F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

MANUSCRIPTS VI

The Vegetable, Stories, and Articles

Part 1

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THE RICH BOY

by F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Begin with an individual and before you know it you find that you have created a type; begin with a type and you find that you have created - nothing. That is because we are all queer fish, queerer behind our faces and voices than we want anyone to know or than we know ourselves. When ever I hear a man proclaiming himself an "average, honest, open fellow" I feel pretty sure that he has some definite and perhaps terrible abnormality which he has agreed to conceal - and his protestation of being average and honest and open is his way of reminding himself of his misprision.

There are no types, no plurals. There is a rich boy, and this is his and not his brothers' story. All my life I have lived among his brothers but this one has been my friend. Besides, if I wrote about his brothers I should have to begin by attacking all the lies that the poor have told about the rich and the rich have told about themselves - such a wild structure that they have erected that when we pick up a book about the rich, some instinct prepares us for unreality. Even the intelligent and sincere reporters of life have made the country of the rich as unreal as fairyland.

Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me. They possess and enjoy early, and it does

something to them, makes them soft where we are hard and cynical where we are trustful, in a way that, unless you were born rich, it is very difficult to understand. They think, deep in their hearts, that they are better than we are because we had to discover the compensations and refuges of life for ourselves. Even where they enter deep into our world or sink below us, they still think that they are better than we are. They are different. The only way I can describe young Anson Hunter is to approach him as if he were a foreigner and cling stubbornly to my point of view. If I accept his for a moment I am lost - I have nothing to show but a preposterous movie.

-II-

Nor shall I subject you to a long, tremulous account of his adolescence. He was the eldest of six children who would some day split up a fortune of fifteen million dollars, and he reached the age of reason — is it seven ? — at the beginning of the century, when daring young women were already gliding along Fifth Avenue in electric "mobiles". In those days he and his brother had an English governess who spoke the language very clearly and crisply and well, so that the two boys grew to speak like she did - their words and sentences were all crisp and clear and not run together like ours are. They didn't talk exactly like English children but acquired an accent that is peculiar

to fashionable people in the city of New York.

In the summer the six children were moved en masse from the house on 7Ist Street to a big, old-fashioned estate in Northern Connecticut. It was not a fashionable locality for Anson's father wanted to delay as long as possible his children's knowledge of that side of life. He was a man somewhat superior to his class (which composed New York society) and his period (which was the snobbish and formalized vulgarity of the Gilded Age) and he wanted his sons to learn habits of concentration and have sound constitutions and grow up into right-living and successful men. He and his wife kept an eye on them as well as they were able until the two older boys went away to school, but in huge establishments this is difficult - it was much simpler in the series of small and medium sized houses in which my own youth was spent - I was never far out of the reach of my mother's voice, of the sense of her presence, her approval or disapproval.

Anson's first sense of his superiority began to him when he became conscious of the half-grudging American deference that was paid to him in the Connecticut village. The parents of the boys he played with always inquired after his father and mother, and were vaguely excited when their children were asked to the Hunters' house. He accepted this as the natural state of things — an impatience with all groups of which he was not the center — in money, in position, in authority — remained

with him for the rest of his life. As a boy he disdained to struggle with other boys for precedence - he expected it to be given him freely and often, when it wasn't, he withdrew into his family. The family was sufficient, for in the East money is still a somewhat feudal thing, a clan-forming thing. In the West, money separates families to form classes.

At eighteen, when he went to New Haven, Anson was tall and thick-set with a clear complexion and a healthy color from the ordered life he had led in school. His hair was yellow and grew in a funny way on his head, his nose was beaked - these two things kept him from being handsome - but he had a confident charm and a certain brusque style about him; the upper-class men who passed him on the street knew without being told that he was a rich boy and had gone to one of the best schools. Nevertheless his very superiority kept him from being a success in college - his independence was mistaken for egotism, while his refusal to accept Yale standards with the proper awe seemed to belittle all those who had - so, long before he graduated, he began to shift the center of his life to New York.

He loved New York. There was his own home with the familiar servants, "the kind you can't get any more", and his own family of which, because of his good humor and a certain ability to make things go, and a judge-like solidity of person, he was rapidly becoming the center, and Wall Street where he would presently take his quick, [illegible] mind to sharpen it on the

brokerage business, and the debutante parties and the correct manly world of the men's clubs and the occasional wild spree with ~~the~~ pretty ladies that most of New Haven knew only from the fifth row. His thoughts were conventional enough, you see— they included even the shadowy girl he would some day marry ; they differed from those of the majority of young dreams men in that there was no mist over them, none of that quality which is ~~variously~~ known as "idealism" or "illusion". Most of our lives end as a compromise ~~at~~ while Anson accepted without reservation the world of high finance and high extravagance, of divorce and dissipation, of snobbery and of privilege— it was as a compromise that his life began.

I ~~first~~ met him in the late summer of 1917 when ~~he was just out of college and~~, like the rest of our generation, he was swept up into the wild hysteria of the war. In the blue green uniform of the naval aviation he came down to Pensacola where the hotel orchestras played "I'm sorry, dear" and we young officers danced with the girls. Everybody liked Anson. ~~him. The man with the drinkers and wasn't an extraordinary good~~ even the instructors treated him with a certain respect. He was always having long talks with them in his confident, logical voice - talks which ended by his getting himself, or more frequently somebody else, out of impending trouble. He was a popular man on any kind of party, ~~stag, wild or respectable~~, and we were all surprised when

he fell in love with a conservative ~~and rather proper~~ girl!

~~Her name was~~ Paula Legendre, a dark, serious young beauty from California. She and Anson became ~~Her family kept a winter residence~~ just outside of town and she was enormously popular ~~for there is a large class of men whose egotism can't endure humor in a woman. But Anson wasn't like that and I couldn't understand the attraction of her sincerity~~ (~~that was the thing~~ to say about her) ~~for his keen and somewhat sardonic mind.~~

~~Nevertheless they fell in love, and on her terms.~~ Anson was ~~[illegible]~~ no longer [illegible] the central [illegible] ~~the twilight [illegible]~~ the De Sota bar ~~and whenever [illegible]~~ [illegible] ~~engaged in~~ a long, serious dialogue that ~~must have gone~~ went on several weeks. — engrossed in a long time ~~Long~~ afterwards he told me that it was not about anything in particular but was ~~composed~~ made up, on both sides, of immature and even meaningless statements — the emotional content that gradually came to fill it grew up not out of the words but out of its enormous seriousness. It was a sort of hypnosis. Often it was interrupted, giving way to that ~~simple~~ childish humor called fun; when they were alone it was resumed again, solemn, low-keyed, pitched so as to give each other a sense of one-ness in feelings and thoughts. They came to resent any interruptions of it, to be unresponsive to facetiousness about life, even to the mild cynicism of their contemporaries with which they had until recently agreed. They were only happy when the dialogue was going on and its seriousness enveloped them like the amber shadow of an open fire. Toward the end

there came an interruption they did not resent - it began to be interrupted by passion.

Curiously enough Anson Hunter was ~~engrossed~~ untangled in the dialogue and profoundly affected by it, and at the same time aware that, on his side, much was insincere and, on hers, much was merely simple. At first, too, he despised her emotional simplicity, ~~as such~~ but at his love Paula's nature deepened and blossomed and he could despise it no longer - on the contrary he felt that if he could enter into Paula"s warm safe life he would be happy. The long preparation of the dialogue removed any constraint - he taught her some of what he had learned from more adventurous women and she responded with a rapt holy intensity. One evening after a dance she agreed to marry him and Anson wrote about her to his mother. The next day Paula told him the interesting fact that she was rich - she had a personal fortune of nearly a million dollars.

-III-

It was exactly as if they could say "Neither of us have anything: we shall be poor together" — just as delightful that they should be rich instead. It gave them the same warm comfortable feeling. But when Anson got leave in April and Paula and her mother went North with him to meet his family, she was impressed with ~~their~~ the standing of the Hunter family in New York,

and with the ~~girls~~ ~~they lived~~. Alone with Anson for the first time in the rooms where he had grown up she was overcome with a rush of emotion. She felt preeminently safe and taken care of. So completely did his authorative person seem to sum up and typify all these things of his that she entertained the idea of being married immediately and going back to Pensacola as his wife. The very pictures of him in a skull cap at his first school, ~~of him~~ on horseback with the sweetheart of another summer, ~~of him~~ in a gay group of ushers and bridesmaid at a cousin's wedding, filled her with jealousy of his past.

