Read and analyze the text

**BERTRAND RUSSELL. HOW TO GROW OLD**

In spite of the title, this article will really be on how not to grow old, which, at my time of life, is a much more important subject. My first advice would be to choose your ancestors carefully. Although both my parents died young, I have done well in this respect as regards my other ancestors. My maternal grandfather, it is true, was cut off in the flower of his youth at the age of sixty-seven, but my other three grandparents all lived to be over eighty. Of remoter ancestors I can only discover one who did not live to a great age, and he died of a disease, which is now rare, namely, having his head cut off. A great-grandmother of mine, who was a friend of Gibbon, lived to the age of ninety-two, and to her last day remained a terror to all her descendants. My maternal grandmother, after having nine children who survived, one who died in infancy, and many miscarriages, as soon as she became a widow devoted herself to women’s higher education. She was one of the founders of Girton College, and worked hard at opening the medical profession to women. She used to tell of how she met in Italy an elderly gentleman who was looking very sad. She asked him why he was so melancholy and he said that he just parted from his two grandchildren. “Good gracious,” she exclaimed, “I have seventy-two grandchildren, and if I were sad each time I parted from one of them, I should have a miserable existence!” “Madres naturale,” he replied. But speaking as one of the seventy-two, I prefer her recipe. After the age of eighty she found she had some difficulty in getting to sleep, so she habitually spent the hours from midnight to 3 a. m. in reading popular science. I do not believe that she ever had time to notice that she was growing old. This, I think, is the proper recipe for remaining young. If you have wide and keen interests and activities in which you can still be effective, you will have no reason to think about the merely statistical fact of the number of years you have already lived, still less of the probable shortness of your future. As regards health, I have nothing useful to say as I have little experience of illness. I eat and drink whatever I like, and sleep when I cannot keep awake. I never do anything whatever on the ground that it is good for health, though in actual fact the things I like doing are mostly wholesome. Psychologically there are two dangers to be guarded against in old age. One of these is too great an absorption in the past. One should not live in memories, in regrets for the good old days, or in sadness about friends who are dead. One’s thoughts must be directed to the future, and to things about which there is something to be done. This is not always easy, one’s own past is a gradually increasing weight. It is easy to think to oneself that one’s emotions used to be more vivid than they are, and one’s mind more keen. If this is true it should be forgotten, and if it is forgotten it will probably not be true. The other thing to be avoided is clinging to youth in the hope of finding strength in its vitality. When your children are grown up they want to live their own lives, and if you continue to be as interested in them as you were when they were young, you are likely to become a burden to them, unless they are unusually insensible. I do not mean that one should be without interest in them, but one’s interest should be contemplative and, if possible, philanthropic, but not too emotional. Animals become indifferent to their young as soon as their young can look after themselves, but human beings, owing to the length of infancy, find this less easy. I think that a successful old age is easiest for those who have strong impersonal interests leading to suitable activities. It is in this sphere that long experience is really fruitful, and that the wisdom born of experience can be used without becoming a burden. It is no use telling grown-up children not to make mistakes, both because they will not believe you, and because mistakes are an essential part of education. But if you are one of those who are incapable of impersonal interests, you may find that your life will be empty unless you concern yourself with your children and grandchildren. In that case you must realise that while you can still help them in material ways, as by making them an allowance or knitting them jumpers, you must not expect that they will enjoy your company. Some old people are troubled by the fear of death. In the young there is a justification for this feeling. Young men who have reason to fear that they will be killed in battle may justifiably feel bitter in the thought that they have been cheated of the best things that life has to offer. But in an old man who has known human joys and sorrows, and has done whatever work it was in him to do, the fear of death is somewhat ignoble. The best way to overcome it — so at least seems to me — is to make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly part of the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break, they become part of the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being. The man who, in old age, can see his life in this way, will not suffer from the fear of death, since the things he cares for will continue. And if, with the loss of vitality, weariness increases, the thought of rest will not be unwelcome. I should wish to die while still at work, knowing that others will carry on what I can no longer do, and content in the thought that what was possible has been done.

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2 Read and analyze the text

**DOROTHY PARKER. THE LAST TEA.**

The young man in the chocolate-brown suit sat down at the table, where the girl with the artificial camellia had been sitting for forty minutes. “Guess I must be late,” he said. “Sorry you been waiting.” “Oh, goodness!” she said. “I just got here myself, just about a second ago. I simply went ahead and ordered because I was dying for a cup of tea. I was late, myself. I haven’t been here more than a minute.” “That’s good,” he said. “Hey, hey, easy on the sugar — one lump is fair enough. And take away those cakes. Terrible! Do I feel terrible!” “Ah,” she said, “you do? Ah. Whadda matter?” “Oh, I’m ruined,” he said. “I’m in terrible shape.” “Ah, the poor boy,” she said, “Was it feelin’ mizzable? Ah, and it came way up here to meet me! You shouldn’t have done that — I’d have understood. Ah, just think of it coming all the way up here when it’s so sick!” “Oh, that’s all right,” he said. “I might as well be here as any place else. Any place is like any other place, the way I feel today. Oh, I’m all shot.” “Why, that’s just awful,” she said. “Why, you poor sick thing. Goodness, I hope it isn’t influenza. They say there’s a lot of it around.” “Influenza!” he said. “I wish that was all I had. Oh, I’m poisoned. I’m through. I’m off the stuff for life. Know what time I got to bed? Twenty minutes past five, a. m., this morning. What a night! What an evening!” “I thought,” she said, “that you were going to stay in the office and work late. You said you’d be working every night this week.” “Yeah, I know,” he said. “But it gave me the jumps. Thinking about going down there and sitting at that desk. I went up to May’s — she was throwing a party. Say, there was somebody there said they knew you.” “Honestly?” she said. “Man or woman?” “Dame,” he said. “Name’s Carol McCall. Say, why haven’t I been told about her before? That’s what I call a girl. What a looker she is!” “Oh, really?” she said. “That’s funny. I never heard of anyone that thought that. I’ve heard people say she was sort of nice-looking, if she wouldn’t make up so much. But I never heard of anyone that thought she was pretty.” “Pretty is right,” he said. “What a couple of eyes she’s got on her!” “Really?” she said. “I never noticed them particularly. But I haven’t seen her for a long time — sometimes people change, or something.” “She says she used to go to school with you,” he said. “Well, we went to the same school,” she said. “I simply happened to go to public school because it happened to be right near us, and Mother hated to have me crossing streets. But she was three or four classes ahead of me. She’s ages older than I am.” “She’s three or four classes ahead of them all,” he said. “Dance! Can she step! ‘Burn your clothes, baby,’ I kept telling her. I must have been fried pretty.” “I was out dancing myself, last night,” she said. “Wally Dillon and I. He’s just been pestering me to go out with him. He’s the most wonderful dancer. Goodness! I didn’t get home until I don’t know what time. I must look just simply a wreck. Don’t I?” “You look all right,” he said. “Wally’s crazy,” she said. “The things he says! For some crazy reason or other, he’s got it into his head that I’ve got beautiful eyes, and, well, he just kept talking about them till I didn’t know where to look, I was so embarrassed. I got so red, I thought everybody in the place would be looking at me. I got just as red as a brick. Beautiful eyes! Isn’t he crazy?” “He’s all right,” he said. “Say, this little McCall girl, she’s had all kinds of offers to go into moving pictures. ‘Why don’t you go ahead and go?’ I told her. But she says she doesn’t feel like it.” “There was a man up at the lake, two summers ago,” she said. “He was a director or something with one of the big moving-picture people — oh, he had all kinds of influence! — and he used to keep insisting and insisting that I ought to be in the movies. Said I ought to be doing sort of Garbo parts. I used to just laugh at him. Imagine!” “She’s had about a million offers,” he said. “I told her to go ahead and go. She keeps getting these offers all the time.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Oh, listen, I knew I had something to ask you. Did you call me up last night, by any chance?” “Me?” he said. “No, I didn’t call you.” “While I was out. Mother said this man’s voice kept calling up,” she said. “I thought maybe it might be you, by some chance. I wonder who could have been. Oh — I guess I know who it was. Yes, that’s who it was!” “No, I didn’t call you,” he said. “I couldn’t have seen a telephone, last night. What a head I had on me, this morning! I called Carol up, around ten, and she said she was feeling great. Can that girl hold her liquor!” “It’s a funny thing about me,” she said. “It just makes me feel sort of sick to see a girl drink. It’s just something in me, I guess. I don’t mind a man so much, but it makes me feel perfectly terrible to see a girl get intoxicated. It’s just the way I am, I suppose.” “Does she carry it!” he said. “And then feels great the next day. There’s a girl! Hey, what are you doing there? I don’t want any more tea, thanks. I’m not one of these tea boys. And these tea-rooms give me the jumps. Look at all those old dames, will you? Enough to give you the jumps.” “Of course, if you’ll rather be some place, drinking, with I don’t know what kinds of people,” she said. “I’m sure I don’t see how I can help that. Goodness, there are enough people that are glad enough to take me to tea — I don’t know how many people keep calling me up and pestering me to take me to tea. Plenty of people!” “All right, all right, I’m here, aren’t I?” he said. “Keep your hair on.” “I could name them all day,” she said. “All right,” he said. “What’s there to crab about?” “Goodness, it isn’t any of my business what you do,” she said. “But I hate to see you wasting your time with people that aren’t nearly good enough for you. That’s all.” “No need worrying over me,” he said. “I’ll be all right. Listen. You don’t have to worry.” “It’s just I don’t like to see you wasting your time,” she said, staying up all night and then feeling terribly the next day. “Ah, I was forgetting he was so sick. Ah, I was mean, wasn’t I, scolding him when he was so mizzable. Poor boy. How’s he feel now?” “Oh, I’m all right,” he said. “I feel fine. You want anything else? How about getting a check? I got to make a telephone call before six.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Calling up Carol?” “She said she might be in around now,” he said. “Seeing her tonight?” she said. “She’s going to let me know when I call up,” he said. “She’s probably got about a million dates. Why?” “I was just wondering,” she said. “Goodness, I’ve got to fly! I’m having dinner with Wally, and he’s so crazy. He’s probably there now. He’s called me up about a hundred times today.” “Wait till I pay the check,” he said, “and I’ll put you on a bus.” “Oh, don’t bother,” she said. “It’s right at the corner. I’ve got to fly. I suppose you want to stand and call up your friend from here?” “It’s an idea,” he said. “Sure you’ll be all right?” “Oh, sure,” she said. Busily she gathered her gloves and purse, and left her chair. He rose, not quite fully, as she stopped beside him. “When’ll I see you again?” she said. “I’ll call you up,” he said. “I’m all tied up, down at the office and everything. Tell you what I’ll do. I’ll give you a ring.” “Honestly, I have more dates!” she said. “It’s terrible. I don’t know when I’ll have a minute. But you call up, will you?” “I’ll do that,” he said. “Take care of yourself.” “You take care of yourself,” she said. “Hope you’ll feel all right.” “Oh, I’m fine,” he said. “Just beginning to come back to life.” “Be sure and let me know how you feel,” she said. “Will you? Sure, now? Well, good-bye. Oh, have a good time tonight! Thanks,” he said. “Hope you have a good time, too.” “Oh, I will,” she said. “I expect to. I’ve got to rush! Oh, I nearly forgot! Thanks ever so much for the tea. It was lovely.” “Be yourself, will you?” he said. “It was,” she said. “Well. Now don’t forget to call me up, will you? Sure? Well, good-bye.” “So long,” he said. She walked on down the little lane between the blue-painted tables.

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3 Read and analyze the text

**Ernest Hemingway – ‘Cat in the Rain’**

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. They did not know any of the people they passed on the stairs on their way to and from their room. Their room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden. In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea. Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. It was made of bronze and glistened in the rain. It was raining. The rain dripped from the palm trees. Water stood in pools on the gravel paths. The sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain. The motor cars were gone from the square by the war monument. Across the square in the doorway of the café a waiter stood looking out at the empty square. The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on. ‘I’m going down and get that kitty,’ the American wife said. ‘I’ll do it,’ her husband offered from the bed. ‘No, I’ll get it. The poor kitty out trying to keep dry under a table.’ The husband went on reading, lying propped up with the two pillows at the foot of the bed. ‘Don’t get wet,’ he said. The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to her as she passed the office. His desk was at the far end of the office. He was an old man and very tall. ‘Il piove,1 ’the wife said. She liked the hotel-keeper. ‘Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo2 . It is very bad weather.’ He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands. Liking him she opened the door and looked out. It was raining harder. A man in a rubber cape was crossing the empty square to the café. The cat would be around to the right. Perhaps she could go along under the eaves. As she stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind her. It was the maid who looked after their room. ‘You must not get wet,’ she smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent her. With the maid holding the umbrella over her, she walked along the gravel path until she was under their window. The table was there, washed bright green in the rain, but the cat was gone. She was suddenly disappointed. The maid looked up at her. ‘Ha perduto qualque cosa, Signora?’3 ‘There was a cat,’ said the American girl. ‘A cat?’ ‘Si, il gatto.’ ‘A cat?’ the maid laughed. ‘A cat in the rain?’ ‘Yes, –’ she said, ‘under the table.’ Then, ‘Oh, I wanted it so much. I wanted a kitty.’ When she talked English the maid’s face tightened. ‘Come, Signora,’ she said. ‘We must get back inside. You will be wet.’ ‘I suppose so,’ said the American girl. 1 ‘It’s raining.’ ‘Yes, yes Madam. Awful weather.’ 3 ‘Have you lost something, Madam?’ They went back along the gravel path and passed in the door. The maid stayed outside to close the umbrella. As the American girl passed the office, the padrone bowed from his desk. Something felt very small and tight inside the girl. The padrone made her feel very small and at the same time really important. She had a momentary feeling of being of supreme importance. She went on up the stairs. She opened the door of the room. George was on the bed, reading. ‘Did you get the cat?’ he asked, putting the book down. ‘It was gone.’ ‘Wonder where it went to,’ he said, resting his eyes from reading. She sat down on the bed. ‘I wanted it so much,’ she said. ‘I don’t know why I wanted it so much. I wanted that poor kitty. It isn’t any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain.’ George was reading again. She went over and sat in front of the mirror of the dressing table looking at herself with the hand glass. She studied her profile, first one side and then the other. Then she studied the back of her head and her neck. ‘Don’t you think it would be a good idea if I let my hair grow out?’ she asked, looking at her profile again. George looked up and saw the back of her neck, clipped close like a boy’s. ‘I like it the way it is.’ ‘I get so tired of it,’ she said. ‘I get so tired of looking like a boy.’ George shifted his position in the bed. He hadn’t looked away from her since she started to speak. ‘You look pretty darn nice,’ he said. She laid the mirror down on the dresser and went over to the window and looked out. It was getting dark. ‘I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,’ she said. ‘I want to have a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her.’ ‘Yeah?’ George said from the bed. ‘And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes.’ ‘Oh, shut up and get something to read,’ George said. He was reading again. His wife was looking out of the window. It was quite dark now and still raining in the palm trees. ‘Anyway, I want a cat,’ she said, ‘I want a cat. I want a cat now. If I can’t have long hair or any fun, I can have a cat.’ George was not listening. He was reading his book. His wife looked out of the window where the light had come on in the square. Someone knocked at the door. ‘Avanti,’ George said. He looked up from his book. In the doorway stood the maid. She held a big tortoiseshell cat pressed tight against her and swung down against her body. ‘Excuse me,’ she said, ‘the padrone asked me to bring this for the Signora.

