true,” Jane said. “Let’s go support the troops.” Jimmy was leaning out from behind the basement door, beckoning. When Jane came near, he grabbed her braid and pulled her under his brown shoulder, kissing her, bending her backwards. She wriggled away and vanished down the stairs.

Ivy looked at Chuck with a little smile. “I get it,” he said. Jane’s new boyfriend made her soft and fidgety.

The only other person upstairs in the office was Greg Lambert, who agreed to man the phone upstairs during the slide show. “But you’ll miss it!” Ivy said.

Chuck hugged her tightly with one arm, hoping she wouldn’t talk Greg into coming downstairs with them. “Thanks, man,” he said, as they passed on the way to the basement. “We need you here. No more broken windows.”

They found a seat that looked like it had come out of an old bus. It was comfortable. He nibbled Ivy’s earring, a little silver ball, and she smiled at him.

The room filled with people – standing, perched on crates, crowded onto a bench, sitting on the floor. Jimmy tacked the sheet to the ceiling beams; the vet fiddled with the projector, trying to get the slides to move smoothly. A snarl of green and brown flashed on the screen and disappeared. A helicopter came on. “Wrong way around,” said the vet. He pulled the helicopter off the screen and turned the slide. Then they were ready.

“I’m an army photographer,” he said, standing in a military at-ease posture in front of the sheet, “but I took these pictures with my own camera. First I want to show you some natural scenery.” He flicked the machine to a seascape at sunset. Then jungle foliage. “This is a typical village.” A cluster of children, grinning. Thatched roofs. “This

is a medical team helping villagers.” The medics were all much larger than the villagers. “More scenery.” Green leaves, brown earth. The helicopter. Chuck had never seen Vietnam in color; even his parents’ color TV showed the news in black and white.

“This is a guy in Charlie Company.” A soldier walked toward them with a determined expression; the sheet rippled, making his body undulate. “They had a lot of casualties before they went up to this place they called Pinkville. It’s pink on the map.” The next slide showed a soldier pitching large flat baskets – for winnowing grain? – into a bonfire. Grain lay in heaps around his feet. The next slide showed woman with a horrible expression, bitterness and terror; someone’s arms were around her middle, as if to hold her back from flying at the face of someone to her right. Children clung to people behind her. Chuck heard his own gasp echo – others were gasping too.

“I can’t tell you exactly what happened,” the vet’s voice was flat. “I don’t think anybody knows. Charlie Company’d lost men; they wanted to get Cong – bad.” The next slide showed a dead child in a ditch.

“Oh no.” Jane’s voice, groaning. Slide after slide came on, mud and bodies and American men leveling guns in their young arms. Soldiers’ expressionless faces. In one photo a rifle puffed. A baby lay near a heap of clothes that might have been its mother. Then came a close-up of a woman, open-eyed, her conical straw hat covering her mouth. She wore a silver-ball earring.

“What’s that on her forehead?” a voice in the darkness asked.

“Brain,” said the vet. “She got shot in the head. You need to understand” – he changed the slide, and a pile of bodies loomed on the wavering sheet – “this is what’s happening. Not easy to tell who’s the enemy.” Could be a woman. I heard of a guy got

his leg blown off by a grenade thrown by a little girl.” Why was the sheet moving? Collective breath of the watchers? Elbows and knees, feet and hands showed at random among the dark-clothed huddled bodies. Twenty or thirty people had been gunned down on a dirt path between tall green grasses. Several were babies with bare behinds.

“You gotta understand about the pressure,” the vet said. “What pressure will do to you, I mean. And what you’ll do. You get what I’m saying? You have to live with it.” He broke off. “This is what it’s like, is all.”

“How many dead?” croaked a voice. “In that village, I mean.”

“It was what we’d call a hamlet, not big enough to be a village. The figure I heard was three hundred.”

“How many soldiers?”

“Half that,” the vet said. He moved another slide onto the screen: two children, still alive, on the ground, the bigger one on top of the smaller. Trying to protect his brother, Chuck thought.

“Did any of these people kill American soldiers?”

“Only one casualty, that day,” said the vet. “He shot himself in the foot.”

“How many of the villagers survived?” Jane asked.

“I’m not sure. Twenty or thirty?”

“So what we’re looking at,” Marvin’s voice, “is a massacre. American soldiers against unarmed villagers.”

“You could say that,” the vet said. He switched to another slide – two American soldiers, lounging by the road, leaning against their packs. One had a straight-lipped smile. “I been showing these slides, so ...”

“How could you just stand there and take pictures?” a voice called from the back.
“Why didn’t you trying to stop them? They were killing babies!”

“Not my job,” the vet’s voice thickened. “I’m a professional. I just take photographs and let them speak for themselves.”

“They’re speaking, pal. Loud and clear.” Bert’s voice.

“I just got a couple more slides,” said the vet. The people in Pinkville seemed to be in the room, that was the awful part. And the Charlie company guys – Chuck felt sadness come into his throat. They looked like boys in his high school. They wore white vee-neck T-shirts.

When the show was over, Jimmy flicked on the lights and said, “Well, thanks for coming. Let’s go upstairs.”

Ivy’d been silent the whole time, clutching Chuck’s hand. She kept tight hold as they mounted the stairs to the office. “Wellp,” he said. He swallowed the bitter stuff that had risen in his throat.

“Their bare feet,” Ivy whispered. “Their feet are so ... walked-on.” She wiped her eyes with the back of her hand.

In the office people crowded the vet, asking questions. His face was red. Marvin asked what he planned to do with the slides. “You’ve got to publicize this,” he insisted. “You really got the war up close. People need to see it.”

“Do you know a publisher?” the vet asked.

“*Ramparts* would print them,” Bert said.

“What’ll they pay?”

“Do you care?”

“Damn right, I care,” the vet said. “This is my job. What I do. I want top dollar.”

“Fuck,” Bert turned away, fumbling in his shirt pocket for a cigarette. He lit it and went outside to smoke. And cool off, Chuck figured. People were still asking questions. Who else knew about this massacre? Were there other massacres? What else had he seen in Vietnam? How long had he been there?

Greg Lambert stepped into the group. “You should have stopped that,” he said. “If you don’t act, you’re no better than the other butchers.”

Jimmy grabbed Greg’s arm. “Lay off!” he said.

“Lambert’s right,” came a woman’s voice.

The vet’s neck swelled and his face went dark red. Chuck let go of Ivy’s hand and reached Greg in three steps. “Take it back, Lambert. You didn’t see the slides. You’re being a bully.”

“*He’s* the bully,” Greg said. “He put on the uniform so he could lord it over the rest of us.”

The vet lunged for Greg. Jimmy and Chuck grabbed his arms. His skin was hot, his triceps thick and hard. He shook them off; the slide projector crashed onto the desk. “We heard him make excuses for those atrocities,” a woman’s voice whined, as the vet made for the door.

“Hey!” Chuck called after him. “Greg Lambert doesn’t speak for all of us.” The vet stopped in the doorway and turned. “He doesn’t speak for me,” Chuck said.

“I don’t need to put up with his attitude, you know what I’m saying?” The vet seemed to loom against the night sky. “I thought you guys wanted to know the real stuff. Fulero said you wanted to learn. He didn’t tell me you’d already made up your minds.”

Jane moved close to him. "Give me your name," she said, "so I can have a reporter contact you."

"Better not," the vet said. "See you later, man." He tapped Jimmy's shoulder and took off, the slides in their case under his arm. He ran fast and steadily, the soles of his boots appearing and vanishing, smaller and smaller, going east.

"He's got the carriage of Pastor Joe's slide projector," Jane said. "You'll get it back, right, Jimmy?"

Jimmy looked anguished. "Greg Lambert is full of shit," he said.

"He's crude, but not that wrong," Jane said. "It's no fun to come close to war." She stood with her arms crossed, clutching herself. "Anyway. Jimmy, get me your friend's name and number."

"I don't know his number," Jimmy said. "His name's Rob Smith."

"Hey! You folks are blocking the door." Marvin's voice called through a knot of people behind them. Chuck pulled Ivy to one side, and the door opened wide as people emerged, first tangled together, then scattering like frightened birds.

"I don't think I was scared," said Ivy, as they walked down Euclid. "I'm not scared now, not even upset, really. I feel ... hm. Like I've been shaken hard; my legs are wobbly." She wobbled along the sidewalk to demonstrate. She looked like a fake drunk, and Chuck laughed, wondering how he could laugh.

He didn't want to talk. A crevasse seemed to have opened in his mind; he'd known it was there, but ignored it. Now he could almost hear it, a sucking roar. If he could go home and sit with the lights off, listening, he'd understand something important.

His request for the CO form had been sent to the Selective Service before he started the savings & loan. No need to apply, now, he'd thought this morning. When the assistant manager had looked over his paperwork and said, "Nice. I can tell you'll do a fine job here," Chuck had glowed. He had not known till now what he would do for money. What else might he do? If Tessa was right, that war-money was inextricable from the American economy, what responsibilities might he be given at an institution in the middle of the economic flood? What blood might get on his hands?

"The Vietnamese are so beautiful," Ivy said. "In their pictures I mean. Tan, thin, with good cheekbones."

"Yeah, good cheekbones," Chuck said. "That's why they photograph so well."

"I don't mean that how it sounded," Ivy said, irritably. "What I mean to say is, how could anyone kill children? I mean ... I can't say what I mean."

"Then shut up," Chuck said. "I can't take you're being so superficial." To say what he felt right now was to cut off thought; even the word *shame* was insufficient. He loathed the sensations that made him aware of his body.

Ivy shut up. He wished he were alone. They walked home in silence and flung themselves into the apartment. He sprawled on the bed fully dressed.

Ivy sat in the chair. "You're so goddamn profound," she said. "Tell me where to go so I don't trouble you with my superficial self."

"Just be quiet," Chuck said. "Sometimes I just need to think without talking, dig? Turn off the light and come to bed."

"Sometimes you just need to insult me, while you're at it," Ivy said. "Is that how it goes? I keep my mouth shut unless you decide you want to put up with my super ..."

“Cut it out,” Chuck said. She had that wet sound in her voice that meant tears, and he didn’t want to see her cry. “I don’t think you’re superficial.”

“So what *do* you think? Are you sorry I came here?” She was crying, after all, and he couldn’t stand how forlorn she looked sitting in the chair, dress askew and bunched around her waist, hair in her face, hands twisting in her lap.

Chuck patted the bed next to him. “C’mere,” he said. “I was harsh. It was an upsetting evening.” She lay down, carefully not touching him. He took her hand and kissed it. “I love you.” An apology would be caving in to her tears.

“I’m sorry I ...” Ivy’s breath came harsh; she rolled away from him, onto her stomach, “can’t stop crying.” The words were muffled in the pillow. Her sobs soothed him, in a way he hadn’t expected. He felt his own eyes wet. He rubbed her back softly, and she didn’t pull away from his hand.

Finally he rose and went to the bathroom, where he used the toilet, then washed his hands and his whole head without looking at himself in the mirror. Then he took off his clothes and brushed his teeth. When he came back, Ivy was naked under the covers.

“Hi,” he said, climbing in next to her. He kissed her briefly and lay still. He wanted to bury himself in darkness. He could not sleep. He wasn’t surprised at what the Charlie soldiers had done; he’d known such things were possible. They’d watched their comrades killed. He could imagine their rage.

Next to him Ivy whimpered and reached for his hand. “The second I close my eyes I see the people in those pictures.” She was holding his hand in both of hers, moving a thumb round and round in his palm. “They move; I can hear them talking, shouting to each other,” her voice was high, tearful. “Like from a distance, you know? No words. I’m

scared. I was scared, down in the basement. What I said earlier, about their being beautiful? That was stupid.”

“I knew what you meant,” said Chuck. He put his arm behind her neck, under the pillow. “I’m ashamed of my job,” he confessed. “I’m working for a racist savings & loan corporation, wearing a tie and wing-tips.” It occurred to him that the job might improve if he concentrated on hating it.

“So you’re a spy,” Ivy said sleepily. “It’s a hustle – a good one; you’re getting paid well, right? And you learn how the enemy thinks.”

“I guess,” Chuck said. Then he added, “I got the job because my grandfather knows the manager.”

Ivy spoke into his ear. “What other choice did you have? It’s the middle of June. You’ve only got two months. Then we’ll go to the Chicago convention, and then school will start. Hold me. I don’t want to see those people when I close my eyes.”

He pulled her close, she tucked one leg between his knees, and they rocked together in the night.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Six

June 24, 1968

Where the hell was Jimmy? Jane threw down *Redbook*, an failed escape-attempt. He'd promised to drive her to Burroughs for office supplies and to Irv's for Reuben sandwiches; she was starving. There was nothing to eat in the apartment she shared with Tessa, who lived on air, yogurt, and an occasional beer. Nothing edible here in the Movement office. It was four in the afternoon. "Come on Jimmy," she muttered. Wrapped in brown paper, the new window glass leaned against the wall. Today the white kids had the derelict gas station; they leaned against the pillars and sat on curbs where pumps had stood a month ago.

Burroughs would close at five, and she needed paper, pencils, posterboard, and paint for tonight's meeting with the liberal Heights women, some of whom had paid for the new window. She hated wheedling money, had to force herself to stay calm through their excuses: "I'd like to, but my husband won't." "Oh Jane, honey, I gotta keep peace in the family. You understand." They were in thrall to their husbands, or to comforts they thought essential: dishwashers, lawns. Some even had cleaning ladies. Jane wished she could make them hear rats in the walls, make them go hungry for more than a couple of hours at a time, put them in a housing project for a week.

Four black kids sauntered past the window and crossed to the opposite sidewalk where they stood cracking on each other, showing how tough they were, laughing,

pretending they didn't see the white kids. Jane admitted it: she should have known better than to count on Jimmy. Should not have let him stay all those nights in her bed.

She'd met him early this month. Home from college for the summer, he'd come to the office looking for action. She knew the answers to the questions he asked – and kept asking, all afternoon and into the evening, trying to catch up with the whole Movement in a few hours. He'd bought her pizza at Lou's, then ice cream at Baskin-Robbins. The next day he'd plunged into Movement work. A few days later he'd moved in with her and Tessa. He wasn't getting along with his parents, but he still had one of their cars. He walked around the apartment in cut-off jeans and nothing else, parading his lovely bare torso, long hair curling around his cheeks and his neck, his muscular legs tan with golden hairs.

"Jane's snuggle-dude," Tessa called him – and she was right: he was lovely to sleep with, fun to kiss. It was flattering to have a beautiful man compliment your plain face, your straggly hair, and then take possession of your knobby, weary body. Jimmy'd urged her to unbraid her hair and, sitting behind her on the bed, brushed it for half an hour. He was only twenty-one, but that was part of his appeal, especially after Norman, who had some gray hair, Jane noticed when they ran into each other at the library.

Unlike Norman, who was entirely too sane, Jimmy didn't have a lot of sense. He thought he could act black. Last night Jane had found him at the Lakeview Tavern, a place practically owned by streetcorner guys and militant nationalists. A white college boy, even a nice one who used language borrowed from the Black Panther's ten-point party platform, was an invader. Jane had been alerted by a neighbor – "You want to look

after your boyfriend” – so she’d run to the tavern and pulled Jimmy off the bar stool, behaving like the typical aggrieved girl retrieving her wayward, virile lover.

The office door swung wide and banged, rattling the remaining front window: Ivy Barcelona entered in, grinning widely. “Hi Jane, I found a second job! I’m a fundraiser for the Poor People’s Campaign.”

“No kidding. They closed Resurrection City yesterday,” Jane said. “But I’m sure there are debts to pay.”

“I guess,” said Ivy, uncertainly. “I didn’t hear Resurrection City was closed.”

“Who are you working with?”

“A guy named Shapiro; his ad in the paper says you can make \$100 a week.” Ivy dropped her shoulder-bag onto the table and hitched herself up next to it, swinging her bare legs. She had a tan and was dressed up, in a pink shirt that clung to her body and a short flowered skirt. Her hair was fastened in two tails, one over each breast.

“He’s paying you to raise funds? Does he work for SCLC?” Jane should’ve heard of this man.

“He didn’t say so,” Ivy said. “I came here to look for some more information. I know you’ve got it.”

“Help yourself,” Jane indicated the lit table by the window. “By the way, have you seen Jimmy?”

“That guy who looks like Verrocchio’s *David*?” Ivy said. “No. Where’s he supposed to be? I was downtown meeting Mr. Shapiro. I did my first door-to-door soliciting. I got twenty dollars, which means I’ve earned two so far. I won’t earn near a hundred this week. Shapiro said, *Can* doesn’t mean you *will*.”

“Jimmy’s supposed to be *here*,” Jane said. Ivy was getting ten percent of what she raised, and there would be overhead, an office, a phone, Shapiro himself. Not much for the SCLC. How long had Shapiro been in business? Ivy wasn’t dumb. Why didn’t she know more? “Ask Mr. Shapiro if he knows Pastor Joe,” Jane told Ivy. “Better yet: call Pastor Joe, see if he knows Shapiro.”

“What’s this?” Ivy had found Jane’s folder full of magazine ads.

“I’m making a collection,” Jane said. “What this society thinks about women.”

“‘A good housewife knows how to be an expensive mistress,’” Ivy read aloud from the Russian Crown Sable coats ad. “Why would anyone want to be an expensive mistress?”

“Better than being a housewife, I guess,” Jane said. “Some man pays for your room, board, and fur coat, and all you have to do in exchange is have sex with him. A housewife has a lot of work as well as sex.”

“Yeah, but if you’re married, then ...”

“Then what? How’s being a wife different from being a mistress, except that you’ve got a piece of paper that says you’re legal?”

“What about being in love?”

“What about it?” For half a second, Jane considered love: Norman came to mind, in a landscape dominated by bruising rocks. “I don’t even know what the word means anymore,” she said, and looked at the wall clock. Four twenty-five. They would not make Burroughs if Jimmy didn’t get here within the next minute. But they could eat.

Ivy was looking at the next ad. “Clothing that communicates,” she read. “I’ve seen this ad twenty times; why’d you save it?”

“Irony,” Jane said. “Look at it: society says the woman should be embarrassed because she beat a man at chess, but she can make up for it, because her clothes tell him she’s subservient.”

“She’s wearing a John Meyer outfit,” Ivy said. “So am I.”

“Ah, but you’re not wearing a ‘tailored-to-perfection John Meyer jonquil four-buckle play skirt (\$14),’” Jane said. “Those four buckles speak to the man: *Open me. You’ll win the next round.* Did you drive, by any chance?”

“No,” Ivy said. “Why would I drive here?”

“Just hoping,” Jane said. “I need to get some office supplies.”

“Damn. I’ve always liked John Meyer.” Ivy looked down at her own outfit. “I just wore this today for the job.”

“I guess it communicated,” Jane said. “Even without the buckles.”

“I like these colors,” Ivy said. “When I was in high school all I wore was navy, cranberry, and gray. It feels liberating to wear pink with orange.” She did a shuffle-dance that seemed to Jane more nervous than liberated. The unnatural pink and orange flowers screamed *New!*

Jane had put a six-inch hem into the khaki skirt she wore today (long skirts could return, anytime) with her faded plaid blouse; the outfit had been new in high school. Would she ever again be able to buy new clothes? She’d rather buy blintzes at Irv’s deli, with blueberries and sour cream.

Ivy was looking through the rest of the ads. “Oh-oh-oh, this is so cool,” she said. I never thought about how advertisers put women down. Jane, you’re brilliant.”

“It’s just a game I started,” Jane said. “Listen, I’ve got to eat something.” Ivy’s admiration was more than she could deal with right now. She needed to think clearly, and to do that, she needed food. Forget Jimmy, his car, and the office supplies.

“I’ve got to be at the Big Penny by six.” Ivy’s gaze moved around the empty office. “But if you want to leave for a bit, I’ll stay here and look through the lit.”

“Great. You could man the phone,” Jane said. *Man* the phone, she thought. So wrong – most phone receptionists were women. She dug around in her purse until she found enough coins for a McDonald’s hamburger.

The phone rang. “Movement office,” Ivy said. “Yes, she’s here.”

It was not Jimmy but (of all people) her mother. “Just wanted to check signals,” she said, chirping the way she did when Jane was in Mississippi, and a year later when Dad had his heart attack.

“How’s Dad?” Jane asked. “What’s happened?”

“He’s fine, still working out with his little dumbbells every morning. I just called for fun.” Mom would never call for fun. She knew Jane knew that.

“Oh,” Jane said. “And how are you?”

“Just fine. I’m at work, as usual.” Jane would have said, Cut the crap, what’s wrong? but her mother went on. “There’s a letter I want to read to you. Hey, you know what? I’m so silly, I left it in the car. Call me back, okay?”

“You should call *me*,” Jane said. “We don’t have long distance here.”

“So go somewhere else,” Mom said. “Call collect.” She hung up.

“Right.” Jane shut her purse and slung it over her shoulder. “If Jimmy shows up,” she said to Ivy, “tell him he’s too late. I went on without him.”

There was a phone booth two blocks away. Jane had lost interest in a hamburger. She could pick up a Snickers; it would keep till she was hungry again. She pictured her mother leaving her office in the court house, going down the hall and out to the parking lot ... At the counter in the drugstore, waiting to pay for her candy, she realized: Mom had not left a letter in the car. She had received or heard something politically crucial, and she believed the office phone was tapped. It probably was. Jane didn't know what a phone tap looked like, hadn't heard the clicks that were supposed to give it away. She'd wedged herself into the phone booth and finished dialing when she thought of the smashed front window. "Okay, Mom, what do you want to talk about?"

"Oh god, there you are. I had another phone call and thought I'd missed you." The chirpyness was gone. "Here's the letter," Mom said, and began to read.

It felt odd, listening through the heavy receiver to Mom's voice reading a report of Jane's activity with "an increasingly subversive organization." A few yards from the phone booth, a dressed-up young man stood nearby, apparently waiting for the light so he could cross. A man with gray hair came out of the photography shop and stared Jane in the face.

"Who sent that?" Jane demanded. The gray-haired man went back into the shop.

"The Chicago office of the FBI," Mom said. "Listen, you've got more than a bugged phone at that office; you've got an informant. Someone came to the meetings when you talked about disrupting the Democratic convention. Someone remembered that you said: 'Let's move in as close as we can to the convention site, whatever it takes.'"

The light changed, and the young man crossed.

“It wasn’t exactly a secret meeting,” Jane said. “We were talking about a completely legal assembly, with permits. And we didn’t reach any conclusions.”

“*Whatever it takes?* I hope you’re not using more subversive language than that.”

“Oh, probably I am, Mom. I can’t censor everything that comes out of my mouth, like ...” She was about to say, “like you and Dad do.” They were so careful it was a shock to hear her mother use the word *informant*, to realize Mom knew how to bypass a tapped phone. This was a new side of her mother – or rather, an old side.

Her parents never told her, flat out, *We belonged*, never showed her their membership cards. But Jane’s memory contained vivid fragments: “Union Maid” and “Banks of Marble” sung around a campfire after a picnic by the lake. The Joe Hill ballad. The Lincoln Brigade Story. Meetings in the living room full of laughter and smoke. Also a mustached man in a dark suit. He came often, bringing Hershey bars special for Jane; then one day she was told, “That man was not here, never. Do you understand?” She understood only that *Do you understand?* meant *Accept what I say, no questions*.

The change came June 19, 1953, the day of the Rosenbergs’ execution. Jane would have been nine-and-a-half, just finished with fourth grade. What she remembered was sitting on the living room rug, working a puzzle, when her father suddenly exploded. “Damn them! *Damn* McCarthy and Cohn, damn Truman and Hoover! God damn them all to hell!” Her gentle Daddy, who said “Shhh!” when her mother swore after breaking a dish, now cursed deliberately, filling the room with rage, red in the face, shaking. Jane reached up for his hand; rather than unwrapping his fist and accepting her fingers, he rushed from the room.

Terrified, she stood up and went to her mother, who sat at the dining room table with a handkerchief to her eyes. Her mother stroked Jane's hair without looking up. Her voice was muffled by the hankie. "He'll be all right, Janie. Don't worry. He'll be all right, and you'll be all right, and ..." a breaking noise in her throat and a huge breath. "I'll be just fine. Are you hungry? Shall I fix you a sandwich?"

Jane had not thought of being hungry, but yes, she wanted her mother to make her a sandwich. Mom pushed herself up from the table and went into the kitchen. Jane sat back down on the rug. Neither parent could calm her; she'd have to calm herself. She'd been putting together the pieces of thatched roof cottage surrounded by flowers. There were people in the picture, too, but she hadn't put them together yet.

She decided to make the people. She'd made three faces and a blue skirt, and was hunting for the pieces that would connect the skirt to a face, when she realized her mother had been in the kitchen too long to make a sandwich, even if it were tuna fish with pickles. Even if she were boiling eggs. There were no sounds, in the kitchen or the bedroom.

Standing in the phone booth marvelling at her memory of that afternoon's details – she could visualize the details of that puzzle, that day, while huge chunks (all of fifth grade, for example) disappeared from her memory – Jane was aware of her own terror *then* and her mother's terror *now*, as though they were the same moment. The sky seemed to darken; the gray clouds had a faint purplish tinge. From within the booth, street noises seemed soft and far away.

In the silence *then*, Jane had crept down the hall to the bedroom and tapped on the door. No voice, no sound of footsteps. Daddy had gone in there. She wasn't supposed to

enter without permission. What if he was dead? What if they were both dead? For a long black moment Jane stood in the dark carpeted hallway, seeing with X-ray eyes her father fallen backward onto the bed, his feet still on the floor; her mother slumped over the kitchen table. While they died, she'd been working a puzzle. She'd never forgive herself. She opened the bedroom door just a crack and peered through. Her father lay face down on the bed; she saw his back move as he breathed. He was still alive, at least.

She tiptoed across the living room to the kitchen, wading into cold dread. Her mother stood at the counter, the jam jar in one hand, a spoon in the other. A knife stuck out of the open peanut butter jar; bread spilled from its wrapper. Jane touched the arm holding the spoon. "Mom?"

Her mother jumped. "Oh Janie! You shouldn't sneak up on people – never!" She looked angrily down.

Jane was short for her age; her mother towered over her. She shrank even smaller, backing out of the kitchen. She watched from the doorway as her mother put down the spoon and the jam jar. "I was just making you a sandwich," Mom said. She took the knife and stroked peanut butter carefully to the edge of the bread, then dipped into the jar again for more, to spread to the other side and then swirl, making the half-sandwich look like an iced cake. "I completely forgot about supper," Mom said. "I don't know how I could have done that."

She laid another slice of bread on the counter, spooned jam onto it, took a clean knife from the drawer and spread the jam – strawberry, made from berries they'd picked in a field and brought home in buckets. Jane had stirred the thickening jam – bubbling hot on a hot Sunday – hating the heat, but wanting to be with her mother. The summer after

fourth grade, Jane had insisted on staying home alone, the annoying woman next door checking up on her – tapping on the window, waiting for Jane to look up and smile, smiling back. Jane had puzzles, and books from the library, so she hadn't felt lonely. Until now. She watched to make sure Mom wouldn't turn into a statue again. "Can I have a glass of milk?" she asked.

She had to sit at the table to drink the milk and eat the sandwich while her mother went to talk to Daddy. Jane listened to the rumble and hum of her parents' low voices as evening filled the room with gray; she slowly labored through her supper, knowing she had to finish every bite, every swallow; that was the rule. The time might well come again, her parents had warned her, when they would not have nice food.

Before she could sleep that night, Jane got Daddy and Mom to sit on her bed and explain again about Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg, the electric chair, the Bomb. How could the Rosenbergs have known the secret of how the Bomb worked? "As if there could be one single secret to the Bomb," her father spat out. No, Jane had never met the Rosenbergs. Mom and Daddy had met them, a couple of times, in big meetings. No, they had not come to this house, had never come to Minneapolis, so far as her parents knew. They lived in New York, had regular jobs like Daddy's and Mom's. "Two children," her mother wailed. "Ai yi, the children!" But if the Rosenbergs couldn't have been spies, Jane asked, then how did the government made such an awful mistake?

Ah, the government hated and feared communism, because they had it mixed up with Stalin, the Russian dictator who was not a true communist. No, Mom and Daddy were not communists. No, the government would never come after Mom and Daddy. They were safe. Jane was safe. They could all continue to eat well, live a normal life.

A normal life meant a hushed, cautious household. Her parents kept going to work and coming home, fixing food, mowing grass and washing the car on weekends. But they stopped seeing their old friends and didn't seem to have new friends, not that Jane could see. There were no more singing picnics at the lake, no more joyful meetings, no more potluck suppers. The mustached man in the dark suit might never have existed; indeed Jane believed for a time that he never had. Her parents got a TV and began to watch every evening. Jane grew accustomed to their dull talk about *The Honeymooners* and *I Love Lucy*, department store sales and eagle stamps. She joined a softball team and later that same summer went canoeing in the lake country with the Campfire Girls. She was normal, Mom and Daddy were normal.

In eighth grade Jane decided to write a report: "Communism – What It Really Is," and her father tried to talk her into writing something else. He wouldn't help her with the research. Her mother said, "Why not write about some government close to home – like Minnesota's?" Jane did the best she could with the encyclopedia, a copy of Marx's *Capital*, and a *Life* magazine article; she got an A, which did not satisfy her. She hadn't learned what she wanted to know.

The Montgomery bus boycott could be talked about, and a year later so could the Hungarian Revolution. During those conversations the supper table glowed with energy – love, it seemed to Jane – for the negroes in the south who resisted Jim Crow, and for students in Budapest who resisted the Russian tanks.

By the time she started at the University of Michigan, Jane thought she'd made a fairly complete picture of what happened to her parents when the Rosenbergs were executed. She understood which side she was on and what her work in the world would

be. When her parents tried to stop her from going to Mississippi, she shouted at them.

“I’m not *like* you – I won’t cower, and I won’t be silenced. You can’t stop me.” They’d given in. They must have secretly respected what she was doing – and they needed to be vindicated.

Now her mother was getting her to use a pay phone and saying *informant*, reading a letter from an FBI operative who knew what meetings Jane had attended. “You can’t be too careful,” Mom said. What did the FBI know about her mother? What threat of danger to her parents was hidden between the lines of this letter about their daughter? “Joe McCarthy’s dead, but J. Edgar Hoover’s not,” Mom went on. “You should think about your future. You don’t want to be stopped from doing something you really want to do some day – taking a government-funded job, for instance, or going to law school.”

“I don’t want to go to law school,” Jane said. *Who?* she thought.

Unbidden, Jimmy came to mind. His sudden appearance, his intense questioning. Had he attended the meeting mentioned in the letter? Jane couldn’t be sure. For several weeks he’d been around all the time. Then, today, unaccountably nowhere. She almost stopped breathing. “I’ll be careful,” she said, making her voice steady. “I will, Mom. I’m glad you called.”

Her mother sighed, a ragged, aging sigh like a wind that blew into the phone booth. “We hated getting that letter, Janie.”

“Burn it,” Jane said. “It’s good you called. I’ll be fine.”

“I know you will. When will we see you?”

“I don’t know; I’m awful busy. Thanksgiving, for sure.”

“Call once a week,” Mom said. “Collect.”

“I’ll try,” Jane said. “I can’t always get to an untapped phone.”

“Ai!” wailed her mother. Then she laughed, so Jane knew she could hang up. Looking out through the glass walls of the phone booth, she realized Mom had forced the laugh for her benefit. There was no sign of the men she’d seen earlier.

They should have thought about the likelihood of an informant. Two weeks ago, the SDS convention in East Lansing had included a workshop on sabotage and explosives, meant to attract the agents and informants, to keep them from coming to the important workshops. As far as anyone could tell, it had worked. But none of the agents and informants had come from Cleveland. Jane told someone from the National Office, “Cleveland has Ungvary and his team; the FBI doesn’t need informants here.” Obviously they thought they did.

Tessa would know how to think about this – but Tessa wouldn’t be home till much later tonight. Marvin might go to the Heights meeting. Jane would call Marvin. For the two blocks back to the office, Jane tried to assure herself that Jimmy’s youth made him an unlikely candidate. He had no guile at all, she’d thought. She found the office door open wide, had a thought – *Jimmy must be here!* – that felt like gladness, and then alarm. She’d have to ask him to move out after all. That thought made her feel cold and unbearably hard.

But Jimmy was not there. Ivy had left the phone and the desk to Greg Lambert. “Jane! Thank the Lord you’re here,” he said. “I’m starving.”

“Has Jimmy been here?”

“Nope,” Greg said. “Ivy said you were looking for him.” He tried to wriggle his eyebrows salaciously like Groucho Marx, but his eyebrows were blond and moved

slowly, so he looked like a kid rehearsing alternate expressions of worry and surprise. “I came here looking for Bert. Or Marvin. Or Chuck. Where are they?”

“Don’t know about Bert and Marvin.” Jane said. “They promised to install the new window, but they haven’t managed to get here at the same time to do it. Why didn’t you ask Ivy about Chuck?”

“I wasn’t thinking about Chuck when Ivy was here,” Greg smirked. Jane could see why Ivy would not want to be alone with Greg; that’s why she’d left early. He shouldn’t have been left in charge, though; that was obvious after his fight with the veteran photographer. Greg was borderline crazy – too goofy and too good-hearted to suspect of working for the FBI. He finished carving a pencil to bits with his pocket knife and crunched a piece of newspaper into a tight ball, which he tossed toward the wastebasket. “Woops,” he said, retrieved the paper ball, and threw it again. It landed in the basket, this time. “Two points for me,” he said, and sprang for the wastebasket so he could make another throw. He reminded Jane of an overgrown seven-year-old.

“How about letting me use the desk?” Jane said. “I’ve got to make a call.”

“Go ahead.” Greg shrugged, and threw his ball again. It landed on the floor.

“Motherfuck,” he said.

“Why not get yourself something to eat,” she said.

“I guess I could,” Greg said. “Maybe I’ll do better with food in me. But I won’t be back, you know. I’m staying at my mom’s.”

“That’s all right,” said Jane. “You could leave notes for Bert and Marvin and Chuck so they’ll know you were looking for them.”

Greg lumbered out. Jane breathed out relief that he was gone, brushed his pencil shreds into the torn newspaper he'd left on the desk, and stuffed the whole mess into the wastebasket. Then she called Marvin. "Can you drive to the meeting tonight?"

"Oh goodness," said Marvin. "I'd forgotten. We're supposed to talk to the folks who bought our new window, right? Hm. Well, yes. I can drive."

"Pick me up at the office by six-thirty," Jane said. "I want to plan while we're driving."

"Have you thought at all about what we're going to *say* to these women?"

"I'm working on it," Jane said. The poster idea had failed for lack of supplies. It wasn't a good idea anyway. She wished she could show the Pinkville slides to these women, and got angry at Greg again for menacing the vet. Then came a storm of rage at Jimmy; she pounded the desk with her fist as hard as she could, once, and again. Had she been a complete fool? The edge of her hand and her baby finger hurt.

On the desk where Ivy had left it lay the SCLC newsletter. Why would Mr. Shapiro raise funds for the Poor People's Campaign? The Heights women had been repulsed by the photographs of Resurrection City, a camp of tents and shacks. "Mud and garbage on the Washington Mall!" said Peggy, an ash blonde in her fifties. "One doesn't want to be associated with that."

The Heights women had deep prejudices. Some still believed in the myth of deadbeats on welfare. If one of those women spent a month on a welfare income, if she simply tried to feed her family on a food stamp diet, she'd know better. What if a well-known woman in Cleveland – Dorothy Fuldheim, Shirley Stokes, or Francis Payne Bolton – fed her family on a welfare budget for a while? The results would go in the

paper, and the public might begin to see what poverty was like. Call it a voluntary Welfare Food Allowance month.

It was a good idea. The afternoon had been harrowing, but Jane could still think clearly. She dialed Marvin's number; she wanted him to know. He'd be notice problems that didn't occur to her.

On the third ring, the office door banged. Jimmy stumbled in, blood on his face. Jane dropped the phone on its cradle and ran to him – not because of the blood, but because of his open mouth, his slow gait, his left arm holding his right. He fell to his knees, bent over the arm, broken (she could see the unnatural bend between wrist and elbow) swelling. "Where's your car?" Jane kept her voice soft, bent to look at his eyes, glassy with pain and tears. "C'mon, Jimmy, we gotta get you to a hospital. Either we take your car or call an ambulance."

"Don't want no ambulance." He sounded like his throat was full of sand.

"So where's your car?"

"Somewhere around the block back there." He gestured with his left hand over his right shoulder, wincing as his right arm dropped into his lap. "Parked it a long time ago."

Jane looked in the direction he'd pointed. She'd have to leave him here and run up and down the streets in the neighborhood. "I can't go hunting your car, Jimmy. I'm not leaving you alone. You're probably in shock, you know." Tessa, she thought: She'd left early this morning, planning to spend the day with her cadaver. "Wait here," Jane said. "No, you need to be a little bit comfortable."

She found a stack of *New Left Notes* to roll for a loose splint; she'd studied first aid in Campfire Girls. He also needed a sling. Someone's sweater hung over a chair; it

had been there since the Vietnam slides. Jane folded the sweater around the paper, tied the arms around Jimmy's neck, and settled him on the couch.

The apartment phone rang twelve times; Tessa was not home yet. Even if the anatomy lab had a phone, there was no way to find the number.

"I'm not hurt," Jimmy said when Jane sat next to him,. "I'm just *hurt*, you know? I said, 'Hey man I'm you're brother,' but they just kept kicking me. Wolf Bey kept yelling, 'You honky deserve to die, understand? Don't matter what you say, you gonna pay!'" Jimmy did his imitation black voice.

Jane had met Wolf Bey in the office a couple of times with Bert and some others from a nationalist group: Afro Set or the Panthers. It was right after Stephen's funeral. Poor, hapless Stephen, shot in the back. She'd wept with Dora at the funeral, and the rift between them had narrowed a little. She should have done more. She should be able to weep now. "Fuck Wolf Bey!" Jimmy said. "I thought he ..."

"He's messed up," Jane said. "He's *really* messed up," she added, as if repeating the phrase would help. Neither Afro Set nor the Panthers advocated beating up lone white kids. Anger filled her chest, dried her throat. She pictured herself throwing a home-made bomb into the Lakeview Tavern, where her dignified, middle aged neighbor enjoyed his beer every Thursday and Saturday evenings. Another bomb into the FBI headquarters in Chicago, another into Ungvary's unmarked light-blue car. She closed her eyes and swallowed. "I'll get you some water," she said. She needed a drink, too.

She drank down a mug of water from the tap in the bathroom sink; then she refilled the mug and took it to Jimmy. "Where did this happen?" Jane asked him. "You didn't go to the Lakewood Tavern."

“No, man!” Jimmy’s tears returned. “I was just walking along. I been to the African culture shop, you know, that on Hough Avenue. I wanted to buy some of Ahmed’s stuff.” He pronounced Fred Evans’ Arabic name *Ahk – med*. “He’s got those little giraffe-carvings, beads made of brass, shell, bone, very cool. Paintings,” he added.

“And a lot of astrology books.” Jane had visited that shop a month ago. “Evans is into that,” she added.

“Big flag: Republic of New Libya,” Jimmy said. He sipped more water. “Anyway, I was walking from there to my car. It’s on 118th, now I remember. Damn those guys, they broke my arm! I heard it snap.”

“That’s why you’re going to the emergency room. I’m calling for a ride,” Jane said. She went to the phone. Was Jimmy really doing what he said he was doing? Would that question have occurred to her before her mother’s phone call? She looked at the battered boy on the couch, his hair snarled, his lower lip drooping as he breathed through his mouth.

Damn the boy, she thought. And damn all boys with revenge on their minds.

“Should I call the police?” she asked Marvin, keeping her voice low. “I’m getting as pissed off at Jimmy as I am at his attackers.”

“Don’t be angry at a man when he’s down,” Marvin said. “Wolf Bey’s obviously a thug. He and his pals could have been on something, you know.”

“My arm’s killing me!” Jimmy’s bellow echoed in the empty office. “Don’t you got any ice? Got any alcohol? I wanna drink something that’ll knock me out.”

“He wants to be knocked out,” Jane said. “I’d do that for him, if I could. You know what? We need a refrigerator in here with food. And Vodka. I could use a couple shots myself. We should ...”

“Calm down, Jane,” Marvin’s voice was mild as ever. “I’m on my way. I’ve got a little bourbon left over from a kind of party. Will that help?”

“It will,” Jane said. Strange, that Marvin would hesitate to tell her what he’d been doing. A kind of party? He’d probably been entertaining a woman he didn’t want anyone to know about. Except that he did, or he wouldn’t have mentioned it at all. Marvin was so complex.

“Keep him conscious,” Marvin said. “He might have a concussion.”

She sat with Jimmy and let him sob on her shoulder. “I *want* to be their brother, man. I do. Why don’t they get it?”

He was blubbering with pain and shock, and he was her sweet lover. “Sh, sh, Jimmy. Of course you want that, and of course they don’t believe it. Sh. Shhhhhh.” She half-held him, awkwardly trying to keep clear of the sling. So sad, and so stupid, to think you could say ‘brother’ and clear up four centuries of racial oppression. Outside the sky glowed with early evening; it was only six fifteen, but it felt much later.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Seven

July 7, 1968

He was a black man with blue eyes, watching her bring him ice water. Conscious of her hips as she wove between the tables, Ivy held his gaze until she got to his booth, when she looked down, carefully setting the glass on the paper mat. She pulled out her order pad. “What would you like to eat?”

“A grilled cheese sandwich,” he said. “Does that come with a pickle?”

“Sure. You like pickles?”

“I do.” He looked as though he had an important message, a secret or a confession that for some reason was especially for her.

She stopped herself from asking *What is it?* and jotted “gr ch pck” on her pad. “Anything to drink?”

“Water’s fine.” His white shirt cuffs were buttoned; he wore no tie. His fingernails were smooth, the backs of his hands and his face a clean light brown. He was older, maybe thirty. Handsome, and the blue eyes made him fascinating. His lips (now at the kitchen window, Ivy collected three dinners, one for each hand, the third balanced on her right baby finger and the edge of another plate; she could do that now: tote three full plates or carry five full glasses at once) – his lips were beautiful, “like a fresh-cut fig,” Hermann Hesse wrote, in *Siddhartha*. She had wondered what such lips looked like: now she knew.

She set the plates down in front of the hard-hats. They'd spent all day working on Claude Foster Hall, the dorm that had to be moved to the other side of Thwing and repositioned sideways to satisfy Claude Foster's egotistical demand that the building eternally face Euclid Avenue. It was one of the most boring buildings on campus. Arthur had lived there; he said it was dingy, uncomfortable, and cheap. The president of the University Circle Development Corporation had said with pride, "We found a construction firm from Georgia that once moved a six-story prison with all the inmates *inside*." He didn't know he'd revealed the University's ruthless, mindless System: Dorm as warehouse. Students as prisoners.

Beefy men, with thick necks and beer bellies, the hard-hats sat on three sides of a square table watching to see that Ivy correctly placed the meat loaf, the spaghetti, and the cheeseburger with everything plus fries. The meat loaf guy winked and said, "Finally!" The spaghetti man stubbed out his cigarette in the ashtray and said, "Don't mind him." Their cheeseburger pal asked, "You got any hot red pepper, hon?"

"We have Tabasco sauce," Ivy said, and went to the kitchen for it, thinking how the black man's lips had trembled a little, holding back his secret. She put three pickles on the plate next to his grilled cheese sandwich and picked up the Tabasco bottle.

"Hold it!" Kreb, the manager, stopped her. "Aren't we being a little generous with the condiments here?" He speared a pickle, plopped it back in the jar, and reached for another.

"Whoops, don't want to spill anything." Ivy scooted out of the kitchen with the two remaining pickles for the black man, still watching her with his blue eyes. Blue-gray, really. He held up his empty glass. "You must be thirsty," Ivy said.

“I guess so,” he said. His voice was cultivated velvet. She wanted him to say something else, but she was bound to deliver the Tabasco sauce. Then a couple came in, settling into the clean booth. Ivy gave them menus and water. Then the construction workers wanted coffee.

Back in the kitchen, Kreb said, “You gotta watch portions, Ivy. Yesterday you over-filled the milk glasses. You’re giving away food, and that extra pickle comes out of my pocket. Who pays you, after all? Think about that.”

Kreb wasn’t always a jerk. Yesterday he’d praised her. “You got the cute friendly thing down,” he’d said.

She twirled away to fill three coffee cups and one water glass; then she had to get the couple’s orders, then pass the orders through the window to the cook. The three construction workers wanted pie. When Ivy came back with the pie – blueberry, apple, banana cream – the blue-eyed black man was gone.

She had to stay past midnight to mop. July already; the Fourth had come and gone. Aunt Peg had invited her and Chuck to Mentor, where they could use a friend’s sailboat, but Ivy’d had to work extra hours at the Big Penny so the other waitress could have a four-day weekend. Just as well. Independence Day was a cruel joke this year, with a thousand more dead since January, killed for preventing Vietnamese independence.

Chuck had spent his Sunday afternoon reading in the air-conditioned library. When she got in he was snoozing on the bed with a Frantz Fanon book spread across his chest. He opened his eyes and sat up. “I gotta go to work tomorrow,” he said irritably, as if she didn’t know.

He loved his job in spite of himself. He was probably good at the social part of being a banker: Ivy had seen him be nice as pie to cops, professors, fraternity guys, little old ladies on the Rapid Transit, children, beggars on Public Square. He treated them all respectfully without giving up an ounce of his own dignity. She admired that – especially since she'd become so uncomfortable with Mr. Shapiro. He'd promoted her to office manager, and every day she had to force herself to be nice. Mr. Shapiro was fat, wore nylon shirts, diamond rings, and sideburns. One of her tasks was to fetch his lunch from the deli – a Reuben every day, very greasy, with sauerkraut and corned beef.

Ten days ago Shapiro had hired six black teenagers at ten percent of what they could collect in boxes with slits for change. He expected Ivy to make the boxes. She'd used red and black magic marker, talking with the kids briefly about the Poor People's Campaign, which they'd barely heard of, and sent them to Public Square. Only four came back at all. Three made a couple dollars each and came back the next day. Then they were gone. Ivy never even learned their names. College students did better; one collected seventy-seven dollars.

"I don't want to quit," she told Chuck. "I've only had the job for two weeks. But I don't know whether to trust him. He didn't say a thing when they closed down Resurrection City. He's got the college girls phone-calling down a list I got from the Democratic Party." They were lying next to each other, Ivy with her arms crossed behind her head. Chuck lay on his side, propped up on one elbow, *Black Skin, White Masks* on the bed between them.

"Who manages PPC finances?" Chuck asked. "Ralph Abernathy's the spokesman, but he doesn't deal with the money. Shapiro should know who he's sending

money to, right?” He sat up and stretched. “We don’t have anything to drink but water. Want some?”

“Yeah,” Ivy said. She took off her shoes – white sneakers, rapidly turning gray – and then her stockings. Chuck was banging the metal tray against the side of the sink to shake ice cubes loose. Against the black night, the windows reflected the room as cozy; in the light of the bedside lamp, the pink wall looked warm, Ivy herself mysterious, her hair half-covering her face. She took off her yellow waitress-dress and sat in her slip, like a vamp about to be ravished by her tall thin lover. Chuck came into the window’s version of the room with tinkling glasses that looked, in the window-scene, like stiff drinks – vodka, gin.

“I like you in your slip,” Chuck said. “Ask Jane.”

“Ask Jane what?”

“Names,” he said. “She’ll know who’s in charge at the PPC, or how to find out.”

Ivy put down her drink and stood up. In the window-scene she grew dark with resolve. “I will,” she said. “I’ll skip work tomorrow so I can talk to Jane.” Then she held out her arms to him.

July 8, 1968

She told Shapiro she was suffering from exhaustion – true, as far as it went: She and Chuck had stayed up very late. She told Jane she wanted to talk about her job.

“I’m busy this afternoon,” Jane said, “taking care of Dora Williams’ children while she visits her mother in the hospital. Unless ... do you have a car?”

“Me? No. Wait!” Chuck had left the keys to the Pontiac, and Ivy had money for gas, thanks to the tips she’d earned last night and the night before. Half her earnings came from tips. “I can use Chuck’s car,” she said.

“Great,” said Jane. “Help me take the kids to Rockefeller Park and then pick up Dora at the hospital.”

“Where’s Rockefeller Park?”

“You know: on Liberty Boulevard.”

So here she was after all, going with kids to the park. Ivy didn’t like driving the Pontiac – a big boat of a car that filled the road in all directions; she had to turn the steering wheel hand over hand, had to strong-arm the gearshift. Jane held the baby on her lap. Dora’s other two children, Tina and Kelvin, sat in the back seat, each watching that the other did not touch the bag of supplies between them. “I wish it’s a wedding cake,” said Kelvin, age five.

“You crazy,” said Tina, age seven. “I wish it’s a purse full of gold. Then you can buy you the biggest wedding cake in the store and two banana splits. Then there be plenty of gold left for me to buy ... a Cadillac.”

“I wish it’s diamonds,” said Kelvin. Neither wanted to spoil the surprise; that was how basically sweet they were. Wind blew in the open windows, cooling only because it moved. Liberty Boulevard snaked between the university and the lake through the old park where the grass spread like a carpet under high-grown trees, and stone walls channeled the polluted stream.

“Slow down,” Jane said. “The playground’s coming up on your right. Turn here!”

Ivy spun the wheel, pulling the car onto a side street. A neat brass sign stuck out near a cluster of bushes. “Irish Cultural Garden,” she read. “What’s that?”

“The park’s full of cultural gardens,” Jane said. “One for each of the immigrant communities, Polish, Finnish, Estonian, Lithuanian, Italian and so on. Thirty years ago they must have been nice.”

With the baby clamped to her hip, Jane opened the door for Tina and Kelvin, who scrambled out of the hot backseat and ran up the hill. The stroller was in the trunk; Ivy fussed with the key while Jane let the baby walk, holding on to its hands – her hands; this was a baby girl, with a pink plastic barrette in her dark fuzz.

“One of the stroller wheels has lost its rubber,” Ivy said.

“It’s been through a lot of kids,” Jane said. “It keeps trying to turn right; you have to correct it all the time.”

They set out, Jane wrestling the stroller onto the sidewalk, Ivy carrying the bag of supplies, a Sterling Lindner shopping bag with rope handles. On the slope above them, bushes formed a wall with a scrolled iron gate. “I can’t see the kids,” Ivy said. “Maybe I should go find them.”

“There’s the playground,” Jane pointed: swings, a slide, monkey bars, a jungle gym with four or five children scrambling around it. None of the children was clad in Tina’s pink shorts or Kelvin’s yellow shirt.

“They went up there. I’ll hunt for them,” Ivy said, hoping to see a cultural garden. She put the supply-bag on the ground next to Jane, who knelt to unbuckle the squirming baby, and trotted up the hill. The trees’ knobbed roots stuck out of the soil like great gripping claws. The grass was mingled with dandelion, clover, and plantain. Earthen

paths had been trampled and eroded; one of these led to the gate. A brass sign labeled the German Cultural garden. “Kelvin!” she called. “Tina! Hey! Where are you?”

She heard a giggle. They were hiding, crouched behind larger-than-life statues of Goethe and Schiller. “Let’s go,” she said. They gave her their hands – made gifts of their small brown hands, one in each of hers – and walked with her through the gate.

A memorial stone with a bronze relief portrait had been slathered with black paint: “Black Power!” in clumsy letters on the white marble. Ivy traced the bronze lettering with her finger: Beethoven. Why Beethoven? He was poor and deaf from having his ears boxed so often. His crankiness drove his friends away, so he was lonely as hell. Her father had told her Beethoven’s story and showed her how to love the music.

Jane was sitting on the grass with the baby sprawled across her legs and drinking water from a bottle held in plump hands. “Someone painted ‘Black Power’ on the Beethoven memorial stone,” Ivy said.

“I know,” said Jane. “I saw it in the *Cleveland Press*, months ago. You’d think they’d target the Polish and Czech gardens. It’s the Poles and the Czechs who beat up black folks in Sowinsky Park.”

“I like Beethoven,” Ivy said. “It feels like a desecration. But ...”

“Black power’s arrived,” Jane said. Rockefeller Park was now the territory of black families – children and adults, babies and old people – who walked along the sidewalk, sat on benches, sprawled on the grass. Brown-skinned children swarmed the jungle gym, the monkey bars, and the swings. Several men fished from the stone wall that lined the creek. Ivy thought about Germany, where formal gardens were groomed and fussed over. A European garden was a work of art. “You’d think they’d build an African

cultural garden,” Jane said. “Hey – Kelvin needs us.” Kelvin had lost his place in line for the swings, pushed to one side by another child.

“I’m-a help,” Tina said, and rushed the offender, knocking her to the ground. The girl began to cry. “Serve you right,” Tina said. “You don’t push *my* brother. Ain’t nobody push *my* brother.” The girl ran off to three adults who sat on lawn chairs near the creek. They turned to look where their child pointed and frowned at Ivy.

The boy on the swing kept going, oblivious to those waiting on the ground. He stood on the seat, clutching the chains and singing “Power to the people!” in rhythm – “power” as the swing dipped backward, “to the people” as it came forward again.

Ivy had assumed they could just turn the kids loose in the playground so she could talk with Jane. “Let’s go to the jungle gym,” she said, leading both children away from the swings. Tina and Kelvin climbed in among the metal pipes, swarming with the others, and Ivy returned to Jane, who was making faces at the baby perched on her lap. The baby chewed the end of Jane’s braid. Ivy leaned smiling to touch the baby’s nubbin nose with her own and felt the little hand yank one of her hoop earrings.

“Leatha Jane,” Jane smiled. “My only chance to be with a baby. Makes me feel peaceful.”

“Why say it’s your only chance?” Ivy asked, detaching Leatha’s fist. Jane was only 25, unless she’d had a birthday recently. “You’ll have your own kids, right?” She dug the car keys out of her purse.

“No,” said Jane. “I won’t bring children into this world.”

“But if it makes you happy ...” Ivy said. She jingled the keys; Leatha grabbed them eagerly and put one in her mouth.

Jane drew a snakey line in the dirt with a twig. “It’s easy when you don’t have to be with them all the time. I hate how hard it is for Dora to raise these kids – hard for her, hard for the kids.” She snapped the twig in half, then snapped both halves. The keys fell from the baby’s fist to the ground. She stretched her arms and leaned. “She wants to walk,” Jane said. “She’s almost ready to make it on her own, so she needs practice.” Ivy took Leatha’s small fingers and helped her stand. The baby crowed. “Ah!”

“Ah!” Ivy answered. Impossible not to crow back and grin. Sunlight poured over the jungle gym, while she and Jane sat in dappled shade. The children shrieked and hollered insults about each others’ mothers.

“Yesterday, I went to buy groceries,” Jane remarked. “Peggy drove me out to Heinen’s, in Shaker Heights, for fresh fruit and low prices. The Glenville market has high prices and lousy fruit; Heinen’s has these big produce tables – I got dizzy looking at all those melons, peaches, and nectarines. Then suddenly it got to me: the unfairness. More than that: the relentlessness and stupidity. I wanted to smush peaches into the super-clean floor, toss bananas into the fluorescent lights, heave a cantaloupe through the plate-glass window. I get so mad sometimes.”

“I know,” Ivy said, though she didn’t, quite.

“Peggy bought all kinds of fruit and made me promise to give it to a family,” Jane said. “So I took it to Dora. She hates handouts; I got her to accept as a favor to me, and she bought the treats for this outing.”

“Who’s Peggy?” Ivy asked.

“She’s one of the Heights ladies, Mothers Opposed to Poverty,” Jane said. “MOP for short. Peggy Barcelona – funny. She has the same last name as you.”

“Is she about fifty? With light brown hair? And no kids of her own?”

“She hasn’t mentioned any kids, but I figured, if she was part of the group...”

Jane stopped talking to watch Kelvin clamber onto a swing.

“She’s my aunt,” Ivy said. Suddenly Aunt Peg’s lost baby existed as it hadn’t before; Peg must be looking for substitute children. “I wonder why she didn’t mention me.” She thought of the hand-knitted mittens, gifts from her aunt, red-green-and-white striped; she wore them sledding the day after Christmas, lost one, and never wore the other one again. Never told Aunt Peg.

“She probably doesn’t know we know each other. How funny,” Jane said. “Oh shit, there he goes.” She leapt up and ran to the swing; Kelvin sprawled in the dirt, yelling at another little boy who was trying to break Kelvin’s hold on the chain. Even after the other boy thrust himself onto the seat and pushed off, Kelvin held tight and got dragged, his arm wrenched, until he dropped with a yell, “Muh-fuck!” Tina came running from the jungle gym and got to her brother just as Jane swooped down.

Baby Leatha leaned into Ivy’s chest, sucking two fingers and drooling, her warm damp weight incredibly sweet. What an honor to be so trusted. Ivy settled herself to make her lap wider, her back more supportive, and watched Tina with her arm around Kelvin, who cussed and cried; Jane hovered over them both. His shirt and pants were filthy with playground-dirt, his legs and arms scraped. One elbow wept blood, ruby-red against his dusty dark skin.

Kelvin needed his wounds tended with Kleenex, which Tina took to the drinking fountain and converted into soggy little balls. “Perfect,” Jane said, dabbing the blood off.

Kelvin winced, cried “Ow Ow Ow!” and Jane laid dry Kleenex over the scrape on his elbow. Then she brought out the treat: a box of animal crackers for each child. Wounds and slights forgotten, Kelvin waved his box, designed to look like a circus cage. He took out a cookie. “This here’s a lion. Rahr!” He lunged at Tina.

“That’s some puny lion,” Tina said. “I got a elephant, *stomps* on your lion!” Her hand holding the elephant-cookie knocked Kelvin’s lion to the ground; he began to cry.

Jane picked it up, made a show of dusting the lion with a fresh Kleenex. “Now quit it,” she said to Tina. “Sit over here and leave your brother alone.” She patted the grass nearby. “Want an animal cracker?” she asked Ivy. “Dora packed a box for us women. Give one to Leatha, too.” She handed Ivy a box decorated with a jungle scene.

Ivy took out a cookie and gave it to Leatha who sat up and began to gnaw. “Have you ever gone to the zoo, to see real animals?” Ivy asked Tina.

“No,” said Tina. “My teacher was going to take us, last year, but then we was bad and she said we couldn’t go. It was other kids was bad,” she added. “I was good.”

“I want to go to the zoo and see lions,” Kelvin said. “Rahr.” He put the lion-cookie in his mouth.

“I’ll take you sometime,” Ivy said.

“Tomorrow?” Tina asked.

“Gotta work tomorrow,” Ivy said. “Soon, though.” It occurred to her that Aunt Peg, a member of MOP – that new version of Aunt Peg might like to go to the zoo. “Maybe next weekend.” But Saturday there was a rally for Dr. Spock, who’d been sentenced to two years and was out on appeal. “Or the weekend after,” she told Tina.

“I’m-a go to Disneyland soon,” Tina shrugged. She dug back into her animal cracker box.

“I used to play with animal crackers,” Ivy said to Tina. She remembered dunking her animal crackers in the glass of milk which always came with them. Finishing the milk was a chore she had to do in return for being allowed to have the cookies, which she could not stop herself from eating first. Now she wished for a way to give these children some milk. She thought of the cute little thermos bottle in her lunch box. She’d loved it till fourth grade, when the cowgirls on the side suddenly seemed babyish, and it smelled of sour milk no matter how thoroughly it was washed.

“Animal crackers is fun,” said Tina. “I wish I had some M & Ms too. I like the red ones best.” She popped the another animal cracker into her mouth, chewed and swallowed. “I’m-a save the rest,” she said. “Can I comb your hair?”

“What?”

The child reached to touch Ivy’s ponytail – not pulling, just feeling the hair with her fingers. “Let me comb your hair. Please!”

“I don’t have a comb.” Ivy gently took Tina’s hand away. She didn’t like anyone to fuss with her hair, had resisted her mother’s combing, then let it grow so she wouldn’t have to go to a beauty parlor. She disliked even the rasping sound of Chuck’s hand in her hair when he petted her head. “Does it look messy?”

“I just like to comb hair,” Tina said. “Jane always lets me comb her hair. I bet she has a comb. Jane!” Jane was on her knees eye-level with Kelvin, her back to them, her braid hanging down her back. Ivy could see Kelvin’s round serious face, striped with

tears and dirt. “Jane!” Tina called again. Jane turned around. “Don’t I always comb your hair real nice?”

“Yep, you do.” Jane smiled. “But not now. I promised your brother I’d ..”

“Ivy don’t have a comb,” Tina said. “I want to do hers.”

“Oh. Well, mine’s in my purse,” Jane said. She rocked back onto her heels and got up, scooping the baby out of Ivy’s lap and reaching for Kelvin’s hand. They headed toward the swings.

Tina extracted a small black comb from Jane’s purse and reached for Ivy’s ponytail. “Yours is even straighter than Jane’s.”

“Hers is longer, though,” Ivy said, jerking her head away without really meaning to. “You have pretty hair,” she said to Tina. “Nice and thick.” Tina’s hair was tightly wound into five short braids, one above each ear, two at the back, one atop her head.

“My hair’s nappy, hurts when you comb it,” Tina said. “I want it long and smooth, like yours.” Her gentle fingers, her wistful triangular face – large eyes, sharp little chin – melted the last of Ivy’s resistance.

“Here,” she said, ripping the elastic from her ponytail. “Don’t yank, okay?”

“Okay,” Tina said, settling onto her knees at Ivy’s back. Ivy felt the teeth of the little comb pull at her scalp and winced. She owed this. And indeed the little girl was careful, stroking the hair back, making a part. Ivy sat still, feeling virtuous, hating it.

“Time to go?” Jane returned with the baby asleep on her shoulder, Kelvin jumping at her side.

“Did you see how high I went on that swing?” he asked.

“You got Jane to push you,” Tina said. “Just let me do this a little longer.”

“I think we should go,” Ivy said. She couldn’t move; Tina held a clump of her hair firmly in her fist to comb out the ends. “We’ve got to pick up your mother, then take you all home, and I’ve got to go downtown.” She wanted the teeth out of her hair; wanted suddenly to get away from these children – had she thought them sweet?

“What you doing downtown?” Tina asked. “You could take me with you.”

“I’m picking up my boyfriend.”

“Woo-woo,” both children hooted, almost in unison.

“You in *love*?” Tina asked.

“I guess so,” Ivy said. This admission seemed to please them a lot.

“What’s his name?”

“Chuck.”

They rollicked back to the car, telling little stories about Ivy and her boyfriend.

“Oh, *Chuck*. Oh, Mr. Woodchuck, oh Ivy and her Mr. Woodchuck in *love*. He say, I love yoooo, Miss Ivy.” The car was sweltering after an hour in the sun. Ivy ignored Tina and Kelvin as they climbed into the back. She started too quickly, stalled, and had to start again before she could drive back up Liberty Boulevard. The children were singing a Motown love song. Jane tried to get them interested in the cars they passed, challenged Tina to read signs, but they kept returning to the story of Ivy and a fat, hairy woodchuck. She drove intently. The baby began to cry.

While Jane ran into the hospital to get Dora, Ivy had to wait with the Tina and Kelvin. Tired of the woodchuck tease, they pestered her with questions – When you taking us to the zoo? How about Disneyland? Yes! We going to Disneyland! Why not?

You stingy! Ivy's responses did no good; they wanted to attack her, get her flustered.

"You know what? Ivy got witch hair," Kelvin told Tina.

"She look like Morticia in the Addams family," Tina said. "You *are* Morticia, that's who you are. You playing around with Ghoulardi, cheating on Mr. Woodchuck."

Ivy whipped around and glared at them. "Stop it, you guys! Right now!"

They laughed. "Woo, she getting mad," Kelvin said.