But, to her disappointment, an immediate marriage wasn't discussed, or even suggested - the engagement wasn't ~~even~~ to be announced ~~outside the families~~ until after the war. She decided, two days before his leave was over, to make him love her so that he would be as unwilling to wait as she was. The words must come from his mouth but she determined to force the question that night.

A cousin of Paula's was staying with them at their suite at the Ritz, a severe bitter girl who loved Paula and ~~yet~~ was somewhat jealous of her ~~impressive~~ engagement. Anson was to call ~~for Paula~~ at six o'clock and take her Paula out to his uncle's house at Hampstead for dinner. Paula was late in dressing, so when Anson called, the cousin, who wasn't going to the party, received him in the parlor of the suite.

[redacted] Anson had met some friends at five and got drunk with them in one short hour. Usually he carried his liquor robustly but to-day he had eaten a light lunch and the first few drinks destroyed his judgement. He left the Yale Club at the proper time and his mother's chauffeur drove him to the Ritz but the impact of the steam-heated sitting-room accentuated his condition. He knew it and he was dimly angry at himself, and dimly amused and dimly sorry.

Paula's cousin was twenty five, she had seen little of the world, and at first she failed to realize what the matter was. She had never met Anson before and she knew something was wrong, because he mumbled strange information and nearly fell off his chair but until Paula appeared it didn't occur to her that she what she had taken for the odor of dry-cleaning gasoline was really whiskey. Paula, however, realized the truth as soon as she came in and her only thought was to get Anson away before her mother saw him. Then her cousin knew.

When they came down to the limousine Anson found two men inside, both intoxicated; they were the men with whom he had been drinking at the Yale Club and they were also going to the party but he had completely forgotten that they were in the car. On the way to Hempstead they all sang. Some of the songs were rather gross and though Paula had ~~come to accept~~ accepted the fact that Anson had few verbal inhibitions, her lips

tightened with annoyance and distate.

Back at the hotel her cousin, confused and exaited considered the situation; then she walked swiftly into Mrs. Legendre's bedroom saying: "Isn't he funny?"

"Who is funny?"

"Why - Mr. Hunter. He seemed so funny".

Mrs. Legendre looked at her sharply.

"How is he funny?"

"Why, he said he was French. I didn't know he was French".

"That's absurd. You must have misunderstood [redacted] "It was a joke".

The cousin shook her head stubbornly.

"No. He said he was brought up in France. He said he couldn't speak any English and that's why he couldn't talk to me. And he couldn't!"

Mrs. Legendre looked up with impatience just as the cousin added thoughtfully, "Perhaps it was just because he was so drunk", and walked out of the room.

~~What she had said was~~ This was all true. Anson, finding his voice thick and uncontrollable, had taken the unusual refuge of announcing that he spoke no English. Years afterwards he used to tell that part of the story, and invariably communicated the uproarious laughter which the memory aroused in him.

Five times between 6.30 and 8.30 Mrs Legendre tried to get Hempstead on the phone. When she succeeded there was

-II-

a ten minute delay before she heard Paula's voice at the other end of the wire.

"Cousin Jo told me Anson was intoxicated".

"Oh, no ...."

"Oh, yes. Cousin Jo says he was intoxicated. He told her he was French and fell off his chair and behaved as if he was very intoxicated. I don't want you to come home with him."

"Mother, he's all right! Please don't worry about -"

"But I do worry. I think it's dreadful. I want you to promise me not to come home with him".

"I'll take care of it, mother ...."

"I don't want you to come home with him."

"All right, mother. Good-bye".

"Be sure now, Paula. Ask someone to bring you."

Deliberately Paula took the receiver from her ear and hung it up. He face was set with annoyance and shame. Anson was strstched out in a bedroom upstairs while below the dinner party was proceeding lugubriously toward the salad.

The hour's drive had sobered him up so, that his arrival was merely hilarious and Paula had hoped that the evening would not be spoiled after all; but he took two imprudent cocktails before dinner and for fifteen minutes he talked boisterously and somewhat offensively to the party at large and then slid silently under the table like a man in an old print. But, unlike an old print, it was horrible without being quaint. None of the

girls remarked on the incident - seemed to merit only silence. His uncle and two other men carried him upstairs, and it was just after this that Paula was called to the phone.

An hour later Anson awoke in a fog of nervous agony through which he perceived after a moment the figure of his uncle standing by the door.

"... I said are you better?"

"What?"

"Do you feel better, old man"

"Terrible", murmured Anson.

"I'm going to try you with another bromo-selzer. ~~If you can hold it down~~ It'll do you good to sleep another hour".

With an effort Anson slid his legs from the bed and stoop up.

"I'm all right", he said dully.

"Take it easy".

"I think if you gave me a glass brandy I could go down!

"Oh, no -"

"Yes, that's the only thing. I'm all right now... I suppose I'm in Dutch down there."

"They know you're a little under the weather", said his uncle depreciatingly. "But what's the difference. Jack Schuler didn't even get here. He died in the locker room over at the links."

Though Anson didn't care what anyone thought, except Paula, he wanted to go downstairs and save the debris of the

evening. ~~But~~ When he did go down ~~after a cold bath,~~ most of the party had left, and Paula got up immediately to go home.

In the limousine the old serious dialogue began. "~~She had known~~ You knew that ~~he~~ drank, Paula said, but ~~she had~~ never expected anything like this" and it seemed to her now that they wouldn't get along. Their ideas about life were too different. Then Anson talked a little, very soberly, and she said she'd have to think it over. She didn't know. She was not angry but she was terribly sorry. She didn't let him come into the Plaza with her but as she got out of the car she kissed him suddenly and unhappily on the cheek.

~~The~~ Next day Anson had a long afternoon talk with Mrs. Legendre while Paula sat listening in silence. It was agreed that Paula was to brood over the incident for a proper period and then, if she thought it best, they were to follow Anson south in three weeks. Anson apologized with sincerity and dignity, that was all; ~~with every~~ during the card ~~in her hand~~ that Mrs. Legendre held in her hand she was unable to establish any advantage over him. He had made no promises, showed no humility, only delivered a few ~~serious~~ comments on life which brought him off with almost a moral superiority at the end. When they came south three weeks later, neither Anson in his satisfaction nor Paula in her relief at the reunion, realized that the psychological moment had passed for ever.

-IV-

He dominated and attracted her and at the same time filled her with anxiety. Confused by the mixture in him of solidity and self-indulgence, sentiment and cynisism, a mixture which her gentle mind was unable to resolve, Paula grew to think of him first in one light and then in another. When she saw him with a formal crowd, with her mother, with casual inferiors, she felt a tremendous pride in his strong attractive presense, the paternal, understanding stature of his mind - but in other company she saw a tendency to let down, to let what had been a fine imperviousness of precautions disclose its real face. The other face was gross, humorous reckless of everything but pleasure. It startled her mind temporarily away from him, even led her into a short covert experiment with an old beau. But it was no use. After four months of Anson's enveloping vitality there was an ~~aenemic~~ pallor in other men.

In July when he was ordered abroad their tenderness and desire reached a crescendo ~~when he was ordered abroad.~~ She considered a last minute marriage and decided against it because there were ~~always~~ cocktails on his breath all through the week before he went away. The parting itself made her almost physically ill with grief and every day she wrote him letters of regret for the days they had missed by waiting. In August his plane fell into the North Sea, He was pulled onto a destroyer after a night in the water

and pneumania set in, and the armistice was signed before he was sent home.

Then, with every opportunity given back to them, with no material obstacle to remove, the secret weavings of their temperaments came between them, drying up their kisses and their tears, making their voices less loud to one another, muffling the intimate chatter of their hearts until the old communication was only possible by letters from far away. One afternoon a society reporter waited for two hours in the downstairs hall of the Hunters' house to confirm their engagement. Anson denied it but nevertheless an early issue carried the report as a leading paragraph—they were constantly seen together at Hempstead, at Southampton, at Hot Springs, at Tuxedo Park. But the serious dialogue had turned a corner into a long sustained quarrel and the affair was almost played out. He got drunk flagrantly and missed an engagement with her whereupon she made certain behavioristic demands. Anson's despair was helpless before his pride and his knowledge of himself, and the engagement was broken.