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4 Read and analyze the text

**GRAHAM GREENE. THE INVISIBLE JAPANESE GENTLEMEN**

There were eight Japanese gentlemen having a fish dinner at Bentley’s. They spoke to each other rarely in their incomprehensible tongue, but always with a courteous smile and often with a small bow. All but one of them wore glasses. Sometimes the pretty girl who sat in the window beyond gave them a passing glance, but her own problem seemed too serious for her to pay real attention to anyone in the world except herself and her companion. She had thin blonde hair and her face was pretty and petite in a Regency way, oval like a miniature, though she had a harsh way of speaking — perhaps the accent of the school, Roedean or Cheltenham Ladies’ College, which she had not long ago left. She wore a man’s signet-ring on her engagement finger, and as I sat down at my table, with the Japanese gentlemen between us, she said, “So you see we could marry next week.” “Yes?” Her companion appeared a little distraught. He refilled their glasses with Chablis and said, “Of course, but Mother...” I missed some of the conversation then, because the eldest Japanese gentleman leant across the table, with a smile and a little bow, and uttered a whole paragraph like the mutter from an aviary, while everyone bent towards him and smiled and listened, and I couldn’t help attending to him myself. The girl’s fiancè resembled her physically. I could see them as two miniatures hanging side by side on white wood panels. He should have been a young officer in Nelson’s navy in the days when a certain weakness and sensitivity were no bar to promotion. She said, “They are giving me an advance of five hundred pounds, and they’ve sold the paperback rights already”. The hard commercial declaration as a shock to me; it was a shock too that she was one of my own profession. She couldn’t be more than twenty. She deserved better of life. He said, “But my uncle¾” “You know you don’t get on with him. This way we shall be quite independent.” “You will be independent,” he said grudgingly “The wine-trade wouldn’t really suit you, would it? I spoke to my publisher about you and there is a very good chance¾ if you began with some reading...” “But I don’t know a thing about books.” “I would help you at the start.” “My mother says that writing is a good crutch...” “Five hundred pounds and half the paperback rights is a pretty solid crutch”, she said. “This Chablis is good, isn’t it?” “I daresay.” I began to change my opinion of him — he had not the Nelson touch. He was doomed to defeat. She came alongside and raked him fore and aft. “Do you know what Mr Dwight said?” “Who’s Dwight?” “Darling, you don’t listen, do you? My publisher. He said he hadn’t read a first novel in the last ten years which showed such powers of observation.” That’s wonderful,” he said sadly, “wonderful.” “Only he wants me to change the tide.” “Yes.” “He does not like The Ever-Rolling Stream. He wants to call it The Chelsea Set. “What did you say?” “I agreed. I do think that with a first novel one should try to keep one’s publisher happy. Especially when, really, he’s going to pay for our marriage, isn’t he?” “I see what you mean.” Absent-mindedly he stirred his Chablis with a fork — perhaps before the engagement he had always bought champagne. The Japanese gentlemen had finished their fish and with very little English but with elaborate courtesy they were ordering from the middle-aged waitress a fresh fruit salad. The girl looked at them, and then she looked at me, but I think she saw only the future. I wanted very much to warn her against any future based on a first novel called The Chelsea Set. I was on the side of his mother. It was a humiliating thought, but I was probably about her mother’s age. I wanted to say to her, are you certain your publisher is telling you the truth? Publishers are human. They may sometimes exaggerate the virtues of the young and the pretty. Will The Chelsea Set be read in five years? Are you prepared for the years of effort, “the long defeat of doing nothing well”? As the years pass writing will not become any easier, the daily effort will grow harder to endure, those “powers of observation” will become enfeebled, you will be judged, when you reach your forties, by performance and not by promise. “My next novel is going to be about St Tropez.” “I didn’t know you’d ever been there.” “I haven’t. A fresh eye’s terribly important. I thought we might settle down there for six months.” “There wouldn’t be much left of the advance by that time.” “The advance is only an advance. I get fifteen per cent after five thousand copies and twenty per cent after ten. And of course another advance will be due, darling — when the next book’s finished. A bigger one if The Chelsea Set sells well.” “Suppose it doesn’t.” “Mr Dwight says it will. He ought to know.” “My uncle would start me at twelve hundred.” “But darling, how could you come then to St. Tropez?” “Perhaps we’d do better to marry when you come back.” She said harshly, “I mightn’t come back if The Chelsea Set sells enough.” “Oh.” She looked at me and the party of Japanese gentlemen. She finished her wine. She said, “Is this a quarrel?” “No.” “I’ve got the title for the next book — The Àãurå Blue.” “I thought azure was blue.” She looked at him with disappointment. “You don’t really want to be married to a novelist, do you?” “You aren’t one yet.” “I was born one — Mr Dwight says. My powers of observation...” “Yes. You told me that, but, dear, couldn’t you observe a bit nearer home? Here in London.” “I’ve done that in The Chelsea Set. I don’t want to repeat myself.” The bill had been lying beside them for some time now. He took out his wallet to pay, but she snatched the paper out of his reach. She said, “This is my celebration.” “What of?” “The Chelsea Set, of course. Darling, you’re awfully decorative, but sometimes — well, you simply don’t connect.” “I’d rather... if you don’t mind...” “No, darling, this is on me. And Mr Dwight, of course.” He submitted just as two of the Japanese gentlemen gave tongue simultaneously, then stopped abruptly and bowed to each other, as though they were blocked in a doorway. I had thought the two young people matching miniatures, but what a contrast in fact there was. The same type of prettiness could contain weakness and strength. Her Regency counterpart, I suppose would have borne a dozen children without the aid of anaesthetics, while he would have fallen an easy victim to the first dark eyes in Naples. Would there one day be a dozen books on her shelf? They have to he born without an anaesthetic too. I found myself hoping that The Chelsea Set would prove to be a disaster and that eventually she would take up photographic modelling while he established himself solidly in the wine-trade in St James’s. I didn’t like to think of her as the Mrs Humphrey Ward of her generation — not that I would live so long. Old age saves us from the realization of a great many fears. I wondered to which publishing firm Dwight belonged. I could imagine the blurb he would have already written about her abrasive powers of observation. There would be a photo, if he was wise, on the back of the jacket, for reviewers, as well as publishers, are human, and she didn’t look like Mrs Humphrey Ward. I could hear them talking while they found their coats at the back of the restaurant. He said, “I wonder what all those Japanese are doing here?” “Japanese?” she said. “What Japanese, darling? Sometimes you are so evasive I think you don’t want to marry me at all.”

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**JAMES JOYCE. EVELINE**

She sat at the window watching the evening enter the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains, and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cotton cloth. She was tired. Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the path before the new red houses. Once there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people’s children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses on it — not like their little brown houses, but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field — the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food, she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her at the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps, and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always spoken harshly to her, especially whenever there were people listening. “Miss Hill, don’t you see these ladies are waiting?” “Look lively, Miss Hill, please.” She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores. But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married — she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father’s violence. She knew it was that that had given her the palpitations. When they were growing up he had never struck her, as he used to strike Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl, but lately he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother’s sake. And now she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the country. Besides, the invariable quarrel about money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages — seven shillings — and Harry always sent up what he could, but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to waste the money, that she had no head, that he wasn’t going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday’s dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions. She had hard work to keep the house together and see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work — a hard life — but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life. She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very bind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres, where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him! He was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his cap pushed on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see The Bohemian Girl and she felt excited as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting, and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused. First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He told tales of distant countries. He had started as a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada. He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him. “I know these sailor chaps,” he said. One day he had quarreled with Frank, and after that she had to meet her lover secretly. The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry, the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite, but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth. She remembered her father putting on her mother’s hat to make the children laugh. Her time was running out, but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cotton cloth. Down in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the tune. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother’s illness; she was again in the close, dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy tune of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and been given sixpence. She remembered her father walking back into the sick-room saying: “Damned Italians! Coming over here!” As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother’s life laid its spell on her very soul — that life of common-place sacrifices ending in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother’s voice saying constantly with foolish insistence: “Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!” She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her. She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying beside the quay wall, with lighted portholes. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a confusion of pain, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, to-morrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her pain awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer. A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand: “Come!” All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing. “Come!” No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in madness. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish. “Eveline! Evvy!” He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on, but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

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6 Read and analyze the text

**LAURIE COLWIN. MR PARKER.**

Mrs Parker died suddenly in October. She and Mr Parker 1ived in a Victorian house next to ours, and Mr Parker was my piano teacher. He commuted to Wall Street, where he was a securities analyst, but he had studied at Juilliard and gave lessons on the side — for the pleasure of it, not for money. His only students were me and the church organist, who was learning technique in a double-keyboard harpsichord Mr Parker had built one spring. Mrs Parker was known for her pastry; she and my mother were friends, after a fashion. Every two months or so they spent a day together in the kitchen baking butter cookies and cream puffs, or rolling out strudel leaves. She was thin and wispy, and turned out her pastry with abstract expertness. As a girl, she had had bright-red hair, which was now the colour of old leaves. There was something smoky and autumnal about her: she wore rust-coloured sweaters and heather coloured skirts, and kept dried weeds in ornamental jars and pressed flowers in frames. If you borrowed a book from her, there were petal marks on the back pages. She was tall, but she stooped as if she had spent a lifetime looking for something she had dropped. The word “tragic” was mentioned in connection with her death. She and Mr Parker were in the middle of their middle age, and neither of them had ever been seriously ill. It was heart failure, and unexpected. My parents went to see Mr Parker as soon as they got the news, since they took their responsibilities as neighbours seriously, and two days later they took me to pay a formal condolence call. It was Indian summer, and the house felt closed in. They had used the fireplace during a recent cold spell, and the living-room smelled faintly of ash. The only people from the community were some neighbours, the minister and his wife, and the rabbi and his wife and son. The Parkers were Episcopalian, but Mr Parker played the organ in the synagogue on Saturday mornings and on High Holy Days. There was a large urn of tea, and the last of Mrs Parker’s strudel. On the sofa were Mrs Parker’s sisters, and a man who looked like Mr Parker ten years younger leaned against the piano, which was closed. The conversation was hushed and stilted. On the way out the rabbi’s son tried to trip me, and I kicked him in return. We were adolescent enemies of a loving sort, and since we didn’t know what else to do, we expressed our love in slaps and pinches and other mild attempts at grievous bodily harm. I loved the Parkers’ house. It was the last Victorian house on the block, and was shaped like a wedding cake. The living-room was round, and all the walls curved. The third floor was a tower, on top of which sat a weathervane. Every five years the house was painted chocolate brown, which faded gradually to the colour of weak tea. The front-hall window was a stained-glass picture of a fat Victorian baby holding a bunch of roses. The baby’s face was puffy and neuter, and its eyes were that of an old man caught in a stale of surprise. Its white dress was milky when the light shone through. On Wednesday afternoons, Mr Parker came home on an early train, and I had my lesson. Mr Parker’s teaching method never varied. He never scolded or corrected. The first fifteen minutes were devoted to a warm-up in which I could play anything I liked. Then Mr Parker played the lesson of the week. His playing was terrifically precise, but his eyes became dreamy and unfocused. Then I played the same lesson, and after that we worked on the difficult passages, but basically he wanted me to hear my mistakes. When we began a new piece, we played it part by part, taking turns, over and over. After that, we sat in me solarium and discussed the next week’s lesson. Mr Parker usually played a record and talked in detail about the composer, his life and times, and the form. With the exception of Mozart and Schubert, he liked Baroque music almost exclusively. The lesson of the week was always Bach, which Mr Parker felt taught elegance and precision. Mrs Parker used to leave us a tray of cookies and lemonade, cold in the summer and hot in the winter, with cinnamon sticks. When the cookies were gone, the lesson was over and I left, passing the Victorian child in the hallway. In the days after the funeral, my mother took several casseroles over to Mr Parker and invited him to dinner a number of times. For several weeks he revolved between us, the minister, and the rabbi. Since neither of my parents cared much about music, except to hear my playing praised, the conversation at dinner was limited to the stock market and the blessings of country life. In a few weeks, I got a note from Mr Parker enclosed in a thank you note to my parents. It said that piano lessons would begin the following Wednesday. I went to the Parkers’ after school. Everything was the same. I warmed up for fifteen minutes. Mr Parker played, and I repeated it. In the solarium were the usual cookies and lemonade. “Are they good, these cookies?” Mr Parker asked. I said they were. “I made them yesterday,” he said. “I’ve got to be my own baker now”. Mr Parker’s hair had once been blond, but was greying into the colour of straw, both he and Mrs Parker seemed to have faded out of some bright time they once had lived in. He was very thin, as if the friction of living had burned every unnecessary particle off him, but he was calm and cheery in the way you expect plump people to be. On teaching days, he always wore a blue cardigan, buttoned, and a striped tie. Both smelled faintly of tobacco. At the end of the lesson, he gave me a robin’s egg he had found. The light was flickering through the bunch of roses in the window as I left. When I got home, I found my mother in the kitchen, waiting and angry.