"We blowed her cover," Tina said. "She don't want to be caught cheating on her boyfriend with Mr. Ghoulardi." They began to sing the Addams family theme song.

Ivy turned on the Pontiac's radio, loud, to a station playing jitterbug music. "Hello Mary Lou." At least the kids agreed it was an awful song; they stormed the front seat and attacked the radio. Ivy grabbed a wrist of each child; they squirmed and protested, "You *mean*, Morticia!" The radio squawked up and down as they rotated the dial, trying to find music they wanted to hear.

"Tell me what station you want," Ivy said. A concession.

Kelvin kept twisting the dial. They didn't want music, they were trying to get her angry, and yes, she was angry, she was ready to hit them. How had she come to this? What had she done?

Over the steering wheel she saw Jane with baby Leatha on her hip, and next to her a tall black woman wearing a blue sheath dress. "There's Mama!" Kelvin cried. He and Tina clambered into the back seat. Dora climbed in to sit between them. "You been polite to this lady?" She had Tina's large eyes and pointed chin; her figure was long-limbed and thick in the middle, her hair pulled to the back of her head.

Jane settled into the passenger seat with the baby snuggled on her shoulder.

On either side of their mother, the children were quieter than they'd been all afternoon. "You had fun in the park," Dora said. It was an order, not a question.

"Yes, Mama." Both said it. Instantly obedient children.

"That's good," said Dora. "Now let's go home. Your grandmommy's doing better; you're going to visit her tomorrow."

"Mommy, Tina made a joke on Ivy," Kelvin said. "Called her Morticia."

"That's not nice, Tina," said Dora.

"Kelvin did too," Tina protested. "We was playing."

"Yeah, I know how you children play. You say you're sorry?" They sat quiet. Ivy wondered if she should say, *Never mind, it was just a game*. "Why're you mumbling like that?" Dora's voice rose in pitch. "Let me hear it: we're sorry, Ivy."

"Sorry, Miss Ivy." Kelvin's voice.

"We're sorry," Tina said.

"Now you thank Ivy for taking you to the park, for playing with you."

"Thank you, Ivy," Tina said. And Kelvin said, "Thank you very *much*!"

Jane glanced up at Ivy and smiled. "Morticia," she said. "Those kids."

"They turned on me," Ivy told Jane, after they'd delivered Dora with her three children to their Glenville house and driven a few more blocks to the Movement office. "Why did they do that? It's like they ganged up on me, all of a sudden."

"They could see it really bothered you," Jane said. "That made it even more satisfying."

"But I'm not the person they should be attacking."

“Why not? You’re big, you’re white. They got the same rage as everybody else. They just don’t have as many targets. You can’t take it personally.”

“Easier said than done.”

“You need practice, that’s all.”

As if you could learn to take torment from small black children the way you learned a sport. Ivy wasn’t good at sports, either. She felt ugly and racist, thinking of those little monkey-hands, those voices that knew just where to aim their barbed spears.

“I need some names,” she told Jane. “People in charge of finances for PPC.”

“Look in these newsletters,” Jane said. “I guess you didn’t get that far when you looked before.”

Two weeks ago she’d been thrilled about the chance to work for the PPC. “I didn’t know what to look for then,” Ivy said. But all the signs had been there: she’d been working for Shapiro, not the PPC. And Shapiro worked for himself. She laid the newsletters flat on the desk, one from SCLC, one from SNCC.

Jane ran her finger down an article. “They keep changing staff, but these guys are probably still there.” She indicated the names.

Ivy copied them and shoved the scrap of paper into her purse. This was how a spy must feel – inhibited and scared. Guilty for having missed clues.

She drove downtown through hot wind, wishing she could go to her old dorm room, quiet, clean, private, wishing she could put on her favorite album right here in the car and listen to “Tom Thumb’s Blues” – that lovely orchestration and Judy Collins’s honey-voice singing Dylan’s song of dissipation, failure and betrayal. The clock at the corner of ninth and Euclid said fifteen minutes past five; she should be able to find Chuck

between his bank and the bus stop. He liked to go to the library on the way; she'd drive there first. She had liked those children. It hurt to have them turn on her. What had she done? How did one practice taking it?

Against the public library was a statue of a lady who seemed to be languidly pulling at the bodice that had slipped off her shoulders and was about to uncover her breasts. She had been white marble, was now gray. Next door was a bronze statue of a giant young man with a crew cut wearing a cave-man skin which showed his huge muscular legs and arms; his eyes were wide, as if he were startled to find himself in downtown Cleveland without enough clothes. The city had a population of giants who watched from their pedestals as the twentieth century walked by. All the giants were white people; all the cultural garden statues were white people. Her time at the playground made these statues seem whiter, more imposing and sinister.

But it had been a good afternoon. Hadn't it? The children told their mother they'd had fun, chorused, "Thank you Ivy, Thank you Jane." The thing was settled, wasn't it? Ivy felt polluted in a way she didn't understand – and couldn't tell Chuck, who trotted down the library steps, his jacket and tie over one arm. He saw the car, then recognized it, then saw her behind the wheel. He came to her window.

"I filled it up," she said. "Thought it needed to be driven."

"Let's go dancing," he said, reaching for the keys. "Right now. I'll drive."

July 9, 1968

"I'm just curious," Ivy began, the next day, setting Mr. Shapiro's coffee on his desk. She put her own coffee on the other desk. He'd paid for it – "You fly I'll buy," he'd said. She was wearing new panti-hose and her cream-colored sling-back pumps.

“Curiosity can get you in trouble,” Shapiro said, and winked. Shapiro’s winks were more frequent than Ivy’s father’s – which meant *This is a joke. Get it?* Shapiro winked to be friendly, though *disarming* might be a better word. But after several weeks of winks from Shapiro, Ivy had begun to feel the menace underneath: he didn’t only mean *I’m friendly*, but *I’m lying* and sometimes, *I’m angry*.

She decided today she’d take the wink at face value and press her questions. “How come you decided to do this – raise funds for the National Poor People’s Campaign?”

“It was after King was murdered. I thought, what can *I* do to help?” He sighed virtuously, swallowed a little coffee, and settled his bulk behind the desk. “There but for fortune and all that. Same reason you got involved.”

“I needed a summer job,” Ivy said.

“Yeah, but you’re a talented young lady. You could have worked anywhere. You chose this because you care.” He was adding more sugar to his coffee, not looking at her. “You have a sense of purpose.” He sounded sincere.

“Thank you,” Ivy said. Of course she cared. That’s why she was determined to understand the finances, as Chuck advised. “How long do you intend to keep raising funds, now that the PPC’s winding down? Whom are you in touch with about future plans?”

“Several people,” Shapiro leveled his dark eyes at her face over the rim of the Styrofoam cup. Eyes the color of beef gravy, the skin around them gray. With his mouth hidden, he looked haunted. “Ralph Abernathy, of course.”

“Of course.” Ivy nodded. But not likely. “Abernathy’s the spokesperson,” she said. “Someone else handles the nuts and bolts. Whom do you send checks to?”

“You’re a smarty-pants, aren’t you?” He got up. “You don’t need to know in order to manage the office.”

“I have to talk to people on the phone. They want to know specifically where the money is going.”

“And you tell them it’s going to help poor people. Tell them about poor people. You’ve got all the statistics.” He winked.

“I could tell them the money goes to Bernard Lafayette,” Ivy said. Lafayette, according to her paper scrap, was the PPC national coordinator. “But if they checked him out, they’d learn he’s lost three million dollars.” Shapiro’s face was red; if he’d been a pressure cooker, he’d have just begun to hiss.

She could hear the voices of the two college girls phoning in the other room. “Sorry to bother you, thanks very much,” said one. The other was having better luck. “Ten dollars? ... Okay, five, then. Shall I send someone out to pick up a check?”

Shapiro glowered. “I sure hope she gets more than five dollars to pick up,” he muttered. He rolled his chair back and stood up. “You’d better stop asking questions and get on the phone, Ivy, line up some bigger checks. I don’t have time for your curiosity.”

“Of course,” Ivy said. She scampered into the phone room and settled at a desk. Most likely Shapiro was holding onto the money – barely possible that he did want to help and would send it to SCLC in a lump – especially if she pushed him to send the money to Rutherford, executive director.

She wished she could talk to Chuck, but she didn't know the the phone number of his bank. She'd meant to ask. She'd meant to do many things – call Aunt Peg. Write to her parents. Contact Bradley Wells about draft resistance plans for the Spock rally next weekend. She had a letter from Gail, who wanted to share an off-campus apartment in the fall, and she didn't know what to write back. She didn't know what to do about this job.

Six hang-ups and ten no-homes. Then someone gave her scripture – “The poor you will always have with you” – in a reassuring voice, as though “the poor” had to be kept that way to fulfill some kind of duty to God. Then came a ten dollar donation.

And for some reason she didn't want to tell Mr. Shapiro, even though she knew he'd be eager to go after checks: his car was air-conditioned; the office was not. She heard him offer to buy Cokes for the girls if they'd pick up his Reuben sandwich. The two girls left, and Ivy kept calling, doggedly; no one was home, no one was home. She counted telephone rings – and still she couldn't shake off her shame, because she knew what Shapiro was doing, had known from the beginning, and still she'd played along because she wanted the job. She wanted to dress up and get bright ideas, be called a smart aleck and a talented young lady. Yet even right now, dialing another Pepper Pike phone number, counting the rings, two, three, four – she knew she was part of the scam, wanting not only the money but the title that sounded good: office manager, fundraiser for Dr. King's campaign, for the Poor who would always be with us because what would we do without them? We'd have to beg for ourselves. Plead for mercy.

“Hello?” A woman's voice answered on the sixth ring. Quavery. An old lady had taken a long time to come to the phone.

“Oh! I've got the wrong number,” Ivy said. “I'm so sorry.”

“Never mind, dear,” the voice said.

Ivy hung up. She *was* sorry. Her ear and her palm were hot from clutching the phone.

“I’m going to get some lunch,” she told Shapiro, handing him the name and the address where he could pick up the last ten dollar check.

She could have given him a bogus address, she realized, in the coffee shop where her fellow phone callers were dawdling over milkshakes. She could have called the ten-dollar donor back and said, “Don’t do this, okay?” She ordered a Coke and sat down with her coworkers.

“We’re quitting,” said one. “We’re not getting paid enough to be yelled at over the phone for eight hours a day.”

“We thought you’d tell Shapiro for us,” the other said. “We don’t want to go back into that office. He’s slimy.” It was simple for these two girls, who were from the West Side; they went to Baldwin-Wallace. For them it wasn’t about the issues, just about how they were treated.

“You could blame it on my parents,” one girl suggested.

“Mine too,” the other said.

“I can tell him,” Ivy said. He wasn’t there when she returned to the office, so she put the Reuben on his desk and set herself to organizing the phone lists. She heard his heavy step on the stair and finished before she went to tell him they’d lost two more workers. He was looking out of the window, leaning with one hand on the frame.

“Money’s gone,” he said.

“You sent it to SCLC?”

“Stolen,” he said. “One of those college boys. The older one.”

“The guy who raised seventy seven dollars in one day,” Ivy said.

“Yeah.” Shapiro rubbed his neck with a fat diamond-ringed hand. “We’d raised four thousand three hundred and twenty eight dollars. I was shooting for five. I wanted to send Ralph Abernathy a five thousand dollar check. And you know damn well he would have known exactly what to do with it.” He sounded hurt – all that good work down the drain. His face and shoulders drooped.

“What are you going to do now?” Ivy asked. How had the thief gotten the bank to give him the money? Shapiro wouldn’t have left it around in a cash box. Would he?

“Raise more,” he shrugged. “Call the *P.D.* and the *Press*, will you? I’m putting another ad in. Call it ‘Charity, Unlimited,’ this time. Nice name, you think?” He winked.

“Right now?” To keep herself from laughing or crying (she wasn’t sure which) she had to believe in Mr. Shapiro for one last time. It was just barely possible that what he’d just said was honest – or close to honest. His ads – “You can earn \$100 a week” – were not honest, however, and she would not call the papers.

He must have seen her refusal coming, the clouds of suspicion. “Never mind,” he said. “I shouldn’t have asked you. I was wishing I didn’t have to tell you – but with that money gone, I can’t afford to keep paying you.”

“Oh,” she said. “So I’m fired?”

“Call it laid off. Happens to the best of us. You’ll turn out fine. You’re a smart cookie. I’ll write you a reference, any time.”

“Thanks,” Ivy said. “I may need one.” They shook hands before she left; his hand was wet. They’d parted on good terms. There was some value to that, wasn’t there? If

she'd simply quit, like the two college girls, she would have vanished in his mind. Now she would stay there, in some form. She wished she knew what he really thought.

She took the bus up Euclid and got out near the art museum lagoon.

"Fundamental change," she said, to ground herself, as she balanced along the narrow white marble ridge next to the sidewalk. Poverty should be eliminated entirely. No one should have to beg. King and Abernathy hadn't intended their campaign to be about pleas for money, but that's all that was left. Give us money.

I'll give you revolution, Ivy promised.

She'd ask Kreb for more hours at the Big Penny, hopefully during the day. Let him yell at her for being generous with pickles, cream, or Tabasco sauce. He couldn't stop her from caring about people. She walked around the fountain, which spouted water over naked white marble giants, their bodies entwined in passion that managed to not be sexual. Two black children, both girls, ran past. Their mother sauntered behind, carrying a bag of cheap white bread. The white giants might have been invisible. They were going down to the lagoon to feed the pigeons, the goldfish, or the ducks, if there were any. Ivy considered running down to find out who was getting the bread. She considered taking off her shoes so she could wade in the fountain by the marble statues. She thought better of both impulses, and turned to go. She could go anywhere she pleased.

Freedom stopped her in her tracks; she didn't know where to go next.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Eight

July 13, 1968

Chuck stood alone in the afternoon heat, surrounded by people he didn't know. In the distance, beyond the forest of posters on sticks, Arthur Cohen was introducing Dr. Benjamin Spock. "We are your children!" Arthur cried into the microphone. Interesting that Arthur got to do the intro, rather than Bradley Wells, head of local draft resistance. Maybe Arthur had taken Spock's child development class at Western Reserve. Spock looked incredibly cool, crossing the podium in his navy blue pinstripe suit, with a high stiff collar and a choking necktie, smiling with his even teeth: the living image of civilization. He didn't know much about blacks or Mexican farmworkers – but then, he didn't pretend to know. "War is not healthy for children and other living things," said the banner behind the podium. Inane, but you couldn't argue with it.

What Chuck couldn't see was Ivy. She'd gone shopping with her aunt in the morning and arranged to meet him at the rally; she should have been here by now. The crowd filled a whole quadrant of Public Square, with its collective back to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. In his Boston-Brahmin voice, Spock said that he hardly knew the other draft resistance leaders before the trial. But the conspiracy charges stuck anyway. He was facing ten years in prison and cheerful about it.

Chuck kept his eyes on his feet to avoid stepping on other people's – a lot of bare toes in sandals – till he got to the sidewalk where he could breathe. A few spindly trees cast shade. "Illegal, immoral, and unwinnable!" Spock was saying. Jane Revard, hugging a pile of the flyers Chuck had written, broke from the group nearest the platform and sprinted across the street to hand them out near the Terminal Tower. Bradley was talking to Arthur. No Ivy.

Stuck out here at the edge: that was Chuck. Ivy thought he should be more involved with the draft resistance. "Your little private correspondence with the Cincinnati draft board isn't doing enough," she'd said. "You know they've stopped reading your letters." She had a point, so he'd helped with the flyers. His biggest objection to Cleveland draft resistance was Bradley, who acted like a star in his own movie and treated Ivy like the dumb ingenue, chucking her under the chin, patting his knees so she'd perch on his lap. She did, too, for almost an hour with Bradley's knee poking through her legs, while Chuck wrote all the words for the flyer. Bradley drew the peace symbol, ran the mimeograph machine, and acted like he'd done the whole thing.

Cleveland Draft Resistance was also full of law students, pissed that their deferments had been revoked, focused on their "right" not to serve. Privately Chuck wasn't sure anyone should be exempt, even guys with epilepsy and bad vision, even homosexuals. The problem wasn't the draft, it was war. With the Bomb, as Spock was saying, no nation could win a war.

One of the officers at the savings & loan liked to quote Curtis Le May: *Bomb them back to the stone age*. Chuck wanted to point out that they'd all be lucky to live in a stone age, once the atomic bombing started, but he'd kept his mouth shut so far, and

made nice complimenting tellers on their hairstyles, encouraging customers' hunger for their own shops and restaurants, their own houses, their own, their own, their own ... Chuck spat, *phooey*, caught his chewing gum in his hand, stuck the wad in a trash can, wiped his hand on his jeans. Odd to be wearing jeans in Public Square. After spending most of the week in Oxford wing tips, his feet hurt in sneakers. Loss of support. His weak arches were getting weaker. Flat feet could get you a 4F exemption.

Bring the troops home, the crowd was chanting; Spock's fingers were raised in a V-sign, and then Bradley Wells was at the podium, shouting *Hell no we won't go!* From behind came other words – *Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh!* A small contingent raised clenched fists and a Viet Cong flag. Chuck saw Bert and then Jimmy, one arm in a red-bandanna sling, his mouth howling *NLF is gonna win!*

"You don't end war by changing sides," Chuck muttered, in case anyone cared what he thought. He kicked at a pop can on the sidewalk, then picked it up and hurled it into the trash barrel. The chanting died down. Benjamin and Lisa took the podium with their guitars – "Blowin in the Wind" again. Chuck wished he'd stayed home reading Frantz Fanon, with a wet towel around his neck and the fan blowing his way. He hated having to wait for Ivy to find him.

He saw Sheldon's brown head sticking out of the crowd. Chuck and Sheldon had had several conversations at night in the Movement office while Ivy worked at the Big Penny. She'd signed up to work nearly every night after she dropped the fund raising job. She and Chuck didn't talk about how they'd both been scammed this summer, though Chuck sometimes wished he'd broken Geoff's nose – a pug, the nostrils two dots in his face, more prominent than his little pale eyes.

Ivy didn't seem to mind waiting tables from four to midnight three days in a row. Chuck woke up as she came to bed, put an arm around her and fell back to sleep; in the morning she was curled around her pillow. They were living together, all right – her laundry was mixed with his; her Grape Nuts stood in the cupboard next to his Cheerios. But he'd imagined long talks interspersed with love making. That's what he wished for today. He was sick of the same old bad-mood noises in his head.

He wasn't lonely like Sheldon, who said he didn't know what it would mean not to be lonely. "Ralph Ellison's invisible man could've been my twin," Sheldon said, "except then there'd be two of us." He liked to talk about books – *The Prophet*, *Cat's Cradle*, *One-dimensional Man* – and practically begged Chuck to read *Black Skin, White Mask*. Sheldon liked to go to coffeehouses; he listened to Baez and Judy Collins. Right now he was intent on Lisa, who was singing "Universal Soldier."

Nothing fully explained Sheldon's isolation. He worked as a keypunch operator and lived with his mother, a former actress at the Karamu theatre. His father was a musician in Europe. Sheldon couldn't seem to break out. In the Movement office he was set apart, the exotic black man. "Why not get involved with your own people?" Chuck asked once.

"Which people?" Sheldon responded. "Why are they *mine*? I don't like Motown or gospel, have no interest in wearing dashikis, don't approve of the Afro Set." Lisa was singing "Thirsty Boots," and Sheldon was singing along: "The dirty words, the muddy cells will soon be judged in shame." He saw Chuck, waved, and made his way over. "Hello, Brother, what is happening?" Sheldon enunciated the words, using Spock's Brahmin voice.

Chuck laughed. "Heat, humidity, and filth," he said.

"Tell me something I don't know." Sheldon returned to his own voice. "Someone should put bottles of water in vending machines. We could pour them over our heads."

"I liked your idea of the bookstore with coffee and opium better," Chuck said. The new-business-scheme game had begun when Chuck revealed his half-baked fantasy that Sheldon would apply for a loan so they could charge the savings & loan with racism. Sheldon had a new idea every time they met.

A jug band was doing "Fixin'-to-die Rag," and the crowd had begun to sway, joining in on the chorus. "Whoopee! we're all gonna die." Sheldon clapped softly, turning his slender, long-fingered hands from one side to the other. He was admirable; it took guts to live so lonely. Chuck himself needed people. Unthinkable, for example, to lose Ivy. It occurred to him that Sheldon might be homosexual. Then he rejected the idea.

"I'm supposed to meet my girlfriend," he said to Sheldon, and sought out the cluster of people near the platform. Spock was nowhere in sight. Jimmy stood next to Bert, who carried the NLF flag, red on top, blue on the bottom, yellow star in the middle. Bradley Wells bent his neck and shoulders to talk with someone short.

Ivy. Bradley leaned into her, stroking her cheek with his thumb, drawing her face up to his. Their foreheads bumped as Chuck landed next to them. Bradley dropped his hands and stood up with a condescending smile.

"Where you been?" Chuck put his arm across Ivy's shoulders and pulled her to his side. She resisted his hug.

"Looking for you," she said. He held her tight.

“Not very hard,” Chuck said. “I was right there.” He thumbed over his shoulder toward Sheldon. Bradley sprang to the microphone and said something about the next meeting of the draft resistance group. The crowd wasn’t listening; they were breaking up.

“Let’s go home,” Chuck took Ivy’s hand. “What was that about?”

“What was what about?” She was watching traffic. At the first gap between cars she leapt off the curb and pulled him with her.

“Is it against your principles to take a few steps to the corner and cross with the light?” He wasn’t really asking. She smirked at him from the curb. “You were flirting with Bradley Wells,” he said. “What’s *that* about?”

“Oh, he’s just fun that way,” Ivy said. “Doesn’t mean anything. The man’s married. He’s a father. Come on.” She walked ahead among the Saturday pedestrians.

“It does mean something,” Chuck said, catching up to her. “You were about to kiss him in public.”

“Next time I’ll kiss him in private, okay? What are you being stuffy for? I sleep with you every night. Isn’t that enough?”

No, Chuck thought. It’s not. But if he said that, Ivy would ask what more he wanted, and he wouldn’t be able to answer. “You’re supposed to kiss *me* in public,” he said. They were under the Halle’s canopy, about to go into the Terminal Tower. A block away the preacher raised his red face to the sky, his voice a faint sing-song in the noisy air. Ivy pressed against Chuck as he kissed her; he felt her breasts, her thighs, the rich triangle between them. He drank her lips open and touched her tongue with his. She must have felt him hardening; she pushed him away and took a breath.

“Okay,” she said, breathing out. “I’m in love with you. Let’s go home to bed.”

They entered the terminal, arms wrapped around each other. “So, have you kissed Bradley Wells?”

“No,” Ivy said. “But if I did, would that be so bad? Exclusive relationships are part and parcel of the bourgeois system, right?”

He knew that argument; guys said it all the time. They’d heard Tessa’s Marxist analysis of bourgeois marriage: woman as her husband’s property, analogous to workers as companies’ property – both ruthlessly exploited. But the correct political line was one thing; commitment between real people was another. “You’re avoiding the issue.”

“What issue?”

“I don’t trust Bradley Wells.” He had a terrible urge to rush Ivy into a corner, savage her, drill himself into her against the marble walls. They bought Rapid Transit tickets, and he was glad to let his erection subside as they ran for the train and slid into a seat. It occurred to him to ask her right now to marry him – a non-bourgeois marriage. She’d ask what that would be like, and he’d admit he didn’t know.

He’d also have to admit to a cowardly wish to appease his folks. The letter had come yesterday, from his mother. His sister Bonnie had let the living arrangement slip out. “I’m sorry to say we are very disappointed,” Mom wrote. “I only hope that next time you come home, you’ll bring Ivy as your bride.” His mother, the forgiving one, had made it impossible for him to go home unless he was at least engaged.

He’d torn up the letter, angry at Bonnie for leaking the information, angry at how he couldn’t explain in any way his mother would understand.

“Kissing is nice,” Ivy said. “It’s harmless. They say that during the love-ins at Golden Gate Park, everyone was kissing everyone else.” She seemed to be studying her

hand on the chrome bar next to their seat. “Girls kissed girls, guys kissed guys. I love kissing.” She turned and kissed Chuck sweetly.

He felt a little sick, an effect of the image of “guys kissing guys” that had flashed through his head. He shouldn’t feel that way. If a man was queer – if that was Sheldon’s problem, for example (for an awful split-second, Chuck was aware of Sheldon’s huge round lips) – then the correct thing, the kind, generous thing, was to wish him acceptance and a lover.

He wished he could be as sure of things as Ivy was. She sat forward on the grimy blue plastic seat, staring through the window. Old wooden houses with steep roofs rattled past above the embankment. A rusty bridge loomed overhead. She wore a bright yellow dress splashed with white and green flowers. Some time in the spring all her skirts had become shorter and brighter; this dress ended near the tops of her thighs. He put his hand on her bare knee. She patted his hand, but she didn’t look at him. “Too hot?” he asked.

“Aunt Peg wants us to go to Kelley’s Island with her,” she said.

“It’d be nice.” Kelley’s Island was rocky and surrounded by Lake Erie. Chuck knew nothing else about it. “It’d be even nicer if we could find a couple of days when neither of us is working.”

“I know.” Ivy slumped back in the seat. “I wanted to sign up for as many days as possible and get a weekend off. But Tammy gets first pick of the schedule. It’s only fair. She’s been there longer than me, and she has kids.”

“You could add more hours on the weekend; I’d quit my job, you’d support both of us, and we’d have the whole week off.”

“Yeah right.” She didn’t believe him.

“I mean it,” Chuck said. “I hate that job.”

“No you don’t.”

“You’ve never even set foot inside the savings & loan.” She could be so wrong about what she was sure of.

“You polish your shoes a lot. You smile when you’re getting dressed in the morning,” she said. “I know you like air conditioning. And your stories about the other people are ...” She hunted for the word in her mind: “affectionate.” They were riding through the bottom of a man-made canyon lined with trash and bedraggled vines. Ivy smiled. “It’s okay,” she said. “I understand it’s a secret you like the job.”

“No,” Chuck insisted. “I really do hate it. Because ...” he blurted what he just now realized, “because it *pulls* at me. I know how the tellers and the loan officers want me to behave, and I do it without thinking. I’ve tried to stop, but I can’t. I want – no, I *need* – people to like me. I need to like them.” He hated the loan officers, junior and senior, their pompous doughy necks stuffed into their buttoned-up collars. Yet he’d skim *Reader’s Digest* in the magazine racks at the Terminal Tower, memorizing one or two jokes they might laugh at. He was a pal to the head teller, a woman who should have his job. He complimented her clothes; she complimented his; that was their rapport. “It’s a dilemma,” he said.

Ivy sat back and leaned against him. “What you are, is *ambivalent*. I love that word. There’s our stop.”

They had a twenty-minute walk to the apartment and a half-hour before she had to work. “I’ll come to the Big Penny tonight,” he said. “I’ll have a vanilla milkshake.”

“Okay.” Then she looked at him warily. “You don’t need to.”

“I want to.” Now he’d revealed his messed-up feelings, he wanted to be near Ivy.

“I thought you were going to the Movement office.”

“First I’ll go to the office, then I’ll come to the Big Penny. What’s wrong?”

“You’re acting like you don’t trust me.” They were climbing the staircase of The Monmouth; her voice echoed in the stairwell. Till this moment, he hadn’t thought of not trusting her.

“How does wanting to be with you get to be not trusting you?” he asked. “What’s going on the Big Penny that you don’t want me to know about?” Bradley, he thought.

“Come see for yourself,” Ivy said, hopping from one foot to the other while he fiddled with the lock. The key never fit right; you had to jiggle it one way and the other, then jiggle the door before you could get the bolt to slide back. “I get the bathroom first,” she said. He opened the door.

Chuck felt good about some of the chaos – newspapers and coffee cups on the table by the window; the tangle of sheets, books, and india-print on the bed. He liked the crayon-drawing taped to the refrigerator – from Tina, a child Ivy had spent time with. But some of it – the sink full of food-crusted dishes; the dirty clothes strewn on the rug, half under the bed, near the bathroom door – was depressing. “We’re supposed to live in squalor,” Ivy had said. She never cleaned house. Chuck sat on the bed and kicked off his sneakers. He wanted her with him. So what if she was one of the thirteen dozen women Bradley Wells flirted with? He could hear her in the bathroom, waiting for the water to get hot so she could clean up for work. He trusted her; of course he trusted her. He would ask her to marry him, but not quite yet.

She came out dressed for work. He watched her yellow waitress skirt slide up her thighs as she bent to tie her sneakers. Then she was gone.

Chuck made himself a tuna sandwich and put it in a paper bag with an apple. They'd begun to count on his coming to the office in the evenings, answering the phone, talking with whoever was there. When he was alone he'd read the papers or write in a spiral-bound notebook he'd bought at the drugstore. He'd open the notebook, write "What's goin' down?" at the top of a page and then scribble about what he'd been reading, or the person who'd just left, or ideas that were bugging him. He'd recorded a whole conversation with Marvin. Last night he'd written about Bert – whose name turned out to be short for Robert. He'd been "Robby" until he got to Cleveland. "Robby" fit him better than "Bert," Chuck thought, though he would not say so. The guy was sensitive, a rooster lifting his neck-feathers at every imagined threat.

In the office Bert was talking to Jane, pacing, trailed by smoke from his cigarette. "There's an entrance by the nursing school," he said. "Another in the library basement. We walked around the stacks in the middle of the night, could've made off with a thousand books, if we'd had a way to carry them."

"And some use for them," Jane said. "Bert's discovered the steam tunnels under the Reserve campus," she told Chuck. "You ever been down there?"

Chuck shook his head and sat next to Jane, who swung from side to side in the desk chair. He took out his sandwich, unwrapped the wax paper, offered her half. She smiled and took it. Funny, how Jane's face turned pretty when she smiled.

"You could live down there, man," Bert said, "and stay undiscovered for weeks, as long as you had food. Students have stashed mattresses in the corners. The hard part is

crossing Euclid Avenue; you have to climb down an iron ladder; the iron burns your hands. He dramatized with his hands and shoulders. "You can hear traffic way overhead."

"I'll check it out, in case I ever need a hiding place," Chuck said. He was intrigued to find out what it was like underneath the city. But he felt hidden too much of the time as it was – this afternoon at the rally, for example.

"People work there, right? On maintenance and stuff," Jane said. "You couldn't hide from them. Why are they called steam tunnels?" She picked up the ringing phone. "Yeah," she said, "in a few minutes. Chuck's here; he can take over. See you." She hung up. "That was Marvin. We're going over there. He's got food, so I won't eat yours." She looked at Bert, meaning something she wouldn't say because Chuck was here.

He took a bite of his sandwich. Right now he needed neither hunger nor rejection. He'd been looking forward to a discussion that could help him analyze his dilemmas. The draft. The job. Bourgeois relationships. He should have known better than to hope.

"You're looking at me that way because of the fuck-head informant," Bert said to Jane. "You thirsty?" he asked Chuck. He opened the basement door, and Chuck remembered seeing a full case of pop at the bottom of the stairs.

"Yes. Bring me one, will you?" Chuck said. Bert left.

"Informant, huh?" Chuck said. Jane was scribbling with a ball-point pen which had run out of ink. She opened the desk drawer and rummaged for another.

"Okay," she said. "I'm just practicing containment; we know it's not you. My mother got a report from the FBI about my subversive influences; you're one of them."

"I am? Why?"

“You’re president of the Cleveland State SDS,” Jane said. “We can’t meet in the office – too many people coming and going – so we need you to keep it open.”

“I thought there might be a discussion of the rally.” Chuck felt much better – he was pegged as an “influence,” and “subversive” – as if he’d been promoted.

“We’re talking about Chicago, mostly. You don’t have an extra pen, do you?” She shouldered her purse. It had once been the kind of high-class bag advertised in *The New Yorker*. Now the leather was worn, ink-stained purple on one corner, the zipper broken; the strap had broken too and been knotted back together.

He shook his head. He’d found his cheap Scrip cartridge pen in a gutter near the campus library. To keep it from leaking he’d wrapped it in masking tape, and it wrote beautifully. Now that he knew he was a subversive influence, he wished Jane and Bert would leave. When he was alone he could write.

“Here you are,” Bert plopped the Nehi on the desk. “I took a few swigs. But I don’t have too many cooties. Come on.” They whisked out the front door.

Chuck took out his notebook and pen. “What’s goin’ down?” he wrote. He took a sip of orange pop and wrote “Plenty.” Then he kept on writing; when the evening light couldn’t reach the murky back of the office, he moved to the big stuffed chair in front. He was writing about how men feel about women. “We call her a score,” he wrote. He’d never use that word for Ivy. Yet, settling into his flunky’s desk in the mornings, he’d picture her dark hair spread across his pillow; he’d imagine her naked, propped on one elbow reading in bed – and his heart would lift as it had when he’d won the Young Cincinnati award in high school for his essay, “Ask What We Can Do for Our Country.” He’d watch Junior walk by and think, If you saw Ivy, you’d envy me.

He couldn't just buy her a ring; she'd tell him to quit wasting money. She was inviolable. He wrote "Ivy, inviolable" and thought maybe it should be "inviolat^e." There was a difference, but he wasn't sure what it was; there should be a dictionary in the office. So many things should be in this office that weren't. A television, for example, would be nice.

"I've no desire to possess you," he wrote. He would write her a letter to explain exactly how he felt. "I am yours as you are mine – perhaps more. We have formed an inviolable entity. A single *us*." No one had the right to violate their love, least of all Bradley Wells. "I love you best in all the world," he wrote.

Chuck put his empty Nehi bottle back in the crate next to Bert's NLF flag. Sure, the Viet Cong were on the right side, and it felt nasty to be American, the wrong side – which is why "What We Can Do for Our Country" had become ... what it had become: resist the draft and go to prison. Work for a group that demanded a democratic society and get spied on by the FBI. Investigate university contracts and uncover a ruling class hoarding wealth and power. So you work on overthrowing the system; that's what you do for your country. "How?" Chuck wrote. He'd heard the answer a hundred times, beginning with Malcolm X: "By any means necessary." You said those words softly, evenly, through clenched teeth.

The hard part was knowing what was necessary. Chuck leafed back through his notebook to the Marvin conversation. "Che said we have to build our jungle base," Marvin said. "But he never figured out how to do it; he was a physician with a Cuban accent, among Bolivian peasants. How could they trust him?" Marvin had sat cross-legged on the table, cocking his head to one side and squinting, and looking down his

nose through his glasses by turns. The new window had poured in afternoon light and made a halo of Marvin's blond curls – thin on top, ends caught in his collar. “The Chinese have a saying – may you be condemned to live in interesting times,” Marvin said. “That’s how I feel – condemned. This wasn’t how I’d planned my life when I left Zambia.”

“How did you plan your life?” Chuck had asked.

Marvin looked surprised to have to come up with words. “I guess ...” he started. Then, “ Well, for example, I had an idea of designing cheap houses, easy to build. You’d put up your own house – with really inexpensive materials – and other folks would help you. Then you’d help them build their houses.”

“Does anyone get to live there who’s no good at building?” Chuck’s last construction project was a house for Bonnie’s dog, when he was twelve. It had become a family joke.

“That was only one idea,” Marvin said. “I guess I want a life where we don’t have to fight all the time. I don’t like being an enemy of Congress or the police.”

“Interesting times,” Chuck wrote now, in the waning light, “are when it’s an honor to be pegged as subversive.” It was nine o’clock. “I want to record here how it is to be on the edge of a revolution. Not a coup d’etat as in Latin America” (had he spelled it correctly?) “but a complete change.” He drew a pyramid upside down. Then he drew a few bricks, scattered on the page. “We call it ‘revolution,’” he wrote, “knowing the Ten Days that Shook the World led to ten years of Stalin. Knowing nothing about what’s happening in China. What we mean by ‘revolution’ has never yet happened, anywhere.”

As to what might be happening *here*, in Cleveland, where he was guarding the office from its enemies ... Suppose the officers of the savings & loan found out he was on record with the FBI. They were not his enemies – but what if they decided he was *their* enemy? He put his fingers to his cheek and felt a coolness that seemed to come from the bones inside. He went to the back door and looked up and down the alley, gravel-strewn and weedy. The air was cooler than it had been during the day, but it warmed his hands. He went back inside and saw it was ten o'clock. No one would phone or come in on a Saturday night after ten. He could leave now for his vanilla milkshake.

July 14, 1968

Sunday morning, alone again, Chuck crossed the vacant lot behind The Monmouth. He had no particular destination. Ivy had welcomed him to the Big Penny with a milkshake and a large cheeseburger on her own tab. He'd given her his letter, they'd made love, and this morning they woke up early to read in bed. Even deep into *The Two Towers* Ivy kept touching him – squeezing his hand before she turned the next page, stroking with two fingers the soft sore spot on either side of his spine. He kept his book open with one hand, moved his other hand along her thigh to her knee and back, careful not to move his hand too much so he could concentrate on Fanon's neurotic Negro from the Antilles.

Then she had to rush to work, and all of a sudden the apartment was too small and cramped. Chuck liked to walk, especially in the mornings when the streets were empty, the light pale, the air still cool. Squeezing around a fence, rounding a corner, he found shade among big houses on Magnolia Drive.

Few of these houses were privately owned; they were too big and too close to the rotting heart of the city. But they were grand, old and sprawling, with dark bricks, complicated windows and heavy roofs. Except for great oaks and elms, the lawns were almost bare. Some had become fraternity houses – Pi Kappa Alpha, Zeta Beta Tau. One was the Music School Settlement; another was the Society of Friends.

Chuck had met a Quaker at a church camp when he was fifteen. Unbeknownst to his parents, the camp was rife with counselors who believed in Civil Rights and Ban the Bomb. For the first time Chuck had come across religions with access to truths he needed. He'd gone to a Quaker meeting where people sat in silence on metal folding chairs. After about fifteen minutes of soft noises – a sigh here and there; rustles of position-changing; a tiny grunt as someone pulled out a kleenex and wiped his nose – a man stood up and said a prayer. He asked for a way to live with fear so he could work in the most violent part of her city. Then he sat down. In the silence, everybody could think about what he'd said. Chuck liked that.

In front of the meeting house, a woman was watering the flower bed. She looked up and saw that he was standing at the end of the front walk, watching. "You seem to have a question for me," she said. Under her hat-brim, her eyes were wide, curious. Gray hair wisped her face and neck. "Do you study here?" She had a slight European accent.

"No," Chuck said. "I mean, not now. Can you tell me about being a pacifist?" He hadn't meant to start there; polite introductions should come first. But she responded as if she understood, and trusted him implicitly.

"You're probably thinking of conscientious objection," she said. "Pacifism is a practice, no? It takes a long time. But I'll loan you a little book." Her name was Mrs.

Nelson; she had come from Germany, right before the war. “The first Quakers I met helped me travel to America,” she told him. She gave him a pamphlet about Friends’ Meeting for Workshop and a CO Handbook, both plain, bound in gray. “Bring the handbook back when you’re done with it,” she said. “Someone else will need it. And come back for meeting, if you like. Eleven o’clock.”

“I’ll think about it,” Chuck said. It might do him good to pray silently for a way to live with his job till the end of the summer. Mrs. Nelson was like no one else he’d ever met, the opposite of an enemy. She trusted him to return the handbook. She’d offered to talk with him about being a CO. He hoped she wasn’t trying to get him to become a Quaker. He wondered how pacifism might be a practice.

He walked through the campus and sat on the Guilford House steps. Ivy’s dorm. But Ivy was flouncing around the Big Penny in her yellow dress, being adorable. Flirting was good for tips, she’d said. He poked at a crack in the gray paint. A fingernail-sized fleck peeled off, revealing a darker layer. He thought, I’m the one who made love to Ivy Barcelona till two in the morning. Three times, he’d come. He pictured how the tip of her tongue touched her upper lip while she wrote an order for biscuits and gravy, the neck of her dress open to a spot right between her breasts.

His mother would never flirt. When he was little she’d had long hair; dressed up with perfume and earrings, she was the most beautiful woman in the world. When she talked with men after church on Sundays, or at a Chrysler family picnic, she was shy. She’d let Granddad or some friend of Dad’s kiss her on the cheek; then she’d do a little closed-mouth laugh. Bonnie did not flirt either. She made wisecracks, and her laugh was hearty. She’d been a biochemistry major, and now she was at veterinary school, so she

palled around with guys. Chuck had met each of her three boyfriends exactly once, at family dinners where there was no flirting.

Sitting on Bradley Wells' lap was fun, Ivy said. When Bert furtively brushed his arm across her breast or patted her bottom, she'd smile as if he were a cat rubbing against her. "He likes me," she'd say. She simply refused to believe they meant anything more than fun or liking. She was inviolate.

He threaded his way through a parking lot and came out by the Church of the Covenant. Sober people, ladies in sturdy lace-up shoes, men in summer suits, children with excruciatingly neat hair and white socks were coming to early service, filing through the great church doors, under the round stained-glass window, the square tower with little points. Chuck could marry Ivy here. The Movement people would come, having spent so many hours in the basement making mimeographs. Ivy could wear a flower wreath. He imagined a procession under embroidered banners – *A true revolutionary is guided by feelings of love; Today is the first day of the rest of your life*; and that sentence he'd read this morning, by Frantz Fanon: "What is needed is to hold oneself, like a sliver, to the heart of the world." There was more he couldn't remember, but it ended with "stand up to the world." Which is what he wanted to get it together to do.

From the front of the church he saw Claude Foster Hall moving – a beige brick corner protruded into Euclid Avenue; a massive tractor roared and yes, it really was moving, a few feet at a time. Chuck walked toward the monstrosity, watching the workmen stop traffic and guide the tractor. Ivy must have fed these men breakfast. They called to each other in short barks, excited to be moving this thing that had never been meant to move. It had been lived in grudgingly, an unattractive monument to a rich man's

ego. Impossible not to feel awe, though, as the dorm came around at its snail-pace. Cars crawled carefully by. So many choices the developers had, to make a nice place for people to live, and *this* was what they'd chosen. Cleveland was a foolish city.

The sun was climbing, the day warming up. Chuck felt sweat at the back of his neck, on his temples, in his mustache. He wondered what exactly he could do, *to stand up to the world*. If he got run down by a car right now, in the middle of Euclid Avenue, his death would change nothing. A few people would be sad, but the world wouldn't have become any better – say, a place where Marvin could show people how to build their own inexpensive houses.

In revolution, one wins or dies. Not many people, even in revolutions, had the choice. Che was killed because he'd needed asthma medicine. How would Chuck die, if he could choose the way? Refusing induction, maybe. Rescuing Ivy from people with guns and dogs. Defending the office from an FBI raid. None of the situations convinced him. It would be better to live – hide out, if he must, in the Missouri woods; maybe he'd write a book.

“Chuck! Hey, Chuck – over here!” The voice was Tessa's. She stood on the Severance Hall staircase, waving. “I'm cleaning the steps in exchange for a pass to the symphony,” she explained, when he came close. She waved the handle of her big push-broom and he grabbed it; she let him pull her near. “They're doing Mahler and Dvorak next Thursday at Blossom Center,” she said. “I'm a sucker for those guys.”

The broom was wet; the steps above Tessa were wet. She'd scrubbed from the top down to where they stood. Her arms and legs were streaked with gray water, her hair tangled; a strand hung over her forehead between her close-set eyes, making her look

cross-eyed. Chuck took the lock between his thumb and fingers and tucked it behind her ear. Something about playing with the broom gave him permission to do that. Tessa smiled. Then she raised her arms over her head and stretched, turning her interlaced fingers inside out. The stretch raised the hem of her damp cotton shift almost to her crotch. "I like the mindless work," she said. "It's literally cool to spend a day in July with wet stone. And I get to go to the symphony." She wrinkled her forehead. "You don't know what that is, do you? It's heaven. Are you coming to the meeting this afternoon?"

Chuck had forgotten. He'd been counting on this afternoon with Ivy. Quaker Meeting would be out of the question. "Probably." Tessa's presumption annoyed him. *You don't know what the symphony is, you uncultured clod.* She could be superior even in a dirty dress, with messy hair, holding a wet broom. Her feet were dirty too. And she always turned him on, which made her even more annoying; he didn't want to be turned on. The meeting would be full of news and urgent actions. If he didn't go he'd learn later that he'd missed another seismic shift in the Movement.

They might mention him. Worse, they'd have no need to mention him.

"You don't have to come, of course," Tessa was smiling with one side of her mouth, as though she could see through to where he was stuffing his vanity into a garbage can, could see that he was aroused and annoyed. Her nipples showed under the damp cloth of her dress.

He reached out as if to touch her shoulder and say 'bye for now, but when he felt her hands on his waist, he reached across her shoulders, pulled her to him, and kissed her mouth. *Kissing is nice.* He heard Ivy's voice in his head as if to give him permission. But it was Tessa kissing him back; he felt her cold breasts through his shirt. She was taking

little sips of his mouth, her tongue flicking the delicate insides of his lips, and his hands moved to her buttocks, pulling her close. He heard the broom clatter on the stone steps. He let go and stepped back.

“You’re a sweet man, Chuck Leggit,” Tessa said. She was smiling on one side of her mouth.

“You are ... something else,” he said. He tried to smile back, but his mouth twitched several ways at once. He ran one hand through his hair, pulled his mustache. “I need to go now. See you a ...” He was about to say, *See you another time*, but he didn’t want – no, he really didn’t – the tryst it might suggest. “Soon,” he said. “I’ll bring Ivy to the meeting.” He needed Ivy now more than ever.

He walked down the steps and sprinted across Euclid to avoid the passage of Claude Foster Hall; then he looked back. Tessa was pushing her broom along the step. Her head bobbed with the strokes; the long handle stuck up behind her.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Nine

July 23, 1968

From her window Jane saw Dora pushing Leatha in the stroller; she rushed outside to catch up. “The other two kids at Mama’s,” Dora said. “She like to keep them all afternoon when school’s out.” Dora’s mother lived down the street from Jane.

“Okay if I walk home with you?” Jane asked. “We haven’t seen each other in ages.”

“I been right here, going up and down these streets,” Dora said. “All you had to do was look.” The street was shady, lined with old maples and sycamores; the houses had wide heavy porches, steep roofs, dormer windows. The neighborhood resembled the Revards’ in Minneapolis, except for the occasional boarded windows and the rows of doorbells on each house, showing how many apartments had been made out of that building. Tina and Kelvin never ran barefoot, as Jane had done every summer when she was a child: too much broken glass.

The stroller caught its bad right wheel in a crack. Dora yanked it free, waking the baby. “Damn this old thing!” Her voice was fierce, then gentle: “Sh-sh, Mama’s here.”

“Let me carry her,” Jane said. She unstrapped the fretful baby and hoisted her up. “Leatha girl,” she murmured into the little round ear. Leatha slumped peacefully in Jane’s crossed arms. They were only a couple of blocks from Dora’s apartment. In the three

years Jane had lived and worked here, she'd come to recognize many of the people who nodded or waved from their porches. If she had a neighborhood, this was it. But today was the first time she'd simply walked along the sidewalk with Dora.

"Baby wore herself out this morning," Dora remarked. "She gets these flusterations. There goes another." A police cruiser rolled by. "Third one since I left Mama's," she said. "Too many for one day."

Jane's neighbor Mr. Logan stopped to admire the baby. "They's two police cars parked near the Lakeview Tavern," he remarked. "Been there a couple hours now. Four cops in each car."

"They must be watching someone," Jane said. "Who's at the Lakeview Tavern?"

"Nobody new," Mr. Logan smiled. He had no upper teeth. "The apartment building next door, on Auburndale, now there's some trouble: young man won't pay his rent, about to get evicted."

"They don't do surveillance for no eviction," Dora said.

"They doing it today," the man said. "You be careful, hear?" He put his hand on Leatha's hair and said, "Bless your heart." Then he went on, walking with his little stiff limp – a wooden leg from a train accident.

"Poor Mr. Logan, can't even get his afternoon drink," Dora said. "Won't go in the Lakeview while the police are there. I'm so *tired* of this neighborhood. People can't pay rent, people leaving their Cadillacs to rot on the street."

"That's a Cadillac?" Jane said. The car had big fins, a flat tire and rust. It sagged against the curb around the corner from Dora's house.

“I’m sick of hauling this crummy stroller up these rickety porch steps,” Dora said, dragging it after her. She inserted her keys, one above the other, and turned them both at once. “It’s worse with three kids and groceries,” she said. “Come on in.”

With the still-sleeping baby, Jane climbed to the porch; the stairs were sturdier than her own. Dora was still griping: the hallway needed paint, she didn’t like having to use three keys to get into her own living room, now she’d have to turn right around and walk back to get Tina and Kelvin, this was no way to live, she wanted a *house* in a new neighborhood, maybe over there off Kinsman.

“Seems to me you’re doing pretty well,” Jane said. Dora had passed her GED exam and the entrance tests for Cuyahoga Community College. “You’ll start CCC this fall, and you’ll love it.” *Dora has the kind of ambition that will flourish in college*, Jane had written in the support letter that went with the application. Dora’s mother had given a little party to celebrate the victory, and Jane had made chocolate chip cookies – the only thing she knew how to bake. She’d had to borrow a cookie sheet from one of the Mothers Opposed to Poverty.

“I’m not going,” Dora said. “Let’s put this baby to bed.” They eased Leatha onto Dora’s bed, then returned to the main room, unusually neat and quiet without children. Dora fixed two glasses of ice water, then settled into the big stuffed chair. She was really upset: her eyes were troubled.

“I *thought* you were complaining more than usual,” Jane said. “What’s happened, that you’re not going to college?”

“I’m-a have another child next winter,” Dora said. She lit a cigarette, breathed in, blew out the smoke.

“Oh no, you can’t,” Jane said. An instant reaction.

“I *got* to.” Dora’s words seared the air. “You a helpful good person, Jane Revard, but you do *not* control my life.”

Obviously, Jane thought. But for someone who wanted to control her own life, a fourth child would be disastrous. “It’s hard on you, that’s what I’m thinking.”

“You bet it’s hard.” Dora’s face was a smear of tears and smoke. “I don’t compromise when it comes to my babies, you know that. They get decent clothes and good food, and they don’t run wild like other kids, they don’t watch TV unless I give permission ...”

“They’re beautiful children,” Jane said. It was true. She loved the rare times she got to play with Tina and Kelvin, got to hold baby Leatha in her arms. “Does your mother know?”

Dora shook her head. “She’s still recovering from that hysterectomy. I’m waiting till she’s back in church. With a good dose of the First Baptists every week, she can handle anything.” Dora herself was cynical about religion. Jane’s first long conversation with her, during the sit-in at the County Welfare office, had explored the wilds of Christian hypocrisy. Jane wanted to say flat-out: You do not have to keep this embryo with the size and sentience of a junebug.

She knew what to do; she’d had an abortion herself, two years ago. It was awful, pretending that she was making a quiet Saturday visit to a nicely-landscaped Bay Village home with a clinic where the rec room would ordinarily be. Tough to keep silence with a man whose hands were between her thighs. She never learned his name; he did not know hers. The secrecy was worse than the pain, which had gone away after a night of bleeding

into the toilet. To give Norman credit, he'd paid for the operation. He'd apologized for using a cheap condom from a gas station dispenser. Then he'd refused to talk about it. But within a few days Jane's dominant feeling was relief. She could at least raise the money for Dora, and help her find a competent doctor to do the job. "What if ..." she began. Dora was wiping her face with a Kleenex. Jane started again. "You know, I could ask around, call Tessa ..."

"Oh, I knew you'd say that," Dora twisted her cigarette to shreds in the ashtray. "You *quit* right now with that stuff. This is *Stephen's* baby."

Poor dead Stephen was enshrined on this living-room wall, a framed eight-by-eleven color photograph – a blown-up snapshot, really; against a background of leaves, he wore his high school graduation robe and laughed. Jane had tried to like him. She admired the dedicated militants he'd tried to emulate – Harllee Jones, Stokely Carmichael, Bobby Seale. But she couldn't see anything but hollow space under his cocky bluster; he'd seemed to be reciting lines.

"As long as you did it soon, it'd be safe," Jane told Dora. "And not too expensive. I know people who ..."

"Yes, you are *so* well connected. Didn't you hear what I said? I am *not* going to kill Stephen's baby. I made up my mind." Tears striped Dora's cheeks, but her voice didn't rise or catch in her throat. "You my friend? Then you'll *never* mention this again. Hear?"

A police car drove by; Dora got up and went to the window to watch. "We got some business here, I tell you. Mm-hmm," she said briskly. Discussion of terminating the pregnancy was finished, just like that.

Jane joined her at the window. “Do you know more than Mr. Logan?”

“I don’t know what it has to do with stakeouts at the Lakeview Tavern and some dude won’t pay his rent,” Dora said. “But I know some people been talking about *we gonna protect ourselves against the Cleveland police.*”

“Soul Power?” Stephen’s group had disbanded after his death. Maybe the former members were shooting their mouths off. More than their mouths.

“No one in Soul Power ever bought any guns; they just talked like they badder than Malcolm X. I mean Ahmed and his kids, that group.”

“The Republic of New Lybia.” Jane had heard from Bert how Evans’s African cultural center was being harrassed by police. Ahmed had been evicted, moved to a new shop, tried to fix it up, and was in a fight with his landlord. The members of his “republic” were teenage boys. “They’re buying guns?”

“Nothing illegal about buying guns,” Dora said. “Remember that rifle club, when you first moved here? Black men doing target practice in the countryside just like they was white men. Made the police *all* uptight. Evans and them not going to the country, not practicing. Someone talking too much; police are moving in.”

“Over-reacting as usual,” Jane said. *Hate the whiteman* rhetoric was hip; Jimmy and Bert talked that way at the office – all metaphor and male strutting. Jane was getting sick of it. She changed the subject. “I remember Kelvin when I first got here,” She said. “He’d just started talking, said ‘chicken’ so cute, *tsiki!*”

“He loved being able to *eat* chicken, too,” Dora said, smiling. “Big treat in this house. That was when his daddy was still around; he was a nice man, but too expensive.” She shook her head, tut-tut.

“Where is he now, Kelvin’s daddy?” Jane had never met the expensive man.

“Chillicothe,” Dora said. “Picked the wrong people to help him get his debts paid. I still see his mother sometimes. Want to see his picture?” She took her album from under the coffee table, then lit a cigarette and sat next to Jane on the couch to show the photographs of Tina and Kelvin as babies, of their fathers, and of Dora herself, a little girl who looked remarkably like Tina, if Tina were to wear a plaid pleated skirt with a white blouse. The house on Cedar Avenue. The grandfather who died. The new dress worn to the junior prom, 1961. “That’s when Tina was conceived.”

She and Dora were the same age. Jane remembered her own junior prom as an awkward evening. Her date had been member of the decorating committee; she told him the decorations were not very interesting, and he took it personally. He brought her home at midnight, and they didn’t even kiss.

They took a long time with the album. Jane kept asking questions about the photos, and Dora kept explaining, and Jane thought how being Dora’s friend meant becoming involved with her children, the new baby too, how the things Dora wanted were so different from the things Jane wanted.

Eventually Leatha woke up, and Jane got to feed her a bottle and play with her while Dora went to retrieve Tina and Kelvin without having to bother with the stroller.

Two hours later Jane sat with her Movement friends in the Crystal, on a bench covered with dark red vinyl, its rips mended with duct tape. A lemon meringue pie, one wedge removed, sat under the glass dome on the counter, glistening sweetly yellow and white, so magnificent that Jane considered skipping the one-dollar meal, eating pie

instead. She'd eaten nothing since coffee this morning. "And you?" Stavros asked. He wore a big cook's apron with the strings wound around his lean waist and tied in front, with a little rhinestone American Flag pinned over one hip. She ordered chicken.

"Six thirty in the morning, fifteenth floor of the Justice Center, and all you're doing is asking to *see records*?" Bert demanded. "Jees, take the fucking gloves *off*, man. When you're at the intake valve on the death machine, you don't just stand around. Pour blood on those files. Burn them. That's how you stop them."

Stavros put down two plates stacked with sliced white bread. "See here?" he said. "I brought you extra. I treat you people good. Here's butter." He grinned, showing his gray teeth.

"Stavros serves the people," Tessa said, raising her water glass in salute.

"You need more water," Stavros said, and went away.

Jane fumbled with her knife, and the hard, cold lump of butter tore a hole in the soft bread. With the first bite came words: *How can I eat and drink when my food is snatched from the hungry and my glass of water belongs to the thirsty?* Lines from a poem Tessa had taped to their bathroom wall, already crammed with posters, flyers, articles, and pictures cut from magazines. Jane had read it again this evening, standing naked on the mat washing herself; their shower had stopped working. The purple print was blurred where water had dripped on it, the corners curled. *And yet I eat and drink.* She chewed her bread, sipped her water. The next line: *I would gladly be wise.* On the jukebox Johnny Mathis began to sing "Unchained Melody."

“What we’re spending to pulverize Vietnam –” Arthur said. He’d grown dark ringlets which hung over the tops of his glasses; the lenses magnified his anxious gray eyes – “that same amount of money would buy every single Vietnamese family a nice brick house, a new Chevy, and a color TV.” Jane liked Arthur instinctively because he was a red-diaper baby like herself. He referred often to his summer on a kibbutz. He was here this evening only because (Chuck had explained to Jane) he’d inserted himself into plans for tomorrow’s selective service walk-in, and Ivy thought it was impolite not to invite him.

“Spread the American Dream around the globe,” Bert said. “Calm ‘em right down.” His upper lip tensed facetiously.

Arthur didn’t pick up on the sarcasm. “We could make a campaign out of this, call it something like ...”

“Make real estate, not war?” Bert offered.

Smirking, Tessa began to hum, “Little boxes on a hillside,” and Ivy joined in.

Marvin said kindly, “I think you’d have trouble getting support for that proposal from Americans who’d like to have those houses themselves.”

Tessa and Ivy were singing, “And they’re all made out of ticky-tacky ...”

“Oh shut up,” Jane said, before she could stop herself. “It’s all beside the point.” If the Vietnamese were inclined to live in American Levittowns, if construction and lawn care would serve politicians’ interests better than air craft carriers and napalm, there would be houses throughout Vietnam within a few months.

“What’s with you?” Tessa asked.

“I visited Dora this afternoon,” Jane said. Tessa should know that Dora wanted almost nothing so much as a little brick house with two bedrooms. Almost.

“Come with me and Marvin after dinner,” Tessa said. “We’re going to see *Rosemary’s Baby*.”

“I’d like to come,” Arthur said. He was determined to be included in this group.

“I promised Tina and Kelvin I’d come by to read them a story before bed,” Jane said. The kids had asked her to stay, when they got back from their grandmother’s; she’d offered a compromise. Also, she didn’t want to see a movie about anyone’s baby.

Ivy was staring gloomily at the salt and pepper and sugar-packets in a plastic holder next to a vase with fake marigolds. “I don’t want to make the revolution just so everyone on the planet can live in little suburban houses,” Ivy said.

“You’re making a lot of assumptions about what people want.” Chuck put his hand on Ivy’s neck, lovingly or proprietarily; Jane couldn’t be sure.

What people want. Stavros put a quarter of a roast chicken in front of her, flanked by green beans and mashed potatoes. All for a dollar. She really wanted pie, but she would drink this water, eat this food snatched from others’ lips. Chuck was right: How could anyone presume to know what another person wanted?

And yet when she thought about it, Jane did know. Dora wanted the house, the lawn, the car, the keys to it all; she wanted to pay the bills with money of her own. Even more, she wanted Stephen’s child.

Arthur wanted to be included in the core Movement group – Bert’s and Marvin’s.

Ivy wanted the kind of serious, old-fashioned beauty found inside glass cases and well-groomed parks. A few days ago she’d put her Emperor Concerto record in Jane’s

lap, saying, as if it were an intimate secret, “Oh Jane, *this* contains ecstasy. That peak, you know, where extreme pleasure and extreme pain meet each other.”

“You mean orgasm?” Jane had asked.

Ivy shrugged. “I was thinking of something more, um, transcendent?” Curious, Jane had taken the record home and listened on the couch to the slow chords – peaceful, not in the least a turn-on. She was drifting off when Tessa burst into the room, talking rapid-fire about something terrifically important.

She stopped, said, “Oh, Beethoven’s Emperor,” and went straight through to the kitchen. Jane kept listening, and eventually the piano galloped up some musical hill – but she didn’t get aroused. Her hands stayed quiet, outside her nightgown, and eventually she fell asleep.

Tessa, now waving her fork to emphasize a point, was utterly different than Ivy: she wanted to fix things. At the moment she had their shower-head in her purse; she wanted to find a part so she could repair it and they could take showers again. Tessa was a good roommate that way. She’d been thrilled when she learned to sew people up after surgery: “The resident said, ‘nice job, Buchanan,’ which is about as good as he gives!” Tessa’s approach was the same to poverty, to the war in Vietnam, to the government. Identify the problem – a worn gasket, a hernia, advanced capitalism – and fix it: buy a new gasket for the shower head, stitch up the abdomen, make a revolution.

At least Tessa would never be without something to fix. Jane wished she could be that focused. This afternoon she’d wanted to join Dora’s family, playing peek-a-boo with Leatha, reading to Kelvin and Tina; she’d almost resolved to welcome the new one, too. Now she wanted nothing more than this: comrades around the table talking about how to

make the revolution. She loved the arguments. Arthur, had just started another one by saying nationalism was dead, or at least counter-revolutionary. Chuck took the bait, saying nationalism was stronger than ever.

“Mexico, Chile, Algiers, Wales and Ireland,” Chuck said. He described how all over the world nationalists met in basements, stockpiled weapons, sang songs to get their blood up. He extolled the courage of resistance. Romance – that’s what Chuck wanted. He carried his torch for Ivy so everyone could see; even while he talked about the Cuban revolution, Chuck kept his hand on Ivy’s, playing with her fingers. Chuck would have understood Michael, the ex-priest who sang “Shoot me like an Irish soldier.”

Stavros was collecting the ravaged plates, stacking them on one hand. “Hey Stavros,” Bert said. “ You’re a patriotic American, aren’t you?”

“You betcha,” Stavros said. “I am citizen five years now. I tell you, this is God’s country!”

“It is,” Bert said, grinning at Stavros.

“You want dessert, yes?” Stavros asked. “I come back.”

Marvin touched Jane on the arm. “You’re awfully quiet,” he said.

“I’m thinking about what motivates people,” she said. “Us, right now – what do we *want*, most of all?”

“Ah.” Marvin nodded. He had a wistful expression, his eyes trained on Ivy, who sipped from Chuck’s water glass. What Marvin wants, Jane thought, is Ivy. “What we want?” he said. “That’s easy: community.”

Maybe he didn’t covet Ivy, but the easy closeness of her relationship with Chuck. “Isn’t community what we have?” Jane asked. “We’re enjoying being together right

now.” She thought of the night of the Columbia takeover, when she’d met Chuck and Ivy for the first time: everyone here, she realized, had been around that table at Marvin’s and Bert’s. Except Arthur, who was now offering to pitch in three dollars so they could have dessert. Arthur belonged, in his earnest, argumentative way.

But this community didn’t feel quite right. For one thing, everyone was white. “Community means a lot of different things,” Jane said to Marvin.

Maybe Marvin did want a girlfriend most of all. The night of Jimmy’s broken arm he’d brought a bottle of bourbon half-full; Jimmy had gulped it down. And while Jimmy got his arm X-rayed, then set, then casted, Marvin and Jane had waited outside the emergency room. “I didn’t think you were a bourbon drinker,” Jane had said.

Marvin had replied, “I’m not, in theory. But every now and then you have to test a theory. So I did.”

“And the results?”

“I’m not a bourbon drinker. I wish I were.”

She tried a more direct question. “Who are you seeing these days?”