"Dearest", said their letters now, "Dearest, Dearest, When I wake up in the middle of the night and realize that after all it was not to be, I feel that I want to die. I can't go on living any more. Perhaps when we meet this summer we may talk things over and decide differently - we were so excited and sad that day and I don't feel that I can live all my life without

you. You speak of other people. Don't you know there are no other people for me but only you..."

But she would sometimes mention her gayiety, as she drifted here and there around the East, to make him wonder. He was too accute to wonder. When he saw a man's name in her letters he felt more sure of her and a little disdainful. ~~He was always superior~~, But he loved her with a great tenderness and still hoped that they would ~~somehow~~ marry.

Meanwhile he plunged vigorously into all the movement and glitter of post-car New York, entering a brokerage house, joining half a dozen clubs, drinking freely three or four nights a week, dancing late and moving in three worlds -- his own, the world of young Yale men, and that section of the demi-monde which rests one end on Broadway. But there was a thorough and infractible eight hours devoted to Wall Street where the combination of his family connection, his large and constantly growing acquaintance, his sharp intelligence and his abundance of sheerly physical energy brought him almost immediately forward. ~~His~~ The carefully founded and apparently adamantine constitution stood him in good stead, and he had one of those invaluable minds with partitions in it. He could appear at the office without a wink of sleep and yet go down the line of customers with such shrewdness and judgement that there was competition for his services. By 1920 his income in salary and commissions exceeded twelve thousand dollars.

-17-

As the Yale tradition slipped into the past he became more and more of a popular figure among his classmates in New York, more popular than he had ever been in college. He had a large house and the ability to introduce young men into other large houses and security, while their lives had, for the most part, arrived at again at precarious beginnings. They began to turn to him for amusement and escape and he responded readily - he had always taken pleasure in helping people and arranging their affairs.

There were no men in Paula's letters now but there was a note of tenderness that had not been there before. From an outside source he heard that she had "a heavy beau", a Bostonian of wealth and position and, tho he was sure she still loved him, it made him uneasy to think that he might lose her after all. She hadn't been in New York, except for one unsatisfactory day, for almost five months and he felt a longing to see her. So he took his vacation in February and went down to Florida to see her.

Palm Beach sprawled plumply as usual between the sparkling saphire of Lake North, flawed here and there by house-boats at anchor, and the great turquoise bar of the Atlantic Ocean. The huge bulks of the Breakers and the Royal Ponciana rose as twin paunches from the bright level of the sand and around them clustered the Dancing Glade, Costigan's House of Chance and a dozen modistes and milleners with svelte goods at triple prices from New York. Apon the trellissed verandah of

the Breakers two hundred women stepped right, stepped left, wheeled and slid in that then celebrated calesthenic known as the "double shuffle" while in half time to the music one two thousand bracelets clicked up and down on two hundred arms.

Indoors every night Paula and Lowell Thayer and Anson and a casual fourth played bridge with hot cards. It seemed to Anson that her kind serious face was wan and tired — she had been around now for five, six years, he had known her for three.

"Two spades".

"Cigarette?... Oh, I beg your pardon - By me."

"Bye"

"I'll double three spades".

There were a dozen tables of bridge in the room, which was filling thick with smoke. Anson's eyes met Ada's, held them persistently as Thayer's desperately cordial glance fell between them.

"What was bid?" he asked.

"Rose of Washington Square", sang the young people in the corner

"I'm withering there
"On basement air".

The smoke banked like fog and the opening of a door filled the room with blown swirl of extoplasms. Little Bright Eyes streaked past the tables seeking Mr. Conan Doyle among the Englishmen who were posing Englishmen about the lobby.

~~"You could cut it with a knife".~~

At the end of the rubber Paula got up suddenly and spoke to Anson in a low voice. With scarcely a glance at Thayer, they walked out the door and descended a long flight of wooden steps - in a moment they were strolling hand in hand along the moonlit beach.

"Darling, darling...." They embraced recklessly, passionately in a shadow... Then Paula drew back her head to let his lips say what she wanted to hear - she could feel the words forming as they kissed again.... again she broke away, listening: "You're going to marry me. You're going to marry me tomorrow". But as he pulled her close once more she realized that he had said nothing - only Darling! Darling! in that deep, sad whisper that always made her cry. Humbly, obediantly, her emotions yielded to him and the tears streamed down her face, but her heart kept on crying "Ask me - Oh, Anson, dearest, ask me!".

"Paula.... Paula!"

The words wrung her heart like hands and Anson feeling her tremble knew that emotion was enough. He need say no more, commit their destinies to no practical enigma. Why should he when he might hold her so, biding his own time, for another year, forever. He was thinking of them both, of her more than of himself. For a moment, when she said suddenly that she must get back to the hotel, he hesitated, thinking first "This is the moment after all" and then "No, let it wait - she is mine".... He had forgotten that Paula too was worn away

inside - Her mood passed forever in the night.

Anson went back to New York next day filled with a certain restless dissatisfaction. There was a pretty debutante he knew in his car and for two days they took their meals together. At first he told her a little about Paula and ~~inventing~~ invented an esoteric incompatibility that was keeping them apart. The girl was of a wild impulsive nature and she was flattered by Anson's confidences. Like Kipling's soldier he might have possessed himself of most of her before he reached New York, but, luckily he was sober and kept controll ~~of himself~~.

Late in April he received a telegram from Bar Harbor in which Paula told him without comment that she was engaged to Lowell Thayer and that they would be married immediately in Boston.

He filled himself with whiskey and went to the office that morning and carried on his work without a break - with a deadly fear of what would happen if he stopped. In the evenings he went out as usual, saying nothing of what had ~~happened~~ occurred, cordial, humorous, unabstracted. But one thing he could not help - for three days, in any place, in any company, he would suddenly bend his head into his hands and cry like a child.

-V-

In 1922 Anson went abroad with the junior partner to investigate some London loans, a journey which intimated that he was to be taken into the firm. He was twenty-seven now, a little heavy without being definately stout, and with a manner and a resourcefulness beyond his years. Old people ~~and young people~~ liked him and trusted him - mothers felt safe when their daughters were in his charge on an expedition; he had a way when he came into a room of putting himself on a footing with the oldest and most conservative people there. "You and I", he seemed to say "We're solid. We understand".

The truth was that he had an instructive and rather charitable knowledge of the weaknesses of men and women and, like a priest, it made him the more concerned for the maintainance of outward forms. It was typical of him that every Sunday morning he taught in a fashionable Episcopal Sunday school - even ~~though~~ when a cold shower and a quick change into a cut-away coat was all that separated him from a wild night before. Once, by some mutual instict several children got up from the front row and moved to the last. He told ~~of~~ this story frequently and it was usually greeted with hilarious laughter.

But in spite of these apparent incongruities he was solid. After his father's death he was the actual head of the family, counseling his mother and deciding the destinies of the younger

children. Through some ~~family~~ legal complication his authority did not extend to his father's estate which was administrated by his Uncle Robert. Uncle Robert was the sporting ~~horsey~~ member of the family, a good natured hard-drinking member of that set which centers about Wheathy Hills. His favorite stories had to do with the menace of socialism and how a Jew named Hirsh had tried to get into a certain fashionable Club on Long Island.

"First he went to a riding school and taught himself to ride and by God the fool wasn't scared of anything. I went out with him one afternoon and his horse threw him about three times to the mile, and, by God, the fool got up and mounted and tried it again. I got to like the man. I took him aside afterwards and I said 'Look here, Hirsh, these people are making a fool of you. You'll never get into that club if you stay down here twenty years. I'm telling it to you because I like you,' I said 'You're [illegible]e a man!'"

He and his wife Edna had always been great friends of Anson's and Uncle Robert was disappointed when Anson's superiority failed to take a horsey form. He backed him for a city club which was the most difficult in America to enter - one could only join if one's family had "helped to build up New York," or, in other words, were rich before 1880 - and when Anson, after his election neglected it for the Yale Club he gave him a pleasant little talk on the subject. When on top of that Anson had declined to entar his own conservative and somewhat

neglected brokerage house and gone into another firm his manner grew cooler. Like a primary teacher who has taught all he knew he slipped out of Anson's life.

