

*Shadows
And Light*

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A

Loving

Phantasy

*IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE SHADOWS
I WOULD WALK ACROSS THIS EARTH*

There were some things wonderfully horrible that moved around and within the shadows and there were some things blindingly brilliant that poured up from beneath, spilled forth, out from behind the light.

Soundless were all these shadows that received him at that last step at the top of the stairs.

Silence had descended when he stopped.

The echoes of his footsteps receded and he paused to allow his eyes to adjust to the hazy dimness that was to his left, in front and extended to his right.

Noise now could be heard as he turned and walked to his right. The attic floor, nearly ninety years old groaningly and moaningly creaked and each step created clear and obviously new footprints in the aged thick dust.

The roof, as a stretched inverted V seemed close above his head and he resisted the urge to bend, bow just a little as if to submit as he walked.

The walls had been pulled back and swallowed completely and wholly and so had

thus disappeared in the flat blackness. And therefore, the walls did not exist.

And because the attic was so very old, the pointed roof so close, the wooden walls there yet not there and the floor pleaded as he moved, he was slightly disoriented.

So he stopped. He turned, looked down and he had taken, not a direct route, not an idle wandering winding, but an indirect purposeful path as a determined pent-up released imperceptible flowing liquid river of volatile volcanic emotion, around all that had impeded his movement, all that could accumulate for over fifty years, very little discarded only added to and laying there undisturbed, untouched in bags and trunks and suitcases in toppled piles to his waist and heaping broken rows, it all resided here along with boxes marked Christmas, that had flared as an idea and came as a clear thought to his mind two days before this now mid-December early afternoon and since the blackness from the walls was spread as deep-grey across the floor he could only vaguely see his last steps, four footprints, and he lifted his head and stared not at the dust

that had risen, stirred up by his presence, but at the shadows.

The myriad surreal shadows that had awaited his singular arrival were somehow magnificent, expansive, and also contained, dryly, vaporously in this, their space and they shifted and shimmered as spirited, inspired amorphous heat and even though shapeless disembodiment they were formed as an invisible permanence, a force, not as spectrally sluggishly settling dust or dull, drab stagnant shade but as multiplied, quantified ether-like traces of all they could represent when every aspect of each shadow relinquished its own personal and primal evanescence and captured fully, filled its self with the unique properties of that which permeates and is restrained in a specific existence and there remains in the non-existence remnants not pieces but essence that is concealed, covered and hidden in empty hollow darkness not frightening but qualitatively splendid because that essential human need to make then reconstruct had created them and imbued precious fragile life to these delicate gossamer shadows that

dipped as he stared and floated tremulously from, past that top step and joined with the others that had descended from the steeped roof and collapsed from the black walls to gather patiently behind him and waver there to wait as he paused, suspended there they were and when he turned back towards the front of the attic they slid, slipped, sidled, reeled, and he resumed his steps and those before him did not part and he passed through them as they fell upon him as a veil and they moved, pivoted, glided and followed, they all followed, thousands and thousands of shadows pursued him as he walked slowly towards the large dusty brown trunk he sought that sat in deep darkness close to the illuminating light.

At the front of this attic there was a small doorless room. One window, also small, not wide, no higher than his waist, faced him from the middle of the far wall as he stood in the doorway.

The window was dirty on the outside, dusty on the inside and the dry, chilled December sun was expressing its self even as the last large fluffy opaque silvery winter

clouds proceeded before it and the quality that emanated from the gaseous sphere became amber-like as it reached the earth and passed through the windowpane and the ignited brownish hue of this room was in stark contrast to the dimness which he had just traversed.

He did not look out of the window. This window that he had first unlocked and pushed open forty-one years ago when he was six years old. Opened to an altered world that extended its self down and across, before his curious eyes. A world that had he looked out at now, remained, in many ways just as it did so long ago. The nearest neighbors acres away on all sides. The roads, the trees, the homes, the sameness yet always the difference, the angles, the varying perceptions because of this height.

Picturesque.

The springs coming. The swelling hot summers. The cooling autumns changing. The freezing winters.

He had seen so many from beyond this window through which he had begun to climb, easing the window nearly closed

behind him. And at first without looking down he had held tightly to the house and moved along the ledge, past the window, onto the roof and the roof became his worldly raised platform and from there he listened, motionless, silently, as Mother called and neighbors searched and they never found him and he would reappear, there, and they had ceased searching, somehow believing, knowing he would return and they had never known, never looked up and he, unseen behind the chimney stared not just down or out across the greens and yellows and browns and reds but on up at the floating blue and emerging black and twinkling hovering dots and the rain fell softly and turned sleety and white in the wintertime and his world then seemed just as it did now if he looked out at this colorless wintry, leafless, flowerless, harsh, frozen desolation.

But on this occasion, at least not yet, he never glanced at the window. There was nothing outside.

Only inside.

Inside this large old trunk his eyes were

now fastened upon, that he had not seen, not thought of on his previous visit nine years ago, not seen in over twenty-five years.

Inside this trunk lay those contents that had initially not hissed but had whispered plaintively not softly nor in an ululating manner but as a beseeching lilting sensual clarion call that enticed him to wrench from the glass his face was pressed against and no longer fixed, flew, when he pushed open and up the heavy top, streaked and clamorously leaped past his heart and into his inmost being and united and submerged with that which had been waiting and which had then driven him mercilessly through that flung open widow and onto the roof that very first time so long ago and each and every subsequent time the sunken substance that he had unearthed and that quietly insistently reached him wherever he was no matter what he was doing, ignoring the time, each instance he would respond and just as he was doing now he would discover himself on his knees before this open trunk and moving the faded tablecloths and tarnished silverware he would pull this that

he had eventually carefully wrapped, from near the bottom, the corner, and rising, closing the lid, he now sat on the dusty top and even though his hands no longer shook, his heart pounded and pounded and ached as he undid the lusterless purple ribbon and as he loosened the knotted, narrow, frayed silk, sitting there with the wall near at his left arm and the window down in front just a little near his left foot, the mass of silvery softness moved and as he opened the yellowed onionskin paper the last nimbus clouds passed and the aureole of the sun expanded and the sun was as the sun should be, rounded and white and also as it could be, distant and chilled and the sky was a quite beautiful piercing blue and soon, totally empty save for this early winter high noon phosphorescent sun and the room brightened and the dust, agitated at his presence had not completely settled from his intrusion and the particles swirled and were iridescent, sparkling, eddying into patterns of disorder to then surcease into static disintegrated rainbows and there and only there where this small, now translucent glass

window allowed the properties of the burning star to enter, the radiance expanded, intensified upon the cold dusty wooden floor that was slowly altering incipiently becoming shimmery luminous and he did not hesitate he leaned forward from the gloomy darkness and gently placed a picture upon the floor into the clear searing opalescent light.

