ПРАКТИКУМ ДЛЯ ВУЗОВ

И. А. Новикова, Н. Ю. Петрова

ПРАКТИКУМ К КУРСУ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

ПОД РЕДАКЦИЕЙ В. Д. АРАКИНА

4 курс

ВЛАДОС

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Практикум по домашнему чтению предназначен для студентов старших курсов английских факультетов, а также для учащихся школ с углубленным изучением английского языка. В практикуме использованы рассказы современных английских писателей, которые широко известны во многих странах.

Практикум состоит из трех частей. Первая посвящена теме литературного аналаиза. Вторая часть позволяет не только ознакомиться с содержанием рассказов, но и произвести интерпретацию и стилистический анализ текстов. В третьей части даны необходимые сведения для работы над художественными произведениями.

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So what is the authentic instrument to be used by the reader? It is impersonal imagination and artistic delight. What should be established, I think, is an artistic harmonious balance between the reader's mind and the author's mind. We ought to remain a little aloof and take pleasure in this aloofness while at the same time we keenly enjoy — passionately enjoy, enjoy with tears and shivers — the inner weave of a given masterpiece.

Vladimir Nabokov. *Good Readers and Good Writers*

Part I

Guide to Literary Analysis of a Short Story

A short story is a relatively brief invented prose narrative that typically deals with a limited group of characters involved in a single action. It usually aims at unity of effect and often concentrates on the creation of mood rather than the telling of a story.

A short story as well as a novel may belong to one of the following types, or genres:

- **social** which studies the effect of social conditions at a given time and place upon human life and conduct;
- **psychological** which is concerned mainly with the mental and emotional aspects of life of the characters;
- **historical** which has as its setting a period of history and usually introduces some historical personages and events;
- **detective** in which traditionally a detective tries to solve a crime;
- **science fiction** which deals with advances in science and technology and their influence on human beings. Sometimes the background of the narrative is quite fantastic and has no connections with reality;
- **documentary** which reproduces real events as close as possible. Its main task is to involve the reader in some vital issue of the moment.

The subject, or **the theme** of a literary work is the basic problem or conflict, which the writer intends to present in his work. It is the general topic, of which the particular story is an illustration. The feelings aroused by **the theme**, **the tone**, **the setting**, the treatment of characters, the general effect of the total work make up the atmosphere of a piece of fiction.

The author's attitude to what is presented is called **the tone**, which can be matter-of-fact, lyrical, sentimental, melodramatic, moralizing, humorous, ironical, farcical, sarcastic, etc.

The description of the physical background — the place and time of the story, the significant items surrounding the action and the characters — constitute **the setting**. **The global setting** of the story (*e.g. New York, the Riviera*) can be subdivided into numerous **subsettings**, or **local settings** (*e.g. in the office, at home, etc.*).

Characters can be presented directly or indirectly. They are **major / round / complex / many-sided / three-dimensional** if they have different personality traits and act like people in real life. On the contrary **minor / flat / undeveloped / one-sided / two-dimensional** are the characters who seem quite simple and do not look full-blooded. The antithetically arranged characters are known as the **protagonists** (positive) and the antagonists (negative). If a personage changes in the course of the story he becomes a dynamic character; if he remains the same he is called a **static** character. The main heroes are often depicted with much detail by the author who tends to give **emotional visual** and **sound** portraits of his characters.

One of the fundamental features of any story is its **composition** which is the interrelation between different relatively independent components of a literary work: **narration**, **description**, **dialogue**, **interior monologue**, **digression**, etc.

Narration is dynamic, it describes the particulars of an act, occurrence, or course of events while **description** is static as it verbally portrays scenes, people, sensations and emotions. **Dialogue** is often the author's favourite compositional component as it produces the effect known as «a slice of the reality». **Interior monologue** gives access to the mental and emotional world of the characters. **Digression** is a diversion, or deviation from the logically and chronologically presented piece which is aimed at breaking the continuum of the story and introducing

the author's contemplations, meditations or another course of events. A digression may be lyrical, philosophical, epigrammatic, critical, etc.

The plot of a literary work is its frame and the structure of the action comprising a series of incidents or system of events. An **episode** is a separate incident helping to unfold the action in a large piece of fiction. The main parts of the plot are: **exposition**, **complication**, **climax** and **denouement**. The introductory part of a story is called exposition. It is an optional component as very often literary works start from the middle. Though a story may lack exposition it usually has more that one complication which is an incident contributing to the general dynamics of the text. A story seldom begins at a point which leads quickly and logically to **climax**. It is the point of highest dramatic tension or a major turning point in the action of the story characterized by great intensity, significance or achievements. The final resolution of the plot is called **denouement**, which is a French word that means «unknotting». This part in a work of fiction comes after climax and sometimes coincides with it. The manner of bringing a piece of fiction to a close is called **ending**. An unexpected turn of the plot not made clear until the end of the story is called **surprise ending**. When the development of the plot deliberately produces a state of uncertainty, doubt or anxiety in the reader and the climax is deliberately postponed, we speak of **suspense**.

The focus of narration has to do with who tells the story. There is a traditional division between the **first-point** narration and the **third-point** narrartion. The first one is told by a relatively subjective narrator who calls himself or herself «I». The limited third-person narration is presented through the eyes of a particular character. The other example of the third-person narrative is the one with the **omniscient narrator** who stands outside the story and has an access to any event or thought and emotion of the characters. There are, of course, various combinations of the main types of narration.

The reader is usually expected not only to dwell on the genre and composition of the story, on the author's attitude towards his characters and the way in which the artistic effect is achieved, but also on the **message** (the main idea) of a given work of art.

Part II

Roald Dahl

THE UMBRELLA MAN

I'm going to tell you about a funny thing that happened to my mother and me yesterday evening. I am twelve years old and I'm a girl. My mother is thirty-four but I'm nearly as tall as her already.

Yesterday afternoon, my mother took me up to London to see the dentist.

He found one hole. It was in a back tooth and he filled it without hurting me too much. After that, we went to a café. I had a banana split[1] and my mother had a cup of coffee. By the time we got up to leave, it was about six o'clock.

When we came out the café it had started to rain. 'We must get a taxi,' my mother said. We were wearing ordinary hats and coats, and it was raining quite hard.

'Why don't we go back into the café and wait for it to stop?' I said. I wanted another of those banana splits. 'We must get home.'

We stood on the pavement in the rain, looking for a taxi. Lots of them came by but they all had passengers inside them. 'I wish we had a car with a chauffeur,' my mother said.

Just then a man came up to us. He was a small man and he was pretty old, probably seventy or more. He raised his hat politely and said to my mother, 'Excuse me, I do hope you will excuse me...' He had a fine white moustache and bushy[2] white eyebrows and a wrinkly[3] pink face. He was sheltering under an umbrella which he held high over his head.

'Yes?' my mother said, very cool and distant.

'I wonder if I could ask a small favour of you,' he said. 'It is only a very small favour.'

I saw my mother looking at him suspiciously. She is a suspicious[4] person, my mother. She is especially suspicious of two things — strange men and boiled eggs. When she cuts the top

of a boiled egg, she pokes around[5] inside it with her spoon as though expecting to find a mouse or something. With strange men, she has a golden rule which says, The nicer the man seems to be, the more suspicious you must become. The little old man was particularly nice. He was polite. He was well-spoken. He was well-dressed. He was a real gentleman. The reason I knew he was a gentleman was because of his shoes. 'You can always spot[6] a gentleman by the shoes he wears,' was another of my mother's favourite sayings. This man had beautiful brown shoes.

The truth of the matter is,' the little man was saying, 'I've got myself into a bit of a scrape. I need some help. Not much I assure you. It's almost nothing, in fact, but I do need it. You see, madam, old people like me often become terribly forgetful...'

My mother's chin was up and she was staring down at him along the full length of her nose. It was a fearsome thing, this frosty-nosed[7] stare of my mother's. Most people go to pieces completely when she gives it to them. I once saw my own headmistress begin to stammer and simper[8] like an idiot when my mother gave her a really roullrosly-noser. But the littIe man on the pavement with the umbrella over his head didn't bat an eyelid. He gave a gentle smile and said, 'I beg you to believe, madam, that I am not in the habit of stopping ladies in the street and telling them my troubles.'

'I should hope not,' my mother said.

I felt quite embarrassed by my mother's sharpness. I wanted to say to her, 'Oh, mummy, for heaven's sake, he's a very very old man, and he's sweet and polite, and he's in some sort of trouble, so don't be so beastly to him. 'But I didn't say anything.

The little man shifted his umbrella from one hand to the other. 'I've never forgotten it before,' he said.

'You've never forgotten what?' my mother asked stemly. 'My wallet,' he said. 'I must have left it in my other jacket. Isn't that the silliest thing to do?

'Are you asking me to give you money?' my mother said.

'Oh, good gracious me, no!' he cried. 'Heaven forbid I should ever do that!'

'Then what are you asking?' my mother said 'Do hurry up. We're getting soaked to the skin here.'

'I know you are,' he said, 'And that is why I'm offering you this umbrella of mine to protect you, and to keep forever, if ... if only ...'

'If only what?' my mother said 'If only you would give me in return a pound for my taxi-fare just to get me home.'

My mother was still suspicious. 'If you had no money in the first place,' she said, 'then how did you get here?'

'I walked,' he answered. 'Every day I go for a lovely long walk and then I summon a taxi to take me home. I do it every day of the year.'

'Why don't you walk home now?' my mother asked.

'Oh, I wish I could,' he said. 'I do wish I could. But I don't think I could manage it on these silly old legs of mine. I've gone too far already.'

My mother stood there chewing her lower lip. She was beginning to melt a bit, I could see that. And the idea of getting an umbrella to shelter under must have tempted her a good deal.

'It's a lovely umbrella,' the little man said.

'So I've noticed,' my mother said.

'It's silk,' he said.

'I can see that.'

'Then why don't you take it, madam,' he said. 'It cost me over twenty pounds, I promise you. But that's of no importance so long as I can get home and rest these old legs of mine.'

I saw my mother's hand feeling for the clasp of her purse. She saw me watching her. I was giving her one of my own frosty-nosed looks this time and she knew exactly what I was telling her. Now listen, mummy, I was telling her, you simply mustn't take advantage of a tired old man in this way. It's a rotten thing to do. My mother paused and looked back at me. Then she said to the little man, 'I don't think it's quite right that I should take an umbrella from you worth twenty pounds. I think I'd better just give you the taxi-fare and be done with it.'

'No, no no!' he cried. 'It's out of the question! I wouldn't dream of it! Not in a million years! I would never accept money from you like that! Take the umbrella, dear lady, and keep the rain off your shoulders!'

My mother gave me a triumphant sideways look. There you are, she was telling me. You're wrong. He wants me to have it.

She fished into her purse and took out a pound note[18]. She held it out to the little man. He took it and handed her the umbrella. He pocketed the pound, raised his hat, gave a quick bow from the waist, and said, 'Thank you, madam, thank you.' Then he was gone.

'Come under here and keep dry, darling,' my mother said. 'Aren't we lucky. I've never had a silk umbrella before. I couldn't afford it.'

'Why were you so horrid to him in the beginning?' I asked.

'I wanted to satisfy myself he wasn't a trickster,'[9] she said. 'And I did. He was a gentleman. I'm very pleased I was able to help him.'

'Yes, mummy,' I said.

'A real gentleman,' she went on. 'Wealthy, too, otherwise he wouldn't have had a silk umbrella. I shouldn't be surprised if he isn't a titled person. Sir Harry Goldsworthy or something like that.'

'Yes, mummy.'

This will be a good lesson to you,' she went on. 'Never rush things. Always take your time when you are summing someone up[10]. Then you'll never make mistakes.'

'There he goes,' I said. 'Look.'

'Where?'

'Over there. He's crossing the street. Goodness, mummy, what a hurry he's in.'

We watched the little man as he dodged[11] nimbly[12] in and out of the traffic. When he reached the other side of the street, he turned left, walking very fast.

'He doesn't look very tired to me, does he to you, mummy?' My mother didn't answer.

'He doesn't look as though he's trying to get a taxi, either,' I said.

My mother was standing very still and stiff, staring across the street at the little man. We could see him clearly. He was in a terrific hurry. He was bustling[13] along the pavement, side-stepping the other pedestrians[14] and swinging his arms like a soldier on the march.

'He's up to something,' my mother said, stony-faced.

'But what?'

'I don't know,' my mother snapped. 'But I'm going to find

out. Come with me.' She took my arm and we crossed the street together. Then we turned left.

'Can you see him?' my mother asked.

'Yes. There he is. He's turning right down the next street.' We came to the corner and turned right. The little man was about twenty yards ahead of us. He was scuttling along[15] like a rabbit and we had to walk very fast to keep up with him. The rain was pelting down[16] harder than ever now and I could see it dripping from the brim of his hat on to his shoulders. But we were snug and dry under our lovely big silk umbrella.

'What is he up to?' my mother said. 'What if he turns round and sees us?' I asked.

'I don't care if he does,' my mother said. 'He lied to us. He said he was too tired to walk any further and he's practically running us off our feet! He's a barefaced liar! He's a crook!'

'You mean he's not a titled gentleman?' I asked.

'Be quiet,' she said.

At the next crossing, the little man turned right again.

Then he turned left. Then right.

'I'm not giving up now,' my mother said.

'He's disappeared!' I cried. 'Where's he gone?'

'He went in that door!' my mother said. 'I saw him! Into that house!Great heavens, it's a pub!'*

It was a pub. In big letters right across the front it said THE RED LION.

'You're not going in are you, mummy?'

'No, she said. 'We'll watch from outside.'

There was a big plate-glass window along the front of the pub, and although it was a bit steamy on the inside, we could see through it very well if we went close.

We stood huddled together outside the pub window. I was clutching my mother's arm. The big raindrops were making a loud noise on our umbrella. 'There he is,'I said. 'Over there.'

The room we were looking into was full of people and cigarette smoke, and our little man was in the middle of it all. He was now without his hat and coat, and he was edging his way through the crowd towards the bar. When he reached it, he placed both hands on the bar itself and spoke to the barman. I saw his lips moving as he gave his order. The barman turned away from him for a few seconds and came back with a smallish

tumbler filled to the brim[17] with light brown liquid. The little man placed a pound note[18] on the counter.

'That's my pound!' my mother hissed. 'By golly,[19] he's got a nerve!'

'What's in the glass?' I asked.

'Whisky,' my mother said. 'Neat whisky.'

The barman didn't give him any change from the pound.

'That must be a treble whisky,' my mummy said.

'What's a treble?' I asked.

'Three times the normal measure,'* she answered.

The little man picked up the glass and put it to his lips. He tilted it gently. Then he tilted it higher... and higher... and higher... and very soon all the whisky had disappeared down his throat in one long pour.

'That's a jolly expensive drink,' I said

'It's ridiculous!' my mummy said. 'Fancy paying a pound for something to swallow in one go!'

'It cost him more than a pound,' I said. 'It cost him a twenty-pound silk umbrella.'

'So it did,' my mother said. 'He must be mad.'

The little man was standing by the bar with the empty glass in his hand. He was smiling now, and a sort of golden glow of pleasure was spreading over his round pink face. I saw his tongue come out to lick the white moustache, as though searching for one last drop of that precious whisky.

Slowly, he turned away from the bar and edged his way back through the crowd to where his hat and coat were hanging. He put on his hat. He put on his coat. Then, in a manner so superbly cool and casual that you hardly noticed anything at all, he lifted from the coat rack one of the many wet umbrellas hanging there, and off he went.

'Did you see that!' my mother shrieked. 'Did you see what he did!'

'Ssshh!' I whispered. 'He's coming out!'

We lowered our umbrella to hide our faces, and peered out from under it.

Out he came. But he never looked in our direction. He opened his new umbrella over his head and scurried off[20] down the road the way he had come.

'So that's his little game!' my mother said.

'Neat,' I said. 'Super.'

We followed him back to the main street where we had first met him, and we watched him as he proceeded, with no trouble at all, to exchange his new umbrella for another pound note. This time it was with a tall thin fellow who didn't even have a coat or hat. And as soon as the transaction was completed, our little man trotted off down the street and was lost in the crowd. But this time he went in the opposite direction.

'You see how clever he is!' my mother said. He never goes to the same pub twice!'

'He could go on doing this all night,' I said.

'Yes,' my mother said. 'Of course.' But I'll bet he prays like mad for rainy days.'

GLOSSARY

1. banana-split	—	десертное блюдо, состоящее из банана, фруктов и взбитых сливок
2. bushy	—	густо растущие волосы
3. wrinkly	—	морщинистый
4. suspicious	—	подозрительный
5. poke around	—	ходить вокруг да около
6. spot	—	опознать
7. frosty-nosed	—	недружелюбный и показывающий, что вы не одобряете кого-то или что-то
8. simper	—	глупо улабаться
9. trickster	—	обманщик, ловкач
10. sum someone up	—	оценить кого-либо
11. dodge	—	увиливать
12. nimbly	—	проворно, быстрыми движениями
13. bustle	—	торопиться
14. pedestrians	—	прохожие
15. scuttle along	—	идти торопливой походкой
16. the rain was pelting down	—	шел сильный дождь
17. to the brim	—	до краев
18. a pound note	—	купюра достоинством 1 фунт
19. by golly	—	фраза, выражающая удивление
20. scurry off	—	идти быстрыми шагами

COMMENTARY

*** A public house or pub** is a place where alcoholic drinks can be bought. Pubs in towns and cities are often crowded. Most pubs have a special place or small room where coats and hats and umbrellas can be put. Food is also served over the counter or in a special eating area.

*** treble — three times the normal measure** — alcoholic drinks are usually served in amount, or 'measures'.

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret along the following lines.

Note that the story is told in the first person and all the events are recorded through the eyes of the twelve-year-old girl.

1. What kind of story is it? What is the general **tone** of the story?

2. What is the **theme** of the story?

3. Who is the **narrator**? Can the reader trust such a narrator? Would a story be improved if told from the mother's point of view? How would the story change if it were told from the point of view of the 'umbrella man'?

4. Where is the **scene** set?

5. Who are the main **characters**? Are they flat or round? Is the 'umbrella man' an antagonist in the story? Is he really a criminal? Why is he successful in his crime? Should he go to prison for it? What do you think he might do when it is not raining?
   Give a one-sentence character sketch of the mother, her daughter and the 'umbrella man'.

6. What is the **plot** of the story? Divide it into several logical parts and entitle each of them. Does the story have a surprise ending? Have you ever been tricked by anybody in a similar way to this?

7. Analyze the **composition** of the story. Comment on the role of direct speech.

8. What is the **message** of the story? Speak on its **title**.

III. Get ready for the stylistic analysis of the story.

1. Note that the text is full of words or phrases repeated by the author. Highlight the paragraph where the adjective *suspicious* is repeated several times. What effect is achieved with the help of this stylistic device? Find other prominent repetitions in the story. What role do they play?

2. R. Dahl creates a brilliant visual and sound portrait of his eponymous (title) character. Make the list of the epithets that the author uses describing the appearance of the 'umbrella man'. Why does R. Dahl take the trouble of presenting such a detailed description?
   List several phrases used by the 'umbrella man' which show how polite he is and prove that they help him to make the mother and the daughter believe his story.

   E.g.
   'I wonder if I could ask a small favour of you.'

3. Comment on how the following examples add to the portraiture of the three characters of the story. Find the Russian equivalents to the given English sentences and illustrate their meaning by the situation from the text:

a) *'I've got myself into a bit of a scrape.'*
b) *Most people go to pieces completely when she gives it to them.*
c) *But the little man on the pavement with the umbrella over his head didn't bat an eyelid.*

d) *We were getting soaked to the skin.*
e) *'You simply mustn't take advantage of a tired old man.'*
f) *He was bustling along the pavement, and swinging his arms like a soldier on the march.*
g) *'He's up to something', my mother said, stony-faced.*
h) *'He's practically running us off our feet.'*
i) *'That's my pound!' my mother hissed. 'By golly, he's got a nerve!'*

4. Sum up all your literary, and stylistic observations and say what makes the authors style individual.

John Collier

BACK FOR CHRISTMAS

'Doctor,' said Major Sinclair, 'we certainly must have you with us for Christmas.' Tea was being poured, and the Carpenters' living-room was filled with friends who had come to say last-minute farewells to the Doctor and his wife.

'He shall be back,' said Mrs. Carpenter. 'I promise you.'

'It's hardly certain,' said Dr. Carpenter. 'I'd like nothing better, of course.'

'After all,' said Mr. Hewitt, 'you've contracted to lecture only for three months.'

'Anything may happen,' said Dr. Carpenter.

'Whatever happens,' said Mrs. Carpenter, beaming at them, 'he shall be back in England for Christmas. You may all believe me.'

They all believed her. The Doctor himself almost believed her. For ten years she had been promising him for dinner parties, garden parties, committees, heaven knows what, and the promises had always been kept.

The farewells began. There was a fluting[1] of compliments on dear Hermione's marvellous arrangements. She and her husband would drive to Southampton that evening. They would embark the following day. No trains, no bustle[2], no last-minute worries. Certain the Doctor was marvellously looked after. He would be a great success in America. Especially with Hermione to see to everything. She would have a wonderful time, too. She would see the skyscrapers. Nothing like that in Little Godwearing. But she must be very sure to bring him back. 'Yes, I will bring him back. You may rely upon it.' He mustn't be persuaded. No extensions. No wonderful post at some super-American hospital. Our infirmary[3] needs him. And he must be back by Christmas. 'Yes,' Mrs. Carpenter called to the last departing guest, 'I shall see to it. He shall be back by Christmas.'

The final arrangements for closing the house were very well managed. The maids soon had the tea things washed up; they came in, said goodbye, and were in time to catch the afternoon bus to Devizes.

Nothing remained but odds and ends, locking doors, seeing that everything was tidy. 'Go upstairs,' said Hermione, 'and change into your brown tweeds. Empty the pockets of that suit before you put it in your bag. I'll see to everything else. All you have to do is not to get in the way.'

The Doctor went upstairs and took off the suit he was wearing, but instead of the brown tweeds, he put on an old, dirty bath gown, which he took from the back of his wardrobe. Then, after making one or two little arrangements, he leaned over the head of the stairs and called to his wife, 'Hermione! Have you a moment to spare?'

'Of course, dear. I'm just finished.'

'Just come up here for a moment. There's something rather extraordinary up here.'

Hermione immediately came up. 'Good heavens, my dear man!' she said when she saw her husband. 'What are you lounging about in that filthy old thing for? I told you to have it burned long ago.'

'Who in the world,' said the Doctor, 'has dropped a gold chain down the bathtub drain[4]?'

'Nobody has, of course,' said Hermione. 'Nobody wears such a thing.'

'Then what is it doing there?' said the Doctor. 'Take this flashlight. If you lean right over, you can see it shining, deep down.'

'Some Woolworth's[5] bangle[6] of one of the maids,' said Hermione. 'It can be nothing else.' However, she took the flashlight and leaned over, squinting into the drain. The Doctor, raising a short length of lead pipe, struck two or three times with great force and precision, and tilting[7] the body by the knees, tumbled it into the tub.

He then slipped off the bathrobe and, standing completely naked, unwrapped a towel full of implements[8] and put them into the washbasin. He spread several sheets of newspaper on the floor and turned once more to his victim.

She was dead, of course — horribly doubled up, like a somersaulter[9], at one end of the tub. He stood looking at her for a very long time, thinking of absolutely nothing at all. Then he saw how much blood there was and his mind began to move again.

First he pushed and pulled until she lay straight in the bath, then he removed her clothing. In a narrow bathtub this was

an extremely clumsy business, but he managed it at last and then turned on the taps. The water rushed into the tub, then dwindled[10], then died away, and the last of it gurgled[11] down the drain.

'Good God!' he said. 'She turned it off at the main.'

There was only one thing to do: the Doctor hastily wiped his hands on a towel, opened the bathroom door with a clean corner of the towel, threw it back onto the bath stool, and ran downstairs, barefoot, light as a cat. The cellar door was in a corner of the entrance hall, under the stairs. He knew just where the cut-off was. He had reason to: he had been pottering about[12] down there for some time past — trying to scrape out a bin for wine, he had told Hermione. He pushed open the cellar door, went down the steep steps, and just before the closing door plunged the cellar into pitch darkness, he put his hand on the tap and turned it on. Then he felt his way back along the grimy[13] wall till he came to the steps. He was about to ascend them when the bell rang.

The Doctor was scarcely aware of the ringing as a sound. It was like a spike of iron pushed slowly up through his stomach. It went on until it reached his brain. Then something broke. He threw himself down in the coal dust on the floor and said, 'I'm through. I'm through!'

'They've got no *right* to come,' he said. Then he heard himself panting. 'None of this,' he said to himself. 'None of this.'

He began to revive. He got to his feet, and when the bell rang again, the sound passed through him almost painlessly. 'Let them go away,' he said. Then he heard the front door open. He said, 'I don't care.' His shoulder came up, like that of a boxer, to shield his face. 'I give up,' he said.

He heard people calling. 'Herbert!' 'Hermione!' It was the Wallingfords. 'Damn them! They come butting[14] in. People anxious to get off. All naked! And blood and coal dust! I'm done! I'm through! I can't do it.'

'Herbert!'

'Hermione!'

'Where the dickens can they be?'

'The car's there.'

'Maybe they've popped round to Mrs. Liddell's.'

'We must see them.'

'Or to the shops, maybe. Something at the last minute.'

'Not Hermione. I say, listen! Isn't that someone having a bath? Shall I shout? What about whanging[15] on the door?'

'Sh-h-h! Don't. It might not be tactful.'

'No harm in a shout.'

'Look, dear. Let's come in on our way back. Hermione said they wouldn't be leaving before seven. They're dining on the way, in Salisbury[16].'

'Think so? All right. Only I want a last drink with old Herbert. He'd be hurt.'

'Let's hurry. We can be back by half-past six.'

The Doctor heard them walk out and the front door close quietly behind them. He thought, 'Half-past six. I can do it.'

He crossed the hall, sprang the latch of the front door, went upstairs, and taking his instruments from the washbasin, finished what he had to do. He came down again, clad[17] in his bath gown, carrying parcel after parcel of towelling or newspaper neatly secured with safety pins. These he packed carefully into the narrow, deep hole he had made in the corner of the cellar, shovelled in the soil, spread coal dust over all, satisfied himself that everything was in order, and went upstairs again. He then thoroughly cleansed the bath, and himself, and the bath again, dressed, and took his wife's clothing and his bath gown to the incinerator[18].

One or two more little touches and everything was in order. It was only quarter past six. The Wallingfords were always late, he had only to get into the car and drive off. It was a pity he couldn't wait till after dusk, but he could make a detour[19] to avoid passing through the main street, and even if he was seen driving alone, people would only think Hermione had gone on ahead for some reason and they would forget about it.

Still, he was glad when he had finally got away, entirely unobserved, on the open road, driving into the gathering dusk. He had to drive very carefully; he found himself unable to judge distances, his reactions were abnormally delayed, but that was a detail. When it was quite dark he allowed himself to stop the car on the top of the downs, in order to think.

The stars were superb. He could see the lights of one or two little towns far away on the plain below him. He was exultant[20]. Everything that was to follow was perfectly simple. Marion was waiting in Chicago. She already believed him to be a widower.

The lecture people could be put off with a word. He had nothing to do but establish himself in some thriving[21] out-of-the-way town in America and he was safe for ever. There were Hermione's clothes, of course, in the suitcases; they could be disposed of through the porthole. Thank heaven she wrote her letters on the typewriter — a little thing like handwriting might have prevented everything. 'But there you are,' he said. 'She was up-to-date, efficient all along the line. Managed everything. Managed herself to death, damn her!'

'There's no reason to get excited,' he thought. 'I'll write a few letters for her, then fewer and fewer. Write myself — always expecting to get back, never quite able to. Keep the house one year, then another, then another; they'll get used to it. Might even come back alone in a year or two and clear it up properly. Nothing easier. But not for Christmas!' He started up the engine and was off.

In New York he felt free at last, really free. He was safe. He could look back with pleasure — at least after a meal, lighting his cigarette, he could look back with a sort of pleasure — to the minute he had passed in the cellar listening to the bell, the door, and the voices. He could look forward to Marion.

As he strolled through the lobby of his hotel, the clerk, smiling, held up letters for him. It was the first batch[22] from England. Well, what did that matter? It would be fun dashing off the typewritten sheets in Hermione's downright style, signing them with her squiggle[23], telling everyone what a success his first lecture had been, how thrilled he was with America but how certainly she'd bring him back for Christmas. Doubts could creep in later.

He glanced over the letters. Most were for Hermione. From the Sinclairs, the Wallingfords, the vicar, and a business letter from Holt & Sons, Builders and Decorators.

He stood in the lounge, people brushing by him. He opened the letters with his thumb, reading here and there, smiling. They all seemed very confident he would be back for Christmas. They relied on Hermione. 'That's where they make their big mistake,' said the Doctor, who had taken to American phrases. The builders' letter he kept to the last. Some bill, probably. It was:

Dear Madam,

We are in receipt of your kind acceptance of estimate as below and also of key.

We beg to repeat you may have every confidence in same being ready in ample[24] time for Christmas present as stated. We are setting men to work this week.

We are, Madam,

Yours faithfully,
PAUL HOLT & SONS

To excavating, building up, suitably lining one sunken wine bin in cellar as indicated, using best materials, making good, etc.

..... £18/0/0

GLOSSARY

1. **fluting** — мягкий вибрирующий голос
2. **bustle** — суматоха, суета
3. **infirmary** — приемная, изолятор
4. **drain** — дренаж, водосток
5. **Woolworth** — американский и английский галантерейный магазин
6. **bangle** — браслет
7. **tilt** — откидывать, наклонять
8. **implements** — инструменты
9. **somersault** — кувыркаться
10. **dwindle** — течь маленькой струей
11. **gurgle** — булькать
12. **potter about** — буспорядочно работать
13. **grimy** — грязный, запачканный
14. **butt** — вторгаться
15. **whang** — постучать громко
16. **Salisbury** — небольшой город в Англии
17. **clad** — одетый
18. **incinerator** — мусоросжигательная печь
19. **detour** — объезд
20. **exultant** — ликующий
21. **thriving** — процветающий

22. batch — пачка писем
23. squiggle — каракули
24. ample — много, достаточно

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What kind of story is it?

E. g.

absorbing	everyday
captivating	down-to-earth
involving	dull
gripping	boring
keeping in suspense	trivial
unputdownable	banal
fascinating	orthodox
exciting	low-brow
amusing	stupid
enjoyable	depressing
delightful	disturbing
whimsical	moralistic
elegant	involved
poetic	complex
real	dense
full-blooded	provocative
human	controversial
perceptive	demanding
profound	nasty
shrewd	dirty
challenging	obscene
clever	outrageous
high-brow	**macabre**
sophisticated	**bizarre**
supernatural	
eccentric	**etc.**

E. g. I've found the story keeping in suspense and rather eccentric in its form if macabre and bizarre in its content.

2. What is the **theme** of the story?

E. g.	love	family love	**murder**
	friendship	war	loneliness
	divorce	sexual warfare	social inadequacy
			etc.

E. g. The story is basically about a cold-blooded murder which...

3. Who is the **narrator**? Is the author's presence non-committal or direct in his attitude towards his characters and their actions? What is the general tone of the story (formal, neutral, ironical, farcical, satirical)?

4. Where is the **scene** set? The juxtaposition of 'Little God-wearing' and New York leads to lots of others. What are they?

5. Who are the main **characters**? Are their names significant? Does the author present a direct description of their appearance, main traits, actions, relationships, etc.? For this comment on the following:

E. g.

1. *The Doctor was marvellously looked after.*

2. *The final arrangements for closing the house were very well managed.*

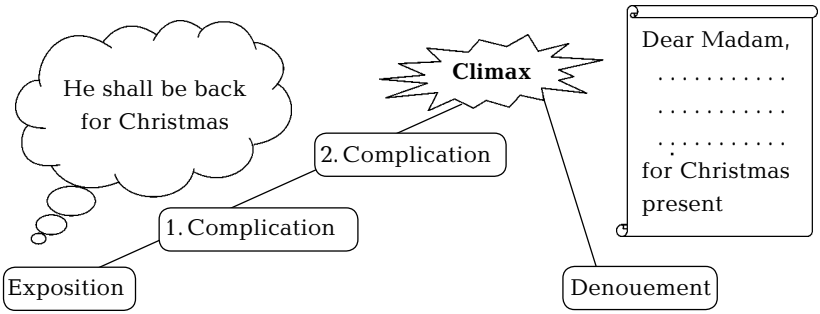
3. *All you have to do is not to get in the way.*

4. *He stood looking at her for a very long time, thinking of absolutely nothing at all.*

5. *She was up-to-date, efficient, all along the line. Managed everything. Managed herself to death.*

Give a one-sentence character sketch of Herbert and Hermione Carpenter.

6. What is the **plot** of the story? Entitle each part.



How can you characterise the ending: tricky, surprise, open, etc.?
Is the presentation scenic or panoramic? At which point of the story is the reader given the delayed information?

7. Analyse **the composition** of the story and determine its predominant components. What is so unusual about the opening dialogue? Do the Doctor and his wife speak to each other or to someone else? Comment on the composition of the paragraph:

The farewells began...

Why does the author prefer the use of the stylistic device of outer represented speech? To feel its effect a dramatization of this paragraph is highly advisable.

8. Speak on the title and the **message** of the story. Note that there are six cases of distant repetition of the title (4 in the exposition, 2 in the denouement) forming a kind of framing.

III. Get ready for a stylistic analysis of the story.

1. Find the most prominent repetitions of the story. Start with the opening scene:

   E. g.

   back,
   promise,
   believe, etc.

   Note that these repetitions belong to Hermione and together with her imperative tone characterize her directly, while the Doctor's evasive answers are misleading and contain hidden implication.

2. Find the crucial point in the story since which the author sticks to the 'telegraphic' style. Give examples. Keep in mind that the characteristic feature of it is lack of epithets, metaphors or any words containing emotive colouring, domination of verbs of action. Which similes are nevertheless used by the author in the description of the Doctor's haste, spasms of fear, despair?
   Which SDs help the author reveal the Doctor's state

   a) in the climactic scene of the story?

      'All naked! And blood and coal dust! I'm done! I'm through! I can't do it.'

   b) in the denouement, after the departure of the unexpected guests?

      'The stars were superb.'

   c) in New York?

      'But not for Christmas.'

   Note that irony is present almost in every line.

3. Fill in the form of the letter received by the Doctor in New York and express your opinion on its role in the surpris ending of the story.

Dear Madam,

_____

_____

_____

_____ **for Christmas present**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

.....£ 18/0/0

4. Sum up all your literary and stylistic observations and say what makes the author's style individual.

Susan Hill

A Bit of Singing and Dancing

There was no one else on the beach so late in the afternoon. She walked very close to the water, where there was a rim of hard, flat sand, easier on her feet than the loose shelves of shingle[1], which folded one on top of the other, up to the storm wall. She thought, I can stay out here just as long as I like, I can do anything I choose, anything at all, for now I am answerable only to myself.

But it was an unpromising afternoon, already half dark, an afternoon for early tea and banked-up[2] fires and entertainment on television. And a small thrill went through her as she realised that that, too, was entirely up to her, she could watch whichever programme she chose, or not watch any at all. There had not been an evening for the past eleven years when the television had stayed off and there was silence to hear the ticking of the clock and the central heating pipes.

'It is her only pleasure,' she used to say. 'She sees things she would otherwise be quite unable to see, the television has given her a new lease[3] of life. You're never too old to learn.' But in truth her mother had watched variety shows, Morecambe and Wise* and the Black and White Minstrels*, whereas she herself would have chosen BBC 2 and something cultural or educational.

'I like a bit of singing and dancing, it cheers you up, Esme, it takes you out of yourself. I like a bit of spectacular.'

But tonight there might be a play or a film about Arabia or the Archipelagoes, or a master class for cellists, tonight she would please herself, for the first time. Because it was two weeks now, since her mother's death, a decent interval.

It was February. It was a cold evening. As far as she could see, the beach and the sea and the sky were all grey, merging into one another in the distance. On the day of her mother's funeral it had been blowing a gale[4], with sleet, she had looked round at all their lifeless, pinched faces under the black hats and

thought, this is right, this is fitting, that we should all of us seem bowed[5] and old and disconsolate[6]. Her mother had a right to a proper grief, a proper mourning.

She had wanted to leave the beach and walk back, her hands were stiff with cold inside the pockets of her navy-blue coat — navy, she thought, was the correct first step away from black. She wanted to go back and toast scones[7] and eat them with too much butter, of which her mother would have strongly disapproved. 'We never had it, *we* never allowed to indulge ourselves in rich foods, and besides, they've been discovering more about heart disease in relation to butter, haven't you read that in the newspapers, Esme? I'm surprised you don't pay attention to these things. I pay attention. I don't believe in butter at every meal — butter on this, butter with that.'

Every morning, her mother had read two newspapers from cover to cover — *the Daily Telegraph* and *the Daily Mirror*, and marked out with a green ball point pen news items in which she thought that her daughter ought to take an interest. She said, 'I like to see both sides of every question.' And so, whichever side her daughter or some visitor took, on some issue of the day, she was informed enough by both her newspapers to take the opposing view. An argument, she had said, sharpened the mind.

'I do not intend to become a cabbage, Esme, just because I am forced to be bedridden.'