There was so many friends in Anson's life - scarcely one to whom he had not done some unusual kindness and scarcely one whom he did not occasionally embarrass by his bursts of gross conversation or by his habit of getting drunk whenever and however he liked. It annoyed him when anyone else blundered in that regard - about his own lapses he was always humorous. Odd things happened to him and he told them with infectious laughter. ★ (insert next page here)

Despite the trusting mothers his attitude toward girls was not indiscriminately protective. It was up to the girl - if she showed a wild streak she must take care of herself.

"Life", he would explain sometimes, "has made a cynic of me".

By life he meant Paula. Sometimes, especially when he was drinking, it became a little twisted in his mind, and he thought that she had callously thrown him over.

It was this "cynicism", or rather his realization that naturally fast girls were not worth sparing, that led to his affair with Dolly Karger. It wasn't his only affair in those years but it came nearest to touching him deeply and it had a profound affect upon his attitude toward life.

Dolly Karger was a New York girl, the daughter of Emory Karger,

(insert on page 23)

¶ I was working in New York that Spring and I used to lunch with him at the Yale Club, ~~which~~ my University was sharing their building until the completion of our own. I had read of Paula's marriage and one afternoon ~~when~~ I asked him about her and something moved him to tell me the story. After that he frequently invited me to family dinners at his house and behaved as though there was a special relation between us, as though with his confidence a little of that consuming memory had passed into me.

~~of~~ a "publicist" for the democratic machine who had married into society. So Dolly grew up into the Junior League, came out at the Plaza and went to the Assemby, and only a few old families like the Hunters could question whether or not she "belonged".

However, her picture was often in the papers and she had much more attention than many girls who undoubtedly belonged. She was dark-haired with carmin-lips and a high lovely color which she concealed under pinkish-grey color all through ~~the~~ her first year out, because high color was unfashionable and Victorian-pale was the thing to be. She wore black severe suits and stood with her hands in her pockets, leaning a little forward, with a humorous restraint on her face as if she were laughing at some gay thought that had just occurred to her. ~~She danced well and she was soft-voiced for humming~~ Better than anything she liked to dance - better than anything except making love. Since she was ten she had always been in love, and, usually, with some boy who didn't respond to her. Those who did - and there were many - bored her after a brief encounter, but for her failures she reserved the warmest spot in her heart. When she met them she would always try once more - sometimes she succeeded, more often she failed.

It never occurred to this gypsy of the unattainable that there was a certain resemblance in those who refused to love her - they shared a hard intuition that saw through to her

weakness, not a weakness of emotion but a weakness of rudder. Anson perceived this when he first met her, less than a month after Paula's marriage. He was drinking rather heavily and he pretended for a week that he was falling in love with her. Then he dropped her abruptly and forgot. Immediately she was mad about him and when they next met she ~~was unwise enough to tell~~ told him so.

Like so many girls of that day Dolly was slackly and indiscreetly wild. The unconventionality of an older generation had simply been one fact of a post-war movement to discredit obsolete manners - Dolly's was both older and shabbier and she saw in Anson the two extremes which the emotionally shiftless woman always seeks, an abandon to indulgence alternating with a protective strength. In his character she felt both the sybarite and the solid rock and these two satisfied every need of her nature.

She saw that it was going to be difficult, though she suspected, wrongly, that it was because Anson and his family probably desired a more spectacular marriage, But she guessed immediately that her advantage lay in his tendency to drink.

They met at the large debutante dances but as her infatuation increased they managed to be more and more together. Like most mothers Mrs. Karger believed that Anson was exceptionally reliable, so she allowed Dolly to go with him to distant country clubs and suburban houses without enquiring closely

-26

into her activities or questioning Dolly's explanations when they came in late. At first these explanations might have been accurate, but Dolly's worldly ideas of capturing Anson were soon engulfed in the rising sweep of her emotion and kisses in the backs of taxis and motor cars were no longer enough; they did a curious thing:

They dropped out of their world for awhile and made another world just beneath it where Anson's tippling and Dolly's irregular hours would be less noticed and commented on. It was composed, this world, of varying elements - several of Anson's Yale friends and their wives, two or three brokers and bond salesmen and a handful of unplaced, unattached young men, fresh from college, with money and a propensity to dissipation. What this world lacked in spaciousness and scale it atoned for by allowing them a liberty that it scarcely permitted itself. Moreover it centered around them and permitted Dolly the pleasure of a faint condescension - a pleasure in which Anson whose whole life was a condescension from the certitudes of his childhood, was unable to participate.

He was not in love with her and in the long feverish winter of their affair he frequently told her so. In the spring he was weary - he wanted to renew his life at some other source - moreover he saw that either he must break with her now or accept the responsibility of a seduction. Her family's encouraging attitude was another complication - once when Mr. Karger, after knocking discreetly at the library door, opened it to

announce that he had left a bottle of old brandy in the dinning room, Anson felt that life was ~~h~~ hemming him in. That night he wrote her a short definite note in which he told her that he was going on his vacation and that in view of all the circumstances they had better meet no more.

It was June. His family had closed up their house and gone to the country so he was living temporarily at the Yale Club. I had heard about his affair with Dolly as it developed—accounts salted with humor for he had no respect for unstable women. They were perhaps a necessity like servants but they had no place in the social edifice in which he believed. Nevertheless when he told me that night that he was definitely breaking with her I was glad. I had seen Dolly here and there and each time with a feeling of pity at the hopelessness of her struggle, and shame at knowing so much about her that I had no right to know. She was what is known as "a pretty little thing" but there was a certain recklessness which rather fasfinated me. Her dedication to the goddess of waste would have been less obvious had she been less spirited - she would most certainly throw herself away but I was glad when I heard that the sacrifice would not be consummated in my sight.

Anson was going to leave the letter at her house next morning. It was one of the few houses left open in the 5th Avenue district and he knew that the Kargers, acting upon erroneous information, had forgone a trip abroad to give Dolly

her chance. As he stepped out into Madison Avenue the postman passed him and he followed him back inside. The first letter that caught his eye was addressed in Dolly's hand.

He knew what it would contain - a lonely and tragic monologue, full of the reproaches he knew, the invoked memories, the "I wonder if's", all the immemorial intimacies that he had communicated to Paula Legendre in what seemed another age. Thumbing over same bills he brought it on top again and opened it. To his surprise it was a short, somewhat formal note, which said that Dolly would be unable to go to the country with him for the week-end, because Perry Hull from Chicago had unexpectedly come to town. It added that Anson had brought this on himself: "- if I felt that you loved me as I loved you I would go with you at any time any place, but Perry is so nice, and he so much wants me to marry him."

Anson smiled contemptuously - he had had experience with such decoy letters. Moreover he knew how Dolly had labored over this plan, probably sent for the faithful Perry and calculated the time of his arrival - labored over the letter even so that it would make him jealous without driving him away - like most compromises it had neither force nor vitality but only a timorous dispair.

Suddenly he was angry. He sat down in the lobby and read it over. Then he went to the telephone, called Dolly and told her in his clear, compelling, determined voice that he

had received her letter and would call for her at five. Scarcely waiting for the pretended uncertainty of her "Perhaps I can see you for an hour", he hung up the receiver and went down to his office. On the way he tore up his own letter and drooped it in the street.

He was not even faintly jealous but at her pathetic ruse everything stubborn and self-indulgent in him came to the surface. It was a presumption from a mental inferior and it could not be overlooked. If she wanted to know to whom she belonged she would see.

He was on the doorstep at quarter past five. She was dressed for the street and he listened in silence to the paragraph of "I can only see you for an hour" which she had begun on the phone.

"Put on your hat, Dolly", he said, "we'll take a walk".

They walked up Madison Avenue and over to 5th while Anson's shirt dampened upon his portly body in the deep heat. He talked little, scolded her, made no love to her, but before they had walked six blocks she was his again, apologizing for her letter, offering not to see Perry at all as an attonement, offering anything. She thought that he had come to her because he was beginning to love her.