He straightened, easing back, back into the shadows and he was comfortable, content, as he looked intently yet serenely down at the glowing warm picture, this once vivid representation of life not much larger than his hand that had captured a moment in fleeting time, one significant instant within the duration of the rhythmic beating throbbing dashing movement of all that had passed into the past, all that had ever been or could ever be measured into the future as the future marched, marked, sped over the present and passed and became the past, was held and then seized firmly in this fading photographic image of his Father and this that he had unwrapped and that now lay

below him was composed of that which he deemed special, precious and this that he had removed, exposed first, this favorite picture of his Father revealed a man in army clothes, khaki pants and long-sleeved shirt, with stripes of a sergeant, hatless and having not stepped but somehow floated from an ornate stone pedestal that rose in height just past his belt, and leaned, not far, but a little, placing his left arm onto the pedestal and his rifle rested in the crook of his left arm and his right hand grasped the rifle near the trigger and his left leg was crossed casually over his right and he did not stare he gazed, softly and a smile, slight, but obvious formed his full lips and added a particular definition there upon his face that transferred its self into his eyes and transformed his eyes into something beyond a looking glass and far beyond magnifying windows and his Father's eyes had revealed to him, his Father's child, a living soul and the child who now sat here as a man had discovered his very own soul as he gazed transfixed at the gaze that reached out to him down deep down into him and within

the child had erupted many tremendous terrifying complex emotions that forced him to flee through that window onto that roof.

This was his preferred picture this scene that through and over the years and years he had brought to movement to which he had imparted soothing voicing sounds and thereafter he could attribute something new each time he stared at it.

At first it was simply only the gaze, those eyes and then behind the eyes within the body, totality emerged and he discovered all he chose, decided, when he knew, became aware of what to give.

Not insolence but confidence in the smile, courage in the stance, strength, protection, in this man he learned had been called Slim.

Endless became his discoveries for each aspect that revealed its self to him was derived from its original source and pointed to something else that inferred more much more than he could ever identify for every thing was as a feeling stamped and imprinted upon him by a perceptible pressure that touched him, affected him, altered him.

He adored this picture this link to the man.

Tall he appeared and colored dark brown in the washed unpainted uncolored image, with an intelligent countenance, somewhat narrow shaped nose, short wavy hair and thin trimmed mustache.

So proud. So loving. So handsome.

And as he stared at the man he was as always, exhilarated by the noble exalted essence that had surely been purified by his imagination condensed not into vaporous gas but molded both symptomatically and symbolically, from indistinct softness, after being placed into the flaring kiln of his soul, fired into an indestructible impenetrable sublime dark-brown concrete model that languidly sensuously moved within him each and every instance any uttered sound or structured form in any fashion even remotely connected to Father reached him to struggle for a completeness that could never be attained within the child or this man whose Father had been destroyed in reality, removed from the conscious earth, a World War II casualty, truly, truly dead just a little

over eleven months after his child was born.

So slowly the next picture came passing from, through, into, to be placed carefully alongside the Father.

The man's first born son now lay close beside the Father.

Now he looked at this picture of a newborn baby revolving with the tinged throes of inchoate existence and he smiled as always at his older Brother who elicited from within him not just unbreakable nexuses to his Father but a specific grouping of emotions surrounded by the word Brother, emotions that spilled outside the confining sound of the spoken meaning, extending to and from the same as originally yet diffused into something else more in addition to that which emanated from the Father to the son to the man who sat and gazed, enchanted, enthralled, at this link that had been forged into a flesh and blood and bone connection that was animated with a breathy inherited disposition that transcended the similarity in eyes and color and gender and poured not just the flowing molten essence of the Father into the first born son but spread,

profusely, humaneness into this singular line that as taut, tensile, steel threadlike veins extended back to the beginning, lineage evolving, moving forth from that inception and incipient emotions, feelings organizing themselves around, within words and images such as this baby, a Brother, filling this picture sideways, sitting propped up as if some soft pillowy substances supported this existence, assisted his head turned left slightly so that the wide eyes peered directly, blending subject and object, emitting and conversely evoking both bewilderment and wonder of a twelve pound baby so strange in appearance with huge precisely shaped head and abnormally large exquisite hands, a baby with the body of a child who the nurses came, from all over the hospital, to peek at in awe with quiet subdued reverence, in the presence of something akin to a dream that would, could somehow before a gaze, unfold and thrive into its essence predetermined by this unusual size and this distinctive expression, obstinate yet peaceful face whose beauteous omniscient visage would pass through pain and elation and settle into a

mask that would conceal and change with a passing time that shrinks, decays all that is pliant and supple into something brittle such as a dry powdery clay, for fate and destiny as members of life had united with time and snatched away time by finding time to touch this baby and ten months away from the creation of this pictured image, polio crippled any first impending precarious hesitant steps and murdered the child and he, who sat, shaded, on this trunk and gazed down at his older, by five years, lambent Brother, would be singed, stabbed slightly and each instance and always when he experienced in any form, Brother.

From an open internal, external, eternal wound, he bled.

His soul had jumped that day forty-one years ago when he was six years old.

Jumped, to there, from fine points of fragmentations as something once always disintegrated, to, there, somewhere possibly, seemingly whole, complete, as one, even though he had been shattered as tiny pieces when the bag he had gently lifted from this trunk, already torn, came apart and spilled

its jeweled contents onto the attic floor into the light he felt when he eased to his knees and the precious fragile tattered pictures, dozens and dozens, of different shapes and sizes, that scurried, scattered and lay spread on the incandescent floor had breathed, exhaled and he touched them gently and they caressed him, each and every one together, and individually and he picked them up, moved them as spaded diamond painted cards and as he attempted to arrange them, the faces, as he ordered them, straightened them, they blurred and each image sighed audible and the once stagnant stale silent attic air stirred and moist heated dust blew into his throat, his face and his eyes became teary and then his fingers began burning as if he were touching fire as if these dull glassy examples equivalent to living lives, of existences, were charged with electricity and he was shocked not brushed but pointed at and a bolt of lightning entered him from, to, passed through his little throbbing heart and this that he experienced frightened him and that was why he had dropped as dangerous the

pictures and escaped out of the window and crawled, scrambled desperately onto the slippery wintry roof.

As days weeks passed he had looked at all these pictures, put them, organized, into separate boxes, staring at some for hours and dismissing others quickly and each one, every single one was named, titled, aged, and dated in fading printing on the backs and so he fell, twirled, spun as if in a foamy whirlpool, into each image he sunk became submerged within through his untainted rudimentary evolving imagination, he was plunged, he drowned to various degrees, pronouncing the names, calculating the distant dates, speaking softly the familial relationships but it was these five that had inevitably, inexorably come together as a fused chainable group that moved him, the five having been multiplied into a quantity that produced influence upon his essence each time he lay them in the light just as he was doing now and the next three pictures drew from the preceding two, drained them, and were therefore able to exaggerate their attributes and so their unique individual

powers shifted, accelerated away from him and returned to him stealthily, secretly, confusingly and he had begun to feel something real, special, mighty, and it was this specific one that he now placed after the Father, beside the Brother, onto the now inflamed floor, that had initiated forcefully, begun supremely, that charged expanded explosion so very long ago and coerced each infinite evanescent particle that made up, consisted of his developing emerging soul, to not move, slide slightly or subtly but at the same time to synchronously jump, separating their selves from what they were previously into some indefinite unspecified else, in addition to and each fresh tiny lancet like shard contained many new jagged angles and so the irrupting expansion of his soul had been of dulled pins and their prickling sharpness and he had winced perceptibly.

