

SCHIZO

by

Robert Minard

Copyright 2021

1.

William Holden Jr and his cat, Huysmans, were writers. The cat she didn't do much writing of course but Holden considered her essential to the occasional undertakings with which he passed the time in his now fifty-three-year-old life. Being middle-aged suited him. For the first time in a long time he considered his circumstances vaguely stable, and he did what had more or less motivated most of his years. He tried to write stories and essays.

He didn't really accomplish much; over the years he had written a science fiction story about an anatomist, a story about an attempted suicide, an essay about William the Conqueror and a lengthy manuscript about life in prep school. These attempts at eloquence were now all gone of course because of a messy eviction in which he lost all of his dwindling possessions and papers including everything he still preserved that he had written over the years. Holden

was an oddball there was no doubt, but now that he had Huysmans for company he was doing all right.

Today the writer and his cat were sitting quietly in their apartment waiting for someone to come and make repairs. This happened once in a while now in his new living arrangement. He now lived in public housing and this was an enormous improvement over his previous situation in a subsidized apartment where his subsidy had changed after he started living there and he could barely afford the rent, not to mention the intrusions by the landlord without permission or notice which gave him enormous problems.

Holden had schizophrenia and had been in and out of living situations for nearly 20 years. He was sensitive to things normal people might have taken in stride and hadn't lived with a cat since long before when a manipulative landlord made him get rid of his pet, Katerina, a little grey tiger cat in the days before he went to the hospital for the first time. It had been a long time, and only a slightly productive time, since then, and finally things were looking up.

"Kitty, what are you doing," He cooed to his new feline friend as she meandered about his room, a comfortable space with a view looking out over Portland Harbor. He now lived on the 15th floor of Franklin Towers, a vintage housing "project" building that housed nearly 200 elderly and disabled residents at the foot of Munjoy Hill in the city. He had lived here about 3 years now without any

problems because the building authority was careful to be considerate about intrusion and requirements and he was grateful to them for it.

Holden's father was a layman but his mother went to Junior College. It mattered a great deal to him that he had come from generations of laborers and farmers, although there was one mention of an ancestor who went to Bowdoin College for a year back during World War I. Holden's imagination had conjured up a story involving military service in the war and then college attendance or some similar trajectory, eventually renouncing war in every way, but this was just his overactive historical imagination mostly. Holden did this a lot, adding details and putting together a story embellished upon from a few historical details. It satisfied the hunger for history in him and he was somewhat of a gumshoe, seeking out curious snips of history and fact from old newspapers and books and then trying to compose a context and teleology for them.

Himself, Holden had been a talented but easygoing student of the classics, getting scholarships to prep school and colleges as much for his promise as from the social responsibility of the institutions he attended funding austerely supported students generously and bringing many poor students into school. He might have otherwise been successful and happy in a trade, and Holden often reflected that, in a different life, mental illness might never have been a factor. The Incredible-Hulk-like frustration that took over his life for years when his studies were

discontinued after a Master's degree because his lackluster performance had disqualified him further was a road in life that might never have been taken. Instead his studies at Phillips Exeter and the University of Southern Maine had carried their momentum into the graduate program at the University of Illinois where his exceptional idiosyncrasy far outpaced his performance and his previous bumpy but supported course of study had found its nemesis.

He had blown up and made an embarrassing scene, literally turning into a hybrid of the Incredible Hulk and the Hunchback of Notre Dame, terrorizing campus with his histrionic madness. Eventually and slowly after a few years he changed, and he treated his whole life, which had reached emergency circumstances maxing-out credit cards and cleaning at a restaurant to survive, as a military campaign. He kept himself "on the march" as he called it and imagined he was fighting the Civil War with his life on the line and making decisions with all the drama that entailed. He began going to a military recruiting station and tried to enlist in the military actually, but he was turned away after the physical examination.

Huysmans came over and rubbed against his leg, meowing for attention. Today he was neglecting his usual routine because he was expecting an interruption from the repairman. Usually he worked at his researches, writing up mysteries found reading old newspaper articles at the library, but today his concentration was interrupted and he watched

Huysmans with delight. Huysmans was such a good cat, she followed him between rooms in his apartment and slept on his bed at night, seldom leaving his side. He was especially anxious to return to his studies today because recently he had stumbled upon a cold case that intrigued him.

Holden was searching in old issues of the American Journal from 25 years before, browsing in the archives room at the Warren Library in Westbrook after he said hello to the library cats there, and he suddenly read a name that made him grow cold with recognition. The name was Tammy Marsden, someone he dated for a while at USM.

William Holden Jr, in all his encounters with medical professionals, had never been suggested to be a person with multiple personalities, but someone might think that if they tried to reconcile some of the facets of his personality. He was shy while at the same time often flamboyant. He was a libertine in many ways while being very reserved, and he was ambitious and outgoing while at the same time he was reclusive and introverted. In the days before his medical problems, which didn't begin in full force until he was thirty, most people would have described him as healthy, well-rounded and successful, at least those people who knew him from "Boosterville", as he called the world of schools and colleges. These people didn't know him from the world where he went when he was pressured to make a living and the various dead-end jobs he had done, some not so dead-end, where he was a happy-

go-lucky raging alcoholic, or just an enthusiastic teenager in the eyes of some.

William Holden had started out my mildly enough doing farm work but he had quickly added dishwashing at the Bonanza Steakhouse at the Maine Mall to his resume, where late night drives to camps at Sebago Lake had involved plenty of drinking and marijuana, and more of the same continued while he spent his free time at the Winchester's restaurant in the food court. His own money meant his own beer, something he didn't have while away at Exeter, not that there wasn't plenty of beer and booze and weed.

At the same time he had been especially fastidious and industrious as a student before his couple of years at boarding school. He used to keep a day schedule that organized its time down to ten-minute intervals every day and he spent more of his day at school doing extra curricular activities than he did eventually when he lived there. He ran on the cross-country running team where a respectable finish was a rarity. He was the manager of the boys basketball team, and he participated in events with the track team without any notable success. His classmates labeled him a brain but he didn't like the honor.

Things were very different at boarding school. He went from the top of his class to the barely respectable middle, while his relative performance as an athlete improved. His days as a born again Low Church Evangelical Protestant from his early teens

ended and he was exposed to the much more dignified and elegant Episcopalians. Holden dreamed one day of representing the wild ululations known as speaking-in-tongues in literature but he could never adequately figure out how to spell the articulations he had heard. Holden reveled in the attention of being a brain, and he wrote a prize essay in the ninth grade called "Opportunity in America". He later suspected that the Latin teacher who encouraged him to apply to boarding school had seen the essay as a member of a school panel of judges.

Holden's father (it was his mother who took him to church) was a snowplow driver who was in line to become the director of the town public works department. If his father had taken the job as director and the raise that came with it William never would have qualified for enough financial aid to go away to school. Instead the elder Holden had turned down the job because he was cautious about the responsibilities of the grander job, and he eventually changed to a less hectic but lesser paid position at the local water company. William inherited his father's commitment to caution but little of the can-do attitude that made his father a success.

Holden's father and mother together had a lot of effect on his growing up. The two were a couple from their high school years, and with few exceptions, growing up they were devoted to each other and both worked tirelessly to keep their household together. They lived, like many Maine farm families, in a little house built on the property of his

grandparents, the land had been a wedding gift, and they lived in the same town as both sets of grandparents. Being raised was a multi-generational project. His mother worked on a farm during the day when he was a child and he and his sister, younger by two years, usually stayed with an aunt on one side of the family or the other. Eventually there was a second sister, born when Holden was 15 and about to go away to school. In the years before his second sister was born, William's mother took an evening job in a greeting card shop to pay for a family piano that she bought so everyone could take lessons and learn to play. There had been an earlier, decrepit old hand-me-down piano that was a gift from an old lady down the road for whom his mother had helped clean house when she was ill.

His mother's tireless selflessness was a great source of guilt to Holden. Holden's mother had a way of becoming overwrought and stressed-out about dramatic events and big decisions, and Holden suspected it was because she cared so much but had so little time to digest events and thoughts. When Holden announced his wish to go to private school his mother, alone with him at the time, had wept with frustration, asking, "Do you think you deserve it?" The memory of it always stuck with Holden along with the other times she wept openly and helplessly at events. He forgave her and felt for her but always envied other children whose parents were more secure and stoic and sophisticated about living decisions. He would always remember when

he dropped out of school eventually and when he was diagnosed with mental illness, secretly blaming her for being no support to him.

There were lots of reasons why William Holden thought he had grown up with a lot of unresolved conflicts. He especially remembered going snowmobiling in Winter and going to the stock car races on Saturday nights in summer. Year-round his father was active, and they did things often with his paternal grandfather. Growing up, too, he had been an insatiable reader, in part because he just liked it, in part because he was curious, and in part because for many years there was no TV to watch in his household. He never knew why there was no TV, he just remembered that one day the TV stopped working and it wasn't replaced for a long time. He didn't know whether this was because it was too expensive to replace the TV or it was his mother's influence who thought the TV's commercialism could be improved upon.

Whatever the reason, the result was that William read a lot and kept reading through his teenage years and beyond. At first he read young adult books by the yard and later as he grew older he read everything that appealed to him at the local library, where the family visited every Wednesday night to check out their reading for the week. He read Alistair MacLean thrillers and Erma Bombeck and Christian novels and Mark Twain and eventually all of Dostoyevsky and all of Camus and all of Hemingway. It was a formative period in his life and his favorite

book was *Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy that he you found in an old box of books from Junior College at home.

In the end the reading took over and he no longer went to church with his mother or stock car racing and snowmobiling with his father and grandfather. These were replaced with music lessons and an intense interest in anglophile sports like crew and rugby which he kept up through his adolescence. In a way his teen years were a complete break with his life at puberty and childhood because there was little connection, it felt like, between himself at eighteen and himself at twelve.

The big difference was really that at eighteen he suddenly had to support himself because he didn't go to college immediately and he came from an austere household. His parents had struck out at about that time in their lives, and although there was a split and he didn't really think of his parents as role models they really were he realized in hindsight. His parents were sober, practical "regular people", to use their own phrase, and he was full of school admissions brochure garble, thinking that with so much prestige behind him he could only grow up to be no less than a bona fide prince. He dreamed of living as an expatriate in Paris like Hemingway and secretly plotted to see Russia somehow and soon while he was still young. To add fuel to the unlikelihood of these fires his classmates in boarding school were actually doing things while he washed dishes at Bonanza.

His senior year was a harbinger of things to come. It was time finally after a couple of years at prep school to apply to college, something that had started out at the front of his mind freshman year but in all the changes and social turmoil and excitement of the following years had lost its momentum. In the 9th grade he had sent letters of inquiry to Harvard and MIT and he had gone to Colby College for an admissions interview. High School had whipped up his ambitions early on like no one else around him. He was making up his college ambitions as he went along with little practical guidance. He just realized he was expected to go to college and he could not wait to grow up and get out of the small, stifling, unglamorous world of his home. If he hadn't found so many new social outlets over his high school years he would have probably carried his momentum into college and then had a breakdown there, but instead it happened in high school.

Returning to school senior year he was morose and depressed, and ended up seeing the school psychologist. He completely neglected college admission applications although he had some advice for pursuing his new ambition of an academic career because it could be a springboard to literary accomplishment. "Going to a big school with a graduate department and alums on the faculty" was wisely recommended, but the only things that mattered to William were his chances at Harvard which were now minimal to nonexistent. He began cutting classes and spending his time smoking in

town. He quit the crew team and began hiding in his dorm room closet when responsibilities encroached. Prep school was no place to have a breakdown so he withdrew and went home by November, to the great consternation of his parents.