She had reached the breakwater[8]. A few gulls circled, bleating[9], in the gunmetal sky, and the waterline was strewn[10] with fish-heads, the flesh all picked away. She thought, I am free, I may go on or go back, or else stand here for an hour, I am mistress of myself. It was a long time since she had been out for so long, she could not quite get used to it, this absence of the need to look at her watch, to scurry[11] home. But after a while, because it was really very damp and there was so little to see, she did turn, and then she thought of tomorrow, and the outing she had promised herself to buy new clothes. It would take some months for her mother's will to be proven, the solicitor had explained to her, things were generally delayed, but there was no doubt that they would be settled to her advantage and really, Mrs. Fanshaw had been very careful, very prudent[12], and so she would not be in want. Meanwhile, perhaps an advance for immediate expenses? Perhaps a hundred pounds?

When the will was read, her first reaction had been one of admiration, she had said, 'The cunning old woman' under her breath, and then put her hand up to her mouth, afraid of being overheard. 'The cunning old woman.' For Mildred Fanshaw had saved up £6,000, scattered about in bank and savings accounts. Yet they had always apparently depended upon Esme's salary and the old age pension, they had had to be careful, she said, about electricity and extra cream and joints of beef. 'Extravagance,' Mrs. Fanshaw said, 'it is a cardinal sin. That is where all other evils stem from, Esme. Extravagance. We should all live within our means.'

And now here was £6,000. For a moment or two it had gone to her head, she had been quite giddy with plans, she would buy a car and learn to drive, buy a washing machine and a television set, she would have a holiday abroad and get properly fitting underwear and eat out in a restaurant now and again, she would...

But she was over fifty, she should be putting money on one side herself now, saving for her own old age, and besides, even the idea of spending made her feel guilty, as though her mother could hear, now, what was going on inside her head, just as, in life, she had known her thoughts from the expression on her face.

She had reached the steps leading up from the beach. It was almost dark.

She shivered, then, in a moment of fear and bewilderment[13] at her new freedom, for there was nothing she had to do, she could please herself about everything, anything, and this she could not get used to. Perhaps she ought not to stay here, perhaps she could try and sell the house, which was really far too big for her, perhaps she ought to get a job and a small flat in London. London was the city of opportunity...

She felt flushed and a little drunk then, she felt that all things were possible, the future was in her power, and she wanted to shout and sing and dance, standing alone in the February twilight, looking at the deserted beach. All the houses along the seafront promenade had blank, black windows, for this was a summer place, in February it was only half alive.

She said, 'And that is what I have been. But I am fifty-one years old and look at the chances before me.'

Far out on the shingle bank the green warning light flashed on-on-off, on-on-off. It had been flashing the night of her mother's stroke, she had gone to the window and watched it

and felt comforted at three a. m. in the aftermath[14] of death. Now, the shock of that death came to her again like a hand slapped across her face, she thought, my mother is not here, my mother is in a box in the earth, and she began to shiver violently, her mind crawling with images of corruption, she started to walk very quickly along the promenade and up the hill towards home.

When she opened the front door she listened, and everything was quite silent, quite still. There had always been the voice from upstairs, 'Esme?' and each time she had wanted to say, 'Who else would it be?' and bitten back the words, only said, 'Hello, it's me.' Now, again, she called, 'It's me. Hello,' and her voice echoed softly up the dark stair well, when she heard it, it was a shock, for what kind of woman was it who talked to herself and was afraid of an empty house? What kind of woman?

She went quickly into the sitting-room and drew the curtains and then poured herself a small glass of sherry, the kind her mother had preferred. It was shock, of course, they had told her, all of them, her brother-in-law and her Uncle Cecil and cousin George Golightly, when they had come back for tea and ham sandwiches after the funeral.

'You will feel the real shock later. Shock is always delayed.' Because she had been so calm and self-possessed, she had made all the arrangements so neatly, they were very surprised.

'If ever you feel the need of company, Esme — and you will — of course you must come to us. Just a telephone call, that's all we need, just a little warning in advance. You are sure to feel strange.'

Strange. Yes. She sat by the electric fire. Well, the truth was she had got herself thoroughly chilled, walking on the beach like that, so late in the afternoon. It had been her own fault.

After a while, the silence of the house oppressed her, so that when she had taken a second glass of sherry and made herself a poached[15] egg on toast, she turned on the television and watched a variety show, because it was something cheerful, and she needed taking out of herself. There would be time enough for the educational programmes when she was used to this new life. But a thought went through her head, backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards, it was as though she were reading from a tape.

'She is upstairs. She is still in her room. If you go upstairs you will see her. Your mother.' The words danced across the television screen, intermingling with the limbs of dancers, issuing like spume[16] out of the mouths of comedians and crooners[17], they took on the rhythm of the drums and the double basses.

'Upstairs. In her room. Upstairs. In her room.'

Your mother. Your mother. Your mother.

Upstairs...'

She jabbed[18] at the push button on top of the set and the picture shrank and died, there was silence, and then she heard her own heart beating and the breath coming out of her in little gasps. She scolded herself for being morbid[19], neurotic. Very well then, she said, go upstairs and see for yourself.

Very deliberately and calmly she went out of the room and climbed the stairs, and went into her mother's bedroom. The light from the street lamp immediately outside the window shone a pale triangle of light down onto the white runner on the dressing table, the white lining of the curtains and the smooth white cover of the bed. Everything had gone. Her mother might never have been here. Esme had been very anxious not to hoard[20] reminders and so, the very day after the funeral, she had cleared out and packed up clothes, linen, medicine, papers, spectacles, she had ruthlessly emptied the room of her mother.

Now, standing in the doorway, smelling lavender polish and dust, she felt ashamed, as though she wanted to be rid of all memory, as though she had wanted her mother to die. She said, but that is what I did want, to be rid of the person who bound me to her for fifty years. She spoke aloud into the bedroom, 'I wanted you dead.' She felt her hands trembling and held them tightly together, she thought, I am a wicked woman. But the sherry she had drunk began to have some effect now, her heart was beating more quietly, and she was able to walk out into the room and draw the curtains, even though it was now unnecessary to scold herself for being so hysterical.

In the living room, she sat beside the fire reading a historical biography until eleven o'clock — when her mother was alive she had always been in bed by ten — and the fears had quite left her, she felt entirely calm. She thought, it is only natural, you have had a shock, you are bound to be affected. That night she slept extremely well.

When she answered the front doorbell at eleven fifteen the following morning and found Mr. Amos Curry, hat in hand, upon the step, enquiring about a room, she remembered a remark her Uncle Cecil had made to her on the day of the funeral. 'You will surely not want to be here all on your own, Esme, in this great house. You should take a lodger.'

Mr. Amos Curry rubbed his left eyebrow with a nervous finger, a gesture of his because he was habitually shy. 'A room to let,' he said, and she noticed that he wore gold cuff links and very well-polished shoes. 'I understand from the agency ... a room to let with breakfast.'

'I know nothing of any agency. I think you have the wrong address.'

He took out a small loose-leaf notebook. 'Number 23, Park Close.'

'Oh no, I'm so sorry, we are...' she corrected herself, 'I am, twenty-three Park *Walk*.'

A flush of embarrassment began to seep up[21] over his face and neck like an ink stain, he loosened his collar a little until she felt quite sorry for him, quite upset.

'An easy mistake, a perfectly understandable mistake. Mr. ... Please do not feel at all...'

'...Curry. Amos Curry.'

'...embarrassed.'

'I am looking for a quiet room with breakfast. It seemed so hopeful. Park Close. Such a comfortable address.'

She thought, he is a very clean man, very neat and spruce[22], he has a gold incisor[23] tooth and he wears gloves. Her mother had always approved of men who wore gloves. 'So few do, nowadays. Gloves and hats. It is easy to pick out a gentleman.'

Mr. Curry also wore a hat.

'I do apologize. Madam, I feel so... I would not have troubled...'

'No... no, please...'

'I must look for Park Close, Number 23.'

'It is just around the bend, to the left, a few hundred yards. A very secluded road.'

'Like this. This road is secluded. I thought as I approached this house, how suitable, I should... I feel one can tell, a house has a certain... But I am so sorry.'

He settled his hat upon his neat grey hair, and then raised it again politely, turning away.

She took in a quick breath. She said, 'What exactly ... that is to say, if you are looking for a room with breakfast, I wonder if I...'

Mr. Amos Curry turned back.

He held a small pickled onion delicately on the end of his fork. 'There is,' he said, 'the question of my equipment.'

Esme Fanshaw heard his voice as though it issued from the wireless — there was a distortion about it, a curious echo. She shook her head. He is not real, she thought... But he was here, Mr. Amos Curry, in a navy-blue pin stripe suit and with a small neat darn just below his shirt collar. He was sitting at her kitchen table — for she had hesitated to ask him into the dining room, which in any case was rarely used, the kitchen had seemed a proper compromise. He was here. She had made a pot of coffee, and then, after an hour, a cold snack of beef and pickles, bread and butter, her hands were a little moist with excitement. She thought again how rash she had been, she said, he is a total stranger, someone from the street, a casual caller, I know nothing at all about him. But she recognized the voice of her mother, then, and rebelled against it. Besides, it was not true, for Mr. Curry had told her a great deal. She thought, this is how life should be, I should be daring, I should allow myself to be constantly surprised. Each day I should be ready for some new encounter. That is how to stay young. She was most anxious to stay young.

In his youth, Mr. Curry had been abroad a great deal, had lived, he said, in Ceylon, Singapore and India. 'I always keep an open mind, Miss Fanshaw, I believe in the principle of tolerance, live and let live. Nation shall speak peace onto nation.'

'Oh, I do agree.'

'I have seen the world and its ways. I have no prejudices. The customs of others may be quite different from our own but human beings are human beings the world over. We learn from one another every day. By keeping an open mind, Miss Fanshaw.'

'Oh yes.'

'You have travelled?'

'I — I have visited Europe. Not too far a field, I'm afraid.'

'I have journeyed on foot through most of the European countries, I have earned my passage at all times.'

She did not like to ask how, but she was impressed, having only been abroad once herself, to France.

Mr. Curry had been an orphan, he said, life for him had begun in a children's home. 'But it was a more than adequate start. Miss Fanshaw, we were all happy together. I do not think memory deceives me. We were one big family. Never let it be said that the Society did not do its best by me. I see how lucky I am. Well, you have only to look about you, Miss Fanshaw — how many people do you see from broken families, unhappy homes? I know nothing of that: I count myself fortunate. I like to think I have made the best of my circumstances.'

His education, he said, had been rather elementary, he had a good brain which had never been taxed to the full.

'Untapped resources,' he said, pointing to his forehead.

They talked so easily, she thought she had never found conversation flowing along with any other stranger, any other man. Mr. Curry had exactly the right amount of formal politeness, mixed with informal ease, and she decided that he was destined to live here, he had style and he seemed so much at home.

He had an ordinary face, for which she was grateful, but there was something slightly unreal about it, as though she were seeing it on a cinema screen. All the same, it was very easy to picture him sitting in this kitchen, eating breakfast, before putting on his hat, which had a small feather in the band, each morning and going off to work.

'I do have some rather bulky equipment.'

'What exactly...'

'I have two jobs, Miss Fanshaw, two strings to my bow[24], as it were. That surprises you? But I have always been anxious to fill up every hour of the day, I have boundless energy.'

She noticed that he had some tufts[25] of pepper coloured hair sprouting from his ears and nostrils and wondered if, when he visited the barber for a haircut, he also had these trimmed. She knew nothing about the habits of men.

'Of course, it is to some extent seasonal work.'

'Seasonal?'

'Yes. For those odd wet and windy days which always come upon us at the English seaside, and of course during the winter, I travel in cleaning utensils.'*

He looked around him quickly, as though to see where she kept her polish and dusters and brooms, to make note of any requirements.

'Perhaps you would require some extra storage space? Other than the room itself.'

Mr. Curry got up from the table and began to clear away dishes, she watched him in astonishment. The man on the doorstep with a note of the wrong address had become the luncheon visitor, the friend who helped with the washing up.

'There is quite a large loft.'

'Inaccessible.'

'Oh.'

'And I do have to be a little careful. No strain on the back. Not that I am a sick man, Miss Fanshaw, I hasten to reassure you, you will not have an invalid on your hands. Oh no. I am extremely healthy for my age. It is because I lead such an active life.'

She thought of him, knocking upon all the doors, walking back down so many front paths. Though this was not what he did in the summer.

'Sound in wind and limb[26], as you might say.'

She thought of racehorses, and tried to decide whether he had ever been married. She said, 'Or else, perhaps, the large cupboard under the stairs, where the gas meter...'

'Perfect.'

He poured just the right amount of washing up liquid into the bowl; his sleeves were already unbuttoned and rolled up to the elbows, his jacket hung on the hook behind the back door. She saw the hairs lying like thatch[27] on his sinewy[28] arms, and a dozen questions sprang up into her mind, then, for although he seemed to have told her a great deal about himself, there were many gaps.

He had visited the town previously, he told her, in the course of his work, and fell for it. 'I never forgot it, Miss Fanshaw. I should be very happy here, I told myself. It is my kind of place. Do you see?'

'And so you came back.'

'Certainly. I know when I am meant to do something. I never ignore that feeling. I was intended to return here.'

'It is rather a small town.'

'But select.'

'I was only wondering — we do have a very short season, really only July and August...'

'Yes?'

'Perhaps it would not be suitable for your — er — summer work?'

'Oh, I think it would, Miss Fanshaw, I think so, I size these things up rather carefully, you know, rather carefully.'

She did not question him further, only said, 'Well, it is winter now.'

'Indeed. I shall, to coin a phrase, be plying[29] my other trade. In a town like this, full of ladies such as yourself, in nice houses with comfortable circumstances, the possibilities are endless, endless.'

'For — er — cleaning materials?'

'Quite so.'

'I do see that.'

'Now you take a pride, don't you? Anyone can see that for himself.'

He waved a hand around the small kitchen, scattering little drops of foamy water, and she saw the room through his eyes, the clean windows, the shining taps, the immaculate sinks. Yes, she took a pride, that was true. Her mother had insisted upon it. Now, she heard herself saying, 'My mother died only a fortnight ago,' forgetting that she had told him already and the shock of the fact overcame her again, she could not believe in the empty room, which she was planning to give to Mr. Curry, and her eyes filled up with tears of guilt. And what would her mother have said about a strange man washing up in their kitchen, about this new, daring friendship.

'You should have consulted me, Esme, you take far too much on trust. You never think. You should have consulted me.'

Two days after her mother's funeral, Mrs. Bickerdike, from The Lilacs, had met her in the pharmacy, and mentioned, in lowered voice, that she 'did work for the bereaved[30]', which, Esme gathered, meant that she conducted seances[31]. She implied that contact might be established with the deceased Mrs. Fanshaw. Esme had been shocked, most of all by the thought of that contact, and a continuing relationship with her mother, though she had only said that she believed in letting

the dead have their rest. 'I think, if you will forgive me, and with respect, that we are not meant to enquire about them, or to follow them on.'

Now, she heard her mother talking about Mr. Curry. 'You should always take particular notice of the eyes, Esme, never trust anyone with eyes set too closely together.'

She tried to see his eyes, but he was turned sideways to her.

'Or else too widely apart. That indicates idleness.'

She was ashamed of what she had just said about her mother's recent death, for she did not at all wish to embarrass him, or to appear hysterical. Mr. Curry had finished washing up and was resting his reddened wet hands upon the rim of the sink. When he spoke, his voice was a little changed and rather solemn. 'I do not believe in shutting away the dead, Miss Fanshaw, I believe in the sacredness of memory. I am only glad that you feel able to talk to me about the good lady.'

She felt suddenly glad to have him here in the kitchen, for his presence took the edge off the emptiness and silence which lately had seemed to fill up every corner of the house.

She said, 'It was not always easy... My mother was a very ... forthright[32] woman.'

'Say no more. I understand only too well. The older generation believed in speaking their minds.'

She thought, he is obviously a very sensitive man, he can read between the lines: and she wanted to laugh with relief, for there was no need to go into details about how dominating her mother had been and how taxing were the last years of her illness — he knew, he understood.

Mr. Curry dried his hands, smoothing the towel down one finger at a time, as though he were drawing on gloves. He rolled down his shirt-sleeves and buttoned them and put on his jacket. His movements were neat and deliberate. He coughed. 'Regarding the room — there is just the question of payment, Miss Fanshaw, I believe in having these matters out at once. There is nothing to be embarrassed about in speaking of money, I hope you agree.'

'Oh no, certainly, I...'

'Shall we say four pounds a week?'

Her head swam. She had no idea at all how much a lodger should pay, how much his breakfasts would cost, and she was

anxious to be both business-like and fair. Well, he had suggested what seemed to him a most suitable sum, he was more experienced in these matters than herself.

'For the time being I am staying at a commercial guest house in Cedars Road. I have only linoleum covering the floor of my room, there is nothing cooked at breakfast. I am not accustomed to luxury, Miss Fanshaw, you will understand that from what I have told you of my life, but I think I am entitled to comfort at the end of the working day.'

'Oh, you will be more than comfortable here, I shall see to that, I shall do my very best. I feel...'

'Yes?'

She was suddenly nervous of how she appeared in his eyes.

'I do feel that the mistake you made in the address was somehow...'

'Fortuitous[33].'

'Yes, oh yes.'

Mr. Curry gave a little bow.

'When would you wish to move in, Mr. Curry? There are one or two things...'

'Tomorrow evening, say?'

'Tomorrow is Friday.'

'Perhaps that is inconvenient.'

'No ... no ... certainly ... our week could begin on a Friday, as it were.'

'I shall greatly look forward to having you as a landlady, Miss Fanshaw.'

Landlady. She wanted to say, 'I hope I shall be a friend, Mr. Curry,' but it sounded presumptuous[34].

When he had gone she made herself a pot of tea, and sat quietly at the kitchen table, a little dazed. She thought, this is a new phase of my life. But she was still a little alarmed. She had acted out of character and against what she would normally have called her better judgement. Her mother would have warned her against inviting strangers into the house, just as, when she was a child, she had warned her about speaking to them in the street. 'You can never be sure, Esme, there are some very peculiar people about.' For she was a great reader of the crime reports in her newspapers, and of books about famous trials. The life of Doctor Crippen* had particularly impressed her.

Esme shook her head. Now, all the plans she had made for selling the house and moving to London and going abroad were necessarily curtailed[35], and for the moment she felt depressed, as though the old life were going to continue, and she wondered, too, what neighbours and friends might say, and whether anyone had seen Mr. Curry standing on her doorstep, paper in hand, whether, when he went from house to house selling cleaning utensils, they would recognize him as Miss Fanshaw's lodger and disapprove. There was no doubt that her mother would have disapproved, and not only because he was a 'stranger off the streets'.

'He is a salesman, Esme, a doorstep pedlar[36], and you do not *know* what his employment in the summer months may turn out to be.'

'He has impeccable[37] manners, mother, quite old-fashioned ones, and a most genteel way of speaking.' She remembered the gloves and the raised hat, the little bow, and also the way he had quietly and confidently done the washing up, as though he were already living here.

'How do you know where things will lead, Esme?'

'I am prepared to take a risk. I have taken too few risks in my life so far.'

She saw her mother purse her lips and fold her hands together, refusing to argue further, only certain that she was in the right. Well, it was her own life now, and she was mistress of it, she would follow her instincts for once. And she went and got a sheet ot paper, on which to write a list of things that were needed to make her mother's old bedroom quite comfortable for him. After that, she would buy cereal and bacon and kidneys for the week's breakfasts.

She was surprised at how little time it took for her to grow quite accustomed to having Mr. Curry in the house. It helped, of course, that he was a man of very regular habits and neat, too, when she had first gone into his room to clean it, she could have believed that no one was using it at all. The bed was neatly made, clothes hung out of sight in drawers — he had locked the wardrobe, she discovered, and taken away the key. Only two pairs of shoes side by side, below the washbasin, and a shaving brush and razor on the shelf above it, gave the lodger away.

Mr. Curry got up promptly at eight — she heard his alarm clock and then the pips of the radio news. At eight twenty he

came down to the kitchen for his breakfast, smelling of shaving soap and shoe polish. Always, he said, 'Ah, good morning, Miss Fanshaw, good morning to you,' and then commented briefly upon the weather. It was 'a bit nippy[38]' or 'a touch of sunshine, I see' or 'bleak[39]'. He ate a cooked breakfast, followed by toast and two cups of strong tea.

Esme took a pride in her breakfasts, in the neat way she laid the table and the freshness of the cloth, she warmed his plate under the grill and waited until the last minute before doing the toast so that it should still be crisp and hot. She thought, it is a very bad thing for a woman such as myself to live alone and become entirely selfish. I am the sort of person who needs to give service.

At ten minutes to nine, Mr. Curry got his suitcase from the downstairs cupboard, wished her good morning again, and left the house. After that she was free for the rest of the day, to live as she had always lived, or else to make changes — though much of her time was taken up with cleaning the house and especially Mr. Curry's room, and shopping for something unusual for Mr. Curry's breakfasts.

She had hoped to enrol for lampshade-making classes at the evening institute but it was too late for that year, they had told her she must apply again after the summer, so she borrowed a book upon the subject from the public library and bought frames and card and fringing[40], and taught herself. She went to one or two bring-and-buy sales[41] and planned to hold a coffee morning and do a little voluntary work for old people. Her life was full. She enjoyed having Mr. Curry in the house. Easter came, and she began to wonder when he would change to his summer work, and what that work might be. He never spoke of it.

To begin with he had come in between five thirty and six every evening, and gone straight to his room. Sometimes he went out again for an hour, she presumed to buy a meal somewhere and perhaps drink a glass of beer, but more often he stayed in, and Esme did not see him again until the following morning. One or twice she heard music coming from his room — presumably from the radio, and she thought how nice it was to hear that the house was alive, a home for someone else.

One Friday evening, Mr. Curry came down into the kitchen to give her the four pounds rent, just as she was serving up lamb casserole[42], and when she invited him to stay and share it with

her, he accepted so quickly that she felt guilty, for perhaps he went without an evening meal altogether. She decided to offer him the use of the kitchen, when a moment should arise which seemed suitable.

But a moment did not arise. Instead, Mr. Curry came down two or three evenings a week and shared her meal, she got used to shopping for two, and when he offered her an extra pound a week, she accepted, it was so nice to have company, though she felt a little daring, a little carefree. She heard her mother telling her that the meals cost more than a pound a week. 'Well, I do not mind, they give me pleasure, it is worth it for that.'

One evening, Mr. Curry asked her if she were good at figures, and when she told him that she had studied bookkeeping, asked her help with the accounts for his kitchen utensil customers. After that, two or three times a month, she helped him regularly, they set up a temporary office on the dining-room table, and she remembered how good she had been at this kind of work, she began to feel useful, to enjoy herself.

He said, 'Well, it will not be for much longer, Miss Fanshaw, the summer is almost upon us, and in the summer, of course, I am self-employed.'

But when she opened her mouth to question him more closely, he changed the subject. Nor did she like to enquire whether the firm who supplied him with the cleaning utensils to sell, objected to the dearth of summer orders.

Mr. Curry was an avid reader, 'in the winter', he said, when he had the time. He read not novels or biographies or war memoirs, but his encyclopedia, of which he had a handsome set, bound in cream mock-leather[43] and paid for by monthly instalments[44]. In the evenings, he took to bringing a volume down to the sitting-room, at her invitation, and keeping her company, she grew used to the sight of him in the opposite armchair. From time to time he would read out to her some curious or entertaining piece of information. His mind soaked up everything, but particularly of a zoological, geographical or anthropological nature, he said that he never forgot a fact, and that you never knew when something might prove of use. And Esme Fanshaw listened, her hands deftly[45] fringing a lampshade — it was a skill she had acquired easily — and continued her education.

'One is never too old to learn, Mr. Curry.'

'How splendid that we are of like mind! How nice!'

She thought, yes, it is nice, as she was washing up the dishes the next morning, and she flushed a little with pleasure and a curious kind of excitement. She wished that she had some woman friend whom she could telephone and invite round for coffee, in order to say, 'How nice it is to have a man about the house, really, I had no idea what a difference it could make.' But she had no close friends, she and her mother had always kept themselves to themselves. She would have said, 'I feel younger, and it is all thanks to Mr. Curry. I see now that I was only half-alive.'

Then, it was summer. Mr. Curry was out until half-past nine or ten o'clock at night, the suitcase full of brooms and brushes and polish was put away under the stairs and he had changed his clothing. He wore a cream linen jacket and a straw hat with a black band, a rose or carnation in his buttonhole. He looked very dapper[46], very smart, and she had no idea at all what work he was doing. Each morning he left the house carrying a black case, quite large and square. She thought, I shall follow him. But she did not do so. Then, one evening in July, she decided to explore, to discover what she could from other people in the town, for someone must know Mr. Curry, he was a distinctive sight, now, in the fresh summer clothes. She had, at the back of her mind, some idea that he might be a beach photographer.

She herself put on a quite different outfit — a white piqué dress she had bought fifteen years ago, but which still not only fitted, but suited her, and a straw boater[47], edged with ribbon, not unlike Mr. Curry's own hat. When she went smartly down the front path, she hardly dared to look about her, certain that she was observed and spoken about by the neighbours. For it was well known now that Miss Fanshaw had a lodger.

She almost never went on to the promenade in the summer. She had told Mr. Curry so. 'I keep to the residential streets, to the shops near home, I do so dislike the summer crowds.' And besides, her mother had impressed on her that the summer visitors were 'quite common'. But tonight walking along in the warm evening air, smelling the sea, she felt ashamed of that opinion, she would not like anyone to think that she had been brought up a snob — live and let live, as Mr. Curry would

tell her. And the people sitting in the deck-chairs and walking in couples along the seafront looked perfectly nice, perfectly respectable, there were a number of older women and families with well-behaved children, this was a small, select resort, and charabancs[48] were discouraged.

But Mr. Curry was not to be seen. There were no beach photographers. She walked quite slowly along the promenade, looking all about her. There was pool, in which children could sail boats, beside the War Memorial, and a putting green[49], alongside the gardens of the Raincliffe Hotel. Really, she thought, I should come out more often, really it is very pleasant here in the summer, I have been missing a good deal.

When she reached the putting green she paused, not wanting to go back, for her sitting-room was rather dark, and she had no real inclination to make lampshades in the middle of July. She was going to sit down, next to an elderly couple on one of the green benches, she was going to enjoy the balm of the evening. Then, she heard music. After a moment, she recognized it. The tune had come quite often through the closed door of Mr. Curry's bedroom.

And there, on a corner opposite the hotel, and the putting green, she saw Mr. Curry. The black case contained a portable gramophone, the old-fashioned kind, with a horn, and this was set on the pavement. Beside it was Mr. Curry, straw hat tipped a little to one side, cane beneath his arm, buttonhole in place. He was singing, in a tuneful, but rather cracked voice, and doing an elaborate little tap dance on the spot, his rather small feet moving swiftly and daintily in time with the music.

Esme Fanshaw put her hand to her face, feeling herself flush, and wishing to conceal herself from him: she turned her head away and looked out to sea, her ears full of the sentimental music. But Mr. Curry was paying attention only to the small crowd which had gathered about him. One of two passers-by, on the opposite side of the road, crossed over to watch, as Mr. Curry danced, a fixed smile on his elderly face. At his feet was an upturned bowler hat[50], into which people dropped coins, and when the record ended, he bent down, turned it over neatly, and began to dance again. At the end of the second tune, he packed the gramophone up and moved on, farther down the promenade, to begin his performance all over again.

She sat on the green bench feeling a little faint and giddy, her heart pounding. She thought of her mother, and what she would have said, she thought of how foolish she had been made to look, for surely someone knew, surely half the town had seen Mr. Curry? The strains of his music drifted up the promenade on the evening air. It was almost dark now, the sea was creeping back up the shingle.

She thought of going home, of turning the contents of Mr. Curry's room out onto the pavement and locking the front door, she thought of calling the police, or her Uncle Cecil, of going to a neighbour. She had been humiliated, taken in, disgraced, and almost wept for the shame of it.

And then, presently, she wondered what it was she had meant by 'shame'. Mr. Curry was not dishonest. He had not told her what he did in the summer months, he had not lied. Perhaps he had simply kept it from her because she might disapprove. It was his own business. And certainly there was no doubt at all that in the winter months he sold cleaning utensils from door to door. He paid his rent. He was neat and tidy and a pleasant companion. What was there to fear?

All at once, then, she felt sorry for him, and at the same time, he became a romantic figure in her eyes, for he had danced well and his singing had not been without a certain style, perhaps he had a fascinating past as a music hall performer, and who was she, Esme Fanshaw, to despise him, what talent had she? Did she earn her living by giving entertainment to others?

'I told you so, Esme. What did I tell you?'

'Told me what, mother? What is it you have to say to me? Why do you not leave me alone?'

Her mother was silent.

Quietly then, she picked up her handbag and left the green bench and the promenade and walked up through the dark residential streets, past the gardens sweet with stocks and roses, past open windows, towards Park Walk, and when she reached her own house, she put away the straw hat, though she kept on the dress of white piqué, because it was such a warm night. She went down into the kitchen and made coffee and set it, with a plate of sandwiches and a plate of biscuits, on a tray, and presently Mr. Curry came in, and she called out to him, she said, 'Do come and have a little snack with me, I am quite sure you can do with it, I'm quite sure you are tired.'

And she saw from his face that he knew that she knew.

But nothing was said that evening, or until some weeks later, when Mr. Curry was sitting opposite her, on a cold, windy August night, reading from the volume COW to DIN. Esme Fanshaw said, looking at him, 'My mother used to say, Mr. Curry, "I always like a bit of singing and dancing, some variety. It takes you out of yourself, singing and dancing." '

Mr. Curry gave a little bow.

GLOSSARY

1. shingle	галька
2. bank up	делать насыпь
3. lease	подъем в жизни
4. gale	очень сильный ветер
5. bow	кланяться
6. disconsolate	безутешный
7. scone	маленький кекс, к которому подается масло и джем
8. breakwater	волнорез мол
9. bleat	скулить
10. strew – strewed – strewn	разбрасывать, усыпать
11. scurry	бежать, нестись
12. prudent	предусмотрительный
13. bewilderment	смущение, замешательство
14. aftermath	последствие
15. poached	сваренное без скорлупы
16. spume	пена, накипь
17. crooner	эстрадный певец
18. jab	ткнуть
19. morbid	болезненный
20. hoard	копить
21. seep	появляться, просачиваться
22. spruce	элегантный
23. incisor	резец, передний зуб
24. two strings to my bow	две привязанности
25. tuft	пучок
26. sound in wind and limb	здоровый

27. thatch	солома
28. sinewy	мускулистый
29. ply	усердно работать
30. bereaved	усопший
31. seance	сеанс
32. forthright	прямолинейный
33. fortuitous	случайный
34. presumptuous	самонадеянный
35. curtail	сокращать, укорачивать
36. pedlar	коробейник, разносчик
37. impeccable	безукоризненный
38. nippy	морозно
39. bleak	унылый
40. fringe	бахрома
41. bring-and- buy-sale	приноси и продавай
42. casserole	пища, приготовленная в глубокой кастрюле
43. mock leather	искусственная кожа
44. instalments	платить в рассрочку
45. deftly	ловко
46. dapper	щеголеватый
47. straw boater	соломенная шляпка, канотье
48. charabanc	шарабан
49. putting green	ровная лужайка для гольфа
50. bowler hat	черная шляпа с узкими полями

COMMENTARY

* *Morecambe and Wise* — very famous English comedians for almost fourty years on stage and television

* *Black and White minstrels* — a very popular English white mixed group of women mainly dancers and men singers who were painted as Negroes (no longer accepted because of race policy)

* *I travel in cleaning utensils* — a door to door salesman carrying goods in a bag (now such business is called cold calling, or unsolicited selling, which is very disapproved by authorities)

* *Dr. Crippen* — a famous English murderer who placed victims in the bath and dissolved their bodies in acid

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What kind of story is it?

2. What is the story about? Is the **theme** of the story of psychological, social, moral, philosophical nature?

3. Who is the **narrator**? Is the narration told through Esme's speech or thoughts? How does it characterize her?

4. What is the **setting**? What is the topic sentence of the first paragraph? Does it contain any hidden **implication**? Follow the author's method of gradual unfolding of Esme's life story and interpret the facts you learn:

   E. g.

   a) *Esme is finally free of something.*
   b) *The past eleven years her mother dictated her tastes.*
   c) *Her mother died two weeks before.*
   d) *Her mother was bedridden.*
   e) ...
   f) ...
   g) ...
   h) ...
   i) ...
   j) ...
   k) ...

5. Name the **characters**. Is Esme's mother a flat or round character? Give examples of how despotic she was with Esme and how she is alive in her daughter's mind, dictating things in a most authoritarian manner. Who is the protagonist? the antagonist?

Give:

a) a one-sentence character sketch of Esme Fanshaw and Mr. Curry,
b) a full character sketch of Mr. Curry.

Mr. Curry	What the author says about it:
Age	
Background	
Family	
Social position	
Appearance	
Habits	
Occupation	
Motto	
Significant details	

Why did Esme make up her mind to take a risk and encourage her friendship with Mr. Curry? Prove that it was not an easy decision. Did her heart or her head prevail in it? Analyse how Esme gradually becomes alive.

What are the main **contrasts** between the dead Mrs. Fanshaw and Mr. Curry? Which of them really enjoyed 'a bit of singing and dancing' in life? The antagonist and the protagonist are characterized through musical tunes they are fond of. How is Esme subconsciously

a) killed by her mother's TV variety shows?
b) revived by Mr. Curry's tune he whistles in the morning?

Can you call Esme's mother a hypocrite? Illustrate the contrasts between Esme's old and new life. Why was she 'half-alive' before?

6. What is the **plot** of the story? In what way is the atmosphere of growing suspense created?

7. Analyse the **composition** of the story. What are its peculiarities?

8. What are the **symbols** in the story? Note that many of them are correlated with Esme's new life and her sense of freedom.

9. Explain the metaphorical essence of the **title**. Is it a musical metaphor? There are many examples of them in the story. What for does the author use them?

10. What is the message of the story?

III. Get ready for a stylistic analysis of the story.

1. How do you account for the abundant use of unuttered represented speech? Whose voices can you hear through it? What effect does the constant repetition of 'She thought...' bring?

2. The author repeats some words many times, some of them forming chain-repetition:

   e. g. *proper, butter, extravagance, shock ...*

   Go on with the list.
   Why do you think the author fixes so much attention on them?

3. What effect does the repetition of the advice of Esme's mother produce?

   — *It cheers you up, Esme, it takes you out of yourself.*
   — *... it was something cheerful, and she needed taking out of herself.*

4. Which thought haunts Esme after her mother's death? How does this thought verbalise due to the SD of chain-repetition?
   Note that it isn't for the first time that the story sounds. ('*The words ... took on the rhythm of the drums and the double basses.*')

5. Sum up your literary and stylistic observations and say what makes the author's style individual.

H.E. Bates has always been interested in the study of varying stages of ripeness in women. Ripeness is all in the Bate's world... — *Punch*

Herbert Ernest Bates

How Vainly Men Themselves Amaze

The sand on the seaward side of the dunes glittered like fine white sugar in the sun. A plastic ball, in white and yellow stripes, rolled softly and with deceptive slowness from one dry tuft of dune-grass to another, not at all unlike a big bored snail, until suddenly a sharper gust of breeze caught it and tossed it bouncing high across the shore.

For the third time that morning young Franklin raced after it, retrieved[1] it and took it back to the auburn-haired woman in the two piece emerald swim-suit sitting at the foot of the dunes. For the third time too she waved her orange-pink nails in the air in protest, smiling with lips of the same colour at the same time.

'Oh! this is becoming an awful bore for you. It really is. Thank you all the same — it's awfully sweet of you — but next time just let it go.'

'That's all right — I'm not doing anything —'

'Can you see those children of mine anywhere or that wretched German girl? She's supposed to look after the ball.'

'I think I saw them going that way, towards the pines. I think they were gathering shells.'

'Anything useless, of course. That's these girls all over. Anything useless.'

He stood looking down at her, feeling slightly awkward, still holding the ball in his hands. She was a beautifully boned woman, about forty, evenly tanned to a deep gold, her stomach flat, her navel a delicate shadowy shell. Beside her on the sand stood a straw basket stuffed with a pink towel, a pair of yellow beach shoes and a yellow scarf, together with a second flatter basket of

bananas, peaches and pears. With her long orange-pink finger tips she patted the sand beside her and said:

'May I offer you some fruit? I feel I somehow ought to reward you for all your tiresome dashing up and down. Anyway, sit down, won't you?'

He hesitated, awkward again, not knowing what to do with the ball.

'Oh! let the wretched ball go. It's a confounded[2] nuisance. I feel I never want to see it again.'

He looked up and down the dunes and then said:

'I'll drop it in this hollow here. It probably won't blow out of there—'

'Oh! let it go.'

He laid the ball in a deep nest of grass, tossing sand round it. She waited for him to finish and then, as he was about to sit down, said:

'Oh! before you sit down would you be an absolute dear and do something for me?'

'Of course, if I can.'

'Go as far as the kiosk and get me a bottle of milk, would you? It's all I ever have for lunch, just milk and fruit.'

Like an over-obedient servant he turned swiftly on his heels, ready to run.

'No, no, wait. Here's some francs. And wouldn't you like to get yourself something too? A beer or something? or would it spoil your lunch?'

'Oh! I never go back to the hotel for lunch. I always grab a sandwich or something down here.'

'Well, bring yourself something anyway. Just what you like. I never go back either. The children and Heidi go back, thank God. That gets them out of my sight.'

When he came back, five minutes later, carrying a bottle of milk, two bottles of beer and four ham rolls, she was lying flat on her stomach, her long beautifully shaped legs stretched straight out, the soles of her feet flat. Something about the pure crinkled whiteness of the underside of her feet stirred him sharply and held him for some moments almost hypnotised.