“Seeing? You mean dating? Oh ...” Marvin had looked around the waiting room as if he hoped to find someone to rescue. Three people chattered with each other in one corner; a fourth slept open-mouthed on a battered couch. No one needed Marvin’s help. “There’s an interesting woman, ex-peace corps, working on her master’s in social work,” he confessed. “Diane.” A couple of seconds went by, and Jane was about to pick up a magazine when Marvin added, “We’ve had various drinks together. Bourbon was one of the experiments.” His face flushed, seemed naked without his glasses.

Remembering the conversation now, as Stavros arrived with desserts and coffee, Jane patted Marvin's arm, glad to have this friendship without the confusions of sex.

Jimmy had spent that last night in Jane's bed, waking the next afternoon, complaining that his arm was killing him. His mother came to get him, patting his back, stroking his hair as he made his way painfully down the sidewalk to the car. Then he was gone; he didn't call, didn't show up at the office. When Jane finally spotted him at the Spock anniversary rally, he asked why she hadn't come to see him. "You were supposed to check up on me," he said.

"I was really busy," Jane said. Not the answer to give to a man you cared about, who'd been so lovely to sleep with, so *nice*. She was ashamed when she heard herself.

"Yeah yeah sure sure sure," Jimmy had replied. Then he'd added, "To tell the truth I would've called or come to the office, but there's this girl I used to be close to. I thought she'd dumped me, but she says she didn't."

"So you're close to her again?" Jane asked. He nodded, and she patted him on the shoulder. "I'm happy for you. Happy for her too."

When Tessa said, "I kind of miss having him around, don't you?" Jane was slightly appalled to realize that she didn't. It was as if, for one month, an intoxicating sexual steam had risen between Jimmy and Jane, gluing them together; now it had vanished. When they met in the office, they were nice to each other – *comrades*, she thought. That word fit her relationship with everyone at this table.

"We're *almost* a community," she said to Marvin. "This could be how it begins – talking around the table, working on the revolution." Her lemon meringue pie slice had been so tempting in the glass case, but on the small white plate in front of her it slumped,

too pale, wilted at the edges. She cut off the point and put it in her mouth – sweet-acid lemon, sweet-foamy meringue. The campfire girls had a legend that if you ate the point of your pie first, you’d never get married.

The Campfire Girls’ camp-outs were fun, but they weren’t Jane’s ideal community – which came, she realized now, from old-left picnics where the adults roasted brats and metts over coals while Jane’s mother played guitar and sang. Jane was allowed to stay up late, curled in her father’s lap watching the fire. The feeling was similar but better in Mississippi, where they’d all pulled together in the same direction, the good direction, and the goals were clear: Justice. Equality. No conflicts over purpose, no questioning of trust.

She ate another bite of pie. “Non-violence was dead before King was killed,” Bert was telling Chuck. “We’re living in the most violent country in the history of the world. Gandhi’s tactics worked against the British; they could be shamed. American pigs have no shame at all. If you don’t fight, they’ll crush you.”

“What are you suggesting?” Chuck demanded. “I can see why real resistance fighters – and the Black Panthers – need to carry guns, but it’d stupid for any of *us* to challenge police, national guard, whoever they are.”

“Pigs,” Bert said. “Get used to it; that’s who they are.” After ten days in the county jail, Bert had come out raging against the deputies – “smelly, oinking pigs, wallowing deep in their own shit.” He’d said very little else about the experience.

“We’re outnumbered and outarmed,” Chuck said. “C’mon, what are you proposing?”

“Something like a people’s army.” Bert said. “Bring the war home.”

What did Bert want? Jane watched him arguing. Underneath his intelligence, his humor, his warm humanity (he honestly liked Stavros) he burned inside. He had more commitment than any of them. Ahmed Evans was harrassed by landlords and police, and Bert felt the injury personally, as if he were the Movement's self-appointed everyman. He wasn't romantic like Chuck; his girlfriends were transient, like Shelly, who was now running around with an older man in the Socialist Workers party.

"Violence is only one phase of revolution," Marvin said. He took a breath, preparing to say more, but Bert interrupted.

"It's the most necessary phase," he said. "We can't avoid it." Either he knew something Jane couldn't face, or violence – from yelling and fist fights to explosions – literally turned him on.

It was still light when they left the Crystal, but the air had cooled. Marvin, Tessa, and Arthur rushed off in the Valiant so as not to be late for the movie. "Let's go to my place," Bert said. "We'll have rum and Coke."

"We're getting up awfully early tomorrow," Chuck said.

Ivy insisted they come. "We don't have to stay late," she said, "and we have more talking to do."

Jane wanted that too: the continuing conversation. "I'll come, but I've got to read to Tina and Kelvin first," she said, beginning to walk.

Ivy caught up with her as they crossed Superior. "Can I come with you?" she asked. "I like those kids." She had become less skittish around Tina and Kelvin one afternoon when they'd come to the office with their mother; Dora had worked on her application to CCC, and Ivy had kept the children occupied with paper and crayons.

“Sure,” Jane said. “They go to bed at eight sharp, Dora’s a real stickler for that.”

“While you girls are reading to the babies,” Bert said, “Chuck and I will pick up the drinks. Don’t be so late that we get smashed without you. Got any cash?” He held out his hand, thick-wristed, thick-fingered.

Ivy reached into her purse. Jane pulled the last dollar from her wallet and handed it to Bert, feeling the little sad tug that always came with giving up her last dollar.

They parted, Chuck and Bert crossing the street, Jane and Ivy rushing so as not to be late for the children’s bedtime. The sky had turned gray; darkness was coming on. The air was thick with moisture and car exhaust. Jane felt a little sick. Maybe the city was getting to her. Maybe she shouldn’t have eaten the pie.

Tina and Kelvin were settled in their beds – mattresses on the floor in a curtained alcove off the kitchen – and Ivy was reading *And to Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street* when a *crack* sounded from outside the open window. A gunshot. Jane thought of the police cars by the Lakeview Tavern as she and Ivy had walked by. Another shot. Bring the war home, Bert had said. He hadn’t been thinking of the Cleveland Police versus the Republic of New Lybia. Maybe some fool had shot randomly.

“A gold and blue chariot’s *something* to meet,” Ivy read, as though she had not noticed. Could have been a car backfiring. Dora shouted something in the living room.

“She callin’ out the window to somebody,” Tina said. “Go on, Ivy.”

“Rumbling like thunder down Mulberry Street!” Heavy footsteps on the porch, sound of bolts, more footsteps. A white male voice exclaimed, “Crazy out there!” Dora’s voice, unintelligible.

Then she stuck her head through the curtain. “Y’all stay in bed, hear?” She looked sternly at Tina, then at Kelvin. Then she disappeared. Water gushed in the kitchen sink. More shots outside.

“Mama!” Kelvin yelped.

Dora re-appeared. “I’m-a help this man who got hurt,” she said. “Y’all be cool, now. You got Ivy and Jane to look after.”

“I want some water,” Kelvin said. “Please, Ma’am, may I have some water?”

Ivy closed the book and put it on the floor. No more interest in Mulberry Street tonight. A cupboard door banged in the kitchen. Dora’s voice came through the curtain. “You go ahead and sit on this towel.” There was a white-male rumble of protest. What white man, shot but still on his feet, needed shelter? Not a policeman. An ordinary guy, perhaps, walking through the neighborhood?

Jane thought of Jimmy, battered, cradling his broken arm; he’d crossed a line without thinking and got attacked by a bunch of guys crazed into get-whitey madness. Bert and Chuck would have bought the drinks by now; they’d be walking down 125th toward Lakeview.

Dora appeared with Kelvin’s cup of water. “You want one too, I suppose,” she said to Tina.

“No thank you,” Tina said. “Who that man?”

“Tow-truck operator,” Dora said. “Come to move that Cadillac on Beulah. Some fool shot him three times. Not too bad, he walking, talking and all. I gave him the use of the phone.” She talked quickly, casually; her nervousness showed only in way her head was cocked, listening as the man slammed the phone and cursed, and the way she held a

dishcloth, rubbing it between her fingers and thumbs, as if it were a remnant of something precious. The phone clicked and rasped as the man dialed again.

Jane heard soft mews. “Is that Leatha waking up?”

“Yeah,” Dora looked back over her shoulder. She backed out of the alcove.

Suddenly the air went wild with sirens. Tina leapt out of bed, but Kelvin was ahead of her, pawing his way through the curtain. Ivy and Jane caught up with them in the arch between kitchen and living room.

The tow-truck man, dressed in policeman-blue jacket and pants, clutched a wad of bloody paper towels between elbow and rib cage. He was young, his hair yellow-blond under his cap, his pale eyes red-rimmed. “It was an ambush,” he said. “Somebody punctured the tires on that Cadillac, waited till we came to tow it, then started shooting.” His breath came in gasps, as if he’d just finished a mile-long run. More sirens wailed. “No wonder all the lines at police headquarters were busy; they’re all out there.” He snickered and coughed. The coughing hurt: his face crumpled, and he leaned against the wall. Then he pulled himself up straight. It was an act of extreme manhood, a fierce denial of the dark wet stains on his jacket, blackish streaks on his pants’ legs. “What are *you* doing here?” he demanded of Jane. “Boy are you ever in the wrong place.”

Lights, spinning on the top of a police cruiser, sent flashes of red through the cracks around the living room window shade.

“Thank the lady of the house for me,” the tow-truck man said. He clenched his lips and his nostrils flared, pulling in air, letting it out. He turned the door handle but couldn’t undo the bolt without raising the arm that pressed the paper towels to the wound in his side; Jane undid the bolt, touching his hand – cold, much whiter than hers. She

thought of saying, *no, not an ambush; the Cadillac has been in that spot for weeks*. This was no time to debate.

“I’ll tell her you said thanks,” she said. She watched him stumble across the porch and down the steps. He’d hammer on the door of the nearest police car – not five steps away – and they’d take him to an emergency room. Maybe he wouldn’t make it. Dora had let him into the house where her children were trying to sleep, given him water and let him phone, bleeding onto the rug. Yet he’d asked what Jane was doing there as though he was accusing her of wrong-doing. She closed the door hard, made sure it was locked and bolted.

Ivy was standing by the window, holding Tina’s hand and lifting the shade a little so they could both see out. “Chuck’s out there,” she said, almost whimpering. Maybe they should leave – find Bert and Chuck, hunker down in their little white-radical digs.

No. Jane couldn’t leave two terrified children with their mother’s arms full of their baby sister. Gunshots rattled, too many, too close together to count – as though someone was shooting a machine gun in back of the house. In Dora’s arms, Leatha began to cry again. “You want to go to Janie?” Dora came to Jane who took the fussy bundle into her arms as Kelvin crowded onto his mother. Dora picked him up and held him. “Get away from that window, Miss Tina!”

Ivy let the shade fall back over the window, then turned with a guilty look. Tina slumped onto the floor. “Didn’t see nothin,” she said.

“Thank goodness,” Dora said. “Now you both goin’ to bed.”

“Uh-unh!” Kelvin shook his head vehemently. “No Mama, I’m-a stay here with you.” He buried his face in his mother’s neck. Dora petted his back absently, her face

creased with distress. Tina crept across the floor on hands and knees, settling crosslegged next to her mother, holding one of Dora's ankles.

"Maybe Chuck and Bert'll come here," Ivy said to Jane.

"Bert doesn't know which apartment Dora lives in," Jane said. "And her phone's unlisted; he can't call." All she knew to do was rock the baby while Dora rocked her little boy, made even smaller by fear. Ivy slumped onto the couch and took one of the throw pillows (Dora had sewn them by hand out of bright scrap material, stuffed them with old stockings) into her arms. Tina settled next to Ivy, two fingers in her mouth. After a minute she picked up the other throw pillow and held it on her lap. They all stayed like that, holding and being held, while shooting continued outdoors. White voices shouted. Cars squealed, driving too fast down narrow streets.

In Jane's arms, Leatha finally went limp. If she could tuck this sleeping baby into Dora's bed, she could phone Bert at home. He and Chuck might've had time to get there.

Dora stood. "You children can't be sitting up all night," she said. "Come on now, we all gonna sleep in my bed." She held out her arms, and Jane delivered Leatha. "God help us, it'll be over soon." She took all three children down the hall and into her bedroom. Ivy went to the window and lifted the shade again to look out. The phone rang.

"I'll answer!" Jane called, and picked up the receiver. It was Dora's mother.

"Someone shot one of the Donaldson boys," Mama said. "He may be killed."

"You shouldn't be alone," Jane said. "I could come be with you."

"As long as my babies is safe, I be just fine," Mama said. "You can't go running around these streets. The air is dangerous. I'm not even going near the windows."

“I probably shouldn’t stay here, either,” Jane said. She didn’t want to upset Dora’s mother further by mentioning the tow truck operator or Ivy.

“Maybe not, but now you’re there, you stay put. Get Dora on the phone. I want to talk to her.”

Dora was coming to the phone anyway. “What if the tow truck operator told the police he saw two white girls?” Jane whispered. “I’m worried you’d get in trouble.”

“I can’t think about all that *if-if-if* stuff,” Dora said. But when she said “Hello, Mama?” into the phone, Jane heard a choke in her voice. They shouldn’t be here.

She joined Ivy at the window. Three police cars were parked near the corner, but except for their official reflecting stripes, they were still and dark. They seemed to be empty. Was that a person *under* one of the cars? A dark shape looked like an arm and part of a torso and seemed to move, a liquid flicker in the deep twilight.

“I’ve got to make sure Chuck’s all right,” Ivy said. “I’m going out there.”

“The air is dangerous,” Jane said.

“Okay,” Ivy said. Her voice was level, uncompromising. “You don’t have to come with me.” She unbolted the door and went out.

“Wait,” Jane said. The street was noisy; Ivy couldn’t hear her. “You can’t go alone!” Jane yelled. She turned to Dora, still on the phone with her mother, caught her eye and made a bye-bye wave. Dora frowned and shook her head – maybe a response to her mother. Jane couldn’t tell. She waved again and went outside.

Ivy was sprinting the wrong direction, away from Lakeview and Bert’s apartment. She crossed Beulah and stopped, but did not turn, even when Jane caught up with her. A young black man lay on his back on the sidewalk. The blood spreading underneath him

shone in the glare of streetlights. Two bandoliers criss-crossed on his chest. His elbows were scraped and bent, his arms in the air. He was wearing sandals – and one of his feet moved.

“We gotta help him.” Ivy rushed forward. *Crack*. The streetlamp shattered.

“Young ladies, get away from there.” The voice came out of darkness on the porch nearby. Jane approached the railing and looked through the gloom at a man she did not recognize. “They’s a hundred men runnin’ around this block,” he said. “In the bushes, between the houses. They shoot at whatever moves.”

“Why’d you shoot out the streetlight?” Jane felt Ivy’s hand in hers.

“That wasn’t me. I called for an ambulance.” Impossible to see his expression. He stayed in shadow. “I tried to go to out there but a bullet stopped me, maybe the same sharp-shooter stopped you.”

“We’re looking for two white guys,” Ivy said, climbing the porch steps, clutching the railing. “One’s tall and thin, the other’s about like this.” She made steps in the air with one hand to show Chuck’s height, Bert’s height.

The man on the porch didn’t respond. Maybe he couldn’t see Ivy’s hands move. Twilight blurred everything to gray shadows, and flashing police car lights made seeing even more difficult. Somewhere in a narrow driveway or a clump of bushes or behind a car, a sniper lurked. Maybe more than one sniper. Jane listened, trying to identify rattles and cracks and thuds. She heard a groan from behind and twisted to see the injured man drop one arm. She lunged toward him.

“You can’t help that boy,” The voice on the porch came deep and clear.

“So where’s the ambulance?” Ivy asked, indignant.

“Soon as it’s safe, they’ll come. A hour? A day?” He chuckled, he-he-he.

“But he’ll ...”

“He already dead, poor boy. This here’s a war zone. I know, I been there.

Womens in war zones – you don’t belong, you hear me?” In peaceful sunlight, Jane had thought she did belong. She climbed the steps to Ivy. “Let’s get going,” she said. “The Lakeview apartment’s that way.”

“Go through this house and out the back door,” the man said. “Don’t turn on any lights, you hear? Go to the kitchen, then out.”

She could hear him behind her as they crept down the dark hallway. He might be aiming a gun at them, but he wouldn’t shoot if they kept going. She didn’t look back. The kitchen smelled of old bacon grease. After the back door came a little closed-in porch crammed with auto parts. Then wobbly steps; Jane clutched the rail and felt a splinter go into the palm of her hand.

More gunshots. A flurry of gunshots. “People on the roof!” Ivy whispered, pointing at a flat-roofed garage. Shadows moved. They pressed themselves close to the aluminum siding of the next house. From inside a woman’s voice keened into the dark yard. Ivy tripped over a tricycle and Jane, watching her, walked into the bars of a swing set. They were about to enter the driveway between houses when two men emerged – police in white helmets. Jane dropped to the ground behind the privet hedge and felt Ivy squatting next to her. “Why don’t we ask them to escort us,” Ivy whispered.

Jane considered what she knew about the Cleveland police; she wanted nothing to do with them. Yet even if police had provoked this firefight, she and Ivy were white – that was all they were right now – thus targeted by black nationalists. If they could cross

Lakeview covered by two armed policemen, they'd be at Bert's in a minute. But the police might kill someone to protect Jane and Ivy. Jane shook her head, *no*.

A shot came from the garage roof, and one policeman dropped. The other fired toward the sniper, *bang bang bang*, then dropped to his knees to check out his partner. Jane felt Ivy's hand on her knee as she watched one man in uniform put his injured partner's arm around his own neck, struggled to help him stand, held him close around the waist. They disappeared together down the driveway.

"So much for the escort idea. Let's go." Ivy pulled Jane's hand. The splinter dug in, and Jane jerked her hand free. They crept to the driveway and looked out to Lakeview. "My god," Ivy said. Lakeview was crammed with police cars. Two policemen crouched behind one of the cars aiming guns toward the street. "We can't go out there," Ivy said.

"That's the way to Chuck," Jane said. "Bert's apartment is across the street and a couple of houses down." They should have gone around by Oakland; now there was no other way through. "We'll crawl behind the hedge." She dropped and felt edges of broken cement bite into her knees and hands.

Ivy stoppered her mouth with a knuckle, as if to keep from talking or crying or whatever the hell she felt like doing. Jane wanted to scream herself. They were caught between black men and white men, aliens trapped in a no-women's land. The bushes scratched and clawed at Jane's hair. The ground under her knees was littered with cigarette butts and broken glass. The air stank horribly of gunsmoke and burning rubber and other stuff she couldn't name. Dim shapes moved in the darkness. Sudden bursts of light illuminated only smoke.

Ivy stood up. “Dark will hide us,” she said. A few yards away something sparked and cracked. Ivy dropped again. “I think I just got shot,” she said. Wonder in her voice. “Look at my shoulder.”

Jane pulled at the tear in Ivy’s T-shirt. The bullet had made a hole – a puncture wound, she remembered its name – and it seeped blood. Jane folded the loose T-shirt sleeve over the ragged flap of skin. “Put your hand here. Keep it there.”

Ivy put her arm across her chest and clamped her hand onto her shoulder. “I want to be home on 116th Street! Where the hell is Chuck?” Her whisper was wet.

“We can’t go to Bert’s,” Jane said. “Bert can’t go there, either. We’ll go around to my place; then we’ll call Bert.”

Ivy took a deep breath. “Just get me outa here,” she hissed.

“Let’s go then.” They walked bent over (Ivy could not crawl), halting every few steps, back into the yard with the swing set. No sign of movement on the garage roof.

“Let’s *talk*,” Jane said. “They’ll hear our voices and realize we’re not who they want to shoot.” She felt putrid inside. It was a huge risk, but they couldn’t run, couldn’t hide either.

“I was planning to get lots of sleep tonight,” Ivy said, in a forced conversational tone. Then she sniffled and wiped her nose with the back of one hand. “At six-thirty I’d be all bright and cheerful for the draft board walk-in.”

“I have a stomach-ache that cuts like a knife,” Jane said. They cut through bushes to a driveway which led to 123rd street. She tried to pretend they were just girlfriends taking a walk. Maybe someday they could be just girlfriends taking a walk.

On this part of 123rd, police cars sat silent and dark along the curbs. The houses were dark. No one moved on porches or behind upstairs windows. “I want to get out of here,” Ivy said. She’d crossed her free arm over the one holding her shoulder, clutching herself as if the injury were in her chest. At the corner of Beulah, the man with the bandoliers lay slightly twisted in an awkward position, absolutely still. “He’s dead,” Ivy said.

“Yes,” Jane agreed. Her eyes stung with fumes. “We should keep going.” They passed Dora’s, dark and silent as the other houses. Oakland Avenue skirted the smoky, crowded darkness that popped with gunshots. Tear gas: that’s why Jane’s face was streaming. The streetlights blurred overhead. Jane stubbed her toe hard on a piece of broken slate and her sandal broke. She stopped to take it off. Ivy had found 125th; when Jane turned the corner she saw Ivy running clumsily, straight for two men on the sidewalk. White men: the backs of their hands shone pale under a streetlamp. Bert’s and Chuck’s faces came into focus.

Ivy collided with Chuck; the two became one shadow under the street lamp. Jane looked at Bert. His face was streaked with dirt and tears, his glasses smeared with soot. “You got gassed,” she said.

“Yup. Down on Auburndale. Police car burst into flame two yards away from us. We couldn’t get near my place.” He pressed the words through a hoarse voice, thick with significance. “It’s begun,” he said. “Here. In Cleveland. If I weren’t so white, I’d go down to Superior. There’s gonna be some action.”

“I got shot,” Ivy was telling Chuck, amazement in her voice.

Jane felt a kind of inner earthquake that was first nausea, then anger. Then it surfaced in a wave of tears. Not because *it* had begun, or because Ivy'd been hit by some fool's bullet. What came into her mind was the face of the dead man: his open eyes. Even dead, his face had a pleading, puzzled expression. He died as a teenager, bleeding onto the sidewalk. She felt Bert's hand on her back. "You okay?" he asked.

"We didn't help him," Jane said. "We should have gone to Dora's again, should've stayed on the phone till we got an ambulance." Crying embarrassed her. She let her hair cover her face and turned away.

Bert's stubby-fingered hand parted the curtain of hair and turned palm up. "The key," he said. "Let's go inside, fix Ivy's shoulder." Jane had the key in her purse, which was still over her shoulder, had been, the whole time. She brought it out and threw her hair back. Everyone's eyes were streaming. In the distance many voices roared, the kind of noise you'd hear from the stadium when the Browns had a home game, but darker.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Ten

August 23, 1968 (Friday)

Chuck had typed and retyped the letter requesting a week's leave without pay; he'd turned it in on Tuesday and waited. Friday at five o'clock he decided to take the silence as assent. He put the stapler, staple-remover, and pencils into the lap drawer; then he ripped his papers into halves, quarters, and eighths, and dropped them into the wastebasket. He'd used the paper for arithmetic and doodling – a few tic tac toe games, a couple of mazes, and many heads, crudely-drawn caricatures of loan officers and tellers who got on his nerves.

Since Glenville they'd talked as though every black person in Cleveland was a sniper or a looter. Carl Stokes pandered to the militants, they told each other in the staff lounge, when he kept white people out of Glenville for almost a week. The city was about to be overrun by a black horde. They used the word *nigger* increasingly. One of the loan officers referred to Stokes as "head coon."

Chuck had attempted reason. "The violence stopped when Stokes allowed the black community to police itself," he'd told his supervisor. He was told to remember he was in "the real world." Chuck remembered all too well.

In the real world of the bank, it was important to dress well and stay cheerful while forcing one's way from one little niche of a job to the next niche, slightly larger. In

the real world, no one asked if a job was intrinsically useful. They asked about windows. A one-window office was a big step up. Two windows, and you were headed for the top.

He reached back into the wastebasket for the largest pieces of paper and tore them in half again; then he buried them under a couple of apple cores. On his way to the door he stopped at the head teller's booth. "I'll be gone for almost a week," he told her. "See you next Friday."

She raised her perfectly chiseled black eyebrows and said, "Okeydoke, I'll tell the boss." Then Chuck pushed the heavy door open and stepped into the street.

An hour later he was sitting on the office couch next to Greg Lambert, watching Tessa, Bert, and Arthur prepare for Chicago. Chuck and Ivy would go on Monday. Greg would not go; he had a factory job somewhere in the flats.

Tessa filled a shopping bag with paper, markers, and flour for paste, so they could make posters on the spot. She called it "Handwriting on the wall."

Bert was packing a loaf's worth of bologna-and-cheese sandwiches, a dozen apples, a package of fig newtons. He'd also assembled helmets, gloves, and goggles, for protection against tear gas and mace, and bought a new jar of Vaseline, which he held aloft to show everyone. "Keeps the mace from burning your face," he said.

"Billy clubs'll slide off, too," Greg said. "If you're greased up."

"I brought Baggies," Tessa said. "Soak a washcloth or a bandanna, keep it in there for your eyes, after you get gassed."

Chuck had not told Ivy they needed protective equipment. She'd been looking forward to this trip together, had signed up for extra hours so they could fill the Pontiac with gas, buy hamburgers and soft ice cream cones when they stopped, and stay in a

motel on the way back. She'd bought him a used sleeping bag at army surplus, for three nights in the church basement. "This will be so *fun*," she'd said. "I can't *wait*."

They hadn't talked about what Chicago would be like or what they'd actually do there. Chuck had bought a new notebook, hoping to record everything when he wasn't marching, distributing leaflets, or putting up posters. He'd go one way, Ivy would go another; then they'd come back together and talk about what they'd seen, like Hemingway and Martha Gellhorn in the Spanish Civil War. He didn't like the idea of wearing a helmet and goggles, or smearing himself with Vaseline. What if they wanted to stop at a café to talk over their next action?

"How are you going to protect yourself?" Greg asked him. He leaned forward with his elbows on his knees, dropping cigarette ashes on the floor. "Shoot to kill arsonists – those are Daley's orders. Shoot to maim looters. In a big crowd, the pigs are gonna see arsonists and looters everywhere."

Arthur held up a bag of marbles. "For scattering in front of police horses." Chuck shuddered at the thought of the damage marbles could do to the hooves of innocent horses. "I've got a slingshot too," Arthur said. "I made it when I was twelve." He went back to whistling "Over There" (or something like it; hard to tell what Arthur whistled). Chuck started to ask, Do you really think you're going to fight police with marbles and a slingshot? But he thought he knew what Arthur – now helping himself to the fig newtons, now shadow-boxing with his backpack on, a happy boy scout – would say.

"You could make a good sap," Greg offered, "with a piece of rubber hose and a big lead sinker, hold it in with electrician's tape. That's protection."

“No, that’s aggression,” Chuck corrected. He liked Greg when he tried to be helpful and generous; he didn’t like the way Greg gravitated towards weaponry. “We’re not gonna get maced for handing out flyers,” Chuck added, raising his voice, because Arthur had picked up Greg’s suggestion and was going to the basement for a rubber hose.

Bert dug into his back pocket and brought out a wallet-sized wad of folded paper. “You need to read this, Leggit,” he said. “Ow! My wrist hurts when I do that.” Bert’s wrist had been hurting since Chuck grabbed it, a month ago – or so Bert said when Chuck made pacifist noises. He pressed open the pages.

“Indeed I live in dark times,” the poem began. The poet was Bertolt Brecht. “What times are these when to speak of trees is almost a crime,” Chuck read. It would have felt almost criminal to spend a weekend at Kelley’s Island with Aunt Peg, so he and Ivy had never gone. He kept reading. “I ate my food between massacres ... And when I loved, I loved with indifference.” *Not me*, Chuck promised silently. *I will never love with indifference*. Bert had folded this poem into a tight little package to bring to Chicago. “He who laughs has not yet heard the terrible news.”

Chuck had heard the terrible news. Three cops were killed in Glenville, at least three teenage nationalists, and a local guy named James Chapman, a twenty-two-year old file clerk who’d helped rescue a wounded policeman and was shot in the head at close range while surrounded by police. Ahmed Evans turned himself in at eleven o’clock that night. A neighbor of Bert’s said Evans had been in his attic, weaponless, since about eight-fifteen. Yet Evans was charged with all seven deaths.

Chuck had been collecting details ever since Ivy had shown him her bullet wound. It was small: the bullet had ripped some flesh and gone on through. But his rage had

begun there, fed by each bit of news: Police had been drinking in their surveillance cars; police had been scared out of their minds. Roving white men had killed a couple of black men standing at the bus stop on St. Clair – no provocation.

He and Bert had taken their time in the liquor store, debating canned vs. bottled Coke, trying to find the best deal; they were having fun, walking down Auburndale with paper bags in their arms, ignoring the screams of the police cruisers, until they rounded the corner and saw the intersection aswarm with cars and running figures. Chuck heard the crack of a rifle. Then the rattle of a semi-automatic. Then one of the cruisers exploded into flame. “Holy shit!” Bert said. His whole body seemed to quiver.

Overwhelmed with excitement, Chuck thought now, as Bert thumped around with Arthur in the basement. The radio was playing “Mony Mony,” but the drumbeat drowned the tune. The air seemed to thicken; smoke from Greg’s cigarette made a diaphanous rope to the ceiling. The phone rang, and Tessa sprang to answer it.

That night in Glenville’s foul-smelling dusk, someone lay in the middle of the street, his head large and white – a police helmet. Another helmeted figure moved toward the fallen figure on the pavement, then hesitated as shots cracked. There was nowhere to walk without having to go through the crossfire.

“Over here,” Bert said, crouching close to some porch steps.

“Do you know the people who live here?”

“Some of them,” Bert said, eyes riveted on the intersection. “Let’s open that bottle of rum.” He took the paper bag off the bottle and twisted the cap.

“Let’s *not*,” Chuck said firmly. “I want my wits about me.” His wits swirled with the red cruiser-lights, hissed with static. A young black man came around the corner of the house; he wore a bandolier over his T-shirt and carried what looked like a carbine.

“Hey, brother,” Bert called softly. “Aren’t you Osu Bey?”

“No,” the young man said sternly. “He over there.” He pointed with his chin at a building across the street. Then he came to the edge of the porch steps. “You honkies better get on out of here. Some heavy shit goin’ down.” He dropped to a squat next to them, gun leveled. “I’m on protection duty myself,” he said, in a teenager’s voice only recently changed to a man’s. “Some of the brothers out to get whitey. They don’t mind if it’s pigs or just Caucasian citizens like yourselves.” His automatic weapon certainly wouldn’t differentiate between honkies, whitey, pigs, and Caucasian citizens.

“Want a sip?” Bert passed the rum bottle, and the bandoliered kid took a swig.

“That’s some shit,” he said, coughing. He passed the bottle back. Chuck heard shouts, thuds, and gunfire, saw the burning cruiser, a figure crouched by a vehicle, another figure rising from a clump of bushes, then dropping again, a car creeping across Auburndale, police stopping the car. “I gotta go do some protecting.” The youngster who was not Osu Bey rose off his haunches and crept away, back around the side of the house.

“If we went that way,” Chuck asked Bert, “could we get to your building?”

“Yep,” Bert said. He swigged the rum. “What that means is, my building is probably surrounded by people and pigs with guns. And what *that* means is,” another swig, “the revolution’s begun.” He squatted on his toes, bouncing, incapable of stillness. Chuck sat in the dirt close to the steps, elbows on his knees.

They were seen. A cop walked up to them. “You boys aren’t gonna have any fun here tonight,” he said. “The tavern’s closed down. The jungle bunnies are hiding – or they’re all downtown.”

“I live over there,” Bert said, pointing toward Lakeview. Chuck felt the neck of the bottle of rum come into his hand and remembered that Bert was not yet twenty-one. “You fucking racist,” Bert added, quietly.

The cop gave him an assessing look. “Boy, you’re in trouble tonight,” he said. A shout came from the intersection. “I’d straighten you out, but I gotta go.” He ran to help his fellows.

“I’m glad I don’t have a gun right now,” Bert said. “I’d be in danger of using it.”

“Shut up.” Chuck pictured Ivy charging into a street without looking, and a high whine entered his head. He unscrewed the top of the rum bottle, took a mouthful, swished it around with his tongue, and swallowed. His throat burned. “Let’s go locate the girls.”

There was no way through to Bert’s apartment, so they lurked in shadows of garages and trees for nearly an hour. Through a tear gas haze Chuck saw a policeman standing behind a parked car, aiming an automatic. Then Bert came past him, one arm raised, half a brick in his hand. “What the *fuck* do you think you’re doing?” Chuck grabbed Bert’s wrist.

“I want to land this on that cop’s fucking head.” Bert struggled to keep his arm high. “Or right between the shoulders. I’ll settle for a hard blow to the back. With luck I’ll rupture a disk. Ow!”

“The hell you will,” Chuck said. “You’re gonna get us both shot dead even if you miss.” He did not know what he’d done until, days later, he saw Bert’s bandaged wrist.

Now the wrist hurt only when Bert wrenched it by reaching into his back pocket – if then. Brecht spoke from the pages on Chuck’s lap. “And yet, I eat and drink.”

Tessa, on the phone with Marvin, paced three steps one way, three the other. She wore pants too large for her; under her T-shirt, her breasts moved with each step. “Right,” she said. “I’ll let them know. Of course I’ll be there. No, I won’t. Quit telling me to be careful!” She hung up. Chuck looked at her inquisitively.

“Five thousand National Guardsmen arrived today,” she said. “They’re practicing riot control on the edge of the city.” Bert came out of the basement waving a hammer. “We’ll meet Marvin and Jane tomorrow in Lincoln Park,” Tessa told Bert.

“Did Marvin say anything about Jane’s father?” Chuck asked.

“Marvin wouldn’t know anything,” Tessa said. “Jane won’t get there till tonight; she’s riding with SDS people from Minneapolis.”

Three days before, Jane’s father had suffered his second heart attack. Driving her to the airport (in silence; she could not speak without choking), Chuck had heard on the radio that Russian tanks were rolling into Prague. The two events – Jane’s father near death, tanks crushing the Czech revolution – fused in his mind. Now the National Guard tanks that had occupied Glenville for weeks were rolling into Chicago.

“Even anger against injustice makes the voice grow harsh,” Brecht said. “Alas, we who wished to lay the foundations of kindness could not ourselves be kind.” Chuck thought of Bert’s hands, carefully hammering supports for the new office window, his friendliness with Stavros at the Crystal, his stories of taking care of day care center kids.

Now he was stowing the hammer in his canvas rucksack with his other Chicago supplies. In Jane’s and Tessa’s apartment that night, watching two houses burn on his

own street, Bert had admitted that they were in the wrong place at the wrong time for the revolution. Chicago, he'd suggested later, would be the right place. "Time to get this stuff packed up and out," he said, jamming a pair of goggles into a duffel, then adding helmets. Greg picked up the bag in one hand, a suitcase in the other, and lugged them toward the back door.

Chuck didn't want to wear a helmet with goggles. It would be hot. It would be an act of menace: *Hey pigs, just try to hit me!* Was it fear, making him a revisionist liberal?

Arthur's voice was louder and higher than usual. "We need a contingency plan," he said to Tessa. "What if we get arrested?"

"Call your lawyer," said Tessa. "Or your folks."

"I know that. I mean, suppose I get thrown in the tank, and you're waiting for me to show up somewhere. How will you know? We should have a way to reach *each other*, while we're in Chicago. There will be emergencies." He jogged in place, his eyes dark, as though the emergencies percolated through the floor, made it impossible to stand still.

"Call the Movement Center," Bert said. The Movement Center was in a church north of the Loop. Chuck didn't know the name of the church, or how to find it. He'd better learn those things quick.

"We're not using the phone there," Tessa said. "*Expressly* not the phone." She was concentrating on the first-aid box, packed to overflowing, trying to shut the plastic cover with her thumbs. "Someone's already gone way out on a limb to let us use the basement and the bathrooms. We're SDS. You know what that means to some people. Especially since Columbia."

“Fuck *some people*,” Bert said. “They’re uptight liberal dickheads. We’re putting our bodies on the line for them. They can’t stop us from using the phone.”

“What if it’s the middle of the night?” Arthur’s voice was shrill. His excitement had tipped into fear. “We need some organization, something to fall back on.”

“We could call here, collect,” Chuck suggested. “Have somebody in the office at all times. We won’t have to pay the phone bill for a month.”

“Phone’s tapped,” Tessa said.

“Who’s going to be staying in this office?” Bert asked.

“We’ll make a code,” Chuck said. “Like if Arthur kills a police horse with his marbles, we’ll call it”

“I’m not going to ...” Arthur was pissed. Good: He’d think better angry than scared.

“Who’s going to stay in this office?” Bert demanded.

“I will, when I’m not at work,” Greg Lambert said.

“Great.” Bert rolled his eyes at Chuck, who was thinking the same thing: Greg Lambert couldn’t keep a code, or even get messages straight. Greg meant well, but he was goofy, dangerous because he was not very smart. Chuck was glad Greg was not going to Chicago. “We’re talking about a phone that can be answered *all the time*,” Bert explained. “It’s too late to set that up now. We gotta get on the road.” He looked at Tessa, her cue to agree with him.

Chuck had an idea, startling in its clarity. Ivy would hate it, but it was the right thing to do. Secretly he’d been thinking he’d have to end up in jail; all his fantasies led to this conclusion. He imagined Ivy leaping into the path of a police horse. She’d get

arrested, maybe attacked; he couldn't just stand by. He imagined a cop trying to take his notebook away; he couldn't allow that. If they succeeded in marching to the stockyards, he'd have to join, even if it meant getting rounded up with the rest of the crowd. In any case, he'd get charged with assault. If Chuck could sprain his friend's wrist, what might he do to a policeman?

Here was the solution. There was no other alternative. Except for people no one knew well enough to trust, everybody – Greg, Sheldon, Bradley and Vanessa Wells, for example – had to work, unless they'd left town for the month, or would be in Chicago. It was simple: They needed him here more than they needed him to march with the Mobe or hand out flyers or lock arms against police. Maybe Ivy would stay with him. They could eat hamburgers and sleep in their sleeping bags in the office.

"Bert's right," Tessa said. "We've got to leave in a few minutes. There's no time to put together a code, recruit someone to live here for a week, and tell them what the code is. We *certainly* can't write down the code and leave it lying around ... oh, this is dumb. Let's just go."

"I'll stay here," Chuck said. The others were startled into quiet.

"What about Ivy?" Arthur asked, his voice dropping to a calmer level.

"Ivy makes up her own mind," Chuck said. "She can go to Chicago, or she can stay here with me, if she wants."

"You took a week's leave without pay," Tessa said. "Do you really want to do this? I mean, we'll find a way to get messages to each other in Chicago." She looked doubtful, not comprehending, even suspicious of his motives.

“You don’t know what’s going to happen in Chicago,” Chuck said, flatly. All this preparation was about that fact. No one knew. “You can do without me there. You really need me here.” This way, he’d have an essential role without having to make a choice he’d regret. The more he thought about staying in the office – *holding the fort*, his grandfather would say – the more it felt like the right decision.

“You’re making a big sacrifice,” Bert said. His little knowing smile said, *Not so big, I understand.*

Arthur shook Chuck’s hand, and Tessa gave him a hug. Since the embrace on the Severance Hall steps, they hadn’t come together except in the presence of others; Chuck had seen to that. Now she wrapped her arms around his waist and rested her head on his chest. “You’re right,” she said. “Anything could happen.”

Bert came up with a code quickly: Lincoln Park was the zoo, the Movement Center was the Finland Station, Grant Park was the village, and jail was school. *I’m stuck at school* would mean *I’ve been arrested*. He was assigning each of them an animal name as they settled into the van.

“Call me when you get there – at least once a day, even if there’s no emergency,” Chuck said. They assured him they would, and drove away.

Greg was still in the office, leaning back in the loose-jointed chair with his feet propped on the desk. “I can spell you, sometimes,” he said. “Want a Dr Pepper?”

“Sure,” Chuck said. “Thanks, man.” He didn’t want to rely on Greg – but he couldn’t stay in the office twenty four hours a day, either. Right now, for example, he needed to walk. He’d drink his Dr Pepper on the way to the Big Penny where he’d tell

Ivy what he'd done. The van wouldn't get to Chicago till midnight at the earliest. He'd be back in the office by then.

* * * * *

August 24, 1968 (Saturday)

Jane raised her *Women Strike for Peace* sign higher and straightened her shoulders under her backpack. Next to her, Tessa shouted *Peace! Now!* to callers down the line yelling *What do we want? When do we want it?* The old question-and-answer cry had become a challenge completely divorced from its words.

They had filled the sidewalk with women – all women, *only* women, marching in front of the Conrad Hilton. A few men on the sidelines watched with dour, puzzled faces. Chicago police in sky-blue helmets and matching short-sleeved shirts watched with hands behind their backs. A police van stood at the corner, its windows reinforced with wire – waiting to be filled with protestors under arrest. There was a rumor that the police had already killed a teenaged boy.

Peace! Now! The women's chant said to the police, We defy you! It said to Jane, We're being safe! She began to substitute "Liberation!" for *Now!* – a small but satisfying change.

She'd found Tessa in Lincoln Park, practicing a Zengakuren snake-dance with the Mobe. The idea was to make a moving barricade of their bodies – arms linked, legs stomping and kicking in rhythm – but mostly it was fun. The five of them agreed to keep close: Marvin, Bert, Arthur, Jane, and Tessa. Bert picked out a tree where they could post messages to each other and handed out paper scraps and thumb tacks. Then Jane and Tessa came downtown for the all-women's peace march, and the men went who-knew-

where. Tessa was yelling “Revolution!” as Jane yelled “Liberation!” They grinned at each other.

Jane remembered her very first picket line: She’d had to reach up to hold onto her mother’s hand outside a department store. Strikes seemed to be always in cold weather, and always called “strikes” rather than “demonstrations.” They dressed in hats and sober coats – dark blue, brown, or gray, collars buttoned, with scarves and gloves. Mom smiled as she marched, sometimes talking with the other men and women, sometimes laughing. Daddy walked silently with his shoulders hunched, his sign over one shoulder, his jaw set. When people scuttled across the line, trying not to meet anyone’s eyes, everyone shouted “Scab!” They were hurting the strike, Mom explained. “A scab puts his own greed ahead of the people’s welfare,” she said. “It’s worse than stealing.”

The mellow late-summer air was breezy and not too hot. Most of the women today wore dresses and sandals – moderate, conciliatory outfits. Jane and Tessa wore jeans. “Liberation!” Jane took the rubber band out of her braid and let her hair go waving over her backpack.

“This is dull.” Tessa whispered. “Let’s go somewhere else.”

“Already? We just got here,” Jane said. “What’s wrong with you?”

“I’m jumping out of my skin,” Tessa said. “Sorry Jane, I gotta move. I’m going back to Lincoln Park. They’ll probably have music.” She bolted from the line, leaping across the path of two women, blew a kiss to Jane, and loped up Michigan Avenue. Policemen turned their heads to watch her go, their helmets swiveling, a row of enormous robins’ eggs.

Jane carried eight quarters for the pay phone in her pocket, enough for two calls, if they were quick. She'd promised to call her parents. Dad was home from the hospital, weak and quiet, keeping still so as not to upset his fragile heart. This diminished man was the result of what the doctors called a "successful" operation. Mom had trouble sleeping. Because she couldn't share the bed with Dad while he was so weak, she'd been spending nights in Jane's old room.

Horrifying, how small and anxious her parents' lives had become. Jane had been a terrible daughter, abandoning them as they scuttled in ever-narrowing circles between their jobs and their couch in front of the television. They'd talked of traveling through Canada when they retired, then through Europe. They'd planned to buy a boat for pleasure trips on the river. But they hadn't retired; instead, Dad's bad heart had become worse. He was confined to his bedroom, Mom confined to the house. "I'll get stronger, Jane. Next time you see me, I'll be bounding around," he said in his weak voice.

She'd run errands in their Ford, and she'd put away all the half-finished sewing and thrown out the wrapping paper and old magazines so her mother could be comfortable in the little room. She'd considered not going to Chicago. Her mother said, "You do what you have to do, Jane," her lips compressed into a tight line.

"Czechago, Czechago, your kind of a town," Dad sang feebly. A little joke.

Yesterday Jane had declared she would not go. They needed her. She would make up for past negligence, stay with them a week – more if necessary, until Daddy was well enough to stay alone while Mom went to work. She stood next to her mother near the bed where her father sat propped on pillows finishing a bowl of jello. "I can work in Minneapolis, if it comes to that," Jane said. "The Movement is everywhere."

Mom hugged her, pressed her wet cheek to Jane's. Then she picked up the tray. Jane started to adjust her father's pillows so he could lie back, when he looked at her and said, "Wrong decision, Jane."

"But Dad, it's important to me to ..."

"It's important to me that you go," he said. "I want you to give those Democrats hell in my name. Show the world they can't keep on the way they've been doing."

"Let me have that pillow, Dad; you're supposed to lie down now." Jane felt like crying again; she didn't want him to see.

Later, while Jane waited for her ride on the porch, Mom came out with the broom and swept in short quick jerks. One side was clean when she stopped. "You represent me too," she said. "I'll get you some cash – and some change so you can phone us." Jane had promised to phone.

Inside the lobby, delegates and politicians glanced at the protesting women and turned away when they saw they were being looked at. Two bellhops stared; one smiled and made the V-sign with his hand. Jane smiled and waved. The inside of the hotel looked like an exotic aquarium, the guests moving in sterile air, glassed-away from the gritty world.

"Those policemen look as if they're hiding erections or trying to keep from peeing," said a voice behind Jane. Sure enough, a line of cops stood with their legs spread, holding nightsticks across their crotches.

Laughing, Jane turned to look at the speaker, a round-faced woman with freckles.

"We're a threat," the woman said. She took two trotting steps to walk next to Jane. "Nothing threatens men like organized women. They can't charge a peaceful picket

line in front of the Conrad Hilton: the most important Democrats are staying here. McCarthy headquarters are here.” Jane glanced through the glass: A red dress and two black suits stood stiffly: slim hard bodies, bland faces. They looked like mannequins.

“How are we a threat to men?” Jane asked.

“We see through them,” the woman said. She was a little older than Jane, maybe thirty, dressed in a polka-dot shift. Her low, conversational voice made her words the more surprising. “Men are chiefly concerned about the size of their dicks, whether they’re in bed with us or in political meetings. The Vietnam war makes sense only as an effort to keep America’s big dick from going soft. But we know it’s soft anyway. American men are getting the pants beat off them by a bunch of barefoot guys in pajamas. Where are you from?”

“Cleveland Movement for a Democratic Society. You?”

“Boston Female Liberation. I came with the Women Strike for Peace.”

Behind them two girls started singing the “Battle Hymn of the Republic.” Jane realized what they were doing at the second line – “She is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored” – and joined in.

* * * * *

August 25, 1968 (Sunday)

“Another cup of coffee, please ma’am,” the man smiled at Ivy. He’d been in the corner booth for an hour, drinking coffee and water, reading the Sunday *Plain Dealer*.

“You need a sandwich with that,” Ivy said, smiling back. He had nice dark eyes. “The grill’s turned off, but I can make you a good chicken salad sandwich.” If Kreb were here, he’d have told Ivy half an hour ago to get the guy to order food or move: A single person occupying the corner booth was taking space meant for good-paying customers.

But at 8:00 on Sunday night Kreb was not here; there were only two other booths occupied and three men at the counter. The tables were empty.

“No thanks,” the man said. “I’m not hungry. I sure do like to watch you do your job, though.”

“You should see me make a chicken salad sandwich,” Ivy said.

He sighed. “There’s other things I’d rather watch. I’ll bet you’re a good dancer.”

“Where do people dance on a Sunday night in Cleveland?” Until Chuck had named it *flirting*, Ivy had simply enjoyed this easy, friendly kind of chatting with men. She learned things. This summer she’d gotten to know construction workers, now settling Claude Foster Hall on its new foundation. They had a lot to say about cement blocks. Who would’ve thought there was so much to know about cement blocks? They loved Loretta Lynn and Patsy Cline (now dead, so sad). They let Ivy try a bit of chewing tobacco, laughed when she chomped vigorously as though it were gum, kept laughing when she ran to the kitchen to flush out her mouth with water.

It was Jane who’d pointed out what Ivy knew but hadn’t admitted: The men weren’t really interested in *her*, not even the one who asked her why she was majoring in art history, and then got her talking about the Dutch masters and how they were different from the Spaniards – Velasquez and El Greco. How Rubens fell somewhere in the middle, how his paintings were political.

“Not even him,” Jane had said. “You stand there running your mouth about great painters, and he’s looking at your breasts, wondering when he’d get to fuck you.”

They were in the Monmouth apartment. Jane was trying on Ivy’s clothes; she was going to the Heights to debunk welfare myths, so she needed to be well-dressed. Ironie,

but there it was. Ivy's clothes hung loosely on Jane. She looked stylishly lean. Ivy felt fat. "That guy's at least thirty-five," she said. "Married. Kids."

"So he fools around with you so he can feel extra masculine," Jane said. "Not to learn about art. Bet on it."

Ivy didn't want to believe it. She saw the man again, walking on Euclid Avenue, and urged him to go to the art museum. "You gonna come with me?" he'd asked, putting his arm around her, speaking into her ear. He had a sour smell.

"Can't," Ivy said. "Gotta be somewhere."

"Be that way." The man turned on his heel and walked away.

Face it, she told herself now. *You're being seductive*. She didn't mean to be seductive. It just happened. She refilled the dark-eyed man's coffee cup, set it down, and felt the heat of his shoulder near her breast – but she didn't touch him. She did not know his name – did not want to know. Did not want this *desire*, which she could feel across the diner when she returned the coffee pot to its hotplate. She was curious, that was all. He looked interesting and spoke with a slight accent. What country was he from? Did he study at Reserve?

She wanted him to want her, that was the thing. She wanted all the men to want her. It would be dishonest to pretend she didn't have a quick throb of delight when the construction worker wanted to go with her to the art museum. But that delight (she had noticed how his nose wrinkled when he smiled, the ruddy little hollow where his collar bones met, the delicious appeal of the inside of his arm just before it disappeared into his rolled-up shirt sleeve) was a shameful secret. She couldn't tell anyone.

“We could dance in my living room,” said the dark-eyed man. “Right after you get off work.”

“Sorry, I’ve got a date,” Ivy said. She turned away, roiling inside. She’d done it again. She didn’t want to go to this man’s living room. He had no business inviting her to his house before he even knew her name. She had no business letting him think she might accept the invitation. She should have said, *My boyfriend, whom I live with and sleep with every night, expects me home at 8:00*. But then the fascinating encounter would end. And the truth was, she didn’t like the fact that her plans at 8:00 were set by Chuck’s expectations. If he expected sex, he’d get that, too, whether she felt like it or not. That’s how things had been going.

The big disappointment was Chuck’s not going to Chicago. He’d decided to mind the office phone in case there were emergencies. “Can’t you organize shifts?” Ivy asked. “Get on the phone and find out who could put in a few hours at a time. Line them all up.”

“No,” he’d said. “Too late.” He’d made up his mind. Except for a few hours here and there when Greg (*ugh!*) or Sheldon would take over, Chuck was committed to the Movement office for the next week. And he expected Ivy to stay with him.

The dark-eyed man had left (of course; damn!) and Ivy wiped down the table. He’d left the Sunday *Plain Dealer*, funnies and all; she would take it back to the apartment and read it, maybe do the crossword, before driving to the office in the Pontiac to be with Chuck. She did not after all want to spend the night alone, and he wanted her there. Wanted her.

Oh, she was all riled up. She wanted to have sex, and Chuck was the one. She felt like licking the insides of his arms, the little hollow at his throat, his belly. She felt like

biting him. She hung up the “Closed” sign and swept the floor. In the soft strokes of the broom, the gathering up of crumbs, cigarette ashes, and torn napkins, she thought: *I can go to Chicago on my own*. She could find a ride – *she* knew how to get on the phone and get things done. She wanted to be in Chicago with Jane and Bert and Tessa and Marvin and Arthur. Maybe Bradley Wells had taken time off and would drive there.

* * * * *

Jane found Marvin leaning against the message tree in Lincoln Park. She didn’t recognize him at first because he’d had a haircut. Bullet-headed and beaky, he was chatting with a policeman. Jane’s stomach recoiled; she crouched behind a bush. She’d never believed *The policeman is your friend* even in elementary school, long before Mississippi. For the past month in Cleveland she’d been ducking out of sight when police or National Guardsmen drove by.

“At least they won’t be able to *put* the LSD *in* the water supply,” the cop told Marvin. He wore jodhpurs and tall black boots. His shirt and his helmet were terribly blue. His club dangled from his hand. “We got a permanent guard on the reservoirs. You can’t be too careful. Those people may seem innocent, all peace-and-lovey-dovey.” He jerked his chin toward the Yippie festival on the lawn. “And maybe you’re right, some of them mean well. But why do they have to get so hairy – and refuse to bathe? When you get down-wind, whew!” He fanned away imaginary odor with his hand.

“You’d think they’d just settle for a few stink bombs, wouldn’t you?” Marvin said placidly. Jane wondered how long he’d been playing with this cop. He wouldn’t have cut his hair just so he could talk incognito with Chicago police.

“Oh, they can’t get enough of stink, they wallow in it,” the cop said. “All that marijuana messes with their smell systems.” He delivered this horseshit with complete authority.

Arthur came through the trees, carrying a loaf of bread. “People keep asking me, *what are you in favor of?* It’s that,” he pointed to the festival. “And this.” He broke off a hunk of bread and handed it to Jane. “From the free food table.”

The bread was dark and crumbly, with whole grains of wheat and sunflower seeds. She bit off a mouthful and chewed. “I don’t think I could stand everybody being this groovy all the time,” she said.

“You’re kind of grouchy, you know that?” Arthur said. “You should lighten up.”

Marvin saw Jane and Arthur, and made a small flapping gesture with one hand, a hi-there-but-stay-away movement. They ducked behind the bush.

“The bad smell is just a way to annoy us, a sign of their *sociopathology*,” the policeman rolled out the word with knowing assurance. “We’re really looking for the masterminds. We know they’re here.”

“Hoffman and Rubin?”

“I mean the people *behind* them, who’d never get their names in the paper.”

“Ah,” Marvin said. “You’re not talking about the FBI, are you?”

The policeman leaned in close and muttered something unintelligible.

“Communists!” Marvin said out loud. “You don’t say! Well, they must have changed. The last Communist Party members I met would never have come up with something called the Festival of Life.”

The cop glanced over his shoulder. He might have seen Jane and Arthur, but something got his attention. “Hey hey – what’d I tell you,” he said to Marvin. “Trouble. You’d better go on home.” He trotted toward a group of bright-blue helmets in the field.

“Where’s his horse?” Arthur walked up, holding out the bread.

“Where’s Tessa and Bert?” asked Jane. “And what’s with the straight haircut?”

“No horse – a three-wheeled motorcycle,” Marvin said. “I think he likes dressing like a stormtrooper. Did you see how he kept admiring his boots surreptitiously? Oh, here they are.” Bert and Tessa appeared.

“We came to get you,” Tessa said. Her legs were sunburnt from being in the park all day. “MC-5 is playing, and some local talent.” Bert’s eyes gleamed from under the rim of the World War II helmet he’d bought at a house sale in Shaker Heights. Tessa wore a football helmet. “Uh-oh.”

“What’s happening over there?” Through the trees and across a baseball diamond, Jane thought she saw a flatbed truck surrounded by police and a swarm of park people. There was a flurry – police were attacking with clubs, pushing park people to the ground. Yells. Sirens. A van arrived and more police poured out.

“The truck was supposed to be a stage for the rock concert.” Tessa handed Jane a bottle of apple juice and sat on the grass. She took off her helmet.

“Aren’t you coming?” Bert asked her.

Tessa shook her head. “I’ve nothing to add to that melee.”

“I’ll go with you,” Arthur said. He put on his batter’s helmet and ran off with Bert. They were like football players who couldn’t stand to sit on the bench.

“Who knows what violence we might have committed with a flatbed truck?”

Marvin said. He nibbled bread and squinted into the distance where police were apparently carting away a few people they’d arrested. The flatbed truck was leaving.

Jane should be phoning her parents, but here she was in Lincoln Park sprawled on the grass. The truth was, she didn’t know what else to do. She felt her head spin; the apple juice must have been spiked. “Did you put vodka in this?” she asked Tessa.

“Yep,” Tessa smiled. “Took you a while, huh?” Marvin was lying on the grass, hands behind his nearly-bald head.

“What did you do with your hair?” Jane asked. She lay down next to Marvin. Maybe then her brain would quit spinning.

“Long hair gets hot,” Marvin said. “I decided I wanted to stay cool.” He put one arm around Jane and pulled her closer, so her head was on his shoulder. The fight in the distance was over, and a concert had started. A band played chords which swelled and burst in the greasy air, like soap bubbles. Jane was high: the soap bubbles glowed.

“It’s good to be here with you,” Jane said. “And Tessa.” She reached for more of the spiked apple juice.

“Actually,” Marvin said into her ear, “I cut my hair for my mother. She lives in Evanston. I paid her a visit a couple of days ago.” Jane had not known that Marvin had a mother. She had not asked. What else did she not know about him? He turned and nuzzled Jane’s hair with his long nose. Then he kissed her on the cheek, reached with his hand to turn her face so he could kiss her lips.

“Don’t,” Jane said. “I’m so fond of you, but when I’m in a bad mood, I don’t want to be kissed. What kind of political confrontation is it when you fight over an

impromptu band stage?” She was still cranky, in spite of the alcohol. The cops had been easy to provoke, and so they’d made temporary martyrs of kids who wanted to earn bruises and jail experience. Her father would have said the kids were “adventurist” – overly romantic about the struggle with no analysis. He’d accused Jane of adventurism when she went to Mississippi in ’64. When she returned to Ann Arbor as a student, roomed and boarded with free run of libraries and movie theatres, she understood: the people in the south bore the full blast of the rulers’ (there was no other word for them) hostility. As a student, she was a bourgeois. As a white person, she was a member of the oppressor class.

She thought again of that young man dying on the sidewalk, at the corner of Beulah and 123rd. She thought of him at least once a day – his eyes, trying to look at her, trying to focus, his lips moving to say something. Dora had told her he was seventeen. Dora knew the two black men who’d been waiting for a bus on St. Clair that night; two cars had stopped at the curb, white men had jumped out and grabbed the blacks, beat them to the ground, and shot one in the head. No one had been arrested for that murder.

“Okay, forget it,” Marvin said. “I’m fond of you too, that’s all.”

“Thanks,” said Jane. “No, no more juice.” She felt foolish. She hadn’t meant to get drunk. *I’m sorry, Dad*, she said to the father in her mind, who lay in bed, frowning.

Tessa squeezed her hand. “Uh-oh. Something’s going down – holy shit, let’s go.” She pulled Jane to her feet. Marvin stood and grabbed her other hand.

Bert and Arthur were helping to build a barricade out of picnic tables and trash baskets. The police line had assumed a groin-protecting position of readiness. “We’re claiming the park,” Arthur said. Jane’s head ached. A push against her back threw her

forward; weighted by her backpack, she landed on hands and knees. Marvin pulled her up. Police clubs waved above the crowd. Cries, shouts, thuds. Jane clutched Marvin's and Tessa's hands. They ran in the midst of a throng heading out of the park. A blow landed on Marvin's head; he fell.

Tessa swooped down to crouch beside him. "He's out cold," she said. "Keep people away, would you? Give the man some room!"

Two police yanked Tessa's arms and pulled her out of the way so they could kick Marvin, who kept his hands to his face, knees to his chest. Kick kick to the head and shoulders, kick kick to butt and groin. Marvin groaned and lay still. The police vanished in the crowd, and Tessa crawled to Marvin's side.

Jane felt much less drunk than she had a few minutes earlier. She put out her arms and called, "Stay back!" to everyone nearby, made a great fan of her arms and hands, trying to be as big as three people. A little space formed around Marvin and Tessa on the ground. Outside that space, the clubbing continued.

"Motherfuck!" Arthur yelled, to no one Jane could see. He was holding a forked stick with a piece of rubber tubing. "I'm really glad I've got this," he said, and put a marble in the slingshot.

"What the hell are you doing?" Jane demanded.

"I'm protecting us," Arthur said. He let fly. The marble *thunked* against a blue helmet.

"Now you've done it, you little fruit," Jane muttered. Arthur loaded another marble. The helmets surged closer, clubs bobbing over the crowd.

"He's come to," Tessa said. "He's getting up now, help me lift him."

Marvin looked sheepish on his knees. Then he stood up slowly, with Tessa's and Jane's hands under his arms. "I think I should ..." He didn't have a chance to finish; a club fell on Jane's shoulder, above her backpack.

The next blow hit Arthur, who staggered. "Ow!" He threw the marble.

"Cut it out!" Jane said. "You're not gonna stop the police with marbles."

Arnold sniffed. "Fuck those motherfuckers!"

"I'm taking Marvin to his friends' place in Old Town," Tessa said. "Look after that crack on his noggin, especially. It's probably a concussion."

There was a push from behind, and the crowd moved into the street. Cars honked and screeched. Jane dodged traffic and wriggled between two parked cars; then her shoes thudded on the sidewalk. She was running between Bert and Arthur through a neighborhood with front stoops. "The pigs are on a fucking rampage." Bert said. Jane tripped over a child's tricycle and fell flat. She sat up and took off her backpack. It was an old Campfire Girls pack she'd used on summer camp hiking trips. The strings on top were knotted; she fumbled to open them.

"Hand that over, girlie." A policeman reached for her pack.

Jane clutched it. "I'm getting a handkerchief," she said. Her fingers touched the plastic bag with her wet washcloth.

"I don't care what you're doing," the cop said. Another cop stood close behind her; Jane felt a tug on her braid. Then she was yanked to her feet.

The pain was like nails and needles driving into her head, knives stabbing the nape of her neck. A hand twisted her braid, pulled her up to a face with flat blue eyes, a purplish nose, bad teeth, a double chin.

“You fucking whore dyke,” the face said. He had a thick red tongue. He spat in her eyes and let her drop. Off-balance, she landed on her tailbone, her hands and elbows slammed to the pavement behind her.

Stand all the way up now, quick. No one could spit in her face and expect her to crumple into a weeping heap. Kicks thumped her back, her butt, her thighs, as she struggled to stand. Pebbles dug into her hands. “Pig” was too good a word for such thugs.

The kicking stopped. Jane lay sprawled, prone, aching. The words “whore dyke” echoed painfully. The noxious spit burned her face. But her hair was still on her head. She could stand up. She was Jane Revard, standing on a street in Old Town. Four piggish thugs in blue shirts and helmets were assaulting people who ran, crouched, or scrambled behind trees. Or fought back. Arthur was fighting back, kicking, spitting, screaming “Cocksucker!”

“This guy bit my hand!” a cop yelled. “I gotta get a rabies shot. We’re taking him in.” Arthur struggled as two cops carried him off. Jane glimpsed his face, lips parted, teeth bared. He held up a solidarity-fist; one of the cops grabbed it and wrenched it around behind his back. Arthur screamed. They lugged him to the paddy wagon at the corner. “Long live the revolution!” he screeched as they threw him in.

Jane picked up her pack: the cops had taken her Swiss army knife and her “Join Us!” leaflets. Her washcloth and handkerchief were still here; so were her pencil and paper – several pieces, folded together. Her money, of course, was in her pockets. Bert came out from behind a tree. “Arthur’s got guts,” he said. “They’ve got him on assaulting an officer and resisting arrest, at least.”

“How are you?” Jane asked.

“Got a few billy-club licks,” Bert said. “Not bad. This jean-jacket’s protective.” He held out his arms and rotated them experimentally. The two blue pigs were coming back from the paddywagon, looking for their next victim. “Let’s get out of here,” Bert said. “It’s too soon to get arrested. The convention’s barely started.”