William had some vivid memories from these years. He remembered the welcoming committee that tipped a trash can full of water into his room in the early days. They had filled a can with water, leaned it against the closed door of his dorm room, and knocked on the door so that when he opened it the water flooded onto the floor of his room. Those early days as a lowerclassman were rough. There was wrestling in the narrow hallways, people threatening with pocket knives and endless tough talk. To Holden it was something out of a book, the beginning of his real life, and he was loath to tell an adult about the trouble. He just quietly took it in stride and became known as just another goodfella. When his second year came around, things were different. He remembered a room with a darklight and Jimi Hendrix playing the Star Spangled Banner, getting high on marijuana for the first time and spending time with the older boys. He remembered how marijuana was the great equalizer and at those late-night parties in an inner room. The physical roughhousing had intimidated him. One upperclassman from those days later died on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, attempting to rob a police detective by mistake.

2.

The name in the newspaper had been Tammy Marsden and he slumped in sadness and defeat to remember her and think that she was gone.

Of all the Greek classes in all the world to think that she had to walk into the one he was in. It was almost 30 years ago now but he remembered it like it was yesterday. He had been looking for the classroom slack-jawed and cool; it was the first day of class for the second semester of his first year at USM and it was a snowy day. He wondered if it would be canceled. He still had a wedding ring on his finger but that relationship was dead. The ring had been an empty and symbolic gift. Sure, they had been living together on and off for a few years, moved across the country to Colorado for one of them, but it was never going to be anything like what he immediately imagined it could be when he was sitting in that classroom waiting for class to start and she walked in. A girl as pretty as this who knew Greek he exclaimed silently to himself. This was what he had been waiting for all his life.

Holden had spent the years of his life between 18 and 25 busy. At 17 he had resolved never to go to school again. He read everything he could get his hands on and wanted to be a writer, but college was for square conservatives, neither of which was what he was. He kept in touch with his friends who were going off to Harvard and Tufts and then law school, but for himself he was going to eke out his own adventure along the way. He was going to do something authentic and not sell out to the establishment. It often occurred to him to wonder why he was so anti-establishment and he sometimes thought it was because that wasn't a comfortable and well-funded path for him.

No one in his family had gone to college before and he didn't value classy accomplishments that much. He liked the attention in school early on until smoking and drinking opened up a whole new definition of adult to him, but there just wasn't that much pressure somehow to do the things his class skills didn't recognize as being very valuable. He remembered how his dear grandmother had thought that complaining about the cafeteria food was somehow *de rigeur* with ritzy schools, something a little more like among the kitchen staff at a tourist hotel like she had done when she was a teenager he thought. Or the Christmas present his mother had gotten for him when he first went away. She had given him a leather bag shaped like a gym bag. It was sort of shaped like a doctor's bag but it was sewn together from small scrap pieces of leather

instead of being one big piece. He never used it much but it was sort of a meaningful gift he thought.

The pressing thing during those years was to pay rent or buy food or just generally figure out how to maintain himself independently. He lived with roommates and shared expenses that way as much as he could. One thing he did was something he dreamed of doing since he was a boy. During his childhood he had always imagined himself growing up to be a truck driver. A childhood friend, one of his neighbors growing up, was a truck aficionado because his father was a semi-truck driver who sometimes brought home his brightly painted immaculately maintained big rig and this occupied Holden and his friend for long periods of time during childhood. The rig dwarfed the house trailer his friend lived in and they built model trucks, read trucker magazines, and even kept a log of all the trucks they saw.

He absorbed a lot of the independent, renegade spirit of trucking during those years and went riding with his father in snow plows and dump trucks which he thought was fascinating. His father let him help operate the trucks, and on weekends he dreamed of being a stock car racing driver like a little Elvis complete with a ducktail hairstyle. His elementary school friends and himself were great race car fans and they formed a racing team together with their soapbox coasters that they pieced together and painted dramatic colors like the cars of their heroes. Without knowing it Holden absorbed a lot during

these formative years especially a sort of rebel ethos that stuck with him long after.

In his early twenties Holden got to try out being a truck driver for a while and he slipped easily into the persona. He drove a delivery van delivering bread and restaurant supplies and then he drove a refrigerated box truck for a while. The truck was the largest he could drive with his license and he swaggered around in his varsity athlete's jacket from high school while driving it and doing all the little pedestrian interactions that went with truck driving. The solitude and independence was a welcome relief from working in the kitchen as he had done for a while.

Going back to school was a big change for Holden, and it was something he approached with a lot of enthusiasm. This time around he would he would treat school differently he told himself. He would go to a public school without all the social pressures of private school, he thought. He would treat school like a job and devote a lot of time to it he thought. He would see how well he did, and if things went well, he would keep going to school afterwards until there was no school anymore and he had a good job. His attitude would be totally different; he wouldn't be so iconoclastic about institutions.

Working outside of Maine had been a rollercoaster. Outside the tourism and hospitality-driven zone of Maine, economics were different and Holden tried warehouse work in a book warehouse. He imagined

himself a writer so it felt like an apprenticeship and he threw himself into the company, which in those days supported nearly 200 souls. He became a fast talker and hustled his way up from the warehouse to the office in a matter of months. Once in the office he was a book buyer who placed the bulk orders for books in the warehouse. It was especially exciting to do this because he met with publishers' sales representatives who sold books to the company.

It didn't last long though, mostly because Holden didn't have a very thick skin. One evening, not very far into his tenure as a book buyer, Holden was at a sales event and was invited to a small gathering afterwards at a nearby bar. Holden didn't know any of the representatives so it was kind of like his first meeting with them. The bar was on campus at Kent State University in Ohio. Holden was emboldened as the only buyer present at a meeting of sales representatives and the drinking and talk loosened his tongue. People were flattering him and he felt vindicated for quitting school years before. He was 22 years old at the time. Then he announced that no one who went to college could be a true radical and there was an awkward silence.

On the drive back home to Cleveland that night in his beat-up old used car Holden was still blushing. He didn't know what came over him but his working-class roots and his ambitions clashed finally with each other. He felt like he had been shown up as a mere poseur with little but blunt iconoclasm to offer.

The next day he quit his job and took the bus back to Maine.

It was an understatement to say college was a sea change for Holden. Just being open to it was completely new to him. It was going okay; he didn't like having his commas corrected and he thought many of the professors were a little snooty, but he was getting by in his mix of shyness and inexperience with feelings of privilege from his high school experience.

Now everything was new and he was suddenly walking into a tiny classroom with only one other person in it, a completely stunning girl! He was cagey and silent as his hawklike eyes saw her in the tiny classroom, which was just a room in a house with a suitable table in it. He squeezed by in the tiny awkward space without saying anything, sat down and started removing a book and fresh new notebook from the soft pack briefcase he carried with him. He was dressed casually in second-hand clothes and so was she with her light brown hair and winter coat. He had his wedding ring which he didn't hide because he thought the ring was chic and only meant what he wanted it to because it has been his idea for a Christmas present with a semi-matching one to his girlfriend at home, who worked in a hospital and wasn't going to college. She sort of wanted to go to school but she had defaulted on a student loan from cooking school and didn't have the scholarship that William had, a complete surprise he

received after he applied to school thinking his scholarship days were over.

Holden remembered those days with slightly awkward difficulty after he thought about it a while waiting for the repairman to come to his apartment. When the repairman did eventually come Huysmans hid under the bed and Holden sat awkwardly idle as the repairman routinely checked the faucets and fire alarms and when everything was done Holden sat exposed where he was, mildly fretting about the intrusion, which distracted from taking notes for his writing project. It left him only able to sit and take notes while we waited. His reverie drifted and as he puzzled over a memory of the day before at the library reading newspaper clippings he reached for his papers. He pulled out a photocopy he made of the newspaper from 22 years before, just a few years after his first memory of Tammy:

Tammy Marsden recently graduated USM student is found dead at the home of Pat Archer USM Classics professor, where she was babysitting. Foul play is suspected but no one has been named as a suspect. Marsden, 25 was killed Friday night authorities say and they have opened a case seeking information from anyone who was in the area of the Archer's home at that time. No further information is available.

Holden still couldn't believe what he had read. The years had passed and he had not heard anything about it. He had been in and out of hospitals, in and

out of trouble with the police, had multiple living situations, and it all started in the disaster at graduate school. Tammy was dead he kept repeating to himself as he straightened up his apartment in the morning sun and made a shopping list. He was going grocery shopping today. He liked to cook, it lifted his mood and gave him something to do.

He dressed again. He had put on his sweatpants when the maintenance man was coming and now he put on the old tan chinos and neutral long sleeve shirt that he always wore when he went out. Huysmans was catnapping in the sun by the window as she always did in good weather. He paid special attention to his clothes. They had been purchased in a hurry, about five years before during his last hospital stay at Riverview Hospital in Augusta. He always ended up losing all his clothes when he was taken to the hospital.

Soon the mentally ill researcher was out in the hallway of his building, waiting for the elevator to arrive. It was very quiet as usual and the elevator was slow. He planned plenty of time to get downstairs and wait for the bus to Hannaford because it was good to get outside and wait. It was a cold winter day so he bundled up in his coat from the Augusta Walmart and his ill-fitting gloves and hat.

In the elevator his acquaintance Millie was riding down too and they talked for a minute. Millie was a retired cleaning woman and she reminded him of his now passed-on grandmother who been a custodian

at USM in Gorham for years. She was full of good will and good wishes and she reminded him of his family and their farming roots just a short generation before. Often they didn't talk much and were significantly mute a lot of the time but they always said a warm hello when they were around each other. Once downstairs they wished each other a good day and got off the elevator.

The investigator went out and waited a little while in the Winter cold for the bus before it came. He always felt sort of at home riding the bus in Portland. The bus was such a slice of life and things moved kind of slowly at a pace William Holden liked, on the bus. People were nicely self-contained and courteous on the bus and you seldom got manic, busy professionals with an attitude on the routes he travelled. Now that he was older and had mellowed considerably from his earlier years he spent much more time with his family whom he had sort of exiled himself from for many years of his adulthood. Now he felt more at home in the world and released from a lot of the pressures he used to feel. The bus was different from his family in that it was a lot more cosmopolitan with people of all different colors and backgrounds who lived in Portland now. When he was younger he was only exposed to this demographic evolution through school, but now he considered diversity a welcome challenge even if it wasn't always one at which he succeeded.

At the store he got his shopping done and was waiting for the bus again on the bench inside the

doors. He sometimes took the bus home and sometimes took a taxi depending on whether he had any extra money. Today in the cold there were other people waiting inside and he squeezed over to make room when other people came up. An older man and woman sat down. The woman was quiet and reserved and the man was silent too at first. He was tall and gangly, a little goofy you might say if you were being completely honest, and she was much shorter. After sitting for a short time in which William kept to himself in an urban sort of way that he had learned over the years of living in cities, keeping his groceries in the cart squarely in front of him, he watched people go in and out of the nearby doors with studied nonchalance. Eventually the old man said something next to him. "What's your name," he said.

William felt like a youth next to the old fellow, and he replied "William," shortly, feeling a little awkward talking to a stranger.

The man didn't seem awkward at all about chatting with strangers as he offered back "My name is Robert, where are you from?"

"Originally I'm from Gorham," William said.

"Oh really, I used to live on a farm in Gorham," the man said. He was very friendly and seemed ready to tell his whole life story without hesitation to a complete stranger waiting for the bus. "Where do you live," he went on.

"Franklin Towers," William said.

"Oh, I used to live there quite a while ago," the man said with a grin, his buck teeth and goofy overbite jutting out.

William wasn't completely accustomed to being cold and distant to friendly strangers or yokels as a more cruel person might have called this fellow, instead he often slowly shifted gears into a more guarded friendliness that was a lot like the simplicity of his childhood around farms in the countryside. This easiness was a relatively new thing again and it had a lot to do with his living situation because he had recourse to more brusque and cold modes of behavior that he knew. During the recent years living in group homes he didn't have the privacy to feel he could be very forthcoming with strangers. And his mood was a big factor; feeling moderately calm and healthy was a change too. Many years of education had pulled him into behavior that contrasted sharply with his upbringing, never leaving him feeling very at home with himself.

"Cows are out," Robert exclaimed, watching a small crowd of people clumsily navigate the doorway near them. They stopped and started, all trying to go through the doorway ahead of them at once.