Suddenly she turned over and saw him staring down at them. For an instant he half flushed as if she had caught him in the act of doing something indiscreet and then she sat up and said:

'Oh! that was awfully quick. I didn't expect you back for ages.'

'I bought myself some beer and ham rolls. I hope that's all right?'

'Of course, I expect you're ravenous.'[3]

Innumerable small sugary grains of sand clung to her arms and thighs, the two pieces of her swim-suit and the upper part of her breasts. As she brushed them away with her hands and even, once, dipped a hand down between her breasts she said that that was the worst of sand. It got into everything. He must be careful it didn't get into his sandwiches.

He sat down, putting the bottle of milk and the two beer bottles on the sand.

'Oh! damn, I forgot about an opener.'

'Don't worry. I'm well equipped. I've got everything.'

By now it was midday and with a miraculous swiftness the shore began to empty itself of people. Everywhere French families were hastily drying bodies, packing up belongings, drifting away.

'You don't see that wretched girl and the children coming back, do you? No, they've probably gone the other way. We're at the *Angleterre*[4]. Where are you?'

'*Les Salles d'Or*.'

'By yourself?'

'With my parents.'

Suddenly she waved her long fingers and asked him to look at the beach. The French were really extraordinary creatures of habit. Dead on the stroke of twelve the beach emptied every day. You'd think a plague[5] had struck it or something. It was all nonsense about the French being so slap-happy[6] and fast and loose[7] and so on. They were really immensely conventional. Didn't he think so? Did he like France anyway?

'It bores me a bit.'

For the first time she looked at him with absolute directness and for the first time he became acutely aware of the peculiar nature of her eyes. The pupils of them were like bright birds' eggs, mottled[8] and stencilled[9] green and orange-brown. For fully a quarter of a minute she held him in a gaze without the flicker of an eyelid and then at last said:

'Good. That makes two of us.'*

Sharply disturbed, he lowered his own gaze and too hastily started to open a bottle of beer. It frothed[10] violently, spilling down his thighs.

'Here. Here's a tissue,' she said and before he could take it, wiped the beer away herself with long smooth strokes.

His body gave a quick central stir. His blood seemed to curdle[11] in the hot bristling Atlantic air and he took a swift drink of beer. As if totally unaware that anything had remotely disturbed him she took a red plastic beaker from her basket and poured it full of milk. The sight of the milk shining pinkly through the plastic and then of her orange-pink mouth held against the lip of the beaker convulsed his body still more sharply, for the second time.

'You haven't told me your name.'

'Franklin. Everybody calls me Frankie.'

'Why does France bore you?'

He drank at the beer again and said he didn't really know. He supposed it might be his parents. They were rather elderly and mad keen on gastronomique excursions, trying new places to eat, new dishes and that sort of thing. That bored him; well, anyway too much of it. He was perfectly happy with a beer and a sandwich and plenty of swimming.

'You've got magnificently brown, I must say.'

'You too. You're a marvellous colour.'

'Well, it's an art. I take it gently. Not too long at a time. I shall lie in the shade this afternoon.'

He started to eat a ham roll, washing it down with an occasional drink of beer. She, using a small silver knife, began to peel a peach, taking off the thin rose downy skin with delicate strokes and then carefully, almost meticulously, laying the fragments on another paper tissue. When finally she bit into the ripe flesh of the peach he saw for the first lime how full her lips were. In contrast to the fine whiteness of her teeth and the green creaminess of the peach they shone richly and as peach-juice ran over them and she licked it away the slow curl of her tongue was voluptuous[12].

'I adore these peaches,' she started to say and then suddenly broke off, a look of stiff annoyance on her face. At the same time he caught the sound of children's voices and looked round to see, thirty yards away, a small boy and a girl and a blonde tall young woman in a plain white swim-suit and carrying a blue wrap, coming across the shore. Even at that distance he thought the girl had an aloof aristocratic, even supercilious[13] air.

The boy, in nothing but a pair of short blue swim-trunks, came running in great excitement.

'We had smashing fun. We found an old anchor — it had barnacles[14] stuck all over it — and an old rope and a big crab. I wanted to bring the crab but Heidi and June said it was too dead —'

'All right, darling, all right. Off you go now to lunch.'

She turned sharply to the tall German gerl. The mottled green-brown eyes held the pale blue almost transparent eyes of the girl in a stare of tense and unconcealed dislike. In return the frigid blue eyes were motionless, calm and equally hostile. 'I thought I always told you to get the children back by twelve. It's long past that now. You know how those French wolves raid the *salle a manger*[15].'

'Yes, Mrs. Palgrave. But sometimes there is a moment when children are too happy to be —'

'Oh! buzz[16] along. And take that silly ball with you. It's been plaguing us to death all morning.'

'I'll get it,' Franklin said and leapt to his feet, beer bottle in hand, and ran to get the ball.

When he eventually brought it to the German girl she looked first at him and then at the beer, at the same time smiling with totally unexpected friendliness. It at once struck him that her hair was almost identical in colour with the sand, so incredibly fine and sun-bleached that it was almost white.

She took the ball from him and said: 'Thank you. Your beer looks good. It makes me thirsty.'

'Oh! wouldn't you have some? There's another bottle —'

'Oh! don't start pampering her. Run along, Heidi. June's already half way there.'

The German girl gave him a final quick, almost confidential smile, and then walked away. The boy called '*Au revoir! Good-bye!*' and ran ahead of her in jumping spirals of excitement and then suddenly, remembering his duty, came running back to kiss his mother.

'Oh! go away. Your hands are simply filthy. You'd better wash well before you go into lunch. You smell of that beastly crab. Heidi! — see that he washes! —'

In ten seconds the harshness of this episode had melted away. With an amazement touched by embarrassment he saw the expression on her face miraculously transformed, all tension gone.

She resumed the business of sucking at the peach as if nothing had happened, the mottled eyes warm with reflected sea-light.

'These girls are an awful responsibility,' she said, but quietly and without rancour[17]. 'I sometimes wonder what she does on her days off. It quite scares me. She looks cold-blooded enough, but you never know, underneath. How did she strike you? — I mean, as a man?'

He laughed quickly. 'Man — well, eighteen. Yes, I suppose so.'

'Eighteen? Good gracious, you look twenty-three or more.' She gave him a bland, unequivocal[18] stare of admiration, eyes immobile and precisely focussed. 'Well, how *did* she strike you? or are you not one of those who size people up very quickly?'

'No, I don't think I do. At first I thought she looked terribly supercilious and then — I don't know —'

'I'm afraid I'm the impetuous[19] sort. Sum people up at first sight — twinkling of an eye sort of thing. I'm not often wrong either. You, for instance —'

'How do you mean, me?'

By now she had finished the peach and was engaged in peeling, with the same delicacy, a long gold-green pear. Before answering she peeled off a long curl of skin and took a slow drink of milk.

'Well, now, tell me if I'm wrong. Generous — sensitive — not malicious[20], not in the least — perhaps a bit impetuous, like me, or anyway eager to please. And, what's getting rare these days, nice manners.'

'Gosh, I'd never measure up to that lot.'*

'Oh! don't be modest. She smiled at him once again with such fixed and candid warmth that he felt his body convulse almost violently. 'Of course you do.'

He gnawed[21] at his third ham roll and drank more beer, not knowing what to say.

'I suppose you've left school? or have you?'

'Last term.'

'And now what are you going to do?'

'Photography. I hope.'

She said that was interesting and sliced the pear in half and then scooped out the cores, leaving the hollows half-filled with juice. This too ran down her chin as she ate the pear and once again she licked it away voluptuously.

'I didn't bring my camera down this morning. First time for days. Stupid of me — I'd awfully like to take a picture of you.'

'Oh! would you? That's nice.'

'Would you mind? I could easily go back and get it after lunch. I've got one of those jobs that takes dozens. You could pick out the ones you liked best and I'd have them blown up.'

'You see. I was right. I said you were generous.'

Half an hour later he got up to go back to the hotel to fetch his camera. In the moment before he walked away she said:

'By the time you get back I'll have retreated to the pines. I've had my ration of sun for the day. You'll find me in the shade.'

By the time he had fetched his camera it was nearly half past two. All across the sand gay coloured umbrellas were going up in the sun; the shore was filling with people.

Just as he reached the sand he heard a shrill voice saying 'I'm going to play with the crab again' and turned to see the German girl and the two children a dozen yards away. The boy said 'Heidi, look, that's the man who was talking to Mummy.' Franklin stopped and waited and said 'Hullo' and the German girl gave him a short, rather frigid smile without a word of greeting.

It suddenly struck him then that what he thought to be superciliousness was perhaps, after all, mere shyness. The effect on him was to make him feel slightly shy and awkward too and in order to counteract it he said to the boy:

'Did you wash?'

'Oh! yes, he washed,' she said. 'I saw to that.'

'Good. Now I can take your picture.' He smiled at the German girl, who promptly dropped the illustrated magazine she was carrying. He picked it up with equal promptitude, dashed sand from it and said: 'Perhaps I could take yours too?'

'Yes, of course. Are you keen on photography?'

'Very. I hope to take it up. I mean professionally. For a living.'

Back at the hotel he had slipped on a white rowing blazer and from one of the pockets he now took out his light exposure meter. The boy at once wanted to know what this was and Franklin jocularly[22] said it was a gadget[23] for measur-

ing whether little boys were telling the truth or not. The joke was lost on the boy but the German girl immediately laughed with such spontaneity, her mouth wide open, her head thrown back, that everything about her was suddenly and amazedly warm. The transformation was so startling that he laughed infectiously too and in a second of quick inspiration lifted the camera to his eye.

'That ought to be a beauty.'

'More probably I shall look an awful sight.'

'Oh! no, you couldn't possibly do that.'

At once her face was cool again, the shyness back. He too felt a moment of awkwardness and started to say that now he would take the three of them together, but to his surprise he suddenly realized that the boy's sister was no longer with them.

'I didn't see her go. Where on earth —'

'Oh! I have my eye on her. She's right over there, by the sea. It's very typical of her — she's what you call contrary in English — independent. Still, I'd better go after her before she goes too far — it's more than my life's worth —'

'Just one more before you go — may I?'

'I think it better I go. We shall see each other again perhaps?'

'I'm sure — I hope so?'

A moment later she and the boy were running across the sand. Looking after them he found the glitter of light on the sea almost painful to his eyes. He took a pair of sun-glasses from his pocket and put them on and then started to walk slowly away in the opposite direction, towards the pines.

In the shade of the pines, as she had said she would be, Mrs. Palgrave was lying flat on her back, her long elegant legs looking for some reason even more golden in shadow than in sun.

'Oh! there you are. I hardly recognized you in that smart white blazer and the dark glasses. You seem to have been gone an awful long time.'

He took off the sun-glasses and sat down on the pine-needled sand beside her.

'I ran into the children and the German girl. That's why.'

'Oh! you did?'

'I think I got a good picture of Heidi. A real beauty.'

'Indeed.'

The air under the trees, thick with pine odour, seemed oppressive. He started to take off his blazer and she watched him in silence for some moments before saying:

'Would you be an awful dear and let me use that as a pillow? Would you mind? The sand isn't so soft here.'

'Of course, of course —'

With great eagerness he started to fold up the blazer.

'Just tuck it under my head, will you? I feel terribly lazy — I suppose it's the warm afternoon.'

He knelt down and she half lifted her head, drowsily. Then he put one hand under the thick red mass of her hair and lifted her head still higher and slipped the folded blazer underneath it.

'That's lovely. That's nice. Thank you.'

She gave a sleepy sinuous[24] movement with her body, closed her eyes for a fraction of a second and then opened them again to smile at him with slow bemusement[25].

'What's the blazer for? Tennis?'

'Rowing.'

'That makes the muscles, strong, I know.'

She gave his right forearm a sudden compulsive grip and he said:

'Careful with that. I broke it a year ago.'

She gave him another slow smile that lingered for some moments somewhere between teasing and mockery and then said:

'How did you come to do that? Resisting some terrible Amazon or something of that sort?'

'No. Quite simple, I was just skating.'

She patted the forearm quickly and then withdrew her hand.

'What sort of boat do you row in?'

'An eight. Or did, rather. I had to give it up because of the arm.'

'Did you win lots of marvellous races?'

'A few. We got a third in the Head of the River* once. On the Thames. Then we were going like stink* on the Serpentine* once, leading by three lengths, and then caught a crab.'

'A crab? Not the sort that wretched child of mine found this morning?'

'No, it's when a man gets his blade[26] stuck in the water, sort of locked, and he can't get it out. There's nothing you can do about it. It stops the boat.'

'I'll bet it didn't happen to you.'

'I'm afraid it did. It can happen to anyone. You feel an awful damn fool.'

She suddenly let the conversation end, simply giving him another long, searching enigmatic[27] smile.

At once he fell his body tighten like a bow string. He drew breath deeply, inhaling draughts of pine odour that were stronger, warmer, more oppressive than ever. On the white sand the red mass of her hair seemed to smoulder[28] and as he stared down at it, fascinated to a point of intoxication, she asked him in the most casual of voices why he didn't come and lie down too? It was awfully, awfully comfortable.

In another moment he was lying side by side with her, looking close into her face. She gave the lightest of laughs and then slowly ran one hand across his bare shoulder. He moved his mouth rapidly to kiss her but she drew her face very slightly away, smiling and saying so this was the way he liked to amuse himself on warm —

She never finished the sentence. He suddenly smothered her mouth with his own. For fully a minute she lay there unresistant and it was only as his hands began to wander across her shoulders and then her breasts that she broke slightly free and said:

'And who gave you permission to do this sort of thing?'

'Do I need permission?'

'Well, at least an invitation.'

'Invite me —'

'You're invited.'

A moment later they were locked together and when finally they broke free again and his hand made a long caressive movement down the curve of her body there was only a single scalding[29] thought in his mind.

'Not here,' she said. 'I don't think it's a good idea, here. I know a better place. Round the headland. A tiny bay about two miles down the coast. I go there sometimes — there's a bit more privacy — I've got the car —'

'Now shall we go?'

'Tomorrow. Don't rush things. I'm here all summer.'

'In the morning then?'

'Afternoon. I must have my ration of morning sun.' She gave her golden body a long still glance of self-admiration, slightly lifting her breasts. 'Don't tell me you don't think it's worth it? Sun in the morning. Love in the afternoon.'

After that, every afternoon, they drove down the coast, through pine forests, to where at last, like a small central bite taken out of an amber quarter moon of melon, a little bay lay within a bay. Dark rocks, like monolithic barriers, locked in a secret arena of sand not more than thirty yards wide, the roots of big pines grappling at the rock crests like claws of animals holding down stricken lumps of prey.

Here, in calmer moments, she coaxed[30] him to talk more about himself. She on the other hand had little or nothing to say of herself and once when he started to question her she merely said 'Me? You don't want to know about me. Isn't it enough that I'm here?'

Every day he took many pictures of her, sometimes in the nude, sometimes in the sea, several times perched[31] high on a rock, like some fabulous red-gold sea creature. She several times confessed that it gave her a strangely uncommon thrill to be photographed quite naked. It was something she'd never known before — it was like being watched by some secret eye.

From time to time he wondered if there could, possibly, be a Mr. Palgrave, but there was no way of asking her this. Finally, as the secretive rapturous[32] afternoons drew out to a number past counting he decided that it couldn't possibly matter about Mr. Palgrave. Mr. Palgrave was either divorced or dead, a faceless unhaunting shape somewhere far outside the world of sand and pines and sun and bristling salty air.

Then one afternoon she suddenly said:

'I'm afraid I'm going to have to leave you.'

At once his heart started bounding with shock. His throat choked thickly and he could barely manage to say:

'I thought you were here for the summer. You mean you're all going away?'

'Oh! good gracious, no. Only me. I've got to go back to London for a few days to see my solicitors. It's about a flat I'm buying. Papers to sign and all that.'

'Will you be gone very long?'

'At the outside three days.'

'God, I'll miss you.'

'I don't believe it. You're trying to flatter me. Out of sight out of mind. Anyway it'll do you good to have a rest from me. You can get sick even of love.'

'Not with you. I'll be bored to death again.'

Bored? Being bored, she told him with a teasing laugh, was merely like being hungry. When the excitement started again you ate it with so much better appetite. Ravenously. Even passionately.

But curiously, after she had gone, he found that he hardly missed her at all. All his emotions were exhausted, drained to a state of dry fatigue. In revulsion[33] from passion he found that he wanted merely to swim, walk idly along the beach, read in the sun. What had been boredom now became a balm[34].

It wasn't until the early evening of the second day after Mrs. Palgrave had left that he suddenly ran into Heidi and the two children as they crossed the shore. The day had been much hotter than usual, the air charged with a sharper exhausting saltiness, and he thought the children look hot and tired.

'They're simply panting for iced drinks.'

'Me too. Let me treat you all. Will you? I feel I could drink beer by the gallon.'

By contrast to the children Heidi looked composed and cool. Under the shade of a big pink umbrella outside the kiosk her fair skin had the softest overtones of rose that gave her a more than usually friendly air, making him more than ever certain that her habitual aloofness[35] arose merely from being shy.

'This orange is good,' she said. She rattled ice round and round in her long glass. 'They always make it of the real oranges here.' The children were drinking something of a lurid[36] purple shade, capped with ice cream and dusted with flakes of chocolate.

'This beer's good too. It's been awfully hot today.'

In less than five minutes all that remained in the children's glasses were smears of purplish cream.

'Another one, please, Heidi. More please. Heidi, be a pet.'

'A swim first. Then we'll see.'

When the children had gone off to the beach again she was very quiet for some moments, as if perhaps shy of being alone with him, and then she said:

'Mrs. Palgrave has gone to London for a few days. Or perhaps you know?'

'Yes. I know.'

'I saw you with her several times.'

'Yes.'

At this she was very quiet again, her eyes lowered as she gently swished the ice round and round in her glass. He felt the silence to be of increasingly acute embarrassment and then realized that it was, after all, the first time they had been completely alone together.

'Oh! by the way, the picture I took of you came out very well. I haven't got it with me but I'll bring it next time I come down.'

'Thank you.'

Another and rather longer silence followed and he had just started to wonder if this might even be one of disapproval, as if perhaps she instinctively sensed how far his relationship with Mrs. Palgrave might have gone, when he suddenly remembered that he had a question to ask her.

Was there a Mr. Palgrave?

'Oh! yes, there is a Mr. Palgrave.'

She took several slow sips of her orange juice, bending low over the glass, so that a strand or two of her extraordinarily fair hair fell across her face. She brushed them lightly back with her fingers and said:

'He is in some sort of business. I don't know what. In the city somewhere.'

'Does he ever come over?'

'Sometimes for a week-end. Every couple of weeks or so. He is always working.'

'What is he like?'

'He is rather older than she is. Rather a silent man.'

'A good old yes-and-no-type.'

'Yes, but rather more no than yes, I feel.'

The discussion of Mr. Palgrave's virtues ended in another wall of silence. After several minutes Franklin finished his beer and then raised his hand to call the waiter for another. Would she perhaps like another orange juice at the same time?

'No, really, thank you.'

Before his second beer arrived he interrupted yet another silence to say:

'Would you mind very much if I asked you something?'

'Please ask.'

'Do you like fish?'

She actually broke into a high peal of laughter. He laughed too but was it really all that funny?

'What a question. You said it so solemnly. Yes, as a matter of fact, I do. Why do you ask me?'

'My father says there's a marvellously good restaurant called *L'Ocean* about six or seven miles down the coast. Nothing but fish. Lobsters, soles, moules, *langoustines*, mountains *of fruits de mer*[37]. I wondered if you'd like to go there tonight. I can have my father's car.'

For some moments she sat silent again, gently swirling the ice in her glass, as if carefully thinking the matter over.

'Thank you. Since Mrs. Palgrave isn't here I think perhaps I could.'

'You mean you couldn't come if she were here?'

'Oh! no.'

'Because of the children?'

'Oh! the children will be all right. They will have dinner and afterwards play donkey. For hours.'

'Donkey?'

'It's a card game.''

Then if it wasn't the children what was it? He didn't quite get the point of it all.

'Oh! she simply doesn't approve of me — what's the word you use? — gallivanting[38] around.'

He suddenly felt an extreme spasm of distaste for Mrs. Palgrave. It was so totally unexpected that now, for once, he too was driven into silence. He even felt cut off from her presence, distracted by a queer nagging[39] uneasiness, so that he was quite startled when Heidi said:

'Will you call for me? And what time?'

Oh! yes, he was sorry. He would call for her. Of course. What time could she be ready? Seven?

'Yes, if that is all right, at seven.'

'I've never been to this place before, but I think it should be good. My father's generally right. He's a tremendous connoisseur.'

She slowly sipped her orange juice down to the last inch or so and then looked at him for the first time with a long glance that was completely direct, easy and no longer shy.

'I'm sure,' she said, 'it will be wonderful.'

As they drove down the coast they passed wide salt flats, long artificial oblongs[40] of drying salt glistening like virgin

snow in the smouldering western sun. Out at sea a group of sardine boats, some blue, some emerald, all with sails of burning orange, were drifting westwards on an ocean of bright green-grey, every sail a tongue of flame on the vast expanse of white-washed water.

L'Ocean was white too: a sparkling low fortress set on a black bastion of rock overhanging the sea, a green flag emblazoned with a great scarlet lobster flying overhead.

'Let's get a drink outside first. My father says we must see the fish tanks. You choose your own lobster while it's still alive.'

As they sat outside on the terrace, sipping *Dubonnet*[41], watching the last of the sardine boats being consumed by the orange cauldron[42] of sunset, the effect of the ocean's vastness was so great that it held him spellbound[43], almost embalmed[44]. Mrs. Palgrave seemed not only far away; she might never have existed.

For the first time he noticed, Heidi was wearing a dress: a simple affair of deep blue with pipings of white at the sleeves and collar. Against it her hair looked more than usually pale blonde almost to whiteness. Her rather thin brown arms were smooth and hairless and she sat with them stretched across the table, her glass held lightly between her ringless fingers.

'What part of Germany do you come from?'

She came from Bavaria, she said. Not far from the Zugspitze, the big mountain. In winter there were great snows and she skied a lot. In summer it was beautiful for walking.

'Will you go back? I mean would you like to go back?'

That was the curious thing, she said. She really didn't want to go back. It was all very beautiful, but somehow — no, she preferred England. It gave her great satisfaction.

The very ordinariness of this conversation succeeded in deepening his own feeling of satisfaction to a point almost of serenity. He felt as if relaxing after a long, tough swim. The almost lunatic days of turbulence with Mrs. Palgrave not only now seemed slightly unreal; there was an uneasy aridity[45] about them, a brittle[46] shadowiness from which all heat had strangely departed.

By contrast the girl sitting in front of him seemed like a bud that had only partly opened. Her physical appeal aroused in him no open excitement. He felt content merely to watch her, framed with an astonishing air of purity against sea and sunset.

'You must give me your address in London,' he said. 'We live in Berkshire, not far out. Perhaps we could meet some time.'

'Yes, I must do that. But I really don't go out very much. Because of Mrs. Palgrave. I told you how it was.'

Abruptly he changed the conversation. Was she getting hungry? What did she fancy to eat? His father said the lobsters were perfect. *The sole Normande* was also marvellous, he said, and both he and his mother apparently always ate mountains and mountains of *langoustines**.

'I find them a bit messy and finicky myself. A bit tedious to unbutton, if you know what I mean.'

'I will unbutton them for you — if you would like me to.'

'Oh! would you? That's awfully nice of you. And we must drink *Montrachet*. My father says the only thing is the *Montrachet*.'

Presently they went inside the hotel to eat. Dark live lobsters crawled with slowly waving antennae about long glass tanks of green-lit water, among emerald forests of sea-weed.

'No, not for me,' Heidi said. 'The poor things look in prison, somehow. Unhappy.'

Soon they were facing prodigious pyramids of shell-fish and then a single big glass bowl of *langoustines*, flowering from rocks of ice like clusters of sea-anemones in pink and white. The *Montrachet* was cold and flinty[17] and, as his father had predicted, excellent. He thought the *langoustines* were pretty good too, especially when, as he said more than once, you had someone to unbutton them for you. She was really spoiling him completely.

'Well, there's no harm in that, or is there?'

'Not at all, not at all. I love it.'

Outside, by now, the light had faded. Against and beyond the electric lights the sky took on the same deep bright blue as her dress and into it, at regular intervals, swept an encircling arrow of yellow, a beam from a lighthouse a mile or two away.

When the last of the *langoustines* had gone and she was thoughtfully washing her hands in a finger bowl he poured out more wine and then asked her, for the first time, if she was enjoying herself? In reply she looked down at her wet hands and said an extraordinary thing:

'More than that. For the first time since we came here I feel I am really myself.'

What did that mean? He didn't quite understand.

'With Mrs. Palgrave I am never myself. She makes me afraid and I go into a shell.'

So this then, he thought, was the key to the superciliousness, the aloof cold air. But afraid? Why afraid?

'I don't know. It's just how it is.' With an abrupt smile she raised her glass to him. 'Well, cheers anyway. Your father is quite right. The wine is splendid.'

'Oh! he really knows, my father. You must meet him. He'd like you. He has such good taste.'

'Really. What flattery.'

'I know what, we'll all come here. I'll see if I can arrange it — for lunch on Sunday. If Mrs. Palgrave is back she can look after the children herself for once. That'll do her no harm, will it?'

She sat very silent again. He never got a single syllable in answer to that question but half way across the bay, on the drive back, he stopped the car. The beam from the lighthouse could still be seen swinging with brilliant regularity across the bay and in one of the spells of darkness it left every twenty seconds or so he kissed her lightly on the lips. Compared with the passionate bite of Mrs. Palgrave's mouth it was like kissing a petal freshly unfolded.

'You're not really afraid, are you?' he said.

Perhaps the question was a stupid one but he never got an answer to it either. She lay back on the seat of the car, very still. When the beam of light flashed again her eyes were very bright and it cut across them like a sword.

Two days later he wandered along the beach, looking for her, but there was no sign of her or the children or the big yellow and white ball. Instead he suddenly-caught sight of a pair of familiar golden legs and a smouldering head of auburn hair against the silver sand of the dunes.

'Hullo there, you're back.'

Mrs. Palgrave was assiduously[48] polishing her fingernails: so assiduously that she hardly bothered to look up at him.

'When did you get in?'

'Yesterday morning.'

'Odd that I haven't seen you.'

'Odd? I had a lot of things to do. Some of them not very pleasant.'

It was now she who had the aloof, ice, supercilious air. An impulse to sit down on the sand beside her left him abruptly. He stood still, stiff and awkward.

'I haven't seen a sign of Heidi or the children either.'

'What a ghastly[49] disappointment for you.'

A small snake of irritation curled sharply up his throat and bit the back of his mouth. She gave a long quizzical look at her nails and then made an equally long search of her handbag, finally producing a mirror.

'I think you might explain that remark.'

'Explain? I can't think why.'

She looked for fully half a minute into the mirror, without saying another word.

'I still can't think why I didn't see Heidi. She promised to meet me for coffee yesterday.'

'She could hardly meet you for coffee if she wasn't here.'

'I don't get it.'

'I've sent her home.

The snake jabbed harshly at his throat again, making his mouth sour and sick.

'Home? You mean to Germany?'

'Of course.'

'But she'll never go. She hates the idea.'

'She's already gone. She left last night.'

He stood stiff and impotent with anger. She stared into the mirror as if he didn't exist and then suddenly he exploded in outrage.

'But good God, that's monstrous! — just like that — it's monstrous!'.

'Don't shout. After all I can't have my children's maid playing fast and loose* with any Tom, Dick and Harry as soon as my back's turned.'

'Fast and loose — ye gods! — all we had was a quiet, simple, innocent dinner.'

At last she looked up at him, the smile on her lips cool and thin.

'Innocent? I love that word innocent. Some of your performances last week hardly belonged to the realm of innocence.'

'There was nothing like that! —'

'How disappointing for you.'

'It was not disappointing! For Christ's sake! —'

Hitherto she had treated him as a man; now she suddenly said:

'Oh! don't be a silly boy. Just go away. There's no point in getting angry.'

'Angry? I like that. It's you that's angry with me.'

She actually laughed.

'Angry? With you? Now that's really funny. On the contrary I'm very grateful.'

'I'm damned if I can think what for.'

'I've been trying to get rid of her for ages, but I never had a real good excuse. Now thanks to you I got one.'

He stood stiff and impotent with anger and humiliation. Again she stared into the mirror as if he simply didn't exist. Then suddenly she gathered up her bathing basket and handbag and stood up, her brown-green eyes absolutely stony.

'If you won't go I'm afraid I must.'

'You sound so bloody righteous somehow —'

'I don't think you quite understand. I told you what a responsibility these girls are. You simply can't have them caught up in all sorts of cheap intrigues —'

With icy contempt she turned abruptly and left him. He stood and raged within himself with sour despair, unable to move or say a word.

The following afternoon he saw the familiar smouldering auburn head coming towards him along the promenade.

He saw at once that she was wearing a dress, a light simple affair of plain yellow, with an emerald belt, and by comparison with the brief swim-suits he had seen her wearing so often it seemed to give her a remarkably respectable, conventional air.

Walking with her was a man of sixty or so, wearing a pair of cream slacks, a navy blue blazer and a yachting cap. He carried a gold-topped walking stick and with this he sometimes pointed at objects out to sea. He too looked conventional, almost to the point of being prim.

Franklin, as Mr. and Mrs Palgrave passed him, stiffened himself to say 'Good afternoon' but in the moment of passing she turned with equal stiffness and stared at the sea.

A few minutes later he was striding along the beach, out of the hot bristling sunlight into the shadow of the pines and then out into the heat of the sun again.

'Heidi,' he kept saying to himself. 'Heidi.' His echoless voice was arid with despair. The white stretch of sand in front of him was as flat and lifeless as the salt flats he had seen in the evening sun. 'Heidi — Heidi — Oh! God, Heidi, where can I find you?'

GLOSSARY

1. retrieve — вернуть назад.
2. confounded — *infm* отъявленный
3. ravenous — изголодавшийся
4. Angleterre — Fr. гостиница Англетер
5. plague — чума
6. slap-happy — невнимательный и безответственный
7. (to play) fast and loose — поступать безответственно
8. mottled — испещренный
9. stencilled — трафаретный
10. froth — пениться
11. curdle — *his blood seemed to curdle* — окказиональный вариант фразеологической единицы 'to make one's blood curdle' = наполнило его страхом = filled him with fear
12. voluptuous — сладострастный
13. supercilious — надменный
14. barnacle — морская уточка
15. salle a manger — Fr. столовая
16. buzz along — болтать
17. rancour — злоба, затаенная вражда
18. unequivocal — недвусмысленный
19. impetuous — стремительный, порывистый
20. malicious — злобный, злонамеренный
21. gnaw — грызть, глодать
22. jocular/ly/ — шутливо, весело
23. gadget — безделушка, техническая новинка

24. sinuous — волнообразное
25. bemusement — ошеломление
26. blade — лопасть винта
27 enigmatic — загадочный
28. smoulder — огненный
29. scalding — жгучая
30. coax — уговаривать
31. perch — взгромоздиться
32. rapturous — восторженный
33. revulsion — отвращение
34. balm — зд. успокоение
35. aloof — отчужденный
aloofness *-n* отчужденность
36. lurid — огненный
37. lobsters, soles, langoustines омары, камбала, лангусты
fruit de mer Fr. дары моря
38. gallivant — флиртовать
39. nagging — ноющий
40. oblongs — продолговатый
41. Dubonnet, Montracher — Fr. французское сухое вино
42. cauldron — котлообразный провал
43. spellbound — очарованный
44. embalmed — забальзомированный
45. aridity — сухость
46. brittle — хрупкий, ломкий
47. flinty — жесткое
48. assiduously — усердно
49. ghastly — очень неприятно

COMMENTARY

* *How vainly men themselves amaze* is a quotation from the poem by Andrew Marvell (1621 — 1678) *'The Garden'*

* *that makes two of us* — we are both of the same mind (opinion)

* *I'd never measure up to that lot* — I would never be as good as that

* *one of those jobs that takes dozens* — that takes a lot of doing

* *the Head of the River* — a title of a University boat race

* *going like stink* — *slang* — rowing very hard

* *Serpentine* (the) — a lake in London where Londoners go swimming and rowing

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

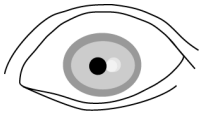
1. What kind of story is it?

2. What is the story about? Frame its **theme**.

3. Who is the author? Who is the **narrator**? Is the narrator the author's mouthpiece? Does the narrator comment on thoughts and actions of the characters or does he only report them? Why?

4. Where and when is the **scene** laid? Prove your answer. What is the opening scene of the story? Remember that in the description of the location such details as colours, the weather, sounds, certain parts of landscape or other details may be important.

5. Name the round and flat **characters**. Who is the main protagonist? Antagonist? How are the characters of Mrs. Palgrave, Franklin and Heidi introduced into the story? Give:
   a) a one-sentence character sketch of the three characters,
   b) a full character sketch of Mrs. Palgrave. For this fill in the scheme:

Mrs. Palgrave	The words of the author	My interpretation
1. Social position, age, nationality, family, education	...	
2. Appearance (face, eyes, hair, body, limbs, poses on the sand)	E.g. **Eyes** The pupils of them were like bright bird's eggs, mottled and stenciled green and orange-brown. For a quarter of a minute she held him in a gaze without the flicker of an eyelid. ... he (Franklin) became acutely aware of the peculiar nature of her eyes	The author is so particular about her eyes because they are known to be 'the mirror of the soul'.  Such a brilliant usage of epithets and simile reveals her secret nature: the eyes are 'peculiar'. because they are typically more of an animal (tiger, etc.) ↓ the author is hinting at her savage nature; she is using Franklin like a vampire
3. Prevailing colours	E.g. **auburn-haired** two-piece emerald swim-suit orange-pink nails lips of the same colour a pink towel yellow beach shoes a yellow scarf	She is dressed to 'kill', i.e. her bright colourful appearance is meant for attracting a prey (compare with militant colouring of birds and animals)

Mrs. Palgrave	The words of the author	My interpretation
4. The way she eats fruit	...	
5. Her method of seduction (the way she brings her prey closer)	...	
6. The way she treats her children	...	
7. Her speech	...	
8. Her life motto	...	
9. Her hypocrisy	...	
10. At the end: taking off the mask	...	

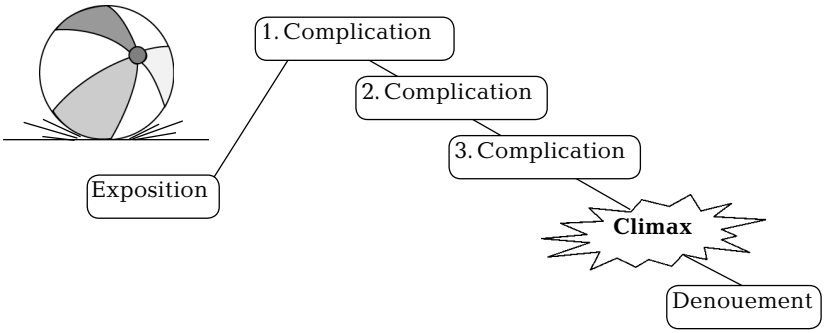
What contrasts between Mrs. Palgrave and Heidi are most striking? Go on filling in the scheme:

Mrs. Palgrave	Heidi
middle-aged	...
...	a servant
colourful	...
...	first love
oppressive air	...

etc.

How does young 'Franklin' gradually discover Mrs. Palgrave's secret nature? Did his intrigue with Mrs. Palgrave teach him to size up people?

6. What is the **plot** of the story? What is the main conflict? Is the **presentation** scenic or panoramic? Entitle each part.



How do you account for the fact that there are almost no flash-backs or foreshadowing? Did Mrs. Palgrave mean her love affair with Frank as a short period intrigue without past and future? What about Frank? Did he want only to 'amaze himself' following linear thinking, not analysing the situation at all? Were they both after emotional relationship or sexual satisfaction?

7. Analyse the **composition** of the story. Why does dialogue prevail in it? Note how naturally it turns into uttered represented speech.
8. What are the **symbols** of the story? Do you find weather, landscape or the opening episode with the rolling ball also symbolic?

9. Explain the **title**.

10. What is the **message** of the story?

III. Get ready for a stylistic analysis of the story.

1. Single out the SDs used by the author most abundantly (three in each group):

Lexical	**Syntactical**
metaphor	inversion
metonymy	detached construction
irony	parallel construction

Lexical	Syntactical
zeugma	repetition
pun	enumeration
epithet	utter represented speech
oxymoron	rhetorical questions
simile,	litotes, etc.

H. E. Bates is a great master of the SD of metaphor:

e. g. *a snake of irritation.*

This powerful metaphor turns into a sustained one in the context that follows.

The snake jabbed harshly.

Keep in mind that there may be two or more SDs used at a time:

e. g. *A plastic ball ... rolled ... not at all unlike a big bored snail ...*

Here an epithet is used within a litotes.

2. Determine the type of the following SDs:

a) orange-pink finger tips
b) like an over-obedient servant
c) fixed and candid warmth
d) It was awfully, awfully comfortable
e) his body tightened like a bow string
f) a scalding thought
g) the roots of big pines grappling at the rock crests like claws of animals holding down stricken lumps of prey
h) virgin snow
i) ringless fingers
j) it cut across them like a sword

3. Sum up all your literary and linguistic observations and answer the question:

What makes the author's style individual?

