

Collision Point

By **Dylan Waylef**

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Police Sergeant Brian Donnelly watches his daughter gather her books and backpack off the floor. His son fumbles with a zipper on his jacket.

"Get a move on you guys."

His wife places a warm hand on his shoulder and gives him a soft kiss as he heads out the door. "See you at lunch dear".

He walks the narrow sidewalk past the neatly trimmed lawn to the four-door, Ford Fairlane in the drive. His two teens run from the house to catch up. He doesn't say much as they drive the few short blocks to the High School, but listens as his son and daughter chatter about friends and a coming basketball game.

Brian pulls to the curb in front of the bustling high school. His son crawls from the back seat.

"Thanks Dad." His daughter gives him a soft kiss on the cheek as he turns his head to watch.

Brian glances to make sure no cars are coming.

"See-ya later Dad" she waves as she crosses the street.

It is a crisp clear winter day as he drives the early morning streets of San Francisco's busy Sunset District. He turns a corner and glides into another world. Sunlight streams through tall misted trees creating dappled patterns on impossibly green lawns. A deeply shaded meadow hides a grazing deer, a family of ducks drifts on a glassy pond.

He loves this drive through Golden Gate Park. He could have taken a slightly faster rout up Lincoln Way, but he likes the lazy wind past Stow Lake, Strybing Arboretum and the Bowling Greens. Brian Donnelly has been with the San Francisco police force for over twenty years, most of it stationed right here at Park Station, and he still enjoys this early morning drive.

The Park Police Station is a two story Mission-style building with stucco walls and a tile roof. It was originally built as quarters for the Mounted Unit, but has been refurbished as an administrative center. Brian parks his car in the back lot, gathers up a brief case, which contains the lunch his wife made for him, and heads inside.

The station is already a hive of activity. Brian casually runs a gantlet of "good morning" greetings as he makes his way to his desk. He places his brief case beside his chair, shuffles through a stack of papers without setting down, and turns to head for the coffee machine. Glancing through the window behind his desk he notices a box outside on the window sill. Brian stops, slightly perplexed, and takes a step closer.

The massive explosion vaporizes the window in a cloud of fine glass. Nails and shrapnel packed in the bomb, obliterating Brian's face and tear the clothes from his body as he is thrown across the room. A hot hurricane from hell pushes desks chairs, books, paper and people in its path. The ceiling collapses in a tangle of wire and debris amid a choking cloud of smoke and dust. Suddenly everything stops and there is a moment of near silence, a slight hissing sound from several small fires and a tinkle of glass. Then choking screams of pain and horror shatter the air as survivors painful crawl from the wreckage.

After five hours of feverish rescue, tears and chaos a final count is announced. Sergeant Brian Donnelly is dead and eight other officers are seriously wounded.

March 1969 - Kelseyville Kansas

Cars slowly rattle down the brick paved street, past the hardware store, bank, grocery and Dairy Queen. At the end of Main Street they make a wide u-turn and head back up in an endless circle. Welcome to Saturday night in Kelseyville Kansas.

It's the late sixties and every teen not stuck at home or at church is showing off his hot-rod, driving the family sedan or has hitched a ride with a friend. It's a moving party, car show, soap opera. Nothing in this small town can compete with "cursing Main Street" on a Saturday night.

Lining each side of the street is a hodgepodge of buildings. The core of the town is made up of one and two story, turn of the century, brick buildings with old fashioned tin awnings over a front sidewalk. One story cinder block buildings from the forties and fifties fill in the gaps. The tall concrete sidewalks are relics of the old days when Main Street was mud and dirt, and when the same pimple faced youth paraded with horses and buggies instead of cars.

Kelseyville was once a prosperous farming community, but consolidation, automation and collapsing crop prices, along with the usual fickle fate of weather, has greatly reduced the number of family owned farms. The agricultural base for small communities like Kelseyville is drying up all over the America. In a few short years the credit crunch will force most family farms into foreclosure and lead to huge corporate consolidations. Fortunately, the people in Kelseyville are close enough to Kansas City and its unrelenting growth south to take advantage of industrial employment opportunities within a reasonable driving distance.

At one end of Main Street a side-show is taking place at the do-it-yourself car wash. Clumps of healthy horse-play guys and cute giggle-faced girls wait their turn with steamy sprayers or just hang out. Out front is a line-up of some of the hottest cars in town, a GTO, Malibu Super Sport and a Corvette. The hood is up on the Malibu as a group of guys tinker with two custom four-barrel carburetors on a big block 396. It's a perfect excuse to loudly gun the engine.

Up the street in a dazzle of buzzing neon is the Dairy queen. Well, not an official Dairy Queen, but a small budget facsimile called the Dairy Bell. Hamburgers and soft serve ice cream, french-fries and syrupy sweat sodas make this a popular destination. Car loads of girls tend to gravitate to the Dairy Bell, while the guys tend to hang out at the car wash, but there are no rules in this big free-for-all street party.

Many of the kids cursing Main Street are drinking, and some are obviously drunk. Open drinking is illegal, but only a thin veil of discretion is necessary. The one cop in town rarely leaves his small main street office, the police cruiser parked in front. He virtually never patrols the town; he just waits for phone calls reporting the latest drunk driver who has run into a ditch.

It has been an unseasonably warm early spring day. The temperature is well above freezing, but the night air has turned chilly. Most of the cars have their windows down and heaters on. It's been a typically long Kansas winter and the spring air is stirring youthful hormones. On Main Street cars slowly pass each other as they cruse in opposite directions on the marry-go-round. Greetings, flirting, kidding and insults pass between the cars. Sometimes two cars will stop next to each other blocking the middle of the street. The parade grinds to a halt, but nobody seems to care. Soon the line of cars starts

slowly moving again and the parade continues. The locals all know if you're in a hurry to drive from one side of town to the other on a Saturday night, you better avoid Main Street.

All the cars in this parade are American made. America dominates the auto industry and General Motors is the largest corporation in the world. But on this night there is a lone exception. Among the Dodges, Fords and Chevys, is a red 1966 Alfa Romeo. Its top is down and inside are two high school seniors pretending their ears aren't cold. The Alfa's heat is on keeping their legs warm, but little of that warm air is making it past their waist. But who cares? Cold-ears are a small price to pay when you're cursing Main in the only convertible with its top down.

The Alpha is Carl Lee's car. He doesn't mind being a little bit different and feels slightly above the drama around him. Carl is a tall skinny kid from the suburbs of Kansas City who just moved to town at the beginning of the school year. His clever mouth and sharp featured good looks make him a popular character with some of the kids, but others think of he is dandy and a smart ass.

Carl thinks of himself as a hippie. Hippies are a popular youthful subculture in suburban communities all across America, just like jocks, greasers and preppies. The hippie culture is partly an outgrowth of the resistance to the Vietnam War, which has prompted social and political rebellion among draft aged college students. Twenty thousand young Americans have already died in Vietnam and almost every American knows someone who has been killed, injured or has at least served. Most military aged guys, whatever their political persuasion, now know enough about the war to know they don't want to go.

Of course the social upheaval in America goes well beyond Vietnam. The murder of Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement have rocked the nation. Now women, and even gays, are demanding civil rights. A social and cultural revolution is taking place, primarily lead by college aged youth. As would be expected, there is also a vigorous conservative and religious backlash. America is a nation in social turmoil.

One of Carl's best friends in the Kansas City is from a liberal Jewish family. Not one Jew lives in Kelseyville. Carl's friend and his two college aged brothers have been a large influence on Carl. They spend hours talking about history, the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. The music Carl listens to, the clothes he wears, the books he reads, all reflect the growing hippie subculture.

Of course, the people in Kelseyville have seen the riots and protest marches on TV. But, to them it seems as if it's happening in another world. Military service is still revered and respected in Kelseyville. Young men have always gone off to war proudly and willingly. For Kelseyville the turmoil is all in the outside world, is something to be feared and avoided and since most Kelseyville kids don't go to college, these cultural changes and influences haven't made their way back like the have in the more affluent suburbs.

Almost all the kids in this parade grew up together and have known each other all their lives. Everybody knows everybody in a Kelseyville. But Carl and his friend Billy are the new kids on the block and the only hippies in town. They started their senior year in the fall. Both are outgoing and socially active. Over the past School year they have come to know most of the kids their age in school and many of the older cruisers. That's not hard to do in a small town. Even so, they are still considered outsiders and their social position feels tenuous. But with a dad in the military, Billy's family moves to a new town every few years. Being a new kid is something Bill knows about.

Carl asks the eternal question.

"So, what do you want to do?"

"I don't know. What do you want to do?" Billy asks back.

"I don't know. What are the choices?"

"Well, we can drive up and down this fucking street with all the rest of these morons, or we can get something to eat, except I don't have any money. Or we can drive out to Pork Chop Hill and smoke that joint you got." Billy looks at Carl hopefully.

"You never have any fucking money man, and that's the last remnant of weed I got. Besides, I left it at home so we wouldn't be tempted."

"Oh man, there is nothing to do around here. This town is driving me crazy." Billy says in despair. He screams out the window to no one in particular.

"I'm going out of my fucking mind."

Jake Walker in a beat up, sixty-two Chevy pickup truck, with three guys and two girls in the front seat, passing in the opposite direction screams back. "You're already out of your fucking mind Arnold."

"Fuck you Walker" Billy yells back with mock aggression.

Walker guns his engine. With a blown muffler, his truck produces an impressive amount of noise.

Billy laughs with calculated hysteria.

"Ok, I'll buy some fries, but I'm saving the weed." Carl says

"How about we smoke the weed and forget the fries?" Billy proposes.

"You're lucky to be getting some fries pal"

Carl and Billy make the big U-turn at the top of Main and head back down. Walker's truck and several other cars are parked in front of the Dairy Bell. Carl turns, and pulls into an open space by the back corner of the building. They crawl out of the car and head around the corner to where Walker and a group of six or seven other high school kids are loitering.

"Are you still going crazy Billy?" Walker quips as they walk up. He turns to the others, "Watch out these guys look dangerous."

"Hell yeah we're dangerous. We escaped from the asylum yesterday." Billy gives a maniacal laugh.

Friendly greetings are exchanged. Carl leans against the truck and chats with one of the girls. Billy offers Walker a cigarette, which he accepts. Billy instantly produces a Zippo lighter. Walker lights his cigarette and takes a long drag. As he exhales, he makes a half-hearted attempt at blowing a few not too impressive smoke rings.

Walker is a popular, good looking, farm kid. He is a little more outgoing than most of the other kids, sharp and more worldly, with an older brother in college. He's not too sure about Carl, but he likes Billy.

Walker turns his head to Billy and says "I hear Roy Welch and Eddie McGuire are looking for you guys." The other kids seem to take note of this tidbit of news.

"Oh yeah?" Billy says nonplussed.

"That's what they said. I just talked to them down at the car wash" Walker says, watching for a reaction.

Billy acts uninterested and takes a drag from his cigarette.

Carl has heard the exchange and is looking a bit more interested. "What do they want? I don't even know those guys. "

"They seem to know you." Walker says with a little smirk on his face. Several of the other guys let out a little laugh. "They make it their business to know just about everybody around here." Walker says.

The other kids have stopped talking, some are fidgeting and looking around, but everyone is listening with a knowing expression.

"You're going to have to deal with those guys at some point" Walker says to Billy.

Carl's not sure what the hell that means, but it doesn't sound good. Sometimes he feels like he is in foreign country, an obscure African tribe, trying figure out a set of arcane and convoluted local customs. He's not even sure what to ask at this point.

"Let's eat." Billy says "I am starving"

Carl takes a step up the curb and then turns back cheerfully, as if nothing has happened "Ok, well, catch you guys latter."

A couple of the guys find this obvious display of cheery chatter amusing and laugh, "Okay, have fun" one of them mimics.

Billy just flicks his cigarette with perfect accuracy into the gutter and walks to the door. Carl follows, concerned and perplexed.

Inside, the Dairy Bar is packed and buzzing with activity. The tables are filled with a cross section of the community, old and young, talking, laughing, and digging into their food. The small dining room has three tables in the center and four booths against the side wall, a low counter with a green Formica top, five round topped stools on chrome posts, and a bustling kitchen open behind. A sweating woman works a steaming grill flipping patties of hamburger. She shakes a basket of French fries dripping with yellow grease. A whirring soft serve machine, coffee maker, twirling punch dispenser, and stacks of paper cups, plates and napkins make a backdrop to the counter. Carl and Billy step behind two preteen girls waiting at the cash register. It smells good. Billy's stomach rumbles. This could take a while, no seats are available and no one is currently at the cash register. They wait.

Carl steps a little closer to Billy and asks under his breath, "So what was that all about?"

"It doesn't sound good. No way do I want anything to do with those two guys. That Welch is a monster." Billy responds.

This is not what Carl wants to hear. He was feeling a bit confused and uneasy, but now a feeling of fear rises up from the bottom of his stomach.

"We don't even know those guys. They're not even in High School. How old are they anyway?" Carl realizes he is whining and tries to adopt a more defiant tone. "This is bullshit man" he says a little too loud.

The girls in front hear the obscenity and uneasily shift their stance, glancing back at them. Billy is silent. They wait.

The girls are now placing their order. A couple in their thirties starts to get up from a pair of the stools at one far end of the counter and Billy steps over to claim the seats. Carl

is a little surprised. He expected to get the fries and go. Billy sets down and Carl reluctantly follows.

"You want to eat here?" Carl says. He always finds this place claustrophobic. Besides, all the action is out on the street.

Billy casually picks up a menu. "Look out the window."

Four plate glass windows line the front and side of the small cafe. Carl turns on his stool to look out the front. Eddie McGuire's red 65 Corvette is double parked behind Walker's truck. McGuire and Welch are standing in the street talking to Walker. Carl's stomach drops.

Without even looking up from the menu Billy says "This doesn't look good, man. Those guys are waiting for us. Walker did us a favor by tipping us off. I am not going out there."

"What the hell do they want? I don't even know those guys. What did we do? I only saw that Welch guy once with some other people at the car wash. I never even talked to him." Carl is whining again.

Billy finally glances out the window. "Stop saying that. It doesn't matter if you know them. This is their turf and we're on it. For whatever reason, or no reason, they're after us. The best we can do is just not let them catch us until they lose interest. How about buying me a hamburger?"

"Fine, have a hamburger. I'm not hungry. Damn, I don't need this shit. I didn't do anything!"

Billy rolls his eyes and gives Carl a disgusted tight mouth look. Carl shuts up.

They finally order. It takes a long time for the hamburger, order of fries and two Cokes to come. That is fine with Carl. Walker and the other kids have moved on, but Eddie McGuire has pulled into a parking space. Now a couple more cars have pulled up. Billy eats the hamburger and most of the fries. Carl sips his Coke and nibbles on a few fries. He keeps glancing out the window.

"They know we got to come out eventually, my car is out there." Carl says. He wants to talk about the situation, make a plan.

Billy has finished eating and is sucking the last of his drink through a straw, tipping and swirling to find the last drops. McGuire and Welch are still parked out front.

Finally Billy turns around on his stool and faces backward, leaning against the counter and watching the two stalkers talking to the occupants of a Ford Torino. He sits that way for a full minute, then says, "Look Carl, there is no way I am going out there. I'm just not going to do it. You need to call your mom or somebody to come down here and get you. Don't go out there, OK? Thanks for the burger."

Carl looks at him perplexed. "What?"

Suddenly Billy stands up, walks toward the cash register, slides around a guy placing an order, opens a hinged piece of counter top that allows access to the back, carefully closes it behind him, turns and quickly walks past the startled, gape mouthed cashier, through the kitchen and disappears out the back door.

The cashier, the customer and Carl stare after him as though they just saw a ghost. With a shake of her head, the cashier turns back to the register and continues ringing up the customer. Carl sits stunned and alone. He decides to order a chocolate malt.

Carl feels like a prisoner. He thinks he better do as Billy suggested and call for his mom to come and get him, but he keeps running that conversation through his mind.

"Hi Mom, don't worry or anything, it's no big deal, but a couple of big guys are after me and I need you to come down to the Dairy Bell and rescue me because I am afraid to go outside."

He knows his Mom will flip out. He will never hear the end of it. He imagines the endless questions "what did you do?", "who are those boys?", "what happened?", "why can't you fit in?"

This sucks. Now what?

Carl is running everything through his mind and starting to question the situation. "How do I really know those guys are after me? All I have to go on is what Walker said. Are they really looking for us? Maybe Walker is mistaken. Maybe they just had a question about something. Maybe I am just going out of my fucking mind. One thing is for sure, Billy was sure taking it seriously."

Carl turns to glance out the windows for the millionth time, but to his surprise, McGuire and Welch are just coming in the door. He quickly turns away and pretends to sip his shake, which is empty. McGuire and Welch step up to the cashier. There is no line. It is quieting down at the Dairy Bell. They order two Cokes. Neither of them even glances at Carl. Carl is pretending to look at a menu, but is watching them closely. They hardly say a word to each other.

Roy Welch looks like a bull. He has no neck. His head sits directly on his wide shoulders. With a great barrel chest and fat biceps in a tight fitting T-shirt-shirt, he looks exactly like some kind of great white bovine on two legs. Even his broad face and sharp features are bull-like. If Roy worked out he could be a body builder, but Roy likes drinking beer more than working out and is already developing a good sized beer gut at twenty three. That's what happens to beer drinking bulls.

Eddie McGuire is a whole different animal. Thin, muscular, not very tall, but you can tell by looking at him that this guy is dangerous. Even though Roy is the monster, it's Eddie who sends a shiver through people's spine. Not that Eddy isn't liked and admired. A born leader, he can be fun, funny, even charming. But somewhere behind all that you can sense the menace, especially when he is drunk. One minute he is joking and friendly, then an instant later, he is over the top angry and ready to fight. He keeps people on edge, on guard, walking a tight rope. It's like he is just looking for a reason to be angry, an excuse to be insulted, an excuse to hurt you. He doesn't just want to win, he wants to humiliate and put people in their place. Eddie is the demagogue and Roy is the enforcer, a kind of partnership well known to history.

Their drinks come, and they turn around and walk out. Carl watches as they get into McGuire's Vette, back out, and drive off. Carl's heart jumps. He gets up and runs to the window to look down the street after them. They are gone. He rushes over to the other window, nearly colliding with a middle aged woman coming in the door, and presses his head to the glass to see if they are hiding around the corner. He can just barely see the back of the Alfa sticking out of its parking space. Nobody in sight, but are they really gone? Is this a trick? He knows that it's certainly a possibility, but he has to take a chance.

Carl hurriedly pays. Of course, the cashier has been checking him out for a while now. First, he sits and watches his friend eat. Then his friend walks right through the kitchen

and out the back door. Now he is chomping at the bit to leave? She is a mother of three and knows something is up.

"Is everything all right?" She asks, giving him a sharp eyed look.

"Yeah, yeah, everything is fine." Carl stammers. He isn't expecting this.

"Are those guys after you?" She guesses correctly, looking him in the eye.

"No, no, I'll be fine. I'm going home right now." He just wants to get the hell out of there.

She slowly gives him his change and an incredulous, raised eye browed look that could only come from a wizened mother. "Be careful" She says.

He grabs his change and she watches him go.

Carl steps out the door, quickly walks around the corner of the building and down the side in front of several parked cars. He slows down as he nears the back of the building. Nobody is in sight. His car is just beyond and he heads for it. As he passes the back corner of the building he hears a voice.

"Hey Carl, what's going on?"

Carl cringes. It's Eddie McGuire.

"We were just checking out your car." Eddie says in a friendly voice.

Eddie and Roy walk up on either side as Carl continues toward his car.

"Damn, that's a nice looking car. What do you think Roy?"

"I like it, kind of small. I'm not sure I can even get in that thing. I bet-ya have a hard time getting a fishing pole and a shotgun in that trunk." Roy lets out a little laugh at his own joke. "But I don't suppose you do that much hunting and fishing anyway, do-ya Carl?"

"I do some fishing." Carl says.

"What kind of car is that?" Eddie asks.

"It's an Alpha Romeo. It's Italian. You don't see too many around here."

"No we don't see too many Alpha Romeeeeeo's around here, do we Roy?"

Roy puts his arm around Carl's shoulders in a mock friendly gesture. Carl feels like a child next to him. The smell of stale beer and cigarettes on Roy's breath makes Carl feel sick. Carl's heart is in his throat, he struggles to act natural.

"That's kind of a strange car ya-got there Carl" Roy says. Carl shrinks from the weight of his heavy arm.

Eddie comes over and is in Carl's face now, a hint on menace in his voice. "What do you think Carl? Is your car a little bit strange or what?" Carl is silent and Eddie slowly steps away to inspect the interior.

Carl squirms from under Roy's arm and quickly heads for the door of the Alfa, but Eddie is too fast for him, and stands in front of the driver's side door blocking his way, looking inside the open convertible.

"Yeah, well, not too many around here." Carl says, trying to recover his cool as he stands by the car looking for an opportunity to get in and get away.

"I sure would like to try to driving this thing. What about you Roy?" Eddie says.

"Go ahead. I'll follow you in the Vette."

"Nice try Welch. You know nobody but me drives the Vette. You drive it?"

Roy's eyebrows rise. "Well, okay, yeah, sure."

Carl chimes in, "No, I don't think so. Sorry, I got 'a get going. It's not running that good right now anyway."

"No! What do you mean no?" Eddie instantly turns angrily. Then just as quickly turns to mock disappointment.

"Roy, did you hear that? Our little buddy here says he won't let you drive his car. What's wrong Carl, you don't like hanging around with us? We don't have any fancy Italian sport cars? We don't have any long hair, or spiffy clothes?" Now a little spark of anger and menace is in McGuire's voice, as he steps in close to Carl's face. It's hard to tell what McGuire is feeling, but of course Carl knows this is all just a game, a ruse.

Roy steps behind Carl, then roughly reaches around and stuffs his hand into the right front pocket of Carl's jeans, where he finds the keys to the Alfa. Carl doesn't resist.

"No, Eddie, he doesn't mind. Do-ya Carl?" Carl doesn't respond. He feels overwhelmed, out of control, in a daze. He knows he is powerless to resist these older and bigger guys.

Roy Welch has the keys and Eddie McGuire, his face inches from Carl's commands.

"Get in." He stands slightly aside as Roy crawls into the driver's seat of the Alfa. Carl slowly backs up and turns, as Eddie follows him only inches away as he makes his way around the back of the car. Eddie opens the door and Carl slides into the low bucket seat.

Roy seems huge to Carl as he sits in the driver's seat. He is testing the clutch and roughly working the shifter. He fiddles with the key to get it in the ignition and then starts the car revving the engine. Carl cringes. Eddie is still standing by the passenger door.

Roy roughly works the shifter to find reverse. "Far to the left and up" Carl says.

Roy slams it over and up, revs it up, and tentatively tests the clutch. The car starts to move backward. Roy looks up with a big smile, like a kid who just scored the winning point. The Alpha slowly backs into the street. He is flailing the shifter again, looking for first. He over revs it and the car springs forward with a jolt.

"Three corners" Eddie yells as they pull away.

"Three Corners" Roy yells back without looking as they move off down the street.

Roy stops at the corner, at the end of the short block. This time he revs and slips the clutch a little less, hits the gas and the Alfa springs to life. He makes a fairly smooth shift to second as they scream down a dark side street. The cold spring night air swirls their hair and creeps down their necks.

"Damn, this thing IS fast."

They come to a corner and Roy tries to take it fast. He over steers and they almost end up in the ditch. Carl is cringing. His right foot is pinned to the floor as if it were a break-peddle. He wonders how much Roy has had to drink.

Roy runs through the gears a bit smother this time. Carl is thankful he isn't red lining it. Fortunately, Roy is used to driving lower revving American cars and is shifting sooner than necessary.

The reality of the situation is starting to sink in. Carl realizes he is trapped and these guys mean him harm. That's clear. How much harm he is not sure. Why, is still a mystery lost in the unfathomable customs of this strange and now dangerous tribe.

"So, Roy, where are we going, what's going on?"

"Nothing, nothing, just a little party." He responds.

Carl decides to try to lighten things up a bit, make friends if possible.

"So how do you like it?"

Roy nods his head a little. "Kinda cool."

"Yeah, it's only a four cylinder, 1600cc, or 97 cubic inches, but it produces about 140 horsepower, which is a lot for a car this size. I'll show you the engine when we stop."

Roy laughs, "Yeah, okay"

The cold night air sends a shiver down Carl's back. It's also a shiver of fear.

They approach a wide curve to the right, but instead of taking it, Roy slows down and pulls off onto a gravel road. Where the gravel road and the curved paved road meet, is a large, flat, open area called 'three corners'. Several cars and trucks are already there. McGuire in his Vette, and several other cars pull in behind them. Roy drives the Alfa into the center of the circle of cars and switches off the ignition. He snatches the keys from the ignition and gets out.

Carl reluctantly crawls out. He recognizes several kids from school, so he heads over to them as if nothing is out of the ordinary. He is scared and looking for help and support.

"Hi Tom, Mark. What's going on? Hi Bill. And you're Barbara, right?" Carl says to an attractive older girl.

They return the greeting, but seem a little surprised to see Carl driving up with Roy Welch. But, they don't act like anything unusual is happening.

Eddie and Roy are talking to a couple of the guys over by the cars that have followed, cracking open beers. Nothing seems much out of the ordinary. Carl has been to this type of beer drinking party before. He is starting to relax. He chats with the kids from his class and notices that Walker has shown up. There are quite a few cars now.

Roy walks over to the Alfa and calls "Hey Carl, come over here and show me this engine."

Carl is startled and says "Oh shit" under his breath. He hesitates and then casually walks over, pops the hood and sets it on its prop. Roy peers in. It's dark and he can't see much.

"Try turning on the lights" Roy says.

Carl leans in the car and turns on the headlights. The engine is more visible now.

"Wow that IS different looking."

"Yeah, well these are overhead cams. That's a big part of what make it so efficient." A couple of the other guys walk over. Carl continues.

"Overhead cams sit right on top of the cylinders. You get a lot closer tolerances that way. And check out these carburetors. These are dual, dual Webbers. See you got one intake for each cylinder. The air comes in this side, right into the cylinder, and out the other side, right into the header. The cams are driven..."

Carl glances sideways just in time to see Eddie McGuire rushing up at him. Eddie slams him in the side of his face with his fist. Carl reels in pain and shock. McGuire comes at him again with several hard punches, as Carl backs away, futilely trying to protect himself with his hands. He trips backward and falls to the ground holding his head.

"Stop, stop." Carl begs.

"Get the fuck up" McGuire stands over him, demanding. Carl lies holding his face, writhing in pain.

"Get the fuck up and fight, you pussy"

"No, look, you win. I don't want to fight." Carl is crying, pleading.

This seems to piss Eddie off even more. He grabs Carl's shirt with his left hand and pounds him again three or four times with his right. Carl curls into a fetal position and tries to protect his face with his hands.

Eddie stands up and struts away. "Fucking pussy." He yells.

Carl lays there in the dirt and gravel, crying. He is not getting up.

Eddie takes a few chugs from his beer and yells, "Get up and fight you little queer."

A few minutes later, Roy Welch walks over, grabs Carl's arm and pulls him up. He says in a non threatening manor "Come on, get up, your all right. Go ahead, fight back."

"Yeah, fight back, fight back" someone yells from the sidelines.

Carl gets up. He is covered with dirt and blood is running from his nose and down his already bruising face. Roy brushes him off a little bit.

"You got to fight back. Come on now, let's see some fists." He grabs Carl's arms and tries to put them up. "No, No, come on Roy, you win. I don't want to fight. I can't fight you Roy. What did I do? I didn't do anything."

"Oh yeah, you been doing a lot. We're just playing." Roy says with a smirk.

"Come on now, put up your hands and fight. Go ahead, hit me." Roy demands.

Roy slaps Carl in the side of the head, trying to get him to fight back. Carl attempts to protect himself with his hands, but is not hitting back.

Roy finally gets frustrated, slaps Carl a couple times, and gives him a push. Carl sprawls to the hard gravel. Roy turns and walks away with a shrug, shaking his head. "He won't fight." He yells to the others.

Carl is on the ground. He sets up with his elbows on his knees, holding his head with his hands. The glaring headlights of the Alfa and the other cars illuminate the scene. He is in pain and afraid to get up, knowing he can't leave because Roy still has his keys. He is left to sit in his own humiliation, while his attackers and his schoolmates look on. They stand by their cars drinking beer. Occasionally Eddie yells an insult. Carl can hear them joking about him, "What a fucking pussy." It seems to go on forever.

Finally Roy walks over again. "Are you ready to get up now?" Carl cringes in fear, covering his head with his arms. "Come on, it's over, get up." Carl doesn't move. Roy tries again, "Come on get up, you'll be alright." Carl is not getting up.

Suddenly Eddie McGuire comes out fuming, "You fucking pussy get the fuck up." He grabs Carl's hair with his left hand, then leaning down punches him in the face and head over and over. Carl curls it a fetal position trying to protect himself with his hands as he lies on the ground. This infuriates Eddie even more. McGuire starts kicking him with his

hard pointed toed cowboy boots. He catches Carl on the forehead, in the side, on the back. He's not pulling his punches. With a final effort, he stomps on Carl's head with the heel of his boot. Carl loses consciousness.

Roy runs over and pushes Eddie away "That's enough, Jesus fucking Christ McGuire, that's enough." Now a couple of other people are calling out. "Leave him alone, he's had enough" McGuire struts off as Carl regains consciousness. A gash above his eye is beading profusely.

Roy leans down to check out the damage. He is a concerned Eddie has have gone too far. Carl is crying and mumbling "I can't see, I can't see"

"What? You can't see?" Roy is trying to talk to him.

"He says he can't see?" Roy calls out.

Roy tries to look at Carl's eyes. They are covered with blood. He is not sure what the damage may be. Roy is pissed at Eddie now. Eddie comes over to take a look. Roy can't understand what the hell has gotten into him. They have roughed up the local guys like this before, but they never really hurt them. They are just putting them in their place. Reminding them who is top-dog, having a little fun. Eddie is acting like he is out for blood.

"Why the fuck did you have to kick him like that, god damn it." Roy says.

Eddie bends down and looks at him for a second, then declares "He's alright, the little faker."

"Yeah, he looks fucking great."

"Fuck that little pussy." Eddie sputters. He starts to go after Carl again, but Roy steps in front, an immovable object. Eddie backs off and stomps away, "Come on let's get the fuck out of here." he calls.

Roy takes one last look at Carl, then turns to follow. "Here are your keys" he says, as he throws them onto the drivers' seat of the Alfa. Carl seems oblivious as he lies in the gravel, quietly crying, blood pouring from the cut on his head.

Roy is concerned. He walks over to the group of kids from Carl's class. They look upset, but are silent. Barbara is one of the older party girls. She is angry. "This is bullshit, Welch. You and McGuire are out of fucking control."

Roy ignores her. "Clean him up and get him home." He says.

Barbara glares. He turns and leaves.

Eddie gets in his Vette with another guy, and drives away in a cloud of dust and gravel. A few other cars follow. Roy jumps in a pickup with two other guys. He is angry. He and Eddie sometimes rough up kids who are copping too much of an attitude. They have been doing it ever since they were juniors in High School. This is their town and they don't take any bullshit. This kid, with his fancy car and clothes, and his little hippie act has had it coming for a while. But, Roy can't understand what made Eddie go off like that. He beat the shit out of that kid. It could have been worse if Roy hadn't stepped in. Roy has a feeling he hasn't heard the last of this. He only hopes Carl isn't seriously hurt, or even blinded.

Barbara and one of the guys in Carl's class come over. They lean down to survey the damage. "God damn, he looks pretty fuck up. We may have to get him to a hospital" Says Tom.

Barbara holds onto Carl's arm, "Can you get up? I have a towel and some water, let's see if we can get you cleaned up."

Carl slowly gets up. He is still quietly crying and in a daze. His head pounds and he can't see out of his left eye. Blood is everywhere. They help him slowly limp over to the car, and he sits on the hood as Barbara gets a towel and a canteen of water from inside. Blood is running down his face and neck, onto his shirt and pants. She holds the towel firmly against the head wound as Carl winces. Wetting the other end, she cleans the blood from his eyes. He can see again.

Carl starts to come-around and settle down. He has stopped crying and has started muttering profanities under his breath, looking around. Barbara and Tom smile to each other and consider that a good sign. All Carl can think about is getting away. He is afraid Eddie and Roy are coming back. Suddenly he staggers to his feet. "I'm going home."

Barbara and Tom are startled. "I don't think you should be driving." Says Tom.

"I got to get out of here." He staggers toward the Alfa.

They follow. "No, you can't drive. Let one of us drive you home."

"I can drive. I got'a get my car. They may be coming back." Carl looks around in fear.

"Don't worry. They're not coming back. We'll get you home" Barbara says.

"No, they may come back" He limps to the car, opens the door and picks up the keys from the seat. Wincing, he slowly gets in. His side is aching and the setting position in the car is excruciating. He grimaces he tries to find a bearable position. Carl turns the key and the starter barely turns over, then clicks. They left the lights on so everyone could watch his torture and humiliation and now the battery is dead.

"Shit, shit, shit" Carl starts to sob again in frustration. The depressing reality of the situation is sinking in. His head is throbbing and blood is seeping into his left eye again.

"Look Carl, you shouldn't be driving any way." Barbara says. "Let me take you home."

He doesn't care anymore. He wants to go to sleep. Barbara helps him out of the car. He is having trouble walking again and both of them have to help. They slowly get him to her car and into the front seat. Barbara reclines the back and Carl closes his eyes. She gets in and starts the car. "Thanks Tom, I'll get him home." Barbara says to Tom out the window.

"Are you sure Barbara, I can follow you if you want." He looks concerned.

"I'm fine, Thanks for helping out."

"I'm mad as hell about this Barbara, but everybody is afraid of those guys." Tom says.

"I know me too." She shrug. "See-ya."

She roles up her window and the car starts to move. Tom absent mindedly waves goodbye.

As they leave Carl opens his eyes and turns his head. He sees the Alfa setting forlornly by itself as it fades from his view.

"The top is still down." He says quietly to himself. "I hope it doesn't rain."

Carl starts taking a self evaluation, looking down at his body moving his limbs, touching his wounds.

Looking at his blood drenched shirt he say, "Oh man, my mom is going to freak out when she sees me."

"She should freak out, I'm freaked out." Barbara says glancing at him as she drives.

"I would sure like to get cleaned up a little bit first."

Barbara looks shocked, "Are you nuts? You should be in the fucking hospital."

"I'm not feeling too good, but I don't think anything is broken. I'm not sure. I can see fine now." He pulls down the visor and looks at himself in the mirror.

"Jesus Christ! I'm a fucking mess. Oh my god, my mom is going to have a fucking heart attack. I'm serious"

Barbara laughs. They look at each other and then both start laughing. She shakes her head.

"OK, let's stop by my place first, but just for a minute."

"Really? But your parents..?"

"I got my own place. I'm twenty-four. I'm old."

They pull into the gravel drive of a tiny, white, two story frame house which was probably built in the 1920's. There is a small front porch with a swing and no garage. Carl gingerly gets out and limps up the three steps to the door. She lets him in. It's modest but neat. She herds him into the kitchen and sits him down at a Formica table where she takes a closer look at the damage in the bright light.

"How does it look?" He asks.

"It ain't pretty." She says grimacing and tisking.

"Got a mirror? Let me see." Carl's impatient.

"Not yet. Let me clean you up a bit." She disappears. He can hear her rummaging around in another room."

Carl uses the opportunity to make another self assessment. His head is throbbing and the light hurts his eyes. He assumes that he has a concussion. The right side of his face is swollen and hurts like hell, but his teeth seem all right. He may have a broken rib. It hurts to breath. All four elbows and knees are scraped up, his left knee especially. But, all in all he thinks it's not as bad as he thought.

Barbara comes back "Let's see what we got here." She has a pan of warm water and a washcloth. Barbara gently wipes the blood from his face. "The cut above your eye doesn't look that bad. It sure did bleed a lot. I think that saved you. Welch looked nervous when you said you couldn't see.

"I played that up a little bit." Carl admits.

"It's that god damned Eddie McGuire, he's the mean one."

"Yeah, well Roy Welch is the one who kidnapped me the son-of-a-bitch. What the hell did I do?"

"You really don't know, do you? They don't like seeing somebody getting too much attention, especially somebody new. They do this to everybody. This is their town. The sports car, the nice clothes, the little hippie thing you got going on. That's all a threat." She wipes the blood from his neck.

"Threat? What kind of threat? I'm just trying to make it through the fucking year so I can graduate from high school and then get the fuck out of town. I only got a couple months left. What kind of fucking threat is that?" Carl says. "Owe! That's sore." He flinches as she finds a cut behind his ear.

Barbara is looking at the side of his face and grimacing. "The side of your face is really a mess. You're going to have one hell of a black eye. We better get some ice on it."

The refrigerator looks like a 1957 Buick standing on end. She opens the freezer door by pulling a giant silver handle. The ice tray is a modernistic aluminum contraption. You're supposed to pull up on a handle to free the ice cubes, but it usually only frees up about half the ice cubes if you're lucky. Now all you need to do is just slam the part with the remaining ice cubes violently against the side of the sink or some other hard object to free up the rest. It takes a fair amount of strength and a special technique. Barbara is pretty good at it. She has a lot of practice from mixing drinks for her dad.

"Put this on your face." She commands. "Let's get you out of that shirt." He unbuttons and painfully slips off the shirt. "Yuck, that's a goner. You'll never get those stains out. Too bad I always liked that shirt. I got a T-shirt-shirt you can borrow." She picks the bloody shirt up with two fingers and drops it into a plastic trash can under the sink, then disappears and comes back with a T-shirt-shirt.

"Now, take off your pants, let's see what you got." She commands.

Carl looks surprised. Is this some good luck for a change?

"Just kidding." She says with a sly smile.

He shakes his head "The story of my life." They both laugh, pause, then laugh again.

Carl has met Barbara before. She is one of the regular cruiser girls. She has been out of High School for five years. That's old to Carl. Barbara has a loose, party girl reputation. She comes from a poorer family and is a bit rough around the edges. Carl has seen her with some of the older, tougher looking guys. She always seemed kind of trashy to Carl, but all of these people seem trashy compared to the people in the upper middle class suburb where he grew up. Her dad has a car repair business in Kelseyville. They were probably farmers at one time. Carl feels guilty for having looked down his nose at her. She was the only person in town willing to help him. Even Billy ran out on him, that son-of-a-bitch. Carl thinks she looks kind of cute now.

"We better go?" Barbara says.

"I'm feeling better. Got a beer?"

"I don't think so. You probably shouldn't be drinking. How much have you had?"

"Not enough. If I had known I was going to get the shit kick out of me I would have downed a fifth of whisky."

"Well that's enough beer. How about a Coke"

She gets him a Coke from the 57 Buick and they move to the living room, where they sit down on opposite ends of the couch.

"Can you turn the light off, it hurts my eyes" he says, but Carl is also worried that they may see him, they may come to get him.

"What did you mean when you said they do this to everybody?" Carl asks

"They do." She says emphatically. "Eddie and Roy beat up, or at least rough up all the guys. It's some kind of macho thing. This is their town."

"You mean the High School kids too?" Carl asks.

"Oh yeah, especially anybody they think is a threat or getting too much attention."

"That's amazing, those guys are so much older and they get away with beating up the high school kids?" He shakes his head.

"Of course they don't usually beat them up as bad as they did you. It was Eddie, he went nuts. I know he's mean, but for some reason he really had it out for you. I don't think Roy intended that to happen. In fact he looked worried when he left. Did you know he asked me to help you?"

"No" Carl says.

"Of course, you've got things pretty stirred up around here."

Carl looks incredulous. "Me? I got things stirred up? You're kidding. What the fuck did I do?"

"Well like I said. You're just a little too cute with that car, and nobody knows what to think about all this hippie stuff. People read about it in the newspaper, and watch the protests on TV. and a few of the college students are coming back all hippie-fied and shit. Then here you come." She turns up her hands.

"Hell, I can't even get a date; none of the girls are interested in me. I had a few dates when I first moved here but now they all treat me like a leper."

"Yeah, well all the girls were checking you out at first, but then they decided you were just too weird."

"Great!" Carl says.

"Well, actually, more like, controversial."

"Controversial?"

"Yeah, I heard this thing about you and Mr. Clark."

"You mean my history teacher?" Carl says in a high puzzled voice.

"Mr. Clark is revered around here. Every kid fears Mr. Clark, dreads that he'll ask them a question. But, I heard you actually argue with Mr. Clark."

"Well, I don't really argue, well maybe a little. He doesn't seem to mind. Besides that's what you're supposed to do in class. It's called education." Carl is feeling exasperated with the whole stupid mess.

"Well maybe that's what they do where you come from but nobody around here has EVER argued with Mr. Clark. That blew people away. You really did that?" She questions, not quite believing it herself.

"We're just talking about history."

"That's not what I heard. They say you were defending drugs." She looks at him accusingly. "I hear some of the older people in town are talking about you now, you and drugs. They think you're a bad influence, that you're turning the kids onto drugs."

Carl looks back at her in disbelief. "It was just one time. We were discussing the legal system and I said that the laws on pot were unreasonable and medical research showed pot isn't as bad for you as alcohol. I just corrected him on some of the stuff he was saying about grass, that it's addictive and stuff. It was just plain wrong information." Carl says defensively.

Her eyes open wide. "Are you out of your fucking mind, my god. No shit? You did that? Holly Christ, they are probably watching my house right now. That probably not only blew away the school big wigs, it blew away the students too. You got some kind of fucking balls man." She says, shaking her head in disbelief.

"You know what? I think I do want you to drop your pants; I got to SEE those bad boys. They must be size of fucking basket balls." They both scream with laughter.

Carl shakes his head, "Yeah, I'm real tough. You saw how brave I was fighting Roy Welch."

"That's not fair, he's twice your size and there were two of them. The thing is you're really fighting the whole town. Most of those other people were cheering them on. Not everybody, but most. I'm just surprise they haven't run you out of town already." She shakes her head.

"Wait a minute, I haven't done anything wrong. I wear my hair long, talk in class, and question some bullshit. I have a right to do that." He says defiantly.

She shakes her head "Like I said, you got some fucking balls. All I can say is watch out."

Barbara is direct and crass. Carl likes that. She sure is different from the high school girls he knows.

"Look, I appreciate you telling me all this, because frankly I had no idea. I mean I knew that I was probably considered weird and a little controversial but none of this." He reaches for her hand and she gives it. "Thanks" he says looking directly into her eyes.

"Carl, I just think that guys like Eddie McGuire, with his cowboy boots and Corvette and shit-kicking ways, they see you and this hippie thing as a threat. Not the politics so much, they don't really give a shit about that, but other people do and they're going to cheer them on. But Eddie, he doesn't want the little high school chicks he is fucking to start thinking guys like you are hot. He can't compete with that. Some of them do think you're hot but are afraid of what other people will say if they go out with you. You're still a little too scary for them, but that could change and I guess that's what McGuire doesn't like."

"I'm scary to Eddie McGuire?! I still don't get it. I feel like I am in another country, on another planet. I have no idea what the fuck is going on, and let me tell you something Barbara, it scares the hell out of me."

Barbara pulls up in front of Carl's house.

"Here you go, your home, safe and sound." They both chuckle.

"Thanks Barbara. I really appreciate your help."

She puts out her hand and Carl reaches to hold it.

"I'm really sorry this happened." She says, then leans over and kisses him on his good cheek. His red face gets a little redder.

"I'll see you again soon, when I'm feeling better." He says

"Sounds good" she replies with an open smile.

He opens the door and struggles out. His left knee and his ribs hurt like hell as he tries to stand up.

"Thanks again" he calls as he closes the door.

As Carl enters the warmth of the house he can hear the TV in his mothers room.

"Carl?" She calls.

"Yeah, it's me."

"Your home early." A question is in her statement.

"Yeah "

"Is everything all right?" She asks. It drives him crazy the way she picks up on shit. How does she do that?

Carl walks down the short hall and stops just before her door so she can't quite see him.

"Okay now, I'm all right, so don't freak out. But, I had a little accident."

"What?" She sounds concerned and is starting to get up.

He steps around the corner and into her room, trying to keep the really bad side of his face turned away.

"Oh my god! What happened?" She is instantly up and out of bed.

"I got in a fight.

"Oh my god!"

"I'm a little banged up but I'm alright." He is acting up beat.

"You don't look alright. Oh my god!" She is poking at him now, inspecting him, pulling on his clothes, looking him over. He hates it when she does that shit.

"Oh my god!"

"I'm all right." He insists.

"Come out here in the kitchen, in the light, let me get you cleaned up. Oh my god!"

She sets him down at the table. Gets a pan from the cupboard and fills it half way with warm tap water.

"Oh my god. How did this happen?"

Oh no, here come the questions. "These guys, Eddie McGuire and Roy Welch decided to kidnap me and beat me up."

"Oh my god! You can't mean Dottie Welch's boy."

"Yeah, well he's a pretty big boy now mom." Carl smirks.

"Oh my god. What did you do?"

"I didn't do anything. I have long hair and drive a sport car. Apparently that's a sin in Kelseyville Kansas."

"Oh my god!"

"Would you stop saying that?" Carl rolls his eyes.

"Well I just don't understand. Did you say something to make them mad?"

"No. I don't even know those guys, they're not even in High School. Apparently they beat up all the guys. It's some kind of initiation, a rite of passage, a perverse pagan ritual that's only practiced in small Midwestern towns. I didn't know a thing about it, until tonight. "

"Oh my god. I think you may need stitches." She observes. She steps back and slowly shakes her head.

"Why can't you just be normal?" She says to herself.

"I'm not getting stitches and I'm never going to be normal, at least by Kelseyville standards mom."

"You'll have a scar."

"I won't have a scar."

"Yes you will."

"Mom! I'll be alright."

"You probably have a concussion. I'm not letting you go to sleep."

"No problem, I'm not tired. Ouch! Take it easy." She is poking at his head again.

He knows she is concerned and he feels bad about it. She always worries about him. It drives him crazy.

She finishes cleaning up Carl's wounds, takes his cloths, gives him a Vicodin and makes him come to watch TV with her on her bed so he won't go to sleep. They watch Johnny Carson side-by-side. He keeps drifting off to sleep and she keeps waking him up.

"Wake up, you're going to sleep!" She nags.

"Would you stop waking me up, I'm fine, I'm just tired. Let me go to sleep."

Finally she lets him drift off. She watches him softly breathing, his face battered and bruised. It breaks her heart to see him this way. She admires Carl, but worries as only a mother can, that the mind and wit that make him so special will ultimately be the source of his greatest pain. In any case, Kelseyville is not where he needs to be. She knows that and she knows that he will be leaving soon and it makes her heart ache. She gently lays her head against his back and listens to him breathing as tears come to her eyes.

Bruised

Carl doesn't wake until around eleven the next morning. He is starving, but when he moves the pain hits him. Every inch of his body aches. He finally makes it out of bed and to living room where he gently collapses on the couch.

His mom dotes over him, fixes him a big breakfast and brings him a bed pillow. He discovers that his upper teeth do hurt and there is a cut inside his lip. Both knees and elbows are scabbing up and hurt pretty bad. His ribs hurt like hell, but his mom says they probably aren't broken. His head is pounding and the right side of his face is a giant, throbbing, swollen, black and blue horror mask. All in all, he is in piss poor shape. Carl has reached the firm conclusion that life sucks. To top it off he is worried about the Alfa. It has been at three-corners all night with the top down. He needs to get it, but is afraid to leave the house.

Carl imagines this is what it must be like to be a black person in an all white town in Mississippi. All the political convictions and arguments he has espoused over the past few years have come crashing down with painfully personal relevance. This is no longer a game or a philosophical argument. He can see the price of his convictions on his own battered face. The danger and the sacrifice of the civil rights movement seem a lot more relevant when you have just had your own ass kicked because you are one supposedly "different".

Carl's changes started five years ago, when he was still a kid, barely a teenager. It was a sleepy Saturday as he rode his bike in the humid heat to the movie theater near his home to meet his friend Lowell for a double feature matinee. Carl can't even remember the name of the first movie. The respite of the theater air conditioning on a hot summer day was as much of a draw as the movie. However Carl will never forget the second movie, "To Kill a Mocking Bird".

Not one black person lived in Carl's neighborhood or attended his school. That's partly why Carl didn't give the injustices of a deeply segregated Kansas City much thought. He was still just a kid and didn't think about things like social justice and politics. But this movie helped change that. The plight of the blacks and the courage of Atticus Finch as seen through the eyes of the character Scout awakened a new awareness in Carl.

Carl's friend Lowell is similarly touched by the movie. Lowell is from a Jewish family and is already sensitive to the issues of social justice. Some of his relatives tell him terrible stories about the Jews in Germany and about some of his own relatives who were killed and imprisoned by the Nazis. Every Jew of this generation is well aware of the similarity between the plight of the American Negro and the systematic persecution of the Jews in both America and Germany. Political awareness and a deep sense of social justice have a long tradition in the Jewish community.

After the movie, Carl and Lowell ride their bikes to a small creek where they hang out in the deep shade of a weeping willow tree and have contests skipping rocks across the glassy surface of the stream. They talk for a long time about the injustices of the world, about blacks and Jews. Lowell tells Carl stories about his family's experiences with discrimination and prejudice. It seems strange that over the years Lowell has never talked to Carl about what it's like to be a Jew, the anger and the insecurity. The idea that

someone could be prejudiced against Lowell because he was Jewish seems absurd to Carl. A life-long friendship is born from this small encounter .

A few weeks later Carl happens to drop by Lowell's house. Everyone in the family is gathered around the small black and white TV, excitedly waiting for a speech by President Johnson. Carl has no idea what is going on, something about a Voting Rights Bill. Lowell's older brother is home from college and has apparently just traveled to Alabama. The president appears on TV as the congress stands to applaud. Carl has never even watched a political speech before. That Lowell's whole family would be riveted with anticipation is stunning. Carl doesn't really remember much of the speech itself. It's the excited response of Scott's brother and the congratulations given him by his parents that sticks in Carl's mind.

Later David sits on the front porch with Lowell and Carl. They eat ice-cream cones as they talk. It is a warm evening and they sit directly on the cool cement of the walkway with raggedy cut-off jeans and bare feet. Bugs circle the yellow light by the screen door. David is a mythical character to Carl and Lowell. As they listened quietly, David tells about his experiences in Alabama working with Black Civil Rights crusaders to help Negro's gain the right to vote. He tells them of the fear, poverty and humiliation of the blacks. He looks angry as he describes the hatred, violence and injustice of the whites. He beams with pride as he weaves stories of the courage, determination and strategy of the protestors. He speaks in admiration of Martin Luther King, John Lewis and the people who died fighting for the cause.

Carl is entranced. He has never met anyone with such strong political convictions. He is determined to get involved and the next few years become an exhilarating and life changing adventure. Carl's new found interest in political causes is a boon to his education. Before, he would barely do the assigned reading, but now he is devouring books. He and Lowell sometimes skip school just to spend a day in the library.

It is an exciting period of history for a growing political mind. The two main issues of the time are Civil Rights and the Vietnam War. However, these issues will soon bloom into a general questioning of all the political institutions and the entire culture. Within days after the passage of the voting rights bill, riots in Watts leave 34 people dead. An epic struggle is taking place within the Civil Rights movement between the peaceful civil disobedience of Martin Luther King and the revolutionary Black Power of Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X. The Civil rights movement is spreading with demands for the end of racial discrimination in schools, housing and jobs.

Carl and Lowell are becoming more interested and involved in the anti-war movement as they see their friends and brothers being drafted into the war. By the end of 1965 there are 175,000 ground troops and 40 thousand Navy personnel in Vietnam. 1,365 Americans dead and 5,300 wounded. Only a year later at the end of 1966 there are 400,000 soldiers and 4,800 killed. Resistance to the war is increasing and Lowell and Carl attend their first demonstration at the University of Kansas.

Carl is disturbed that the civil rights movement has turned violent. He sympathizes with the frustration of Blacks, but he feels drawn to the non violence of Martin Luther King and Gandhi. Carl's interest in politics inspires his interest in learning in general. He is now reading a variety of books, from Isaac Asimov Science fiction, to Sartre philosophy.

1967 is more of the same, war, death, riots discrimination and lies. Then comes "The Summer of Love". Mix drugs with great rock and roll. Throw in a healthy dose of pop culture, skin tight bell bottoms, and don't forget to throw away your bra. Now stir in a

healthy dose of "fuck authority" and "why be normal". And last, but by far not least, invent easy and reliable birth control. Far out man. Never has there been a more idealistic, fun loving, crazy and alienated youth culture. By the summer of 67 much of America's youth is on a rampage. Black power is in your face. Hippie culture is out in force in all its flamboyant glory and being unquestioningly welcomed by white youth.

Carl buys the Alpha Romeo on June first. He is a suburban hippie kid now and America is a very different place. David is supplying Lowell with the best drugs and it's shaping up to be a great summer.

The primary meeting place for the hip kids of Kansas City is Volker Park and the lawns of the Nelson Art Gallery. On any afternoon you will find groups of hippie kids lounging on the broad lawns, playing guitar and sneaking hits of pot. It's perfectly acceptable for anyone with long hair and hip clothes to walk right up, introduce themselves and share a couple hits..

Another example of the unprecedented and wide ranging comradery is the "peace sign", which is simply two fingers held up like a V. If you are driving down the street and see another car coming with a group of young and hip looking riders you flash them the peace sign. Even as complete strangers, they will flash the peace sign back. This small gesture becomes symbolic of the counter culture, a fact not overlooked by the conservative backlash. In later years the peace sign will be ridiculed and made fun of, but at the time it was far reaching and emblematic of an amazingly cohesive counter culture.

Between the suburbs of Prairie Village where Carl lives and the Hippie hang out of Volker Park is the up scale community of Mission Hills. It is the wealthiest, old money section of Kansas City. Many of the Americas' most wealthy power-elite live in these gated compounds, with mansions looming behind expansive lawns. Carl likes to race the Alpha along a windy road through this community on the way to the Volker Park. Down Indian lane, past the Mission Hills Country Club and over to Ward Parkway, it's an awesome race course and amazingly, not well policed. Fortunately, private security patrols don't give out speeding tickets.

One day as Carl rips around a corner a new Cadillac is pulling out of a drive way. Carl breaks hard, but is easily able to stop. He patiently waits for the Cadillac to complete its left hand turn onto the road. In the back seat he can see a well dressed old man giving the driver hell. The old man turns and stares directly at Carl with a look of anger, contempt and condescension. He recognizes Carl as one of those impudent hippies. Carl flashes him the peace sign.