“Where were you?” she said.

“At my piano lesson.”

“What piano lesson?”

“You know what piano lesson. At Mr Parker’s.”

“You didn’t tell me you were going to a piano lesson,” she said.

“I always have a lesson on Wednesday.”

“I don’t want you having lessons there now that Mrs Parker’s gone,” She slung a roast into a pan. I stomped off to my room and wrapped the robin’s egg in a sweat sock. My throat felt shrivelled and hot. At dinner, my mother said to my father, “I don’t want Jane taking piano lessons from Mr Parker now that Mrs Parker’s gone.” “Why don’t you want me to have lessons?” I said, close to shouting. “There’s no reason.” “She can study with Mrs Murchison”. Mrs Murchison had been my first teacher. She was a fat, myopic woman who smelled of bacon grease and whose repertoire was confined to “Little Classics for Children”. Her students were mostly under ten and she kept an asthmatic chow who was often sick on the rug. “I won’t go to Mrs Murchison!” I shouted. “I’ve outgrown her.” “Let’s be sensible about this,” said my father. “Calm down, Janie.” I stuck my fork into a potato to keep from crying and muttered melodramatically that I would hang myself before I’d go back to Mrs Murchison. The lessons continued. At night I practised quietly, and from time to time my mother would look up and say, “That’s nice, dear.” Mr Parker had given me a Three-Part Invention, and I worked on it as if it were granite. It was the most complicated piece of music I had ever played, and I learned it with a sense of loss; since I didn’t know when the axe would fall, I thought it might be the last piece of music I would ever learn from Mr Parker. The lessons went on and nothing was said, but when I came home after them my mother and I faced each other with division and coldness. Mr Parker bought a kitten called Mildred to keep him company in the house. When we had our cookies and lemonade, Mildred got a saucer of milk. At night, I was grilled by my mother as we washed the dishes. I found her sudden interest in the events of my day unnerving. She was systematic, beginning with my morning classes, ending in the afternoon. In the light of her intense focus, everything seemed wrong. Then she said, with arch sweetness,

“And how is Mr Parker, dear?”

“Fine.”

“And how are the lessons going?”

“Fine.” “And how is the house now that Mrs Parker’s gone?”

“It’s the same. Mr Parker bought a kitten.” As I said it, I knew it was betrayal. “What kind of kitten?”

“A sort of pink one.”

“What’s it name?”

“It doesn’t have one,” I said. One night she said,

“Does Mr Parker drink?”

“He drinks lemonade.”

“I only asked because it must be so hard for him,” she said in an offended voice. “He must be very sad.”

“He doesn’t seem all that sad to me.” It was the wrong thing to say.

“I see,” she said, folding the dish-towel with elaborate care. “You know how I feel about this, Jane. I don’t want you alone in the house with him.”

“He’s my piano teacher,” I was suddenly in tears, so I ran out of the kitchen and up to my room. She followed me up, and sat on the edge of my bed while I sat al the desk, secretly crying on to the blotter.

“I only want what’s best for you,” she said.

“If you want what’s best for me, why don’t you want me to have piano lessons?”

“I do want you to have piano lessons, but you’re growing up and it doesn’t look right for you to be in a house alone with a widowed man.”

“I think you’re crazy.”

“I don’t think you understand what I’m trying to say. You’re not a little girl any more, Jane. There are privileges of childhood, and privileges of adulthood, and you’re in the middle. It’s difficult, I know.”

“You don’t know. You’re just trying to stop me from taking piano lessons.” She stood up.

“I’m trying to protect you,” she said. “What if Mr Parker touched you? What would you do then?” She made the word “touch” sound sinister.

“You’re just being mean,” I said, and by this time I was crying openly. It would have fixed things to throw my arms around her, but that meant losing, and this was war.

“We’ll discuss it some other time,” she said, close to tears herself. I worked on the Invention until my hands shook. When I came home, if the house was empty, I practised in a panic, and finally, it was almost right. On Wednesday, I went to Mr Parker’s and stood at the doorway, expecting something drastic and changed, but it was all the same. There were cookies and lemonade in the solarium. Mildred took a nap on my coat. My fifteen-minute warm-up was terrible; I made mistakes in the simplest parts, in things I knew by heart. Then Mr Parker played the lesson of the week and I tried to memorize his phrasing exactly. Before my turn came, Mr Parker put the metronome on the floor and we watched Mildred trying to catch the arm. I played it, and I knew it was right — I was playing music, not struggling with a lesson. When I finished, Mr Parker grabbed me by the shoulders. “That’s perfect! Really perfect!” he said. “A real breakthrough. These are the times that make teachers glad they teach.” We had lemonade and cookies and listened to some Palestrina motets. When I left, it was overcast, and the light was murky and green. I walked home slowly, divided by dread and joy in equal parts. I had performed like an adult, and had been congratulated by an adult, but something had been closed off, I sat under a tree and cried like a baby. He had touched me after all.

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7 Read and analyze the text

**O’HENRY. WHILE THE AUTO WAITS**

Promptly at the beginning of twilight, came again to that quiet corner of that quiet, small park the girl in gray. She sat upon a bench and read a book, for there was yet to come a half hour in which print could be read. To repeat: Her dress was gray, and plain but perfect in style and fit. A large-meshed veil imprisoned her hat and a face that shone through it with a calm and unconscious beauty. She had come there at the same hour on the previous day, and on the day before that; and there was one who knew it. The young man who knew it was waiting nearby. His patience was rewarded, in turning a page, her book slipped from her fingers and bounded from the bench a full yard away. The young man seized it with great audacity, returning it to its owner with a look of gallantry and hope. In a pleasant voice, be risked a simple remark upon the weather — that introductory subject responsible for so much of the world’s unhappiness — and stood by for a moment, awaiting his fate. The girl looked at him over leisurely; at his ordinary neat dress and his features that showed no particular expression. “You may sit down, if you like”, she said, in a full, slow contralto. “Really, I would like to have you do so. The light is too bad for reading. I would prefer to talk.” He slid upon the seat by her side with politeness. “Do you know,” he said, speaking the formula with which park chairmen open their meetings, “that you are quite the most beautiful girl I have seen in a long time? I had my eye on you yesterday. Didn’t know somebody was knocked down by those pretty lamps of yours, did you, honeysuckle?” “Whoever you are,” said the girl in icy tones, “you must remember that I am a lady. I will excuse the remark you have just made because the mistake was, doubtless, not an unnatural one — in your circle. I asked you to sit down; if the invitation must make me your honeysuckle, consider it withdrawn”. “I earnestly beg your pardon,” pleaded the young man. “It was my fault, you know, — I mean, there are girls in parks, you know — that is, of course, you don’t know, but —” “Abandon the subject, if you please. Of course I know. Now, tell me about these people passing and crowding, each way, along these paths. Where are they going? Why do they hurry so? Are they happy?” The young man could not guess the role he would be expected to play. “It is interesting to watch them,” he replied. “It’s the wonderful drama of life. Some are going to supper and some to — er — other places. One wonders what their histories are”. “I do not,” said the girl, “I am not so curious. I come here to sit because here, only, can I be near the great, common, beating heart of humanity. My part in life is played where its beats are never felt. Can you guess why I spoke to you, Mr — ?” “Parkenstacker,” said the young man. Then he looked eager and hopeful. “No,” said the girl, holding up a slender finger, and smiling slightly. “You would recognize it immediately. It is impossible to keep one’s name out of print. Or even one’s portrait. This veil and this hat of my maid’s hide my identity. You should have seen the chauffeur stare at it when he thought I did not see. Frankly, there are five or six names that belong in the holy of holies, and mine, by accident of birth, is one of them. I spoke to you, Mr Stackenpot — ” “Parkenstacker,” corrected the young man, modestly. “Mr Parkenstacker, because I wanted to talk, for once, with a natural man — one unspoiled by wealth and supposed social superiority. Oh! you do not know how weary I am of it — money, money, money! And of the men who surround me, dancing like dolls all cut by the same pattern. I am sick of pleasure, of jewels, of travel, of society, of luxuries of all kinds.” “I always had an idea,” uttered the young man, hesitatingly, “that money must be a pretty good thing.” “Enough money for living comfortably is to be desired. But when you have so many millions that — !” She concluded the sentence with a gesture of despair. “It is the monotony of it,” she continued, “that bores. Drives, dinners, theatres, balls, suppers, with the gilding of too much wealth over it all. Sometimes the very tinkle of the ice in my champagne glass nearly drives me mad.” Mr Parkenstacker looked frankly interested. “I have always liked,” he said, “to read and hear about the ways of wealthy and fashionable folks. I suppose I am a bit of a snob. But I like to have my information accurate. Now, I had formed the opinion that champagne is cooled in the bottle and not by placing ice in the glass.” The girl gave a musical laugh of real amusement. “You should know,” she explained, in a patient tone, “that we of the non-useful class depend for our amusement upon change. Just now it is the fashion to put ice in champagne. The idea was originated by a visiting Prince of Tartary while dining at the Waldorf. It will soon give way to some other new idea. Just as at a dinner party this week on Madison Avenue a green glove was laid by the plate of each guest to be put on and used while eating olives.” “I see,” admitted the young man, humbly. “These special amusements of the inner circle do not become known to the common public.” “Sometimes,” continued the girl, acknowledging his confession of error by a slight bow, “I have thought that if I ever should love a man it would be one of lowly station. One who is a worker and not a drone. But, doubtless, the demands of caste and wealth will be stronger than my wishes. What is it that makes me tell you these things, Mr Packenstarker?” “Parkenstacker,” breathed the young man. “Indeed, you cannot know how much I appreciate your confidences.” The girl regarded him with the calm, impersonal look that befitted the difference in their stations. “What is your line of business, Mr Parkenstacker?” she asked. “A very humble one. But I hope to rise in the world. Were you really in earnest when you said that you could love a man of lowly position?” “Indeed I was. But I said ‘might’. There is a Grand Duke and a Marquis pursuing me. Yes, no position could be too humble were the man what I would wish him to be.” “I work,” declared Mr Parkenstacker, “in a restaurant.” The girl shrank slightly. “Not as a waiter?” she said, almost pleading. “Labour is noble, but, — personal service, you know — valets and — ” “I am not a waiter. I am cashier in” — on the street they faced beyond the opposite side of the park was the brilliant electric sign “RESTAURANT” — “I am cashier in that restaurant you see there.” The girl glanced at a tiny watch set in a bracelet upon her left wrist, and rose, hurriedly. She pushed her book into a glittering bag, for which, however, the book was too large. “Why are you not at work?” she asked. “I am on the night turn,” said the young man; “it is yet an hour before my period begins. May I not hope to see you again?” “I do not know. Perhaps — but the fancy may not seize me again. I must go quickly now. There is a dinner, and a box at the play — and oh! the same old round. Perhaps you noticed an automobile at the upper corner of the park as you came. One with a white body.” “And red wheels?” asked the young man, frowning thoughtfully. “Yes, I always come in that. Pierre waits for me there. He supposes me to be shopping in the department store across the square. Imagine a life wherein we must deceive even our chauffeurs. Goodnight.” “But it is dark now,” said Mr Parkenstacker, “and the park is full of rude men. May I not walk — ?” “If you have the slightest regard for my wishes,” said the girl, firmly, “you will remain at this bench for ten minutes after I have left. I do not mean to accuse you, but you are probably aware that autos generally bear the monogram of their owner. Again, good-night.” Swift and stately she moved away through the dusk. The young man watched her graceful form as she reached the pavement at the park’s edge, and turned up along it toward the corner where stood the automobile. Then he treacherously and unhesitatingly began to slide along the park trees and bushes in a course parallel to her route, keeping her well in sight. When she reached the corner she turned her head to glance at the motor car, and then passed it, continuing on across the street. Sheltered behind a standing cab, the young man followed her movements closely with his eyes. Passing down the sidewalk of the street opposite the park, she entered the restaurant with the blazing sign. The place was one of those glaring establishments, all white paint and glass, where one may dine cheaply. The girl entered the restaurant and went to some place at the back, whence she quickly returned without her hat and veil. The cashier’s desk was well to the front. A red-haired girl on the stool climbed down, glancing pointedly at the clock as she did so. The girl in gray mounted in her place. The young man pushed his hands into his pockets and walked slowly back along the sidewalk. At the corner his foot struck a small, paper-covered volume lying there. By its picturesque cover he recognized it as the book the girl had been reading. He picked it up carelessly, and saw that its title was New Arabian Nights, the author being of the name of Stevenson. He dropped it again upon the grass, and stood hesitating, for a minute. Then he stepped into the automobile reclined upon the cushions, and said two words to the chauffeur: “Club, Henri.”