Joyce Cary

PERIOD PIECE[1]

Tutin, married sixteen years, with three children, had an affair with his secretary, Phyllis, aged eighteen, and wanted a divorce. His wife, Clare, with her usual good sense, was resigned. 'If you feel you must make a break,' she said, sadly but without bitterness, 'there's no more to be said. It would be stupid to try to hold you against your will. You'd only hate me and that wouldn't help either of us.'

But when her mother in remote Yorkshire heard of this arrangement, she wrote and said it was preposterous[2] and wicked[3], she wouldn't allow it. Old Mrs. Beer was the widow of a canon. She was a short, stout woman with a red face and a heavy jaw — a pugnacious[4] and indomitable[5] face. Yet there was something defeated about it too. The little faded blue eyes especially seemed to confess that the old woman had long given up hope of any serious attention from anybody.

You see such faces in boxing booths among the seconds[6] and backers[7], men who have been in the ring all their lives and lost all their fight, but still follow the game as bottle holders, training partners, punching bags[8] for young champions.

Her son-in-law laughed at her when she didn't exasperate him to madness by her sudden raids and arbitrary[9] commands. Each time a child was born she planted herself in the household and took charge of every detail — laying down the law in an intolerable manner and flatly contradicting everybody from the doctor to the monthly nurse[10].

Now, at this talk of divorce, she excelled herself. When Clare wrote her explanations she came south without any warning whatever, broke into Tutin's office and, marching up to his desk, umbrella in hand as if about to beat him, demanded, 'What's this nonsense about a divorce?'

This in the presence of the secretary who was taking dictation — not Phyllis, of course — Phyllis was no longer a secretary. As the future Mrs. Tutin she had to think of her dignity. She had a nice flat in a new building in Mayfair[11] and spent

her time shopping. The new secretary, on promotion from the general office, was a widow of fifty, Mrs. Bateman, with a dark moustache and a strong cast[12] in one eye. Phyllis had chosen her as a thoroughly reliable person.

All the same, Tutin was not anxious to have his most private affairs discussed in front of her. He opened his mouth to tell her to go but Mrs. Beer had now come between. She planted her umbrella on the desk, and shouted at him, 'But there's not going to be a divorce—'

'My dear Mamma, all this has been discussed between Clare and me and we are completely agreed that it's impossible to go on.'

'Of course you can go on — if you *had* to go on you'd go on very well.'

Mrs. Bateman was still folding up her notebook, now she dropped her pencil. Tutin, a thoroughly good natured man, hating to quarrel with anybody, answered patiently, 'Of course, these things are not so simple.'

Frank Tutin was a humane, a kindly man. He was extremely upset by this crisis in his family life. He realized how his wife was suffering, how much the children were concerned. He did not forget for a moment, he said, the danger to them of a broken home. Divorce was a very serious thing.

For days he had discussed it with Clare, analysing all the complex factors involved: Clare's feelings, his feelings, the children's feelings, Phyllis's feelings and everybody's right to consideration. Sometimes he had thought that there was no way out — divorce would be as bad as the present unhappy situation. But gradually he had found confidence; certain large principles detached themselves in the confusion — that the children of divided parents in an unhappy home were, according to a psychiatrist consulted by Frank himself, just as likely to suffer in character as those left with one or the other, alone but devoted, after divorce; that the Tutin's home life was growing every day more distracted, tense and impossible, that the one guiltless person who must not be let down was poor little Phyllis, that Frank and Clare had had many years of happiness together and could not fairly expect to go on for ever.

Clare in this crisis lived up to all Frank's expectations of her. Like the highly intelligent woman she was she took all his points.

And now, just when the divorce had been arranged in the most civilized manner, when Clare had agreed to ask Phyllis to the house to discuss the whole affair — Clare had been charming to Phyllis, so young and so worried, so terribly in love, Phyllis was already quite devoted to her — and when she had agreed to accept a reasonable alimony[13] and allow Tutin to have free access to the children, Mrs. Beer comes charging in like some palaeolithic[14] monster, hopelessly thick-skinned, brutal, insensitive. Comes and calls him selfish.

One could not blame the poor old woman. She was simply out of touch — she belonged to a rougher, cruder age where psychology was practically unheard of, where moral judgments were simply thrown out like packets from a slot machine, where there were only two kinds of character, bad and good, and only one kind of marriage, with no problems except the cook's temper, the drains[15] or, in extreme cases, the monthly bills.

He could ignore poor old Mrs. Beer — but suddenly he felt a strange uneasiness in the middle of his stomach. What was this? Indigestion again. He had had a touch of indigestion for the first time during these anxious weeks — Clare had been worried about him and sent for the doctor who had warned him strongly against worry. But how could he help worrying — he wasn't made of stone. It was worry, a new worry, that was working in him now. Had the old woman yet seen Clare, and what would she say to her? Clare didn't take her mother too seriously, but she was fond of her. And Mrs. Beer had never before been quite so outrageous[16]. The uneasiness grew to a climax; and suddenly he jumped up and made for home. He drove far too fast and beat at least two sets of lights. He had an extraordinary fancy that Clare might have decided to walk out and take the children with her. He rushed into the house as if his shirt-tail were on fire.

What a marvellous relief — Clare was in her usual corner of the sitting-room doing her accounts. She looked at him with mild surprise, blushed and asked, 'Is anything wrong? Do you want me for anything?'

'No, my dear,' Turin caught his breath and gathered his nerve. 'It's nothing — by the way, your mother is in town. She turned up just now in the office.'

'Yes, she's been here too.'

'Oh, I suppose she's been telling you that I'm a selfish brute.'

Clare was silent, and Tutin's irritation rose. 'Selfish — spoiled — a mummy's boy.'

'Of course, Mamma is always rather —'

'Do you think I'm a selfish brute?'

'Of course not, Frank, you know I don't. You've been most considerate from the beginning. You've done your best to be fair to everyone.'

'Yes, but especially to myself, the mummy's boy.'

'What do you mean — I never said —'

'But you didn't contradict.'

'Mamma is so upset.'

But Frank knew his Clare. He could detect in her the least shade of criticism and he perceived[17] very easily that she was not prepared to say that he was quite free from a certain egotism.

To himself he admitted that he had acted, partly, in his own interest. But so had Clare in hers. He was the last to blame her. To do anything else would have been flying in the face of all the best modern opinion; everyone nowadays was bound to pay attention to his psychological make-up, quite as much as to his physical needs. A man who did not, who took no trouble to keep himself properly adjusted in mind as well as body, was not only a fool but a selfish fool. It was his plain duty, not only to himself but to his dependents, to look after himself, and only he could tell exactly what was necessary to keep him in health.

They had agreed that Phyllis was the key to the problem. In fact, the matter was decided and now he could not do without Phyllis — it was impossible. She adored him. The poor kid simply lived for him. This new exciting love coming to him now in his early fifties had transformed his life.

He had simply forgotten what love and life could mean, until Phyllis came to him. Since then he had been young again — better than really young, because he knew how to appreciate this extraordinary happiness.

And he exclaimed to Clare, in a furious, even threatening voice, 'She's got round you, in fact, but I don't care what you think of me. If you refuse a divorce I'll simply go away — Phyllis is ready for anything, poor child.'

'Oh, but of course I'll give you the divorce. Mamma doesn't understand about — well, modern ideas.'

Tutin didn't even thank her. He had been profoundly disillusioned in Clare. Apparently she took very much the same view of him as her mother. In this indignant mood those sixteen years of happy marriage seemed like sixteen years of deceit. He could not bear the thought that during the whole time CIare had been regarding him with her critical eye. He was too furious to stay in the house.

He went out abruptly and then made for Phyllis's flat. It had suddenly struck him that Mrs. Beer in her rampageous[18] mood might even attack Phyllis, and he was at the moment particularly anxious to avoid the least chance of any misunderstanding with Phyllis on account of a slight difference of opinion between them about a mink coat. Phyllis considered that, as the future Mrs. Tutin, it was absolutely necessary to her to have a mink coat. Tutin was not yet convinced of the absolute necessity.

As he came in Mrs. Beer came out. And Phyllis was in an extraordinary state of mind. Red, tearful and extremely excited, even, as he had to admit, unreasonable. For she flew at him. What did he mean by letting her in for that old bitch? She'd been here half an hour — she'd be here still if he hadn't turned up, bawling[19] her out as if she were a tart[20]. She was damned if she'd take it.

'But Phyll. I didn't even know she was coming to London.'

'Where did she get my address?'

'Well, the office perhaps —'

'It's never you, is it — what are you gaping at? I tell you you'd better do something. She called me a common little tart. She said I'd put my hooks on you because you were meat for a floozy[21].'

'But you needn't mind her — she's only a silly old —'

'Not mind her,' shouted Phyllis; she advanced on him with curled fingers. 'Why, you fat old fool —'

For a moment he had the awful expectation of her nails in his face. But she did not claw, perhaps she was afraid of breaking a nail; she only shrieked again and went into hysterics.

Even after Tutin gave her the mink coat she still considered that she had been cheated of her case for damages against Mrs. Beer.

Phyllis had very strong ideas about her rights. She asked Tutin several times if he didn't agree that this was a free country and he agreed at once, very warmly. He could not forget those

awful words, 'a fat old fool.' He did not wish to offend Phyllis again. He even had some gloomy doubts about his future bliss with this darling child.

But he did not change his plans. He was too proud to creep back to the treacherous[22] CIare.

And Clare was a woman of her word. The divorce went forward, and Mrs. Beer, defeated again, trailed back to her bear's den in the northern wilds. Three weeks later, and before the case had come to court, Phyllis met a young assistant film director who promised to make her a star. They went to ltaly on Tutin's furniture, and got a house within a hundred yards of the assistant director's favourite studio on the mink coat.

Tutin did not go back to Clare; he felt that confidence between them had been destroyed. There was no longer sufficient basis for a complete and satisfactory understanding, without which marriage would be a farce[23]; a patched-up[24] thing. It was Clare who came to him and apologized. In the end she succeeded in persuading him at least to let her look after him while he was getting over the great tragedy of his life.

He was, in fact, a broken man. He felt ridiculous and avoided his friends. He neglected to take exercise and ate too much. He went quite grey and in an incredibly short time developed the sagging[25] figure of middle age. But under Clare's care his sleep and digestion greatly improved.

All this was seven years ago. The other day a visitor, a new acquaintance, who had stayed a week-end at the Tutins', congratulated him on his happy family life, his charming wife, his delightful children. And in his B and B letter[26] he declared that he would never forget the experience.

The young fellow, who wanted to join Tutin's firm, was obviously anxious to be well with him. Tutin was amused by his compliments. But suddenly it struck him that there was some truth in them.

After all, most of his happiness was in his home, and it was a very considerable happiness. How and when it had begun to re-establish itself he could not tell. He had not noticed its arrival. He had not noticed it at all. It wasn't romantic — it had nothing exciting about it. It was not in the least like that matrimonial[27] dream of young lovers, an everlasting honeymoon agreeably variegated[28] by large and brilliant cocktail parties for envious friends; it was indeed the exact opposite — a way

of life in which everything was known and accepted, simple and ordinary, where affection was a matter of course and romantic flourishes not only unnecessary but superfluous[29], even troublesome. As for parties, they were perhaps necessary, but what a bore, really, what a waste of time, that is, of peace, of happiness.

And it seems to Tutin that he has made a great success of life in its most important department, at home. How wise he had been to make all those subtle adjustments in his relation with Clare, necessary to render possible their continued life together.

As for Phyllis, he has seen her once in a film, an extra in a crowd scene. It is a night-club and she is a hostess — he is entranced[30] — he feels his heart beat double time — he thinks, 'I might be her husband now, and living just such a life as those roisterers[31]. 'He shudders all down his spine and an immense gratitude rises in his soul. He thanks his lucky stars for a notable escape.

Mrs. Beer is seventy-eight and has shrunk down to a little old woman with a face no bigger than a child's. The angry red of her cheeks is now the shiny russet[32] of a country child's, and its look of the defeated but still truculent[33] pug[34] has turned gradually to a look of patient surprise. The high arched eyebrows in the wrinkled forehead, the compressed lips seem to ask, 'Why are young people so blind and silly — why does the world get madder and madder?'

She rarely comes south, but when she does she gives no trouble. The Tutins cosset[35] her and keep her warm; she plays a great deal of patience[36]. Once only, after her good-night kiss from the children, and possibly exhilarated by getting out two games running, she murmurs something to Frank about how things had come right again as soon as he had given up the idea of a divorce. Frank is startled — he has forgotten the old woman's excitement seven years before. But, looking at her as she lays out a new game, he detects in her expression, even in the way she slaps down the cards, a certain self-satisfaction. It seems that she cherishes[37] one victory.

For a moment Frank is astonished and irritated. Had the poor old thing really persuaded herself that her ideas had had anything to do with what no doubt she would call the salvation[38] of his marriage? Did she really suppose that people hadn't changed in the last half-century, or realize that what might

have been sense for her contemporaries in the 1890's, before psychology was even invented, was now a little out of date? Had she the faintest notion of the complex problems that he and Clare had had to face and solve, individual problems quite different from anyone else's, in which her antique rules of thumb[39] had no more value than a screw-wrench to a watchmaker?

The old woman is still slapping down her cards and for a moment Frank is inclined to tell her how little he agrees with her on the subject of divorce, but he thinks at once, 'Poor old thing, let her enjoy her little illusion.'

Mrs. Beer puts a red ten on a black jack[40], gets out an ace[41], looks up and catches Frank's eye. She gives a smile and a nod, quite openly triumphant.

Frank smiles as at a child who dwells in a world of phantasms[42].

GLOSSARY

1. period piece — предмет или произведение искусства, напоминающее о прошедших временах и кажущееся старомодным
2. preposterous — несообразый, нелепый, абсурдный
3. wicked — безнравственный
4. pugnacious — драчливый
5. indomitable spirit — неукротимый характер
6. second — помощник боксера
7. backer — тот, кто поддерживает
8. punching bag — груша для тренировки боксера
9. arbitrary — деспотичный
10. monthly nurse — патронажная сестра
11. Mayfair — богатый модный район в западном Лондоне со множетсвом клубов и отелей
12. cast — косоглазие
13. alimony — алименты, выплачиваемые жене при разводе
14. Palaeolithic — представитель каменного века
15. drain — канализационная труба, водосток

16. outrageous — неистовый
17. perceive — осознавать, постигать
18. rampageous — буйный
19. bawl — орать
20. a tart — проститутка
21. floozy — шлюха
22. treacherous — предательский
23. farce — фарс
24. patch up — улаживать
25. sag — ослабеть, повиснуть
26. B and B letter — письмо благодарности за гостеприимство
27. matrimonial — супружеский
28. variegated — разнообразный
29. superfluous — излишний
30. entranced — испуганный
31. roister — гуляка
32. russet — красновато-коричневый
33. truculent — свирепый, грубый
34. pug — мопс
35. cosset — баловать, ласкать
36. patience — карточная игра для одного человека (пасьянс)
37. cherish — хранить, лелеять
38. salvation — спасение
39. rule of thumb — правило большого пальца в карточной игре
40. jack — карточный валет
41. ace — туз в карточной игре
42. phantasm — фантом, призрак

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What are your impressions of the story? What struck you most about it? To answer this question take into

consideration the fact that in this story the author follows the British comic tradition: he is quite serious in what he dwells upon and his observations are disturbingly close to truth while his style is farcical, satirical, ironical, often with irony reduced to an art.

2. What is the story about? Is the **theme** explicit?

3. Who is in charge with relating the story? Is the **narrator** reliable? Is he telling the story at the time of the action or is he looking back at a past event?

4. What is the **setting** of the story? What is the opening sentence typical of? Does the author follow deductive or inductive way of presenting the facts?

5. What is the main **conflict**? Who is the protagonist? The antagonist? Name all the **characters** dividing them into round and flat. Are the secondary personages of vital importance too? What role do they play?

   Give:

   a) a one-sentence character sketch of Tutin, Mrs. Beer, Clare and Phyllis.
   b) a full character sketch of Tutin and Mrs. Beer.

	Tutin	**Mrs. Beer**
1. Name (is it a talking name?)	E. g. His name is not talking, but it sounds funny (compare: twitty, tutti-frutti, etc.).	
2. Age	E. g. In his early fifties.	71
3. Social status	...	
4. Background	...	
5. Appearance	...	
6. Main feature	...	
7. Motto	...	

	Tutin	Mrs. Beer
8. Influence of psychology as a science on their outlook	...	
9. Significant details	...	
10. In the end	...	

How do you account for the lack of description of Tutin's appearance and the abundance of the one of Mrs. Beer's?

6. Single out the **exposition**, **complication**, **climax** and **denouement** of the story. Is the time **presentation** scenic or panoramic? Are there any flash-backs or foreshadowing? Comment on the use of tenses:

Past Tense	*7 years later*	**Present Tense**
for the Past Period, i.e. for the 'Period Piece'		for the Present Period to show the 'Period Piece' is over

Do you find the end of the story predictable?

7. Analyse the **composition** of the story. Due to the SD of unuttered represented speech F. Tutin's point of view dominates throughout the whole story; still there are some parts where we can hear the voice of the author. Supply your answer with examples. Do you find these interpolations sometimes hardly perceptible?

8. Explain the **title**.

9. What is the **message** of the story?

III. Get ready for a stylistic analysis of the text.

1. Name expressive means and styliscic devices which are predominating in the author's style.

2. Guess the names of the characters.
   Pay attention that all of them are presented with irony:

a) _____ *cherished her victory.*
b) _____ *had to think about her dignity.*
c) _____ *with a dark moustache and a strong cast in the eye.*
d) *In his B&B letter* _____ *declared that he would never forget the experience.*
e) _____ *smiles as a child who dwells in a world of phantasms.*
f) _____ *adored him.* _____ *simply lived for him.*
g) _____ *had been worried about him and sent for the doctor who had warned him strongly against worry.*
h) _____ *comes charging in like some palaeolithic monster.*
i) _____ *only shrieked again and went into hysterics.*

3. The author brilliantly depicts his characters. What SDs does he use for this purpose?

   E. g.

   > *... and Mrs. Beer, defeated again, trailed back to her bear's den in the northern wilds.*

   The SD of sustained metaphor is used to express the narrator's contempt for Yorkshire, which Mrs. Beer is from. It is situated in N. England and is known for its wild countryside. To a supercilious Londoner as Tutin is, his mother-in-law is 'a bear' and her home is 'a den'.

4. Sum up all your literary and stylistic observations and say what makes the author's style individual.

Francis King

Making It All Right

'If you want to see Iris Clark, we ought to call her soon. She's got herself into the habit of going to bed early.' As she spoke, Diana Lucas jumped up from the settee and, stooping over, began to edge a six-panel gold screen out from the wall behind it. 'Oh, this woman! She never puts anything back straight. And the filth behind here. Mary, just look at this filth, just look at it.' Mary Hirst glanced over her shoulder. 'Bob, just look.' Mary's husband, Bob, clumsy hands clasped between bony knees, continued to stare down at the Chinese silk carpet which, Diana had told them, she had bought off a restaurant in Kobe* 'for a song, an absolute song[1]'. 'Oh, well, I suppose that I oughtn't to grumble about her. She's really rather a dear. And she's been with me twelve years. Did you realize that, Mary? She's been with me twelve years. I taught her everything she knows — which isn't saying much.'

'Oh, I think that she's a lovely cook,' Mary said. She enunciated[2] her words slowly and carefully with a trace of an Australian accent.

'On a good day,' Diana conceded. 'Now what about that call to Iris?'

'Well, I don't know, dear.' Mary looked at her watch and then looked at Bob. 'It's getting late. It's such a long drive back to Kyoto* and Bob has to be on duty at the hospital at nine o'clock.'

'She'd appreciate a visit from you, I know. Even if we looked in just for ten minutes. They were always so inseparable; other people never really counted for them. And now that she's on her own, well, the poor thing seems so utterly *lost*.' Again Diana fidgeted[3] with the screen. 'It's a beauty, isn't it? The gold alone is worth a fortune.'

'Isn't that the one you picked up with me at that little junkshop behind Kyoto station?' Mary queried.

'Yes, of course, so I did! I'd quite forgotten. Yes, that's right.' But Diana did not care to be reminded. 'Of course it was in a ghastly condition then. Remember? But I saw at once that it had

its possibilities. I had it remounted[4]. Touched up by a little man whom I've found, a real artist. The gold restored — that cost me a pretty penny, I can tell you. Yes, I'm pleased with the result ... Now, Mary, let's put through that call. You'll be doing her such a good turn[5].'

Mary, who hardly knew Iris Clark, was less sure of this. But the news of the car accident in which Frank Clark had been killed and Iris herself gravely injured had appalled[6] her when she had read of it in the newspaper and ever since she had hoped for some opportunity to be of comfort or assistance. 'Would we really be welcome — at this hour, I mean?'

'Quarter-to-ten,' said Diana with a brisk look at the platinum-and-diamond watch on her wrist. 'She doesn't go to bed all *that* early. Come.' She held out a hand to Mary and yanked[7] her, with surprising ease considering the disparity in their size, out of the sofa and on to her feet. 'You'd better speak to her. It'll make it nicer, coming from you.'

'Me, dear?'

'I'm always running over to see her. Almost daily. And now that it seems likely that I shall be taking over the house —'

'Taking over the house?' Mary stared at her in amazement.

'Sh! It's meant to be a secret. Don't tell a soul. Isn't it wonderful news?'

'But I — I thought that the *bank* rented it.'

'Yes, but Iris hated the thought of its falling into the hands of Frank's successor. A bachelor. After all they put into it, it would have been such a shame — one of the show-places of the district. So she's *arranged* — with a little scheming — for me to have it. Isn't it marvellous news? I can't wait to get out of this beastly western house. My things are going to look ten times better when they're on show in their proper setting.'

'But — how did she fix it?' Mary asked, as Diana continued to impel[8] her inexorably[9] towards the telephone.

'Quite simple. The company asked if the landlord would be willing to renew the lease[10] — it ends this month by a lucky chance — and she said that she would ask him. Then she told them that he was awfully sorry but he wanted the house back as he had promised it to someone else. That was me, of course.' Mary was still looking at her openmouthed with a mixture of shock and admiration. 'Now, come, dear. I'll dial the number and then you can speak to her.'

'But I hardly know —'

'Come!'

Mary submitted to Diana as people of far stronger wills found themselves submitting. 'Are you sure that we won't be disturbing you?' she asked, and Iris's far-away, plaintive[11] voice answered her: 'No, no, I have nothing to do but to — to sit here. So please come. Do you think you can find the way?'

'Oh, yes. Diana Lucas will be with us.'

'Diana! How lovely!'

'Tell her I'll bring the screen — I'll bring her screen over. Tell her it's gorgeous,' Diana hissed.

Mary did as she was bid.

'Oh, I am excited!' Iris exclaimed.

'Bob, give me a hand with this screen,' Diana said, advancing on the six-panel gold screen as soon as the telephone call had ended. 'Let's take your car, shall we? Then I needn't get mine out of the garage. Bob, dear!... Now be *very* careful, won't you, sweetie?That's right.' Between them they began to fold up the screen.

'Has — has Iris Clark —?' Mary began to ask.

'Yes, she begged me to let her have it. It breaks my heart, I've really grown so fond of it. But that's the hell of this business ... Ah, well, I suppose that I'll find another.' Diana's own house was the show-room for the Chinese and Japanese antiques which she sold chiefly to rich American tourists, ignorant of the prices prevalent[12] in the stores of Kobe and Kyoto from which Diana usually bought them. 'I let her have it for a quite unrealistic price, but she'd set her heart on it and in the circumstances...'

'You're a sentimentalist,' said Bob. 'Bless your heart'. He meant the blessing, though he did not really consider her a sentimentalist. He had always admired Diana for her elegance, her sophistication and her business flair[13]; all qualities in which Mary, bless her heart too, was conspicuously lacking.

'Well, kids, let's go!' Diana lifted one end of the screen, Bob the other. 'Yes, I sure am sorry to see that blank wall,' Diana said in a poor imitation of an American accent, gazing at it. 'You'll have to help me to find something really nice to put in its place, Mary. Mary has a wonderful eye, did you know that, Bob? She ought to go into business with me.'

'I'd love to,' Mary said, obviously pleased. 'If only I didn't have *him* to look after.'

'Oh, leave him!' Diana exclaimed. 'He'd manage on his own. Wouldn't you, Bob?'

For some reason Bob began to flush as he stopped to ease the screen through the narrow doorway.

Iris Clark was seated, not at the desk which stood in the glassed-in porch* running the whole length of the vast, Japanese-style room, but at a small, gate-legged table* which to Mary seemed perfectly ordinary but which Diana always eyed greedily, knowing it to be Sheraton*. She was a tall, bony woman, whom grief and the months she had spent in hospital had made even bonier. Light freckles[14] dotted the pallor[15] of her cheekbones, her forehead and her arms. When she drew back her lips in a smile, she revealed both large irregular teeth and the gums above them. Her hand made a brief icy contact with Mary's and then with Bob's, but on Diana she bestowed[16] a kiss and convulsive hug.

'What have you been doing? What's all this?' Diana indicated the table.

'Invitations. For my farewell party.' She turned to Bob and Mary. 'I hope that you can come.'

'I've spoken to those two waiters and they've agreed to help,' Diana said before either of them could answer. She was examining a scroll[17]-painting hanging in the alcove.

'Wonderful. You *are* good, Diana.'

'Sweetie, I don't *honestly* like this very much.'

'Oh, don't you? No, I wasn't sure about it. Frank — 'her voice trembled momentarily — 'bought it off Cecil Courtney.'

'Well, that explains of course why nothing about it seems quite right.' Cecil Courtney was a rival dealer. Diana walked over and, putting her hand on Iris's shoulder, inspected her carefully. 'You know, you look so much better. Oh, much better. Doesn't she, Mary?'

Mary, who had not seen Iris since her accident, was in no position to judge; but she nodded her head emphatically.

'And that coat and skirt is *very* elegant. I sent Iris to Madam Keiko. Don't you like Iris's coat and skirt?... Now, Iris, you sit down and I'll see about the drinks. No, sit down, dear. You're looking much stronger and much better, but you've still got to take it easy. Sit down, there's a good girl.'

Iris did as she was told.

'I've just let Mary and Bob into our secret — Mary is one of my oldest friends, even if we do see so little of each other now that she and Bob have taken themselves off to Kyoto. She's as thrilled as I am. As she rightly said, my things are going to look ten times nicer in this setting than in that poky western-style house.' She seemed to have forgotten that it was in fact she herself who had said this.

Mary looked about her: the room, for a Japanese house, was vast, the ceiling far higher than customary, the various woods of the floor beams, the transoms and the *tokonoma*[18] all, even to her inexpert eye, of a costly variety. 'Yes, it's a gorgeous home,' she said, thinking of their own cosy but creaking and fragile wooden box, possible for entertaining only if they removed the sliding screens and threw all three downstairs rooms into one. 'You'll have difficulty in heating it, Diana, won't you?'

Diana leaned forward, as sleek[19], polished and finely wrought as the birds which had been carved[20], perched[21] among irises, in the transom[22] above her. 'Well, that all depends on Iris,' she said in a soft, winning voice.

Iris glanced at her momentarily, glanced away and then glanced back, to hold her bright, appealing gaze, as she said in a voice pitched so low that Bob, who was growing deaf, could not hear her: 'It's Mrs. Macready. I *did* promise her the space-heater, oh, long, long ago.'

'But she can order one from the States. She won't even have to pay any duty.'

'Oh, yes, she will. They don't have any diplomatic privileges.'

'Anyway he's making so much money out of selling scrapiron that he can afford to pay duty. Whereas I...' She put one small hand over Iris's large one. 'Please, Iris dear. You don't want me to shiver all winter, do you?'

'Well, of course not.' Iris said with a laugh as brief as a hiccough[23].

'Then that's fixed. And presumably it was, since Iris merely stared down at her wedding-ring. 'Now you must tell me what I can do to help with the party.'

'Well, first —' Iris got up and went over to the gate-legged table — 'do have a look at this list. I hope that I've remembered everyone that I ought to remember.'

Diana took the list and examined it, drawing on the long ivory cigarette-holder into which she had just eased a Turkish cigarette. 'Him,' she grunted. 'Him.' She looked up, frowning. 'Do you really want the Da Silvas?'

'Oh, yes. I must. I must have them. He was one of Frank's golfing friends, you know.'

'And that dreary Gulliver couple?'

She continued to go through the list until, suddenly, she put it down on her knees and said: 'Oh, Iris dear, I meant to ask you — would you mind if I started to bring over some of my things next Saturday? Sakurai has promised to let me have one of his company trucks. We could use the side entrance,' she went on hurriedly, 'and stack the things in the two rooms which you never use — you know, the ones facing north. Would you mind, dear? Please be quite frank.'

To this Iris also agreed; as to the suggestion which followed, that — 'for a little present, of course' — her driver should help with the loading and unloading of Diana's possessions. 'Oh, Iris, you really are an angel! You do spoil me so. Doesn't she, Mary? Aren't I lucky to have such a friend?'

Mary gave a taut[24] smile and, hands crossed over the slight protuberance of her stomach, looked around her. She was not a jealous woman and it was not precisely jealousy that she felt, but rather a sense of exclusion. Diana, after all, was *her* friend; had been her friend ever since they had first met at the Kobe Women's Club in the early days of the occupation*. Besides, she now wanted to talk to Iris Clark herself in order to pour out over her all the sympathy which her warm, generous character secreted in such abundance. The other two women continued to discuss the party, Diana's move, the gas and electricity bills, the rates, a carpet which Diana wished to buy and a fur-coat she wished to sell; and there sat Mary and Bob, ignored and excluded except when Diana would turn to one or the other to ask for their confirmation or support — 'I am right, aren't I, Bob dear?' 'You do agree, don't you, Mary?' 'Have you ever heard anything like it, Bob?'

Suddenly Diana jumped up: 'You've not yet looked at the screen. Do get your boy to bring it in. It's in the boot of the car. Bob, angel, do give me the key.' She took the bunch of keys and held them out to Iris. 'Here.'

'Oh, I *am* longing to see it,' Iris said when she had sent the boy off to fetch the screen. 'You've seen it, haven't you?' It was the first time she had addressed Mary since the invitation to the party.

'Yes,' Mary said. 'It's a beauty.'

'It's so sweet of Diana to let me have it. It'll be a wonderful reminder of Japan when I am in my poky little Chelsea* flat. I never thought that I should possess a KanoTanyu* screen, never, never.'

'Kano Tanyu?' Mary was genuinely amazed.

Diana said hurriedly: 'Well, that's only my guess. It's not signed. If it were, of course the price would be quite astronomical and I'd be selling it to a museum and living happily ever afterwards on the proceeds. But I have a feeling — a hunch[25]...' She laughed, as though at herself. 'One can't explain these feelings, can one? But it's the same feeling that I had about that Kemair head — remember, Mary? And then Professor Hunter came along and lo and behold[26] my hunch had been right!'

Iris's driver came in, lugging[27] the screen which was almost twice as tall as himself. 'Oh, do be careful!' Diana cried in Japanese. 'There!' She and the boy began to open it between them, revealing bamboos on a gold background, among which whiskered tigers, benevolent[28] and plump as cats, stalked[29] each other or crouched[30] at rest. The four foreigners and the Japanese boy all gazed at it in silence.

'It's certainly awfully like those Kano Tanyu *fusuma*[31] in Nijo Castle — or is it in Chion-in*?' Mary said. Diana gave her a sharp look.

'You've got a mint of gold there.' Bob pointed his pipe at the screen.

'Real gold,' said Diana. 'Gold leaf. The Technique is interesting. Do you know about this? They have these gold squares, each square about...' She spoke quickly and efficiently, like an instructor explaining a machine. 'Fascinating, isn't it?' she concluded. This was how she invariably won over the more sceptical of her customers.

'It's breathtaking,' Iris said; and she seemed literally to have had her breath taken away. She gulped for air: 'Oh, breathtaking,' she said. 'Darling, how can you *bear* to part with it?'

'Yes, it is a wrench[32]. I really am in love with it. But in this case — well, I want you to have it. Very much.'

Iris went up to the screen and then suddenly, going down on her knees, scrutinised[33] it from there.

'Yes, that's the right angle!' Bob exclaimed. 'We westerners tend to examine Japanese objects from the wrong — standing or from a chair, instead of from the floor.' It was something which he had subconsciously remembered from one of Diana's sales-talks on another occasion.

'I love it,' Iris said. 'Oh, I do love it.'

Soon Iris and Diana went off together to decide which of two dresses Iris should wear at her farewell party.

'I can't think why she was so insistent that we should call,' Mary pouted[34]. 'Iris has taken no notice of us ever since we got here.'

'She and Diana have a lot to arrange together,' Bob replied.

'Diana has a lot to arrange! She just wanted an excuse to come over here, if you ask me — to settle everything to her own satisfaction. That screen!'

'It's a beauty, isn't it?'

'Kano Tanyu! I was with her when she bought it. Three thousand yen, it cost her — less than ten dollars. Of course she must have spent a bit on having it restored. Oh, she's a clever business woman is our Diana.' Usually easy-going and kindly, Mary was now venomous[35].

'...Then if you want it,' Diana was saying as they returned, 'you *must* let me know soon. That American dealer is mad about it and he wants a decision before he goes back to Tokyo. You know, if you like, we could do an exchange. The bowl for the space-heater, how about that?' She had come back into the room her arm linked in Iris's. 'Iris adores that Ming bowl* of mine — you know the one, Mary. It's flawless, quite flawless[36], and historically quite interesting because it's one of the few examples...' As she went on talking she crossed over to the sofa, picked up her bag and slipped into it a piece of paper which Mary's alert eye saw to be a cheque.

'Well, sweetie, you must get the rest which the doctor said that you needed and we must be on our way. Mustn't we, Mary? Bob?' Her two heavily-built friends struggled to their feet, Mary pulling down her girdle[37] and Bob hitching up[38] his trousers. 'Lovely to have seen you, Iris dear. Now if there's *anything* that you need — any help at all —'

When they were in the car, Diana suddenly said to Bob, who had already started the engine: 'Oh, I've forgotten, I ought to have asked Iris about her cook. I want to take her on. I must make sure that it's all right. Could you — *would* you — wait just a moment for me?' She jumped out of the car before either of them had answered and ran wobbling up the drive on her high stiletto heels.

Mary and Bob sat in silence, the engine still running while Bob banged impatiently with one hand on the steering-wheel. Then, suddenly, Mary, sitting in the back of the car where Bob could not see her, opened Diana's bag and jerked out the cheque. Holding it up to the light which slanted down from the porch at the end of the drive, she made out the words with an amazement so intense that it felt like a sudden burst of rage; yen one hundred and fifty thousand only. One hundred and fifty pounds, *only* one hundred and fifty pounds! For the screen they had bought together in the junk-shop! 'Bob,' she began, but a crunch[39] on the gravel made her slip the cheque back into the bag and click it rapidly shut.

'Dear Iris,' Diana said. 'Don't you think she's sweet?'

'Nice woman,' Bob agreed.

'I'm glad to see her so much better.'

'She relies on you a lot,' Bob said. 'Anyone can see that you have had a lot to do with her recovery.'

'Well, it's nice of you to say that. Yes, I've tried to do the best I can for her. What she needs is jollying along and cheering up.'

'And that's your speciality,' said Bob.

'You are being nice to me. What do you want from me?' Diana asked with a delighted laugh.

'Everything.'

Mary sat next to Diana, tense and silent. 'Just listen to your husband!' Diana exclaimed.

Mary was listening; but she still said nothing.

'Oh, I shall miss my beautiful screen!' Diana sighed. 'I let her have it for practically nothing, she'd so set her heart on it. Just enough to cover the cost of restoration. Hammerslay — that American dealer, you know — well, I'm sure that he'd have offered me at least three hundred, four hundred dollars. But I wanted her to have it. I knew what it meant to her.'

'Very generous of you,' said Bob. 'Bless your heart.'

'Well here's my humble abode[40]. Thank you very much, sir. Next time you visit me I'll be in residence in my palace. I can't wait, I just can't wait, to settle myself in with all my things around me. ...Good night, Mary dear. Good night, Bob. God Bless. And come and see me soon. *Soon*.'

Diana wondered for a moment, as she turned away from them, why Mary had neither returned her greeting nor taken her hand, instead squinting[41] at her with what was, yes, an almost paranoical intensity. Paranoical, paranoidal? She tried out both words as she slipped her key in the lock, smiling to herself. Mary was jealous, poor dear, that was it. As if anyone would want to take dear, dull old Bob away from her! Well, she'd make it all all right on the telephone tomorrow. She could always make it all all right — anything, with anyone.

GLOSSARY

1. **buy smth for a song** — купить вещь за бесценок
2. **enunciate** — объявлять
3. **fidget** — беспокоиться о чем-то
4. **remount** — реставрировать
5. **do someone a good turn** — услужить кому-либо
6. **appal** — напугать, быть в шоке
7. **yank** — дергать
8. **impel** — заставлять кого-либо что-то делать
9. **inexorably** — безжалостно, непоколебимо
10. **lease** — сдавать в аренду землю или здание
11. **plaintive** — горестный
12. **prevalent** — преобладающий
13. **flair** — склонность, способность
14. **freckles** — веснушки
15. **pallor** — бледность
16. **bestow** — запечатлеть
17. **scroll** — свиток
18. **tokonoma** — яп. альков, где помещают картины или цветы
19. **sleek** — гладкий, прилизанный

20. carve — вырезанный по дереву
21. perch — насест, жердь
22. transom — брусок
23. hiccough — икота
24. taut — натянутый
25. hunch — предчувствие
26. lo and behold — и вот! и вдруг, о чудо!
27. lug — тащить
28. benevolent — благожелательный
29. stalk — шествовать
30. crouch — припадать к земле
31. fusuma — яп. ширма, экран
32. wrench — печаль, боль разлуки
33. scrutinise — внимательно рассматриовать
34. pout — выставить нижнюю губу, выражая отчаяние
35. venomous — чувствовать ненависть и зло
36. flawless — безошибочный
37. girdle — резиновый пояс
38. hitch up — подтянуть брюки
39. crunch — зд.: шум
40. abode — форм., юмор.: место для жилья
41. squint — смотреть искоса

COMMENTARY

* *Kobe, Kyoto* — cities of Japan, seaports.