"I'm hot", he said, when they reached Seventy-sixth Street, "this is a winter suit. If I stop by the house and change

would you mind waiting for me down-stairs. I'll only be a minute.

She was happy, the intimacy of his being hot, of any physical fact about him thrilled her. When they came to the iron-grated door and Anson took out his key she experienced a sort of delight.

Downstairs it was dark and after Anson ascended in the lift she raised a curtain and looked out through opaque lace at the street. She heard the lift machinery stop and, with the notion of teasing him, pressed the button that brought it down. Then on a sudden impulse she got into it and sent it up to what she guessed was his floor.

"Anson", she called, laughing a little.

"Just a minute", he answered from his bed-room",... now you can come in".

He had changed and was buttoning his vest.

"This is my room", he said lightly, "How do you like it?"

She caught sight of Paula's picture on the wall and she stared at in in fascination, just as Paula had stared at the pictures of Anson's childish sweethearts five years ago. She knew something about Paula - sometimes she tortured herself with fragments of the story.

Suddenly she came close to Anson, raising her arms; they embraced. Outside the area window a soft artificial

twilight already hovered, though the sun was still bright on a back roof across the way. In half an hour the room would be quite dark. The uncalculated opportunity overwhelmed them, made them both breathless and they clung more closely together. It was eminent, inevitable, let it be. Still holding each other, they raised their heads - their eyes fell directly upon Paula's picture, staring at them from the wall.

Suddenly Anson let go and sitting down at his desk tried the drawer with a bunch of keys.

"Like a drink?" he asked in a gruff voice.

"No".

He poured himself ~~a drink~~ one, swallowed it and then opened the door into the hall.

"Come on", he said.

She hesitated.

"Anson - I'm going to the country with you tonight after all. You understand that, don't you".

"Of course", he answered brusquely.

In Dolly's car they rode out to Long Island, closer in their emotions than they had ever been before. They knew what would happen — not with Paula's face to remind them of what was lacking, but when they were alone in the still hot Long Island night that did not care.

They dined in Jericho and danced at the Linx Club - the estate in Port Washington where they were to spend the week-end

belonged to a cousin of Anson's who had married a Montana copper operator/ An interminable drive began at the lodge and twisted under imported poplar saplings toward a huge, white stone house. Anson had often visited there before.

At midnight he assured himself that ~~the~~ his cousins would not leave the Linx Club before two - then he explained to them that Dolly was tired, he would take her home and return to the dance later. Trembling a little with excitment they got into a borrowed car together and drove to Port Washington. As they reached the lodge he stopped and spoke to the night-watchman.

"When are you making a round, Carl?"

"Right away".

"Then you're coming back here".

"Then I'll be here till everybody's in".

"All right. Now listen. If any automobile, no matter whose it is, turns in at this gate I want you to ring the house immediately on the private phone" He put a five dollar bill into his hand, "Is that clear?"

"Yes, Mr. Anson". Being of the old world he neither winked nor smiled - but Dolly sat with her face turned slightly away.

Anson had a key. Once inside he poured a drink for both of them - Dolly left hers untasted - then he definitely ascertained the location of the phone. It was within easy hearing distance of their rooms both of which were on the first floor.

Five minutes later he knocked at the door of Dolly's room.

"Anson?"

He went in, closing the door behind him. She sat up in bed and sitting beside her he took her in his arms.

"Anson, darling"

He didn't answer.

"Anson.... Anson! I love you... Say you love me. Say it now - can't you say it know? Even if you don't mean it?"

He didn't hear. Over her head ~~he saw that~~ Paula's picture was still hanging on the wall.

He got up and went close to it. The frame gleamed faintly with thrice-reflected moonlight - within was a blurred shadow of a face which he saw that he did not know. Almost sobbing he turned around and stared with abomination at the little figure on the bed.

"This is all foolishness", he said thickly; "I don't know what I was thinking about. I don't love you and you'd better wait for somebody that loves you. I don't love you a bit, ~~don't~~ can't you understand.

His voice broke and he went out quickly. Back in the salon he poured himself a drink with uneasy fingers. The front door opened suddenly and his cousin came in.

"Why, Anson", she said, "I hear Dolly's sick. I ran home to see".

"It was nothing", he answered, raising his voice so

that it would carry into Dolly's room, "She was a little tired so she went to bed".

For a long time afterwards Anson was believed that a protective God sometimes interfered in human affairs. But Dolly Karger lying awake and staring at the ceiling never again believed in anything at all.

-VI-

When Dolly married the following autumn, Anson was in London on business. Like Paula's marriage, it was sudden, but affected him in a different way. At first he thought it was funny and had a tendency to laugh when he thought of it. Later it depressed him - it made him feel old.

There was something representative about it - why, Paula and Dolly had belonged to different generations - he had a foretaste of the sensation of a man of forty who hears that the daughter of an old flame has married. He wired congratulations and, ~~as was not the case with~~ unlike those he had wired Paula, they were sincere - he had never really hoped that Paula would be happy.

When he returned to New York, he was made a partner in the firm and as his responsibilities increased he had less time on his hands. The refusal of a Life Insurance company to issue him a policy made such an impression on him that he stopped drinking for a year and claimed to feel better physically, though I think he missed the convivial recounting of those

Cellinisque adventures which in his early twenties had been such a part of his life. But he never abandoned the Yale Club. He was a figure there, a personality, and the tendency of his class, who were now seven years out of college, to drift away to more sober haunts, was checked by his presence.

His day was never too full, nor his mind too weary to give any sort of aid to anyone who asked it. What had been done at first through pride and superiority had become a habit and a passion. And there was always something - a younger brother in trouble at New Haven, a quarrel to be patched up between a friend and his wife, a position to be found for this man, an investment for that. But his speciality was the solving of problems for young married people. Young married people fascinated him and their apartments were almost sacred to him - he knew the story of their love affair, advised them where to live and how, and remembered their babies' names. Toward young wives his attitude was circumspect - he never encroached upon the trust which their husbands - strangely enough in view of his unconcealed irregularities - invariably reposed in him.

He came to take a vicarious pleasure in happy marriages and be inspired to an almost equally pleasant melancholy by those that went astray. Not a season passed that he did not witness the collapse of an affair that he himself perhaps fathered. When Paula was divorced and almost immediately remarried to another Bostonian he talked about to me

all one afternoon. He would never love anyone as he had loved Paula, but he insisted that he no longer cared.

"I'll never marry", he came to say, "I've seen too much of it and I know that a happy marriage is a very rare thing. Besides, I'm too old".

But he did believe in marriage. Like all men who spring from a happy and successful marriage he believe in it passionately - nothing he had seen would change his belief and his cynicism dissolved upon it like air. But he did really ~~believe~~ consider that he was too old. At twenty-eight he began to accept with equanimity the prospect of marrying without romantic love, he resolutely chose a New York girl of his own class, pretty, intelligent, congenial and above reproach - and set about falling in love with her. But he failed. The things he had said to Paula with sincerity, to other girls with grace, he could no longer say at all without smiling, or with the force necessary to convince.

"When I'm forty", he told his friends, "I'll be ripe. I'll fall for some chorus girl like the rest".

Nevertheless he persisted in his attept. His mother wanted to see him married and he could well afford it.-He had a seat on the stock exchange, now and his earned income came to twenty-five thousand a year. ~~And~~ Moreover the idea itself was agreeable; ~~when his friends~~ - he spent most of his time with the set he and Dolly had evolved - and when his friends closed themselves in behind domestic doors at night he no longer rejoiced in his freedom. He even

wondered if he should have married Dolly - not even Paula had loved him more and he was learning the rarity, in a single life, of true emotion.

Just as this mood began to creep over him a disquieting story reached his ear. His Aunt Edna, a woman of thirty-eight was carrying on an open intrigue with a wild, hard-drinking young man named Cary Sloane. Everyone knew of it except his uncle who for ten years had talked long in clubs and taken his wife for granted.

Anson heard the story again and again with increasing annoyance. Something of his old feeling for his uncle came back to him, a feeling that was more than personal, a reversion toward that family solidarity on which he had based his pride. His intuition singled out the essential point of the affair which was that his uncle shouldn't be hurt. It was his first experiment in unsollicited meddling but with his knowledge of Edna's character he felt that he could handle the matter better than a district judge, or his uncle.