The old man would have been less offended if Carl had given him the middle finger. He is one of the most powerful and successful men in the country with a vast personal fortune. He has squashed men a hundred times better than this punk during his climb to the top and now he is being forced to endure this defiant insult. As they drive past the old man's face is red with anger and he turns in his seat to glare. Carl stares back with a defiant little smile, still flashing the peace sign.

Even if Carl's new found interest in politics and intellectual development is good for his schoolwork, it hasn't helped his home life. His dad is a traveling salesman and is rarely home. That leaves his mom to gradually go batty with loneliness and two bratty kids. As the years go by she gradually loses her girlish figure and self-respect. Of course a well meaning Doctor is glad to prescribe her an unlimited supply of Darvon and

Valium. It's just what she needed to totally check-out of her boredom and meaningless reality.

When Carl's dad comes home from the road the house is a shambles and she is in bed with another mysterious illness that no one can diagnose. After tasting a few women on the side, he decided it's worth the expense of a divorce to move on to sweeter desserts.

Carl never does figure out why his dad bothered to fight for custody, revenge maybe. After playing the field for a year or two he ends up with a much younger wife named Beverly. Beverly has perfect hair, big tits and a taste for expensive antiques. Before the marriage she seemed delighted with Carl and even encouraging of his interest in politics. She tells his Dad, a lifelong Republican and closet anti-Semite who is not pleased with Carl's new political activism not to worry, that it's just a passing phase. His Dad isn't so sure and his efforts to "talk some sense into the boy" always ended in a loud, red faced argument and hurt feelings.

Soon after the marriage Beverly has a sudden change of heart. Carl is now an expensive pain in the ass. Even though he works after school, he is always a little short when it came time for his car payment. Carl is now a hopeless problem child and what is even worse, a slob. Carl is a bit slovenly, but not much more than most teenagers. The last straw comes when Beverly and his dad go away for the weekend and leave Carl home alone with strict instructions that nobody else is allowed in the house.

It was only a small party and Carl is sure he cleaned the house meticulously. Unfortunately, Carl didn't know his friends used one of Beverly's antique cups as an ash tray. Beverly goes ballistic. His Dad has to make a choice. It's Carl or Beverly's tits. The tits win.

Carl has been moping around for about an hour since breakfast when he hears a knock at the door. He reflexively jumps in fear. Sneaking over he looks out the window and sees Billy. Carl opens the door and Billy's mouth drops open.

"Holly shit! Man, you really look fucked up."

"Thanks. And good fucking morning to you too, asshole."

"Oh man, I really feel bad about this now. Those son-of-a-bitches. What the hell happened?"

"Yeah, well thanks for abandoning me last night."

Carl steps aside so Billy can come in. He takes the opportunity to look up and down the street, then carefully closes and locks the door.

Carl tells Billy the whole story. Billy is visibly upset and angry.

"I feel like shit man. I never should have left you." Billy shakes his head

"They just would have beaten us both up." Carl says. "I'm afraid your next."

"They got' a catch me first, the mutha-fuckers. I've seen people like this before man, and I've always been able to dodge them."

"I'll have to admit, that was a pretty slick little tRob you pulled at the Dairy Bell. You're a master of evasion Arnold. That's a great survival skill. Your genes will go far." Carl smirks

"I try to spread them as much as possible. All for the good of the human race of course."

"I'm feeling pretty jumpy. I know it doesn't make any sense, but I keep thinking they're coming to get me. I'm thinking about going to the cops."

Billy raises his eyebrows, and then sets silently thinking. Finally he says,

"I'm not sure that's a good idea. You'll be out of this town in a few months, probably spending most of your time in KC and Lawrence this summer. Then you'll be off to college. Why make waves? Just let it go. If you go to the cops it will just stir up more shit."

"Yeah, well I thought about that. I know you're probably right, you sound like my mother. But the whole thing pisses me off."

Carl stops and thinks for a while. It's an uneasy silence. Then he says, "I didn't do anything wrong. They kidnapped me and beat me up. That's a crime."

"I know man, but sometimes you have to choose your battles. This town isn't worth it. As much as you bitch about this town? Who gives a shit? Do your time and move on. Think of it as prison. You got bigger fish to fry."

Carl laughs. "Like prison, you got that right. That's exactly how it feels. My sentence is up in three months."

"Let's go get the Alpha." Billy says. "I'll go with you, it'll be all right."

Carl throws some jumper cables in the trunk of his mom's car and a shot gun in the back seat. The two of them drive out to three-corners to get the Alpha. It's dusty, but undamaged. Carl is nervous the whole time. No matter how much he tells himself its safe, he is still afraid.

Carl stays home from school on Monday. Around ten in the morning he drives downtown to the tiny store front police station. He can tell the town cop is in because the only cop car is parked in front. When Carl steps in the door, Officer Larry Barns is leaning back in his chair arguing with his wife about who is going to pick up groceries. The grocery store is a half a block from the police station. They decided that she will do it.

Barns is an ex-marine. He worked a short time as a cop in some big city down south, but his wife grew up in Kelseyville and inherited an old farm house just outside town, so they moved here. He likes it.

A basketball game is on the radio. Larry Barns is a sports fanatic, meaning all sports, which in Kelseyville is football, basketball and baseball. Barns also likes to take life nice-and-easy. That's why he's a cop in Kelseyville, nothing ever happens. There is virtually no crime in Kelseyville, so he never has to patrol. He has to break up domestic disputes from time to time, but he almost always knows the couple, which makes it easier. Sometimes Barns sets up a radar trap on the edge of town to help pay his salary. That's about it. Officer Larry Barns doesn't like trouble.

"Hi, how-ya doing? Your Carl Lee, right?" Says Barns.

"Yeah, how's it going?" Carl replies

"Not bad. What can I do for-ya."

"Well I wanted to talk to you about a little problem I had Saturday night." Carl says, getting right to the point.

"I can see your looking kind of banged up. What happened?" Barns looks concerned.

"Well, Eddie McGuire and Roy Welch kidnapped me and beat me up."

"I may have heard a little something about that Carl. But you know, kidnapped is kind of a strong word."

"Kidnapped." Carl reiterates emphatically.

"Carl, I usually try not to get in the middle of fights between teenagers. I know there can be some pretty hard feelings, especially when one person gets the short end of the stick. But-ya know, these things seem to have a way of working themselves out over time. Why don't we just let this blow over for a few days and I think you'll feel a whole lot better about it? I see you decided not to go to school today and I can sure see why. You look pretty sore, but you'll have to go back sometime, and it needs to be soon Carl. Kids are supposed to be in school. What grade are you in?"

"I'm a senior."

"Well there you go, you only got a couple of month to go and I guarantee ya, this is gon'a blow over. Trust me." Barns is using his fatherly approach.

Carl can see this is going to be a little trickier than he thought. He hates being patronized. He isn't stupid.

"You know that all makes a lot of sense and I have thought about all that Officer Barns. But you know there are a couple of things that really bother me about this. First of all, those guys aren't teenagers any more. I'm the teenager, they are in their twenties and I don't even know them. Second, look at me Officer Barns. Do I look like somebody who is going to pick a fight with Roy Welch? Or Eddie McGuire, for that mater? Come on."

Barns looks at Carl and thinks he probably has a point, but he is careful not to show it. This kid is sharper than he expected.

"Well Carl I don't know. It looks to me like you're a healthy kid. You're going to be alright in a few weeks." Still fatherly.

"Yeah, well I was lucky. I don't feel too lucky. But they could have easily put my eye out, what then? Did you know they've been beating up all the kids?"

Barns doesn't answer, but he does know they have beaten up at least a couple of other kids.

"Well Carl, I'll tell you what, I plan to talk to both of those guys. I don't like this one bit and I can see why you're upset." He did plan to talk to them, and he didn't like it one bit. Larry Barns doesn't like trouble and this is starting to look like trouble. "But you know what, I would like you to just sit tight on this for a little while and let me see what I can do."

"I sure would appreciate that Officer Barns. I really would, but in the mean time, I would like to file a complaint."

Shit, this is exactly what Barns does not want to hear. That means the local DA and Sheriff will be investigating, and that means trouble. "Now I don't want you doing that Carl, that's just gona make things worse. I want you to go home and let me handle this." Barns looks irritated.

"Officer Barns, I would sure appreciate you looking into it, but I think it would be best to file a complaint. Can I file one here?" Carl is acting all business.

"No you can't. You have to drive all the way to Ottawa."

Barns is short and angry now. Carl can file a complaint in Barn's office, but he is not going to make it easy for him. This kid is turning into trouble. Larry Barns hates trouble. Most kids this age would have backed down by now, time to get tough. Barns sits straight up in his chair and leans forward, his face getting red. "Damn it Carl, you're the one who is causing the problem now. I don't like trouble, and I don't want you filing a complaint until I get a chance to work this out. Is that clear." Barns is red and angry.

Carl is taken back. He hadn't expected this much of a reaction. "Okay well I don't want to cause any trouble, but look at me Officer Barns. I didn't do anything wrong. I didn't deserve this. I just want a little justice."

"Well I'm the one who dispenses the justice around here Carl and I am telling you I am going to look into it." Barns is staring Carl down, making himself perfectly clear.

"Thanks alot Officer Barns, I sure appreciate it." Carl says.

"Now you just go on home and get yourself better, and get on back to School tomorrow. I am going to handle this from here, don't you worry." Barns is backing off now, acting fatherly again. He figures he has Carl talked out of pressing charges. He does plan to talk to McGuire and Welch, just as soon as he can get around to it.

Carl leaves the office but he isn't reassured. He drives down the shaded streets to the edge of town and makes a right turn onto a two lane highway. Two miles later is the on-ramp to I-35. Carl downshifts to second rips around the corner, then runs the Alpha through the gears to ninety. He is headed to Ottawa.

A cold front moved in late last night and the day is cold, gray, bleak. Kansas winters are like that. No snow for months at a time just overcast and bone chilling cold. As Carl rips down the highway every plant, every tree, every living thing on the flat horizon zooming past his window is dead and gray.

Carl may have come across as cool and confident to Barns, but the encounter has left him rattled. He is debating with himself, "Maybe I should just give it up, hunker down and wait it out. Why can't I just be normal, like my mom says? Will I ever find a place I can fit in? How could my dad have sent me to this hell hole?" A happy ending is getting hard to see. No matter how he looks at the situation, at his life, it looks bleak. Carl feels tired, discouraged, jumpy, and angry.

The highway is deserted. Carl runs the Alpha up to a hundred. The speed, like his life is on the edge. He can see an overpass coming up fast. All it would take is one quick flip of his wrist, one tiny movement of his hand and all the pain and confusion, all the humiliation and heart-ach of this unjust and wicked world would be gone. Aspirations, convictions, hopes, fears, plans, he can't seem to remember any of them now. When he is gone none of it will matter, none of it matters now.

The bridge is only seconds away. The steering wheel feels tight in his hand, the engine whines in perfect precision harmony. At a hundred miles and hour he won't feel a thing, he and the Alpha will be joined together in a holly union of twisted metal, bone and bloody wreckage. Just one little twist. He tries to turn the wheal but it won't move. It feels solid, unmovable. He screams under the overpass and then glances to watch it recede in his rear view mirror. No problem, another overpass is coming up in a few miles.

The cop in Ottawa isn't any happier to take the complaint than Larry Barns. Later that day a Sheriff's deputy visits Roy Welch and Eddie McGuire. He asks some questions about the incident, takes some notes and files a report. A hearing will be set within thirty days. Kidnapping is a serious charge, and the DA can press charges or even file a warrant

for their arrest now, forcing them to make bail. A detective handling the case calls Larry Barns to inform him of the complaint and to see what he knows about it. The detective isn't surprised that Barns is well aware of the situation. Of course, as always, the implication is that this is something that happened on Barns watch, in Barns town and now it's an issue. That means trouble and Larry Barns hates trouble.

Eddie McGuire grew up about a mile outside of Kelseyville in an old farm house his dad bought almost thirty years ago. His dad is a long haul truck driver and his mom stays home with Eddie, his two older brothers and one younger sister. Being third in line Eddie always felt a bit overlooked with a supposedly perfect oldest brother and a hell raising next older brother. His mom was pretty much burned out by the time Eddie came along. Of course, everybody loves baby sister. But in general Eddie comes from a happy family. His dad is often away but when he comes home he loves to spend time with his kids. His dad is a bit of a kid himself and the whole family including his mom like to play highly contentious games of touch football on the front lawn, or rollicking games of basketball on the court they set up by the garage. His dad teaches them all about sports strategy.

Eddie is a natural athlete, aggressive and competitive, but strategic and a born leader. But he can be a sore loser with a hot temper and temper. Somebody else is always cheating. Eddie is a good runner and great at catching passes. When he was young Eddie often fumble the football, but his dad drilled into him, "Hang onto that ball Eddie". It's a lesson he will never forget.

Eddie's dad got him a good paying job right out of High School doing local deliveries for a beverage company. Eddie is a hard worker. He also helped Eddie fix up an old out building into his own place. They even put in a kitchenette and a bathroom. It's modest but nice and his Mom and Dad are glad to have him still living with them. With few expenses Eddie is able to buy a used Corvette, his pride and joy. All and all it's a sweat setup but Eddie often seems angry and morose and drinks too much.

Eddie's mom calls him stubborn, his dad says he is a hot-head, but in general people like Eddie, when he's sober. But everybody knows Eddie has a mean streak, always has. Nice one minute, mad the next. Maybe he got that way fighting for attention with his older brothers, maybe that's just the way he's wired.

Roy and Eddie hooked up in ninth grade. They owned the High School by the time they were out of tenth grade. Roy is the biggest and toughest guy in town. Eddie is the craziest and the meanest. It's a combination that most people decide not to tangle with.

Both are jocks in High School and into all the sports, though it is Roy who will become a minor football star. They are at the top of the social ladder and they gladly enjoyed the benefits of respect and cute girls. Now, five years out of High School, they are still big fish in a little pond. But most of the kids they went to school with are married now and having their own kids, Others have moved away in search of a better job and a better life. Roy is oblivious, but Eddie can tell that things are changing. Somewhere in the back of his mind he knows they can't stay High School heroes forever and it bothers him.

When Eddie knocks on Roy's door he is fuming. "I'm going to kill that son of a bitch."

Roy pushed Eddie out the door as he looks over his shoulder. He still lives at home and his parents are less than thrilled when the Sheriff shows up at the door looking for Roy with a complaint for possible kidnapping and assault. Roy is feeling more afraid than angry.

"You better just cool it Eddie. This has turned into some big trouble." Roy says irritated.

"Cool it? I'm gona get that fucker." Eddie burns.

"My dad says it's his word against ours and the complaint is probably bullshit, but Carl Lee's family has money. They could really drag this out." Roy says.

Part of Roy's newly cautious attitude is based on the fact his dad was ready to beat the shit out of him last night. Roy's dad is the only other person on the planet that scares Roy Welch.

"You can count me out of anything. I'm lying low." Roy is adamant, distant and peeved. This angers Eddie even more.

"God damn it. Everybody is acting like a bunch of fucking pussies. I hate that fucking little cry baby fucker. Fuck!" Eddie is pacing, stamping his feet, getting loud. Roy is afraid his dad will hear him and is getting pissed. Eddie is a hot head, Roy knows that, but this is serious business now. Roy's dad said he could go to jail for what Eddie did to Carl Lee.

"Drop it. He's graduating this year and leaving town. He's not going to be coming around town now. So forget about it. Let it blow over. What the hell is the matter with you?" Roy is trying to calm Eddie but it's not working.

"Your right, he probably will leave. That's why I got to get that son-of-a-bitch before he gets away." Eddie is serious. Roy is baffled.

((So what is with this guy? You have seen these people before, the ultra conservative haters. Eddie McGuire hates everything about Carl Lee. Carl Lee disgusts him. He sees him as a threat far beyond what at first glance would seem reasonable. It's a classic xenophobic response, fear and hatred of the outsider.

Mistrust of outsiders is a natural human trait, something in all of us. Xenophobia is a genetic tendency we inherited from our ancient hunter-gatherer past, when the tribe on the other side of the hill represented a very real danger. That tribe might take your land, steal your food, run off with your women or cut your throat. In other words, don't thrust strangers.

To some degree this is still an appropriate response to the dangers of outsiders. But some people have a heightened genetic disposition towards xenophobia and tribal identification. They strongly hate and mistrust outsiders and this tendency is reinforced by a bigoted culture. This manifests itself as racism, gay bashing and overblown fears of spies and communists. And of course, this is a trait that politicians, preachers and other demagogues know how to exploit.

For Eddie, Carl's sports car and hippie style is more than a fashion statement; it's an assault on the social fabric of his tribe. Carl's unapologetic social rebelliousness is impossible for an authoritarian like Eddie McGuire to take. In fact, the mini authoritarian state McGuire has set up in Kelseyville, with Welch as his "brown shirt" enforcer, is consistent with Eddie's xenophobic tendencies. After all, authoritarianism and xenophobia go hand in hand. Eddie's over the top hatred of Carl Lee is hard for Roy to understand, because Roy is just a follower who is mainly in it for the ride and the social benefits. But Eddie is serious and Carl Lee is the biggest threat of all, a threat to the culture that supports and nurtures his power and authority. And it's not just Carl Lee.

Eddie sees changes happening all around him and it makes him nervous and insecure. Of course, Eddie knows nothing about xenophobia. All he knows is he despises Carl Lee.))

Back To School

Carl doesn't receive much notice as he walks from his car to side door of Kelseyville High school, but as he starts the long walk down the hallway to his first class, faces turn and the hallway goes silent. He feels the eyes on him and can hear the comments. He struggles to act like it doesn't matter.

Walker approaches Carl in the hall. "Damn, they really fucked you up. I tried to warn you guys. I've had my own run in with those guys, but not like this."

"I'm not as wily as Billy."

"I heard you pressed charges." Walker says.

"Yeah, I did."

"No shit? That's really going to piss McGuire off. Well good luck." Walker looks skeptical. Carl does not respond.

Walker looks around. "It's almost time for class, got a go."

"Alright, catch-ya later."

Carl is anxious to get out of the public hallway and into class. He thinks a desk in the back of the room is what he needs, though he would prefer a dark closet, or better yet a cave. The combination of shame, humiliation, anger and fear is eating a hole in his stomach and he feels like throwing up.

Carl has no small ego. He has always liked nice clothes and been fussy with his hair. He knows he doesn't just have a black eye; he looks like something out of late night horror movie. The whole side of his face, running from his hair line all the way down his neck is a black, blue, purple, yellow, swollen disgusting mess. His eye is black and partially swollen shut. Nobody can even stand to look at him. Getting a date for the senior prom is not going to be easy.

Carl finds his first period class and slinks to the back of the room, purposefully choosing the right side of the room so he can keep the left side of his face pointed away from the class. He starts reading and pretends not to notice the other students staring at him as they drift to their seats. He can hear the not so quiet whispers. Many of the students are not sympathetic. Carl is not just a new kid in town. He often comes across as an arrogant know-it-all. To them, he is always talking in class trying to be the center of attention. The teachers like him just a little too much. And the way he dresses, all slick and hip, with the long hair and the sports car. That rubs these farm boys the wrong way. At first he was a bit of a novelty, but as the school year wore on the tall skinny kid from the city started to rub allot of people the wrong way. It's true that some think it was a shame what happened. Others aren't surprised. But some think he had it coming.

The periods slowly come and go. Lunch is another freak show nightmare. Kids slowly walk by just to get a better look. After lunch is American History with the infamous Mr. Clark.

Joe Clark is a no-nonsense ex-marine and tough as nails. But at times there is a glimmer of heart underneath his tough facade and he is generally liked and admired. Mr. Clark does not approve of Carl, but he has to admit he likes him. Carl is the only kid he has ever seen in fifteen years of teaching who actually has a real opinion about American History, even if Mr. Clark mostly disagrees with that opinion. Most kids shut up, do their

assignments to a greater or lesser degree, and move on. Carl actually reads the book and forms an opinion, and he loves to argue that opinion, sometimes beyond the patience of Mr. Clark and the class. Clark respects that even if he disagrees with Carl's cynical views.

Mr. Clark knows Carl has read several leftist books and unfortunately has been negatively influenced by them. He takes it as a personal challenge to steer him back on the right path and he hopes Carl's idealistic sense of social justice will help him see the light and will eventually steer him back to Clark's more conservative philosophy.

Carl is no push over, the kid is sharp. Clark has to admit he enjoyed their discussions at first, he even found himself looking forward to their little class room debates. He even thought it was a good learning experience for the other kids. Now some of the other students are speaking up and expressing their own opinions. But, as the year has gone on it has started to become tedious. He finds himself feeling angry after school and even debating Carl in his head in the middle of the night. Plus, he has fallen way behind in his lesson plan and now is struggling to catch up.

Carl would never admit it, but he loves history class and he likes and respects Mr. Clark. Carl adopts a lofty and idealistic viewpoint of the world, while Mr. Clark supplies a hard-nosed and cautious dose of reality. It is a point of view that Carl is learning to respect. Carl has become especially friendly with several the other kids in this particular class and they have grown to admire his moxie. It takes a lot of balls to take on Mr. Clark and to everyone's surprise Mr. Clark is not the frightening ogre they expected.

Mr. Clark is an almost mythical figure in the school and community. His chiseled features, stark Marine hair cut and serious, unsmiling demeanor is legendary. Cut-up in Mr. Clark's class and you are likely to be dragged by the collar out into the hallway and have your ass set straight, in no uncertain terms mister. It is partly this reputation that has turned Clark's class into a less-than-effective boot camp. Nobody ever speaks and everybody dreads being called upon. For Carl to willingly engage in debate with Mr. Clark is a startling revelation and it turns out to have made a lasting impression, not only on the students, but Mr. Clark as well. It has shown Mr. Clark that class order is not the same thing as an effective learning environment. Carl acts like learning is a fun and a lively exchange of ideas and opposing viewpoints is acceptable. It's an attitude that Mr. Clark is learning to agree with.

Carl is feeling miserable. Before class a few girls express the first real feelings of sympathy. That lifts his spirits, slightly. Mr. Clark walks in, places his brief case on the desk and proceeds to unload his lesson plan and other papers. When the bell rings he looks up. Looking out over the class he sees Carl in the back and does a double take, then looks away. Mr. Clark has already heard about Carl's injuries in the teachers' lounge, but this is worse than he expected. He feels his jaw tighten with anger as he turns to write "Supreme Court" on the blackboard.

"If the legislature makes the laws why do we need the Supreme Court?" Mr. Clark asks.

Silence.

He points to an unlucky victim. "Jamie?"

Jamie shifts uncomfortably in her seat and looks at her book, which is open to the first page of the chapter they are studying, hoping that the answer will jump out at her. Even though she has read the chapter, her mind is drawing a blank. She stammers, "Well, they are a bunch of judges who decide legal cases."

She looks up hopefully. Did she win?

"That's true, but what kind of cases?"

Silence.

He decides to answer the question himself. "Constitutional Cases". They decide whether the laws are consistent with the Constitution." He writes 'Constitutional Cases' on the blackboard and looks out at the class. He keeps seeing Carl's battered face in the back row. He trudges on like this for another half-hour. Nobody is saying anything. Carl isn't offering his usual quips today. Mr. Clark is talking about 'precedent' when he turns and sees Carl's hand in the air. It's a welcome sight. Maybe he is coming out of his shell.

"Carl?"

"Fear. It's all about fear."

"How is that?"

"They were afraid of the people, afraid that the legislature would pass laws that would take away the freedom of the people. It's called the 'tyranny of the majority', the tyranny of the popular, of the normal." Carl says.

"Your right, in the battle for political power the legislature might make laws that are unconstitutional, laws that would take away the rights guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. By protecting the rights of the few, what might be a minority at the time, we are protecting the rights of everybody in the long run. The Supreme Court upholds the base standards of fairness."

Carl jumps in. "Which brings us back to fear. Most of the founding fathers came from small towns just like Kelseyville and they probably knew all about fear. I've been learning about fear myself over the last few days." Carl says.

The class shifts uncomfortably in their seats.

"That's why we have laws to protect us Carl. I think Kelseyville is generally a pretty safe place. Most people don't even lock their doors."

"Well it's not looking too safe to me Mr. Clark. Sure, there are laws to protect us, but the laws only work if they are enforced. They only work if people are willing do something about it. But if you're a little bit strange, or if you're black, or a Jew, well then all those good people, the majority, they just look the other way." Carl says, bitterness in his voice.

"I don't think that's true Carl, there not looking the other way."

"Yeah, they are. Come on, were talking about me, right? I know I'm considered weird. I'm the new kid in town, that I have unpopular opinions. But I shouldn't have to be afraid. I shouldn't be assaulted just because I'm different. My mom keeps asking me "why can't you just be normal." The kids all laugh. "But I should have a right to be weird." The kids are sitting up in their seats now. This is a major source of controversy around the school and Carl is taking it head on.

"I know some of the people in this town think I deserved what happened to me, maybe even most think I deserved it, I don't know. But, that's the point. The majority is glad to see me put back in my place. People like to talk about freedom and democracy, but apparently Kelseyville can't make room for someone like me, even if I haven't committed any crime. Like I said, the tyranny of the majority." Carl sits back.

"What happened to you was wrong and those guys are going have to answer in a court of law for that. I was glad to hear you pressed charges." Mr. Clark says pointedly.

Jan Myers raises her hand. Yes Jan?

"But, Mr. Clark, this has been going on for a long time. Those guys are bullies, they have been beating up allot of people. Why should we have to be afraid of them?"

There is a murmur of voices, "Yeah."

She continues. "I hate to admit it, but allot of kids are saying Carl deserved it."

She turns to Carl, "You do say some kind of kooky stuff sometimes, but you say some good things too. You didn't deserve this and I feel really bad, and I for one am sorry it happened." Carl looks down, his eyes are watering.

"Thanks, Jan." Carl says softly.

"Me too" says a few other people.

A few of the other girls are looking a bit teary eyed as well.

"You may have more support than you realize Carl." Mr. Clark says softly.

Unfortunately, sometimes it takes something bad like this to wake people up. I have to say, I've never had a student like you before." Everybody laughs. "But, I welcome your opinions, even if I don't always agree."

Mr. Clark can see some of the students are upset and decides to take a break. "Let's start reading the next chapter for last ten minutes of class."

Mr. Clark sits at his desk and grades tests. The situation disturbs him, but he not sure there is much he can do about it. He feels it's unfortunate that Carl got beat up, but at the same time, he is not surprised. Carl loves to get in peoples face with his political views. Much of what he says and believes is wrong and misguided. It's no surprise that some people are offended and lash out. If you're going to be a rabble rouser and an iconoclast, then resistance, sometimes violent resistance, is the price you may have to pay. He admires Carl's spunk, but not his whining about getting his ass kicked. It's an unfair world and ass-kicking are a common occurrence. If Carl chooses a path of social confrontation then he better get used to it.

Carl makes it through the day and the rest of the week. It has been rough, but the other kids are finally becoming accustomed to seeing his ugly face. He has received allot of sympathy and support, but allot of kids snicker and call him a pussy behind his back. He has stirred up controversy among the adults in the town as well. Some see this as just a tiff between teenagers. Some are disturbed to hear about any kind of violence in their idyllic town and want law and order strictly enforced. Some see Carl as a trouble maker, a hippie and a rumored drug user and dealer. Carl realizes that he has stirred up some controversy. How much controversy, he will soon find out.

BAR

Carl calls Barbara late Friday afternoon. She has just gotten home from work as a cashier at a hardware store in Ottawa.

"Hi this is Carl."

"Oh, hi Carl, how are you feeling?" She sounds glad to hear from him.

"Sore, but much better. I wanted to see if you'd like to drive into Lawrence with me for a movie or something."

"No, I'm kind of tired tonight. It's been a long day."

"Oh, well okay."

She can hear the disappointment in his voice. He knew it was a long shot. She is older and he looks like a train wreck. He feels embarrassed now for even asking.

"I know you probably think I'm blowing you off, but I really am tired. This job kicks my ass. I'm just not ready for a night on the town. I was hoping for a quiet evening at home. Maybe tomorrow night?"

"Okay, that's cool. Let's do it tomorrow."

"But, you can come over to my house and just hang out tonight if you want."

"Really?" He says excited, then cringes. That was a stupid thing to say.

"Sure, whenever you want. I'm just hanging around home."

"Okay, Yeah, I can drop by in about an hour or so, if that's cool?"

"Sure, see-ya then"

"Okay, bye"

"Bye."

"Alright! She's going to see me and at her house, alone." Carl thinks he might get lucky if he didn't look like a car wreck. But what the hell, he can always go for the sympathy vote. Carl has been thinking about Barbara and the way she helped him. Her house is only three blocks away so he decides to walk. This sounds a little scary, but he doesn't want to park the Alpha in front of her house, he would rather keep it safe in the garage. It will be easier to sneak over unseen on foot.

It's already dark. The night is crisp and the air smells sweet and clean. He can see in the windows of the small town bungalows as he walks. They look warm and secure. Big old oaks and maples line the street, their roots raise and crack the aging sidewalk. Kelseyville seems like a place lost in another time, a simpler time. But the truth is that there never was a simpler time. This town has gone through the same wars and depressions that every other town in the US has gone through. The world outside may seem far away but its effects are easy to see if you look closer. Like the roots of those ancient oaks, the outside world has warped and broken the social fabric of this little town many times in the past. Its young men have died in all the American wars, WWI and WWII, Korea and Vietnam. The turmoil of social change, from prohibition to jazz, from technology to hippies; they have all left their mark.

Carl does not want to be seen. He has been running scared ever since he got beat up. He wakes up sweating from nightmares and can't get back to sleep, worrying that they are

coming to get him. Sometimes he crawls from bed to peek out the window even though he knows it's crazy. He keeps a loaded twelve gage shotgun, a family heirloom but in perfect working condition, discreet but handy behind the door of his bedroom. Now he is out in the open and it makes him nervous. He carefully waits in the shadows until no cars are coming and then runs across the street to Barbara's house. He looks around. No one is in sight. He knocks.

A block away Jane Wilkins is walking her dog. She slowly walks along as he carefully sniffs to find the perfect spot for a piss. She has never been able to figure out why one spot is so much better than another, but it seems extremely important to her dog so she patiently follows. Standing in the shadow of a tree behind a large bush, she glances down the street and sees someone at Barbara May's door. She takes a step for a clearer view and tilts her head to one side as the door opens. The light shines out onto the porch and she clearly sees Carl Lee for one brief moment and then he is gone. "That's interesting." She says to herself.

Later Jane mentions this tidbit of news to her friends, Brenda and Marry, who are overheard by Tom as they talk about it to two other friends, and Tom tells a carload of drunken guys that Carl Lee must be fucking Barbara May because someone saw him at her house tonight. One of those guys just happens to mention it to Eddie McGuire. "That's interesting." he says to himself.

Barbara comes to the door in a T-shirt-shirt, blue jeans and cowboy boots.

"Hi" she says cheerfully "How are you feeling" she looks Carl over. Carl steps in and stands for inspection, feeling embarrassed.

"You still look pretty banged up." She says matter of fact. "Well come on in. Want a beer?"

"Sure" Carl responds trying to regain his cool.

Carl sits on the couch. He is nervous with a combination of self consciousness, anticipation and horniness. Barbara sits on the couch and hands Carl a can of Coors. She tucks one leg up under her and turns toward him with a fetching smile. Carl's heart flutters. He takes a long thirsty guzzle. He needs some liquid courage.

"I'm thinking about taking some classes at K.U." she says "Actually, I got really good grades in High School, and I should be able to get in no problem."

"Really, that would be great." Carl says.

"I can stay living here and it's not that far to drive. My dad says I can stay here free as long as I am in school. He may even pay my tuition."

"That's a great idea Barbara. I may end up at KU myself. Lawrence is a cool town."

"I know. In fact one of the main reasons I want to go is just to find some new friends. Everybody here thinks of me the way I was in High School and I don't want to be that way anymore." Barbara knows she has a bad reputation. Once established, a bad reputation is almost impossible to live down in a small town.

Carl puts his arm on the back of the couch and touches her shoulder with his hand.

"Times are changing Barbara. You can do whatever you want. You don't have to spend all your time in Kelseyville. I drive to Kansas City and Lawrence all the time. Let's go together, I'll show you around."

"Really? Yeah, that would be great."

They talk for a while about collage. They pause to drink their beers. Then Barbara turns to Carl with a soft smile, leans over and kisses him on the lips. Carl kisses back and they move together. She is a sexy kisser, lots of tongue. Carl works up the courage to touch her breast through her T-shirt-shirt. To his surprise she doesn't object. Barbara reaches over to feel Carl's hard cock straining for release from his tight jeans. She looks down then back at him with a crooked smile and a raised eyebrow. "No damage here."

Eddie is seriously contemplating murder. He keeps running the scenario through his mind like a movie. He parks around the corner, sneaks up from the side yard, kicks in the door and blows that little punk's brains out. No, he would blow that bitch's brains out first. Then blow his brains out. He can see them begging for their lives and blood everywhere. But then the movie sputters like a broken reel. Somebody sees his car parked around the corner and the cops know he is the one who did it. No matter how he plays it they figure out he did it and he gets caught and sent to the electric chair.

Fuck it. He is so mad he doesn't even care if he gets caught. He can see himself being chased by the cops in the Vette, shooting back at them with one hand like an old fashioned western and when he finally gets cornered he crashes at 140 miles per hour in a spectacular blaze of glory.

Then he comes back to where he is, leaning against a Chevy at the car wash as Earl licks bitches about the price of hogs. He takes a long slog of watered down 3.2% beer. He isn't fucking stupid. Hell no, he doesn't want to get caught, but he still wants to kill that pussy son of a bitch.

Eddie glances around distracted. This is his town but somehow it's starting to look too familiar. It's the same old bullshit. On the other side of the parking lot between two cars he sees a group of young Junior High kids. He knows all of them. They are looking at something conspiratorially. Tami Harrison has something and she is showing it to the other kids. It's probably some pot. Drugs have already arrived in Kelseyville. Pot is fairly common. Even coke and speed are around sometimes. Eddie prefers booze but a little weed now in then is good for a few giggles. A few minutes later one of the Junior High guys' walks by.

"Hay Freddy, come over here." Eddie calls.

Freddy stops in his tracks. He's not sure whether to be afraid or flattered. Eddie McGuire is actually talking to him.

"Freddy, come on over. It's alright. I just want to talk too-ya for a minute."

Freddy strolls over trying to look cool. He's still a little nervous.

Eddie puts his arm around Freddy and pretends to punch him in the stomach. "How-ya doing? You and your brother still go hunting out by Rock Creek?" Eddie is walking him off to the side a little so they can talk privately. Nobody thinks anything about it. "Yeah Eddie, we been hunting quail out there a lot." Freddy says excitedly.

"That's a great spot, done some hunting there myself." Eddie lowers his voice. "Let me ask-ya something Freddy. What has Tami Harrison got over there?"

Freddy looks down and doesn't say anything.

"Don't worry your not in trouble or anything. I just want to know. What has she got?" Eddie asks. Freddy looks around, and then whispers.

"She says she has some drugs. Speed or coke or something, I don't know. I think its bullshit."

"Why is that?" Eddie asks.

"I don't know anyplace to get stuff like that, where would she get it? Pot maybe."

"What does it look like?" McGuire is really interested now.

"Some white powder in a baggie." Freddy whispers.

Eddie thinks about this for a few seconds. "Okay Freddy. Thanks for the information. I won't say anything, and don't you say anything either. This is between you and me, right?" Eddie gives him an unmistakable 'Or-else' look.

"Oh yeah, Eddie I wont say anything to anybody."

"All right." He pretends to punch him in the stomach again and ruffs him up playfully.

"See ya latter." Eddie says.

Freddy starts to walk away. Eddie watches and then changes his mind.

"Hey Freddy, come on back her for a second." Eddie calls.

Freddy turns and trots back.

"I want you to do something for me. You know Barbara May right?"

"Sure I do." Freddy says.

"You know where she lives, over on Maple?"

"Sure, it's a white house."

Two thirds of the houses in town are white but Eddie still figures he knows where it is.

"Look, I want you to go see if Carl Lee is over there. His car may not be there, so you will have to look in the window. Real secret now, don't let anybody see you. And don't tell anybody either. This is a secret mission just for me. Do you think you can do it?" Eddie asks with mock seriousness.

"Freddy's eyes are wide with excitement "Absolutely Eddie, I can do it."

"Good job. No go check it out and report back to me. Remember, top secret."

Eddie swats him on the butt and sends him on his mission.

About ten minutes later Freddy walks by and just nods his head to Eddie. McGuire discreetly gives him a thumbs up.

Eddie knows Tami Harrison's dad. He hangs out at the bar across the street. He is a mean old son of a bitch and a drunk just like everybody else in that place.

"Hey Roy." Eddie calls. Roy looks up. "Let's walk over to the bar for a little while."

The bar is a featureless one story cinder block building. The one window in front next to the scuffed door has a neon sign that simply says, BAR. Nobody is likely to mistake it for anything else.

When Eddie steps in, the place is packed. A nondescript three chord country twang is playing on the jukebox. It's around ten o'clock and everybody is pretty much hammered already. John Harrison and three other guys are playing liars dice at the bar. Eddie holds off for a couple seconds to let them finish a noisy round. The air is thick with cigarette

smoke and smells like stale beer. Eddie walks right up. "George, John, how-ya doing? Hi Ray."

"Hey Eddie, how's that Corvette running?" George slurs, holding a beer and weaving slightly. "That's a damn fine machine."

Eddie looks at George and thinks to himself, 'what a fucking loser'. "Running great George, I'll have to take you for a ride sometime." McGuire says supper friendly while he thinks to himself 'fat fucking chance'.

Eddie turns to John Harrison and asks under his breath. "Hey John ya-got a second?"

John looks a little surprised but no big deal "Sure Eddie."

Eddie steps a little closer to be discreet, but the other guys are still setting right there and can easily hear every word he is saying. "John, I'm not sure how to tell you this, but I thought you should know. I just saw Tami over at the car wash with some other kids and I could have sworn I saw her with some drugs." The smiles instantly fade from all three faces. "I can't be sure but she has a baggie with some white powder in it and it sure looks like drugs to me." Eddie says a little louder.

"What?" John says his face scrunched up trying to comprehend what Eddie just told him. Eddie continues

"I'm just into drinking, you guys know that. I sure hate to see these drugs taking over our town."

"What the fuck!" John has finally grasped the news and he on his feet in a rage. "Where is she?" he billows. Every head in the bar turns to see what is going on "God damn it, where is she?" he is heading for the door. The other guys are up now.

"Son of a bitch."

Two guys ask George "What's going on."

"Tami's got some drugs."

"Oh my god." A woman nearby says.

Ray is talking to some people at a table. The news is spreading like wild fire. John is making his way out the door and is screaming across the street for Tami. "Tami! Tami! Get your ass over here."

It's all Eddie can do to get himself out the door because so many people are crowding outside to see what's going on. Kids at the car wash are calling Tami.

"Tami, your dad is calling for you"

Tami appears between to pickups, fear on her face. She is half running to cross the street. She has heard her dad's voice like that before, and she knows it ain't good. That drunken, raging voice has preceded several severe beatings and she is terrified. She runs across the street and then slows seeing the raging red face of her father and the crowd of people. She is afraid to come closer.

"Get your ass over her right now." He screams.

She slowly obeys, her head lowered now, warily watching for the first blow. Her father grabs her violently by the arm, the tears start flowing.

"Where is it? Where are the drugs?" He sticks his hand in one pocket and then another. Out comes a baggie. There is a gasp from the crowd of people.

"Oh my god" a lady exclaims.

"What is this? What is this?" Harrison screams shaking her violently by the arm. Tami is crying hysterically, cringing in pain.

Eddie steps forward, "let's see it John." John Harrison hands the baggie of drugs to Eddie. He opens the bag and smells it. "It looks like speed or maybe heroin." He says loudly. The crowd is buzzing "Son of a bitch. Unfucking believable. No fucking way. Oh my god." Everyone is angry. John shakes Tami violently and is screaming at her again. "Where did you get it, where did you get this shit." He slaps her across the face. Tami screams in terror, trying to cover her face with her hands.

Eddie steps closer. "Did Carl Lee give it to you Tami? Is he the one? Was it that guy Carl Lee?" She doesn't understand at first, but Eddie keeps at her. "Is Carl Lee the one? It's his fault not yours Tami. Is he the one?" She finally catches on. She nods her head and says meekly "Yes, Yes, He's the one."

"What did she say?" someone asks. Eddie speaks up.

"She says that Carl Lee gave it to her. Carl Lee, that new hippie guy. He's been giving her dope. He's been giving all the kids dope"

The crowd is buzzing even louder now, angry voices are rising up. "Son of a bitch. Unfucking believable. No fucking way. Oh my god."

The lie has worked for Tami. John lets go of her arm.

"Who? Who did it?" John Harrison asks confused.

"That new hippie guy, Carl Lee." McGuire tells him. John doesn't even know who Carl Lee is. But it's all sinking in now.

"I'm going to kill' em. I'm going to kill' em." John is in a white hot rage as are half the people at the bar.

The significance of what she has said is now sinking in with Tami. "No, stop she says." Eddie jumps in. "Are you having sex with him, Tami?" Everybody catches their breath and looks at her. She looks back in shock and humiliation "No" she says. Everybody is looking at her in disbelief. "No, I'm not." She screams in humiliation. "I'm not." She is hysterical, trembling, crying.

"You don't have to protect him Tami." McGuire says.

"I'm Not, I'm not" she screams defiantly, and then collapses in tears.

John looks stricken "Oh God, God no." He grabs her arm again. "You're not screwing this guy are you?" he pleads.

"No" she screams, but he doesn't hear her. He is off tearing at his hair "I'm going to kill' em. I'm going to kill' em."

Eddie yells "Let's get that mutha-fucker. Were not gon'a take this kind shit in our town."

That's all it takes. The ball is rolling now.

Eddie is laughing, but nobody even notices.

And now the last piece of the puzzle. Eddie grabs George by the arm.

"I know where he is." Eddie says.

"You do?" George responds with a dazed look.

"Yeah he is shackled up with that slut, Barbara May. She lives right around the corner on Maple Street."

"He's at Barbara May's?" George slurs back confused.

Eddie looks at George and thinks 'What do-ya want me to do write it down for-ya, you dumb fuck. Jesus, this guy is fucking pathetic'.

Eddie repeats slowly.

"George. Carl is at Barbara May's house. Its on Maple Street." George's face lights up. He gets it.

"Carl Lee is at Barbara May's, right around the corner. Carl Lee at Barbara May's, right around the corner" George starts yelling. He is proud of himself as he spreads the news.

Eddie is laughing his ass off watching everybody running around in an uproar. Ever once in a while he screams, "Kill' em." Now he decides to add something, a little icing on the cake.

"Watch out he may be armed. He's a drug dealer he probably has a gun. Watch out."

"He has a gun, watch out." People are now saying.

Eddie steps back. He says to himself 'These people are so fucking stupid.' It's like he is watching an old time movie. People are screaming in anger, guys are piling into cars. Guns are being pulled out of trunks and the back of pick-ups. Finally he runs over to get in the Vette. He better hurry, these people are ready to roll. Cars are starting, engines are roaring. Eddie jumps in front of them, and then waits. He wants to make sure these drunks don't get lost, the stupid ass holes. He revs the Vette's engine. He's laughing and screaming with delight, congratulating himself and marveling at the stupidity and gullibility of these drunken morons. They are moving now. It's only a few blocks.

"You feel so good" Carl says softly as he kisses her neck.

She is rubbing Carl through his pants "I'm not ready to jump in bed yet, but I will give you a blow job." She says.

Carl is startled. He is used to hours of heavy kissing, petting and begging with the High School girls he usually dates. A blow job would be considered a home run after weeks of heavy courtship. These older girls are where it is at!

"Okay" he says lamely.

Barbara starts to unbutton his pants, but Carl jumps in and quickly does it for her, pulling his pants and underwear down far enough for his cock to pop out at attention. She places her hand on his cock and they kiss for a few seconds. Then she moves down and takes him in her mouth. Carl strains with all his concentration to keep from coming at that very moment, going over in his mind the process of changing the oil on the Alpha. She senses his dilemma and backs off for a minute, coming up to kiss him while she still holds him and gently rubs his cock. Carl regains his control and she moves back down.

Barbara has certainly been around. She learned early that easy sex was a sure way to get the attention of the popular guys. She likes sex too. However, as the years have gone by, the strategy has taken a toll. Now every guy she goes out with expects easy sex, and not just easy sex, selfish sex. They don't even bother with her pleasure. They treat her like a slut and act like she is stupid. She has even learned to feel stupid. But Barbara is not

stupid. She knows she's being used and she is learning that there is a world outside Kelseyville.

She finds this Carl kid interesting. He actually bothers to talk to her intelligently. True, it's not much, but Barbara figures it's worth a blow job. Besides, he gets the sympathy vote and he seems so dammed appreciative. What the hell.

Barbara knows what she is doing. Using her mouth and her hands she works on Carl with enthusiasm. Carl has her shirt up now, massaging her breasts, rubbing her ass and pussy through her jeans as she positions herself to accommodate his touch. He is taking his time about cuming, enjoying the moment. Finally she comes up for air and they kiss for a while. She takes a breather and looks down at his hard cock in her hand, then looks back at him and says with that same little raised eyebrow look "On second thought, maybe I would like to take you to bed." It looks like Carl's lucky night, but just as he is about to respond he hears the distant sound of squealing tires and roaring engines.

Carl and Barbara are on the couch with his pants pulled down and her hand on his cock. Two half drunk cans of Coors are on the coffee table. Carl has been feeling jumpy since he got there. He listens to the sound of the cars and then the unmistakable sound of McGuire's Vette coming down the street. Carl immediately jumps up, panic stricken. He grabs at his jeans and hobbles to the high window in the front door. His face is white with fear.

Eddie McGuire screeches to a halt in front of the house and jumps out of his car. A gaggle of cars and trucks roar to a halt behind him, pointing in various directions in the middle of the street.

Barbara grabs Carl and pulls him toward the stairs, as he struggles to pull up his pants. "Hide up stairs." She yells. As Carl scrambles up the stairs, Barbara looks back out the window.

Twenty-two men, some holding shotguns, rifles and hand guns tumble out and run towards the house. They hesitate for a moment so John Harrison can take the lead.

Barbara turns to run and hide but her eyes focus on the two cans of beer on the table. She rushes over and grabs one of the half full cans and throws it under the couch.

The sounds of heavy feet rumble up the wooden steps and across the small porch. John reaches for the handle, it's locked. He steps back and in one motion kicks a well worn work boot, planting it flat against the door just above the handle. The door sill splinters. The door slams open, shattering its glass pane, and the men storm into the house.

Barbara turns just as the door crashes open. She is surprised and startled to see John Harrison storming in her front door with half a dozen armed men following him. Barbara starts screaming "Get out, get out." John ignores her, glancing around the room. Carl is nowhere in sight. He rushes into the kitchen and then back. "Find him" he yells at the other men. The command is instantly repeated among the men "Find him" Find him," Find him" They storm through the house.

Barbara is emitting an angry glass shattering scream. John grabs her by the arm and slaps her hard across the face. Blood flies from her nose. A momentary breath of shock, then she screams and attacks. Fighting and clawing at John Harrison with her other hand. She has been beat up before by her father and boyfriends and it will take more than one slap to tame this wild woman's rage. He shakes her and slaps her again but his blow is partially blocked by her flailing arms. He holds her away. "Where is he?" he demands.

"He's not here you mutha-fuckers" she yells, and then lets out another blood curdling scream as she kicks at him, blood pouring from her nose. One of her kicks hits him in the knee causing a momentary shot of pain. John throws her sprawling over the coffee table and to the floor. She hits her head on the edge of the end table, a lamp goes flying, but she is instantly scrambling back up to her feet. With another deafening scream she jumps on George as he walks by. They tumble to the floor with Barbara on top. She punches him in the side of the face, scratches at his eyes. George is screaming and trying to get up, to get away. John has already moved on "Where he?" he billows.

Carl is standing in a tiny bedroom. There is no place to hide. Crashing, screaming and yelling is coming from below. He runs into a closet. He knows they will find him. There are sounds on the stairs. It's over, he knows he is dead. He looks up and in the ceiling of the closet is a small square of wood. He knows it's an access panel for the attic. Instantly he scrambles up, using a shelf as a foothold, tossing aside the loose panel of wood and crawling through. It's dark. He turns to replace the wooden cover. He reaches out, but can't find it.

Carl hears the men in the room now and he freezes in fear. He can hear their feet. A man steps to the closet, Carl holds his breath, peering down through the open hole, he sees the man pause, turns on the closet light, push aside some hanging clothes, fumble with some blankets on the floor, then turn and leave. More men are coming. He can hear them yelling to find him, more screams and crashes below.

John huffs his way up taking three stairs at a time, running into two men as they come from the bedroom.

"He's not up here" they shout.

"Bullshit!" John yells as he squeezes past to take a look himself.

Carl is searching again with his hands to find the wooden lid. Balancing on the rafter beams, he takes care not to step or fall between the cracks where thin sheetrock will easily crack under his weight and crash into the room below. It's an old house and the attic is musty with aged timbers full of splinters that rip at his hands as he desperately searches for the cover. He finally finds it. Slowly, carefully, he places it over the gaping hole.

It's pitch-black now. Carl holds his breath. His heart is pounding. He hears more clumping just below. Without the ceiling panels he could easily reach down and touch the man who is looking to kill him.

John Harrison stomps into the bedroom but doesn't see anyone. He slams the closet door aside and peers in. No one is there. In a rage he slides his hand over a tall chest of drawers, flinging some small glass figurines and other objects across the room to shatter against a wall.

Carl hears cursing, a crash and more clumping on the stairs, screams and yelling below.

The other two men are already heading down the stairs. They can hear screaming, yelling, crashes. Two guys are trying to pull Barbara off George. Now she turns and attacks them, blood is all over her, the sounds of her screams make them cringe.

"He's not here." They call. The men being attacked by Barbara are backing out the front door, yelling in response.

"He's not here." The call is taken up by three men in the kitchen, "He's not here."
"He's not here." Someone yells in the front yard.

Eddie McGuire is standing on the porch, waiting for them to grab Carl Lee. He has no intention of being the one who kills him, but he sure wants to watch. Now it's looking like he got away. Eddie can't fucking believe it. He turns to leave, cursing under his breath. "God damn it, I know that fucker was here." Eddie stamps across the yard cursing out loud.

The man Barbara is currently attacking gives her a final hard push. She sprawls to the floor on her butt. He turns and runs from the house. She is instantly up and following into the yard. The rest of the men are filing out of the house behind her, including George. Blood is streaming down George's face his ear is half ripped off. When he sees Barbara he runs to the side, taking a wide birth around the side of the yard. He watches her with a wary look.

Barbary is screaming "Fuck You" over and over. She is a crazy, bloody, wild mess. The men are getting in their cars. They are ready to get out of there. John Harrison is the last one out. As he comes down the stairs and heads across the yard Barbara sees him. She is screaming and coming after him now. He lashes out with a hard backhanded swing; his hand in a fist. She's sees it coming and is too fast for him. He misses by a mile. She is following, screaming, yelling, "Fuck you, fuck you. You mutha-fuckers are going to pay for this. Do you hear me? You're going to fucking pay for this. Get the fuck off my fucking property you muthafuckers." They are peeling away in a cloud of car exhaust and dust, headed back to the bar. They all need a drink.

Carl quivers in the dark. It's quieter and the screaming is distant. "Are they leaving?"

He hears a car start, then another. More screams, distant, outside. Then silence. Carl starts to sob, waves of nausea, choking fear. "I can't take this. I just can't take this." He whimpers to himself under his breath.

Barbara stands panting, motionless, in the middle of her yard, a torn and bloody mess, listening to the sound of the cars in the distance. Suddenly, she drops to her knees, her head in her hands and starts to cry in deep moaning sobs, tears mingling with the blood on her face.

Five minutes later Larry Barns pulls up and jumps out of the town's one police car. Barbara is still on her knees crying quietly in the yard. He walks over cautiously, looking around. "Barbara, are you all right?"

She looks up. Her face and clothes are covered with blood, hair tangled, tears streaming down her face. "Fuck no, I'm not alright." She screams.

"What the hell happened here?"

"A bunch of guys with guns broke into my house and beat me up. That's what fucking happened here. They said they were looking for Carl Lee." She slowly starts to get up.

"What the hell?" Alarms are going off in Larry Barn's head.

"Did they get him?"

"I don't think so." She says as she straightens up holding her back.

"Don't think so? Is he here?"

"He ran to hide upstairs when we saw them coming."

"Okay Barbara I want you to stay right where you are. How bad are you hurt?"

"I don't know, not that bad. I think my nose broken maybe." She is calming down.

Larry Barns runs to his car and calls for backup and an ambulance on his radio.

"Hang tight Barbara, help is on the way."

He walks to the house. The door is wide open. Inside the place is a shambles. His boots crunch on broken glass as he walks to the bottom of the stairs.

"Carl Lee" he calls.

"This is officer Barns. Come on out."

No response.

Barns makes his way up a couple stairs and calls again. "Carl, come on out. It's safe, they're gone. Nobody is going to hurt you." He listens. He thinks that he hears some movement up stairs. He takes two more steps up, looks up and Carl appear at the top of the stairs.

"Come on down Carl. Your Okay, they're gone."

Carl slowly comes down the stairs, he is in a daze and there are streaks on his face from crying. He follows Barns to the door but hesitates before going outside.

"What is going on Carl? Why are these guys after you?"

Carl shakes his head "I don't know. I just don't know. I didn't do anything. What's wrong with me? Why are they doing this?" He starts to break down and cry.

"I don't know either Carl, but I'm sure as hell going to find out." A Franklin County Sheriff's car pulls up in front of the house.

"Come with me Carl. You're safe now."

Barns leads Carl over to the Sheriff's car and puts him in the back seat. He talks to the Sheriff a few minutes and a Highway Patrol car shows up. Then an ambulance pulls in. The paramedics walk over and start talking to Barbara. Larry Barns gets in his car and he and the Highway Patrol drive off.

The vigilantes are back at the bar having a well deserved round of drinks. People are milling around outside as well. There is a lot of heated talk about killing Carl Lee. After a drink or two the plan is to go to his house to find him. The general consensus is that a slimy, drug dealing, child rapping, hippie, doesn't deserve to live and they would be doing the town a favor by giving him what he justly deserves. Castration is being considered as a viable alternative.

Larry Barns and the Highway Patrol pull up in front of the bar and a half a dozen people immediately come running over as Barns gets out. They are all talking at once about drugs, statutory rape and the downfall of western society. Barns holds up his hand for them to stop,

"I'm looking for John Harrison."