* *glassed-in porch* — a veranda or a conservatory — a room with walls and a glass roof, which is attached to the house. Plants are often grown in a conservatory.

* *gate-legged table* — a table which has a leg on a HINGE (metal part which joins two objects together) that can swing in to let down part of the table.

* *Sheraton* — the graceful style (of a piece of furniture) made in Britain around 1800 by Thomas Sheraton.

* *in the early days of the occupation* — the period of time at the end of the Second World War when Japan was occu-

pied by the allied armies of Great Britain, USA, Australia, and Canada.

* *Nijo Castle, Chion-in* — ancient Japanese castles.

* *Chelsea* — an area of London known for its expensive housing and fashionable shops.

* *Kano Tanuy screen* — a screen made by the royal Japanese Kano Tanyu (1602—1674). In Japan the Kano family has had the hereditary post of the Royal artist to this day.

* *Ming-bowl* — a vase of the Ming's period. The Ming family is a Chinese dynasty (1368-1644).

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What kind of story is it?

2. What is the **theme** of the story? Is it easily traced?

3. What kind of **narrative** is it? At which point of the story is the omniscient author more explicit?

4. What is the **setting** of the story? Is it of much significance?

5. What is the **main conflict** and when does it reveal itself? Who is the protagonist? The antagonist? Name all the **characters** dividing them into round and flat. Prove that all of them are depicted with irony.

   Give:

   a) a one-sentence character sketch of Diana, Mary, Bob and Iris,
   b) a full character sketch of Diana and Mary.

	Diana	Mary
1. Nationality	...	Australian
2. Family	single	married to Bob
3. Occupation	antiques dealer	...
4. Appearance	...	...
5. Behaviour	...	...
6. Manner	...	...
7. Motto	...	...
8. Significant details	...	...

Name at least 10 examples of how in her sharky pursuit of money 'Diana the schemer' takes advantage of her less sophisticated friends.

E. g.

1. *Diana is insistent that Mary should call Iris and arrange a meeting with her.*
2. *She uses Bob's car to go to Iris's house.*
3. *...*
4. *...*

What are the main traits of Diana's character? To answer this analyse the following:

1. *Oh, this woman! She never puts anything back straight. And the filth behind here. Mary, just look at this filth, just look at it.*
2. *I'm always running over to see her. Almost daily. And now that it seems likely that I shall be taking over the house —*
3. *My things are going to look ten times better when they're on show in their proper setting.*
4. *Let's take your car, shall we? Then I needn't take mine out of the garage.*
5. *Yes, she begged me to let her have it. It breaks my heart, I've really grown so fond of it.*
6. *Mary has a wonderful eye, did you know that, Bob?*

7. *Well, kids, let's go.*
8. *She put one small hand over Iris's large one. 'Please, Iris, dear. You don't want me to shiver all winter, do you?'*
9. *Next time you visit me I'll be in residence in my palace. I can't wait, I just can't wait, to settle myself in with all my things around me...*
10. *She could always make it all all right — anything, with anyone.*

6. What is the **plot** of the story? Is there any exposition? Denouement? What is so peculiar about the climax?

7. Comment on the **composition** of the story. What is the main advantage of the abundance of the dialogical speech? Who is leading the conversation?

8. Explain the **title** and the **message** of the story. Do you believe that Diana would make it all right with Bob and Mary?

III. Get ready for the stylistic analysis of the story.

1. Comment on the emblematic names of some of the characters. What is the contextual explanation of the name Iris?

2. Guess the names of the characters. Note that all of them are presented with irony:

   a) _____*'s hand made a brief, icy contact with* _____*'s and then* _____*'s, but on* _____ _____ *bestowed a kiss and convulsive hug.*
   b) *... and there* _____ *and* _____*, ignored and excluded ...*
   c) _____*'s two heavily-built friends struggled to their feet,* _____ *pulling down her girdle and* _____ *hitching up his trousers.*

3. Sum up all your literary and stylistic observations and say what makes the author's style individual.

ENGLAND VERSUS ENGLAND*

'I think I'll be off,' said Charlie. 'My things are packed.' He had made sure of getting his holdall[1] ready so that his mother wouldn't. 'But it's early,' she protested. Yet she was already knocking red hands together to rid them of water while she turned to say good-bye: she knew her son was leaving early to avoid the father. But the back door now opened and Mr. Thornton came in. Charlie and his father were alike: tall, over-thin, big-boned. The old miner stooped, his hair had gone into grey wisps, and his hollow cheeks were coal-pitted. The young man was still fresh, with jaunty fair hair and alert eyes. But there were scoops[2] of strain under his eyes.

'You're alone,' said Charlie involuntarily, pleased,ready to sit down again. The old man was not alone. Three men came into view behind him in the light that fell into the yard from the door, and Charlie said quickly: 'I'm off, Dad, it's good-bye till Christmas.' They all came crowding into the little kitchen, bringing with them the spirit of facetiousness[3] that seemed to Charlie his personal spiteful[4] enemy, like a poltergeist[5] standing in wait somewhere behind his right shoulder. 'So you're back to the dreaming spires*,' said one man, nodding good-bye. 'Off to t'palaces of learning,' said another. Both were smiling. There was no hostility in it, or even envy, but it shut Charlie out of his family, away from his people. The third man, adding his tribute to this, the most brilliant son of the village, said: 'You'll be coming back to a right Christmas with us, then, or will you be frolicking[6] with t'lords* and t'earls you're the equal of now?'

'He'll be home for Christmas,' said the mother sharply. She turned her back on them, and dropped potatoes one by one from a paper bag into a bowl.

'For a day or so, any road,' said Charlie, in obedience to the prompting spirit. That's time enough to spend with t'hewers of wood and t'drawers of water.'* The third man nodded, as if to say: That's right! and put back his head to let out a relieved bellow. The father and the other two men guffawed[7] with him.

Young Lennie pushed and shoved Charlie encouragingly and Charlie jostled[8] back, while the mother nodded and smiled because of the saving horse-play[9]. All the same, he had not been home for nearly a year, and when they stopped laughing and stood waiting for him to go, their grave eyes said they were remembering this fact.

'Sorry I've not had more time with you, son,' said Mr. Thornton, 'but you know how' tis.'

The old miner had been union secretary, was now chairman and had spent his working life as miners' representative in a dozen capacities. When he walked through the village, men at a back-door, or a woman in an apron called: 'Just a minute, Bill,' and came after him. Every evening Mr. Thornton sat in the kitchen, or in the parlour when the television was claimed by the children, giving advice about pensions, claims, work-rules, allowances; filling in forms; listening to tales of trouble. Ever since Charlie could remember, Mr. Thornton had been less his father than the father of the village. Now the three miners went into the parlour, and Mr. Thornton laid his hand on his son's shoulder, and said: 'It's been good seeing you,' nodded and followed them. As he shut the door he said to his wife: 'Make us a cup of tea, will you, lass?'

'There's time for a cup, Charlie,' said the mother, meaning there was no need for him to rush off now, when it was unlikely any more neighbours would come in. Charlie did not hear. He was watching her slosh[10] dirty potatoes about under the running tap while with her free hand she reached for the kettle. He went to fetch his raincoat and his holdall listening to the nagging inner voice which he hated, but which he felt as his only protection against the spiteful enemy outside: 'I can't stand it when my father apologizes to me — he was apologizing to me for not seeing more of me. If he wasn't as he is, better than any one else in the village, and our home the only house with real books in it, I wouldn't be at Oxford. I wouldn't have done well at school, so it cuts both ways.' The words, cuts both ways, echoed uncannily in his inner ear, and he felt queasy[11], as if the earth he stood on was shaking. His eyes cleared on the sight of his mother, standing in front of him, her shrewd, non-judging gaze on his face. 'Eh, lad,' she said. 'You don't look any too good to me.' 'I'm all right,' he said hastily, and kissed her, adding: 'Say my piece to the girls* when they come in.' He went out with Lennie behind him.

The two youths walked in silence past fifty crammed[12] lively brightly-lit kitchens whose doors kept opening as the miners came in from the pit for their tea[13]. They walked in silence along the fronts of fifty more houses. The fronts were all dark. The life of the village, even now, was in the kitchens where great fires roared all day on the cheap coal. The village had been built in the thirties by the company, now nationalized. There were two thousand houses, exactly alike, with identical patches of carefully tended front garden, and busy back-yards. Nearly every house had a television aerial. From every chimney poured black smoke.

At the bus stop Charlie turned to look back at the village, now a low hollow of black, streaked and spattered with sullen wet lights. He tried to isolate the gleam from his own home, while he thought how he loved his home and how he hated the village. Everything about it offended him yet as soon as he stepped inside his kitchen he was received into warmth. That morning he had stood on the front step and looked out on lines of grey stucco houses on either side of grey tarmac[14]; on grey ugly lamp-posts and greyish hedges, and beyond to the grey mine-tip and the neat black diagram of the minehead[15].

He had looked, listening while the painful inner voice lectured: 'There's nothing in sight, not one object or building anywhere, that is beautiful. Everything is so ugly and mean and graceless that it should be bulldozed into the earth and out of the memory of man.' There was not even a cinema.

There was a post office, and attached to it a library that had romances and war stories. There were two miners' clubs for drinking. And there was television. These were the amenities[16] for two thousand families.

When Mr. Thornton stood on his front step and looked forth he smiled with pride and called his children to say: 'You've never seen what a miners' town can be like. You couldn't even imagine the conditions. Slums, that's what they used to be. Well, we've put an end to all that... Yes, off you go to Doncaster, I suppose, dancing and the pictures — that's all you can think about. And you take it all for granted. Now, in our time...'

And so, when Charlie visited his home, he was careful that none of his bitter criticisms reached words for, above all, he could not bear to hurt his father.

A group of young miners came along for the bus. They wore smartly-shouldered suits, their caps set at angles, and scarves flung back over their shoulders. They greeted Lennie, looked to see who the stranger was, and when Lennie said: 'This is my brother,' they nodded and turned quickly to board the bus. They went upstairs, and Lennie and Charlie went to the front down stairs. Lennie looked like them, with a strong cloth cap and jaunty scarf. He was short, stocky, strong — 'built for t'pit,' Mr. Thornton said. But Lennie was in a foundry[17] in Doncaster. No pit for him, he said. He had heard his father coughing through all the nights of his childhood, and the pit wasn't for him. But he had never said this to his father.

Lennie was twenty. He earned seventeen pounds a week, and wanted to marry a girl he had been courting for three years now. But he could not marry until the big brother was through college. The father was still on the coal-face, when by rights of age he should have been on the surface, because he earned four pounds a week more on the face. The sister in the office had wanted to be a school-teacher, but at the moment of decision all the extra money of the family had been needed for Charlie. It cost them two hundred pounds a year for his extras at Oxford. The only members of the family not making sacrifices for Charlie were the schoolgirl and the mother.

It was half an hour on the bus, and Charlie's muscles were set hard in readiness for what Lennie might say, which must be resisted. Yet he had come home thinking: Well, at least I can talk it out with Lennie, I can be honest with him.

Now Lennie said facetiously, but with an anxious loving inspection of his brother's face: 'And what for do we owe the pleasure of your company, Charlie-boy? You could have knocked us all down with a feather when you said you were coming this week-end.'

Charlie said angrily: 'I got fed with t'earls and t'dukes.'

'Eh,' said Lennie quickly, 'but you didn't need to mind them, they didn't mean to rile[18] you.'

'I know they didn't.'

'Mum's right,' said Lennie, with another anxious, but carefully brief glance, 'you're not looking too good, what's up?'

'What if I don't pass t'examinations,' said Charlie in a rush.

'Eh, but what is this, then? You were always first in school. You were the best of everyone. Why shouldn't you pass, then?'

'Sometimes I think I won't,' said Charlie lamely, but glad he had let the moment pass.

Lennie examined him again, this time frankly, and gave a movement like a shrug. But it was a hunching[19] of the shoulders against a possible defeat. He sat hunched, his big hands on his knees. On his face was a small critical grin. Not critical of Charlie, not at all, but of life.

His heart beating painfully with guilt Charlie said: 'It's not as bad as that, I'll pass.' The inner enemy remarked softly: 'I'll pass, then I'll get a nice pansy job* in a publisher's office with the other wet-nosed little boys, or I'll be a sort of clerk. Or I'll be a teacher — I've no talent for teaching, but what's that matter? Or I'll be on the management side of industry, pushing people like Lennie around. And the joke is, Lennie's earning more than I shall for years.' The enemy behind his right shoulder began satirically tolling a bell[20] and intoned: 'Charlie Thornton, in his third year at Oxford, was found dead in a gas-filled bed-sitting-room this morning. He had been overworking. Death from natural causes.' The enemy added a loud rude raspberry[21] and fell silent. But he was waiting: Charlie could feel him there waiting.

Lennie said: 'Seen a doctor, Charlie-boy?'

'Yes. He said I should take it easy a bit. That's why I came home.'

'No point killing yourself working.'

'No, it's not serious, he just said I must take it easy.'

Lennie's face remained grave. Charlie knew that when he got home he would say to the mother: 'I think Charlie's got summat on his mind.' And his mother would say (while she stood shaking chips of potato into boiling fat): 'I expect sometimes he wonders, is the grind[22] worth it? And he sees you earning, when he isn't.' She would say, after a silence during which they exchanged careful looks: 'It must be hard for him, coming here, everything different, then off he goes, everything different again.'

'Shouldn't worry, mum.'

'I'm not worrying. Charlie's all right.'

The inner voice inquired anxiously: 'If she's on the spot about the rest, I suppose she's right about the last bit too, *I suppose I am all right*?'

But the enemy behind his right shoulder said: 'A man's best friend is his mother, she never lets a thing pass.'

Last year he had brought Jenny down for a week-end, to satisfy the family's friendly curiosity about the posh[23] people he knew these days. Jenny was a poor clergyman's daughter, bookish, a bit of a prig, but a nice girl. She had easily navigated[24] the complicated currents of the week-end, while the family waited for her to put on 'side'*. Afterwards Mrs. Thornton had said, putting her finger on the sore spot: 'That's a right nice girl. She's a proper mother to you, and that's a fact.' The last was not a criticism of the girl, but of Charlie. Now Charlie looked with envy at Lennie's responsible profile and said to himself: Yes, he's a man. He has been for years, since he left school. Me, I'm a proper baby, and I've got two years over him.

For, above everything else, Charlie was made to feel, every time he came home, that these people, his people were serious; while he and the people with whom he would now spend his life (if he passed the examination) were not serious. He did not believe this. The inner didactic voice made short work of any such idea. The outer enemy could, and did, parody it in a hundred ways. His family did not believe it, they were proud of him. Yet Charlie felt it in everything they said and did. They protected him. They sheltered him. And, above all, they still paid for him. At his age, his father had been working in the pit for eight years.

Lennie would be married next year. He already talked of a family. He, Charlie (if he passed the examination) would be running around licking people's arses* to get a job, Bachelor of Arts, Oxford, and a drug on the market.

They had reached Doncaster. It was raining. Soon they would pass where Doreen, Lennie's girl, worked. 'You'd better get off here,' Charlie said. 'You'll have all that drag back through the wet.' 'No, s'all right, I'll come with you to the station.'

There were another five minutes to go. 'I don't think it's right, the way you get at mum,' Lennie said, at last coming to the point.

'But I haven't said a bloody word,' said Charlie, switching without having intended it into his other voice, the middleclass voice which he was careful never to use with his family except in joke. Lennie gave him a glance of surprise and reproach and said: 'AII the same. She feels it.'

'But it's bloody ridiculous.' Charlie's voice was rising. 'She stands in that kitchen all day, pandering[25] to our every whim[26], when she's not doing housework or making a hundred trips a

day with that bloody coal...' In the Christmas holidays, when Charlie had visited home last, he had fixed up a bucket on the frame of an old pram to ease his mother's work. This morning he had seen the contrivance[27] collapsed and full of rain-water in the back-yard. After breakfast Lennie and Charlie had sat at the table in their shirt-sleeves watching their mother. The door was open into the backyard. Mrs. Thornton carried a shovel whose blade was nine inches by ten, and was walking back and forth from the coal-hole in the yard, through the kitchen, into the parlour. On each inward journey, a small clump of coal balanced on the shovel. Charlie counted that his mother walked from the coal-hole to the kitchen fire and the parlour fire thirty-six times. She walked steadily, the shovel in front, held like a spear in both hands, and her face frowned with purpose. Charlie had dropped his head on to his arms and laughed soundlessly until he felt Lennie's warning gaze and stopped the heave[28] of his shoulders. After a moment he had sat up, straight-faced. Lennie said: 'Why do you get at mum, then?' Charlie said: 'But I haven't said owt[29].' 'No, but she's getting riled. You always show what you think, Charlie-boy.' As Charlie did not respond to this appeal — for far more than present charity, Lennie went on: 'You can't teach an old dog new tricks.' 'Old! She's not fifty!'

Now Charlie said, continuing the early conversation: 'She goes on as if she were an old woman. She wears herself out with nothing — she could get through all the work she has in a couple of hours if she organized herself. Or if just for once she told us where to get off.'*

'What'd she do with herself, then?'

'Do? Well she could do something for herself. Read. Or see friends. Or something.'

'She feels it. Last time you went off she cried.'

'She *what*?' Charlie's guilt almost overpowered him, but the inner didactic voice switched on in time and he spoke through it: 'What right have we to treat her like a bloody servant? Betty likes her food this way and that way, and Dad won't eat this and that, and she stands there and humours the lot of us — like a servant.'

'And who was it last night said he wouldn't have fat on his meat and changed it for hers?' said Lennie smiling, but full of reproach.

'Oh, I'm just as bad as the rest of you,' said Charlie, sounding false. 'It makes me wild to see it,' he said, sounding sincere. Didactically he said: 'All the women in the village — they take it for granted. If someone organized them so that they had half a day to themselves sometimes, they'd think they were being insulted — they can't stop working. Just look at mum, then. She comes into Doncaster to wrap sweets two or three times a week — well, she actually loses money on it, by the time she's paid bus fares. l said to her, you're actually losing money on it, and she said: I like to get out and see a bit of life. A bit of life! Wrapping sweets in a bloody factory. Why can't she just come into town of an evening and have a bit of fun without feeling she has to pay for it by wrapping sweets, sweated bloody labour, and she actually loses on it. It doesn't make sense. They're human beings, aren't they, not just...'

'Not just what?' asked Lennie angrily. He had listened to Charlie's tirade, his mouth setting harder, his eyes narrowing. 'Here's the station,' he said in relief. They waited for the young miners to clatter down and off before going forward themselves. 'I'll come with you to your stop,' said Charlie; and they crossed the dark, shiny, grimy street to the opposite stop for the bus which would take Lennie back to Doreen.

'It's no good thinking we're going to change, Charlie-boy.'

'Who said change?' said Charlie excitedly; but the bus had come, and Lennie was already swinging on to the back. 'If you're in trouble just write and say,' said Lennie, and the bell pinged and his face vanished as the lit bus was absorbed by the light-streaked drizzling darkness.

There was half an hour before the London train. Charlie stood with the rain on his shoulders, his hands in his pockets, wondering whether to go after his brother and explain — what? He bolted[30] across the street to the pub near the station. It was run by an Irishman who knew him and Lennie. The place was still empty, being just after opening time.

'It's you, then,' said Mike, drawing him a pint of bitter without asking. 'Yes, it's me,' said Charlie, swinging himself up on to a stool.

'And what's in the great world of learning?'

'Oh Jesus, *no*!' said Charlie. The Irishman blinked, and Charlie said quickly: 'What have you gone and tarted[31] this place up for?*'

The pub had been panelled in dark wood. It was ugly and comforting. Now it had half a dozen bright wall-papers and areas of shining paint, and Charlie's stomach moved again, light filled his eyes, and he set his elbows hard down for support, and put his chin on his two fists.

'The youngsters like it,' said the Irishman. 'But we've left the bar next door as it was for the old ones.'

'You should have a sign up: Age This Way,' said Charlie. I'd have known where to go.' He carefully lifted his head off his fists, narrowing his eyes to exclude the battling[32] colours of the wall-papers, the shine of the paint.

'You look bad,' said the Irishman. He was a small, round, alcoholically cheerful man who, like Charlie, had two voices. For the enemy — that is, all the English whom he did not regard as a friend, which meant people who were not regulars — he put on an exaggerated brogue[33] which was bound, if he persisted, to lead to the political arguments he delighted in. For friends like Charlie he didn't trouble himself. He now said: 'All work and no play.'

'That's right,' said Charlie. 'I went to the doctor. He gave me a tonic and said I am fundamentally sound in wind and limb, 'You are sound in wind and limb,' he said,' said Charlie, parodying an upper-class English voice for the Irishman's pleasure.

Mike winked, acknowledging the jest, while his professionally humorous face remained serious. 'You can't burn the candle at both ends,' he said in earnest warning.

Charlie laughed out. 'That's what the doctor said. 'You can't burn the candle at both ends,' he said.'

This time, when the stool he sat on, and the floor beneath the stool, moved away from him, and the glittering ceiling dipped and swung, his eyes went dark and stayed dark. He shut them and gripped the counter tight. With his eyes still shut he said facetiously: 'It's the clash of cultures[34], that's what it is. It makes me light-headed.' He opened his eyes and saw from the Irishman's face that he had not said these words aloud.

He said aloud: 'Actually the doctor was all right, he meant well. But, Mike, I'm not going to make it. I'm going to fail.'

'Well, it won't be the end of the world.'

'*Jesus*. That's what I like about you, Mike, you take a broad view of life.'

'I'll be back,' said Mike, going to serve a customer.

A week ago Charlie had gone to the doctor with a cyclo-styled leaflet* in his hand. It was called: A Report Into the Increased Incidence of Breakdown Among Undergraduates. He had underlined the words: 'Young men from working-class and lower middle-class families on scholarships are particularly vulnerable[35]. For them, the gaining of a degree is obviously crucial. In addition they are under the continuous strain of adapting themselves to middle-class morals that are foreign to them. They are victims of a clash of standards, a clash of cultures, divided loyalties.'

The doctor, a young man of about thirty, provided by the college authorities as a sort of father-figure to advise on work problems, personal problems and (as the satirical *alter ego*[36] took pleasure in pointing out) on clash-of-culture problems, glanced once at the pamphlet and handed it back. He had written it. As, of course, Charlie had known. 'When are your examinations?' he asked. *Getting to the root of the matter, just like mum*, remarked the malevolent voice from behind Charlie's shoulder.

'I've got five months, Doctor, and I can't work and I can't sleep.'

'For how long?'

'It's been coming on gradually.' Ever since I was born, said the enemy.

'I can give you sedatives and sleeping pills, of course, but that's not going to touch what's really wrong.'

Which is, all this unnatural mixing of the classes. Doesn't do, you know. People should know their place and stick to it. 'I'd like some sleep-pills, all the same.'

'Have you got a girl?'

'Two.'

The doctor paid out an allowance of man-of-the-world sympathy, then shut off his smile and said: 'Perhaps you'd be better with one?'

Which, my mum-figure, or my lovely bit of sex? — 'Perhaps I would, at that.'

'I could arrange for you to have some talks with a psychiatrist — well, not if you don't want,' he said hastily, for the alter ego had exploded through Charlie's lips in a horse-laugh and: 'What can the trick-cyclist tell me I don't know?'

He roared with laughter, flinging his legs up; and an ashtray went circling around the room on its rim. Charlie laughed, watched the ashtray, and thought: There, I knew all the time it was a poltergeist sitting there behind my shoulder. I swear I never touched that damned ashtray.

The doctor waited until it circled near him, stopped it with his foot, picked it up, laid it back on the desk. 'It's no point your going to him if you feel like that.'

*All avenues explored, all roads charted.**

'Well now, let's see, have you been to see your family recently?'

'Last Christmas. No, Doctor, it's not because I don't want to, it's because I can't work there.' *You try working in an atmosphere of trade union meetings and the telly and the pictures in Doncaster. You try it, Doc. And, besides, all my energies go into not up setting them. Because I do up set them. My dear Doc, when we scholarship boys jump our class, it's not we who suffer, it's our families. We are an expense, Doc. And besides — write a thesis, I'd like to read it ... call it: Long-term effects on working-class or lower middle-class family of a scholarship child whose existence is a perpetual reminder that they are nothing but ignorant non-cultured clods*[37]*. How's that for a thesis, Doc? Why, I do believe I could write it myself.*

'If I were you, I'd go home for a few days. Don't try to work at all. Go to the picture. Sleep and eat and let them fuss over you. Get this prescription made up and come and see me when you get back.'

'Thanks, Doc, I will.' *You mean well.*

The Irishman came back to find Charlie spinning a penny, so intent on this game that he did not see him. First he spun it with his right hand, anti-clockwise, then with his left, clockwise. The right hand represented his jeering *alter ego*. The left hand was the didactic and rational voice. The left hand was able to keep the coin in a glittering spin for much longer than the right.

'You ambidextrous?'[38]

'Yes, always was.'

The Irishman watched the boy's frowning, teeth clenched concentration for a while, then removed the untouched beer and poured him a double whisky. 'You drink that and get on the train and sleep.'

'Thanks, Mike. Thanks.'

'That was a nice girl you had with you last time.'

'I've quarrelled with her. Or rather, she's given me the boot[39]. And quite right, too.'

After the visit to the doctor Charlie had gone straight to Jenny. He had guyed[40] the interview while she sat, gravely listening. Then he had given her his favourite lecture on the class and unalterable insensibility of anybody anywhere born middle-class. No one but Jenny ever heard this lecture. She said at last: 'You *should* go and see a psychiatrist. No, don't you see, it's not fair.'

'Who to, me?'

'No, me. What's the use of shouting at me all the time. You should be saying these things to him.'

'*What*?'

'Well, surely you can see that. You spend all your time lecturing me. You make use of me, Charles.' (She always called him Charles.)

What she was really saying was: 'You should be making love to me, not lecturing me.' Charlie did not really like making love to Jenny. He forced himself when her increasingly tart and accusing manner reminded him that he ought to. He had another girl, whom he disliked, a tall crisp middle-class girl called Sally. She called him, mocking: Charlie-boy. When he had slammed out of Jenny's room, he had gone to Sally and fought his way into her bed. Every act of sex with Sally was a slow, cold subjugation[41] of her by him. That night he had said, when she lay at last, submissive, beneath him: 'Horny-handed son of toil wins by his unquenched[42] virility[43] beautiful daughter of the moneyed classes. And doesn't she love it.'

'Oh yes I do, Charlie-boy.'

'I'm nothing but a bloody sex symbol.'

'Well,' she murmured, already self-possessed, freeing herself, 'that's all I am to you.' She added defiantly[44], showing that she did care, and that it was Charlie's fault: 'And I couldn't care less.'

'Dear Sally, what I like about you is your beautiful honesty.'

'Is that what you like about me? I thought it was the thrill of beating me down.'

Charlie said to the Irishman: 'I've quarrelled with everyone I know in the last weeks.'

'Quarrelled with your family, too?'

'*No*,' he said, appalled, while the room again swung around him. 'Good Lord no,' he said in a different tone — grateful. He added savagely: 'How could I? I can never say anything to them I really think.' He looked at Mike to see if he had actually said these words aloud. He had, because now Mike said: 'So you know how I feel. I've lived thirty years in this mucking[45] country, and if you arrogant sods[46] knew what I'm thinking half the time.'

'Liar. You say whatever you think, from Cromwell* to the Black and Tans* and Casement*. You never let up. But it's not hurting yourself to say it.'

'Yourself, is it?'

'Yes. But it's all insane. Do you realize how insane it all is, Mike? There's my father. Pillar of the working-class. Labour Party, Trade Union, the lot. But I've been watching my tongue not to say I spent last term campaigning about — he takes it for granted even now that the British should push the wogs[47] around.'

'You're a great nation,' said the Irishman. 'But it's not your personal fault, so drink up and have another.'

Charlie drank his first Scotch, and drew the second glass towards him. 'Don't you see what I mean?' he said, his voice rising excitedly. 'Don't you see that it's all insane? There's my mother, her sister is ill and it looks as if she'll die. There are two kids, and my mother'll take them both. They're nippers[48], three and four, it's like starting a family all over again. She thinks nothing of it. If someone's in trouble, she's the mug[49], every time. But there she sits and says: Those juvenile offenders ought to be flogged[50] until they are senseless. She read it in the papers and so she says it. She said it to me and I kept my mouth shut. And they're all alike.'

'Yes, but you're not going to change it, Charlie, so drink up.'

A man standing a few feet down the bar had a paper slicking out of his pocket. Mike said to him: 'Mind if I borrow your paper for the winners, sir?'

'Help yourself.'

Mike turned the paper over to the back page. 'I had five quid[51] on today,' he said. 'Lost it. Lovely bit of horseflesh, but I lost it.'

'Wait,' said Charlie excitedly, straightening the paper so he could see the front page. WARDROBE MURDERER GETS SECOND CHANCE, it said. 'See that?' said Charlie. 'The Home

Secretary says he can have another chance, they can review the case, he says.'

The Irishman read, cold-faced. 'So he does,' he said.

'Well, I mean to say, there's some decency left, then, I mean if the case can be reviewed it shows they do care about something at least.'

'I don't see it your way at all. It's England versus England, that's all. Fair play all round, but they'll hang the poor sod on the day appointed as usual.' He turned the newspaper and studied the race news.

Charlie waited for his eyes to clear, held himself steady with one hand flat on the counter, and drank his second double. He pushed over a pound note, remembering it had to last three days, and that now he had quarrelled with Jenny there was no place for him to stay in London.

'No, it's on me,' said Mike. 'I asked you. It's been a pleasure seeing you, Charlie. And don't take the sins of the world on your personal shoulders, lad, because that doesn't do anyone any good, does it now?'

'See you at Christmas, Mike, and thanks.'

He walked carefully out into the rain. There was no solitude to be had on the train that night, so he chose a compartment with one person in it, and settled himself in a corner before looking to see who it was he had with him. It was a girl. He saw then that she was pretty, and then that she was upper-class. Another Sally, he thought, sensing danger, seeing the cool, self-sufficient little face. Hey, there, Charlie, he said to himself, keep yourself in order, or you've had it. He carefully located himself: he, Charlie, was now a warm, whisky-comforted belly, already a little sick. Close above it, like a silent loud-speaker, was the source of the hectoring voice. Behind his shoulder waited his grinning familiar. *He must keep them all apart*. He tested the didactic voice: It's not your fault, poor bitch, victim of the class-system, she can't help she sees everyone under her like dirt... But the alcohol was working strongly and meanwhile his familiar was calculating: She's had a good look, but can't make me out. My clothes are right, my haircut's on the line, but there's something that makes her wonder. She's waiting for me to speak, then she'll make up her mind. Well, first I'll get her, and then I'll speak.

He caught her eyes and signalled an invitation, but it was an aggressive invitation, to make it as hard for her as he could. After a bit, she smiled at him. Then he roughened his speech to the point of unintelligibility and said: 'Appen you'd like t'window up? What wi' t'rain and t'wind and all.'

'What?' she said sharply, her face lengthening into such a comical frankness of shock that he laughed out, and afterwards inquired impeccably: 'Actually it is rather cold, isn't it? Wouldn't you like to have the window up?' She picked up a magazine and shut him out, while he watched, grinning, the blood creep up from her neat suit collar to her hair-line.

The door slid back; two people came in. They were a man and his wife, both small, crumpled[52] in face and flesh, and dressed in their best for London. There was a fuss and a heaving of suitcases and murmured apologies because of the two superior young people. Then the woman, having settled herself in a corner, looked steadily at Charlie, while he thought: Deep calls to deep, *she* knows who I am all right, she's not foxed[53] by the trimmings. He was right, because soon she said familiarly: 'Would you put the window up for me, lad? It's a rare cold night and no mistake.'

Charlie put up the window, not looking at the girl, who was hiding behind the magazine. Now the woman smiled, and the man smiled, too, because of her ease with the youth.

'You comfortable like that, Father?' she asked.

'Fair enough,' said the husband on the stoical note of the confirmed grumbler.

'Put your feet up beside me, any road.'

'But I'm all right, lass,' he said bravely. Then, making a favour of it, he loosened his laces, eased his feet inside too-new shoes, and set them on the seat beside his wife.

She, for her part, was removing her hat. It was of shapeless grey felt, with a pink rose at the front. Charlie's mother owned just such a badge of respectability, renewed every year or so at the sales. Hers was always bluish felt, with a bit of ribbon or coarse net, and she would rather be seen dead than without it in public.

The woman sat fingering her hair, which was thin and greying. For some reason, the sight of her clean pinkish scalp shining through the grey wisps[54] made Charlie wild with anger. He was taken by surprise, and again summoned himself to himself,

making the didactic voice lecture: 'The working woman of these islands enjoys a position in the family superior to that of the middle-class woman, etc., etc., etc.' This was an article he had read recently, and he continued to recite from it, until he realized the voice had become an open sneer, and was saying: 'Not only is she the emotional bulwark of the family, but she is frequently the breadwinner as well, such as wrapping sweets at night, sweated labour for pleasure, anything to get out of the happy home for a few hours. '

The fusion of the two voices, the nagging[55] inside voice, and the jeer[56] from the dangerous force outside, terrified Charlie, and he told himself hastily: 'You're drunk, that's all, now keep your mouth shut, for God's sake.'

The woman was asking him: 'Are you feeling all right?'

'Yes, I'm all right,' he said carefully.

'Going all the way to London?'

'Yes, I'm going all, the way to London.'

'It's a long drag[57].'

'Yes, it's a long drag.'

At this echoing dialogue, the girl lowered her magazine to give him a sharp contemptuous look, up and down. Her face was now smoothly pink, and her small pink mouth was judging.

'You have a mouth like a rosebud,' said Charlie, listening horrified to these words emerging from him.

The girl jerked up the magazine. The man looked sharply at Charlie, to see if he had heard aright, and then at his wife, for guidance. The wife looked doubtfully at Charlie, who offered her a slow desperate wink. She accepted it, and nodded at her husband: boys will be boys. They both glanced warily at the shining face of the magazine.

'We're on our way to London, too,' said the woman.

'So you're on your way to London.'

Stop it, he told himself. He felt a foolish slack grin on his face, and his tongue was thickening in his mouth. He shut his eyes, trying to summon Charlie to his aid, but his stomach was rolling, warm and sick. He lit a cigarette for support, watching his hands at work. 'Lily-handed son of learning wants a manicure badly,' commented a soft voice in his ear; and he saw the cigarette droop in a parody of a cad's gesture between displayed nicotined fingers. Charlie, smoking with poise, sat preserving a polite, sarcastic smile.

He was in the grip of terror. He was afraid he might slide off the seat. He could no longer help himself.

'London's a big place, for strangers,' said the woman

'But it makes a nice change,' said Charlie, trying hard.

The woman, delighted that a real conversation was at last under way, settled her shabby old head against a leather bulge, and said: 'Yes, it does make a nice change.' The shine on the leather confused Charlie's eyes; he glanced over at the magazine, but its glitter, too, seemed to invade his pupils. He looked at the dirty floor for comfort, and said: 'It's good for people to get a change now and then.'

'Yes, that's what I tell my husband, don't I, Father? It's good for us to get away now and then. We have a married daughter in Streatham.'

'It's a great thing, family ties.'

'Yes, but it's a drag,' said the man. 'Say what you like, but it is. After all, I mean, when all is said and done.' He paused, his head on one side, with a debating look, waiting for Charlie to take it up.

Charlie said: 'There's no denying it, say what you like, I mean, there's no doubt about *that*.' And he looked interestedly at the man for his reply.

The woman said: 'Yes, but the way I look at it, you've got to get out of yourself sometimes, look at it that way.'

'It's all very well,' said the husband, on a satisfied but grumbling note, 'but if you're going to do that, well, for a start-off, it's an expense.'

'If you don't throw a good penny after a bad one,' said Charlie judiciously, 'I mean, what's the point.'

'Yes, that's it,' said the woman excitedly, her old face animated. 'That's what I say to Father, what's the point if you don't sometimes let yourself go?'

'I mean, life's bad enough as it is,' said Charlie, watching the magazine slowly lower itself. It was laid precisely on the seat. The girl now sat, two small brown-gloved hands in a ginger-tweeded lap, staring him out. Her blue eyes glinted[58] into his, and he looked quickly away.

'Well, I can see that right enough,' said the man, 'but there again, you've got to know where to stop.'

'That's right,' said Charlie, 'you're dead right.'

'I know it's all right for some,' said the man, 'I know that, but if you're going to do that, you've got to consider, that's what I think.'

'But, Father, you know you enjoy it, once you're there and Joyce has settled you in your own corner with your own chair and your cup to yourself.'

'Ah,' said the man, nodding heavily, 'but it's not as easy as that now, is it? Well, I mean, that stands to reason.'

'Ah,' said Charlie, shaking his head, feeling it roll heavily in the socket of his neck, 'but if you're going to consider at all, then what's the point? I mean, what I think is, for a start-off, there's no doubt about it.'