“Let’s find a phone booth,” Jane said.

“Right. We should phone Chuck,” Bert said. “Arthur’s gone to school.”

When they crossed Clark Street Jane knew where she was and where the Movement Center was. She was tingling all over, the soreness of her limbs and head and back waking up her body. She had felt what it was like to be scalped. She had been spat on. She was coming to her senses, she knew who she was, and she was not tired at all. Her bad mood had fled.

“They’re terrified of us,” Bert said. “They think we’re monster zombie hippie vermin, gonna destroy the world.”

“Whore dyke, the guy called me.”

“Whoa – what an honor!” Bert welcomed her to the ranks of the truly reviled. “We were just disorganized politico schmucks,” he said. They could walk now, no pigs were chasing them, no fellow protestors pushing past. “We aren’t doing a tenth of what we said we’d do.” He stopped at the corner, looked both ways, charged across. “And they think we’re taking over. In their minds, we’re winning!”

“How do you know what they think?”

“Fear in their eyes,” Bert said. “Also, anybody who’s threatened by little Arthur and his marbles has got to be seeing bogeymen. Here’s a phone.”

While Bert called Chuck, Jane wiped her face with the damp washcloth from her pack. A police car was parked nearby, its occupant a shadow backlit by streetlights. She missed her Swiss army knife. She'd always carried it, to open letters, cut cord, slice apples; but it was sharp enough to make a hole in a tire. It hurt to think of Marvin huddled on the ground. She looked at the apartment building nearby, windows glowing softly with lamplight. She and Bert could go inside, pound on all the doors, yelling *Wake up!* Tell everyone what Chicago's finest were doing in their dark streets.

"What if they say *Hurrah for Chicago's finest?*" Bert said when she told him. His eyes narrowed. "We're the enemy now. The war's come home."

"We're not who they think we are," Jane said.

"I think maybe I am," Bert said, scratching his chin. He hadn't shaved since leaving Cleveland. "At least I hope so, at least some of the time."

Jane thought of Dora leaning out the front window in Glenville, calling to the wounded white tow-truck operator, giving him a glass of water, letting him use her phone, not mentioning him the next day as she soaked the blood-stained rug with cold water, scrubbed it with soap, and soaked it again. Jane had no sympathy for the Cleveland police who were racist to the bone, who shot young black men to death and pinned the murders on a nationalist visionary. She had thought she was like Dora. But tonight she wanted to slash tires and rouse sleepers, drag them into the streets.

"Let me call my folks," she said to Bert. "I'll be quick."

He leaned against a wall and smoked a cigarette while Jane told her mother she was fine. "Glad to hear it," her mother said cheerfully. "We didn't watch the news

tonight. Why wouldn't you be fine?" Her voice had the sharp-edged chirpiness she used when she was scared.

"How's Daddy?"

"Okay," Mom said. "He was sitting up and walking around yesterday. Today he's pretty tired, stayed in bed. I'm glad you called. But I'm barely awake, Janie. Call earlier next time, okay?"

"I'll try." Her mother was not sleepy; she was covering up. Dad was back in bed because his condition was worse. Jane considered telling her mother she knew that, but Bert had finished his cigarette and was making faces, pressing his blobby nose against the glass, then his lips and chin. Mom would deny her fear. There was nothing Jane could do for her father over the phone. She said good-bye and hung up, then burst open the phone booth doors and said "Let's go" before Bert could ask questions. Mom had been right to shut her out; Jane was where she belonged now, whore-dyke of the streets, the law-and-order man's worst nightmare.

August 26, 1968 (Monday)

Jane felt like she'd been running in the streets for months. They'd marched on police headquarters and been stopped by pigs in sky-blue helmets. They'd flour-pasted signs to marble and sandstone walls. They'd been cursed by solid citizens, and they'd laughed at the foul language coming out of perfectly-painted lips, over clean-shaven chins and white shirt collars. Tessa had bought two tubes of bright red lipstick; she and Jane had left messages in the ladies rooms of two restaurants and two hotels. They'd found a sympathetic waiter who let them sit in his restaurant for half an hour, eating rolls with butter and drinking ice water. They'd taken the red cloth napkins as souvenirs.

In Grant Park, Bert led the assault on General Logan – a bronze Civil War general on horseback – carrying his NLF flag. Five or six boys ran ahead of him and clambered onto the horse. “Too soon to get arrested,” he said. Evidence of how much he hated the Cuyahoga County Jail, Jane thought.

Boys swarmed over the statue, kicking the police who tried to stop them. One kid climbed the general’s upflung arm and shinnied to the top of the flag he carried; one perched atop the horse’s head. “Look at us,” Bert said, waving his NLF flag. “We’re black and white, hippy-dippy, and straight as pretzel sticks. There’s a guy in a suit.” The guy in the suit waved and held up a Mobe sign: *Bring the troops home now!*

“With a tie, no less,” Tessa said. “Still, there are more police than protestors.”

“Here they come,” Bert said. A fresh river of blue helmets and black clubs cut through the crowd around General Logan, beating, flinging people to the ground, carrying some away. Tear gas rose like thick steam. Bert lifted his bandanna from his neck to cover his nose and mouth. Jane opened her pack and dug past the papers for her washcloth, still slightly damp. Tessa had a handkerchief. They ran.

Something clanked against Jane’s foot. She picked it up, a metal cylinder, and threw it toward a cluster of police near the drinking fountain.

“That was a tear gas canister,” Bert said. “Good throw.” They stopped to watch it erupt; the pigs scattered to get away from the fumes. Jane felt a surge of mean gladness.

She’d been noticed, of course; the blue pigs regrouped and came for her, so she ran again, Bert and Tessa with her, speeding her up when her body begged to go slow. Tear gas burned the inside of her nose and throat; chemically-induced tears ran down her cheeks and neck. She did not think, she did not see where they were going. She’d known

warfare was crazy; she had not known how simpleminded it was. Jane shouted “Liberation!” and saw police faces turn piggish as if she’d shouted “Sons of bitches!” or thrown a rock. “We should check on Arthur,” she said to Bert, when they crouched in some bushes to catch their breaths.

“We should,” Bert said. “But we don’t know where he is. And I’ve twisted my ankle.” He could barely walk.

So he and Tessa took a bus back to the medical station in Lincoln Park while Jane went alone to police headquarters. The cop behind the desk couldn’t tell her where Arthur was – he could have found out, if he’d wanted to, but he was not going to tell her, he was sorry, unless she was a relative; he followed regulations, and that was all there was. Jane looked at his face; without a helmet, he looked human, *was* human, of course he was. If he hadn’t been in uniform, she would have thought of him as a nice man – young, not much older than she was. “You’re just doing your job, right?” she said.

He nodded. Then he said, “Listen, I know the war is wrong. I know politicians are jerks. Makes me mad as hell.”

“You could do something about that.”

“What? I like my job, most of the time. I got a wife and” (smiling) “a new baby girl.” If Jane had asked, he’d have pulled the photos out of his wallet. “What I don’t get,” he said, “is why you’re here, rather than in school or a nice job. You don’t have to worry about the draft. You could be a social worker, do a lot of good that way.”

Jane thought of the social workers she knew whose lives were constant struggles between regulations and human decency. She knew others who’d given up on decency to spy – make sure the mothers weren’t accepting food someone brought them, or being

visited by boyfriends, or earning a couple of dollars babysitting. The spies got promoted.

“I think I can be more useful doing what I’m doing.”

“Which is?”

She told him about getting people to see how the System was working against them so they could change it – the welfare system, the draft and armed service system ... He didn’t understand. He thought she could choose to join the System and live happily ever after. Change it from the inside, little by little, to help people.

“Are you making change on the inside?” she asked him.

“I’m helping people,” he said. “I really am.”

The whole way back to Lincoln Park – two miles on foot – Jane thought about what she should have said. And she hid from police in helmets.

At dusk the Festival of Life had become a camp; there were bonfires with orange flames. Everything else – trees, tents, people – was cloaked in shades of gray from smoke and approaching night. Someone was playing guitar, singing “I’m gonna give all that I’ve got to give, cross my heart and I hope to live.” A Phil Ochs song. It was Ochs himself, standing near the fire, a bandage on his forehead, surrounded by Park people. Bert and Tessa were not in the medical center. The message tree was empty. Jane sat down and leaned her back against it, to rest and wait. From there she saw the police move in.

“Curfew!” one called to the people among the trees. “Time to go home. Take baths, kiddies. You got a count of three to get moving. One, two ...” She knew the park people would not leave. She was a park person, now. A guy who reminded her of Greg Lambert — huge rounded shoulders and a buzz cut – bent over the fire nearest her. Then a flaming log soared through the air. People scattered to get out of its way. Police

converged on the thrower – dozens of pigs. While two made the arrest, the others began clubbing.

It was like they *wanted* to fight, both police and guys like Greg. That had not been him; Chuck had told her Greg was working in the flats. In the dark all she'd seen was a silhouette. She got up to look for Bert and Tessa. A tear gas cannister went *pop – hiss*, and she put her washcloth to her nose. Then she had to run among strangers, all the way back to Old Town, chased by pigs.

Two kids pounded on the door of a nearby house, pleading to be let in. Two cops followed, boots drumming on the wooden porch, grabbed one kid's arm and gripped the other by the collar of his jacket. Pigs forced the two kids to the ground and frisked them. They must have found something –a joint? a pebble? – because they handcuffed the kids, hauled them up, and forced them to walk toward a van. “Ronny!” A man stood in the open doorway with a woman, calling, “What’s going on?” One of the kids twisted around to look, as best he could with his hands cuffed, and was stuffed into the van. The man was grabbed and pulled down the porch steps. The woman ran out. “We know those kids!” she yelled, and she too was pulled off the porch and hit on the back and shoulders.

With no idea how she got there, Jane was grabbing the club-wielding arm, shrieking “Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!” in a voice she'd never imagined could be hers. The elbow (pink, hairy, big as a raw leg of lamb) came back like a piston and dug into her chest; she landed on the sidewalk, got kicked in the ribs, rolled to escape the kicks, off the curb into the street, and lay with her face in the gutter. It was cool and smelled of sweetly moldering leaves.

Eventually she raised her head and looked around. Pulled herself up and walked, looking into people's faces. They looked back at her with bleary openness, bruised as she was, dizzy, enraged – but none of them was Bert, or Tessa, or anybody she knew. She stood confused in the middle of a narrow street. A man limped past carrying what looked like two cameras. “Excuse me, which way is Clark Street from here?” Jane asked him.

It was Norman. “Oh my god, Jane!” He put his arms around her, and she hugged him back. “Careful,” he said. “My ribs hurt; I got beat up. I can't believe they're attacking journalists. My camera's smashed.” He showed her the cracked lens.

Jane's ribs hurt too. “Don't hug,” she said, leaning into Norman. “I'm just glad to see someone I know, to be able to ...” She raised a hand and touched his cheek, rough as sandpaper. “We're just two frightened people, aren't we?”

Norman took a deep breath. “I dunno what we are,” he said. “I'm taking notes so I can figure it out. Tell me everything you've seen and done. Clark Street's this way.”

It helped to explain events to Norman, keeping her voice calm, reporting in a matter-of-fact way the invasion of the park at curfew, the pursuit into Old Town, the people who'd been pulled off their own porch and clubbed. “Their own porch!” She felt her voice rise and forced it down with a gulp. Norman was watching movement ahead of them along the line of parked cars. “That's a cop, slashing those tires,” he said. He took the lens cover off his good camera and clicked, clicked again and moved closer. The car had a McCarthy sticker. Jane saw a cop trot past to slash the tires of another McCarthy car in front of it. A third cop stepped out of a shadow. “Stop that!” he yelled at Norman, and took out his gun.

Norman and Jane stood frozen. The cop snatched the camera, threw it down, and stomped on it. Then he hit it with the billy club. Glass tinkled on the street. “You want to look like this camera?” He held it out to Norman, the film compartment swinging open. “Then beat it.”

They crossed to Clark Street, Jane trotting to keep up with Norman’s longer stride. “I’m going to the Movement Center to see if I can find my friends,” she said. “It’s in a church a few blocks from here.” She did not want to be alone tonight. All that was real was the street, the running, the bruises, the masses of struggling youth, the blue-headed pig-police trying to stop them. They held hands on the way to the church.

Bert and Tessa lay next to each other in their sleeping bags – Bert with his head on his rolled up jean jacket, his mouth open, snoring; Tessa on her stomach with one arm wrapped around the pillow she must have brought with her. Her other arm was flung out toward Bert; their hands touched lightly.

Jane opened her sleeping bag all the way so there was room for two, and she and Norman eased onto the padded flannel together. Norman’s whiskers raked her face as he kissed her. “Ow,” she whispered, and smiled; then she put her arms around him. But they were both too sore; they had to settle for lying side by side.

“I’ve got to call my lawyer first thing in the morning,” Norman said. “File a complaint about destruction of property. Two cameras in one night. *Good* ones.”

“You’re a bourgeois liberal, you know that?” Jane said.

“Don’t call me names,” he said. “What does that make you?”

“Yesterday I got called a whore dyke.” she said. “I hated it. Now I’m getting to like the idea.”

“Sorry,” Norman said. “You don’t have a prayer of being either of those things. I know that much about you.” He kissed her on the cheek and lay back down. Later, in half-light of early morning, Jane felt Norman lift himself from his side of the sleeping bag and fold it over her before he left.

* * * * *

August 27, 1968 (Tuesday)

In the church basement Ivy put on her visit-the-delegate clothes. The floor was littered with sleeping bags; some were humped with sleeping people. The room was warm with the sleepers’ breath and body heat. She’d come with Pastor Joe Griever and his wife, leaving Cleveland in darkness and falling asleep as the sun rose. It was mid-morning when Pastor Joe let her out next to this church, saying, “You’ll find our people in the basement, see you later,” and drove off. In white-stockinged feet, Ivy tiptoed among the sleeping bags until she saw a long braid. She tugged it gently, and Jane woke up, saying, “Ow, watch it!”

“I’m going to visit the Ohio delegation,” Ivy said. She twirled on one heel. “Do I look like a McCarthy kid?”

Jane rolled over and hitched herself onto her elbows. “You look like you’re about to rush Phi Kappa Zeta. What time is it?” Light spilled from little windows near the ceiling.

“Noon, I think,” Ivy said. “I got here about fifteen minutes ago. Want to come with me to visit delegates? They’re in the Holiday Inn, which I’ve no idea how to find.”

“There’ll be a coffee shop and a super-clean restroom. I’ll go.” Jane slithered out of the bag. She was a mess, her face streaked with grime; wobbling, she picked her way

barefoot across the floor to the lavatory. She wore dirty jeans and a T-shirt. Hair had escaped her braid, straggling over her neck and cheeks.

Ivy strapped on her patent-leather Mary Jane pumps and followed Jane to the bathroom so she could use the mirror. She tied a red ribbon behind her bangs and over the tips of her ears: the Alice-in-Wonderland hairstyle.

Jane came out of a stall. "You need a McCarthy button."

"Got one." Ivy fished the button out of her purse and pinned it over her left breast.

"What are you going to wear?"

"I don't have a costume," Jane said. "Don't McCarthy kids wear jeans?"

"The boys do," Ivy said.

Jane rummaged in her suitcase, stripped naked for an instant, then covered herself with a long pink T-shirt decorated with a few flowers, hand-drawn with red magic marker. "I brought this to sleep in," she said. "Will it pass?"

"If you want to come across as a freaky hippie chick," Ivy said. "What are you going to do with your hair?" She was restless to get going.

"Rat's nest, isn't it?" Jane picked up the end of her braid and broke the rubber band as she pulled it off. "You don't have a brush, do you?"

"Of course I do." Ivy found her suitcase and her brush.

"We had fun all day Saturday and part of Sunday," Jane said, brushing the ends of her hair. "Then the police attacked." She was pulling the brush across her scalp, brushing the whole mane. Her eyes were tearing. "I'm so mad and tired, and my ribs hurt. I feel like I'm twenty years older than I was on Saturday." She handed Ivy the brush, packed with hairs. "I need a Kleenex."

“What happened to Arthur?” Ivy asked.

“He’s been arrested. Bert has a twisted ankle. Marvin’s got a concussion. I don’t know where Tessa is. And me – I’ve been hit all over. She touched her legs, arms, rib cage, butt. “I’m all right,” she said, and blew her nose. “Now, can I go to the Holiday Inn without embarrassing you? I know; I’ll wear this coat.” Ivy’s London Fog lay over a chair. Jane put it on. With her braid and sandals, she looked like a German art student.

“That’s my coat,” said Ivy. “I was going to take it, but you need it more.”

Inside the revolving doors of the hotel were men in suits and women in lacquered hair; everyone seemed to be wearing red or blue, with touches of white. They walked quickly past or stood waiting for elevators. They spoke in hushed voices.

“How about we go to the coffee shop?” Jane suggested.

It seemed to be as good a place to start as any. Jane went ahead, and Ivy stopped to check herself in the long mirror in front of the elevators. The pattern of her dress, red with black and white lightning streaks, hid its wrinkles. Her hair was only a little messy; she tucked a couple of wisps into place under the red ribbon and put on lipstick.

She was still studying her reflection and smearing her lips together when the elevator opened and a man stepped out. He was rotund, white-haired, and he wore a neat blue three-piece suit with a nametag that identified him as an Ohio delegate from Columbus. He also wore a Humphrey button. Ivy started for the coffee shop, but he stopped her.

“Honey,” he said, smiling as though she were his long-lost niece. “I gotta tell you: your man is just not going to win.” He shook his head sorrowfully: too bad.

Her man? McCarthy, Ivy remembered. “Easy for you to say,” she smiled at him. She was supposed to be finding the McCarthy delegates, drawing their attention to what was really happening. “I chose my candidate because he’s against the Vietnam War. Your candidate isn’t; why should I have any interest in him?” She kept her voice firm and polite. He was a friendly gentleman. She started to walk away.

But the delegate put his hand on her arm. “I know how you feel – you’re young and idealistic. But you need to understand.” He tilted himself so his face came within an inch of hers, even though they stood two paces apart. “Politics is like a baseball game. You should root for the winning team.” He spoke slowly, as though he were imparting a profound secret.

“What do you mean?” Ivy tried to comprehend what a baseball game might have to do with this election. “Humphrey will win anyway so I should work for him?”

The man nodded.

“That’s the dumbest idea I ever heard,” she said. Didn’t he know? She wanted to shove pictures and statistics in his face. “I didn’t set out to work for a politician,” she said, “I set out to change things. Children are dying and whole neighborhoods are on fire – not only in Vietnam, but in Cleveland ...” The words poured out in a rush; all the problems made worse by Johnson’s escalating that awful war, with no end in sight but nuclear explosions all over the planet. He listened, looking at the floor as the atrocities piled up. “All this suffering and dying because of *your team*,” Ivy said, “and you have the gall to talk about baseball games! How *could* you!”

“You finished?” he asked. She nodded. He regarded her seriously and calmly. *I’ve lived a long time*, his expression said, *and you are very young*. “Honey,” he said, “you don’t know how important a baseball game is.”

“I can’t think of anything less important than a baseball game,” Ivy said. “Unless it’s ...” She tried to imagine something less relevant than baseball and couldn’t. “Hubert Humphrey as president,” she said.

“You got spunk,” the delegate said. “But you’re way outta your league, honey. I don’t believe for a minute you’re really committed to changing the world. Why you’re ...” he held out his arm in a look-at-you gesture. “You’re fat!”

There was nothing to do but turn away. Ivy fled to the coffee shop. Jane was not there. Muttering, “Baseball game!” Ivy found the ladies’ room; a damp paper towel would feel good; she was so angry, so angry.

Jane stood at one of the sinks. “I saw you talking to that guy,” she said. “I came in here to scrub with hot water and soap. I feel better.” She looked cleaner, anyway.

“Let’s go back to the church,” Ivy said. “It’s time to get out of these clothes. I’m done playing McCarthy girl.”

“That was fast,” Jane said. “What happened?”

“He said that politics is just a baseball game,” Ivy said. “And baseball games are more important than people’s lives. Let’s go.”

“Just a minute.” Jane held up a lipstick: “Cherries in the Snow.” She grinned and wrote across the mirror: “Power to the People – Dare to struggle, dare to win!” in thick red letters.

Then they had to leave quickly. “Let’s take the bus,” Ivy said. As they rode through the Loop she scuffed her shiny black shoes and tried to make herself small in the seat. Fat. What did he know? More than she did, probably, about things like how the ruling class made money on war. And he did not care.

* * * * *

August 28, 1968 (Wednesday)

Chuck listened to Greg Lambert’s phone ring ten times. He’d called Greg three times in the past hour. Where the hell was he? Chuck would need a break soon.

Tessa had phoned the office twice, first to say that everything was fine, then that Marvin had a concussion as well as a nasty head wound and a bunch of bruises.

Yesterday Ivy’d called; great speeches in Grant Park, she said.

“Has the fox gotten out of school?” Chuck asked. “Fox” was Arthur’s code-name.

“Haven’t seen him,” Ivy said. “I’m with Jane – I mean, the cobra.” Named for her braid. “She’s okay.”

Worrisome, that the group had dwindled, with no way to keep in touch. “The fox should call his den.” His parents.

“Why don’t you call them?” Ivy said. “I don’t want to talk too long.”

It was an ugly, itchy feeling, to have to mind his words. He wanted to ask, are you being careful? Are you at least obeying stoplights? Are you flirting inadvertently? He knew better than to ask. “Right, well, it’s good to hear your voice.”

“Good to hear yours,” Ivy said. She hung up.

Yesterday Sheldon had brought a television, which Chuck kept on all the time now that the convention was in session. He felt smug knowing his comrades could not see inside; he was useful just by watching and taking notes. When he didn’t want to

watch, the voices kept him company. When he couldn't stand what they were saying (this morning the peace plank was voted down), he turned off the sound and focused on delegates' faces – excited, astonished, aghast, and grief-stricken by turns. Chuck phoned Greg again; no answer. He needed air, a walk, and a Dr Pepper. The office could get along without him for ten minutes.

Since the Glenville shootout, the black kids' gang had vanished from Euclid Avenue, and the white kids had taken to roaming the cemetery. Chuck saw them by the big gates, fooling around with stones the way he had when he was a boy. A black woman walked by with a shopping bag and two of the boys threw stones at her. One hit her shopping bag, and she turned to look, but the boys who'd thrown the stones hid behind a bush, so the woman went on. Another stone flew out and landed right behind her on the sidewalk. She turned, saw it, shook her head *tsk-tsk*. Chuck rushed to the gate, indignant, determined to straighten those boys out; but they saw him coming and ran up the hill.

He got his Dr Pepper and returned to the office. He was enjoying his time there. The quietness, the shabbiness, the insufficient lighting all added to its comforts. Greg Lambert had dropped in on Sunday, pleased with himself. "I'm raking in the moolah," he'd said. "Let me know if you need anything – anything at all." Now he couldn't be reached. Count on Greg to be unreliable.

Chuck wasn't envious of Greg's job. He'd have to put on a tie to return to the savings & loan on Friday, and that thought choked him. Racism at the bank, of course, was why he was so angry at those boys with their pebbles. He had three more weeks of self-control before school started. They'd said he might be allowed to work there part time during school: He was that good at hiding his thoughts.

It was better to be free. He turned on the television without sound. CBS showed a bandshell, with a stage, musicians and an audience. The camera stayed on the audience; police were charging through the seats, clubs rising and falling in unison. The people on stage stood still. The camera went back to the audience and zoomed in on Ivy. She stood all alone between two rows and watched the cops come – her eyes and mouth three holes through which her spirit poured out; as the camera veered away, her face became a gaping mask.

There was a commercial for Certs – *two, two, two mints in one!* – and then a reporter's face, nose dripping, glasses shattered. Chuck turned on the sound and heard the reporter's hot, urgent staccato. The police had attacked newsmen. The police had closed access to the bridges. The police were wading into this crowd, now, at the corner of Michigan and Balbo. With the sound on, there was no mistaking the clubs; Chuck heard them strike with a sickening *thok*.

The phone rang, and he turned the sound off. It was his grandfather. "I heard you took a leave of absence from work," Granddad said. "Something wrong with your body? No? Is something wrong with your head?"

"I'm fine," Chuck said. "Just fine. How did you get this number?"

"I called information. Kept asking till I got it right. You're listed as the Movement for a Democratic Society. Talk about confusion!" Granddad was pissed off; Chuck could hear his breaths rasp.

"Is everything all right?" Chuck moved as close as he dared to the TV. Screaming stumbling people were being attacked by police; he was looking for Ivy or Jane. Ivy had said she was with Jane.

“Well, I thought everything was just fine,” Granddad said, “till I phoned my friend George at the bank. Who do you think you are, some salaried executive? You were on your way, but now you’ve quit in the middle of things, and you’ve made me look like a fool in front of a man I can’t afford to be foolish with. I don’t need that, Chucky, that man did me a favor.”

“Wait – stop. I wrote a letter a full week in advance, explaining what I wanted to do. They never got back to tell me I couldn’t do it.”

“They never said you could, either, am I right?”

“Right. But listen: I didn’t leave anyone in the lurch. It wasn’t like they needed me. I was doing busywork – correcting arithmetic, running errands; for Chrissake, I felt like a fraud. I guess I should have called, I guess ...” Chuck heard himself falter and begin to whine. He stopped. On the screen policemen ran after a protestor and knocked him to the ground.

“You know what, Chucky? You don’t know who you are yet.”

“Of course I know who I am, as much as anyone knows, at my age. Tell my father I’ve saved almost all the money I owe him.”

His grandfather harrumphed. “How’s that girlfriend of yours – what’s her name?”

“Ivy Barcelona. She’s fine.” Chuck closed his eyes and crossed his fingers. *Let her be fine, please please please, let Ivy come through this* – a silent blurt of prayer. The TV was still full of running screaming people being beaten by police, who stood out because of their shiny pale-gray helmets.

“You know, I’m afraid that girl’s turned your head, son.” Grandad’s voice had its familiar gruff kindness. “That’s why you forgot yourself. She’s got you thinking you’re

some kind of peace-and-love missionary; she's one of those New Left kids, that's what your mother says. She got you involved in plotting trouble in Chicago." Suddenly he shouted. "Do you know what kind of shit you're in?"

Chuck pulled the receiver back from his ear. He had to say something, Granddad had it so mixed up. "The truth is, I got *her* involved. There's no law against protesting in Chicago, but I'd be in deeper shit if I were actually there." He wasn't lying. His mother and grandfather had no way of knowing Ivy was there. Come to think of it, Chuck hadn't mentioned Ivy's politics to any of the Leggits. "Where does Mom get her information?"

"A little bird told her," his grandfather said. "Or women's intuition. I don't care. I want to know why you left the job."

"I didn't," Chuck began. But he knew it wouldn't wash. If Chuck showed up at the office Friday, he would not be allowed in. Time to level. "Didn't you ever do anything you *had* to do, that others thought was dumb?"

Granddad harrumphed. On the screen, National Guardsmen marched, their bayonets fixed. "Okay. I bought a car in 1915. Lotta people thought that was pretty silly, but I showed them."

"Well, I'll show you some day."

Granddad chuckled. "Maybe you will. I'm not sure I want to wait around, though, to find out what it is you're gonna show me. I won't have to, the way you're messing with my life and putting your mother in the dumps."

"Is she really upset?"

"Yes, she's upset. Who wouldn't be? Tell me: Are you gonna marry that girl?"

"Yes," Chuck said. "Yes, I am. Tell Mom I said so."

“Oh dear. Are you sure? Have you popped the question?”

“No. I’m waiting till ...”

“That’s good. You could get yourself into a mess with a woman like that.”

“Granddad, Ivy’s a terrific person. She’s innocent, she’s – if you met her, you’d see how sweet she is, how good-hearted.”

“Yeah, yeah, I know. She’s beautiful and intelligent too. Son, the first woman is always that way. Always.” The old man sighed. “Your mother will probably feel better if I tell her you’re determined to marry this girl. Meanwhile, you get yourself straightened around, you hear me? You could break your grandfather’s heart, you know.” Another sigh. “Goodbye. And make yourself easier to call, next time. I’m too old to be browbeating operators into finding me phone numbers for the *movement*.”

Chuck couldn’t bear to turn on the sound, even though the television was showing another commercial. He couldn’t bear to read. He watched the light fade on Euclid Avenue. When he could no longer see the derelict gas station across the street, he lay on the couch. With his eyes closed, he saw Ivy running from police with billy clubs. *What times are these, when to speak of trees is almost a crime*. After a while Sheldon came, and together they watched the eleven o’clock news, looking carefully for faces they knew during the replay of the police riot at Michigan and Balbo. They saw Ribicoff shout “Gestapo tactics in the streets of Chicago!” in the Amphitheatre, saw Daley explode too far from the microphones to be audible.

“Did you hear?” Sheldon said, when it was over. “Ahmed Evans’ gun money came from Cleveland:Now!”

“All of it?”

“He didn’t need *all*. Guns aren’t that expensive.”

“Actually I’m surprised you know that,” said Chuck.

“I am too,” Sheldon said. “I surprise myself all the time, with what I know.”

* * * * *

Her fifth day in Chicago, and Jane had lost track of all the others. She’d been at the bandshell with Ivy, and then she’d gone to find a drinking fountain – she wanted to soak their washcloths; more police had arrived, which meant more tear gas – and while she was trying to find a fountain that worked, the police charged, wielding clubs like Davy Crockett at the Alamo. Ivy was swallowed up in the crowd.

Jane walked among shoulders and frightened voices, sorry she hadn’t gotten Ivy’s washcloth to her in time; the air was thick with fumes. Her bruises made her aware of all the little movements involved in walking, the bunch and release of thigh muscles, the side-to-side rocking of hip bones, the rasp of lungs.

The Jackson Street Bridge was crammed with chanting, singing Mobe kids, police herding them from the sides, calling “Keep moving!” nudging people with their nightsticks. Jane’s voice had died within her. She needed to find a bathroom and to call her parents. At the end of the bridge she found the restroom at the back of a café. She stared at her face in the mirror – bumpy nose and bony cheekbones, her lips invisible, thin, the same color as the rest of her face. The eyes were narrow, dark, angry. Street fighter’s eyes. She washed her hands and wet her face, and went back out. On the way out of the coffee shop she scooped a handful of sugar cubes into a napkin and stole a knife. She’d become an outlaw, vandalizing mirrors with lipstick, stealing sugar and flatware. She sucked on a sugar cube and looked for a phone.

Daley had ripped the kindly mask off the Democrats and set the cops on them all, even journalists. In the waning light and the press of people on Michigan and Balbo she saw Jimmy – she was sure it was him – blood on his face, being dragged toward a paddywagon, waving his fist, yelling, “Long live the revolution!” He’d be happy about going to jail – the big Movement credential.

She skirted the melee, avoiding nightsticks, dodging legs and arms that flailed the air, and got caught in a press of people so tight she felt herself lifted off the ground and carried by elbows crunching her sore ribs. She couldn’t breathe. They were Movement people, her people, and still they pressed against her as if they didn’t know she was there. She heard the crack of club on bone, again, again, again.

And then she was free, running alone down Michigan Avenue; the streetlights were on, and she thought she saw a phone booth on the corner, so she ran that way. She still had quarters in her pocket. She pushed on the glass, the door folded open, and she had one foot inside when she felt a hand on her shoulder.

“Go somewhere else to make your call.” A helmeted pig snorted at her, gripped both her arms; he was wearing tight black leather gloves.

“I’ve got to call my folks,” Jane said, as he pulled her out. She kicked the air.

He wrenched her backpack off her sore shoulder. “Gotta check for weapons,” he said, untying the top of the pack. Out came the pink T-shirt.

Fury boiled through Jane’s legs and arms; before she could think she had kicked the piggy rump, the porky thighs, kicked and kicked. And then she was in a paddywagon, being hauled through the streets. It was crowded with protestors sitting thigh to thigh. Across from Jane was a boy who looked like he’d come through a windstorm that had

blown away all his landmarks. “You look bewildered,” she said. Her voice rasped from tear gas.

“I’m stoned,” he rasped back. “And I really, *really* wish I wasn’t. It’s *so* weird.”

Jane was not stoned, and she knew the situation was not weird at all. “This is normal,” she told him. Being thrown into a police wagon was just the next thing after being clubbed, manhandled, and nearly scalped. For others it had been normal for years – generations.

It was normal (she reminded herself) to be fingerprinted, to be handcuffed, to be pulled along by the upper arm, to be silenced. It was her due: She was on the same side as the Vietnamese National Liberation Front. She’d phone Chuck as soon as she could; he’d be calm. He’d know where the others were. Mom and Daddy would have to wait till she was out.

The women were crammed into one room. “We’ll be out by morning,” someone was saying. “They’ve arrested hundreds of people in just a few days. Can’t afford to take each one of us through the arraignment, the hearing, whatever happens after that.”

A deep chuckle. “I don’t know. I wish I could sit down.” Jane recognized the voice – and when she looked where it came from, she recognized her acquaintance from the Women Strike for Peace march.

“Hey!” She called, waving, grinning through a forest of women’s heads and shoulders. The freckled woman waved back. Jane looked down to avoid stepping on toes as she sidled and squeezed between bodies toward her new friend. What a collection of women’s shoes – hiking boots, sandals, bright patent leather pumps. Jane stepped over a saddle shoe and smiled up at the gray-haired woman who wore it. The night ahead would

be long and uncomfortable, but Jane felt a strange euphoria, as if in some sense she was finally on her way home.

The woman from Boston was named Patricia. “You know,” she said. “History will prove we’re right. This is just the beginning of a huge change.”

They had nothing to do but talk. Patricia had been married for five years; then she’d found a women’s liberation group. She’d left her husband finally a few months ago. “When Kennedy was assassinated,” she said, “I was standing in the kitchen beating eggs, waiting for my husband to come home from work. I barely had a thought for Kennedy, because I was concentrating so hard on being Paul’s wife. Can you imagine?”

Jane couldn’t.

“I can’t either,” Patricia said. “What a tight little mind I had.”

* * * * *

Somewhere along Michigan Avenue, Ivy’s lungs began to solidify; she stopped running; then she stopped walking to concentrate on getting the air out. Then she had to bend over to get enough air, hands on her thighs to give herself more room. Time to use the inhaler for the first time in two months. Shit.

Tear gas, of course, but Goddamn it still. The inhaler was buried in the depths of her shoulder bag; she had to rummage for a while and use it right there among the milling and shouting people. She edged to the wall of a building and inhaled again. It was almost empty, the medicine stale and weak.

She’d been moving since the moment at the bandshell when the police charged, swinging their clubs between the benches to hit anyone who didn’t scurry out of the way – an attack on the audience, whose only assertive act had been to chant *AAOOUUMM*

along with Allen Ginsberg, so hoarse from days of tear gas and *oming* he could hardly do it alone. *AAOOUUMM*, and then a band came on, as an idiot kid shinnied up the flagpole, people around him yelling *Half-mast! Don't take it down!* and the police waded in. That was the moment when Ivy knew Bert was right about the war coming home. And so, in a way, was George Wallace right: *Not a dime's worth of difference between Republicans and Democrats*. They were all thugs. They would destroy democracy – destroy their own children – rather than give up their fucking baseball game.

She couldn't stay here, leaning against this building. She felt a little shaky, but she could breathe all right. She began to walk – and then, because there were police on motorcycles coming down the streets, the people on either side of her began to run, so she ran again, her shoulder bag banging against her side. She ran with a throat sore from tear gas; if her lungs seized up, it was too soon to use the inhaler. She'd have to wait. She stumbled against a manhole cover, put her arms out to break her fall, and felt someone grab her hand.

"Come on," said a male voice. "Just a little farther." There were two of them, each holding one of her hands; they pulled her along for another block, and then another. When the street had cleared so they could walk, they introduced themselves. Ed was short and stocky; Mike was tall and thin. "Were you at Michigan and Balbo?" Ed asked. Ivy shrugged; she wasn't sure.

"I was at the bandshell," she said. "Then I crossed a bridge. Then I came here."

"Then you came through Michigan and Balbo," Mike said. "Those cops went crazy, hitting everything that moved. Pushed a bunch of bystanders through a plate glass

window. If you'd told me cops would do that, I would have said no way. It's like Russia – or Nazis on Kristallnacht.”

“Let's go to Grant Park,” Ed said. “We'll be okay there.” They rounded a corner, walked through an alley, and headed back toward Michigan. A barrier had been made of blue sawhorses; they had to follow the sidewalk single file. For the moment they were the only three people here.

Suddenly they came up against a phalanx of National Guard standing motionless, bayonets fixed. They had to walk along the front line of Guardsmen. Bayonet points glittered an inch from Ivy's face. She stopped. Behind her, Ed reached for her hand. The nearest guard was less than a foot away; she heard him breathe. He would not catch her eye. His lips were shut firmly over his teeth.

A scream erupted: “*Fuckers!*” Ahead of her, Mike dropped to a squat, scrabbling the sidewalk with his fingers. The line of guardsmen had not moved. Mike hurled a pebble; it hit a wall and dropped harmlessly. He bent again, spluttering gibberish, and came up throwing an empty cigarette pack, hitting a guardsman's helmet. “Hey Buddy, hey,” Ed grabbed his arm. “Cool it, Mike. Cool it now.” The guardsmen stood impassive. Mike shuddered and fumed while Ed patted his back. Ivy held Mike's hand; as he struggled to break loose, she put her other arm around his waist.

They got him to come with them, crossing the street to the park. “Something just cracked inside,” he told them. His cheeks were wet with rageful tears. “For two days I've been thinking, *police state. This is a police state.* Those bayonets – I couldn't stand it another second. Had to fight back, somehow.”

They entered Grant Park's leafy darkness, and she saw hundreds, maybe thousands, of people in clusters on the grass. She kept Ed's and Mike's hands; it was as if they'd fused on the walk past the bayonets. They stepped over blue-jeaned legs, sidled past backs. Colors had been erased by darkness.

"Dellinger's talking," said Ed. Dave Dellinger, president of the Mobe. Ivy glimpsed him with the bullhorn, a wide man in a suit. She dropped on the grass – dirt and grass, grass becoming dirt – between Ed and Mike. Across the street was a tall grid of glowing squares: the windows of the Conrad Hilton. Close at hand were rustles and murmurs. Dellinger read messages from famous people. "We're with you," they'd written. "You're doing what we should have done long ago." Below the noise of traffic came a roar with no source that Ivy could identify.

Someone put a paper bag into her hands. "Have some and pass it," a voice said. Fritos. Another bag came by with Oreos. Then came a jug of KoolAid. Then came a jug of wine. More KoolAid. Food was circulating throughout the park; everyone helped themselves, no one worried about germs. Ivy was more thirsty than hungry. When she found a ham sandwich in her lap she passed it to Mike, who ate half and passed the rest on. He'd found a tree to lean against.

The bullhorn was passed to Rennie Davis, whose head was wrapped in a bandage. Standing again, Ivy looked around the crowd: surely Jane was nearby – or Bert. She needed to find someone from Cleveland. She squinted to see faces better; no good. She wished Chuck were here, with his arm around her. Her lungs were beginning to tighten again. Back at the church she had aminophyllin stowed in the suitcase, along with an inhaler refill. What if she couldn't find her way back? She had a five-dollar bill in her

back pocket – barely enough for a taxi, but then she'd be broke. "This is our turf; the police won't attack here," Rennie Davis said. "See those cameras? The whole world is watching."

The crowd picked up his sentence and chanted: *The whole world is watching! The whole world is watching!* Ivy felt a hand pulling hers; Ed wanted her to sit by him. She dropped to her haunches, then rocked back into what she realized was his arm. His other arm came round her. "Take it easy for a bit," he said, and kissed her.

She felt as though she were kissing an anonymous person, as though the people in Grant Park had melded into one vast person; she was kissing that collective person. They kissed again.

Mike was looking away. Ivy pulled out of Ed's arms as a new voice came through the bullhorn: a dark man with his eyes hidden under black hat with a wide brim, a black man so tall he could sit on a camp stool and still be seen by the crowd. "Brothers and sisters," he was saying, "the Blackstone Rangers are among you." The crowd erupted in cheers. The Blackstone Rangers, the mysterious street gang that had resisted white domination, resisted the Daley machine, would show them all how to take the streets.

Nearby crouched a girl Ivy's own age, a black girl in a black leather jacket, her clear-eyed face shining briefly in the roving glance of a flashlight. "Vote for George Wallace," she said. "So we can have a *revolution*."

Ivy'd never heard anyone say it: Let the government get so bad that citizens must revolt. The idea was a manipulative, a massive cheat. But it might work. Ed was reaching to kiss her again; he sat cross-legged and pulled her into his lap, held her close to his chest. She felt his hands travel up and down her back, fingering her shoulder

blades, her waist, rounding her buttocks, pulling her close. His kiss was soft and smoky and warm. His hand moved to her breast.

She stopped his hand. "I want to listen," she said. Someone was holding a transistor radio to the bullhorn, broadcasting a voice, the words coated with radio-fuzz, barely intelligible. *Delegates are with us* – the whisper traveled from one cluster of park people to the next. *Senators and congressmen are with us*. Just being here had given power to the people.

The shadow took the bullhorn away from the radio and spoke into it. "See all those lights in the Conrad Hilton?" He turned the bullhorn toward the grid full of yellow squares: "If you're with us, blink your lights!" The chant echoed out of the crowd. "Blink your lights if you're with us! Blink your lights!"

Up and down the face of the Conrad Hilton Hotel, lights winked off and on again, off and on. Ivy leaned into Ed and took Mike's hand. He squeezed.

"Vote for Wallace," said the black girl again. Her hands were clenched under her knees; she rocked back on her hips and forward onto her black boots. "We want a *revolution*."

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Eleven

September 7, 1968

Jane stood on the boardwalk. Behind her was the Atlantic City convention center, in front of her, the ocean. Waves unfurled onto the beach and were dragged back, then swelled, great salty breaths made visible. In the distance, ocean met sky at a thin white line that barely separated two pale blues, almost the same color. The salt wind blew Jane's hair off her face and made her squint; she removed her coat – Ivy's London Fog; she had kept it after Chicago, without meaning to – and felt her arms and legs and torso unknotting in the wind.

She had arrived by train at dawn and slept on the beach, wrapped in the London Fog, among grassy sand hills that turned hard under her body. It must be the middle of the day; the sun was somewhere in the haze overhead.

She loved the feeling of space. Slipping out of her sandals and picking them up, she trotted across the sand and let the water wash over her feet, felt the sand tickle as it slipped out from under her soles. A few people walked the shoreline; the season was not quite past, but enthusiasm for wave-hopping and sunbathing had apparently ebbed. No one lay sprawled on beach towels. Only a couple of young men with pale naked torsos – they must be workers who had to be indoors all week – swam and bounded through waves. Two teen-age girls in bikinis stepped past Jane with thin legs, their shoulders rigid. One wrapped her arms around her body, clutching her rib-cage; the other kept looking over her shoulder. Jane met her eyes – furtive, troubled. These girls had

beautifully tan, slender, smooth bodies, brand-new breasts and hips, graceful ankles and high-arched feet. But they seemed embarrassed, tense, carrying themselves as though they would fly apart if they didn't hold tightly to whatever tied their bodies together inside. Jane thought of a doll she'd had, its legs and arms and head fastened inside the torso with rubber bands that snapped; in an instant the doll went from being a small replica of a girl to six plastic pieces, grotesque in their bare round pinkness.

"In there," said the girl who looked over her shoulder, pointing to the convention center. "Miss America will be there tonight. I wish I could go."

"You gonna watch on TV?" the other asked, still clutching herself. Perhaps she was cold. Jane felt chilly as the wind blew through her T-shirt and jeans, cold water splashing her feet and ankles. She stepped backwards, away from the water. Sand grated between her toes.

"Probably," said the other girl. "My dad wouldn't miss it, and besides ..." Jane couldn't hear any more.

She wished Tessa were here. They had come to Manhattan together, both planning to be at the No More Miss America demonstration, but Tessa had been sidetracked as usual by her mother, who insisted on clothes-shopping, even offered to buy a new outfit for Jane. And then Javier had arrived with an invitation to Mexico. *Vamonos, Hija!* And Tessa had agreed to go. "Miss America *is* pretty trivial," she'd said.

"That's exactly the point," Jane had insisted. "Trivial gets the attention, and real women get ignored."

But Tessa wouldn't give up a chance to visit Javier's home province. "I need to further my third-world education," she explained. "Mexico has peasants as well as

workers, and the organizers are very politically advanced.” The chance for another application of Marxist theory was an excuse: Tessa couldn’t resist an invitation to visit Mexico – with her politically-aware Mexican lover, no less. Jane couldn’t fault her decision.

Jane had come to Atlantic City partly to get away from Cleveland. Specifically, the Movement office. Even more precisely, Bert, who’d picked her up at the jail in Chicago and kept his arm around her as they went down the steps, using the word *fuck* in every other sentence, and pawing at her as soon as they were in the blue van. “Oh man, Jane, I fucking gotta get laid. You do too, I know you do, it’ll jolt you out of your pissy little mood. Let’s fuck right here. Now.”

Jane pushed him away. “You’re acting like a pig,” she said. “And we both need a shower. Phew! Be decent.” Bert had made innuendos before, humorous overtures; it had been easy to put him off.

Now he persisted. “I don’t care how funky you smell; funk is a turn-on,” he said, one grubby hand under her waistband, fumbling with the buttons on her jeans. She’d had to threaten to bite him and knee him in the groin. She’d had to move to the front of the van to sit between Tessa and Marvin all the way to Cleveland, seven more hours without sleep, while Bert sprawled on the seat snoring as if the whole point had been to claim the back seat for himself. When they got back to the office Bert swaggered, smoking, talking about battles with police and how the revolution had entered a new phase. He hadn’t mentioned the running, the clubbing, his twisted ankle, or the confused ranting that had taken over the SDS meetings in the church-basement nursery.

Jane had spent two days taking hot showers and sleeping. She could use Tessa's bed without guilt because Tessa now slept with Javier. Jane had been staying in that apartment since the Glenville rebellion. The landlady had told Tessa they must leave. In the past month Jane had come to know Javier only as a swarthy handsome fellow in a lab coat whom she glimpsed sometimes on her way to the bathroom, sometimes as he was heading out the door.

Sitting on the edge of the boardwalk, cleaning the sand from between her toes, she decided she should not be angry with Javier or Tessa – or even Bert, for that matter. Sand clung to the calluses on her feet, the hollows in her ankles. She wiped the sand away with her fingers; then sand clung to her fingers. She cleaned her hands with the red cloth napkin she'd brought back from Chicago.

What happened in Chicago? Had the mayor and the police gone crazy, or had the American version of fascism revealed itself? Had the police overdone it, beating up reporters like Norman, who could then report with great sympathy for the beaten-up? Had the revolution actually begun? And if so, what came next?

She rolled up the London Fog and tucked it under her head to lie on. She was reluctant to let it go. It had been with her since the hotel where Ivy had played ingenue with the aging delegate. She'd worn it while running through tear gas. She'd kept it on when the police pulled her out of the phone booth, and in the jail, in that thick-doored room filled with women. They'd talked all night long, taking turns sitting on the cement floor with their legs layered over and under, backs against others' backs, sometimes laying sleepy heads on others' shoulders. Jane talked mostly with Patricia, who'd come to the Movement recently, through feminism, whereas Jane had come the other way round.

Periodically a deputy would pound the door and tell them to shut up. The noise was significant: a group from New York kept up chants and songs that grew increasingly bawdy as the night progressed. A few women quarreled. One who looked Chinese retreated into a private hell, eyes squeezed shut, arms wrapped around her knees, keening in a high, thin monotone till her voice gave out. No one could calm her down or talk her into opening her eyes and joining them. *Power to the women, fuck the pigs!* sang the New Yorkers. One of them yelled “Pig!” just as a female deputy opened the door, and for that she was refused her chance for the toilet. She screamed in frustration and had to pee on the floor, apologizing as she soaked the shoes of others around her.

They were escorted to the toilet one at a time by deputies who insulted them as they walked down the hall. Jane’s deputy, older and not as beefy as the blue Chicago pigs on the street (more like an old mongrel dog than a pig), kept his hand on Jane’s shoulder and told her to take off her coat. “Take your hand away,” she said, “and I might.” When he dropped his hand to his belt, close to the gun and the nightstick, she said, “I think I’ll just leave the coat on.”

“Hey Marilyn,” he called. “Need you to come search. Got this bitch here who refuses to take her raincoat off.”

“Do it yourself,” came the female voice from another room. “Have fun.”

The deputy did not have fun; he searched Jane as though he were rifling a chest of drawers, reaching into her coat pockets, then the pockets of her jeans, stuffing the contents into a paper sack. He felt under her T-shirt, inside her bra, his face impassive; then he made her bend over and poked his fingers into her anus and her vagina. “Now I got to warsh my hands,” he said, making a disgusted face. “You can use the toilet.” The

toilet was filthy with shit and vomit. While Jane peed, the deputy stood at the sink lathering his hands. He dried his fingers carefully and put on gloves. Jane asked to wash her hands and face, and he refused. "I know you don't believe in warshing; you're just saying that to give me a hard time," he said, steering Jane by the shoulders out of the bathroom and back to the holding cell.

That search, the man's hands probing Jane's softest places, pressing her bruises as though she were a piece of fruit he was testing for ripeness, left her shaken and trembling. She stepped high over women's laps, careful not to knock or press – most everyone was as bruised as she was, or more – until she got to Patricia, who looked at her and said, "Another male chauvinist pig did his dirty work, huh?" Jane crumpled to her knees, hands covering her face. Patricia put her hand on Jane's head, and Jane winced.

"My hair got yanked pretty hard," she explained. "Still hurts."

"Listen to me," Patricia said. "Don't you be ashamed. Men have been setting up women to feel filthy for ages, and we're not filthy. You know that."

Jane did know that. Menstrual blood, even phlegm, urine, and shit – none of that stuff was filthy. In the conversation that followed, with four or five women as well as Patricia, Jane had realized she'd felt ashamed for years – since her nipples first hardened to turn into breasts, before her first period. The nipples were tender as bruises; she'd blamed them for hurting her, rather than blaming the sixth-grade boys who elbowed her to see if she'd cry out, like a baby doll with an internal squawk-box.

Now, after the hot soapy showers, after laundering all her clothes (but not Ivy's coat; she'd have to pay a dry-cleaner, eventually, before she could give it back), Jane felt whole but fragile. She didn't want to be around men, not even Marvin, who'd become old

after his crack on the head. Who'd tried to kiss her and might try again. The two pale boys ran from the sea to the beach.

"I hope we get to see one of those babes," called one to the other.

"Ah, they got 'em locked up," the other responded. "Gotta keep 'em virgins till tonight's over." His white skin was prickly with goosebumps, his nipples dark and protruding, hardened by the breeze on his wet skin.

"You really believe all those Miss America girls are virgins?" This boy wore a soaking wet T-shirt; his face was mottled with acne. They were walking together now, past Jane, whom they ignored. She clutched the coat, which still stank – a mixture of smoke, urine, tear gas, sweat, and fear. She inhaled it deeply; the smell was awful, but it told her where she'd been, who she was.

On the boardwalk, women gathered for the demonstration. They came in pairs, in threes, in clusters; their hair blew in the wind. They talked excitedly with one another. Some carried signs which they laid on the boardwalk, forming a heap. Jane came over to pick out a sign. "This is the first thing I've ever organized without any men involved," said one woman to another. Jane half-recognized her – from one of the New York SDS chapters; she couldn't remember her name.

"The first time," Jane echoed. She'd organized actions without men, hadn't she? No, they'd always been around, giving advice if not calling the shots.

"It was a little scary," the woman said to her. "But also the most liberating thing I've ever done. I came up against getting the permit, thought, *Gotta ask my old man how to handle this*. Then I realized: no, not his action. And I did it myself, my way."

“Congratulations,” Jane said. Jill, that was this woman’s name. She wrote for *New Left Notes*. “Congratulations, Jill. This is a great day.”

It was a great day. The haze was clearing, the line was forming, and women were smiling – having fun. Jane picked up a sign that said “Welcome to the Miss America Cattle Auction” and joined the picket line. They made a great circle on the Boardwalk.

“Here comes the sheep!” Voices rose, excited about the sheep, which wore a collar and was led by two ropes attached like leashes by a pair of women who beamed as they coaxed it along, alternately tugging on the ropes and patting its haunches. It wore a thick coat of wool and a bewildered look. “Our new Miss America!” Jill hollered. If the Yippies could elect a pig president, then the feminists could elect a sheep Miss America. Jane put on her coat, attached her backpack to both shoulders, and joined the line. “We’re going till midnight,” said the woman behind her, passing forward a flyer.

“It should be a groovy day on the Boardwalk in the sun with our sisters,” the flyer said. “In case of arrests, however, we plan to reject all male authority and demand to be busted by policewomen only. (In Atlantic City, women cops are not permitted to make arrests – dig that!)” Male reporters would be refused interviews. Jane read the ten points of protest as she walked, sun on her cheeks. The language was witty, not strident. There was no tiresome rhetoric.

Jane found herself wishing Ivy could be here. It would do her good. The girl played up to men every chance she got – charming, naïve, cute. In some moments (watching Ivy swish through the hotel lobby, for example, and purse her lips as she looked in the mirror by the elevators) Jane envied her ease with femininity. But at the rate Ivy was going, she’d be married to Chuck and mothering three babies within the next five

years. Jane had known even radical civil rights workers to get buried alive in housekeeping and baby care. She didn't want to split Ivy apart from Chuck – their love affair was sweet, and Chuck was a good guy. She wanted Ivy to be more independent. They needed a long talk, the kind Jane and Tessa used to have before Glenville, the kind she'd had in jail with Patricia and the other women.

The sheep had been duly crowned and paraded, and a life-sized paper-dolly puppet with women chained to her (“women enslaved by beauty standards”) was being auctioned when Jane heard her name called. The voice came from somewhere high up, behind and above her. “Jane! Over here! On the bridge!”

She looked up. The bridge spanned the road next to the convention center; a red-haired woman waved her arms. Patricia. Jane danced in the picket line, waving, and Patricia called, “Stay there! We're coming down.”

She emerged onto the boardwalk with her friends. Jane ran to them and was caught up in a full-body hug. She felt Patricia's soft ampleness, hands stroking her back; women didn't hug like this in Cleveland. Her parents didn't hug like this. She heard Patricia sigh deeply – inhale, exhale – and felt herself relax. She felt safe and welcome, no longer alone. Patricia stepped back and said, “Meet my pals.” The Boston group: five women. They were not dressed fashionably, like the women marching at the Conrad Hilton, or like the Heights MOP. No makeup, for one thing. Patricia had her arm around a thick-bodied woman whose Movement button said “The Bread Is Rising.” Another woman had almost boy-short hair. A stocky woman with large breasts wore a man's seersucker vest. The fifth wore a long dress made of India-print. But it wasn't their

clothes that made them unusual – it was an ease at being together, obvious delight in each other's company.

"I thought of asking you that night we were in jail together," Patricia said, "if you're a lesbian, too. You look a little shocked. Guess not."

"I don't mean to be shocked," Jane said. "I can't see what difference it makes. We're all fed up with the Miss America meat-market." It shouldn't make a difference, that she'd loved Patricia's embrace, that she'd felt something like what she would have called *turned on*. Close, but not the same. The feeling was happiness. She did not want to imagine having sex with Patricia, or any woman. "I'm really glad you're here," she said. "I was tired of being alone." That was true.

"Let's go." The woman with the seersucker vest tapped Patricia on the arm. "They're opening up the convention center."

"You have to have tickets, don't you?" Jane said.

"We have three." Patricia pulled the tickets out of her shirt-front pocket. None of these women carried purses, Jane noticed. And neither did she. She'd left her purse in Cleveland, its strap broken again. In Chicago, she'd had the backpack which she still carried. "Want to come?" Patricia asked Jane.

Jane shook her head. "I don't want to take up anyone else's space – and I'd rather be outside." It wasn't that she wanted to avoid associating with this group. She didn't want to be cooped up watching the pageant, which was boring, or had been when she'd seen part of it on TV last year at Bert's and Marvin's apartment. All the contestants looked alike. Their comments were non-committal, and their talents were amateurish. In the middle of a baton-twirling act, she'd left to talk with Marvin about travelling; she was

about to go meet the North Vietnamese. Bert had stayed rapt on the couch. At the time she didn't think much of it – Bert watched a lot of television – but now she wondered what he'd been thinking.

Patricia, her daughter and her friends had gone with their tickets to sit through a lot of boring pageantry in hopes of one or two unusual moments: an audience reaction to the Women's Liberation banner, a contestant who'd side with the feminists, a chance to be on TV. Jane wandered into the crowd of women on the boardwalk. The light slanted now, glittering on the waves. Across the country, school was starting. It would be fall soon. Ivy wasn't here because she was moving back to campus. She couldn't live openly with Chuck and stay enrolled in college; she was too honest to live with Chuck and keep it secret. She'd probably get permission to live in an apartment. Maybe there would be an extra room.

A group of demonstrators were singing "Ain't she sweet, making profit off her meat."

"You're the cow!" someone yelled: a woman's voice, harsh, flavored with New Jersey. A woman with long blond hair – brassy and too-straight: dyed and ironed – was pointing at her, and Jane realized she was still carrying the sign that read "Welcome to the Miss America Cattle Auction."

"Moo!" she grinned and came closer. The woman wore a short skirt made out of fake patent-leather, with a wide belt that made her hips look large.

Next to the blonde, a young man with an earnest face under the pomaded curl on his forehead asked, "Which one of those girls is your husband, or do youse all sleep around?"

There it was again: *whore-dyke*. Jane inhaled, exhaled, and felt herself immune. “Moooh,” she said, making the sound rise and bawl like a real cow’s lowing. “Actually, I don’t belong to anyone. I come and go as I please. I’m into freedom.”

“Bet you’d like to be Miss America, if you could,” the man said.

“You’re just jealous,” said the girl.

Other women demonstrators were being heckled farther along the boardwalk. Jane heard calls: *Get on your broom and fly out of here! Go back to Russia!*

“You couldn’t be Miss America if you were the last woman on earth,” said the blonde. “You’re too ugly.”

“I don’t wear high heels with a bathing suit,” Jane said, shrugging. “I don’t know any self-respecting person who would. Actually,” she said straight to the blonde, “I think you’re more beautiful than any of the Miss America contestants.”

“Hey, she’s hot for you,” the man said to the blonde. “Stay away from my girlfriend, bitch.”

“Who does he think you are?” Jane asked the girl. “Does he think you’d be taken in by anyone who gives you a compliment? You’re strong.”

“How do you know?” the girl asked. It was a real question.

“Your voice,” Jane said. “You’ve got a good strong way of saying what you think. Do you sing?”

The man snickered.

“Shut up!” His girlfriend nudged him. “I do too sing, pretty good too.”

“For a church choir,” the man said, his upper lip curled.

“What’s wrong with a church choir?” Jane demanded of him. “Doesn’t a church have a right to have good strong singers? Does a woman have to win a contest to be good at what she does?”

“Let’s get out of here.” The man took his girlfriend by the arm. “This bitch is messing with you.” He said “with you” as *witchah*. He pulled the blonde; she hung back.

“Tell me true,” she said. “If you *could* be Miss America, or even Miss New Jersey or Miss Hoboken – if you had a real chance, wouldn’t you take it?” Jane shook her head firmly. “Why *not*?”

Jane had ten answers, wittily summarized on the paper in her pocket, but none of them quite fit this moment. Between the hanks of artificially lightened and pressed hair, under the plucked eyebrows, this girl wanted a specific, personal, direct answer. She had decided to trust Jane to be honest with her. “Because,” Jane said, and the words that came next seemed true enough. “Because it’s a lie.” Which lie? Purity? Success? Picture Miss America sitting on a shit-stained toilet, watched by the deputy who’d probed her ass with his fingers. “Because you wear the crown and carry the roses for one day, one minute, and then where are you? For a year, people tell you where to go and what to say, you smile and wave all over the place, but what about your own aspirations?”

“What about them?” The blonde was pulling against her boyfriend, who still gripped her arm. “You go on. I’ll come in a minute,” she told him.

“Uh-unh, you’re coming with me,” he said. “Now.” *Yuah comin wit me.*

“I wanna talk to this person, she’s interesting.” Blond hair flapped as she turned toward her scowling boyfriend. “Now get off my case!” That stentorian voice.

He kept pulling her arm. “You do what I say.”

“Ouch!” she yelled. “You’re givin’ me bruises!”

“Do you?” Jane asked, leaning into the girl, keeping her voice low. “Do you always do what he says?”

He heard her anyway. “She sure as hell does! She’s a good girl. We’re getting married in two months.”

“Really?” The blonde looked up in surprise. He let go of her arm and put his around her shoulders. “You’re really gonna marry me?” Her voice rose to a squeak.

“You bet I am,” he said. He kissed the top of her head, right on the dark roots which showed at her part. He looked defiantly at Jane. “No one’ll marry *you*, ever,” he said. “You’re gonna be one sorry old maid. Let’s go, Milly.”

Now he used her name. He’d marry her, and then he’d probably order her around. But Milly’s eyes had connected with Jane’s as if she understood what Jane hadn’t said about the lie. Would Milly keep singing in the choir? Would the church tell her she had to obey her husband? Wondering about the life of this woman, Jane thought *That’s exactly right. I am a woman who’ll never get married. If that means I feel like a sorry old maid part of the time, so be it.* The decision was made – had been made months ago, maybe longer – and it was final.

She had left the line to talk to Milly and her fiancé. She walked pensively now, away from the picketing women, who still carried their signs, chanted, and sang. They held aloft high heels, long chiffon scarves, bras, girdles, and fishnet stockings – emblems of male control over women’s bodies. Four women rolled a huge barrel to the center of their circle and tied a sign around it with string: *Freedom Trash Can.*

She'd known. Whenever she ate the point of a wedge of pie, she'd known she would not marry – and yet at the same time she'd assumed she would. Even after Norman had left, she'd kept looking for men. She'd let Jimmy grope her possessively in public. She'd taken shelter under Marvin's arm, less than a week ago. She'd been hurt and angry because Bert wouldn't let her sleep near him on the backseat of the van without fucking.

Mom had a phrase, "When you get married, you'll know." Most recently, she'd said that in response to Jane's question: "So why didn't you just go to Italy on your own, if you wanted to so much?" Jane had not thought of saying, *but I'll never get married*. But there it was. Solid as bedrock.

She never wanted to be tethered, as Ivy and Chuck were. It seemed impossible to know each of them separately, even when Ivy was in Chicago and Chuck was in Cleveland. Jane thought of Ivy studying herself in the mirror, swinging her hair like the model in a Breck commercial. Ivy looked at herself as if a man were watching. And Chuck couldn't see her clearly either, he was so hung up on his girl. Chuck was an interesting, attractive man; he thought deeply, cared deeply. In conversation with Chuck, Jane could always sense Ivy lurking in his mind. If Ivy weren't there, Jane might like sleeping with Chuck. But then, like every man she'd gotten close to, he'd probably want to "score." She never again wanted to add to a man's score.

She walked on a narrower part of the boardwalk now, where feminist demonstrators mingled with ordinary beachgoers, buying drinks at the refreshment stand, staring at the waves, dark and licking the shore. Their bodies threw long shadows in the late-summer twilight; the edges of buildings and boards were sharp, the cracks between them very dark. The women's restroom – a latrine really, with a cold shower and

changing areas – was set between two other buildings, formerly concession stands, now boarded up. Jane relieved herself in the cool briny stall, its smells cleansed by sea air, rinsed her feet in the shower and flushed her face with water from cupped hands.

She stretched her arms overhead, then swung down and touched her toes, and felt her body fill up with well-being. Something about being here with only-women freed her from the need to keep her desperate rage burning. The Miss America protest seemed to her full of joy, nothing at all like the ferocity and confusion of Chicago. Maybe it was the ocean that calmed and strengthened her inside. Maybe she needed to find a way to live near the ocean.