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8 Read and analyze the text

**W.SOMERSET MAUGHAM. HOME.**

The farm lay in a small valley among the Somersetshire hills, an old-fashioned stone house surrounded by barns and pens and outhouses. Over the doorway the date when it was built had been carved in the elegant figures of the period, 1673, and the house, grey and weather-beaten, looked as much a part of the landscape as the trees that surrounded it. An avenue of splendid elms led from the road to the neat garden. The people who lived here were unexcitable, strong and modest as the house; their only boast was that ever since it was built they had been born and died in it: from father to son in one unbroken line. For three hundred years they had farmed the surrounding land. George Meadows was now a man of fifty, and his wife was a year or two younger. They were both fine, honest people in the prime of life; and their children, two sons and three girls were handsome and strong. I have never seen a more united household. They were merry, industrious and kindly. Their life had a completeness that gave it a beauty as definite as that of a symphony of Beethoven’s or a picture by Titian. They were happy and they deserved their happiness. But the master of the house was not George Meadows (not by a long chalk, they said in the village); it was his mother. She was twice the man her son was, they said. She was a woman of seventy, tall, upright and dignified with grey hair, and though her face was much wrinkled, her eyes were bright and shrewd. Her word was law in the house and on the farm; but she had humor, and if her rule was despotic it was also kindly. People laughed at her jokes and repeated them. She was a good business woman. She combined in a rare degree good will with a sense of the ridiculous. She was a character. One day Mrs. George stopped me on my way home. She was really exited. (Her mother-in-law was the only “Mrs. Meadows” we knew; George’s wife was only known as “Mrs. George”). “Who ever do you think is coming here today?” she asked me. “Uncle George Meadows. You know, he was in China.” “Why, I thought he was dead.” “We all thought he was dead.” 7 – 64 – I had heard the story of Uncle George Meadows a dozen times, and it had amused me because it sounded like an old ballad: it was quite moving to come across it in real life. For Uncle George Meadows and Tom, his younger brother, had both courted Mrs. Meadows when she was Emily Green, fifty years and more ago, and when she married Torn, George had gone away to sea. They heard of him on the China coast. For twenty years now and then he had sent them presents; then there was no more news of him; when Tom Meadows died his widow wrote and told him, but received no answer; and at last they came to the conclusion that he must be dead. But two or three days ago to their astonishment they had received a letter from the matron of the sailors’ home at Portsmouth. It appeared that for the last ten years George Meadows, crippled with rheumatism, had lived there, and now, feeling that he had not much longer to live, wanted to see once more the house in which he was born. Albert Meadows, his great-nephew, had gone over to Portsmouth in the Ford to fetch him and he was to arrive that afternoon. “Just fancy,” said Mrs. George, “he’s not been here for more than fifty years. He’s never even seen my George, who’s fifty-one next birthday.” “And what does Mrs. Meadows think of it?” I asked. “Well, you know what she is. She sits there and smiles to herself. All she says, ‘He was a good-looking young fellow when he left, but not so steady as his brother,’ That’s why she chose my George’s father. ‘But he’s probably quietened down by now,’ she says.” Mrs George asked me to look in and see him. With the simplicity of a country woman who had never been further from her home than London, she thought that because we had both been in China we must have something in common. Of course I accepted. I found the whole family assembled when I arrived; they were sitting in the great old kitchen, with its stone floor, Mrs Meadows in her usual chair by the fire, very upright, and I was amused to see that she had put on her best silk dress, while her son and his wife sat at the table with their children. On the other side of the fireplace sat an old man, bunched up in a chair. He was very thin and his skin hung on his bones like an old suit much too large for him; his face was wrinkled and yellow and he had lost nearly all his teeth. I shook hands with him. – 65 – “Well, I’m glad too see you’ve got here safely, Mr Meadows”, I said. “Captain,” he corrected. “He walked here,” Albert, his great-nephew, told me. “When he got to the gate he made me stop the car and said he wanted to walk.” “And mind you, I’ve not been out of my bed for two years. They carried me down and put me in the car. I thought I’d never walk again, but when I saw those elm trees, I felt I could walk. I walked down that drive fifty-two years ago when I went away and now I’ve walked back again.” “Silly, I call it,” said Mrs Meadows. “It’s done me good I feel better and stronger than I have for ten years. I’ll see you out yet, Emily.” “Don’t you be too sure”, she answered. I suppose no one had called Mrs Meadows by her first name for a generation. It gave me a little shock, as though the old man were taking a liberty with her. She looked at him with a shrewd smile in her eyes and he, talking to her, grinned with his toothless gums. It was strange to look at them, these two old people who had not seen one another for half a century, and to think that all that long time ago he had loved her and she had loved another. I wondered if they remembered what they had felt then and what they had said to one another. I wondered if it seemed to him strange now that for that old woman he had left the home of his fathers, his lawful inheritance, and lived an exile’s life. “Have you ever been married, Captain Meadows?” I asked. “Not me,” he said, in his shaking voice, with a grin. “I know too much about women for that.” “That’s what you say,” answered Mrs Meadows. “If the truth was known I shouldn’t be surprised to hear that you’d had half a dozen black wives in your day,” “They’re not black in China, Emily, óîu ought to know better than that, they’re yellow.” “Perhaps that’s why you’ve got so yellow yourself. When I saw you, I said to myself, why, he’s got jaundice”. “I said I’d never marry anyone but you, Emily, and I never have.” He said this not to cause pity or in bitterness, but as a mere statement of fact, as a man might say, “I said I’d walk twenty miles and I’ve done it.” There was some satisfaction in the speech. “Well, you might have regretted it if you had,” she answered. – 66 – I talked a little with the old man about China. “There’s no port in China that I don’t know better than you know your coat pocket. Where a shi p can go I’ve been. I could keep you sitting here all day long for six months and not tell you half the things I’ve seen in my day”. “Well, one thing you’ve not done, George, as far as I can see,” said Mrs Meadows, “the mocking but not unkindly smile still in her eyes, and that’s to make a fortune.” “I’m not one to save money. Make it and spend it; that’s my motto. But one thing I can say for myself: if I had the chance of going through life again I’d take it. And there aren’t many people who’ll say that.” “No, indeed,” I said. I looked at him with admiration and respect. He was a toothless, cri ppled, penniless old man, but he had made a success of life, for he had enjoyed it. When I left him he asked me to come and see him again next day. If I was interested in China he would tell me all the stories I wanted to hear. Next morning I thought I would go and ask if the old man would like to see me. I strolled down the magnificent avenue of elm trees and when I came to the garden saw Mrs Meadows picking flowers. I bade her good morning and she raised herself. She had a huge armful of white flowers. I glanced at the house and I saw that the blinds were drawn: I was surprised, for Mrs Meadows liked the sunshine. “Time enough to live in the dark when you’re buried,” she always said. “How’s Captain Meadows?” I asked her. “He always was a wild fellow,” she answered. “When Lizzie took him a cup of tea this morning she found he was dead.” “Dead?” “Yes. Died in his sleep. I was just picking these flowers to put in the room. Well, I’m glad he died in that old house. It always means a lot to those Meadows to do that”. They had had a good deal of difficulty in persuading him to go to bed. He had talked to them of all the things that had happened to him in his long life. He was happy to be back in his old home. He was proud that he had walked up the drive without assistance, and he boasted that he would live for another twenty years. But fate had been kind: death had written the full-stop in the right place. Mrs Meadows smelt the white flowers that she held in her arms. “Well, I’m glad he came back,” she said. “After I married Tom Meadows and George went away, the fact is I was never quite sure that I’d married the right one”.

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**BERTRAND RUSSELL. HOW TO GROW OLD**

In spite of the title, this article will really be on how not to grow old, which, at my time of life, is a much more important subject. My first advice would be to choose your ancestors carefully. Although both my parents died young, I have done well in this respect as regards my other ancestors. My maternal grandfather, it is true, was cut off in the flower of his youth at the age of sixty-seven, but my other three grandparents all lived to be over eighty. Of remoter ancestors I can only discover one who did not live to a great age, and he died of a disease, which is now rare, namely, having his head cut off. A great-grandmother of mine, who was a friend of Gibbon, lived to the age of ninety-two, and to her last day remained a terror to all her descendants. My maternal grandmother, after having nine children who survived, one who died in infancy, and many miscarriages, as soon as she became a widow devoted herself to women’s higher education. She was one of the founders of Girton College, and worked hard at opening the medical profession to women. She used to tell of how she met in Italy an elderly gentleman who was looking very sad. She asked him why he was so melancholy and he said that he just parted from his two grandchildren. “Good gracious,” she exclaimed, “I have seventy-two grandchildren, and if I were sad each time I parted from one of them, I should have a miserable existence!” “Madres naturale,” he replied. But speaking as one of the seventy-two, I prefer her recipe. After the age of eighty she found she had some difficulty in getting to sleep, so she habitually spent the hours from midnight to 3 a. m. in reading popular science. I do not believe that she ever had time to notice that she was growing old. This, I think, is the proper recipe for remaining young. If you have wide and keen interests and activities in which you can still be effective, you will have no reason to think about the merely statistical fact of the number of years you have already lived, still less of the probable shortness of your future. As regards health, I have nothing useful to say as I have little experience of illness. I eat and drink whatever I like, and sleep when I cannot keep awake. I never do anything whatever on the ground that it is good for health, though in actual fact the things I like doing are mostly wholesome. Psychologically there are two dangers to be guarded against in old age. One of these is too great an absorption in the past. One should not live in memories, in regrets for the good old days, or in sadness about friends who are dead. One’s thoughts must be directed to the future, and to things about which there is something to be done. This is not always easy, one’s own past is a gradually increasing weight. It is easy to think to oneself that one’s emotions used to be more vivid than they are, and one’s mind more keen. If this is true it should be forgotten, and if it is forgotten it will probably not be true. The other thing to be avoided is clinging to youth in the hope of finding strength in its vitality. When your children are grown up they want to live their own lives, and if you continue to be as interested in them as you were when they were young, you are likely to become a burden to them, unless they are unusually insensible. I do not mean that one should be without interest in them, but one’s interest should be contemplative and, if possible, philanthropic, but not too emotional. Animals become indifferent to their young as soon as their young can look after themselves, but human beings, owing to the length of infancy, find this less easy. I think that a successful old age is easiest for those who have strong impersonal interests leading to suitable activities. It is in this sphere that long experience is really fruitful, and that the wisdom born of experience can be used without becoming a burden. It is no use telling grown-up children not to make mistakes, both because they will not believe you, and because mistakes are an essential part of education. But if you are one of those who are incapable of impersonal interests, you may find that your life will be empty unless you concern yourself with your children and grandchildren. In that case you must realise that while you can still help them in material ways, as by making them an allowance or knitting them jumpers, you must not expect that they will enjoy your company. Some old people are troubled by the fear of death. In the young there is a justification for this feeling. Young men who have reason to fear that they will be killed in battle may justifiably feel bitter in the thought that they have been cheated of the best things that life has to offer. But in an old man who has known human joys and sorrows, and has done whatever work it was in him to do, the fear of death is somewhat ignoble. The best way to overcome it — so at least seems to me — is to make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly part of the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break, they become part of the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being. The man who, in old age, can see his life in this way, will not suffer from the fear of death, since the things he cares for will continue. And if, with the loss of vitality, weariness increases, the thought of rest will not be unwelcome. I should wish to die while still at work, knowing that others will carry on what I can no longer do, and content in the thought that what was possible has been done.

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**DOROTHY PARKER. THE LAST TEA.**

The young man in the chocolate-brown suit sat down at the table, where the girl with the artificial camellia had been sitting for forty minutes. “Guess I must be late,” he said. “Sorry you been waiting.” “Oh, goodness!” she said. “I just got here myself, just about a second ago. I simply went ahead and ordered because I was dying for a cup of tea. I was late, myself. I haven’t been here more than a minute.” “That’s good,” he said. “Hey, hey, easy on the sugar — one lump is fair enough. And take away those cakes. Terrible! Do I feel terrible!” “Ah,” she said, “you do? Ah. Whadda matter?” “Oh, I’m ruined,” he said. “I’m in terrible shape.” “Ah, the poor boy,” she said, “Was it feelin’ mizzable? Ah, and it came way up here to meet me! You shouldn’t have done that — I’d have understood. Ah, just think of it coming all the way up here when it’s so sick!” “Oh, that’s all right,” he said. “I might as well be here as any place else. Any place is like any other place, the way I feel today. Oh, I’m all shot.” “Why, that’s just awful,” she said. “Why, you poor sick thing. Goodness, I hope it isn’t influenza. They say there’s a lot of it around.” “Influenza!” he said. “I wish that was all I had. Oh, I’m poisoned. I’m through. I’m off the stuff for life. Know what time I got to bed? Twenty minutes past five, a. m., this morning. What a night! What an evening!” “I thought,” she said, “that you were going to stay in the office and work late. You said you’d be working every night this week.” “Yeah, I know,” he said. “But it gave me the jumps. Thinking about going down there and sitting at that desk. I went up to May’s — she was throwing a party. Say, there was somebody there said they knew you.” “Honestly?” she said. “Man or woman?” “Dame,” he said. “Name’s Carol McCall. Say, why haven’t I been told about her before? That’s what I call a girl. What a looker she is!” “Oh, really?” she said. “That’s funny. I never heard of anyone that thought that. I’ve heard people say she was sort of nice-looking, if she wouldn’t make up so much. But I never heard of anyone that thought she was pretty.” “Pretty is right,” he said. “What a couple of eyes she’s got on her!” “Really?” she said. “I never noticed them particularly. But I haven’t seen her for a long time — sometimes people change, or something.” “She says she used to go to school with you,” he said. “Well, we went to the same school,” she said. “I simply happened to go to public school because it happened to be right near us, and Mother hated to have me crossing streets. But she was three or four classes ahead of me. She’s ages older than I am.” “She’s three or four classes ahead of them all,” he said. “Dance! Can she step! ‘Burn your clothes, baby,’ I kept telling her. I must have been fried pretty.” “I was out dancing myself, last night,” she said. “Wally Dillon and I. He’s just been pestering me to go out with him. He’s the most wonderful dancer. Goodness! I didn’t get home until I don’t know what time. I must look just simply a wreck. Don’t I?” “You look all right,” he said. “Wally’s crazy,” she said. “The things he says! For some crazy reason or other, he’s got it into his head that I’ve got beautiful eyes, and, well, he just kept talking about them till I didn’t know where to look, I was so embarrassed. I got so red, I thought everybody in the place would be looking at me. I got just as red as a brick. Beautiful eyes! Isn’t he crazy?” “He’s all right,” he said. “Say, this little McCall girl, she’s had all kinds of offers to go into moving pictures. ‘Why don’t you go ahead and go?’ I told her. But she says she doesn’t feel like it.” “There was a man up at the lake, two summers ago,” she said. “He was a director or something with one of the big moving-picture people — oh, he had all kinds of influence! — and he used to keep insisting and insisting that I ought to be in the movies. Said I ought to be doing sort of Garbo parts. I used to just laugh at him. Imagine!” “She’s had about a million offers,” he said. “I told her to go ahead and go. She keeps getting these offers all the time.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Oh, listen, I knew I had something to ask you. Did you call me up last night, by any chance?” “Me?” he said. “No, I didn’t call you.” “While I was out. Mother said this man’s voice kept calling up,” she said. “I thought maybe it might be you, by some chance. I wonder who could have been. Oh — I guess I know who it was. Yes, that’s who it was!” “No, I didn’t call you,” he said. “I couldn’t have seen a telephone, last night. What a head I had on me, this morning! I called Carol up, around ten, and she said she was feeling great. Can that girl hold her liquor!” “It’s a funny thing about me,” she said. “It just makes me feel sort of sick to see a girl drink. It’s just something in me, I guess. I don’t mind a man so much, but it makes me feel perfectly terrible to see a girl get intoxicated. It’s just the way I am, I suppose.” “Does she carry it!” he said. “And then feels great the next day. There’s a girl! Hey, what are you doing there? I don’t want any more tea, thanks. I’m not one of these tea boys. And these tea-rooms give me the jumps. Look at all those old dames, will you? Enough to give you the jumps.” “Of course, if you’ll rather be some place, drinking, with I don’t know what kinds of people,” she said. “I’m sure I don’t see how I can help that. Goodness, there are enough people that are glad enough to take me to tea — I don’t know how many people keep calling me up and pestering me to take me to tea. Plenty of people!” “All right, all right, I’m here, aren’t I?” he said. “Keep your hair on.” “I could name them all day,” she said. “All right,” he said. “What’s there to crab about?” “Goodness, it isn’t any of my business what you do,” she said. “But I hate to see you wasting your time with people that aren’t nearly good enough for you. That’s all.” “No need worrying over me,” he said. “I’ll be all right. Listen. You don’t have to worry.” “It’s just I don’t like to see you wasting your time,” she said, staying up all night and then feeling terribly the next day. “Ah, I was forgetting he was so sick. Ah, I was mean, wasn’t I, scolding him when he was so mizzable. Poor boy. How’s he feel now?” “Oh, I’m all right,” he said. “I feel fine. You want anything else? How about getting a check? I got to make a telephone call before six.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Calling up Carol?” “She said she might be in around now,” he said. “Seeing her tonight?” she said. “She’s going to let me know when I call up,” he said. “She’s probably got about a million dates. Why?” “I was just wondering,” she said. “Goodness, I’ve got to fly! I’m having dinner with Wally, and he’s so crazy. He’s probably there now. He’s called me up about a hundred times today.” “Wait till I pay the check,” he said, “and I’ll put you on a bus.” “Oh, don’t bother,” she said. “It’s right at the corner. I’ve got to fly. I suppose you want to stand and call up your friend from here?” “It’s an idea,” he said. “Sure you’ll be all right?” “Oh, sure,” she said. Busily she gathered her gloves and purse, and left her chair. He rose, not quite fully, as she stopped beside him. “When’ll I see you again?” she said. “I’ll call you up,” he said. “I’m all tied up, down at the office and everything. Tell you what I’ll do. I’ll give you a ring.” “Honestly, I have more dates!” she said. “It’s terrible. I don’t know when I’ll have a minute. But you call up, will you?” “I’ll do that,” he said. “Take care of yourself.” “You take care of yourself,” she said. “Hope you’ll feel all right.” “Oh, I’m fine,” he said. “Just beginning to come back to life.” “Be sure and let me know how you feel,” she said. “Will you? Sure, now? Well, good-bye. Oh, have a good time tonight! Thanks,” he said. “Hope you have a good time, too.” “Oh, I will,” she said. “I expect to. I’ve got to rush! Oh, I nearly forgot! Thanks ever so much for the tea. It was lovely.” “Be yourself, will you?” he said. “It was,” she said. “Well. Now don’t forget to call me up, will you? Sure? Well, good-bye.” “So long,” he said. She walked on down the little lane between the blue-painted tables.