William immediately recalled an encounter he had as a boy. He and his childhood friend would ride their bikes on the tractor path in the great meadow across the street from his house where he lived. The field belonged to his grandfather who lived in the big old

farm across the street next door to his house. His grandfather no longer kept livestock since William was born and growing up but the fields and forests were all there to play and ride bikes in. His grandfather gave the hay to another farmer about a mile down the road who cut it each summer. Sometimes the tractors would drive by and he would see the other farmer, who had many sons, drive by on his way to the field.

One day in the field he and his friend, Chuck, were riding and along came a tractor with a manure spreading trailer, however riding along on the tractor was another boy whom they recognized from the school bus. The boy's name was Jason they knew and he was about their age and a sort of belligerent fellow they knew from the schoolyard. When he saw them in the field Jason did not hesitate, and he immediately began throwing clumps of dried manure in their direction. Apparently to Jason somebody was trespassing and who it was we did not know as we watched in disbelief. Soon we were returning the barrage although our hearts weren't really in it; we were more puzzled than incensed. Eventually he was gone and we kept riding all the way to the far side of the field.

Across the field there were trees and a fence concealing another secluded field on the far side. We ditched our bikes and climbed over the barbed wire fence which was not electrified at that time. We kept going over a small hill and then we found it. There standing in the grass was a creature. It had large

eyes, brown hair and hooves. It looked like it weighed eight or nine hundred pounds or more and was intent on chewing the grass with its pink, wet mouth. Chuck did not know what to do. "Whoa," he said and stopped short. We hadn't seen cows before and were surprised. "Should we run," asked Chuck, "What if he chases us?" The creature didn't seem intent on doing anything but chewing its grass it seemed, so we stayed put. This cow had a bell around its neck and soon more than a dozen other creatures came into view from a nearby gully. The cows were so lugubrious and unobtrusive that we weren't inspired to throw manure or do anything really the way that Jason was so at home around them. We just watched them and soon we realized that the cow with the Bell was their leader and the rest of the herd followed it around the field. What a strange thing we thought, they just organized themselves spontaneously.

Soon we tired of watching and walked back to the fence where we squeezed carefully through then found our bikes and hopped on. Now that Jason was gone there was no hostility to be found anywhere. We rode in the field to avoid the traffic on the road which was used by dump trucks from the nearby gravel pit, and once we reached the end of the field we carefully followed the edge of the road for just a short stretch until we crossed and went up the driveway to my little house. From there we climbed the path up the hill to my grandfather's old barnyard

where we rode our bikes around for the rest of the day.

William decided he didn't have to tell the friendly fellow about his childhood but his memory was welcome as they sat waiting for the bus in the warmth of the store. This guy simply seemed like a nice fellow and he hoped he would see him around sometime at the store or on the bus which soon pulled up at the stop outside. The man and his wife sat with their groceries up at the front of the bus while William sat at the rear on the long winding trip around the city before he got back to his stop.

Once he was back in his apartment 15 stories up he was on his own again and after lunch he drifted into thinking about the inquiries with which he passed the time and decided to watch an old movie he had gotten to try and immerse himself a little in the 1920's, which is when his great grandmother, his father's grandmother, was young and active. She had passed away years before but he remembered her vividly because she had been around for years and years when he was little and had been there to babysit when his father was working away her summer days on a farm on the other side of town where his dad was from.

He and his sister stayed at his other grandparents house with his aunt and great grandmother where there was a small barn and field too but they only had one milking cow back in the day he was told. His great grandmother had lived near Augusta back then

and his great grandfather whose surname he carried had lived over in Brunswick. He imagined them going to the movies which were silent or accompanied by a piano player then and he had found a collection of old silent movies to borrow from the library and watch.

His inquiry was a question about the meaning of a proverb he had heard his great grandmother use. He once overheard her say, "Everyone wants to sit with their fanny on three stools." This statement puzzled William who had taken an interest in proverbs of all sorts of since his time studying Greek in school. Some seemed like a mystery, their meaning lost to all forever while others offered a curious insight into their authors' milieu.

William couldn't figure out what his great grandmother had meant when she used to use the phrase and he wondered if it referred to trying to do something comically impossible or trying to establish a plurality or just what it might technically mean. Movies were the method he hit upon because he didn't expect to find the colloquialism in the novels from that time that he read. He started watching the Buster Keaton movie he had thinking it was only a short 15-minute movie but was amazed when the comic pantomime of the thing kept going for a whole hour and a half. The actor fell on his behind, changed his clothes, and missed his train over and over again throughout the movie, always with some big motion-generating distraction in every scene like a ticker-tape at the bottom of the screen of the news. What

he came to hope was that he would find his sought-out phrase in the subtitles that came from time to time in the movie. He was gratified to have found exactly the kind of comics silliness that characterized his great grandmother's sense of humor but he didn't find the quip. He resolved to keep watching because he nevertheless felt closer to solving his inquiry.

Another of his inquiries also came from his childhood but wasn't nearly so innocent. He had been researching in the archives at the library about it when he stumbled across the clipping about Tammy. When William was still in elementary school way back in the 1970s there had been a terrible murder in the woods near his house at a place where the school bus drove by every day. Two people, a man, who was incidentally a lawyer, and his son were hunting in the woods. They were found shot with targets clipped to their jackets. The gun had been a small .22 caliber rifle. Not long afterwards a local juvenile had been found and charged with the crime.

William was trying to find information about the event because he was trying to imagine the parts of the story that never made it into the newspapers. In those days the bus made two trips through his and the murderer's neighborhood, one for the older high school students and one for the elementary school students. It must have been that the murderer rode the same bus at a different time, William thought. He remembered the rough boys from the murderer's family as well as the house down the street. The

hunting tragedy intrigued him. Why had the fellow done it, William wondered. Was he the oldest brother? The youngest brother? Was he bullied?

He found himself thinking about something a psychiatrist had once said to him, "the definition of the psyche!" He had said it like Robert waiting for the bus had announced, "cows are out," like it was offered for significant thought or it was bait to draw you into conversation. He thought and thought about it and wondered if it would make a good topic for one of his inquiries.

3.

Contrary to popular belief, enlightenment didn't emerge full-grown from the head of Zeus, but it did reach early fruition nurtured by the powers of the state. Plato, in attempting to catalog some of the powers and aims of the government around him, invented the state and at the same time made his achievements in philosophy. The two fit together because in Plato's opinion the state needed guidance and probably this guidance was to come from his fee-paying students attracted by the epistemological allure of his writings. And who better to feature in his writings to that end than a character fashioned from his real life associate, the inquisitive, suicidal veteran Socrates. It was the first college, dedicated to advanced learning and fashioned for social ends and especially for profit. To this day college is a finishing school for the affluent, an introduction to the middle class for others and an occasion for trying out the discipline to create monuments of mass culture large and small for still some more.

For the affluent college is a take-it-or-leave-it series of lessons in polishing one's expression and acquiring superfluous skills. The basic skills of class apologetics

are ingrained from birth by circumstance in most. Praise of what is rare, expensive and select, embrace of the mass appeal of comfort, these are some of the ways college adapts itself to privileged circumstances. Optimism about class identity and circumstances pervades modern College. Hordes of students are attracted and persuaded to pay exorbitant sums by the prospect of earned payback. It's the age-old spectacle of wealthy circumstances paving its own way with gold bricks that informs this impression, and today some private, for-profit colleges are prosecuted for predatory lending after leaving their students hopelessly encumbered with crippling debt and little of use except a vague cultural introduction to show for it. Culture diverges from employment skills and to both of which college only pays expensive lip service. Cultural accomplishment inspired by college is nearly as rare among the wealthy and affluent as it is among the economically challenged. The real thing about wealth and college students is lifestyle. Wealth is a cultural shock absorber for students and college is a shock absorber for these same students for whom the politics of power and influence might be a greater strain.

For many students universal types of courtesy and thoughtfulness are new experiences in college, not to mention having leisure time. Many students experience new social pressures in college. High School teachers can only demand so much. The standards of adults apply most closely in college and college has a new culture. This is especially so when

students are flattered to be admitted to a new peer group. Working-class students may find themselves in a new and entirely different world. This is because of the general affluence that college imposes, and "impose" is the right word here because it's really just that. There's no reason except commercial ones that college couldn't be a somewhat ascetic experience; austerity would promote cultural productivity afterwards with new living skills and habits, and college culture would be less associated with wealth and ease. Thoughtfulness and courtesy can also be in short supply in harried working-class life and college bends over backwards to supply it. In this way college lifestyles have a sort of monopoly on consideration for many students who never think to do more than pretend they are rich too and stoically accept the change when they leave school. The faculty point of view in particular supports a period of austerity after college when school students are beginning to pay back loans. Leisure time is another area that changes when students are in college. Structured time is something that considerate people take for granted. In the working-class, the only structured time is wage-earning time.

In college there is also a category of students who are out to raise the bar in every way they can. From laws to science this group is inflamed by the power of knowledge and seek to outdo their peers as much as possible. It's tempting to say that college is a sort of release of ambition and energy for this group, but meeting these uptight people, one would hardly

imagine they achieve much relief from what often amounts to an obsession. Exhortations to excellence are internalized from an early age, and careers have to go just right to succeed. The scale of society in college is what drives this phenomenon, and the larger the honor the more people outdone in seeking it. This too is the selection of students that drives colleges into the future, with their works and careers becoming the center of college life as time passes. There is a revolving door for this group as well with successful careers in law and politics and business and science returning to the commercial halls of academia to sell their experience. There's always room at the top the saying goes and this aspect of college is the top of social achievement, making it more difficult and raising standards for those who follow behind, as any vanguard would. Often success in college is considered a lifetime peak and follows the student for the rest of their life. College is a kind of contest, and for some it would be meaningless without winning and losing.

It is little perceived that college is a for-profit enterprise for faculty and seems above the fray of commerce to the lower and working classes. For them health, consideration and courtesy are considered rare privileges. For most, college raises their level of social awareness a little because it is often a mass population experience. College is generally an identity driven experience that appeals to young people especially, however the enlightenment of college does not always follow

students into adulthood. College could be described as an eternal enlightenment machine driven by greed and complacency. College relies upon ambition and motivation to drive people's paths to enlightenment while saddling people with crippling debt that treats college as if it were a one-time class hurdle to be surpassed financially instead of a supportive lifetime commitment. College does little to erode the impression that money is everything.

When William Holden Jr woke up the next morning, Huysmans jumped down from her place at the foot of the bed and greeted him with a welcoming "Meoow" as she always did. They got up, made coffee and put in their time poring over the materials William had copied at the library about the story he remembered from the school bus going up. He was writing a short story about those days and it was going slowly. He used a little information, and a lot of imagination and empathy, to try and compose a story, but today he found himself pondering the news that he read about Tammy Marsden. 1998 was 23 years ago and he wondered how to go about getting information about the crime, that is, if there had been a crime.

"Did anyone know what happened," he wondered aloud. Sometimes when he felt stress he talked aloud to himself. It could have been something he had noticed since way back in the more difficult days in his life. In those days he would be sitting at home or alone someplace and he would be obsessing frantically in a way that was probably best described

as illness and he would discover himself to be talking aloud at the approach of strangers outside the room. It was either preternatural hearing or smell or some other sense of people but it was the most uncanny thing how the approach of people outside his room, in the hallway, would cause him to speak aloud. It was just one of a few strange behaviors that had plagued him in those days.

He let it happen again and kept talking to himself because it wasn't intrusive or loud. He was just glad it wasn't yelling or talking around other people, which he had sometimes done before too. "How would I track a case that happened 23 years before," he asked aloud of no one in particular. "I wonder whatever happened to Betsy, Tammy's friend who had a car and drove her to school sometimes, or what happened to Jim, the guy from the Student Senate Betsy was dating." William was lost in a reverie for a minute remembering being younger and full of hope and expectations for the future. People were so energetic then, bouncing off the walls with excitement about sex and money and whatever else happened to come up. Now, 23 years later people would have jobs, spouses, kids. He hadn't kept in touch with anyone. "What would people think of his story if he contacted them?"