It was his sister who lived, from, within, only through this particular picture, for he chose not one older or younger but this one here where she was adorned, appeared as a fragile chocolate ornament and she filled this frameless creation along with the chair

upon which she sat, a flower patterned chair that may have reflected particular subjective expressionist lengthy hues when it existed, with the flowers of the fabric appearing naturally unreal but of a spectrum of warmth and the blooms on the back of this armless padded chair rose up, just past her neck but she was not pressed nor reclined, not sitting there with her legs straightened as those of a two and one half year old child's would be in a chair this size but she sat up straight, comfortably erect, towards the front on the seat of the chair, knees bent, with little black and white round-toed, strapped, glistening shoes and white lacy-looking socks covering her ankles and a soft fluffy, silky-looking, short-sleeved perhaps white dress and she looked directly at him and he saw her gaze as something tactile, tangible, staring at him and she was not just beginning, not almost, she was holding the clothed black baby doll with the bonnet, that she clutched tenderly in both hands, up, to extend out to him and he would move the picture to different positions, those amazing eyes following him and he had never seen

such a preternatural look, not before or ever after been contacted by anything remotely near this that existed in those eyes, associated, later, but unlike this need to touch the long dark wavy hair that hung just past her little shoulders, replaced, but different from this initial want to wonder of skin such as hers that appeared to him unbelievable, somehow because what could be seen of her legs, her arms, her face, where ever there was flesh he was mystified by the incipient understanding, aspect of surety, gradual absolute belief that there would be some unusual particular essences in the feel of her, if allowed to touch her, his adored Sister, if permitted to touch him, he sensed, not just through his own eyes but also by way of his fingertips as they skimmed her image that each, all intended would have been not opposite, or other than, nor similar, simply altered from the loving handshakes of his Father and loving embraces of his Brother, all contained, each possessed some special tenderness that was greater, eminently more supreme and somehow existed somewhere, everywhere in the loving touches of a Sister

that are soothingly placed upon her Brother, perpetually four years younger than she.

He comprehended with clear vagueness that what he experienced when he stared at this specific picture of a little girl child was an opening to an expanse, a place existing beyond her angelic beauty, somewhere high above the hope within her sparkling, excited, wondering eyes, and on past the absolute dazzling joy in her innocent smile, further than the simple pure gesture of unselfish sharing in her surrendering arms, he detected a potential of an exceptional sensitive destiny that had seeped into the warmth that stirred, leaked, and settled into him as thick weighted emotion.

He perceived long before he even believed, that she would have loved him as only a Sister could, and he could have, would have, indeed, did truly love her as only a Brother loved a Sister but in actuality could not, would not, did not rightfully, and never did he ever regard sleep as what it was, was supposed to be because he inspected it and found out about the dark inimical elements that survived with inherent hostility within

deep and bottomless sleep, and thrived there entwined with enduring unending sleep, he discovered a terrifying essence of sleep when he beheld that his only Sister had gone too far into eternal sleep and become hopelessly lost one peaceful night and could not return from the final labyrinth of darkness and would exist always thereafter, in the unlit smoky hazy mazes of unconsciousness.

She lived only in dreamless sleep, four years and six months after the first, at three and one half years of age, the second child died in her sleep, less than six months before he, the very last child was born, and relieved from sleep.

He paused now to stare at the wall opposite him that suddenly swelled slightly and wavered and the dimness coiled but did not change not really and he moved his gaze towards the window and the glass was dulled sun streaked and soiled and he did not look out not really did he see the beautiful white flakes that had begun to float down to fall so softly and they covered that which lay upon the ground and they clung cohesively to the bushes and trees and

hardened in essence to rest beside the houses, upon the roofs as something sheeted and icy and as he raised the next dimensional twenty-eight year old image from beside him the yellowed paper protested and he was almost aware of the coldness in his own fingers as contrasted to the texture of the picture, solid, heavy, that was not mist but did consist of heat above that which boiled and then the fire within this photographic drawing was pushed, pulled throughout his body and ran, lifted, then flashed and ascended to fill him and his head was tight and faintness blew into his mind when he closed his eyes and held this picture aloft and reached out, down, and the sunlight warmed his fingers and the Mother was there after the Father, Brother, and Sister and she enclosed the children as a border but she was indistinct, as someone existing but only peripherally because he did not look at her, not really, not until he had caught his breath and blinked away that which blurred his obscured vision, and her gaze stared past him, and when his breathing, so obvious in the attic air as dissipating steam began to

ease he watched the last of his gasping breath disperse its self and vanish into the shadowy darkness near the wall and he breathed in deeply and when he looked down there at his Mother he exhaled fully, audibly, and his breath, cast out with the force of a strengthened resignation was then deposited into the sun's illumination and was lost and disappeared within the light.

He stared at Mother but he did not observe her, not truly.

He could not see her any longer for she had been, somehow essentially annihilated.

Destroyed from a unique locality that was directed from somewhere far, far, far away, distant, that went, came, arrived, begun by an inexorable and indefatigable unleashed movement that continued an unharnessed universal inherent process that had never even at all introduced its presence to his, the loving son's mind.

It, inch by inch and step by methodical course began long before he knocked and knocked again louder, four months and fifteen days ago, it commenced previous to this two week visit, was imperceptible before

he had first departed those thirty years ago at seventeen, had infected her virulently between his other visit nine years ago and the moment Mother slowly peeked out, smiled slightly, opened the door and extended her arms.

The effusive width had slowed tediously and narrowed to only the brutal elongated length and the cruel lengthening had been savagely constricted, pressured by twirling passing motion and this human related history who embraced him tightly, fervently, had been strained, stretched to a thinness that obviously etched, not just the beginning or the passing or pausing but the long, long slender thread was as a gouged, running, twining, floating road begun when the metal stake was forged, first placed, driven deeply and struck to bring forth that pealing tone that declared, emphatically summoned and sounded, reverberated with deafening ringing and the vibrations ran over the earth resoundingly to quiet themselves and hush their rhythmic beating and slow to a lamenting song, a waltzing dirge without a rhyme with fading notes and conclusive

chimes and only the interval of the echoes would indicate that any line of any kind had ever existed, anywhere in fleeting time.

It was a derivative of death that had hugged him that August evening.

Age squeezed him, murmured, mumbled sweetly into his ear and settled as never before into his soul and assumed its proper respectful position.

It had been this that had called him urgently, insistently, home.

This thing that entered him as a dreadful shock to his chest and formed its character as damp heated moisture, wrapped around his heart and pressed, drew in, to shrink so tightly, and wetness slanted into his throat and burned and began to ascend towards his blinking eyes and he opened his mouth and sucked the summer air and the air cooled his heaving lungs and he swallowed again to push back and away the tears that sought their own expression and they aimed, to join with their comparative essence that fell from Mother's eyes and down her cheeks and as he watched, tracked the descending staining tears he saw her sunken wrinkled

skin and when he looked into her glistening eyes he saw them as dull chilled hardened glass and the tears were as cloudy ancient raindrops and he was overwhelmed as never before, seized, as only one could be who had been not, held or captured but was trapped and then astonishingly crushed by the pure entangled reality of what it truly meant to develop beyond out, expand beyond up, extend beyond on, Mother had not increased by nine years, not grown older, Mother had grown only, simply, old.