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**Ernest Hemingway – ‘Cat in the Rain’**

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. They did not know any of the people they passed on the stairs on their way to and from their room. Their room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden. In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea. Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. It was made of bronze and glistened in the rain. It was raining. The rain dripped from the palm trees. Water stood in pools on the gravel paths. The sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain. The motor cars were gone from the square by the war monument. Across the square in the doorway of the café a waiter stood looking out at the empty square. The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on. ‘I’m going down and get that kitty,’ the American wife said. ‘I’ll do it,’ her husband offered from the bed. ‘No, I’ll get it. The poor kitty out trying to keep dry under a table.’ The husband went on reading, lying propped up with the two pillows at the foot of the bed. ‘Don’t get wet,’ he said. The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to her as she passed the office. His desk was at the far end of the office. He was an old man and very tall. ‘Il piove,1 ’the wife said. She liked the hotel-keeper. ‘Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo2 . It is very bad weather.’ He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands. Liking him she opened the door and looked out. It was raining harder. A man in a rubber cape was crossing the empty square to the café. The cat would be around to the right. Perhaps she could go along under the eaves. As she stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind her. It was the maid who looked after their room. ‘You must not get wet,’ she smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent her. With the maid holding the umbrella over her, she walked along the gravel path until she was under their window. The table was there, washed bright green in the rain, but the cat was gone. She was suddenly disappointed. The maid looked up at her. ‘Ha perduto qualque cosa, Signora?’3 ‘There was a cat,’ said the American girl. ‘A cat?’ ‘Si, il gatto.’ ‘A cat?’ the maid laughed. ‘A cat in the rain?’ ‘Yes, –’ she said, ‘under the table.’ Then, ‘Oh, I wanted it so much. I wanted a kitty.’ When she talked English the maid’s face tightened. ‘Come, Signora,’ she said. ‘We must get back inside. You will be wet.’ ‘I suppose so,’ said the American girl. 1 ‘It’s raining.’ ‘Yes, yes Madam. Awful weather.’ 3 ‘Have you lost something, Madam?’ They went back along the gravel path and passed in the door. The maid stayed outside to close the umbrella. As the American girl passed the office, the padrone bowed from his desk. Something felt very small and tight inside the girl. The padrone made her feel very small and at the same time really important. She had a momentary feeling of being of supreme importance. She went on up the stairs. She opened the door of the room. George was on the bed, reading. ‘Did you get the cat?’ he asked, putting the book down. ‘It was gone.’ ‘Wonder where it went to,’ he said, resting his eyes from reading. She sat down on the bed. ‘I wanted it so much,’ she said. ‘I don’t know why I wanted it so much. I wanted that poor kitty. It isn’t any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain.’ George was reading again. She went over and sat in front of the mirror of the dressing table looking at herself with the hand glass. She studied her profile, first one side and then the other. Then she studied the back of her head and her neck. ‘Don’t you think it would be a good idea if I let my hair grow out?’ she asked, looking at her profile again. George looked up and saw the back of her neck, clipped close like a boy’s. ‘I like it the way it is.’ ‘I get so tired of it,’ she said. ‘I get so tired of looking like a boy.’ George shifted his position in the bed. He hadn’t looked away from her since she started to speak. ‘You look pretty darn nice,’ he said. She laid the mirror down on the dresser and went over to the window and looked out. It was getting dark. ‘I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,’ she said. ‘I want to have a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her.’ ‘Yeah?’ George said from the bed. ‘And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes.’ ‘Oh, shut up and get something to read,’ George said. He was reading again. His wife was looking out of the window. It was quite dark now and still raining in the palm trees. ‘Anyway, I want a cat,’ she said, ‘I want a cat. I want a cat now. If I can’t have long hair or any fun, I can have a cat.’ George was not listening. He was reading his book. His wife looked out of the window where the light had come on in the square. Someone knocked at the door. ‘Avanti,’ George said. He looked up from his book. In the doorway stood the maid. She held a big tortoiseshell cat pressed tight against her and swung down against her body. ‘Excuse me,’ she said, ‘the padrone asked me to bring this for the Signora.

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**GRAHAM GREENE. THE INVISIBLE JAPANESE GENTLEMEN**

There were eight Japanese gentlemen having a fish dinner at Bentley’s. They spoke to each other rarely in their incomprehensible tongue, but always with a courteous smile and often with a small bow. All but one of them wore glasses. Sometimes the pretty girl who sat in the window beyond gave them a passing glance, but her own problem seemed too serious for her to pay real attention to anyone in the world except herself and her companion. She had thin blonde hair and her face was pretty and petite in a Regency way, oval like a miniature, though she had a harsh way of speaking — perhaps the accent of the school, Roedean or Cheltenham Ladies’ College, which she had not long ago left. She wore a man’s signet-ring on her engagement finger, and as I sat down at my table, with the Japanese gentlemen between us, she said, “So you see we could marry next week.” “Yes?” Her companion appeared a little distraught. He refilled their glasses with Chablis and said, “Of course, but Mother...” I missed some of the conversation then, because the eldest Japanese gentleman leant across the table, with a smile and a little bow, and uttered a whole paragraph like the mutter from an aviary, while everyone bent towards him and smiled and listened, and I couldn’t help attending to him myself. The girl’s fiancè resembled her physically. I could see them as two miniatures hanging side by side on white wood panels. He should have been a young officer in Nelson’s navy in the days when a certain weakness and sensitivity were no bar to promotion. She said, “They are giving me an advance of five hundred pounds, and they’ve sold the paperback rights already”. The hard commercial declaration as a shock to me; it was a shock too that she was one of my own profession. She couldn’t be more than twenty. She deserved better of life. He said, “But my uncle¾” “You know you don’t get on with him. This way we shall be quite independent.” “You will be independent,” he said grudgingly “The wine-trade wouldn’t really suit you, would it? I spoke to my publisher about you and there is a very good chance¾ if you began with some reading...” “But I don’t know a thing about books.” “I would help you at the start.” “My mother says that writing is a good crutch...” “Five hundred pounds and half the paperback rights is a pretty solid crutch”, she said. “This Chablis is good, isn’t it?” “I daresay.” I began to change my opinion of him — he had not the Nelson touch. He was doomed to defeat. She came alongside and raked him fore and aft. “Do you know what Mr Dwight said?” “Who’s Dwight?” “Darling, you don’t listen, do you? My publisher. He said he hadn’t read a first novel in the last ten years which showed such powers of observation.” That’s wonderful,” he said sadly, “wonderful.” “Only he wants me to change the tide.” “Yes.” “He does not like The Ever-Rolling Stream. He wants to call it The Chelsea Set. “What did you say?” “I agreed. I do think that with a first novel one should try to keep one’s publisher happy. Especially when, really, he’s going to pay for our marriage, isn’t he?” “I see what you mean.” Absent-mindedly he stirred his Chablis with a fork — perhaps before the engagement he had always bought champagne. The Japanese gentlemen had finished their fish and with very little English but with elaborate courtesy they were ordering from the middle-aged waitress a fresh fruit salad. The girl looked at them, and then she looked at me, but I think she saw only the future. I wanted very much to warn her against any future based on a first novel called The Chelsea Set. I was on the side of his mother. It was a humiliating thought, but I was probably about her mother’s age. I wanted to say to her, are you certain your publisher is telling you the truth? Publishers are human. They may sometimes exaggerate the virtues of the young and the pretty. Will The Chelsea Set be read in five years? Are you prepared for the years of effort, “the long defeat of doing nothing well”? As the years pass writing will not become any easier, the daily effort will grow harder to endure, those “powers of observation” will become enfeebled, you will be judged, when you reach your forties, by performance and not by promise. “My next novel is going to be about St Tropez.” “I didn’t know you’d ever been there.” “I haven’t. A fresh eye’s terribly important. I thought we might settle down there for six months.” “There wouldn’t be much left of the advance by that time.” “The advance is only an advance. I get fifteen per cent after five thousand copies and twenty per cent after ten. And of course another advance will be due, darling — when the next book’s finished. A bigger one if The Chelsea Set sells well.” “Suppose it doesn’t.” “Mr Dwight says it will. He ought to know.” “My uncle would start me at twelve hundred.” “But darling, how could you come then to St. Tropez?” “Perhaps we’d do better to marry when you come back.” She said harshly, “I mightn’t come back if The Chelsea Set sells enough.” “Oh.” She looked at me and the party of Japanese gentlemen. She finished her wine. She said, “Is this a quarrel?” “No.” “I’ve got the title for the next book — The Àãurå Blue.” “I thought azure was blue.” She looked at him with disappointment. “You don’t really want to be married to a novelist, do you?” “You aren’t one yet.” “I was born one — Mr Dwight says. My powers of observation...” “Yes. You told me that, but, dear, couldn’t you observe a bit nearer home? Here in London.” “I’ve done that in The Chelsea Set. I don’t want to repeat myself.” The bill had been lying beside them for some time now. He took out his wallet to pay, but she snatched the paper out of his reach. She said, “This is my celebration.” “What of?” “The Chelsea Set, of course. Darling, you’re awfully decorative, but sometimes — well, you simply don’t connect.” “I’d rather... if you don’t mind...” “No, darling, this is on me. And Mr Dwight, of course.” He submitted just as two of the Japanese gentlemen gave tongue simultaneously, then stopped abruptly and bowed to each other, as though they were blocked in a doorway. I had thought the two young people matching miniatures, but what a contrast in fact there was. The same type of prettiness could contain weakness and strength. Her Regency counterpart, I suppose would have borne a dozen children without the aid of anaesthetics, while he would have fallen an easy victim to the first dark eyes in Naples. Would there one day be a dozen books on her shelf? They have to he born without an anaesthetic too. I found myself hoping that The Chelsea Set would prove to be a disaster and that eventually she would take up photographic modelling while he established himself solidly in the wine-trade in St James’s. I didn’t like to think of her as the Mrs Humphrey Ward of her generation — not that I would live so long. Old age saves us from the realization of a great many fears. I wondered to which publishing firm Dwight belonged. I could imagine the blurb he would have already written about her abrasive powers of observation. There would be a photo, if he was wise, on the back of the jacket, for reviewers, as well as publishers, are human, and she didn’t look like Mrs Humphrey Ward. I could hear them talking while they found their coats at the back of the restaurant. He said, “I wonder what all those Japanese are doing here?” “Japanese?” she said. “What Japanese, darling? Sometimes you are so evasive I think you don’t want to marry me at all.”