His uncle was in Hot Springs. He traced down the sources of the story so that there should be no possibility of mistake and then he called Edna and asked her to lunch with him at the Plaza next day. Something in his tone must have frightened her for she was reluctant but Anson insisted, putting off the date until she had no excuse for refusing.

She met him at the appointed time in the Plaza Lobby,

a lovely,faded, grey-eyed blonde in a coat of Russian sable. Five great rings, cold with diamonds and emeralds, sparkled on her slender hands. It occurred to Anson that it was his father's intelligence and not his uncle's that had earned ~~the fur and the stones, the~~ that rich brilliance that buoyed up her passing beauty.

Though Edna scented his hostility she was unprepared for the directness of his approach.

"Edna, I'm astonished at the way you've been acting", he said in a strong frank voice, "at first I couldn't believe it".

"Believe what?" she demanded sharply.

"You needn't pretend with me, Edna. I'm talking about Mary Sloane. Aside from any other consideration I didn't think you could treat Uncle Robert -

"Now look here, Anson - " she began angrily but his peremptory voice broke through hers,

"- and your children in such a way. You've been married eighteen years and you're old to know better".

"You can't talk to me like that! You - "

"Yes I can. Uncle Robert has always been my best friend -" He was tremendously moved. He felt a real distress about his uncle, about his three young cousins.

Edna stood up, leaving her crab flake cocktail untasted.

"This is the silliest thing -"

"~~Very well.~~ If you won't listen to me, I'll go to

Uncle Robert and tell him the whole story - he's bound to hear it sooner or later. And afterwards I'll go to old Moses Sloane".

Edna faltered back into her chair.

"Don't talk so loud", she begged him. Her eyes blurred with tears. "You have no idea how your voice carries. You might have chosen a less public place to make all there - all these crazy accusations".

He didn't answer.

"Oh, you never liked me, I know", she went on, "You're just taking advantage of some silly gossip to try and break up the only interesting friendship I've ever had. What have I ever done to make you hate me so?"

Still Anson waited. There would be the appeal to his chivalry, then to his pity, finally to his superior sophistication - when he had shouldered his way through all these there would be admissions and he could come to grips with her. By being silent, by being impervious, by returning constantly to his main weapon which was his own emotion, he bullied her into frantic despair as the luncheon hour slipped away. At two o'clock she took out a mirror and a handkerchief, stained away the marks of her tears and powdered the slight hollows where they had lain. She had agreed to meet him at her own house at five.

When he arrived she was stretched on a chaise-longue which was covered with cretonne for the summer, the tears he had called up at luncheon seemed to be still standing in her

eyes. Then he saw Billy Sloane's dark anxious presence upon the cold hearth.

"What's this idea of your", broke out Sloane immediately, "I understand you invited Edna to lunch and then threatened her on the basis of some cheap scandal".

Anson sat down.

"I have no reason to think its only scandal".

"And I hear you're going to take it to Robert Hunter and to my father".

Anson nodded.

"Either you break off or I will", he said.

"What God dammed business is it of yours, Hunter?"

"Don't lose your temper, Billy", said Edith nervously. "It's only a question of showing him how absurd -"

"For one thing, it's my name that's being handed around," interrupted Anson, "that's all that concerns you."

"Edna isn't a member of your family".

"She most certainly is". His anger mounted, "She owes this house, and the very rings on her fingers, to my father's brains. When Uncle Robert married her she didn't have a penny".

They all looked at the rings as if they had a significant bearing on the situation. Edna made a gesture to take them from her hand.

"I guess they're not the only rings in the world" said Sloane

"Oh, this is absurd", cried Edna, "Anson, will you listen to me? I've found out how the silly story started. It was a maid who I discharged and who went right to the Chilichuffs; all these Russian pump things out of their servants and then put a false meaning on them". She brought down her small fist angrily on the table, "And after Tom lent them the limousine for a month when we were South last winter - oh, I wish -"

"Do you see?" demanded Sloane eagerly. "This maid got hold of the wrong end of the thing. She knew that Edna and I were friends and she carried it to the Chilichuffs. In Russia they assume that if a man and a woman-"

He enlarged the theme to a disquisition upon social relations in the Caucasus.

"If that's the case it better be explained to Uncle Robert", said Anson dryly, "so that when the rumors do reach him he'll know the're not true".

Adopting the method he had followed with Edna at luncheon he let them explain it all away. He knew that they were guilty and that presently they would cross the fine line from explanation into justification and convict themselves more definitely that he could ever do. By seven they had taken the desperate step of telling him the truth - Robert Hunter's neglect, Edna's empty life, the casual dalliance that had flamed up into a grande passion - but like so many true stories it had the misfortune of being old and its enfeebled body beat helplessly

against the armor of Anson's will. The threat to go to Sloane's father sealed their helplessness for the latter, a retired cotton broker out of Alabama, was a notorious fundamentalist who controlled his son by a rigid allowance and the promise that at his next vagary even the allowance would stop forever.

They dined at a small French restaurant and the discussion continued - at one time Sloane resorted to physical threats, a little later they were both imploring him to give them time. But he was obdurate. He saw that Edna was breaking up and that her spirit must not be refreshed by any renewal of their passion.

At two o'clock in a small night-club on 53rd Street, Edna's nerves collapsed suddenly and she cried to go home. Sloane had been drinking hard all evening and he was faintly maudlin, leaning on the table and weeping a little with his face in his hands. Quickly Anson gave them his terms. He himself would take Edna back to the country. - Sloane was to go away for a month ~~and he must leave town~~ within twenty-four hours. At the end of a year she might, if she wished, tell Robert Hunter that she wanted a divorce and go about it in the usual way.

"Or there's another thing you can do", he said, "if Edna wants to leave her home and her children, there's nothing I can do to prevent your running off together".

"I want to go home" cried Edna again, "Oh, havn't you

done enough to us for one day".

Outside it was dark, save for a blurred glow from 6th Avenue down the street. In that light these two who had been lovers looked for the last time into each other's tragic faces, realizing that between them there was not enough youth and strength to avert their eternal parting. Sloane walked suddenly off down the street and Anson bargained with a taxi-driver for the long ride.

It was almost four: there was a patient flow of cleaning water along the ghostly pavement of 5th Avenue and the shadows of two night women flitted over the dark facade of St. Thomas church. Then the desolate shrubbery of Central Park where Anson had often played as a child and the mounting numbers, significant as names, of the marching streets. This was his city where his name had flourished through five generations - no change could alter the permanence of its place here for change itself was the essential sub-strata by which he and those of his name identified themselves with the spirit of New York. Resourcefulness, will — for his threats in weaker hands would have been less than nothing — had washed the dust from his uncle's name, the name of his family, even from this shivering figure that sat beside him in the car.

Billy Sloane's body was found next morning on the lower shelf of Queensborough Bridge. In the darkness and in his excitment he had thought that it was the water flowing back beneath him, but in less than a second it made no possible difference - unless he had planned to think one last thought of Edna and call her name as he struggled feebly in the water.

-VII-

Anson never blamed his own part in this affair - the situation which brought it about had certainly not been of his making. But the just suffer with the unjust and Anson found that his oldest and most precious friendship was over. He never knew what distorted story Edna told but he was welcome in his uncle's house no longer.

Just before Christmas Mrs. Hunter retired to a select Episcopal heaven and Anson became the responsible head of his family. An unmarried aunt who had lived with them for years ran the house and attempted with helpless inefficiency to chaperone the younger girls. All the children were less self-reliant than Anson, more conventional both in their virtues and their shortcomings. Mrs. Hunter's death had postponed the debut of one daughter and the wedding of another. Also it had taken something deeply material from all of them for with her passing the quiet expensive superiority of the Hunters came to an end.