Nothing expressed through or between her written words or within or behind her voice prepared him for this and so the picture he now stared at had been obliterated.

He looked away from the flawed filtering shadows and could not see the now effaced, concealed reality that did not reveal its once wondrous identity, in spite of, because of a new recognition, he was sightless at this excruciatingly painful instance, viciously blinded by the violent unblotted, agonizing light.

What did it matter the padded shoulders of the plaid suit coat or what of the size, the

roundness, the sheerness of lacy white fluff of the collar on her dress or the lustrous wavy black hair that was so thickly long the picture, from her waist up, could not contain it? And the manner she posed, the way she was leaning back a little and turning to her right, this profile was lost to him along with the smoothness of her unblemished creamy skin and her so obvious silken eyelashes no longer fluttered with these lovely haunting eyes that no longer moved and the exquisite soulful beauty of her eyes did not touch him and the tinted unknown color on her smiling, slightly parted lips could not shine and her nose, her cheeks, he did not kiss and he knew before he mounted the attic stairs this day, his once nurturing youthful-natured Mother, her valorously dignified loving essence

could not, did not no longer, exist.

All that had thus been disintegrated and destroyed was refined, reconstituted into the terrible image he brought heavily, tugged and dragged and arduously carried upon his aching throbbing shoulders, carried as a weighted polished personal burden up the

quaking attic stairs just a seemingly short while ago, and this monumental memory that now at this moment imposed its massive enduring self upon this picture upon the floor in the light was of Mother, below him, sitting in the cool shadows of the dining room with her mouth open and turned towards the living room and the noisy box, of talking singing preaching and moving animated pictures, that sat in the far front room corner and her rough veined hands were placed in a supplicating manner and clasped together almost as praying hands and they lay in her lap upon her pink apron and her hands were barely attached to dark skinny arms that appeared as two thin limbs from a small sapless tree and these once strong plump arms were hardly fastened to an emaciated corporeal vessel and her reposed body was lifted and impaled into his mind and this scene was branded onto his gaze and this oppressive vision was what he saw, all that he could see as he ascended the stairs and the sight of her that hovered before him as he walked across the creaking wooden floor was placed beneath the Father,

Brother and Sister but moved when its time came, to wrap its self around the picture he once adored and reveal its powerful essence in its ability to affect that which he observed at this moment and what he saw backed up to the moment he first arrived home and it unfolded as a surreal nightmare that had somehow reached over the necessity of sleepy darkness and forced its demanding self into conscious time.

This compelling and ubiquitous force that was building and constructing its shrill self before he arrived, had lost control and was as a leaning wobbly rapidly spinning circle gaining in unsteady speed and when it collapsed it did not stop but continued boring and increased in depth and strength until its coercive presence broke through and shattered pre-existing reality and brought forth its own actual realism and spoke, expressed its vehement truth when thirteen days after he arrived, it, arrived, and asked him through Mother, as he rose to take the dinner dishes into the kitchen, it was then that the spotlighted nightmare talked when Mother, confused, inquired aloud of the

children, the little boy and little girl who had shared with her, dinner, and had somehow suddenly inexplicable disappeared and she was perplexed and concerned and she questioned if they had had enough to eat and then she wondered how and where they had gone and he stopped before the sink, dishes in hand, and in the silence of the deafening prolonged pause, between those uttered words the nightmare burst, creating an endless chasm and everything that was, had been, would be, toppled then fell into the abysmal bottomless rift then reformed and returned with its own time, a possessed time, unmeasurable, exceeding all, every standard, containing its own unique dreadful values for there is only chaotic, disordered time for time does not exist in both a pleasurable peace and serenity, there it streaks, soars, and is thus uncountable, time only exists in slow joyless suffering and the next morning brought the time for flies.

They came swarming just before dawn and drove Mother from her sleep, out of her bed into the bathroom, then the kitchen where he found her, rolled up newspaper in

hand and her hostile eyes searched for the invasive filthy insects that had invaded the sanctity of her home and their intrusive humming, buzzing, was so loud to her she was pained in trilling agony from the intolerable high-pitched sounds and she struggled gallantly, frantically, against the flying bugs and brushed them from her hair, down from her body and followed them as he followed her into the living room where he joined the battle to hush their irritating whispers, silence their stinging roaring and still their transparent flapping wings and over the next four days and three nights the turbulent conflict raged and Mother and son fought together, and killed, murdered, waged war against the elevated twirling nightmare until it landed, then, it stopped and they swept up the disgusting blackish-green bodies, and Mother then resumed her search for the missing little girl and little boy and just three days after the flies departed the scurrying tiny mice came to interfere while Mother cooked or cleaned or sat and they were quick and sneaky and cute and there was sorrow and misgivings

when they were discovered, ensnared in the traps that were set and that were sprung and snapped to break their necks and crush their little heads and the noise the closing traps made was so loud, so often, Mother heard them each time they snuffed out the life of a mouse and even asleep she would be awakened roughly, shaken by the startling deathly sound and then rise to discard the bulging-eyed body and reset the trap and the mice were especially alive at night and their dying continued on into, through the day and finally twenty-two were disposed of, buried by the son and after six days and nights the mice were all dead and could no longer frighten the little girl and little boy and a four day cessation, a peace, settled into the house until the silent rattling slithering snakes eased slowly into Mother's bedroom and he had to lie in wait for them, stalk them, or follow her pointing trembling bony finger, catch them and chop off their poisonous heads with his long sharpened broomstick sword and when he held up their wiggling headless bodies they evaporated, disappeared before her frightened eyes and

only he was involved in the stealthy pursuit, the actual killing, Mother's courage having been neglected and affected, damaged, and become ineffective and her shame moved her into the other bedroom down the hall and the snakes of all sizes departed after staying only five days and nights.

In the evening of the thirty-fifth day the last long, deceitful, limbless scaly reptile began its headless slide back into its world and then the people began their glide and stepped lightly from the far outskirts, edged past the near corners of black darkness and eased through the meadow, across the road, over the front yard grass and strolled not just onto the porch but surrounded the house and the lost children, their apparitional presence found their spectral voices, joined with these alien strangers and continuously summoned Mother until he had to lock, then bar all the doors, not against them but to oppose the restlessness they contained and created and transmitted to Mother and she would leave the house in day or night and aimlessly wander, determined yet lost and so the chained doors held her in and shut her

off but the people were at the windows, a face here, looking, a hand, fingers tapping and Mother asked her son to see what it was they wanted, asked that they be provided that which they needed and insisted the cooling nights would harm them, particularly the children, so he let the children in and the people slipped in also and they were lying in the closets, hiding beneath the beds and crouching under the tables, sitting on the chairs, talking, standing in the hallways looking, lounging on the desk, reading, and there was a tiny baby in the cabinet drawer sleeping and the people moved into her old bedroom and she relinquished all the bedrooms to them and could only sleep in the large dining room chair and while he slumbered deeply one night she set the dining room table with the best dishes and silverware for the people and then emptied almost everything from the refrigerator and cupboards until he moved the food into the basement kitchen in order to cook and prepare her elaborate Thanksgiving Day meal and over the days he fed Mother and also bathed her and dressed her wrinkled

decimated body and brushed and combed her long grey hair and watched her sit and sleep and listened to her pace the creaking floors, walking day and night, exhaustingly searching for the concealed exit, seeking to find her way, their way, out of the endless, uncontrollable, tiring nightmare and she asked her son everything, constantly, about the people, about the children who kept calling only for her and she inquired of him as to where he was and he posed a question that caused her to ponder, to wonder, and intently stare at him, her forehead lined and her hands gripped together, twisting in bewildered anguish when he asked her who he was and sometimes she smiled with understanding when she believed she knew and with this recognition she would open her arms to him and fifteen days ago, one hundred and twenty-three days after his two weeks visit began, he awoke to discover her dressed in coat and hat and scarf, purse, paper bags full, prepared for her journey and she informed him she was ready to leave, told him it was time to go and asked him imploringly if he was able, willing to take

her home.