Think of the others, he thought, now silent again. There were people from the Honors Program; what happened to Willamina, he thought, the assistant who had edited the academic journal Tammy had tried to get published in? He remembered how he

had read her essay about Lucretius and a new kind of romantic relationship. He had thought it was great, but the other assistant editors didn't agree and it wasn't published. In his brief years at USM he hadn't used this time to try and get published, although in retrospect that would have been a shrewd thing to do. He would have been more prepared for graduate school instead of being a cocky fool who was behind his peers. Did Tammy's mother and sister still live locally? Tammy had gone to high school in Pownal she once said. Tammy's mother ran a boarding house in Portland back in the days when they were dating and her sister had an antique store which she ran with her boyfriend. Once when William had first come back to Portland, newly diagnosed with schizophrenia, he had thought he saw Tammy at the store with a young family. Of course he knew now it could not have been her but his new distance from her had brought him to tears as he walked away without greeting her.

There was the clue in the news story that it had been at Professor Archer's home. "What did that mean," he asked aloud again. Maybe he should contact people who knew Archer to find out what happened. He would think about that. Professor Hatley, Archer's older colleague would be retired and very old now. He had a little idea what to do but decided the first place to start was with the USM alumni office. If he could sniff around the old alumni magazine and read the class notes from those days he might find a clue. It must have been around the

time she died that he stopped getting the magazine in the mail because of a change of address. There had been a lot of those over the years, although at first after leaving USM to go to graduate school he had planned to keep in touch. Those years were far more hectic than the years of idyllic achievement he had expected. Nice clothes and faculty mixers were what he expected but money-crazed, hyper-competitive peers were what he got. Litigious landlords and survival-level employment were a bonus.

There was a special alumni room at the library back in the days that he had been there, he remembered, and if that was still there they might have back issues of the alumni magazine. As he remembered the library and thought about visiting he slowed down, there were a lot of things to consider.

He did nothing quickly these days and was careful to think through all his outings. Being mentally ill was not really a grab-and-go, cash-and-carry type of lifestyle. He didn't have to tell anyone his problems when he was going to visit like this, but upon closer inspection, and people on college campuses were very alert, he wondered if people would refrain from brusquely brushing him off. He could hardly pass for a student or a prospective student anymore, more because his clothes were a little shabby than because he was too old, and if he announced he was an alum he wouldn't look like a very successful one. He had visited the library a couple of times before to use the public computers. You could get a temporary alumni card in those days but he had stuck out like a sore

thumb when all he had really wanted was to blend in innocuously. There had been other older people at that time using the computers, but from their look, dignified and prosperous, he guessed that they were benefactors or senior citizens taking classes for fun. Just like everything in his life these days, visiting campus would take a lot of “character.”

He decided to take it easy and go carefully, to reconnoiter by checking websites before he went. Even looking for apps was something to be careful about he thought. They were often deceptively informative and inviting. Probably the alumni magazine was online these days he thought, although not the back issues, he reflected. He was a stranger now in new ways from being a stranger back then he thought as he reached for his computer to see what searching for the “USM Alumni Office” would bring up.

He searched and brought up the information. “Transforming students’ lives for tomorrow” the mission statement screamed, and he thought about how his own life had been transformed through and since college. The optimism of the place was virulently contagious and admitted of no exceptions for shortcomings. Welcome to “Boosterville” was how he thought of all the ready-money, eager-to-please sentiments with which they bombarded students of all ages. He wondered what college would be like without the cash-on-the-barrel commercialism that universally animated it. For himself college had been an introduction to the

temptation of spending money because of the credit it afforded, and the years he had spent working full time before he went made college seem like some sort of summer camp. Even at USM where many people worked and attended part-time there was a relief from the cynical working-class atmosphere of low-wage jobs, but he felt it was an artificial inflation created by credit instead of real hope or expectations. There was nothing about back issues of the alumni magazine on the website.

The college-educated detective who didn't take his education for granted decided to slowly absorb what he had seen and thought about until tomorrow when he would be more prepared. He cautioned himself and scrupulously avoided enthusiasm for the rest of the day which was what he always did no matter what he was doing. Enthusiasm never felt wise or genuine in this life now and on occasion it got him into trouble because he was less circumspect. Running straight into a hypervigilant young security guard enforcing decorum was not wise and had consequences. The same was true of the regular police who seemed to think that all any mentally ill person ever wanted was a ride to the hospital. He traced out his steps on campus as much as he could imagine beforehand. He decided to go in the middle afternoon the next day because it would be a quiet time and in case the special library room didn't open in the mornings. He slept fitfully that night and dreamed.

In the morning he lay in bed and tried to remember his dreams. Sometimes he was successful, sometimes they eluded him, but he was almost always glad to dream. Occasionally they were very frightening and he fell out of bed fighting off ghosts or trying to run away, but a lot of times they were just intriguing and he tried to gain insight into his anxieties from them. He had read the Interpretation of Dreams, and he was always fascinated with the way his mind convoluted memories or invented new ones out of puns. Above all he was entertained by his dreams and they were a release from the deliberate monotony of his everyday life. The way his dreams were elusive to remember or analyze kept them at arm's length from his life which he consciously tried to keep uneventful, no longer trusting himself with enthusiasm or excitement after long experiences of disasters that started with being just a little too carefree.

The night before he had dreamed he was with his parents, wandering around a huge sterile complex. In the dream he lost sight of his parents and was annoyed they had lost him. He continued wandering on his own until he heard music. Eventually he came to an area full of musicians. In a private area there were more than a dozen musicians and singers playing loud, deep bass-sounding music. As he wandered into the area the director or the sound man, someone sitting a little apart from the performers, chastised him for coming in. The music was frighteningly loud. He remembered stumbling

onward in a room like a retail store, searching for his mother. Then he was passing closed doors in an intersecting hallway and he noticed one of the doors was labeled "'n God". He paused and then passed on, coming to a sales counter and buying toast in a very slow motion. He was relieved his parents rejoined him, and he learns that he is in Scotland and it is customary to make toast very slowly there.

It was a pretty interesting dream he thought as Huysmans came up to greet him next to the bed as she did every morning. He was elated to see her like always and reached down to pet her. Today was a big day because he would be making an exploration trip to the USM Library where he had not visited for 10 years. He got up and made coffee and breakfast trying to imagine all the details of his trip. He would have to check the bus schedule, which was online now. He would wear his good coat so he looked more prosperous and presentable. He refrained from making up a cover story which is what he used to do before he took his medication regularly. He would make sure he had an excuse for being there that didn't mention too many details about himself, but today he wasn't going incognito. He was going as himself, an alum going to the alumni room; it sounded simple enough. But he was pretty worked up because it was uncomfortable to be labeled mentally ill around busy normal people. He mumbled to himself as he waited for it to be time to go. Talking to himself with something he did when his intensity was up.

Finally it was afternoon and he got himself dressed and set out. It was a short walk to the bus station, and as he walked the few blocks by City Hall he reminded himself not to talk out loud and checked out the people on the street that day. They ranged from people who seemed like they were having difficulties blending in with the hustle of workday life, one man pushed his grocery cart full of his belongings slowly down the sidewalk, to the people pushing through faster and faster, unfazed by the city around them. There was a spectrum he thought as he came to the bus station and checked his watch. He sat down on a bench to wait and watched more people and buses shuffle through.

He was waiting for the USM bus, and he noticed a couple of people who looked like students also waiting. They had the ubiquitous back pack and coffee cup with them and variously spent the time waiting, one reading a textbook frantically and another listening to something on headphones. William didn't approach them, though part of them wished he could. He expected being a student hadn't changed that much since his student days except in the details, which were so much a part of the extra effort of being a student. They looked earnest and careful and purposeful as the bus pulled up and they all got on.

It wasn't a very long ride from downtown over to the campus and he remembered how long before there had been a campus shuttle bus running from the dorm downtown. It ran from a dorm, which

happened to be across the street from his apartment, down to the Campus Center. The more things change the more they remain the same he hoped as he got off at the bus stop on campus and started down the sidewalk to the library. People were walking purposefully past, some on their phones, and he tried to adjust his slouching, shuffling demeanor so he wouldn't stick out.

At the library a fellow with a down vest and a red backpack held the front door and said, "Go ahead bro," and he wondered how he got to age 53 and was still spontaneously addressed as "bro", but he felt significantly welcomed as he approached the front desk and got out his driver's license. He waited a moment till someone came out looking busy and asking "What can I do for you" to which he replied, "Hi I am an alum and I was wondering if I could use the library," in an obsequious tone.

"You can get an alumni card that's good for one month if you have your ID with you."

"Okay yes please I'd like to do that," he said remembering that his driver's license still had the address of Riverview Hospital on it, since that had been his only address to use when he had renewed it a few years before. The short, chubby woman to whom he had talked took it and promptly went into an adjoining room behind the desk where she was gone a few minutes.

During the time the woman was gone he waited at the desk, standing and looking around at the

students quietly using the photocopier across the large open room, and he read the poster announcing the special exhibition of the map gallery next door. Soon she came back with a small red square of cardstock which she filled out, asking him what year he was and then asking him to sign the back. Once she gave it to him with his ID he decided to ask directions. "Could you tell me where the alumni archives are now," he asked.

"That's up on the third floor," she said helpfully and he said thank you and went over to the elevator.

At the third floor he got off the elevator and went searching for the archives. He remembered a place at the back of the building so he went there first. There were students everywhere that afternoon in study carrels. They were using computers and they didn't notice him and he blended in. At the back of the building he found a small room with a plaque announcing "alumni archives." He went in and there was a small waiting area with chairs and a coffee-type table with magazines on it. No one was there so he sat down and looked at the magazines. One looked like a recent issue so he picked it up and began browsing. He hadn't seen an issue in ages because he had stopped looking at them when they came in the mail even before they stopped coming altogether because he had no forwarding address. There was an article about the new university president, who had been a teacher at Gorham High School at the start of his career, and there was an article about an artist who was succeeding at a

mercantile career, selling paintings of landscapes and having shows all around New England. William read a little of the articles, flipping through towards the class notes, which were his real aim.

When he was just getting to the class notes section he was interrupted by someone who appeared to be the archivist, a tall slim man about William's age who was dressed in the winter country casual dress of a USM librarian.

"Can I help you," the man said in a busy tone.

"Yes," William replied, "I am wondering if I could look at back issues of this alumni magazine, Winter, Spring and Summer of 1998 if you have them?"

"Those are in the back, let me see," he said and walked through to another room where he could see filing cabinets lining the walls. The archives seemed mostly dedicated to the Gorham Normal School which William remembered was a school for teachers that had preceded all the earlier incarnations of the University of Southern Maine in the 20th century that he could remember. There were black and white pictures of the Gorham campus framed and hanging on the wall, as well as ones of some of the recognizable older buildings there. Soon the archivist came back and to William's relief he had the back issues with him.

"Can I make photocopies of these," William asked.

"Yes but you have to sign them out," indicating a clipboard with a lined sheet on the coffee table.

William picked up the clipboard and dutifully wrote down the issues and signed his name then carried them out of the room and headed back downstairs to where the photocopiers were by the front desk. When he got there he discovered he needed to buy a copier card to use the machine and he remembered that he fortunately had some money in his pocket to do so. He took his time flipping through the issues hoping for clues, but for the most part all he got were the notes for the classes of '95 and '96 during the year Tammy died. He had also signed out the current issue from the coffee table and made a copy of the notes in that issue too. When they were all copied, only having made a preliminary glance at them he folded the copies in half for carrying and took the magazines back upstairs to the archives. There he saw that the archivist was nowhere to be found so he placed them in a neat pile on the table and signed them back in on the sheet. Then he headed back to the bus stop where he checked the schedule and sat down to wait.