The word goes out and a few moments later John Harrison appears at the bar door. The crowd parts silently as he slowly limps with an indignant and martyred air over to Barns. John hurt his knee during the commotion, but he can't remember where.

"I'm glad your here Barn's because that fucking hippie drug dealer raped my daughter and has been giving her dope and you need to do something about it." He is standing proud and righteous, a man who has been terribly wronged.

A crowd has gathered and is bearing witness

"That's right. You got to put a stop to this shit. What are you gon'a do about it? You should have taken care of that drug dealer hippie a long time ago." Someone yells from the back.

"Okay John, I intend to get to the bottom of this. Get in."

Barns opens the front passenger door of the police car and John Harrison slowly gets in gets in, taking care with his injured knee. Barns waves off the crowd as he walks around to the driver's side.

John Harrison does a good job of telling the whole disturbing story, leaving out the part about the guns and wanting to kill Carl Lee of course. He and the others just wanted to bring him to justice. To prove his story John proudly pulls the bag of drugs from his pocket and hands it to Barns. Barns asks him a few more questions to make sure he has the story straight then takes a closer look at the drugs. Opening the bag he cautiously sniffs then wets his pinky and dips it in. He carefully touches his finger to the end of his tongue and tastes it. John watches, waiting for a verdict. Barns looks disgusted.

"Wait right here John."

Barns gets out and calls the Highway Patrol officer over behind the car. Now the Highway Patrol officer tastes the contents of the baggie as the crowd watches. They talk quietly for a few minutes. Barns comes back around and opens John's door. "Where is your girl John? I'd like to ask her a couple of questions. Is that okay with you?"

"Sure, she's in the truck" John volunteers, pointing to his truck which is parked a few cars away.

Tami is lying on the front seat when Barns knocks on the window. She jumps up with a start, and then looks relieved to see it is Barns and not her dad. She cranks down the window. He can see she has been beaten, her face is red and swollen and one eye is starting to turn black. "Tami, I need to ask you a few questions and I need you to promise that you are going to be absolutely truthful, because as you already know, this whole thing has gotten completely out of control because of the lie you told earlier." Tears immediately come to her eyes. She lowers her head and nods "I promise."

"Did Carl Lee give you that bag with the powder in it?"

With her head still down she shakes it and says "No."

"That's aspirin in that bag isn't it?"

She nods her head "Yes"

"Where did you get it Tami?"

"From home." She mutters quietly.

"You thought it would be cool to make the other kids think you had some drugs?"

"Yeah."

"Do you even know Carl Lee?"

She shakes her head. "No."

"This almost got Carl Lee killed and a bunch of these men, including you dad sent away to prison for a very long time. Do you think drugs are cool now Tami?"

"No." She bursts into tears.

"Tami, now listen to me. This was just a stupid kid's kind of prank. You're just a kid, and kids make mistakes sometimes and you have learned your lesson. Right? You're not in trouble, at least as far as the law is concerned. Your dad on the other hand, is in trouble."

He touches her shoulder gently "You're a good kid Tami and this will all blow over in a little time. You'll see."

She finally looks up and dries her tears with her sleeve. "Thank you Officer Barns."

"One more thing Tami. You let me know if your dad ever hits you again."

"I will Mr. Barns." She lowers her head and sobs.

Barns questions a couple other people as he walks back to the police car. They tell him how Eddie McGuire first approached John Harrison about Tami and the drugs. It's all becoming clear.

The crowd is still milling around impatiently though many have gone back into the bar. Larry Barns slides into the car, closes the door and turns to John Harrison. "Well John. This is crushed up aspirin in this bag. Your daughter got it from the medicine cabinet at home. And, she doesn't even know Carl Lee." John looks dumbfounded. "You just about killed a High School kid for absolutely no reason. And if I find out about you ever hitting Tami again, you will be spending even more time in jail than you're already looking at now." John Harrison swallows hard and puts his hands over his eyes.

Barns gets out of the car and walks around to the other side as he motions to the Highway Patrolman leaning against his car. He opens the passenger door and says "Come on out John." John slowly gets out of the car. "You're under arrest for breaking and entering, and assault. Turn around." John sheepishly complies. Barns clips handcuffs onto him and walks him limping to the Highway Patrol car as the officer opens the back door. Barns puts him in the back seat and closes the door.

The crowd is stunned. People are calling out "Their arresting John Harrison" as more people pile out of the bar. There is grumbling and angry talk in the back.

Larry Barns steps to the front of the police car and pauses. The crowd hushes to hear what he is about to say.

"I see that a lot of you have been doing some heavy drinking tonight. Anybody got a headache?" The crowd looks puzzled. Barns holds up the baggie.

"Well if you do I got just what you need right here, because this bag contains aspirin, crushed up aspirin. Tami Harrison got it at home from the family medicine cabinet. Carl Lee did not, I repeat, did not give this to Tami Harrison. In fact, Carl and Tami don't even know each other." A stunned murmur goes through the crowd. Heads lower and feet shuffle.

"I am disgusted by what has happened here tonight. I am ashamed that this could happen in our town. What the hell were you people thinking?"

"You just about killed a totally innocent High School kid for no reason, and I know about the guns." There is silence.

"I am arresting John Harrison and you can expect me to be serving warrants on some of the rest of you vigilantes in the next few days." Barns pauses to let that bit of bad news sink in.

"I better not hear about anybody harassing that kid. You hear me? He has done nothing wrong." He pauses and stares at them.

"Is that clear?" He stands and waits.

Silence.

"Now go home. And I better not catch any of you driving drunk. I am going to be watching tonight." Barns gets in the town police car, backs out and slowly drives back up Main Street. The Highway Patrol car with John Harrison in the back seat pulls away and heads for Ottawa and the county jail.

The Paramedics determined Barbara is not badly injured and have packed up and left. They tell her that her nose is probably not broken, but she should go to a doctor in the morning just to make sure. Barbara goes over to the sheriff's car just as Larry Barns calls on the radio to tell him he will be arriving in a moment to take Carl home. The officer allows Carl out and he and Barbara walk back to her house and sit on the porch steps.

"I'm so sorry this happened." Barbara says.

"You're sorry? I'm the one that should be sorry. Look at you. Look at your house. I'm jinxed. Was I there to protect you? No. I run off to hide while they beat you up."

"They wanted to kill you, they had guns. My god, you did the right thing."

"It's all completely crazy. I just can't take it any more. I feel like such a wimp." Carl shakes his head tears coming to his eyes.

"You know what Carl, we are all strong in our own way. It took a lot of courage to press charges against those guys and by god you can bet I am going to press charges for this, big time. I'm mad as hell, but you know what; I might not have done it before."

Larry Barns slows to a stop in front of Barbara's house. Carl and Barbara watch silently from the porch as he spends a few moments talking to the Sheriff. Barns walks toward them as the Sheriff drives away.

"You two have had a pretty rough night." Barns says, putting one foot on the first steps. "I think your friend Eddie McGuire pulled a fast one on all of us tonight and there's not a damned thing I can do about it." Barns tells them how Eddie McGuire stirred up the drunken mob at the bar into coming after Carl. "What bothers me is that they didn't come and let me to deal with it. I would have been on your ass in a minute if you really had given that girl drugs."

"They know you don't like trouble Mr. Barns." Carl quips. Barn's eyebrows raise and then he lets out a cynical laugh. "I get the point Carl and I apologize for not taking you seriously."

"That's it for me. I can't take it any more. I'm out of this town. I couldn't even make it through one year of high School. I didn't plan to stay in Kelseyville anyway, but I sure didn't plan on getting run out of town at the point of a gun. "

"I can't say I blame you for thinking that way Carl, but just hold on. You only have a few months of high school left and I promise I am on this now, you'll be safe." Barns says.

"Look, I know that this is partly my own fault. I admit it. I didn't really try to fit in. I came here with my own style and I've been 'in your face' about it the whole time. I was arrogant and that was a mistake."

Barns looks puzzled. "Funny I didn't notice anything. I saw you around, and it just didn't seem like a big deal."

"Well it's not like I was a major criminal or anything so you didn't notice. It runs deeper than that. Frankly, I had no idea I was that controversial. There are lots of kids like me in Kansas City. The people in Kelseyville like to think of themselves as the salt of the earth, the defenders of the American way, but when High School kids get kidnapped and beat up because they are a little different and a gang of bullies rules the street, that's sure not the America Mr. Clark teaches us about in history class."

Barns jumps in defensively. "Those guys are in big trouble, John Harrison is in jail" "What about Eddie McGuire?" Carl asks incredulously.

"Unfortunately, I don't really have anything on him yet."

"I don't find that too reassuring Officer Barns. Eddie McGuire may just decide to finish the job himself next time."

There is a moment of uncomfortable silence then Carl says "Thanks Officer Barns and you too Barbara, but I was already a nervous wreck, I can't imagine what it's going to be like now. I wish I was a stronger person but this whole thing has me totally flipped out. I'm not as brave as Barbara. She was ready to kick all their asses." They laugh.

Barbara stands up and looks at her broken door. "Well the whole thing pisses me off. I don't think you should leave. Look at me, I'm staying. This is my dad's house, my house. Look at my door. I plan on pressing charges and suing somebody's ass. But, you know what Carl? I might not have done that before." Barbara sits down next to Carl and takes his hand. "I think you have more support and have changed more than you know. You changed me." She says teary eyed.

"It's your town Barbara. You were born here so you should fight. I'm sorry, but for me I just have to move on." Carl hugs Barbara for a long time as Larry Barns steps away and waits patiently.

Finally Carl stands up and Barns say "I'll take you home Carl and I'll have a volunteer deputy watch your house tonight. I promise you'll be safe. Give it a couple of days until this thing blows over, you may change your mind."

"Mr. Barns, somehow I don't see this as blowing over, more like blowing up."

As Carl steps in the house his mother calls to him. "Carl?"

"Yeah, it's me."

"Are you alright?"

He walks into her room, she is sitting on the side of the bed ready to get up.

"I'm fine. See, just the same as when I left" Carl holds out his arms and turns around.

"Yeah, well you weren't looking all that great when you left."

She lies back against the cushions on her bed. An open book lies beside her. She picks up the book, replaces the book mark and then pats the bed beside her. "Come and set with me. We'll watch Johnny Carson."

Carl kicks off his shoes, walks around and flops on the bed. "What are you reading."

"Oh, nothing, just one of my silly romance novels."

Carl leans back against the cushions and rubs both of his eyes with the palms of his hands.

He sighs "It's crazy out there Mom."

"What's wrong?"

Carl takes a long breath. He is dreading this. He doesn't know what to say.

"They tried to get me again tonight."

"Oh my god, not again. I was afraid this wasn't over."

"I was at Barbara's house. Eddie McGuire and a bunch of guys came to get me, but I hid upstairs and they went away."

Carl decides not to go into all the gory details. He figures she will find out soon enough.

"Oh Carl, no." she knows this is bad news. That he has been suffering from fear.

"I just don't understand it." She says.

Carl lays his head on her lap as she strokes his hair.

"I don't understand it either. Why can't I just be normal?"

She smooths the hair on his forehead.

"I'm sorry son."

"I'm sorry too mom."

They lay there silently for a while. She knows that he is going to leave and he is trying to find a way to tell her.

"I wanted so much to make this a home for you. Kelseyville has always been such a quiet and peaceful place to me. I'm sorry it didn't turn out that way for you. I just hate to lose my little boy." Her eyes tear.

"You're not losing me. I'm just growing up, that's all. It happens to everybody. I would have been moving in a few months anyway. I talked to Lowell's parents in Kansas City and they said I could come and stay with them for a while."

"That's probably for the best."

Carl gets up, turns on the TV and clicks the knob over two channels to Johnny Carson. Like everyone else they only get three stations. Carl lies down beside his mother and they watch a funny bit from a new comedian named George Carlin. Soon Carl falls into a fitful sleep, but his mother stays awake, quietly crying to herself.

Crash Landing

John Harrison is taken to jail and everyone else at the bar drifts home to sleep it off. Many of the people in town are stunned by the frightening actions of the drunken vigilantes. Many of Carl's schoolmates not only sympathized with his plight, they are starting to feel threatened by the mood of the community themselves. Until now the guys have accepted the imposed pecking order as "just the way it is." Sure, most of them have been roughed up or intimidated by McGuire and Welch but it didn't seem all that much different from than intimidation they get from their dads and older brothers. But this is getting crazy now.

Of course, not everyone is ready for world peace, love and understanding. To them, Carl Lee is the problem. They didn't have any problems until he came along. They don't like the kids in town being influenced by "this hippie thing." They have seen the news. They know about the turmoil on the college campuses and the anti war protests. They have seen the scruffy long haired dope smokers on TV and from time to time in Kansas City and Lawrence. They think hippies are disgusting. Worse than disgusting, they are frightening and traitorous. The cultural war is going on all over the US and now it's even happening right here in Kelseyville. Maybe the actions of John Hanson were hasty and over the top, but he was justifiably concerned. That Carl Lee guy probably is a dope user and therefore a dope dealer. This whole hippie thing is communist inspired. Even if he is just an unwitting sympathizer, they don't want this kind of thing in Kelseyville. If he got run out of town it's probably his own fault.

Self justification or not, the bar crowd and the town elders are short on sympathy for Carl Lee. However, they sure feel bad about poor John Hanson going to jail. And one other thing; they were pissed at Eddie McGuire.

Even in their drunken minds they quickly figured out that they had been hoodwinked by Eddie. Granted, heavy drinking may have killed quite a few brain cells over the years, but they aren't that stupid. Well, maybe some of them are that stupid. A few defend Eddie by saying he must have believed Tami really did have drugs, but it doesn't take much brain power to remember how he pushed poor Tami into all those lies and stirred up the crowd. They still don't like Carl Lee, but Eddie is the one who purposefully deceived them and got John Hanson thrown in jail.

The whole episode is a major source of gossip and by the following Saturday everyone in town knows the details of the story. The town is still split in its judgment of Carl Lee, which doesn't really matter at this point because he is long gone and not coming back. It's rumored he has gone to California, which comes as no surprise to anybody. Still this is the most excitement Kelseyville has seen in years.

One thing that is back to normal is the Saturday night cruise scene. Maybe it's because it's the first of the month and a lot of people just got paid, or maybe it's because it's been another unseasonably warm spring like day, but Main Street is hopping. Nobody has seen Eddie McGuire since last Saturday so when his Vette pulls into the car wash heads turn. Eddie double-parks behind Jake Walker's pickup. Jake's truck and several other cars are parked side-by-side pointing out toward the main drag. Jake, Roy Welch and two other guys are leaning against a couple cars talking. Four girls are in Jake's truck with the door

open chattering and giggling as they sift through a stack of eight-track cartages deciding which one to play next. As Eddie gets out of his car they stare and whispered.

Eddie is already drunk. He seems to be talking to himself as he climbs out of the Vette. His actions are exaggerated as he closes the door and swerves slightly as he walks around the car and heads over to the guys. He is holding a beer. As Eddie walks up everyone is silent.

"Where's the fucking party?" Eddie asks in a loud mocking voice.

Nobody says anything, they just look around nonchalant, ignoring him, taking sips of beer. Eddie pretends not to notice and takes a chug of his own beer. He suspected there would be some blow-back from last week.

"Hey Roy lets go cruse around for a while" Eddie says casually.

"I don't think so Eddie." Roy says dryly.

Eddie looks at everybody with disgust.

"Come on, your all acting like a bunch of fucking women." He's getting iterated.

He chugs more beer. "Nobody wants to have fun in this town any more." He says to himself.

Jake is standing closest to Eddie, across from Roy. Eddie turns to Jake "Okay, well come on Jake, lets go."

Jake just looks at him silently, not moving.

The blood rushes to Eddie's face.

"What? Now you're fucking def? I said, lets go?"

Jake silently glares.

Eddie flies into a rage, grabs Jake by the shirt and starts hitting him in the face, "Don't fucking stare at me like that you, son of a bitch." Jake is taking some blows, but he is defiantly hitting and pushing back.

Eddie stops hitting him for a moment, still holding his shirt.

"Fuck you" Jake sputters in his face. Eddie is enraged.

Eddie hits Jake square in the face and is pulling back for another punch when a heavy blow cracks against the side of his head. He staggers back. Roy Welch is on top of him. Grabbing Eddie around the neck with his left hand, Roy lifts him up. Eddie is flailing, harmlessly hitting at Roy. His air is running out as Roy holds his neck with one giant hand. Eddie is turning purple. Finally Roy throws him backward and Eddie sprawls on his back to the ground. He lays there for a moment gasping for breath, then scrambles backwards and to his feet. He heads for his car in a rage.

Everyone is staring. "Fuck you people. Fuck all of you. Fuck this town. Fuck you." He yanks the door of is car open, which then springs back and hits him. He pushes it out of the way, jumps in the Vette and slams the door. The Vette sparks to life with a roar. Tires smoke as he fishtails onto the street.

Sixteen year old Jenny Lane has had her drivers' license for two months. She begged her mom for two weeks to let her to drive the family Dodge Dart directly to and from the Dairy Bell with her best friend for hamburgers. She has calculated that her mom will

never know if they take a couple rounds up and down Main Street. It's the big time for Jenny Lane and her friend.

Now, they stare frozen and wide eyed as Eddie McGuire's Vette, tires smoking, heads straight at them. They hold their breaths waiting for the crash. Jenny is already thinking about what she will say to her mother and promising god she will never disobey again. At the last possible second, Eddie McGuire's Vette swerves to the right and roars up Main Street, only to screech to a halt behind Johnny Wheelers Pontiac Tempest. Eddie is stuck in the parade.

As McGuire crawls along in the line of cars he is fuming. "Fuck this town. I hate all these cock suckers. They're all a bunch of fucking pussies. They couldn't even catch that piss-ant little hippie fucker. I'm going to kill him. I'm going to kill all of-em. Fuck-em. Fuck-em all."

Half a block away is a side road that heads out of town. "I'll be back and then you'll pay, you'll all pay."

Larry Barns steps onto the porch in front of his office to survey the scene on Main Street and have a cigarette. He still hasn't had a chance to confront Eddie McGuire about what happened last week. Barns knows he doesn't have anything he can charge McGuire with, but the days of looking the other way and cutting McGuire slack are over. He has been talking with several town leaders. Even with the various opinions about Carl Lee they are all upset by the actions of the vigilante group. Of course, this is all trouble for Larry Barns and reflects badly on his position as town cop. The town pays him to keep law and order and the events of the last few weeks have the whole town in an uproar. The sooner things get back to normal the better.

Barns lights his cigarette and glances down the street. Sure enough, he can see McGuire's Vette parked at the car wash. He isn't sure, but there appears to be some kind of commotion.

Suddenly McGuire's Vette comes smoking out of the car wash and damned near hits a Dodge Dart, then comes screaming up the street and stops just before running into the back of a Pontiac Tempest.

Barns throws down his cigarette and jumps in the police car. The lights and siren come on as he slams it into reverse.

Barn heads down the middle of the street siren blaring lights flashing. He has just enough room to squeeze between the cars coming up and going down Main Street. When Barns gets to McGuire's Vette he swings the police car to the left, blocking Eddie's way.

Eddie sees Barns coming and before Barns has even stopped is in reverse. He backs up about ten feet, cranks it to the left and fishtails around to escape in the other direction. There is just enough room between the cars on the other side of the street for McGuire's bold maneuver, but as he straightens out he sideswipes Lowell Hager's 59 Chevy pickup truck. The right side of the Vette shatters. The fender and headlight are ripped completely off. It hardly makes a dent in Hager's pickup which has been pre-disastered with years of heavy farm use.

The collision slows McGuire down but doesn't stop him. The way is now clear down the middle of the two lines of cars. McGuire is going for his escape. Eddie figures the

chances of Barns catching his 427 Corvette with his Ford Fairlane police cruiser are next to zilch.

Jan Myers, the sympathetic girl from Carl's History class is five cars behind Eddie McGuire in a line of cars coming up Main Street. She has seen the whole thing, the smoking tires, the near collision with Jenny Lane. She saw Officer Barns cut McGuire off and McGuire's escape. McGuire has just sideswiped Lowell Hager's truck and is now speeding down the street toward her. Like everybody else in town, Jan Myers knows all about what happened to Carl Lee and is saddened and upset to hear he left town. He wasn't in class all week.

Somewhere deep down inside of Jan Myers, the nicest girl in town, the quiet girl who loves to take care of stray animals, who never has an unkind word about anyone, and who has never even had a boyfriend unless you count a couple furtive kisses in the back seat of Kevin Scott's Rambler station wagon, there is anger. That anger is welling up in Jan Myers, a girl who rarely if ever has a reason to be angry about much of anything. Jan's anger comes boiling to the surface and fuels a quick and decisive maneuver that no one who has ever known Jan Myers would have thought possible. She pins the accelerator of her father's Buick Electra to the floor and cranks the steering wheel hard to the left. The Buick, a giant rolling ship of a car, hiccups twice and makes a wheezing leap forward.

On the other side of Main Bobby Brown is stopped in his beloved, 1968, cannery yellow, GTO. When Bobby Brown sees that Buick Electra heading straight for his GTO with Jan Myers at the wheel he nearly becomes the youngest heart attack victim in Kelseyville history. At the last second Jan stands on the breaks and the Buick Electra lurches to a stop less than an inch from Bobby Brown's perfectly waxed door. Eddie is trapped. Jan Myers is blocking his path

When Eddie is forced to stop, Barns is already out of his car and running toward the Vette. He swings open the driver's side door and grabs the neck of Eddie's shirt. Eddie comes out swinging. He flails with his fists hitting Barns in the face with a hard right.

Barns is no longer in the kind of shape he was back in the Marines, life in Kelseyville just too easy. But Officer Barns still has a bit of the old 'hard as nails' marine in him. He drives his left fist straight into Eddie's stomach just below the solar plexus, then shoves him over his left leg face first to the hard brick street. Instantly he is on top with a knee in Eddie's back and in another moment the handcuffs are on. Eddie McGuire lays bleeding and gasping for air in the middle of Main Street for all to see.

February 1967 - Vietnam

Flying in choppers always scares the hell out of Drew, but he's trying not to show it. Unfortunately, he's been forced to take this mission because a coworker is on leave. Normally Drew Kroll spends his time in Saigon. As an intelligence officer with the 525th Military Intelligence Group he is responsible for locating and identifying the enemy, proving how they got there, and finding out where they came from. To do this, staff officers like Drew often go into the field to pick up captured documents and sit in on interrogations. However, field work is usually done by one of the more 'military type' guys in Drew's office. As a five foot ten, New York Jew with thick glasses and a pale complexion, Drew doesn't quite fit the macho military image. But Drew's language skills and Ivy League education make him an expert at analyzing documents. Unfortunately, Drew is stuck with this field assignment. The terrifying rollercoaster ride he is struggling to endure is not something he was looking forward to.

Drew is from a moderately wealthy and well connected Jewish family in upstate New York. He attended Harvard, majored in economics and did research on multi-national corporations in France. He never expected to find himself in the military. Unfortunately, the draft board caught up with him. Like most 'better educated' young men facing the draft he decided he should enlist rather than get drafted. The Army agreed. A person with his educational background should be in "Area Studies", not carrying an M-16. That sounded a hell of a lot better than slogging through rice paddies. He figured a couple years as a midlevel military bureaucrat and he could get on with his life. Unfortunately, Drew soon found out that "Area Studies" was just another Army euphemism for being a spy.

Drew speaks fluent French and passable German so the Army decided to send him to language school to learn Vietnamese. After school they shipped him to Saigon where he spends most of his time setting up press covers for French spies who run back and forth from Cambodia to Saigon. Of course, the US denies that espionage operatives are using press covers, but everybody in the local press knows all about it. It's been standing covert policy since the beginning of the war.

None of this surprises Drew. What does surprise him is how willing Esso Standard Oil and about a hundred other companies are to provide cover in Cambodia for the CIA and Army Intelligence. The IRS, Treasury Department, and Immigration Department regularly falsify documents to hide the money being paid to spies for bribes, assassination and corruption. It's all just business as usual and everybody is in on it.

When Drew was in college he believed that all these institutions and multi-national corporations contributed to world peace and were welding the world together. The truth is they all work with Uncle Sam, competing for a share of the spoils. These institutions gladly provide cover for all the operations nobody is willing to talk about in polite society. Not because it would be a threat to national security, that's just an excuse to keep shit swept under the rug. It's because, if the people back in the US found out about the sleazy world behind the scenes they would feel the same way Drew feels about it. It's all a corrupt, rotten mess. All those old idealistic alternatives he studied in college, his vision of himself as a future corporate leader, have somehow been tainted. Now it all has the same corrupt and incompetent stench as the Army.

But Drew figures that's part of waking up to the real world. Today, unfortunately, Drew is stuck with the real world job of running this suck ass pick-up and interrogation. With less than two week's left on his tour he just hopes it's his last.

Of course, Drew suspected the war was bullshit before he even joined the Army. Now he knows the thin veil of justifications he read in the newspapers back home were a sham. The US is backing a totally corrupt, puppet government and apparently everybody but the US taxpayer knows it. The war has already been lost, but nobody, not the politicians, nor the generals, has the balls to admit it. Nobody wants to take the blame for losing the war so it just keeps going on and on in its brutal, horrific way, with an unstoppable inertia of its own.

For Drew, the disillusionment runs even deeper. As he contemplates going back to the states in a few weeks all those upper class aspirations and justifications he had have somehow faded. They're no longer the same viable alternative and Drew keeps wondering where his new idealism is going to come from. What will replace this growing, feeling of cynicism, mistrust and shame? It bothers him.

Most people think it's just the working class student protestors who are disillusioned, but the best and the brightest, the shining elite, they face much the same problem. They see that the lies, corruption and horrors are systemic and realize they are in the same leaky boat.

At around 0700 hours the company that Drew is assigned to makes a final check of their weapons and equipment and moves to the loading area. The deafening sound of the arriving lift helicopters and gunships creates a feeling of dread in Drew. LTC Paulson has just departed in the command and control helicopter. With the final coordination for artillery and combat assault finished, the first elements of C Company lift off. "War Lord" gunships come in from their base at Chu Lai, approaching from the north. The lead gunship advises the net control station by radio that they are holding over the operational area pending commencement of the combat assault. Drew is on the second wave of nine lift ships making their way to the landing zone while avoiding the gun-target line for artillery preparation. The artillery barrage only lasts five minutes.

When the shelling begins the people working in the surrounding rice paddies seek cover along the dikes and in the numerous buffalo wallows which dot the rice fields. Inside the hamlet, people ran for cover in homemade shelters adjacent to their houses.

For Drew, life in Saigon is sweet. He spends short hours in the office and long hours by the pool. He has what passes for a luxury apartment in Saigon and enjoys the night life. By Vietnamese standards he's rich. Drew has settled in with a regular Vietnamese girl friend. They spend long hours drinking and talking by the quiet pool at his apartment, far away from the hustle of the city and the carnage of the war. Mi speaks perfect French and good English. They both prefer French, though he loves the sound of her French/Asian accent when she speaks English. She is twenty-two, a college student, smart, educated and beautiful.

Like all the paid "girl friends" in Saigon, she probably hopes he will marry her and take her back to the states, anything to get out of Vietnam, but Mi never mentions it. She seems to live life as if each moment is her last, as if she has surrendered to her fate. She

cherishes each experience, savors each meal, laughs with joy and makes love with abandon. Underneath Drew senses her despair, the realization that her beauty will soon fade and her education and here intelligence will be lost in the chaos of the world she has been so unlucky to be born into. She is like an impossibly delicate and beautiful flower in the middle of a construction site.

Mi's mother collects Drew's "gifts", which he is glad to pay, and it's the mother who awkwardly asks him each time they meet when he will marry Mi. He always answers "maybe some day soon." The mother scowls and tells him what a fine wife she would make, as she palms his American dollars. The mother doesn't trust him one bit and she is right. Drew doesn't intend to marry Mi. He knows that she would never fit into his upper-class Jewish family. He will be back home in a couple more weeks, back in the real world. With his education and family connections, Drew knows he has a bright future ahead of him and he is already setting up opportunities.

Mi's father was a mid level French official when it was the French fighting this war. When the French finally smartened up and left, Mi's mother was left behind with a young daughter and no money. Her mother went from being a well cared for concubine, to a dirt poor street urchin in one day. None of this really matters to Drew, at least he tells himself it doesn't mater. But underneath, Drew is haunted by the fact he loves Mi.

When Drew watches Mi stand at the pool's edge, her lean, smooth, brown skinned body in a tiny white bikini he feels more than lust. Mi has Caucasian features, but exotic Asian eyes. Long black hair falls across her face and down below her shoulders. To Drew she is the most beautiful woman he has ever seen, let alone had sex with.

Drew is a fairly good catch, reasonably attractive in a preppy sort of way, but he would never rate a beauty like Mi back in the states. However, it's more than Mi's beauty and the passionate sex they share that has driven Drew to the inconvenient realization he loves her. Mi is smart and educated and Drew is someone who appreciates intelligence and education. It's the way she surprises him with her witty comments and sly knowing smile. Drew respects Mi, but beyond all that, when he sometimes looks at her lying in the mottled shadows by the pool, he sees a deep and knowing sadness, an awareness far beyond her years. She has a worldly understanding that he knows he will never grasp. For some reason it is this sadness that drives Drew's love, that makes her cries of passion cries of the deepest sorrow and loss.

Drew is trying not to concentrate on the fact his helicopter is skimming the top of the jungle at a suicidal pace. Drew can see the smoke and fire set by the artillery as the inbound helicopter banks. Rocket and machine gun fire erupts from several of the choppers as they head for an already prepared landing zone a couple of hundred yards from the hamlet. Any VC in the area had ample warning and faded into the safety of the surrounding jungle.

Finally they drop like a stone. Drew reflexively grabs his seat and closes his eyes as he struggles to endure the rollercoaster ride of the landing. They hit the ground with a thump. He immediately scrambles out, ducking and running through the hurricane of prop wash and seconds later the choppers are gone.

Amazed to still be alive, Drew follows the others to a gathering point and after some confusion in the chaos of running solders, stacks of equipment, nearby gun fire and explosions, he finds the Commanding Officer. Drew knows the drill. He will interrogate several previously captured prisoners and interpret some documents written in French.

An NVA tunnel and bunker complex near this hamlet was taken yesterday. Two NVA doctors and four nurses were hiding in the bunkers with medical supplies and black uniforms. Drew knows this kind of interrogation can be nasty. Watching torture is not something Drew looks forward too, but he has been through it before. This kind of current intelligence can be extremely useful and Drew thinks of himself as a hardened professional. He is an intelligence officer, a spy, and torture is just part of the information gathering game.

Captain George is not much older than Drew. His glasses make him look like an accountant.

"You're from MI" the Captain states.

"Yeah, I'm here for the documents and the interrogation."

"We will probably have some more before the day is out. I have reason to believe this gook village has additional assets. We had one hell of a time dragging those cock suckers out of that complex yesterday, heavy mortars, traps and snipers, Fucking VC all over the area. We should be able to wrap it up in a couple more days. I need all the intel you can give me."

"That's what I'm here for."

"Good" The Captain says as he turns to another soldier.

"Harrison, take him down to the prisoners and show him what we got. Then take him in. I want him around if we find more documents."

The Captain immediately starts talking to another Marine about some chopper problems. Harrison turns and walks away without a word, Drew follows. They walk along the edge of a lush green rice paddy into the darkness of the giant vine covered jungle. Muffled sounds of the battle can clearly be heard behind the constant droning buzz of the jungle. They soon come to a small clearing. It's hot and the sun drenched clearing seems blinding after the darkness of the trees. The sun is high and the heat and humidity is oppressive. Sweat runs down Drew's face, stings his eyes and soaks his shirt.

A tent is set up as a shade structure and stacks of supplies litter the area. About a dozen soldiers are involved in various activities. Four guys are standing and talking in the shade of the tent. As Drew approaches he sees the prisoners tied to chairs behind the tent. They are unconscious and look half dead. He immediately walks over to the prisoners and gently touches their heads, carefully inspecting them. The guys in the tent stop talking and watch.

Drew steps into the shade of the tent. They can see he looks angry. "How the fuck am I supposed to get anything out of these guys if they're already dead? Bring some water and get them into the shade. Son of a bitch. Who the fuck did this?" The four guys just stand there.

"Who is the interrogator here?" Drew demands.

A sergeant speaks up "Yeah, well we already interrogated them. We got everything right here." A small table littered with papers, stands in the corner surrounded by boxes of supplies.

"Well why the fuck do they have me here if you already interrogated them? They're useless now."

"Good then we can kill'em. They been stinking up the place." The Sergeant says. They all laugh. The Sergeant is hard and crusty. He's been in the bush for a couple years by now and has no patience for ninety-day wonder Lieutenants.

Drew shakes his head in disgust, and throws his hands up in the air in resignation. "How about the nurses? I understand you got some nurses?"

They look at each other and snicker. "Yeah, well we're done interrogating them too?" They all laugh raucously.

"What the fuck? So your telling me they're dead too?" Drew is exasperated.

"Yeah, pretty dead."

"Where are they?" Drew asks.

"You don't want to know. Besides, they really didn't know much."

"Where are they? I would like to see them."

"Believe me, you don't want to see them." The Sergeant says dryly.

Drew feels compelled now to follow through, and inspect the nurses. Were they really nurses? Maybe he can find some detail of significance if he takes a quick look. He certainly doesn't trust the judgment of these yahoos.

"Are they far?"

Not far.

"Well get these guys out of the sun and give them some water and see if you can revive them. Have they had any food?"

They just look at him like he is nuts?

Reluctantly the soldiers come out of the shade and drag the two captives under the tent. They try pouring water on them and trying to get them to drink. Drew can see that the prisoners are missing fingers and have been badly beaten. God knows what else has been done to them.

"I want to see the nurses, are you sure they are dead?" Drew asks.

"They're dead, but be my fucking guest." The sergeant is copping a defiant attitude. He doesn't need this fucking "college boy" Lieutenant coming around busting his chops over a bunch of worthless NVA gooks.

Drew is the superior officer and the sergeant is way over the line as far as he is concerned. The whole fucking situation is way over the line.

"This is bullshit, I intend to raise some major shit about this. Do you understand? Now take me to the fucking nurses." Drew sputters in the sergeant's face. The sergeant shrugs nonplused. "Fine." He motions to one of the other soldiers. "Take him to the nurses."

This soldier gives the sergeant a "why me" look, then reluctantly heads for a path behind the tent. Drew follows. It's a good quarter mile through the deep jungle before they come to another clearing. As they approach the smell of decay hits him. Now Drew sees the naked corpses of the nurses tied spread eagle on the ground. The stench of rotting flesh is overpowering. They have obviously been raped and tortured, several of their breasts have been sliced off, vaginas blown apart. Most of their fingers are gone. One has been gutted, her intestines spilling along the ground. The tops of their heads are gone, blown away with a high powered rifle. All are already bloating in the tropical heat, flies swarm as Drew enters the clearing.

Drew feels sick. He has never seen this kind of barbarism before. He has heard about shit like this going on, but this is beyond anything he expected. He turns around and walks back up the trail. He stops with his hands on his knees struggling to keep from throwing up. The other soldier is hanging back up the trail in the darkness of the trees.

During the walk back, Drew tries to gather himself together. This is war. He has seen some pretty hairy shit before and he forces himself to harden up. When he arrives back at the tent, the two prisoners don't look any better. He storms up to the sergeant. "Who is responsible for this disgrace? Did you do that?"

"Hey, we don't know a thing about it, we left them there last night and when we got here this morning that is what we found."

Drew is in his face. "You expect me to believe that bullshit?"

"Believe whatever you want, Lieutenant. We don't know a thing about it. Welcome to Vietnam, shit happens. Besides, they didn't know anything." The Sergeant isn't backing down. In fact he is openly defiant. The other soldiers stand back and snicker.

"Heads are going to fucking roll for this. You got that?" Drew is looking him in the eye. The sergeant glares back.

"We'll see. Anyway who gives a fuck about a couple of gook bitches, especially NVA?"

Drew is apoplectic now, his face burning with anger.

"Unbelievable, this is unfucking believable. You think this is acceptable?" Drew is sputtering with rage. He turns and storms up the path toward the command post.

The four guys look at each other, shaking their heads in disgust. One spits on the ground in contempt.

"That guy is going to be a fucking problem." The Sergeant mutters under his breath.

All hell has broken loose by now. Drew can hear gun fire and explosions coming from the hamlet. He can feel the concussions of the explosions through his feet. It sounds like a major battle is raging in the village. This is the kind of shit Drew had hoped to avoid. The image of the slaughtered nurses is still fresh in his mind. The command post is bustling with activity. The CO is talking heatedly with two guys and three more are waiting. Drew has to stand in line. Helicopters are landing and taking off nearby and everyone has to scream to talk above the roar.

Finally Drew gets a chance to speak to the Captain. "Those prisoners are half dead, how the hell can I interrogate them when they're dead?" Drew yells as a chopper takes off.

"We already interrogated them. What about the documents?" The Captain responds.

"I never looked at the documents, I was trying to see if I could revive the prisoners and then I find out that the nurses were killed, slaughtered is more like it. It's an outrage, they have been..."

"I don't give a fuck!" Screams the CO. "I need the god damned information from those documents. Get the fuck back down there and translate those fucking documents. You speak French, right? That's why you're here, to translate and interpret those fucking documents."

"But this is outrageous, they murdered those..." Drew sputters. He is blindsided by the Captain's uncaring response.

"What the fuck are you talking about? This is war Lieutenant. You need to get the fuck out of Saigon sometime. I got men dying up there, dying for me everyday, fighting the enemy. We got ambushed yesterday. Some of my best men were killed. I don't need this bullshit. In fact, forget the fucking documents. We're getting more prisoners right now, let's get your ass up there and see if you can get some useful intelligence out of these other gooks." He quickly turns to one of his staff. "Have somebody hook him up with Kelly's platoon." Turning to Drew he snarls. "And try to keep the fuck out of the way so my men can do their fucking job." He turns to one of the other marines, who pushes his way in with an urgent look on his face.

Someone grabs Drew by the arm "Follow me." He demands.

Drew is shocked and angry. He grabs his pack and gun and follows. He can't believe what just happened. He has met some hard ass Captains before, but this new batch of officers is beyond the scope. Drew promises himself he is not going to let what he has seen be swept under the rug.

Drew gets passed off to another marine and has to hustle to keep up as they head toward the hamlet. After a short distance, Drew sees bodies lying in the ditch along the side of the path, a lot of bodies. Not just men, but women and children, often in small groups sprawled or clinging to each other. These are typical Vietnamese villagers and obviously not VC fighters. Drew is surprised. Maybe they were caught in crossfire. Now he sees that even cows, chickens and dogs have been shot. Helicopters circle over head. Explosions, screams and gunfire come from the village up ahead.

The village of My Mai has around eight hundred residents. There are a few red-brick houses and many thatch-covered huts. On the east side is a deep drainage ditch and squares of lush green rice paddies. The South China Sea shimmers in the distance. It's not all one village, but more like clusters of houses and huts separated by rice paddies. It is bordered on one side by a river and the sea, on the other by hills and jungle. In the middle, next to the river is a small plaza with a Buddhist temple.

My Mai is a quiet and peaceful village. It is one of the more affluent communities in the area because it's located by a good sized river. It has excellent farming, with irrigation and farming infrastructure developed over hundreds of years. Its location next to the sea and river provide excellent fishing.

Of course the people in the community know all about the terrible war, but up until now they have been virtually untouched. From time to time groups of Viet Cong appear at the village to buy food and then disappeared back into the hills. They cause little trouble, but the villagers are as frightened of them as they are of the Americans.

Recently, they have heard the bombing and shelling coming closer. Americans came into the village twice about a month ago, bringing candy for the children and cigarettes for the adults. A medic gave medicine to some of the sick. But the villagers still mistrust the Americans. They hear stories of unspeakable brutality and the elders are cautious when they speak. Some of the children make faces as the Americans pass.

Drew soon finds Lieutenant Kelly rushing from one place to another. The soldiers are already conducting the usual search and destroy tasks of pulling people out of their homes, interrogating them, searching for VC, and then torching the hut. Gun fire and grenade blasts can be heard nearby.

"Lieutenant Kelly, I'm Lieutenant Kroll from the 525th MI Group. I'm here to assist in interrogations and to gather intelligence."

"Fine. Interrogate all you want, but make it fast. My guys are clearing out this entire nest of VC. Set aside anybody you want to hold as a prisoner."

That is it. Kelly turns and runs off with three other marines. Drew is left standing alone in the middle of chaos. It takes a few seconds for Drew to gather his senses. "OK, let's see what the hell we got." He mutters to himself.

A group of villagers has been gathered nearby. They are kneeling on the ground in terror with their hands on their heads screaming "No VC! No VC! No VC!" Drew yells to a sergeant watching as soldiers throw people to the ground. "I'm from the MI Group; I'm here to interrogate prisoners." The soldiers look at each other surprised. "No fucking problem" the sergeant yells over the sound of gun fire.

Drew looks at the group of terrified villagers huddled together on the ground. It is mostly women and children with a few older men. He is not sure who may be worth interrogating. He points out an older man who is wearing a western style watch. Two soldiers immediately drag him over. He is begging "No VC!" Drew speaks to him in Vietnamese "Who is the head man in the village?" "Truong Moi, Truong Moi, he lives just over the bridge." The man immediately responds. He points to a path. Drew decides to try French. "Do you speak French? parlez-vous français"

"We" Says the man.

Drew continues the conversation in French. The man seems well educated. He says that he once worked at the French military headquarters, before the Americans came. He swears there are no VC in the village, that the VC only come around occasionally for food and the villagers only sell them food because they are afraid not to. Looking at the villagers, Drew is inclined to believe him. Drew politely thanks him for the information.

"Okay I'm done with him. Let me talk to that one over there. He points to another older man cowering in the dust. The same two guys grab the quivering man and drag him over to Drew.

Before Drew knows what's happening, one of the Sergeants grabs the man he interrogated to by the back of the shirt, kicks him face down on the ground and stabs him in the back with his bayonet. The man lets out a short scream and twitches as blood comes from his mouth. The soldier places his foot on his back and with a twisting motion, retrieves his bayonet.

"What the fuck did you do that for? I didn't say to kill him. Jesus fucking Christ." Drew is appalled.

"He's a fucking VC." The Marine responds, as if that should be obvious.

"No he's not." Drew screams.

"Well he's a mutha fucking gook, and that's enough for me, the cock sucker."

"You didn't have to kill him." Drew yells.

"It's pay back time for all these fuckers." He turns to a middle aged woman kneeling with the group and shoots her in the head, as blood splatters all over the screaming villager behind her. A young woman slumps over screaming and clutching her stomach. The bullet has gone through the first victim and hit her. The villagers are screaming hysterically and crying in terror.

Drew runs up and grabs the Sergeants' gun. The Sergeant does not let go. They both tug and struggle, shuffling, turning, kicking up dust. "What the fuck are you doing? Stop shooting." Drew is yelling.

The soldier rips the gun from Drew's hands. Drew stumbles and almost falls over. "Halt firing, that's an order. No more killing." Drew is yelling out of breath, trying to regain his balance.

Red faced and flustered, Drew gathers himself up. The Sergeant is glaring at him. "I am not done questioning these people. Do not harm them. They are probably not VC. Do you understand? That is a direct order. No more shooting." Drew says with authority.

The soldiers silently glare. The Sergeant Drew fought with is pointing his gun near where Drew is standing. Drew thinks he may shoot him. Drew tries to gather his composure and adopt an officer's bearing. "I'm going to find the head man for this village. This man gladly gave me his name. No killing. I'll be back ASAP."

The soldiers don't respond, standing motionless, glaring. Drew turns and walks down the path indicated by the now dead prisoner. He glances over his shoulder. The marines are still glaring at him. He wonders if they will shoot him in the back.

As soon as Drew disappears the Sergeant with the bayonet grabs the arm of the second man Drew intended to interrogate. Another soldier immediately comes to help. They drag the man, kicking and screaming over to a nearby well and throw him in. The Sergeant pulls the pin on a grenade and tosses it in after him. A cloud of smoke and water explodes from the mouth of the well like a giant canon.

Pham is a quiet but active ten year old girl. She belongs to one of the wealthier families in the village. Her father, brothers and uncles work some of the best rice paddies in the village and they own two prized water buffalo. Pham loves to sit on the wide veranda of her well-built brick home, shaded by tall bamboo trees and weave baskets with her mother. The home sits on the northern edge of the village near the edge of the forest. It has been in the family for generations. Pham and her older fourteen year old sister Mui, take care of the family's two water buffalo. These large animals can be extremely dangerous if they are startled or angry, but for Pham and Mui they are the gentlest of creatures, part of the family. Each day the two girls ride the family's water buffalo to and from the fields.

When the shelling starts, Pham's father and two brothers run to the house and herd the family to the shelter of the tunnel below. They are all afraid and her youngest brother starts to cry. Soon the shelling stops and they hear the helicopters coming. One of her brothers wants to see what is happening, so he leaves the shelter, but never comes back. They shiver in fear as they hear the sound of gun fire and feel the earth tremor with each nearby explosion. Pham and Mui cling to their mother, who is trembling and praying as she holds her whimpering two year old son.

Four American soldiers quickly find the tunnel and order Pham and her family to come out. Pham hides behind her mother's skirt. They file out one by one. Then kneel on the ground in terror. Her father has his hands on his head and is screaming "No VC! No VC! No VC!" Pham has never seen her proud father act this way, cowering in fear, begging, crying.

Suddenly the soldiers open fire. She watches as bullets rip her father and brother to shreds, blood and flesh flying. The others instinctively run. Pham's mother is pulling

Pham and her sister, trying to escape but is shot as they run. She falls but Pham miraculously escapes around to the back of the house.

Pham is panicked. Not knowing where to go, she runs inside and stands in the middle of the room, hysterical with fear, shock and confusion. Finally she runs and hides under a table and soon the shooting stops. It is quiet, she shivers and waits. Soon Pham hears her sister Mui screaming. She can't stand the sound and finally crawls out from under the table to peek through the window. She sees her sister naked on the ground. A soldier is grunting on top of her, while another soldier stands guard laughing. Her sister is crying and trying to push him away, but he is a huge man, a giant man, an ugly man. They are all huge and ugly. The man stops grunting and then slowly gets up. Mui is crying on the ground. He pulls up his pants, tucks in his shirt and fiddles with his belt. Pham can see the blood between her sister's legs. She hopes that now Mui can escape. Mui is crying, trying to get up, covering herself with her hands. The big man casually picks up his rifle and shoots three times. Pham sees Mui's tiny body ripped apart by bullets, her head shattered and slammed to the ground.

In horror Pham runs in confusion, then hides in a cabinet, where she trembles and cries in horror.

After a long while Pham hears her mother calling. She immediately scrambles from the cabinet and finds her mother sitting on the veranda in a chair holding her dead two year old brother. Seeing her mother sitting in her usual chair reminds Pham of a normal day. Her mother quietly watches a chicken pecking in the yard. All the other chickens lie in little piles of feathers, dead. Pham can see the family's two beloved water buffalo lying motionless in their stalls.

As Pham approaches her mother, she sees her hand is holding a gaping wound in her stomach, her insides are coming out between her fingers. Her mother sees her now and in a whisper calls to her.

"Pham, you must hide." She says softly.

Pham runs and kneels beside her. She buries her head in her mother's breast

"No, mama no." She cries "I want to stay with you."

"Run away and hide Pham, so you can live . . . As for me, I think I am going to die . . . I can't live much longer." She says in a distant voice.

"You must hide Pham, so you can live." Her mother says.

Pham continues to hold her mother as she slowly grows silent and her soft breathing stops.

Drew comes to a small foot bridge that crosses a ravine. As he crosses he sees dozens of bodies, mostly women and small children in piles. He knows now that they have been executed in mass. These are not casualties from cross fire. In fact, Drew hasn't seen any return fire or fighting. He stops and stares, shaking his head in anger and disgust. These are simple villagers and this is a massacre, pure and simple. How can this be happening? Where are the officers? Does the Captain know this? He must. He would have to know about wide spread killing on this scale. If the Captain knows, then does the LC Know? The regional commander? The Secretary of Defense? The President? How high up does this go?

As Drew approaches the house where the prisoner said he would find the head man of the village he sees that he is too late. Bodies clutter the path. An older man in a western

style shirt, who may have been the man he was looking for, is leaning against a wall, his face obliterated by a high caliber bullet.

"What am I doing here?" Drew screams. "They're all dead. How can I find out anything if they are all dead? What is there to find out? What does it fucking matter? They're going to kill them all anyway. This is fucking insane." He is screaming at himself. No one else is around. Everyone is gone or dead so he moves on.

The huts are on fire, so Drew runs around the side to escape the smoke and heat. He comes to a small Buddhist temple. In front, the bodies of fifteen or twenty older women lay slumped beside each other in neat little rows. They have been praying. The soldiers executed them one by one, shooting them in the back of the head as they prayed. Each waited quietly for their turn, accepting their fate, resigned to the futility of escape and aware that their village and its way of life was forever gone.

The depravity of the scene reminds Drew of the stories his relatives used to tell him about Nazi Germany, about the burning of Jews as they worshiped in synagogues. The full horror of the situation and his own culpability seeps into Drew's consciousness. He has heard about atrocities, but he never knew it was like this. He never dared dream it was like this.

Drew stumbles along aimlessly. "I didn't know." He mumbles to himself, struggling to explain away his own involvement in this horror. "I didn't know." He keeps trying to convince himself of his own innocence, but he knows now.

Drew is crying. His head is pounding. He stumbles out of control. He can't go back like this. He doesn't want to go back. He doesn't want to see the smug face of the Captain and Lieutenant Kelly. How could they let this happen? How can he ever learn to live with himself?

Drew continues along the path away from the burning huts. It is beautiful here with the brilliant green of the rice paddies on each side of the path, the dark jungle behind. The gun fire is behind him. He comes to a bRob house. He can see the soldiers have already been here. The dead are lying in the dust. Drew is in shock, numb, shattered. He wants to run away, but he can't think of any place to go. He dreads the thought of going back.

He is stumbling along in his own despair, when a motion catches his eye. He is startled and then sees that on the porch of the house a little girl is gently rocking in a large chair. She is staring, blind, in shock. He can hear the squeaking sound of the rocking chair on the wooden porch. Next to her, in another chair, is a woman and small child covered with blood. They are dead.

Drew takes a few steps closer to the house and then sees the body of a naked and violated girl in the dirt. Her fragile body ripped to shreds by bullets. The rest of the family lies dead in the yard. Drew realizes this little girl must be the only survivor of her family.

He looks back at the porch. The little girl is still quietly rocking. He walks to the steps and as he places his foot on the first step the girl stops rocking, turns her head and looks straight into Drew's eyes. He is frozen by her gaze. She is motionless. In her eyes he sees no fear. She has surrendered, her world is gone, shattered and she quietly awaits her fate. In her eyes Drew sees only questions.

"Who are you? Why have you done this to us? What kind of horrible creatures are you?" Her eyes ask. Drew can't move or take his eyes from hers. He is blinded, numb, and in his eyes are the same questions. "What have we become? What have I become? What kind of horrible creatures are we? "

Then, as if surfacing from under water, Drew comes back to the moment. He knows the others will soon be coming to assure the completeness of their carnage and suddenly he is afraid. He is more afraid than he has ever been in his life, afraid that they will come to find this girl, afraid that she is the last living bit of goodness in existence and that they, them, those awful un-human creatures are coming to kill her, the last vestige of peace and innocence in the world, the last bit of hope and love in his own heart and he is the only one who can save her, save her beauty, the last beauty on the earth, save himself, save the last bit of beauty and hope and kindness in his own heart.

Drew scrambles up the steps and gently helps her from the chair.

"Di, di, mau!"----"Go, go quickly!"

Mi awakens from her trance. She does not know at first where she is, but she hears the urgent warnings. Somehow, even after the horror she has seen committed by the other soldiers, she knows Drew is trying to help her, to save her and she lets him guide her down the stairs and toward the jungle behind the house.

"Di, di, mau!"----"Go, go quickly!"

Drew watches as Mi walks down the dirt path and is swallowed in the dark green safety of the jungle.

"Di, di, mau!" he calls.

The sergeant who Drew first argued with about the tortured prisoners and dead nurses walks up to the sergeant who had the run in with Drew over the prisoners and stabbed the prisoner with his bayonet. He stands with two other Marines as they watch several of the last huts being torched.

"What the fuck is going on with that Lieutenant from the MI Group? I heard he was busting your chops." Asks the first Sergeant. "He was just over busting our ass about those two fucking NVA prisoners. We haven't even killed em yet, and he's complaining about our "inhuman" treatment." He sneers. "Then he totally flips out about those fucking nurses."

The second Sergeant glances at him irritated. "Jesus fucking Christ, I keep telling those guys to clean up after themselves when they do that shit. Just blow em up with some C4 or something, get rid of the evidence. Case closed."

"Yeah, well I think this guy is trouble. He went right to the old man. The old man blew him off, of course, but that guy could stir up some major shit and it's our fucking heads it'll be coming down on. The old man will claim he didn't know a thing about it."

"Yeah, right." The second Sergeant responds sarcastically. "That jackass is walking around flipping out about everything. I've had it with these pussy, do good muthafuckers coming from Saigon, never spent a fucking day in the bush, telling us what heartless sons-of-a-bitches we are for not loving gooks. Well they haven't been getting their fucking asses shot off, blown up, and pissed on by these little slant eye bastards like we have. Kill em all I say. That's our fucking job. That guy is trouble. Mark my fucking work. He's gona start some kind of do-gooder bullshit and its all gona be on our fucking heads."

The other sergeant glances around. "Where is he?"

"He's across the bridge looking for somebody to interrogate. The only problem is their aint nobody left to interrogate." They both laugh. "He'll be coming back soon."

They watch the huts burn. Finally the first sergeant responds, "The other problem with these little Saigon pussies is they just don't understand how dangerous it can get out here. You know what I mean?" He says with a crooked smile. "I'm amazed we haven't had more American casualties considering how many VC we had to kill."

"Damn, I hope nothing happens to him." The second Sergeant says with a snicker. "Maybe I better go make sure he's all right."

"Are you sure you want the job?" The first Sergeant asks.

"Believe me, it'll be a fucking pleasure."

The girl has escaped into the safety of the jungle and Drew is making his way back to the landing zone. His mind is spinning in a daze of horror and confusion. All he wants is to get back to Saigon, to Mi, to the peace and quiet of his swimming pool. Once he is back in his world he will be able to do something about the atrocities he has seen. Drew feels energized now. He has a new mission.