For one thing, the estate, considerably diminished by two inheritance taxes and soon to be divided among six children, was not a notable fortune any more. Anson saw a tendency in his youngest sisters to speak rather respectfully of ~~families~~ families that hadn't ~~been mentioned~~ "existed" twenty years ago. His own feeling of superiority was not echoed in them - sometimes

they were snobbish, that was all. For another thing, this was the last summer they would spend on the Conneticut estate; the clamor against it was too loud: "Who wants to waste the best months of the year shut up in that dead old town". Reluctantly he yielded - the house would go into the market in the fall - and next summer they would rent a smaller place in Westchester County. It was a step down from the expensive simplicity of his father's idea and while he sympathized with the revolt it also annoyed him - during his mother's life time he had gone up there at least every other week-end, even in the gayest summers. Yet he himself was part of this change and his strong instinct for life had turned him in his twenties from the hollow obsequies of that abortive leisure class. He did not see this clearly - he still felt that there was a norm, a standard of society. But there was no norm, it was doubtful if there had ever been a true norm in New York. The few who still paid and fought to enter that "inner" set succeeded only to find that as a society it scarcely existed - or, what was more alarming, that the Bohemia from which they fled sat above them at table.

At thirty Anson's chief concern was his own growing loneliness. He was sure now that he would never marry. The number of weddings at which he had officiated as best man or usher was past all counting - there was a drawer at home that bulged with the official neckties of this or that wedding party,

necklies standing for romances that had not endured a year, for couples who had passed completely from his life. Scarfpins, gold pencils, cuff buttons,—presents from a generation of grooms had passed through his jewel box and been lost-and with every ceremony he was less and less able to imagine himself in the groom's place. Under his hearty good will toward all of them there was dispair about his own.

As he neared thirty he grew a little depressed at the inroads that marriage, especially love, had made upon his friendships. Groups of people had a disconcerting tendency to dissolve and disappear. The men from his own college - and it was upon them he had expended the most time and affection - were the most elusive of all. Most of them were drawn deep into marriage, two were dead, one lived abroad, one was in Hollywood writing continuities for pictures that Anson went faithfully to see.

Most of them, however, were permanent commuters with an intricate family life centering around some suburban country club and it was from these that he felt his estrangement most keenly.

In the early days of their married life they had all needed him;-he gave them advice about their slim finances, he exorcised their doubts about the advisability of bringing a baby into two rooms and a bath - he stood for the great world outside. But now their financial troubles were in the past

and the fearfully expected child had evolved into an absorbing family. They were always glad to see old Anson but they dressed up for him and tried to impress him with their present importance, and kept their troubles to themselves. They needed him no longer.

A few weeks before his thirtieth birthday the last of his early and intimate friends was married. Anson acted in his usual roll of best man, gave his usual silver tea-service and went down to the usual Homeric to say good bye. It was a hot Friday afternoon in May and as he walked from the pier he realized that Saturday closing had begun and he was free until Monday morning.

"Go where?" he asked himself.

The Yale Club of course, bridge until dinner, then four or five raw cocktails in somebody's room and a pleasant confused evening. He regretted that this afternoon's groom wouldn't be along - they had always been able to cram so much into such a night: they knew how to attach women and how to get rid of them, how much consideration any girl deserved from their intelligent hedonism. A party was an adjusted thing - you took certain girls to certain places and spent just so much on their amusement; you drank a little, not much, more than you ought to drink and at a certain time in the morning, you stood up firmly and said you were going home. You avoided college boys, sponges, future engagements, fights, sentiment and indiscretions. That was the way it was done. The rest was

dissipation.

In the morning you were never violently sorry - you made no resolutions but if you had overdone it and your heart was slightly out of order you went on the wagon for a few days without saying anything about it and waited until an accumulation of nervous boredom projected you into another party.

The lobby of the Yale Club was unpopulated. In the bar three very young allumni looked up at him, momentarily and without curiosity.

"Hello there, Oscar", he said to the bar tender, "Mr. Cahill been around this afternoon?"

"Mr Cahill's gone to New Haven".

"Oh... that so?"

"Gone to the ball game. Lot of men gone up"

Anson looked once again into the lobby, considered for a moment and then walked out and over to Fifth Avenue. From the broad window of one of his clubs - one that he had scarcely visited in five years - a grey man with watery eyes stared down at him. Anson looked quickly away - something about that figure sitting in vacant resignation, in supercillious solitude, depressed him. He stopped and retracing his steps started over 47th Street toward Teak Warden's apartment. Teak and his wife had once been his most familiar friends - it was a household where he and Dolly Karger had been used to go in the days of their affair. But Teak had taken to drink and his

wife had publicly remarked to people that Anson was a bad influence on him. The remark reached Anson in an exaggerated form - when it was finally cleared up, the delicate spell of intimacy was broken, never to be renewed.

"Is Mr. Warden in?" he inquired.

"They've gone to the country."

The fact unexpectedly cut at him. They were gone to the country and he hadn't known. Two years before he would have known the date, the hour, come up at the last moment for a final drink and planned his first visit to them. Now they had gone without a word.

Anson looked at his watch and considered a week-end with his family, but the only train was the local, which would jolt through the agressive heat for four hours. And tomorrow in the country, and Sunday - he was in no mood for bridge on the porch with undergraduates and dancing after dinner at a rural road house, a diminutive of gayety which his father had judged too well.

"Oh no", he said to himself... "No"

He was a dignified, impressive young man - rather stout now but otherwise unmarked by dissipation. He could have been cast for a pillar of something - at times you were sure it was not society, at others nothing else - for the law for the church. He stood for a few minutes on the side walk in front of a 47th Street apartment-house - for almost the first time in his life he had nothing whatever to do.

Then he began to walk briskly up 5th Avenue, as if he had just been reminded of an important engagement there. The necessity of dissimulation is (despite Jack London's intellectual valets) one of the few characteristics that we share with dogs and I think of Anson on that day as some well-bred specimen who had been disappointed in a familiar back yard. He was going to see Nick, once a fashionable bar-tender in demand at all private dances and now employed in cooling non-alcoholic champagne among the labyrinths of the Plaza Hotel.

"Nick", he said, "What's happened to everything?"

"Dead", Nick said.

"Make me a whiskey sour". Anson handed a pint bottle over the counter, "Nick, the girls are different, I had a girl in Brooklyn and she got married last week without letting me know".

"That a fact? Ha-ha-ha", said Nick diplomaticly, "Slipped it over on you".

"Callously", said Anson. "Especially since I was out with her the night before".

"Ha-ha-ha", said Nick, "ha-ha-ha!"

"Do you remember the wedding, Nick, in Hot Springs where I had the waiters and the musicians singing 'God save the King'."

"Now where was that, Mr Hunter", Nick scratched his head, "Seems to me that was -"

"Next time they were back for more and I began to wonder how much I'd paid them".

" - seems to me that was at Mr. Frenholm's wedding."

"Don't know him", said Anson decisely. He was offended that a strange name should intrude upon his reminiscenses; Nick perceived this.

"Naw -- up -", he admitted, "I ought to know that. It was one of your crowd - Brakins, Baker-"

"Bicker Baker", said Anson responsively"- They put me in a hearse after it was over and covered me up with flowers and drove me away.

"Ha-ha-ha", said Carl, "Ha-ha-ha".

Carl's simulation of the old family servant paled presently and Anson went upstairs to the lobby. He looked around - his eyes met the glance of an unfamiliar clerk at the desk, then fell upon a flower from the morning's marriage hesitating in the mouth of a brass cuspidor. He went out and walked slowly toward the blood-red sun over Columbus Circle. Suddenly he turned around and retracing his steps to the Plaza immured himself in a telephone booth.

Later he said that he tried to get me three times that afternoon, that he tried everyone who might be in New York, men and girls he had not seen for years - an artist's model of his college days whose faded number was still in his address book - Central told him that even the exchange existed no longer.

At length his quest roved into the country and he held brief disappointing conversations with emphatic buttlers and maids. So and so was out, riding, swimming, playing golf,- sailed to Europe last week. Who shall I say phoned?

It was intolerable that he should pass the evening alone - the private reckonings, which one always plans for a moment of leisure, lost every charm when the solitude was enforced There were always women of a sort but the ones he knew had temporarily vanished, and to pass the evening in the hired company of a stranger never occurred to him - he would have considered that there was something shameful and secret about it - the diversion of a travelling salesman in a strange town.