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**JAMES JOYCE. EVELINE**

She sat at the window watching the evening enter the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains, and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cotton cloth. She was tired. Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the path before the new red houses. Once there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people’s children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses on it — not like their little brown houses, but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field — the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food, she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her at the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps, and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always spoken harshly to her, especially whenever there were people listening. “Miss Hill, don’t you see these ladies are waiting?” “Look lively, Miss Hill, please.” She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores. But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married — she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father’s violence. She knew it was that that had given her the palpitations. When they were growing up he had never struck her, as he used to strike Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl, but lately he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother’s sake. And now she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the country. Besides, the invariable quarrel about money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages — seven shillings — and Harry always sent up what he could, but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to waste the money, that she had no head, that he wasn’t going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday’s dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions. She had hard work to keep the house together and see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work — a hard life — but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life. She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very bind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres, where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him! He was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his cap pushed on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see The Bohemian Girl and she felt excited as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting, and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused. First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He told tales of distant countries. He had started as a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada. He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him. “I know these sailor chaps,” he said. One day he had quarreled with Frank, and after that she had to meet her lover secretly. The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry, the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite, but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth. She remembered her father putting on her mother’s hat to make the children laugh. Her time was running out, but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cotton cloth. Down in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the tune. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother’s illness; she was again in the close, dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy tune of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and been given sixpence. She remembered her father walking back into the sick-room saying: “Damned Italians! Coming over here!” As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother’s life laid its spell on her very soul — that life of common-place sacrifices ending in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother’s voice saying constantly with foolish insistence: “Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!” She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her. She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying beside the quay wall, with lighted portholes. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a confusion of pain, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, to-morrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her pain awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer. A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand: “Come!” All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing. “Come!” No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in madness. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish. “Eveline! Evvy!” He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on, but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

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**O’HENRY. WHILE THE AUTO WAITS**

Promptly at the beginning of twilight, came again to that quiet corner of that quiet, small park the girl in gray. She sat upon a bench and read a book, for there was yet to come a half hour in which print could be read. To repeat: Her dress was gray, and plain but perfect in style and fit. A large-meshed veil imprisoned her hat and a face that shone through it with a calm and unconscious beauty. She had come there at the same hour on the previous day, and on the day before that; and there was one who knew it. The young man who knew it was waiting nearby. His patience was rewarded, in turning a page, her book slipped from her fingers and bounded from the bench a full yard away. The young man seized it with great audacity, returning it to its owner with a look of gallantry and hope. In a pleasant voice, be risked a simple remark upon the weather — that introductory subject responsible for so much of the world’s unhappiness — and stood by for a moment, awaiting his fate. The girl looked at him over leisurely; at his ordinary neat dress and his features that showed no particular expression. “You may sit down, if you like”, she said, in a full, slow contralto. “Really, I would like to have you do so. The light is too bad for reading. I would prefer to talk.” He slid upon the seat by her side with politeness. “Do you know,” he said, speaking the formula with which park chairmen open their meetings, “that you are quite the most beautiful girl I have seen in a long time? I had my eye on you yesterday. Didn’t know somebody was knocked down by those pretty lamps of yours, did you, honeysuckle?” “Whoever you are,” said the girl in icy tones, “you must remember that I am a lady. I will excuse the remark you have just made because the mistake was, doubtless, not an unnatural one — in your circle. I asked you to sit down; if the invitation must make me your honeysuckle, consider it withdrawn”. “I earnestly beg your pardon,” pleaded the young man. “It was my fault, you know, — I mean, there are girls in parks, you know — that is, of course, you don’t know, but —” “Abandon the subject, if you please. Of course I know. Now, tell me about these people passing and crowding, each way, along these paths. Where are they going? Why do they hurry so? Are they happy?” The young man could not guess the role he would be expected to play. “It is interesting to watch them,” he replied. “It’s the wonderful drama of life. Some are going to supper and some to — er — other places. One wonders what their histories are”. “I do not,” said the girl, “I am not so curious. I come here to sit because here, only, can I be near the great, common, beating heart of humanity. My part in life is played where its beats are never felt. Can you guess why I spoke to you, Mr — ?” “Parkenstacker,” said the young man. Then he looked eager and hopeful. “No,” said the girl, holding up a slender finger, and smiling slightly. “You would recognize it immediately. It is impossible to keep one’s name out of print. Or even one’s portrait. This veil and this hat of my maid’s hide my identity. You should have seen the chauffeur stare at it when he thought I did not see. Frankly, there are five or six names that belong in the holy of holies, and mine, by accident of birth, is one of them. I spoke to you, Mr Stackenpot — ” “Parkenstacker,” corrected the young man, modestly. “Mr Parkenstacker, because I wanted to talk, for once, with a natural man — one unspoiled by wealth and supposed social superiority. Oh! you do not know how weary I am of it — money, money, money! And of the men who surround me, dancing like dolls all cut by the same pattern. I am sick of pleasure, of jewels, of travel, of society, of luxuries of all kinds.” “I always had an idea,” uttered the young man, hesitatingly, “that money must be a pretty good thing.” “Enough money for living comfortably is to be desired. But when you have so many millions that — !” She concluded the sentence with a gesture of despair. “It is the monotony of it,” she continued, “that bores. Drives, dinners, theatres, balls, suppers, with the gilding of too much wealth over it all. Sometimes the very tinkle of the ice in my champagne glass nearly drives me mad.” Mr Parkenstacker looked frankly interested. “I have always liked,” he said, “to read and hear about the ways of wealthy and fashionable folks. I suppose I am a bit of a snob. But I like to have my information accurate. Now, I had formed the opinion that champagne is cooled in the bottle and not by placing ice in the glass.” The girl gave a musical laugh of real amusement. “You should know,” she explained, in a patient tone, “that we of the non-useful class depend for our amusement upon change. Just now it is the fashion to put ice in champagne. The idea was originated by a visiting Prince of Tartary while dining at the Waldorf. It will soon give way to some other new idea. Just as at a dinner party this week on Madison Avenue a green glove was laid by the plate of each guest to be put on and used while eating olives.” “I see,” admitted the young man, humbly. “These special amusements of the inner circle do not become known to the common public.” “Sometimes,” continued the girl, acknowledging his confession of error by a slight bow, “I have thought that if I ever should love a man it would be one of lowly station. One who is a worker and not a drone. But, doubtless, the demands of caste and wealth will be stronger than my wishes. What is it that makes me tell you these things, Mr Packenstarker?” “Parkenstacker,” breathed the young man. “Indeed, you cannot know how much I appreciate your confidences.” The girl regarded him with the calm, impersonal look that befitted the difference in their stations. “What is your line of business, Mr Parkenstacker?” she asked. “A very humble one. But I hope to rise in the world. Were you really in earnest when you said that you could love a man of lowly position?” “Indeed I was. But I said ‘might’. There is a Grand Duke and a Marquis pursuing me. Yes, no position could be too humble were the man what I would wish him to be.” “I work,” declared Mr Parkenstacker, “in a restaurant.” The girl shrank slightly. “Not as a waiter?” she said, almost pleading. “Labour is noble, but, — personal service, you know — valets and — ” “I am not a waiter. I am cashier in” — on the street they faced beyond the opposite side of the park was the brilliant electric sign “RESTAURANT” — “I am cashier in that restaurant you see there.” The girl glanced at a tiny watch set in a bracelet upon her left wrist, and rose, hurriedly. She pushed her book into a glittering bag, for which, however, the book was too large. “Why are you not at work?” she asked. “I am on the night turn,” said the young man; “it is yet an hour before my period begins. May I not hope to see you again?” “I do not know. Perhaps — but the fancy may not seize me again. I must go quickly now. There is a dinner, and a box at the play — and oh! the same old round. Perhaps you noticed an automobile at the upper corner of the park as you came. One with a white body.” “And red wheels?” asked the young man, frowning thoughtfully. “Yes, I always come in that. Pierre waits for me there. He supposes me to be shopping in the department store across the square. Imagine a life wherein we must deceive even our chauffeurs. Goodnight.” “But it is dark now,” said Mr Parkenstacker, “and the park is full of rude men. May I not walk — ?” “If you have the slightest regard for my wishes,” said the girl, firmly, “you will remain at this bench for ten minutes after I have left. I do not mean to accuse you, but you are probably aware that autos generally bear the monogram of their owner. Again, good-night.” Swift and stately she moved away through the dusk. The young man watched her graceful form as she reached the pavement at the park’s edge, and turned up along it toward the corner where stood the automobile. Then he treacherously and unhesitatingly began to slide along the park trees and bushes in a course parallel to her route, keeping her well in sight. When she reached the corner she turned her head to glance at the motor car, and then passed it, continuing on across the street. Sheltered behind a standing cab, the young man followed her movements closely with his eyes. Passing down the sidewalk of the street opposite the park, she entered the restaurant with the blazing sign. The place was one of those glaring establishments, all white paint and glass, where one may dine cheaply. The girl entered the restaurant and went to some place at the back, whence she quickly returned without her hat and veil. The cashier’s desk was well to the front. A red-haired girl on the stool climbed down, glancing pointedly at the clock as she did so. The girl in gray mounted in her place. The young man pushed his hands into his pockets and walked slowly back along the sidewalk. At the corner his foot struck a small, paper-covered volume lying there. By its picturesque cover he recognized it as the book the girl had been reading. He picked it up carelessly, and saw that its title was New Arabian Nights, the author being of the name of Stevenson. He dropped it again upon the grass, and stood hesitating, for a minute. Then he stepped into the automobile reclined upon the cushions, and said two words to the chauffeur: “Club, Henri.”

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**W.SOMERSET MAUGHAM. HOME.**

The farm lay in a small valley among the Somersetshire hills, an old-fashioned stone house surrounded by barns and pens and outhouses. Over the doorway the date when it was built had been carved in the elegant figures of the period, 1673, and the house, grey and weather-beaten, looked as much a part of the landscape as the trees that surrounded it. An avenue of splendid elms led from the road to the neat garden. The people who lived here were unexcitable, strong and modest as the house; their only boast was that ever since it was built they had been born and died in it: from father to son in one unbroken line. For three hundred years they had farmed the surrounding land. George Meadows was now a man of fifty, and his wife was a year or two younger. They were both fine, honest people in the prime of life; and their children, two sons and three girls were handsome and strong. I have never seen a more united household. They were merry, industrious and kindly. Their life had a completeness that gave it a beauty as definite as that of a symphony of Beethoven’s or a picture by Titian. They were happy and they deserved their happiness. But the master of the house was not George Meadows (not by a long chalk, they said in the village); it was his mother. She was twice the man her son was, they said. She was a woman of seventy, tall, upright and dignified with grey hair, and though her face was much wrinkled, her eyes were bright and shrewd. Her word was law in the house and on the farm; but she had humor, and if her rule was despotic it was also kindly. People laughed at her jokes and repeated them. She was a good business woman. She combined in a rare degree good will with a sense of the ridiculous. She was a character. One day Mrs. George stopped me on my way home. She was really exited. (Her mother-in-law was the only “Mrs. Meadows” we knew; George’s wife was only known as “Mrs. George”). “Who ever do you think is coming here today?” she asked me. “Uncle George Meadows. You know, he was in China.” “Why, I thought he was dead.” “We all thought he was dead.” 7 – 64 – I had heard the story of Uncle George Meadows a dozen times, and it had amused me because it sounded like an old ballad: it was quite moving to come across it in real life. For Uncle George Meadows and Tom, his younger brother, had both courted Mrs. Meadows when she was Emily Green, fifty years and more ago, and when she married Torn, George had gone away to sea. They heard of him on the China coast. For twenty years now and then he had sent them presents; then there was no more news of him; when Tom Meadows died his widow wrote and told him, but received no answer; and at last they came to the conclusion that he must be dead. But two or three days ago to their astonishment they had received a letter from the matron of the sailors’ home at Portsmouth. It appeared that for the last ten years George Meadows, crippled with rheumatism, had lived there, and now, feeling that he had not much longer to live, wanted to see once more the house in which he was born. Albert Meadows, his great-nephew, had gone over to Portsmouth in the Ford to fetch him and he was to arrive that afternoon. “Just fancy,” said Mrs. George, “he’s not been here for more than fifty years. He’s never even seen my George, who’s fifty-one next birthday.” “And what does Mrs. Meadows think of it?” I asked. “Well, you know what she is. She sits there and smiles to herself. All she says, ‘He was a good-looking young fellow when he left, but not so steady as his brother,’ That’s why she chose my George’s father. ‘But he’s probably quietened down by now,’ she says.” Mrs George asked me to look in and see him. With the simplicity of a country woman who had never been further from her home than London, she thought that because we had both been in China we must have something in common. Of course I accepted. I found the whole family assembled when I arrived; they were sitting in the great old kitchen, with its stone floor, Mrs Meadows in her usual chair by the fire, very upright, and I was amused to see that she had put on her best silk dress, while her son and his wife sat at the table with their children. On the other side of the fireplace sat an old man, bunched up in a chair. He was very thin and his skin hung on his bones like an old suit much too large for him; his face was wrinkled and yellow and he had lost nearly all his teeth. I shook hands with him. – 65 – “Well, I’m glad too see you’ve got here safely, Mr Meadows”, I said. “Captain,” he corrected. “He walked here,” Albert, his great-nephew, told me. “When he got to the gate he made me stop the car and said he wanted to walk.” “And mind you, I’ve not been out of my bed for two years. They carried me down and put me in the car. I thought I’d never walk again, but when I saw those elm trees, I felt I could walk. I walked down that drive fifty-two years ago when I went away and now I’ve walked back again.” “Silly, I call it,” said Mrs Meadows. “It’s done me good I feel better and stronger than I have for ten years. I’ll see you out yet, Emily.” “Don’t you be too sure”, she answered. I suppose no one had called Mrs Meadows by her first name for a generation. It gave me a little shock, as though the old man were taking a liberty with her. She looked at him with a shrewd smile in her eyes and he, talking to her, grinned with his toothless gums. It was strange to look at them, these two old people who had not seen one another for half a century, and to think that all that long time ago he had loved her and she had loved another. I wondered if they remembered what they had felt then and what they had said to one another. I wondered if it seemed to him strange now that for that old woman he had left the home of his fathers, his lawful inheritance, and lived an exile’s life. “Have you ever been married, Captain Meadows?” I asked. “Not me,” he said, in his shaking voice, with a grin. “I know too much about women for that.” “That’s what you say,” answered Mrs Meadows. “If the truth was known I shouldn’t be surprised to hear that you’d had half a dozen black wives in your day,” “They’re not black in China, Emily, óîu ought to know better than that, they’re yellow.” “Perhaps that’s why you’ve got so yellow yourself. When I saw you, I said to myself, why, he’s got jaundice”. “I said I’d never marry anyone but you, Emily, and I never have.” He said this not to cause pity or in bitterness, but as a mere statement of fact, as a man might say, “I said I’d walk twenty miles and I’ve done it.” There was some satisfaction in the speech. “Well, you might have regretted it if you had,” she answered. – 66 – I talked a little with the old man about China. “There’s no port in China that I don’t know better than you know your coat pocket. Where a shi p can go I’ve been. I could keep you sitting here all day long for six months and not tell you half the things I’ve seen in my day”. “Well, one thing you’ve not done, George, as far as I can see,” said Mrs Meadows, “the mocking but not unkindly smile still in her eyes, and that’s to make a fortune.” “I’m not one to save money. Make it and spend it; that’s my motto. But one thing I can say for myself: if I had the chance of going through life again I’d take it. And there aren’t many people who’ll say that.” “No, indeed,” I said. I looked at him with admiration and respect. He was a toothless, cri ppled, penniless old man, but he had made a success of life, for he had enjoyed it. When I left him he asked me to come and see him again next day. If I was interested in China he would tell me all the stories I wanted to hear. Next morning I thought I would go and ask if the old man would like to see me. I strolled down the magnificent avenue of elm trees and when I came to the garden saw Mrs Meadows picking flowers. I bade her good morning and she raised herself. She had a huge armful of white flowers. I glanced at the house and I saw that the blinds were drawn: I was surprised, for Mrs Meadows liked the sunshine. “Time enough to live in the dark when you’re buried,” she always said. “How’s Captain Meadows?” I asked her. “He always was a wild fellow,” she answered. “When Lizzie took him a cup of tea this morning she found he was dead.” “Dead?” “Yes. Died in his sleep. I was just picking these flowers to put in the room. Well, I’m glad he died in that old house. It always means a lot to those Meadows to do that”. They had had a good deal of difficulty in persuading him to go to bed. He had talked to them of all the things that had happened to him in his long life. He was happy to be back in his old home. He was proud that he had walked up the drive without assistance, and he boasted that he would live for another twenty years. But fate had been kind: death had written the full-stop in the right place. Mrs Meadows smelt the white flowers that she held in her arms. “Well, I’m glad he came back,” she said. “After I married Tom Meadows and George went away, the fact is I was never quite sure that I’d married the right one”.