The huts along the village path are smoldering. Drew hurries past to avoid the smoke. Suddenly he sees something running on the ground in front of him. He stops, thinking it's a rat. Now he sees it. It's a grenade! He turns to run and takes two steps. Drew feels a pressure in his ears and then a giant hand snatches him up, squeezes every last breath of air from him, spins him in the air and slams him to the ground.

Drew slowly becomes aware of a dim light and pain. He is heavily sedated and feels as if he is suspended in a thick gel. He can't remember how he got injured but he knows it's wrong, it's a mistake. One week after the grenade blast nearly kills him, Drew is lying in the intensive care unit of a VA hospital in Saigon. He has a collapsed lung, three broken ribs, a broken collar bone and a shattered left leg, which is broken in three places. They almost decide to amputate the leg.

As Drew gradually becomes aware of his circumstances he makes an effort to tell someone about the horrible things he saw at the village. As he mumbles through a haze of drugs, no one listens. Drew is haunted by visions of the village, the face of the man he interrogated, the blood and gore, and the eyes of the little girl.

It's two months later. Drew is scheduled to go back to the states. One of the guys from his unit in Saigon comes to visit. When Drew tries to tell him about the massacre at the village, he looks nervous and says he will look into it. Drew begs him to find Mi, Drew's Vietnamese girl friend. Drew asks him to tell her what has happened and that he will be contacting her. His colleague assures him he will.

Back in the States, it is another month before Drew is able to communicate effectively without being completely whacked out on pain medication. He is just starting to get out of a wheelchair and onto crutches. When he attempts to speak to the officers at the hospital about the atrocities at the village, they either humor him and say they will look into it, or they gave him a cold glare and tell him to file a report. Drew has filed a report. He is still waiting for a response.

Drew attempts to contact Mi. He is worried about what will happen to her without the money he provides. He assumes her mother has already fixed her up with some other American GI, but Drew doesn't care. Drew now realizes he desperately misses Mi, and wants to tell her that he has been a fool, that he loves her and he wants her to come with him back to the states.

All Drew's letters go unanswered. He places a long distance phone call to the owner of the apartment where he lived. He says, he hasn't seen Mi. Drew calls some of the places they frequented. Nobody knows where she is. Drew wonders if they are lying to him for some reason.

Drew contacts some of his colleagues in Saigon and asks them to try to find Mi. They are spies for Christ sake; they should be able to find one well known Vietnamese girl. They respond weeks later that she is gone and may have gone back to her village. However Drew knows Mi and her mother are from Saigon, they have no village to go back to. It is driving him mad.

Dreams of Mi and of the little girl, hunt him. Sometimes the little girl has Mi's face. He runs after her calling "Di, di, mau!"----"Go, go quickly!", but she stands frozen, waiting, unafraid, as death stalks her. Drew's despair is a vast wasteland of guilt, shame, anger. He is only thankful that the drugs and the pain of his injuries are there to mask the unbearable and gaping wound that is his savaged heart and soul.

April 1969 - Leawood Kansas

Carl asks his city friend Lowell if he can stay at his house for a few days. When Lowell's parents see Carl's battered face and hear his story they are outraged and set him up in the basement. He can stay as long as he wants.

Carl tries to negotiate a deal with the Kelseyville High School to take his finals now so he can receive his High School diploma, but they turn him down. Even though his teachers support Carl, he is a controversial character and some of the school board members are adamantly opposed. Carl is officially a High School drop out.

Now that Eddie McGuire has been arrested, Carl doesn't feel as afraid to come back to town, at least during the day. However, Carl is suffering from fear a paranoia that runs far deeper than an unreasonable fear of Kelseyville. He finds himself constantly afraid and filled with an indefinable anxiety. He wakes up almost every night from frightening nightmares. He jumps with fear at the most innocuous things, a barking dog, a car horn, a sudden movement or noise.

Carl is able to rationalize enough courage to spend some time with his Mom. She is upset and thinks somehow all this must be her fault. Carl tries to make her understand he doesn't blame her. She is beginning to understand that they are both victims.

Carl isn't sure what he wants to do, or where he wants to go, but he would love to get out of Kansas, at least for the coming summer. Carl mopes around in limbo for a few weeks. He has a rather uneventful eighteenth birthday on which Lowell treats him to a hamburger at Winstead's, his favorite hamburger place in Kansas City. He is still sore and ugly but healing fast.

One day Scott's brother David comes to Carl with an offer. He has a friend in California named Kate who may have a place available. She lives in a beautiful house by the ocean in Marin County, which is just north of San Francisco. It's a place called Tomales Bay in the Point Reyes National Seashore and out in the country but near enough to attend the local college in the fall if he wants. Several of the other people living at the house are students and they sometimes share rides. Carl should be able to fake California residency and attend college without paying out of state tuition. Plus, California accepts anyone who is over eighteen as a community college student even if they haven't graduated from High School. Carl is interested and immediately goes to the library to look up information about the area. It looks beautiful.

David and Carl call Kate. Yes, she has a room available. She talks to Carl for a while and then talks to David again. She is a little reluctant. Carl seems young. It's kind of a wild party place and she doesn't want to be responsible for babysitting a kid from Kansas. David does a great job convincing her that Carl is a cool guy, level headed, but not too level headed. He is the kind of character who will fit in perfectly. David and Kate are old friends and she respects his level of coolness and relents. If Carl sends two months' rent right away, the room is his starting last week. Carl sends a check that day. He figures it will be a fun place to spend the summer until he gets his head together. If he doesn't like it he can find someplace else. At least he will be living in California. It can't be that bad.

Carl decides to spend four or five days driving to California so he can do a little skiing in Colorado. He makes the rounds to all his friends and family to say goodbye. Carl is chomping at the bit to get out of town. His mom promises to give him money each

month while he is in College and getting good grades. The day before he leaves he stops by Kelseyville to say goodbye.

"It's a hard thing to watch your little boy grow up and move away from home." She says. "I'm so sad that Kelseyville turned into such a nightmare for you. I would be angrier at your dad for making you move here, but the idea delighted me at the time. I guess it was both our faults."

"If I had just kept my big mouth shut none of this would have happened." Carl shrugs.

She touches his shoulder, "You're just a High School kid. What happened to you was criminal. I have half a mind to sue their butts off." She says.

"No mom, this thing is already crazy enough. Can I please just move on with my life. I want to go to college with people like myself, away from Kansas. It's time for you and Dad to let me try my wings. If I'm old enough to be drafted to Vietnam and get my ass shot off, I'm old enough to be heading out on my own to California for college"

She nods her head. "I guess you're going to do it anyway. I wish it was closer so I could see you more often." She says looking a little teary eyed.

"I'm just going off the college like a million other kids." He says, trying to reassure her.

"I know. You're a good kid. I know that and I have faith in you, no matter what these narrow-minded rednecks say." Carl laughs to hear her call them rednecks.

Carl works up the courage to drive down Main Street one last time. It already looks small and old to him. As he stops at the corner heading out of town he says. "See-ya later suckers." He pops the clutch and lays a defiant little patch of scratch as he runs the Alpha through the gears. He makes a fast turn onto I-35 toward Kansas City and takes it up to ninety. He will never have to deal with Eddie McGuire, Roy Welch or the narrow-minded people of Kelseyville again. Soon all this will be ancient history. It's the beginning of a new life. Kelseyville is already far behind him.

Every square inch of the Alpha is loaded, including the passenger seat. Carl is so short on space he doesn't even take a suitcase, he just packs his clothes directly into the trunk. The tires look squished so he puts in extra air. Carl has maps, flash lights, a sleeping bag, small tent, emergency food, a small mini cooler for drinks, clothes, tools, you name it. "I'm off for adventure." He yells to no one in particular.

Carl has been studying maps of Northern California. He loves maps. They are a window on the world. He never gets lost. He keeps thinking about all the places he wants to see. He has never been to San Francisco, though he did visit Palm Springs once with his brother and loved it. The trip is uneventful and he drives straight through to Denver where he spends the night in a cheap roadside motel. He has never stayed at a motel by himself before. It's exciting.

At two in the morning Carl wakes in a panic to the sound of a loud muffler in the parking lot. He finally gets back to sleep two hours later.

The next day Carl drives through the mountains to Aspen Colorado. He has been to Colorado many times before, but this trip through the mountains seems especially beautiful and inspiring. The passes are still cold and covered with snow and he has to take it easy with the Alpha when an afternoon snow storm blows through. The Alpha isn't too good in the snow.

Carl pulls into Aspen in the early afternoon. It's almost a carnival atmosphere. The streets are clogged with hip young tourists and skiers. Walking around the funky town is a blast. The mountain people have a style all their own, allot of fringe leather and lambs fleece coats. Carl stays at a small lodge in town, all quaint and woodsy. He sits by the fire and talks with a young couple. The smell of a pinion pine fire will always remind Carl of this trip to Aspen.

The next day Carl drives out to Snowmass to ski. It's a beautiful warm day, great spring skiing, good snow on top, but a little slushy down below. Carl's favorite spot is a place called the Big Burn. It's the whole top of a mountain with a wide open bowl. He likes doing long traverses just to enjoy the spectacular view. A feeling of freedom is starting to sink in.

The next day as Carl heads to California, he makes his way down from the mountains into Utah. He stops at a small diner for dinner and watches the truck drivers talking in groups. Who knows, one of them could be Eddie McGuire's dad. They remind him of Kelseyville and Carl feels nervous and self-conscious. Is California that different? He hopes so.

Carl isn't tired and is anxious to get to California so he decides to drive through the night. He likes driving in the dark, the sound of the Alpha purring in his hands. It's timeless and peaceful out in the middle of nowhere with hardly any other cars on the highway. It took the pioneers' months to make this trip, but by tomorrow evening Carl plans to be watching the sun set over the wide Pacific Ocean.

Its morning by the time Carl hit's Reno and he can see the Sierra Mountains and California dead ahead. As he drives past Truckee and over the high mountain pass he it struck by how different the Sierra Mountains are from Colorado Rockies, the great granite slabs, the soaring cliffs. Carl can't wait to try out the skiing, but not today. He is off to San Francisco.

As Carl drives across the Bay Bridge he gets a good view of the city shimmering across the bay. He takes the first exit into the financial district, then winds his way along the Embarcadero, past the tall buildings, through the trinkety glare of Fisherman's Wharf and along the cliffs of the Presidio over looking the Golden Gate Bridge.

Carl ends up at Ocean Beach just in time for sunset. He takes a blanket and a sleeping bag to the beach to stay warm. As the light fades to darkness he falls asleep and doesn't wake until early the next morning, cold and damp from the fog and dew. Carl sits up in his sleeping bag to look at the ocean. He is refreshed and ready for a new day and a new life.

The Tomales Bay House

Heading north from San Francisco, across the Golden Gate Bridge, Carl takes the first exit. Under the freeway and up a hill overlooking the bridge he finds a small turnout and pulls over. The view is spectacular, with the bridge standing huge in the foreground, the San Francisco skyline stretches out across the sparkling bay. It reminds him of the Emerald City in the Wizard of Oz. The natural beauty of the Bay Area is beyond anything he has ever seen, so lush with life and natural wonders.

Carl jumps back in the Alpha. Next stop Point Reyes. Through a tunnel, down past more views of the bay, he sees a bunch of funky houseboats. Hippies are everywhere it seems. Turning off the freeway in Kentfield he notices a sign for the College of Marin. "So this is where it is." This is the school he hopes to attend in the fall.

On he drives through funky little towns, over a winding pass, through a redwood forest and as he crests a hill he gets his first glimpse of Tomales Bay stretched out in the distance. As he pulls into Inverness he stops to phone Kate. She sounds happy to hear he has arrived and with a few last minute directions she tells him to come on out, his room is ready.

The road snakes along the shore of the bay. Small houses on piers, ramshackle motels and little road side restaurants over look the shimmering water. The vegetation is lush and green and he can smell the ocean air.

Soon the road curves up a long hill. Carl takes a quick right and a magnificent view of the ocean and the Point Reyes Peninsula stretches into the distance. Far below he can see a long sandy beach running perfectly straight to a rocky point. Carl follows the road until he sees the turn-off. Up a little grade he hits a gravel road. He slows the Alpha and creeps along enjoying the view and trying not to stir up the dust since the top is down. The views are stunning. All along the road are verdant green fields stretching down to the Ocean miles away. He passes through a dairy farm. There are no fences so he has to stop a few times for cows to move slowly off the narrow gravel road. Finally the road starts to slope down and he can see Tomales Bay in the distance.

The road turns to pavement and there is a drive straight ahead or a drive off the right. Carl checks his directions, they don't mention two different drives and there is no posted address. Lost, he decides to take a chance on the first drive which curves down and ends at the side of a cinderblock house. There is a pull out to the left and he parks. Carl sees four other cars. Thick Bay Laurel trees surround the parking area. It is dark and cool and the mentholated scent of Bay is hypnotic.

Carl strolls toward the house. A path goes to the front, where he glimpses a view of the bay, or off to the right through a breezeway behind the house. He decides to try the front. As Carl steps around the corner and onto a broad cement patio running the length of the house, a magnificent view of Tomales Bay strikes him. The house is a couple of hundred feet up and away from the bay with views that stretch miles in each direction, mountains beyond. Carl stops for a moment just to marvel. As he turns to move on he sees two young women and a guy lying naked, sunning themselves in lounge chairs. He stops, stunned and embarrassed. He isn't sure what he should do. He's not even sure if this is the right place. He considers going back and trying the breeze way. The people sunning themselves have their eyes closed and are oblivious. He is about to turn back when a

woman comes out of a door at the far end of the house. He is relieved to see she is wearing shorts and a tank top. She sees Carl.

"Hi" she says cheerfully.

"Hi, My name is Carl Lee and ..."

"Oh, Hi Carl. I'm Kate. Welcome." She says with a smile.

Carl walks closer. The people sunning on the deck don't move.

"Nice to meet you" she says "How was your trip?"

"Good. It's so beautiful here." He says as he turns to look out over the bay.

"Isn't it? I just love this place."

She glances toward the people sunning and says. "People like to sunbathe naked here. It feels so good." she says quietly, as if confiding a secret.

He looks at the people and nods his head. They are all young and attractive.

"That's cool." He says.

Carl tells himself that he is not going to be shocked by anything. He is on an adventure in a foreign culture and even if he is not exactly sure of the customs he is going to adapt and accept until he can make a judgment of his own. He is not going to make the same mistake that he did in Kelseyville.

"It's a good way to loose your tan line." Carl comments awkwardly.

"Come in and I'll show you around." The house is made of pinkish colored cinder blocks with a wood-beamed roof slanted from front to the back. The dark wood beams and ceiling are warm and beautiful, even if the cinder block is a bit drab. They have covered most of the walls with India print spreads and tapestries. To the right is a large fireplace set in the middle of the room. The kitchen is beyond. You can go around the fireplace through a short hall to the left or into the kitchen to the right. All along the entire front of the house are large plate glass windows. The view from the living room is spectacular, just like the patio. In front of the windows as you approach the kitchen, is a large table. Against the back wall is an old upright piano. Several Couches, a couple chairs and a large, low, square, coffee table furnish the living room. A big fake Persian rug covers the tile floor. A long haired guy wearing shorts, no shirt and no shoes is sitting at the kitchen table eating a sandwich and reading.

"Jack, this is Carl, David's friend." Jack looks up with a smile. He is wearing glasses and has an intelligent looking face and a distinctive gap between his two front teeth.

"Oh, hi" he says. He closes his book. Carl sees that he is reading the science fiction book "Dune."

"Hi." Carl says "That's a great book. I just read it a couple months ago."

Jack's eyebrows rise. "Yeah, it's pretty good. So you're into science fiction?"

"Yeah" Carl says, as though that's not all he is into. "I really like Asimov. I've read just about all his stuff." Carl adds.

"Cool, I like Asimov. I Robot and all-of-that." Jack says.

"It's great to finally meet both of you" Carl says looking back at Kate. "David told me allot about you. I appreciate you letting me stay here. Besides, I need to get rid of this tan line." Carl says joking. He is completely white after a long winter in Kansas.

Jack and Kate look at him blank for a second, then get the joke and laugh. "I think your going to fit in just fine." Kate snickers.

They continue the tour. "This is the kitchen. We really like to cook around here. We have our own garden and Auggie the gardener is the best gardener on the planet. He knows how to grow things really big. You'll find out what I mean."

At the back of the kitchen is the door that goes to the breezeway. The short hallway around the back side of the fireplace is to the left and to the right is a long hallway to a bathroom and three bedrooms. The first door is a large bathroom with a bath and shower at the far end.

They walk down the hall "These are the two other rooms" she says as they pass two doors. At the very end of the hall is the last door. She opens it and they walk in. It's a long narrow room with the same wood beam ceiling that is throughout the house. It looks Spartan, but the key feature is a raised bed at the far end of the room.

Someone has built a large platform bed clear across the entire width of the room. On it are two full size mattresses side-by-side. At the same level of the bed is a huge window stretching nearly the full width of the room with an opening window completing the wall of glass effect. The view from that window is the same stunning view Carl saw when he first stepped onto the patio at the front of the house.

"Wow, what a cool bed." Carl says.

"And those are awesome shelves." As a headboard to the left are some intricate shelves that take up most of the wall.

"Those came from an old run down building not far from here. They were built for a carpentry shop, for all the little screws and tools they use."

"Somebody spent a lot of time making those. It's a real work of art."

The room is beyond anything Carl could have dreamed. There is a wide wooden step up to the bed and Carl steps up to try it out. The view from the bed is amazing!

Kate crawls up. "Don't you love this bed?"

"Wow, Kate, its spectacular. Thanks. I plan to spend the rest of my life right here." They both laugh.

"That sounds good, but you can come out to take a shower or have dinner sometimes if you want."

"Well, maybe, occasionally." He says

"Let me show you around the property."

They go back out front and down a path between high bushes. As they descend the path, densely packed Bay trees and thick bushes hang over head. It's like walking through a green tunnel, the damp smell of the ocean and the bay all around. Soon they come out into the open. A lush garden of flowers and vegetables sits behind a tall fence to the left and a path to the right leads down toward the water.

"That's Auggie's garden. You'll meet him later and he can show you around. Let's go down to the landing."

They head down the path past giant bushes blooming with fragrant California blue flower. Suddenly the path opens to a flat landing on a small bluff directly overlooking the water. It's another commanding view. "Wow, another awesome spot." Carl exclaims. They set on a bench overlooking the bay.

"This is so amazing Kate. I have to say, I never expected a place as beautiful as this. Pinch me, I think I'm dreaming." Carl swoons. She laughs.

"I know. I had the same reaction. No matter how many times I come here I am still amazed."

Carl gets up and strolls around just trying to take it all in. Over to one side of the landing are some stairs that lead down the cliff to a tiny beach below.

"Watch out. Those stairs are extremely dangerous. There must have been a pier at one time and those stairs are all that remains. They are very slippery and falling apart. We really need to tear them down before somebody gets hurt." Kate says.

Carl and Kate head back up to the house. Carl brings in his stuff from the Alpha and starts to settle in. That night they have a big dinner. Everybody pitches in to cook and clean. It's a fascinating group of people. The Tomales House is not a commune, it's just a share rental, but with a strong sense of community. No particular rules, just hang loose, help out and be tolerant.

Jack and Kate have been together for three years. Jack has the look of an east coast fraternity boy, thick rimmed glasses and a brown mop of hair that falls into his face. He always has the inquisitive look of someone who is either fascinated or incredulous. Some might mistake him for a nerd, but he is too hip and in tune with his surroundings for that. When Jack focuses his hyper intelligent attention on an object or an individual you can almost see the gears turning.

Carl and Jack are immediate friends driven by common interests, friendly challenge and grudging respect. Carl won't admit it, but he has more than met his match when it comes to science and nature. Jack is a professional student and highly educated in the sciences. Carl is merely an amateur with attitude. Jack impresses Carl and he is glad to listen and learn. For Jack it's refreshing to find someone who is not a science major, who truly appreciates the sciences and has the balls to spar with him. Carl is good enough to be amusing, but not to be a threat. A natural teacher, Jack gives Carl his due and enjoys stimulating his inquisitive mind.

Rob is an artist and has the room next to Carl. He has been studying at the College of Marin and working as a baker at a natural-foods bakery in Inverness. Each morning he gets up for work at three o'clock. That means, he goes to bed around six or seven. How he is able to sleep through the racket that sometimes ensues is a mystery, but he never complains.

Wayne rolls in a little while before dinner. He is already stoned and probably a bit drunk as well. Nobody seems to mind because the room lights up when Wayne walks in.

Wayne gets his good looks from the Spanish side of the family. Tall, large chested, with a bronze complexion and a wide smile, Wayne perfectly fits the image of the handsome hot blooded Spaniard. When Wayne has had a few drinks no one is more charming and quick witted.

Auggie the gardener is quiet but always smiling. He is the shaman of the house. He lives in a small shack down by the garden and brings arm loads of delicious food to the house each day which he spends hours preparing with Kate's help into delicious vegetarian meals.

Carl has always thought of vegetarian food as something you chocked down for your own good, but the food at the Tomales house has completely changed his mind. With fresh ingredients, the right herbs and spices and a creative flair, vegetarian cuisine is delicious. Carl is more than satisfied eating the vegetarian food at the Tomales house and

he is learning to become a fairly good cook himself. Don't tell anybody, but Carl still sneaks out for a hamburger once in a while. After all, he is just a boy from Kansas.

Kate is the matriarch of Tomales house. When Carl and Kate first met they had an immediate affinity for each other. Kate is twenty six with a solid attractive body. She has a mature figure, but a California girl tan. Her long dish water blond hair usually looks a bit frazzled, but her eyes are as sharp and clear as the morning air.

Not much gets by Kate. She has a mother's instinct that cuts to the heart of the situation. Carl would never admit it, but Kate has eased his transition by helping to replace the support he counted on from his mother.

Kate is from Ann Arbor Michigan, a student of the University of Michigan since 1962. She has a liberal-arts degree and was studying for a Master's in education until she moved to California last fall. She found the Tomales House when she came to Marin to visiting a friend for a couple weeks. Kate and Jack have been living here for six months.

In Ann Arbor Kate worked as a teacher at the Children's Community School, an alternative school set up off campus and primarily run by students. Kate tells Carl about some of the ways they encouraged students to learn on their own and why this is a better way to teach. She speaks to Carl at length about alternative education theory. Jack was a part time teacher at the school as well. That is where Kate and Jack met.

A few days later Carl drives into town to buy some stuff for his room. From Pier One Imports he buys some cheep India print spreads to cover the walls, a red paper hanging lamp shade with fringe, a reading lamp and a variety of candles. He finds a used stereo in the classified ads.

Carl has to buy two sets of dark blue bed sheets and two matching soft furry bed spreads because there are two mattresses on his giant bed. He comes home and sets everything up. When it's all done he lights a few candles and jumps up onto his new cushy bead. Leans back against his new India print cushions and looks out the giant window which stretches more than the length the bed. It's almost like being outside.

Carl stops at a library to pick up books about the area. He reads everything possible about Point Reyes, the flora, fauna, geology and history. He gets a map and starts exploring roads. Then he sets out to hike the trails. Point Reyes is one of the most beautifully places in the world. There are more species of bird on the Point Reyes peninsula than anywhere in the North American Continent. There are elk and rare white deer. The beaches are beautiful, the views magnificent and the hiking superb.

Besides the natural wonders of Point Reyes and Tomales Bay, the community at the house is a delight. During the week it's quiet. Wayne and Rob often stay in town during part of the week, but today is Saturday and everybody is home.

Carl left early in the morning for a hike down the coast by Limantour beach. It is mid afternoon when he comes back. The House is full of people. Four people are sunning themselves naked on the porch. Others are lounging around the living room talking and laughing. Kate and Auggie are in the kitchen cooking and Jack has taken a few people sailing. Various other people are strolling around. Most of the people are guests. Short term guests are always welcome, no questions asked. This is rarely a problem. In fact, the delightful variety of people passing through is one of the most intriguing things about the Tomales house.

Carl steps in the back door and is greeted by Kate.

"Hi Carl, how was your hike?"

"Fantastic, I found this waterfall that comes right off the cliff and down to the beach. What a beautiful place. The beach is huge, and no people." Carl says excited. It's all still a dazzling wonder to Carl.

"Wow, I know, I love that hike down by Limantour. I don't think I've gotten as far as the waterfall though. I'd love to see it."

Kate is chopping up some onion and putting it in a blender. "Auggie and I are working on dinner, like to help?" She asks.

"Sure, I'm not that good of a cook, but I can wash dishes." He says. She laughs. "We'll see about that."

"Let me get cleaned up and I'll be right in."

Carl takes a quick shower and comes back to the kitchen. Kate immediately puts him to work. She doesn't just have him doing dishes; she is making him cook a vegetable casserole from a recipe. All the while she gives him tips, how to chop vegetables without slicing his finger off, reading recipes, using a blender and what is the right consistency for the creamy cheese sauce for the casserole. Everybody is talking, drinking red wine and having fun. Various people pop into the kitchen dipping their fingers in sauces, introducing themselves and rummaging through the refrigerator. Rob decides to bake a desert. The kitchen is packed, people squeezing by each other, but nobody seems to mind. Carl is having a blast.

Just when things seem as crazily delightful as they can possibly get, Jack comes back with three more people from boating. They traipse in the door, huffing and puffing from hiking up the hill from the boat, cold and hungry, all laughing and delighted with their great adventure on the bay.

Now these people are squeezing through the kitchen, getting glasses of wine, excitedly telling stories, sticking their fingers in the food to sample the coming delights and just generally adding to the pandemonium. Carl finds the sheer energy and good natured chaos of the situation hilarious and he steps back for a moment just to observe and laugh.

Finally the food is cooked and spread out on the table. Everybody grabs a plate and digs in. Much comment and congratulations go out to the chefs. Carl's casserole is a hit and the accolades delighted him. Maybe he can cook after all.

After dinner, Jack and the boat crew along with some of the other people pitch in and clean up the kitchen. Carl and Kate sit together and have a cup of coffee. Carl has never had coffee like this before. It's some kind of French coffee and incredibly strong. He wasn't sure he liked it at first, but by adding a little sugar and a lot of cream he has grown to love its deep and slightly bitter flavor. Carl is discovering all kinds of new tastes and delights.

One of Jack's sailing companions is an attractive dark haired woman named Mary. She comes and sits in a chair by Kate and Carl. Kate is a very tactile person and often touches Carl on the shoulder as she talks. Mary is not sure if they are a couple or not until Jack comes and sits on the couch and kisses Kate. Mary decides Carl is fair game and kind of cute. They talk and mildly flirt.

Mary is a tall, dark eyed Italian beauty with angular features and a wide toothy smile. She is out for a few weeks from New York visiting with some old friends.

The wine is flowing and Wayne is setting at the table rolling joints, which are lit and passed around. Not everyone is smoking. Kate doesn't smoke pot and Carl doesn't drink much. He learned a long time ago that alcohol puts him to sleep. Everyone is talking, laughing, flirting and doing the things people do when they are having good time at a party.

Carl and Mary are hitting it off. This is a confidence booster for Carl. He is still feeling a little insecure about how well he fits in, but these people are easy to fit in with. They instinctively welcome and enjoy variety. Eccentricity is something to be cultivated.

Jack plays a few tunes on the piano. He has a Beatles song book, and Carl and Mary stand by the side of the piano singing along. Carl knows all the Beatles harmonies and Jack is impressed.

"Great harmonies man. Not very many people know how to sing harmony." Carl and Jack do more songs, and they are sounding pretty good. Afterward Mary and several other people compliment him on his voice. Carl is flattered and it boosts his confidence even more.

Carl takes a break and shows Mary his room thinking he might get lucky. She likes the view, but does not crawl up to try out the bed. She knows where that will lead, and she already has a boyfriend, even though spending the night in this beautiful retreat with this charming and sexy young lad is tempting. They kiss and fondle each other for a while as they lean against the tall bed. Carl is trying to play it cool, but he is horny and she feels extremely good. After a while, they go back to the party. Carl is disappointed, but he is having so much fun it hardly makes a dent in his mood. They both content themselves with their friendly infatuation.

Carl makes the rounds talking and socializing with the others. He is feeling high and socially confident and everyone treats him with interest and respect. What a change from Kelseyville.

Finally people start drifting away to bed. Mary and her friends are driving back to San Anselmo and Carl and Mary kiss goodbye. As Carl heads to his room he says good night to Kate.

"Kate, I just want to tell you what a great time I had tonight." Carl says sincerely, as both lean against the counter in the kitchen. He touches her arm and she gives him a little hug.

"You sure seemed to be having a good time. For a while, I thought you were going to get Mary to spend the night, but she didn't come through. Oh well." She shrugs and gives a funny little laugh. Carl shrugs and looks disappointed.

Kate responds reassuringly, "She was interested. Don't worry your going to do all right. Allot of women come through this place, your going to get all the pussy you every dreamed of." They are both laughing as Jack walks in.

"What's all this talk about pussy?" Jack pretends to look suspicious. Carl and Kate laugh as Jack goes to Kate, puts his arm around her and kisses her seductively on the neck.

Kate quips "I was just saying you would be coming in here in a minute looking for some pussy. And here you are." She gives him a quick kiss on the lips.

"Damn right woman and I'm ready for some, right now. Let's go to bed." He gives her ass a little grab.

"Back off." she grabs at his hand "Your gon'a get it. You better not have drunk too much wine, I don't want any fucking excuses." She looks him over critically.

"I'm in top working order, captain." He says with a pretend drunken slur, saluting her.

"You better be, or I'll be calling up Ensign Lee here to active duty." She jokes.

"That won't be necessary sir." he says with another salute. They all laugh.

"I better get this guy to bed before he falls over." says Kate.

They all say good night and Carl goes to bed. Before he goes to sleep he masturbates as he thinks about Mary. Carl sure wishes some of that pussy Kate was talking about would hurry-up and come his way.

Woody

About a month after Jack and Kate moved to the Tomales house, Jack bought a small sail boat from the classified ads in the bay area. He had to rent a trailer and borrow a truck to bring it to Tomales bay, then launch it in Inverness and sail it all the way to the Cove next to the Tomales house. Plus, he had to rig up a mooring by creating a heavy concrete anchor. It was worth the effort.

The boat is a Concordia Gaff Rig Sloop. It's all wood, with Carvel (plank on frame) construction, using native oak for the keel, skeg, stem, stern and frames. The planking is cedar and the decks are white pine. It is a thing of beauty with lots of bright work. Jack named her Woody, because he says sailing her gives him a woody. Carl has never had that particular reaction but he can see how it might be possible.

The design of the boat is based on an inshore lobster boat, which were common on the east coast in the 1850's. A gaffe rigged sloop with a flying jib, she has a simple rig with only two strings to pull to hoist her sails. Her mast is short and doesn't have any standing rigging, which is a benefit of the gaff rig. Like most gaffers, she sails best off the wind on a broad reach or a run, but doesn't point very well. In a light breeze it takes a lot of patience to get her moving, but once under sail when she heels over and lays on her lines, she is stable and fast, especially down wind in a stiff breeze. Jack loves sailing her.

On Sunday, Jack asks Carl to join him for a sail. It is a bright, but windy, late spring day. Woody is tied to a mooring in the middle of the cove. They use an aluminum canoe which is kept hidden in the bushes to row out to her.

Jack starts teaching Carl all about sailing as soon as they climb aboard. Every time he does something or uses something, he calls it by its name. Then he makes Carl repeat back to him the names and the functions. It is all completely foreign to Carl. He has never been on a sailboat before. Carl is intrigued.

Soon they have the sails up and Jack has Carl climb up on the front of the boat. Laying on his stomach he carefully unclips the boat from its mooring. It is a tricky maneuver and requires pulling the boat up to get some slack. The canoe is already tied to the mooring and keeps getting in the way. Carl finally gets them loose and the boat gradually drifts around and floats peacefully toward the center of the bay. They both put on life vests.

They are behind a tall ridge, which is blocking the prevailing wind coming off the ocean. However, when they come around the point they will be naked to the wind that rips down the middle of Tomales Bay. For now they continue to float along peacefully. "So Carl, how do you like sailing so far?" Jack asks, nonchalant. He sees the wind line ahead. "Nice, really nice. It sure is a beautiful day." Carl responds, leaning back in the sun, enjoying the views as they drift along.

"Yeah, it's really nice. Sailing can be really mellow, but not always." Jack says, as he takes his position to wait for the onslaught of wind. The boat is picking up a little speed. "Better hang on Carl." Says Jack.

"What?"

Suddenly they come out from behind the point and the driving wind grabs the boat and tips it on its side. Jack knows just how far to let it go, The boat leaps ahead as Carl scrambles. He is climbing up the side of the boat, eyes wide, hanging on for life. "Holly

shit." Carl screams. Jack is laughing. Carl gets it now. He is laughing as well. "You son of a bitch. Thanks for warning me."

"I told you to hold on." Jack laughs. "Sailing is 'Mellow' right?" Jack says, hiking out over the side. Carl crawls up and emulates Jack.

Jack tells Carl how to work the jib and how to hike out using the hiking straps at his feet. "I wondered what those were for." Carl says.

They rip across the bay and Carl loves it. They are moving somewhere shy of twenty miles an hour, but it feels like a hundred. Jack teaches Carl all about the physics of sailing, showing him the techniques and teaching him the terminology. Carl is eager to learn. It reminds him of driving the Alpha on a windy road, feeling the edge of control and danger. "I'll take you for a ride in the Alpha." Carl promises Jack.

"Yeah, I'd like that." He responds with a grin. Finally Jack lets Carl take the helm. He's a natural and he's hooked.

Marshall Tavern

It's a mellow Saturday. Rob and Auggie are not around, and nobody is visiting. After lunch Wayne and Carl are sitting around talking as Jack and Kate putter in the kitchen.

"So Carl, I bet you haven't even been to the Marshall Tavern yet, have you?" Wayne asks.

"No, I've never heard of it. Carl replies.

"Oh man!" Wayne calls to Kate and Jack. "He says he has never been to the Marshall Tavern." Kate walks in drinking a smoothie and flops on the couch. She grins at Carl.

"That's right; he's never been to the Marshall Tavern. That could be the answer to all your dreams, Carl." She says, as Jack comes in behind her and joins her on the couch.

"What? What dreams?" Carl says.

"Pussy, man, pussy. If you can't hook up with somebody at the Marshall Tavern you're in trouble." Jack chimes in.

"That's right, man. Marshall Tavern is the hottest place around, great bands, right on the bay, all the hot hippie chicks come there, it's a far out place." Wayne is ecstatic. "Let's go."

Sounds good to Carl. "Sure, let's go. Where is it?"

"Right there" says Kate pointing out the window toward the bay.

"What?" Carl is confused.

"It's right there." Says Jack, as he stands up and points out the window. "See those buildings over there across the bay, the white one, where the boats are moored? That's it." He points with his finger as Carl stands up to look. "Yeah, I see, far out. Can we take the boat?" Carl asks.

"I've been wondering about that myself." Jack says. "I think we can do it if we prepare ourselves. First, the wind is supposed to die down tonight, so we'll have to take the oars to row back. It's not far. The other thing is finding our way. We should be able to get a decent compass reading, but the tide, the movement of the water, will screw up our navigation so we need to leave a light on in the house. But, it could get foggy. We may just have to make our way across, see where we land and then go up or down the coast until we find the cove." Jack says. "I think we can recognize where we are, even at night."

"That sounds a little risky. How about a lantern on the beach or something reflective?" Carl asks. Carl and Jack are off in their own world now thinking and planning how to sail back from the Marshall Tavern at night.

"It looks like we're going." Kate says to Wayne as she sips her coffee.

A couple hours later they are on the bay. They plan to sail for a while, have dinner at the Tavern and party the night away. They have no idea what band is playing.

After tying up at the dock in Marshall they make their way up the stairs to the landing. It's a beautiful view and they can easily see the house across the bay. Jack and Carl take a compass reading on the house and write in a notebook, calculating a return course.

The Marshall Tavern is a big old two story roadhouse constructed in 1873. It's one of the oldest roadhouses in California and was built for the railroad which once ran along the Tomales Bay. Next door is the original old Marshall Hotel. As you enter the tavern there is a wide hall way. To the left is the bar, with windows facing the front on the left, with the stage at the back and a long bar. To the right of the hallway is the restaurant, with windows overlooking the bay all along the side and back. It's all old and funky, with tongue and groove wood ceilings and walls, and oak floors that creak when you walk. The whole thing is built on stilts and hangs out over the bay.

The tavern is already packed and there is a wait for seats in the restaurant. That's fine with them, they're in no hurry. They stroll around town, which is just the tavern, hotel and a few houses. The hotel looks full as well. They go back out to the landing to check the boat. It's doing fine.

Several other people are enjoying the view and they strike up conversations.

"Yeah' we live right over there" Carl says to a cute little blond he just met.

"Really? Where?" She says, intrigued.

"Right there. See the house above the bluff. That's our cove to the right. We sailed over. That's our sailboat down there at the dock." As if everybody arrives by sailboat.

"Far out!" She says. "My name is Laura." Carl checks her out and chalks her up as prospect number one.

"Yeah, we plan to sail back after the show. It should be fun. We got a compass bearing and everything." Carl says as if it's no big deal, they got it covered.

"Far out!" She says. "You like to dance?"

"I love to dance." Carl says looking deep into her eyes.

"Far out! Me too." She says, with a flirty little smile.

"We're having dinner now, but I'll see you later." He says touching her arm "I really want to dance with you." He says.

"Far out! Me too. See-ya."

Carl is not looking for intellectual stimulation tonight, neither is Laura. It's party time at the Marshall Tavern and the vibes are thick with flirtatious fun. Maybe Carl and Laura will develop a deeper level of interest and respect as they get to know each other. All that matters now is someone fun to dance with, and if the vibes are right, spend the night with.

As they walk back to the restaurant Kate is chuckling. She puts on a sweet little voice.

"Far out Carl! Will you dance with me too?" Blinking up at him all dreamy eyed. They all laugh.

Wayne says. "Damn, I saw her, but before I could say anything Carl swooped on her." He grabs Carl like he is ready to fight, and they hit and bump against each other playfully.

"This may be your lucky night kid." says Kate.

Just to be fully prepared, Carl has fried oysters for dinner. They are the freshest and the most delicious oysters he has ever had. By the end of dinner they have met everybody sitting around them. Carl has two more dance partners who have clearly deduced that some lucky girl will be sailing back across the bay with Carl tonight.

The music that night is being performed by a guy Carl has never heard of, Van Morrison. Needless to say, Carl is impressed. The club is rocking, packed to the rafters.

Carl can't order drinks from the bar because he isn't twenty one, but being in the club is apparently no problem. Besides, Carl prefers pot and there is plenty of that making the rounds. He dances and flirts with all the ladies. The music is great.

Van Morrison has a strong soulful voice and the songs are impossible to get out of your head. When the band is rocking with "Brown Eyed Girl" everybody is up dancing and sweating, the whole room shaking. And when Van does a sweetly soulful ballad like "Into the Mystic," the young women are like ripe fruit waiting to be picked.

Carl finally settles on that first cute blond he met on the landing when they first arrived. They take a stroll out to the end of the landing pier with the sound of the band still playing. It's dark and cool. The sweet ocean air surrounds them as they listen to the water gently lapping against the boats below. Not a breath of wind. The bay is like a lake of molten obsidian. They kiss. Carl places his hand on her tight little ass. She feels his cock through his pants. "How does the rigging check out?" he asks.

"I think you pass inspection." She laughs.

"Were defiantly Okay abaft" he says as he gives her ass another little squeeze.

She whispers in his ear, still touching his cock through his pants "I would love to go for a sailboat ride tonight."

"That can be arraigned, as long as I get to navigate." Carl says.

"Are you sure I pass inspection?" She says with a pretend pout.

"We'll see about that later." He says with a crooked smile as butterflies of anticipation flutter in his stomach.

Carl is the only sober one in the boat, so Jack appoints him captain. Wayne has a woman with him as well and they are both roaring drunk. Jack and Kate are feeling pretty happy themselves. Laura is only a bit tipsy. Of course Carl is stoned but that's widely recognized as being less of an impairment than being drunk. One look at Wayne confirms this bit of wisdom.

First Carl makes them all put on life jackets. A fair amount of grumbling accompanies this decision and Carl is afraid he may lose his command to a mutiny before they even leave the dock.

Though they put up the sails there is no wind. That means they have to row. They came prepared for this eventuality with two oars. Normally they don't carry oars when sailing because they take up too much space in the boat and get in the way. However, tonight they are essential. They take turns rowing.

Carl looks at the compass. Jack and Carl have checked the tide tables and determined that the tide will be going out about half a knot. With some calculations in their notebook and a bit of guess work they determine a heading. Carl steers and carefully watches the compass.

"Pull harder, ye swabbies." Carl barks.

"Fuck you man, I need another drink" responds Wayne at the oars. Everyone screams with laughter. You can hear them laughing, giggling, cursing and clunking around for miles across the glassy surface of the water as they slowly make their way across the bay.

It's chilly out. They switch places rowing. Jack is far more effective than Wayne's drunken and clumsy effort and they soon come to the other shore. Carl announces "I see the light at the house and its right where it's supposed to be." Captain Bly is the hero after

all. Carl takes over the oars as they attempt to hook up to the mooring. Jack almost falls in. There are screams and more raucous laughter.

Finally they make it back up to the house. Everyone immediately says good night and goes to their rooms. When Carl and Laura get into Carl's room they quickly take off their clothes and jump in bed. They are both cold from the ride, and they cuddle up to one another just to warm up. Lara is drunk and tired and Carl is stoned and tired. They kiss and she pulls Carl on top. He slips inside her. It's warm and good and they pant and groan with pleasure. Carl only thinks about changing the oil on the Alpha for a little while, then coms, rolls off and they are both asleep within seconds.

When Carl opens his eyes it's early and Laura is already awake and setting up in bed. She has opened the curtains and is looking out over the bay. "This is the most amazing view. What a wonderful way wake up."

He cuddles up to her. They are both warm and cozy now. She wiggles back down into bed and they lay there for a while cuddled together, watching thin wisps of clouds drift down the bay.

After a while Laura turns to him and then, without saying a word moves down and starts sucking his cock. "Oh yeah, that is so good." He says stretching out and thoroughly enjoying himself. He peeks under the covers to watch this beautiful blond girl working on his cock and thinks, "Man, it can't get much better than this."

As far as Carl is concerned, he has arrived. Maybe it's because it's early, or maybe it's because he got some sex last night, but Carl doesn't have to think about changing the oil on the Alpha even once. She moves on top of him now and they fuck for a long time. Finally Lara touches herself to reach orgasm and after Carl cums, she rolls off and both fall asleep. They don't wake up again until well after noon.

Auggie's Wondrous Garden

One of the great things about the Tomales house is its privacy. The back and sides of the house are completely surrounded by thick trees and bushes making it invisible from the road. Even the drive is protected from the front of the house so if someone does stumble down the drive they won't immediately be confronted by a group of naked hippies lounging in the sun. The view from the large arching patio in the front is open to the bay, but the water is far below and away from the house. A boater with binoculars could certainly get an eye full, but if this has ever actually happened, no one knows for sure and frankly they could care less. Let them look.

On warm days everyone goes naked. It's a comfortable way to live. You would probably think that open nakedness must inevitably lead to a highly charged sexual environment, but it is surprising how fast people get used to seeing other people naked. For most people the first few hours are a bit of a thrill, but soon they find themselves ignoring other people's body parts and even feeling comfortable with their own nakedness. Everyone is free to lounge around without feeling ogled or self-conscious. Plus, it feels good lying in the warm sun and losing all that restrictive clothing. Once the initial shock has passed, most people take to it immediately.

Not that there isn't a fair amount of sexual energy in the air. These are young, attractive and uninhibited people after all. If a young naked woman leans over to pick up something it may well draw the attention of Carl and the other guys. However, if she were to lean over to pick up something while wearing a swim suite or even a tight pair of jeans there is a good chance that it would catch their attention as well. If it's a nice ass and worth look at, clothed or naked, guys will take a look. If they also just happen to get a little glimpse of some fresh beaver, well that's just icing on the cake. Undoubtedly, having a bunch of naked young women around is a pleasant diversion for the guys, but what is really surprising is that the real head-turner of the house turns out to be one of the guys.

Down a short path, you will find the community garden. Next to the garden is a small shed that has been fixed up and turned into Auggie's cabin. Auggie loves to garden and this is his little patch of heaven. Being so close to the ocean, it never freezes at Point Reyes and everything grows with exuberance. Auggie's garden is a work of art, a veritable jungle of every kind of plant and flower, all slightly overgrown. He produces a bounty of delicious and healthy food which he sells at the farmers market in town. On most days you can find Auggie working contentedly in his garden.

Part Black and part Hispanic, Auggie is tall, lean and muscular with a smooth milk chocolate complexion. By any measure Auggie is a very handsome guy. But what really catches people's attention if they happened to stroll down the lush path overlooking the garden is the incredible size of Auggie's cock. It is a schlong of truly stunning proportions. As you stroll by you can see it hanging down and flopping around with happy abandon as Auggie pulls weeds or works with a hoe. People usually try to observe discreetly and hide their amazed expressions. Some claim Auggie has been misusing the Miracle-Grow.

Some women claim that size is not important, but Auggie is proof that this opinion is far from universal. Auggie is indeed very popular with the ladies. Not everyone jumps in his bed, but naked days at the Tomales house are certainly effective advertising for Auggie's gift from god and he usually has some more than willing woman at his disposal.

However, Auggie's natural talents also create an intimidating situation for the guys. Carl has always prided himself for being a bit better hung than most, but next to Auggie he feels downright puny. If there is any consolation it is that all the other guys are in the same boat. It also tends to dampen any exhibitionist exuberances among the men. If some new guy decides to parade around in an ostentatious display of his wares, a sight seeing trip to the garden is soon organized.

One day three acquaintances of Kates come to visit. They are all secretarial types enjoying the opportunity to be hip, even if they are a bit older. In their early thirties they are still looking good, even if they may be carrying a few extra pounds. All three are having a great time lounging naked on the sun deck, drinking wine and smoking pot. After a while Kate takes them for a little walk and they disappear down the path chattering and laughing. A short while later they all come back joking and swooning over Auggie and his amazing schlong. They have never seen anything like it. One of the women, a bold red head with a solid build and ample breasts, threatens to go back down and see if Auggie is up for a little daytime fun.

She asks Carl "So, is Auggie in any kind of relationship?"

Carl chuckles, "Nope, I can assure you Auggie is free as a bird and he has been known to pick the juiciest fruit from the garden all for himself."

"Really" she says.

All three are laughing and making bawdy comments. The red head keeps threatening to go meet Auggie.

"Go on, go down and talk to him." The other two women are saying. "I dare you" None of them think she will do it.

With a little more encouragement she finally gets up her nerve and defiantly strolls off, flashing her friends one last wicked grin as she disappears down the garden path. The other women are laughing and joking about how crazy she is. Nobody really thinks that she will hook-up with Auggie. But, as the minutes turn into an hour and the hour turns into two hours, everyone is starting to wonder what is going on. However, nobody has the nerve to actually go down and check out the situation.

Finally one of the women says "I think I see her coming." Everybody is silent; all eyes watch as she slowly comes up the path. She finally appears. Her face is beaming with a smile the size of Wyoming. The other women are screaming. "Oh my god, don't tell me. No, it can't be true. What happened, what happened?"

She slowly, obviously continues up the path taking one step at a time, her body limp, legs rubbery. She is radiant and silent as she heads to a lounge chair where she flops down as if she has spent her last ounce of energy. The other women are hysterical now "What happened? What happened? Did you really sleep with him? Oh my god. Come on, tell us." In reply the red head slowly stretches herself out, takes a deep breath, spreads her arms out wide as she looks straight up into the crystal blue sky, opens her mouth and bursts forth with one long, heart felt, operatic note of joy.

The Trip

It is a beautiful spring morning and Carl has just finished his breakfast when Kate comes and sits by him at the table. "Auggie has some very clean window pane acid and Rob and Auggie are planning on dropping some today. Would you be interested?"

"Yeah, maybe." Carl says thoughtfully.

"You have done acid before, right?" She asks

"Yeah, a couple of times. David got it for us."

"Oh, will then it was probably good stuff." She says. "I'm not taking any and will be straight, so if anything comes up I can take care of it. And if you are feeling a little too high, I will be there to talk you down. This is a wonderful place to trip." She smiles.

"Yeah, I've been thinking about it. I would love to." He says.

She comes back a few minutes later with a tinny translucent square.

"Here it is, have fun. I will be around if you need me." She gives him a little hug and walks off.

He swallows it with some milk, then goes into his room and reads for a while feeling nothing. After about an hour he goes to the front porch to sit in the sun. Rob and Auggie are there and greet him friendly smiles.

"Feeling anything yet?" Rob asks.

"I don't think so." Carl says

"I think I am just starting to come on."

Carl sits back in the chair. He feels excitement and fear in the pit of his stomach. Dropping acid is always an intense experience, not something to be taken lightly. It can be terrifying and dangerous in the wrong situation.

Carl can feel it now, he feels a little dizzy and things around him are looking more colorful. Auggie is in the lounge chair next to Rob. The three of them sit side-by-side as though it is a carnival ride, but this is bound to be wilder than any ride yet invented.

"Oh man, I am definitely coming on now" Auggie says.

"Me too man" Rob giggles.

"I'm flying too. Hang on." Carl says

They all laugh out loud. Rob lets out a little whoop as the roller coaster starts to roll and they all join in.

Carl is flying. It feels like all his senses are opening and he is being bombarded with sight and sound, emotions suddenly bubbling up and then just as fast spin away. Carl remembers when you first come onto acid, in the first couple of hours of a trip, that it can be a white knuckle experience, but you usually to level out after an hour or two. That may be reassuring information to remember, but when you're just coming on it's hard to remember anything. Carl is enjoying the view of the bay and trying to maintain.

After a while Kate comes out.

"You guys are looking pretty zoned. How is it going?"

"Far out." says Rob

"The clouds are moving." Says Auggie

"What?" Says Carl

"Okay, you all still talking, though I'm not sure 'What' qualifies." She chuckles. How about some fresh squeezed orange juice to bring you back down to the personal level? Sound Good?"

"Far out." says Rob

"The trees are moving." Say Auggie

"Oranges?" Says Carl

Kate brings out some fresh squeezed orange juice in plastic glasses. It takes a while to consume, but it's a hit, an explosion of flavor, even if they aren't in the least bit hungry. Carl is starting to feel overwhelmed. Kate comes and sits by him.

"How are you doing Carl?" She asks. He is looking wide eyed and a bit out of control. "Let's bring you in out of the sun. You need to mellow out for a while."

"Okay, I liked the orange juice." Carl says seriously.

"Good, I have something else for you until you start to level out." He follows her in and she guides him over to a big chair in the living room where it's cool and quiet. He sits down and in a couple minutes she comes back with a stack of photography books. "Check these out. I think you'll like them." She stacks them by the chair and walks away.

Carl picks one up. 'Macro Photography' the book is titled. It is filled with high quality nature close-ups, flowers, plants, bugs, drops of water. The images are stunning. He can't recall ever looking at photography books on acid, but he is blown away by the beauty. When Carl was outside the world was overwhelming and over stimulating. Now, focusing his attention on these individual photographs feels comforting. They are not moving or doing anything bazaar, they just seem stunningly beautiful and profound.

Carl spends more than an hour in the chair contentedly staring at all kinds of photographs. Kate walks by "So you like those?"

"Wow, these are incredible. I want to get a camera." He says.

She laughs. "That sounds like a great idea, but not today. Come with me I want to show you something." He gets up and follows her back out front. Rob and Auggie are talking and laughing when they come out. "Hey, Carl is back. How you doing man?" Rob says.

"I'm doing good, I've mellowed out quite a bit."

"Well come on over here, were just about the light a joint. That will help you mellow out some more." Says Auggie

"That's right. Smoking a little pot would be good. But not too much, just a couple tokes." Kate says helpfully.

"But first, check this out." She goes to the far end of the house and uncoils a garden hose, turns it on and drags it back to where Carl is standing. The water is flowing freely from the end. "Check out this water." She says.

Carl looks at her. What does she mean? It sounds silly. He looks at the water flowing from the end of the hose. "Touch it" she says. Carl puts his fingers in the water and its like and electric shock. He jerks away, and looks at her questioning. "Go ahead, it won't hurt you. He puts his hand in again. The cold water flows in a transparent wave over his skin. It is like a living thing. He moves his hand around, fascinated by the way the water

glistens, the way it feels, the way it clings to his hand. "Wow" he says "It's all wet and alive."

"Of course it's wet, its water" says Rob. They all laugh.

"No really, it's incredible." Carl says. He is making the water flows down his arms. It slashes on his legs and feet, puddles forming on the cement. He is wiggling his toes in it laughing and squealing like a child.

"Let me try it" says Auggie, getting up. Now Rob is up. They come over and put their hands in it and start laughing. The hose is passed around and things start getting wild as Rob tries to stop the water from coming out with his hand and it squirts out the sides. They are all laughing and carrying on like five year olds, playing in the water in the warm sunshine.

Finally they settle down and Kate comes back out, turns off the water and coils the hose back on its rack. As she walks by Carl, setting with the guys and getting ready to smoke some weed she says "I think you're doing fine now"

The weed does mellow Carl out and he comes back inside. Jack is there and they start talking about astronomy and the possibility of intelligent life in the universe. Jack is straight, but the conversation becomes quite intense and Carl is amazed at how articulate and lucid he feels. His recall of facts seems enhanced. Carl has leveled off and he now feels in a hyper state of awareness. He is feeling the need to go outside and walk and asks Kate if that seems like a good idea. "That sound great, I feel like taking a walk myself. Let's go, but first let me get a few things." She loads up a fanny pack with a bottle of water and some trail mix. They head out the door and up walk up toward the meadows.

For a few weeks each year the wild flowers at Point Reyes are in full boom. Thousand of acres of lush grassland explode in a dazzling display of color. As Carl and Kate walk up into the hills and meadows above the bay they are overwhelmed by the display of wild flowers carpeting the earth. Each flower is a world within itself, like the macro photography in the book. However, here there are literal billions of delicate and impossibly intricate flowers everywhere. It is impossible to walk without crushing them under your feet.

Carl and Kate find a spot to sit down with a long range view across the brightly colored meadows to the ocean for beyond. They are speechless. Carl turns to Kate, wide eyed. "It's so impossibly beautiful my heart can't take it." Carl says.

Kate smiles at him knowingly. "It is impossibly beautiful, but have no fear, your heart is strong and you can take it, and there is so much more. Go forth and experience the world." She says, spreading her arms in a dramatic gesture. With that she gets up and goes back to the house, leaving the pack with water and snacks for Carl. Carl gets up and starts to walk, reveling in the awesome beauty that surrounds him.