She thought of climbing the dune behind the restroom for a better view of the ocean, and entered the dark space between two buildings. Two women stood there, and they were kissing each other. They held each other close, cupped each other's cheeks with their hands, and moved their heads and mouths, nibbling, sipping, drinking each other in. Jane could not stop herself from staring.

They were beautiful, these women – fleshy; one was even stout, her hair too short to put into rollers or tie with a ribbon. They made little soft sounds that reminded Jane of eating strawberries. She thought she'd never seen such beauty before in her life.

One of the women glanced up and saw her. "Sh," she said, and pushed the other away gently. It was Patricia.

"Don't stop!" Jane whispered. She realized she was intruding – "I'm sorry" – and spun around, back to the boardwalk, trotting toward the convention center, her ragged braid flopping against her shoulder, loose hair blowing across her eyes and into her mouth.

On the wide boardwalk, women were filling the Freedom Trash Can with symbols of their oppression. A gray-haired woman who dressed like Jane's mother walked past with a book, *The Joy of Cooking*, and heaved it into the can. Then she raised her arms in a giant V for victory, her face shiny with tears.

Three women in pastel dresses with tight waists and big poufy skirts were performing a guerrilla theater skit. One painted red circles on another's cheeks with an oversized brush. The red-cheeked woman held a spray can with a balloon – supposed to be a giant perfume atomizer. She shouted “Down with body odor!” in a shrill voice and sprayed the third woman who coughed elaborately, then raised a pair of enormous scissors and began to cut away at the yellow skirt of the woman with the paint brush. “Skirts are short this year!” They went into a frenzy of cutting, spraying, and painting.

Jane watched the scissors. They looked like hedge clippers with long blades. Bits of cloth fell into a pile, and the woman in yellow scooped them up to toss into the trash can, leaving the scissors on the ground – an invitation. Jane picked them up. “Do you mind?” she asked the guerrilla actress, who wore a black “bubble” wig; her dress was now in tatters around her knees. The actress gave a wide red-mouthed smile and stuck out one hip. “Cut right here,” she said, lifting a train of yellow cloth, netted and crinolined, that fell over her rear end to the ground. Jane clipped once, twice, and again to part the last threads. “Piece of tail!” the actress yelled, holding it aloft and dumping it into the trash can. Everyone cheered. The actress did a little jig, her legs now bare, her skirt shredded around her hips.

“My turn,” Jane said, handing over the clippers. “Time to get rid of the braid.” She lifted it off the back of her neck – five years she'd been trailing this rope of hair. It

had grown relentlessly heavier and longer until it hung almost to her hips. It stuck in her coat and got tangled in purse or backpack straps. It begged to be pulled by any man who wanted to assert his dominance; the blue pig in Chicago had not been the first, just the most vicious. Washing, combing, letting it dry, braiding took hours – for what? “Cut it off!” She shouted. She stretched it and held it still, a snake with its neck on the guillotine.

The clippers came together with a metallic shearing finality; Jane could feel the braid writhe between the blades. Then it was in her hand, held high, and women around her cheered. “Freedom!” she cried, fist held high. She threw, and the braid sailed into the can, a furry arrow with a rubber band at the end.

“Freedom!” they yelled. Someone threw in a bottle of dishwashing soap; someone else threw in hairspray. The three actresses began a can-can, kicking their bare legs high. One wore work boots; the other two wore sneakers. Another can-can line formed. All over the boardwalk women danced as the sun set behind the convention center. Jane joined Patricia and her girlfriend in a *Hora* circle. They held her hands as she danced. Her head felt light and free, her neck felt cool and free; her hair felt lovely blowing around her face.

The Miss America pageant had become trivial indeed. She wished she could stay on the boardwalk forever, with all these women around her. But this was just a protest; it would end. She’d take the train back to Manhattan, where Tessa’s mother would give her a shower and a night’s sleep. Tomorrow she’d get a bus to Cleveland. Eventually she’d get a short-all-over haircut like Patricia’s.

Walking toward the train station in the dark, Jane thought about herself at the beginning of the summer, falling all over Jimmy. It had not been a good thing. She’d

been unfair, taking advantage of how young and good-looking he was to make herself feel young and beautiful – feminine. She would never again feel the need to be feminine in that way – like Ivy was, for example.

And that was all right. It was just fine. She was surprised at herself and wondered how come she had taken so long to make the cut.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Twelve

September 14, 1968

Ivy stepped through the doorway, between two fluted pillars and under a carved lintel, into a space the size of four living rooms, with divans, settees, clusters of prim chairs, shelves full of books, carved and polished cupboards, and a dozen Heights people with smooth hair and crisp Saturday clothes. “This is a mansion, not a house,” she whispered to Aunt Peg, who was already looking eagerly at price tags. Over the mantelpiece was a thin, stern lady in dark blue velvet, her white hair piled high, pearls in a long rope around her neck and dangling from her ears. The portrait had no price tag. The lady seemed to glare at Ivy, a revolutionary vandal hunting loot.

Ivy had mentioned to Aunt Peg that she needed a dresser in the apartment she now shared with Gail and Susan. “We’ll go to a house sale,” Peg had said. “That’s the way it’s done in Cleveland Heights.” When someone died, whoever was left could simply put tags on everything and open the house to shoppers. Prices were wonderfully low: A stuffed ottoman was three dollars; two silver candlesticks were ten. In the back bedroom Ivy found a commode, with a white china basin and pitcher on its marble top. Two-fifty each for pitcher and basin; they might be useful, when Susan or Gail was in the bathroom. Ivy opened the cabinet underneath: sure enough, here was the chamber pot, like a giant teacup with a lid and roses painted on its side. Very clean. Three dollars.

As if to keep her head straight, a song played in Ivy's head: *To you, beloved comrade, I make this solemn vow – the fight will go on.* The dresser was twelve dollars, with a huge mirror included. The top drawer stuck – no, it opened after a firm tug, and inside were scarves, each straight-pinned with its price tag. Ten cents per scarf, a quarter for a purple shawl with fringe that slid richly over Ivy's fingers. The singing in her head reminded her: *The banks are made of marble with a guard at every door.* She forced the drawer closed. Other drawers held table cloths, tea towels, and napkins. Ivy leaned against the fuzzy wallpaper and closed one eye to see the mounts and screws on the back of the mirror. This dresser was too big for Aunt Peg's Corvair. Ivy would return with Chuck and the Pontiac, put the mirror in the back seat, fit the chest into the trunk.

And the vaults are stuffed with silver that the workers sweated for. The bathroom was tiled white and black, the fixtures new. The useless guest towels had bright embroidered floral designs. Ten cents each. Ivy was ready to find Aunt Peg and close the deal; she had a busy day ahead. She climbed the large staircase, her hand on the polished-oak banister. *Why do they have the gold, why do they have the power, why why why why why?* An Oriental rug (one hundred dollars) filled the upstairs hall floor.

The first room held a jumble of objects: A Spanish guitar. A slide projector. A parcheesi board. A Mother Goose book. Several pairs of ice skates. Binoculars. A pair of knee-high leather boots. "Airman's boots WWI," said the tag. Two dollars. Ivy removed one sneaker and slid her foot into a boot. She could wear it with thick socks. She stepped into the other boot, tugged, and felt the leather tear. She pulled it off, and the leather ripped a little more, not on the seam but next to it. The leather was rotting. Her mother would say she must offer to pay. *Why do they have the friends at the top? Why do they*

have the jobs at the top? We've got nothing ..." The song rollicked in her head. She stood the boots neatly against the wall and fled the room.

Across the hall, Aunt Peg was inspecting a dark red brocade bedspread. "Hold up that end, will you, Ivy? I want to make sure it has no holes. It's a steal."

"Every item seems to be a steal," Ivy said. "Except that rug in the hall." She held the bedspread by its corner and followed Peg's lead, carrying it to the window. "I found a dresser in the bedroom on the first floor," she said to Peg. "Twelve dollars. Show me whom to pay and we can go."

"Just a minute," her aunt said, adjusting her half-glasses and leaning close to the bedspread, so as not to miss a frayed thread. Peg's permanent had grown out; she'd put her hair in a French twist and wore gold hoop earrings. She still had a tan from summer weekends on the Lake Erie shore. She seemed to have grown younger, her body softer. "It's got a couple of snags on this side," Peg said. "But it'll work for your purposes."

"I don't have any purposes." Ivy had a single bed – an old rollaway cot with an extra pad; this spread would be much too large. "Come on. Somebody might buy that dresser before we get to it."

"Use it to cover that horrible plaid couch in the front room," Peg said. "Nothing like a used bedspread to clean up old furniture. Have you checked out the kitchen things? I bet you could use a teakettle, and you'll probably be able to find ..."

"Aunt Peg, I've got a lot going on. I can't roam around buying things I don't need." Ivy was an SDS leader now; even before the first issue of the *Reserve Tribune* had announced tomorrow night's meeting, strange freshmen had sought her out. "Heard you were in Chicago," said one. "Tell me all about it."

“I wanted to go, but I couldn’t,” said another.

“My older brother went,” said a third. “He was on the General Logan statue.” She got invitations to speak to a class, a church youth group, a high school junior council on world affairs. She had to get out of this mansion, this pile of ruling-class spoils. *We want our rights, and we don’t care how. We want a revolution – now.*

After Chicago Ivy had gone to Bloomington, meaning to stay overnight and leave the next day. But her lungs had seized up; she had no inhaler refills, no aminophyllin. She’d had to ask her father to write her a prescription for more medication. “*Now* you tell me,” he said. “Minutes away from dinner. Your mother’s been working on it all afternoon.”

“Just write it,” Ivy said. “I’ll go to the pharmacy. Back in minutes.” She breathed short and shallow, clutching the back of a chair.

Her father leaned into the corner of the couch, his tie loosened, before-dinner Scotch in his hand. “You can’t drive the car while you’re having an asthma attack,” he said. “How about I pour you a little Scotch? Help you relax.”

“Hard to relax,” Ivy grunted. “When you can’t breathe.” She took the Scotch and sipped. It made her cough, and the muscles in her back crimped painfully. Tears spilled over her lower eyelids; more coughing made her leak all over. Pee ran down her leg.

Her father regarded her with clinical detachment. “I thought you knew better than to let your meds run out,” he said. “But hell, you should have known better than to go to Chicago. You knew there would be tear gas.”

“I was fine,” Ivy said, forcing air out. “In Chicago.”

“Sure you were,” her father said. “Running around with a bunch of unhinged self-styled revolutionaries. All you did was make matters worse for the Democrats.”

If only she could breathe, she’d tell her father how wrong he was. Was he so angry at her politics that he welcomed her suffering? She took another sip of Scotch, managing not to cough.

“See,” her father went on, “America thrives on the two-party system.” He began lecturing her about the political process, how each party cast a net to which its members attached themselves. It wasn’t that hard to connect to the net, then see that your people got elected, your legislation passed.

Ivy willed him to take out his prescription pad and write on it. She might die from asphyxiation while her father lectured on the merits of the two-party system. Her mother came into the living room. “Dinner’s ready,” Hetty said. “D’you have any of that Scotch for me? Oh, better not. I’ll just have some white wine. Ivy, will you light the candles?”

Ivy stood straight. All right, she would light the candles. She got as far as the dining room doorway; then her mother saw. “Goodness, you’re in rather bad shape,” she said.

“She let her meds run out.” Dad came behind Ivy and put his hand on her back. The feel of his palm eased the sore muscles, but its weight made breathing harder. “She wants a prescription.”

“Well, John, you’ll have to write it,” Hetty said. “Ivy, this is extremely annoying. We get you home for only two days, and you’ve managed to ruin our only nice dinner. Beef tenderloin.”

Extremely annoying doesn't even begin to describe the situation, Ivy would have said, but she couldn't speak. Her mother had made a centerpiece of daisies and purple asters. The china plates, the glasses, and the silverware all gleamed balefully. "Didn't mean to," Ivy said. Her lungs pressed against her ribs and backbone; the little tubes, the bronchioles and alvioli, would not *would not* let the air out. "Couldn't help it." Her voice emerged half-strangled.

"Let's not forgo the dinner, Hetty," Dad said. "If she sits with us quietly the asthma will ease up. Give her a cup of tea; the tannin will help."

"Can't sit." Ivy insisted. Dad was an obstetrician, not a lung specialist, but how could he not *know*? Maybe if she passed out, he'd get it. She wished she could pass out. She stopped breathing, and felt herself relax.

Then she had to inhale again. Her mother bent to look at her hands clutching the chair. Through narrow eyes she looked at Ivy's lips. "I'm afraid we'll have to do something, John," she said. "Your daughter's beginning to turn blue."

"Ahhhh." Her father groaned with disgust. "The hospital pharmacy is the only one open at this hour." He looked weary and sad as he put on his jacket and got a prescription pad out of the breast pocket. "What do you take?"

Ivy told him the precise amounts and the correct spellings. Her mother made her a cup of tea and went upstairs without a word. Alone at the gleaming, flowery table, Ivy breathed in tea-steam and felt her lung-tubes open slightly. She stopped thinking.

The medicine, when it finally got to her, made it possible to climb the stairs, wash herself, and go to bed. She slept fitfully, waking every two hours, waiting a third hour so she could use the inhaler safely, sleeping another two hours. She vomited her first three

aminophyllin tablets; the second three stayed down. The next day she called Chuck, and he drove to rescue her. He didn't understand what had happened, and she couldn't explain. She only said, "I want nothing to do with my parents. Take me home."

Since then she'd neither written nor talked to them, and she had no plans to do so. She could take care of her own needs. Aunt Peg, she'd found, could be trusted: she did not ask about Ivy's health.

They found the man to be paid for the dresser sprawled in a chair on the sun porch. His name was Kevin Waterson. His grandmother was the lady in blue velvet whose portrait hung over the mantelpiece. As Ivy and Peg emptied the dresser drawers, he told them how troublesome the house sale was, how he needed to get back to the bond market, how boring the bond market was.

"Do you know the Watts, over near Chestnut Hills?" Peg asked.

"My parents did," Mr. Waterson said. While he and Peg dropped names – the Watts, the Halles, the Criles – Ivy piled scarves and tablecloths neatly on the bed. She stroked the purple shawl, fingering its cream-colored fringe. She considered the china basin and pitcher on the commode, relics of a time without plumbing. The simplicity appealed to her: no need for ugly pipes underneath, no taps clogged with rust, like the ones in The Monmouth. She'd used a chamberpot when she was small, on a visit to the Adirondacks. She remembered squatting over the metal-enamel pan, her bare feet on the cold wood floor of a cabin loft. In this mansion, servants would have done the business of the commode. A servant would have heated water on a stove that burned coal or wood, then poured it scalding into the pitcher. Someone had the job of emptying the

grandmother's wash-water; someone dumped her shit into a pit outdoors and cleaned the china pot. The white-tiled bathroom was a force for equality.

"My niece was in Chicago," she heard Peg say. "Why don't you ask her?"

Kevin Waterson was regarding Ivy as though she'd grown older and taller all of a sudden. "What do you want to know?" Ivy asked.

"I admire people who have the courage of their convictions," he said. "But throwing bags of excrement and dressing weird and smoking LSD just hurts the cause."

Ivy wondered what he thought the cause was. "LSD isn't smoked," she said, keeping her voice patient. "And nobody threw any bags of excrement."

"The newspapers said they did. The police reported it."

"But it doesn't make sense. We ran around the city for days. Can you imagine carrying a bag of excrement with you all that time so maybe you could throw it at some cop?" She thought, *If I had been the grandmother's servant before the bathroom was installed, I might have wanted to throw shit at her.*

Mr. Waterman's nose wrinkled. "So why did the police say so?"

"Why did the police say they were under attack when they were the ones with guns, clubs, and teargas?" Her voice rose. "Why did they charge into the seats at the Grant Park bandshell clubbing people who were just standing there chanting OM?"

"No bags of excrement? Are you sure?" He looked disappointed.

"No," Ivy said. "There were twelve thousand Chicago policemen on duty in new blue shirts and helmets. There were also five thousand soldiers and six thousand National Guard with fixed bayonets." She loved being able to rattle off the numbers, which she'd gotten yesterday from Chuck, who'd been reading all the newspapers, including the

Chicago *Tribune*. “We don’t know how many demonstrators there were – maybe four thousand, maybe more, if you include the newsmen who got beaten to a pulp and the delegates who joined us.” Waterman’s face had turned solemn and accepting. Numbers could do that. “That same week,” she went on, “308 Americans were killed in Vietnam, and 1134 were wounded. The enemy body count was 4755.”

“You certainly made an impression,” Aunt Peg said. Kevin Waterman had sold the bedspread for a dollar-fifty and given Ivy the shawl for free. She’d come back for the dresser with Chuck’s car. She should have mentioned the tear in the airman’s boots, but she did not want Aunt Peg to get snarled up in another conversation that would almost certainly include a long story about the airman, whoever he was.

“That shawl is absolutely royal purple,” Aunt Peg said, as Ivy conducted her into the apartment on Hessler Road. “It would be perfect draped over a baby grand piano. Didn’t your dorm have a grand piano?”

“It did,” Ivy said. “It also had a nosy housemother and a stairwell that made all phone conversations public. I like being able to invite my aunt in for a cup of coffee without making a public event of it.” She went into the kitchen and put a saucepan full of water on the stove.

“You *do* need a kettle,” Aunt Peg said. “I’ll cover the couch, shall I?”

In this apartment, they could have men visit as they pleased. Chuck could come to Ivy’s bedroom here, though she preferred his big double bed, where she could now stay all night without having to worry about being seen the next morning. It was stupid that she could not have kept living at Chuck’s, not even with her mother’s written permission.

But in truth, she was relieved to be out of the grimy efficiency at the Monmouth, away from Chuck's smelly socks, among other things.

She'd returned from Chicago driving Jimmy Fulero's parents' Chevrolet while Jimmy slept. He'd appeared the morning after Grant Park, lying next to her on the church basement floor, his casted arm over her waist. When she sat up and yelled, he'd begged her to go back to Cleveland with him. "C'mon, Ivy, I can't drive by myself."

He'd come to Chicago with a girl who'd decided to stay with friends at Lake Forest. His broken arm had caused trouble: A couple weeks before, it had had to be rebroken, reset, and recasted; then at Michigan and Balbo it had been clubbed. He'd been jailed half the night. He couldn't lift it without pain. "I'm sorry," he said. "I just had to lie down, and there was a section of your sleeping bag right there. I must have put my arm around you in my sleep. Please, drive with me. I promise I won't mess with you. I know you're Chuck's woman." Everything about Jimmy – his patchy beard, his oily uncombed hair, his droopy eyes and weary croaking voice – spoke defeat.

Ivy drove cautiously, threading her way through crowded streets, trying to watch traffic signals and signs that would guide her toward Route 1. "I got re-classified 1-A," Jimmy said, lighting an unfiltered Camel. "Bad grades."

"Oh God, what are you going to do?"

"I'm gonna wait till my arm heals. Then I guess I'll go in the army."

"Jimmy! Why?" She'd gone too far on Halsted Street. She pulled over to study the map again.

"I can't think of good enough reasons not to," Jimmy said. "Maybe I can organize GIs against the war." He was talking with his eyes closed.

After he fell asleep, Ivy had found her way out of the city. Perhaps he'd dreamed his 1-A; that's how exhausted he was. She smoked the rest of his cigarettes and sucked Lifesavers to keep herself awake while she drove. Her lungs had been fine, that day.

Back at the office she was glad to be wrapped in Chuck's long arms, her head against his blue shirt, clean and safe. "Mmm, cigarettes and peppermint," he said. Then he said, "I've been thinking, it's time to change your name to mine. How would you like to be Ivy Leggit?"

Oh no! Too soon! – that was her first reaction. But she'd also wanted to say *Yes. Yes!* What she said out loud was, "I'm too tired to think about it right now." She'd clung to him with her arms around his waist, felt him stroke her head, heard the rasp of his hand on her hair. Later she'd said, "I've got to graduate first. So do you."

"But I'm not going back to school," Chuck had said. He'd paid his father and gotten a new job at the university bookstore; he also worked part-time in the poet d.a. levy's Underground Books. He could earn enough to pay rent and food, not enough for tuition. "I can make my own way," he said. "It's better like this. And I've been thinking how the Cleveland Movement needs an underground newspaper."

"Chuck's starting an underground newspaper," Ivy told Aunt Peg, who stirred milk and sugar into her instant coffee. The dark red bedspread draped richly over the couch; Ivy was pleased. "He can do an article on MOP."

"We couldn't get Shirley Stokes to sign up for Welfare Food Allowance month," Peg said. "Her husband's been so embattled since Glenville. But we did get Mrs. Louis Stokes, the state representative's wife."

Susan burst in, carrying a bag of apples. "I've been in the country!" she said. "I didn't know Ohio could be so pretty." Susan had returned from a summer in Europe wearing floaty blouses with wide sleeves and deeply scooped necks; she'd also stopped setting her hair on orange juice cans and let it ripple around her face and down her back. "We picked apples; I ate so many – you could pick 'em off the ground, take a bite off the good side and throw the rest away – I'm drunk on apples, I have cider-breath." She blew into Ivy's face. "Want some?"

The phone rang. Arthur wanted to plan the SDS meeting. "We've got this huge agenda," he said. "The war, the draft, the elections, campus complicity, the railroading of Ahmed Evans – and Bert wants us to deal with this Revolutionary Youth Movement thing. You know, Ivy, I don't think Bert should come to this meeting."

"I can't tell him not to," Ivy said.

"Why not?"

"That's what participatory democracy means – we don't exclude people. I thought you liked Bert."

"My feelings are irrelevant. Let's get together tomorrow, okay? Is Gail there?"

Gail was upstairs, still in sweatpants and T-shirt. She thumped to the phone to talk to Arthur. Susan put a dozen apples in a wooden bowl on the coffee table. "Jonathans and winesaps!" she exclaimed. "Look at all the reds and greens."

"Admirable apples," Aunt Peg said, stressing the *As*. Then she looked at her watch. "Oh my dear, I've had a lovely time. And I must go. I have to meet, um" – she picked up her purse and took out a little hand mirror, inspected her lips and eyes and hair – "someone," she finished.

Aunt Peg was being coy, secretive in a way that suggested she wanted Ivy to ask who her date was. Ivy had never told her aunt that she knew about the lover and the adopted-away child. She wasn't sure how much more she wanted to know. If Aunt Peg were to say *Yes, I'm dating someone*, suddenly there would be a man to meet, or to avoid meeting, another person to feel guilty about not being nice to. What if he were fat and bald? What if he talked through his nose? Ivy did not want to imagine Peg having sex. And it occurred to her suddenly that if she didn't marry Chuck she herself could end up like Aunt Peg, now walking out the door, her round rear end rocking from side to side.

"I hope you're staying at Chuck's tonight," Susan said. "There's this guy I know from Nyack coming through on his way west; could he use your bed?"

"Sure," Ivy said. "As long as he doesn't get stuff on the sheets."

Gail hung up the phone. "Gotta get dressed," she said. "We're going to a matinee of *Planet of the Apes*." She made for the stairs.

"Arthur and Gail?" Ivy whispered. Gail was conventional, not the kind to take risks. And Arthur was full of himself. Since he'd spent two days and a night in the Cook County Jail, his shoulders seemed to have broadened, his voice grown louder.

"She's not really dating him, of course," Susan said. "She's loyal to Freddy in Khe Sanh. But Arthur persuaded her the war was bad, then he did the rap about university complicity, and she got it. She says they *do things* together. So what are your plans for tonight?"

"I don't know what Chuck's got in mind." Ivy said. Except marriage. She loved him so much. Just scribbling the name "Chuck Leggit" in the white space above the lines in her notebook sweetened her heart. She'd look at the name and think, *He loves me*. Last

Thursday in biology lecture she'd decided to write "Ivy Leggit" to see how it felt; she'd written "Ivy" and sat with her pen poised, unable to write the rest.

"Thanks for your room," Susan said. "My Nyack friend is on his way to Canada. He'll never come back. *Never*: The word gets me right here." She thumped her sternum.

"Which reminds me," Ivy said. "I'm late for the draft resistance meeting. It's at Bradley's apartment, and I'm taking the bus."

At the Wells' apartment, Vanessa was in the kitchen making coffee with the baby fussing on her hip while Bradley presided from the biggest chair in the living room. Three guys sat in a row on the couch and two more on the floor, law students leaning back on their hands with their legs crossed and their ties tossed over their shoulders. "Brad!" Vanessa poked her head into the living room. "Take Wesley for a minute?"

"Not now, honey," he said. "We're in the middle of something."

"He wants six things at once," Vanessa said, meaning the baby. "Keep an eye on the coffee, then. If it perks too long, it'll be undrinkable. About three minutes more." She talked from the kitchen, Baby Wesley clutched to her chest.

"Sure thing," Bradley told her. Then he turned to Ivy. "You'll keep track of the time, won't you?"

"Of course," Ivy said. She did not have a watch; there was no clock in the room, so she counted to sixty three times, oblivious to the meeting. Then she went into the kitchen to take the percolator off the stove.

Vanessa was nursing the baby. "My nipples were weeping milk all over my blouse," she said. "Otherwise I would have come into the living room."

“Why couldn’t you nurse in there? You should be part of things.” And this was marriage, Ivy thought: Vanessa stuck in the kitchen while Bradley was in the middle of the action.

“I’m too uptight to nurse in front of men, and that stops the milk.” Vanessa sat Wesley on her lap – a large baby, he grabbed at her nipples – and unhooked the bra over her other breast. He dove for it and began sucking with gusto. “Do you mind serving the coffee?” Vanessa asked. “It’d be so nice of you.”

“Of course,” Ivy said. She poured six cups of coffee and carried them in. Each man, as she gave him his cup, said “Thanks” without looking at her. Then she found sugar and milk, a little bowl and a little pitcher, and spoons, and trundled it all to the coffee table. She imagined being married to Chuck, making coffee for men, pouring milk into a little pitcher.

“You look bothered,” Bradley said. “It was a good meeting. We got somewhere.”

“I’m not upset,” Ivy lied. Jane had warned her about Movement men’s tendency to treat women as servants, especially in draft resistance. Something to do with masculinity, courage and cowardice. “I’m sorry I was late,” she added. She explained about Aunt Peg, the house sale, and the dresser.

“I’ll help you get the dresser,” Bradley said. “It’ll be easy. I’ve got a pickup truck. On the way there and back I can fill you in about what you missed.”

“Yes,” she said. “Fill me in.” Ivy was the liaison between the draft resistance group and the campus SDS. At the meeting tomorrow night she would try to recruit people who wanted to join the resistance. In the twenty-minute drive to the Heights, Bradley gave her two minutes’ worth of information.

“It’s such a private struggle,” Ivy said. “You have to decide what to risk – jail, exile, your family’s hatred.”

“You’ve got to put up with being called a coward,” Bradley said, “especially if you’re a conscientious objector.”

“Chuck’s applying for CO status, now that he’s quit school.”

“Good for Chuck,” Bradley said.

Chuck had admitted that he was trying to be a CO because he was terrified of war. But he was less afraid of being killed than of killing. Ivy figured his fear was that he was trying to avoid killing because if he got good at it he might not want to stop. He’d refused to go the meeting with Bradley Wells and the law students. “Different priorities,” he’d said. “I gotta get together exactly where I stand before I can organize others. Bradley Wells’ group is okay for you, because you’re a girl; you need to know what’s going on. But it doesn’t help me.” Ivy did not tell Bradley what Chuck had said.

“We’re almost there,” she said, reading house numbers on Fairmount Boulevard. “There it is. No! Here.” Bradley drove into the loop in front of Kevin Waterson’s mansion. “Thank you,” Ivy said. “That was a long way.”

“Actually, I’m glad to get out of the house,” Bradley said. “The kid has diarrhea, stinks up the bathroom, and Vanessa’s all exhausted and teary. I needed a break. Jesus, this is a palace.”

Kevin Waterson helped them load the dresser, donating two thick blankets to use as padding. “Peace!” He held up the V-sign as they drove away.

On Hessler Road they had to carry first the mirror in its frame, then the dresser drawers, two at a time, then the dresser itself, up to the porch, then up to Ivy’s room, a

slow, heavy process. “All my stuff is piled in suitcases in the closet,” Ivy said. “I can’t wait to unload.”

Bradley screwed the mirror onto the back. “Hold this, will you?” he said. She held the connecting boards steady so he could put in extra screws. She had to lean close over his shoulder and twist so he had enough light. The evening was coming in gray and rainy, the light dimmed further by the grime on Ivy’s one small window.

“There,” he said, and stood up next to her. Close to her. Suddenly they were kissing. “I’ve wanted to do this for so long,” he said. His large hands moved down her back to her hips, the thought of his mangled finger arousing all her tenderness. She felt her breath rise to the top of her chest, felt her breasts lighten as though they were hollow and superbly sensitive, felt his fingers on one of her breasts. He lifted her shirt, pulled her bra to one side and kissed her breast.

“Oh girl, you are dangerous for me.” Bradley’s voice was a gray whisper in the gray light. They kissed again.

She squirmed away and took a breath. Her lungs were tightening. “We’re dangerous for each other,” she said. “I can’t go any further.”

“You’re thinking about your boyfriend,” he said, inhaled deeply and exhaled, a huge breath. She envied him his deep-breathing ability. “Just as well,” he said. “I could really get a case of you, and I don’t want to do that.”

“A case of me?”

“I could fall in love,” he said, turning away.

“Oh God, don’t do that,” Ivy said. He was already trotting down the stairs. Then he was gone. Rain thundered on the tin roof. Ivy used her inhaler and turned on the

shower. She was clean and quiet – narrow escape; she could get a case of Bradley Wells – and putting things into drawers when Chuck called.

They went to Cusumano's for pizza, and he asked her again to marry him. "I really mean this," he said. "It's absolutely the right thing for me."

"But," Ivy said her most honest thought: "I haven't gone around the world yet."

Chuck sat back, surprised. "What does that have to do with marriage?" he asked. "What kind of around-the-world do you have in mind?"

"It's something I've always wanted to do." She had a vision of herself coming down a gangplank into a world of strange colors and scents. "I want to see old places – Egypt, Greece, Florence – and forbidden places – Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary. China. I want to see my friends in Stuttgart," she said. She hadn't written to them since Christmas the year before last. "I want to visit Glen in India."

Glen had sent her a letter last week. The villagers needed clean drinking water, but he didn't know yet how to help get them that. He'd begun to learn how to handle cow dung with his hands, to keep fires going and to build walls. "I feel like a rather inept hired hand, most of the time," he wrote.

Bert and Tessa said Peace Corps was simply another component of American imperialism, so Ivy hadn't cared when she learned that they didn't accept people with asthma. "I'd like to go to the Himalayas," she told Chuck. "Tibet or Nepal or Sikkim."

"You haven't said why all this traveling means you can't marry me," Chuck said.

"I can't marry you before I go," Ivy said. "Of course, I'll be working for the international revolutionary youth movement." The image in her mind shifted. Thinner than the fat-face, fat-rumped girl she saw in the mirror, with longer hair, she would

become Comrade Ivy, a revolutionary in pants and boots, her face and arms tanned and weathered, moving purposefully along an extremely narrow street lined with mud-walled houses.

The point was, Ivy Barcelona could be a world traveler and revolutionary, while Ivy Leggit would have to be like Vanessa Wells, expected to produce pots of coffee and plates of cookies during meetings. “The truth is, I haven’t figured out what I want to do,” she said to Chuck. “I’m working on it.”

He glowered at her across the table. “I’m going to Cincinnati tomorrow afternoon,” he said. “I’d like to tell my mother we’re engaged.”

“Tell her we’re thinking about being engaged,” Ivy said.

“How about ‘working out the details of the engagement’?”

“That’s not what we’re doing,” Ivy said. “You can say ‘almost engaged.’ And I don’t want to discuss it any more tonight.” He’d have to accept that.

They talked about other things, and when they got to The Monmouth he made love to her almost violently, not listening when she begged him to slow down, not seeing how, when he ejaculated, she burst into tears.

September 15, 1968

When Ivy returned to Hessler Road, Susan and Gail were reading the Sunday *New York Times* and drinking coffee. “Well, he’s gone,” Susan said. “He wanted to sleep with me last night. I almost let him, out of pity. But I couldn’t bring myself. Your sheets are still clean, I think.”

“He’d be pissed if he knew you pitied him,” Ivy said. “You did the right thing.”

“Arthur wants to sleep with me,” Gail said. “I kind of want to. But he lives with his parents.”

“So let him sleep here. You’ve got the biggest bed,” Susan said. “Ivy and I will not know anything. We could even leave for a night. Hey – we could go camping. Come on, Ivy, that’d be fun, wouldn’t it?”

“Freddy’s proposed in two letters,” Gail said. “I haven’t said yes or no, but he thinks we’re getting married next Spring.”

“All the more reason you should sleep with someone else,” Susan said. She was putting her favorite record on the stereo: Jacques Brel. “Then you can make up your mind with some experience.”

“I’ve been thinking,” Ivy said. “It’d be terrible to never sleep with anyone but Chuck in my whole life.” She hadn’t told them Chuck had proposed. Maybe she should.

“Exactly,” Susan said. “Terrible.”

“I love Chuck so much,” Ivy said. Jacques Brel crooned: “je t’aime encore, je t’aime.” Ivy mouthed the French words, feeling them with her lips and the front of her mouth. It would feel delicious to speak French. Maybe that’s how Susan kept so thin; she spoke French rather than eating.

“I’m not sure how much I love Freddy,” Gail dropped on the red-spread couch. “I won’t tell him about Arthur, not while he’s in Vietnam.”

“No need to,” Ivy said.

“I’m going to make split-pea soup,” Susan said. “With carrots.” She went into the kitchen. Pots banged. Jacques Brel sang delicious unintelligible words.

“I’ve got to read about medieval art before tonight’s meeting,” Ivy said. “You coming, Gail?” Why would Arthur want to keep Bert away from the meeting?

“I’ll be there,” Gail said. “Of course.”

On the cover of the medieval art book was a painting of God removing a rib from Adam’s side. God had dark hair, a gold halo like a plate on the back of his head, and an expression of wide-eyed tender concern. Adam slept, his hand covering half his face, as if he had a headache. He had pubic hair, but no penis. The rib looked like a penis that God was holding out – *here, try this*. Ivy began to read, but the words did not penetrate her thoughts, which were jumbled, a queasy mix of darkness and burning, as if her mind were smoldering and full of thorns.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Thirteen

October 5, 1968

“The Selective Service wants to know if I believe in a Supreme Being,” Chuck said to Mrs. Nelson, who knelt in the garden of the Friends’ Meeting House, planting mums. “I’m not sure, and the form’s got only got two boxes: *yes* and *no*.”

“If you want to be a conscientious objector,” she said, patting the dirt around a dark red cluster, “you must choose between *yes* and the blank space.” Her hands in oversized gloves moved tenderly, precisely. “You want to reach me the watering can?”

The morning was bright but still chilly; Chuck brought the watering can and crouched next to her, clutching his *Handbook for Conscientious Objectors* and his notebook, which held Form 150, the application demanding that he make up his mind about the existence of God, the uses of violence, and the essential nature of war, among other things. He had only a few days to get it together. Mrs. Nelson had agreed to see him on short notice.

“This blank space? Here?” He showed her the form.

“That one. If you’re certain you’re agnostic, write something like ‘see attached’.” She tilted the can, dribbling water around the base of the mums. “Then you write an essay, telling them exactly what you believe, in detail.” Mrs. Nelson spoke as if she were pointing out the obvious, with crisp European syllables, pronouncing the *t* in *exactly* and *detail*.

“But I’m not sure exactly what I believe,” Chuck said. That was an understatement. Doubts swarmed like buzzards these days. He had no time for an essay. He barely had the time to write articles for the underground newspaper. Writing beliefs required a quiet atmosphere, distance from the clamoring world. In half an hour he was due at Underground Books, where he worked for a few hours on Saturdays. Maybe there he could think clearly. There were never many customers.

“Of course, you are full of doubt,” Mrs. Nelson said. “You are a thoughtful young man.” She began to dig another hole in the soft soil of the flower bed. Under her apron she wore wide-legged jeans with Swedish clogs. She also wore earrings, the kind Chuck’s mother would call “chi-chi,” silver with blue enamel.

This Quaker lady was the only person, this half-hour was the only time, Chuck had. “I have to put the application in the mail by Thursday,” he said.

“What about the thirty days? Let’s put the white mums here.” She reached out with her oversized glove. Chuck put the plastic pot – with tightly clenched buds, only a few unfurled flowers – into her palm.

“Thirty days from when the reclassification letter was *mailed*. September 16th.”

Mrs. Nelson looked up, frowning. “You were re-classified 1-A on September 16th, and you’re just now getting around to this?” She upended the pot and caught the plant, white mums drooping below her fingers, pot-shaped clod of earth in her hand. “One has to wonder: are you sure you *want* CO status?”

“Of course,” Chuck said, too quickly. “What happened was, I had to go to Cincinnati, so I didn’t get the letter until it had been in my mailbox for days.” He hadn’t opened the thing right away, either.

He'd started the process with one of his letters: "Dear Uncle Sam, I've given up school in exchange for sanity." He'd enclosed a cartoon that pictured the draft board as a pair of American eagles looming rapaciously over a hapless kid, drawn to look like both student and baby goat. "Your loving victim ..." The board responded fast. He could not believing the reclassification had come so soon, did not want to see it: 1-A.

While he was in Cincinnati, Greg saw Ivy and Bert Claymore with their arms around each other, late at night. "I don't know how long they were in the office, or what would've happened if they hadn't seen me," Greg said.

Chuck had told Ivy right away, of course, and she'd been annoyed. "Bert and I went to the office after the SDS meeting," she said. "We hugged. I don't know what Greg thought he saw. What is the big deal? You're not jealous of Bert Claymore?"

Chuck had decided Greg was the jealous one, trying to subvert Chuck's love for Ivy, which was strong and true. They'd avoided a fight. But a few days later – last weekend – she'd refused to spend Saturday night with him. She didn't feel well, she said, lots to do. He'd begun to worry again. He couldn't help it.

"It's complicated," he said to Mrs Nelson.

"Ah," she said. "*Complicated*." She tucked the white mums into bed and patted the soil over them. Then she added water. "You're *sure* you want to be a CO?" she asked again, sitting back on her heels.

"1-O," he said. "Civilian service." He'd work as a hospital orderly or teach kids in an inner city school. He might even get to work in a library. "I like the idea of service. It makes sense in a participatory democracy." The words came with an image: a man in overalls, holding a cap in his gnarled hard-working hands, speaking out at a meeting.

He'd seen a picture of that man once. "Everybody has a voice, and everybody takes a turn cleaning streets, looking after kids, or volunteering for the fire department."

"That idea is part of several religions, you know," Mrs. Nelson said. "Come to the kitchen while I wash my hands." She pushed herself up a bit awkwardly, brushing dirt off her knees, removing her gloves. "What you're talking about is a society without hierarchy, and *without war*."

"Are you an absolute pacifist, then?" he asked, as they went into the mudroom.

Mrs. Nelson stepped out of her clogs. "Absolute," she said.

Chuck kicked off his sneakers; his feet were bare. "What about World War II?" he asked. "Hitler had to be stopped. *Had* to."

"Yes, of course," she said, washing her hands at the kitchen sink. "But not necessarily by war." He knew that she had fled Nazi Germany because she had a Jewish grandmother. "I was lucky," she had said. "I met the Quakers."

"What else would have stopped the Nazis? Assassination didn't work."

She turned off the water. "What stopped Napoleon?"

"You mean the Russian winter?" He could think of ten reasons why the comparison was absurd, but what else could she mean?

"Exactly," she said. "There is always an alternative to war."

"What would that have been, in Europe, twenty-five years ago?" he asked.

"Thirty years ago the war could have been prevented." She sighed. "I am not a politician or a historian. What I know is, if men refuse to fight wars, then war will end. One must take a stand. Berrigan, in Milwaukee, wrote that we begin by saying No on every front where man is destroyed and defeated."

“Pacifism as a practice?” Chuck asked.

“Peace is like housework,” Mrs. Nelson said. “It’s hard, feels like drudgery, has to be done over and over. You only miss it when you haven’t done it.”

“That doesn’t help me know what to write about the supreme being.” Chuck’s feet were cold on the cracked linoleum. “I like the Quaker idea about ‘that of God’ in everyone. But there’s nothing ‘supreme’ in that. If God exists, there must be more than just a little spark in every person.”

“Why?” Mrs. Nelson leaned against the sink. “Think about it: every person. Personally, I find a bit of God also in plants and animals. Maybe stones. ‘Supreme’ doesn’t mean you must write a long complex essay. The harder question for you seems to be whether war is ever justified. I say no. I can’t help you much more than that.”

“May I talk with you again – before Thursday?” He picked up his sneakers and fumbled with the laces.

“Let’s see, I have a busy week.” Mrs. Nelson slipped into her clogs. “Shall we make an appointment for seven on Wednesday – here, in the library?” She took a car key out of her pocket.

“Yes, please.” Chuck wasn’t sure he’d be able to keep the appointment – but he felt stabilized knowing he could talk again with this slightly-cracked German woman who believed God was in flowers and World War II could have been avoided. But her questions were useful. She seemed to have a feel for who he was. He liked being around her, the way she calmly kept on gardening, the way she padded around in white socks.

Chuck’s father believed in war. He seemed to need an enemy – Vietnamese communists, the Cadillac place across the street from his Chrysler dealership, whatever

team opposed the Reds – to keep him focused, to know what to do next. At dinner three weeks ago Chuck had noticed his father’s pleasure in sharpening the big carving knife, which he didn’t need, and attacking the slow-baked chicken. Only the skin needed slicing; a dig with the knife-point popped out the leg; a single sweep over the breast, and the white meat fell away on to the plate. Father’s delight in carving with too much knife was his only honest expression that evening.

In the Battle of the Bulge, Charley Leggit had acquired a piece of shrapnel in his chest that for some reason couldn’t be removed. It travelled around his body. Once he’d let Chuck feel it, a hard lump under the skin. Father never talked about the war, except to say, “I was a soldier, did what I had to do. Served my country. Lucky to get out alive.”

Charley Leggit and Mrs. Nelson: both lucky to get out alive.

One reason not to be a soldier was that Chuck might grow as rigid and isolated as his father. He crossed the campus, where anti-war signs were plastered on every possible tree and wall space. For years he’d been living with his father’s disappointment in him: He’d hated phys. ed, quit playing football and baseball after eighth grade. He opposed the war. Now Chuck was disappointed in his father. If he became a CO, the distance between them would only become a little harder to cross than it already was.

Promptly at ten o’clock, Chuck let himself into Underground Books, in the cellar beneath the coffee house on 115th and Euclid. “God is Dog spelled backwards,” someone had written on the blackboard near the counter. He thought of Ferlinghetti’s “Dog” poem and wondered if Ferlinghetti believed in a Supreme Being. To the dog, everything was equal: “puddles and babies/cats and cigars/ poolrooms and policemen.” He’d piss on a

congressman, “just another fire hydrant” – but in the end he was the Victor Victrola dog, listening for his master’s voice.

The poet d.a.levy had left a new paper – *Buddhist Third-Class Junk Mail Oracle* – to sell at fifty cents a copy. Chuck moved *The Swamp Erie Pipe Dream*, the old paper which had failed to sell for that price, to the bench by the door. Then he spread the counter with his own work for the day: Form 150, the CO handbook, and his notebook, open to a blank page. He took out a pen, climbed onto the stool behind the counter, and waited for words to form in his mind.

He’d heard once before about that flickering thing Mrs. Nelson called “that of God” from the interfaith camp counselor who’d taken him to Friends meeting. He’d liked the guy at first. But he turned out to be queer. One night, on the road back from the campfire, he’d put his hand on Chuck’s shoulder, spoken close to Chuck’s the lips making a tiny suck-sound. “I’m here, you know. Any time.” Chuck had flung off the counselor’s hand and run. Where was “that of God” inside such a man, to mix “I’m here” with such seduction?

Maybe, Chuck thought now, he’d misunderstood, and the counselor (his name erased from memory) hadn’t meant to seduce. More to the point was knowing that, even if there was a divine spark in everyone – Father, Ivy, Greg Lambert, Tessa Buchanan – it was mixed with bad things. Even in Chuck himself.

“When I was twelve,” he wrote, “I killed a squirrel. I watched the light die in its eyes, and knew I could never kill again, for any reason. I want to be a person who helps other people, perhaps a teacher or a guidance counselor. I want to nourish the bit of God I believe everyone carries inside, kind of like blowing on a coal to keep the fire warm.”

It was a start. It was true. It was also a lie. He'd killed in dreams. Over and over, most often with guns, firing at menacing dogs or at people whose faces were hidden. In one dream he'd rammed a horse with his grandfather's tractor, waking full of sorrow. And once he stabbed a man. The face was in shadow, as in the other dreams, but he'd felt the cloth of a suit coat, the solid softness of the man's stomach underneath. He'd pushed the knife in. There'd been a scream, high above; the man was very tall. He'd pulled the knife out, pressed it in again. Blood had poured over his hands and down his front.

Perhaps he was a coward. Bert Claymore had accused him of avoiding confrontation. Bert confronted with words, though. He didn't walk around with a gun or a club. If Chuck could think of the words on the spot, he'd use them as Bert did. But Chuck had to sit over a page with a pen in his hand writing before he could find words. Then, after he wrote them, he doubted their sincerity.

"Question 5: Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe in the use of force?" *Force*, not *killing*. Chuck had done right to stop Bert from landing that brick on the cop in Glenville. Berrigan and the others had done right to burn draft files: that was force. "When force stops further violence, then one does right ..." he began.

Fight for peace, Bert liked to say. Chuck pictured Bert with his arms around Ivy and felt his own body tense. If he'd been there he'd have thrown Bert to the ground and slapped him, one cheek, then the other, slapped him hard. Given the guy a bloody nose, at least. Would that stop further violence? It would have stopped Bert from messing with Ivy.

"Question 3: Explain how, when, and from whom or from what source you received the training and acquired the belief ..." The Baptists had taught him about

Jesus. He still believed what they'd told him about loving his enemy and giving to those in need, even though they hadn't really meant it. They believed in money and authority.

Granddad was a Baptist. "Now see here, Chucky, you're falling into that left-wing habit," he'd said, three weeks ago. "Bunch of hoodlums burn and loot their own neighborhoods, a few hot-heads kill some policemen, and the lefties say *Spend more money!* That makes no sense at all. Rhodes says: law and order first. And I say he's right. So does Nixon."

"I don't trust Nixon," Chuck said.

"Neither do I. No one should trust any politician."

Granddad worshipped the invisible hand of the Market without calling it God, and did not care that the Market invariably turned to guns, bombs, and invasions of small countries. But Granddad's hands taught something different than his words. When a little Perch got caught on his hook, Granddad held it delicately and released it safely, saying "Gwan, little fella." He'd brush Jesse James with respect for the sensitive spots, examine each hoof tenderly, take extra time to rub his hand along the crest under the mane, to scratch the little whorl between Jesse's eyes. Mrs. Nelson's hands on the mums reminded Chuck of his grandfather's hands on his own head, before he'd gotten so tall. That blessing had given Chuck his belief.

"You should know," Granddad had said, "your mother's been getting letters from the FBI. She asked me to tell you." That explained why they could sit on the porch without being disturbed by the rest of the family. Chuck did not say he'd expected such letters. The informant, whoever he was, had done his job.

"What do they say?" Chuck asked.

“They say you’re engaged in subversive activities, advocating overthrow of the government. They say your girlfriend is encouraging draft dodgers and you’re in meetings with known Communists. You get the gist.”

Chuck wondered who the FBI knew was Communist. Three oaks threw long shadows across the scruffy grass. “You know I’m against war and racism,” he said. “It’s part of my religious faith.” He’d said that half-joking, eighteen days ago; now, with Form 150 in his notebook, the words were almost true.

Granddad had blamed the summer camp staffed by idealistic Quakers. Chuck had pointed out that Nixon was a Quaker. Granddad had brushed that aside. “Quakers don’t understand human nature.”

“Human nature,” Chuck said, “will blow us off the planet.”

Granddad chuckled. “It just might do that.”

“But don’t you care?” Chuck asked.

“I care about you, Chucky, and your sister Bonnie, and your hard-headed hardworking parents, and a few other people. I want you to have a good life, and God only knows how long that’ll be. I’ve lived seventy-eight years, which is a long time, and I still have my wits about me. I can’t control what some fool Communists might do, now that they have the Bomb. And that’s as far as it goes. Leave the rest to the good Lord.” He leaned forward in his chair, elbows on his knees, looking out at the yard. “Bats.” He pointed. Dark shapes flitted between the trees.

The next morning Chuck had driven home to Cleveland. At the Monmouth, his 1-A classification was waiting in the mailbox.

Sheldon came in, and Chuck closed his notebook, glad to stop for now. “Far out, Levy’s new rag.” Sheldon picked up the top copy of the *Buddhist Third Class Junk Mail Oracle* and read out loud, pausing at the line breaks: “‘A wordless knowing/Grasps my wandering/ Through another/Day of rain.’ Beautiful, isn’t it?”

“Gentler than usual,” Chuck said. “Not so much fucking and shitting.”

“Ah, but d.a. makes the obscenities holy,” Sheldon said. “Think about it. Fucking. Shitting. Those are God-given acts.”

“I dunno.” Chuck could see that Sheldon was right. “Why doesn’t he spell his name with capital letters? Why does he charge so much for his paper?”

Sheldon sat on the bench to load his pipe with cherry blend. “He’s a beautiful man, levy.” he said. “I admire him. Refuses to compromise.”

“Easier said than done – *refuse to compromise*,” Chuck said. The poet took a stand, he thought, and Mrs. Nelson took hers. His father took another stand. They had refusal in common. And Chuck was now refusing, as well. The FBI informant had told his mother he’d already done it.

“I’ll buy this,” Sheldon picked up the *Oracle*, “with good money I picked up from compromising.” He produced a Kennedy half-dollar which rang on the counter. “I’ll see you later, won’t I? Marching against Mr. Wallace.”

“Right,” Chuck said. He’d almost forgotten. George Wallace would be surrounded by his loyal followers, the Cleveland branches of the Hungarian Freedom Fighters and the Fraternal Order of Police. They were due a visit from the Movement as well. “I wouldn’t miss it,” he told Sheldon. “See you there.”

He opened his notebook to his article on Glenville. He liked his beginning: “The brutal face of this society showed itself in Chicago at the end of August, and in the rush-indictment of Ahmed Evans, who’s facing the chair. People on Lakeview and 123rd streets say Evans was in an attic the whole time. They ought to know. He was in one of their attics. So who killed those cops? Maybe the cops themselves.”

Evans had said that he *would* have killed the police if his carbine hadn’t jammed. He’d almost certainly given a carbine and two loaded bandoliers to the teenager who was not Osu Bey. “My point is,” Chuck had written, “the gloves are off. This wasn’t just a bunch of hoodlums or frustrated ghetto dwellers. This was armed insurrection.” War. Chuck had sided with the revolutionaries – who were ready to kill police, whether or not they actually did. He’d taken his stand.

The youth in Chicago had not carried guns; is that why they hadn’t been shot? Youth in Prague weren’t armed, either, but the tanks did not stop. What would Chuck do if the police attacked at the Wallace demonstration? He leafed through his notebook. Roldo Bartimole, the renegade journalist, had written that Glenville “must be viewed as a deliberate, revolutionary and political act.” Chuck had copied it down. “The choices are narrowing to two: freedom or repression.” How would pacifism – unwillingness to kill, for any reason – withstand the revolution?

Pacifists don’t understand human nature, Granddad had said. Chuck paged through his notes, flipping past Glenville, then Chicago, then the Milwaukee 14, to a new blank sheet. He began to write about the use of force. He tried to be honest, but under every sentence, inside every thought, crouched its opposite. Behind him on the wall, God was dog spelled backwards.

The door slammed open, its bell jingling, and Ivy rushed in. “It’s past one! Let’s go! We’re marching on Public Hall!” She’d been gaining weight – the Pill, she said – so her roundness was becoming what people called “buxom;” her pants were tight at the hips and crotch, and her shirt strained against its buttons, revealing skin between her breasts. She had not set her hair, and her bangs hung into her eyes.

“Glad to see you too,” Chuck said, kissing her. She was still beautiful, and today she was happy. Her sweater hid any gaps in her shirt. Her hair flowed to her shoulder-blades. Her upper lip was pert and smiling.

“Arthur and Gail drove downtown with the signs,” she said, as they left the store. “I’m planning to enjoy this march.”

“Right,” Chuck said. The police would be out in full riot gear. Wallace was their “lawnorder” man. Carl Stokes had refused to welcome him to Cleveland. Enjoy the march? It could turn bloody.

Tessa waited for them at the corner light of East Sixth and St. Clair, in her loose army pants and combat boots, her breasts like water balloons under her T-shirt. “Police shot students at *Tlatelolco*,” she said. “They were doing a peaceful rally. Yesterday. Javier phoned his mother; she couldn’t talk for crying.”

“What’s *Tlat* ... what you said?” Chuck asked. They walked single file past the Freedom Fighters’ bus parked at the back entrance of Public Hall. A sign in its window read *Wallace for President!*

“*Tlatelolco* is a little plaza in Mexico City,” Tessa said. “It was a massacre. Javier’s mama said thousands are dead or missing.”

They turned the corner and saw clusters of people with signs. *Stop Wallace Now!* Bert and Susan carried a banner: *Bombs Away with Curtis LeMay!* Marvin's said, *The Police Are Here to Preserve Disorder!* Not even at the Pentagon had Chuck seen so many different Movement organizations in one place: Youth Against War and Fascism. Cleveland Area Peace Action Council. Mothers Against War. A group of young Republicans in blue suits carried signs for Nixon and freedom of speech.

Old Ted Dostal, the Socialist, strode by in his orthopedic shoes. "Scabs!" he shouted in the direction of the Wallace supporters. "Scabs!" Behind him two men carried flags – one with a hammer and sickle, the other starred and striped. Six high school students (*Shaw High Shows Up for Peace*) marched past, their cheeks soft and pink.

Chuck, Ivy, and Tessa fell into step with the others. No one was chanting, but there was march rhythm; lines had formed. "What the hell are you talking about?" Ivy asked Chuck. She'd taken up casual swearing since Chicago.

"I'm practicing," he said. He hadn't known he was saying it aloud as he walked: "Tlatelolco. Tlatelolco. Tlatelolco. Just trying to say it right," he told Ivy.

"How do you know for sure which is right without asking someone who's Mexican?" she asked.

"I can tell by the sound," Chuck said. Which was not true. Was he the only person who knew how ironic this scene was? "Where's Javier?" He stepped close to Tessa, almost touching her breasts accidentally. Form 150 had made him think too hard, looking for signs of God, reading opposites in everything.

"He's in a psychiatry rotation, this month," Tessa said.

The police stood in two lines on either side of the entrance, their faces stern and beefy. Preservers of disorder.

“Hey Chuck! Ivy! Here we are!” Hands waved. Gail and Arthur carried a *Students against the War* banner.

“Jane looks more cheerful with short hair,” Ivy whispered to Chuck. He hadn’t even recognized Jane next to Tessa. Jane’s hair curled and waved like Bob Dylan’s.

“How would a haircut make you look cheerful?” he asked.

Ivy didn’t hear him; she was listening to Tessa tell about Mexico, how deliberate and open the police oppression was. “The Mexican students know all about Paris, Prague, Columbia, and Chicago. They’re counting on us; I told them they could.”

“We can only do our part,” Jane said.

“We have a big part, though,” said Tessa. “The center is here.”

In Cleveland? Chuck thought. He counted maybe two hundred anti-Wallace protestors, not sure he was including everyone. Were the young Republicans against Wallace? Yes. “I’m not sure how protesting Wallace is making the revolution,” he said.

“You don’t question a protest march when you’re in the middle. It’s not good form.” The deep voice came from behind him: Sheldon. “It’s all theater,” Sheldon said.

“Don’tcha know.” He raised his fist and shouted, “Power to the People Right On!”

“You’ve just got to take a stand against a racist,” Jane said. “Shh. Listen.” Drums, a tight bongo rhythm. Seconds after Jane’s *Shh* the drums were loud, the crowd hushed. Black nationalists marched in a double line, with black berets. Some of the berets had the red, gold & green African National Congress insignia, and a man at the head of the line carried an ANC flag. Six drummers beat with their hands and stepped in time. They were

perfectly synchronized, and the crowd parted as they approached the Public Hall entrance. They stopped. The drums still played; the men stepped *bam-bam*, into place facing the police.

“Afro-set,” Sheldon whispered in Chuck’s ear. The discipline of the Afro-set made everyone else look chaotic, mere clusters of poorly dressed white people with messy hair, standing bewildered or mesmerized – Chuck was both – by the drums. By the stern black faces. “That’s Harllel Jones,” Sheldon nodded toward the tall man at the end of the line. Notorious Harllel. Every policeman lifted his nightstick and held it poised, one hand clutching the handle, the other holding the tip.

“Harllel’s effective,” Jane said to Sheldon. She turned to Tessa. “This is what I mean by nonviolent aggression,” she said. The drums still beat.

Ivy clutched Chuck’s hand. The nationalists were waiting to be admitted into the auditorium. Jones strode to the nearest policeman and said something too quiet to hear. The door was opened, and the drums went silent as the black men filed in. The motley white contingents followed.

“Oh my God, he’s so small,” Ivy said, as the crowd cheered Wallace, who crossed to his bulletproof lectern, marching to the beat of a country & western song performed by a trio of bubble-haired girls. Then the speech began. When he paused the Afro-set chanted, “Stop racism now!” their voices synchronized, clapping on the down-beat.

Wallace looked up and shook his finger. “Turn those TV cameras to the balcony. Show the people of America what kind of folks they are,” he said.

The cameras were already on the Nationalists – how could they not be? The men of the Afro-set were compelling – stone-faced black power asserting itself calmly,

relentlessly, chanting to the TV cameras, now in a new rhythm – “Power to the People!” – they swayed and clapped.

“Nonviolent aggression.” Chuck scribbled the phrase in his notebook.

“How’s he gonna get his audience back?” Sheldon murmured.

There was a flurry behind them. A scream. Several police left the balcony and disappeared.

“Calm down, let the police handle it,” Wallace said. “We got the anarchists under control here. You know, if one of those demonstrators ever laid in front of my automobile, that would be the last automobile he’d ever lay down in front of.” The ground-floor audience cheered.

“Susan had her Curtis LeMay sign torn up by a couple of Wallace fans,” Jane said from behind them. “The police took her outside.”

“She wasn’t doing anything illegal,” Gail said.

“She was creating a disturbance,” Jane said. “I say, good for her.”

“Me too,” Ivy said. Behind the enormous steel lectern, the little candidate was promising to fill Washington with rednecks and peckerwoods (the first-floor crowd cheered) and to make life miserable for shiftless people with no jobs (more cheers).

“Ah, life without a job is so *easy*,” Jane said, almost loud enough to be heckling.

The nationalists started a new chant – *You don’t have a job! You don’t have a job!* – pointing toward the lectern on *you*, clapping after *job*.

“I’m sorry I had to speak to you under such disruptive circumstances,” Wallace said. The nationalists stood with their arms folded across their chests as his speech ended.

When the applause began, they turned and marched in their double line up the balcony steps, between the police guards at the door.

“I’ve changed my mind,” Ivy said to Chuck as they filed out. “I don’t think we could make a revolution by voting for Wallace.”

“Did you ever really think that?” he asked.

“I guess I didn’t,” Ivy said. “Uh-oh. Careful.”

Outside the auditorium, police were moving into the crowd as it fanned across the mall, billy clubs raised. The Afro-set had resumed drumming as they marched, quick-stepping toward Superior. Not one of them got out of line. The police stayed in line too, their faces tight-lipped, their bodies taut.

Out of the corner of his eye, Chuck saw Greg Lambert pick up a stone and lift his arm like a baseball pitcher. “Stop that, you idiot!” he yelled. He flew into Greg, landing with his shoulder against one large arm. Two policemen came rushing. “Drop that rock!” Chuck yelled. Greg had already dropped it. The police hesitated. Then came a cry from another direction. “Motherfuckers!” And the two police moved in that direction.

“I get so mad,” Greg said, rubbing the upper arm Chuck had hit with as much of his weight as he could hurl. “Those pigs are such ...”

“I know,” Chuck said. “Hey, I hope I didn’t hurt you.”

“Nah,” Greg said. “I’m fine.” He didn’t seem to want to stay near Chuck; he hurried away, into the crowd. The police were clubbing and making arrests. Old Ted Dostal went down. Bert went down.

Chuck found Ivy – rather she found him and said, “Come on!” – and they hurried away from the melee.

Sitting on the Rapid with Ivy and Jane, Chuck realized that he had told Greg two lies. He had not known what Greg was going to say about the pigs, he just didn't want to hear. And second, he hoped he did hurt Greg. He wanted to have raised a bruise at least. The galoot loved violence. Chuck believed in nonviolent aggression; his essay had been developing nicely. Then he'd had the chance to ram into Greg, only partly to stop further violence.

"Are you going to write this up for the underground newspaper?" Jane asked.

"No, no." He shook his head. "I'm still working on Glenville. And the Milwaukee 14. You can write this one."

"I'm writing about Women's Liberation," Jane said. "We should get Tessa to write about the student massacre in Mexico. She's quit school to work full time on the revolution."

"Oh no!" Ivy said. "The revolution needs doctors. She was close."

"Not that close," Jane said. "It was her decision. Why don't you write about SDS on campus?"

"I don't know," Ivy said doubtfully. "I'm taking a pretty heavy load this term."

"What about your roommate – Susan?" Chuck asked.

"She'd say *sure I'll do it*, then she wouldn't," Ivy said. She slumped and bit her upper lip. "Okay. What happened was, we had a hundred people at the first SDS meeting. And a big fight between Arthur and Bert. Arthur walked out. At the second meeting there were twelve people. I don't want *anyone* to write about it."

"Who's the numbskull," Chuck asked, "Arthur or Bert?"

Jane laughed and tucked her hands behind her head. The Rapid Transit rattled through a man-made gorge, littered with dead wood and garbage.

“What are you thinking?” he asked Jane.

“People are going crazy,” she said, shaking her head. “That’s all. Bert’s crazy.”

“Do you know that Arthur came out of jail in Chicago and nobody was there to meet him?” Ivy said. “He was in Cook County jail two nights, two-and-a-half days – and none of us waited for him. He took the bus back to Cleveland all alone.”

“Did he say that was why he was mad at Bert?” Chuck asked.

“Of course not,” Ivy said. “He says they differ on some fundamental principles. He told Gail, though, and she told me. I feel terrible – like we failed him. We had all these people ready to join SDS, and we failed them, too.”

“You had all these people curious,” Chuck said. “And you took care of Jimmy after Chicago, instead of Arthur.” If Bert was a crazy numbskull, he wanted to ask Ivy, why go to the office with him? Why give him sexy hugs?

But when he’d thought for a minute, he realized he had a pretty good idea. He knew how Ivy thought: she wanted to calm Bert down, maybe even to straighten him out. Greg had it wrong, of course. “You haven’t failed,” he said. “You’ve done fine.”