The bus stop was quiet and he was glad the trip had been uneventful, but he was still nervous to be out and about and he couldn't wait to be back safe at home. He was a little disappointed in the results he had found but he hadn't looked closely and he was still a little hopeful of finding a clue. It was a needle in a haystack really because he knew few if any of the names he had seen at a glance. He opened up the papers he had with him and put the sheets in order from oldest to newest. The issues were only semi-

annual he now noticed, and he estimated from the newspaper note he had seen before that Tammy had been killed in October of 1997, just before the alumni issue that he had been reading. When he glanced at the January 1998 issue he didn't see any mention of Tammy but the June issue was different:

Class of '95. Send any correspondence you have care of Jack McGowan. Hope to hear from you. Jack and Kelly welcomed their first child Joshua McGowan in January. Ellen Harding writes that she is enjoying working in the Caribbean. She has been at the Hotel St Lucia in the Bahamas all winter. Mike Gaudet and family write that they have settled into their second year of his philosophy program at Texas A&M. They send greetings to everyone. On a sad note we were remember Tammy Marsden who died last Fall but the news didn't reach us until this Spring. Our thoughts go out to her friends and family.

The bus came and William got on, remembering Jack McGowan who was a writer too and Mike Gaudet who also went on to graduate school. He wondered what had become of Mike who also had the added pressure of a new baby when he traveled to Texas. Mike was determined to try his luck though, and William hadn't been in touch with him just like he hadn't been in touch with everyone else. Fate could be cruel when they were exams involved, William reflected as he got off the bus again at the station.

The man with his belongings in the shopping cart was still out on the street he noticed walking back to his

apartment, and the cold was beginning to seep back in the late afternoon. Soon he was back in his apartment glad to be done with his adventurous errand.

4.

Class of '96. Please send any correspondence you have care of Katie Hamilton. Hope to hear from you soon! Julia Magruder writes in that she and her husband John just welcomed their first grandchild. She has been at UNUM for 25 years now and still loves it. Stan Smith writes in his firm Smith Associates Accounting is going strong and Tim McDonald is still in nursing after 20 fruitful years. Charles Barstow writes that he is still an English teacher in Standish and wonders if anyone out there wants to connect with a student for career day. If you can help, write to him at CBarstow45@gmail.com.

William was elated to see a familiar name at last in the notes. Charles Barstow was one of his better friends during his three years at USM. Charles was a personable good student back in those days in the Honors Program and he wasn't surprised that he was doing okay. Charles was in a band and liked to write science fiction stories when he could get to it. William was a little surprised that Charles became a

teacher because he had never talked about an interest in that, but it made sense. Charles was a little younger than William and worked his way through school working as an attendant in a house for disabled people. He didn't have the hang-ups that William had; William's ambitions were a little unrealistic and not very well-managed. When he thought about it, he had never really adjusted that well during the years, only superficially perhaps.

When William had gotten back to Franklin towers and into his apartment he had taken off his coat and sat down immediately to continue reading the copies of class notes he had gotten. The trip was an exertion that left him feeling a little down. Huffing and puffing to get up to pace to visit campus took a lot out of him, and he was reminded of how anomalous his life was when he read the class notes. Somehow other people and his peers among them had transitioned through their teenage years and into their twenties so much more smoothly.

He had been a standout student and received special attention, dropped out of school twice, ran away, establish residency in three different states, been a migratory worker, had a job with a salary and joined the gig economy all before going to college at age 25. His youth was frenetic and that made all the difference. He often thought that if he hadn't dropped out of high school first he would have dropped out of college when he got there. It all added up to a meltdown when he turned 30 and being labeled mentally ill. He had accepted mental

illness slowly, vehemently denying it at first but after years of rejection and not taking medication he eventually acquiesced and quieted down. He was deeply skeptical of a chemical imbalance as a cause for illness. It was far too deterministic for his existential personal philosophy. He believed in free will and total personal responsibility and couldn't believe his unrest was determined by a chemical imbalance brought on by genes like the doctors whose fundamental pragmatism somehow always showed through. To ask him, the answer for his persistent unrest was a cardboard box found in the attic under the eaves of the little cape cod house where he grew up.

The box contained a dozen textbooks that his mother had used in junior college where he guessed from the books that she pursued a course of General Studies. There was a book titled 10 Greek plays, a series of books on Western Civilization and a copy of Jude the Obscure. He had read the books assiduously for pleasure in his early teens which he had spent locked in his room with no TV. He had gone from silently accepting Jesus as his personal savior in church at 12 or 13 to reading *The Stranger* by Albert Camus at 14 or 15. Somehow he remembered barely noticing the shift. Church had been the world of his mother and grandmother, and its modesty and sincerity had always been lost on him in the sea of humble circumstances that was the Pentecostal Evangelical Church he went to.

His grandmother was a founding member of the church. All kinds of burdens were represented there. He remembered people asking for healing from bad accidents at work. His father's family took care of his uncle, who had severe Down's Syndrome and couldn't take care of himself. There were people who lost teenagers to mortal illness and people suffering from substance abuse and unemployment. The catalog of problems was endless every Sunday, and young William had only heard the needs without reflecting on how therapeutic the whole process was with people finding moral support they didn't get much of in society outside the church. William had never felt extraordinary need in his own life until he was diagnosed with illness 20 years later. In his early teens all he brought to church was a lot of deep guilt about sexuality from puberty. Unlike James Joyce he was repentant about his sexual feelings and earnestly but quietly sought forgiveness for them.

In many ways at 35 years old and in the hospital for the first time William was suffering from a crisis of moral support. Since puberty he had been a solitary type of individual, always relying on himself and seeking answers for himself in books. His mother had given him a Bible and through many earnest Sunday School lessons he was quite familiar with it. But it wasn't until his thirties that he found himself seeking solace in it. He remembered one verse in particular that he had liked. "The stone that the builder has rejected becomes the cornerstone"(Psalm 118:22). It spoke to him about his failure to advance in school

and his new psychiatric label, but those early teenage years with the junior college textbooks had been the beginning of his independent secular education. He read Aristophanes and Sophocles, finding them a little different and inscrutable, but excerpts from Francis Bacon and Plato seemed somehow more relevant in that they were about science and government. He found Thomas Hardy's gothic novel dense but thrilling to read. What he was going through, William reflected, was a crisis in faith in God.

The thing was that in his early teens he had been persuaded to believe in God and he honestly did, but soon after (it seemed like a very swift change) he left all that behind and was reading atheistic philosophy. He had never read Evangelical theology, and it seemed mostly to him like a sort of camp-meeting Christianity. But what they seemed to have in common was the emphasis on personal responsibility and personal actions.

He never asked Charles Barstow about his belief in God, but Charles wasn't a very gloomy type. He wondered what Charles' teenage years were like. Charles had been a military brat, so he'd probably moved around some. Charles seemed quite well-adjusted, so he wondered what caused that. In fact most people seemed well-adjusted compared to William, he reflected, so it wasn't completely out of his thinking to consider himself anomalous. Some people in college believed in God and were quite earnest Christians he remembered. One woman in

particular had been his debating partner once. Her name was Marcia and she was a devout Christian who made no secret of her beliefs in the Honors Program. They had debated whether or not Jesus Christ was a social revolutionary and he remembered booming out quotes in Latin that left the judges looking a little skeptical. Marcia found the topic a little awkward but they had struggled through. He had been more than a little awkward on multiple occasions in college. He was not very well adjusted so, although he thought he was, that was often a clumsy thing.

Something he never understood about himself was that he was jealous. His confidence was really a very thin veneer when he thought about it and his insecurities came through more often than he liked to remember. He remembered blushing in anger once when it was revealed to him that Charles was dating a girl in whom William had a secret interest. He had always been like that, even when going to Exeter. Although he never dated anyone at Exeter he had gone on dates at home and once when he had been on a date with a girl whom he particularly liked and it had not gone as expected, he had lost his temper with his guy friends when he was talking about it afterwards. They thought he was some sort of spaz for it because after all they thought it was just a date with a girl.

When Charles met Tammy he looked like he had seen the promised land, William thought. One night in Winter early in William's college career Professor

Patrick Archer and his wife and three children had hosted a dinner party for a few of their friends among the students. It had been a stormy day during Winter vacation and the party was almost called off but the snow stopped in the evening and they decided to have the party anyway although the electric power was still out at their house. William got a ride out to the party with Kara, who was a part-time student at USM who lived in a house by the ocean in Cape Elizabeth and loved to travel to Italy. The Archers lived in Falmouth. William was always getting rides everywhere because he didn't have a car.

The Archers' house sat back from the road at the end of a long paved driveway. On the night of the party there was dim candle light coming from the windows of the large square georgian house with a low roof on top that the Archers took over when they came to town a few years before. William had never visited the Archer house before, and he was impressed, thinking that the grand colonial house was bigger and grander than Archer could afford on his USM salary.

"This must be it," Kara said as she turned off her car, a late model Toyota that had driven well through the snow to get there.

"Uh huh, I've never been here before," said William. There was ample parking, and it appeared like they were the first guests to arrive. As they were getting out of the car Archer himself appeared in the snow,

dressed for clearing the yard, and he greeted them warmly.

"Hi did you make it okay in the snow? The lights are still out here. They could come back on anytime I guess." In those days Archer was about to turn 40 and still in the prime of youth. He was a slim man, barely six feet tall and he looked bigger in his outdoor clothes. He was riding along near the top of an Edward Bellamy Stagecoach, and if nothing else he made the ride look easy. He was warm and generous at the appropriate times and a stern authority if needed at others. He stayed moderately fit by biking in to work at USM on occasion. He was a fountain of good taste and breeding to his students who mingled abject hero worship with abject toadyism in their quest for his favor. Above all his comfort in his role and his generosity came through. His personality was studious and student-like, and he often exhibited an eager enthusiasm that animated his talk. Once he told an anecdote from his student days in which he sketched his own sophomoric behavior, announcing loudly in a packed student cafe "Pope sucks" and relating how everyone turned to stare at his hasty opinion of the 18th century poet.

Right away Archer ushered them into the house and they stopped to take off their coats in a large modern kitchen. There were stainless steel appliances and a faucet that gave heated water right out of the tap, and William and Kara could smell dinner cooking as Mrs. Archer, or Lucinda as they were told to call her came in.

"The kids are at my parents house for the night," Lucinda said and commented on Kara's attractive sweater.

"Oh I got it in Milan, Italy," Kara responded, flattered to bring up Italy, which the Archers also loved to visit.

"Would you like to see the house," Archer asked, "we have been trying to fill this place up with furniture since we got here and we are sort of succeeding." He asked them to follow him, and they went into the next room, leaving Lucinda behind in the kitchen. "This is the dining area," he said and showed them a big table set with antique Wedgewood china. "There is a garden outside there," he said as he gestured to a small room adjoining with double doors opening to the outside. "Down the hall here is the front room," and he led them to a large, open sitting room comfortably furnished with all sorts of eclectic furniture from Danish modern to an eighteenth-century looking settee right in the middle of the room. There were examples of Bauhaus chairs and ancestral paintings lined the walls. It was an impressive room to William, but Kara made herself right at home commenting how the old man in one of the paintings looked dignified and saying she had an Italian vase like one in the corner of the room at her home with her parents. "The library is across the hall," Archer continued. They go across the hall to an ostentatious library of leather bindings and rare books and then wind their way back to the kitchen where Charles, Tammy, Tom and Vicki have arrived.

"Hi, how was the driving," William and Kara ask them.

"The roads were not too bad outside of Portland," Tom and Vicki reply and Charles, who rode with them, stopped oggling Tammy and nodded with them.

"Well let me take your coats," Lucinda says, "dinner will be ready right away."

They all follow Lucinda into an adjoining room and come back without their coats. There is a space with chairs in between the kitchen and the dining room where there is a small but warm wood stove going and they formally make themselves at home there to wait for dinner. Archer questions them individually about their studies, and he graciously draws out their interests. "You're an English major aren't you Charles, how's that going?"