The woman hesitated, started to say something, but let her small bright eyes falter[59] away. She was beginning to colour.

Charlie went on compulsively, his head turning like a clock-work-man's — 'It's what you're used to, that's what I say, well I mean. *Well*, and there's another thing, when all is said and done, and after all, if you're going to take one thing with another...'

'Stop it,' said the girl, in a sharp, high voice.

'It's a question of principle,' said Charlie, but his head had stopped rolling and his eyes had focused.

'If you don't stop, I'm going to call the guard and have you put in another compartment,' said the girl. To the old people, she said in a righteous scandalized voice: 'Can't you see he's laughing at you? Can't you see?' She lifted the magazine again.

The old people looked suspiciously at Charlie, dubiously at each other. The woman's face was very pink and her eyes bright and hot.

'I think I am going to get forty winks[60],' said the man, with general hostility. He settled his feet, put his head back, and closed his eyes.

Charlie said: 'Excuse me,' and scrambled his way to the corridor over the legs of the man, then the legs of the woman, muttering 'Excuse me, excuse me, I'm sorry.'

He stood in the corridor, his back jolting slightly against the shifting wood of the compartment's sides. His eyes were shut, his tears running. Words, no longer articulate, muttered and jumbled somewhere inside him, a stream of frightened protesting phrases.

Wood slid against wood close to his ear, and he heard the softness of clothed flesh on wood.

'If it's that bloody little bint, I'll kill her,' said a voice, small and quiet, from his diaphragm.

He opened his murderous eyes on the woman. She looked concerned.

'I'm sorry,' he said, stiff and sullen, 'I'm sorry, I didn't mean...'

'It's all right,' she said, and laid her two red hands on his crossed quivering forearms. She took his two wrists, and laid his arms gently down by his sides. 'Don't take on,' she said, 'it's all right, it's all right, son.'

The tense rejection of his flesh caused her to take a step back from him. But there she stood her ground and said: 'Now look, son, there's no point taking on like that, well, is there? I mean to say, you've got to take the rough with the smooth, and there's no other way of looking at it.'

She waited, facing him, troubled but sure of herself.

After a while Charlie said: 'Yes, I suppose you're right.'

She nodded and smiled, and went back into the compartment. After a moment, Charlie followed her.

GLOSSARY

1. **holdall** — вещевой мешок, рюкзак
2. **scoop** — впадина
3. **facetious** — шутливый
   facetiousness — шутливость
4. **spiteful** — злобный
5. **poltergeist** — домовой
6. **frolic** — проказничать веселиться
7. **guffaw** — грубо хохотать
8. **jostle** — оттолкнуть
9. **horse-play** — грубое развлечение
10. **slosh** — поливать водой
11. **feel queasy** — чувствовать тошноту
12. **crammed** — набитый битком
13. **tea** — чай подразумевает прием в рабочих семьях горячей пищи

14. tarmac — гудронированный
15. minehead — горн. надшахтное сооружение
16. amenities — прелести семейной жизни
17. foundry — литейный цех
18. rile — раздражать
19. hunch — сгорбленный
20. toll the bell — звонить в колокол
21. raspberry — грубость
22. grind — зубрежка
23. posh — богатый
24. navigate — разобраться
25. pander — ублажать
26. whim — каприз, причуда
27. contrivance — изобретение
28. heave — вздергивание
29. owt — местное выражение, означающее — «все» (anything)
30. bolt — помчаться
31. tart — проститутка
32. battling — несовместимые
33. brogue — ирландский акцент
34. clash of culture — несогласие, конфликт между культурами
35. vulnerable — уязвимый, ранимый
36. alter ego — вторая, скрытая личность человека, которую люди обычно не видят
37. clod — устаревш.: глупый человек
38. ambidextrous — человек, способный управлять одинаково левой и правой рукой
39. to give smb. the boot — дать знать, что с вами не хотят общаться
40. guy — высмеивать
41. subjugation — поражение
42. unquenched — не быть удовлетворенным
43. virility — мужество, возмужание
44. defiant — агрессивный, вызывающий
45. mucking — дрянная
46. sod — противный, неприятный
47. wog — ругательство
48. nipper — неопытный малыш

49. mug — тупой, доверчивый
50. to be flogged — быть избитым
51. quid — фунт
52. crumpled — морщинистый
53. fox — обманывать
54. wisp — пробор
55. nagging — жалующий
56. jeer — смех
57. drag — путь
58. glint — сверлить
59. falter — отвести взор
60. forty winks — короткий сон в течение дня

COMMENTARY

* *England Versus England* — is a judicial way of presenting a case in court

* *dreaming spires* is a quotation taken from a poem Hyrrsis (1.19) by a famous English writer Matthew Arnold, 1822 – 1888. *And that sweet City with her dreaming spires. She needs not June for beauty's heightening* (She is beautiful as she is)

* *t'lords* — the lords

* *t'hewers of wood and t'drawers of water (Bible)* — the cutters of wood and the carriers of water, i.e. working class

* *Say my piece to the girls* — say good-bye to the girls

* *a nice pansy job* — an ordinary easy occupation

* *to put on 'side'* — to put on airs

* *arse* — a rude word for your behind

* *told us where to get off* — told us off

* *What have you gone and tarted this place up for?* — Why have you decorated your pub in such a garish way?

* *cyclo-styled leaflet* — a leaflet printed on a copying machine

* *All avenues explored, all roads charted* — an expression typical of psycho-analysis

* *She has given me the boot* — she has dumped me, given me up

* *Oliver Cromwell (1599—1658)* — an English general, politician, and puritan. He was leader of the Parlamentarian army against King Charles I in the Civil War and became Lord Protector of England after the king's execution

* *the Black and Tans* — Royal police forces in Ireland

* *Casement* — Sir Rodger David Casement (1864 — 1816), an Englsish diplomat and an Irish nationalist

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analysis

I. Give a summary of the story. Make use of the exemplary pattern given below.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What kind of story is it?

Summary

Introduction

"*England* Versus *England*" is a challenging and profound short story about...

2. What is the story about? Is the **theme** explicit or implicit in the story?

Quite explicit: *young men from working-class and lower middle-class families on scholarships are particularly vulnerable... They are victims of a clash of standards, a clash of cultures, divided loyalties.*

Summary

...about victims of a clash of social classes in a contemporary society.

3. Who is the author? Who is the **narrator**? (point of view)

E. g.

a) *Doris Lessing, the leading woman-writer of Contemporary England (see Appendix).*

b) *It is a 3-rd person narration with abundant inner represented speech of the main character, Charlie Thornton.*

Summary

At the beginning of her 3-d person narration Doris Lessing introduces the main character, Charlie Thornton, an Oxford third year scholarship student...

4. Where is the **scene** laid?

5. What do we learn about the main **character** and his family?

What are the first alarming signals revealing a problem?

leaving early
to avoid
scoops of strain under his eyes
personal spiteful enemy
poltergeist

How does Charlie's attitude towards his native village differ from his father's?

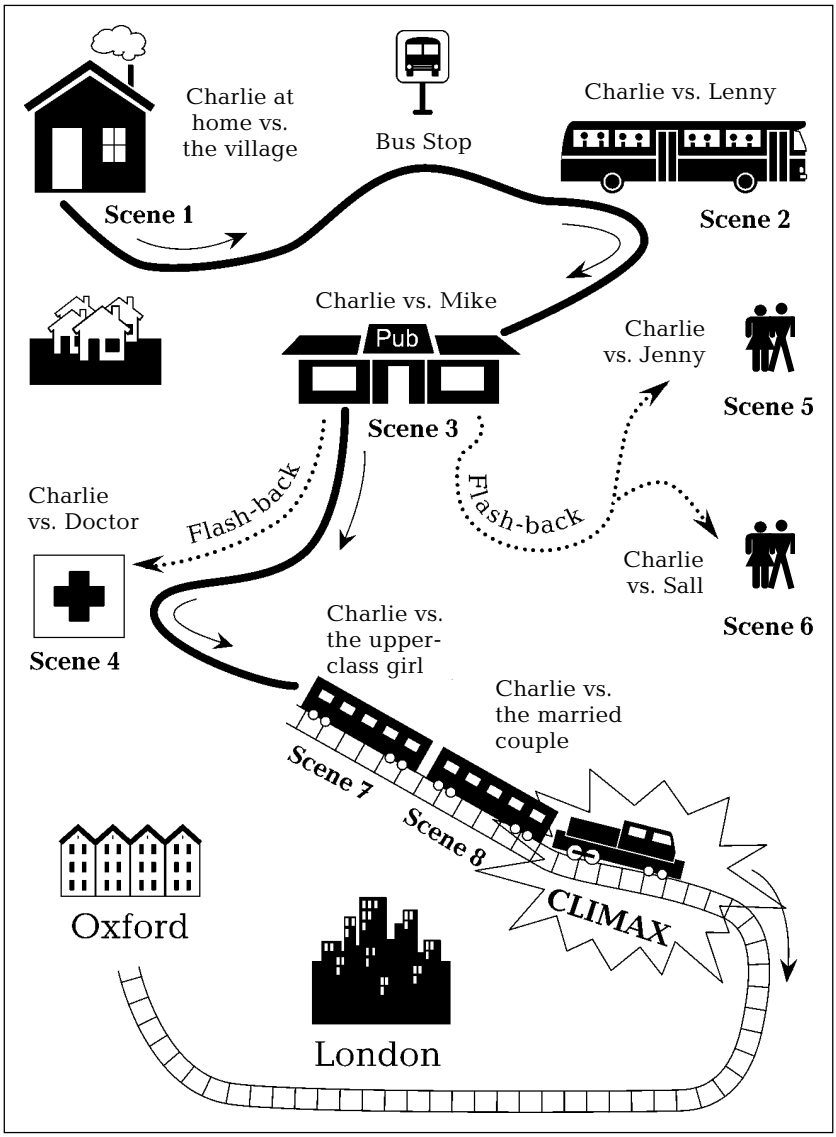
Why does it seem 'ugly and mean and graceless' to him?

Summary

He is leaving his parents' home, a typical poor house in a miners' village. The author stresses the fact that he is in a hurry to avoid his father. The problem is that Charlie loves his family but hates the surroundings to which he once belonged. The author reveals the fact that Charlie avoids his father as a social figure and 'a father of the village'. Charlie is ashamed to be shut out of the family and to feel social and cultural distance between them now.

The author presents Charlie's point of view on the miners' village and then the one of his father's.
As an outsider now Charlie considers life in the village grey and miserable. On the contrary his father is proud of every progressive step in the development of the village.

What is the **plot** of the story?
Is the presentation scenic or panoramic?



Scenic (horisontal) presentation
In scenes 1 — 8 only scenes 4, 5, 6 are presented as flash-backs.

6. What is the **conflict**?

Why is Charlie in conflict with everybody?

Has he quarrelled with his family too?

How does his inner monologue reveal it?

What for is this device used so abundantly?

Does Charlie need to undergo this psycho-analysis to get over his problems?

Summary

The author shows through Charlie's inner monologue that his social inadequacy brings him on the verge of nervous breakdown. He suffers from a split personality, his outer middle-class and his inner working class voices contradicting everything. In his talks with Lenny, Mike, Doctor, Jenny, Sally (the latter three given by way of flashbacks) Charlie is searching for an answer how to cope with his feelings.

7. What is the **climactic scene**?

Why did Charlie mock at the girl? at the provincial elderly couple?

Why did the upper-class girl defend the low middle-class passengers?

Summary

In the climactic scene in the train compartment the author shows the outburst of Charlie's feelings. First he mocks an upper-class girl striking her with an imitated provincial accent. Then he ridicules a low middle-class elderly couple so that the girl defends them. As he is crying his heart out in the corridor the old woman comes out to comfort him. She explains that he has to take 'the rough with the smooth' and find peace in his heart.

8. How can you explain the **title**? What is the **message** of the story?

   What logical way of reasoning does the author use in presenting the facts:
   a) from particulars to general;
   b) from general to particulars?

> **E. g. The story is written along the inductive** way **of logical reasoning thus making the reader build up the jig-saw puzzle with his own little pieces of analysis.**

III. Get ready for vocabulary work and stylistic analysis of the story:

A. 1. Study the following terms:

   a) Schizophrenia
   Gk. skhizo = split + phren = mind
   Mental disease marked by disconnection between thoughts, feelings and actions, frequently with delusions (i.e. hallucinations, false impressions) and retreat from social life.

   b) Split personality
   Alteration or dissociation of personality (i.e. coexistence of two or more distinct personalities in the same person) such as may in some mental illnesses, especially schizophrenia and hysteria.

2. Study the following allusions:

   a) *City of dreaming spires* — the best known description of Oxford is by Mathew Arnold, the 19th century poet, who wrote about 'that sweet city with her dreaming spires'.

      Who uses this literary allusion in the story?

      Doesn't it sound a little far-fetched?

   b) Cromwell, Oliver (1599—1658) — an English military and political leader who led the army of Parliament against King Charles I in the English Civil War. After defeating

the King, he made a Republic called the 'Commonwealth' and ruled as Lord Protector until his death.

c) Black and Tans — a British military force that was active in Ireland from 1918 to 1920, opposing the people who were fighting for independence. They were known as cruel and violent.

Whose speech includes these historical allusions?

How does it characterize him?

3. Fill in the gaps:

1. *The old man _____ , his hair had gone into gray , and his hollow cheeks were _____ .*
2. *The young man was still _____ , with _____ fair hair and _____ eyes.*
3. *It was a girl. He saw that she was _____ , and then that she was _____ .*
4. *My clothes are _____ , my haircut's _____ .*
5. *They were a man and his wife, both _____ , _____ in and _____ , and dressed for London.*

4. Choose the right variant:

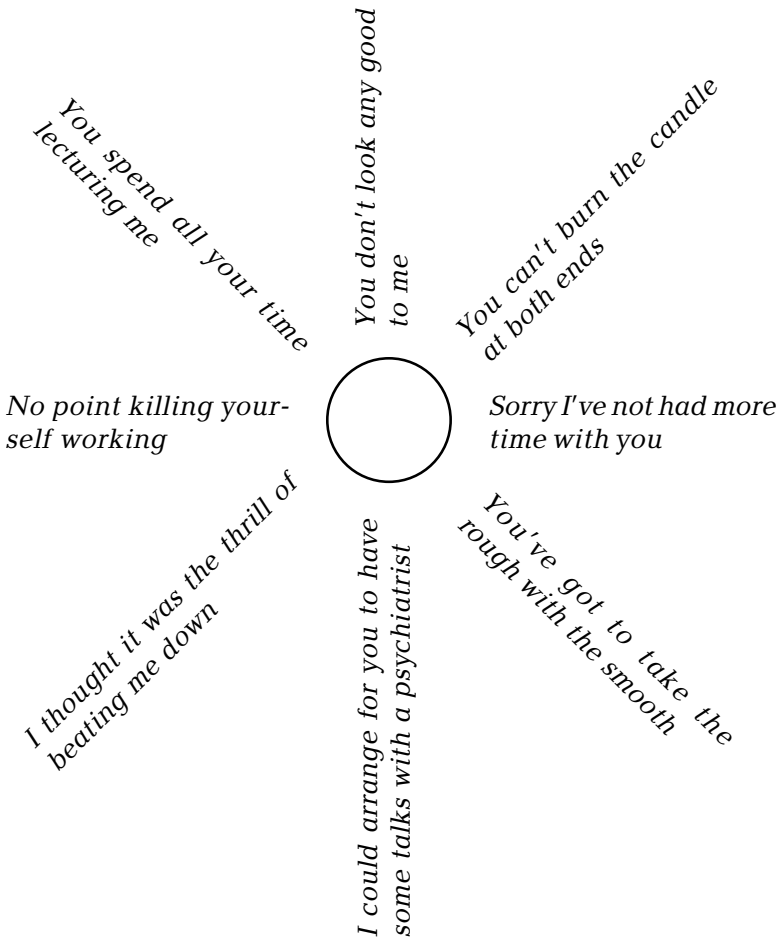
1. *They all came crowding into the little kitchen, bringing with them the spirit of _____ .*
   — *envy,*
   — *hostility,*
   — *facetiousness.*

2. *Every evening Mr. Thornton sat in the kitchen, giving advice about _____ .*
   — *claims and work-rules,*
   — *scholarships,*
   — *stocks and shares.*
3. *His eyes cleared on the sight of his mother, standing in front of him, her _____ gaze on her face.*
   — *loving,*
   — *shrewd,*
   — *tired.*

4. *Everything is so ugly and mean and graceless that it should be .*
   — *rebuilt immediately,*
   — *bulldozed into the earth,*
   — *laughed at.*

5. *The doctor paid out an allowance of sympathy.*
   — *sincere,*
   — *man-of-the world,*
   — *artificial.*

5. Who said it to Charlie?



B. 1. Find the Russian equivalents and illustrate the meaning by the situation from the text:

1. You could have knocked me down with a feather.
2. Deep calls to deep.
3. Boys will be boys.
4. When all is said and done.
5. You can't burn the candle at both ends.
6. All work and play = All work and play makes Jack a dull boy.
7. Under one's skin.
8. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
9. To pander to someboy's every whim.
10. To wear oneself out with nothing.
11. To give somebody the boot.
12. You've got to take the rough with the smooth.
13. I'm sound in wind and limb.

2. Study the following examples and single out the peculiarities of spoken English:

1. *'Seen a doctor?'*
2. *'You ambidextrous?'*
3. *'See that?'*
4. *'Doesn't do, you know.'*
5. *'Going all the way?'*

Now reduce the following sentences as they may be used in spoken English:

1. Have you got a match?
2. Are you some kind of an idiot?
3. Do you think I would do a thing like that?
4. Do you have any ideas?
5. Do you come here often?

3. Study the following examples. Note that they belong to the cases when an imperative or statement becomes a request or a question.

1. *'Make some tea, will you?' (emphatic)*
2. *'He won't come, will he?' (doubt)*

Now change the following, using the same formula:

1. I don't think he came.
2. You aren't very talkative today.
3. Shut up!
4. I can't see it making any difference.
5. Leave me alone!

THE CHORDS OF YOUTH

'I would absolutely stake my life,' my Aunt Leonora said, 'that it's Otto. The same, same old Otto. Even after thirty years I'd know that marvellous forehead anywhere. That fine brow.'

With a rising shrillness in her voice, never in any case an instrument much subdued, she brandished[1] a copy of the *Flimshurst Courier & Gazette* in front of my face with all the excited ardour of a messenger arriving with news of some positive and splendid victory.

'Look at that face. Look at it. Wouldn't you know it anywhere?'

With what I hoped was pointed if casual gentleness I reminded my Aunt Leonora that I had never met Otto. I had never, until that moment, even heard of Otto. Otto, for all I knew or could guess, might never have existed. He was yet another of those figures out of the vast social mythology that, over the years, Aunt Leonora conjured up so smoothly and sweetly to amuse herself and deceive and infuriate the rest of us. Otto, without doubt, belonged to those picnics she thought had been arranged but hadn't, those couples she thought were in love but weren't, to all those various misguided and tangled lives she thought ought to be re-moulded nearer to her particular heart's desire simply in order to give her the serene satisfaction of feeling that their new-shaped destinies were her own.

'We met,' she suddenly said with that inconsequent entanglement[2] near-truth and near-falsehood, not quite downright lying, that formed the greater part of her charm, 'in Switzerland. We climbed the Zugspitze together.'

'The Zugspitze happens,' I said, 'to be in Germany.'

'Well, wherever it was. I know it was somewhere near the frontier.'

'The nearest frontier to the Zugspitze,' I pointed out, 'is Austria.'

'Very well, Austria then. I know it was somewhere there. Why on earth do you always have to split hairs*?'

I was about to point out, with all the blandness[3] in the world, that there were times when some degree of accuracy helped, one way or another, when she smartly brandished the copy of *The Courier & Gazette* at me a second time. Didn't I agree that it was Otto? That it couldn't possibly be anyone else but Otto?

'You see,' she said, now baring her long teeth in one of those maddeningly disarming smiles of hers, 'it's so typical. I mean this twinning of towns idea. Adopting one another, one English and one German. He was all for that sort of thing, fraternity and so on. Aren't you? You've heard of it, haven't you?'

One moment she was flashing her golden spectacles at me in insistent demand for an answer; the next she was wheeling round with affectionate vehemence[4] on my Uncle Freddie, who was sitting with sublime comfort in his easy chair, sopping a slice of buttered toast in his tea.

'I —' Freddie said. 'What? —'

'That was Otto all over,' she said. 'That's how we all were at the Hirschen. The *Gasthof*. At six o'clock in the evening none of us knew each other — German, Swiss, English, Austrian, total strangers, the lot — by midnight we were all in love. Next day we were all haring[5] up the Zugspitze.'

A gift for exaggeration is not the least of my Aunt Leonora's charms. A sudden monstrous turn of phrase will serve to extinguish, as if by magic, all her tiresome, fibbing[6] garrulity[7]. In consequence, I loved the sentence 'haring up the Zugspitze'. It endeared[8] her so much to you that you forgave her all tedium[9], all chatter. It even made me smile.

'I can't think what there is to smile at,' she said, 'and keep those eyes of yours to yourself. They're always wandering.' She gave me one of those dark accusatory glares of hers, at the same time half-hinting that I was somehow corrupting Freddie. 'It's no use looking at Freddie, either. He's all for it*, too.'

All for what I didn't know and had no time to ask before she went on, with an almost blithe[10] shrillness of joy:

'That's the thing that makes me so sure it is Otto. It's so exactly like him. He'd have everybody blood-brothers in no time. I mean anybody, no matter. For instance this exchange of towns idea. The mayor of this in Germany and the mayor of that in England. Just like him. I think we really ought to try to love the Germans, don't you?

'No.'

'What do you mean? — no?'

'No.'

In a withering[11] second she turned cold on me; her spectacles were icy.

'No? I'm shocked. I thought you were so frightfully keen on that sort of thing?'

'What sort of thing?'

'International good-will and all that. International understanding. You're always on about it, anyway. It's one of your hobby-horses[12].'

It was a typical, blatant[13] outrageous lie. I will admit, it is true, to a few hobby-horses, but international good-will is not one of them. I am, on the whole, less interested in that subject than in the love-making of snails. It was now my turn to be icy.

'And that, I suppose, is a picture of the great Otto you've got there?'

She snapped *The Courier & Gazette* at me with all the crackling vehemence of a pistol trigger being cocked[14].

'I don't know what's behind that word great,' she said, 'but there isn't a doubt that's him, being greeted by the Mayor of Flimshurst at the quayside.'

'Not the mayor. The Chairman of the Urban District Council.'

'Well, whatever he is. Anyway, I think he ought to be Mayor. It sounds so much more equal.'

Eagerly but coldly watched by Aunt Leonora, I turned to the picture, on the front page of *The Courier & Gazette*, of Anglo-German friendship. The Chairman of the Urban District Council looked, except for a thick ecclesiastical[15] bunch of white hair curling in his neck, remarkably like a well-gnawed bone. He also looked to me like the kind of man who smiles too easily. A glittering chain of office was looped[16] about his neck.

In his left hand he was holding aloft[17] the German flag; with his right he was shaking hands in smiling effusion[18] with a bald-headed man whose face looked like a pot of lard[19] that has boiled over and eventually congealed[20] in white, flabby, unhealthy drifts[21] and folds. He was waving the Union Jack. Enthusiastic and even strenuous though this gesture was, he somehow hardly looked to me like a man who had ever, even in youth, scaled high mountains. Nor could I detect in the heavy Teutonic* furrows[22] of his face any sign of that marvellous forehead, that fine brow.

'And what,' I said, 'did you say that Otto's other name was?'

'Oh! Heimberger. Hunnegar. Honnegger. Heimburg. Something like that.'

'According to the paper here this is a Herr Otto Untermeyer.'

'Oh! is it? Oh! yes, I suppose it could be. After all these years. Untermeyer — well, yes, it isn't all that — anyway, it does say Otto?'

'It does say Otto.'

'Good, then it must be. It positively couldn't be anyone else.'

Here I thought it pertinent to ask:

'Yes, but does it look anything like the man? Would you recognize him again, for instance?'

'I shall invite him to tea. No, lunch. That would give us more time.' She actually laughed as she suddenly stopped talking of lunch and scaled the inconsequent steps of memory. 'The thing I remember most is the wild flowers. Gentians and soldanellas and anemones — those lovely big greyish-yellow ones. And the butterflies. And the vast amounts of sausage. *Wurst — Liber-wurst, Bratwurst* — Oh! it became quite a joke, the *wurst*. Especially with Otto. Follow me, all, he would say — *Achtung*! all will now follow — *Achtung*! — I will go *wurst*. *Wurst*, you see? — first!'

I said I saw; Uncle Freddie, at the same moment, rather dismally started to sop the last piece of buttered toast in his tea.

Abruptly and unexpectedly, as she often did, Aunt Leonora became pensive[23]. Behind the dancing golden spectacles, so icy a few minutes before, her eyes became dreamy, wide and globular. She might for a second or two have been living again some long-uncaptured moment of Teutonic romance, gentian[24]-starred, listening to a thousand-belled peal of soldanellas between summer meadows and summer snow — or that, at least, is what I thought until with equal abruptness all her dreaminess evaporated and she said with that simplicity that both endeared and disarmed:

'I should like to show him something really English. A real English memory. Like the *wurst* is for me. As German as that is, only English. You know?'

I was about to say I didn't know and then to make some innocent suggestion about fish-and-chips when she suddenly gave a series of chirps, either of delight or revelation or both, and danced across the room to pick up the telephone directory.

'Oh! what is his name, that man, that Chairman of the Council fellow? I know it as well as my own. Doesn't he keep a shop or something?'

'Several. Among other things.'

'Other things? What other things?'

'Anything that will earn a dishonest penny.'

She glowered at me with extreme accusation.

'I always thought you judged people too hastily,' she said. 'There's good in everybody.'

I said I didn't doubt it; you had to be good to go as far as her George Wilbram, Chairman of the Urban Council, had done.

'What was that? What did you say? Don't mumble so. I'm always telling you.'

'You'll find him under Wilbram,' I said. 'Or Augustine Developments or Abbey Enterprises.'

'What charming names. I think I'll try Augustine. Will you come to lunch too? I think you'd adore Otto. Something tells me you'd have a great deal in common.'

While waiting for Mr Wilbram's number to come through she several times urged me to put my thinking-cap on* in the matter of German wines. We had to do our utmost to do Otto well on that score; we had to match the vintage to the guest.

'Rather *soigné*[25],' she said. 'You know what I mean? I don't know the German word. There must be one, mustn't there?'

I started to say that undoubtedly there must and turned in readiness to wink at Uncle Freddie, only to find that he had dropped off, head on chest, the last piece of buttered toast precariously poised in his fingers, like some half-smoked cigar.

'Oh! Mr Wilbram? You won't know me, but — I saw all about that marvellous Anglo-German unity thing of yours. Yes. In the paper. Oh! yes, I'm a great friend of Otto. We once climbed together.'

Ten minutes later, after a conversation as one-sided as the progress of a snow-fed torrent careering[26] down one of the many valleys at the foot of the Zugspitze, Aunt Leonora at last drew breath, went in brief silence to the window and looked across, eastward and southward, to the modest summer hills that grace the skyline like folds of gentlest green cloth between her house and the sea.

In the sigh that she finally and suddenly gave there was, I thought, a depth not unmystical. It revealed too, like her words, how tender and endearing at heart she really was.

'If we can't show him gentians and anemones and soldanellas and all that we can at least show him the orchids. All those rare native ones of ours that grow up there — the Spider, the Butterfly, the Bee, the Soldier — you know — they're so English, aren't they? And to think that the Romans must have seen them too — marvellous thought!'

She actually gave a short, ecstatic clap of her hands. Much startled, Uncle Freddie woke with a jump. The remaining piece of buttered toast dropped into his tea-cup. With feverish haste he scrambled to his feet, knocking cup into saucer, looking rather like a pink, fat baby roused cruelly from milky slumber[27], and said:

'What was that? I thought you called me.'

'The most marvellous thing has happened,' she said. 'A sort of Prodigal Son* thing — in a way, sort of.' She suddenly turned to me those inquisitive innocent spectacles of hers, as if seeking some confirmation of this preposterous parallel of hers. 'Don't you think so? It is rather like that, don't you feel? — Otto coming back. Quite a miracle in a way. Don't you think so?'

'No.'

'Oh?' For a single second she looked wildly hurt. Then she looked utterly stern. 'And if it isn't a miracle what in your precious book is it then?'

Something prompted me to say 'the trump of doom', but I remembered myself in time and said:

'Never mind about the miracles. What are you going to give them to eat? I'd like the wine and the food to marry as well as they can.'

'Steak and kidney pudding*,' she said with such promptitude that Uncle Freddie actually emerged into full consciousness, like a schoolboy bidden[28] to a sudden banquet. 'And Christmas pudding* for afters. I always keep one or two back — one for Easter and one for emergencies.'

Uncle Freddie actually gave something like a cheer. 'The old Kate and Sidney!' he started to say when she abruptly interrupted him with renewed sternness, as if rebuking[29] the man for interrupting holy ritual.

'That will do,' she said and suddenly rose inconsequently away from both of us and such worldly matters as steak and kidney pudding by saying very softly, in a sentence now more mysterious than mystical: 'I'd have you know the chords of youth are

sometimes very slender,' leaving us both abruptly chastened and without an answer.

It was only some long time later that it occurred to me that the word might well have been 'tender'.

For lunch on the following Friday I selected a white wine, a *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59*. That this was unlikely to marry very well with the steak and kidney pudding, or for that matter with the Christmas pudding either, was something that hardly seemed to matter. Nothing else would marry anyway. The choice was merely a gesture in the cause of Anglo-German unity. With the *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59 we made our bow, so to speak, to the Reich. With the two puddings we raised the English standard high.

For some time before lunch I had an uneasy feeling that Aunt Leonora might take the cause of friendship even further. For some reason or other I was over-possessed by the notion that the chords of youth might well prompt her to go, ridiculous though it may sound, all Bavarian, peasant costume and all. I need hardly have worried. She finally appeared in mustard-and-pepper tweed costume, a shirt blouse and brown brogue[30] shoes.

These, she said, were just the stuff for walking.

'Oh! Herr Untermeyer. Otto. It was weather just like this, wasn't it? You remember? A little mist first thing and then — *achtung*! the sun. *Wurst*!'

Herr Untermeyer looked much more than startled. I could have sworn that his transparent pork-like eyes, too small for the immense inflated paper-bag of his face, turned pink. He looked, gross and flabby[31] in a grey summer suit cut to disguise the vast lines of his figure and now much-creased with travelling, very like a prisoner rudely captured on a foreign field, nervously wondering if his captors were about to treat him well or not.

'Wasn't this a piece of luck, Mr Wilbram? It was just by chance that I saw it in the paper. What's the name of the town you're twinning with, or adopting, or whatever it is?'

'Traben. It's —'

'Oh! would that be near the Zugspitze? Have you been to that part, Mr Wilbram? There's a marvellous blue lake there. All blue.'

'No, I haven't,' Mr Wilbram said. 'It's farther north — Traben, I mean.'

'You've talked to Otto about how we met and climbed the Zugspitze and all that, I suppose? It's all of thirty years.'

'Herr Untermeyer doesn't speak English very easily,' Mr Wilbram said. 'He's all right if he takes it slowly.'

'Really? It used to be beautiful.'

'Yes? I suppose you tend to forget it over the years.'

Mr Wilbram might, I thought, have been a medieval prelate[32]. His lean countenance — face is too simple a word — exuded goodness as a ripe plum exudes[33] juice, except that there was neither juice nor ripeness in Mr Wilbram. The goodness of his eye was cold. His hair, white and slightly curled as fresh lamb's wool, as I had noted in the picture in the newspaper, had been allowed to grow rather long in his neck, where you felt it had been carefully tended with a comb of piety.

'Now what about a drink? You,' she said to me, 'organize the drinks with Freddie. A pink gin for me. And you, Mr Wilbram, what for you?'

'For me, nothing. I rarely —'

'No? Not even for an occasion — a day like this?'

'For an occasion, sometimes. But midday, never.'

'But Otto will. Herr Untermeyer? You'll have a little — *schniff*, you know? You remember *schniff*? You remember how we all used to have *schniffs*? I said in English we called it snifter and you said in German it was *schnapps* and so in the end it got to *schniffs*. Eh? You remember? That was a good example of Anglo-German unity all right, Mr Wilbram, wasn't it? *Schniffs*?

'I suppose it was,' Mr Wilbram said.

'And that,' she said, 'in the early days of the Nasties too. I always called them the Nasties. So much nearer the truth. Still, we'll forget all that. Enough of that. This is our day, isn't it, Otto? What about a *schniff* now?'

Herr Untermeyer, it seemed to me, didn't seem to think it was their day. Nor, I thought, was he much inclined to *schniffs*. Prisoner-like still, he stood painfully erect, as if under orders of silence, awaiting the terms of his sentence.

'I know! I'll give him red-currant wine,' she said. 'After all it was in Germany I first drank it. And you, Mr Wilbram, too? Yes? It's my own — from a German recipe. *Guht*, yes? Red-currant, Otto, you understand? That will do you?'

'So,' Herr Untermeyer said.

'Your pink gin,' I said, 'or would you rather have red-currant now?'

'Oh! red-currant, I think, now, don't you? I think so. It's all the better for the unity.'

So we drank red-currant for unity. Even Mr Wilbram drank a modest half-glass, sipping it with something between a touch of disapprobation[34] and an air of penance[35], rather as if it were communion wine. By contrast Herr Untermeyer seemed to approve greatly. Uncle Freddie had somehow drawn him aside, towards the window, through which and over ruby glasses they were contemplating the hills.

'Orchids,' I heard Uncle Freddie say. 'Very rare.' Uncle Freddie raised his glass, in what might have been a gesture of salutation. 'You know them? Orchids? They are disappearing fast.'

'*So*? Disappearing?'

'My wife,' Uncle Freddie said, making another gesture with his glass towards the hills, 'will show them to you. After lunch. Up there. You like the wine?'

'Was good.'

'I'm rather for it myself," Uncle Freddie said and reached out to a side-table for the bottle. In re-filling Herr Untermeyer's glass and his own he referred once or twice more to the orchids. It was a great shame. They were disappearing fast. A tragedy. Being stolen, he explained. It was the same in Germany, he supposed? Picnickers and motorists and all that? —

'The rape of the countryside,' Aunt Leonora said. 'Oh! I'm sure it goes on everywhere. That at least we have in common.'

'In common? Rape?' Herr Untermeyer stared at Aunt Leonora greatly mystified, eyes rapidly growing pinker. 'So? This word I am not knowing. And orchids? *Was* is orchids?'

'They are referring,' Mr Wilbram said, 'to a certain kind of flower. *Blumen*.'

'Ah! *blumen*. So?'

'Some,' Aunt Leonora said, 'are shaped like soldiers. And some like spiders. And some like men.'

'Soldiers?' Herr Untermeyer said. '*Blumen*? This I am not —'

'Soldiers,' Aunt Leonora said. 'What is the German for soldiers? *Wehrmacht*?'

'No, no. *Soldaten*,' Mr Wilbram said. '*Soldaten*.'

'We have them shaped like butterflies too,' Uncle Freddie said. 'And bees. And there is one, the *Military* —'

'*Soldaten?* Ah! you are in military service?'

'Do I smell something boiling over?' I said.

Aunt Leonora promptly rushed to the kitchen, calling as she went, 'Don't rush, don't rush. We'll be ten minutes yet. Give everybody another *schniff*, dear boy, will you? Don't let Otto get dry.'

I immediately armed myself with a fresh bottle of red-currant.

'Another *schniff*, Herr Untermeyer?'

'*Danke*. *Schniff?* What is this word *schniff*?'

I was about to say that it was a word born out of international fraternity or something of that sort when Mr Wilbram said:

'From here, Herr Untermeyer, we are actually looking straight across to where the Romans camped. Straight up there.'

Herr Untermeyer, glass replenished, eyes pinker than ever, slowly followed the direction of Mr Wilbram's pointing finger to the line of hills a mile or two away.

'Takes you back a bit, doesn't it?' Uncle Freddie said. 'Always gives me a sense of history. To think the Romans —'

'Romans?' Herr Untermeyer said. His eyes were fixed on the hills in a kind of jellified mystification. 'Romans?'

'Ceasar's soldiers,' Mr Wilbram said. '*Soldaten — Romanisch —*'

'*Ja*, *ja*!' Herr Untermeyer said. '*So*! I understood.' All mystification gone, all military secrets unravelled[36], Herr Untermeyer actually laughed, bellying guffaws[37], begging us please to excuse the badness of his understanding about the *blumen*. He had foolishly confused them with the military. *Blumen* were for gardens, *ja*?

'You do much climbing now?' Uncle Freddie said.

What answer Herr Untermeyer was about to give to this discomforting question I never knew. In that same moment Aunt Leonora came back from the kitchen, instantly seized Herr Untermeyer affectionately by the arm and led him to the window. For an awful moment or two I saw us being launched yet again on the tortuous seas of flora and fauna, of orchids and Romans, *blumen* and the military, when to my infinite surprise she looked Otto straight in the face and said:

'Let's have a good look at you. No. You really haven't changed. Not all that much. I'd have known you again — even without the photograph.' In a gesture of affection quite touching in its disarming simplicity she held up her pink gin. '*Schniff*, eh, Otto? Cheers! *Wurst*! It's such a pleasure to have you here.'

'Also for me it is great pleasure. Also to be in England.'