Everything and everyone, twelve days ago, crawled and then settled into the moving picture box she never really watched before he turned it on to distract her from the inimical immediate surroundings and she observed this new and fresh form of the nightmare with a special keen interest and began to relate to these images who spoke to her and the images were real for her and she would stand, while dressed for travel, in the middle of the living room close to them, talk to them, experience them and each and every thing they did affected her and she became caught up, imprisoned in their lives, believed in their influence and this Sunday morning as he once again thought about the Christmas decorations and stared out of the rear window of the den at the cloudy wintry December low sky, Mother watched a standing swaying gathering of people and their singing swelled and then gradually lowered, subsiding into ethereal musical murmuring as they all, in unison, sat and the man who remained standing on the stage before the audience, with head bowed,

a large open book in his hands, looked up abruptly, directly at Mother and he spoke her full name and asked her gently to sit down and whispered conspiratorially that only if she was still and quiet would everything be all right and Mother had turned, walked into the dining room and eased stiffly, slowly down into her chair and when she looked back towards the man in black he was suddenly a fading shadowy figure and then her mouth opened, to speak, distinctly, her eyes opened wide, to see, clearly, and the parting deep darkness surrendered to the dominating light and the pulsating energy of the nightmare ceased.

For ever.

The wonderful terrible horror of for ever more then erupted from within him, crashed down upon him like a thudding powerful padded tremendous blow he was struck, ambushed from behind, against his neck and he was forcibly removed from the trunk, from the shadows, and thrown to his knees, tossed upon the floor into the light and he grasped firmly, held on desperately to the last picture and on his knees he laid the

picture on the floor next to Mother but he could not see, his eyes were closed tightly and his arms were joined together, crossed before his body as if to ward off, protect himself and he attempted to catch his spasmodic breath, as a representation of spirit was coming and leaving and all the sharp icy cold air of the attic seemed to have disappeared, been sucked away and he was quietly choking in the chilled vacuum and his swollen heart hurt and the acute pain was wonderful and terrible and horrible and warm dusty liquid was in his eyes and threatened to spill out and he squeezed his eyes to hold back the tears for he knew if they began to fall down the torrential despairing pouring would run on and on, never stop, so he shook his head again and again to toss the despondent tears away and he opened his shining eyes and focused on the steamy breath blowing from his open gasping mouth and he lifted his convulsing hands and endeavored to touch, to feel, to caress his own breath that he wanted to supply, and measurably occupy the attic and allow him to respire, permit him to sustain his self

through the realization that had almost numbed his heart and he knew, understood somehow perfectly of the reality of for ever and that coupling to never, his Mother was gone for ever, never again here or there and his family, represented by these long ago images, never for him could be, would be always for ever, actually unreachable and the horror of these past losses and the most recent demise overwhelmed him and he bent as if broken and his face nearly reached the floor and he was in a motion, rocking, and the terror of his aloneness joined with the surging alarm and he fought to recover the wonder that was almost, nearly swallowed, struggled tenaciously to reclaim and taste the sweet sublime viscous beauty all but devoured by the reality of endless death for ever and ever so he clenched his teeth and grimaced and he felt coiling, spiraling to rise beneath his left hand that which could never conquer but would put into proper place, stand up and align dark death beside another reality and thus the capacity of that transcending energizing force had reared and floated in his trembling hand and the

terrible horror was subdued by the power of life and lighted love and he now, at this time, from this momentous day, understood the significance of hope above hopelessness and the wonderful, glorious, lovely, pure preciousness within living a genuine life by comprehending completely and accepting totally the tragic eternity that always and immediately for ever follows the unfulfilled unrealized, wasted loveless lost life.

He raised his hand that had been placed upon the floor to check himself, to arrest his forward downward pitch and he looked now at the final picture and a short quiet choked laugh came up, expelled softly, airily from his heated constricted throat and he smiled slightly at this photograph of his own self when he was only seven months of age and he experienced different pleasurable levels of pains throughout his soul, within his body, around his skipping fluttering heart and the incipient moist tears were of another type, from another source and he stared at himself as a naked dark-brown baby sitting, placed before draped white, upon soft fluffy white and he picked up the untainted image

and brought it closer to see better, observe all that he believed would be new this time when he peered deep into, deeper beyond these innocent beautiful large brown eyes and the happy astral eyes, their omniscient gaze was fixed directly back upon him and the plump little baby arms were lifted and yearning, for the body to be gathered up, held, and he was mesmerized, captivated, fastened within the trusting ancient gaze of his own eyes and inside he cried, he wept joyously, and uncontrollably, and his own smiling lips kissed tenderly the baby's smiling lips and the flowing, internal tears washed serenity throughout his soul, cleansed all that existed down in the dense impenetrable darkness and that darkness was stanching, diluted, flushed by the basic fundamental purifying illuminating power of truth just as love and life had crushed horror and death and he unconditionally loved this baby, wanted so much to possess a baby just like this to love and he whispered aloud that all would eventually be made right, to not fear, death was really not the ultimate good or evil purpose, was however

most definitely a concluding aspect but to experience the process and essence of love in the unfolding of life was the great truthful quest of existence and he realized only this baby, who yet lived within him, understood him as a feeling, as he felt perceptibly the baby, for he was the singular life on the surface of this earth that knew precisely, truly, actually, all, every thing, each thing that the baby in the picture would confront, that had awaited this child, and he knew exactly what the baby could, would feel, and that added to and enhanced his amazing absolute love for this child because they were as one, indeed had been for ever would be for ever together seeking what the rising arms of the baby sought, only to love and simply be loved and that was what there was essentially to authentic existence and so he assured the baby all was all right for he as a man continued for the baby, on the path of ultimate purpose alone but not lonely and it was all right that Father and Brother and Sister could not be there to help and assist by absorbing elements of the pain created by the seeping death of wife and Mother as if