"Oh I've got about 40 credit hours left. I'm writing a paper on Wordsworth this semester."

"That's exciting, what about you Vicki are you having a busy semester?"

"I guess so, Greek 302 is really kicking my behind."

"When I was in graduate school there were some people studying for the CIA and Foreign Service, and they would receive a series of communications that had to do with their field. The exercise was to figure out which message to stop at and declare hostilities. Some of my friends kept right on going and never

pulled the plug on any situation. They would get to the end and there would be a coup!" Archer was animated as he told the story. "How about you Tom, how are things going," Archer continued.

Tom was kind of quiet and shy and paused a minute before replying, "Just like tai chi in the park, pretty smooth."

"Okay everybody into the dining room," Lucinda said as she came through carrying a large hot dish, and everybody got up and found places at the table. Once there, Kara took up talking about Italy on her last trip there when she went to Sicily and saw the megaliths there. The Archers had been working on a book about the fountains in Rome and they talked about their trips too. Apparently to get near the famous fountains you have to practically live there and Dr. Archer passed the time talking about the small apartment he rented while they wrote the book. Eventually dinner was finished which was an excellent home cooked meal, and people helped clear the table and carry things back to the kitchen. Charles and Tammy and William helped do the dishes in the kitchen while Archer took the others on another tour of the house, showing them the library especially.

When they all came back together in the open area near the kitchen two more people arrived whom the Archers had invited over for coffee. They were Dr. Johnson, a visiting professor, and her husband Dean, who was a professional librarian. They had finished

up graduate school in Cambridge and Dr. Johnson had a part-time appointment at USM. They hoped to somehow find tenure-track positions since they just had part-time appointments in those days. William observed carefully because of his own not-so-secret ambitions.

Soon Vicki and Tom announced that they had to be going home because their babysitter couldn't stay late, and Kara announced that she would also like to be driving home soon. She expected the roads were completely clear by now. Charles had gotten a ride with Tom and Vicky, and Tammy had driven out alone in her mother's car. Dr. Archer said goodnight to the Johnsons as well and asked Charles, William and Tammy if they would like to see the slave quarters in the cellar of the old house and come out to visit his study. William and Charles quickly asked Tammy if they could get a ride back to Portland with her and she agreed so they all said their goodbyes to the others and followed Dr. Archer down the cellar stairs.

Downstairs had a low ceiling and was dank and the cellar seemed to go on forever underneath the huge old house, but soon they came to a small plastered room near the middle of the house that Professor Archer said was used as slave quarters long ago. "There were slaves in New England back in the 18th century, but there were fewer and fewer as time progressed in the 19th century. The previous owners of the house showed us this when we bought it," Archer said.

"There is no God," William said, crouching with the others in the barren little whitewashed room.

Tammy: If there is a God I don't think we can completely know God's mind.

William: God is just a device for power over poor people. God organizes and palliates them.

Charles: But God is benevolent. Poor people need benevolence. Even if there were no good God you'd have to invent one. People need reverence.

Tammy: In a way, an unknowable God is like having no God because everything becomes the search for God, like science.

William: So Charles aren't you saying that people need to be controlled by God? What about free will? Are people God's slaves?

Charles: No I'm just saying that if there were a god there's no reason he wouldn't invent free will. It would be kind of a simplistic world without free will. God is natural to the way people think. There has to be an ideal that people strive for otherwise there would be no order to be found. God is the mediator between people.

William: That sounds a lot like "God is reason." Can't people discover reason without resorting to God as an explanation for it. I mean two plus two doesn't need God to add up to four. God is just a relationship of mankind to the other animals.

Tammy: Thinking that God is the Lion King doesn't really solve problems like humility before God. It just puts fear in place I think. God might be like an archaeological dig where you just have a collection of enigmatic clues and a method for figuring out what was there. A god like that could be nearly irrelevant to thinking about people. God might be irretrievably far away and long ago.

Charles: If there is a God he has to be knowable. God would be the reason things make sense.

Tammy: If there is a God, he or she might not reveal their purposes, which would require faith. Faith is the real value of having a God. God becomes something that represents something bigger than oneself and faith emphasizes dealing with a relationship like that. It becomes possible for a person to be a knight of faith. I think that's important.

William: People believe in God because other people around them agree. It's often not very solitary. They value that God isn't complicated. It's just that the God, he or she, is like a person who leads them. God isn't a very helpful concept for an independent minded person.

Archer: What about deity that isn't anthropomorphic? Isn't that complex enough for a thinking person? Let's go out to my study, it's outside just a short walk away.

They all walk upstairs still crouching until they get out of the cellar and then go out the door and walk across the parking area to a modern building that looks like a workshop. They go in and after a short entryway find themselves in Archer's study. It has a large ell-shaped desk with a computer on it, one of the first desktop models with a large square monitor sitting atop a rectangular box. Near the desk is a small seating area with two simple couches and a chair. Archer says to make themselves at home and they sit comfortably on the couches admiring his study arrangement.

Archer: It's possible that without God or with a God that doesn't reveal himself that nature becomes the focus for man's reverence. There's a tension between nature and civilization.

William: A dichotomy between civilization and nature is too facile. Blake's dark satanic mills are just as much a product of nature as a sublime landscape view. When you think about it industry dwarfs an individual person just as much as pastoral nature.

Charles: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Maine will provide a house to any minister who is willing to take over a parish in Maine.

William: That's what I mean, the task of shepherding relationships between people is huge and filled with anxiety, not to mention just the task of being a responsible individual.

Tammy: With or without God, it takes faith to deal with things that are unknowable.

Charles: The thing is doing the most good for the most people.

William: That's just it, there are so many people, and they all have unique realities. We can accept that there's some overlap, maybe like a limited but shared dream, but with so many different unique perceptions social behavior really takes over as the engine of human knowledge. How do you reconcile so many differences? The common elements take over and those things aren't what most people think of as philosophy. Food and water, comfort and security. People readily agree to trade on these things but look at the result.

Charles: I agree the world is more than a little neurotic and people are terribly recalcitrant about material objects. Doing good seems to have a lot of effective options but stretching your definition of good to suit a lot of people is an enormous challenge and then there's a lot of resistance in many people to doing anything. Identity and desires become huge obstacles to people fitting in in the world. Stone age people must have done a lot of different things at once like our DNA wants to do. Specialization satisfies some things like megalomania in exceptional people, but people are reluctant to negotiate variety in life. Life should be like school; you always have half a dozen topics on your plate.

Tammy: Faith should be placed in people and their behavior. There's too much distrust and punitive impulses in society. People who are treated well and are secure mind their own business and reciprocate good behavior. Even wanting to be rich becomes a less likely behavior when security is basic to human rights. Constant negotiation and wrangling, something humans are widely genetically disposed to I think, excludes basic needs, which should be inalienable.

At this point William finds himself staring at a curio Archer had prominently displayed on a rack cross from his desk. There gleaming in the dim light was a Roman sword about 3 ft. long with a gilded hilt. "That's quite a sword," William said aloud.

"Yes, I always keep it in mind when I think about ancient culture. In ancient culture as much as half the population was enslaved. Slaves were war captives sent from the ends of the Empire. They were practically treated as currency," Archer replied.

"And owners had the power of life and death over them didn't they," Charles said.

"Yes," Archer replied, "shall we head back inside?"

At this word William, Tammy and Charles all rose and followed Archer back out into the yard and across it to the house again where Lucinda retrieved their coats for them.

"Thank you very much," they all said and climbed into Tammy's car for the ride back to Portland. "I'll

see you when vacation is over," said Archer, and Tammy backed slowly down the driveway and they all went back to Portland.

5.

At 53 years old and setting aside his memories at Franklin Towers later that day William Holden was glad those days were long behind him when intellectual matters could cause him so much anxiety. He continued to think of Archer's home which he so graciously shared with his friends from USM and wondered how he was going to use his new information to try and track down what happened to Tammy. He knew about Tammy's fate but what had happened to Tom and Vicki and Charles? Maybe Archer knew and he could contact him.

Charles said in the class notes that he was seeking information about career day. It sounded as though Charles were a school teacher but what about the details? He could contact Charles by the email that he published, but he would have to explain what he had been up to all these years and that he didn't really have a career like other people. He had only known Charles during his time at USM and he hadn't kept up with him afterwards. Holden had not really kept up with anyone because his optimism was so high and he was sure one day he would be brimming with the prestigious good news that he was a professor. In retrospect it was all very unrealistic and he wondered what Charles had thought about his

ambitions. People reacted differently when he told them about his illness. Some of his old friends he had never told, and others whom he had told in the immediate aftermath of his awkward troubles had received the news with distant sympathy. Most people wondered if he acted strange or violent and those things didn't really come up anymore although the unstated stigma remained. He decided to sleep on it and think of an inquiry to send to Charles tomorrow.

There was still a while before bed time, and as he lay on his couch listening to music to try and calm himself he thought about writing to Charles. Career day was something he would have to recuse himself from. In another life he thought he could have been a teacher like Charles but maybe not. Without illness, which the doctors had said was genetic, he wondered what life would have been like. In his own opinion he thought more than anything that different life circumstances would have made him a different person, but he kept that to himself and tried to let the system take its course as far as he could without letting go of himself too much. If he were to write to Charles about career day he would have to explain that more than anything he thought the world should be a different place for careers to happen in.

He thought it would be a better world if everyone lived in high-rise housing projects, doing away with urban sprawl and private housing and personal transportation. Everyone, except for disabilities,

should work part-time--this would be a big change in careers--and personal wealth should be outlawed. The remainder of people's time should be spent in school for lifelong education. People's lives should be spent in creative and intellectual endeavors and education should be perpetually involved with work.

Equality, in his opinion, and less burden, would solve more of the world's problems of crime and discontent than any other method. If people wanted to enhance their sense of stability and security they should work to increase the safety and happiness of their neighbors and fellow humans. That would be real security, which was what most people wanted from wealth anyway. He wondered if Charles was still much of an idealist.

Huysmans said meow and climbed up into his lap for a cat nap, and Holden petted her affectionately, glad for company and always marveling at what a good cat she was. Holden continued thinking about writing to Charles. He could explain to him that if it were possible he wished his career was that of a teacher or a writer or both. There were many things he would like to tell young people, although he was for the most part excluded from that part of life. It wasn't really an official thing; no one banned him from having an opinion to share with young people, and doctors and medical professionals would probably optimistically agree that it was possible for him to be a teacher and be around young people. But they would probably not encourage him.

The real obstacle was getting hired by a school superintendent who would never risk having parents find out that a teacher had such a stigma attached to them. Public opinion mattered in teaching and the wide opinion of schizophrenia involved stigma extensively. But he could be a writer. And that was what he did with himself. He described little stories that he researched like an after-the-fact journalist and that was how he gave himself a sense of having a voice. He wondered if Charles still wrote things occasionally. It would be a challenge just to recount his story to Charles.

If he could he would tell young people really optimistic things about the future and tell them to work toward the expansion of rights. Above all he would encourage them to observe other people and think about the ways that people grow and develop. He thought the world should stop growing its economies and start growing people. The world was a different place than it used to be when a dearth of everything, food, medical care, leisure time, all reduced the world to a survivalist scramble. In modern cities all these things were comparatively abundant. It was people's attitudes that needed to change. They needed to stop thinking that control by fear and punishment was acceptable. Inequality was unacceptable and people slowly were absorbing that thought and changing.

Charles would be interested in his experience in graduate school and he thought about explaining that it had been a total disaster. He completely

underestimated how demanding it would be and what preparations it would require, and his cynicism put him at a great disadvantage. He took his standardized tests and prepared his prerequisites thinking that higher education was largely social promotion. He got a big surprise when he found himself excluded on the basis of a lackluster performance in his studies.

Holden gently woke Huysmans and got ready for bed. Huysmans jumped down from his lap indignantly and sat for a moment on the floor gathering herself and wondering what would happen next. It wasn't late. It was about 8pm which was Holden's usual bedtime, especially after a relatively busy day. The trip to the university had been a mental exertion. He kept track thing of things like that and tried to balance them with extra relaxation. Over the years he had changed a lot, and now he rated pretty well at taking care of himself.