Carl comes to a spot with a commanding view. It is a remote part of the park only accessible by foot. He is alone. Carl sits down in the grass and reflects on his good fortune. He can't believe how amazingly well things are going. Every day he pinches himself to make sure this is really happening and he has only just arrived.

The nightmare of Kelseyville seems far away now. But Carl knows the trauma is still within him. He is hyper aware of everything around him, but is afraid to turn that enhanced perception within himself. He wants to move beyond those bad experiences, but they linger inside, welling up at inappropriate times, blocking his awareness.

Carl forces himself to turn his perception inward, to feel the anger, fear and sadness. As these feelings bubble to the surface and break into his perception he is afraid. He is

afraid the pain and bad memories are more than he can bear, afraid that they will crush him, afraid that he doesn't have the strength to cope.

Carl thinks of Eddie McGuire and Roy Welch and he screams and curses at them, using every foul and vulgar word. Then falling to the ground he tares at the grass, yanking it out in fistfuls, tearing off the heads of his enemy, of his father who betrayed him, of all the wickedness of the world. Now the sadness wells up inside him and it gushes forth in great heaving sobs and he wails in pain and sorrow at the sky. Great waves of sadness, fear and abandonment wash over him clawing at his heart, threatening to rip it to shreds. He collapses, exhausted, sobbing and falls asleep.

Carl hears buzzing and opens his eyes. Green grass towers over him and there in front of his eyes is a tiny wild Iris. He looks at it, at the intricacy of its design and the brilliance of its color. It is stunningly beautiful. His eye shifts and behind the flower he sees another flower. He lifts his head. Spread out in front of him are millions of tiny, delicate and infinitely beautiful wild irises. Carl looks around, and everywhere he looks is beauty, awesome, profound, inspiring beauty and his heart soars. A thousand pounds have been lifted from him as he stands. He takes a step. He lifts his voice and screams "I am alive" and then he laughs at what a funny man he is, what a silly man to have missed all this beauty that was around him. He takes a long drink of water then grabs his pack. It is a long way back to the house and he is looking forward to the hike.

The Benefactor

Willard Kaidy pulls up to the gate control in his green 1967 Ford Falcon and pressed the button. A scratchy voice answers.

"Yes?"

"Hello, I'm Willard Kaidy and I'm here to see Tomas Chaney."

No response. He waits. He is wondering what to do. Should he press the button again? The gate opens. Willard drives through and up the brick drive. A beefy guard is waiting in front of a red brick mansion. The guard motions Willard to keep on going.

The mansion was originally built in the 1920' by the wealthy owner of an oil company but has been extensively remodeled and modernized. Willard drives a little further and another guard motions him around the side of the mansion where he parks in a turnout with several other cars and trucks. Willard gets out and locks the car with his key. One of the security guards is waiting about ten feet away saying nothing. The guard motions for him to follow and takes him to a side door of the mansion.

Willard waits in a small office. Standard office side-chairs line two walls and a secretarial desk stands empty by the door. His stomach rumbles. He is hungry. Suddenly the door opens and two security guards come in. One is carrying a wand device of some kind; Willard has never seen anything like it. "I'm sorry Mr. Kaidy, but we need to check you for security purposes. Is that okay with you?" The guard waits expressionless. "Well, yeah, I guess so." Willard says. He isn't too happy about it. He wouldn't bring a gun or anything like that to a meeting like this.

The two guards immediately go into action. One thoroughly frisks Willard and the other waves the wand device over his body. Willard feels invaded, but the search is quickly over. "Again I apologize for the inconvenience Mr. Kaidy. Mr. Chaney will be with you in a moment."

Willard sits back down and waits. He is here to ask for money. He has a new organization called the American Alliance of Youth. The objective of the group is to recruit students and young people to counter liberal and Marxist groups like the SDS.

The American Alliance of Youth emerged from an earlier group connected to Willard Kaidy known as Youth for Wallace, which supported segregationist Governor George Wallace in his bid for president as an American Independent Party Candidate in 1968. Wallace lost. Willard needs new funds to continue his fight against communists and Jews, and Chaney is a well known supporter of right wing causes.

The door opens and the security guard motions for Willard to follow. He takes him down a long corridor to another section of the mansion and through a huge lobby. They stop at a pair of tall double doors. The guard quietly knocks and then goes in. Willard follows. It is an elegantly furnished library. Books line shelves on all sides except where two large windows with leaded glass overlook a broad lawn. . Willard recognizes Tomas Chaney from his photograph. Chaney is sitting behind a desk watching as the guard guides Willard to a chair across from his desk. One security guard moves to the side of Mr. Chaney, while the other one stands next to Willard. To the other side of Chaney are two young men in what appears to be tennis attire, sitting in wing back chairs.

"Thank you for coming Mr. Kaidy." Tomas Chaney says in a fragile voice. I understand you have a new organization. Why don't you tell us about it?"

"Well, thank you for seeing me Mr. Chaney. The name of my organization is the American Alliance of Youth. What I want to do is organize small groups of commandos who can take our fight directly to the communists. Take it to the SDS, the nigger Panthers, and the Jew intellectuals on the college communes. We plan to organize counter protests, peaceful if possible, but willing to bust some heads if we get the opportunity. We're recruiting right now and have some good Christian warriors ready to fight. All we need is the resources to get them on the battle field. Not much, just gas in the car and food in the belly that's all these young solders need." Willard is just getting warmed up and he leans forward in his chair.

"Now I know that you've been a supporter of the John Birch Society for a long time Mr. Chaney and they have done some good work exposing the conspiracy of internationalists, Jew bankers, communists, and corrupt politicians who are trying to take over the world. Unfortunately, we are losing this war. The communist directed hippie movement and the niggerfication of America is happening right before our eyes. Now I know you can only do so much Mr. Chaney and the international Jew conspiracy owns the press and will crucify anyone who speaks god's truth. Its better that you not expose yourself to their slander, but it's critical that we keep our righteous crusade on the path to victory and I am here to ask your help as a devoted warrior." Willard pauses to catch his breath. He is not done, but before he can start again Mr. Chaney speaks.

"Willard, you know that I've been a supporter of the cause for many years and I still support it. But you're the one on the front lines, taking the battle to the enemy. You're the hero Willard, the true patriot, not me. I'm just a businessman trying to meet payroll. If it weren't for people like you, well the communists would have taken over this country long ago and I'd be driving a truck. Not that there's anything wrong with good honest hard work mind you. Hell, I think I'd be happier today if Id just stayed out there on the line, digging wells." Chaney stops to cough, then continues.

"Willard, I can't officially indorse what you're doing." Chaney says.

"Oh no Mr. Chaney, I'm not asking for that. I know you'd like to, but that would just be playing into the hands of the Jew media." Willard is scrambling to explain. Chaney holds up his hand and Willard stops talking.

"That's right Willard and unfortunately I have to turn you down today. I can't support anything your doing. Do you understand? I disavow any participation in your organization." Willard Kaidy is shocked and disappointed. He is ready to argue when he sees Chaney motioning for his security guard to bring a brief case to Willard. The guard hands Willard the case. "I'm sorry I can't help you, but I wish you luck." Chaney says.

Willard starts to open the case, but the security guard puts his hand on top. "Not here" he says.

Willard decides to play along. For whatever reason, this is the way he want to do business. "Okay Mr. Chaney, thank you for your time. I hope you will keep an eye on what we are doing and maybe someday when all these communists have been rooted out and hung from the highest tree you can find a way to support our cause."

"I hope your right, Willard. Good luck." Chaney doesn't get up to shake his hand and Willard doesn't attempt to approach. The security guard leads him to the door.

Willard gets in his car, putting the brief case on the passenger seat beside him. The guards direct him to the front gate which opens just as he is approaching. He stops and waits. It's a blind curve to the left. Willard turns onto the road and drives past the other mansions. An expansive green golf course is on his right. Finally he finds a safe turn out

and pulls over. A middle aged man is just about to make a putt on the perfectly manicured putting green on the other side of a rustic split rail fence. Willard has other interests.

He reaches over and pops the locks on the brief case and opens the top. It is filled with money, tens of thousand of dollars in cash. Willard is in business.

Donald and Mathew Chaney go into Donald's office. Mathew plops down on the leather couch and Donald sits in the executive chair behind his desk. There is a quietly knock at the door.

"Come in Juanita." Donald says.

"Would you like something sir?" She asks.

"Yeah, I'll have some mineral water. How about you Mathew?"

"That sounds good"

Juanita disappears and Donald leans back in his chair.

Mathew looks iterated. "Where in the hell does Dad pick up these people? That guy is nuts."

"Well Dad seems a bit round the bend with these conspiracies himself, don't you think? Though I have a feeling he may not be as crazy as he appears. You know how Dad is. You never really know what is going on in that mind of his. This is just part of some bigger plan that he has."

"Well I don't like it. I don't want to get mixed up with those kind of people. I don't get the point. Dad's involvement with the John Birchers has been nothing but a public-relations nightmare. I don't see how any good can come of it."

Mathew responds. "The country is in chaos. It's a danger and an opportunity."

"Opportunity? The hippies are taking over. The whole country has gone mad." Mathew sniffs derisively.

"I don't think so. These left wing radicals have made some gains and gotten allot of media but this could end up working to our advantage. I think dad understands that. The backlash is just beginning. Most Americans are appalled by these people. And mark my word; the Democratic Party is going to pay a big price."

"Well they certainly destroyed the Vietnam effort."

"I could care less about Vietnam. Let Johnson and the Democrats take the blame for that debacle. The goal is to grab hold of the backlash. The workers have always been part of the Democratic base and now they are all disgusted with what the liberals have become. If the conservatives can capitalize on that, well then you would really be talking about a major shift in power."

There is a knock at the door.

"Come in Juanita."

Juanita comes in with a tray holding two drinks. She quickly and efficiently places them on coasters near each of the men and turns to leave.

"Just a minute Juanita" Donald says.

She turns "Yes sir?"

"Juanita, did you voted for John Kennedy when he ran for president?"

Juanita looks surprised and nervous. She isn't sure what to say. She knows that all the Chaneyes are strong conservatives.

"It's all right Juanita; I don't hold it against you. I am just curious what you found appealing about him."

"I am a Catholic sir." She says softly.

"Of course you are, and I admire your religious devotion Juanita. But as a Catholic, what do you think of all these hippies and war protestors?"

"I don't like them sir. They're disgusting people." She says forthrightly, then looks worried that she may have over-stepped her bounds.

"I agree with you Juanita, they are horrible people and I appreciate your being so honest with me. That will be all, thank you."

Juanita nods her head, turns and hurries out of the room and quietly closes the door behind her. She didn't enjoy that little encounter one bit.

"So?" Says Mathew. "What was the point of that?"

People like Juanita, and like this nut that Dad has hooked up with, they don't know or care about economic issues, capital gains, estate taxes. They care about social issues. Religion for example is the single biggest influence on millions of people's lives. Like Juanita. The most important factor in her vote was that John Kennedy was a Catholic. Those people hate the Hippies. If we can make the Democrats and the Liberals the Hippie party and the Republicans the down home Religious party we can win their vote."

"Well that sounds pretty far fetched Donald. What we want on economic issues is not what they want. Allot of those religious Christians are Union workers. It's the Democrats who are fighting their battles. It's not in their interest to cut our taxes. They're not stupid, why would they vote against their own interests?"

"Because they hate hippies, communists, and atheists, that's why. And when it comes to economics, they may be stupider than you think. Look at this idiot Dad brought us. Look how many votes George Wallace got. There is a backlash happening and we need to encourage and exploit it."

"Well I certainly don't want to be associated with these people. I don't want my name dragged in the mud. Their nuts, communists are not coming out of the woodwork Donald."

"Of course not, but behind the scenes we can make a huge difference. A little money can go a long way with these people. Look at all the money we give to the Republican Party so that bunch of corrupt politicians will represent our interests. That has become hugely expensive. Those guys are a bottomless pit. I think that we can really make a difference here. The long term return on investment could be outstanding."

"Fine, if you think it's worth doing, but nothing public, all under the table, no more public involvement with the John Birch Society. That was a disaster. As far as the public is concerned we are mainstream Republicans." Mathew says emphatically.

"Absolutely, all under the table." Donald takes a sip of his drink and then adds, "And besides, I agree with Juanita, hippies are disgusting people." They both laugh.

Rose

Kate has been talking non-stop for a week about her old friend Rose who is coming to visit. Kate drives to town and comes back in the afternoon with Rose.

Carl is in the kitchen when Kate and Rose breeze in the door excitedly talking and laughing.

"Oh, hi Carl, this is my good friend Rose."

"Hi Rose." Carl says as he awkwardly performs the customary short hug greeting. Rose smells like Patchouli. She greets him with a broad smile.

"Nice to meet you Carl, Kate has been telling me about you." Kate and Rose laugh. Carl self consciously laughs along with them though he is not sure why.

Rose is twenty-five, the same age as Kate, but she has lived and traveled all over the world. She has already had more adventure in than most people experience in a lifetime. Recently back from India, Rose looks like a cross between a gypsy and an Indian princess. She is wearing a long skirt, intricate Indian blouse, and colorful scarves wrapped around her shoulders and waist. Pounds of jewelry dangle from her wrists, arms, neck, ears and ankles. She jangles when she walks. Carl has never met anyone like Rose. He finds her beautiful, mysterious and intimidating.

Rose's family is Creole, originally from New Orleans. Creole is a broad mixture of French, Black, Spanish, American Indian and who knows. The Creoles are natives of the city of New Orleans, where art, music and culture have existed in a vacuum for generations, mostly removed from much of the narrow-minded bigotry of the south. Rose's family somehow ended up in Ann Arbor Michigan where her father was a High School teacher.

Rose has a light milk chocolate complexion that usually passes for some flavor of white. Of course, in New Orleans anyone would instantly recognize her as a Creole. Rose is medium height with a thin but muscular body. Her hair is short, dark brown and a little on the wild side. She has a wide smile with perfect teeth and twinkling eyes. Carl immediately finds her island girl looks and slim body tantalizing.

Kate and Rose grew up together in Ann Arbor Michigan. They met in High School, and have been good friends ever since. While Kate continued on to college, Rose traveled the world.

Rose and Kate immediately get crazy in the kitchen, cooking up a variety of Indian inspired dishes with California hippie flare. Fragrant, pungent and tantalizing odors fill the house. Carl helps out, following Kate's orders, but for the most part staying out of the conversation as Rose and Kate talk about old friends and Rose's adventures. Carl is amazed by her stories.

Rose has traveled to almost every continent, nearly killed by pirates while sailing at the mouth of the Amazon River, hung out with Salvador Dali and a bunch of crazed artists in France, and nearly died of thirst while lost in the Australian desert. She has traveled all over the US as well and just came back from Europe and an eight month trip to India a month ago. She has been in New York City for the past few weeks. Her plan is to go back to school and get a nursing degree. Apparently nurses are in demand everywhere, especially third-world countries. She sees it as a way to help pay for her adventures and do good things for local people at the same time.

Rose primarily travels on private aircraft and sailboats. All for free. Her primary method of getting rides on planes is to go to airport lounges set aside for the pilots of private aircraft. This is where businessmen and pilots hang out as they wait for their planes to be refueled, to plan their next trip, or just to have lunch. She primarily hitches rides with businessmen who fly private airplanes for business. These flights are often long and boring, and the company of an articulate, charming and attractive young woman is seen as an unusual and welcome opportunity. You don't become a successful businessman without learning to recognize a good opportunity when you see one. In addition, one of the biggest dangers of flying solo on long trips is falling asleep. Having a passenger actually improves safety. Rose has even learned to help with the controls and navigation. She speaks just enough aviation lingo to intrigue the pilots. She has even traveled cross country on luxurious corporate jets on their way to pick up clients at other locations. And always for free. Rose claims the businessmen have always been perfect gentlemen, but it's implied that Rose has also developed deeper relationships with some of her flying acquaintances. Her friendship with some of these wealthy benefactors has benefited Rose in numerous ways.

Rose has also learned to crew on sailboats. Large yachts are apparently always looking for experienced crew. Some will even pay a small wage for cooking and other services. Carl is absolutely amazed at the number of exotic places Rose has traveled, Tahiti, Hawaii, the Cook Island and a bunch of other places he has never even heard of. Some of these adventures have been dangerous, but most have been idyllic. Rose seems to have a knack for finding adventure and supportive relationships wherever she goes. By any standard, Rose is an amazing and worldly woman.

Carl sits by Rose during dinner and they chat pleasantly. She fascinates him, but her age, sophistication and worldliness make her seem completely out of his league. He is just a eighteen year old kid fresh from Kansas. However, Rose is open and friendly and she makes Carl feel generally at ease as she listens to his ideas and laughs at his clever quips.

A little later as Carl is helping Kate clean up the kitchen Kate says "Isn't Rose great?"

"Yeah, she is really amazing."

"She's planning to take nursing classes at the College of Marin this fall. They have a good nursing program there."

"Great, you're planning to go there as well."

"That's right. She may move into town in the fall, but she is interested in possibly spending the summer here."

"Really, that would be great. I like here alot Kate; she would make a wonderful addition to the household. But is anybody is leaving? How about Rob?"

"Yeah, that could be a possibility." She says, and then moves off to wipe down the table.

That night Jack plays the piano and Carl sings a few songs with his guitar. Carl is still a shy, but his singing is open and dynamic, even if his guitar playing is a little ragged. Everybody in the house has heard him practicing his songs, but it's the first time for Rose. She always has had a weak spot for musicians and Carl's sweet, high and earnest voice touches her.

Kate is not so subtly pushing Rose to hook up with Carl and spend the summer at the house. Rose has doubts and is in no hurry to make any moves. She loves the Tomales house, but is thinking of getting her own place in Fairfax or one of the other towns closer

to where she will be going to school in the fall. Plus, Rose is in no hurry for a new relationship. She just spent time with a boyfriend in New York, a relationship that is ending and she feels like being alone for a while. Carl is cute and charming, but he seems so young. Besides, he just isn't her type. Rose usually hooks up with older men, stronger men, successful men.

A few idyllic days drift by. Rose is having fun visiting with Kate and Jack. Everyone in the house is friendly and Carl has been a delight. She has to admit, she is attracted to Carl. She considers it a puppy love kind of thing. They engage in a lot of kidding and horse play. She finds herself giggling with abandon. In some ways Carl is so shy, but in other ways so clever and confident. She doesn't feel pressured by him. He makes her laugh.

Kate's constant urgings are also starting to have an influence. She whispers little suggestive comments about Carl as he is engaged in some amusing little antic. Rose thinks Kate would be interested in Carl herself if she wasn't with Jack. Rose finds herself unconsciously flirting with him. She feels like she is back in High School or something. The atmosphere is charged with silly sexual infatuation. Whatever, she is just going with the flow and enjoying herself. It's all great fun, and what a beautiful place to hang out.

The next morning, Jack and Kate decide to take Rose for a sail and ask Carl to come. After breakfast they all head down the narrow path to the cove. Carl takes Jack out first in the canoe so he can start rigging the boat. Then he comes back to pick up Kate and Rose.

They are soon underway. It is a gorgeous, calm, sunny day on the bay as they reach across the wide part of the bay toward Hog Island. A light breeze pulls them lazily along. Sunshine sparkles off the water, as Maxfield Parish clouds float above. They chat and laugh, then lean back and quietly laze in the warm sun, reveling in the beauty of the day. Carl feels uninhibited as he flirts with Rose. They sit close together, as all four move to one side of the boat to counter balance the wind. The way they touch is casual but feels significant to Carl. At one point, Rose peels an Orange and offers Carl some slices. As he watches, she takes a juicy bite in a way that seems incredibly sensual. He is staring at her when she turns her head and looks at him with a coy smile, juice drips down her chin. Carl is smitten and Rose seems to enjoy it.

Jack and Carl have become good friends, but they also enjoy friendly competition. Jack is a science and chemistry major. Carl likes reading science fiction and has read all Isaac Asimov's science fact books for laymen. They have fun trying to one-up each other with tidbits of science trivia. As a science major, Jack usually has the upper hand, but he is often amused and surprised at the wide ranging knowledge Carl is able to pull out of his hat.

Clearly visible and shining high in the daytime sky is a nearly full moon.

"Wow, check out the moon." Kate says.

"Beautiful" responds Rose.

"Okay Carl, so tell me, how far away is the moon" Professor Jack asks.

"Let's see, I think it's around three hundred thousand miles?" Carl guesses.

"Close but no cookie. 238 thousand miles, but it varies some." Jack lectures. "Okay and the diameter of the moon?" Jack asks.

"I give up" Carl says

"2,160 miles." Jack answers. "Which is how big compared to the earth?" He looks at Carl expectantly.

"Oh, I think I know that. I think it's one eighth the size, right?"

"That's right! One eighth" Jack says officially.

Kate and Rose chuckle and roll their eyes at the little competition. Jack is showing off, but Carl seems to be game.

"All right Jack, I got one for you." Carl says

"The moon is not really a moon. By that I mean it's not a satellite of the earth, so what is it?" Carl asks.

"What?" Jack says while giving Carl his famous incredulous look. "Not a satellite? What are you talking about?"

"Well, like Europa is a moon and satellite of Jupiter. But the celestial object we're looking at right up there is not really a moon or satellite of the earth. Not like Europa." Carl says confidently. "So what is it?"

"What, you're out of your mind, man. The moon is a moon. That's where the name moon came from."

"Well, you're right, that is where the name came from, but it's not a satellite of the earth." Carl insists awkwardly.

Kate and Rose are looking skeptical as well.

"That sounds kind of out-there Carl. What do you mean?" Kate asks

"Yeah, I got'-a hear this one." Jack says with self-assured skepticism.

"So you're giving up?" Carl says with a smile. "Okay, Europa is a moon and a satellite of Jupiter. Meaning that Europa orbits Jupiter, and Jupiter is the primary force that determines Europa's path through space. Just like a communications satellite's path through space is primarily determined by the earth. But the relationship between the Earth and the Moon is different. The moon is so big, relative to the size of the earth, that the primary gravitational force that determines its path through space is the sun, not the earth. Earth actually places a secondary influence on the moon.

Proof of that is, if you plot the path of the moon through space it looks like a wave. The moon never goes backward on its path around the sun. But the path of Europa would look like a curlicue. It goes backward on itself because it is primarily going around Jupiter. It's a satellite.

They all look at each other surprised.

"Really?" Says Jack as he switches to his inquisitive look.

Kate and Rose laugh.

"I think he may have you on this one Jack." Kate says teasing.

"I don't know. I've never heard that one before, but he could be right. I've just never thought about it like that." He is still skeptical and not ready to admit defeat.

"Yeah, but you still never answered my question. If the moon is not a satellite of the earth what is it?" Carl asks pointedly.

Jack is on the hot seat but is determined not to get stumped again. He thinks about this for a second.

"Well, I guess that would make it a planet?" He looks at Carl questioning.

"Right! It's a planet. The Earth and the Moon are really a binary planet system. That's why I kept saying that the Moon is not a moon. It's another planet."

"Wow, that's pretty cool." Jack says.

Everybody laughs. "Good try Mr. Wizard." Kate says kidding Jack.

Everybody is laughing and kidding Jack and congratulating Carl. Finally Rose chimes in.

"So, does either of you know-it-alls know the phases of the moon?" Rose asks.

Kate jumps in "Let's see, full moon, half moon, crescent moon, half moon again, and full moon."

"You missed one, or two really. What is the phase of the moon right now? Jack?"

"I know that. Damn, I can't remember." He says in frustration.

"Carl?" She says, unconsciously looking at him with a little flirtatious smile.

"Well" he says looking into her eyes. "I know there is some waxing and a waning involved. Waxing is when it's getting harder, and waning is when it's getting softer."

"No!" she says giggling, then in mock seriously. "It's waxing when it is getting bigger, and waning when it is getting smaller."

"That's what I said." Carl protests.

"No it isn't." She says in play anger.

"But you still haven't told me what faze the moon is in right now." She points up at the moon. The moon is not quite full.

"I give up" Carl says.

"It's called a gibbous moon." Rose says as they all turn to admire the beauty of the nearly full daytime moon.

"Gibbous moon, that's right, I knew that. Damn." Says Jack.

"Gibbous moon" Carl says wistfully. "I like that." Carl and Rose turn to stare briefly into each other's eyes, a flutter in their hearts. She has to admit, she likes this kid.

They drag the boat onto a sandy beach, lay out blankets and have a picnic in the sun. Latter, they explore a grove of giant fir trees behind the beach. In the cool darkness of the trees they find a small stream surrounded by ferns and moss covered logs. They explore along the edge of the gurgling stream and find a small, crystal clear pool. Under a log is a bright orange salamander. He is surprisingly large and lethargic. None of them has ever seen anything like it. They pick him up, but he barely moves to get away. Finally after marveling at his brilliant orange and green stripes, they carefully place him back in the shallow pool. He slowly crawls back under a mossy log.

They decide to hike up the hill for a view of the bay. At the top of a knoll, they lay down a blanket in the tall grass, a sparkling Tomales Bay is stretched out in both directions. It's a wondrous sight. Jack and Kate walk off together to find their own private spot so they can enjoy a little sex in the sun.

Carl and Rose lay on the blanket enjoying the view. Carl is wondering how to make his move on Rose. He is feeling shy again, still thinking she is way out of his league. But

Carl is sure he has been getting at least some flirtatious vibes. He leans over a little closer and puts his hand on her leg and says "I have really enjoyed being with you today."

"It's been a beautiful day." She says with a relaxed smile, but she doesn't make any move to acknowledge his not so subtle advance. He knows she is resisting, but he senses her interest and desire.

There is a ravine to one side with a small group of fragrant bay laurel trees.

Directly in front of them is the same beautiful daytime moon they saw while on the boat.

On top of this hill it seems even closer. Carl stands up and stretches, then walks to a spindly bay tree nearby. The tree is only about twice as tall as him, but he steps up on a low branch, only two or three feet above the ground and addresses the moon in a theatrical voice.

"Oh Gibbous Moon, please shine your wondrous light upon my needy soul. I have climbed here to the top of this mountain, to the top of this high tree, just to be closer to you, to see your radiant light, to gaze upon your beautiful face"

"For I love you, Gibbous Moon. I love you like the earth loves the mountains, like the ocean loves the shore, like time loves eternity, but I could love you even more Gibbous Moon.

Rose is watching, amused and flattered. "Forgive me Gibbous Moon for I'm helplessly in love with you. But, how can I dare to dream that you will ever love me, that you will shine your wondrous love upon me, upon my merely mortal soul? For you Gibbous Moon already have the love and the devotion of the ocean who has given you command of his mighty tides, and the night which lets you pierce its lonely heart of darkness, and the day who lets you shine even against the brightness of the sun. What treasures can I give you in comparison Gibbous Moon? For I am just a man and all I have is my eternal love and devotion. A mere mortal, standing here at your feet, trying to catch your fair eternal light, a slave to your ancient primal love and beauty."

Carl glances to see Rose watching him with a wide smile.

"All I can do Gibbous Moon, all I can ever hope, is that some day, you will shine your mystical powers down upon my needy soul, shower me with your magical affections, grace me with your wondrous gifts of love, and take pity upon my poor, mortal soul. Oh, please Gibbous Moon, won't you show me a sign, just a little sign that you care for me. For if you don't I fear that I must wait, lonely and forsaken, here in this tree for the rest of my life."

Carl pauses for a moment, as if waiting for an answer. Again, he glances at Rose who is laughing at his dramatic performance. "Well, go ahead and think about it for a while Gibbous Moon. I'm going to get down now and hang out over here on this blanket, because it does get kind-of hard standing up in this tree after a while. But that doesn't mean I don't still love you Gibbous Moon, I will always love you Gibbous Moon."

Carl jumps down from the tree and walks toward the blanket. Rose leans back on her elbows, watching him with a mysterious smile. He stops just before the blanket and calls up one more. "Here I am Gibbous Moon. I'll be right here if you need me." Carl tumbles down onto the blanket and lies back on one elbow facing Rose. She immediately comes to him, kissing him passionately on the lips, then pushes him away so that he falls over on his back.

"You are too damn cute." She says shaking her head. Rose comes to him again and kisses him with passion and abandon as he lies on his back. Her kisses are soft, sweet and sensual.

Carl is trying to be cool and controlled, but he loves the way her body feels, thin like his, firm and warm, her scent stirs him and drives his desire. She likes the way he feels as well. He touches her breast and runs his hands over her smooth body, gently exploring the folds of her deep warm places. She does the same, feeling the firmness of his cock through his pants.

"It looks like we have another waxing gibbous on our hands." She says.

He pulls at her shirt, drawn to the smoothness of her skin. "I'm not ready for anything major right now." she says, but then pulls her shirt open and comes to him. "You do feel good." she says with a wicked little smile. They continue to discover one another.

When John and Kate suddenly appear, Kate's eyebrows rise to see them cuddled together. "Oh, I see you've been playing too." Kate says.

"Just getting acquainted." Rose replies.

They take their time heading back. When they finally stumble in the door, they find Rob has several friends visiting and Auggie is fixing one of his spectacular vegetarian dinners. It's a warm evening and they are eating early, so the table up set outside. It already feels like a party.

Carl and Rose are affectionate but reserved during dinner. After dinner and dishes, Rose comes to sit with Carl who is relaxing in a big bamboo chair in the corner.

Rose likes the way Carl feels. She likes his smell. She likes his sexy eyes and open smile. It's been a few weeks since she has had sex and she has to admit she's horny. This young guy, this boy-toy, turns her on. It looks like easy, uncomplicated, good sex. But, if there is one thing Rose knows, sex is always at least a little bit complicated.

Spending the summer with Carl at the Tomales house sounds great, but Rose plans to move on in the fall and she doesn't want to hurt Carl. The kid is obviously ga-ga over her and she likes that. It seems like the older men she has been with always holding back. They have already had their hearts broken. But Carl is young. He is completely open and uninhabited. Again, it's like puppy love and Rose has to admit it's an infectious feeling.

When she mentions her reservations about hurting Carl to Kate, Kate just laughs. "I'm sure Carl is more than willing to take his chances to get you in his bed." she says. In any case, Rose has already made up her mind.

Rose takes Carl's hand and smiles up at him. She stays that way for a few moments, looking into his face, then whispers "Would you like for me to stay with you tonight?"

"If you do, I'll know Gibbous Moon has answered by prayers." Carl replies softly.

"I'll come to your room in a little while."

Rose gives Carl a soft kiss, gets up, and heads out to John and Kate's room where she has been staying. As soon as the door closes behind her Carl jumps up and goes to his room. It is a mess. Carl starts rushing around, throwing his clothes in a pile in the closet, stuffing boxes of tools and other car stuff under the bed. He rushes to remake the bed. The sheets and blankets are new and still pretty clean. He runs to the bathroom for a quick shower, teeth brushing and is back in the room in fifteen minutes. A candle is lit

and curtains drawn. Carl decides on gym shorts, no underwear, and a T-shirt. He crawls up on the bed, assumes a casual pose and attempts to act as if he is reading.

Soon there is a light knock at the door. Rose comes in. She is carrying a colorful bag from India containing a few necessities. "Hi" she whispers with a warm smile. "Hi" Carl whispers back. She crawls up on the bed and tumbles into his arms. They are both full of youthful desire. The feel of their bodies together at last takes their breath away. Carl is overwhelmed with lust, but is trying to be cool. Rose is an older, exotic, worldly woman and he doesn't want to blow it. He is nervous and self-conscious, but he thinks he is hiding it well.

They kiss for a while and then take off their clothes. He touches her naked body. She holds his hard cock firmly around the shaft. Just the feel of her hand on his cock makes him want to cum. Carl tries with all his might to remember the precise steps for changing the oil in the Alpha. She watches him as he concentrates on screwing in the oil filter without stripping the threads.

She has seen this control technique before. "You're really horny aren't you?" She asks with her hand still on his cock.

"Yeah, but it's Okay. Just give me a few minutes to get myself under control and I'll be alright.

"So, what are you thinking about?" she says with a curious smile.

No one has ever asked him that before. He isn't sure he should tell her. He hesitates.

"Come on, I'm curious" she says.

"Changing the oil in my car." Carl replies sheepishly. Rose starts to giggle and they both laugh out loud.

"Look, just let it go. I want you to cum as soon as you want." She says softly.

"Can you count in tenths of a second?" Carl asks.

"Yes I can." She replies.

She starts kissing him passionately and then on her way down to his cock she says, "Cum for me, I want to feel you cum right now. He watches her put his cock between her beautiful, succulent lips and 5.3 seconds later he cums in her warm mouth.

She holds him there for a long time, and then wipes her face with a towel that is hiding in her bag. She cuddles up to him. "Was it good? Do you feel better now?" "I'm sorry, I would have been alright if..." "Don't worry about it." She says, kissing him on the lips, then taking his hand and putting it on her breast, "The night is young." She assures him. "But you didn't answer me. Was it good? Do you feel better?"

"It was very good, and I feel a lot better."

"Great, let's go have some coffee and dessert."

She scrambles off the bed and he meekly follows. He can't believe what a pathetic asshole he is, what a fucking lame performance that was. What the fuck was he thinking? He told her, he admitted, that he was thinking about changing the oil on his car? What a fucking moron. Carl presumes it is over.

They put on their clothes and go back out to the living room. Sure enough, Kate is making fresh coffee and they walk in just as it finishes brewing.

Kate looks a little surprised. "Hi, how is it going?" she asks.

"Just getting warmed up." Rose says secretively and gives Carl a sexy wink.

"Cool" Kate says with wicked grin.

Carl is still feeling embarrassed, but Rose just helped him save face in front of Kate. He appreciates that, even if he still suspects he has blown it.

"We want some coffee, got enough?"

"Absolutely" Kate says.

They sit together on the couch and have coffee and talk to an interesting couple named Redwood and Savitre. They have just purchased a large parcel of land up the coast near Point Arena. It sounds like a beautiful place and they invite Carl and Rose to visit sometime. He is a PhD in Mathematics and she teaches Ti-Chi. The four of them hit it off. Carl talks to Redwood about astronomy, G. Spencer Brown and the concept of infinite series in mathematics. Rose talks to Savitre about her travels in Tibet and the Dali Lama. Savitre is determined to meet the Dali Lama someday. Carl is having such a good time he forgets his pathetic performance in the bedroom.

A few hours later Rose whispers into Carl's ear, "Let's go to bed." They say good night and head to Carl's room. Carl closes the door as Rose walks to the bed. She steps onto the single step that leads to the high bed, turns around to face him, slips the straps of her dress off her shoulders and lets it fall to her ankles. She stands naked, posed with one leg slightly, arms stretched out holding the edge of the bed. She is luscious and she is waiting for him.

Carl watches in an agony of delightful expectation, then comes to her and places his hands on her hips as she looks down and moves her hands under his shirt. Rose is giving him the full treatment and she enjoys it. She prides herself in the art of sex and seduction. Long ago she noticed a look Lauren Bacall gave Humphrey Bogart in Key Largo. It's a look she has used many times with great effect. In fact, she doesn't even think about it now, it just happens when the time is right.

Her head is slightly lowered as she looks upward into his eyes, a tiny knowing smile, a look that melts Carl's heart. They savor the moment.

Rose pulls the T-shirt up over Carl's head. He slips off his shorts as she pulls herself up onto the bed. He is right behind her and they tumble into each other's arms.

Both of their bodies are tan and thin and smooth. They marvel at how similar they are and how perfectly they fit. Exploring each other with soft hands they take their time, Carl feels focused and undistracted.

They pause while Carl crawls down to the end of the bed and lights candles. Rose pulls a couple towels and a large tube of lotion out of her bag. She pulls back the covers and lays a large towel on the bed. "Come lay down on your stomach."

Carl does as he is told. Rose kneels beside him, squeezing white coconut paste into her hand and working it between her warm palms until it liquefies. With a gentile motion, she rubs the fragrant oil into his back. It smells like coconuts, a scent that Carl will always associate with this sensual moment.

Firmly, expertly, she massages his back and shoulders. He closes his eyes and revels in her touch. She gets more oil and moves down to his calves and thighs, running her slippery fingers over his smooth ass, kneading, squeezing, and massaging him. She moves beside him as she rubs his back, leaning over to let her naked breasts touch his slippery back. "Roll over" she whispers. As he rolls over she starts with his legs, rubbing and kneading up to his thighs. She massages the inside of his thighs and runs her warm hands across his stomach. As she move closer Carl's cock becomes hard, so she gently

glides her warm hand over it, then holds it firmly in her grip as it swells, gripping it with the slippery oil. Carl takes a deep breath and moans in response. Rose lays her warm body on top of his and kisses him, as her slippery hands move up over his stomach and chest. Placing her hands behind his neck Rose firmly massages, squeezing his tight muscles to the edge of pain. Carl sees stars. He is almost in a trance as she gently kisses his lips, her warm wet tongue touching his.

Rose moves down and takes him into her mouth. Carl swoons and moans. Using her hands and lips she strokes him, pulling him up and back. Carl opens his eyes and watches. She is on her knees, holding him with both hands, his cock in her mouth, her ass in air. He runs his hands along her smooth brown body and she responds by moving closer so he can see and touch every part of her.

She is more beautiful than he ever imagined, her arched back and tiny waist, small firm breasts with chocolate nipples, and perfectly smooth round ass. It's the ass of a thousand dreams. He glides his hands over her, exploring, admiring, sliding down the crack between the dark folds and into the wet pink fruit of her pussy. He feels her respond, spreading her legs wider as he gently touches her swollen clit with his wet fingers. He looks down to watch her sucking his cock. He leans up and pulls her to him. They kiss.

For Carl, kissing has always been a prelude to sex, but in this moment kissing is the most sensual of acts, her swollen wet lips and eager tongue, her breasts and body against his. He could stay this way forever. "You are so beautiful Rose. I want you so much." He whispers they hold each other. "Teach me how to please you. How can I please you?" he asks. "You already please me. You already have the magic in your touch. We will learn together." she whispers.

Rose moves down and again takes his cock in her hands and mouth, sucking and kissing, looking up at him for his approval. "Oh yes, that is so good. I love to watch you." With that she gives him a little smile, holding his bulging manhood against her beautiful face, posing for his pleasure. She rolls to her side and with a hand on her knee spreads her legs as he lies back down. He can see all of her stretched out and open before him and he revels in the exquisite carnal ecstasy of the sight.

Putting one arm under her, Carl pulls her to him and buries his face in the ripe fruit of her pussy. He is driven with lust, kissing and licking, drinking in the scent of her sweet musk. She moans and moves her hips in response, whispering "Suck my clit. Touch it with your tongue." Carl moves his mouth forward, then gently sucks and licks. His tongue finds her swelling clitoris and as he touches it he can feel it becoming firmer. Rose gasps and makes a little high pitched sound of pleasure. "Yes, yes, like that." She grabs his hair and pulls him back then pushes him back down, her hips moving to meet him. "Oh, god, that is so good. You got it, you got it. Gently, then firmly, that's it."

Carl's hand is massaging her thigh and the cheek of her ass. She reaches around and guides his fingers to folds of her ass. "Gentle now." She says. "Just on the outside." She presses his fingers in a rhythmic motion. "Oh god." she swoons.

Carl spreads her open and moves his wet mouth to her, tickling with his tongue, making her wet and slippery, then moves back to her swollen clit. He rhythmically massages her, gently pressing and pushing with his fingers. One finger sometimes slips just inside, wiggling and tickling. She screams and moans moving her hips. He can tell she is close to orgasm, so he backs off.

Rose brings her legs together, his whole hand slides over the deep crevasse of her ass cheeks, with just the tips of his fingers still touching and tickling down into the folds.

They lay on their sides, the swollen mound of her pussy and clit bulging from between her legs, as his she holds his horizontal member inside her mouth. Carl lightly licks and sucks, she humps to and from his face. She holds the swollen head of his cock perfectly still in her mouth while squeezing the hard shaft. They stay this way for a long time, in prolonged arousal.

Finally she spreads her legs and grabs him by the hair, holding him back making him look at her, knowing how much he wants her. "Do you want to make me cum now?" She asks.

"Oh yes, I want to feel you cum in my mouth. Let me make you cum." He says.

"Yes, yes, make me cum now, I want to cum."

Rose releases him and he takes her swollen mound into his mouth, letting his tongue work its magic as his fingers touch her slightly harder, delving slightly deeper. She dives back down to his cock, her body rhythmically moving in unison with his. She gasps and stops. For an instant she is fully open and relaxed. Carl pauses, prolonging her ecstasy, then dips his fingers deeper and presses her clit with his tongue as she cums. He can feel her convulsions, pulsating, hard and deep. She moans and gasps, quivering, until it slowly subsides. He holds her there motionless, barely touching her clit with his tongue until the last convulsion dies. Rose collapses onto the bed.

Carl gently releases her and comes on top and she willingly greets him into her arms. "Fuck me now." She whispers in his ear, as her lips meet his. His cock finds her, and she pulls him deep inside. He fucks her, pounding and thrusting, sweating, devouring. She wants to feel him hard and deep, to take it with lust and abandon. On and on he gives her his cock, sometimes slowing to lean above her waiting for her to pull him down and ask him for more. She pushes him away and quickly turns over,

"Take me this way now." she says. He slides inside and she swoons. "Oh god, I can feel you so good like this." She arches her back as he ponds her again from behind, watching his cock between that gorgeous ass. Gradually he slows down.

She pushes him aside and he rolls off her onto his back. "Now it's my turn she says." as she crawls on top. She leans forward and comes to him with sweet wet passionate kisses as she slowly moves, sliding him in and out. They stay this way for a long time, quietly kissing and cuddling, slowly fucking. Finally she sits up and leans back, grabbing his knees, her arms behind her. Rose raises her pelvis up and down and looks at him with a wicked smile. He watches the gorgeous woman he has dreamed of, he has lusted for, fucking him, showing him her pussy with his hard cock sliding in and out. "Do you like to watch me fucking you?" she asks, as if she doesn't already know the answer.

"You look so fucking hot like that."

"So you like me? You like to see my pussy."

"I love to see you, to touch you, to suck you."

"Oh god you sucked me off so fucking good' She says with a growl in her voice as she comes down hard on his cock in time with her words.

"I love to please you he says."

"Now I want to make you cum. Are you ready?" she says

"Only if you're ready, I'll fuck you as long as you want. We can stay this way until next week if you like."

She laughs "You foolish boy. I don't want to wait that long. I want to feel you cumming inside me now." She says.

"Let's try this." She slowly raises up, and as his hard cock slides out of her it makes a wet plops onto his stomach. They laugh. She turns around, straddling him, facing the other direction. She puts his cock back inside her then leans forward, looking back to see his response. He can see her beautiful ass and pussy now, his cock inside her, her arching back and impossibly tiny waist. There are two dimples just below the small of her back. Something about these dimples, the shape of her back, the way it comes down and becomes her ass. Something about those dimples totally turns him on. She starts fucking him now, rocking forward and back. Watching him watching her, knowing he knows she is watching him, and he knows she knows she knows he is watching her. "You like?" she asks.

"Oh yeah, you look so good, so fucking good"

"Now I want you to cum in me," she says still rhythmically rocking.

"Are you sure you want it." He teases.

"Oh yes, I want it. Shoot you're cum in me. I want it now. Right now. Give it to me now."

7.4 seconds later Carl explodes inside Rose as she watches with glee. She stops moving as he cums. She can feel him pulsating inside her. "What a hard cumer you are" she says.

As soon as the pulsations start to subside she quickly slides off, turns and takes his cock into her mouth. He grabs at her head afraid she will over stimulate him, but she carefully holds the head of his engorged cock inside her mouth while firmly squeezing his shaft. She can taste his last sweet drops of his cum.

Rose stays that way for a long time, his cock cradled in the warmth of her mouth. When Carl has completely relaxed, Rose lets him go, grabs a towel and wipes him off gently with one end, her face with the other and then her pussy. She moves up beside him, pulling up the warm covers and they drift asleep in each other's arms.

Early the next morning they wake up, sleepy and groggy. They cuddle and kiss. "Check this." out Carl says. He gets up on his knees in the cold morning air and opens the curtains. Light floods in as he jumps back under the warm blankets. At first the light is blinding but quickly their eyes adjust and there before them is a stunning, panoramic view of the Tomales bay, with the coastal mountains in the distance, the water perfectly still. The fog clouds are just burning off and float in a defused light, patches of blue peaking through. The bed is right next to the window, literally inches away.

"It's stunning." She says.

"I spend hours here, reading and watching. I never get tired of it."

They spoon together, her in front and him behind marveling at the beauty of the world. The warmth of her body, the smoothness of her skin and the memories of the hot sex they had last night stirs Carl. His cock is hard again. She feels it against her and reaches around without saying a word and slips it inside her. They stay this way for a long time slowly fucking, feeling each other breath, watching the pelicans fly in flocks over the bay, skimming along the top of the water. She arches her back and Carl leans away so he can see those cute dimples he loves so much and his hard cock between her ass. She takes his index finger and with her finger on top licks it, then guides him to her clit. She shows him how to touch her, gently, softly, then firmly and back again. Soon he

learns to do it himself and she lays back feeling his delicious cock inside her, gently, deeply, fucking her from behind, his fingers deftly touching her clit. She cums with a moaning, pulsating orgasm. Now she feels Carl letting himself go, shooting inside her just as the last pulsations of her own orgasm subside. He stays inside her for a long time, even after he has become soft, enjoying the wet warmth of her, smelling her neck and hearing her breath. They fall back into a deep sleep.

Carl and Rose don't get up until well after noon. While Carl is in the shower Rose is standing in the Kitchen drinking coffee with Kate. "So, how did it go last night?" Kate asks with a sideways glance.

"Dreamy. He is so tinder and loving. Beautiful cock, great fuck, the boy is definitely talented." she says with a wistful smile and a deep sigh. Rose takes a sip of her coffee, holding the big mug with two hands, leaning against the counter.

"I knew he'd be good." Kate says, proud of herself for hooking them up. She wants Kate to stay. This is working out just right.

Rose continues, as she holds the warm mug close to her face, savoring the smell of fresh coffee. "All my life, I've been with so many older men. But with Carl I feel like I'm in High School, all kind of giddy and infatuated. It feels so, uncomplicated. Thanks for inviting me to stay. I would like to be with him. I need a change."

"Oh, I'm so glad. This is a great life here Rose, and I am looking forward to spending some time with you. It's going to be fun." She says, then comes over and gives Rose a hug.

"You smell like sex." Kate chuckles.

"Yeah" Rose says with a dreamy smile as she takes another sip of her coffee. She has been traveling for a long time. It seems like forever since she has had a place that felt like home. She loves the Tomales house and is feeling very good about Carl and herself. Rose knows how to live-in and enjoy the moment, and this moment is good, very good indeed.

Paul & Rose

Rose's relationships have almost always been with older men. They have been a great source of opportunity, adventure and learning for Rose. She likes successful men, but she only sleeps with the ones she honestly finds attractive. She likes dynamic men, and she would have to admit she likes the money and the opportunities they have brought her.

Rose just arrived from New York where she was visited her friend and lover Paul. Rose hooked up with Paul four years ago on a plane ride. He was flying his private plane from Phoenix to New York with a stop in Washington DC. He was glad to have the company. Paul and Rose hit it off right away. He was smart, witty, and good looking in a preppy sort of way. She was exotic, charming and beautiful. Rose resisted Paul's advances the first night they stayed in Washington. But the next night, after an afternoon of sightseeing and a pleasant dinner, they ended up sharing a room. Rose has been seeing Paul between adventures ever since.

Paul is a very successful businessman. When Rose visits Paul he always puts her up in a high-class hotel in Manhattan near the park. They go to fine restaurants, good plays and do side trips to quaint little bed and breakfasts around New England. He also buys her stylish clothes, the kind of clothes she needs for the up-scale places they tend to frequent. It's all great fun, but somehow it always seems about him, his needs and his ego.

The problem is Paul loves Rose. She genuinely interests him, her adventurousness, her concern about the poor in the third world countries where she has traveled, and the way she cares about his ideas more than his accomplishments. He likes to hear her stories and secretly wishes he had the courage to fly one way to Bangkok Thailand with no plans and no idea where the winds might take him. Paul tells her about how he once wanted to be a writer. About the stories he wrote in College. He has an idea for a novel and she is genuinely interested and encourages him to get back into writing. Maybe he will, he thinks to himself. She is so different from anyone he has ever met and he finds himself thinking about her at the oddest times and counting the days until she again comes back to visit.

But behind it all, is the high speed, high pressure world he lives in. He has a fancy house in the suburbs and a fancy wife to match, and Rose. Rose has never dared to hope that Paul would leave it all behind just for her. Well, maybe a few times.

Paul is a good lover, strong and active, sexy and sensitive. But Rose feels the distance, the distraction holding him back from true sexual abandonment. Paul loves Rose. He relishes sex with her. But they both know it's a love that will never pass the test of time.

When Rose and Paul are together this time she can sense a sadness. Paul knows she won't be calling him the next time she passes through New York. They have a great month together, though he is often called away for business. Rose never has trouble entertaining herself in Manhattan.

One day Paul looks at Rose and it hits him. He is afraid of losing her, afraid of losing that part of himself. Sometimes he has thoughts about just chucking it all. He thinks about how he and Rose could take his money and run away to some remote beach in Thailand or Bali and never come back. He knows it will never happen, but he loves the dream.

Sometimes Paul thinks about a Joni Mitchell song called "The Arraignment". Now the lyrics of that song haunt him.

You could have been more

Than a name on the door

On the thirty-third floor in the air

More than a credit card

Swimming pool in the backyard

While you still have the time

You could get away and find

A better life, you know the grind Is so ungrateful

Racing cars, whisky bars

No one cares who you really are

You're the keeper of the cards

Yes I know it gets hard

Keeping the wheels turning
And the wife she keeps the keys

She is so pleased to be

A part of the arrangement

"You have plenty of money." he says to himself. "It could last a lifetime with some discretion. Maybe I will start writing again, like I loved to do in College. I always did want to be a writer."

Paul thinks about the problems he is having at one of his divisions. There are always problems at the divisions. No matter how much you give, it's never enough. And the pay off, the hot cars, the nights on the town the fancy dinners, the "whisky bars," they all seem boring to him now. He just paid thousands of dollars for a wrist watch. He knew it was a rip-off, but he didn't care. It gave him a little thrill. But what surprised him was

how fast that ridiculously expensive watch lost its luster. It seems like the toys just get more and more expensive and the payoff just gets smaller and smaller.

And all those supposed friends that his wife Jen loves to see at parties? The truth is they bore the hell out of him. To them he is just the job that he does, the image.

Paul looks at his expensive watch. He has an important meeting in a couple hours, he can't miss that. It's time to wrap this up.

"You fool, you still love your wife" he says to himself. How could he even think of leaving her, for what reason? He thinks of Jen, her perfect hair and immaculate skin. He thinks of her obsession with decorating the house, the travertine floors and antique furniture. It is a beautiful place, a show place. She has no complaints, as long as he keeps bringing home the money.

He looks at Rose and she looks back at him with an open smile and wonders "what is he thinking about? Probably some problem at work."

When Rose tells Paul she wants to go back to school to become a nurse, he thinks it is a great idea. He rambles on and on encouraging her to find something she wants to do. "You're going to want to settle down one of these days Rose." He says. "God knows I love you as the free spirit you are, but you're a woman and your time will come."

When Rose leaves, as usual Paul slips her a check. Later when she looks at it she is surprised to see that it's for ten thousand dollars. On the bottom he has written, "For school."

Later, as Paul walks to the elevator of his office building, he can't get that Joni Mitchell song out of his mind. "You could have been more."

As the elevator door closes he feels like he is locked in a coffin. "You could have been more." He steps off the elevator and greets his secretary with a smile and goes to his office and closes the door. He feels old and tired as he sits down in his plush executive chair and swivels to look out the window at a spectacular view of the New York skyline. He feels as if it's years in the future, as if he is lying by himself in some lonely room. He closes his eyes. "You could have been more. You could have been more. You could have been more."

Carl & Rose

The next month is a blur of great sex, fun parties, sailing on the bay, exhilarating hikes and days at the beach. Rose cautions Carl that she plans to stay only for the summer. That he should not get too attached. These little talks are directed as much at herself as they are at him. Her feelings for Carl surprise her. None of this seems to effect Carl. He is madly in love with Rose and he makes no pretence whatsoever at holding back. Maybe it's because he has never had a heart broken, like Rose. And maybe, this unrestrained love is why Rose is so surprisingly enamored by him. However, Rose is a woman of the world and she knows how to be cautious with her emotions, how to hold back just enough so she won't be crushed when it comes to an inevitable end.

Sometimes Carl and Rose take the Alpha up to Mt. Vision to watch the sunset. The road up the mountain is tight and windy, well paved, with banked turns. It is usually deserted on weekdays when the tourists aren't around. Carl powers the Alpha up through the turns, engine wailing, tires squealing, Rose screaming with delight. Carl thinks, anyone else would be scared shitless but Rose is fearless.

At the top of the mountain they park at a favorite little turnout, take a blanket and walk down a tiny path, around the corner to a private spot with a commanding view. Drakes Bay curves in a sandy arc to the rocky black outline of the Point Reyes peninsula, the wide Pacific Ocean stretches out to infinity and beyond. Rose has on a long, full, white cotton skirt and no underwear. With Carl sitting on the blanket, Rose comes on top and they make love while sitting up and watching the sun set. With a sky of bright oranges and pale blues, the sun setting over an endless blue and gold ocean, a light blue dome of the sky fading to stars above and darkness behind, and the first bright stars and planets sparkling like cut diamonds, Carl touches Rose in that special way she has taught him until she cums in a great panting orgasm and to her delight he joins her. Then they cuddle and drift to sleep, side-by-side in the fading light.

One day they stop for lunch while hiking the Bear Valley Trail to Arch Rock and Wildcat Beach. Rose asks Carl how he got that little scar above his left eyebrow. Carl is surprised and taken back by the question. "Oh, well, that's a long story."

Rose senses this is something Carl is reluctant to talk about. Carl takes another slice of cheese and nibbles on it as he leans against a driftwood log. Wildcat Beach is beautiful and deserted. It is a sunny day, but a little bit windy.

Finally Carl responds. "Well, I haven't really talked about it much, but I had a pretty rough time back in Kansas before I came to California." Carl proceeds to tell Rose the whole story of how he was run out of Wellsville. He is surprised at himself for being so forthcoming about what a coward he felt was. "So, that's the story. I guess you could say I ran away from my problems. It may seem like I was kind of a wimp, but it wasn't that easy to stand up to that kind of violence. I have to admit, I was really scared."

Rose is left a little teary eyed by his story and is surprised when he calls himself a wimp. "What do you mean, you did the right thing. You tried to let the people know how wrong this all was. But it would have been crazy to continue living there under those circumstances. On the contrary, it took more courage to move on. And look at where you are now. I don't think there is any doubt you made the right decision to leave."