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**JAMES JOYCE. EVELINE**

She sat at the window watching the evening enter the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains, and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cotton cloth. She was tired. Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the path before the new red houses. Once there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people’s children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses on it — not like their little brown houses, but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field — the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home. Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food, she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her at the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps, and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always spoken harshly to her, especially whenever there were people listening. “Miss Hill, don’t you see these ladies are waiting?” “Look lively, Miss Hill, please.” She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores. But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married — she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father’s violence. She knew it was that that had given her the palpitations. When they were growing up he had never struck her, as he used to strike Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl, but lately he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother’s sake. And now she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the country. Besides, the invariable quarrel about money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages — seven shillings — and Harry always sent up what he could, but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to waste the money, that she had no head, that he wasn’t going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday’s dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions. She had hard work to keep the house together and see that the two young children who had been left to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work — a hard life — but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life. She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very bind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres, where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him! He was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his cap pushed on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see The Bohemian Girl and she felt excited as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting, and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused. First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He told tales of distant countries. He had started as a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada. He told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him. “I know these sailor chaps,” he said. One day he had quarreled with Frank, and after that she had to meet her lover secretly. The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry, the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite, but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth. She remembered her father putting on her mother’s hat to make the children laugh. Her time was running out, but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cotton cloth. Down in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the tune. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother’s illness; she was again in the close, dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy tune of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and been given sixpence. She remembered her father walking back into the sick-room saying: “Damned Italians! Coming over here!” As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother’s life laid its spell on her very soul — that life of common-place sacrifices ending in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother’s voice saying constantly with foolish insistence: “Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!” She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her. She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying beside the quay wall, with lighted portholes. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a confusion of pain, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, to-morrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her pain awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer. A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand: “Come!” All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing. “Come!” No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in madness. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish. “Eveline! Evvy!” He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on, but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.

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**BERTRAND RUSSELL. HOW TO GROW OLD**

In spite of the title, this article will really be on how not to grow old, which, at my time of life, is a much more important subject. My first advice would be to choose your ancestors carefully. Although both my parents died young, I have done well in this respect as regards my other ancestors. My maternal grandfather, it is true, was cut off in the flower of his youth at the age of sixty-seven, but my other three grandparents all lived to be over eighty. Of remoter ancestors I can only discover one who did not live to a great age, and he died of a disease, which is now rare, namely, having his head cut off. A great-grandmother of mine, who was a friend of Gibbon, lived to the age of ninety-two, and to her last day remained a terror to all her descendants. My maternal grandmother, after having nine children who survived, one who died in infancy, and many miscarriages, as soon as she became a widow devoted herself to women’s higher education. She was one of the founders of Girton College, and worked hard at opening the medical profession to women. She used to tell of how she met in Italy an elderly gentleman who was looking very sad. She asked him why he was so melancholy and he said that he just parted from his two grandchildren. “Good gracious,” she exclaimed, “I have seventy-two grandchildren, and if I were sad each time I parted from one of them, I should have a miserable existence!” “Madres naturale,” he replied. But speaking as one of the seventy-two, I prefer her recipe. After the age of eighty she found she had some difficulty in getting to sleep, so she habitually spent the hours from midnight to 3 a. m. in reading popular science. I do not believe that she ever had time to notice that she was growing old. This, I think, is the proper recipe for remaining young. If you have wide and keen interests and activities in which you can still be effective, you will have no reason to think about the merely statistical fact of the number of years you have already lived, still less of the probable shortness of your future. As regards health, I have nothing useful to say as I have little experience of illness. I eat and drink whatever I like, and sleep when I cannot keep awake. I never do anything whatever on the ground that it is good for health, though in actual fact the things I like doing are mostly wholesome. Psychologically there are two dangers to be guarded against in old age. One of these is too great an absorption in the past. One should not live in memories, in regrets for the good old days, or in sadness about friends who are dead. One’s thoughts must be directed to the future, and to things about which there is something to be done. This is not always easy, one’s own past is a gradually increasing weight. It is easy to think to oneself that one’s emotions used to be more vivid than they are, and one’s mind more keen. If this is true it should be forgotten, and if it is forgotten it will probably not be true. The other thing to be avoided is clinging to youth in the hope of finding strength in its vitality. When your children are grown up they want to live their own lives, and if you continue to be as interested in them as you were when they were young, you are likely to become a burden to them, unless they are unusually insensible. I do not mean that one should be without interest in them, but one’s interest should be contemplative and, if possible, philanthropic, but not too emotional. Animals become indifferent to their young as soon as their young can look after themselves, but human beings, owing to the length of infancy, find this less easy. I think that a successful old age is easiest for those who have strong impersonal interests leading to suitable activities. It is in this sphere that long experience is really fruitful, and that the wisdom born of experience can be used without becoming a burden. It is no use telling grown-up children not to make mistakes, both because they will not believe you, and because mistakes are an essential part of education. But if you are one of those who are incapable of impersonal interests, you may find that your life will be empty unless you concern yourself with your children and grandchildren. In that case you must realise that while you can still help them in material ways, as by making them an allowance or knitting them jumpers, you must not expect that they will enjoy your company. Some old people are troubled by the fear of death. In the young there is a justification for this feeling. Young men who have reason to fear that they will be killed in battle may justifiably feel bitter in the thought that they have been cheated of the best things that life has to offer. But in an old man who has known human joys and sorrows, and has done whatever work it was in him to do, the fear of death is somewhat ignoble. The best way to overcome it — so at least seems to me — is to make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly part of the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river small at first, narrowly contained within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break, they become part of the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being. The man who, in old age, can see his life in this way, will not suffer from the fear of death, since the things he cares for will continue. And if, with the loss of vitality, weariness increases, the thought of rest will not be unwelcome. I should wish to die while still at work, knowing that others will carry on what I can no longer do, and content in the thought that what was possible has been done.

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DOROTHY PARKER. THE LAST TEA.

The young man in the chocolate-brown suit sat down at the table, where the girl with the artificial camellia had been sitting for forty minutes. “Guess I must be late,” he said. “Sorry you been waiting.” “Oh, goodness!” she said. “I just got here myself, just about a second ago. I simply went ahead and ordered because I was dying for a cup of tea. I was late, myself. I haven’t been here more than a minute.” “That’s good,” he said. “Hey, hey, easy on the sugar — one lump is fair enough. And take away those cakes. Terrible! Do I feel terrible!” “Ah,” she said, “you do? Ah. Whadda matter?” “Oh, I’m ruined,” he said. “I’m in terrible shape.” “Ah, the poor boy,” she said, “Was it feelin’ mizzable? Ah, and it came way up here to meet me! You shouldn’t have done that — I’d have understood. Ah, just think of it coming all the way up here when it’s so sick!” “Oh, that’s all right,” he said. “I might as well be here as any place else. Any place is like any other place, the way I feel today. Oh, I’m all shot.” “Why, that’s just awful,” she said. “Why, you poor sick thing. Goodness, I hope it isn’t influenza. They say there’s a lot of it around.” “Influenza!” he said. “I wish that was all I had. Oh, I’m poisoned. I’m through. I’m off the stuff for life. Know what time I got to bed? Twenty minutes past five, a. m., this morning. What a night! What an evening!” “I thought,” she said, “that you were going to stay in the office and work late. You said you’d be working every night this week.” “Yeah, I know,” he said. “But it gave me the jumps. Thinking about going down there and sitting at that desk. I went up to May’s — she was throwing a party. Say, there was somebody there said they knew you.” “Honestly?” she said. “Man or woman?” “Dame,” he said. “Name’s Carol McCall. Say, why haven’t I been told about her before? That’s what I call a girl. What a looker she is!” “Oh, really?” she said. “That’s funny. I never heard of anyone that thought that. I’ve heard people say she was sort of nice-looking, if she wouldn’t make up so much. But I never heard of anyone that thought she was pretty.” “Pretty is right,” he said. “What a couple of eyes she’s got on her!” “Really?” she said. “I never noticed them particularly. But I haven’t seen her for a long time — sometimes people change, or something.” “She says she used to go to school with you,” he said. “Well, we went to the same school,” she said. “I simply happened to go to public school because it happened to be right near us, and Mother hated to have me crossing streets. But she was three or four classes ahead of me. She’s ages older than I am.” “She’s three or four classes ahead of them all,” he said. “Dance! Can she step! ‘Burn your clothes, baby,’ I kept telling her. I must have been fried pretty.” “I was out dancing myself, last night,” she said. “Wally Dillon and I. He’s just been pestering me to go out with him. He’s the most wonderful dancer. Goodness! I didn’t get home until I don’t know what time. I must look just simply a wreck. Don’t I?” “You look all right,” he said. “Wally’s crazy,” she said. “The things he says! For some crazy reason or other, he’s got it into his head that I’ve got beautiful eyes, and, well, he just kept talking about them till I didn’t know where to look, I was so embarrassed. I got so red, I thought everybody in the place would be looking at me. I got just as red as a brick. Beautiful eyes! Isn’t he crazy?” “He’s all right,” he said. “Say, this little McCall girl, she’s had all kinds of offers to go into moving pictures. ‘Why don’t you go ahead and go?’ I told her. But she says she doesn’t feel like it.” “There was a man up at the lake, two summers ago,” she said. “He was a director or something with one of the big moving-picture people — oh, he had all kinds of influence! — and he used to keep insisting and insisting that I ought to be in the movies. Said I ought to be doing sort of Garbo parts. I used to just laugh at him. Imagine!” “She’s had about a million offers,” he said. “I told her to go ahead and go. She keeps getting these offers all the time.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Oh, listen, I knew I had something to ask you. Did you call me up last night, by any chance?” “Me?” he said. “No, I didn’t call you.” “While I was out. Mother said this man’s voice kept calling up,” she said. “I thought maybe it might be you, by some chance. I wonder who could have been. Oh — I guess I know who it was. Yes, that’s who it was!” “No, I didn’t call you,” he said. “I couldn’t have seen a telephone, last night. What a head I had on me, this morning! I called Carol up, around ten, and she said she was feeling great. Can that girl hold her liquor!” “It’s a funny thing about me,” she said. “It just makes me feel sort of sick to see a girl drink. It’s just something in me, I guess. I don’t mind a man so much, but it makes me feel perfectly terrible to see a girl get intoxicated. It’s just the way I am, I suppose.” “Does she carry it!” he said. “And then feels great the next day. There’s a girl! Hey, what are you doing there? I don’t want any more tea, thanks. I’m not one of these tea boys. And these tea-rooms give me the jumps. Look at all those old dames, will you? Enough to give you the jumps.” “Of course, if you’ll rather be some place, drinking, with I don’t know what kinds of people,” she said. “I’m sure I don’t see how I can help that. Goodness, there are enough people that are glad enough to take me to tea — I don’t know how many people keep calling me up and pestering me to take me to tea. Plenty of people!” “All right, all right, I’m here, aren’t I?” he said. “Keep your hair on.” “I could name them all day,” she said. “All right,” he said. “What’s there to crab about?” “Goodness, it isn’t any of my business what you do,” she said. “But I hate to see you wasting your time with people that aren’t nearly good enough for you. That’s all.” “No need worrying over me,” he said. “I’ll be all right. Listen. You don’t have to worry.” “It’s just I don’t like to see you wasting your time,” she said, staying up all night and then feeling terribly the next day. “Ah, I was forgetting he was so sick. Ah, I was mean, wasn’t I, scolding him when he was so mizzable. Poor boy. How’s he feel now?” “Oh, I’m all right,” he said. “I feel fine. You want anything else? How about getting a check? I got to make a telephone call before six.” “Oh, really?” she said. “Calling up Carol?” “She said she might be in around now,” he said. “Seeing her tonight?” she said. “She’s going to let me know when I call up,” he said. “She’s probably got about a million dates. Why?” “I was just wondering,” she said. “Goodness, I’ve got to fly! I’m having dinner with Wally, and he’s so crazy. He’s probably there now. He’s called me up about a hundred times today.” “Wait till I pay the check,” he said, “and I’ll put you on a bus.” “Oh, don’t bother,” she said. “It’s right at the corner. I’ve got to fly. I suppose you want to stand and call up your friend from here?” “It’s an idea,” he said. “Sure you’ll be all right?” “Oh, sure,” she said. Busily she gathered her gloves and purse, and left her chair. He rose, not quite fully, as she stopped beside him. “When’ll I see you again?” she said. “I’ll call you up,” he said. “I’m all tied up, down at the office and everything. Tell you what I’ll do. I’ll give you a ring.” “Honestly, I have more dates!” she said. “It’s terrible. I don’t know when I’ll have a minute. But you call up, will you?” “I’ll do that,” he said. “Take care of yourself.” “You take care of yourself,” she said. “Hope you’ll feel all right.” “Oh, I’m fine,” he said. “Just beginning to come back to life.” “Be sure and let me know how you feel,” she said. “Will you? Sure, now? Well, good-bye. Oh, have a good time tonight! Thanks,” he said. “Hope you have a good time, too.” “Oh, I will,” she said. “I expect to. I’ve got to rush! Oh, I nearly forgot! Thanks ever so much for the tea. It was lovely.” “Be yourself, will you?” he said. “It was,” she said. “Well. Now don’t forget to call me up, will you? Sure? Well, good-bye.” “So long,” he said. She walked on down the little lane between the blue-painted tables.