Anson paid the telephone bill - he and the girl exchanged a smile at its size - and for the second time that afternnon, started to leave the hotel and go he knew not where. Near the revolving door the figure of a woman, obviously with child, stood sideways to the light - A sheer beige cape fluttered at her shoulders when the door turned and each time she looked impatiently toward it as if she were weary of waiting. At the first sight of her a strong nervous thrill of familiarity went over him but not until he was within five feet of her did he realize that it was Paula,

"Why, Anson Hunter"-

His heart turned over.

"Why, Paula -"

"Why, this is wonderful. I can't believe it, Anson!"

She took both his hands and he saw in the freedom of the gesture that the memory of him had lost poignancy for her. But not for him - he felt that old mood that she evoked in him stealing over his brain, the gentleness with which he had always met her optimism as if afraid to mar its surface.

"We're at Rye for the summer. Pete had to come East on business - you know of course I'm Mrs. Peter Hagerty now - so we brought the children and took a house. You've got to come out and see us".

"Can I?" he asked directly, "When"

"When you like - here's Pete" - the revolving door functioned giving up a fine tall man of thirty with a tanned face and a dark mustache. His immaculate fitness made a sharp contract with Anson's increasing bulk, which was obvious under the faintly tight cut away coat.

"You oughtn't to be standing", said Hagerty to his wife! "Let's sit here". He indicated some lobby chairs but Paula hesitated.

"I've got to get right home", she said, "Anson, why don't you - why don't you come out and have dinner with us tonight. We're just getting settled, but if you can stand that -"

Hagerty confirmed the invitation cordially.

"Come out for the night".

Their car waited in front of the hotel and Paula with a tired gesture sank back against silk cushions in the corner.

"There's so much I want to talk to you about", she said, "It seems hopeless".

"I want to hear about you".

"Well"- she smiled at Hagerty, "That would take a long time too. I have three children - by my first marriage - the oldest is five, then four, then three". She smiled again. "I didn't waste much time having them, did I"

"Boys?"

"A boy and two girls. Then - oh, a lot of things happened and I got a divorce in Paris a year ago and married Pete. That's all - except that I'm awfully happy".

In Rye they drove up to a large house near the beach club from which there issued presently three dark slim children who broke from an English governess and approached them with an esoteric cry. Abstractedly and with difficulty Paula took them each in turn into her arms, a caress which they accepted stiffly as they had evidently been told not to bump into Mummy. Even against their fresh faces Paula's skin showed scarcely any loss - for all her physical languor she seemed younger than when he had last seen her at Palm Beach seven years ago.

At dinner she seemed preoccupied, and afterwards during the session of the eternal radio she lay with closed eyes on the sofa until Anson wondered if his presence at this time were not an intrusion. But at nine o'clock when Hagerty rose and said pleasantly that he was going to leave them by themselves

for an hour she began to talk slowly about ~~hsisx herself and~~ the past.

"My first baby", she said, "the one we call Darling, the biggest little girl - I wanted to die when I knew I was going to have her because Lloyd was like a stranger to me - it didn't seem as though she could be my own - I wrote you a letter and tore it up. Oh, you were so bad to me, Anson".

It was the dialogue again, rising and falling. Anson felt a sudden quickening of memorye.

"Weren't you engaged once", she asked, " a girl named Dolly something?."

"I wasn't ever engaged. I tried to be engaged but I never loved anybody but you Paula".

"Oh", she said, Then after a moment: "This baby is the first one I ever really wanted. You see, I'm in love now, at last".

He didn't answer, shocked at the treachery of remembrance. She must have seen that the words bruised him for she continued:

"I was infatuated with you, Anson - you could make me do anything you liked. But we wouldn't have been happy. I'm not smart enough for you. I don't like things to be complicated like you do". She paused, "You'll never settle down", she said.

The phrase struck at him from behind - it was an

accusation that of all accusations he had never merited.

"I could settle down if women were different" he said. "If I didn't understand so much about them, if women didn't spoil you for other women, if they had only a little pride, if I could go to sleep for awhile and wake up into a home that was really mine, oh why - why that's what I'm made for, Paula, that's what women have seen in me and liked in me. It's only the bridge between that's worn away-"

Hagerty came in a little after ten; after a night-cap Paula stood up and announced that she was going to bed. She went over and stood by her husband.

"Where did you go, dearest?" she demanded.

"I had a drink with Ed Saunders".

"I was worried. I thought may be you'd run away".

She rested her head against his necktie.

"He's sweet, isn't' he Anson", she said,

"Absolutely", said Anson laughing.

She raised her face to her husband.

"Well, I'm ready", she said. She turned to Anson, "Do you want to see something?"

"Yes", he said in an interested voice.

"All night - go!"

Hagerty picked her up easily in his arm.

"This is called the family acrobatic stunt" said Paula, "Every night he carries me upstairs, Isn't that nice of him"?

"Yes", said Anson.

"That's because he loves me truly, isn't it, you".

Hagerty bent his head slightly until his face touched her own.

"And I love him too - I've just been telling you, havn't I Anson.

"Yes", he said.

"He's the sweetest thing that ever lived in this world, arn't you darling .... Well, good-night. Here we go. Isn't he strong?"

"Yes", Anson said.

"Sweet dreams. You'll find a pair of Pete's pajamas laid out for you. Sweet dreams - see you at breakfast.

"Yes" Anson said.

-VIII-

The older members of the firm insisted that Anson should go abroad for the summer. He had scarcely had a vacation in seven years, they said. He was stale and needed a change. Anson resisted.

"If I go", he declared, "I won't come back any more".

"That's absurd, old man. You'll be back in three months with all this depression gone. Fit as ever".

"No", He shook his head stubbornly. "If I stop I

won't go back to work. If I stop that means I've given up - I'm through"

"We'll take a chance on that. Stay six months if you like - We're not afraid you'll leave us. Why, you'd be miserable if you didn't work".

They arranged his passage for him. They liked Anson - everyone liked Anson - and the change that had been coming over him cast a sort of pall over the office. The enthusiasm that had invariably signalled up business, the consideration toward his equals and his inferiors, the lift of his vital presence, his intense nervousness had melted down these qualities into the fussy pessimism of a man of forty. Once he had buoyed up the people around him - now on every transaction in which he was involved he acted as a drag and a strain.

"If I go I'll never come back", he said.

Three days before he sailed Paula died in child birth. I was with him a great deal then for we were crossing together but for the first time in our friendship he told me not a word of how he felt nor did I see the slightest sign of emotion. His chief preoccupation was with the fact that he was thirty years old - he would turn the conversation to the point where he could remind you of it and then fall silent as if he assumed that the statement would start a chain of thought sufficient to itself. Like his partners I was amazed

at the change in him and I was glad when the"Paris"moved off into the wat space between the worlds leaving his principality behind.

"How about a drink", he suggested.

We walked into the bar with that faintly defiant feeling that characterizes the first day out and ordered four Martini cocktails. After the first one a change came over him - he reached over suddenly and slapped my knee with the first joviality I had seen him exhibit for months.

"Did you see that girl in the red tam?" he demanded, "the one with the high color who had the two police dogs down here to bid her good bye".

"She's pretty", I said.

"I looked her up in the purser's office and found out that she's alone. I'm going down to see the steward in a few minutes. We'll have dinner with her to-night".

After awhile he left me and within an hour he was walking up and down the deck with her, talking to her in his strong, clear voice. Her red tam was a bright spot of color against the steel green sea and from time to time she looked up from under it and smiled with amusement, with interest, with anticipation. At dinner we had champagne and were very gay - afterwards Anson ran the pool with infectious gusto and several people who had seen me with him asked me his name. He and the girl were talking and laughing together on a lounge

in the bar when I went to bed.

I saw less of him on the trip than I had hoped. He wanted to arrange a foursome but there was no one available so I saw him only at meals. Sometimes, though, he would have a cocktail in the bar and he told me about the girl in the red tam and his adventures with her, making them all bizarre and amusing as he had a way of doing, and I was glad that he was himself again, or at least the self that I knew and with which I felt at home. I don't think he was ever happy unless someone was in love with him, responding to him like filings to a magnet, helping him to explain himself, promising him something. What it was I do not know. Perhaps they promised that there would always be women in the world who would spend their brightest, freshest, rarest hours to nurse and protect that superiority he cherished in his heart.