'Herr Untermeyer loves England,' Mr Wilbram said. 'Except for the sausages, eh, Herr Untermeyer!' Mr Wilbram gave a brief, harsh crackle of a laugh. 'Not the sausages.'

'Not the sausages?' Aunt Leonora said. 'No? Not the *wurst*?'

'He thinks they are very bad,' Mr Wilbram said. 'Very bad.'

'Bad. Bad. Very bad,' Otto said. 'Most bad. Most.'

'Good God, what's wrong with them?' Uncle Freddie said. 'I get raring hungry at the thought of them. When can we eat, dear?'

'Bad, the sausage, very bad. The wurst, in England, very bad. They are not ripe.'

'Ah, ah! We have had this before,' Mr Wilbram said. 'By ripe — I should explain — he means they have no flavour.'

'They have not the strong!' Herr Untermeyer said, suddenly making gestures of powerful vehemence with his clenched massive lardy fists, so that for a moment or two Aunt Leonora recoiled, positively alarmed. 'They have not the force! You understood?'

'The melons,' my Aunt Leonora suddenly said, in one of those typically inconsequent moments of hers that both charm and dismay, 'weren't quite as ripe as I should have liked them — they're a little bit tricky as late as this in August. So we have to begin without them, I'm afraid.' With those long, disengaging teeth of hers she flashed at each of us in turn, a separate disarming smile. 'Aren't I lucky? Four men. Shall we go in before everything gets cold?'

'Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!' Uncle Freddie said. 'The good old Kate and Sidney.'

There were always moments when Uncle Freddie, fired by an extra glass or two of something, particularly red-currant wine, was liable to become harmlessly jocular[38], but now I thought I detected in the cold goodness of Mr Wilbram's eye an answering glint of disquiet, as if Freddie had been guilty of a spasm of blasphemy[39].

Undeterred[40], ripe-faced and famished[41], Freddie stood at the head of the lunch table, brandishing a knife and fork over the steak and kidney pudding like a priest preparing a sacrifice.

'Nothing like the good old Kate and Sidney!'

'Kate and Sidney?' Mr Wilbram said, his cold good eyes fixed on the puffed white crust of the pudding, large as a football, his voice again frosty, as if once more a slight blasphemy had been committed.

'*Gate und* —'

Herr Untermeyer too looked confused, pink, questioning eyes on the pudding, from the crust of which Uncle Freddie now proceeded to cut a generous slice, so that steam rose forth.

'I never heard it called this before,' Mr Wilbram said, rather as if he had just heard that some alien clause had been introduced into the *Sermon on the Mount**. '"Kate and Sidney" —?'

'It's a kind of joke,' I said.

'Rhyming slang,' Uncle Freddie said. 'By God, the crust's beautiful. Apples and pears. Trouble and strife. Tit for tat. Plates, please, plates. Where are the plates?'

'Right in front of your eyes, dear.'

'We have this special kind of slang,' I started to explain to Herr Untermeyer, who looked increasingly bewildered. 'Tit for tat: hat. So you get titfer. It's a joke — a *scherz*,' I said, this being the only German word I could think of that meant light. 'A joke-*scherz*,' I repeated several times. 'You see?'

Herr Untermeyer, who had been standing at attention all this time, said he did not understood.

'Oh! do please sit down, everybody,' Aunt Leonora said. 'And stop prattling[42] — this to me, quite sharply, as if I had been guilty of more or less continued flippancy[43]. The wine is far more important. Show Otto the wine.'

'*Wasser, bitte*,' Herr Untermeyer started to say and for one uneasy moment I thought that the carefully chosen *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59 might after all go unappreciated. 'Pliss, may I —'

'Oh! yes, I'm sorry,' Mr Wilbram said. 'It's my fault. Herr Untermeyer has to have a glass of water. He has tablets to take.'

'For the hard.' Herr Untermeyer tapped his chest several times. 'Also when the bad wind is blowing. From the East —'

'I'll go, I'll go,' Aunt Leonora said and then as suddenly gave the water-fetching task to me. 'You go. I must hand the vegetables. We have no help, Otto, you see.'

When I got back to the lunch table again, a glass of water in one hand and a bottle of the *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59 in the other, Herr Untermeyer had a private array of bottles set out in front of him, one containing green pills, one pink and two white.

I set the glass of water in front of him and at the same time prepared to show him the *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59. A rich and

seductive odour of meat pudding filled the air. Assailed by this, by the sight of the wine-bottle and by the enforced necessity of pill-taking, Herr Untermeyer sat in further confusion, painfully beset by the opposing forces of denial and indulgence, his large frame breathing heavily.

'I hope you will like the wine, Herr Untermeyer,' I said and to my relief he turned on the bottle with a gesture of hardly concealed joy, actually caressing it with his fat fingers. 'Ah! is *guht*. Is very nice. From my part of Germany. You understood?'

In the same moment Aunt Leonora set in front of him a plate generously heaped with pudding, mashed potatoes flecked with parsley butter, French beans and cauliflower, the whole caressed by the rich dark gravy of the Kate and Sidney.

As Herr Untermeyer gazed down on this with an almost tortured expression of pleasure and anticipation I heard Mr Wilbram plead with Aunt Leonora in a whisper almost deathly:

'A mere half of that for me, Mrs Elphinstone. A mere half. Less if possible. Even less. I am not a great eater.'

As Mr Wilbram's frame bore a sharp resemblance to one of those pallid marble effigies[44], horizontally embalmed for ever in stony piety, that one sees in churches, it was impossible to imagine that he ever ate much at all, except perhaps toast and dry cornflakes.

'Would you please try the wine, Herr Untermeyer?' I said.

'You know you're not really supposed to, Otto,' Mr Wilbram said.

'Ah? You say?'

'*Verboten*, Otto', Mr Wilbram said. '*Verboten*.'

'*Mit* the pills, yes, yes. I can do. Is all right.'

'No, no. *Verboten*. Remember now. You told me yourself. One glass and then *verboten*.'

'No, no! *Mit* the pills,' Herr Untermeyer said, 'is *guht*. Is all right.'

Mr Wilbram shook his head with a gesture of sad goodness, gloomily exhorting Herr Untermeyer to remember that after all it was he, not Mr Wilbram, who would suffer.

In answer Herr Untermeyer suddenly tasted the wine with a positive gasp of pleasure.

'*Wunderbar*!'

'Well, well, have it your way,' Mr Wilbram said. The tone of his voice was that of one icily delivering judgement.

'Don't say I didn't warn you. You remember the attack in Traben last year?'

'That,' Herr Untermeyer said, 'was not the same. Was different on that occasion. Was then the *lieber*. Now, *mit* the pills, the *lieber* is *guht*. The *wein* I can in little bits take now.'

'All right, all right. It's on your head,' Mr Wilbram said. 'It's on your head.'

'Oh! come, a little wine after all,' Aunt Leonora said, 'for thy stomach's sake. It maketh glad the heart of man, surely. And anyway this is something of an occasion. Nothing like wine for warming up the international fellowship, is there? We saw that at the Hirschen, didn't we, Otto?

'I'll bet it wasn't backward in flowing forward at Traben last year either,' Uncle Freddie said. 'By God, the Kate and Sidney's good. Sorry if I've started.'

'Oh! yes, do start, Otto,' Aunt Leonora said. 'Please don't let it get cold.'

Herr Untermeyer at once struck into the steak and kidney pudding with the enthusiasm of a man long deprived of nourishment. The pills stood before him forgotten. The gross nature of his pleasure was now and then reflected in monosyllables richly content and sometimes, unlike the English sausage, ripe. '*Schön*!' was one of these and '*Budding*' another.

'How you call this *budding* again? A *joke*?' Herr Untermeyer turned on from the depths of his stomach a positive diapason of voluptuous approval and pleasure. 'This is not *joke*. This is *himmel*! *Was* is this flesh?' he said, holding up a succulent square of steak speared at the end of his fork. 'How is this called?'

'Not flesh,' Mr Wilbram said. 'Meat. Steak.'

'To rhyme with Kate,' Uncle Freddie said.

'How is this. Ah! this you call it? Kate? How you say like that? Kate?'

'No, steak,' Mr Wilbram said. 'Steak. Kate is a figure of speech. So to speak.'

'So? *Kate budding*, so? This I love. This is *himmel*, Frau Elphinstein, *himmel*. My bestest congratulations on your kitchen. *Danke*. I give you *Schniff*!'

'*Schniff*!' Aunt Leonora said. '*Schniff*! Oh! how that word takes me back.'

'The chords of youth,' I said and raised my glass of *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59.

'What was that?' she said sharply. 'I've told you before. Don't mumble so.'

'I was simply praising the pudding.'

'Oh! were you? All I can say is it sounded a funny sort of praise.'

If my own praise was odd and whispered, that of Herr Untermeyer continued to be splendidly articulate. Between gargantuan* mouthfuls of meat and vegetable and crust he hardly paused for breath. Nor, for a man who wasn't a very great eater, did Mr Wilbram, I thought, appear to be doing badly either. Spots of gravy actually dribbled down the front of his shirt as he pushed his loaded fork into his mouth. Only now and then, as if some force in him slightly disapproved of the enjoyments of the flesh, did he suddenly desist[45], glance genially at Aunt Leonora as if in fear that his plate might be empty before that of Otto, and then forge[46] on again.

He need have had no qualms about the plates; Otto's was white and clean while Mr Wilbram was still mopping up the last forkfuls of kidney and potato.

'Now, now, come along, everybody. I want none of it left. More for you, Otto? Yes!'

'*Schön*! *Schön*! *Schön* beyond speak. No? That is not right?'

'What is right then? Unspeak? — unspeakable?'

Uncle Freddie and I laughed aloud and Aunt Leonora, beaming with those long, impossible white teeth of hers, said:

'Oh! you're quite a dear, Otto. You're really a great dear. You don't change a scrap[47]. Give Otto more wine. And I won't say "No" either.'

'Better open another bottle, dear boy,' Uncle Freddie said. 'That's if there *is* a second?'

'And a third,' I said.

'Good show. There's a certain something about this German wine.'

'Oh! we drank oceans of it at the Hirschen, didn't we, Otto? Positive oceans.'

'*Wein* we may have in Germany. *Guht wein*. Much *wein*. But not this *budding*. No.'

Soon, I noticed, even Mr Wilbram was enjoying that certain something in the German wine. Its influence rose about the lunch

table like a breath of flowers. We *schniffed* exhaustively. Aunt Laura *schniffed* to the Zugspitze and Herr Untermeyer, actually standing up, glass upraised, *schniffed* to England, and to my great surprise, 'the gliffs of Dover'. This gliffs of Dover had, it seemed, moved him immeasurably.

'From the sea, from the ship, I am seeing this gliffs. So white. They are so *schön* and white and I am weeping.'

'May I in return,' Mr Wilbram said, 'pledge our faith in Germany? Perhaps I ought to say the new Germany?'

'I think you'd better,' Aunt Leonora said, in one of those charmingly swift diplomatic thrusts of hers that are always over before you can do anything about them. To hell with the old. I mean the Nasties. You know what I mean.'

'That,' Mr Wilbram said, 'is what we are all trying to forget.'

'You may be,' she said, 'but not me.'

On this very slightly discordant[48] note she got up from the table and started to clear the dishes, urging us all at the same time to stay where we were, and then presently went off to the kitchen, whispering as she passed me:

'Brandy or rum, do you think?'

'Rum,' I said. 'It burns better.'

As we waited for her return I drained the second bottle of *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59. This led Uncle Freddie to praise it, not for the first time, as a wine that one could drink a good deal of and not feel the difference.

Herr Untermeyer strongly agreed. 'That is so. You are not feeling it. Not in the head. Not in the legs. Only in the hard. How do you say this? — this *wein* is like — how are you saying? — a *lieder*?

'A song.'

'A song, *jawohl*. That is so. A song. A song for the hard.'

'Brings back the good old days, I'll bet,' Uncle Freddie said. 'Slopes of the Zugspitze and all that. I often wonder what you got up to on that mountain.'

'International fellowship,' I said.

Any glint of remonstrance in Mr Wilbram's eye was promptly extinguished by the entrance of Aunt Leonora, bringing the Christmas pudding, bearing it aloft[49] like some blue-flamed dark head on a charger.

'My God, she's well alight,' Uncle Freddie said.

'It's the rum,' I said. 'Far better than brandy.'

'Let's have a drop more on, dear boy,' Freddie said. 'Don't let her die down. Splendid show.'

As Aunt Leonora finally bore the flaming pudding to the table Uncle Freddie and I raised an appropriate cheer. Herr Untermeyer, pink eyes transfixed by this newly offered sacrifice, actually clapped his fat hands, delighted as a child at the rum-fed flames.

'Looks marvellous,' Uncle Freddie said.

'I only hope it will be good,' Aunt Leonora said. 'I always think they taste better for keeping. Don't you think so, Mr Wilbram? Does your wife keep yours?'

Mr Wilbram said he rather thought not. They were rarely at home for Christmas. He suddenly ran his finger round his shirt collar, looking flushed and discomforted. Wasn't it rather warm, didn't we think? Would anyone mind if we opened a window?

It was rather warm, Aunt Leonora suddenly confessed, and while Uncle Freddie was feeding the expiring flames on the pudding with more rum I went to the window and opened it, surprised to see how the day had flowered from an early morning fogginess, clothed in softest white cloud, to a blazing afternoon. The hills shone golden with a purity of light that only the marriage of sea and late summer could give.

'Perfect afternoon,' I said. 'Splendid for walking.'

Uncle Freddie gave me a sharpish sort of look, which I ignored, and Aunt Leonora said while I was up would I hand her the cream? As I picked up the cream-boat from the sideboard I heard Mr Wilbram say:

'I don't want to put a damper on things, Mrs Elphinstone, but I feel I ought to say that Herr Untermeyer has an engagement at five. He's christening a bus.'

'Good God, man,' she said, 'since when have buses had to be christened?'

'It's a joint Anglo-German effort,' Mr Wilbram said. 'The two towns have shared the cost, Traben and ours. It's for the old people. Excursions and so on. It's going to be called ***The Lorelei****. Herr Untermeyer's idea.'

'The chords of youth again,' I said.

'What did you say?' Mr Wilbram said, 'I didn't quite catch that.'

'Oh! take no notice,' Aunt Leonora said. 'In any case there's plenty of time for the bus. It isn't two o'clock yet. You'll want to walk your lunch down, won't you?'

Mr Wilbram, I thought, didn't look at all as if he wanted to walk his lunch down.

'Ah! the fire is now out,' Herr Untermeyer said, rubbing his hands.

'Drop more rum do you think?' Uncle Freddie said and was about to feed the dying flames a second time when Aunt Leonora waved him aside and started to cut generous wedges of Christmas pudding, at the same time saying to Herr Untermeyer:

'Now, Otto, you'll taste this? Something very specially English. They don't even have it in Scotland.' What this had to do with it I simply couldn't think. 'I'm sorry there aren't any good-luck charms. But then we're grown-up, aren't we?'

'This also is a *budding*?'

'Yes, but for Christmas.'

'Ah! so? But Christmas it is not now. It is now summer.'

'Yes, but we saved it from last year.'

The expression on Herr Untermeyer's face clouded from mere bewilderment to fogged mystification. The Christmas pudding steamed with richness. Aunt Leonora drowned a mountainous wedge of it in cream, Uncle Freddie topped up the wine glasses and Mr Wilbram further complicated things by saying:

'I suppose it's something left over from pre-Christian times. I mean the dried fruit and all that. The feast of the Winter Solstice and so on. Very little for me, Mrs Elphinstone, please, very little. I've really had an excellent sufficiency.'

'I admit it does blow you up a bit,' Uncle Freddie said.

'Winter?' Herr Untermeyer said. 'Winter? Why you now say winter?'

'Oh! you'll soon walk that off,' Aunt Leonora said and carved Mr Wilbram a slice of pudding, darkly rich and steaming, as generous as Otto's, topping it with cream. 'Anyway you can always rundown the hills. If not up them.'

With dismay Mr Wilbram picked up his fork and started to toy with the pudding. His normally pallid effigy of a face had already turned a rich, sweaty rose. At the same time it was restless, I thought, even melancholy.

By contrast Herr Untermeyer sucked at his lumps of pudding as eagerly as a baby sucks at a dummy-teat. Cream ran down his chin. Currants slipped from his spoon. His tongue, like that of an eager dog, leapt out and licked up morsels[50] and dribbles[51] with the deftness[52] of a conjuror, with no pause for either word or breath.

Once Aunt Leonora remarked that it was a treat to see people eat. The pudding, I had to admit, was a poem, if rather a stolid one, and presently I began to feel my own face expanding, overfed with rum, fruit, and cream, into a flushed, almost feverish bag, my eyes moist and somnolent.

With much scraping and sucking, Herr Untermeyer left his platter clean — licked would almost have been the appropriate word — and then, glass suddenly high, ***schniffed*** the ***budding***, red lips spluttering[53] a sentence half-English, half-German, in which I several times caught, I thought, the word 'engels'.

Aunt Leonora instantly demanded to know what all this meant and I, not really having more than the faintest idea myself, as instantly translated it as:

'Otto says the pudding could only have been made by the hands of angels.'

It might have been a trick I'd learned from her. It might have been one of her own inspired half-truths. At any rate with a cry of joy she jumped up from the table, waltzed round it to Otto and excitedly kissed him, continental fashion, on both cheeks. Then, before he had time to recover from this affectionate onslaught[54], she kissed him with what I thought was astonishingly vigorous ardour on the lips, saying:

'And that one's for the Zugspitze. For luck. For old times. Who says there's any lack of Anglo-German unity?'

My swift examination of Mr Wilbram's face found it far gone beyond melancholy. It was sunk in reproving gloom. At the same time his eye was arid[55]. There were clearly excessive heights of passion towards which even Christmas pudding could not be permitted to reach. There were limits even to Anglo-German fellowship.

It wasn't surprising that, after all this, Otto took a second helping of pudding or that Aunt Leonora cut it even larger than the first. While he attacked it with that unremitting[56] vigour Aunt Leonora found such a delight Uncle Freddie topped up the wine glasses, Otto at once seizing his and holding it aloft to ***schniff*** us all in general and the pudding again in particular, saying that he could only wish it was always Christmas in summer-time.

'In Germany we have never this. Never this festival in *sommer*.'

'Oh! who says anything about angels?' Aunt Leonora said. 'You're the angel if ever there was one. Oh! Otto, you haven't changed a bit. ***Spoem***, remember?'

This new and sweeping word, this new marriage of German and English, suddenly fell on us, I thought, like an entrancing rocket.

'You remember *spoem*, surely, Otto?'

'*Bitte?* '

'It was the second night at the Hirschen. We'd all been drinking that wild raspberry drink. Not *framboise*[57], that's French. *Himber* or something like that, isn't it? We'd been drinking it for hours. Perhaps I was a little far gone, I don't know, but suddenly I turned to you and said 'S'lovely, isn't it? S'poem, isn't it?' *Spoem* — it became one of those words — *spoem*, like *schniff*, you know? *Spoem* — you surely remember?'

'*Bitte? Ah, so, so.*'

'Anyway,' she said, with one of those entrancing and wholly unexpected turns of mind that sometimes make her, in fact, a sort of *spoem* herself, 'who's for cheese?'

Uncle Freddie, Mr Wilbram and I were, reluctantly, not for cheese, but Otto was.

'Ah! the Stilton,' Aunt Leonora said. 'At the last moment I remembered it. There must be one more very, very English thing, I thought, and Stilton was it.'

While Aunt Leonora danced to the kitchen to fetch the Stilton Uncle Freddie went to the sideboard and came back with a decanter[58].

'Well, if Stilton must be eaten,' he said, 'then port must be drunk. Agree, dear boy?'

I said I very much agreed and in the same moment saw Mr Wilbram take a quick, cold look at his watch. Then as Freddie started to find glasses for the port Mr Wilbram whispered something into Herr Untermeyer's ear and Herr Untermeyer looked at his watch too.

'*Ah*! *so*. Fine, fine. Is plenty.'

'Ah! port!' Aunt Leonora came back into the room bearing dishes of butter and biscuits and a half Stilton. 'Splendid idea. Have we time?' She looked at her watch too. 'Oh! oceans, oceans. That little orchid trip won't take us the whisk of a donkey's tail*.

Here I thought it prudent to remind her that the orchids were not only rare but widely scattered, that their habitat was as jealously guarded as a state secret and that, in any case, the flowering season of many of them was already over; to which she replied, characteristically:

'Well, we don't expect to see all Rome in a day, do we? Of course we shan't see them all. That isn't the point. It's the feeling that they might be there.'

Herr Untermeyer attacked the Stilton. With an ardour undiminished he married it with the port. It was all, like the Kate and Sidney, the Christmas pudding and the *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59, *schön*, the work of angels. Every moment he looked more richly, expansively content.

'A little more Stilton, Otto? Another drop of port? A *soup-çon-kleine*? —'

Mr Wilbram, by this time, had grown visibly impatient. He didn't want to interrupt things, he said, coldly, but he felt, he had to remind Mrs Elphinstone about the bus. The bus had to be christened. At five o'clock prompt. And afterwards representatives of the two towns had to take a ride in it and this too couldn't be delayed. Was this — this other — so important?'

'Of course, it's important.' She gave him one of those characteristically dark, accusatory glares of hers that had him silenced completely. 'It's important to show him our heritage and all that, isn't it? That's what he's here for, isn't he?

It is always hard to reply to these caustic[59] darts of Aunt Leonora's; they disarm the best of men; and Mr Wilbram remained miserably, but I thought wisely, silent.

'After all it is the little things that count. It's neglecting them that leads to wars.' After this astonishing statement of untruth she declared, rather sharply, that she would get the coffee. 'It's only a matter of a mile, anyway. Goodness gracious, it isn't a route march, is it? The walk will do us all the world of good.'

Our hills are not high; their grassy slopes, rich with cowslips[60] spring and light drifts[61] of harebells[62] in summer, have nothing in common with the slopes of the Zugspitze; but they rise with sudden abruptness, hard, dry bosoms of grass that present, to those who have just lunched well on two sorts of pudding, two of wine, Stilton cheese and coffee, obstacles as formidable as those in a steeplechase[63].

'We might possibly see the Spider[64],' Aunt Leonora said. We were all struggling up the steep rough hillside, she and Otto ahead together, I next, Mr Wilbram last, in single file, in the heat of afternoon. 'And the Bee[65]. But not of course anything so rare as the Military[66]. That's only known to a dozen or more choice spirits.'

I always admired certain phrases of Aunt Leonora's and 'choice spirits', I thought, was good.

'We are not seeing this military?' Herr Untermeyer stopped suddenly to say. 'This camp?'

'No, no, Otto. You don't quite understand. The Military is not a camp. It's a flower.'

'Not a camp? But this Romans*? —'

'That,' she said, 'is quite a different matter.'

'So?'

'Left fork here!'

At the command Herr Untermeyer turned, stomping[67] behind Aunt Leonora up an even steeper path. Before I joined them something made me stop and look back. Twenty yards behind me, bent at the knees, head well down, Mr Wilbram had stopped for breath.

'Everything all right? 'I called. 'Shall I wait for you?'

There was no sound in answer; Mr Wilbram merely waved one hand, flat, like a man counting a boxer out.

A minute or two later, as I climbed the path, I saw that Aunt Leonora and Herr Untermeyer had also paused. They seemed, I thought, to be having something of an argument. It became evident, presently, that Herr Untermeyer wasn't happy about the military. I heard him declare, rather aggressively, that he was confused, that he did not understood.

It was very hot and a slight breeze blowing from the sea only seemed to make the air more burning. But with a coolness I thought remarkable Aunt Leonora started to explain, clearly not for the first time, that the military on the one hand wasn't quite the same as the military on the other. To make it worse she explained that in any case we wouldn't see either.

'So? But Herr Wilbram is spoking of a camp.'

'I know Mr Wilbram spoke of a camp. But there is nothing to be seen. It has all disappeared. You can only stand on the spot and say "It was here". Or rather probably.'

'Ah! it is here?'

'No, no, it isn't here. It was probably a mile or two over there. There were probably two camps anyway.'

'Ah! two camps? This is why you are spoking of the military twice?'

In answer Aunt Leonora developed a sudden sharp concern for Mr Wilbram. Where was the man? She turned and looked back

to where Mr Wilbram, practically on all fours now, seemed to be fumbling for the right fork in the path. Good God, she said, speaking as if the man were slacking, did he expect them to stand around and wait? They hadn't got all day.

Here I suggested that Mr Wilbram might perhaps be feeling the effects of lunch, particularly the puddings. Herr Untermeyer at once struck his chest a resounding blow.

'No, no, that can't be so. You are not feeling this *buddings*. Not here.' He struck his chest again. 'With the bestest cooking you are not feeling it. In one half hour it is not felt.'

With these praises falling enthusiastically on her ears Aunt Leonora positively purred.

'Shall we press on to the top then? Best foot forward. *Achtung*!'

Promptly Herr Untermeyer stomped ahead, now as it were in command, the *fuehrer* leading us. I felt warm sweat dribble down my hair into my neck and I turned to take yet another look at Mr Wilbram. His position on all fours seemed, I thought, to have become infinitely more acute, as if he had in fact resigned himself to the idea of crawling the rest of the way to the top.

'I think perhaps I ought to wait for Mr Wilbram,' I called.

'Oh! do no such thing. He'll catch up. He isn't tied to his mother's apron strings, is he? Press on!'

'Right,' I said. I started to press on. 'Excelsior!'

Herr Untermeyer, in spite of years, fat, puddings and port, pressed on too, climbing at a punishing pace. Even Aunt Leonora, inspired no doubt by memories of other, more youthful ascents, could hardly keep up. Nor in fact could I.

Far down the hillside Mr Wilbram crawled like a tortoise in pain. I paused once, looking back, to offer succour, but Mr Wilbram seemed merely to be sunk in an attitude of prayer.

By the time I reached the crest of the hillside Herr Untermeyer and Aunt Leonora were surveying the wide pastoral scene below them, its uttermost fringes pencilled with the faint line of the sea, with an air of triumphant satisfaction, almost if not quite smug.

'I said it was only a jaunt. I can't think why that man Wilbram makes so much fuss of it.'

'Herr Wilbram is tired? He does not seem to have the strong.'

Clearly Mr Wilbram had not the strong. A little concerned now, I made the suggestion that I should go back and help him to the top, an idea Aunt Leonora greeted with withering scorn.

'Good God, man, let him fend[68] for himself. He'll be needing a rope next.'

Flabby-kneed, panting wretchedly, Mr Wilbram took nearly another five minutes to drag himself to the top, only to be greeted by Aunt Leonora, never the most tactful of women, saying:

'Well, you made it. Next time we'll bring an ice-axe.'

Herr Untermeyer laughed stentoriously[69]. It was a laugh, fruity and slightly coarse, in which you could fairly hear the heavy power of puddings and it fell on Mr Wilbram, still periodically gasping for breath, like a mocking blow.

'I don't see that there's anything particularly funny about it.'

'No?' Herr Untermeyer merely let out another laugh, fruitier and coarser than the first.

'Oh! very well, if that's how you feel about it.'

Unexpectedly Herr Untermeyer now revealed a sense of humour hitherto entirely unexpected; or perhaps it was merely the good humour of the *Deidesheimer Hofstück* '59, the port and the flaming rum that was speaking.

'We should perhaps have brought a *dachshund*, eh, *mit* brandy?'

'I don't quite follow that remark,' Mr Wilbram said.

'*So*?' Herr Untermeyer laughed yet again, this time I thought a little loftily, with a touch of the master-race. 'On the great mountain you have the great *hund*. *St Bernard*. On the small mountain you have the small. You follow?'

Mr Wilbram did not follow; he turned, instead, very icy.

'Was that illustration meant as a personal affront[70],' he said, 'or what?'

'Oh! it was a bit of light-heartedness,' Aunt Leonora said.

'It was not exactly,' Mr Wilbram said, 'my idea of light-heartedness. But of course there's a difference between English and German humour.'

'Oh! is there? I never noticed it.'

'We are dragged up here on some — some pretext,' Mr Wilbram said, 'and I find myself laughed at. I say "we". All except Mr Elphinstone, of course. I noticed he didn't come.'

Hitherto no one had remarked on the absence of Uncle Freddie who, as was customary, had conveniently stayed behind to have a zizz[71].

'My husband has nothing to do with it. He always retires after lunch.'

'So do I.'

'Then,' she said with one of those wide, enchanting, large-toothed smile of hers, 'you should have said so.'

Mr Wilbram gasped impotently. Herr Untermeyer stood erect, very stiff. A train, crossing the valley far below, gave a sudden shrilling whistle, the sound ripping the warm still air.

'Men make such a song and dance about little things*,' Aunt Leonora went on. 'You could have had a zizz too if you'd wanted to. You only had to say.'

'A what?'

'A zizz. A nap. Good gracious me, you might have thought we'd asked you to climb the Matterhorn.'

'Of course some of us,' Mr Wilbram said, 'have the advantage of being mountain climbers.'

'We were all so jolly and friendly,' she said, 'and then suddenly you went all spokey.'

'Spokey? I must saw you use the oddest words sometimes. What exactly does that mean?'

'It means,' I said, 'bloody-minded.'

'Oh! it does? Do you mind cutting out the bad language? I don't think that helps.'

I didn't say anything; I didn't think, at that moment, that anything would help. There was a feeling in the air, it seemed to me, of undeclared conflict. The forces of Anglo-German unity had drifted rather far apart.

'Well,' Aunt Leonora said, with remarkable poise and cordiality, 'shall we sort of drift back?'

I loved the expression 'sort of drift back'; but if it was in-tended as balm on the troubled air it failed completely.

'Oh! do exactly as you like,' Mr Wilbram said. 'Take no notice of me. I don't want to break up the afternoon.'

'Would you like to go back, Otto?' Aunt Leonora said. There'd be just time for a cup of tea.'

'I am thinking yet,' Herr Untermeyer said, 'of the military. This perhaps we have time to see?'

'No, no, Otto. I've already explained. There isn't any military. Except for the orchid. And that's quite different.'

'Exactly. Why don't you tell him,' Mr Wilbram said, 'that there aren't any orchids either? I don't want to press the point, but could we get back? We've got a bus to christen.'

Without waiting for an answer, Mr Wilbram started back down the hill. Aunt Leonora, under her breath, said she wished people wouldn't get so huffy[72] and spokey and then, in a voice deliberately loud, said:

'Otto. Straight across there — right across — so far as you can see — is Hastings. Where the great battle was fought.'

'Oh! who cares about the Battle of Hastings*?' Mr Wilbram said. 'We're late now.'

'I do for one,' she said. 'I care about it awfully. We wouldn't be the same without it, would we? It's part of our heritage, isn't it?' And then, in one of those delightfully diplomatic thrusts of hers: 'It might do a bit more good if you showed the flag.'

'Flag?' Mr Wilbram said. 'What flag?'

'Our flag. You were fast enough showing that German one.'

Oh! indeed and where was that? Mr Wilbram wanted to know.

'In that wretched paper. You were waving the German one and Otto had the Union Jack.'

'That,' Mr Wilbram said, 'is what it is all about. In case you've missed the point.'

'Oh! is it? Then I can only say it would have made more sense if you'd have waved ours instead of theirs. What next? I expect we'll all soon be waving the hammer-and sickle*.'

'Oh! my dear woman —'

For the second time Mr Wilbram started down the hillside. I thought it prudent to follow and then heard Otto say:

'This battle. This is the affair military we are coming to see?'

'No, no, Otto. We should go. You have your bus to christen.'

'You are speaking also of flags.'

'Well, yes, just in passing. Shall I lead the way?'

'Herr Wilbram is angry? Yes, I think. Why is Herr Wilbram angry?'

'I told him he was waving the wrong flag.'

'So? Which is the wrong flag?'

'The German flag.'

'So? You are not liking the German flag?'

There are moments when my Aunt Leonora, divine crack-pot[73] that she is, is capable of the most deliberate, endearing honesty.

'No,' she said. 'It does something to me. It curls me up inside*.'

We descended the hillside in absolute silence. The heat of the sun, coming more from the westward now, seemed more burning than ever. A chalky dust rose from our footsteps. I now felt powerfully thirsty and, unlike Herr Untermeyer, could feel the two puddings engaged in heavy, sometimes windy, conflict inside me.

By the time we reached the foot of the hill some hidden force had conquered Mr Wilbram's lethargy. Armed with second wind, he was striding out strongly, fifty yards ahead. Long before we reached Aunt Leonora's house he had doubled the distance and by the time we reached it too he was already sitting, pale and impatient, at the wheel of his car.

'Wouldn't you all care for a cup of tea?'

'I'm afraid we haven't the time.'

'It won't take a minute. I'll have the kettle on in a jiff*.'

'English tea?' Otto suddenly said. 'This I am liking very much. *Mit* toast, eh? This is something splendid.'

'Good. Then we'll all go in, shall we? Freddie'll be awake now.'

Perhaps the very thought of Freddie having been asleep all afternoon, deeply lapped in a zizz, roused some demon in Mr Wilbram. At any rate he suddenly thrust his head out of the window of his car and positively barked:

'Otto! *There is no time*!'

'You mean for tea?' Aunt Leonora spoke with the utmost sweetness, itself as maddening as anything could be, smiling blandly with those long teeth of hers. 'Of course there's time. There's oceans of time.'

'Otto, we must go. There simply isn't the time.'

'Oh! don't be such a fidget[74]. Of course there's time.'

'I am not a fidget!'

'Then don't be so spokey. If Otto wants a cup of tea then he can have a cup of tea, can't he? Don't make such an issue of it.'

'I am not making an issue of it. But Herr Untermeyer has a programme to keep.'

'Then he must do a Francis Drake*, mustn't he? Have a cup of tea with plenty of time to beat the Spaniards afterwards —'

'Otto! We haven't the time. *We must get going*. Spaniards! —'

Otto was already half-way up the garden path, with Aunt Leonora not far behind. As if this were not irritation enough in itself the front door of the house suddenly opened and Uncle Freddie appeared, fresh and vibrant from sleep, eager with smiling welcome.

'Ah! there you all are. Tongues hanging out, I expect. I've got the kettle on.'

I suppose it was 'tongues hanging out' that provided the last extreme force that unloosed the puritanical demon in Mr Wilbram. Suddenly he yapped like an infuriated dog:

'Once and for all, Otto, we have to go.' He was actually out of the car now. Paler than ever, he strode as far as the garden gate. 'For heaven's sake, don't you realize it's nearly five o'clock? Why on earth must you have tea?'

'Because I am thirsty.'

'Then get Mrs Elphinstone to give you a glass of water and let's get going. Quickly.'

'Glass of water, my foot,' Aunt Leonora said. 'The man's entitled to tea if he wants to have tea, isn't he? Without being bossed around.'

'The tea I am taking only in small portion. Most quickly. In one moment.'

Mr Wilbram banged with his fists on top of the garden gate, shouting:

'Otto, if you don't come now, I wash my hands of* the whole affair. I disclaim responsibility. We shall only be just in time as it is. It's on your head, I warn you, it's on your head.'

Herr Untermeyer too strode to the garden gate.

'You are spoking very loud at me?'

'I am and I will!'

'Ah! *so*? You wish conflict?'

'I am not talking of conflict. I am talking of time. Getting to places on time. People are waiting. Don't you understand?'

'I do not understand when you are making loud words!'

'Now, now,' Aunt Leonora said. 'You two. You mustn't get at loggerheads.'

'Loggerheads?' Otto said. 'Loggerheads? What is this word? Explain to me, please.'

'Oh! damn the explaining! I don't often use strong language, but really, really! Damn the word! Damn the man! —'

'This word I am knowing. This damn. This is not polite.'

'Oh! it's an everyday word nowadays,' Aunt Leonora said. 'Nobody takes any notice. Like bloody. Anyway, you shouldn't swear at your visitor, Mr Wilbram, should you?'

'I am not swearing at him!' Mr Wilbram actually shook his fist in the air. 'I am simply saying that if he doesn't come now, this minute, I'll wash my hands of the whole affair.'

'Oh! why don't you all come in?' Uncle Freddie called from the doorway. 'The tea's already made.'

'I come!' Otto said. 'The tea I will take at once! Like *blitzen* — quick take!'

'You will do no such thing. We've had to deal with this German obstinacy before,' Mr Wilbram explained. 'This wretched Teutonic — whatever it is —'

'Bloody-mindedness,' I said.

'Well, whatever it is! The only way is to treat with obstinacy in return. I say we go now! I say no tea! You understand?'

'I understood. You wish conflict again, ah? This is *catastroff*!'

Herr Untermeyer actually raised his fist and shook it so aggressively that I thought he would, for one moment, poke Mr Wilbram in the eye. The two men faced each other, one red with passion, one pale with ashen indignation, both speechless, at a point of thunderflash, until suddenly my Aunt Leonora said with disarming sweetness:

'Into the car, the pair of you. The tea-party can wait until some other time. We don't want another Boston* on top of us, do we?'

Like two scowling dogs, anger unappeased[75], Mr Wilbram and Herr Untermeyer got into the car.

'Good-bye, Otto,' Aunt Leonora said, almost as if nothing had happened. '*Auf Wiedersehen*. You won't be late. It's been like old times. Come again.'

'It is *catastroff*!' I heard Herr Untermeyer say. '*Cafastroff*!'

The car drove away. The pair of hands that waved the briefest of farewells, one German, one English, were scarcely flags of cordiality.

Slowly I walked back to the house with Aunt Leonora. Above us the hills were bathed in serenity. The golden summer air was utterly silent. Nothing could have been more peaceful. Only she herself seemed, for once, I thought, more than a little perturbed[76].'