Huysmans followed him into the bedroom and lay on the floor showing her tummy as he got into bed and turned out the lights. Soon Huysmans joined him on the bed and it was time for their quiet time. Every night Huysmans jumped onto the bed and curled up to nap. Sometimes she stayed for most of the night and other times only a few hours as Holden was falling asleep. On this night Holden fell asleep quite early in his routine and slept soundly for a few hours, but soon found himself awake again about 4am in the morning. He lay awake and thought some more.

He didn't know what to think about so he let his mind relax. He had been dreaming and he remembered the dream. In his dream he was dressed strangely and had a denture to cover up a gap in his teeth where his front teeth used to be. He was dressed kind of shabbily wearing a skirt and an old patent leather belt. His clothes were awkward to attach and slowly kept falling off and being a trouble. In the first part of the dream he goes to the symphony with cool, aloof friends who are all dressed formally. They remark when they see his clothes, "Well, I guess you took time to make a skirt." They go to the symphony but his clothes keep deteriorating and he loses his denture. He carries a pocketbook with his tattered wallet and debit card and cash. Eventually his friends ditch him because he looked so disheveled and he is left alone outside the auditorium. He decides since he still has money to go and find something to eat and get a taxi to make his way back to his friend's house where he got dressed. He wanders around and finds a buffet that is open. He's been here before and he finds the line and the dishes comforting like he always does. He piles his plate with potato salad and green salad and eggs. Things keep falling off. When he gets to the cash register he can't find his tattered wallet with cash in it. Then he doesn't have his pocketbook or his debit card. He keeps searching frantically as people stare at his missing teeth and roll their eyes. His belt wears out and his skirt falls off. He's wearing tattered homemade underwear as he explains to the proprietor he doesn't have any money or his debit card. He doesn't know what he's

going to do for a ride. The scene switches to an outdoor cashier by gas pumps on top of a hill. Another customer, a woman, is nice to him and says she can give him a ride home. He feels embarrassed and ashamed. A car comes backing up the hill to the gas pumps. It looks like the back has been crashed into and crushed. The driver keeps backing until they are all the way backed in against the pump. A teenager gets out like he's going to get gas. Instead he reaches into the bent back of the car. The engine is there in the rear. He adjusts something, stretching awkwardly, then gets back in the decrepit car and drives off. That was the end of the dream.

Holden lay still and comfortable as he enjoyed the safety of the darkness and thought about the dream. His skirt was certainly strange he thought but it made him think of a coarse shirt that he had made for himself once when he didn't have any money. He used to wear it in Portland as part of historical costume that he liked. Sometimes he wore it with shorts and socks for a tudor look but at other times it served to make him sort of look like a colonial tradesman with a straw hat. He liked to dress in a historical-looking costume to be around the tourists in Summer. It made him sort of fit in and sometimes people would ask him to take their picture.

He often wondered what his father would think of his costumes. His father was very masculine and manly in the work he did and he often remembered his father cutting down trees in the forest near his home for firewood. He did very macho hard-working

things for extra income and Holden always remembered that from his childhood. Holden didn't feel very effeminate but his reading and writing interested him in things like historical clothes and sometimes it made him anxious. Soon he went back to sleep and morning eventually came.

In the morning Huysmans greets him as she always does. He let his hand fall beside the bed and she would gently rub against it from nose to tail a couple of times, then she would scent mark him with her cheeks and whiskers before she firmly nibbled on his hand with her teeth. She communicated that it was time to get up this way. She was always very refreshed and eager in the morning, and it was encouraging to him. He began his morning routine with a light breakfast and then sat down with a notebook to draft an email to Charles Barstow.

TO: CharlesBarstow@gmail.com

Dear Charles Barstow, I don't know if you remember me or not but my name is William Holden and we knew each other back in the class of '96 at the University of Southern Maine. I got your email from the class notes in the last issue of the alumni magazine and was interested to hear that you are doing well as an English teacher out in Standish. After a long odyssey of different experiences I am living in Portland. Being a teacher must be interesting. I know I sort of wish I had become one. Probably when we last talked I was getting ready to go to graduate school and pursue a career. Careers

are a big step in a young person's life fraught with challenges and difficulties. If you asked me I would explain that in my opinion many of those difficulties were avoidable if people thought about society in a different way. In my opinion education should not stop in people's lives after high school or college or even graduate school but instead be an important part of their working and social lives until they are very old. People should work less and go to school a lot more. All around the world wealth and militarism should evolve into equality. People should develop as people, not mostly as workers, and work should be like natural gathering and grazing, not specialized exertion. There is so much that could be more natural and healthy about the way people interact to create resources, and change begins with education I think. My own experience, I'm sorry to say, but trying to learn from it, has been a catastrophe. I can think of so many cautions to share with a young person. When I went to graduate school I was cranked up with enthusiasm but awfully unprepared. I expected it to be competitive but nothing I couldn't handle. I would advise young students from a rural high school to outdo themselves as much as possible from early on to have a chance at higher learning. They should expect to completely leave their classmates behind and throw the book out the window because they were so advanced. Even being emotionally unprepared but scholastically advanced would be a good thing. It's such a hard combination to crack. I didn't qualify for a PhD and I got extremely upset. There was no way I could take it in stride. After

years of crisis I tried to join the army but ended up diagnosed with schizophrenia. I know, crazy huh! It's been a bumpy ride and I know I can't help out with career day I guess, but there was another reason I wanted to contact you. Do you remember Tammy Marsden? She was about five-feet-six, pretty, and studied archaeology and anthropology? Well, I found some sad news about her the other day and I'm trying to track down more information. Did you know she died? Back in 1998? Did you hear any information about her death back then? I was away in graduate school then and I didn't hear about it until just last week when I was going through some old American Journals. I would really appreciate it if you remember any news from back then and could contact me to fill me in. This is such a tragedy; I'm having a hard time processing it. Well, I hope this finds you well and you get lots of contacts for career day.

Your Friend, William Holden

Holden finished his note and thought about it as he sat on his couch at Franklin Towers. He hoped Charles had heard some news and would write to fill him in. Huysmans was sunbathing in the morning sun as it came through the windows, and she was as contented as a cat could be. He watched the noontime news on television and decided to wait until afternoon to type in his email to Charles. He usually ate early in the mid-afternoon and it was his one meal of the day. He ate lightly, because he didn't want to gain weight on his medication. When the

time came around he sent off his note and set aside his phone to wait for a response. The longer it took to get back to him the better he thought because that would mean Charles might have more information to include. He wondered if Charles was married or had kids. If he were he would be busy he thought.

What a different life having a wife and kids would be Holden mused. There was only a short time in his life when he thought about marrying or having kids. As a teenager he had always thought he was against marriage. The only reason he could think of for marrying was to "legitimate" children as he thought about it, and he knew he had no desire for children. He attributed his reluctance to marry to the type of ambition he had and his witnessing of his parents experience with marriage and children. Holden wanted to be a writer. In his early years he didn't yet associate this with endless solitude and grinding concentration but he was beginning to gravitate in that direction.

His parents influence was more concrete. His parents worked from dawn till dusk to establish an austere lifestyle for him and his sisters. They had little time to be parents and most of the time they were chastising their kids about how much things cost. Holden knew he didn't want to be a parent in austere circumstances, and he felt he had few paths to a more comfortable situation. After quitting high school he thought that to return to university or school he would have to "sell out" and take a more

conventional path which involved compromising his true feelings.

The path to a different view of children and marriage was a twisting, steep one and he passed it gradually between the years of about 20 to 25. In those years he explored his first attempts at writing, he settled down into stable living situations and he met Lana, with them living together much of the time from the very start. Two incomes made a big difference.

At first when he was about 20 he was living in an apartment in Portland with two or three roommates. It wasn't his first apartment in Portland but it was his first secure and stable one. He had found the apartment when he met a woman named Deidre at a local coffee establishment, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, which he had frequented ever since he was old enough to come into Portland to hang out from Gorham where his parents lived. It was a place full of Portlanders young and old and it satisfied some of his restlessness to be out of his parents' house.

This time he was back home for a short stay after having lived in a run-down house in Bayside a year before where he'd been living when he started dating a girl named Elaine who was a barista there at Green Mountain Roasters back in the days before there was a Starbucks. He had followed her back to college in Manhattan at Barnard when the Summer came to an end, and he spent a couple of weeks there until they ran out of money and their living in her dorm room came to an awkward end. He had

intended to move to New York City and get a job there but that didn't turn out to be a very practical option. So he took the bus back and after a brief stint at the University of New Hampshire living in another dorm room with another friend who went there and getting into trouble with the police there for Criminal Trespass after a party he was attending was broken up, he was back in Portland with a court date in New Hampshire and no place to live or work. He ended up at Green Mountain Coffee Roasters talking to people and when Deidre heard he was looking for a place to live she introduced herself because she was looking for roommates to share an apartment.

Deidre was about five-foot-six and curvy and had dark hair and had a one-year-old son who lived with his father across town. She worked at a restaurant in the Old Port and knew lots of people in Portland. When she introduced herself she said she was looking for roommates who didn't mind if she walked around naked and if her boyfriend Glenn came over sometimes. Holden was easygoing and he thought he didn't mind so he ended up with an apartment soon enough. Deidre said her father was an economics professor and she used to be a stripper at the Stardust on Munjoy Hill. It was all exotic enough to Holden. Deidre liked Tom Robbins' book *Only Cowgirls Get the Blues* and Holden read it because he was interested in what books were lying around. She had gone to college at the University of Maine and there were other books like William Faulkner's *Go Down Moses* too.

It was during this time that when he wasn't drinking beer or reading he was driving a refrigerator truck downtown and his visits to the local bookstores got his reading going. In those days he would buy used paperbacks and he was in the process of collecting Hemingway and Camus. He read everything he could find from both of them and the quote from Albert Camus's Notebooks where he declared that "he was interested in the very rich and the very poor but had no interest in the mass in between" stuck with him.

After a period with a roommate who objected to his drinking because she was in Alcoholics Anonymous, eventually Deidre found another roommate at Green Mountain Roasters who was a significant change for Holden. Deidre brought home one day a young man named Mark who stuck out flamboyantly because he was gay. Mark was between jobs and being supported by his mother, who was between husbands, and Holden and Mark got along very well. Unlike Holden, Mark was a hipster who was obsessed with clothes and style. He wanted to be a fashion designer and was constantly dressing himself in capes and kaftans and turbans that he made for himself. Unlike Deidre, Holden and Mark both smoked. Mark didn't really drink but he liked to smoke marijuana so it was very easy going times at the apartment. Mark had gone to Windham High School and Holden imagined how much harassment there must have been there. Once, when a friend from Exeter was visiting Portland and met Mark, the friend remarked callously, "Something in the water I

guess." When Mark and Holden ate at restaurants they were seated discreetly at the back as if they were a couple which they weren't.

Mark and his flamboyant homosexuality were a new thing for Holden. It wasn't like Holden had never met gay people before, but it was a first for him to be friends with someone who was gay. Being friends with Mark partitioned his life in strange ways. He was working as a truck driver, and he knew the men he worked with would react differently to Mark's flamboyance than he did. Mark was always sharply aware that some men attacked gays and it shaped the places he went and the things he did.

To Holden there were two Portlands, one in which he worked and tended to hang out in and one which cost a little more and tended to demand more circumspect dress and behavior. Mark was always fastidious in his dress. He never wore jeans, and he always looked carefully dressed and accessorized even when he was trying to dress casually. He looked like he belonged to an 80s art rock band. Holden on the other hand no longer dressed like he went to Exeter, and his department store preppy look had long since disappeared. Holden was thoroughly working-class except in his interest in literature, and he assimilated discontent along with his clothes. To Holden though, Mark seemed very rebellious. His flamboyance, his singular clothes, all seemed to express counterculture to him and that was a new experience. It was like a new sort of attitude to Holden and he observed it carefully, all the while

absorbing Mark's hipster vocabulary and habits. Holden had never been a person to assert his identity very much, except negatively when he quit school a couple of times.