the quality of this most special pure pain permeated with the passing away, the loss, the finality, could be shared, the unique quantity passed in allotted pieces to all family members so that each one could be distributed their own proper portion and thereby relieve its strength and diminish its agony and since that was not to be, it was all right, for he as a man would withstand this and as he stared at the precious baby the baby transmitted faith and conviction to him, a wanting need that believed in the man's ability to go on, and make the baby's life real and good and noble by allowing this baby to become that for which he was brought into this world, put on this earth to do, supposed to be, what no one else could be for him, could present to him as some tangible valued object or would be acquired for him at some external placed point and this baby knew that he knew he must never cease, must strive for ever to become his own entirely completed loving self and now his self was in both upheaval and turmoil and confronted with a situation he had never experienced before, consumed by emotions he

had never felt before and he wished to quell the tumultuous chaos within and rescue his own life that seemed to be slipping, breaking apart and he kissed the baby one more, last time, laid the picture down beside the now re-emerged lovely young Mother and when he rose quickly from his dusty, dirty hands and knees he was dizzy for a moment and he closed his eyes tightly and could not see and even when he opened them he still could not see, not really did he see the oblong patch of light fading behind him, light that had moved since his arrival and would continue to change, to lessen, and the light would eventually, inevitably depart and plunge the five symbols of life into repetitious darkness and not really did he see the shadows before him as he cut a swath while he strolled blindly towards the stairs and he stepped determinately and straight, around nothing, all being kicked and heaved and pushed from his path and the shadows parted for him and when he reached the first step and began his descent the shadows sighed loudly, waved goodbye and settled and he did not see the shifting stairs upon

which he tread or the peeling painted walls that reached out to bruise him as he stumbled towards his restoration that awaited him in the basement and all that had fragmented and broken loose within him crumbled as fine fractured crystal that was unsymmetrical and that tumbled inside him as pointed splintered glassy shards and grabbed and wrenched to rip him asunder and on down he went and when he gained the basement it was as if he were in a daze and then he arrived at the door to what had once been, long ago, the coal bin room and it was closed and his soul was gaping and wounded and extending desperately to that which was on the other side and he had to pull hard to release the door and he put his right arm out before him, moved it, as if to brush slowly away the darkness and he felt something as if it were a thin dangling piece of a web and when he jerked on the long hanging string he knew to be there the unshaded light bulb came on to glare harshly and offensive radiance flooded the small room and he blinked and blinked again and then the contents of the room lost

their indefiniteness as his eyes adjusted and focused and he saw that the room was packed to the ceiling, stuffed so full, bags fell at his feet and he snatched these paper and plastic bags from the room and yanked dry curtains and brittle sheets, each obstacle, everything that impeded his progress came from that stale musty room and all was tossed behind him, piled up, and what was once an imposing barrier to his entrance became an impressive barricade behind him to his exit but he did not see that which was before or behind, he could only acutely sense that which he knew was laying in the far corner waiting for him and when he bent and held out his left arm and felt his leather pouch his pounding racing aching heart slowed and he could breathe again, he could clearly see again.

All that he had finally become began with this that he held firmly in his hands.

This pouch contained the nascent essence of his desire, the incipient purpose of his life was surrounded by but was not suppressed by the soft leather which only protected these reverential tokens of a beginning of a long

running length which could not indicate the eventual elevated strength of a specific emotion that had become a magnificent pulsating power that was quite beautifully splendid and burned, seared pleasantly within his blood, throughout his body and this feeling as he believed it would, at this very moment was recovering, reasserting its self and was, for him, unlike any other need he had ever known and it had begun with these charms and abstractions he now dumped from the pouch upon the antique dresser top and the reflections of these items were blunted by the clinging dust on the mirror that was in front of him and his own dulled reflection he could barely see as he paused suddenly to stare at himself and he used the sleeve of his shirt to wipe some of the finely powdered matter away to observe his own image better in this brightness that was nearly totally absent of shadows and he saw who he had become since he was sent away from home by these ribbony pieces of meshed, fibrous clothing and locks of once shiny hair and tiny tarnished trinkets and pure guileless love letters from almost thirty-three

years ago and he looked at these silent whispering souvenirs and smiled just a little and touched the start, before he felt, he sensed somehow some mysterious things that were concealed alongside these testaments taken, received from his very first little girl friends and knew there, somewhere some unexplained things, layered far behind the words identifying an emotion he did not and could not understand being much too young to comprehend yet finding some vague phantastic attraction to the never leaving, never forgetting, always loving, love for ever expressions of the curious creatures who were but were not of his life at that time and yet expressed that they thought and dreamed of him and he almost had solid knowledge, but not really, of that which they shyly spoke and hinted at and wrote and what he himself exchanged and replied but by course it was only the beginning then, the foundation being laid of an unspecified concern perhaps possible that was rightfully existing and that he was supposed to seek as purpose and every now and then a fleeting notion came amorphously to him in his own

youthful thoughts and dreams and then when he was fifteen, as if he had crossed some invisible defining line that indicated a threshold to another world, he went to sleep in shadowy tender darkness and woke up filled with, being used up by illuminating raw desire and he was overwhelmed by the marvelous excellence of the energy and the remarkable power of such an essence that could dramatically alter his existence and cause him, seemingly over the course of a night, to not be that which he was, a young boy, and force him to be who he was not, a young man, and the endless sky and what it contained even above the eternal stars and the suspended earth and each of its colorful elements along with the whole impenetrable world and all that the world had been, was to be, everything, and all separated things became more, heightened beyond something else, each thing became charged with a connection to life, and desire on that very morning began its extraordinary quest for satisfying fulfillment and it manifested its self in the new developing otherness of his own existence and he recognized, as if blind

before, young women, and they were now different in the manner in which they walked and talked and not just degrees but essentially, so that he saw them and heard them not as before and wanted of them so much that was not needed before and each moment of every day his aching inchoate desire pushed at him interfered with him, worried him as some unique thing that was once inanimate but was now inspired and so very tireless that was buried deep inside not just his soul but permeating his entire physical being and would urge him on until it was allowed its own exalted renascence and be presented to reality within and through and out of the substance of the motion of his young body and he became forced to action and the sequence of events was contrived to express desire in its purest form at that end of motivation when desire must be done, to do, something physical and so beneath the starry sky and moonlit night on the dewy grass and inside the cavernous barns within the piles of hay and behind the quieted houses and upon concealed stairs and in soft back seats desire was felt acutely

and he experienced his own and that of the other, trembling, excited, semi-naked flesh and seeking, hungry warm lips and teasing sweetened tongues and nervous probing hands and never had he touched and been touched like this or felt another body or his own body ever been affected by sensations like this in these strained lustful strenuous eager encounters and the sumptuous heat and rare syrupy wetness and their thrusting stabbing rolling movements, the intensity, the abandonment, confused him and the shuddering, shivering, tingling, burning relief he attained scarred him scared him and he had not ever known this unique admixture of fear and desire and power and shame and he was left with indefinite inimical feelings as if in this spurning spewing gushing issued release he had been unchained yet he remained confined and involved in wrongness and this hurrying and groping and whispering dampened and covered the secret guilt and shrouded and diminished the fiery stinging pleasure and even though he attempted he could not halt himself and the reduced, withdrawn, would

return, would fill in again, spill over and rise up again, charged, increased again and in the darkness before he slept, prior to dreaming, he pondered, alone, of this that had been introduced into his life and he sought in the veiled seductive gazes of the young women, the answers to his myriad questions that silently asked if they felt as he?