Carl looks around himself at the beautiful beach. He thinks about all the great things that had happened since he came to California. He especially thinks about his love for Rose.

Carl laughs at himself for still feeling guilt and embarrassment over what happened. "I guess you're right. Look at this beautiful beach. This definitely beats the hell out of Wellsville." Carl gives Rose a kiss on the lips. "Thank you, your right, it was the right decision to leave. Wellsville sucks."

"No shit" Rose says, and they both laugh.

Call it a motherly instinct. Call it the sympathy vote, but the story touches Rose and her heart aches to think of Carl being terrorized and brutalized like that. She leans over and kisses him on that small scar above his left eyebrow. "That's all far, away now and I love this little scar. It makes you look like a gangster and that kind of turns me on" she says, moving to kiss his lips.

Carl and Rose love to sail. Even on windy days, especially on windy days. The cove is fairly calm when they untie from the mooring, but when they come around the point, the full force of the wind ripping down the length of the bay and hits them. The boat heels over and they are off and running. It is a seaworthy and sturdy little boat, but it is a boat that can easily go over in a strong breeze and the water in the bay is cold. It feels like real danger and it is. They eat it up. Both of them sit on the high side of the boat, hanging by their toes, hiking out as far as possible. With Carl on the tiller and Rose on the jib, they rip back and forth across the bay. After a while they switch positions and Rose takes the tiller. She is already an experienced sailor and Carl loves her confidence and adventurous nature. Eventually they find a quiet cove and beach the boat. They stroll on the beach collecting shells then hike up the hill to enjoy the view.

At a spot not far from where Carl proclaimed his undying love for Gibbous Moon, they find a private spot to make love. Gibbous Moon looks down from the heavens and can see Carl's naked butt, well tanned with no tan line, bouncing up and down, as Rose spreads her legs and wraps her arms around him, making high pitched cat like sounds of desire and ecstasy.

If Gibbous Moon is jealous she doesn't show it. After all, she has the love of the ocean, and of the night and day to satisfy her needs, and can't be bothered coming down from the heavens just to fuck some horny young man, no matter how sincere his love and devotion. No, Gibbous Moon is in fact glad to see Rose taking the responsibility of quenching Carl Lee's desires, and from where Gibbous Moon is standing it looks as if Rose is doing quite a good job of it.

((At this point you are probably be saying to yourself, "God damn, Carl and Rose are fucking again? Those two sure have a lot of sex." And you would be correct, they do have a lot of sex. That is the point. If you put two healthy and attractive young lovers together in a beautiful paradise, don't burden them with heavy responsibility or cultural and religious hang ups, and the odds are they will have frequent and fantastic sex.

Great sex is not just an act of human affirmation, it is an act of political defiance. In fact, one thing that defines a straight, conservative, uptight, war mongering culture is its hatred of good sex. Just good look at those fat-ass, pasty faced, pig politicians, preachers, priests and other patrolman. You can see they haven't had a good fuck in decades, if ever.

They, and the religions and philosophies they cling to, despise sex, declare it evil, vile and filthy. Those who enjoy sex are fornicators, sluts, whores and heretics. They believe sexual energy should be suppressed and channeled into more productive endeavors like religion, war, and product advertising. They love to point out the evils of sex, pregnancy, disease and abortion, but never talk about the life affirming joy of sex.

What kind of fucked up philosophy worships a virgin as the mother of the son of god? Didn't Mary and Joseph ever fuck? Didn't Mary ever give Joseph a nice little blow job at the end of a hard days work, when he was really horny and needed a little tender loving care? God made her bear his child but he couldn't spare her a few orgasms? Why are priests and nuns forced to be celibate? Sex is only allowed for procreation? And forget about birth control, we all know where that leads.

But not just right wing Christians, fundamentalist Islam wins the prize as the most sexually fucked up religion. What kind of sick, perverted, hateful, and despicable religion would force women to hide themselves from head to toe in a burka? Is it god's will to stone people to death for adultery, throw acid in the faces of young girls who want to go to school, or mutilate a woman's clitoris?

Ball slapping, pussy sucking, cum swallowing, screaming, mutually orgasmic sex is one of the most profound, liberating and politically significant acts possible. Fuck the up-tight religious fanatics and their politically conservative brethren. Sex and romance is good. Go do it.))

Peace Movement History

Carl and Rose are coming from the cove where they have been working on the boat when Kate greets them at the door. "Hey, there is a big war protest in Berkeley tomorrow. Do you guys want to go? John and I are driving in tomorrow morning. It should be fun, as long as it doesn't get too crazy."

"I haven't done very many protests." Says Rose.

"I went to a couple at KU, but they were pretty mellow, not that many people showed up." Carl says.

"Well you can bet there will be a lot of people at this one. This is Berkeley. This is the real thing." Kate says.

"Yeah, I would love to go." Carl says, and then turns to Rose. "What do you think? Want to go?"

"Yeah, that sounds fun. Besides I am sick of this stupid war. I want to do my part to end it."

"All right, that's the spirit." Says Kate. "Plus, you will get a chance to meet my friend Drew. He's very active in the peace movement."

They leave early the next morning. During the drive Kate tells Carl and Rose the history of the peace movement in Berkeley.

"It all started in May 1960 when a group of Berkeley students organized a demonstration against the House Un-American Activities Committee which was meeting at San Francisco city hall. As usual the Committee was looking for more of those elusive "communists". They had been claiming that commies were lurking in every corner since the Joseph McCarthy hysteria. Of course, anyone whose political views were slightly left of center was a suspect. But the mood in the country had changed by 1960 and this group of students refused to go back to the McCarthyism of the fifties without a fight.

The students were waiting outside to get into the hearing when police suddenly turned on them with fire hoses and began to dragging them out of the building. The event might have just been forgotten, but the Committee decided to make a film depicting the students as part of a vast communist conspiracy. This trumped up anti-communist message may have played well in Omaha, but for the educated students who had watched the disgraceful McCarthy hearings, it was just another flagrantly absurd piece of political propaganda.

When the film was subsequently shown around the country it had the effect of recruiting even more left leaning students to the University at Berkeley. When they saw how willing the students were to confront the oppressive committee, it seemed like Berkeley was the place for political activists to be.

It's important to know that the whole vast "communist conspiracy" thing is a complete fraud. Sure, the Soviets have spies in the US, but it's absurd to think that the labor movement, the civil rights movement, the peace movement, the media and the universities were all inspired and run by some secret communist conspiracy. It's all a

transparent ruse to demonize the political left. Not one shred of credible evidence has ever been produced to prove any such conspiracy exists.

By the early sixties the university system was already a huge industry. Government and corporations were depending on it to turn out highly trained and knowledgeable workers. In fact the whole university system was designed like a knowledge factory and Berkeley was the most prestigious university in the whole California system.

An organization called SLATE was created by left leaning students to run candidates in the student elections. These were the idealistic days of Martin Luther King and John Kennedy and more than any other cause the civil rights movement became the foundation of the movement.

But 'social issues' was not the business that the University was in. They discounted the importance of the civil rights movement to the students and the support that student organizations had on campus. They wanted to limit the discussion of issues like civil rights and keep them off the campus.

By now a lot of the more politically active students were looking for a way to legitimize left leaning issues, so they started a protest campaign against businesses in the Bay Area that discriminated in hiring. They primarily targeted the hotel industry in San Francisco which was notoriously discriminatory against blacks.

They set up a picket line around the Sheraton Palace hotel and then even marched through the lobby. The Sheraton is one of the most elegant and prestigious hotels in the country.

Well, all hell broke loose and finally the police came. The students were dragged out and arrested. Still, it was a huge and costly disruption to the hotel and bad publicity as well.

However, negotiations between student leaders and the hotel resulted in an agreement with the whole local hotel industry. They agreed to stop discriminatory practices and even agreed to hire minorities in management. It was an unbelievable victory for the students and showed that the movement could really have an effect.

"Are you guys getting board yet?" says Kate. "If you want you can just take a nap until we get to Berkeley. You don't really need to know the history of the anti-war movement if you don't mind being an ignoramus."

"No, go ahead. We're stuck in this car and can't escape, so what other choice do we have? Go ahead, ramble on." Rose says.

So the students won, but the business community was pissed. They saw the student movement as a threat. So they started putting pressure on the University to reign in the students.

In 1963 the University decides to ban tables in the commons area that students used to recruit support among other students. These recruiting Tables have been traditionally allowed and now they are being banned them from University property. But, it turns out that not only are liberal students banned from setting up tables, all student organizations are banned. In other words the University is banning all political action on campus. The students considered this an attempt to limit their freedom of speech and everybody is angry, left, right and between.

So the students defie the order and set up tables anyway. Next thing you know an administrator comes out and gives citations to four of students working the tables. They are facing suspension. Five hundred students gather in protest that afternoon.

The next morning, the tables are back. This time an administration official comes and confronts one of the table workers, the student refuses to identify himself. The administrator says if he won't prove he is a student then he is trespassing and the administrator has him arrested.

By now hundreds of students are gathered around and everybody is mad about the student's arrest. When the police load him into a police car and attempt to leave hundreds of angry students surround them. It is a stalemate, the police car is trapped and it begins one of the most bazaar and unique events in American democracy.

Soon A microphone is rigged up and the students are taking turns standing on top of the police car and voicing their opinions. The students are all careful to take off their shoes and not damage the police car. As the cops stand by, and the arrested student sits in the back seat, hundreds of students take turns giving three minutes speeches. Even some of the fraternity guys who came to jeer the proceeding were brought up to speak. It is a huge protest, but no one from the administration shows up to explain there position. There are as many as six-thousand people, mostly students. They spend an amazing thirty-two hours in this stalemate. The arrested student is still in the back seat of the trapped police car.

Meanwhile, negotiations with the administration produce an agreement, to set up a committee to renegotiate the regulations. It looks like a victory for the students, so everybody goes home.

For the student community this whole issue has now become a serious commitment to the principal of free speech. Plus, it ends up being a huge social happening. Everybody is talking about it and popular support is overwhelming.

During the negotiations the university blocks every attempt to change the policy. The main student leader is Mario Savio, an articulate, charismatic philosophy major. He soon becomes widely admired by everybody on campus.

The administration is totally evasive and ineffective. What's worse, they start resorting to character assignation, describing the students as a bearded, unwashed, lunatic, fringe. This was a blatant mischaracterization and may have played well to the media and the country at large, but it did not set well with the students. What's amazing about this characterization is when you view film footage of the events, the students look like they just stepped off the set of the Ozzie and Harriet show. They are all totally clean-cut and middle class. But this is just the beginning of a tactic that the political right will use from now on. They never want to talk about the issues, they prefer to demonize and lie about the opposition. The media picks one scruffy guy out of the crowd and makes him the representative. They claim we are all immoral, which by their standards may be true, but in a good way." They all laugh.

Anyway, these are affluent and privileged kids from all across America. Only the most elite students can get into Berkeley and yet they start to see themselves as an oppressed class. Soon they have daily gatherings with musicians like Joan Biaz and other popular speakers. It all becomes a deeply meaningful experience, an issue that thousands of students identify with all over the country.

Finally the administration agrees to let tables to be set up on campus, but not for the advocacy of any supposed outside issues. This would exclude civil rights, Vietnam or any of the other pressing social issues of interest to students. It was a totally unacceptable decision to the students. But then, just as the decision is still being debated, the university expels the original students who were cited. By now these

students have become minor celebrities and this creates a whole new sense of outrage within the student body.

It is at this point that Mario Savio delivered his now famous speech. It was inspiring, it was profound and it was the beginning of a massive protest. The students took over Sproul Hall."

"I know that speech." Carl says.

"Cool. You probably already know all this stuff." Says Kate

"I've read about some of it." Carl says.

Rose jumps in. "Well I don't know about it. I've heard about it a little bit, but I think it's interesting. Go on."

"Yeah, its good Kate, keep talking." Carl adds.

"Well anyway, the protest at Sproul Hall is just a peaceful sit in demonstration, but it turns into a total party atmosphere. Again, when you look at the images of the students they were amazingly clean-cut and middle class. The solidarity among the students, both inside and outside the hall is amazing. Finally the police come, and the students are dragged out and arrested, but it turns out that this new escalation is a tremendous inspiration for further resistance. The whole University is in chaos. It creates a massive collapse of authority. The administration is not only despised by the students, but the faculty and the outside community is disgusted with their handling of the situation as well.

So, as a last desperate attempt to regain some credibility, the administration organizes an event at the Greek Theatre. Thousands show up. The administration starts off by demanding that the students give them fifty minutes of complete silence, which the students do. However the condescending speeches of administration speakers are an insult. The students are not impressed. When the fifty minutes is up, Mario Savio, the widely recognized student leader, walks on stage to offer the student's position. As he steps to the podium the campus police grabbed him from behind and dragged him off the stage. The students are outraged, there is pandemonium. It is a complete political disaster for the administration.

At this point, the university faculty finally rebels against the administration and come down soundly on the side of the students. The students win, the tables are allowed. All looks well.

So, several thousand students gather at a peaceful victory celebration the next day. The cops allow the students to come onto the campus, but they won't allow them to leave. Suddenly, helicopters fly over the crowd and sprayed the students with teargas and nausea gas. People are screaming, choking, vomiting, and trying to run away, but the cops won't let anybody out. It is a blatant and violent payback attack on the students and it is the end of any respect for authority at the university. A whole generation of student activists is born.

As far as how this all played to the outside world, the media was careful to portray the students as an unwashed, lunatic, fringe. In fact the student protestors were mostly clean-cut and upper middle class and generally supported by the vast majority of the student body. They said the students were alienated and cynical. But the truth is the exact opposite. It was an idealistic commitment to the American principals of freedom, democracy and fair play that motivated the students. These were the lessons they learned all through school and now they were shocked to see the lies, distortions and vicious tactics of an America they once respected. The knowledge factories were

finding out that when it comes to people, it's not so easy to stamp out a complacent and obedient product like a part in a machine. But, it was soon to become even worse.

Of course, all this is over what was really a very simple principal of freedom of speech, but to the government and the business community it was a matter of authority and a backlash of outrage was rising. Gradually the political issue switches to the war in Vietnam, but now the government is beginning to push back.

There is another dark cloud hanging over all of this, the prospect of the nuclear annihilation of the whole world. By now the US and the Soviets have thousands of nuclear missiles aimed at each other. The Cuban missile crises of 1962, was the most dangerous moment in history. The world came within a hair's breath of total destruction. If it wasn't for the leadership of Kennedy, who faced down the Soviets and restrained the US military who wanted to initiate a preemptive nuclear attack on Russia, none of us would probably be alive today. Not only is humanity and civilization at stake, but environmental disaster as well. This sword of Damocles has a profound effect on the psyche of the world and its youth.

Then along comes Vietnam. For any reasonably well read person it is completely obvious that the Vietnam War is a disaster. Thousands of young Americans are dying and many more thousands of Vietnamese are being slaughtered. The Gulf of Tonkin incident, which was the excuse for entering the war, is most likely a fraud. The puppet regime the US is supporting is a disgrace. And, the supposed "Domino Theory" is absurd. The Domino Theory in particular is just another paranoid fantasy perpetrated by the anti-communist conspiracy conservatives to justify America's flagrant aggression. Anyone with any understanding of the local history of Vietnam knows it is ridiculous. The Vietnamese have been fighting the Chinese for centuries. Ho Che Min is a national hero from World War Two. There is no credible evidence that this is anything more than a determined attempt by the Vietnamese to get all foreigners the fuck out of their country.

Of no small significance, the students themselves are all subject to being involuntarily drafted into the military and sent to fight in Vietnam. Everybody knows someone who has been killed, maimed or terrorized by their involvement in the war. The Vietnam War has quickly become the issue of the day.

To protest the war, a group of students decides to march on the Oakland induction center. As they approached the border of the city they are turned away by the Oakland police. The next day, an even larger march is organized, but it is again turned away by the police. This time the police let the Hells Angels attack the protestors. The Hells Angels had decided that the protestors are all traitors. Their leader Sonny Barger later gives a bazaar and incoherent announcement and then volunteers the Hells Angels for service as a special forces unit in Vietnam. Apparently the Army isn't interested.

A month later an even bigger march finally makes it into Oakland. But all these attempts to close the induction center are mostly ineffective and the destruction of property ends up alienating the local community. It's all pretty much a waste of time except for the publicity.

However, the consensus supporting the war in the US is gradually being broken. How much the demonstrations have contributed to this change of heart is debatable. However, what is becoming obvious is the wide spread antipathy of the American public to the protestors.

When Ronald Reagan ran for governor in 1966, he made a point of pandering to the general outrage against the student protestors. He cited ridiculous descriptions of the

students to prove how immoral and despicable they were. Again it is easy, but effective charter assignation designed to take advantage of the beginning of the cultural backlash. Of course, millions of young people are not impressed.

By now Hippie culture is flourishing. Drugs are becoming common place. Turn on, tune in and drop out is the popular mantra. The hippie movement is bigger than either the anti war or civil rights movement. It is a major rejection of the entire traditional structure of American society. Young people are dropping out of the main stream and experimenting with a variety of alternative life styles. Even though many of the hippies are not that political, it's the protest movement that is the foundation of the anti-establishment backlash. War, racism and corruption in America are so blatantly obvious and unfair that it starts a widespread questioning of the entire culture.

The establishment and the older generation are baffled. Why would the youth of America want to reject all the great things that American society has to offer, that their parents have worked so hard to create? Many if not most of the young rebels come from middle and upper middle class families. US culture is reveling in its materialism, but the hippies didn't seem to care about wealth and power. They are looking for personal experience and enlightenment. They wanted more than a house in the suburbs. Many have lived that life and have seen the cracks in the facade, especially for women and minorities, or for anyone else who happens to be too different.

Initially there is a separation between the political left and the counter culture. Inevitably they ended up bonding together. It's a natural affinity. Some of the hippies are naive to think that music and love will change the world and stop the war, but the political activists are equally naive to think that America is ready for armed revolution. But, it is obvious they are both becoming alienated from the rest of main stream American culture.

As veterans come back from the war with horrendous stories and ready to rebel, the movement escalates to a more aggressive phase. By October 1967 the peace movement is changing from protest to resistance. There is a feeling that the current strategy is not working, as the war continues to escalate. The movement is determined to make the government pay a price if they continued the war.

This time the protestors intended to shut down the Oakland induction center. They are ready for a fight. The police are ready as well. The protestors fragment as the police break their ranks and chase them through the streets. The bus loads of recruits continued to come and the protestors are powerless to stop them.

A week later the demonstrators come back, bigger and stronger this time. The riot happens as planned. Wearing motorcycle helmets and hard hats the students surge against the police and push them back. It is bloody and violent. The students give Nazi Salutes, mocking the police. Finally they succeeded in closing down the draft induction center, even if temporarily. The message is clear, 'if you continue this war the price you will pay will be chaos in the streets'. The protestors are emboldened, but the reality is they will never really have the power to violently confront the system. They are only glue in the keyhole. The confrontations may seem like a victory, but the peace movement is leaving the rest of the country behind.

Everything changes after the unexpected and bold attack by Viet Cong called the Tet Offensive, in January 1968. It now becomes obvious to almost everyone that the government's rosy depiction of the war was a lie. The Vietnam War is a growing disaster. When American generals ask Johnson to commit a million more men, J Edgar Hoover tells him that he cannot guarantee the internal security of the country. If he tries

to draft that many more men, there is bound to be open rebellion in the streets. As much as the establishment denies it, the war resistance movement has become a major factor.

1968 is a turning point in America. The impact of the Tet Offensive ended the political career of Lyndon Johnson. By winning the California primary Robert Kennedy was almost assuredly going to be the next president. He was widely supported by young America and his establishment and Democratic Party connections and credentials would give him a huge advantage in the general election. With his position against the war it seems that the youth movement is bound to have a lasting effect on both the culture and the politics of America. Those dreams start to collapse with the assassination of Martin Luther King on April 4th. Rioting erupts across America, as a non-violent solution to the country's racial problems seems to have turned into a nightmare. The new generation's main stream political aspirations are further shattered with Robert Kennedy's assassinating only two months later.

The Democratic convention in Chicago turns into a blood bath as Mayor Daley's police brutalize protestors who are determined to ridicule the political process by nominating a pig for president. Hubert Humphrey, who supports the war loses the left and is soundly defeated by Richard Nixon. The Democrats are a basket case at this point.

1968 is also a turning point for civil rights movement. There has been rioting over the last few years and now the resistance is starting to become even more confrontational. The Black Panthers in Oakland decide it is time to pick up guns and declare Black Power. The Panthers are just a small time organization with virtually no budget, but they receive tons of international media attention. Their original concern is police violence in Oakland.

They are completely crazy. They followed the police around with car loads of guys with guns. At that time, it is legal to carry a gun if it's not concealed or loaded. The Panthers say straight out that "Niggers with guns" is meant to put the fear in the white middle class. They certainly succeed and it also got a huge amount of media attention.

They even march on the California capital in Sacramento to oppose a bill making it illegal to carry guns in public. Finally they attempted to carry guns inside the capital building and were arrested for conspiracy.

Predictably, a shootout ends with a dead cop and Huey Newton arrested and charged with murder. Of course Huey Newton claims he shot the cop in self-defense, which is probably true. It's no secret that the police are out to get the Panthers.

The white radical left is fascinated by the Panthers. The Panthers capture their imagination, because they are confronting the power structure in a way no one has ever dreamed.

Martin Luther king is assassinated, and two days later Bobby Hutton is killed and Eldridge Cleaver is injured in another shoot out. For the Panthers the guns, which got them so much media become their nemesis. The police are out to get them wherever they go, and in the end they do.

Unfortunately, the Panthers have influenced the hard core resistance into believing that violent confrontation is the only approach that can work. They are convinced that revolution is imminent."

Carl jumps in. "The reality is that the rest of America is nowhere near supporting a revolution. In fact, America has a growing hard core resistance to the movement."

"It's a misconception that's easy to understand. There are various types of resistance movements forming all over the world. It seemed like revolution is in the air everywhere, from Prague Spring in the east, to the anti war movement in the west. It looks like it is all coming apart. The world is in chaos, undergoing tremendous political and cultural change."

"That's right; I just came back from Paris." Rose says. "The students are fighting a conservative and repressive government that has had the same President since 1959. What is amazing is the demand for change in both soviet controlled Europe and in Western Europe. Much of it is inspired by what is happening right here in America and Berkeley."

Kate continues. "Unfortunately, there is a huge backlash developing. The establishment is not going to just sit back and watch a rag tag bunch of College kids take over the world. The more militant the demonstrators get the more militant the response. The peace movement is fracturing. The more moderate political leaders and workers are all dropping out.

What we have is polarization on many different levels. First, there is the original, and now fairly moderate liberal political movement for civil rights and against the war. Now the Weathermen and the Black Panthers have become radically violent and confrontational. Plus the Hippies who are all about personal growth and development, but seem to be fairly ineffective politically.

In opposition we have the government which is more than willing to meet violence with violence, but ultimately is influenced by public opinion, hopefully. In addition there are the right wing and Christian backlash groups whose primary effect is to radicalize the general population by demonizing the left. And finally, the wealthy elite who intend to protect their interest by using the radical right to influence the public and the government to reign in the rebellious population.

Welcome to 1969. It's a crazy time to be alive."

Rose jumps in. "I would like to bring up another factor, all the purely social change that is happening. The best example is the women's movement.

Women are forming a sisterhood with other women all over this country. In the existing society even the men in the Peace Movement resisted putting women in important rolls. Now women are demanding equal jobs, equal pay, daycare and personal respect. The long term effect of the women's movement could be tremendous, because it brings the revolution home, into the kitchen and the bedroom. The Cultural Revolution is multi faceted and makes changes in all dimensions of life.

Beyond Women's Rights, we have gay rights and the environment. Even the changes happening in music and art are profound and significant.

The war is horrible and it's genocidal in scope. But the long term effect of the Cultural Revolution may in the end be even more profound."

"You are so cool" Carl says and tries to give Rose a kiss.

"Get back you chauvinist pig."

Carl cringes in pretend terror. "Okay, I give up. You can get on top." Rose slaps him and they all laugh.

Berkeley

They cross the San Rafael, Richmond Bridge and take the College Avenue Exit. As they go down College Avenue toward the University the world changes. Long hairs and freaks are everywhere. This is Berkeley, 1969.

The peace rally is at Peoples Park. Kate tells them this park was just built by the community on University property, but that is all she knows about it. The rally is in the park and that is where they are supposed to meet her friend Drew.

As they get closer the streets are jammed. They head down a side street to park. As they walk to the rally Carl is struck by the variety of people, from hip well dressed college students, to down-and-out street people. Some have a hard edged biker look and many are tie-dyed flower children. It is a wonderfully crazy scene.

There are three or four hundred people at the rally, which is at one end of the park. A flat bed truck is set up on the street as a stage and a long haired guy is speaking. Some of the audience is near the stage, but many of the people are spread throughout the park, lying on the grass, talking in groups, playing guitar and eating.

They gradually make their way through the crowd to the stage where Kate sees her friend.

"Hi Drew."

"Hi Kate. Its great to see you." Drew says, as they hug each other. Drew greets Jack. "Good to see you man"

Kate introduces Carl and Rose.

"Welcome to People's Park. This place didn't exist three weeks ago." Drew says.

"Yeah, I was wondering what was going on. When did all this happen?" Kate asks.

"It's an interesting story. A year ago this was a bunch of run down houses. The University bought it, condemned the houses and tore them down. They eventually want to build dorms or a soccer field or something. Anyway, the lot has been vacant for months, just a muddy, junk strewn, eyesore. The neighbors kept bitching at the university to clean it up.

So finally this guy who owns a dress shop around the corner comes up with the idea of making a Peoples Park. He gets a small group of people together and a couple hundred bucks and they lays down some sod in one corner. The next thing you know the free press picks it up and the hundreds of people are down here turning this mud hole into a park. They got the environmental design students working out the landscaping plans, people donating materials and equipment, the whole community helping. It was amazing, you should have seen it. There were sorority girls carrying big old muddy rolls of sod, hippies digging trenches, grand mothers planting flowers. It was chaos and funny as hell to watch, but sure enough, they created this beautiful park." He spreads his arms out "What do you think?"

They look out over the once vacant lot and had to admit, it's a beautiful park. There is a wide lawn bordered by trees, a curving sidewalk, a playground with a swing set and a sandbox. It's a typical park and at the moment it is packed with people enjoying a beautiful day.

Jack ruins the peace and love moment by asking, "Yeah, but you said the university owns the property. I bet they aren't too thrilled about all this."

Drew laughs. "Well, no, they're not. Frankly, I and most of the political types thought it was a stupid idea, just another one of those hippie utopian things. We thought we should be concentrating on stopping the war, building a People's Park seems irrelevant. But now, even I have to admit, it's an amazing concept and it has totally captured the imagination of the entire community. Even the straight people support it, though there has been some complaints about late night partying and sex." Drew smiles.

"Oh god, don't tell me these awful hippies are having sex again!" Kate says in shock. Everyone laughs.

"Yes, indeed they are, and the university hasn't quite decided what to do about it. Apparently some of the people in the community and students from the environmental design department are trying to negotiate a deal. The university doesn't have any immediate plans to build so they could easily make some kind of compromise, at least temporarily, if they wanted, but I don't think it's going to happen." Drew says

"So what are they going to do?" Jack asks.

Drew shrugs his shoulders. "I don't know. But if they try to take it back they are going to have one hell of a fight on their hands. Unfortunately, I think that may be exactly what they want."

Drew is working with the people organizing the speakers and entertainment, so the four of them leave him to his job and find a spot on the lawn to watch. The speakers have three minutes to make a speech. This is broken up by musicians playing acoustic guitars and singing songs. Some of the musicians were good, but most of the speakers were not. To Carl they all seem to be saying the same catch phrases of the movement over and over. It gets boring.

A little later Drew joins them. "How are we doing, can you hear the speeches?" He asks, listening to check out the sound.

"Yeah, the sound is Okay, but I thought you would have some better speakers." Kate says.

"Sorry, everybody was busy." Drew shrugs.

"I could do better than that." Carl says.

Everybody turns to look at him with surprise. "Seriously, I could do better." He says defensively.

Kate jumps in. "Drew, let Carl speak."

Drew is surprised. "Well, it's not that easy. We have people lined up. There is a list, I'm not sure." Drew waffles.

"Oh, bullshit Drew. Take him up there and let him speak if he wants. I'm telling you, he can do better than the people we've seen so far." Kate says.

Drew laughs, then shrugs and says "Okay, let's go."

Now Carl is the one surprised. He hadn't expected this, but he is the one who opened his big mouth. It's a dare now. "Okay, let's go." Carl says as he gets up.

They are all laughing and yelling encouragement as Carl and Drew walk toward the stage. Rose is especially blown away. This is a side of Carl she has never seen, and for Carl it's a side he has never seen either. Suddenly he is scarred shitless.

Drew talks to a few people as Carl stands and waits, knees shaking. They don't seem too thrilled with the change in line up, but a few minutes later Drew comes over and says, "You're next, right after this guy." Drew can see Carl is holding back a panic attack. He hopes this isn't a screw up, he doesn't know a thing about this guy. To late now, Carl is next.

"Okay Carl, I'm no public speaker, but just take a deep breath. It's normal to be scared, and just take your time and tell us what you think. That's what we want to hear." Drew says as he pats him on the back.

Carl barely hears Drew. He is going over in his mind what he wants to say, and he does have something he wants to say. It is a message that was burning in his mind as he watched the other speakers and watched the crowd. He is determined.

The guy at the microphone is done and there is a smattering of applause. It's Carl's turn and Drew leads him on stage. There is no introduction.

Carl steps up, leans into the microphone and declares,

"You're a motley looking bunch of long hairs."

A couple of whoops rise up amid a faint murmur of laughter.

"I haven't seen this much hair since my aunt Mabel decided to shave her arm pits."

There is little laughter and scattered applause as he steps back. Carl looks over at Rose and laughs at his own joke. He steps up to the microphone.

"What happened to you people? You're supposed to be the clean-cut youth of the future of America. My mother warned me not to hang around with people like you and now look what happened to me."

He spreads his arms in resignation. Wide spread laughter and whoops. Some guy screams out "Yeah man."

"What happened to us? Here we are, the vaunted youth of America, the richest country in the world. We've had all the advantages of middle class America, good food, good schools, modern science, modern medicine. Most of our parents worked their asses off to give us a better life and send us to school, to give us all the breaks they never had. And here we are, a bunch of long haired protestors."

There is a smattering of applause.

"Many, if not most of us here today are College students. You know, all of people all over America and all over the world, they don't get an opportunity to go to college, to get a college education. And now, here we are a bunch of rabble rousing freaks protesting this war, and really more than just this war, the whole society."

"They say we're a bunch of spoiled, ungrateful, inconsiderate, lazy, hippies. They say that we have no appreciation for the sacrifices of our American ancestors. They say that we don't understand the lessons of the American dream, of freedom, or democracy, or justice. "

"Our parents, the authorities, the cops out here on the street and all those people all across America just don't get it, they just can't understand what happened to all those nice clean-cut kids they used to know. And now, here we are, just a bunch of scruffy looking long hair protestors."

"What's wrong with you people?" Carl screams.

That crowd is silent, their not sure what to think. Is he serious? Are they being insulted? Carl steps back and pauses to let this sink in. Then he starts up slowly.

"Well let me tell you America...Mom and Dad. Let me tell you what's wrong."

"We did what you told us. We did what we were supposed to do. We went to school and studied history and science and literature, and we learned our lessons well. We learned all about the declaration of Independence and about how 'All men are created equal.' And then we looked around us and saw racial discrimination and Jim Crow laws and the oppression of millions of American citizens for nothing more than the color of their skin."

"We learned about equality, but only for wealthy white men, not minorities, not women not the disabled. We learned about American history and the struggle for democracy, and then we saw the political corruption and money driven politics that pervades our government. We learned about capitalism and free trade, but then we saw that trade isn't really free at all, because giant corporations monopolize the markets and make laws that gave them an unfair advantage, or tax breaks, or no bid government contracts because they know and pay off all the right people."

"We learned that justice is supposed to be blind, but saw that you only get as much justice as you can afford. We learned that America stands for personal freedom, freedom of speech, freedom from oppression and freedom from tyranny, and then we find out that J. Edgar Hoover and his FBI spies, hound, infiltrate, jail, blacklist and sometimes even murder in their sleep anyone who dares speak out against the crimes and injustice all around us."

"We learned that America is a place that is supposed to give everybody a fair change at life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but if you have the audacity to speak out for the generations of the impoverished and downtrodden, against the injustices all around us, that you'll be labeled a Communist, an agent of a foreign government, a traitor."

"We learned that America stands for freedom and democracy all over the world, and then find ourselves drafted against our wills into a pointless and immoral war of blatant aggression and genocide against an impoverished nation of peasants all in the name of some absurd, paranoid "domino theory."

"Love it or leave it they tell us. But the lessons we learned tell us that it's our responsibility to fight tyranny and injustice, it's our responsibility to improve America for our future and for our children's future."

There is loud applause. A raw edged waver has crept into Carl's voice, a voice he never knew he had.

"If the Colleges and Universities are a business and you Mr. and Mrs. America are paying them to make us, the nation's youth, the future of this country into unquestioning, obedient, unfeeling, blind workers...well then believe me America, you are NOT getting what you bargained for. Because your sons and daughters have been taught to think and to see and to learn for themselves, and to speak out and communicate and tell it like it is when "the emperor has no clothes." And that is why we are here today, to tell you in no uncertain word that "the emperor has no clothes."

Wild applause erupts. He is visibly angry and shaken, but he continues slowly and deliberately, emphasizing and articulating each word, as he drives the last raspy words from his failing voice. Carl decides to end with part of the Mario Savio's speech which is recognized by most in the crowd.

"There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!" The crowd bursts into applause, cheers and uproar.

Carl steps back from the microphone and holds his fist into the air. He bows his head and then turns and walks off the stage. It was a rousing speech, a speech with content, the best speech of the day. Rose, Kate and Drew are waiting at the bottom of the steps to the stage.

Rose comes to Carl and hugs him. He says "let's get out of here" and he pulls her away. People are still cheering and chanting. A few people say "great speech, good job" as they pass. He guides Rose behind the stage, away from the crowd. They duck around the corner into an alley and Carl walks between two parked cars and leans, partially setting against the front of a car. Rose steps between his legs and wraps her arms around his waist, laying her head on his chest. Carl rests his head against the top of her head and closes his eyes. Giving the speech was exhilarating, but draining. He feels exhausted. It feels so comforting to have Rose in his arms, holding him.

After a few moments he notices Rose is crying. He lifts his head. He hears her sobbing, the high pitch of quiet crying.

"Rose, what's wrong." He says, confused, looking down at her. She looks up into his eyes, tears running down her face. She places both hands on the side of his face and starts gently kissing him all over. He can feel her wet tears. "What's wrong?" He asks again.

"I love you Carl. I love you so much. I have resisted but I give up. I love you. That was the most beautiful, heartfelt thing I have ever seen." She looks down and wipes her face with her wrist, then looks back up at him, looking at every feature of his face. "It's not just the speech. It's the way you're so good to me, and hold me, and listen to me, and care about me. It's the things you say and do, and I don't know why, but I love you. I cherish you. I'm crazy about you. I give up. I'm yours, take me." She kisses him on the lips and then puts her head back on his chest.

Now tears are in Carl's eyes. "Rose, I am so glad. I never dared to hope you would ever really love me. I love you too Rose." They stay that way for a long time, occasionally kissing and promising one another their love. Finally they walk back holding hands, like giddy tangers, like puppy love, like flowers in the spring.

Kate and Drew watched Carl come off the stage and fall into Rose's arms. The next thing they know they have disappeared. "Hey I wanted to talk to him. That was good." Drew says to Kate, craning his neck to see where Carl went. "I told you." Kate says "But, frankly I had no idea he was that good."

"Who is he?" Drew asks.

"He is just a young guy from Kansas City. A friend of David Kroll's. He's only eighteen. Isn't that amazing?"

"And he is staying at the Tomales house?"

"Yes he is." Kate replies.

"Yeah, well the question is can he do it again? I need somebody like that."

"That's why I wanted you to meet him. But take it easy Drew. He's just a kid. He's smart and articulate but he's still pretty green. I don't want you getting him in trouble." She looks at him like a mother about to scolding a child.

"Hey, I barely even met him? Give me a break. He may not even be interested in the movement." Drew says.

"Don't worry, he'll be interested."

Carl and Rose work their way through the crowd back to the stage. Kate and Drew are talking. "Here they are." Kate says. "Where were you guys?"

"Just talking" Carl says. Carl and Rose look at each other all moony eyed.

Drew and Kate look at each other and roll their eyes.

Drew chimes up, "Would you guys like to come over to my place for a while. A bunch of activist will be there, it'll be a party."

"I don't think so." Carl says. "My voice is all fucked up and I'm feeling totally burnt out. I need to lie down for a while."

"No problem, you can go up to my room. I even have a private spare bed. You two can lie down for a while. Take a nap. Whatever." Drew continues, trying to make the sale. "How about you Kate, want to come?"

"Sure" She says. "Come on you guys, there will be a place you can mellow out at Drew's house. It's just a few blocks away and Tomales is at over an hour drive."

Carl and Rose look at each other and shrug. "Okay says Rose.

Drew lives in a big old two story house a few blocks off Telegraph Avenue. At least half a dozen students live in the house which is within easy walking distance to the University. It's a ramshackle place with a dirt front yard, tufts of crab grass and weeds around the edges. The front room contains only one large banquet table, the rest is open to accommodate meetings and parties. Several buildings in back are divided as rooms.

Up a narrow flight of stairs off the kitchen is a large attic. It occupies the whole top of the house with a low slanted roof and several gables with windows along the sides. Drew has a large bed in one corner, a sofa, chair and table, and even a full size refrigerator. Carl wonders how in the hell they got that regenerator up those stairs.

In an alcove created by a gable is a space Drew has set aside for guests. Carl and Rose decided to take a nap while Kate, Jack and Drew rummage around in the kitchen below making sandwiches.

Drew moved to the house after he was released from the Army on disability. He is a student at the University. Drew is a changed man, driven to seek revenge and justice for the crimes he has seen and the attempt on his life. He immediately became involved with the anti war movement and has become a important organizer and activist. However, the movement is rapidly changing and Drew is unsure of his place within it.

Later Carl and Rose join everybody downstairs. Kate has sandwiches waiting.

"You guys are welcome to stay if you like. You and Rose can stay in my room, and I have another room where Kate and Jack can stay." Drew says

"That sounds fun, but just for a day or two. What do you think?" Kate asks Carl and Rose. "That sounds good." they reply. They found the alcove in Drew's room comfortable and private.

That evening is a party and Carl and Rose get to meet Drew's house mates and many of the local activists. They are a fascinating group of people. They all compliment Carl on his speech and urge him to get involved. "We always need good motivators." they say. Carl is interested and Rose urges him to get involved, if that's what he wants. She thinks Carl has a gift and wants him to develop it. His public speaking ability is something that could be useful to him in other endeavors.

Carl and Drew became instant friends. Drew seems like an older brother. They spend hours talking about history and politics. Carl also gets to know some of the other political people. They are all involved with the movement. In fact, Drew has a whole enterprise going, with volunteers who organize and promote meetings and protests. It's a whole new scene and Carl was fascinated. Finally things wind down and they all go off to bed.

Early the next morning, the sound of someone clomping up the stair to Drew's attic awakens Carl and Rose. "Drew, wake up. The cops have taken over People's Park" he says.

"Oh, shit, it's started." Drew's responds.

They all quickly dress and head for the park on foot. Other people are headed in that direction as well. In the early morning hours around a hundred California Highway Patrol officers cordon off eight blocks. Heavy equipment was brought in. As the community watches from the perimeter, they bulldoze the grass, the gardens, and the playground, then erect a cyclone fence around the park with "No trespassing" signs.

By noon several thousand people have gathered at a rally on campus. The president of the student body finally gets on stage and yells. "Let's go down there and take the park." Instantly the crowd is in motion and pours out onto Telegraph Avenue and heads for the park. The police are waiting.

As the windows of Bank of America are smashed and fire hydrants are opened, the police advance firing tear gas. Tear gas canisters and rocks are thrown back by the protestors.

Carl, Rose, Kate and Jack have been part of the protest up to now. Drew has left them and they can see him in the front lines screaming in fury and throwing rocks. The tear gas is starting to sting their eyes and throats. "I'm not ready this." yells Rose above the sirens, screaming and noise. "The cops always win. I want to go." They all instantly agree, but the going is slow. Others have the same idea and now the cops are everywhere, they aren't sure how to get out. Fear, anger and chaos reigns as people struggle to leave or join the fight.

A squadron of Special Units have appeared in blue jumpsuits and gas masks. They have flack jackets and shotguns. Looking like some kind of space alien from hell, they move forward in precise unison. The crowd is in disbelief.

"Watch out they have guns." the cry goes up. Normally the police don't use guns, but this time the authorities intend to send a message.

People are now trying to run but it's still too crowded. "Don't fall down." yells Jack. Shots are fired. There is screaming and pandemonium. The shots keep coming and Carl can feel spent buckshot reigning down on the crowd. They are far enough away to not be injured but he knows this is serious. These cops are shooting to kill.

They finally break out of the crowd as they round a corner, but Carl looks back to see a girl get shot in the back as she is running away. Reporters, passers by, and even students walking on campus unaware of what is going on are shot. Most are only injured but one student is blinded by a shot to the face, and the belly of a young visitor from San Jose who is watching from a roof top is torn apart by buckshot. He dies that night. At least a hundred protestors are shot.

Debating the issues of property rights is one thing, but shooting down people in the streets with shotguns is another. No one expected this type of unusual and excessive force from the police. The community is in shock and fury.

Governor Ronald Reagan sends in three thousand National Guardsmen and Berkeley is shut down. Gatherings of more than three people are prohibited.

Back at Drew's house it is like a war zone. Injured people are being treated. Angry activists who are ready to throw themselves against the police in suicidal assaults are held back by their friends. The four of them are trapped, at least for tonight. Drew eventually makes his way back to the house. He has been heavily tear-gassed and it takes him several hours to recover.

Carl, Rose, Kate and Jack hide out upstairs in Drew's room. Drew finally comes to join them.

"Drew, are you going to be Okay" Kate asks with concern. Drew's eyes are blood-shot and he looks exhausted.

"I'm fine." He says. He doesn't look fine.

"I just can't believe they reacted with that level of violence." He says. "There is no mistaking the message, the gloves are off." He shakes his head.

"It's interesting, because I think the university was willing to let the whole People's Park thing slide, especially because of the kind of broad based support it had in the community. No, this is not the university sending a message. It's a message from far higher up." Drew dabs at his swollen eyes with a wet towel.

"What do you mean?" asks Kate. "Who else would be involved?"

"Well, the university would never want this kind of bloodbath. There are too many supporters in both the faculty and the administration for that. This was probably ordered by Ronald Reagan, who may have even been pressured by Nixon. Who knows? We have already seen violent responses from the government at other protests, but for them to do this, and for something as innocuous and as hippie dippy as the People's Park is amazing. They understand now, the Cultural Revolution is as dangerous as the Political Revolution. It's the end. The establishment is ready to do whatever it takes to destroy us."

Drew leans back and covers his eyes with a wet cloth. The four of them look at each other, then silently get up and go to bed.

The Movement

The next morning as the four of them are having coffee, Drew pulls up a chair. "That was quite an experience yesterday." Drew says, taking a sip.

"I have to admit, I was scared." Say Rose.

"We were all scared." Jack responds. "You'd be crazy not to be scared."

"If that was the intent, they sure succeeded." Kate says.

Drew replies. "I think your right. It's too bad because I was hoping to talk you guys into getting involved a little bit more, at least for the summer. But after that I don't blame you for being reluctant. I think a lot of people are going to be having second thoughts now."

"It depends on the type of involvement." Says Carl.

"Yeah, I guess your right." Drew says

"That was just plying into their hands yesterday. The authorities knew there would be a riot and that's exactly what they wanted, and they were ready for it. Any sympathy for the Peoples Park will be lost in the media coverage of "rioting radicals" Carl says.

Drew nods his head. "You're probably right."

Carl continues "There is no way I will ever support violent resistance. It's not only futile, it's ineffective. Otherwise I would like to help."

Drew is pleasantly surprised. He thought that Carl was history after what happened yesterday. This kid may have more spunk than he thought. He has certainly surprised Drew so far. As far as the commitment to non violence, well we will see if that changes when Carl is not so green behind the ears.

"Let's try this." Drew says. "I will let you know about the meetings and rallies I have coming up and if you want to attend and say a few words, that would be great."

"Perfect." Carl Says. "But now, I think we are all ready to get back to the peace and quiet of Tomales Bay." Carl says as he looks at the others. "That's a little more excitement than we are used too." they all laugh.

Over the next few months Carl drives into Berkeley a couple of days each week. Sometimes Rose comes with him, but most of the time he comes alone.

Carl and Drew are becoming good friends and colleagues. They have been attending meetings for a broad variety of activist groups. It's surprising how many different groups there are, each with its own slightly different philosophy and interest. Drew is trying to keep them pumped up, unified and committed. It's not easy.

Drew and Carl work as a team, Drew does the general hob knobbing and organizing and Carl gives a speech to inspire them and impress on them the importance of working together and overlooking their differences. This is a message Carl believes in.

Carl never knows what he is going to say beforehand, but has developed a few different approaches. He often finds an historical analogy for something that is currently happening. Drew has been impressed by the reaction. People love Carl's thought provoking stories and entertaining approach. It seems casual and easy to Carl, as far as he

is concerned he is just preaching to the choir. Everybody already believes in basically the same outcome, it's mostly the strategies and styles that differ.

Deja

A few days later Carl is in Berkeley. He spoke to a group of High School Students that morning and has another meeting tonight. Right now he is hanging out and thinking about taking a walk up to Telegraph Avenue just to check things out, maybe have some coffee or go to the book store. Everybody is at class or out and the Berkeley house is deserted. On his way out; Carl stops in the kitchen to grab an orange. He is peering into the refrigerator when a cute, long haired blond girl walks in.

"Hi, I'm Deja." She says

"Hi Deja, I'm Carl." Carl says, looking up with the refrigerator door still open.

"I know who you are, I saw you at a rally. I loved your speech." She says with an interested smile. "So you're working with Drew?"

"I'm just helping a little bit." Carl says.

"Drew and I are old friends. Wow, I just thought your speech was so right-on. How do you do that? Get up in front of all those people. I'd be scared shitless." She laughs.

"Well, it is kind-of scary at first, but then you get going and you kind of just get used to it. I don't know."

"Well you sure didn't look scared." She says. She steps closer now. She is stunningly cute. Carl is tantalized. He is also flattered by her compliments. Deja is just a little wisp of a thing, five foot one, a perfect, natural, platinum blond, with long hair and pale white skin. She looks Scandinavian or something. Where Rose is thin and muscular, Deja is soft and rounded. Her pale cheeks are fresh and pink. Deja has a thing for Angles and it fits because she looks like a cherub herself. The perky pink nipples of her plump little breasts are clearly visible through her thin white cotton blouse. Carl thanks god they did away with bras.

"So you know these guys?" Carl asks.

"Oh yeah, I come over all the time. Where are you going?"

"Nowhere really. I just thought I would go down to telegraph and see what was going on. Like to come?" Carl says. He is smiling and flirting a little bit now. She is cute.

"Yeah, that would be great. I'd like to get to know you better" she says with an interested smile. Now she is flirting. Deja comes around and stands right next to Carl, bending over to look in the refrigerator, not so subtly rubbing against him. "Got anything to drink?"

"I got some apple juice or some beer." He says.

"Beer? Really? The hippies in this house never have any beer." They laugh.

"That's because somebody always drinks it up." Carl jokes. "I got a private stash in the refrigerator. Would you like one?"

"Yeah, that sounds great." She watches him closely as he gets out two beers from a paper bag with his name on it.

"So where do you live?"

"I live out at Point Reyes, but I'm staying here for a few days with Drew, in a little room back in back of his room."

"Oh yeah, I know where you mean. I've been up in Drew's room lots of times." She says

"Are you guys dating or something?" Carl asks. He doesn't want to be hitting on one of Drew's girl friends. Besides, Carl is starting to feel guilty for flirting with Deja, after all he is madly in love with Rose.

"No, No, We're just old friends." She takes a long drink of her beer. "Thanks, that tastes great." She says, looking around. "So is Drew here?"

"No, I'm not sure when he is coming back." Carl says.

"No big deal. Want to smoke a joint to go with our beer?"

Carl thinks about it for a second, he wasn't planning to get blasted this early in the day, but one beer and a couple tokes wouldn't hurt. He nods his head.

"Well, sure. That sounds good." Carl relents.

"Cool. Let's go up to Drew's room, we can smoke up there." She says with a little flirtatious smile. Carl can feel a flutter in his stomach. She looks incredibly hot and she is sending all the right signals.

"Sounds good." He says.

They trudge up the stairs and tumble down on the couch. Deja pulls out an already rolled joint from her bag and a Zippo lighter. She lights it up and hands it to Carl. She is sitting close and watching him.

They take a few hits and then Carl says "That's enough for me."

"Yeah me too." They take a few long drinks from their beers and then she says. "You're sure cute. Why haven't I seen you before?" She moves closer to Carl staring up into his eyes.

"Uh, well I just met Drew a few months ago..." Carl stammers.

She gives him a flirtatious smile and moves her face closer. Carl knows this is where he is supposed to kiss her. He hesitates for a moment and then his hard cock takes control. He leans over and they start kissing and hugging, instantly fondling each other. He has his hand under her shirt and on those beautiful plump tits and she is trying to unzip his pants, his cock straining for release. He decides to help. Soon woody has joined the party, just like he wanted. Her hand is on his cock and she is looking at it.

"I knew you'd have a nice cock." she says looking back up at him. "It's the hands. I can always tell by the hands. Come on, let's ball."

Carl doesn't put up any resistance. She leads him over to the little nook behind the curtain. They both instantly strip off their clothes and tumble onto the mattress. They are kissing hot and heavy. Carl dips his fingers into her wet pussy and then starts using a few of the techniques that Rose taught him. Deja immediately responds.

"Oh god yeah, touch my clit. That's good. Let me taste that cock". She turns and goes down on him, making sure he has easy access to her pussy. Carl pulls her around for some pussy sucking. After about thirty seconds she is swooning. "God damn that's fucking good. Where did you learn to suck pussy like that? Don't answer. just suck." He moves back to her clit and she moves back to his cock.

Carl fingers her ass. She stops sucking his cock to scream, "Fuck yeah, god damn you're a good pussy sucker. I am going to fucking cream all over you fucking face." She pushes him away. "But not yet, not yet." She pulls away and turns around to get on top of

him. "Fuck me first." She slips him inside and starts grinding on his cock. She likes it deep. Carl wonders how that little body can take it, but she can't seem to get enough. She is fucking him and whispering in his ear as he fondles her tits. "That was some good pussy sucking man, really fucking good. Anything you want me to do, I'll do it." She sets up.

"Lets see that pussy." Carl says. She leans back so he can see her. She has a perfectly blond pussy. Carl has never seen a pussy like that.

Just then they hear a voice. "Hello? Carl is that you?" It's Drew.

"Oh, hi, Drew. Carl calls. "Sorry, I didn't know when you were coming back." Carl says through the curtain.

Drew is laughing "No problem man. I'll give you guys a while to finish what you're doing. Take your time."

"Hi, Drew" Deja calls.

There is a pause. "Is that you Deja?" Drew answers in return.

"Yeah, it's me." She says happily.

Drew comes over and peeks around the corner, Deja is still on top of Carl, with his cock inside her.

"Hey, I thought you were coming over to hang out with me for a while?" Drew says to Deja who is still slowly grinding on Carl's cock.

"Yeah well I was, but I met Carl." Deja says. Drew laughs.

"I can see that." He chuckles. Carl is shocked.

"You said you weren't dating Drew." Carl whines.

"I'm not! We just ball sometimes. Besides I ball who ever I want. Nobody tells me who to be with." She stops and looks up at Drew.

"Hey, don't look at me. I don't care if you guys want to get it on."

They both are looking at Drew with a questioning look.

"Really, I don't care. I guess I may have to settle for sloppy seconds, but hey, really, go for it. She is a great fuck Carl, have fun."

"Uh..Thanks." Carl says.

"I'm sorry Drew." Says Deja. "I did come over to ball you. But Carl was looking so hot, and this guy really knows how to suck pussy." She says enthusiastically. Drew laughs uproariously.

"You're a man of many talents Carl." Drew says. "Well, I'll leave you guys alone." He turns to go.

Carl leans up on one elbow. "I'm sorry Drew, I didn't know." Carl calls behind him.

"Oh, quit worrying about him, I'll take care of that. Shut up and fuck me." Deja says, pushing him down and sticking her tongue in his mouth. Deja stays on top for a while then slides off and gets up on her hands and knees with her ass pointed at Carl. She looks back at Carl. Her cute white ass is in the air, her pink freshly fucked pussy and its little tuft of blond pubic hair waiting to get fucked.

"Come and get me cowboy." she says, giving her ass a wiggle. Carl burns with lust. He takes her from behind and it is good.

"Touch me now and make me cum." She whispers. Carl touches her in the same way that he touches Rose. Soon he feels her pussy pulsating and he quickly follows. Carl rolls off and fades to sleep.

He wakes up as Deja finishes dressing and is gathering her things. She bends down and gives him a wet kiss on the lips.

"Great fuck" she says with a happy smile. "You can ball me any time. I'll see you around."

"Yeah Deja, that was hot. I'll catch you later."

She disappears beyond the curtain. Carl dozes off. When he wakes up it is nearly dark. He misses Rose. He gets up, grabs a few things and goes into Drew's bathroom to take a shower. As he stands under the shower the guilt flows over him like the hot water. He can't believe that he fucked that girl only a couple days after Rose said she loved him and he professed his never ending love to her. He is totally devoted to Rose with every inch of his body. Well, not every inch. His hard cock was obviously calling the shots today. The temptation of Deja was too much for him. He wanted to fuck her. He did fuck her. He enjoyed fucking her. But he still loves Rose. He swears to himself it will never happen again. But he wonders, will he be able to avoid the temptation of Deja the next time she comes around.

Carl gets dressed and packs up his things. He was planning to stay one more day, but now he wants to go home and be with Rose. He wants to be away from all the crazy shit going on here in Berserk-ley. He wants to wake up in his own bed with Rose and look out at his beloved bay.

As Carl is going out the front door Drew drives up. Drew sees he has his stuff.

"Hi man, how's it going? I see you're heading out."