Everything was all right. He would take Ivy home with him. No, he’d take *her* home so she could shower and dress in something pretty, but not fancy. He’d pick her up in a couple of hours, after he’d cleaned up himself. He rubbed his cheeks: it was time to shave. He’d buy a rose and present it to her. A rose or a bouquet, whichever he could afford.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Fourteen

October 11, 1968

Rain slicked the dead leaves and the gray slate, pelted the cars in the parking lot, and chilled the metal railing on the Student Union steps. Ivy's hand hurt with cold; she stumbled in to get a cup of coffee and catch her breath between classes. She'd come from the biology lecture on the "elegant adaptations" of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito; ten minutes from now she'd be in a lecture on Sophocles' Oedipus cycle. She couldn't exhale enough; her lungs resisted, and the inhaler could not be used for another hour. She stood in line trying to wheeze noiselessly. Coffee steam might relax her lungs a bit, make them stop fighting her. After Greek Drama class she'd use her inhaler, go home, drop several aminophyllin tablets, and sleep for awhile before the next thing, which was the counter-homecoming.

Chuck had gone to Boulder with Bert and Tessa – they were involved in the SDS national council meeting; he was going to write about it for the Underground News. Everybody liked the first issue; copies lay around the union.

Ivy would have gone to Boulder, but she had a medieval art paper due on Monday. Also her women's liberation group was responsible for tonight's counter-homecoming – and, oh shit, she'd almost forgotten: Jane was coming over. No time for a nap. Events were coming too fast.

Also, with Chuck gone, she had to decide, finally, how to break up with him.

She did not want to hurt Chuck. She loved Chuck. The thing was, she couldn't marry him. She had to admit she wanted – no, she *needed* – to be able to sleep with more than just one man. “Women should be entitled to sleep around,” Susan had said, more than once. Since Ivy had moved in with her and Gail, Susan had been out all night several times, but she didn't tell them who she was sleeping with. Susan had lost her virginity at sixteen to Johnny, a boy she sarcastically called her *first love*. “That was when I was being Johnny's girl,” she'd say. “Every girl needs a Johnny once in her life.” She'd shudder at the memory of Johnny, now safely obliterated in the fog of high school.

Ivy supposed Chuck was her Johnny. She no longer wanted to be Chuck's girl, to be owned by him. She intended to be her own person. Chuck had said “I don't own you; it's a figure of speech,” but he still wanted her to commit to marrying him. With Chuck, marriage was inevitable as a tunnel up ahead: they'd have to go through and she'd come out Ivy Leggit, someone she didn't know and didn't much like. She needed to get off the turnpike.

That's what she told herself, sipping coffee, trying to listen to Prof. Brownstone lecture on Sophocles. She wanted to care about Sophocles, but it was hard; Brownstone's beard jutted out from the end of his chin and wagged up and down while he talked – gray man, gray beard, gray suit, gray chalk smears across the blackboard as he erased and wrote a word in Greek. Ivy copied it down, couldn't understand what he was saying – it sounded so strange – and missed the concept, which she knew was important. She was breathing more easily now, so sleepiness was catching up with her.

She couldn't stop thinking about Bradley Wells. Even today in the rain, rushing from the Student Union to Brownstone's class, she'd scanned the parking lot for his

truck. He had kissed her at the rent party last Sunday, leaning against the brick wall of the apartment building – a thrilling, clandestine kiss. “I’m burning for you, girl,” he’d said. In bed with Bradley Wells she would feel smoothly impaled, her hunger satisfied. There was no name for the Bradley-longing. It was an ache just above her groin, a prickle on the back of her neck that knew when he was in the same room. She could feel her breasts reach toward him like tongue-tips, her lips swell with blood.

Yet Bradley was the husband of a perfectly nice woman. And Bradley himself was not very nice. He had male chauvinist tendencies. In the draft resistance he was cautious and practical, nothing like the passionate Catholics of Milwaukee whose freedom&love poetry was smuggled out of jail. She was *burned for – wanted*; and her response was thoroughly wrong. But it was real. It gushed through her like water from a broken faucet; she couldn’t turn it off, couldn’t understand it.

When she thought of being free, she pictured herself alone, happily exploring cities, meeting fascinating people, untethered to Chuck or anyone else. She was apparently capable of honestly loving one man and honestly longing for another; the two feelings were quite separate. No, she should not continue to be Chuck’s girlfriend. It was good that Chuck was out of town.

Not that they’d been spending much time together. Movement stuff happened constantly: meetings every night. People called on the phone, pounded on her door. She had papers to write and books to read in biology and medieval art. She wanted to keep up with Marxism, since she’d helped write the petition asking to have the course taught. And Greek Drama ... she came back to the present: Professor Brownstone was still droning. One wall of this lecture hall had a plaster cast of the Parthenon frieze, Apollonian youths

galloping on horses whiter than marble. Brownstone was explaining Sophocles' use of the chorus, how it was different from Euripedes' use, and how they both influenced Aristophanes. She wanted to hear about Oedipus, the man who'd stabbed his own eyes in penance for feelings he couldn't help having, acts he couldn't help doing.

At home later that afternoon she found a torn piece of a letter from Gail to Freddy. "I love you, darling; I just need to be free for now," it said. "When you get back, maybe ..." Ivy wondered if Gail had sent Freddy a more definite rejection than this. She hoped so. Freddy was the soldier who cut off Vietnamese ears; Gail could never get back together with him now. Arthur had been elected president of the Committee to End the War in Viet Nam, and Gail had become his sidekick, spending whole weekends with him. She thought he was adorable.

Ivy was still at the table with a cup of tea and Gail's half-letter in her hand, thinking it might be possible to say to Chuck, *I just need to be free for now. Maybe we'll get back together, when ...* when Jane Revard appeared in the kitchen doorway. "I let myself in," she said. "Did you get your period yet?"

Ivy shook her head. That was another worry. She'd skipped a pill two weeks ago, which meant Chuck had to use condoms until after her next period. They hated condoms: Chuck got annoyed at having to stop and put one on. Ivy disliked the smell. Her period should have come four days ago; yesterday, frantic, she'd told Jane.

If she were pregnant, Chuck would press her to marry him right away. She probably would; it'd be the simplest thing. Having a baby might make her happy to be Ivy Leggit. She half-believed the secret meaning of a wedding might be to give birth to a wife, who'd be a whole new person.

Applied to herself, the idea was terrifying. "I've been trying not to think about it," she said to Jane. "Maybe I should get tested."

"Wait a couple more weeks," Jane said. "Then get tested. If you're pregnant and you don't want to have a baby, I'll help you find a safe doctor."

"Thank you," Ivy said. Jane was a good friend to have. Perhaps she'd understand how Ivy loved Chuck, but wanted to be free of him, too.

"Let's go," Jane said. "I have the car, so we can pick up the mannequin and get refreshments in one trip." The mannequin, in the possession of an art student Jane knew, was their first-place candidate for counter-homecoming queen. Ivy would play one of the runners-up: Suzy Creamcheese, with ruffles and ringlets, white stockings and patent leather Mary Janes. Susan would play Glamour Puss, with several layers of false eyelashes and a long fall that made her a red-head.

"Bradley Wells is bringing his sound system," Jane said, backing the Valiant out of its parking space. "I offered to take good care of it, but he said he had to be there." She paused. "So Ivy, what's the deal with you and Bradley?"

Ivy's hands got instantly cold. "What did he say about me?"

"Nothing," Jane said. "I saw you at the rent party. I wouldn't mention it, but with Chuck out of town and Bradley hot to come to a women's lib event – totally unlike Bradley – I couldn't help but wonder."

"You must think I'm despicable." Ivy felt nauseous, though she'd taken only two tabs of aminophyllin.

"Because you were kissing Bradley at the rent party? No, I don't think you're despicable." Jane stopped in front of the Art Institute, in a space that said *No Stopping*

Zone. “Men get to screw around all the time. Nobody would think Bradley’s despicable for wanting to get you into bed.”

“Vanessa would,” Ivy said.

“Vanessa knows how Bradley is. She’d probably be pissed, but not surprised,” Jane said. “What I want to know is, do you really want a relationship with him?”

“I don’t know very well what I want these days,” Ivy confessed. Gray rain pelted the dirty car window as the afternoon grew dark too soon. The rain seemed to be encouraging her to cry.

“Bradley’s an attractive-looking man,” Jane said. “I can see why you might want to have sex with him – for the experience, I mean. I just hope you’re not hung up on him; it’d be a really bad scene. Let’s go get our girl.”

“I haven’t had sex with him,” Ivy said. “And I’m not hung up on him.”

“That’s good,” Jane said. She got out of the car – thin, curly-haired, purposeful, clear-headed. Ivy followed her up the Art Institute steps.

Jane didn’t seem to regret Jimmy Fulero. After what looked like a feverish romance, they were separate all of a sudden. Coming home from Chicago Jimmy had not mentioned Jane.

“Have you heard any news from Jimmy?” Ivy asked as they walked down a hallway that smelled of oil paint. “He was 1-A.”

“He’s gone back to Kalamazoo,” Jane said. “They let him back in, but he could still get drafted. That’s all I know. He stays in touch with Bert.”

“Bert wouldn’t approve of Jimmy’s accepting induction,” Ivy said. “Unless Jimmy could prove that going military would somehow aid the international struggle against U.S. imperialism.”

“Yeah,” Jane said. “Listen: I didn’t mean to mess with your business, I’d just hate to see you involved with a man who doesn’t deserve you. Here we are.” She knocked, and someone opened the door to a large room where the mannequin stood – a naked plastic woman, life-sized. The artist showed how the body came apart and gave Ivy and Jane each half to carry out to the car. They must have looked hilarious: Jane walked ahead with mannequin-arms reaching over one shoulder in a supplicant gesture, legs kicking over the other shoulder, and the wig resting on her curls like a strange hat. Ivy carried the torso, the hard plastic breasts pressing her stomach, the bald head watching back over her shoulder. The mannequin still looked human – amputated and bald, but recognizably a woman, sitting between them in the car on the way to the grocery.

“I’ve been thinking,” Ivy said hesitantly, “I need to break up with Chuck.”

“Oh,” Jane said. “Well.” She drove up Cornell Hill and stopped at the light. Then she said, “I guess I’m not all that surprised. Nothing to do with Bradley? Or Chuck’s going to Boulder?”

“Nothing,” Ivy said. “I need freedom.” The light changed; Jane drove on.

“And you can’t have freedom and stay with Chuck? He certainly loves you.”

“I love him,” Ivy said. She began to cry. “Maybe it’s a stupid idea.”

“I know,” Jane said. “But you can break up with someone and keep loving him. I still love Norman.”

“Do you see him?” Ivy had never met Norman; she only remembered he was someone Jane had lived with.

“I saw him in Chicago, getting his camera bashed,” Jane said. “He sent me a letter the other day. He’s in Columbus. In a way I love him more now, from a distance, than when I lived with him. I’d never go back.”

“I don’t think I know what love means anymore,” Ivy said. “Chuck seems to think it means getting married. Having sex and then getting married.”

“Sex has almost nothing to do with love,” Jane said firmly. “Marriage doesn’t either – doesn’t have to.” They parked at the supermarket and went in, leaving the bald mannequin in the front seat smiling courteously, graciously.

A long ramp led down to the door; inside, the aisles buzzed with Cleveland Heights housewives. Jane trundled the cart toward the mounds of fruit and vegetables – bright orange, red, yellow, a wild variety of greens.

Sex without love: the idea had a kind of purity. Ivy thought about reveling in the sensation of skin-on-skin, tangling with another body for the sheer joy of it, climbing slowly toward orgasm. She picked up two purple plums to hold in her palm, stroke with her thumb. She could buy a pound of these and take them back to Hessler Road. “Sex is kind of like eating, isn’t it?” She thought of Dutch paintings – grapes and half-peeled lemons, dead pheasants and skinned rabbits. Still lifes, they were called. They weren’t still at all.

“Almost exactly,” Jane said. “Jimmy Fulero was like a steady supply of chocolate creams. Got to be too much after awhile.” She turned the cart down the snack aisle.

Ivy let fall a handful of plums into a paper sack and held it, the soft round weight of plums-in-paper against her chest. If Jimmy was chocolate, then Chuck was ... mashed potatoes with gravy. Bread and butter, with honey. Comforting, bland. Jane loaded a large bag of yellow and white popcorn into the cart, then three boxes of marshmallows. "Symbolic refreshments," she said. "Time for the soda." They chose gingerale, Coke, and Hawaiian Punch. Alcohol was not allowed in the Student Union.

"We ought to name our candidate," Ivy said, when they'd returned to the car and clambered in beside the mannequin. "Rosie the Raider? Queen of the Reserve Raiders?"

"The Raiders will have their own queen," Jane said. "How about Boob Girlie?"

"Dolly Sweetheart," Ivy said.

"Madonna Hooker," said Jane.

They decided to have a vote – Name the Queen! – with little slips of paper in a fishbowl on the literature table. By the time Jane dropped her off, Ivy was hearing the high whine behind one ear that said she was late: she needed several hours to get her hair into ringlets. Susan had promised to loan her a pink dress, but it might have to be altered. Ivy felt fat. She could be pregnant. Well, she would not eat – not tonight, or tomorrow, except maybe a plum or two. She would fast till Chuck returned from Boulder. Then she'd tell him.

Or she wouldn't tell him, and they'd go on as before. She'd avoid Bradley Wells. Jane had warned her about what she already knew: getting hooked on Bradley would be much worse than marrying Chuck.

Oh Chuck! How could she stand to hurt him?

“I wore this to homecoming freshman year,” Susan said, holding the dress by its shoulders. Isn’t it awful?”

The dress was high-waisted, satin and chiffon, with smocking under the breasts and a white collar. Hard to imagine Susan choosing it. “You’d have no choice but to be demure in this dress,” Ivy said. “How did you ever manage that?”

“I did a good demure act for a long time,” Susan said. “I didn’t know any better. She put the fall over her hair, pinning it to her temples and the top of her head. “This is gonna itch,” she said. “I need a black hairband.”

“Zip me up in back,” Ivy said. The dress was tight across her breasts; otherwise it fit, white collar, puffy sleeves, chiffon and all. It was too long – a 1965 dress, not a 1968 dress, stopping above her knees only because she was taller than Susan. “I should have a pink ribbon for my hair.”

“Cut off the sash,” Susan said. She’d taken off her clothes and put on the black leather skirt. It was a new skirt. Susan had shrugged at the cost, said she’d been wanting a leather skirt for a long time. The black leather looked extraordinarily sexy with Susan’s small naked breasts, her nipples scarcely darker than the pink dress. “Where’s your scissors?”

“What shirt are you gonna wear?” Ivy asked. “You could put on suspenders and say it was a Rudy Gernreich design.”

“I thought of making a shirt out of cellophane,” Susan said. “Are your scissors in your desk?”

“Don’t cut off the sash,” Ivy said. “Suzy Creamcheese needs all the bows she can get. I think I have a white ribbon somewhere.” The dress would be permanently marred

without its sash. She hated the idea of cutting anything. In her head Chuck stood waving at her as a thick fog rolled in to obliterate him.

“Too bad Chuck had to miss Suzy Creamcheese,” Susan said. “When’s he coming back?”

“Next week sometime,” Ivy said. Her breathing was shallow, her lungs tight. She found the white ribbon in her top drawer. “I’m not looking forward to it.”

“You’re not?” Susan had dropped the leather skirt onto the floor and was struggling back into her jeans.

“I have to break up with him.” Ivy glanced at Susan’s astonished face and looked away. “It’s nothing he did, nothing specific, I mean. I just need to be someone other than Chuck’s girlfriend.”

“You mean you want to play the field for awhile,” Susan said. “Every woman should play the field, Kind of like trying on different shoes before you choose.”

“Maybe,” Ivy said. “It’s hard. We’ve been together a year now, and he wants us to get married. I keep putting him off. I just feel ... too attached.”

“I understand,” Susan said. “You gotta cut the umbilical cord. Like it’s hard for Gail to cut the cord with Freddy.”

“That’s because he’s in Vietnam,” Ivy said. “Cutting that cord is like letting him fall over a cliff.” Susan was exactly right, though – she could feel the cord connecting her to Chuck, muscular and ropey, pulsing with blood. The tethers to her parents were thinner and longer, strong as steel, and she supposed there were lines to her brothers – Glen in India, Randy in Indianapolis. The line to Glen would be solid; the line to Randy – the business man, the bully of her childhood – might as well be spider-web. The cord tied

to Chuck wriggled through her mind, wrapped around her chest, hobbled her legs; she was all tangled up.

“I don’t want to be tied to anyone,” Susan said. “Not even my family. No commitments.”

“How do you do that?”

“Live for the moment, I guess.” Susan shrugged. “Do you want to use the shower first or shall I?”

“I’ll go. I need to make ringlets.” Ivy was running out of time.

Arthur phoned as soon as she got out of the shower. He was looking for Gail, putting together the lit table, and complaining about the SDS pamphlet. “Listen to this,” he said: “If you’re tired of the Vietnamese eating napalm for breakfast, if you’re tired of the blacks eating tear gas for dinner, and if you’re tired of eating plastic for lunch, then give it a name: call it SDS, and join us.”

“Okay,” Ivy said. “What’s the problem?”

“It has no political focus,” Arthur complained. “I wouldn’t mind so much if it made a principled statement against the war. Or if it endorsed an anti-war candidate.”

“So put out a leaflet for Dr. Spock.” She knew his candidate was Fred Halstead, the Trotskyist. Arthur’s rhetoric had become eerily divorced from reality. If he wanted to make a working class revolution so bad, why was he still in school? Why was he heading up the Committee to End the War? “Put the SDS pamphlet on the table,” she said. “Along with your literature, and the women’s liberation pamphlet, and the Underground News.”

“Bert’s rhetoric is unacceptable.”

“It’s not Bert’s rhetoric – the plastic-for-lunch stuff was written by SDS folks in Ann Arbor.”

“Bert’s ordered me to stay away from SDS meetings,” Arthur said. “So I don’t see why I should share a table with SDS lit.”

“I’m SDS,” Ivy said. “So are Marvin and Jane. And we don’t have a problem with your bringing copies of *The Militant* tonight. Listen, I gotta go.”

“I’m not bringing only *The Militant*. I’m bringing anti-war flyers, too.”

“You’re pushing Fred Halstead,” Ivy said.

“Only when people are ready,” Arthur said. “They come to us already against the war; then we show them how the war is because of capitalism. We show them Halstead’s analysis – which is the correct one, by the way – and from there they join the party.

That’s how we make the revolution.”

“Halstead’s SWP is *not* the only revolutionary party.” Ivy stood by the phone in Gail’s bedroom, naked except for her bathrobe; her hair was drying unset and straggly.

“We don’t have time for this discussion right now. If you don’t put the SDS pamphlet on the lit table, then ...” She could think of nothing to threaten him with except that she’d urge Gail to break off with him. She was tempted to do that anyway. A month ago, she’d really liked Arthur.

“Okay,” Arthur said. “I’ll put the fucking pamphlet on one corner of the table, because this is supposedly an inter-organizational event – though I can tell it’s really a women’s lib event. I feel very coerced.”

“If it’s a women’s lib event,” Ivy demanded, “then why is Marvin Kaminsky playing MC? Why is Bradley Wells willing to do sound?”

“If you don’t know, I won’t bother you with some basic truths about the need for parties on Friday nights,” Arthur said. “Listen Ivy, you’re a smart person. We really should talk.”

“Okay,” Ivy said. “We’ll talk.” She owed him that much. And she needed to work with Arthur, keep communications open between SDS and Committee to End the War. “I gotta go,” she insisted.

Neither she nor Susan looked as Ivy had imagined they would. Susan wore a white sweater which was not even translucent, and her boots were not black but scuffed orange-brown suede. The false eyelashes looked more sloppy than glamorous. Ivy’s ringlets emerged from the rags in droopy spirals; she settled for two pigtails with white ribbons. And her earrings were wrong – little pearl studs; they should have been big baubles like the girl in *The Graduate* wore.

They had fun with Marvin, who gravely asked each of them her personal feelings about football and its importance to higher education. Susan as Glamour Pussy answered, “It’s a highly educational experience to watch guys crash into each other and get injured; it makes me understand men and patriotism and you know, *life*.”

Ivy gave her Suzy Creamcheese speech: “Those men are such gorgeous *hunks*. They’re so tough! I just get all gooey inside when I think about them.” She stood pigeon-toed, clutched Marvin’s arm, and squealed.

The mannequin nodded and smiled, and Marvin said, “See that! She’s beaming with joy! She knows when to keep quiet!”

Bradley turned up the amps, and the event turned into a party, with the Counter-homecoming Queen presiding in plastic silence as they danced. Someone had brought

jugs full of vodka-spiked orange juice. As Ivy ponied by with a guy she knew from biology class, Bradley grabbed her arm and whispered, "You're so yummy tonight I can hardly stand it." She wriggled back to her partner.

Between records, she wandered to the lit table and found the SDS brochures on the corner, half under copies of *The Militant*. She pulled them out so they could be seen. It was silly to argue; nobody would look at lit tonight. Gail sat reading *Man's Fate*.

"Not good for your eyes," Ivy said. "Can I at least get you something to drink? Orange juice?"

"Coke," Gail said. "I've got a big paper to write this weekend. That's why I'm reading this." She was dressed in slacks and a polo shirt. Maybe it was the dim light, but her eyes looked as though she'd smeared black shadow all around them. Ivy couldn't help giggling to the music; Gail was almost as still as the mannequin.

She's eaten up by her dilemma, Ivy thought: Arthur vs. Freddy. Support the troops vs. end the war. She had the urge to tell Gail she'd read that fragment of letter.

When she got back to the table with two Cokes, Gail said, "I almost forgot. You got a telegram at the apartment, after you left. Here."

It was from Chuck, sent early this morning in St. Louis: "Thinking of how sincerely I do love you."

Ivy felt a painful visceral tug on the umbilical cord. *Shit!* Tears came into her eyes. She couldn't wipe them away without smearing Suzy Creamcheese's mascara, and she had no Kleenex.

"That's really sweet of him," Gail said, reading the telegram Ivy had let drop on the table.

“Yes, he is,” Ivy said. Like mashed potatoes, like a parent who kept you on a leash for your own good. Jane danced by with Marvin, both doing a goofy leg-and-arm-waving thing to the Beatles’ “Revolution.”

“Shall I get another chair?” she asked Gail. They could talk. Gail might say how she was trying to break up with Freddy, and Ivy might tell her about breaking up with Chuck; they might be able to talk about Arthur and the shadow of the Socialist Workers Party looming behind the Committee to End the War.

“I’ve really got to finish this book.” Gail said. She picked it up and turned a page.

Ivy felt the pink dress tight around her chest; she’d lost breath while dancing. Her inhaler was in her coat pocket in a dark corner. She didn’t want to be at this party any more. She waved good bye to Jane and Susan and was half-way down the stairs when she felt hands on her shoulders: Bradley Wells. “*You* want another drink,” he said. “Let’s do it.”

“I’m going home,” Ivy said.

He put his arms around her. “I want you...” humming the Bob Dylan tune, “*So bad.*” She was *wanted* – like a criminal, she thought. He pulled her around to face him and kissed her, thrusting his tongue into her throat. She squirmed, choking, and pushed herself away. Then she ran down the stairs and banged out the door. She stopped at the corner to use the inhaler, coughed and felt wet between her legs; now she had to go to the bathroom. The night was cold; streetlights barely penetrated the mist.

In the empty apartment Ivy showered and wrapped herself in her bathrobe. Tea would help. There was Constant Comment in the cupboard, and honey. She was putting on water when she heard a pounding on the door. Susan or Gail had forgotten her key.

It was Bradley Wells, looming under the porch light, then filling the hall, saying, “Why’d you run off like that? Let me in – please?” He held her hands tightly between his. “Do you realize what’s been going on with me?”

“No,” Ivy said. “Have a cup of tea, and tell me what’s going on with you.” Now they would talk about this inappropriate longing.

He told her he couldn’t quit thinking about her. He was going nuts in the apartment where he couldn’t be alone, not ever, unless he was in the bathroom. Vanessa had begun to nag, which he hated. She’d promised him never to nag, and when he told her she’d broken her promise, she went crazy and threw things. He talked rapidly, in a low voice, looking down at the table, fiddling with a teaspoon.

“Guess Vanessa didn’t like you coming to the counter-homecoming,” Ivy said.

He shook his head, once, the smallest kind of *no*, and sipped his tea.

Ivy sipped hers; it was comforting and sobering. In the harsh light of the kitchen, she could see stubble on Bradley’s chin and jaw. He had gray hair among the bronze strands that hung loose on either side of his face, and the hair was greasy. She had never seen his face this close in the light. When she fantasized about having Bradley with her alone, she’d assumed intimate talk would bring them close together; they’d understand each other and life and the revolution as never before. Their desire would catch flame with their understanding; their lovemaking would pull the Movement forward.

“You’re so lovely,” he said, fingering the terry cloth lapel of her robe. “If we could just have each other once in a while ... Come on, you know you want me as much as I want you.” He reached inside the robe and cupped her breast with his hand. Looked at her, his eyes pleading.

This was what she'd imagined, and yet it wasn't at all. In Ivy's head, Vanessa said, *Please Brad, help me with this baby*, milk pouring from her nipples. Jane's voice echoed, *Do you really want this relationship? It could be a bad scene*. Ivy took Bradley's hand away and wrapped her robe tightly across her breasts. She wasn't *lovely*; she was a mess, especially tonight, and she didn't want him, not right now. Not while she knew that Vanessa cried and threw things. "Let's talk about something else," she said. "Did you enjoy the party?"

"You were so sweet and cuddly in that pink dress. I didn't see much else."

"Look, I'm not gonna sleep with you," Ivy said. "I'm gonna finish my tea and go to bed. If you really can't go home, you can crash on the couch."

"You're a fucking tease," he said, his face drawn in anger – or grief, she couldn't tell which. "You get a guy all turned on and then *wham*. You must've taken lessons from Jane Revard."

"I've learned a lot from Jane," Ivy said. "She's a great person."

"She's a castrating bitch," Bradley said. The chair creaked and scraped as he rose from the table. Ivy took both tea cups to the sink. "Here's what I have to say to you," Bradley said, behind her. Then: "Oh never mind, I'm sorry."

"What?" Ivy turned around.

"You should have told me you were on the rag." He pointed to her robe, and Ivy looked over her shoulder to see the red streak.

"Yes," she said. "I am."

"I'll go, then." He cupped her face in his hands and kissed her forehead, then turned and left her not sure whether he'd assumed that being "on the rag" made her sick,

unable to sleep with him, irrational, or all of those things. She washed herself and rinsed the blood out of her robe, thinking about what could have happened between him and Jane and why Jane hadn't told her. How *interesting* that he'd become unattractive all of sudden, when she had him right there in the kitchen, wanting her. And how marvelous that she was not pregnant after all. She scrubbed the pink stain with soap, rinsed it, and rinsed it again. Fastening a Kotex pad onto the belt, she heard the door and footsteps downstairs, so she dressed in clean underwear, jeans, and a sweatshirt before going down. Looking over the bannister she saw Arthur and Gail.

"Oh!" Gail pulled her sweater down. "I thought no one was here."

"Hi there," Arthur did a little hand-wipe-wave. "You were pretty creamy tonight."

"I'm glad to be out of that costume," Ivy said. "*This* is me."

"You're more than an old Western Reserve sweatshirt," Arthur said.

Ivy ignored him. He was probably drunk.

"I'm sorry to interrupt," Ivy said. "I'll be out of your way in a minute." She made herself another cup of tea to take to bed. She was so tired she ought to conk right out.

But she lay awake for a long time listening to the sounds downstairs: rustling, murmuring, then finally the front door closing. Gail came upstairs. Ivy heard her in the bathroom; she would understand the wet robe. Maybe she'd say something. But she didn't. Ivy heard Gail's bedroom door close, the creaking of bedsprings. The house was quiet. What was this ache of regret? Unbidden, Ivy's mind gravitated toward the way Bradley Wells' hand had crept into her robe. She felt her body soften, remembering the kiss on the Student Union stairs. If Chuck would thrust his tongue into her that suddenly, would she want to stay with him? Chuck was tentative with his tongue. He'd had to find a

Western Union office, go there, and compose his telegram. *How sincerely I do love you* – the words snarled around in her mind. He'd had to pay for it. What a waste of money, to say what she already knew. Like the bunch of flowers he'd brought her after the Wallace demonstration, this telegram was romantic as hell, but with a tether.

Maybe if she explained about how she couldn't be his girl, needed to be free, but she loved him anyway ... No, she'd tried that. He wouldn't accept it. They'd keep going on the same road toward the dark tunnel. She'd have to tell him it was over. Then, if they came together again, some day, when everything was different and she'd been around the world ...

October 12, 1968

She was awakened by Gail pounding on her door. "Ivy! Get up! Chuck's here!"

"He can't be," Ivy said, still sleepy, the high note in back of her right ear whining *please, no, I'm not ready; I want another talk with Jane; I can't tell Chuck now*. But there he was, in the big living room chair, handsome in the worker-shirt which made his eyes look extra blue. "Hi, sleepy girl," he smiled at her.

"What are you doing here?" she asked. "Why aren't you in Boulder?"

"The blue van got a terminal case of transmissionitis." Chuck came toward her. She stayed behind the banister halfway up the stairs. "We had to abandon it in Kansas City. Bert and Tessa flew out to Boulder. I took the bus home."

"Where did Bert and Tessa get the money?" she asked. "Why wasn't there enough for you?"

"SDS paid, I guess." Chuck shrugged. "Bert and Tessa work for them now." He reached for her hand, and she squeezed, then let go. She must not dissemble or tease.

“Let’s go get some coffee,” he said. “And a newspaper. You don’t even have to comb your hair.” He reached one finger to push the long bangs out of her eyes.

She shook her head. She wanted nothing so much as a chance to wake up slowly with a cup of coffee and the newspaper, sitting in the drugstore across the formica-topped table from Chuck Leggit, who was dear to her. But the other knowledge stopped her like hard-boiled egg in her throat. Her eyes were burning dry; she could not meet his face, could not let him touch her again. She kept the banister between them. “No,” she said. “I’ve decided. I can’t go on ... being your girl. It’s over.”

“Oh,” he said. “Are you sure?”

“Yes.” She was sure only that she had to answer *yes*.

“Okay,” he said. “Bye.” He turned away. Turned his back on her, opened the door, and walked out. She could not move. His steps rang on the porch and thudded down the steps. All her muscles wanted to lunge after him – *no, wait, I didn’t mean it*.

She did mean it. She reminded herself of that constricting tangle, that tight cord; she wanted her connections with people from now on to be made of gossamer. She felt herself bleeding, her Kotex fill with blood. She sank onto the stairs.

When Susan came home, red hair spilling from the paper bag that held her costume, Ivy was still sitting on the fourth stair from the bottom. Hours might have gone by; she didn’t know. “I broke up with Chuck,” she said.

“Wow,” Susan said. “You’ve got guts. You guys were welded at the hip – oh, honey, here, here.” She let Ivy cry in her arms, cry and cry, and Susan’s arms were not comforting. Nothing could ever be comforting again. Ivy hated her own skin, her own voice. She’d wronged Chuck, she’d wronged Bradley too, and she’d violated her parents’

trust. Oedipus had put out his eyes, she thought, not to be blind but to be disgusting, to make himself impossible to look at without retching.

She felt like retching as she washed the blood out of her underwear and her jeans. Bless Susan for making a whole pot of coffee. Ivy brought her cup to the living room couch. After a time she was able to retrieve her medieval art book, to look at images of Jesus, Mary, the saints, and the kings. For hundreds of years, a whole world held still on stone pillars and altars and tomb-lids, unchangeable, indestructible.

* * * * *

Lake Erie slapped against rocks under Chuck's feet, the water greenish-brown, translucent, impenetrable as wax. The rocks heaved and scraped, a jumble of dark basalt, mottled granite, and broken cement. Spray bit into his sneakers; he shivered in the afternoon cold. He'd forgotten his jacket. Could he have left it at Ivy's house? If so, was it lost to him forever?

He'd walked from Hessler Road to the Lake Shore, noticing only his feet on pavement, astonished that they kept appearing, one before the other, below his knees. He looked at his right hand: it was clutched around a water-smoothed stone. He threw it *plop* into the lake and watched the ripples try to make circles, as they would in a pond, but they failed: the lake water cut the stone's ripples into snaky lines, subsuming them in waves which sloshed into nauseous billows without cresting. He wished he hadn't thrown the stone. His hand missed it.

He wouldn't have sent Ivy the telegram if he'd know the van was about to throw a rod. He'd been thinking about her creamcheese outfit, knowing she'd borrowed a dress

from Susan, who wore diaphanous low-necked things. He'd thought how bony Susan was; underneath her clothing you'd find a creature scrawny as a wet cat. But Ivy in a dress of Susan's, breasts tight against the cloth, fabric brushing all her soft curves – Ivy moved into his mind as the Western Union office appeared, in the same moment, across the street from the gas station where he and Bert waited for Tessa to finish in the bathroom, and so he'd rushed over and sent the first ten words he thought of.

He shouldn't have surprised her today; he should have called first. He'd taken the time to bathe and put on his only clean clothes; he could have called, but he was full of his plan to take Ivy to breakfast, didn't think of calling – because he didn't; he just rushed stupidly from his apartment to hers. She came down the stairs all blowzy in jeans and a sweatshirt, barefoot, no bra, her ears sticking out between droopy spirals of hair – and for a split second she came into his arms, her cheeks soft and pink with sleep. For that instant before she startled and pushed him away, he was able to deny that he knew the break-up was coming.

He'd known when he sent the telegram; it was a line intended to hold his mooring for a while longer.

He began to look for another stone. His butt ached from sitting on a sharp edge of broken cement for hours, maybe. He slid off smooth rocks into pieces of slate sharp as hatchets, and the cold wind blew through his shirt as he slid down close to the water. His jeans were soaked to the knees before he found the round stone he wanted and took his bearings. Northward Lake Erie stretched to the horizon. Beyond was Canada. East were the villages, snobbish and closed as their ancestor-towns in Connecticut. West stood the Terminal Tower amid the lesser buildings of downtown Cleveland. Once, in another life,

he'd worked there in a bank. He'd worn a suit and tie and held Ivy, his darling, in his bed, her arms clinging to him, her sweet hair against his mouth as he kissed her. "I hate when you leave," she'd say, even though they'd be parting only for a few hours.

One more embrace, please, God! Then he could be strong.

The ache pulled him off the rocks and across the Lake Shore traffic, running, his sneakers chafing his feet. He wore no socks; he would have to do laundry before he could wear socks again. He might never wear socks again. The wet hems of his jeans rubbed his ankles raw as he ran, with darkness coming, up Liberty Boulevard. Weren't those the bushes where a girl's body had been found the other day? She'd been raped and "disfigured," according to the newspaper – cut with a knife, probably: her face, her breasts, or her vagina. Predators lurked among the trees here, thinking a white boy would have a wallet, thinking vengeance on the oppressors.

He had no wallet, just three dollars in his back pocket, meant to pay for coffee for himself and Ivy this morning, also a sticky bun for each of them. What if he hadn't let her pull away? What if he'd said, "Don't be silly, let's talk this over," rather than letting her finish it like that?

Rather than arguing, begging, trying to hold her by force and failing, he'd walked away. He knew. She'd as much as said it all before: she wanted to go around the world, to flirt and kiss at random. She wanted to be a girl who'd been around. What was the likelihood there was a man in her bed this morning, a man still there when she stood in the living room telling Chuck it was over? Not small. He'd give it fifty per cent.

Near a playground he got a cramp that felt like a knife in his ribs and stopped running. He wasn't going back to Ivy's, not now. He'd ask someone else – that was a

reasonable plan. He'd find Susan in the Student Union; she seemed to do most of her studying there. *Hi Susan, you didn't happen to notice a tan jacket with a plaid lining – dark khaki? By the way, what's Ivy doing? Has she said anything to you about ...*

He didn't like the hang-dog transparency of that speech. Today was Saturday: Susan wouldn't be studying. He didn't give a fuck about his jacket. He didn't give a fuck about anything except that he would not let Ivy know how bad he hurt right now. He didn't want to go to his apartment and face all that dirty laundry. How much scotch could he buy for three dollars?

Three glasses at Adele's. He hadn't eaten, so the first drink was enough to make him warm, as the words reeled through his brain – *No! We have to break up. I've decided. It's over. Are you sure? Yes. Okay, 'Bye.* He could not stand the loss, wanted to sob, thought he must go to Hessler Road, smash the glass on the front door, sneak in, and climb to her bed. He ordered the second scotch and managed to stay at the bar.

He did not want to *own* her, as she kept accusing him of doing. If she needed to sleep around a little as a liberated woman, he might be able to live with it. He needed her *there*, that was all, when he reached for her. Someone to grab onto – to hang onto, like you'd hold a rope during a storm at sea, in a ship heading toward the far edge of the world where no one had ever gone. His mistake was in not facing what he knew: Ivy was no solid post, no mast to which you could lash yourself, not at all. She was being tossed around by the storm as much as Chuck, maybe even more. When he thought of them that way – two people wind-blown and reeling crazily into unknown territory – he could see it might be possible to forgive her. Of course the line would snap.

The third scotch numbed him as it used up his last dollar. He made his way back to The Monmouth and found his jacket on the back of a chair. Then he took off his jeans, crawled into his dirty sheets and slept. In the morning he woke clutching a T-shirt: Ivy had borrowed it to sleep in and left it in the bed, the last time she was here. The last time. It still smelled of her body. Then he wept.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Fifteen

October 19, 1968

Jane gave up trying to sleep when the harmonica whined into “All Along the Watchtower” for the third time in a row. As Dylan’s voice barked, “There must be some way *out* of here,” she ran to the bathroom and turned on the shower. Even through the rush of water she could hear it – “too much *confusion*, I can’t get no relief” – because Tessa had the volume turned up, and the words were stuck in her head now. It wouldn’t be so bad if Tessa would play whole album. But Tessa kept picking up the needle and putting it back on the beginning of Watchtower song.

Jane had slept past noon. She sipped her coffee and realized the women’s liberation meeting was at Ivy’s in an hour. She had the script of *Female in America* ready, the original and four carbon-copies stacked across each other. She’d typed in the office till dawn, using half a ream of paper, glad for an electric typewriter, though it had a few messed-up letters. If the meeting didn’t go on too long (personal experiences always got into the discussion; the stories were necessary, though they’d be a waste of time in most other meetings) she could drop in on Kelvin’s birthday party. Then there was a meeting at Marvin’s: He’d be cooking supper. “Will you be at Marvin’s and Bert’s tonight?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” Tessa said. She’d left the Dylan album alone to cook oatmeal; Dylan was now singing about Frankie Lee and Judas Priest. “Bert’s coming over here

soon. Some things are urgent.” She was surly, scraping the pot with the spoon in a way that grated against Jane’s spine, banging the cupboard door, plopping two bowls on the counter. She went into her bedroom, which opened onto the kitchen, and moved the needle back to “All Along the Watchtower.”

“Will you quit playing that *song*? I’m sick of it, sounds like a hyper-amplified mosquito.” Since the beginning of the month they’d shared this place in a run-down Cleveland Heights neighborhood, the back half of a full-sized apartment the landlord had divided into two. Jane slept in the other room on a fold-out couch. She’d been looking forward to good times with Tessa again. But they weren’t happening, and she didn’t know why.

“I need that song,” Tessa said. “It’s stone *revolution* – every phrase: the wildcat yowling in the darkness, the two riders approaching. Dig?” She set a bowl of oatmeal in front of Jane. “Why don’t we have any milk or sugar?”

“We didn’t buy any.” Jane was not going to apologize for the lack of groceries. “We’ve been too busy, and I like it plain.”

Tessa sat on across the table and looked at the newspaper. Cold came through the cracks around the window. The oak leaves had lost their brightness and wind was ripping them off the branches. “No you don’t like it plain,” she said, lowering the paper so Jane would see she’d been caught lying. “I know you.” She spooned oatmeal into her mouth. “Blech!”

“Try some salt,” Jane said. She sprinkled salt on the pasty stuff. It was edible. Maybe she was the trouble: She’d started writing all the time – the script for *Female in America*, the final draft (Jane hoped) of the Welfare Rights Handbook, and an article for

the next edition of the *Underground News*, which needed a new name. Writing made her solitary and touchy; she felt like she was losing touch with the Movement.

“Look at this.” Tessa slapped the paper onto the table. “Student *unrest*,” she said. “Never expect the *Plain Dealer* to get a story straight, but even so.”

Jane studied the picture: Arthur Cohen, collar turned up against the wind, talked into a microphone. He looked older in the photo than in life; his long nose and black-rimmed glasses made stark shadows on his face. Ivy stood nearby in a short winter coat and high boots. They were leading a protest against Dow recruiters at Case. The article quoted Arthur at length – napalm, bring the troops home – and Ivy briefly: university complicity, students’ rights. But the thrust of the story came from the recruiter, who explained that his company was Dow *Corning*, not Dow *Chemical*: “We need young engineers to help us improve our cookware; our company has nothing to do with war or weapons. These radicals should have checked their facts.”

“Even so – what?” Jane asked.

“Neither Ivy nor Arthur mentioned how it works,” Tessa said. “Dow decides to separate flesh-burning from those white dishes with blue flower designs, but *of course* they’re connected. Arthur’s joined the Trots, so he just says ‘American Troops Out Now!’ over and over – and Ivy’s going along.” Tessa slammed her fist on the table. The bowls and cups jumped. “They should be stopping the recruitment, rather than walking round and round. She’s letting Arthur’s group call the shots.”

“Have you talked with Ivy about this?” Jane asked. “Maybe we should ask her to come tonight.”

“Why haven’t *you* talked to Ivy?” Tessa demanded. “You meet with her about Women’s Lib all the time; can’t you even discuss how capitalism works?” She half-rose from her chair, her eyes close-set and unforgiving. This was more than disagreement.

Jane felt a surge of revulsion that shocked her. She swallowed it. “I’m going to Ivy’s now,” she said, keeping her voice even. She stood up and reached for her manuscripts.

“That’s right, pat your fucking play,” Tessa said. “I read it this morning. It’s all about middle-class white people – yeah yeah, some of them are Movement people, and in *that* scene you’ve trivialized the Movement, as though it’s a phase men and women go through before they get married and have kids.” She went into Jane’s room.

“You’ve missed the point entirely,” Jane said. She put her dishes in the sink and followed Tessa. Tessa hadn’t asked if she could read the play.

“You don’t need to yell,” Tessa said. She was standing by the window – looking out for Bert, maybe. The room had to become a living room again before he got here. “Maybe women’s-liberation training is the best way to get middle class coeds in touch with the sytem’s oppression. Maybe you need to write that personal shit for therapeutic reasons. But you’re a cadre. This is not the time to abandon the revolution.”

“I couldn’t abandon the revolution any more than I could cut off my leg,” Jane said. “How could you say that?”

Tessa stood with her arms crossed, calm now that she could see Jane was burning mad. “I’d expect you to confront me, you know, if I was being counter-revolutionary. You shouldn’t take this personally. But the revolution is now, and we’re all that’s happening – the blacks and us. We can’t fool around.” She picked up the end of Jane’s

bed to collapse it back into a couch. Jane watched her stuff the sheets and blankets around the corners as she heaved against the metal frame. "Stick around," Tessa said. "Help Bert and me plan the next action. I can't get this to close."

"You and Bert don't need me, obviously, if all you're going to do is tell me what to think." Jane ripped off the covers and stuffed them in the coat closet so Tessa could fold up the couch. "We can talk later, at Marvin's." She grabbed her play, her purse, and her jacket, not putting it on till she was outside.

As if Jane hadn't handed herself over to the Revolution before she'd even known what to call it. As if a single target like Dow would ever be sufficient. The Movement was a fluid organism, constantly changing. What had happened to make Tessa so dictatorial? And what did she mean by *cadre*?

Jane decided to walk to Ivy's, to save money. Exercise in the open air, away from Tessa's new Dylan album, would help her let off steam. Coventry Road had a new shop with clothes in bright colors – dark purple velvet, bright green satin. A silvery dress with pink and green embroidery. Jane had no money for such clothes. If she needed a sweater or a pair of jeans, she went to Good Will and got it for a quarter or fifty cents. Every Christmas her mother gave her a packet of white cotton underpants, beautifully wrapped. So she didn't need flowered bikini panties either. She went inside just to look. The shop was called The Coven Tree, and it seemed to have brought San Francisco here. Leather bags with fringe hung from hooks on the rough-paneled wall. The counter was strewn with colored glass beads, scented candles, and strange objects handcrafted by old beatniks. Only young anti-war activists and cultural radicals would buy such stuff. If this shop could earn its way in *Cleveland*, then the changes were huge and unstoppable.

Still, there was nothing here that Jane *needed*. Even though the revolution was not the single-track confrontation that Tessa imagined it was, the trappings of the counter-culture would not make revolution, either. She looked again at the objects in the glass case – hand-carved pipes, for smoking marijuana: that’s what they were.

Jane passed Irv’s delicatessen, the shoe repair shop, the hardware store, the gas station, and was comforted by the mingled smells of cured meats, shoe polish, metal, grease and gasoline. None of these places had changed in a generation. She swung onto Mayfield and down the hill, cemetery on one side, apartment buildings on the other, and hurried through Little Italy, where snipers were known to lurking again – to keep black people out. Case-Western students were shocked when they brought black friends here for pizza and saw the hostility with which those friends were treated. No one brought a black friend to Little Italy a second time.

Ivy answered the door looking flushed and upset. “Oh God, Jane, I forgot to tell the others,” she said. “I just got up – had to write a paper. Stuck it under the professor’s door at three in the morning.”

It must have been coincidence, the gathering clouds darkening the sky at that moment. Jane did not say, *Oh of course, that’s all right*. She stayed silent and followed Ivy into the kitchen, putting her play on the table as Ivy cut up an apple to share.

“Oh look, you’ve finished!” Ivy picked up a copy (*Wipe your hands!* Jane almost said) and scanned the pages. Jane ate her half of the apple. Painstaking hours she’d spent constructing scenes from a woman’s life. She wondered if there should be a second act that showed welfare mothers, showed how all women suffered under capitalism. If Ivy had remembered the meeting, the group could have talked about that.

“Looks cool,” Ivy said. “Where’d you get this letter from the girl who loves books and doesn’t want to be kissed? Sounds like what I would have said at fifteen.”

“*American Girl*, I think,” Jane said. She had written the letter herself, at fifteen, the only one in her class not excited about boys, in agony over the possibility that she was backward or had a disease. She had not kissed anyone till she was in college. Why not tell Ivy? She enjoyed kissing now, but some of the old feelings were still there, like sludge in the bottom of a barrel she’d thought was empty. A letter from Patricia had come a week ago – friendly, with news of an International Women’s Conference to be held at Thanksgiving. Patricia’s tone had conjured up the exhilaration of that day on the Atlantic City boardwalk. Jane felt a guilty twinge for not having responded yet. None of this was Ivy’s business.

Ivy murmured, “Yeah,” chuckling as she turned a page.

“Which scene?” Jane asked.

“The meeting where the men get to make the decisions and the women get to make the coffee. Reminds me of the Draft Resistance group. Except ...” Ivy stopped.

“What?”

“It’s more complicated than this, you know? All the little things that go on underneath a meeting, between men and women, and women and women, and men and men. I guess they’re not really little things; they’re important. But we never talk about them, there’s no time, no room – oh, never mind, I don’t know how to say what I mean.”

“If I tried to include all the things underneath, I wouldn’t have a scene,” Jane said. “I’d have a book, maybe. Except I wouldn’t know how to write that kind of book.” Ivy had tears in her eyes. Oh God. “What’s wrong?”

“Everything. I’m not much good, am I? Want some tea?” Without waiting for an answer, Ivy went to the sink to fill a saucepan. “I was thinking of Chuck again,” she said. She’d said nothing to Jane after the break-up. Chuck hadn’t mentioned it either, though he and Jane had spent hours together on the *Underground News*, reading each other’s articles, planning to sell ads for the next issue. A few times Jane noticed that when he wasn’t in conversation he looked sad. She assumed he wanted to be left alone about it.

“It feels really terrible. Like an amputation.” Tears rolled down Ivy’s face. Probably she was feeling guilty.

“But you initiated it,” Jane said.

“I still really miss him.”

“Are you thinking you’ve made a mistake?”

Ivy shook her head. “I’ll be fine.” She sniffed, then blew her nose again. “I know I’ve done the right thing. I’m free. And I’m really busy – all that Dow protesting. We’ve got another meeting in an hour. I’m sure I just need more sleep.” She took out two cups and put a tea bag in each. “Shall we set up another meeting? I could get everybody together tomorrow – or how about Monday evening?”

They didn’t need to *meet*, Jane realized. They could read this play on their own. Then they’d talk about a second act. Ivy’s tears weren’t phony, but the girl – woman – was certainly confused. She had no right to feel sorry for herself. “How about I leave a couple of these scripts here,” Jane said. “You and the others read them, then call me.” She did not want to wait for tea. “You’ve got to go to your meeting, and I promised Dora I’d stop in for Kelvin’s birthday party.”

“Kelvin! Give him a hug for me!” Ivy enthused as if Kelvin were a special friend.

Jane left wishing she weren't so annoyed. Or that Ivy were more self-aware. She suspected she might not have been annoyed with Ivy at all, except for Tessa, whose criticism hurt. *Only middle-class white people. Trivialized the Movement.* Revolution right now – *two, three, many Chicagos*, Tom Hayden had said. Fine for people who relished street-fighting. Jane did not. Glenville and Chicago had taught her how frustrating and confusing it was to battle police. Mindless, too. The streets were the last recourse, when they'd been driven out, had no other place to work.

She'd shown part of *Female in America* to Dora, who tried her best to be interested. "What is this, a play? *What for?*" Jane had brought out the ad collection, explained the marketing of women's bodies, the continual suggestion that women should be subservient to men, the hint of glamor in dish soap, cigarettes, and other places glamor didn't belong. "You got a point, Janie," Dora had said. "You sure got me thinking. But I don't got the *time* to do this kind of thinking."

Now she pulled Jane in the door and kissed her on the cheek. "Your hair's *cute*," she said. "Come on, sit down here next to Mama." The ballooned-and-streamered living room was crowded with adults and children, Leatha high-stepping among them in a white dress and a white hair ribbon. Kelvin sat cross-legged on the floor, tearing the wrapper off a new board game while his grandmother leaned over him, watching.

"What you got to say to me?" she asked.

"Thank you very *much*!" He grinned. "Oh, Jane's here! Hi, Jane!"

All she'd brought was a Snickers, but his pleasure was made convincing by his disappointment ("Dag!") when Dora insisted he save it for later. They were happy today, Dora beaming and chattering in a pink dress with a big bow over her pregnant stomach.

“Now can we have the cake?” Tina came to her grandmother. “Oh mercy, Jane, you cut your hair.” She fingered Jane’s curls. “Still soft, though.”

“Mercy?” Jane mouthed the word at Dora, who was introducing her to some guests as the woman responsible. “Responsible?” Jane asked aloud.

“I got me a job,” Dora said. “And you helped me get my GED. You got me involved in the welfare rights, so I had experience. Janie, you should be real proud of me.” She had started that week as a community outreach worker for the new Neighborhood Family Health Care Center.

“I *am* proud of you,” Jane said. “It’s a great job.” Stokes’s people did something right once in a while, she thought. If they could let Dora organize as she knew how to do, then maybe one small bit of revolution would be accomplished without a street fight.

“I’m gonna move out this neighborhood,” Dora said. “Get us a house over by Kinsman Road.”

“What about the new baby? How will you keep working?” Jane asked.

“Mama gonna live with us; she’ll quit cleaning house for those white people. New baby will have her all day long. One more year, and I’m-a go to *college*.” Her ambition uncorked, buoyant as the balloons that Tina and her friends were hitting back and forth, Dora sauntered to the table where the cake was displayed. “Come on everyone,” she called, lighting candles. “*Happy birthday ...*” The song began.

How would Tessa analyze this situation? Dora’s mother cleaned house for people like the Buchanans, who sent money to their daughter so their daughter could make a revolution, after which everyone would have a basic guaranteed income and clean his or her own house. Or a collective could pay housecleaners well (it was always nice when

someone else did the housework) and thus distribute the wealth further. Dora, meanwhile, would not wait till after the revolution to live well. She wasn't waiting for men to come to their senses and grant women equal rights, either. She was working it out for herself. Tessa might say she was co-opted by the System, but Tessa was living off Marjorie and Tom Buchanan. The second act of *Female in America* began to take shape in Jane's mind. Tessa might not like it any better than the first act, even if Jane made a point of saying: *here's what people mean by the surfacing of contradictions.*

She should of course consider the Revard household, where the cleaning lady came once in a while to do big jobs like scrubbing floors and washing windows. Jane could always fall back into that household, as if it were a mattress on the ground below a window. She could put the mattress into the play. But if Dora's job got wiped out, or if something happened to Mama (Jane thought of her father's heart) – any little crisis would send them spiraling – *splat* – into poverty; the Revards' simple mattress was cushy in comparison. If Jane could take some notes, if her mouth weren't full of chocolate cake, she'd be able to do an analysis so even Tessa and Bert would admire it.

The day had just enough light left for her to walk to the familiar East Cleveland apartment Bert and Marvin were subletting from Norman, who was rising in the *Columbus Post Dispatch*; his Chicago story had gotten attention. Marvin was alone, cooking spaghetti sauce, with no idea when the others would show. "Bert and I don't exactly keep track of each other," he said.

When they all lived in Glenville, Marvin and Bert knew each other's whereabouts. Jane remembered Marvin saying, "If you can't find me, tell Bert." Bert

would say, “Marvin knows what I’m doing next week. Check with him.” If she gave one of them a message, Jane knew it would get to the other.

“Actually, he doesn’t live here anymore,” Marvin said, dumping a can of mushrooms into the sauce and stirring.

“What? When did he leave? Why? Where did he go?” Another comrade was slipping out of reach.

“A couple of nights ago, I ...” Marvin leaned against the stove with one hip. “I kind of threw him out. I’d had enough of his obsession with armed struggle.”

“But that’s common talk. The Black Panthers started it.”

“No, actually they didn’t.” Marvin looked at the floor. “You’re right, it’s common. If he were just reading Regis DeBray like everybody else, I wouldn’t worry. But Bert was making molotov cocktails – here, in the kitchen.” He stirred the sauce carefully. “Do you think I was over-hasty?”

“I’m trying to understand what’s going on,” Jane said. “Tessa has been pissy since she and Bert got back from Boulder.” Tessa had complained of fuck-ups wasting time and energy. Bert had done a long theatrical tirade about a faction he called Maoist zombies, the red army of the living dead. “National conferences are notorious for disorganization; that’s why I’ve stopped going to them,” Jane said. “Where’s Bert staying?”

“I don’t know,” Marvin said. “We’ll find out soon enough.”

“He and Tessa were about to meet when I left early this afternoon.” Jane imagined coming home, later tonight, to a kitchen full of Molotov cocktails. She couldn’t kick Tessa out; the rent was paid by Tessa’s family. Jane still earned her five dollars a

week for organizing, but there was no extra for rent; since Chicago, Marvin hadn't been able to raise as much money as before.

Marvin shrugged. "Bert's awful hungry for militant action." He took the box out of the cupboard: Not spaghetti, but Choo Choo Wheels – children's noodles. Jane laughed out loud. "You got something against my favorite meal?" he asked.

She should be able to confront Marvin: *Listen, we're losing the ability to argue constructively with each other. Tessa attacked me. You obviously attacked Bert.* Marvin calmly poured Choo Choo Wheels into the boiling water. "Tessa was upset about the Dow recruitment protests at Case," she said. Somehow Marvin controlled the tone of a conversation. "Not militant enough. Dominated by the Committee to End the War."

"Which is dominated by the Young Socialist Alliance," Marvin said.

In any case, it was easier to tolerate Marvin's eccentricities than Tessa's incessantly playing the same music. Before Dylan it had been Dvorak. Jane told Marvin about the Watchtower song, then about Ivy's failure to pull together a meeting, then about the birthday party in Glenville. "Dora's headed straight for the middle class," she said.

"If you've never been there, it's a good place to be," Marvin said.

"I feel like everyone's slipping ahead of me," Jane said. "Should I run after Tessa, argue till we understand each other? Should I study Regis DeBray?"

"I been thinking about Tessa," Marvin said. "She quit school because she was convinced the revolution would happen without her if she didn't. Right?"

"Or it would fail, or it would by-pass Cleveland. She felt she couldn't make the revolution as med student," Jane said. "Not if she wanted to be a good doctor." Tessa

hated to do anything half-assed; in med school she'd prepared frantically for exams, was ecstatic whenever she received a little praise from a professor.

"Here's what I'm seeing: SDS has more chapters than ever before, all paying dues. The national office hires Tessa full-time," Marvin said. "And their meeting's a bust."

"So why attack *me*?" Jane asked. "Why accuse me of abandoning the revolution? I'm actually glad she's not here right now. She'd want to force me into self-criticism."

"I think she lashed out at you as a side-effect of her own self-criticism," Marvin said. "She has to make the revolution now, every minute: otherwise why throw over her career like that?"

Marvin dished up a bowl full of Choo Choo Wheels, added a glop of sauce, and put it in front of Jane. Then he bolted to the living room to answer the phone. It occurred to Jane that he and Bert might be having some weird rivalry. They'd both tried to be sexual with her – Marvin's diffident kiss, Bert's practically forcing himself on her. The thought of sex with either one repelled her. But it the splitting was scary. They'd all gone to Chicago together, but they'd never put messages on their tree. They'd returned with no common strategy. The spaghetti sauce was watery; the Choo Choo wheels were undercooked.

"We're going to Case," Marvin said. "That was Tessa. She and Bert want us there; they can't leave."

"Things are heating up, then."

"They've broken into the office where the Dow recruiters have been meeting with engineering students. They're planning to barricade themselves in."

Nothing like an action to pull us together, Jane thought. And if Case engineering students were sitting in – then things had moved drastically forward since this morning's *Plain Dealer* story.

On the Case quad, students milled around Bert and Arthur, who yelled at each other from about three yards apart. "Couple of roosters," Marvin said.

"Get rid of your dumb sign!" Arthur yelled. "People don't know what *End Monopoly Capitalism* means."

"Who the fuck are you to tell me what people know and what they don't?" Bert demanded. "Let them make up their own minds."

"Fess up, Bert, the sit-in is counterproductive. You're doing it to disrupt our protest, turn off the people in my committee."

My committee. That's how it was now, with Arthur. What had happened to him in that Chicago jail? What had happened after? They should have looked for him again.

"Do you see me sitting in? I'm out here confronting your sorry ass, Arthur. It's the students who are sitting in."

"You're the sorry ass. You're just trying to make trouble. I bet the subversive squad loves you." Arthur took two steps forward, and Bert rushed him. They both went down, punching and kicking.

Ivy appeared. "Oh, I'm glad to see you," she said. "We can't have this. Pull them apart. How do you pull people apart? I don't know." Several male students were grabbing Arthur and Bert by the arms, dragging them back. Bert's glasses had been knocked off; Jane knew that meant he couldn't see anything.

When the security guards arrived, the fight was over. Jane heard Arthur tell them, “He’s not a student, no. He just attacked me all of a sudden.”

“You all can go home now,” one guard said. He walked from one cluster of youngsters to the next, repeating his phrase, and they began to disperse.

Tessa picked up Bert’s glasses, and Bert put them on. “He was extremely provocative, Officer. Ask anyone here.” Ivy and the other SDS students moved closer to agree with Bert. Yes, Arthur had been obnoxious, trying to prevent a peaceful protest.

“Bert Claymore organized a break-in!” Arthur called out from across the quad, where he was surrounded by “his” committee. So much for re-uniting the Movement, Jane thought.

“We’re going to the Union,” Ivy told Jane. “We’ve got to organize a protest. Arthur got security to help protect *his* committee.” Arthur was thanking the other guard, shaking his hand. They were walking away together.

“Arthur couldn’t have called security,” Jane said.

“You know what I mean,” said Ivy. “We were supposed to be working together. This is a mess.”

“Bert’s barred from campus. We’re going to the all-night diner on Superior,” Marvin told Jane. “Why don’t you drive us? Then you can keep the car and run messages back and forth.” He and Bert would talk to each other, at least. Jane would talk with Tessa and Ivy.

When she got to the Student Union, Chuck Leggit was talking to three students in pea jackets and parkas. “A dozen of them have locked themselves in,” he said. “We’re organizing support.” He nodded to Jane, all seriousness.

“Dow the maker of napalm, the burner of children and spoiler of land!” Susan cried out to the students who sat in pairs and threes at scattered tables. “King of evil corporations, you guys, its profits quadrupled in the past year – death money! You sign on with Dow, you’re a ghoul, a carrion eater, one of those vultures with the naked red head and the long black wings.” She flapped her arms. Her big sleeves fluttered.

“They think they can stop us by getting rid of Bert Claymore,” Tessa called out. “They can’t. We won’t leave till Dow is gone!”

“Free Bert Claymore!” yelled a guy at one of the tables.

“Shut the university down!” yelled someone else.

“No!” Jane watched the heads turn her direction. “Do the opposite: Open the University up!”

“Good thinking.” Tessa came to Jane. “Now here’s the deal: Ivy’s gone to the church with couple others; they’re making a flyer. We’ll plaster the campus by morning. Meanwhile, this place is our forum.” Tessa was elated, in full action mode. The last time Jane had seen her so happy, they were making plans for Chicago. “I’m glad you’re here,” she said, and ran off to meet more students.

Chuck approached with his notebook and a cup of coffee. His hair was a mess, and he wore an orange sweatshirt with no collar – not the usual natty-Chuck look. “You’re taking notes for the underground paper,” Jane said. “Are you going to write about the fight?”

“Maybe,” Chuck said. “Somebody’s got to clarify things.”

“I don’t know whether the *Underground News* should deal with factional differences,” Jane said. “Makes it look like the Movement’s coming apart.”

“Repression is coming down!” Susan called out. “The sleeping dogs are barking. Case Western Reserve is showing its true colors!”

“Did you see how the fight began?” Jane asked Susan.

“Yeah. Arthur and Bert are both jerks,” Susan said. “Even worse, Arthur’s dating Gail, my roommate. They were headed for our apartment.”

Chuck looked disgusted. “You’re right,” he said to Jane. “We don’t need this in the paper.”

“But the Trotskyists are trying to undermine SDS,” Tessa said “Arthur could fuck up our sit-in even worse than he’s already done.”

“Shouldn’t we be focused on the sit-in itself?” Jane asked. She knew how it would be for the little group in the dark office, with nothing to do but talk to each other and keep warm. They’d be singing by now. She wished she could join them. But she wasn’t a student.

“Arthur just likes to have a big following,” Susan said. “There’s the new flyer. Hey Angela, let’s see it!”

Angela looked like a boy until she got close and Jane could see she was a girl with a cute nose wearing a Greek fisherman’s cap. Obviously Ivy had sent her to avoid being in the same room with Chuck. “We just made a few,” Angela said.

“I don’t know about this paragraph,” Tessa said. “You need to connect Dow Corning to world-wide American imperialism, or else what’s this sit-in have to do with the Vietnam War?”

“Shouldn’t we focus on the recruitment business?” Chuck asked. “College grads as wage-slaves?”

“We took *your* advice on this,” Angela said to Tessa. The kid looked annoyed.

“Let me see.” Jane read the flyer. The paragraph had obviously been written by too many people who hadn’t read each other’s sentences carefully.

“Free Bert Claymore!” The chant was raised, and seven or eight students picked it up with clenched fists. “Free Bert!”

“That’s the flyer we need,” Tessa said. “The pigs have restricted free speech and freedom of assembly. Hang on.” She scribbled a half page, while the noise of voices grew: *Free Bert! Dump Dow!* Susan led a march through the tables where students who’d just come over for a late-night snack were trying to stay uninvolved.

Tessa sent the new flyer with Angela to be typed and printed. But when it came back, they realized it didn’t mention Vietnam. Tessa rewrote, and they sent it back again. Chuck found some mistakes on the next version.