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**Ernest Hemingway – ‘Cat in the Rain’**

There were only two Americans stopping at the hotel. They did not know any of the people they passed on the stairs on their way to and from their room. Their room was on the second floor facing the sea. It also faced the public garden and the war monument. There were big palms and green benches in the public garden. In the good weather there was always an artist with his easel. Artists liked the way the palms grew and the bright colors of the hotels facing the gardens and the sea. Italians came from a long way off to look up at the war monument. It was made of bronze and glistened in the rain. It was raining. The rain dripped from the palm trees. Water stood in pools on the gravel paths. The sea broke in a long line in the rain and slipped back down the beach to come up and break again in a long line in the rain. The motor cars were gone from the square by the war monument. Across the square in the doorway of the café a waiter stood looking out at the empty square. The American wife stood at the window looking out. Outside right under their window a cat was crouched under one of the dripping green tables. The cat was trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on. ‘I’m going down and get that kitty,’ the American wife said. ‘I’ll do it,’ her husband offered from the bed. ‘No, I’ll get it. The poor kitty out trying to keep dry under a table.’ The husband went on reading, lying propped up with the two pillows at the foot of the bed. ‘Don’t get wet,’ he said. The wife went downstairs and the hotel owner stood up and bowed to her as she passed the office. His desk was at the far end of the office. He was an old man and very tall. ‘Il piove,1 ’the wife said. She liked the hotel-keeper. ‘Si, Si, Signora, brutto tempo2 . It is very bad weather.’ He stood behind his desk in the far end of the dim room. The wife liked him. She liked the deadly serious way he received any complaints. She liked his dignity. She liked the way he wanted to serve her. She liked the way he felt about being a hotel-keeper. She liked his old, heavy face and big hands. Liking him she opened the door and looked out. It was raining harder. A man in a rubber cape was crossing the empty square to the café. The cat would be around to the right. Perhaps she could go along under the eaves. As she stood in the doorway an umbrella opened behind her. It was the maid who looked after their room. ‘You must not get wet,’ she smiled, speaking Italian. Of course, the hotel-keeper had sent her. With the maid holding the umbrella over her, she walked along the gravel path until she was under their window. The table was there, washed bright green in the rain, but the cat was gone. She was suddenly disappointed. The maid looked up at her. ‘Ha perduto qualque cosa, Signora?’3 ‘There was a cat,’ said the American girl. ‘A cat?’ ‘Si, il gatto.’ ‘A cat?’ the maid laughed. ‘A cat in the rain?’ ‘Yes, –’ she said, ‘under the table.’ Then, ‘Oh, I wanted it so much. I wanted a kitty.’ When she talked English the maid’s face tightened. ‘Come, Signora,’ she said. ‘We must get back inside. You will be wet.’ ‘I suppose so,’ said the American girl. 1 ‘It’s raining.’ ‘Yes, yes Madam. Awful weather.’ 3 ‘Have you lost something, Madam?’ They went back along the gravel path and passed in the door. The maid stayed outside to close the umbrella. As the American girl passed the office, the padrone bowed from his desk. Something felt very small and tight inside the girl. The padrone made her feel very small and at the same time really important. She had a momentary feeling of being of supreme importance. She went on up the stairs. She opened the door of the room. George was on the bed, reading. ‘Did you get the cat?’ he asked, putting the book down. ‘It was gone.’ ‘Wonder where it went to,’ he said, resting his eyes from reading. She sat down on the bed. ‘I wanted it so much,’ she said. ‘I don’t know why I wanted it so much. I wanted that poor kitty. It isn’t any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain.’ George was reading again. She went over and sat in front of the mirror of the dressing table looking at herself with the hand glass. She studied her profile, first one side and then the other. Then she studied the back of her head and her neck. ‘Don’t you think it would be a good idea if I let my hair grow out?’ she asked, looking at her profile again. George looked up and saw the back of her neck, clipped close like a boy’s. ‘I like it the way it is.’ ‘I get so tired of it,’ she said. ‘I get so tired of looking like a boy.’ George shifted his position in the bed. He hadn’t looked away from her since she started to speak. ‘You look pretty darn nice,’ he said. She laid the mirror down on the dresser and went over to the window and looked out. It was getting dark. ‘I want to pull my hair back tight and smooth and make a big knot at the back that I can feel,’ she said. ‘I want to have a kitty to sit on my lap and purr when I stroke her.’ ‘Yeah?’ George said from the bed. ‘And I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes.’ ‘Oh, shut up and get something to read,’ George said. He was reading again. His wife was looking out of the window. It was quite dark now and still raining in the palm trees. ‘Anyway, I want a cat,’ she said, ‘I want a cat. I want a cat now. If I can’t have long hair or any fun, I can have a cat.’ George was not listening. He was reading his book. His wife looked out of the window where the light had come on in the square. Someone knocked at the door. ‘Avanti,’ George said. He looked up from his book. In the doorway stood the maid. She held a big tortoiseshell cat pressed tight against her and swung down against her body. ‘Excuse me,’ she said, ‘the padrone asked me to bring this for the Signora.

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**GRAHAM GREENE. THE INVISIBLE JAPANESE GENTLEMEN**

There were eight Japanese gentlemen having a fish dinner at Bentley’s. They spoke to each other rarely in their incomprehensible tongue, but always with a courteous smile and often with a small bow. All but one of them wore glasses. Sometimes the pretty girl who sat in the window beyond gave them a passing glance, but her own problem seemed too serious for her to pay real attention to anyone in the world except herself and her companion. She had thin blonde hair and her face was pretty and petite in a Regency way, oval like a miniature, though she had a harsh way of speaking — perhaps the accent of the school, Roedean or Cheltenham Ladies’ College, which she had not long ago left. She wore a man’s signet-ring on her engagement finger, and as I sat down at my table, with the Japanese gentlemen between us, she said, “So you see we could marry next week.” “Yes?” Her companion appeared a little distraught. He refilled their glasses with Chablis and said, “Of course, but Mother...” I missed some of the conversation then, because the eldest Japanese gentleman leant across the table, with a smile and a little bow, and uttered a whole paragraph like the mutter from an aviary, while everyone bent towards him and smiled and listened, and I couldn’t help attending to him myself. The girl’s fiancè resembled her physically. I could see them as two miniatures hanging side by side on white wood panels. He should have been a young officer in Nelson’s navy in the days when a certain weakness and sensitivity were no bar to promotion. She said, “They are giving me an advance of five hundred pounds, and they’ve sold the paperback rights already”. The hard commercial declaration as a shock to me; it was a shock too that she was one of my own profession. She couldn’t be more than twenty. She deserved better of life. He said, “But my uncle¾” “You know you don’t get on with him. This way we shall be quite independent.” “You will be independent,” he said grudgingly “The wine-trade wouldn’t really suit you, would it? I spoke to my publisher about you and there is a very good chance¾ if you began with some reading...” “But I don’t know a thing about books.” “I would help you at the start.” “My mother says that writing is a good crutch...” “Five hundred pounds and half the paperback rights is a pretty solid crutch”, she said. “This Chablis is good, isn’t it?” “I daresay.” I began to change my opinion of him — he had not the Nelson touch. He was doomed to defeat. She came alongside and raked him fore and aft. “Do you know what Mr Dwight said?” “Who’s Dwight?” “Darling, you don’t listen, do you? My publisher. He said he hadn’t read a first novel in the last ten years which showed such powers of observation.” That’s wonderful,” he said sadly, “wonderful.” “Only he wants me to change the tide.” “Yes.” “He does not like The Ever-Rolling Stream. He wants to call it The Chelsea Set. “What did you say?” “I agreed. I do think that with a first novel one should try to keep one’s publisher happy. Especially when, really, he’s going to pay for our marriage, isn’t he?” “I see what you mean.” Absent-mindedly he stirred his Chablis with a fork — perhaps before the engagement he had always bought champagne. The Japanese gentlemen had finished their fish and with very little English but with elaborate courtesy they were ordering from the middle-aged waitress a fresh fruit salad. The girl looked at them, and then she looked at me, but I think she saw only the future. I wanted very much to warn her against any future based on a first novel called The Chelsea Set. I was on the side of his mother. It was a humiliating thought, but I was probably about her mother’s age. I wanted to say to her, are you certain your publisher is telling you the truth? Publishers are human. They may sometimes exaggerate the virtues of the young and the pretty. Will The Chelsea Set be read in five years? Are you prepared for the years of effort, “the long defeat of doing nothing well”? As the years pass writing will not become any easier, the daily effort will grow harder to endure, those “powers of observation” will become enfeebled, you will be judged, when you reach your forties, by performance and not by promise. “My next novel is going to be about St Tropez.” “I didn’t know you’d ever been there.” “I haven’t. A fresh eye’s terribly important. I thought we might settle down there for six months.” “There wouldn’t be much left of the advance by that time.” “The advance is only an advance. I get fifteen per cent after five thousand copies and twenty per cent after ten. And of course another advance will be due, darling — when the next book’s finished. A bigger one if The Chelsea Set sells well.” “Suppose it doesn’t.” “Mr Dwight says it will. He ought to know.” “My uncle would start me at twelve hundred.” “But darling, how could you come then to St. Tropez?” “Perhaps we’d do better to marry when you come back.” She said harshly, “I mightn’t come back if The Chelsea Set sells enough.” “Oh.” She looked at me and the party of Japanese gentlemen. She finished her wine. She said, “Is this a quarrel?” “No.” “I’ve got the title for the next book — The Àãurå Blue.” “I thought azure was blue.” She looked at him with disappointment. “You don’t really want to be married to a novelist, do you?” “You aren’t one yet.” “I was born one — Mr Dwight says. My powers of observation...” “Yes. You told me that, but, dear, couldn’t you observe a bit nearer home? Here in London.” “I’ve done that in The Chelsea Set. I don’t want to repeat myself.” The bill had been lying beside them for some time now. He took out his wallet to pay, but she snatched the paper out of his reach. She said, “This is my celebration.” “What of?” “The Chelsea Set, of course. Darling, you’re awfully decorative, but sometimes — well, you simply don’t connect.” “I’d rather... if you don’t mind...” “No, darling, this is on me. And Mr Dwight, of course.” He submitted just as two of the Japanese gentlemen gave tongue simultaneously, then stopped abruptly and bowed to each other, as though they were blocked in a doorway. I had thought the two young people matching miniatures, but what a contrast in fact there was. The same type of prettiness could contain weakness and strength. Her Regency counterpart, I suppose would have borne a dozen children without the aid of anaesthetics, while he would have fallen an easy victim to the first dark eyes in Naples. Would there one day be a dozen books on her shelf? They have to he born without an anaesthetic too. I found myself hoping that The Chelsea Set would prove to be a disaster and that eventually she would take up photographic modelling while he established himself solidly in the wine-trade in St James’s. I didn’t like to think of her as the Mrs Humphrey Ward of her generation — not that I would live so long. Old age saves us from the realization of a great many fears. I wondered to which publishing firm Dwight belonged. I could imagine the blurb he would have already written about her abrasive powers of observation. There would be a photo, if he was wise, on the back of the jacket, for reviewers, as well as publishers, are human, and she didn’t look like Mrs Humphrey Ward. I could hear them talking while they found their coats at the back of the restaurant. He said, “I wonder what all those Japanese are doing here?” “Japanese?” she said. “What Japanese, darling? Sometimes you are so evasive I think you don’t want to marry me at all.”

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6. In whose name is the story narrated? Is it a first-person (a third- person) narration? Outline the character of the narrator, if there is any. What is the function of the narrator?

7. What mood (key, vein, slant) is the passage/story written in? Does the mood change as the narration proceeds?

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9. Speak about the language means employed in the passage/story. What episodes abound in various tropes? What is their effect? Are there any places which are devoid of any imagery? What does this dry manner of writing con- tribute to? Does the author contrast expressiveness of some parts of his story?

Why? What layer words are mainly used in the passage/story: formal, bookish, colloquial? Does the author resort to stylistically coloured vocabulary: terms, archaisms, neologisms, barbarisms, foreign loans, slangy words, jargonisms, professional and dialectal words, vulgarisms? What is their function? Are there any discrepancies between the plot and the language means used to reproduce it?

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2. Give the gist of the passage/story. (Summarize the content of the pas- sage/story.) Divide it into logically complete parts and suggest titles to each.

3. Point out the composition parts of the passage/story: exposition, story, climax, denouement. Is there a clear exposition or does the narration start abruptly? Are time, place and background stated or only implied?

Analyze the use of the articles, pronouns and adverbs. Say whether their specific usage creates the implication of precedence. What is the function of this implication? How does the action move: slowly or fast? What part of speech prevails: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc.? What is the effect of their use?

4. What is more important: the events that make the plot or the implication? What is implied? How does the passage/story end: in a clear or ambiguous and vague way?

5. What does the passage/story present: narration, description, dialogue, monologue, inner monologue of a character, the author’s argumentation? What is the prevailing narrative form?

6. In whose name is the story narrated? Is it a first-person (a third- person) narration? Outline the character of the narrator, if there is any. What is the function of the narrator?

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