'I wouldn't have expected that from Otto,' she said at last and her voice was hurt. 'Why did he have to behave like that? It wasn't like him at all. It wasn't a bit like he used to be. I do wish people wouldn't change so. It would make it so much easier if they always remained the same, don't you think?'

As I looked back at the tranquil hills, in the golden August sun, it was suddenly on the tip of my tongue to say that the chords of youth were very tender; but I kept quiet instead, content to know that I had no answer.

GLOSSARY

1. **brandish** — размахивать
2. **entanglement** — запутанность
3. **blandness** — вкрадчивость
4. **vehemence** — страсть, горячность
5. **hare** — быстро идти
6. **fib** — выдумки
7. **garrulity** — болтливость
   garrulous — болтливый
8. **endear** — влюблять в себя
9. **tedium** — утомительность
10. **blithe** — болтовня, вздор
11. **withering** — уничтожающая
12. **hobby-horse** — игрушечная лошадка
13. **blatant** — вопиющий
14. **cock** — заряженный
15. **ecclesiastic** — духовный
16. **loop** — закреплять петлю
17. **aloft** — наверху
18. **effusion** — покрасневший
19. **lard** — жир
20. **congealed** — застывшая
21. **drift** — куча
22. **furrow** — глубокие морщины
23. **pensive** — задумчивый
24. **gentian** — бот. горечавка (растение с голубыми цветами)
    gentian-starred — усыпанный цветами

25. soignee — фр. изысканный
26. career — быстрое движение
27. slumber — дрема
28. bid — приглашать
29. rebuke — упрекать
30. brogue — провинциальный
31. flabby — дряблый
32. prelate — прелат
33. exude — источать
34. disapprobation — неодобрение, осуждение
35. penance — наказание, кара
36. unravel — разгадывать, объяснять
37. guffaw — гоготать
38. jocular — шутливый, комический
39. blasphemy — богохульство
40. undeterred — не разочарованный
41. famished — изможденный голодом
42. prattle — болтать глупости
43. flippant — легкомысленный
flippance — легкомыслие, ветренность
44. effigy — изображение, портрет
45. desist — переставать
46. forge — зд. быстро приняться за еду
47. scrap — нисколько
48. discordant — диссонирующий
49. aloft — легко
50. morsel — кусочки пищи
51. dribble — слюни
52. deft — ловкий
deftness — ловкость
53. splutter — говорить быстро и путано
54. onslaught — яростная атака
55. arid — сухой, равнодушный
56. unremitting — неослабный
57. framboise — фр. малина
58. decanter — графин
59. caustic — способный сжечь или сломать
60. cowslip — бот. первоцвет
61. drift — заросли
62. harebell — колокольчик

63. steeplechase — длительные скачки лошадей, в которых лошади должны перепрыгивать через заграждения и воду
64. spider — растение с узкими листьями и гроздями цветов
65. bee — растение
66. military — цветок, похожий на орхидею голубого и белого цвета растет в лесах в основном на юге
67. stomp — тяжело шагать, топать
68. fend — защищать себя от нападения
69. stentoriously — громоподобно
70. affront — преднамеренное оскорбление
71. to have a ziz — вздремнуть
72. huffy — злой и взволнованный
73. crack-pot — придурок
74. to fidget — суетиться, ерзать
75. unappeased — непримиримый, неукротимый
76. perturb — приводить в смущение

COMMENTARY

***** *split hairs* — to make unnecessary distinctions between things when the differences are so small that they are not important

***** *he is all for it* — to be all for smth/smb — to support, to back smb, to be in favour of

***** *Teutonic* — typical of or relating to German people

***** *put one's thinking-cap on* — to think over smth, хорошо подумать

***** *The Prodigal Son* — a young man in a story in the Bible who leaves home and wastes his time and money but then feels sorry and returns home, where he receives a joyful welcome from his family

***** *steak and kidney pudding* — a dish containing steak and kidney with a pastry top. The traditional method of making a steak and kidney pudding is to put the meat raw into the pastry-lined pudding basin. To make the filling, cut the steak

into neat pieces and slice the kidney, add the cooked in butter onion, stock and boil in a casserole. Add the fried mushrooms and simmer it for about an hour until the steak and kidney are almost cooked

* *Christmas pudding* — a heavy sweet pudding containing a lot of dried fruit and often covered with burning brandy, served hot, esp. at the end of dinner on Christmas Day

* *Deidesheimer Hofstück* — German wine

* *the Sermon on the Mount* — (in the Bible) a talk given by Jesus teaching about moral behaviour

* *gargantuan — adj.* extremely large; gigantic

* *Lorelei* — название одного из живописных берегов Рейна, где возвышается скала; имя прекрасной девушки-русалки из немецкого эпоса, воспетой поэтом Гейне

* *It won't take us the whisk of a donkey's tail* — it won't take us long

* *Roman* — related to or connected with ancient Rome and its Empire consisted of the countries of Europe and the Near East which were ruled from Rome from around 44 BC until around AD 395 when it was split into two

* *make a song and dance about little things* — to be fussy about little things

* *Hastings* — a town on the SE coast of England. The Battle of Hastings took place near Hastings. King Harold of England was defeated and killed by William the Conqueror's army in 1066

* *hammer-and sickle* — the USSR flag

* *it curls me up inside* — it frightens me

* *I'll have the kettle on in a jiff* — in a jiffy — very quickly or very soon

* *Drake, Sir Francis (1540—96)* — an English navigator who was the first Englishman to sail around the world and who led the English navy to victory against the Spanish Armada

* *wash one's hands of* — to refuse to take responsibility for smth/smb

* *'Tea party can wait. We don't want another Boston on top of us'* — an allusion to Boston tea party, famous incident in American history. It occurred on 16 December 1773, two years before the American Revolution. In order to protest about the British tax on tea, a group of Americans dressed as Mohawk Indians went onto three British ships in Boston harbour and threw 342 large boxes of tea into the sea

GERMAN WORDS

p. 140 Gasthof — гостиница
p. 142 Wurst — колбаса
Liberwurst — ливерная колбаса
Bratwurst — жаренная колбаса
Achtung — внимание
p. 146 Schniff — broken German
Schnapps — шнапс, водка
p. 147 Was — Что
Blume — цветок, Blumen — цветы
Wehrmacht — Министерство вооруженных сил при нацизме
Soldat — солдат, Soldaten — солдаты
p. 148 Danke — спасибо
Romanish — романский
Ja — да
p. 150 Scherz — шутка
Wasser, bitter — воды, пожалуйста
p. 151 guht — хорошо
verboten — от verbieten — запрещать
mit — предлог «с»
p. 152 wunderbar — чудесно
Lieber — печень
Wein — вино
schön — прекрасно
Himmel — небо
danke — спасибо
p. 154 jawohl — конечно
p. 158 Sommer — лето
Himbeere — малина
bitter — пожалуйста, *здесь* простите
p. 159 A soup-çon-kleine:
kleine — немного, чуть-чуть
p. 161 Fuehrer — лидер, вождь, фюрер
p. 162 Dachshund — такса
Hund — собака
p. 167 blitzen — молниеносно
Catastroff — от немецкого ***Katastrophe*** — катастрофа
Auf Wiedersehen — до свидания

Assignments for Interpretation and Stylistic Analyses

I. Give a summary of the story.

II. Get ready to interpret the story along the following lines:

1. What kind of story is it? Keep in mind that the satirical portraits of Otto Untermeyer and Mr Wilbram expand the story far beyond its humour boundaries.

2. What are the local and global **themes** of the story? Are they implicit or explicit? Different characters of the story constantly repeat the words "friendship", "fraternity", "international good-will". Do these notions always imply the same meaning?

3. Express your opinion of the **narrator** who is a rare case of practically complete identity with the author. Is he a reluctant or eager participant of the events? How does his ironic scepticism influence the general **tone** of the story? Is the narrator equally critical of everyone in the story? Do you find the "dear boy" the most effective narrator or could the story have been told better from another character's viewpoint?

4. Is the **setting** of the story real? Define its time, place and surroundings. What part does a "sense of history" play in it (e.g. the Romans, the Reich, the Battle of Hastings, etc.)?

5. Name the five **characters** of the story and prove that they are all round (3-dimensional) though only three of them are depicted with much detail. Are there any protagonists or antagonists in the story? Give:

    a) a one-sentence character sketch of all the characters;

    b) a full character sketch of Aunt Leonora and Otto Untermeyer. For this fill in the scheme:

	Aunt Leonora	Otto
1. Name (is it a talking name?)	e.g. She's got a talking name of Mrs Elphinstone (elfin + stone). Otto mixes it up with Elphinstein (elfin + stein — a suffix typical of Jewish surnames).	e.g. He's got a typically German name of Untermeyer (unter + meyer). Aunt Leonora can't remember it correctly: Heimberger. Hunnegar. Honnegger. Heimburg.
2. Age, social position, family, education	...	...
3. Nationality	British	German
4. Occupation	...	...
5. A hobby-horse	...	...
6. Appearance (face, smile, voice, clothes, etc.)	e.g. ... now baring her long teeth in one of those maddeningly disarming smiles of hers.	e.g. ... his transparent pork-like eyes, too small for the immense inflated paper-bag of his face, turned pink. He looked gross and flabby in a grey summer suit cut to disguise the vast lines of his figure and now much-creased with travelling, very like a prisoner rudely captured on a foreign field, nervously wondering if his captors were about to treat him well or not.
7. Speech	...	...
8. Behaviour	...	e.g. Prisoner-like still, he stood painfully erect, as if under orders of silence, awaiting the terms of his sentence.
9. Life principles	...	...
10. Significant details	...	...

Identify utterances, actions and qualities in Aunt Leonora, that confirm the word "inconsequent" in the author's characterization. Give several quotations from the text:

E.g.

1. *He was yet another of those figures out of the vast social mythology that, over the years, Aunt Leonora conjured up so smoothly and sweetly to amuse herself and deceive and infuriate the rest of us.*

2. *'We met', she suddenly said with that inconsequent entanglement of near-truth and near-falsehood, not quite downright lying, that formed the greater part of her charm, 'in Switzerland.'*

3. ...

4. ...

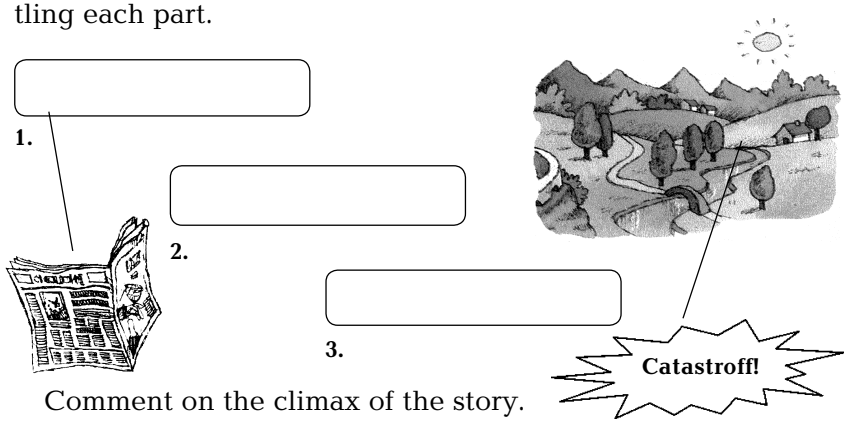
5. ...

At one point Aunt Leonora surprises the reader by displaying characteristics the reader did not think she had. What are they?

Why is Mr. Wilbram needed in the story? What does the author gain from including him?

6. What is the **plot** of the story? Is the **presentation** scenic or panoramic?

Are Aunt Leonora's reminiscences real flashbacks or another example of her telling stories? Follow the chain of events, entitling each part.



Comment on the climax of the story.

7. Analyse the **composition** of the story. Why does dialogue prevail in it? Note how naturally the narrator turns it into both uttered and unuttered represented speech.

8. Are there any **symbols** in the story? To answer this question a commentary on the scenery may be helpful.

9. Explain the **title**. Why didn't Otto measure up to Aunt Leonora's expectations of him?

10. What is the **message** of the story? What makes the narrator give a negative answer to Aunt Leonora's question "I think we really ought to try to love the Germans, don't you?"

III. Get ready for a stylistic analysis of the text.

1. Single out the SDs and EMs used by the author most abundantly (at least 3 from each group):

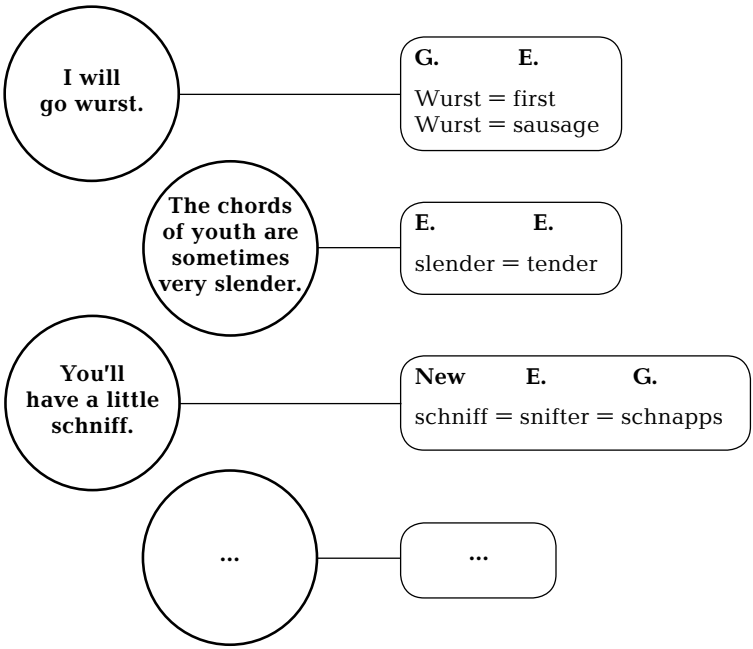
Lexical	**Syntactical**
metaphor	inversion
metonymy	detached construction
irony	parallel construction
pun	repetition
epithet	represented speech
oxymoron	rhetorical questions
simile, etc.	litotes, etc.

2. Define the type of the following SD or EM:

1. affectionate vehemence,
2. her spectacles were icy,
3. a thick ecclesiastical bunch of white hair,
4. like a well-gnawed bone,
5. to scale the inconsequent steps of memory,
6. a depth not unmystical,
7. a Prodigal Son thing,
8. like a schoolboy bidden to a sudden banquet,
9. the good old Kate and Sidney,

10. "the budding",
11. like a tortoise in pain,
12. "the gliffs of Dover".

3. An attentive reader may notice that the major comic effect of the story is based on Otto's poor knowledge of English. His difficulties are doubled by the hosts' manner to use rhyming slang. The interference of English (E.) and German (G.) leads to numerous language confusions. Trace at least 10 such examples and build up a chain of these confusions. Explain their origin and comment on their linguistic nature.



4. Sum up your literary and stylistic observations and say what makes the author's style individual.

Part III

APPENDIX I

COLLIER, JOHN (1901—80), was poetry editor of *Time and Tide* during the 1920s and 1930s, but is remembered as a novelist and writer of fantastic stories combining satire with the macabre and the supernatural. His best-known novel is *His Monkey Wife* (1930), describing the marriage between a repatriated explorer and his pet chimpanzee. In 1935 he moved to the US and made his living as a screen-writer in Hollywood. *The John Collier Reader* (1972) is an anthology of his major stories with an introduction by A. Burgess.

SUSAN HILL. Susan Hill was born in Scarborough, Yorkshire in 1942. Her novels include *Gentlemen and Ladies, A Change for the Better, I'm the King of the Castle* (Somerset Maugham Award), *The Albatross ana Other Stories* (John Llewellyn Prize), *Strange Meeting, The Bird of Night* (Whitbread Prize), *In the Springtime of the Year* and *The Woman in Black*. She has also written the two autobiographical books *The Magic Apple Tree* and *Family*, as well as books for children. She is a regular broadcaster and reviewer.

Susan Hill is married to the Shakespeare scholar Stanley Wells. They have two daughters and live in Oxfordshire.

H.E. BATES (1905—1974). One of the great English storytellers, Bates wove his art from the tiniest and most unlikely shreds of inspiration. He was discovered at the age of 20 and steered towards professionalism by the finest of mentors. His talent withstood ill health and changing fashions, and enabled him to make the leap into the modern world of film and radio. But he remained a countryman first and foremost, immortalizing the particular English landscape he knew so well with his sensuous prose.

CARY JOYCE LUNEL. Cary (Arthur) Joyce Lunel (1888—1957), Anglo-Irish novelist and poet, born in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, and educated at the University of Oxford. He was a public administrator in Africa for two years. Ill health and injuries forced Cary to retire in 1920 to Oxford, where he began his writing career. *Aissa Saved* (1932) concerns the conversion of an African girl to Christianity. Cary is best known for a trilogy that includes *Herself Surprised* (1941), *To Be a Pilgrim* (1942), and *The Horse's Mouth* (1944), later made into a film. These three works were acclaimed for their well-developed plots and credible characterization of an artist. Literary critics have noted Cary's superb skill in producing high comic effect.

ROALD DAHL was born in 1916 in Wales of Norwegian parents. He was educated in England before starting work for the Shell Oil Company in Africa. He began writing after a 'monumental bash on the head' sustained as an RAF pilot during the second World War. Roald Dahl is one of the most successful and well-known of all children's writers. His books, which are read by children the world over, include *James and the Giant Peach, Charley and the Chocolate Factory, The Magic Finger, Charlie And the Great Glass Elevator, Fantastic Mr Fox, The Twits, The BFG and The Witches*, winner of the 1983 Whitbread Award. Roald Dahl died in 1990 at the age of seventy four.

KING, Francis Henry (1923—), novelist, short story writer, and critic, born in Switzerland, and brought up partly in Switzerland and India. He was educated at Shrewsbury School and Balliol College, Oxford, and for some years (1949—63) worked abroad for the British Council; several of his novels have foreign settings, notably Japan and Greece. They include *To The Dark Tower* (1946), *The Diving Stream* (1951), *The Widow* (1957), *The Custom House* (1961), *Flights* (1973), and *The Action* (1979), and are marked by a cool and ironic detachment, close analysis of human motivation (particularly in some of its less admirable aspects), and an unobtrusive technical elegance. *Act of Darkness* (1983) is a psychological thriller, set largely in India; it describes, with considerable narrative power and an insight into perverse and pathological behaviour, the murder of a small boy, and the implication in his death of father, sister, and governess. Volumes of short stories, which show the influ-

ence of Chekhov and K. Mansfield, include *The Brighton Belle and Other Stories* (1968) and *Hard Feelings and Other Stories* (1976). He has also written travel books, and a study of E. M. Forster (*E. M. Forster and His World*, 1978), to whose work, in terms of social comedy and nuance and narrative lucidity his own bears some similarity.

DORIS LESSING (Doris May Taylor) born October 22, 1919 in Kermanshah, Persia (now Iran).

British writer whose novels and short stories are largely concerned with people involved in the social and political upheavals of the 20th century.

Her father was serving in Iran as a captain in the British army at her birth. The family moved to a farm in Rhodesia, where she lived from 1924 until she settled in England in 1949. In her early adult years she was an active communist. *In Pursuit of the English* (1960) tells of her initial months in England, and *Going Home* (1957) describes her reaction to Rhodesia on a return visit.

Her first published book, The *Grass Is Singing* (1950), is about a white farmer and his wife and their African servant in Rhodesia. Her most substantial work is her series of novels about Martha Quest, who also grows up in southern Africa and settles in England. They were published in two volumes as *Children of Violence* (1964—65). *The Golden Notebook* (1962), in which a woman writer attempts to come to terms with the life of her times through her art, is one of the most complex and the most widely read of her novels. *The Memoirs of a Survivor* (1975) is a prophetic fantasy. A master of the short story, Lessing has published several collections, including *The Story of a Non-Marrying Man* (1972); her African stories, collected in *This Was the Old Chief's Country* and *The Sun Between Their Feet* (both 1973); and *Stories* (1978).

Lessing turned to science fiction in a five-novel sequence titled *Canopus in Argos: Archives* (1979—83). The novels *The Diary of a Good Neighbour* (1983) and *If the Old Could...* (1984) were published pseudonymously, under the name Jane Somers, to dramatize the problems of unknown writers. In 1985 Lessing published *The Good Terrorist*, a novel about a group of revolutionaries in London. *The Fifth Child*, a horror story about a family destroyed by the birth of a monstrous child, was published in 1988.

Literary Terms

1. **Anadiplosis** (catch repetition) — a stylistic device where the end of one clause is repeated at the beginning of the following one.
   Money is what he is after, money. (Galore)

2. **Anaphora** — a figure of speech where the beginning of some successive sentences is repeated.
   My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here.
   (Burns)

3. **Antithesis** — a stylisitic device of speech that is the exact opposite of something.
   As he came in Mrs. Beer came out. (Joyce Carry)

4. **Antonomasia** — a stylistic device based on the interplay between the logical and nominal meaning of the word. Antonomasia is intended to stress the most important feature of a person or event. At the same time it pins the leading feature as a proper name to a person or a place concerned. It is a much favoured device in belles-lettres (Mrs Sharp, Mr Snake, Mrs Holiday, Snowwhite, Плюшкин, Манилов, Собакевич). Antonomasia can also make a word with a nominal meaning acquire a generic signification or in other words a logical meaning (Don Juan, Casanova).

5. **Assonance** — the repeating of sounds in words that are close together, especially for literary effect:
   Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the distant Aiden,
   I shall clasp a sainted maiden...
   Assonance here consists in the recurrence of the diphthong /ei/

6. **Asyndeton** — a deliberate omission of conjunctions.
   The plates are mismatched: one green, one white; the glasses too, are all different: one tall, one short, one which bears the label Amora.

7. **Chiasmus** is a reversed parallel construction.
   Soldiers face powder, girls powder faces.
   A handsome man kisses misses, an ugly one misses kisses.

8. **Cliche** — a phrase or idea which people use a lot and which is no longer original.
   the Iron Lady

9. **Climax** — the most exciting, important, or effective part in a story, experience, set of events which usually comes near the end.
   A very sweet story, singularly sweet; in fact, madam, the critics are saying it is the sweetest thing that Mr. Slush has done. (Leacock)

10. **Collision** — an occasion when two very different things meet to come together. Comes from the verb "collide" — to crash violently, or to come into disagreement.
    Three young people had a collision of principles and interests.
    The employers'organizations on a collision course with the unions.

11. **Complication** — a component of the plot which is an incident contributing to the dinamics of the story.

12. **Conflict** — suggests antagonism of ideas, or interests that results in open hostility.
    There was a slight conflict between Phyllis who considered that, as the future Mrs. Tutin, it was absolutely necessary to her to have a mink coat. Tutin was not yet convinced of the absolute necessity. (J. Cary)

13. **Contrast** an intentional combination, often by direct juxtaposition of ideas, mutually excluding and incompatible with one another.

Desperate efforts to look their horrid best.
(Priestley)
Carry became aware that a little village was a total contrast to Chicago. (T. Dreizer)

14. Denouement — a literary term for 'untying a knot'. During the denouement the conflict is settled and a new condition, a new kind of stability, is reached. Not all the stories, however, have a denouement. Some stories end right after the climax, leaving it up to the reader to judge what will be the outcome of the conflict. Such stories are called 'open-ended'.

15. Detachment — a specific arrangement of sentence members. The general stylistic effect of detachment is strengthening, emphasizing the word (or phrase) in question.
She was washing her hands of me. Of all of us.
And Laura, as much as she is anywhere. Her essence.

16. Discord — disagreement between people and events. Discord in general implies sharply opposing positions within a group of people.
The newly wed farmers dressed in fashionable attires looked so discordant that even the porter couldn't help laughing at them.

17. Ellipsis — absence of one or both principal parts (the subject, the predicate) in the sentence; typical of colloquial speech.
I love that girl.
You what?
I love her, you deaf?

18. Epithet — a stylistic device based on the interaction between the logical and emotive meaning of a word. Epithet conveys the subjective attitude of the writer towards people and events described (destructive charms, a savage hockey — player)
She abandoned her low-fat, healthfood kick and split the packet of Roast Beef-flavoured crisps open.

19. Flash-back — turning back to the events of the past to shape the meaning of the present action.

She was ashamed of what she had just said about her mother's recent death, for she did not at all wish to embarrass him, or to appear hysterical. (Susan Hill)

20. Framing — a stylistic device where the beginning of the sentence is repeated in the end, thus forming a frame.

Those kids were getting it all right, with busted heads and bleeding faces — those kids were getting it all right.
The hound. After all running, and rushing and sweating it out and half drawing ... The hound.

21. Gradation — an arrangement of correlative ideas in which what precedes is less than what follows.

I like you, I'm fond of you, I love you!

22. Hyperbole is exaggeration of dimensions or other properties of the object.

From what I've heard she was as smooth as silk and as cool as a cucumber, but with a will like a bone saw.

23. Imagery — the use of images, both literal and figurative in speech and writing. Image is a picture formed in the reader's mind. A literal image is a description or suggestion of actual physical qualities. A figurative image is successful when the writer and the reader think of the same qualities.

A late lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended
Lingers as in content.

24. Intrigue — a means to interest greatly, especially because strange, mysterious or unexpected.

You intrigue me, tell me more! She got to her present high position by plotting and intrigue.

25. Irony — a stylistic device by which words are made to convey the contextual meaning opposite to their logical meaning.

Stoney smiled the sweetest smile of an alligator.
That's a pretty kettle of fish!
A fine friend you are!

As I entered he looked up at me and remarked: 'Ah, another lamb to the slaughter- or shall we say black sheep?' /a new black teacher/ (E.R. Braithwaite)

Last time it was a nice simple, European-style war. (I. Shaw)

26. Leitmotif — something in a work of art, a person's behaviour etc.that appears repeatedly and is seen to be a controlling influence or important interest.

27. Litotes — a two component structure in which two negations are joint to give a positive evaluation.

I was quiet, but not uncommunicative; reserved, but not reclusive; energetic at times, but seldom enthusiastic. (J. Barth)

Her face was not unhandsome. (A. Huxley)

28. Message — an important or main idea.

Did you get the message that your boss has cancelled the meeting?

It is not just a mindless entertainment — it's a film with a message.

29. Metaphor is a relation between the logical and contextual-logical meaning of the word based on the identification of the two subjects, actions or phenomena. It gives a vivid image of a thing or a phenomenon. The expressions *Head of the government, film star, bottle's neck, leg of the table* disclose the essence of metaphor but they are of little or no interest for stylistics. But metaphors in prose and in poetry can usually disclose the essence of the matter.

The machine sitting at that desk was no longer a man. It was a busy New York broker. (O. Henry)

The taxi driver threaded his way through the maze of roads. (C. Matthews)

Jemmie's eyebrows met in the middle. (C. Matthews)

30. Metonymy a stylistic device based on a definite relation between the object implied and the object named.

Give every man thy ear and few thy voice. (Shakespeare)

She lives at an expensive address.
She made her way through the perfume and conversation. (I. Shaw)
Several newspapers in the surrounding seats lowered to look briefly at the object of his derision. (C. Mathews)

31. Oxymoron — a stylistic device based on the interplay of the logical and emotive meaning of the word It consists of an epithet in contradition to the main word it defines:

wise foolishness, ugly pleasant face.
He caught a ride home to the crowded loneliness of the barraks.
There were some bookcases of superbly unreadable books.

32. Polysyndeton — repeated use of conjunctions.

The long Commercial Road lay straight ahead, fluttering like an international maypole with the name ribbons of Greece, and Israel, Poland and China, Germany and Belgium, India and Russia, and many others; Semmeweiss and Smaile, Sshultz and Chin-Yen, Smith Seibt and Litobaraki. (E.R. Braithwaite)

33. Personification — a stylistic device based on assigning actions and qualities characteristic of people to the idea or thing described.

Mother nature always blushed before disrobed.
No, sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet. (Byron)

34. Pun — a stylistic device based on the interaction of two well-known meanings of a word or a phrase. Sometimes it is difficult to draw a hard line between PUN and ZEUGMA.

'Good morning,' said Bilbo, and he meant it. The sun was shining and the grass was very green. (A.T)

35. Simile is the expression of likeness existing between two objects, actions, or phenomena. Simile characterises the two objects by intensifying one property, common to both objects, though the objects belong to different classes and are not com-

pared as a rule. Thus simile gives rise to a new understanding of the object itself.

He looked like a scolded dog. (C. Mathews)

His skin flushed to a deeper shade of beetroot. (C. Mathews)

He had perfect white teeth, like the ones in a toothpaste advert. (C. Mathews)

She shook herself like a bird settling its ruffled feathers. (C. Mathews)

36. Zeugma — a stylistic device, typical of English, in which one word is used in relation to two or more other words in different sense (meaning) but in the same grammatical construction. So in case of zeugma the context allows to realize two meanings of the same polysemantic word simultaneously.

Nicholas felt perfectly capable of being in disgrace and in the gooseberry garden. (Saki)

Mr Higgins took his leave and his hat.

Summary

1. A summary is a clear concise orderly retelling of the contents of a passage or a text and is ordinarily about 1/3 or 1/4 as long as the original. The student who is in the habit of searching for the main points, understanding them, learning them, and reviewing them is educating himself. The ability to get at the essence of a matter is important.

The first and most important step in making a summary is reading the passage thoroughly. After it a) write out clearly in your own words the main points of the selection. Subordinate or eliminate minor points. b) Retain the paragraphing of the original unless the summary is extremely short. Preserve the proportion of the original. c) Change direct narration to indirect whenever it is possible, use words instead of word combinations and word combinations instead of sentences. d) Omit figures of speech, repetitions, and most examples. e) Don't use personal pronouns, use proper names. f) Do not introduce any extra material by way of opinion, interpretation or appreciation.

Read the selection again and critisize and revise your words.

2. Give a summary of the text. For this and similar assignments the following phrases may be helpful. Try and use the ones that are most suitable for the occasion.

a) At the beginning of the story (in the beginning) the author describes (depicts, dwells on, touches upon, explains, introduces, mentions, recalls, characterizes, critisizes, analyses, comments on, enumerates, points out, generalizes, makes a few critical remarks, reveals, exposes, accuses, blames, condemns, mocks, ridicules, praises, sings somebody's praises, sympathizes with, gives a summary of, gives his account of, makes an excursus into, digresses from the subject to describe the scenery, to enumerate, etc.).

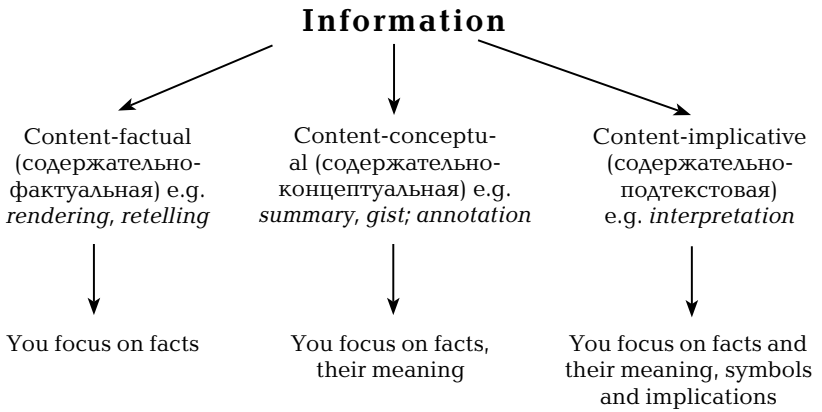
The story (the author) begins with a/the description of, the mention of, the analysis of a/the comment on, a review of, an account of, a summary of, the characterization of, his opinion of, his recollection of, the enumeration of, the criticism of some/a few critical remarks about, the accusation of the/his praises of, the ridicule of, the generalization of, an excursus into.
The story opens with...
The scene is laid in...
The opening scene shows...
We first meet him (her...) as a student of... (a girl of 15)

b) Then (after that, further, further on, next) the author passes on to... (goes on to say that..., gives a detailed description (analysis, etc.), digresses from the subject, etc.). For the rest see the verbs in list a.

c) In conclusion the author describes...
The author concludes with...
The story ends with...
To finish with the author describes...
At the end of the story the author draws the conclusion that... (comes to the conclusion that...)
At the end of the story the author sums it all up (by saying...)
The concluding words are...

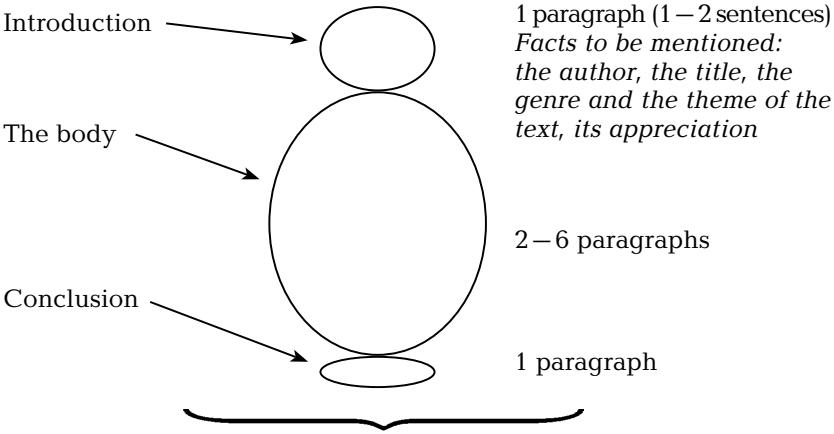
APPENDIX IV

How to write a Summary



	Dos	**Donts**
General approach	Be selective. Single out major facts. Follow the sequence	Don't focus on details. Don't focus on minor facts. Don't be sporadic
Lexic	proper names neutral lexic synonyms	pronouns colloquial, literary lexic repetitions
Grammar	simple sentences Present Indefinite, Present Perfect indirect speech	composite sentences with clauses, gerundial or participial constructions Past Indefinite, Past Perfect direct speech
Style	no more than 3 — 5 quotations with quotation marks neutral style laconic style, clear point of view	more than 3 — 5 examples from the text EMs and SDs (metaphors, epithets, etc.) lengthy sentences

The Frame of a Summary



Connectors and Sequence Markers

1 Logical connectors and sequence markers

a) Cause:
therefore *so* *accordingly* *consequently*
as a consequence/result *hence* (formal)
thus (formal) *because of this* *that's why* (informal)

b) Contrast:
yet *however* *nevertheless* *still*
but *even so* *all the same* (informal)

c) Condition:
then *in that case*

d) Comparison:
similarly *in the same way*

e) Concession:
anyway *at any rate*

f) Contradiction:
in fact *actually* *as a matter of fact* *indeed*

g) Alternation:
instead *alternatively*

2 Textual connectors and sequence markers

a) Addition:
also *in addition* *moreover* *furthermore* *besides*
too *overall* *what's more* (informal) *in brief/short*

b) Summary:
to sum up then overall in brief/short

c) Conclusion:
in conclusion finally lastly to conclude

d) Equivalence:
in other words that means namely
that is to say or rather

e) Inclusion:
for example for instance say such as
as follows (written) *e.g.* (formal and written)

f) Highlight:
in particular in detail especially notably
chiefly mainly

g) Generalisation:
usually normally as a rule in general
for the most part in most cases on the whole

h) Stating the obvious:
obviously naturally of course clearly

The Essay Narrative and Descriptive

Building up your essay

Instructions

1. Interest

You must do all you can to make your essays *interesting* so that they will hold the reader's attention to the very end. All you need to do is to include incidents and details which are drawn from everyday life or which you have imagined.

An essay can be as dull or as interesting as you care to make it. Once you have found something definite to say, your essay will be interesting to read.

2. Unity

Just as it is important to connect your sentences *within* a paragraph, you should make sure that your paragraphs lead on naturally to each other. Answer the questions closely. Do not repeat yourself. Make sure that every paragraph adds something new to the essay.

3. Balance and proportion

The length of a paragraph will depend on what you have to say; however do not let yourself be carried away by fascinating but unimportant details. Never attempt to write an essay in a single paragraph.

4. Personal statements

Do not address the teacher or make comments on the topic like, 'I do not like this subject and do not know how to begin...', or '...and now it is time for me to finish my essay', etc.

5. Re-reading

It is absolutely necessary to read your work through when you have finished writing. While doing so, keep a sharp look out for the grammatical mistakes — especially those connected with word order or the sequence of tenses. Try to develop the habit of not repeating a mistake once it has been pointed to you.

6. Narrative planning

When telling a story, it is always best to relate events in the order in which they happened. Your first paragraph should set the scene. The most exciting part of the story should come at the end. The general outline for stories should be as follows:

Before the event
The event
After the event

Before writing on your plan try to decide what the main event will be so that you can build your story round it. It is not always necessary to make out a full, detailed plan. But it is wise to note a few ideas under each heading so that you have a fairly clear picture of what you are going to say before you begin writing. Remember that a plan is only *a guide*.

7. Descriptive planning

In descriptive essays there is no underlying 'story' to hold your composition together so it is necessary to think of a central idea to which everything you describe can be related.

There is also another important difference between narrative and descriptive. In descriptive writing, there is no single event which will keep the reader in suspense as there is in a story. Whether or not your essay will be exciting to read will depend entirely on the interesting details you include. In your first paragraph you should consider the object in general and deal with details in the paragraph that follows. Your description may take the form of a personal impression or may be purely imaginary.

The general outline for descriptive essays should be as follows:

Introduction
Development
Conclusion

It is absolutely necessary to make out a plan noting a few ideas under each heading in this way:

Plan

1. Introduction
2. Development
3. Conclusion

Refer to 'English Writing'
by S. Berlison and others pp. 33—43.

CONTENTS

Part I

Part II

Part III

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