Jane drove to the all-night diner where Bert and Marvin were drinking coffee and doing a crossword in the *Cleveland Press*. She told them about the “Free Bert” campaign. “Student-initiated,” she said. “I’ve been keeping my mouth shut.” She was glad to be message-carrier, because she didn’t know what was the right thing to do. That was because she was not a student. Tessa, a Reserve med student until recently, had more reason to be involved than Jane did.

When she got back, the Union was empty except for seven people at the SDS table, arguing over the words *exploitation* and *oppression*, *which* and *that* and *fuck*. Jane joined them, feeling needed because they were all so tired. It was five thirty before they got a flyer they could agree on. Angela and Susan ran a draft back to Ivy and returned with the news that it wouldn’t fit on one page. “So make it two pages!” Tessa said.

“Absolutely not,” Jane said. “If we can’t get it on one page, we haven’t focused it enough.” Chuck agreed with her and cut a whole paragraph. Angela and Susan ran back and forth. The last version had three typos: Susan’s doing. She wept with frustration, dead on her feet.

“Let’s live with it,” Chuck said. And Tessa agreed.

Bert and Marvin were dozing in the all-night diner when Chuck and Jane arrived with the completed flyers. Bert had his head on crossed arms; Marvin leaned against the wall of the booth, his feet up on the bench.

“Here’s the latest.” Jane gave Bert the new leaflet, still damp from the mimeograph machine, with FREE BERT CLAYMORE across the top in bloopy ballpoint letters. Bert glanced at it.

“Forget it,” he said. “I’ve been thinking.”

“What do you mean, *Forget it?*” Chuck asked.

“I mean call it off. We got it all wrong,” Bert said. He was unshaven, puffy-eyed, and pale. He’d twisted and shredded a plastic straw into a vaguely horrifying cluster of bristles.

“We got this one right,” Jane said. “Dow is Dow, napalm or dishes, a juicy hunk of the military industrial complex worth stopping. What the hell are you thinking?” She felt jittery and raw. In the diner kitchen, a cook and a waitress hollered at each other. Their voices sawed at a place where a headache formed, at the back of Jane’s skull.

Bert picked up the top copy of “Free Bert Claymore” and tore it across, then across the other way. “I don’t need freeing; I’m not in jail,” he said. “I was ordered off campus, not arrested. Dow Corning is not Dow Chemical, we are not Students for a

Dowless Society, and I'm not an oppressed person." He kept his elbow on the table, propping his head on one hand.

"You haven't even read our deathless prose," Chuck said. "I'm afraid you gotta go through with this. We need to fight for your freedom. We're committed to the struggle. No going back." His sarcasm deflected Bert's attack, but it was also directed at himself and the group who'd stayed up all night. He was as undecided as Jane about what they were doing.

Bert, however, had decided. "Get somebody else to be Bert Claymore and fight for *his* freedom," he said. "I'm done with this action. It wasn't about Dow, it was about the fight between SDS and the CEWV-Trots. I got it wrong." He looked sorry as hell.

Marvin was awake now, sitting up and watching. His eyes twinkled over his half-glasses. Marvin must have probed and listened, clarified and asked more probing questions until he talked Bert into backing down. Maybe that was the right decision: Jane didn't know. "Okay," she said. "Live and learn. Let's go home." She picked up the bundle of "Free Bert Claymore" flyers and took them out to the Dumpster. They still had that fresh-mimeo-ink smell.

The sun was coming, a fiery red sliver bleeding upward through naked branches toward clouds bunched low. Overhead was clear night-blue. All day Jane had carried a sense of purpose, like an arrow in her hand; if her comrades weren't with her at the moment, at least she knew where the arrow was going. Now, without knowing how or when, she'd lost the target.

Chuck appeared next to her, tall and calm. "Nice sunrise," he said.

Jane took a deep breath. "May I tell you something intimate and confessional?"

“Sure,” Chuck said. “Intimacy and confessions are just the ticket at six-thirty in the morning after a night of no sleep.”

“I am so goddamn fucking *angry*,” Jane said. “Nothing the pigs or the politicians could do would make me as angry as I am at Bert Claymore right this minute. Not just Bert.” That was all she could think of. Chuck was silent.

Finally he said, “He can be a son of a bitch.”

“Motherfucker,” said Jane. “And Marvin talked him into it.”

“They let us off the hook, you know,” Chuck said. “We could be running around University Circle posting and distributing those flyers, making ourselves look foolish.”

“You think Bert’s right then: we’ve got nothing to complain about? SDS should take the pressure off Dow Corning?”

“Hell, I don’t know,” Chuck said. “I’d like to know if Dow Corning engineers are exempt from the draft. That would tell me something.”

“I don’t know either,” Jane said. “Except it’s a relief to tell you I don’t know, to say maybe I’m wrong about some things.”

“Bert doesn’t often say that,” Chuck pointed out. “I wonder why he did, this time.”

“I think there’s some heavy shit between him and Marvin,” Jane said. “But the action *was* warped by the fight between SDS and the Committee to End the War ...”

“Arthur’s another one who won’t say he’s wrong.”

“Tessa too,” Jane said. Before last night – or before Boulder, or before Chicago – Tessa had doubted herself. When they were all part of one happy Movement stream, fed by various rivers of ideology and events. “I hate knowing Arthur’s agenda is not what he

says,” Jane said. She was shivering. Chuck put an arm around her. “And I really don’t understand Bert’s and Tessa’s agendas anymore. I can’t talk to Tessa like I used to.” The confession made her feel like crying. “I hate that,” she added.

“I can’t talk to Ivy Barcelona,” Chuck said. “Everything else is small potatoes, compared with that.”

“I’m sorry,” Jane said. “Have I told you that? I know how bad you’re hurting.”

“I’ll be okay, eventually,” Chuck said. “Tessa gave me a lecture: ‘A revolutionary can’t give in to personal attachments. Pack up your broken heart and join the fight.’ That’s what I was doing tonight.”

“The *Underground News* is a good thing,” Jane said. “But it needs a new name. How about the *Steam Tunnel Express*?”

“After the steam tunnels under the Reserve campus?”

“I’ll bet there are steam tunnels in other parts of the city, too,” Jane said. His arm kept her warm. She needed to work with people – she was a sucker for working with people. She’d gotten all caught up in freeing Bert while Marvin was making him see he was already free.

“Maybe,” Chuck said. “I’ve got lots of ideas. Here come the others.”

“Whew,” Marvin said. “We were afraid you’d driven off in the Valiant.”

“I considered it,” Jane said. She would drive them all home. This was the first time she’d been the driver for three men: It felt like a tiny victory.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Sixteen

November 4, 1968

Some time after midnight Gail pounded on Ivy's door: "Phone for you!"

"I'm hiding out till after midterms," Ivy said. For the last month she'd practically given up school for the Movement. Now she was hiding from the Movement to read biology for a test at 9 am. She had a Greek drama paper due Friday, and no topic yet. Friday was also her art history exam.

"It's your mother," Gail croaked, opening the door and glaring. "Tell her not to call when I'm asleep." Her hair stood out in tufts from the sides of her head.

"Sorry," Ivy said. "Go back to bed." She picked up the phone in the kitchen.

"You're not supposed to call when Gail's asleep."

Her mother gave a harsh laugh. "I didn't think any of you slept, these days."

"What's up?" The clock read 2 am. "Goodness, Mum, why'd you call now?"

"The FBI was here looking for you."

"In Bloomington?"

"Standing outside our front door, two of them, an hour ago. Your father in his bathrobe and slippers. I must say we were quite put out."

"What did they want?"

"To talk to you, of course. Your father promised we'd have you contact them."

"They didn't say what they wanted to talk to me about?"

“Listen, Ivy, your dad got rid of them as quickly as he could. I couldn’t go back to sleep. Believe me, I tried. What is it you need to be telling us? I’d rather hear it from you than from some law officer letting us know we’ll have to mortgage the house to get you out of jail and pay a lawyer – like the Oliphants. You know their son Gary? He’s in serious trouble for throwing a homemade bomb.”

“No kidding.” Gary Oliphant had been a track star; then he tore a ligament. For a whole semester he hobbled on crutches through the Bloomington High halls. Ivy could not remember ever talking with him. “Where is he?” she asked, wondering (as she now wondered about everyone in the Movement) which group he was in – SDS or the Mobe, YSA or one of the draft resistance groups.

“Somewhere back east – Massachusetts, I think. You’ve avoided the question, my dear.” Mum sounded like she always did, English-cool; only the weird hour, the fact that she’d phoned so she could sleep, signaled how upset she was.

“I haven’t thrown anything, Mummy. A homemade bomb is just a Coke bottle full of gasoline and motor oil.” Bert had told her this. He’d also said, if you add detergent and stir it up you get a sticky flammable paste, which is napalm. You have to be careful not to shake the bottle.

“You didn’t do anything illegal in Chicago?”

“No, Mother.” Jane was the one who’d written on the mirror in the Holiday Inn. The rolls and napkins from the restaurant had been given to them freely. “I’m studying for my biology midterm,” Ivy said. “Go to sleep and don’t worry about me. I’ll be home for Thanksgiving.” She needed to get her winter coat and her big sweaters.

“Don’t hang up!” Her mother’s voice went suddenly shrill. “Get a pencil and take down the number of the FBI. We knew better than to give out your address or phone.”

“That’s good,” Ivy said.

“But we promised you’d ring him up, so you’d best do it. Here’s the number. A Chicago office, I believe.”

Ivy tucked the number into her purse. If the FBI wanted her, she must have had some impact. She thought of the thrilling conspiratorial darkness in Grant Park, two months ago. Maybe she was in deep shit for something she didn’t remember she’d done.

The neat thing about biology was that she could study it when she was upset; it calmed her down – the math, especially. The wailing in her head after she sent Chuck away (she calculated) twenty-three days ago would not stop until she’d gone to the bio lab to count fruit flies. She was supposed to start them breeding, divide the red-eyes from the yellow-eyes, count them, let them breed some more, and count again. The numbers were to teach her about genetics and evolution. Instead she learned that counting made her numb. The process was so soothing, she’d volunteered to be treasurer of the SDS so she could collect dues and keep count. A lot of people spent most of their lives counting, she figured out, in banks, in corporations, in government, in university administration. They could spend whole days – weeks, years! – without feeling sad, lonely, angry, scared, or confused, feelings that poured through Ivy relentlessly as rain. She lit another cigarette and bent over the textbook, feeling numb and businesslike, determined to understand the Krebs cycle before she went on to the next chapter.

Understanding the Krebs cycle was an achievement; she knew she'd passed that part of the exam. Afterward she slept through the afternoon and woke in a rush, as if the FBI's number in her purse were an alarm clock. She had to call for advice.

Jane wasn't home. "She's gone off with Chuck," Tessa said. "They're working on the underground newspaper."

"Oh." Ivy pictured Jane bent over Chuck's notebook. She'd had one talk with him since the breakup, after Mark Rudd's speech. Couldn't avoid each other.

"Actually, I wasn't surprised," he'd said. "You needed freedom. I knew that. I just didn't want to face it."

"I'll always love you," she said.

"Don't tell me that," Chuck said. "Freedom's probably good for me, you know? Maybe someday ..."

"We'll be friends?" she finished.

He gave her a bitter smile – a frown, really, and squeezed her hand before he walked away. To keep from following him, she'd counted her steps all the way home.

"The FBI came to my parents' house last night," she told Tessa. "I'm supposed to call them back."

"You don't have to talk to the FBI," Tessa said. "Not unless you're charged with something. Ask them flat-out, *Am I charged with anything?* If they say no, you hang up."

"What if I don't call them at all?"

"If they're pressing charges, they'll come after you," Tessa said. "And you'll be in worse trouble. I've heard they're trying to collect evidence against the people who

planned Chicago. *Planned*. What a joke.” Tessa’d been talking plans and strategy ever since the Dow thing, which she’d called “a mess, an unconscionable waste of time.”

“But if I call,” Ivy said, “can I be sure they’re telling me the truth – about charges, I mean? And if there are none, they’ll leave me alone?”

“They should,” Tessa said. “They can’t lie about charges, because it would ruin any case they tried to make. And they can’t force you to talk to them.”

“Thanks,” Ivy said. The Dow thing had wasted time. Typing all night in the church basement worked as well as counting to forget that Chuck was at the student union. Even after Bert decided that he didn’t feel oppressed, SDS had kept the sit-in going. Ivy’d sat in two days and a night, talking and singing with the underclassmen, who declared victory when the Dow recruiters cleared out.

Then they learned the recruiters were at Howard Johnson’s, still interviewing Case. So in a way the protests hadn’t worked, but people remembered it, all over campus, and now they had a core group of SDS activists. It was all part of the struggle, as Marvin said.

Arthur hadn’t even come to Mark Rudd’s speech, which almost filled Harkness Chapel. Rudd had said, “We must be a threat to the establishment, otherwise we’ll get nowhere.” He’d said, “Organizing is another word for going slow. Walking around with signs should not be confused with action.” And, “Everyone should strike on election day, but especially students. No class today, no ruling class tomorrow.” He’d asked, “Why aren’t you actively recruiting, every single day?” After the speech he’d gone off with Bert and Tessa. Ivy had set up a recruitment table in the Union the next day, with books, pamphlets, and copies of *New Left Notes*. The table was there now, and she avoided it,

scuttling around the corner and up the Union stairs to the phones. If she was seen, she'd be asked to take over the table, and she was determined to keep hiding out till midterms were over. She didn't want to call the FBI from home, in case they had a way of knowing the number she was calling from.

Tomorrow was election day; there would be no student strike here. They'd decided they wouldn't get enough participation during midterms. Ivy couldn't vote anyway; she wouldn't turn twenty-one for another month.

She dialed and was listening to the ring when Arthur appeared. "Barcelona!" He held up his hand to show that he'd wait for her attention. She hung up.

"The Committee's picketing the polling places tomorrow," Arthur said. "You want to join us?"

End the war while voting? Ivy thought. "No," she said. "I'm gonna pass midterms instead. Then I'll work on the revolution."

"At least you're still studying," Arthur said. "That means you're not getting too jerked around by Bert and Tessa." He took out a cigarette, gave her one, and lit them both.

"They're pretty damn well informed," Ivy said. "That's why I listen to them – and that's the only reason." *No one* was jerking her around.

"If SDS had some discipline and a coherent platform, I'd listen, too." Arthur sat on the top step and patted the floor next to him. Ivy sat. "I tried, you know – right through the Democratic Convention. Then I stayed in Chicago for the Student Mobilization Committee conference and saw how an effective organization works."

“The SMC is completely infiltrated by the Young Socialist Alliance,” Ivy said.

“Why do you even bother having two organizations? Why hide your real agenda behind your end-the-war message?” She knew why: The real agenda was to build a Socialist Workers Party with a platform written in dense Trot rhetoric. They knew their team would not win on Trotskyism. It was that simple, that manipulative.

“After I graduate,” Arthur said, ignoring her challenge, “I’m going to enlist so I can organize in the armed forces.”

“You think they’ll let you in?”

“Why not? I wouldn’t be dumb enough to tell them my plans.”

“I guess you wouldn’t,” she said. He’d grown thicker around the neck and shoulders in the past six months. He’d developed a public mask, which he dropped now, here with just the two of them. They’d known each other since freshman year, when they’d ridden the Rapid together on Wednesdays for peace vigils on Public Square.

“I wish we were working together,” he said. “We were good at it.” He picked up her hand and kissed her knuckles.

“I’m in deep with SDS,” Ivy said. “You know that.”

“What has SDS done to deserve your loyalty?”

“Exposed university complicity, to start. We’ve joined the worldwide ...”

“Oh, bullshit,” Arthur said. “Tessa and Bert are *sexy*, and Mark Rudd’s *sexy* too – that’s why you’re following them. You know better, Ivy. If you’re serious about a revolution, you should join the party that’s organized to do it.”

“Right,” Ivy said. “And ditch everything I love about the Movement – the participatory democracy, the constant discovery of new connections ...” She struggled to stay honest. “Questioning every authority, every rule, even our own ...”

“Participatory chaos!” Arthur scolded. “You don’t even know grass roots when you see it!” He grew red in the face, rattling off a string of accomplishments in a high pitched staccato: numbers of “his” people on this march and that, circulation of *The Militant*, numbers of committees against the war ...

“Stop it!” she said. “I’m not listening!”

He stopped. “No,” he said. “You’re not listening.” For a split-second he looked desperately sad. “When you want to listen, come find me.” He hurried down the stairs.

Shaken, she walked to the library. If she and Arthur couldn’t talk through their ideas, listen to each other – what hope was there for the Movement? That was how they used to work. It was messy sometimes, but it wasn’t chaos.

She found two books on Sophocles at the library on the second floor and saw Manfred, a German grad student she’d talked with a couple of times. He was waving from a table in the literature section; his field was American Lit. He’d come all the way from Cologne – *Köln* – to study here in Cleveland. Ivy wasn’t sure if she liked him – he thought it was “cute” that she was a “women’s libber” – but she liked to practice her German, so she strolled to his table.

“Come to the Symphony with me,” he said. “I found tickets for Thursday a week.” He meant a week from Thursday, ten days from now. “One of the best orchestras in the world – and they’re playing Schumann.”

“Ganz gut,” she said, not knowing if that was the right expression. She had no opinion of Schumann. “Okay, I’ll come. Work to do now.”

“Ah,” he said. “Of course.” He pulled her leather purse-strap to make her bend over, and then kissed her. She backed away, seeing his smile light up his face – the white teeth, the brown eyes, the thick eyebrows.

She was *wanted*. And she was suspicious of the reasons. Neither Arthur nor Manfred simply liked her – one wanted kissing, at least; the other wanted her on his committee – any more than the FBI men liked her. She went back to the phones in the Union and this time spoke to a man who said she was not charged with anything.

“Okay,” she said. “Then it’s been nice talking with you.”

“You were at a meeting on June 11th,” he said. “At 13805 Euclid Avenue, where plans were being made to disrupt the Chicago convention.”

“Goodness,” Ivy said. “I don’t remember dates. I went to a lot of meetings in June. Good-bye now.”

“While you were in Chicago, did you see Tessa Buchanan or Jane Revard?” the man persisted. “Bert Claymore? Marvin Kaminsky?”

“I’m not going to tell you anything,” Ivy said.

“You’re a person who believes in honesty and openness,” the man said.

“That doesn’t mean telling everything you know to strangers,” Ivy said. “I’m going to hang up now.” She did.

Not until she got back to the Hessler Road apartment did she admit to herself that she liked being someone the FBI wanted to talk to. Being wanted. “I learned that I don’t need to tell everything I know,” she said to Susan, who was frying hamburger in the

kitchen. Greasy smoke crept along the ceiling. “I don’t need to say everything I’m thinking, either.”

“Good lesson,” Susan said. “You’ll need it on the date to the symphony – and when you see Arthur again. Gail’s not seeing him right now.”

“I told him to stay away until I’ve told Freddy I won’t marry him.” Gail came into the kitchen and picked up a bit of cooked hamburger to nibble.

“Careful, it’s hot,” Susan said. “I’m making a casserole to last a week.”

“Or until I’ve told Freddy I *will* marry him,” Gail said.

“The FBI must’ve got their information from someone involved with the Movement office,” Ivy said. Now she could remember the June 11th meeting. Seven or eight people were there. Chuck had been there, of course, and Bert, Greg, and Jane. She couldn’t remember the others. She wasn’t sure about Jane.

“I’m beginning to think Arthur is a true believer,” Gail said. “You know this book? It’s by Eric Hoffer. A lot of what he says makes incredible sense. You know he’s working-class?” She had the book in her hand, one finger marking her place.

“I take it Eric Hoffer doesn’t like true believers,” Ivy said.

“He doesn’t trust them,” Gail said. “That’s what’s important.” She opened the book, flipped pages and read, “The loyalty of the true believer is to the whole— the church, party, nation— and not to his fellow true believer.”

Ivy thought of Arthur’s sadness, a couple of hours ago. Just a glimpse, she’d had.

“Our quarrel with the world is an echo of the endless quarrel proceeding within us,” Gail read. “The point is,” she said, “people join mass movements because of their own frustrations and insecurities.”

“But how do we bring about change without joining mass movements?” Ivy asked. What if she resolved all her inner quarrels, her frustrations, and her insecurities? Would she stop caring about oppressed people? Would she become blind to the workings of the System? It didn’t seem right.

“Hell, I haven’t even read the whole book,” Gail said. “I’m just getting into it. I don’t think Freddy’s a true believer – at least not when I saw him last. He was frustrated and insecure sometimes, but he didn’t need a mass movement. Want to borrow this book when I’m done? Then we could talk about it.”

“Maybe,” Ivy said, thinking how the quarrels proceeding within Freddy had somehow led him to slice off a man’s ear and present it to Gail last spring. She didn’t have to say everything she thought. “I’m going up to work on my Greek drama paper.”

She’d almost reached the landing when Susan called her. “There’s an SDS meeting, you know.” Susan was president of the chapter.

“I know,” Ivy called down. “I’m not coming. I’ve got to work on this paper. A lot of people won’t come during midterms.”

“So it’s all the more important that you do,” Susan said. “Please, Ivy? You’ve got plenty of time. I’ll give you all the No-Doz you want. Look – the Dow sit-in was a success. We’ve recruited all these new people. We need you there.”

She was wanted, this time for reasons that made sense: SDS wanted her to follow through on what she’d started. Here was a chance, for that matter, to show her loyalty to Susan. She’d slept well after the biology test. She could stay up late.

The Olive Tree didn’t have enough chairs for the crowd, so they stowed the chairs behind the counter and sat on the floor. Ivy knew fewer half the people, and they all

seemed to be the kind Aunt Peg called “funny-looking,” with asymmetrical faces, bad skin, crooked, mashed-down, or enormous noses. SDS hadn’t recruited any cheerleaders or fraternity men.

They were discussing the Dow sit-in – what had worked, what they could have done differently – before Susan perched on the counter so she could lead the meeting, keep them on track, give new people a chance to contribute. Ivy stood next to her.

Greg Lambert didn’t wait to be recognized. “We should go to the polls tomorrow, kick some ass,” he said.

“The Committee to End the War’s got the polling places covered,” Ivy said. “We’re not needed.”

“We got to kick their asses,” Greg said. “Not literally,” he added, when several voices called out against violence. “It’s no secret they’re bad-mouthing SDS. We need to stop that.”

“You don’t improve your reputation by figuratively kicking ass,” someone yelled from the back.

“Oh, but sometimes you do.” It was Angela. “Just making your presence known, you show strength. That’s what Greg means – we gotta show we’re tough, we won’t concede or back down.”

Susan called on a guy Ivy had never seen before, older than the rest, with a skinny neck and a big Adam’s apple. “I want to know why you haven’t mentioned the war in Angola and Mozambique,” he said. “Massacres in those places. Never heard about it, right? You’re all a bunch of infants. You don’t know shit.”

Ivy wondered if he was putting them on and was trying to think of how to find out when Tessa intervened. “Let’s start closer to home, people. We ought to be planning a vigil for Ahmed Evans, who’s about to be on trial for his life. And boy has he been framed.”

A jumble of questions rose like hornets. “How do you know?” “Who the hell is he?” “What’s he sposed to’ve done?” Tessa tried to explain, but so did Greg and Susan, and none of them could be heard clearly.

“Cool it!” Ivy yelled. “Let one person talk!” She nodded to Tessa, inviting her to do her eloquent thing.

“I got something to say.” The man might have been black; Ivy couldn’t tell. His skin was sort of gray, and his hair was dark and close-shaven. He had a resonant voice that sounded like he knew something important about the Evans cause. “Blasted landscapes,” he said. “Dead kittens and stunted trees. Christ is still on the cross, bleeding from both hands and feet. The ladies’ club of Moline, Illinois has taken up stoning. They practice on scarecrows and bums they find downtown.” He kept on, droning out one dark, depressing thing after another.

Susan seemed powerless to interrupt. Ivy looked around the room. Some faces looked fascinated; some looked appalled. She thought of proposing an educational session on the Glenville shoot-out and racism in Cleveland and raised her hand. A scream erupted.

It was the Angola-Mozambique guy. “Why doesn’t someone stop him? His ego is permeating this room like a rotten egg!”

“The University’s *our* problem,” Greg shouted. “Case Western Reserve oppresses blacks. If you don’t speak to that, you’re a fucking elitist!”

“Who’re you calling an elitist?” The gray-skinned man looked indignant. “Don’t you dare tell me who I am or what I should care about! You don’t even know me!”

“That was one of Greg’s better suggestions,” Ivy whispered to Susan.

“I know,” Susan said. “What do I do now?”

The Angola-Mozambique guy screamed, “You’re all so fulla shit your eyes are brown!” Voices rose in a babbling, swearing wave.

Tessa stood up and raised her arms. “Let’s talk one person at a time, shall we?”

It did no good. Greg was yelling now: “You’re the most privileged kids in the world. You go to the best university in the whole of Northern Ohio. You ...”

“Stop talking, Greg!” Susan yelled. She was kneeling on the counter. Half the group was standing now. People gesticulated in each other’s faces, talking loudly.

“I’m communicating openly,” Greg said. “That’s what the Movement needs. Just telling it like it is.”

“You’re a fucking jerk!” screamed the gray-faced guy.

They managed, by holding his arms and patting his back, to keep Greg from punching the guy, who was much smaller and skinnier. Susan waved her arms.

“Meeting’s over!” she yelled. Tessa picked it up: “Thanks for coming!”

By the time Ivy got to her room, sitting cross-legged on the bed with her cup of coffee and a cigarette, she was too rattled to write about Antigone. She had to study art history anyway. She found a discussion of Byzantine imperial influence on Carolingian architecture and – reading with glazed, itching eyes – let herself be comforted by the

massive walls and rounded arches of Romanesque cathedrals. She wasn't aware she'd fallen asleep until she realized that the yelling crowd outside her window – all men, with Bert and Greg and Arthur calling her an elitist bitch and a counterrevolutionary slut – could not have stood on that narrow ledge and pounded on the door at the same time. She had not actually screamed “Pigs! You're all fucking pigs!” But the dream bothered her; it seemed true, if not real. She undressed, brushed her teeth, and crawled between the covers.

November 5, 1968

On election day she awoke with the title for her paper: “Antigone's Hidden Agenda.” She wrote all afternoon, in pencil, filling page after page of her notebook. Whenever she closed her eyes, the Movement roared at her: a sea of faces with anguished open mouths, crying *do something, but not that! Do the best thing, the thing that's never been done before, the only thing that will work!* Hands waved, and fists shot like snake-heads out of the snarl of bodies.

No wonder Antigone made a big deal of her brother's body rotting on the battlefield: It was the nearest outrage, the one issue the people (men, all of them) would understand her caring about. The Dow recruiters had provided the nearest outrage at Reserve. Ivy didn't know what to do about racism; what was there to say to the pigs who charged Ahmed Evans with seven murders? She should think of something. No, she needed to get back to her paper. No, she couldn't get back to her paper.

“Communicate openly,” she thought. Bert had obeyed campus security and stayed away from the meeting. She could talk to Bert most of the time; he had a good analysis. He knew what was going on with SDS nationally.

Bert was not home, so she told Marvin about the disastrous meeting. "I have two ideas," he said. "First: we're organizing a People's Contingent to go bother the Charity Lunch, downtown at the Sheraton, a week before Thanksgiving. Get your SDS involved. Here's what: you be in charge of the lunch itself. Bring a nutritious lunch for about fifty people at thirty-seven cents apiece. That's about what they get on welfare. Make sure it's nutritious. Call a dietician if you need to."

Ivy's head cleared. Here was an action. "We can do that," she said. A peaceful disruption: A couple of people could prepare the lunch; everyone else could just come. "What's the second thing?"

"Let me take you to dinner," Marvin said. "After your next exam."

"And my paper," Ivy said. "They're both on Friday."

"So – Friday night, then? I've found a little money, which I feel guilty about – an old savings account that accumulated while I was in Zambia. So I'm trying to spend part of it at ethnic restaurants all over Cleveland. Ever been to Eddie's Middle East?"

"Is this a date?" Ivy asked.

"A date? Well, I suppose," Marvin sounded flustered. "Yes, it is. Kind of. We don't have to call it that, if you'd rather not."

"I just want to talk to you," she said. Marvin Kaminsky wanted to be friends with Ivy Barcelona, that confused girl. She was pleased. She was happy. She could make more coffee, light a fresh cigarette, and get to work on *Antigone*.

She'd finished the pencil-draft and was ready to start typing when she saw the pattern: That confused girl was a sucker for men. They must sense it. In the past twenty-four hours she'd had one advance (Arthur's kiss on the knuckles) and been asked out

twice. They all wanted sex. She felt fucked-up. Would she have sex with Marvin and Manfred within the same week? She did not want to be a woman who did that. She wanted to be a woman who ate dinner at Eddie's Middle East and listened to the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra perform live. Did she have to pay with sex for such experiences?

The apartment was quiet. Susan had gone out; Gail was asleep. When the phone rang, Ivy practically threw herself downstairs to the kitchen extension so Gail wouldn't be wakened.

"Just wanted to make sure you were there," said Bradley Wells. "I'm at the Commodore bar, and I'm coming over."

"I'm working on a paper."

"So? You need to talk to me. I won't take long."

He arrived minutes later, shoulders damp with rain, hands cold on her cheeks and neck. "I love you," he whispered. Alcohol on his breath.

"What?" Ivy backed up, and Bradley dropped his hands to her shoulders. He fixed his eyes on hers. How much had he drunk? "What's wrong? Why aren't you at home?"

"If I stay in that apartment another day, I'll hate them – Vanessa and the baby. They don't deserve it, but I can't help it. It's you."

"What's me?"

"The one I love. When I'm with you, I feel so alive." He pulled her to his chest.

"You love me too; I know it."

She'd once had a crush on this man. She'd fantasized about being in his arms. More: she'd imagined him in bed with her, inside her. She did not love him. Yet here he

was, eyes blazing, long arms and large, skilful hands on her back and hips. She wriggled out of his grasp – wary, and curious as hell.

She made them each a cup of instant coffee, wondering, while she waited for the water to boil, what it meant when a man left his wife and baby and drove across town to have several drinks and then barge in on a college girl? The sexual pull – puzzling, delicious, dangerous, hard to resist; she felt it humming under her breasts, between her hips – was not something you’d leave your wife and kid for. Unless there was some amazing quality in Ivy Barcelona which she didn’t see.

“You have to help me,” he said. He sat in the stuffed chair holding the coffee cup; it was small in his hands. She sat on the couch opposite him.

“What are you talking about? I can’t offer you a thing.”

“But you broke up with Chuck.”

“Yes. It hurt like hell. You didn’t think I broke up with him for you?”

“Didn’t you?” His look said that was just what he’d thought. “At least partly?”

“I guess my interest in you was evidence I couldn’t stay with him right now,” she admitted.

“Aha,” he said. “See, that’s where I am – my interest in you *proves* I can’t stay married to Vanessa. I just can’t.” He put his coffee cup on the floor, leaned forward and stroked her cheek with one finger. “Don’t you feel it, Ivy, pulling us together? We’ll be miserable if we try to resist.”

She did feel it. Her lips softened and warmed, expanding like biscuit dough in the oven. Her skin hummed with desire. She leaned back into the couch cushions, out of his reach, holding her mug of coffee in front of her.

“Come to me,” he said. But he came to her, taking the mug out of her hands, pulling her to her feet, kissing her, pulling her sweatshirt up, unhooking her bra. He smelled of alcohol, and he would not hold still for an instant, would not meet her eyes, would not touch her gently, forced his hand between her legs.

“Hold it!” She pushed with all her strength and he had to back up. “You’d better go,” she said, pulling her sweatshirt over her breasts, buttoning her jeans. “Go where you like; you can’t stay here. I have a paper to finish and a test to study for. I’m not in love with you.”

He wasn’t angry. He was miserable – finally it registered – lost and desperate, and he’d come to see her because they turned each other on, and it felt good to be turned on, better than how he felt with Vanessa and Baby Wesley. Except he didn’t turn her on, not now. He wasn’t the strong leader of the resistance, fantasy-lover; he was a half-drunk, miserable man who’d married before he was ready. She saw that all at once.

“I’m sorry,” she said. “But if you’ve got to leave the marriage, you’ll do better without me around.”

“She loves me, Vanessa does,” he said. He didn’t seem to know what to do with his hands, now that he wasn’t trying to touch Ivy. “She says it drives her nuts not to know where I am at all times.”

“Does she know how you feel about me?”

“I haven’t told her,” he said. In other words, Vanessa might know. Ivy kept her eyes locked on his while he gulped the last of his coffee. “You’re a good kid, you know that?” he said.

She gave him his jacket, and he put it on. "I know you're in love with me," he said, before he left. "It'll take some time, that's all."

Good kid, Ivy thought. How *dare* he dump his marriage on her living room rug? She put the cups in the sink, went upstairs, lit another cigarette, and waited for her head to clear. She was still waiting when she heard Susan *tump-tump* on the stairs. "Hi there," she called.

Susan came halfway into the room, stood leaning against the doorjamb. "How much are you smoking these days?" she asked.

"Not that much," Ivy said. "More when I write papers. You want one?" She held out her pack – Benson & Hedges. Menthol.

Susan took one. "This can't be good for your lungs," she said, as she blew out a cloud. "The first puff – always the best."

"It doesn't seem to hurt the lungs," Ivy said. Not exactly true; she'd been coughing up yellow gunk. "I know I should quit. But I can't till after midterms." Smoking helped her focus as she read, and it was absolutely necessary for writing. "Bradley Wells came here tonight."

"What did he want?" Susan settled cross-legged on Ivy's bed.

"To tell me he hates being married."

"And throw himself at your feet, right?"

"Not exactly. He did say he loved me."

"Oh Christ," Susan said. She got a BandAid box out of her purse and tapped her ashes into it. "Bradley Wells, the dreamiest guy in the Movement, wants to leave his wife for you?"

“He’s not so dreamy, up close.”

“Sex?”

Ivy shook her head. “I decided not to.”

Susan smiled sadly. “Not even once?”

“No!” The word poured out with tears. She’d wanted to. So much.

Susan came to put her arms around Ivy. “Oh, sweetie,” she said.

“He’s Vanessa’s husband,” Ivy sobbed into Susan’s small shoulder.

“Not your responsibility,” Susan said. “His marriage is obviously coming apart.”

“Everything’s coming apart,” Ivy snuffled.

“Yeah,” Susan said. “But that’s how it goes. You’re a biophilic.”

“I’m a what?”

“I told you weeks ago – that night when I met Erich Fromm.”

Ivy had been envious: Susan had met the famous man. She’d almost forgotten about his theory of the biophiliacs – lovers of life – and the necrophiliacs, who loved order, authority, spotless black-and-white tile floors, and death, the ultimate neatness. The Oakland police had tested high-necrophiliac on Fromm’s surveys. Biophiliacs loved chaos, bright colors, and sex. “Now I remember,” Ivy said. “I *guess* it’s a good thing to be.” She thought about her desire for men – that weird mix of curiosity and lust.

“It’s the only thing you *can* be,” Susan said. “Listen, you’re a lovely woman, and men are gonna come after you, and most of them won’t appreciate you.”

“That awful SDS meeting that gave me bad dreams – we were all being chaotic biophiliacs?”

“Exactly,” Susan said. “Aren’t you relieved?”

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Seventeen

November 13, 1968

Daylight peered around the edges of the window shade, turning the humped gray shadows into furniture – a stuffed chair, a lamp – and Chuck knew he was in Jane’s fold-out bed, naked and chilly. He pulled at the sheet and blanket that had slithered away during the night, but the covers were trapped around Jane, who curled with her back to him. He reached for her shoulder. In his arms last night she’d felt small and bony, her curls soft on his cheek, tangled in his mouth. He thought of the sharpness of her shoulder-blades and hips, the soft concavity of her stomach, and rolled close to her back, reaching her hands, which clutched the blanket and sheet. He kissed her cheek. She squeezed her eyes tight and shook her head as if to get a fly off.

They’d begun brushing against each other by accident in the office as they moved between the typewriter, the layout table, and the printing press. Then they were deliberately rubbing against each other, as if to satisfy an itch. Desire had come like smoke from new-lit tinder, screwing Chuck’s sense of purpose all to hell, and they made love right there on the layout table. Then they picked the papers off the floor, put the work away, and unbuttoned each other’s shirts. The second time they were on the couch in the office. The third time: couch in her apartment. She was fierce, scratching, biting, then slippery – he chased her around, picked her up and held her like a fireman rescuing a child. Fourth: the couch unfolded and became her bed.

Her back and neck were warm; he palmed her small breasts and reached for the damp forest between her legs. She clamped her thighs together and reared away, groaning “Leave me alone,” digging her elbow into his stomach. He let go. She rolled over, letting go of the covers – what he’d wanted in the first place. He pulled them over his chest, settling into the warm hollow she’d vacated, marveling at how happy he felt.

Jane Revard. She had tawny yellow-beige skin. “Olive complexion,” she’d said. “French trait, like the name.” Her father had come from Quebec. Chuck would like to visit France, where the revolution had flared in May with a blue flame. *Bleu*. He couldn’t pronounce French; the word came out *bluh* or *blur*. He could get along in Spanish; he’d rather visit Mexico, Cuba, or South America, where revolution burned in all different forms and phases. Red, orange, yellow, and white flames rose in his early-morning imagination like beacons from rubble heaps. The oppressors could use buckets, fire hoses, and asbestos blankets, come down hard as they could, but they could not quench all the flames. As soon as they turned their backs, another one flared. Like magma bubbling from the core of the earth, the people would rise up and assert their right to freedom and dignity – also equality, justice, peace, a share of the wealth; in Paris last May, the students hung signs that said *The more I make revolution, the more I make love* and *All power to the imagination*. All demands were contained in these two essentials: *Freedom. Dignity*. Chuck tongued the words like food. The Doors’ “Light My Fire” was not about sex, after all; it was about Revolution. He needed to write his vision down; maybe his notebook was under the clothes that filled the stuffed chair by the window. *Try to set the night on fire*. He sat up and put his feet on the floor. It was hard and cold.

A door opened and closed: Tessa emerging. Chuck threw the bedclothes over his lap and watched her walk by. Maybe she was half-asleep. Her bathrobe hung open; he glimpsed her breasts, her belly, her pubic hair and her thighs – just a glimpse; then she'd gone into the bathroom and was using the toilet. Jane had said Tessa wouldn't be home. Damn. He needed the toilet himself.

"Hi, Chuck." Jane was awake, her curly head sticking out of the covers.

"Hi." He dropped to one elbow to kiss her, but she stopped his lips with her hand.

"Don't," she said. "My mouth tastes awful – kind of like the way your feet smell."

"Thanks a lot," he said, sitting up again. "You sure know how to squash a guy."

"Yeah." Jane stretched her arms overhead, looked at the ceiling. Her underarms were as furry as her crotch. "Is Tessa here?"

The toilet flushed. "I'm next in the john," Chuck said. "Gotta wash my feet."

"Don't take it personally," Jane said. "I just need autonomy in the morning. And we did enough last night to take care of our sexual urges for ..."

"I could do it again," Chuck said. "In a few minutes." He climbed into his shorts and jeans, buttoning and zipping carefully. The jeans were loose; he was getting thinner.

"We've got to finish the paper." Jane sat up, her skin goose-bumped, her little brown nipples erect with cold. For a painful second Chuck thought of Ivy's round body tinged with pink, her way of cuddling up to him in the morning. He shivered and reached for his shirt.

The bathroom door opened. "Hi there," Tessa said. She held the halves of her robe overlapped at her waist. "Do we have coffee?" she asked Jane, who bent naked over a laundry basket.

“Yeah,” Jane said. “Make some for Chuck and me too, okay?” Tessa grunted, and Chuck claimed the bathroom.

He took his time relieving himself and studied his face in the mirror. Bristle-chin: he hadn’t shaved since yesterday morning. He wet-combed his hair to get rid of the fuzz around the tops of his ears and the back of his neck, doused his face and wiped it dry. He tucked in his shirt and buckled his belt. Here he was, in sudden friendly intimacy with two women. Twenty-four hours ago, he hadn’t suspected he would have wild sex with Jane Revard. Four times. No guilt. If she had sex with someone else, that would be fine with Chuck. He would not compare himself with that other person. Jimmy was at Kalamazoo with induction still hanging over his head. He might come to Cleveland for Thanksgiving, and he might then sleep with Jane. Chuck thought of Jimmy’s beefy torso, on display all last June and July. His mind was free of jealousy. Good: his feelings were aligning with his politics.

Marvin had been dating Ivy, Jane had told him. Fine with Chuck.

Jane was pounding on the door. “Let me in, I gotta pee!”

He turned the latch, and she made for the toilet. He heard her rush of water before he was out. Should he have left the door open? Did equality mean less privacy? Tying his sneakers, Chuck thought about the politics of bathrooms and bodies. He had to learn to be comfortable around a woman’s naked body; even the thought of Tessa beneath her robe made him flush. What if he had sex with Tessa? Jane wouldn’t mind.

Still in her robe, Tessa was moving from the fridge to the counter as he came in. The robe parted to show her upper thigh. Coffee perked on the stove. “Aren’t you even chilly?” he asked.

“No,” Tessa said. She handed him an empty cup. “The coffee’s not quite ready. I suppose I should get dressed.”

“Not if you don’t feel like it,” Chuck said. The correct thing was to be nonchalant; with practice, he’d learn to not be aroused with a woman’s body exposed, or half-exposed. He looked out the window at bare branches, leaden sky, and thought of his mother.

She was always fully dressed in the kitchen, except for Christmas morning and her birthday. On those two days she was wrapped in a long plush robe over a nightgown and slippers. On Christmas everyone wore a robe, slippers, and pyjamas to open presents. On Mother’s birthday, Father made pancakes, and she wore her robe and slippers to show that she was taking it easy. Her hair was always “done,” though, never in curlers. When she really took it easy, like on a few summer afternoons after swimming, her hair curled every which way like Jane’s.

His memories of Mother’s birthday were chiefly about the presents he’d given her. He’d save his allowance for weeks, then spend hours among jewelry and perfumes, wrappings and ribbons and cards, always wishing he had more money. This year he was spending nothing and making her a collage, using pictures from magazines – women’s eyes and arms, an apple-laden branch and various flowers, a lioness with cubs. He’d found a piece of cardboard and moved the pictures around – but the design wasn’t quite right yet. He hadn’t finished, and her birthday (he realized with a jolt) had been yesterday. He’d have to write a note with the collage, telling her how much time he’d spent, hoping she’d see how much he loved her. She seemed far away now, in her robe and slippers and perfect hair, in a foreign land with strange meaningless rituals.

“Now that you mention it, I do feel cold,” Tessa said. “Especially my feet. I’m using a pair of your socks.” The last remark was to Jane, who’d come in wearing jeans, a high-neck sweater, and fleece-lined moccasins.

“Wait, I need those socks,” Jane said. But Tessa had hurried through the door and was out of range. “How close are we to finished?” Jane asked Chuck. “Now Tessa’s got my last pair of clean knee-socks. I was going to wear them to the Charity Lunch invasion tomorrow. I was hoping to take copies of the *Steam Tunnel Express*.”

“I just asked if she was cold,” Chuck said.

“She’s completely oblivious to her body.” Jane’s mouth had a zipper this morning, opening just a crack as she tilted the coffee cup against her lips, then *vvvt*, closed, little vertical clench-lines on her lips.

“No, she’s not.” Chuck thought of Tessa’s thigh between his legs, last summer, on the Severance hall steps. He watched Jane’s eyes dart around *New Left Notes*, not reading, not even scanning. “I have an idea,” he said. “Tessa could write an article about the symphony – a review, with maybe some commentary on the politics.”

“You could ask.” Jane raised one eyebrow and looked at a spot on the wall over his head. “She doesn’t go to concerts like she used to. She might write about cultural elitism.”

“That’d be cool. We’d get some letters to the editor.” He opened his notebook and took out his pen, to start a list of ideas. But he didn’t want to talk about the paper. He wanted to know how Jane felt about last night, to understand how the sleepy, naked girl in bed with him could be the same person as this woman across the table, covered from neck to wrists, pretending to read the paper. He wanted to think aloud about the politics

of nakedness, find out what Jane would think if he had sex with Tessa. He wasn't sure he wanted to do it; he just couldn't help being aroused when Tessa walked around in her bathrobe. It gave him ideas. He wanted to talk about those ideas. "By the way," he said, touching Jane's hand, one thumb-stroke on the knuckle of her first finger. "I had a great time last night. You?"

"Mm," she said. She took his hand, squeezed, and let go. Picked up her cup. "It was fun." Her "fun" was lukewarm – the kind of thing you'd say about a TV show you'd watched. Then she said, in her business voice: "Where's the Evans article?"

"Sheldon's writing it," Chuck said. "He should have had it done yesterday."

"Sheldon," Tessa spoke from the doorway, "is the least political guy I know."

"That's why he's the one doing it," Chuck said. "If I went to the jail, Ungvary's men would be on top of me. But they wouldn't be suspicious of Sheldon. He's black."

"Not really," Tessa said. "What bugs me is your content. It's not revolutionary."

"What do you mean Sheldon's not black?"

"She means he doesn't think like a Panther," Jane said.

"What's the matter with our content?" Chuck felt slapped.

"That is *not* what I mean, Jane," Tessa said. "And you're not thinking like radicals. Your politics are all over the place. You've got to deal with what's coming *down*." Either she was leading up to something, or this was part of a fight she'd had going with Jane.

"I thought you might write for us," Chuck said. "About the symphony."

“Oh my God,” Tessa said. “He wants the symphony in the *Steam Tunnel Express*! The name’s good, I’ll give you that. Chuck old buddy, I thought you were editing a paper about *us*. What the hell are you thinking?”

“I thought you liked the symphony enough to be a volunteer janitor,” Chuck said.

“So I have a bourgeois hangup. I’m working on it, but it’s nothing to write about.” Tessa pulled her purse off the back of Jane’s chair and looped it over one shoulder. “I don’t have time to discuss basic issues with you guys. I’m going to work.”

“So what *do* you want to write about?” he asked. What work? What did she mean by *basic issues*?

“I’m writing something with Bert,” Tessa said. “A sort of think-it-through manifesto. We’ll show you when it’s done. I just didn’t know you were so determined to be out of line. You’re selling fucking advertisements!”

“To support the paper.” He was more astonished than angry, raking through his mind for something that would help her see what he’d been so sure of: a jungle vine of a paper, poking through cracks in the walls, breaking apart the old square structures. *Out of line*? “You don’t actually want a paper that agrees with you all the way,” he said.

“I want a paper that recognizes the Revolution,” Tessa said. “I’m shocked you don’t understand that. You, of all people.” She rushed out. The door banged.

“She didn’t even put on a coat,” Jane said. “See what I mean by oblivious?”

“What does she mean – me *of all people*?” Chuck asked.

Jane shook her head. “I’ve no idea. Tessa’s been hard to live with. And Bert’s moved out on Marvin again.”

It occurred to Chuck that Jane might be no easier to live with than Tessa was.

“Tessa’s writing with Bert? Is she also sleeping with him?”

Jane shrugged. “I thought so, but she came home last night. Listen, I’m worried about Sheldon’s article.”

“Because he’s not radical enough?” There were clues here that Chuck couldn’t put together. He and Jane had come together last night like wood and flame; now they sat at a splintery wood table with *New Left Notes*, unread, and two cups of lukewarm coffee, undrunk. And she wouldn’t look him in the eye, wouldn’t say what she was thinking. This sudden chill had something to do with the nearly finished issue, with Tessa’s storm about their not being radical enough, with Bert’s leaving Marvin again. Chuck couldn’t put it together. Couldn’t put *them* together – and they’d been so close last night, bent over the layout, trying to cut a few more words so the Charity Lunch invasion announcement would fit into the column. That event was out of reach too; Ivy was involved, so Jane was going, but not Chuck – even though he and Ivy were officially friends. He tried again not to mind that she was dating Marvin. She wasn’t his girl – but she wasn’t Marvin’s, either, and she’d said she’d never be anyone’s girl again. Which was fine when he was waking up, but now it was not, and he didn’t know what had changed, except that he’d lost the sense that he understood people, the underground paper, and revolutionary politics.

Jane glanced at him through narrow eyes, then took a sip of coffee and put the cup down, looking into it as though it were a mirror. “I liked having sex with you,” she said to the coffee. “I might want to do it again sometime. But I don’t want you to expect it. Do you understand? We have a good working relationship. I want *that* to stay. Do you understand?”

She'd asked twice, so Chuck had to say yes, of course. He thought so – but an hour ago he'd thought he'd understood a bunch of things he now was not sure of.

He dropped Jane off on campus. She was probably meeting Ivy; otherwise she would have told him what she was doing. Then he drove to the office. He had the day off from the university bookstore, in exchange for agreeing to work Sunday. If Sheldon's article was ready he'd have time to write after he finished the paper. Sometimes writing helped him think.

Marvin was sitting at the desk twirling a pencil like a miniature baton between his fingers. Chuck took Sheldon's number out of his wallet and returned Marvin's nod as he reached for the phone.

Marvin put a hand on his wrist. "I'm waiting for a call."

"Okay," Chuck said. "I hope it comes soon. I gotta talk to Sheldon."

"Right," Marvin said. "How are things?"

"I don't know," Chuck said. "I heard Bert moved out again."

"Oh, that." Marvin shifted in the chair. "I guess it was time."

All those hours in the all-night diner, and they still couldn't live together. There must be some kind of competition, after all. Would Ivy and Bert get together? The thought made Chuck rage internally – especially since Tessa had implied that Bert didn't like the paper any more than she did. "Where's he staying?"

"I don't know. He wouldn't be stupid enough to lurk around the steam tunnels. He's probably with friends, sleeping on couches. Maybe he's at Tessa's and Jane's."

"Nope," Chuck said. "Not last night, at any rate."

Marvin half-smiled, raising his nose to look through his glasses as if he could smell sex or anxiety. Then he looked at the phone, as if willing it to ring. Chuck hoped it would. Marvin rose abruptly and walked to the front window. Rain blurred the street, hissed and wept under the traffic noise. Cold November rain. Marvin stood still.

“What’s going on?” Chuck asked. There had been no screech of brakes, no shattering glass, no yells. He saw only the usual traffic. The cemetery grass was beaten, bleached, and muddy. A Corvair parked at the derelict gas station. A woman got out, tying a plastic rain hat under her chin, squinting and wincing when raindrops hit her face. She walked toward the corner, high heels wobbling as she tried to avoid puddles. She was headed for the medical supply shop or auto parts next door.

“What worries me about Bert,” Marvin said, “is not his moving out. He has slob tendencies and a busy schedule. He kept getting calls from Ann Arbor and New York and Chicago, and I had to take messages. He’d return calls in the middle of the night. Even so, the phone bill’s huge this month.”

“You were about to say what worries you,” Chuck reminded him.

“I know. It’s more than just making Molotov cocktails, which I stopped his doing. The subversive squad watches my apartment: What was he thinking? That’s the problem: I don’t like what he’s thinking, going over and over his analysis, working through the same arguments, which always lead to armed struggle.”

“Has he bought a gun?”

“Probably, though he hasn’t said so. He knows I think it makes no sense. The blacks have to battle cops and armed bigots; there’s a strategic rationale for them to be able to protect themselves. But we have nothing to gain by getting violent.”

“You’re not a pacifist, then.”

“No. Are you?” Marvin asked.

“No,” Chuck said. “But I don’t think I could kill anyone, unless they were trying to kill me, right there.” He’d written and written his Conscientious Objector application, deciding finally that alternative service was still service to the System that was already spying on him, sending warnings to his mother, pitting blacks and whites against each other. Also, his arguments were superficial. He hadn’t been convinced by anything he’d written, couldn’t put words to what he really believed.

“Unmitigated pacifism is stupid,” Marvin said. “But so is making ‘armed struggle’ out of a white youth movement with plenty of other options.”

“Did you tell him to leave, or did he just go?” Chuck imagined Bert and Marvin attacking each other’s political rhetoric. Bert would have screamed; Marvin would have stayed as cool as he was now, meandering toward the desk, not answering Chuck. Maybe the awaited call was from Ivy. “I guess you’re seeing a lot of Ivy, these days,” Chuck said.

Marvin turned pink. “We’ve had a couple of meals together. That’s all.”

“Hey, all’s fair. She’s her own person,” Chuck said. “I know she likes you. I’m glad you like her.”

“She’s ...” Marvin held out his hands as if he were carrying a large China bowl. “Nubile,” he said.

“She’s also ambitious,” Chuck said. “And very bright. A good thinker.”

“I haven’t slept with her, if that’s what you want to know,” Marvin said. “I’d like to, but no. The truth is, I haven’t had much experience with women. And she’s not the

only one I'm seeing. The call I'm expecting is from Diane. She's involved in the Charity Lunch invasion."

"The call looks like it's not coming," Chuck said. "I was hoping to get Sheldon on his lunch hour, but that's about over."

"I didn't kick Bert out; he left," Marvin said. "Two nights ago. First he denounced me – ostensibly for not being willing to have a gun. All Jews should have guns to protect themselves, he said, just like all blacks should. Millions of people could have been saved if we'd had guns in Europe thirty-five years ago. Lots of swagger, lots of profanity – but that's just Bert being revolutionary youth. He's only twenty-one."

"Ostensibly?" Chuck said.

"I was fond of him," Marvin said, rotating the desk chair from side to side and looking sadly at his lap. "But he's not funny anymore. His conversation has lost elasticity."

"Elasticity: I know what you mean," Chuck said. Sheldon's conversations were elastic. So were Ivy's; they boinged all over the place. He missed talking with her. He'd thought he had established a base – call it trust? – with Jane, and with Tessa and Bert, in October, driving toward Boulder. Now it seemed to have eroded under them all, without warning. "You don't have to answer this," he said, "but is it possible that Bert's interested in Ivy?"

"It's hard for me to imagine anyone *not* interested in Ivy," Marvin said. "But it might ease your mind to know that Bert seems to have taken up with an underclass girl from Reserve. I've given up waiting for the phone." He turned his back and dialed his friend Diane, and Chuck knew he'd reached her because he cupped his hand around the

receiver. Chuck was not welcome as eavesdropper; that was plain. He'd hoped to talk to Marvin about writing for the *Steam Tunnel Express*. Marvin had good insights when Chuck was trying to fit things together – the politics of the paper, for example, and elasticity.

He decided to go see Sheldon face to face, as he should have done (he realized, hunting for a parking spot near Case) before going to the office. Sheldon worked in a basement, typing into a machine that produced cards with little holes in them. The cards could be fed into a computer which occupied a room at the end of the hall. Chuck stood outside the door and watched through the glass as Sheldon's hands flew over the keys. There was no one else in the room. This was the newest form of production line: Sheldon was a worker in an alligator sport shirt and loafers. He'd joined the proletariat. But he didn't fit there, either. Probably no one did. Chuck tapped on the glass, then knocked. Sheldon couldn't hear him. Chuck pounded. No response. Finally Sheldon picked up the stack of cards his machine had spit out and came toward the door. Then he saw Chuck.

"I couldn't finish the article," Sheldon said. "I was hoping you wouldn't notice." They walked the long hall, beige-linoleum-tiled, beige walls. How hard it must be to avoid discouragement, walking this hall for hours every day.

"I just wanted to find out how it's going," Chuck said, "how the interview went, you know." They came to a door, and Sheldon knocked.

"We're waiting here for Rhonda to take these cards and give me more data," Sheldon said. "Data are currency here, food for the System. Did you know data are plural? One datum, two data."

"What does all that stuff say?" Chuck indicated the stack of cards.

“Each card,” Sheldon said, “carries a little bit of information that someone upstairs will use to plot into curves that predict a trend. I can’t tell you much more than that. None of my business anyway. If you’d come at lunchtime we could’ve gone out. Baskin Robbins would be nice.”

A woman opened the top half of the door and traded Sheldon’s cards for a few pages. She was black, with a short Afro and big gold hoop earrings. “Baskin Robbins would be outasight,” she said. “What do you know good?”

“Just lovely,” Sheldon said. He looked at the pages of data to be keypunched in. “Be cool,” he said to her. He and Chuck walked back down the hall.

“Need me to leave?” Chuck asked. “You could just give me your notes on Ahmed, and I could type them up.”

“That’s the problem,” Sheldon said. “I talked to Brother Ahk-med – listened to him, mostly. I’d ask half a question and get a long response. I wrote as fast as I could.” Sheldon took his jacket off the hook on his door and pulled a roll of notebook paper from the pocket.

“What’s he like – Ahmed Evans?” Chuck held out his hand, and Sheldon reluctantly laid the roll across it.

“Tall. Six-five, six-six maybe, with a deep voice – lovely deep preacher’s voice. Dark skinned. Nice. We’re sitting on either side of a table in the jail, bulletproof glass between us, guards standing by. The brother’s polite to the guards. Asked after my mother.”

“He knows your mother?”

“Everybody knows my mother. That’s the way she is.”

“I don’t know her,” Chuck said. “I want to. So I can be like everybody.”

“You’re a conformist at heart,” Sheldon said. “I knew that. Listen, I got no time to be rapping with you; I got to punch keys. I’m not writing that article, and you shouldn’t publish it.”

“Why not?” Chuck thumbed through the pages – twelve of them, close-written, two sided. “You got plenty.”

“Yes indeed, stuff galore,” Sheldon said. “Nothing about the shoot-out, or the Republic of New Libya; he couldn’t talk about that with the guard there.”

“That’s okay. We can write what we know from other sources. Is that the problem?”

“No,” Sheldon said. “It’s this: The brother makes no sense. I’m not writing an article that says Ahmed Evans is crazy.”

Chuck looked through the notes. *Golden rule*, he read, *Supremacy of Allah, the merciful, praised be his name. Shining beauty of Malcolm X*. He imagined the words spoken in a deep preacher’s voice.

“Look at the part about the UFO,” Sheldon said. He found the page and read, in a booming voice, “*Space creatures from another planet – they said my brothers and I, we beautiful, that the continuance of life on earth is in our hands. Beware of the gun, they said.*” He looked at Chuck with an eyebrow cocked. “He met that flying saucer in 1962. See what I mean?”

“Interesting,” Chuck said. “Has an odd ring of truth – except for the part about the space creatures. We could just mention that he had an encounter with a UFO.”

“Then he tells me about the future,” Sherman went on. “He’s figured it out astrologically – a great earthquake, massive upheavals in all the major cities in America. All the prison doors wrenched open. Fire and rain plummeting down on Cleveland. Next summer, or maybe not till fall.”

“Not much crazier than some versions of the revolution,” Chuck said. “But I see the problem.”

“Yeah,” Sheldon said. “Sitting there listening to Brother Ahk-med, I didn’t know what to think. Maybe he killed those pigs after all. He certainly would like to have done.”

“He wouldn’t have killed his own people,” Chuck said. “And he was inside an attic when the police got killed.”

“Things are getting dangerous,” Sheldon said. “I don’t think it’s a good idea for me to be writing for an underground paper. My boss ...” – he looked out the window nervously – “did not appreciate the fact that I was at the Wallace demonstration, much less writing for a newspaper that calls policemen pigs.”

“You let him intimidate you?”

“Yes,” said Sheldon. “I do. Some of these data are for police departments. I didn’t tell you earlier, when you asked. Do you see what’s happening?”

“You’re in line for a promotion,” Chuck said.

“I want it, too,” Sheldon said. “You’re a good fellow, Chuck. I hope to see you around, but I’m not going to jeopardize my livelihood. Dig? Better give me those notes.” Chuck handed him the roll of pages. Sheldon started to tear them, then stopped. “I’ll destroy these at home. Don’t want this stuff found in my wastebasket.” He practically pushed Chuck out the door.

Dangerous. Whoever had said *When people are threatened by us, we're getting somewhere* hadn't mentioned how sad that was. Chuck climbed The Monmouth stairs, looking forward to a bologna sandwich and the beer he knew was in the fridge. Sheldon must have aroused his suspicions: He found himself looking for tracks on the linoleum, finger-smears on the doorknob. Nothing, of course – but when his door swung open, he realized he'd picked up a subliminal clue. In the middle of the floor stood a pair of pointy-toed, thick-heeled boots and a half-full backpack. Bert lay on the bed upside down, his feet in socks crossed on the pillow, his shaggy head at the foot. He was reading Lenin's *Imperialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism*. "Light's better this way," Bert said.

"Get your feet off my pillow." Chuck was taking out bread and bologna. "I have enough for two fat sandwiches, but I only had one bottle of beer. Since you drank it, how about getting some more?" What else had Bert brought into this apartment?

"Here." Bert sat up and retrieved the beer. "I had one sip. Then I got an attack of the guilts. I hate feeling guilty. It makes me want to punch somebody out."

"Thanks." One swig and Chuck felt a little better – even though the beer was no longer cold. Bert was his friend, whether or not they agreed politically. The man he'd been with in Glenville. He took another sip and looked at Bert's small feet, his limp hands, his greasy jeans. "You want some?"

"Nah," Bert said. "I got my own stuff." He showed Chuck a bottle of bourbon, half empty. "I been squatting here since yesterday."

"How'd you get in?" Chuck asked.

“Used my credit card.” He was not smiling. He slumped on the edge of the bed, his face coated with oily sweat. He was sick – probably sick-drunk. “Can I stay here tonight?” he asked.

“Don’t you have anywhere else to stay?”

“I wanted to shack up with Angela,” Bert said. “Remember her? She’s kind of sweet on me, and I think she’s” – he hesitated – “nubile. But she lives in a dorm and doesn’t want trouble. I’m working on her, but it’ll take some time.”

Bert had used Marvin’s term – not the other way round, Chuck was sure. “Maybe you should rent a room with your credit card.”

“That’s mean,” Bert said.

“I apologize,” Chuck said. “I’m too hungry to be nice. Want a sandwich? We should be able to think of somebody who has an empty bed or a couch you could crash on.” Two slices of white bread, two slabs of bologna, and mustard: the meal had become a staple of Chuck’s diet, and he enjoyed it every time. Bert lurched to the table for his sandwich (“no crumbs in my bed,” Chuck insisted), and they ate like companions.

Maybe it wasn’t necessary to know what Bert was carrying in his backpack, or whether he agreed with Tessa that the *Steam Tunnel Express* wasn’t revolutionary. Maybe it was enough to share space and food and drink. Chuck took a swig of Bert’s bourbon. Just one. He had to work tonight.

“You going to help invade the Charity lunch tomorrow?” he asked.

Bert looked at him with his mouth screwed to one side. “It’s not going to be a real invasion,” he said.

“Jane said she thought you and Tessa had something aggressive planned.”

“She did, did she?” Bert gave a wary smile. “If I carried out half my aggressive plans, this city would be smoldering ruin.” Liquor talking. At least Chuck hoped so. “I’ll tell you the truth,” Bert said. He pushed back from the table and stood up. “I’m not going to rain on Marvin Kaminsky’s little parade, this time.” He glowered as though he were reluctantly confessing a personal failure of will.

“Makes sense to me,” Chuck said. Only the words made sense; he didn’t know how to respond to this glaring drunk, staggering around his apartment, looking depressed.

Bert slumped back onto the bed and belched. “I been sipping bourbon and reading and thinking. Wanna know what I figured out?”

“Can’t wait,” Chuck said.

“Marvin’s a father figure.”

Chuck laughed. “I would’ve thought that was obvious.”

“Of course it was, in a general way. The news is: he’s *my* father figure. And I can’t live with that.”

Bert had not lived with his father since he was a little kid. Bert’s father had bought his son a lawyer, but hadn’t come to visit him in jail, or to welcome him on release. That was all Chuck knew. Marvin must have been the good father Bert didn’t have – close, approving, friendly, sharing a household. Then Marvin had stopped the Molotov- cocktail making. Marvin had talked Bert out of letting students campaign for his freedom. And Marvin had attacked Bert’s analysis – which might be the thing Bert loved best about himself.