did they wonder as he?

was it for them as it was for him?

beautiful and horrible and wonderful and frightening and he stared into their sinless eyes, looked into their florescent souls deeply, immediately after they had relinquished their selves to him and he had completely surrendered his self to them, and he tried desperately to peer to see if they had been significantly changed, in any way altered by this climactic physical meeting that was not, could not be actually the culmination but only an abrupt, brief pause that allowed him to begin to believe, start to sense what there should be, seemed to be able to hear thin rustling promises of more to seek, more to drastically feel, to let go, in order to be left

with a quieted calmed serene soul that was not turning and shaking and churning with embarrassing stressful disorder and self-reproach, was not both displeased and dissatisfied with having expected yet fallen short, unable to cross over the boundary or reach some limitless goal that he could not see in his own restricted youthful eyes or touch through his own restrained body and yet he respected the esteemed essence of his desire and worshipped the regarded young women who urged him on simply by their impressive presence and he watched them, pursued them, and gazed intently steadily behind their enticing smiles and deciphered between their tempting whistling words that summoned him, challenged him, roused him until awakened and stirred desire was other than a starving or gnawing craving hunger for some nourishment and above an extreme excessive need for warmth or a drink and he wanted so very much that which lay beyond his desire that a rash reckless yearning wasted him and propelled him forth from home at the age of seventeen and his leaving was accepted as something normal that was

invariably innately done to become a man and he was driven by a compulsory internal drive that was mercilessly constant, flowing forward as a molten flooding river without an end, just pausing momentarily, receding temporarily, pouring forth and therefore becoming specific in its organization and molding, forming him as destined creative artist, not of pastel substances and entities abstract that have turned and spun away from actualities of appearance, not as a composing creator of fleeting unrealistic impressions bathed in choppy shimmering, shortened shiny glimmering vibrating pure primarily colored sunlight, not a mortar and steel and wood and iron, three-dimensional architect nor an expressionist maker of bended distorted thinking, feeling, symbolic laden tinted lines with illusions hidden, surreal meanings and obscured brushed and water-colored signs, formed he was, and had become a stately sculptor of ultimate purpose so that he stood proudly in this basement room possessing an invisible sharpened chisel, strong wooden mallet and a honed scraping rasp which were tools of his

desiring carving mind that had commenced over thirty years ago to create, design a free-standing iridescently black marble singular, personal, private, loving phantasy that had so far surpassed and overcome all adversities and dominated and transcended ravaging despairing time and far, so very far he had traveled since departing his home to search and traverse over the bridges, through the tunnels, and across the miles and moments and days and years passed behind and the polished limestone chips and pieces and chunks of marble fell, sprinkled, cascading down leaving a marked and prominent sparkling trail upon the earth, across the oceans, in the sky, and vast the distances, extensive the loneliness in the beginning for great was the desire and at first elusive the belief that he had decided that there was only one woman who belonged only to him and that he belonged only to one particular woman and

*not any of the ones who he had left
who had left him wanting and needing
yet unknowingly assisted him in his superb
statuesque opalescent creation that had at*

first, initially engulfed him, the tinted dyed blackness did, and narrowed his vision and blocked out the horizon until he began to be able to step from it and he could see the grand dimensions of the glowing blackness, its scope and size began to shrink from its monolithic proportions and manageable the rigid luminous blackness became and no longer subtle elusive or ethereal, the belief solidified its self, coalesced into unwavering faith and the loneliness dissipated because he knew, without doubt, he was simply alone for that time being in the present since she awaited him there in the future and each woman was a hint a strike at the marble, as an artistic stroke upon the granite-like hardness, a gouge, were those first beautiful soft women who showed him through their uninhibited total nakedness the silhouetted potential wealth of substances unclothed undraped and becoming revealed as they sensuously exposed their selves to his glazed hypnotized wonder-filled gaze and gave their tremulous stunning selves to him and completely naked he felt what it would be like to be free and began to understand

unrepressed naturalness and with those who followed, his wantonness was quelled as he learned of unselfishness and patience and perverse passions and positions of physical expression and identified screaming and moaning exhorting sounds of ecstasy and he listened as he unfailingly strove to bring forth those rapturous utterances evoked only from the inmost depths of the female being and his provoked expanding spirit wanted so much to convincingly drain and thoroughly satisfy the forming phantasy he tightly held in his arms and he fervently kissed silky red tinged lips from which he could not long remove his eyes, kissed enduringly with released unleashed ardor and embraced each woman's undisguised body and held on for his own existence, seized, for his own life needed to touch, press upon every part of her, wanted to unceasingly caress all of her without and within and so he did, in lightly lingering reverently running skipping and tripping tracing gentle movements of his fingers and hands and he was continuously amazed at the texture of the flesh, the sight of it and the delicate movement of corporeal

femininity and how astonishing a woman's body felt beneath, above, wrapped around, against his own and amazing it was when his own extended self penetrated her and moved and roamed in her and he craved desperately for more and knew it to be correct and perfect when the very first woman ever, whispered entreatingly for him to please look here, there, inside of her, please, to taste her as she needed, imploring him to enjoy her in every way, in all the ways she wanted and beseeched him to make her needs his own and each subsequent woman's wants, expressed responsively, so obviously through their heated moisture became a factual aspect of his own desiring phantasy and thrilled him to such depths an emotional tremor would lose its self beyond his bended soul only to be stoked to a palpable tremendous sensation by the flowing fueling milky liquid from her dissolving melting body that was unlike anything he had ever tasted or savored before that was not too thickly sticky nor sour nor sweet but was indeed exquisite as it offered to him an arousing pungent, sharp

perfumed female animal essence that was unmatched, could not be duplicated, and each individual woman was dripping and spilling, exuding, giving something different and as sublimely special as some avowed elixir juice that has solemnly promised since the beginning of man's existence, wholeness, fulfillment, and external peace and thirstily he drank of this magnificent solution and his raging burning desire was doused and flamed, to uncontrollably roar, and on he progressed, for each woman he touched, tasted and devoured, fell upon the earth and shattered at his feet as broken fragile indications of that which the statue that formed its durable self within his mind, within his soul, could be, would become if only he persisted and struggled on, for each woman bequeathed to him, unease, and he remained perplexed as to what was missing and lacking and he brought his mallet down upon his chisel frantically and scraped away diligently at the rough jagged slicing edges that scratched him and cut him and caused him to bleed and deposited scars as the miles unfolded and the years

passed and the transitory women slipped from his grasp and became ephemeral and passed and disappeared within the varying, fluctuating deep chiaroscuro dimensional dark of the marble and yet the chimerical form of the phantasy, through and from his perseverance, was somehow indefatigably becoming distinct with that only woman emerging as he cast away and chipped away, subtracting all that was superfluous, excessive and false to his phantasy until there was nothing externally left to remove, and nothing else remained but to add determining will, all reasoning thought, pervading principled courage, essential emotional morality and a breath of life to that pure spirit that is unfathomable and could only be really for him if that soul was loving, for what was missing in each woman he had ever experienced physically was a love that confessedly, loudly, truly, absolutely stated and confirmed exclusive possession by, and of the glorious loving desiring touch and kiss that has been illustriously raised and willingly and correctly surrendered totally in order to be