"Yeah man, I'm going home." Carl says.

"That's cool. Come back whenever you want, I can always use you. You're a powerful force Carl, more powerful than you know." Drew can see Carl is upset. He guesses it is about Deja.

Carl says, "Yeah, will I will be back. I think what you're doing is important and I want to make a contribution. But, I miss home."

Drew puts his arm around Carl and walks with him toward the Alpha. "Look man, I bet I know why you're upset. It's about Deja isn't it?"

"Yeah, I'm really sorry about that Drew, I didn't know that you were seeing her." Carl wonders if he still would have fucked Deja even if he had known she was seeing Drew. He thinks that he probably would have.

"I don't care about that. I just care about you being happy man. I know you and Rose love each other, I don't want to see anything get in the way of that."

"I know. I really fucked up." Carl is looking a little teary eyed. Drew looks at him and kind of chuckles. Carl is so emotional, so serious sometimes, it amazes him.

"Look buddy, this kind of thing can just happen to a guy. Jesus Christ, what guy with blood running through his veins could turn down Deja. She's the fucking angle of sex. Give yourself a break. You'll know better next time and I'll talk to Deja. We have been friends for a while and nobody will ever know. I promise."

Carl has pulled it together and is nodding his head. "Yeah, I hope I learned my lesson."

"Just lighten up on yourself. Guys have been giving in to pussy on the side for a million years. It happens. Just don't tell Rose. Got it? Don't tell her. That will only make it worse. Even if she says she doesn't care, believe me, she cares. Just watch yourself. There are a lot of free spirited women around here and you're becoming a bit of a celebrity. If you want to be loyal to Rose you'll have to watch your step. I'm not sure I could do it, but hey man, give it a try." Drew laughs.

Carl nods his head "It ain't gon'a be easy that's for damn sure. That Deja has some kind of sweet fucking pussy, damn." They are both laughing.

"Ooooh yeah." Drew says.

Drew slaps him on the back "Go on home to your woman."

As Carl drives he thinks about what Drew said. Drew read him like a book. Carl was thinking about confessing to Rose. Now he sees that would be stupid. Just shut the fuck up, leave this behind him, and do the right thing from now on. He is feeling better, for a while.

Then a new emotion starts to creep in, jealousy. If he is fucking people on the side, maybe she is to. He could hardly blame her after what he just did. She has certainly been with other men before and Carl still feels insecure about his age and inexperience.

Carl is coming home a day early. What if he walks in the room and Augie is up on their bed fucking Rose what that giant schlong of his? What if she is loving it? Carl is going mad with jealousy. He knows it's crazy. He has no reason to think it is true, though maybe she does seem over friendly to Auggie, or maybe it's just Carl's imagination. And to add to, he has to admit the thought of it kind of turns-him-on. Carl knows he is out of his fucking mind. He keeps tells himself to stop thinking about this shit, it's just a mind fuck, a scenario based on his own guilt. But he can't help punishing himself for his own transgression.

Carl goes home to Rose. She isn't been fucking Auggie when he walks in. She welcomes him with open loving arms. He keeps his mouth shut and doesn't say anything to tip her off to his little tryst with Deja. And if Carl is more loving and affectionate than usual she doesn't seem to notice.

It's morning and they are setting up in bed, each with a book and a cup of coffee, sun shimmering on the bay outside their window. Rose is readying "This Is It" by Alan Watts, Carl has "The Medium is the Massage" by Marshall McLuhan.

"Are you happy?" Rose asks Carl.

"So happy I have to pinch myself to make sure I'm not dreaming" Carl replies.

"I'm happy to." she says. "This is a good book. I really do try to live my life to the fullest and appreciate the moment."

"You have already had an amazing life Rose. Not many people have done the things you've done or seen the things you've seen." Carl says.

"Yeah, I guess your right. In a way it just sort of happened. There have been a lot of hard times, scary times." says Rose, looking out the window as if she is looking into the past.

"I'm happy Rose, but I want to know so much more. Happiness is over rated. This is happiness right here Rose, right now. I couldn't be happier than I am at this very moment. But, here I am reading about media and communications. Tomorrow I will be back in Berkeley preaching against the war. I guess happiness isn't enough for me."

"I know exactly what you mean. Many of the eastern religions seek perfect happiness, nirvana, but I am a striver. That's why I love to travel. I'll settle down for a while and then the urge to go out into the world, to see and adventure just grabs me and I have to go.

Rose continues "All those happy little families in the suburbs, zoned out on Christianity. The answers aren't that easy and the world is both a beautiful and a horrible place. I need to know, to experience. Not all of it, of course, because some is just too terrible to endure, but I want to know as much as possible so I can play a part, so I can be aware and informed." Rose looks at Carl, questioning. Does he really understand what she is saying? "I'm not sure I will ever make a very good traditional housewife."

"I hope not. That would be a travesty. You're a free spirit Rose and I can live with that." Carl says. They cuddle a little closer together.

"Rose, these moments we have together in this beautiful place are precious to me. When I am in Berkeley I can't wait to get back to you. But just as you crave adventure, knowledge and understanding, so do I. I love the political work I'm doing. I never dreamed that I could do something like this, that I could make a difference. I know some day we both will be moving on, and that does cause me fear and sadness. I don't want to lose you. But I am confident we can find a way to achieve both happiness and fulfillment together."

Rose turns to kiss Carl's neck, putting one of her warm and naked legs over his. Looking up into his face she says "I think we can do that Carl, I really do. But right now I just want one of your sweet coffee flavored kisses." They both slide down into the bed and as their lips meet. Carl pulls the covers up over their heads. For Rose and Carl, staying this way forever would be nirvana.

The Meeting

A week goes by before Carl gets back to Berkeley. Drew says nothing about his little encounter with Deja and they continue to make their rounds. It's almost like a real job and they are getting good at.

One day, Drew asks Carl to come with him. Drew insists on driving his old Chevy. "It's not far" he says. They drive for a while and the neighborhoods start looking really seedy. It's a poor area with an inner city industrial feel some place in the lowlands of Oakland. Finally Drew pulls up in front of a run-down, store front building. All the windows are covered with dusty paper. Two big black guys with giant afros, black leather jackets, black gloves and dark sun glasses are standing in front of a narrow doorway near the back. The streets are deserted.

Carl and Drew get out of the car. Carl looks at Drew, but Drew doesn't look at him. He just jumps out of the car and goes straight up to the two guys and tells them they are here for the meeting. The black guys don't say a word they just stare at him. Carl is getting nervous. One of them finally goes inside and a few minutes later comes back and motions for them to follow him.

They go in the door and climb up a very long flight of stairs. It's dark and musty and smells like piss. As they approach the top they hear loud talking and laughter. Turning the corner they enter a large room. It appears to take up the whole top of the building, with a dirt brown tile floor, florescent lighting and a low, water stained ceiling. A dozen or more big black guys just, like the ones down stairs, are all talking or laughing. Some appear angry, yelling 'mutha-fucka this, and mutha-fucka that. The guys they are yelling at are yelling right back and occasionally they all break out in uproarious laughter.

There are Black Panther posters covering the walls, a fierce looking panther cat showing its teeth, a clenched fist and lettering that says 'Black Power'. There are guns leaning against the wall and some of the Panthers are wearing side arms. Now Carl is sure he is nervous.

Carl and Drew are guided over to a muscular black guy who immediately recognizes Drew.

"Hey man, I'm glad you could make it." he says doing a reach around handshake with Drew.

"I appreciate you having us. This is my comrade Carl."

"Hi Man, glad to meet you, I'm Darin." He says to Carl, extending his hand.

Carl also does the reach around handshake and tries to squeeze his hand as firmly as possible without wincing. The guy is very big, very black and very scary looking.

"Hello, I'm Carl"

Darin seems friendly enough but everybody else is either ignoring or glaring at them. Drew is talking to Darin and Carl is starting to get an idea of what is going on.

The movement has already been working with the Black Panthers. But some of the Panthers are highly suspicious of the Peace movement, and some are openly hostile. Drew is trying to bridge the gap. These are the hard-core Panthers.

Carl has had limited experience with black people. No, that's an over statement. Carl has had NO experience with black people. This is the most black people he has ever seen

in one place, at one time, other than from the safety of a speeding car with the windows rolled up and the doors locked. Drew wants him to speak to these guys? Carl is ready to piss in his pants.

Carl gets Drew aside for a moment. "What the fuck, why didn't you tell me this was where we were going?"

"I thought you would chicken out." Drew says.

"Fucking-A I would have chickened out. I don't know what to say to these guys."

"Hey, you're the one who does all preaching about racial equality. Well this is your chance to do something and stop just talking. Besides, they probably won't kill you even if you do sound like an idiot." He chuckles.

"That's comforting." Carl rolls his eyes.

The meeting starts. Everybody sits on brown folding metal chairs and the one who is talking stands up. The discussions all sound like heated arguments and there is a lot of interrupting. Everybody is loud and profane. Carl is racking his brain for something to say. Finally Darin gets up and talks about the idea of working with the peace movement. Some of the Panthers seem mildly open to it, but most are visibly disdainful, even angry. Darin introduces Drew. Carl hopes he will talk for a long time so he doesn't have to say much, but it seems like Drew is done in about five seconds. "And this is my comrade Carl. He has a few things to say."

Drew looks at Carl. Carl swallows hard and stands up. "Well of course there is a long history of whites working for black equality and I am sure you have all heard the stories about the freedom workers in the south." There is silence. Of course they have heard the stories. They are sick of the fucking stories about the freedom workers in the south. And, of course, the civil war, but Lincoln and the north had other motives for that. They know that as well, that's part of why they mistrust whites.

"But, I am from Kansas and Kansas has a whole history that is intertwined with the abolitionist movement. They are silently waiting to be impressed.

Carl starts telling the story of how the abolitionists moved to Kansas to block it from becoming a slave state. Many of the Panthers have heard something about this history, but not much. Carl, in his inimitable way, is able to bring the story to life.

Carl tells of the hardships his own family endured when they came to Kansas in covered wagons as part of a movement from the east that wanted to prevent slavery. How they fought a running guerilla war for five years with the slave owners of Missouri, just before the Civil War. How they inspired the Free Soil movement, the new Republican Party and the spectacle of "Bleeding Kansas." Carl goes on to describe the horrors of the destruction of Lawrence Kansas by the bloodthirsty Confederates. By now the group is fascinated.

Next he tells of the murderous rampage against pro-slavers by crazy John Brown, who hacked his enemies to pieces with long knives. Carl gets some "right-ons" from this story.

But it is the description of John Brown, as pictured in the famous portrait in the Kansas State Capital at Topeka, standing in a thunderstorm, long beard flowing, a bible in one hand and a gun in the other, that brings the house down. Carl is thoroughly enjoying himself because the audience is so emotionally involved and responsive. To his surprise they turn out to be a great audience.

In the end, Carl brings the story back around to the point that even today there are many whites who support Black liberation. They may have different reasons and different

viewpoints. Some may even be kind of fucked up like John Brown. But a lot of people in the peace movement feel very strongly about the issue and it only makes sense for the Panthers and the peace movement to work together.

It is a very persuasive speech and many of the Panthers, but not all, admit he probably has a point. They are saying "right on." "yeah man." and "that's right." Drew is beaming, looking at Carl and thinking 'this guy is good'.

Carl and Drew are a hit. Drew is delighted. They get in the car and head back home. "That was unbelievable what you did back there man, un-fucking-believable. You got a real talent." Drew thinks, with Carl's political speaking talent and his organizational and behind the scenes strategies they could really do something. They could really make a difference.

Carl says "I enjoyed it, but don't ever do that again. I am glad I went, and no I probably wouldn't have gone, but still, don't do that to me again." Carl is looking at Drew seriously

"Hey man, point taken. I completely apologize. I didn't think it would be that heavy. The truth is when we walked in that room and I saw the guns I was fucking scared shitless." He laughs

"I almost pissed my pants man. I am serious." They both scream with laughter.

Both hold their fist in the air and screaming, "Power to the people mutha-fucker." They drive the rest of the way back talking and laughing. They are a team now and they played the toughest crowd possible.

Carl starts seeing Darin around the Berkeley house. They have become friends and Carl has gotten to know some of the other Black Panthers. They seem scary at first, that's their intent, but once you get to know them they are just a bunch rough house kids who are trying to make their way through a tough situation.

Carl realizes that Darin and many of the others come from the kind of poverty and turmoil that a middle class American like him could only imagine in his worst nightmare. Carl doesn't agree with some of their tactics and he often argues with Darin about it. However, he respects the difficult circumstances and the limited choices that confront them.

One weekend Drew and Darin come out to the Tomales for a visit. Darin seems to have a great time, though the vegetarian food is not to his liking. As Darin is leaving he seems to have a better understanding of Carl.

"You know Carl, I can see that if you live with beauty like this all around you, you're bound to have a different view of the world. I wish I could have more beauty around me. I'm tired of fighting. It seems like I have never known anything but struggle. I hope someday we can all share a common vision of hope and beauty. Unfortunately, all that ugliness and struggle is still waiting for me back in the city."

"That's why it's good to step back sometimes and get a little perspective. Come on back and visit again if you need a break. We'd love to have you." Carl says.

"Thanks man." Darin says as they shake hands.

Bad Morning

Carl trudges up the stairs to Drew's room and knocks on the wall to announce his arrival.

"Come on up." Drew calls.

Carl finds Drew lying on the couch with a pillow over his eyes. Drew sets up as Carl comes in. He looks like shit.

"Hey man, you aren't looking to good this morning." Calling it morning is being generous. It's pushing one o'clock in the afternoon.

"I've got a cold or something coming on, my head aches, the war is still raging and I'm just generally bummed out, so don't come in here with a bunch of cheery bullshit." Drew snarls.

"It's nice to see you too." Carl says cheerily. "It's a beautiful day, and there's a whole troop of Girl Scouts on their way up right now just to bring you some Girl Scout cookies. Which do you like, thin mint or peanut butter?"

"Fuck you" Drew says with a begrudged chuckle.

Drew does not have a cold coming on. He is experiencing a round of headaches, which have plagued him periodically since he got blown up in Vietnam. He is also severely depressed. All Drew's efforts to locate Mi, the girl he fell in love with in Vietnam, have failed. He has finally come to the realization that he will never see her again. In addition, every effort he has made to initiate an investigation into the atrocities he saw has gone nowhere. The military is treating him like a traitor and a trouble maker. No one believes him. No one wants to believe him.

On the coffee table is a newspaper with the headline, "President Nixon Visits Troops in Vietnam." It shows a picture of Nixon shaking hands with a GI and another shot of Nixon and President Thieu.

"What a crock of fucking shit." Drew says, nodding his head toward the newspaper. "Those two deserve each other. No one is more corrupt than Thieu. It's unbelievable the public buys this sham. Thieu is just a puppet. He wouldn't last five minutes without the US propping him up."

Carl picks up the paper "Glad to see Nixon is over there fighting. I imagine they handed him an M16 and choppered him into some hell hole right after this shot." They both shake their heads in disgust.

"It's not working" Drew says. "The movement is just not working. They are killing us, literally. King, Kennedy, the protestors in the street, the gloves are off."

"I think your right. Any chance of a soft landing died with King and Kennedy. They had the main stream clout to end the war and make this a peaceful transition to a new political and cultural environment, but with their deaths and the violent backlash of the establishment it's going to be difficult." Carl says.

"I hate Nixon and all those fuckers. It's personal for me. The person I once was died in Vietnam. I'm an enemy of the state now and I'm tired of playing nice." Drew is stone faced and angry.

"I understand where you're coming from Drew, but violent resistance is just what they want. That's the game they play best and you're bound to lose if you try to go that rout. Besides, it kills any chance of gaining main stream support from the general population. It just helps them to demonize us. All this Marxist revolution bullshit of the Weatherman is ridiculous. Nobody is going to buy that shit." Carl says

"Maybe, maybe not. All I know is what we are doing now is not working. Nixon is ignoring us. We're nothing but a mosquito on the ass of an elephant." Drew sniffs

"I'm not so sure about that either. They're certainly not going to admit it, but we are gradually turning the tide of public opinion. Besides, I am coming to believe the cultural changes will have an even longer term effect. Civil right, women's liberation, environment, the human potential movements, these are the things that will last and change society as a whole. People are turning-on to a million new things. Some day the Vietnam War will just be a bad memory, a fuck up, a bad decision." Carl says.

"That's bullshit, Carl. It's the war, and the political and economic power that matter. All this other hippie dippy shit just takes people's eye off the ball. We have to take control of the government and that's going to take force. The rich and powerful aren't going to just roll over and play dead. They intend to fight to protect what they've got and we're going to have to fight to take it."

"You may be right Drew, but you're not going to make that happen by planting a pipe bomb in toilet of the Federal Building. We have to organize politically and that kind of stupid and meaningless violence just makes it harder."

"Well your right about the pipe bomb. What these fuckers need is a real wake up call. We're not going to just roll over and take this shit." Drew spits out in anger. Drew stops himself before he says more.

They both sit silently for a while to cool down. Finally Drew says, "Look Carl, I know you're in love and have a whole different perspective on things. I value that. But I'm still at war. I admit it, I'm consumed by hate and the memory of Vietnam. I can't just sit back and play nice, pretend self actualization. After what I have been through, all that seems like an impossible dream. No, I'm stuck here on the front lines, with no end to my tour of duty in sight, and no place to call home. I admire what you're doing Carl, and that's where you belong, not on the front lines." Drew says, turning to look into Carl's eyes.

Carl knows this has to be the end of the conversation. He knows that Drew is probably into some kind of violent shit, and Carl does not want to know about it. He disagrees, but he is certainly not going to actively oppose it. Violence is the game both sides are playing and unfortunately, they will both suffer the consequences. But a seed of doubt and concern has been planted in Carl's mind and he is now asking himself how much longer he wants to stay involved. Unlike Drew, Carl has a life.

Temptation

When Carl walks into the Berkeley house, standing in the doorway of the kitchen is Deja. Carl is instantly on guard.

"Hi Carl it's so nice to see you." Deja says.

"Hi Deja" He is thinking about just turning around and leaving.

"I just dropped by to see if Drew was around." She says as she walks up to Carl. No one else is around.

"I sure did enjoy being with you last time, but I talked to Drew and he said you were feeling kind of bad because you already have a girl friend." She is looking up into his face, her impossibly blue eyes staring into his, blond hair falling across her face and spilling down around her shoulders.

"Yeah, well I did feel kind of guilty about it." Carl says sheepishly.

She puts her hand on his shoulder, then runs it down his arm. "That is so sweet. You really love your girl friend don't you? Why can't I find somebody like you Carl?" She has moved to within a breath of him and he can smell the subtle scent of her musky perfume, the scent of her hair.

"You will Deja" Carl says, his hand has instinctively moved to her waist. He wants to touch her.

"I don't want to cause you any trouble. Everything that happens between us is our little secret. Let's go up to Draw's room and smoke a joint." She says seductively. Her body is pressed against his and she is still looking up at him with those impossibly beautiful eyes, her lips moist and red.

"No Deja, that's not a good idea." Carl says meekly as his hands hold her around the waist.

She presses her body against him now rubbing him with her breasts, with a harder edge she lowers her voice and says. "This is between you and me Carl. I want you again. I've been thinking about you and I want you to fuck me again. I want to do something special for you."

She puts her hand on his already hard cock, feeling it through his pants. Carl almost swoons. Every inch of him wants to rip her clothes off and ravage her. "You want me to Carl. See you already have a nice hard cock for me." She stretches up and puts her lips by his and says "I have something special I want to do for you. I want you to fuck me in the ass this time. I've been dreaming about feeling you fucking me in the ass when you make me cum. Come and fuck me Carl." She kisses him on the lips, and he kisses her back. He has given up. The world is gone and only his lust remains.

She takes him by the hand and leads him to the stairs. As they start to ascend Carl realizes what he is doing and stops. He knows what will happen if he goes up those stairs and he wants to go up. He wants to fuck Deja in the ass.

"No, stop Deja" he says in the middle of the stairs. "Oh god, I want to go up there and fuck you Deja, believe me. More than anything I want to fuck you, but I don't want to do it. Please Deja, you got to help me" She turns and comes to him. He is helpless to resist her physical advances but he continues to talk. "I want you Deja, but you have to help me please. If you continue to touch me, to ask me, I will give in. I just can't help myself.

That's why you have to walk me back down these stairs. I love Rose. I want to be loyal to her because it would hurt her if she knew I was fucking somebody else. But I want to fuck you Deja, I can't help that. It's up to you Deja. I'm powerless.

Deja is looking at him, her head slightly tilted, a puzzled expression. "Wow, you really do love her don't you? That is so sweet. Damn, I really want to fuck you. I have been thinking about you. Damned if I don't feel jealous about you and your girl friend. What's her name, Rose?"

"Deja, you don't know how powerful your sexuality is. Men can't resist that, I can't resist it. You have to take some responsibility, use it in a good way. Not just for other people, but for yourself. You're a free spirit now Deja, but some day soon you'll want someone of your own. You won't want some hot babe fucking your old man. Help me out here, kick me in the ass and throw me down these stairs because my dick is hard as a rock and I want to fuck you so god damn bad." Carl sits down on the stairs and Deja sits beside him.

She laughs and then looks kind of sad. "Your right I do want someone, I am tired of sleeping around, though it has been fun. I only fuck the guys that turn me on." She says defensively. She looks at him, tears in her eyes. "The truth is, I have been thinking about you. I thought that maybe we could get together. I was upset when Drew told me about your girl friend."

"Yeah, well I wasn't exactly forthcoming with that information, and you weren't exactly all that interested. That's what courtship is about Deja. It's a chance to find out about somebody before you jump in bed with them. You know all about sex Deja, god knows that. But you need to learn about love. For you own sake as much as others."

She is softly crying as they sit down on the stairs together side-by-side. She leans her head against Carl's shoulder and he waits for her as she cries. Finally she lifts her head, pulls herself together, wiping away her tears with some Kleenex from her bag.

"Thank you Carl. This isn't all about you. Its' something I have been coming to realize myself for a while. You're an inspiration to me. Have you got a brother?" she asks.

Carl puts his arms around her "You're a beautiful woman. The right guy is out there. Get a little more selective." He says in a brotherly way. She nods her head.

"Great, so can we go on up now? I'm really looking forward to fucking you in the ass." Carl says seriously.

She looks at him shocked. They both break out in laughter.

"No way ass hole" she says and punches him on the shoulder. "You just blew your fucking chance pal."

Later, Carl feels proud of himself, but not too proud. He knows that it could easily have gone the other way if Deja hadn't relented, if she hadn't shown pity on him, If they had made it to the top of those stairs, he would almost certainly, and with relish, have fucked her brains out. Carl knows the weakness is still there. But still, he feels a weight lifted from his shoulders. Also, the idea that Rose is fucking Auggie on the side seems ridiculous now. He knows she has more self-control than that, even if she would like a taste of that big honker. His jealousy subsides as he comes to terms with his own irresponsibility. He has to admit though, the thought of Rose riding that giant cock Auggie's does still kind of turn him on.

Fall Out

Carl notices Darin's car as he parks on the street in front of the Berkeley house. When he goes inside two Panthers are standing in the doorway by the stairs leading up the Drew's room.

"Hey man, how-ya hanging." They say as Carl comes over.

"Doing good, doing good, what's happening?" Carl says as they shake hands.

Carl trudges up the stairs to Drew's attic. As he approaches the top he can clearly hear Drew and Darin talking.

"We got the dynamite. It's time to make those fucking pigs bleed." Says Darin.

"But we don't want to kill anybody if we can help it. Not yet. We just want to send a message. That's what the others are doing." Drew says.

Darin responds "Okay but I want..."

Carl walks into the room, and Drew holds up his hand to stop Darin.

"Oh, Hi Carl." Drew says quickly. "What's going on." He is trying to recover and act like nothing is going on. The look of shock on Carl's flushed face makes it obvious he heard what they were saying. For a moment they just stand there. Nobody knows what to say.

Finally Drew says.

"Look Carl, you're not supposed to be here. I'm sorry but this is a private meeting. You should probably go."

Carl pauses for a moment, then turns to leave. Suddenly Darin jumps in front of him, blocking the way.

"Wait a minute. Not so fast. He heard what we were talking about."

"No he didn't. You didn't hear a thing, did you Carl?" Drew asks.

Carl backs away from Darin, who is glairing at him. He is frightened. This is something he did not expect and does not want to be involved with. At the same time, he is furious.

"I didn't hear a thing and I don't want to be involved. You're both out of your fucking mind. This is stupid. It's futile. It's moronic. You and I have talked about this Drew. It's a bad strategy." Carl says.

Darin jumps in. "That's easy for you to say, you're not the one being hunted down and murdered by the fucking pigs every day. We're sick of this bullshit and we're fighting back. I can't afford to let you ruin our plans, to betray my people. You're with us or against us." Darin says. The implication is clear, Carl isn't just walking out of here.

"Wait, a minute." Drew steps up to Darin. "Carl is one of us. He believes in the cause. It's just another point of view. He's not a traitor. He won't tell anybody about what he's heard. I personally take responsibility for him. Let's just settle down. This is no crisis." Drew pushes Carl toward a chair. "Let's just finish our meeting later. I'll talk with Carl. It's Okay"

Darin isn't moving. He doesn't trust Carl. He has been friendly with Carl, but this is war. His brother's lives are at stake.

Drew is scrambling to defuse the situation, he is afraid Darin might kill Carl.

"Listen Carl, you didn't hear anything. You are not going to say anything to anybody, your girl friend, Kate, nobody. Am I right?" Drew says as he looks straight into Carl's eyes." For Carl the seriousness of the situation is sinking in.

"Absolutely, I don't know a thing. I didn't hear a thing. I don't want to be involved." He looks at Darin. "I understand where you're coming from, man. I will never say a thing. I was never here."

Drew looks at Darin "There you go. Everything is cool"

"You have no idea where I'm coming from white boy, and everything is not cool. But I am going to let this slide, for now." He steps over to the chair where Carl is setting and towering over him he say, "If I ever hear a thing about you talking to anybody or disrupting our operations, you're dead. Do you understand?" Darin glares.

"I got it. I'm not involved." Carl says, his voice quivering.

Darin turns and stomps out of the room and down the stairs. Drew and Carl listen as there is a crash and yelling "Why the fuck did you let him come up there?" Darin is yelling. More crashing, "I thought he was cool." They can hear them stomping and arguing out the front door.

Both Carl and Drew remain silent and motionless as they hear Darin's car start and with a screech, pull away.

"Fuck, man" Drew says with a deep breath. "I thought you were a goner. You need to learn when to keep your fucking mouth shut man." Drew shakes his head.

"That always has been a problem of mine." Carl responds.

"Well that and some bad timing just about got your ass killed. Those guys are serious. You better lay low. I'll talk to him some more, I think you're all right."

Drew flops onto the couch exhausted. Carl is silent.

"This is what you want to be involved in?" Carl asks irritated.

"It's a bad world Carl. We're in a war and it's going to take action to win. If your not part of the solution your part of the problem." Drew says.

"I'm part of the problem? You're becoming just like them. You're losing your fucking soul man." Carl just stares at him shaking his head.

"Thank you for saving me. I will honor my word. I don't want to be involved in any of this. I think the more important and long lasting effects will be social, not political. Politically, I think we have shot ourselves in the foot."

Carl stands and Drew stands to meet him. They both know this means Carl's involvement with Drew and the political movement is over. "Good luck Drew. I really mean that." Carl says, tears in his eyes. They hug each other.

"You're like a brother to me Carl, I think your making the right decision to get out now. Things are falling apart. I wish I could leave, but I can't." Drew says.

"Come and live with us out at Tomales. It'll change your perspective, I promise." Carl says.

Drew doesn't say anything. He just walks with Carl to the stairs. They hug one more time and Carl turns and goes without another word.

Out of Jail

Eddie McGuire was sentenced to one year in jail for assaulting an officer, hit and run, DWI, and reckless driving. However the sentence was reduced to six months and Eddie got out a month early for good behavior. The Complaint filed by Carl Lee is dropped when he leaves the state. With no witness the local prosecutor decides not to pursue them.

Eddie has moped around home for a month. He has no car and it will be three more months before he can legally drive. He lost his job and the remains of his Corvette were been sold to help pay his legal fees.

Eddie has only been to Wellsville on the weekend one time. He felt out of place. Roy Welch and the others were fairly friendly, but he knew they were talking about him behind his back. He was appalled to see more of the kids wearing long hair and hippie style clothes. Roy was even wearing bell bottom jeans for Christ sake. In only a few months' things had changed. Eddie feels older now, out of place.

But Eddie found a new calling in prison. He became a born again Christian. Well sort of. He's no holly roller but he sure knows whose side god is on. He also learned all about the communist conspiracy. With nothing else to do so he learned to read and obsesses about the hippie Jew conspiracy. He even found a radio station out of Olathe that talks full time about the Christian movement and the Communist liberal conspiracy. Eddie's older cell-mate knew all about it. He hates hippies as much Eddie. He even gave Eddie the name of a guy who is recruiting people to fight the hippies and communists on College campuses. He says this guy is actually paying people to get involved. Eddie decides to look him up as soon as he gets his drivers license. His name is Willard Kaidy and the organization is the American Alliance of Youth.

College Students

Carl talks to Rose about his falling out with Drew and about his misgivings with the direction of the political movement. To protect her, he is careful not to mention anything about Darin or the possibility of violence. Berkeley and all that political mess seems far away. The school year is about to start and both Carl and Rose will be taking classes at the College of Marin. Rose is studying Nursing and Carl is leaning towards science, music and general requirements. Ending his involvement in the movement was just as well, he needs all his time for school.

The College of Marin is just a Junior College, but an exceptionally good school. The quality of its teaching staff rivals many Universities. Nestled at the foot of Mount Tamalpais, Marin is one of the wealthiest and most naturally beautiful places in the country. Top quality professors want to live and work in Marin at this well funded school with its liberal and upscale student body. Carl and Rose fit right in.

Jack, Kate and Rob are all taking classes at the College. This allows the group to share rides. Rose and Carl buy a 1965 Malibu convertible, yellow with a black interior. This allows them to share rides with the others. After the first month they rent a small room in a house nestled in the hills above Fairfax. They stay there part time during the week but consider the Tomales house their home.

Rose dives into the difficult classes of the nursing program. Carl finds his classes easy, but he is happy to sail along and do the required work. They are just a couple of college students now and Carl lays back to enjoy the beauty of Marin and his beloved Rose. They also get a chance to play tourist in San Francisco and the rest of the Bay Area. It's an amazing place. Life is easy and peaceful, even as the war rages on.

Carl and Rose are a happy couple and their relationship is maturing. The puppy-love is still there but they are learning to make decisions together, to compromise and to get used to each other's idiosyncrasies. Carl likes to take naps and has sweaty feet. Rose has picked up a number of peculiar habits from her travels. She loves to wear strange and exotic clothes and recently got a nose ring. None of that bothers Carl much. He likes the way she looks.

However, one day Carl and Rose are having lunch at a cafe near the college. As they eat a young woman at the next table leaves. She has only eaten half her sandwich. Rose glances at her table, then unapologetically reaches over and snags the other half of her uneaten sandwich.

"What are you doing?" Carl whines.

"I'm taking this sandwich. Americans are so wasteful. Look at this perfectly good food, and they will just throw it away."

"But, we can pay for our own sandwiches." Carl responds defensively.

"That's not the point. One of these days when you see people starving in other countries, in this country, you will understand what I mean. I can't stand seeing the waste. It's arrogant." Rose defiantly takes a bite of the retrieved sandwich.

"But, she might have some kind of disease or something." Carl protests.

Rose just gives him that incredulous, tight lipped look he has seen before. "I'll take my chances" She replies.

Not only does Rose snag food from other peoples tables, which still embarrasses Carl no matter how much he tries to rationalize this behavior, she also scavenges food from dumpsters behind food stores. Carl often finds a bag of blemished fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator. Rose gets these from two local grocery stores where they also shop.

Each day, throughout America, all produce with the slightest blemish is pulled from grocery store shelves. American consumers will not buy an apple with a brown spot on it, even if it is otherwise perfect. To Rose, this is all a horrible waste. In the third-world countries where she has lived this is be perfectly good food.

At first, when the employees find this beautiful young woman taking food from the dumpster, they were appalled and feel sorry for her. They figure she is poor and needs the food. The employees even start setting aside produce just for Rose. Soon though, as they get to know Rose, they realized this is her way of fighting, even if in a small way, the waste she sees all around her. She tells them stories about the places she had lived and the poor people she knows who would love to have this food. Soon, everyone at the stores knows Rose, and Carl is embarrassed when they offer her a bag of blemished produce as they shopped. Carl realizes that Rose is not intending to make a political statement by her actions. She is not intentionally trying to changes the people at the stores, but she is changing their outlook.

Sometimes it seems like Carl and Rose are so busy that they hardly ever get to see one another, and when they do they are tired. However, tired doesn't stop Carl from wanting sex, even if it does dampens the mood for Rose. In the end, they learn to compromise, especially Carl, because they love each other. It's part of growing up.

Time slips away. It's Christmas and Carl's mom comes to visit from Kansas. Rose is surprised how nervous Carl is about her visit. He wants her to have fun and admire what he is doing. He is making Rose nervous as well, but when Rose meets Carl's mom they hit it off immediately. They show her the sights of San Francisco and thrill her with the beauty of Point Reyes. Rose really likes his mom and sees much of her in Carl. She thinks that his close relationship with his mother speaks well of him as a mate.

As Carl's mom is leaving she says "I think you kids are a perfect pair, I hope the next time I visit it's for a wedding." Carl and Rose blush. That is not something they have discussed. Neither one of them mentions it, but his mom has succeeded in planting a seed.

Marriage is something Rose has resisted. She has turned down a few proposals already. But Rose is surprised at herself for thinking that she kind of wishes Carl would ask her to marry him, though she is still not sure how she would respond if he did. Of course she would never mention this to Carl. For Carl the thought of being turned down is too much to bear, and he is sure the answer would be not yet.

Even though the winter is cold and rainy, Tomales Bay is world of natural wonders. Great flocks of birds and ducks cover the bay and the house is rattled buy great winter storms blowing in from the Pacific Ocean. With the winter rains, come lush green meadows, which tumble like green velvet into the sea and soon there is the hint of spring as March approaches.

Kate Goes To New York

Kate is excited about a trip she is taking to New York. She has some old friends she wants to see. Jack seems concerned about the trip. There is some distance between them for a while, but just before she leaves they seem to make up.

A week later, Kate returns bearing gifts. She brings Carl and the other guys in the house black T-shirts-shirts with the words "New York" written on them in cool gold lettering. Carl likes to wear his even though he has never been farther east than Chicago. For Rose, Kate brings a vegetarian cook book. Carl is not sure what that has to do with New York but Rose likes it anyway. Jack and Kate are thrilled to see each other. The house seemed lonely without Kate, but now things are back to normal.

Eddie McGuire meets Willard Kaidy

Eddie calls the phone number given to him by his cell mate. He speaks with Willard Kaidy himself. Kaidy seems like a good guy. They set up a meeting in Kansas City and Eddie drives down on a Wednesday.

The office is in a run down brick building in an older section of Kansas City Kansas. Eddie goes up a flight of stairs and finds the door down a dark and musty hallway. On the front of the door in white letters is the name of the organization, American Alliance of Youth. He steps in. It is just a single room dominated by a large wooden desk in the middle. Willard is behind the desk on the phone, turned sideways with his feet propped up on a metal waste-basket. He motions with one hand for Eddie to set down. Two armless wooden chairs sit in front of the desk. Eddie takes a seat.

"I'll send the payment today. Yes. Yes. That's right. Okay can do, bye." Willard hangs up the phone. He stands up and thrusts his hand across the desk. "Hi, I'm Willard Kaidy and you must be Eddie McGuire." Willard says enthusiastically.

Eddie stands up and awkwardly shakes his hand.

"Yeah. I'm Eddie McGuire, nice to meet you." They both set back down.

"Well, Eddie I hear good things about you. Jim says you're a straight up guy, a big supporter of the cause."

"That's right, I've been reading and listening to Patriot Radio out of Olathe and I hate communists and hippies." Eddie says.

"Well that's a good start, a real good start." Kaidy says.

Willard tells Eddie all about the idea behind the American Alliance of Youth, with a lot of side discussions of communist conspiracies, Jew conspiracies, liberal conspiracies and the niggerfication of America. Eddie throws in some comments about the great Satan conspiracy, the fluoride conspiracy and filthy hippies taking over the youth of America. Willard is impressed. Eddie has done his home work.

"I like you Eddie. I think you're the kind of man were looking for." Eddie is excited. "What you would be doing is going directly to College campuses, hooking up with our existing network of supporters and recruiting new young people to join our cause. When the hippies and communists come out to protest, you'll be their protesting right back. If they get in your face and want to fight, then you're free to kick their fucking ass."

Eddie really likes that part. Kicking ass is something he is good at, and kicking hippie ass is a job he was made for.

Willard continues. "Now Eddie, I know that you've had some trouble with the law, and that's too bad because if you were a filthy hippie the ACLU would have been there to get you off for nothing. But since you're just a working-man they sent you to jail. It's a god damn shame and I feel for you. But in this job, if you get arrested, we will be right behind you. We'll bail you out and provide all the legal services you need." Willard knows this is only partially true, but he doesn't want to bore Eddie with the details. "Of course we don't expect you to do anything illegal. You're just exercising your right to freedom of speech, just like the commie radicals are doing. I just want you to know we will be there for you if you need us." Willard says with conviction. Willard lets that sink

in and Eddie nods his head. Sounds good to Eddie, he doesn't need any more legal problems that's for sure.

"What do you think? Are you interested?" Willard asks.

"Absolutely sir, I can do the job, I'm sure of that."

"Good, I know you can." He gets up and shakes Eddie's hand. Eddie rises to meet him. They sit back down.

"Okay Eddie, lets get on to some specifics. How would you like to take a trip to sunny California?" Willard asks with a straight face.

Eddie's eyebrows rise. "Sure." he says.

"I have some people who need your help, and as you know, Berkeley is the center of the hippie conspiracy universe. This is the heart of the beast Eddie. Do you think you can handle it?"

"Yes sir." Eddie immediately responds.

"Great, that's the kind of enthusiasm I like." Willard says. Willard thinks for a minute and then changes gears.

"Now Eddie, we're just a new organization and don't have a whole lot of money yet, but allot more money is coming in every day. I can't pay much to start, but let me tell you the opportunity here is unlimited. What I can do is give you a couple hundred bucks to pay for your gas to drive to California, and a couple hundred bucks a month to do the job. Now I know that's not much, but do a good job and I can guarantee more will be coming. Plus, I can hook you up with some of our people out there who should be able to provide a place for you to stay." Willard watches to see if Eddie bites.

Eddie thinks about this for a minute. "Wow, that's not much money. I used to draw down good pay when I had my distribution route. I'm not sure I can make it on that." Eddie says.

"It's just the beginning Eddie. Just hang in there for a couple months, show you can do the job and I'll have more. You're fighting the good cause here Eddie and you'll get to kick some hippie ass." Willard says.

Willard has Eddie pegged. Kicking hippie ass is the magic phrase. "I would sure like to give it a try Mr. Kaidy. How much would you give me now?" Eddie asks.

"Well Eddie, normally I would just give you the two hundred now and send you the rest in California, but I am willing to give you four hundred dollars right now." Willard reaches in his desk and pulls out four, crisp, one hundred dollar bills and fans them out on the desk right in front of Eddie. At this point it looks like allot of money to Eddie. "But only if you promise to leave for California first thing next week." Willard lets this sink in. Benjamin Franklin is staring up at Eddie asking him the question, "Is he a patriot or not?"

"Okay, I'll do it." Says Eddie.

Eddie leaves the office with the four crisp hundred dollar bills in his pocket and a whole new purpose in life. Who knows, maybe he will even run into that commie cock-sucker Carl Lee in California.

Explosion In New York

It is a quiet Friday morning in Greenwich Village New York on a typical tree lined street of century old red brick town houses. Suddenly an explosion rips open the front of one of the building, shattering the glass of the surrounding buildings and sending a column of smoke billowing into the air. Fire starts spreading rapidly within the ruins. Two young men run from a nearby building and start searching in the rubble. They find a young woman, completely naked and covered in dust. Another young woman wearing only jeans is also pulled out of the bricks as flames consume what little is left of the townhouse. Neighbors help the coughing and choking young women and bringing them coats to cover their nakedness. They appeared unhurt, so a neighbor lets them use her shower and gives them some old clothes. Later when she returns to check on them and they are gone. Neighbors also report seeing three men running and jumping over a back fence after the explosion.

Fire trucks arrive just as two more explosions weaken what is left of the structure. A few minutes later it completely collapses. After the fire is put out, the fire department brings in a crane to look for more victims. They soon discover the body of a young man who has been crushed to death.

Reporters swarm to the scene, asking the fire department questions about the cause the explosion. No one is sure yet, but a gas leak is considered a possibility. The explosion has blasted a hole right through the wall of an adjoining building and soon the bomb squad is called to help search of the wreckage. There is speculation about the possibility of dynamite.

In the following days, as more bodies are recovered, they are all identified as SDS members. SDS literature and two, twelve inch lead pipes, filled with dynamite are discovered four days later. The neighbors watch as a bomb removal truck is brought to the scene. Within a day they discover four cartons containing 57 sticks of dynamite, 30 blasting caps and several cheap alarm clocks with holes in the face for attaching wires.

The four dead SDS members are all from wealthy or upper middle class families. There is much media speculation about why some of the best and brightest children of this generation would become terrorists.

One of the dead is Diana Oughton, the daughter of James Oughton, an Illinois State Senator. She attended school at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and once worked as a teacher at the Children's Community School.

Eddie McGuire Comes To California

Eddie doesn't even tell his parents he is going to California. He figures he will call when he gets there. He doesn't want to hear his mom worrying or his dad bitching. It's none of their fucking business anyway and Eddie can't stand to see his mom worry.

The red, four door, 1962 Chevy Impala Eddie is driving makes the trip without a problem. He blows a tire in Utah, but has a decent spare and buys a used tire at a gas station. The mountains were beautiful. He even stops to fish, but the spring run off makes it unlikely he will catch anything. It doesn't matter, he likes fishing anyway.

Eddie sleeps in the car the whole way to save money. That's one of the advantages of traveling in a big old Chevy. When he gets to the busy freeways of the San Francisco Bay Area he is confused and makes a wrong turn. When he gets off the freeway to turn around he finds himself in the lowlands of Oakland. "I've never seen so many niggers in my life." He says to himself.

It's about five-thirty and the traffic is jammed when Eddie finally makes his way back onto the freeway. He heads down to Hayward where he is supposed to meet one of the leaders of the local American Alliance of Youth group. After some additional freeway confusion, he finds the house on a long street, with low, one story, plywood houses, with flat tar and gravel roofs. The front yard has a chain link fence and there are bars on all the windows. A newish truck and an older ford sedan are in the drive. As Eddie starts to go in the gate a big black dog comes barking and snarling to meet him. Eddie stands behind the fence as the dog snarls and bears his fangs. He isn't sure what to do next. It's hard to ring the doorbell with an attack dog in the front yard. After a couple minutes of furious barking the front door opens and a middle aged guy wearing a dirty white T-shirt, that barely covers his beer belly, comes out in his bare feet cursing and screaming at the dog.

"Yeah, what'a ya-want?" He yells from the door over the barking dog.

"I'm Eddie. I called you earlier. Willard Kaidy sent me." Eddie yells back.

The guy has to think about it. "Oh yeah, that's right. Hold on a second." He disappears back into the house and comes back out wearing house slippers. He grabs the dog by the collar yelling, "Shut the fuck up," and comes over to open the gate.

The dog is still snarling and growling as the fat guy holds him and Eddie is reluctant to go in.

"Don't worry, I got him," the guy promises as he struggles to hold the snarling dog. Eddie cautiously walks in. The dog lunges but the fat guy has a firm grip on his collar. "Go on in," yells the wild dog handler.

Eddie moves up the walk and into the house. The guy follows and then turns to push the growling and barking dog out the door and quickly closes it behind him. "That's Duke. He has a little bit of a temper around strangers, but he's one hell of a good guard dog." The guy says. Eddie can believe that.

"Hi, I'm Eddie McGuire." Eddie says offering his hand. The fat guy wipes his hand on the side of his shirt and shakes Eddie's hand. "I'm Tom Butler, damn nice to meet-ya. So Willard Kaidy sent you. Ain't that something. Go ahead, sit on down." He motions to a green couch and eddy sits down as Tom Butler goes around the corner to the kitchen. "Like a beer?" he calls.

"Sure, sounds good." Eddie says. And it did sound good after barely surviving that fucking crazed man eating dog.

It's a small front room with a mish-mash of shabby furniture. The worn carpet must have been tan at some point in history. Now it's a dingy, brownish gray. It smells like stale cigarettes, beer and cat piss. Leaning in the corner by a Naugahyde lounge chair is a double barrel shot gun, and slung over one corner of the chair is a holster with some kind of large caliber hand gun. There is nothing on the yellowing white walls.

Tom Butler returns with two Budweisers, hands one to Eddie and collapses in the lounge chair. He groans and takes a deep breath, like that was the most exercise he has had all day, then pops his beer, puts the tab in the hole and drinks half the beer in one guzzle.

Eddie joins him with the beer. When he looks up Tom Butler is looking at him suspiciously, with a little bit of beer dribbling down his fat double chin. "So Willard Kaidy sent you? I told him I was doing the best I could. I need more money if he wants me to recruit more guys. We're doing military training on the weekends and we'll be ready for those niggers when they come, I can tell-ya that for god damn sure. We'll blow there black asses all the way back to nigger town Oakland, that's what." He says his face turning red. Eddie doesn't know what to say.

"Look, he just sent me out here to help organize some counter demonstrations at the Berkeley Campus. He said that you would be able to help me, get me connected to some of the other people in the organization." Eddie says. Tom Butler looks confused. He has to let this sink in with another gulp of beer.

"Yeah, well were still getting organized. Training and getting organized. Those freaks at Berkeley, their pretty god damned scary when-ya actually go down there. There's fucking millions of em. We need to get organized before we do any counter demonstration, that's for sure. Kaidy cant just expect us to go in there until we get organized." Tom Butler says.

This is not what Eddie expected. First of all, he thought it was going to be some other young guys like him, who were ready to raise some shit and kick some ass. This fat old fucker couldn't fight his way out of his god damned lounge chair unless it was to get another beer. Maybe some of the others are in better shape, but this guy is a huge disappointment.

"Well, Okay, when did you say the next meeting was?" Eddie asks.

"This Saturday, we're all meeting up at a place near Willits to do some training and shooting. It's a hell of a lot of fun." Tom Butler says.

"That's just in a couple of days. Kaidy said you could set me up with a place to stay."

"What? I don't have any place for you to stay. I guess you could stay in the garage for a few days if you want." Tom Butler doesn't look too happy about this. Eddie thinks about this as he drinks his beer.

"Look, how about if I just sleep in my car in the drive and you let me take a shower and use your bathroom for a few days, until after the meeting this weekend?" Eddie asks.

Tom Butler nods his head. He thinks he better offer some kind of hospitality or Kaidy might stop sending him money. Even though it's not as much money as he should be getting for all the organizing he is doing. "That sounds good. Help yourself."

Eddie goes out and buys some hamburgers for both of them. Afterward, Eddie takes a shower and goes to sleep in his car. Eddie considers Tom Butler a freeloading pig and

intends on telling Willard all about it when he calls. The next day Eddie decides to check out Berkeley himself. Tom Butler gives him a few directions and he finds his way without ending up in East Oakland this time.

Eddie parks a few blocks from Telegraph Avenue and sets out to explore the area. Hippies are everywhere he looks. Most of them are young college kids like Carl Lee, but some are hard core. Eddie thinks the street people are filthy, disgusting bums. They sit on the street with grimy black feet, mangy dogs and sleazy looking women with their tits hanging out of cheap cotton clothes.

Vendors line the sidewalk. Some of the stuff is interesting but most of it is a bunch of cheap crap. There are tables with communist literature right out in the open. He can't believe the cops let them get away with this shit. They all look like a bunch of fucking pussys as far as Eddie is concerned. He and Roy Welch could start at one end of this street and kick everyone of these cock suckers asses right on down the line. All he needs is a few more guys with some fucking balls and he can raise some major shit. To Eddie McGuire everyone he sees is a barely human, an alien from a hostile planet. They are all communists, atheists, and Jews conspiring to destroy his country and take over the world. He is here to exterminate them.

The next day Eddie drives to San Francisco, but everywhere he looks are the same degenerate forces of evil. He understands now why Tom Butler hides in his house, behind bars, with an attack dog and loaded guns at the ready. The plague is all around him and it is not just infuriating, it is frightening.

Early Saturday morning Eddie follows Tom Butler to Willits for the weekend. It's a long way. They finally leave the freeway for a gravel road, then wind their way high into the coastal mountains. Tom Butler gets out and opens a combination lock at a gate. They follow a dirt path around a hill to a tiny cabin and an old wooden barn. Eddie counts seven other cars and trucks.

Tom Butler and Eddie pull up to a group of guys dressed in army camouflage, standing at the back of an open tailgate. They are looking at several guns laid out in the truck bed on a blanket. When Tom Butler and Eddie get out and the men stare at them suspiciously as they walk over.

"Who is this, Butler? You know outsiders aren't allowed without approval." The tall guy asks. One of the other men throws the side of the blanket over the guns.

Nonplused, Tom Butler says, "This is Eddie McGuire. Willard Kaidy sent him out here from Kansas City. He is on the American Alliance of Youth payroll." They all look surprised and impressed.

"Willard Kaidy sent you?" Says one

"Sure did." Says Eddie.

"I called Kaidy and checked it out." Says Tom Butler.

"Okay, well then I move that we officially allow Eddie, what was your name again?" The tall guy asks.

"Eddie McGuire"

"Eddie McGuire, to be allowed to attend these events. Everybody in favor?"

"I" they all say.

"And those against?" Nobody answers.

"You're officially welcome to attend future meetings of the California Chapter of the Christian militia." the tall guy says. The blanket is thrown back from the guns.

"I thought this was the American Alliance of Youth." Eddie says.

"Yeah, well that to." The tall guy says.

No doubt, it is a fine collection of guns.

They all take turns trying out each others guns. Shooting at tin cans and other crap lined up against a nearby hill. They have coolers filled with beer and a few of them are drinking Jack Daniel's. Guns and booze, it's a fun if frightening combination.

All together there are sixteen men, including Eddie and Tom Butler. They are mostly in their thirties and forties with one other guy around Eddie's age. They all know the talk, bitching and moaning about the niggers, hippies, Jews, liberals and communists. But later when Eddie tries to nail them down and organize some counter protests in Berkeley they all have second thoughts. They need more organization and training they say. They need more members and more guns. They needed more time and more money from Kaidy.

Eddie thinks they needed more balls and less bullshit. They are all fucking worthless as far as he can see. All they want to do is shoot guns, get drunk and play army. Non of them is willing to actually go into Berkeley and confront the niggers, hippies, Jews, liberals and communists that they say they hate so much. The guy who is Eddie's age is there with his dad. When his dad hears Eddie trying to talk him into going with him to kick some ass in Berkeley, he angrily jumps in. "No fucking way are you going down there. Who knows what those freaks might do. We aren't ready for that. Don't worry, our day will come." He promises.

Eddie drives back to Tom Butler's house the next day. He is discourage, home sick, hungry, horny, tired and broke, and he feels like kicking somebody's ass.

Call From New York

Its two days after Kate returns from her trip to New York. Carl is reading a book, curled up in a big overstuffed chair facing the fire. It's a cold and rainy day and they have a fire going in the fireplace. Rose is in the bedroom doing something and Kate is puttering around the kitchen, fixing some tea.

The phone rings and Kate picks it up. Carl can hear her on the phone.

"Hello? Oh hi, how's it going? No, no I haven't. What? What? No, oh my god, no. But I...I just saw them. Oh god no. Nobody has contacted me. I will. I'm not involved anymore and haven't been for a long time. I was just visiting. Okay I will. Thanks for the call, good by."

Kate gently hangs up the phone. There is silence. Then Carl hears Kate crying.

Carl gets up from the chair and walks to the kitchen. Kate is leaning with her head against the wall sobbing.

"Kate, what's wrong?" He says softly as he walks over to her.

She turns and holds him. She has her head against his chest and is moaning, whimpering, crying. Now Rose comes from the bedroom, she also heard Kate crying.

"What's going on?" she asks Carl, concerned.

"I'm not sure" he replies softly.

Kate just stays that way for a long time. Rose has come over and is gently holding her as well. Kate continues to sob. Finally, she starts to settle down a bit, takes a deep breath and looks up at them as they still hold her.

"A close friend, one of the people I just saw in New York, has been killed."

"Oh, I am so sorry to hear that Kate." Rose says. Now she has tears in her eyes.

"I was afraid something like this might happen. It's all crazy, completely insane." Now she is biting her lower lip and looking concerned. She glances at them but seems afraid to look them in the eye.

"What happened?" Carl asks.

"There was an explosion in the building where she was living. Both she and her husband were killed."

"Oh, that's horrible." says Rose. "I'm so sorry Kate." Rose puts her arm around Kate.

"I need to lie down for a while" Kate says with tears in her eyes. She goes out the door to her room.

About an hour later Carl is still reading in front of the fire. Kate quietly comes in the kitchen door and approaches Carl. Speaking low she says,

"Carl I need to talk to you about something, privately." She looks around.

"Well, let's go for a little walk. Some fresh air will do you good." Carl says.

They grab their jackets from the hooks near the door. "Kate and I are going for a walk Rose, be back in a little while." Carl calls.

"Great, see you later." She says cheerfully. She hopes Carl can console Kate. She is glad they have such a close relationship.

Carl and Kate stroll down the path towards the landing. When they get to the bench that overlooks the bay, they set down side-by-side. Carl puts his arm around Kate.

"I'm so sorry Kate. Life is a fragile thing. You'll feel better with time. You just have to wait it out, give yourself a chance to heal." He says.

"Thanks Carl, but I have something else to talk to you about, something of even more concern." She lowers her head and takes a deep breath.

"The explosion that killed Diana and the others was a bomb, a bomb they were building." Carl's eyebrows rise in an expression of surprise, then concern.

"I was once much more involved with the movement than I have let you know. When I was in Ann Arbor I was in the SDS. It was primarily a political organization back in those days, but as time went on some of the members became convinced that violence was the only way to get the establishment's attention. Finally the group split apart and Diana and I went in different directions. I came to California and gave up the movement. Diana and her boy friend Bill Ayers became involved with the Weathermen." Kate looks wistfully over the hazy surface of the bay.