Chuck thought about his father, whom he no longer feared or hated, but could not stand to be around for long. There were good memories he didn’t know what to do with;

they made him sad. “We all have to outgrow our fathers,” he told Bert. “Hurts, but there it is.”

“It’s easier said than done,” Bert said. He took another long swig of bourbon and lay back. Chuck watched his eyes close. He was nearing oblivion.

“I’m going to the office to finish the paper,” Chuck said. “When I come back – hopefully not too late ...” He realized Bert didn’t care. He lay still, the bottle tucked under his arm.

“Just roll me onto the floor when you come to bed,” he mumbled. “I’m no homo.”

Chuck took the bottle and put it on the table before he left.

By two a.m. the paper was printed and stacked. He’d worked alone, except for the radio, and felt sweaty and exhausted. He’d stopped thinking hours before. Rather than go back to The Monmouth, he slept on the office couch, the sleep of the good task completed, waking only when the phone rang.

“I figured you’d be there,” Jane said. “We need you.”

“The *Steam Tunnel Express* is ready for distribution,” Chuck said. “One thousand copies.” He looked groggily at the morning outside the big window – gray, but not raining. “What time is it?”

“It’s nine. Tessa took Ivy to the hospital last night.”

“Ivy’s in the hospital?” His brain flashed Ivy’s face, open-mouthed at the Grant Park bandshell, seeing the police attack. “What the hell’s happened?”

“Quit yelling,” Jane said. “Her asthma got bad. Tessa took her to the emergency room, and they admitted her. That’s why we need you: Ivy was supposed to handle the food for the Poor People’s lunch.”

“Is somebody with her? Has anyone called her parents? People die from lack of oxygen, you know.” Trust Jane to stay on task, even if a not quite twenty-one-year-old girl couldn’t breathe and dropped by the wayside. “I’m going to the hospital,” Chuck said. “Which one is it?”

“University,” Jane said. “Tessa’s good at this stuff. She snapped right into medical-student mode. She likes Ivy a lot, you know. We all do. We’re not going to abandon her. I don’t think it’s a good idea for you to go rushing to the hospital, do you? Think about it.”

He thought of Ivy when she couldn’t breathe: stiff-backed, private, determined to keep her dignity and freedom (those words again). Asthma was a ball and chain she had to drag around, she’d said once. Her own personal oppressor. “Okay,” he said. “What do you want me to do?” He’d go to the hospital after the papers were distributed, after the lunch invasion was over. He needed to see Ivy. If she was asleep (he imagined tubes, a face mask, an iron lung; he’d never yet visited anyone in a hospital), he might not even tell her he was there.

“Buy food to feed fifty people lunch at thirty-seven cents apiece,” Jane said. “Peanut butter and jelly, maybe. And a drink.”

“KoolAid,” Chuck said. “How about bologna, bread, and mustard?”

“As long as you can get enough of it for \$18.50,” Jane said. “I hope you have cash.”

He had an envelope in his dresser with two twenty-dollar bills. Savings for a trip west. “Can you reimburse me?”

“We’re selling the lunches,” Jane said. “See you at the Sheraton.”

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Eighteen

November 15, 1968

“You were co-opted,” Tessa said. “How come you can’t *see* that?” She was pulling clothes out of drawers and sorting them into piles on the bed. Jane stood in the doorway nursing a cup of coffee. She’d been awake all night, and her head felt like an old carpet sweeper choked with hairballs and rust.

“We did what we set out to do,” she said. “Disrupted the charity lunch, shook people up, got some facts out there about the United Appeal under Carter Kissell.”

“What got out there was Carl Stokes on the nightly news welcoming the People’s Contingent with open arms and Carter Kissell waving – no, brandishing – his thirty-seven-cent lunch. You made them relevant, and now they don’t have to change a thing.” Tessa pawed through socks, folded several pairs into neat balls, then looked at her watch. “Gotta move, if I’m going to catch that train to the airport.” She was going to New York for Thanksgiving with the Buchanans.

She called her parents “The Buchanans” or “Marjorie and Tom,” as though they had a distant business relationship. Jane had seen Tessa with them, however: she turned into a darling, gave them little pats on shoulders or cheeks, fixed them perfect martinis, asked leading questions to get them talking about relatives and friends, tennis matches, plans for summer at the Cape. The Buchanans were not conspicuously wealthy – there was no cook, no gardener, none of the groomed acreage Jane saw around other houses in

the neighborhood. After Atlantic City, when she'd found her way to Long Island alone, Marjorie was friendly, fixed tuna salad sandwiches, and gave Jane her own appointment at the beauty salon. "I can wait a few days; you can't get on that plane to Cleveland without a real haircut." Jane felt coerced – but Marjorie respected her enough to tell the beautician there would be no setting, no permanent wave, just a wash and cut. The Buchanans supported Tessa's "eccentric idealism" – later, when she quit medical school, they assumed she was "taking a break" from "the stress." So Tessa had said.

Tessa dumped socks into her duffel bag, then gathered up her shirts. Jane held the bag open while Tessa filled it – pants, sweaters, shoes. While Tessa splashed and banged doors in the bathroom, Jane sipped her coffee dutifully. This was what you did for friends: force down coffee and prepare to drive after a night of insomniac confusion.

The news had cut yesterday's most interesting moment: Roldo Bartimole, the maverick journalist, had responded to Stokes's welcome by making a trumpet of his hands and yelling, "If we're so welcome, Carl, how come your undercover police are here watching us?"

"Are they here?" Stokes flashed his dimples. "I didn't know."

"There's Sergeant Ungvary!" Marvin called.

"Go ahead – take their pictures!" Roldo pointed to the men who stood in a silent row against the back wall, their shoulders and necks blocked into suits so smooth they could have been black plastic. As the cameras whirled around, the undercover agents scattered like cockroaches, and Ungvary backed into a corner behind a plant. No wonder the footage was cut.

Tessa was right: The People's Contingent been co-opted. The dressed-up administrators of Red Cross, Family Services and welfare programs smiled as warmly as if the protesters were modeling the latest styles instead of waving signs that attacked the wealthy who pretended to be charitable. The wealthy cheerfully looked up from their chicken croquettes and paid thirty-seven cents each for bologna sandwiches and KoolAid in paper cups.

"It's an indicator of change that they *wanted* to use us to be relevant," Jane said, when Tessa returned from the bathroom with her hands full of things to pack. "They'd have nothing to do with us last May, when Stokes launched Cleveland:Now!"

"Good point." Tessa opened her cream-colored vanity case and loaded the top tray with her toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, Noxzema. In the space underneath meant for rollers and makeup, she put books, a wad of paper, and a handful of pencils and pens. "No, I was right the first time." She closed the little case, stood up and stretchd. "They twisted what we did to suit their agenda. No change. Let's go."

If Tessa were going to visit only her parents, she would have taken just the vanity case, or she might have slipped her toothbrush into her purse and left without anything else. She had a whole wardrobe at the Buchanan home that never came to Cleveland. But the duffel was crammed with her Movement clothes. Jane shoved it into the back seat of the Valiant. Tessa put the little case on the floor. "You're meeting some people in New York, aren't you?" Jane said.

"Well sure." Tessa shrugged. "You sign on to the international youth revolution, you gotta meet with the vanguard."

"I thought the vanguard was the Black Panthers in Oakland."

“Smart aleck.” Tessa narrowed her eyes and smiled. “You know what I mean.”

“Mmmm.” Tessa thought New York was the hub of the world. Indeed, SDS was larger there than it could ever be in Cleveland. The Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers created another inventive disruption every week, artists held Happenings in warehouses, and the *Rat* was published by extremely smart New Left writers and editors. The Black Panthers fed breakfast to children and gave speeches to liberals. But all that did not mean the vanguard was in New York.

Jane resented Tessa’s belittling the Cleveland Movement. “We couldn’t even stay in the dining room,” she said. “The dining service people stopped us.”

“Union?”

“Yes,” Jane said. In the middle of Marvin’s speech about how most United Appeal money went to the middle class, Chuck had leapt onto the stage with a tray-full of bologna sandwiches and borrowed the mike. “We’re not welcome after all,” he announced. “So we’re going back where we belong: to the streets!”

They’d all cheered him. Only now did Jane see how Chuck had twisted the situation to suit their needs. She changed the subject. “Dora was there yesterday.”

“At the luncheon? How is she?”

“Angry,” Jane said. “She’s been kicked off the job; they decided they couldn’t have a seven-months-pregnant single outreach worker.”

“That stinks,” Tessa said. “But now she can do outreach for us.”

“For Welfare Rights,” Jane said. “They’ve got this grant from the national organization, so they’re paying her. Not much more than she’d get on welfare, but at least she doesn’t have to shuffle and eat dirt for her check.”

“Shit.” Tessa pushed her lower jaw forward, something she did when she was glum and didn’t know how to get past it. Then she said, “I’m sick of being a white person. Look at me. Tonight I’ll be in Long Island having dinner with the Buchanans. Who do I think I am, trying to be in the front lines of the revolution, with Marjorie and Tom to live down?”

“So in the city, you’ll turn black and get into the vanguard, right?”

“There’s a role for me,” Tessa said. She didn’t laugh. “I’m not sure what my role is yet. But it’s time to repudiate my class background.”

“What do you mean, repudiate?”

“Kiss Marjorie, Tom, and Long Island good-bye. I’ll tell them tonight. Tomorrow I’ll be in the City.” Just this precipitously, Tessa had decided to quit medical school, work full-time on the revolution, and divest herself of a physician’s privileged status. Now she would cut herself loose from her parents.

“How will they take it?” Nothing seemed to disturb the Buchanans. Jane had felt the household’s smooth impermeable coating – which their daughter was about to rip away.

“They’ll assume at first I’m just visiting friends,” Tessa said. “They won’t believe I’m not coming back. Eventually it’ll sink in.” She thrust her lower jaw forward again.

“What about our rent?” Jane asked. She’d come to rely on the Buchanans for that, and a few other amenities.

“I have enough to cover us till the end of the year. By then we shouldn’t need the apartment anymore.” Tessa’s voice was flat, harsh, as though she talked without moving her jaw, steeling herself.

“Why not?” Jane parked along the curb near the station entrance.

“The revolution is gonna blow soon.” Tessa opened her door. “And when it does we won’t live anywhere – or rather, we’ll live everywhere.”

“What exactly do you imagine?” Jane demanded, holding her friend by the arm. Tessa wasn’t delusional; she must have information. “What does *anywhere – everywhere* mean in practical day-to-day terms?” The next question was *Who do you include in “we”*? Usually when Tessa talked about the revolution, her visions at least made sense. The end of the year was six weeks from now.

“I’m past imagining, Jane. I’m planning.” Tessa got out. Jane came around to help settle the big duffel bag on her friend’s shoulder. They hugged good-bye. Maybe Tessa would find a role in New York and stay there. Maybe she was hoping to somehow force the revolution to start next week. “Gotta make the train,” Tessa said, walking away.

“What about *my* plans?” Jane called. “Aren’t they tied to yours?” Tessa didn’t hear. She crossed to the Rapid Transit entrance, swinging her vanity case in one hand. Her other hand clutched the strap of her duffel, packed with all the clothes she’d need for a long time. Big enough to contain another person, it barely slowed her down.

Tessa might repudiate the past, but she wouldn’t get rid of it. She could give up gallery openings and live performances of classical music, but she’d listen to the radio with an ear that loved Beethoven and choose revolutionary posters with an eye that knew fine art. Even if she avoided the Buchanans, she’d know that she could someday turn around, leave *anywhere—everywhere*, and return to the comfortable house, the posh neighborhood. She’d always been able to come up with money – for a phone call, a bottle of wine, a book she wanted. She couldn’t quit being rich any more than she could quit

being white. Jane didn't care that Tessa was rich. She didn't want to let her go. She started the car, weary and weak with fear.

Winter was pressing down on Cleveland, the sky leaden, the dank air that chilled more thoroughly than if it were freezing. The Valiant chugged up Cedar Hill, the first foothill of the Alleghenies, the entrance to Cleveland Heights, where the dark and ivy-covered buildings were venerable, the people white, their gentility doomed. Jane steered onto Euclid Heights Boulevard, the most direct route to her apartment, empty and cold. The radiators clanked and barely got warm: She could rest her hand comfortably on the metal. The cockroaches were multiplying. They invaded the kitchen, streaming away when Jane turned on the light. Last night, when she couldn't sleep, she'd stomped hard and fast, killing five or six while hundreds escaped into their cracks. She'd crushed a few strays who couldn't bear to leave the sink, scummy with orange juice pulp and milk curds, cooked oats, grains of rice.

She'd decided to scrub the sink. She didn't fear cockroaches as she feared the rats in Glenville, didn't loathe them as she'd loathed flies in East Cleveland and mosquitoes that ruined Minneapolis summers. Chiggers in Mississippi, ants in Ann Arbor – she couldn't remember a life without a plague of insects. She scrubbed the oatmeal pot thoroughly; then she cleaned the floor on hands and knees. She knew neither Spic 'n Span nor Lysol would keep the roaches away, but a clean floor might give them less to eat, slow down their procreation.

She'd been scrubbing dirt out of the cracks in the linoleum when Tessa appeared, wakened by the noise. "Hot chocolate will put you to sleep," she said, and went to work heating milk in the clean pot, stirring in sugar and cocoa, watching to make sure it didn't

boil. Then she filled a mug and put it on the table. “Here,” she said, a hand on Jane’s shoulder. “I’m going back to bed with mine.”

Jane had sipped her cocoa, wishing Tessa would stay up and sit with her. Maybe in this otherworldly space when they should be sleeping, they’d be able to talk each other into understanding, the way they used to. In the last month they’d argued politics every few days, and they hadn’t been able to resolve a thing. The kitchen chair was hard against her body, ungiving and unstable; one slightly shorter leg ticked against the floor as she leaned to pick up the mug and sip cocoa, which Tessa had cooked perfectly, without too much sugar, without scorching. Her bedroom door remained closed. Jane filled the empty mug and the pot with water and left them in the sink. Then she went back to bed and shivered till dawn, feeling lonely, telling herself how irrational that was.

Now she was in the driveway of the apartment building, but rather than parking, she backed out again and drove toward Coventry. She was afraid of not being able to sleep. She drove without knowing where she was going. What bothered her went deeper than the arguments, or the prospect of losing Tessa. Regret had niggled at her brain since she’d wakened two days ago with Chuck lying next to her. The niggle went back and forth. On the one hand, having sex with Chuck and then spending the night with him made her much too vulnerable: She should not have done it. On the other hand, she should have enjoyed it more. She should have relished sex with Chuck, whom she liked very much.

She drove around in Lake Forest cemetery, the gravestones and statues stark amidst depleted grass and barren trees. It was a good place to practice being lost. She had the sense that she’d once known the way and now she didn’t. Had there been a wrong

turn? No, the road had led her to this confusing place. She needed to learn what her role was, but she could not simply go to New York to find out. She had to figure it out on her own. The answer would come from inside.

Liberated woman. She didn't know, right now, what that meant. She'd practiced *Female in America* with Ivy, Susan, and the others; they were scheduled to give a public reading next week in the basement of the church. The play showed accurately (they'd all recognized themselves) women's *lack* of liberation. It didn't go far enough.

Jane thought of Tessa, striding along with her soldier's bag and her ladies' vanity case. Jane didn't want to be a soldier any more than she wanted to be a lady. She didn't want to be forced into the streets; she'd had enough of that. The revolution could fail – especially if it started soon. Young men could claim a hilltop, straddle General Logan's horse, climb to the rider's bronze shoulders, and be triumphant. They could take over university administration buildings, shut down business-as-usual for a few days, weeks, or months. They could tear down walls and uproot the hidden rules about girls and boys, respect for authority, and straight lines. But then what?

The question wasn't how you replace a government you've toppled, or even what a socialist democracy would look like. Some American version of Sweden, perhaps: a guaranteed income, universal health coverage, racial, sexual, and class equality, free telephone service. That much was easy. The real questions were *Who are you now? And where will you find rest? With whom?*

Chuck's Pontiac sat against the curb in front of The Monmouth, but that didn't mean he was home. He often walked to work at the bookstore or the office. Jane parked behind the Pontiac and thought how she might go ahead and fall in love with Chuck

Leggit. He was a genuinely nice guy. He was open about his doubts and fears. He liked cats and children. They shared a nice companionable craftsmanship over the layout and copy-editing of *The Steam Tunnel Gazette*.

At the time it felt only natural to be on the layout table with their shirts up and their pants down, slamming into each other as the table-legs screeched on the cement floor. Chuck's mouth was wet and voracious, his cock enormous, and she couldn't get enough of him, there on the table, or later on the couch. "You're insatiable!" he'd said, with the delight of a treasure-hunter who'd found the jewels: an insatiable woman. On her own couch, she finally came. Then, because he was so eager, she tried again, but she was glad when he'd finally had enough. It was good to fall asleep with him: She'd felt safe and held his hand.

In the morning her vagina burned and she was disgusted with herself. Chuck kept saying "Four times!" as though that were some sort of record, as though he expected her to say *it was fabulous, let's do it again right now*. She'd let him think she was insatiable rather than dissatisfied. She needed to get back to business and felt herself grow cold without meaning to. It occurred to her that all their sexual energy had come from anger – he probably hadn't had sex since Ivy'd ended their relationship, and so had poured his resentment into Jane. Her own anger was more diffuse, pounding against the expectations of all the men she'd slept with, and some she hadn't. In the night she hadn't seen what was so plain in the morning: Chuck had the same expectations as other men.

She parked behind his car because she didn't want to be alone. She needed a friend. It was eleven in the morning; she hoped he was there and would not expect sex right away. Maybe this evening, after she'd slept. She needed to sleep.

The front door's metal tooth had not quite caught; she heaved against it, and it lurched open. Jane climbed the three flights clutching the handrail, walked to his door, tapped. Then she knocked. Then she pounded three times. He wasn't home.

She pulled herself together and assessed how exhausted she was. She'd come running to Chuck as if she still thought a man would help her straighten things out. She needed someone; that much she recognized. By now Tessa was at the airport. Ivy was still in the hospital, where Tessa had taken her on Wednesday night. She couldn't think of another woman she wanted to see. Patricia? Jane had written her yesterday, a quick, cheerful note. "I'll come to the conference on Thanksgiving if I can – money's an issue, as you can guess. And parents."

The sun poured through the Valiant's windshield, lighting up the dust motes, glancing off the crack on the far corner, warming the front seat. She considered driving to the office, to the West Side Commune, or to Columbus to visit Norman. She had one dollar left till Monday, when Marvin would pay her with some of the money he'd been raising. She could eat for one dollar till then, but she could not drive to Columbus. She thought of Norman scooping her into his arms, how lovely it would be to lay her head on his shoulder and close her eyes, *happiness, blissfulness, togetherness* ... The song was "Love Hurts," and Norman had never scooped her into his arms like that. It was her father's arms she'd felt comfortable in, when she was small enough to be held with her legs wrapped around his waist, her head on his shoulder, before the Rosenberg execution, when he crumpled, shrank, and grew cold. *Oo-oooh, love hurts.*

She was wakened by a pounding and a distant shout. "Jane! Jane!" Far away she saw Chuck's face, fierce and terrified. She'd lain sideways on the seat, and he was

pounding on the window near her feet. Scrambling up, she hit the horn. It squawked, and she saw Chuck's face relax as she rolled down the window. Cold air poured over her.

"Are you sick?" he asked.

"Let me out." She shivered and pulled the halves of her jacket across each other. She knew what had happened: In her weariness and confusion, the strength of her girl-conditioning had re-asserted itself. She let the cold harshness of the day – it was afternoon now; she'd slept for hours – knock the silly wistful longings and weaknesses out of her brain. Chuck opened the door, and she stood up next to him, wondering how to explain herself.

"Let's go eat at the Big Penny," he said.

She would spend her dollar later on rice and lentils or potatoes and eggs; then she would have plenty to eat right through Monday. To assuage hunger now she stirred three packs of sugar into her coffee, sipped it, and filled the cup to the brim with milk.

"I've seen Ivy," he said. "Her aunt was there."

"That's good," Jane said. "Ivy likes Peg. So do I. How is she? I thought asthma could vanish as quickly as it came."

"She's still in the oxygen tent. You ever seen one of those things? I hadn't either. It's got plastic walls and steam inside, and through the steam you see this big-eyed girl floating." Chuck's eyes were big and blue, though paler than Ivy's. He stared fearfully into the space above the table, as though something hovered there, crystalline and sharp. "I couldn't touch her," he whispered. "No one could, except nurses."

"Can she talk? Is she getting better?"

“When Tessa found her, her lungs felt like cement, crawling with worms – that’s how she described it. She’s been coughing up the worms; she says they’re greenish-yellow.”

“She must’ve had bronchitis,” Jane said. “I had that last winter. Took a lot of antibiotics. Phlegm gets packed into the little tubes in your lungs; when you cough it up, it holds its shape.” She wanted to ask about Peg, who should have come to the Sheraton yesterday to announce the beginning of Welfare Food Budget week. Peg had recruited a hundred volunteers to eat on a Welfare food allowance between now and Thanksgiving. But it was no good if there was no publicity.

“Ivy’s getting antibiotics through an IV tube in her arm,” Chuck said. “Drugs to make her relax, drugs to clear her lungs. There was no place for me in that scene.” He looked like he might cry.

“I’m sorry,” Jane said. She felt guilty for thinking of her own agenda and touched his hand, which lay on the table under the invisible icy thing. He gripped her fingers.

“*You* didn’t do anything,” he said. “I’m the one that got all hung up on Ivy Barcelona. I just wish I could undo the hook. That’s exactly what I feel like – a big old catfish with a hook in its jaw. You know? The line’s been snapped, but the hook still hurts. I see Ivy and it’s like she’s giving it a tug. All she has to do is say Hi Chuck thanks a lot for the flowers. *Yank*. Ow!”

“You brought her flowers? Oh, Chuck.”

“I know,” he said. “She was being sarcastic.” He picked up his coffee cup, looked into it, put it down. “I’m sorry I went.”

“Don’t be. It was good of you. You put yourself out there. You were just ...”

Something so unfailingly kind about Chuck: He approached the world tenderly, even when he knew it would hurt. The word “sweetheart” fit him.

“A great thing about spending the night with you,” he said, “was feeling the hook come loose.”

“Glad to be of service,” Jane said.

“I didn’t mean that like it sounded,” Chuck said. His sandwich arrived, warm and fragrant with bacon. He smiled in anticipation and asked for more coffee.

Jane felt her poverty and thought of Dora. At this rate, she’d never have Dora’s strength. “Tessa says we were co-opted yesterday,” she said.

“She would,” Chuck said. “Have you seen the position paper she wrote with Bert? They call it ‘Let Us Not Talk Falsely Now; the Hour Is Getting Late.’”

“That’s a line from ‘All Along the Watchtower.’ What do Bert and Tessa say?”

“Time to commit, whole-hog. If you’re not working for the international struggle against U.S. imperialism, then you’re not doing shit,” Chuck said. “I told them we’d publish it as a position paper. Movement people sure do love that word *struggle*.” He cut his sandwich into two triangles.

“I’ve begun to think most struggles are internal,” Jane said.

“Here.” Chuck put one triangle on his saucer and passed it across the table. “I think *struggle* probably means too many things.”

“Tessa says I’m always navel-gazing,” Jane said. “She says the problems are never internal, always in the objective conditions.” Eating a BLT felt wonderful. Tessa

was at least partly right: Jane had been wallowing in feelings and fantasy, when all she needed was food and sleep. She would sleep again soon.

“Objective conditions: that’s another mouthful,” Chuck said, chewing. He swallowed and said, “Bert’s been staying at my apartment, working on the manifesto. He’s lost most of his sense of humor, and he’s been liberating things. I don’t mind having a jar of olives from the Italian grocery, but he ripped off the bookstore the other day – a really fat dictionary.”

“Do you want to kick him out?”

“I was going to ask you, while Tessa’s in New York ...”

“Bert can stay in her room, I guess,” Jane said. “Though I’d rather he didn’t.” She didn’t like the idea of being alone in the apartment with Bert since he’d tried to force her in the back of the van coming home from Chicago. But comrades didn’t turn each other away. They’d been so close, Tessa, Bert, Marvin and herself, trusting each other completely. She had to hope the trust would return.

“Actually,” Chuck said, “I was going to ask if I could come home with you tonight.” The waitress refilled their cups.

“*You* want to use Tessa’s room?” Jane asked.

“That wasn’t exactly what I had in mind.” He loaded his coffee with sugar and milk and stirred.

Jane added sugar and milk to hers. She should simply explain that she didn’t want to deal with sex right now. Sometimes she wanted sex. Sometimes she didn’t. What was the big deal? She didn’t want sex to be a bargain. Couldn’t a couple of people sleep together for comfort without the sex? She heard a growl across the table.

Chuck was making fast little circles in his coffee with the stirring stick. “Rrrrr, rrrrrr” – a guttural noise, not really growling. “Rrrrrrr.”

“What are you doing?” she asked.

“I’m being a motor,” he said.

“That was a motor sound?”

“Yeah. I guess I don’t do that in public. I don’t think of you as ‘public.’”

“Oh,” Jane said. He’d probably been playing that boy-game since elementary school. Being a motor, a machine gun, a motorcycle. Boy-conditioning also taught them they had to conquer the girl. Probably as hard to get over as girl-conditioning.

She took him home; what else could she do? They stopped on the way for potatoes, eggs, and bread, and Chuck bought a bottle of Ripple – all he could afford. At least she did not have to be alone.

He was incredulous that she really did not want sex, even after he’d cooked a potato-egg omelet and given her a tumbler full of wine. “I’m still sore,” she said. He accepted that, then found some Vaseline in the medicine cupboard to cure the soreness. He simply did not understand that she could like him, could let him hold her in his arms while they talked on the couch, then could push him away when he started to unbutton her jeans.

“What am I doing wrong?” he asked.

She couldn’t tell him. She didn’t have words for it. “Nothing,” she said.

“Maybe if I’m really, really gentle?” He poked her shirt out of the way and kissed her collarbone sweetly.

She exploded from the couch. “Goddamn it, Chuck, I like you. Don’t spoil it.” She shut herself in Tessa’s room, heard him in the kitchen washing the dishes, singing “Rainy Day Women” off-key. He’d made her toast and buttered it right to the edge. She liked having him around, but sex would rear its ugly head every time. The penis *did* have an ugly head, all blind, gooey mouth. It wasn’t Chuck’s fault.

Tessa had left behind her stereo and her classical records, which filled both shelves of an orange crate. Che Guevarra and Beethoven glared from the walls. On the dresser was a jewelry box: Jane opened it and a dancer began to twirl to a tinkly phrase. Box and dancer were dusty. The only jewelry inside was a circle pin and a pair of pearl earrings. The room was colder than the rest of the apartment. Jane climbed into the bed and tried to sleep. Eventually she heard a tap on the door.

“What is it?” She propped herself on one elbow.

He peeked in. “I need company a lot more than I need sex. Really.”

“I need sleep,” she said. “But it’s cold in here. Company would be nice.”

They made tea and unfolded the couch. Jane wore her pyjamas and socks, and to keep warm she sat close to him, their legs and arms touching. After a while, he kissed her. They kissed each other, and his kisses grew hungry. His hand came under her shirt. She shook her head, *no*, but he pulled her close and held her tightly, fumbling to open her jeans. She pushed with both arms and climbed off the bed.

He caught up with her at the door to Tessa’s room and picked her up, laughing, carried her back to the bed. He pulled down her jeans and climbed on top of her. She could not stop him.

Afterward, she wept on his chest, his arm around her. "What's wrong? Why are you so upset?" he asked.

She shook her head. "It's beyond words," she said. She didn't know what was wrong.

Chuck stroked her back. "You know what? You were playing Rapo," he said. "It's one of the games women play, in the Berne book." She'd leafed through it once at a bookstore: Eric Berne gave cute titles to psychological games, like "Ain't it Awful" and "Let's You and Him Fight." "A woman resists and resists because she wants a man to force her," Chuck said. "Then she cries rape."

"I didn't want you to force me," Jane said. She pulled away. "And I'm not crying rape."

"But you wanted it. I know you did."

"No," she said. "I really didn't." She could not look at him.

She curled into the far corner of the couch and pulled the covers over herself. "It's not something you do consciously," he said. "Once you see the game, you can stop playing it."

"Does the book include the game men play?" she asked. "It should be called How Can You Resist My Big Dick?"

She would not look at him, shrugged his hand off her shoulder. She heard him whisper "I'm so sorry," and did not respond. After a while she felt him leave the bed. Then she heard the shower running. She did not move. She would not give up her bed, could not let him near her. In an uneasy doze she saw herself on the lip of a canyon, with

enemies at her back. Chuck's footsteps made the apartment floor creak. He did not try to return to the bed.

He must have slept in Tessa's room. In the morning he was not in the apartment; Tessa's bed was neatly made. Two beloved comrades – gone in one day.

LIBERTY BOULEVARD

Chapter Nineteen

December 21, 1968

Ivy picked her way along Euclid Avenue, stepping over sharp edges where cement had buckled and heaved, avoiding brown puddles with ice-skins; she was wearing her dollar-ninety-eight tie-up shoes, suede with round toes. She'd just met with Tessa at the office. "You've got to *commit*," Tessa said. "Stop believing you can work with Trotskyists."

"But not all of the CEWV members are Trotskyists," Ivy pointed out. SDS and the Committee (she and Arthur) had talked about sharing a bus to Washington for a Nixon inHOGuration protest, conveniently after finals. Nothing had been decided.

"Come on, Ivy, are you with SDS or not?" There was ultimatum in Tessa's close-together eyes. She would not give an inch.

A month ago, Tessa had saved Ivy's life.

She had managed to walk downstairs to the kitchen table; then something snapped, and she couldn't move. Susan found her holding her lungs open with her elbows on the table, no air going in or out, unable to speak. Susan put on water for tea and opened the door to Tessa, who burst in, looked at Ivy and said, "We're going to the hospital." They fireman-carried Ivy to the Valiant. In the emergency room, Tessa was easy and brisk as Ivy's mother would have been, comfortable among medical charts, gurneys, curtains, rubber tubing, and the men and women in white who swished through. As soon as the chart was stamped "admitted – status asthmaticus" Tessa vanished.

Then came a wheeled rush down corridors, more tubes and curtains, needles, and the oxygen tent. Through mist and wavering plastic walls Ivy could see a faraway room with a black window and a framed print – a field of flowers painted by some would-be impressionist. When she coughed she wet herself. Her back-muscles hurt. Her hand was pierced, taped, and fastened to an IV. Periodically someone came to check the bottle that fed the tube, inject it with medication or attach a new bottle. Sometimes whoever it was would push back the curtain and say, “Okay, hon?” or listen with a stethoscope. Ivy dozed and waked, half-dozed and half-waked, and thus lost track of days. She could not imagine the world outside the tent; reality was mist and the harsh jerk of her own breath coming into a little space at the top of her lungs, leaking slowly out again.

One day she decided she wanted very much to live. If she had to fight to breathe, if she had to be fat, if she had to hate herself for breaking Chuck’s heart, if she failed to finish college, if she had to disappoint her parents, even if she had to compromise her political beliefs – she wanted to go on living.

Aunt Peg appeared, wisecracking and scolding. “I’ve wanted to help you all along, make things easier, but you’ve made it difficult. Every step of the way. You know that?” Ivy, let out of the tent for an hour, admired her bare foot on top of the blanket. It looked healthy, rotated hopefully on its ankle bones, wiggled its toes. A marvelous creature, that foot.

She saw Chuck through the mist with daisies in his hands. Love and sadness rose in her chest like foam; she coughed and coughed, filling tissues with mucus, dropping them into a pile on the bed. When she could see again, Chuck was standing next to Aunt Peg, who was fumbling at the tent wall to find the nurse-call button. Ivy pushed it out of

the tent and felt Chuck's hand on hers. Her heart squeezed. She thought he'd gotten on with his life. Damn him for coming around now, making her feel like shit when she was as low as she could get. Damn him for not hating her.

She left the hospital feeling like she'd been peeled, inside and out. Aunt Peg hovered as she packed shoes, clothes, and books. No time to be alone, to return phone calls, to talk with Susan. Peg drove her to Bloomington, grouching the whole way. "This, of all weeks!" She was managing Welfare Food Budget Week, supposed to be available to all hundred volunteer families. She'd planned to be home, not in Bloomington till Thanksgiving. Now she'd incur a whopping long-distance bill. "I'm sorry," Ivy said. "I couldn't help it." She stared out the window at the bleached fields, the bony woods, the sky spitting gray snow.

Peg said, "Mmm, I guess you couldn't," as if she didn't believe it. Then, after a pause: "I guess you learned a lot. There's always more to learn. You can see that, can't you?" When Ivy didn't answer, Peg complained about John and Hetty because neither of them had come to the hospital. "You'd think my brother would put his daughter ahead of his patients," she said. "And your mother doesn't work. I had to take time off – which I can't afford, I tell you that."

"Dad always puts his patients ahead of us," Ivy said. "And Mum does work; she fills in for his receptionist – the one who just had a baby. She never drives, not since she caused that accident when Randy was little." Ivy was glad to have been spared attention from her parents. She'd have preferred not going to Bloomington, except that she'd been so certain she would die.

Thanksgiving was awkward because they could not talk about Ivy's lungs, which began to tighten again almost right away. No one asked about the breakup with Chuck or noted the empty space in the house: Glen hadn't written home for several months. Except for Randy's rant about semiconductors and miniature integrated circuits – "Electronics is the *real* revolution, not this bunch of kids with their long hair and outrageous language!" – the conversation was bland and cheerful, as if everything was just fine.

She couldn't go home to Hessler Road right away. She had to see her parents' doctor, then an allergist. She got new medication, insisted on riding the bus back to Cleveland, and stayed just long enough to catch up with classes. She had to return to Bloomington for allergy testing: a hundred injections in a grid on her back. A few raised itchy welts – essences of cat hair, tree pollen, mold, house dust; they were her allergies. In Bloomington she read newspapers and magazines and watched television. The world seethed madly, out of reach.

She took a walk with her mother, who kept her arms folded across her chest the whole way round the park. "I'd like to know your plans for the future," Hetty said.

"I was planning to stay in Cleveland after graduation." Ivy would stick with the Movement; that was all she knew for certain.

"You should consider getting certified to teach," Hetty said. "There's not much you can do with an art history degree."

"I might," Ivy said. Teaching would be a hustle. It would pay better than waitressing or library work, the hustles she'd had so far, but it was more time-consuming.

"Your father says as long as you're interested in politics, you should work for a politician. Get an internship with Birch Bayh. Or the senator from Ohio – Steve Young."

“His politics are impossible for me to support,” Ivy said. “I’ll be with the Movement, Mum.” She was not breathing well; the allergist had said cold exacerbated the condition. Ivy had asked if one could be allergic to one’s parents, and he laughed.

In Cleveland she breathed easier, and she’d made her choice. “I’m with SDS,” she’d told Tessa. She would never join the Trots or limit herself to the Committee’s anti-war work. And she couldn’t cut herself off from Tessa, who was strong and brilliant, less concerned than Jane about feminism – because Tessa did not need feminism: She was already liberated, her own person. Tessa didn’t even wear underpants. Marvin had mentioned that. “In a meeting,” he’d said, “I’ll pick up a jolt of electricity running through the men in the room and realize: ah yes, Tessa has just sat down.”

Tessa saw nothing wrong in having sex casually. “Just don’t lie about it,” she told Ivy. “There are lots of reasons to have sex. It’s a physical release, like dancing or sports. It’s not necessarily connected with love.” There would be a national conference in Ann Arbor right after Christmas; Ivy, Tessa, and the others would meet there. She walked across the used-car lot, zigzagging carefully from one dry bit of asphalt to the next.

Still, Ivy thought, Tessa was a bit fanatic to believe that SDS was the only white-people’s organization with the correct line. The Movement marched under many flags now – the black power flag, the women’s liberation flag, the draft resistance, the old socialists. They should support each other whenever they could. The green flag: Susan had developed a passion for the Environment – by which she meant nature, the outdoors without people. She and her new boyfriend were planning to hike the Appalachian Trail all summer.

The anti-imperialist revolution comes ahead of the environment, Tessa said. Yes, but a central tenet of SDS – one of the beliefs that got Ivy involved in the first place – was that all the struggles are interconnected. Tessa said, “But the times demand focus. We can’t just split into little groups according to our personal interests. We’ll dissipate the Movement energy.”

Ivy ducked into the Commodore deli. She needed protein. At home they were down to bread, butter, and jam. She put a can of Vienna sausages into her pocket and turned toward the exit. There was Chuck, studying the label on a jar of pickled onions.

“How *are* you?” he said. “Besides thinner.”

“Couldn’t eat while not breathing,” Ivy said. He was studying her intently. “I’m fine,” she said. To show him she took a deep breath and blew out. Then she turned to go. He followed her.

“You must be pretty hungry,” he said. “You liberated that can of sausage.”

“Couldn’t fit peanut butter into my pocket. Haven’t been able to work at the library, so I’m broke.” He was walking next to her now. They stopped at the corner. “Where are you headed?” she asked.

“The office,” Chuck said.

“I’ve just come from there. Long talk with Tessa. She thinks the revolution is imminent. Next year – or 1970, maybe ‘71.”

“I know,” Chuck said. “I think I won’t go to the office after all. She’s not happy with me.”

“Why not? You published ‘The Hour’s Getting Late.’”

“It was too long, so I cut some. She accused me of making autocratic decisions.”

As the editor, he had to make autocratic decisions, Ivy thought. "How's Jane?" She knew Jane worked on *The Steam Tunnel Express*. Also Jane had been sleeping with Chuck. Stuck in Bloomington, she'd missed the staged reading of *Female in America*, so she hadn't seen Jane.

"She's gone," Chuck said. "Moved to Boston. Actually, she's in Minneapolis with her folks right now; she'll go to Boston after the New Year."

"Those Boston women she met? She's *moving* to be with them?" Why hadn't Jane told her? Ivy felt a pang. She liked Jane. Admired Jane. What had gotten in the way? Surely not Jane's relationship with Chuck.

"Are you sad?" she asked. They were on Ford Drive now, near Hessler.

Chuck looked sad. "It wasn't working," he said. "We weren't, um, compatible."

"Oh." She wondered what he meant. There were whole dimensions to both Jane and Chuck she didn't know. Yet she knew Chuck in a way she'd never known anyone else, recognized his way of walking – slightly ahead of her, his familiar big feet toeing out – and using his hands to make a point, chopping, stirring, molding the air. A long time ago she'd adored him without question, could not have imagined herself without him. Even if she wanted that relationship back, she could not have it. The boyfriend-girlfriend almost-married thing was far behind, on the other side of October.

She didn't much like dating. Manfred, who liked to be called Manny, had not taken her to the symphony. "Sold out," he'd said. "*Tut mir leid*." He offered to play his favorite composers for her, so she went to his apartment. He settled her on the couch with a glass of white wine and Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony on the stereo. "Fine music, it arouses me, I can't help it," he said, and began a series of insistent, needy kisses and

gropings that mashed her against the hard corners of the couch. She blamed her own stupidity and told no one but Susan.

Chuck was telling her about his plan to follow Chavez's farmworkers and write about them. "I've always wanted to experience California," he said. They passed her house on Hessler and walked on – over the part of the street paved in wooden bricks, through the new dorm complex to Magnolia Drive, where Chuck went to Quaker Meeting now and then, even though he'd decided not to be a Conscientious Objector.

"They haven't tried to induct me," he said. "When they do I may have to go to prison and write about it." He looked cheerful about this option. "A bunch of men have done it and survived," he said. "Do you still plan to go around the world?"

"Yes," Ivy said. "I wish there was a way just to study things I'm curious about. American Indians and slavery. Revolutions in China and Cuba. How women came to be dominated by men."

"I'm not convinced women *are* dominated by men," Chuck said. "At least it's not that simple." They were back on Euclid Avenue, walking past boarded-up buildings and empty lots to 116th Street. "Well, I'll be seeing you," Chuck said. "I'm leaving for Cincinnati in a few hours."

"You won't be seeing me," Ivy said. "That's what you mean."

"Yeah, you're right. I won't see you." He turned toward The Monmouth, muttering something she couldn't quite hear. Maybe it was "Good to talk."

"Yes," she said. "I like talking with you." She put out her hand to shake.

He looked at her hand curiously, then pulled at his mustache. "I'd invite you up," he said. "But my place is a disaster area."

“Is Bert still there?”

“No – are you kidding? He’s with your SDS pal, Angie.”

“Angela? She lives in a dorm. He can’t stay there.”

“He can’t stay here, either, that’s all I know. I haven’t seen him in a week.”

“I’m going to Bloomington tomorrow,” Ivy said. Her throat felt swollen with grief. “I’ve been there far too much. The folks are ... oh, you know. They hate me for being sick. I hate being sick.”

“Hate’s a pretty strong word,” Chuck said. “I can’t imagine your folks feeling that way. But when I was in their presence I had no idea how they were feeling about anything. Especially about me.”

“That’s how they are,” Ivy said. “They don’t say how they feel. Sometimes I think they don’t know. My dad exploded when he found out I smoked.”

“I never noticed you smoked that much.” They were walking up The Monmouth stairs. Ivy held on to the railing. An old friend from long ago, this grimy railing. “Dad slammed his briefcase on the side table so hard all the dishes jumped,” she said. “Then he said, ‘You’re not running a risk of emphysema. You’re welcoming it with open arms.’ I don’t smoke anymore, haven’t since the hospital.”

“Not even dope?”

“Unh-unh.” She stopped at the top of the stairs. “For my birthday, Susan baked marijuana brownies. We ate them and drank tequila and laughed a lot.” The laughter had been strangely disconnected from the conversation. There had been a lovely moment that seemed to go on and on when she’d listened to a piano record of Gail’s and heard every note distinctly, one crystalline drop after another.

“So you’re twenty-one at last.” He grinned. They were standing at the door of the apartment; he was opening it. “I’ll understand if you can’t come in.” She knew his smell, the rumble of his voice, felt herself relax with his familiar body so near. The place looked worse than she’d ever seen it.

“I shouldn’t stay,” she said. “I’ve been so lonesome.” She stepped over a heap of dirty laundry. “I’ve gone off the pill.”

“I think I have a condom somewhere,” Chuck said. He kicked the laundry into the closet and opened a drawer.

“Never mind,” Ivy said. “I’m having my period.” It was good to feel his hands on her shoulders, to wrap her arms around his torso and move in close, close.

“You’re lovely,” he whispered.

For a month she’d lived in pain and suffocation, her body a container of nothing but phlegm, urine, and bitter chemicals. She hadn’t felt lovely till now, sliding into his arms and onto the bed. They made love carefully, more gently than ever before, as if they knew this was the last time.

The divide between them remained.

Afterward, Ivy washed and put on a fresh Kotex pad. She refused Chuck’s offer to walk her home – it was still light, and she needed to reclaim her self: Ivy Barcelona, strong and independent, walking alone under a gray sky on dirty streets. She stumbled over a break in the sidewalk and felt a warm flow down the inside of her leg. At the used-car lot she saw her sock was red. By the time she got home her shoe was soaked; she left a trail of reddish scuff-marks across the porch. The fresh pad she put on after her bath was soaked through within an hour. All evening and into the night she kept bleeding.

December 27 1968

On Christmas the Barcelonas' household rang like a bell with its clapper wrapped in felt. There was no word – not even a postcard – from Glen. Simon and Garfunkel's seven o'clock news version of "Silent Night" came onto the radio, and Mum switched it off. Ivy kept to her room and took medicine. When she had conversations, she limited herself to talking about the people who'd sent Christmas cards.

The next day she took a bus to Ann Arbor and found the conference easily: black fists silk-screened onto white paper were taped to the doors.

"Here she *is*! Here's our Ivy girl!" Bert patted her on the back and steered her to a table where a leather-jacketed man with a sandy beard sat behind a pile of literature.

"James, this is the woman I was telling you about," Bert said.

"What did he tell you?" Ivy asked. James had a freckly face and hands. White teeth. Green eyes.

"That you're a smart chick," James said.

"Here's a revised copy of our statement," Bert said, handing her "Let Us Not Talk Falsely Now; the Hour Is Growing Late." "James is with us on this," he said. Ivy shoved her suitcase and sleeping bag behind a turquoise couch and settled down to read. Around her, people greeted each other with hugs, kisses, and glad cries.

"We've got the place to stand," she overheard someone say. "We just need to locate the lever, and we'll roll the whole capitalist-imperialist stone off its cliff and into oblivion." The voice belonged to Bert's friend James, now standing in front of the lit table, talking to a circle of people; he was taller than most of them.

"The lever is us!" A woman's voice. "Our lives, our bodies. If we don't do it – won't happen."

“Ah but it will.” Bert’s voice. “The colonized nations will bring it down.”

“Good old Bert.” Marvin Kaminsky sat next to Ivy on the couch. “You’ve got a long slog ahead.” He indicated the manifesto on her lap. “Keep in mind the title is part of a conversation between a joker and a thief.”

“I read the version in the *Steam Tunnel Express*,” Ivy said. “Comprehensive. And extremely logical. If SDS is going to make the revolution, then we need to commit fully.”

“Extreme logic is one of the things that makes me skeptical,” Marvin said.

“How are you getting along with Bert these days?” On their dinner date, Marvin had made a dry remark about perpetual boys in cowboy boots, overly fond of explosives.

“His heart’s in the right place. His head?” Marvin shrugged. He was so diffident Ivy didn’t know what to make of him. She’d figured out he was shy and old-fashioned. At the end of the date he’d kissed her politely, not passionately. He’d announced he was seeing other women, as if she had a right to know. They had a real conversation about how the negative income tax might work and what a university might be like in the year 2000. He seemed to understand there would be a year 2000 in a way Ivy could not imagine.

“Are you coming to the Midwest Caucus? I’ll see you there.” Marvin patted her knee and went away. Ivy wished Jane were here. She bent her head to the revised paper: It began with a quote from Lin Piao and clicked like a train through class analysis ... means of production ... new working class ... American Black Colony at the sharp edge of the struggle ... false consciousness caused by racism ... proposal for a revolutionary youth movement: This summer small groups of SDS would live in collectives in key cities; they’d study, recruit other young people, and confront every manifestation they

could find of the racist monopolist power structure. Here was Bert's and Tessa's answer to Ivy's question of what to do after graduation.

In the caucus room, Tessa was talking about how much she used to love classical music. "Mao says *There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics,*" she said. "Classical music was created by lackeys for the European nobility – and it hasn't changed. The whole point of Severance Hall is to make the bourgeoisie feel they are nobility, to stop change!" Her plan for confrontation was to dump garbage in the Severance Hall lobby.

"Whoop!" Angela jumped from her seat next to Bert and waved her Greek fisherman's cap. "I'm with you, Tessa!"

The point here was *action*, Ivy realized. She was sitting on Bert's other side; he scribbled on a stenographer's pad. Ivy thought about the summertime when they were all together in the Crystal. If she joined Bert and Tessa, they would have long talks at the Crystal. What would Chuck think? It shouldn't matter. What did Marvin think? He was leaning back, balanced on two legs of his chair. Thoughtful, not cheering.

James quoted Mao's analogy of the pear you have to eat to understand. "I don't have any use for theory unconnected with practice," he said, "or learning unconnected with experience." He waved his arms for emphasis. The fringes on his leather jacket swung. *Action*, Ivy thought. She felt her lungs tighten. The room was full of cigarette smoke; maybe that was why. She went out for her inhaler and a pill. The doctor had warned her against letting asthma get out of hand.

When she came back, Marvin was telling about social experiments like the community school in Ann Arbor. Intentional Communities. Worker-owned businesses.

“Yeah, right, and the Free Clinic,” Tessa said. “You know how tiny those efforts are compared to what’s needed, how quickly they fold, how the Establishment tries to stop them every chance it has. You can’t set up the new society while we’re still under the thumb of the old.”

“We can’t even be peaceful,” Bert said. “The System warps us, setting us against each other, teaching competition. Racism.” His voice was thick with feeling.

Ivy stopped listening to words. Tessa blazed; James supported her with wit and information. Marvin let the others talk. They didn’t bullshit, didn’t use phony Marxist rhetoric. All the questions were good. No one else had brought it up, so Ivy asked if “armed struggle” meant buying and carrying guns. Several voices called out “No!” Others yelled “Yes!”

“Not right away, of course,” Tessa said. “We need to prepare. Learn to shoot, for one thing. I’ve never used a gun.”

“Bombs are more effective than guns,” Bert said. “They’re symbolic, not lethal. No one’s even been injured in any of the ROTC facility bombings. We didn’t hurt anybody, but we real damage at the University of Washington, and here in Ann Arbor we blew a nice hole in the classified military research building.”

“We?” Marvin asked. “Who’s *we*?”

“Revolutionaries,” Bert said. “Who else?” He scowled.

After the caucus Ivy found a new, steel drinking fountain; the water was very cold. Chin drippin, she turned to see James. “Are you as tired of political discussion as I am?” he asked.

“I need air,” Ivy said. She was glad go outside, where the day was bright and still, though bitter cold. “I hate having to think about guns and bombs,” she said.

“Yeah, it’s sad.” He shortened his stride so she could keep up. “But once we’ve committed, we have to keep going. Dare to struggle and dare to win.” He didn’t sound sad.

“You’re fond of Mao quotes.”

“Mao’s a giant of the twentieth century. You’re still in school, right?”

“One more semester,” Ivy told him. “I’m an art history major.”

“So how do you deal with the argument that art is separate from politics?”

“*Nothing* is separate from politics, is it? Not my new Brazilian-made boots, not your cool fringe leather jacket.”

“I like my jacket. And your boots. And your leather – whatever it is.”

“It’s a jumper,” Ivy said. “And it’s made of vinyl.” She wrapped her scarf over her nose and mouth so the cold air wouldn’t shut her lungs. Already she felt a wheeze.

“Tell you what,” James said. He dropped his cigarette and squashed it flat with his boot. “I’ve got the key to a friend’s pad. Let’s go there for a bit, get comfortable.” Ivy fingered her inhaler in her coat pocket; it would be good to go to a quiet indoor place. “It’s only a block away,” he said, and took her hand. “I’ll show you why you don’t have to stay in school.”

What he wanted her to see was Mao’s essay on culture and the arts. James’s friend lived in the ground floor of a white house with green shutters; they sat at the kitchen table while James read aloud, touching her knee, her hand, her cheek by turns, for emphasis. Thank goodness the essay was short.

“It doesn’t say I should quit school,” Ivy said.

“Not all by itself, I guess,” he said. “Let me show you something else,” and he led her to a room with a four-poster bed of dark wood.

“Don’t you think ...” Ivy began, but he was unzipping her jumper and pulling the straps off her shoulders. No preliminaries. Surprised into silence, she let him undress her completely, tossing her clothes into the corner. Then he opened the bed and undressed himself. He had lean, freckled shoulders and white hips, ridged like a Greek statue. She lay on her side among sheets and blankets, her hand on his hip. He pushed her to her back and traveled her body with his hands and his tongue.

Interesting, how different men’s bodies were, one from the other, how detached she could be while having sex, how mechanical sex could be. She stayed calm while this handsome stranger’s skin slid across hers, while his fingers reached inside her. This was not at all like the disastrous date with Manny, which she’d ended by wriggling out from under, demanding that he take her home. This man had none of Bradley Wells’ romantic passion.

For a week she’d feared that Bradley Wells would come back and she’d have to give in to him. Then she saw him, at a panel discussion on draft resistance. She stayed at the back, hoping he wouldn’t see her. Bert was explaining how draft resistance was counterrevolutionary, and Ivy was listening skeptically, trying to decide what she agreed with, when she heard Vanessa’s voice. She turned with a friendly smile. Vanessa was rocking from side to side with Wesley in her arms, talking to a woman next to her. “I know he’s seeing someone,” Vanessa said. “If I ever find out who, I’ll kill her. No, I won’t, but I’ll tell her what a shit he is, and I’ll tell all her friends what a shit *she* is.”

Ivy's stomach, already uneasy, whipped into a knot. She hurried to the rest room and threw up. Then she left the building. What tremendous relief.

She knew it was a compliment to be in bed with an SDS leader whom Bert and Tessa admired. He'd singled her out; she felt as if she'd been tapped by the most radical, innermost circle of the revolution. She stroked his back and kissed his mouth, eager to look deep into his eyes, but he slid down to her breast, tongued her nipple; then his hands parted her thighs and she was thrilled in spite of herself. Too soon he slipped away and began to insert his cock.

"You need to know I'm not on birth control," she said. "I've been sick."

He sat back on his haunches, his penis swollen, purple. "*Now* you tell me."

She felt guilty. "I'm sorry, I should have said something earlier."

He grunted, "I can't just *stop*, you know. Shit." He dropped onto her, rocked his hips against her *fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck*. His head blocked the ceiling light so it made a halo behind his reddish hair. Sperm squirted over her belly, and he rolled over, onto his back.

"You're a sexy chick," he said, putting his arm around her. Their bellies were covered with slime. "Also a tease. I hate doing that."

"I'm sorry," Ivy said again. The yellow light against the blue walls gave the room a sickly green cast. The ceiling had a large water stain.

"It'd be nice to take a nap before going back to the meeting," he said. "SDS national cons are so full of bullshit."

"Tell me how you got to know Bert and Tessa," Ivy said. An opening question.

"But unfortunately, I *do* have to go back," he said.

So much for a postcoital talk. “So do I,” Ivy said. “I want to clean up first, though. Your friend – the one who lives here – when do you expect him back?”

“Not till after New Year’s,” James said. “They’re in Florida.”

She stood in the bathroom washing sex off her belly with the washcloth. She was more fragile than she used to be. The house was cold; she had goosebumps, and her feet were frozen from the ankles down. She had no idea if she liked James, or if he liked her. They should have taken a walk through snowy Ann Arbor; she could have kept her scarf over her nose to keep the cold air out of her lungs. She would have liked to look at trees and houses, to explore the Michigan winter.

He came into the bathroom and ran one hand down her naked back. “Your ribs are sprung; you have a barrel chest.”

“I know,” she said. “Do you think it’d be all right if I took a shower?”

“Suit yourself.” He was preparing to use the toilet.

“I’ll be quick,” she said, stepping into the tub and pulling the curtain closed behind her. She turned on the water; it gushed out cold, sluicing over her, drenching her hair, pouring down her back. She couldn’t escape it; the tub was too small. She forced herself to withstand the ice on her skin, stood gasping and shivering, unable to move toward the cheap shampoo on the shelf behind the cold waterfall. Beyond the curtain, the toilet flushed just as the shower became tepid. Then it grew warm. She felt like weeping. She soaped her hair and then her body. She decided to take a long time – to get thoroughly warm and clean. She shampooed again.

He hadn’t waited for her. Her body was pink and strong, as if it were pleased with her for having endured the cold shower. She took her time dressing, dried each toe and

the membranes between them, waggled her feet in the chilly air. She combed her hair slowly from the ends – the only way to get out the tangles with her tiny purse-comb. She should stay indoors till her hair was dry (her mother’s advice; funny to have Mum show up in her head in this place).

James’s friends kept their books in the back room, on shelves made of cement blocks and one-by-six boards that filled two walls. Ivy trolled the spines and took out Brecht’s selected poems. She reread “To Posterity” carefully this time. Her German had deteriorated since the spring, but she could still see how inexact the translation was. “Do not judge us/too harshly” was something like “Think of us with patience” in German.

She paged through, sinking into the stark world of Europe in the ‘30s and ‘40s. “Children’s Crusade” was not about medieval children trying to save Jerusalem, but a band of children in Poland, 1939, fleeing their burned-out villages. Brecht made them a microcosmic society; they took care of each other, cooked, made music, taught each other writing, acquired a dog. There were lovers, a short war, a funeral. Winter came, and the children began to starve. Then they disappeared. The dog showed up in a strange village with a note: “Please send help! We don’t know where we are!” But no one looked for the children, and the dog starved to death.

It could have happened. Outside this window at the back of the house, lived in by people Ivy would never meet, who’d never know she’d sat in their armchair, holding selected poems of Brecht and weeping, blue shadows crept across the winter landscape bounded by pines and birches. Broken sunflower stalks stuck up through the snow. Someone had painted a peace sign on the garage, with a dove and clasped hands, one black, one white. The paint was peeling, and the garage roof sagged.

She was not weeping for Brecht's lost children, who may not have existed. She did not regret the sex-adventure with James, but she would not seek him out again.

She found Angela, Bert, and Tessa in the meeting of the whole. A skinny, hollow-eyed blond man wielded a microphone on a platform in the center. "That's Mike Klonsky," Tessa whispered. "National Secretary."

Bert whispered in Ivy's ear. "How d'you like James?"

"He's interesting," she said.

Bert grinned. "He's great," he said. "Good-looking, too."

"Certainly good-looking," Ivy said. She wondered what Bert knew, or thought he knew. "Of course, you can't get to know someone the first day you meet him," she added. Bert returned to writing in his notebook. On the platform Klonsky was giving speakers the microphone and taking it back when they were done – sometimes before they were done.

"What have I missed?" Ivy asked.

"A *lot* of talk," Angela said. "I really *get* why action's the important thing."

"Three basic discussions," Tessa said. "Racism. Women's liberation. Revolutionary Youth Movement. That's what 'The Hour's Getting Late' is for. We're into a side issue right now."

Speakers were introducing themselves by political positions – "I'm Ed Waverley, Marxist pacifist from San Francisco State!" "I am Gene Bazarov, independent radical!" The issue seemed to be this: who was the most oppressed? Someone thought the Chinese peasants had been more oppressed than American blacks. Another said the American

blacks were more oppressed, because land reform had succeeded in China. Several women pointed out that women were most oppressed of all.

No, a wealthy woman – Jackie Kennedy, for example – could not be said to be oppressed, under any circumstances. Fred Holt, Marxist from Illinois, yelled, “Students are an oppressed group by definition!”

Not all students. Not by definition. Three people took turns explaining which students could be called oppressed and which could not. James took the microphone and looked severely out at the crowd as he delivered a detailed class analysis of American students. He could not have missed seeing Ivy, but his eyes did not meet hers. He must be too hot in that jacket. Ivy was warm, and she’d taken her coat off. He was letting the fringes sway for effect.

When he was done, a passionate student argued for his own oppression even though he went to an Ivy League School, because even though he and his fellows fully recognized their privilege, they too lacked control over the means of production. “John-John Kennedy is oppressed!” he cried, and listed all John-John’s constraints: no choice of school or playmates; couldn’t go anywhere without the Secret Service; couldn’t *play* – “not even a fucking simple game of stickball!”

It’s a race, Ivy thought. The winner gets to be an honorary Chinese peasant. There were no Chinese peasants in the room to make the award, though there were plenty of quotes from Mao. No Black Panthers had come to welcome SDS support for their anti-imperialist struggle.

James came back to the microphone and said, “John-John is *not* oppressed, people. Get your heads out of your asses.” Tessa and Angela whooped approval.

A Boston representative criticized James for misinterpreting something or other. “Progressive Labor,” Tessa whispered. “They’re trying to bring him down.”

Ivy was losing her ability to pay attention. What the hell did *oppression* mean anyway? She wondered if she’d ever known. She went out to the lobby and remembered she hadn’t eaten all day. Maybe someone could tell her where to get a sandwich and a cup of tea. Bert followed her. “I’m glad you like James,” he said. He looked expectant.

“You said that already.” If Bert thought she’d be swept off her feet by the man with the fringed jacket just because she’d gone to bed with him for an hour, he’d be disappointed.

“Angela might drop out of school,” Bert said. “I’ve been talking to her.”

“I’m going to graduate,” Ivy said. “James read Mao’s essay to me, but it didn’t work. Mao wasn’t writing about me.” Then she got it: Bert had cooked up the whole seduction – key to the apartment, essay on culture and the arts, four poster bed. It had been a test, to bring her in and bind her to the *Hour’s Getting Late* contingent. The *Talk Falsely* contingent. “Do you know where I can get something to eat?” she asked.

“Across the quad, I think,” he said, pointing. She walked that way. The prospect of living in a collective this summer looked less appealing. Especially if she were supposed to learn to shoot or plan “symbolic” bombings.

Either Bert was wrong, or she was too addled by hunger to find the place. When Ivy returned to the lobby, Marvin was fastening the toggles on his duffel coat. “Where are you going?” she asked. She hoped he would say *Out for some food*.

But he said, “Cleveland.”

“Will you take ... I mean, do you have room in the car for me?” she asked.

He gave his knowing smile. She went to retrieve her sleeping bag and suitcase; on the coffee lay Bert's notebook. He'd want it back. It fell open as she picked it up.

"Dare to struggle, dare to win," he'd written. And again, on the next line: "Dare to struggle, dare to win." Over and over: he'd filled up a page with that slogan. And another page. And a third – no: the third page said, "Marvin Kaminsky Marvin Kaminsky Marvin Kaminsky. ..." Two full pages: just Marvin's name.

She felt pity. Bert Claymore must have demons in his head – worse than hers. *We don't know where we are.*

"I don't think armed struggle makes sense," Ivy said to Marvin as they crossed the parking lot, "strategically, I mean. We don't have mass support."

"I think it's supposed to go like this," Marvin said. "When something explodes, and that thing – police station, bank, school administration office – symbolizes a kind of power that made you feel small and scared, then you get a burst of courage and wild joy."

"That's what oppression is, isn't it? Feeling small and scared." She thought of the oxygen tent, of her parents' closed-off superiority. *We are medical practitioners, not patients*, they silently transmitted. *You have failed us by becoming a patient.*

"Yes, and there's also not having any money, not having enough to eat, getting kicked out of your apartment, getting shot at by police ..."

"Objective conditions, Tessa would say." Ivy didn't like having to disappoint Tessa. But Tessa had never asked Ivy to be her follower. She'd only said, Choose.

"Some people are good at destruction," Marvin said.

"People like Bert?"

“If Bert decided to join the workers, he’d do real well in demolition work. I think the Movement may need people like him. A lot of things need to be destroyed.”

“What about Tessa? She says we’ll soon be carrying guns.”

“She hasn’t got one yet, has she? Tessa’s good at tearing down illusions, taking apart ideas. Do you want to stop for a hamburger before we get too far out of town?”

They bought hamburgers and milkshakes and ate them as they drove. “Some of us choose to build instead,” Marvin said. “Because that’s the work we find in us to do.”

“I think I want to put all the disparate pieces together,” Ivy said.

“I think you could do fine at that,” Marvin said.

“Thank you.” She wanted to be thought well of. Not just liked, but esteemed. That’s why she had told Tessa *Yes, I commit to SDS*. Why she climbed into bed with a man she did not know. “I miss Jane,” Ivy said.

“Me too. I’m going east to visit her,” Marvin said, “before I go west.”

“You’re not staying in Cleveland? Why not?”

“I just want to take a trip; I’m planning to leave for good.”

Ivy considered saying, *Take me with you. I want to see Jane. I want to go west*. But he might say no, and she didn’t think she could handle being rebuffed.

“Folks get so angry about whether or not correct Marxist analysis pegs Ho Chi Minh as a revisionist,” Marvin said. “Does Ho Chi Minh care?”

Ivy laughed.

“No,” Marvin said. “It’s a crying shame. A couple of months ago, SDS had more influence than we’d ever imagined.”

“But Marvin, we can still make the revolution, can’t we?” There was still the struggle. Ivy Barcelona, strong independent woman, could study, organize, confront, and put the pieces together, no matter what happened at the big meeting James called a National Con. They were in darkness now, traveling across northern Ohio.

“Well,” Marvin said. He took his glasses off and put them in his shirt pocket. He squinted out over the steering wheel into the snowy waste. “We can *try*,” he said.