allowed a stunning and radiant living reproducing experience with and through the equivalent matching other one who is also lovingly possessed by, and of the exact same quantity and equal quality of exalted desiring touching kissing love that is specific and that flows solely from only one, to only one other one and back along that same charged existing path and his splendid burning desire would say emphatically, sincerely, to hers and her sumptuous fiery desire would say forcibly, honestly, to his, at the same time, the identical desiring words, synchronously, of

never leaving, always loving,
loving for ever, only you,
solemn words speaking, soothingly, silently, together, to each other of needing more than conscious love, wanting desperately also to love purely physically with an endless everlasting love that shouts and says, let me touch you, let me kiss you, for I am the one for you, belong only to you, allow me to show you where, for that destination as the directed expression of my love is an ultimate purposeful love that takes you, brings to your

soul, after the passionate moving deed, as
you lay shivering, subsiding within my arms,
the beautiful consummating, culminating
act of my love, because of the phantastic
truth of it, shall always, never cease to, for
ever will create quiet freedom, a soft calm,
harmonious serenity and an oceanic peace
that simply lives only through that loving
embrace, but likewise makes everything, all
things right and because I know, I can say,
and because you believe, you will know and
we will whisper together

it's all right

yes, yes,

it's all right

I'm satisfied now,

but whenever your desire, desires to go on
again and again further experience my
body which belongs to you, presented to you,
owned by you, gently take me, sensuously
shape me, completely use me, to bring into
being life as it should be for us,

perfectly all right,

for it was, he believed, actually, solely
through enacted love could life be truly lived
as existence was indeed love and love to exist

was to consist of eternal properties that were not in any manner extinguished or lost after a desirous physical expression or diminished or relieved through satiated relief, for not a moment of an instant was life supposed to pause or repose, since to stop or cease for even the briefest of possible points in time was to experience a direct essence of finality, to touch an aspect of death, and now at this moment in this room he gradually shuttered his eyes and behind him, above him from the ceiling, filament, having been weakened from use and the passage of time, bent, and the light bulb flickered and the darkness hidden within his unseeing eyes, unaffected by the straining, simulated, artificial light was also an element of death and when he opened his eyes he was fastened and fixed into, deeply impaled upon them and he looked intently at the filmy facial image within the once ornate, aged mirror and the reality of his life gushed up from his soul, swamped and overflowed his distended hurting heart and emotions and all that was indescribable of them rose and filled his body and flooded into, through his own

enduring vision which had firmly and steadfastly remained young, yearning, and hopeful, he saw also the obvious inexorable result of passing time in his altering self and he looked down at his no longer soft hands that clutched the dresser top for unburdened balance, leaving resolute fingerprints, and all that had flooded him, washed through him and his head, his body, became warm and his legs lessened their support as if in his long released audible sigh, strength was blowing out, rushing away, deserting him, and so he breathed, inhaled deeply and his heaving chest and tightening throat pained him and just as he had done in the cold shadowy naturally illuminated attic high above, he struggled, fought for air as a necessity of life and blinked and blinked again and was forced by an immense shifting descending weight to press closed his eyes again quickly, urgently, firmly, and his bowed head moved slowly from side to side, and then nodded slowly up and down and this was repeated and in those opposing contrasting incongruous movements was expressed the magnificent irony of life and

he smiled slightly and then frowned a little as he began to hear, behind his closed eyes, in this damp chilled challenging basement, somehow from far, far away, from somewhere deep, deep inside of him he heard distinctly a jarring, cacophony of rising and swelling swirling sounds, foreign, alien, distant and unrecognizable and the blare dinning and clamor was his rumbling anguished soul erupting and his spirit railed and wailed and roared at the calamitous horror of life and was lifted and soared at the beauteous wonder of life and he was blinded by the brilliance of the recent newly accumulated knowledge of the true proportional brevity of life and weakened by the sure sense of having been thrown haphazardly, tossed into it to possibly be doomed to live alone throughout, without, yet comprehending an essential truth of life, that so very much of that which is done and felt is meaningless, when too much of that which is felt and done is emotionless and all that is loveless is always wasted, thus for ever disastrously lost, becoming an unrecoverable significant part of fleeting precious life, even still, he was

emboldened and strengthened in the belief
that he had fortunately discovered his own
fated purpose and he perceived, here in this
basement that would one day deteriorate
and crumble that he understood the factual,
existing length, extending, propelled forth
was as uncountable moments and days and
years and he experienced real recognition of
his world, long, long after he was gone,
continuing, rotating, circling on and on
and on and he would have indeed been less
than a glimmer, faintly there on the endless,
dynamic, unreachable horizon and could
have certainly become nothingness as a
singular, solitary grain of sand on an
infinite stormy beach had he not discovered
that the concluding horror, was not, to have
been as an undirected someone who had so
briefly passed by, gone through, given up on
a living life, the tragedy was to have spent
and squandered and exhausted one's short
time of life without the siren calling,
without the tender forming,
without the relentless seeking,
of a loving phantasy,
and he believed also that his own finality

would be not only an indication but a symbolic representation of his own path he had chosen, for in that unshakeable sublime sensitive quest, he knew he was pulled, led, and guided by the pure and powerfully illuminating, healing rays of love and when he departed from this earth, at his specific bell toiling time, whether or not he had completed the phantastic journey, he would have been immolated, burned up, consumed by the mighty lovely beams and there at the end as he moved closer, the searing radiance of love would have destroyed him and rendered him not into a minute imperceptible piece of grainy sandy dust but he would seem as a lustrous golden polished pebble and even buried and unseen he would stand out from the many and glitter and shine and appear as a valued and beloved exquisite jewel and beyond emerald or pearl or sapphire or diamond he would never desist, always exist and for ever be an indestructible eternal essence of love and he released, let the dresser top go, straightened, and shifted his shoulders and then he reached and scattered these venerated relics

from his past into the air and as they drifted and fell upon the floor his left hand grasped and clutched one last item and he raised it and opened it and looked inside and he read the message from long, long ago that had been neatly printed in this book of matches and the little letters made words that told him where to meet her, what time, pleaded that he not be too late, because she would be there early, waiting for him, with her undying love, and the old light bulb hanging, suspended there from the ceiling flickered and its properties surceased as it went out and he was plunged into a deep death-like blackness and even in the thick unwavering darkness he could visualize all that was piled up outside the door that blocked his way forward and he could see in his mind, imagine those pictured images that lay unmoving on the attic floor that he would surely gather up again and almost feel all the baggage around him that also impeded his progress and he did not move, could not take a step and he fumbled with the matches, extracted one and tried to strike it and there was no friction from the

aged, once rough now nearly smooth surface
it was hopelessly useless yet he could smell
barely, wafting sulfuric floating smoke and
he attempted another one that almost, but
failed, and placing two matches close he
struck them upon and across the phosphorus
powdered glass surface and they sizzled and
popped and hesitantly sparked and together
they burst into a small hot yellow-blue flame
and he held this that was lit, up, before him
and he looked around slowly and he could
clearly see, at the same time, both
 shadows and light.