"Diana and I have been best friends since High School." Kate looks at Carl with tears in her eyes again. "She was a lovely girl, crazy about kids, so smart and kind. We just hit it off immediately." She looks back across the bay.

"Anyway, we have stayed in touch and I have been worried about her. So I went the New York to see her and some of our other friends. We got a chance to spend quite a bit of time together, even though she was paranoid and on the run the whole time. She didn't look good." Kate shakes her head. Then looks at Carl,

"But, that's not why I wanted to talk to you. I'm reluctant to get you involved but I have to ask you a question. Is Drew involved with any of these bombings?" she is closely watching for Carl's response. Carl doesn't want to mention what he knows, at least not yet.

"Well, I'm not sure, I hope not. It's possible." Carl says with a crooked frown.

"Shit, he better not be, god damn it." She is angry but calms down.

"Diana told me some stuff, some secret and dangerous stuff. I'm not sure I should tell you." She purses her lips, debating.

"Look you don't have to tell me anything. I'm not involved either."

"Yeah, but it may involve Drew." She is debating in her mind whether to tell Carl or not.

"Okay here it is. First she told me they were building a bomb to blow up an officer's dance at Fort Dix. Then she said somebody in the Bay Area was going to blow up an officer's dance at the Presidio in San Francisco. I don't know why the fuck she told me that shit. I have been tortured by it ever since I got back. Diana seemed totally brain washed and totally into the violent revolution thing. They are fucking nuts as far as I'm concerned. I wasn't even sure I should believe her. It could have been all bullshit as far as I knew." Kate stops to think for a minute.

Carl's mind is racing. Could Drew possibly be mixed up in this? What should he do with this information? It is totally third hand hearsay at this point, but he has a weird feeling that there is something to it. But Kate wasn't sure if she should believe Diana when she told her and look what happened, they got blown up. What should he say to Kate?

"Look Kate, I don't think Drew is involved in any of this stuff. Plus, if anybody was planning something they are probably having second thoughts now. Just try to forget about it. I am planning a trip into Berkeley tomorrow. I'll talk to Drew. He'll know what to do with the information. It's best that all of us just stay out of it." Carl was not really been planning to go to Berkeley, but he is now.

"Maybe your right." Kate says. "But Drew should know about it, just in case. Do you want me to call him?" she asks.

"No way, we don't want to be talking about this shit on the phone. I'll talk to him, but I am sure he is not involved in anything like that." Carl lies. He doesn't want her to know about Drew or what he heard that day he walked in on his meeting.

"Thanks Carl. I appreciate your support. This whole thing is way out of control. Everybody has gone crazy."

"Really, it's nuts and completely counterproductive." Carl says, shaking his head. Kate hugs Carl around the shoulder and kisses him on the cheek. Rose is a lucky woman, I'm so happy for both of you." She lets go of him and stands up.

"I feel a little better about it now. I just don't want anybody else to get hurt." she says. "But be careful. I don't want you getting involved."

Carl wishes he felt better. This is all a shock and he doesn't dare tell Kate or Rose. The person he needs to talk to is Drew. He only hopes none of it's true and Drew is not involved. Still, Carl has a bad feeling.

"Don't worry Kate, I'll just mention it to him. I won't even tell him where I heard it. Let's not mention this to Rose either; I don't want her to worry."

"Your right, she doesn't need to know. Thank you so much." she says and gives him another hug.

They stroll back up to the house and act as if nothing has happened. Later that night Carl mentions he needs to go into town tomorrow to run some errands. "No need for you to come if you don't want to." He says nonchalantly. As he predicted she says, "Nah, I'd rather not, unless you want me to. We could have lunch somewhere." She says.

"No need, I plan on having a hamburger for lunch. I'll be back before dinner." Carl says.

She knows that he sneaks out for a hamburger now and then. He is from Kansas after all and needs some bloody meat every now and then. "Go ahead, have your charred flesh, you Cannibal." She says in fake anger. Carl comes over to bite her neck as she screams in pretend pain.

The next day Carl takes his time about leaving. He has a pleasant breakfast, reads for a while, and takes a leisurely shower. No hurry, as far as he knows nothing imminent is happening. At around ten he says goodbye to Rose and heads out. When he gets to Inverness he calls to make sure Drew is around. Drew says he is going out, but will be

back by the time Carl gets there. Carl acts like nothing is wrong and Drew is happy to hear he is dropping by.

Carl makes the drive to Berkeley and decides to cruise down Telegraph just for the hell of it. It's barely out of the way, except for the traffic. Plus, he just likes to check out the Berkeley scene.

Eddie McGuire is strolling down Telegraph cursing at the degenerate hippie trash under his breath. What is he doing here? The people who are supposed to be helping him are worthless. The job, the trip, the whole thing is bullshit. Eddie feels directionless. Now what? He feels like punching out a few people, just for the hell of it. This has all been a complete waste of time and he is ready to head back to Kansas.

Eddie's car is parked around the corner on a side street and he is heading that way when he catches a glimpse of a red sports car. It's a car just like the one Carl Lee used to drive. He does a double take. "Son of a bitch, that looks just like Carl Lee." The car has already gone past him by now, but it's moving slowly in the traffic. Eddie trots after it and has almost caught up. He can clearly see now, it defiantly is Carl Lee.

The traffic starts moving again and the Alpha pulls away. Eddie McGuire is running to catch up. He has no idea what he is going to do when he catches him, but he feels compelled to follow. Carl is several blocks ahead and Eddie slows down to catch his breath. He thinks that he has lost him, when suddenly he sees the Alpha turn the corner.

Eddie runs again to catch up. Unfortunately, the pointy toed cowboy boots that were so good for kicking Carl in the face as he lay bleeding on the ground, and the high heels that make Eddie feel taller than he is, are not so good when it comes to running. As Eddie turns the corner to follow Carl he slips on the slick leather soles and almost falls on his ass, but he catches himself at the last second. He can barely see the Alpha now, three or four blocks away. As he trots down the side street his feet are starting to hurt and he realizes that there is no way he is going to catch Carl on foot. Then, to his amazement, the Alpha's break lights go on and he watches as it pulls over to the side and parks.

As Eddie gets about a block away he can see Carl Lee standing by the Alpha talking to a couple of guys. One is white and the other is a big black nigger. Parked in front of the Alpha is a black, 1962 Chrysler Imperial. Eddie's uncle had one just like it and he recognizes it immediately.

Eddie is panting and completely out of breath from running all that way, so he steps behind a large tree a safe distance up the street and watches. He sees them talking for a couple of minutes and then the black guy gets in the Imperial and drives away. Carl and the other guy walk to the house and go inside.

Eddie has caught his breath by now and walks a little closer. It's a typical, raggedy, hippie house from what Eddie can see. He is wondering what to do. He stands behind a bush and watches. He has no idea if Carl Lee lives here or what. He decides that he should watch the place, but what if Carl Lee leaves. It would be better to have his car.

Eddie turns around, and runs all the way back to his car, a good ten blocks. His feet are killing him by the time he gets there. With a grimace, he pulls off his boots. He has two big blisters on the heels of both feet. He starts the Chevy.

Eddie is afraid that when he gets back that the Alpha will be gone, but when he turns the corner and heads down the street he sees that it is still in the same spot. Eddie pulls over and waits.

The Conversation

When Carl pulls up he sees Drew and Darin standing in the yard talking. He parks the Alpha on the street behind Darin's Chrysler and jumps out.

"Hi, how's it going?" Carl says

"Hey, it's good to see you man." Drew says as he comes over and gives Carl a bear hug. Darin walks over as well and they do a friendly reach around handshake.

"We just got here a few minutes ago." Drew says.

Darin says "Man, I wish I could hang around but I got to get going. Are you going to be around for a few days?"

"No I'm going back to Point Reyes this afternoon. I just wanted to stop by for a few minutes and say hi." Carl says

"Well it's good to see you. Everything is still good, right?" Darin says as he gives Carl another handshake.

"Absolutely man. Absolutely." Carl responds.

"Cool, Cool. Okay well then I'll catch you guys later." Darin gets in the big old Chrysler, fires it up with a rumble and allot of valve clatter and pulls away. Carl and Drew watch him go. They head for the house.

"It's great to see you, I miss you. I miss our conversations." They clomp through the house and up the stairs. For Carl it's like coming home, he's had a lot of good times in this house.

Carl plops down on the couch and Drew heads to the refrigerator. "Want something to drink? I'm dying of thirst."

"Yeah, I'll take a Coke." Carl responds.

Drew brings back two Cokes and sets down on the couch by Carl, hands him the Coke and puts his feet up on the table.

"How are Rose and Kate doing? I really miss you guys. I'm serious, we got to get together. Forget about all this political bullshit, were friends." Says Drew

"It's good to hear you say that man. You need to come out and stay with us for a while and forget about the movement. We'd love to have you." Carl turns in his seat towards Drew and takes a long sip of his Coke.

"Drew, I need to talk to you about something."

"Sure man, what's going on?"

"I'm sure you know about the guys who got blown up in New York. They were SDS."

"Yeah, well everybody knows that." Drew says with a shrug.

"Well, they were planning to bomb an officer's dance at Fort Dix. Hundreds could have been killed or injured." Carl says.

"Yeah, I did hear that and I think it sounds like a stupid thing to do. So what?" Drew says.

"I also hear that there are plans to blow up an event at the Presidio in San Francisco." Carl says.

Drew raises his eyebrows in surprise "Not that I know of. Where did you hear that?"

"From one of the people who died in New York."

Drew looks shocked. "What? No. That's bullshit. I would know. That's not true." Drew says, but then pauses with a far-off look. At least he thinks he would know.

Things like that have been discussed, but they have always been rejected. Great pains have been taken to assure that nobody gets hurt, but there have been exceptions. The bombing at the Golden Gate Park police station was a mistake. It was supposed to have gone off in the night when nobody was around, but it went off in the morning and it killed a cop. But that was an accident.

"Are you sure?" Carl asks, skeptically.

"Absolutely, that's bullshit." Drew says, getting up and pacing the floor. "It's not going to happen."

Now Carl gets up and started pacing around. "How the hell did this shit get started? One of the women that got blown up was Kate's close friend. Kate is distraught over the whole thing. God damn it Drew, you're not involved in this I hope." Carl is angry and upset.

"No, I told you, its bullshit, it's not going to happen."

"I'll tell you what's bullshit man, and that's all this stupid fucking violence, all this pretend revolution crap. Innocent people are getting killed and for what? So that the vast majority of Americans learn to fear and hate us? I am totally pissed Drew, totally pissed that this shit is happening." Carl is livid and in Drew's face.

"Well it's not happening and if it does, well then fuck those pig mutha-fuckers. They fucking deserve it. They're killing people every day. They're killing our leaders, breaking down doors and murdering people in their sleep. Throwing good people in jail to rot away or be raped. Fuck em." Drew is back in Carl's face, but Carl is not backing down like Drew expected. Drew pushes Carl away, but he comes right back in his face.

"So you're becoming just like them? Murdering innocent people? People at random, in terrorist attacks? What the fuck is wrong with you? Not only is it stupid, it's wrong Drew, its fucking wrong god damn it."

Drew pushes Carl. Carl pushes Drew. Drew hits Carl in the face with a short right handed swing that mostly glances off, but now they are grabbing at each other, cursing. They stumble, fall, and crash through the table. Cokes, ashtrays, candles fly. Carl is no match for Drew but he is holding his own. He's had it with not defending himself and flails back at Drew. They roll across the floor kicking and end table. A lamp crashes to the floor. Drew grabs a large glass ash tray off the floor. Now he is on top of Carl and he raises his hand to smash it into Carl's face. Drew looks at Carl in rage, then catches himself and throws the ash tray across the room where it shatters against a wall.

Drew stumbles up and away, then stands with his hands on his knees to catch his breath. Carl sets up panting, elbows on his knees. They stay this way, speechless, gasping for air.

Finally Carl says "And now you want to kill me? Am I a traitor?"

Drew just shakes his head, panting "No man, you're not a traitor." He slowly stands up as Carl gets to his feet. They both walk together and clasp one another in a bear hug then pull away, and grab each other by the arm again, holding, pushing, pulling, feeling each other's life force and strength.

"I love you man, I just don't want to see you end up like those people in New York. I'm worried about you." Carl says.

"I know." Drew says as he hugs him again, pats him on the back, then turns and walks over to the refrigerator and takes out two more Cokes.

Drew walks back, kicks the broken table out of the way and collapses on the couch, Carl sets down beside him. Drew hands him a Coke, they both pop the top and take a couple of thirsty gulps.

"I'll take care of it." Drew says.

"Good." Carl replies.

They both take another slug of Coke and just set there for a while.

Finally Carl says "That table is fucking toast, man." They slowly look at each other, then break out laughing.

Follow

Eddie McGuire waits in his car for Carl Lee to appear from the house. Now he knows why he came to California, to kill Carl Lee. It's a miracle, a sign from god. Carl Lee is the anti-Christ and Eddie is the avenger, the warrior, the angel of death assigned to reap vengeance upon his evil, communistic, blood sucking soul. It's all crystal clear to now and Eddie intends to finish the job.

He gets out of the red Impala and goes to the trunk. He looks around to make sure no one is watching, then inserts the key and opens the lid. It's a cavernous trunk, filled with all Eddie's stuff, suite case, unrolled sleeping bag and pillow, clothes and jackets strewn around. To one side, under a box of tools is a heavy black canvas bag. Eddie grabs it, slams the trunk closed and gets back in the car. He places the bag on the seat, unzips the top and fumbles around inside. The Colt 45 automatic, model 1911 is wrapped in a rag. It's a gun that's been in Eddie's family since his grandfather fought in World War I. Eddie's dad gave it to him in a solemn ceremony when he turned eighteen. It's a family heirloom and Eddie has shot it a thousand times. It's a formidable weapon.

Eddie carefully unwraps the gun, finds three, eight round clips, and snaps one of the clips into the grip. Looking around he lifts the gun up out of the bag just enough to jack a round into the chamber. He checks that the safety is on, puts it back in the bag and places the bag within easy reach, on the passenger side floor. He takes a deep breath of resolve and watches.

It's been about an hour and Eddie is hungry and thirsty. He hasn't had anything to eat or drink since breakfast at Denny's. All that running made him really thirsty. It's two or three o'clock by now, but Eddie doesn't dare leave. He thinks of his hunger and thirst as a badge of courage.

Suddenly Carl Lee appears. He walks straight to the Alpha, jumps in, fires it up and is off. Eddie scrambles to follow. They speed down the shady tree lined residential streets, take a right and then a left onto a crowded boulevard, and then onto the freeway. Eddie easily follows. His intention is to find out where Carl Lee lives, where he spends the night, if possible, a spot where he can catch Carl Lee alone. Eddie may be an avenging angel from god, but he still doesn't want to get caught if he can help it.

They go over a big bridge, past San Quentin prison and down Sir Francis Drake Boulevard through the quaint towns and neighborhoods of Marin.

Eddie is getting low on gas, but he figures Carl will stop soon. But Carl just keeps on going, out past Fairfax, up and over a windy hill and down a long rural valley. "Where the hell is he going god damn it?" Eddie says to himself. His gas gauge is showing near empty. Eddie hadn't figured on driving this far, but he can't stop for gas or he will lose Carl.

Eddie considers speeding up and ramming the small Alpha, forcing it off the road, but this is still a fairly populated area, someone would surly see. They start winding through a redwood forest. Not many people here, but Eddie is having a hard time keeping up with the Carl Lee and the Alpha. If he tries to run Carl off the road and Carl realized what is happening, Eddie would never be able to catch him. That Alpha would leave him in the dust on a road like this. All Eddie can do is keep following.

On, and on they go, past Olema, along the marshy shore of Tomales bay and through Inverness. About a mile past Inverness Eddie sputters to a stop, out of gas. As he coasts to the side of the road he sees Carl Lee and the Alpha disappear around a corner.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck." he screams as he slams his palms against the steering wheel. Eddie kicks the door open, jumps out and slams it with all his strength. The window does not shatter, but its close. He turns and starts walking back to Inverness, cursing under his breath. Hopefully that small gas station he saw in town will still be open.

Presidio

Drew watches from the window as Carl drives away. He doesn't notice the red Chevy in pursuit. He thinks about what Carl told him.

There is a bombing planned for tonight, something he couldn't tell Carl Lee. But the bombing is supposed to be late at night when no one is around. It will only show that the movement can do deadly damage if it wants to. That the establishment needs to know that there are limits, that a violent backlash is a very real possibility.

Drew is concerned. The bombing at the Golden Gate Park police station was a disaster. It went off in the morning when the station was crowded with people, killing one cop. Drew was stricken with guilt over the mistake. The bomb was supposed to go off at night, when nobody was around, not in the main building, but in a storage building in back. When Drew confronted Darin about it, he swore it was a mistake, but none of the Weathermen or Panther crew was very upset about it. They bragged about "offing the pig" and blowing the shit out of the cop station. They didn't seem to see, as Carl Lee pointed out, that this was a political disaster. They only made the cop a martyr and the police victims and heroes.

What disturbs Drew now is that they did discuss bombing the dance at the officers club. Drew vehemently opposed that plan and they finally agreed that the bombing would be at the same time as the dance, but at an empty administration building near buy. It would scare the shit out of the people at the dance, but not hurt anybody.

Drew wonders, would Darin actually bomb the dance. It's possible. Drew's relationship with Darin has been rocky lately. Darin and the hard core Weathermen think the country is ready for armed rebellion. They're idiots. It feels strange for Drew to consider himself 'the moderate'. As if involvement in bombing a military facility could ever be considered moderate. He hates to admit it, but it's Carl Lee who is responsible for his more reasoned approach.

The dance is tonight. Drew needs to find Darin and make sure there is no change of strategy, that the bomb is planted in another building away from the crowded dance. Killing innocent people, even army officers, is wrong. They need to convince these people, make them allies, not enemies. Hell, he was an Army officer himself until a few months ago.

Drew makes some calls but can't find Darin. He decides to go look for him and drives around to a few places, but no luck. It's getting late, the officers dance will be starting soon. Drew decides to go to San Francisco and see if he can find Darin.

Drew skirts the perimeter of the Presidio. He can't drive onto the compound itself because they take the license numbers of all cars. After the bombing, they would come right to him. Instead he drives down a couple of city streets bordering the Presidio that allow foot access. The Presidio is only a partially active base. Most of it is open to civilians and city residents who often access the beautiful park like area for walks and picnics.

Drew drives up the famously steep hill on Divisadero from the marina district. At the top he takes a right onto Broadway and rolls past some of the finest mansions in San Francisco, all with commanding views of the San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. At the end of Broadway he comes to the boundary of the Presidio and takes a left. A popular walking path that leads to a secluded part of the Presidio starts here. Just

around the corner on Pacific he finds Darin's car. It's empty. Drew takes a parking space nearby and waits. About thirty minutes later, just as it's getting dark, Darin shows up.

Drew jumps out of his car and trots over to Darin. When Darin sees him he is shocked. "What the fuck are you doing here?" he says as he looks around.

"We need to talk." Drew says quietly.

"Get in." Darin says as he opens the door.

"What the hell is going on?" Darin says.

"Is the bomb set?" Drew asks.

"What the fuck do you think I'm doing here? We shouldn't be hanging around." He looks around nervously.

"Did you set it at the administration building or the officers club?" Drew asks, watching him closely.

"I did what I was supposed to do." Darin says.

"God damn it, are you out of your fucking minds. We can't blow up the officers club, it's insane." Drew is visibly shaking and upset.

"Who the fuck told you? Anyway, it's too late, the bomb is set. We decided to do the club." Darin is matter of fact.

"Decided? Who decided? I didn't decide to do the club, just the opposite."

"Well, who the fuck do you think you are? You think we do everything you say? Bull shit. We, the rest of us, decided to do the club. Fuck those pigs." Darin is hot.

"Don't you know about New York? I got word from somebody who already knew we were doing the club. Everybody and their fucking brother knows. We shouldn't even be doing this now."

"Who told you? Was it Carl? You were good to go when I saw you just a couple hours ago. I told that mutha-fucker to stay out of our shit. God damn it!" Darin is fuming.

"He was just passing on information he heard. How many more people know? This operation is out of fucking control." Drew shakes his head. "I'm going to retrieve the bomb." Drew says, looking around and reaching for the door handle.

"Are you out of your fucking mind, it's already set. It could go off any minute." Darin grabs him by the arm to hold him back. They struggle, but Drew is able to pull away and jump from the car. Darin jumps out to catch him, but Drew is across the street and trotting toward the Presidio.

"Fuck!" Darin says, and then looks around nervously. They are making a scene, exactly what you don't want to do when you're planting a bomb.

"Fuck it, I'm out of here." he says to himself under his breath. He gets back in the Imperial, fires it up and pulls away.

Drew knows where he is going. He has poured over the maps to help plan the operation. He takes a backlot path that cuts through a high stone wall and enters the Presidio. It's at half a mile or more down a gradual slope down through a high cypress forest to the Officers Club. He is walking as fast as he can with his injured leg. He hopes that he can make it in time.

Darin is almost to Van Ness when he pulls into a parking space in front of a long row of red brick apartment buildings. He has to think. He knows it will take Drew at least fifteen or twenty minutes to get the bomb and get back. That's going to be cutting it real close. He hopes Drew stops part way to defuse the bomb, but unless he has some tools that is not going to be easy.

Darin looks at his watch, then makes a U-turn and heads back up Pacific. When he gets about three blocks away from Drew's car he finds a space to park. He can barely see Drew's car through the deepening twilight. Darin waits.

Drew quickly makes his way down the path. When he gets to the area that contains the building with the Officers Club he works around to the back, hiding in the bushes. When the coast is clear, he quickly walks to the next hiding place. He is about fifty feet away from the back of the building, crouched down in some bushes. He scans the back, then sees it. A cardboard box is sitting on a wide window sill. He looks around, then heads straight for it, down a steep dirt slope, and without pause, walks right to the spot and grabs the box. As he turns a worker opens a back door. Drew freezes, but the worker who looks like a bus-boy doesn't even glance his way. The worker throws some trash into a bin and goes back inside. Drew is up and over the dirt slope and in the bushes in the blink of an eye.

He makes his way to the path, doing his best to stay out of sight. A couple of times Drew stops to wait for a car to pass, then off he trudges. The box doesn't seem that heavy at first, but it feels heavy now. He keeps shifting the weight from arm to arm. His leg is starting to hurt. This is more exercise than he is used to, plus he is going up hill. The hill seems steeper going up, but on he trudges, limping and gasping for air. He meets a jogger and tries to look nonchalant, but the jogger gives him a suspicious look.

Drew thinks about stopping to defuse the bomb, but he ran off without getting any tools. He will just have to make it back to the car and do it there, but his leg hurts more and more with each step and it's slowing him down. On he trudges.

Drew thinks he sees the end of the path. It's a good thing because he can't go much longer. He comes to the end and pauses before he crosses the street. No one is coming. He quickly limps across the street and fumbles with his keys as he goes to the passenger side of the old Chevy. The door is open. He puts the box on the passenger seat. As he goes around to the drivers side he stops at the trunk, opens it and grabs a small tool box. Drew crawls in the front seat and turns to start defusing the bomb.

Darin watches from a distance as Drew gets in the car. The Chevy explodes in flames. Pieces of metal and body parts scatter down the street.

Darin immediately starts the car, makes a U-turn and drives away. He is shaking. Tears cloud his eyes as he heads down the steep Divisadero hill toward Lombard. A quick left and soon he is crossing the Golden Gate Bridge. Darin is headed out of the City and the Bay Area. He plans to lay low for a while, but first he needs to see somebody about some unfinished business...Carl Lee.

Collision

After walking about half way, Eddie catches a ride to Inverness. The gas station is closed. Eddie looks in the window but it's dark. He's fucked.

As Eddie walks toward the street he notices a sign for a repair shop pointing toward the back, so he walks around the side of the building. In back is a gravel lot with a dozen cars parked around. A garage door in the building is open. He steps into the cool dimness and is greeted by the familiar smell of grease and gas. He doesn't see anybody. "Hello?" He calls.

"Hello." is the response, but he can't tell from where. A guy rolls out from under a car jacked up near the door on a man dolly.

"Howdy, what can I do for ya?" The mechanic says.

"Hi, glad to see your open." Eddie says.

"Well I'm not open but I'm still working." He chuckles.

Eddie laughs. "I'm sorry to bother you, but damned if I didn't run out of gas. I'm not from around here and I didn't realize how far it was between gas stations. Any chance I could get some gas from-ya? I'd be glad to buy the gas and pay for your time." Eddie says.

"I can probably fix you up. Where you from?" The mechanic asks as he gets up.

"Kansas." says Eddie.

"No kidding, I'm from Omaha."

"I've been there many a time. My aunt lives there."

"I'll be darned" says the mechanic.

The mechanic grabs an already filled can of gas. Eddie is not the first one to run out of gas around here, and they jump in an old dodge truck and head out to Eddie's car. Eddie follows him back and the mechanic unlocks one of the pumps so Eddie can buy some gas. As they are pumping gas Eddie asks. "I'm looking for an old friend of mine. He drives a little red sports car, an Alfa Romeo. He's kind-a tall and skinny. Ever seen him?"

"Oh yeah, I've talked to him before. That's a real nice car. He stops for gas sometimes."

"Do you know where he lives by chance?" Eddie asks. This could be a break.

"I sure don't. Here in Inverness I expect, could be up on the ridge." He says.

"Oh yeah, where is that?"

"There are houses spread all up these roads on the ridges. It's going to be pretty hard to find him if you don't know where he lives." The mechanic says.

Eddie pays for the gas, five candy bars, four bags of potato chips, and three cokes, and heads out to try to find Carl Lee. He drives out past where he ran out of gas, up a dozen side roads and almost all the way to the end of the Point, with no luck. It is well past dark when Eddie heads back through town. He pulls into the gas station again, for no particular reason, and just sits there.

Maybe God hasn't put him on this mission. How could God let him get so close and then just pull the plug? Eddie is tired and hungry. The candy bars and potato chips helped, but he could sure use a big fat cheeseburger about now. He starts the Chevy and is ready to pull out, but has to wait for an oncoming car. As the car passes he immediately recognizes it. It's that black, 1962, Chrysler Imperial he saw in Berkeley and sure enough, it's being driven by the same big nigger.

Eddie waits for him to pass, then pulls out behind him. This is his free ticket to Carl Lee, and he knows it. Hallelujah, it's another fucking miracle. He really has been chosen by god to kill Carl Lee.

Eddie follows Darin, staying as far back as possible. It's a dark windy road and difficult to keep a discreet distance without losing him, but the unique shape of the tail lights on the Imperial, which look just like rocket boosters glued to the top of the tail fins, makes him easy to identify. Still, Eddie completely misses it when Darin turns to the right onto a small side road. It is only when he glances to the right and sees those distinctive tail lights angling off on another road that he realizes he missed his turn. Eddie slams on the breaks and does a quick U-turn in the middle of the road. He races back, finds the road and soon catches up as the road turns to gravel. The gravel makes it easier. Even if he can't see the tail lights any more he can easily follow the dust. They are going through a dairy ranch and soon the road starts to slope downward.

Darin glides slowly down the paved drive and pulls up to the side of the house. He has been here before and remembers that the bay is to the left, in front of the house and a breezeway runs along the back to a door in the kitchen. Darin gets out and tucks a snub nose thirty eight in the front waist of his pants. He heads to the front of the house which is lined with windows. It's a breezy night and the air is cold and moist with the unmistakable scent of the ocean. As he comes around the corner he can see lights in several of the rooms, allowing him to see clearly through the windows that line the front of the house.

Just as Darin walks by the first room, Rose is leaning down to pick up some clothes from the floor. He just misses seeing her. There are two darkened bedrooms and then he sees the kitchen and living room. Carl is eating and reading at a table next to the window.

Eddie is approaching some trees and a drive, another drive turns to the right. He's not sure which drive Darin took, but this is obviously the end of the line so he pulls into a small turnout and switches off the car. Eddie grabs the 45 and gets out. He quietly shuts the door. It's dark and there are no street lights, but the moon is about three quarters full. His eyes gradually adjust and he sees the paved drives sloping off in both directions. He decides to give the drive on the left a try. It gets darker as he walks under the trees but he soon rounds a curve and sees lights from a house. Bingo, the Chrysler Imperial is parked in the driveway next to the Alpha.

Darin quickly walks to the door leading into the living room. Carl looks up with a start as Darin enters. It's too late, Darin is in the door. Fork still in hand, Carl looks at Darin, and then notices the gun in his belt.

"Where's Drew?" Carl asks.

"He's dead."

Carl stares at him in disbelief. This is his worst nightmare come true.

"What happened?"

"He found me after I set the bomb and thanks to you, he decided to try and stop it. I told him it was too late, it was set to blow any minute, but that do-good dumb-ass decides he has to save the pigs, so he went down to get it."

Darin takes a step closer now and pauses to look around. The large fireplace in the center of the room blocks his view of the rest of the kitchen and the hallway.

"It's a long way down the hill to the officers club and Drew has that bad leg. He just got in the car when it blew up. I was parked a couple blocks away, saw the whole thing. It blew up right in his face."

"I can't believe it." Carl shakes his head and covers his tearing eyes. "Drew is dead?"

"Not only is he dead, everybody's cover is completely blown. They will be looking at anyone who knew Drew, including you. I'm getting out of town tonight. You're my last stop. Who else is here?"

Carl is wary. "Nobody, just me. Everybody went over to Marshall for music." Carl lies. He hopes Rose doesn't come out of the bedroom.

Rose can hear Carl talking to somebody. They must have just come in because they are the only ones home tonight. Rose heads down the hall to see who just came in when she recognizes the sound of Darin's voice. It stops her short. That seems strange. Darin has never come out to the house by himself before, especially at night and she knows that Darin and Carl are on shaky terms. Something is not right. Rose creeps down the hallway and stops to listen.

Darin pulls the gun from his belt and points it at Carl.

"Drew said you told him we were planting to bomb the Officers Club for the party and not the offices. How the fuck did you know that?"

"Kate found out in New York." Carl answers with a quiver in his voice. His hands are raised and in the open.

"You're the one who got him killed. Why the fuck are you getting involved anyway? This isn't any of your god damned business, and I told you to keep the fuck out of it."

"I thought he should know. That's not what he wanted. The question is why the hell did you try to blow up all those people? That's not going to get us anywhere."

"Us? What do you mean us? You're just part of the fucking problem now, ass hole. It's easy for you, hiding out while my people are being oppressed and killed. This is war, man. As far as I'm concerned you're nothing but another one of the fucking pigs. A fucking traitor pigs, a fucking narc."

Rose has heard enough. She quickly goes back to the room and quietly closes the door. Rose climbs onto the bed and opens the window, moves a candle aside, then climbs out the window feet first and lowers herself to the ground. She can still hear them talking. Taking one step back she can see through the window. Darin is pointing a gun at Carl. Her heart leaps into her throat.

"You think I'm a traitor because I told Drew what was going on? Or, do you really think I'm a narc, talking to the cops?"

Darin gives a snide little laugh.

"No, you probably haven't been talking to the cops, but that doesn't mean you wont. You still know too much and you fucked up by getting involved. I warned you.

Eddie walks down the drive past the Chrysler and the Alpha. This is the place. He pulls the 45 from his belt, cocks it and clicks the safety off. The light in the breeze way is on and he can see the door that goes into the kitchen. As he approaches the door he hears voices inside. Stepping closer he clearly recognizes Carl's voice. He quietly tests the doorknob. It's not locked.

"Look, I'm not going to talk to anybody. I haven't been involved with the movement for over a year." Carl pleads.

"Maybe you will, maybe you won't. Frankly I don't give a shit." Darin says. This conversation is over as far as Darin is concerned. He is ready to blow this mutha-fucker away and get the fuck out of town.

At that moment the kitchen door flies open and Eddie McGuire rushes in aiming the 45 with both hands at Carl. Startled, Carl stares in disbelief. Where the fuck did Eddie McGuire come from? How many more people want to kill him tonight?

Darin hears the door and sees Carl's reaction, but can't see who came in because the fireplace is blocking his view.

Eddie sees Carl with his hands already raised and Carl looking back at Darin.

Instantly, they both realize that someone else is in the room. Darin and Eddie each take a step forward to peak around the edge of the fireplace. They see each other at the same time, point there guns then jump back behind the fireplace without firing.

Rose is hiding in the bushes watching through the window, helpless and terrified as Darin points a gun at Carl. Suddenly another guy with a gun runs in the door and points another, even bigger gun at Carl. Who hell is this?

For Darin and Eddie the reality of the situation quickly sinks in. Somebody with a gun is on the other side of this wall and they may be coming around, from either side, at any moment with their gun blazing. Carl can see both Darin and Eddie and realizes the dilemma as well. He also recognizes this could be his opportunity to escape. He positions himself to move.

Darin and Eddie see Carl poised to run and both point their guns at him thinking "lets just shoot this fucker now." But then, as if on queue, they point their guns back toward the wall in anticipation of imminent attack. Carl doesn't have a gun, he's not a threat, they can kill him later. The immediate issue is the guy with a gun on the other side of this wall. The problem is that you can walk around the Fireplace from either direction. They don't know which side the attack will come from. The game begins.

Eddie has no intention of letting this armed nigger live to testify against him and Darin has pretty much the same inclination. They both kind of wonder who the other guy is and why he also seems to have it out for Carl. But at this point who gives a fuck? They're just trying to stay alive.

They each try taking peeks around the side of the wall to see where the other one is, then jump back to safety as they see one another. They may not know each other, but they recognize a mortal threat. A truce is not an option. They each fake and parry a few times to size up the situation. Totally vulnerable, Carl watches for an opportunity to escape.

Holding his gun way out to the right, Darin quickly steps around the corner and fires a shot at Eddie with his 38. He misses by a mile and Eddie jumps back. Now Eddie tries coming around the other side but Darin is expecting him, they both fire shots, both missing, then jump back. The sound of the gun fire is deafening, especially the 45. Gun smoke hangs acrid in the air.

Eddie rushes around to his left and almost catches Darin by surprise. They both fire. Eddie is standing right in front of Carl and Darin's bullet screams past Carl's head and shatters a cabinet door. Carl ducks down, but stays poised to run. They fire again, both missing then ducking back to safety.

Eddie barely missed Darin that time. Darin is a big man and if Darin could get his hands on Eddie, he would be in trouble. But when it comes to guns, Eddie has been shooting all his life and Eddie's 45 automatic is not only more deadly than Darin's 38, it has more shots and is more accurate.

Carl can see Eddie getting mad. Darin looks scared. Eddie pauses for an instant then rushes to the right around the back side of the wall, ducking low and firing two times. Darin fires in return, but a bullet catches Darin in the hip and knocks him against the table. He fires again as he is going down but Eddie is on top of him with another direct hit to the chest. With a startled look on his face, Darin falls forward, face down, with a thud, lifeless

Carl makes a break for the hallway. Eddie turns and fires. He misses and the bullet shatters another cabinet. He pulls the trigger again but is out of ammo. Eddie reaches in his pocket for another clip. In an instant he pops the spent clip out and snaps in a new clip with eight more rounds. He jacks a round into the chamber and runs to catch Carl.

Carl scrambles down the hall and into his room. Rose calls from window. "Carl, here, out the window." Carl leaps onto the bed and out the window head first, taking a hard tumble on the cement walkway. Instantly he is up, grabbing Rose's hand as they run for the path towards the bay.

Eddie makes his way into Carl's room and glances out the window just in time to see Carl and Rose running toward the path. Reversing direction, he heads back into the living room and fires another shot into Darin as he runs for the door.

A few feet down the path Carl and Rose plunge into darkness. The tall bushes and low hanging Bay trees create total blackness. The pitch dark slows Carl down, but he knows this path. He has been down it a hundred times and his feet are telling him where to go. Rose grabs the tail of Carl's shirt as they plunge on single file.

Now Eddie hits the darkness and is immediately tangled in thick bushes.

"God damn it" he curses.

Gaining his composure he gradually feels his way along. Eddie feels with his feet, hands out stretched and gradually makes headway. Soon the path opens and the ambient light from the moon and his gradually adjusting eyes allow him to see the path curving down toward the bay.

Carl and Rose have already reached the landing. It is a long twenty to thirty foot drop to the water from the flat area overlooking the bay, but off to the left are the rickety old steps that lead to the beach below, except there is no beach. The tide is in and the water is two or three feet deep.

No one use these steps. They're dangerous and falling apart, but it's the only way out. If they can get down to the water they may have a chance to escape.

Carl whispers to Rose. "Let's get the canoe and go to the boat. He won't be able to follow us there."

"Will the steps hold us?"

"I hope so. Just stay close to the cliff and watch out, they are really slippery and a couple steps are missing.

"I know. Let's go for it. I'll hold back a step or two." says Rose.

Carl starts down, touching the side of the cliff for balance. The steps are wet and slippery with dew and mold. It's harder than he thought. They slowly make their way down. Carl stretches over a missing step. He waits to help Rose, but then moves on, afraid that their combined weight on one step could cause it to collapse. This is taking too long. He is afraid McGuire will catch up and they will be caught defenseless and in the open.

The dark path delays Eddie, but now he clearly sees the path before him. He glances around to see if they may have taken a side path, but the bushes are thick and this seems to be the only way forward. He soon comes to the landing. He steps to the edge. It is a sheer cliff. He looks around. There doesn't seem to be anywhere to go but over the cliff or back up the path. He can hear the water lapping softly below. Then he hears something else, tiny rocks falling. The sound is coming from the left and he explores closer. Now he sees the steps and below he hears the sound of the rocks that Carl and Rose are knocking loose as they hold onto the cliff for support. He has found them.

Eddie takes a few steps down and he can clearly see them. Carl looks up and sees Eddie's profile against the sky. They are still a half a dozen steps from the bottom.

"Watch out he's up there. Jump for it."

They Jump, just as a shot rings out, and hit the icy cold water with both feet. The shot missed its mark and they are running, trudging through the waist high water, trying to round the point.

Eddie is comes down the steps, trying to see to line himself up for another shot. He doesn't see the missing step and comes down hard on the step below. His right boot slides and his left foot buckles. He feels it snap as he falls, tumbling down head first. He hits his head, flips over the side, scrapes the cliff with his back and then falls through the air, hitting the water flat on his face. The pain and cold water paralyze him. He screams in shock, taking a breath of salt water. Eddie knows he is in trouble. Scrambling, he gets his feet under him. The water is shallow and he struggles to gain his balance and stand up, coughing, gasping, struggling for air. Now the pain in his foot hits him. He stumbles but keeps his balance. Gradually he catches his breath and looks around him. They are gone. Miraculously the gun is still in his hands. His dad taught him never to drop that ball.

Carl and Rose are around the corner and trudging through the water to find the beach in the cove.

"I see it" Carl Calls "I see the beach. And there is the boat." He points out in the water. The sail boat is tied peacefully to its mooring.

They come to a small narrow beach and behind some bushes, tied to a tree is the canoe. They scramble to untie the canoe and pull it down to the water. They didn't see McGuire fall and are expecting him to come up behind them at any moment. The canoe is in the water. Rose jumps in the front and immediately starts paddling furiously. Carl

tumbles into the back and scrambles to paddle and steer. They are moving fast and it will only take a few moments to get to the boat. Suddenly a shot rings out and a red-hot pain grips the left side of Carl's neck, just below the jaw. He knows he has been shot.

With dogged determination Eddie McGuire has made his way around the point and to the beach. He limps badly, his ankle broken, blood running down his face, his shirt ripped, and his back bruised and bleeding. He is holding the 45 with both hands, this time taking careful aim. They are moving away fast. Another shot rings out as they disappear around the backside of the small boat floating in the cove. Eddie sits down in the wet sand. "Fuck" he yells.

Carl doesn't know how badly he is hurt, but he does know he is still paddling and the second shot missed. They make a sharp turn around the backside of the boat and Rose grabs on. For the first time she turns as Carl grabs onto the boat. She gasps.

"Oh no, god, your bleeding"

"Yeah." Carl gasps out of breath. They both just sit there, silent, gasping, looking at each other, holding on.

"Can you get in the boat?" She asks concerned.

"Yeah, my neck hurts but I think I'm all right."

They peek up over the side. They can barely see Eddie through the gloom, sitting on the beach. "Let's go" she say.

"Okay, you go first." He holds tightly to the boat as she, crawls up and over the side. Carl is feeling light-headed but he quickly follows. They tumble to the floor, safely out of sight. She immediately crawls over. "Let's see your neck."

He turns his head and feels with his hands. "Don't touch it." She scolds. "I don't see a hole; I think he just grazed you." She says as she tries to see in the dark.

"I think your right. It's not even bleeding that much."

"Damn, that was close."

"No shit." Carl says. If the bullet had been one inch to the right it would have shattered Carl's spine and surely killed him.

Carl peeks up over the side. "I think we're safe. He can't get out here without swimming. And he would have a hell of a time getting up on the boat."

"I think your right."

"Who the hell is that?" Rose asks

"Eddie McGuire"

"Eddie McGuire? You mean Eddie McGuire from Kansans? Where the hell did he come from?"

"Just another one of my admirers." Carl smirks.

Rose lets out a little laugh. "Your fucking crazy, ya-know that?" Carl nods his head.

Carl looks again, glancing around.

"Keep your head down." Rose says.

Carl quickly sits down and looks at her with a crooked frown. "We're in trouble."

Eddie is shivering on the beach. He has got to kill them. They saw him blow away that nigger. Besides, God sent him all the way to California to kill Carl Lee. On the other hand, he is freezing and wondering if he can even make it back to his car. He obviously can't go back the way he came. There must be a path from here somewhere, but he can barely walk. Then he sees it, the canoe. It's floating away from the boat. At first he thought it was tied on, but now he can see it is definitely drifting.

"The canoe. I let it get away." Carl says.

Now they are both up, looking to check out the situation. Sure enough, the canoe is floating away from the boat. The question is; where will it float to? They watch. "Fuck, I think it may hit the point." Carl says.

"Damn, I think your right."

"Okay, well, we got to get out of here, and fast. There's not much wind here, but there will be past the point." Carl says.

"Let's go for it, grab the sails." Rose is already moving. They both scramble.

Having sailed together many times before, they know the drill. Carl drags out the bags, and Rose starts pulling the sails out. Carl is lowering the boom and retrieving the main halyard wire when a shot rings out. They dive for the floor.

"Son of a bitch. He knows what we are doing." Carl says.

"He just wants to slow us down. Carl looks up. That's a long fucking shot with a pistol, in the dark. We can't just hide here and wait for him to come and get us. Keep your head down as much as you can, but we got to get this boat moving."

"You're absolutely right. Fuck him." Rose says defiantly.

They both jump up and continue rigging the boat. It only takes a few more minutes and they are ready to raise the main sail. Now they have to unclip from the mooring. Carl crawls out onto the front of the boat and hangs his arms over the side. He pulls them forward to get some slack. Another shot rings out and a wooden rail by Carl's leg shatters. He is completely exposed. Furiously he struggles to unclip the boat with his cold and numb fingers. Another shot rings out. He pushes the clip and they are free.

Carl scrambles back inside and grabs a long handled paddle. The oars are at the house. He paddles on one side to get them facing down wind, while Rose pulls on the main halyard to raise the sail. They slowly come-about and the sail catches a light breath of air. Rose pulls up the jib as Carl rounds it off. They are moving, but very slowly.

Carl looks to see where McGuire is. He can clearly see the canoe, which is close to the point, but where is McGuire? Now he sees him. Eddie is swimming with the canoe back to shore.

Eddie is close to shore, painfully stumbling over rocks. The water is finally shallow enough to get in and he contorts his body to keep from tipping the thing over. He grabs a paddle and starts paddling.

"Nice of the dip-shits to leave me the paddles." He laughs.

The canoe quickly cuts through the water. Eddie McGuire is cursing with anticipation.

Rose has the jib up and Carl adjusts the direction of the small sail boat to try and catch as much wind as possible. They are closely watching Eddie. He is gaining on them fast. "You steer and I will paddle" Carl calls out. They switch positions. Carl paddles furiously and they speed up marginally, but the wind is starting picking up a bit. Past the point, out in the open water, in the middle of the bay where the wind gets funneled directly down from the ocean, the wind will be ripping. If they can make it past the point they will be free.

Eddie is exhausted and the sailboat is moving a little faster. If he can just get close enough he should be able to get a couple decent shots. Eddie decides to make one last all out effort. He digs in. The canoe scoots forward and the gap closes fast. Eddie is only about thirty feet from the sail boat when he stops paddling to take a shot. It will probably be his last chance.

Carl can see the wind line. Eddie has been paddling furiously and has almost caught them, but the wind is picking up and the wind line is dead ahead. Carl steers a little closer to the wind in anticipation, but he wouldn't want to be taken by surprise and go over. Suddenly the wind hits, the sail boat heels over, they scramble to the windward side as the boat takes off.

Eddie sees the sail boat heel over and start to rapidly pull away. He immediately starts shooting but he can barely see them behind the sail. He switched to a full clip on the beach and he fires all eight rounds. But the waves are higher now, slapping into the side of the canoe, rocking and rolling. One by one his shots ring out threateningly but aren't even close. He drops his arms. The sail boat is gone. He stares in disappointment and disgust. He's not sure, but he thinks he can hear them yelling back at him

Eddie attempts to turn the canoe around and head back, but the distant shore is just a giant black shadow. He has no idea where he is. The cold winds buffet the small canoe. The middle of Tomales Bay in the middle of the night is no place for a canoe, especially with only one person. When Eddie tries to steer sideways to the wind to head toward shore, the wind immediately pushes the front of the canoe back around like a weather vane. Eddie finally gives up. He figures he will just float with the wind and eventually he will come to shore. Just as likely, he will get stranded in the muddy shallows at the far end of the bay. In any case, Eddie is spent. His broken ankle has swollen inside his boot. He has a mild concussion from his fall and he is on the verge of hypothermia. Still, Eddie McGuire is young and strong and there is a reasonable chance he can survive.

When the gun fire stops, Carl and Rose realize they are out of range and safe. They can see Eddie McGuire drifting helplessly down wind. It's impossible for Eddie to make it back to the house now. He is in trouble out in the middle of the bay in this kind of wind and they know it.

"Fuck you." Carl screams out the back of the boat. "Fuck you, you puta-fucker"

Carl is enraged. "Let's go get that son of a bitch" Carl says to Rose.

"What?" she says. "What do you mean?"

"Let's run him down. He's up shit creek already, the dumb fuck, following us out here. Let's go get him." Carl says.

Rose is shocked. They barely escaped with their lives. Then a look of anger and determination crosses her face. She watches as Eddie drifts helplessly down wind.

"That fucking bastard. Your right, he's in trouble now, he'll never get back." She screams out the back of the boat. "You're going to Inverness now ass hole." They both laugh. Then she looks worried. "But what about the gun?"

"Fuck the gun. It's impossible to aim in this kind of shit. That fucker is going to chase us the rest of our lives. He must have come all the way from Kansas just to kill me. We got the upper hand now, let's get him."

"Yeah" She says, the idea is sinking in.

Rose is still at the tiller and without a word they both go into action. "Ready about, about" she yells. They both duck down as the boom crosses to the other side and they head in the other direction. Carl sets the sails and then retrieves a bag with some windbreakers and sailing gloves. They are both freezing cold and on the verge of hypothermia themselves.

They work their way back. "Let's keep it headed to wind a little bit longer so when we drop off we are on a fast, broad reach, when we hit him." says Rose.

"Absolutely, a little bit farther." They intently watch McGuire's position. He is sitting up in the canoe, watching. He knows they are coming now."

Eddie can see them approaching. At first, he didn't notice, but soon he realized that they were getting closer not farther away. Eddie is hypothermic. The canoe is sinking. He knows he is in trouble. The clip in the gun is empty but there is one round left in the other clip. His hands are so cold he has trouble pressing the clip release but he finally changes clips. Eddie looks up and sees them changing course. They are headed straight at him. "Fuck you" he yells. All he needs is one good shot to kill Carl Lee. As for what happens to himself after that, he really doesn't even care anymore.

"Does this looks about right?" she asks.

"Yeah, that looks great"

Carl lets out the main sail as she moves the tiller and they fall off the wind. They are headed straight at the canoe and Eddie McGuire, and they are coming fast.

Carl carefully adjusts and cleats the sails. He grabs the paddle and finds himself a spot toward the front with good footing. He ducks down and looks back at Rose. She is intently watching their position and then glances down at Carl. Their eyes meet.

"I love you." he says. "Keep your head down."

"Let's get this fucker." she replies, as she squats down in the boat. They both peek up over the edge to watch their position.

Running with the wind on a broad reach is surprisingly peaceful, even in heavy wind. The boat gracefully surfs the waves. The only sound is water swishing against the hull. They wait silently. The canoe is dead ahead.

"We're almost there. He will shoot just before we hit him." Carl calls back to Rose. Carl can see Eddie McGuire clearly now. He has the gun in both hands. They are seconds away.

"Duck." Carl yells as he concentrates, ready to fend off Eddie if he tries to jump aboard. A shot rings out a moment before impact. A metal cleat shatters. Rose slumps over the tiller as the sailboat hits the canoe.

Eddie drops the gun and leaps for the boat with his last bit of energy. He gets part way up, his torso on the deck, but is helplessly dragged back down by the water and the sinking canoe as it is silently sucked under the charging sail boat. Just in time, Eddie catches a side rail with both hands and dangles in the water.

Carl rushes up to where Eddie clings to the side. He raises the paddle to bash his fingers, then looks straight into Eddie's eyes. He is frozen by his gaze. There is no fear. Eddie has surrendered, he knows he is lost, that his world is gone, and he awaits his fate. Eddie's life flashes before his eyes, the voice of his dad, the laugh of his mother, a football game with his family on a summer afternoon. His fingers slip, and just as he lets go, Carl grabs him by the wrist with one hand. Carl sees Eddie look at his hand in surprise. Now he reflexively grabs Eddie's wrist with his other hand.

Eddie looks straight at Carl. He realizes Carl is trying to save him. But Eddie doesn't want to be saved by Carl. He doesn't want Carl Lee to have the satisfaction of saving his life. He can't stand the thought, the burden, the knowledge, that Carl Lee, his hated enemy, would save him after all his efforts to kill him. The hatred and the anger that have been so much a part of Eddie's life come boiling up one more time and he screams in rage "No!" as he yanks away from Carl's hands. The rushing water grabs Eddie and drags him down, back and away, into its icy primal grasp. Carl watches as Eddie McGuire disappears beneath the dark waves.

Carl turns and suddenly sees Rose leaning, unconscious against the tiller, blood gushing from her forehead. He scrambles back to her "Oh god no." he screams. "Rose. Rose." He takes her in his arms. She has been shot. Despair and horror grip him.

Carl tries to determine if she is breathing, when miraculously, she opens her eyes. Blood is running down her face. "Rose can you hear me." He is trying to see the wound, pulling her hair aside. He was sure she was dead. There is a deep gash.

"Carl." She says "What happened?" What... she reaches up to her head. "Oh shit..." she says, looking up at him now, her eyes glazed but coherent. "Ouch, something hit my head."

Carl kisses her face, tears in his eyes. "Oh my god, I thought I lost you." He says. "I think you're alright." He looks again. It's definitely not a built wound; it looks like a deep cut. Carl takes the tiller and helps Rose back up onto the seat beside him. He rips off a piece of his shirt and presses it to her head. "Hold this tight against you head." He says. She leans against him and he changes course. He is heading to Marshall. Its close and he can call an ambulance from there.

Carl pulls the boat up to the dock at Marshall Tavern. He calls to a group of people standing on the landing and they rush down to help him with Rose. Carl needs some help himself. He is hypothermic and has lost blood from the wound in his neck. They go to the bar which is filled with people. The sound of a live band shakes the walls. He finds Kate and Jack and quickly tells them the story. Jack rushes back to the house to stash all the

drugs before the cops come. A nurse at the party looks them over. She is afraid that Rose may go into shock. Carl is in bad shape as well, cold and collapsing from the strain of the whole ordeal. An ambulance and the cops are called.

As they wait Carl whispers to Rose.

"Look, we are going to have to talk to the cops. Everything happened exactly as it actually happened, except we didn't run down Eddie McGuire. He capsized and drowned all on his own." Carl says.

"That is what happened. Anyway I have a concussion. I don't remember a thing, after we got on the boat." Rose is pale, but lucid.

"Also, those guys came to shoot each other. I had nothing to do with it. We are just innocent bystanders." Carl says

"I wasn't even in the room. All I saw was a gun."

She smiles at him, "Were going to be all right."

She reaches up and touches the scar on Carl's forehead as she holds a bandage against her own forehead. "Were going to have matching scars you know, thanks to Eddie McGuire." She says smiling at him, looking into his eyes.

The ambulance takes them to a hospital where they are stitched up and their wounds dressed. They give Rose some blood, get both of them warmed up and put them to bed. The next morning, the police are waiting when they wake up. They have been to the house and seen Darin's body. Darin and Eddie McGuire's' cars have also been inspected. Inside Eddie's car they found extra shells for a forty-five. Two days later Eddie's body is recovered from the bay. Even after all that time in the water, gunpowder is still clearly detectable on his hands.

They were suspicious about Carl's involvement and question both of them intensely, but in the end they have little that they can pin on them. After a couple weeks it becomes clear, Carl and Rose will not be charged with anything. They were officially innocent victims. Carl is worried about the reaction of the other people in the house, but they are all supportive and sympathetic.

Carl and Rose hide out in their room for a few days to recover, sleeping and making love. Kate goes out of her way to fix them some delicious dinners and tasty deserts. Carl tells her what happened with Drew and she feels guilty.

One fine day a couple of weeks later, after everything has settled down, Carl and Rose spend an afternoon at the beach. Rose has gone down to the water to collect shells and pieces of driftwood. Carl is lying on a blanket in the warm sand watching as she walks back, her smooth tan body, hair blowing in the ocean breeze, her beautiful smiling face. His heart aches with love and desire. She sees him watching her. Rose knows that she will never find a truer love, a more sensitive lover, a more conscious human being. She comes and lies beside him and they turn and look into each others eyes.

"Rose, I want you to know that I am totally committed too you for the rest of my life, if you will have me."

She smiles at him "I know you are, and I will have you. And I am for ever committed to you, and us, and the love we share."

Carl looks at her with a loving smile, "I know its kind of old fashioned, but Rose, will you marry me. I never really understood what that kind of commitment meant before, but

I understand now and I would like to be your husband and I would like you to be my wife."

Rose looks up into his face with tears in her eyes. "I would love to marry you, in any old fashioned way you like." They kiss softly and lay together for the longest time, her head on his chest, the sound of the waves crashing on the shore, the warmth of the sun on their skin.

By Dylan Waylef

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