Mark also had friends who moved in and shared the rent. Eventually Mark's acquaintances Greg and Christian moved in and stayed for quite a while after Deidre moved out to a place where she could live with her son. Greg and Christian were also gay and from the Greater Portland area. They were very personable and Holden's social skills improved a lot during this period of time. He gained a sense of what one Portland culture was like and gained a lot of living skills that he had not had in previous living situations. Cooking a little and shopping in thrift stores for clothing and furniture were new things that he learned from his new friends.

High school and its aftermath were a disaster for Holden. In a way, since his parents met at Gorham High School and got married soon after Holden spent his high school years trying to break away from them and exceed them. There was no roadmap for what he was trying to do except the books he grew up reading. There was no television and he went to few movies. He borrowed the family car, a modest sedan with an ostentatious school window sticker on it, and he went on dates but he was always trading on his ostentatious future and was seldom what his parents would have called a "regular person." All his energy went into the social challenges of those years. When he quit school because he had already graduated in his mind from awkward nerd to rowdy jock in a couple of short years, he renounced the whole enterprise of school and thought he had enough education to get him started for a whole lifetime. He would be an adventurer and writer whose social credentials were fully established. He had no sense, like his school friends, of the necessity of grinding away at school for another seven years or more and then starting in the job market. Instead his situation dropped him straight into the working world where he already had plenty of experience from working during the Summer on a farm and in a restaurant.

What he didn't have was experience living on his own on a rock bottom income.

It was a bumpy start just like it was for his real world friends like Lana and Mark whom he found himself hanging out with when a little of the dust began to settle. He had hitchhiked from coast to coast, lived in a punk rock squat and worked as a migrant laborer in Selma, Alabama all in the space of a couple of short years. He did anything to get away from his father's pressure to move out of his family home. When he met Deidre he had been accused of Criminal Trespass in New Hampshire and didn't have a car to get to court there after he started work in Portland. Deidra loaned him a car and he went to court and pleaded guilty and he was fined \$50 for his trouble. On Deidre's advice, he wore his work uniform to court and didn't mention anything about going to Exeter. She was the best lawyer he ever had.

He remembered the first time he had met Lana. He came trudging up the stairs into the apartment he shared with Mark and Greg and there was a new young woman sitting in a rocking chair in the front room. She was laughing and gay and had come over to visit Greg and was staying the night. From what he could gather she had been in a production of Romeo and Juliet that Greg had directed at Fort Williams Park in South Portland and she was visiting to stay in town away from her parents. She worked at Maine Medical Center where her mother also worked.

Holden didn't have a girlfriend at the time which wasn't unusual although he dated some. As was the case with many 20- and 21-year-olds they slept together that first night and became fast friends the next day. At first it was a social novelty, having a girlfriend to come home to when she stayed over. She came home from work back to the apartment and he would get home later in the evening when it was dark at first because it was Winter and he worked a lot of overtime. They were soon spending weekends together and going out for breakfast which it seemed like all of Portland did back in those days. There were many breakfast spots and they went mostly to the one called the Magic Muffin on Congress Street.

They got along well. In many ways it was a relationship of convenience with Lana looking for a place to stay outside of her parents house in Falmouth, but there was a spark of familiarity between them and they fit together well. They went to the theater locally with Mark and Greg and dressing up for the theater was a big thing. Mark and Lana always said together that there was nothing wrong with being poor, only in dressing poorly, a sentiment which they followed through completely. Mark and Greg were doing Children's Theater at the time and Mark played "Puss" in "Puss in Boots" out in Westbrook which spilled over into everything he did while he was playing the part.

The theater spilled over into Holden's life too when he wasn't working and one evening while walking

somewhere he had an inspiration to write a one-act play. He and Lana were walking on Congress Street near Brown Street and they walked by a bank there that had a new enclosure outside their lobby. It was completely closed in by glass on all sides and there was a door which required a magnetic card to open it. Inside there were some potted ferns and a strange new machine.

The machine was called an automatic teller machine and now for the first time bank customers could get money out of the bank outside of bank hours. This caught Holden's imagination as a dramatic scene for a one-act play and he told Lana about it. After thinking about it for a while he began to type it up on an old Underwood typewriter he got at Goodwill. There were a lot of typewriters at thrift stores in those days he remembered because word processors had just started a few years before and getting one was one of the things Holden most wanted, but they were too expensive for his budget. Instead typing away at the old Underwood seemed romantic like a movie and he kept at it for a while on weekends. He had typed letters to girlfriends before in a previous living situation, when he had left and moved to New York City with his Summer girlfriend, and typing made him drunk with enthusiasm for writing.

The play set a man called Richard and his wife and two teenage kids against the machine. He was a banker and was stopping off at the machine to get some money out on Saturday evening. But the twist

was that he was secretly gay and was having an affair with Serge, a young man who comes along on the street, very drunk. Richard and his family get locked in the glass enclosure when they try to use the machine and Serge falls down drunk at the bottom of the lamp-post at the front of the stage. The play goes on and Richard tries to persuade the drunken Serge to come over to the ATM enclosure and open the door to let them out.

The short play ends with Serge finally letting them out but not before Richard's wife and family finds out about their father. Holden called the play P.I.N. for personal identification number and was very proud of it, thinking he might somehow get it produced. Lana insisted she get a share of the copyright for helping to think of it. Outside of love letters and school projects the play was Holden's first attempt at writing on his own. Looking back he was kind of a late bloomer like his mother always said but that didn't dim his enthusiasm.

Life went on as usual at the apartment. People worked; it was the first living situation Holden had experienced where almost everyone had a steady job. Everybody that is except Greg who was in his thirties and tried to make a living in theater. He was very charismatic and obsequious about his poverty and he did the most creative things out of the four people who lived at the apartment regularly plus Lana. They became a sort of "chosen family" as socially adept people often do and they all had creative aspirations although Greg was the only one

who didn't have a day job to support himself. It was also curious that despite their aspirations only Holden would eventually go to college. For everyone else it was the practical issue of money that kept them back. To Holden, who at that time was adamantly rebellious about school, everyone's abstinence from school was authentic and normal. Greg talked about leaving town, a move between inexpensive places to live, and he encouraged everyone to come to Denver where he was going to do a coffeehouse theater. It was sort of mysterious how Greg had so many irons in the fire but he was apparently determined to make a living in entertainment. Christian and Lana decided to do a production of a Sam Shepard play at a local venue where they knew the owner, and they hoped to use the money to move out to Denver.

Time and rehearsals passed and Holden and Lana kept on seeing each other. Of everyone, Holden was the most enthusiastic about moving. He wanted to try a new place and new opportunities and he kept drinking and reading and writing as he went through three jobs in a year in those days. At his age he found he could get plain jobs at will so he didn't worry much about them, and when the time came for Christian and Lana's play he got ready to move and gave up a good job driving a delivery truck in South Portland. The play was a success with a small audience of friends and family and soon after it was decided that Holden would go out ahead and Lana would come after. Greg had left months before,

unable to make rent even though rent at the apartment was very modest since it was split four ways.

Holden sat and remembered. In those days he had so much energy. Everybody had so much energy it seemed. In those days the drama of events in life was so much more important than practicalities up to a point, although that was the most important part of those years it turned out in retrospect. He learned survival skills and he worked a lot, something that his days of hitchhiking and working as a migrant laborer taught him. He had realized that in order to do any writing he needed to have a roof over his head and a place to sleep. And that was just a minimum. He carried a heavy poetry anthology all the way across the country along with a notebook but seldom had time or place to read or write. In his journey to becoming an amateur writer, although in those days he had anticipated writing professionally, those were the first steps, that is, realizing he needed more than just something to write about to be a writer.

As he sat he remembered he had an errand to take care of today because Huysmans was running out of cat food and he needed to make a special trip down to the store to get some. He put on his shoes and got ready to catch the bus. It was afternoon so he expected the bus would not be too busy. He always got a big bag of cat food so he would have a supply. Huysmans was very particular and he always got her the same kind of food. He would have fed her human food or anything else she liked if she wanted, but she

didn't really like human food and didn't even come over for cat treats when he offered them. He went downstairs in the elevator and the building was deserted as it often was in the afternoon. The bus soon came and the ride was uneventful. At the store there were more people but it was just a simple trip for a big bag of cat food. Waiting for the bus home he didn't see Robert around anywhere which did not surprise him since he usually saw Robert at the store on weekends.

Today there were a couple of people drinking at the bus stop. That was unusual but not unheard-of, since there was no other place to sit in the Hannaford parking lot and people living in homeless shelters like he heard these people talking about came to Hannaford regularly to buy alcohol. He heard the man talking about how he received a settlement for an accidental injury and this told the curious story of how he how he came to be living in the streets and drinking.

"You know Smokey, or Bandit, or Fatty," he asked the fellow he was talking too, a 30-something man with a limp, naming off people he knew from the streets.

"No but I know a lot of people around downtown," the man replied. This man had been on the bus when Holden rode down. The man had asked something about the scenery, a construction project out the window, and Holden had replied. Holden liked that about the bus, the sort of ad hoc camaraderie of bus

riders, but Holden didn't join in the conversation with the man drinking at the bus stop.

"I've been drinking all day, Vodka and Hawaiian Punch," he said and held up a bottle of red liquid, oblivious to his surroundings. "You want some," he offered the other fellow.

"No thanks," he said.

Holden worried for the drunk man. He didn't understand how someone could drink so irresponsibly. The man looked like he was still young, under 30 maybe. Must have been tough times he thought as the bus pulled up and he got on. The fellow with the limp got on also and the drunk man was left there with the dregs of his bottle. "Cold," the fellow said simply as he sat down across from Holden.

"Yes it's cold out," Holden replied, "there were a few nice days last week." When he got back to Franklin Towers he got off the bus and went into the building. In the building by the elevator there was a young man standing and waiting. He was of medium height and dark-haired with an unkempt beard. He looked rather disheveled like he hadn't had a shower in a while, but Holden knew him and called out.

"Hi Drew," he said, "haven't seen you in a while." The young man replied in slightly slurred hesitating speech, "Oh hi William, I've been in the hospital." Holden knew Drew from a few years back on his own last trip to the hospital. Drew had stayed in the same

hospital for a few weeks, before Holden had been shipped to Riverview in Augusta. Holden had never talked with Drew about illness, even when they both stayed at the same group home for a year after they each got out of their respective hospitals, but Holden had gotten pretty adept at guessing people's illnesses in all his time in mental hospitals. Drew was pretty likely a case of schizophrenia he estimated. Drew had problems with talking out loud to himself. He was a little unnerving if you were squeamish or unfamiliar with mentally ill people, but if you saw past that like Holden did Drew was a very personable and kind of a frustrated regular young man. Holden couldn't imagine very well what it would have been like to become ill in his late teens or early twenties like Drew probably had. Most young men with schizophrenia were diagnosed at that age. Holden had been a little developmentally off-kilter then but he was very active and romantically involved in those years, and many young men with schizophrenia whom he met were growing older with their illness without that experience. They just tried to deal with their illness and pass the time.

Drew kept explaining himself there by the elevator. He said he had problems with management and might lose his apartment. That explained his trip to the hospital. Then he said he was going to get high, something Holden took as an open invitation to join him but Holden didn't say anything. At 53 years old Holden wasn't interested in marijuana, and he worried about Drew. Holden realized thinking to

himself that changes in the marijuana laws probably had a big effect for Drew, whom he had not known to use drugs before. Holden wanted to do something to help Drew but he thought being a friendly acquaintance was about all he could do. Drew kept very much to himself and was standoffish about further contact. He was like a lot of younger people Holden had met. Holden got on the elevator with his cat food and sincerely wished Drew a good day.

Once back in his apartment Holden put away the cat food and said hello to Huysmans, who was a little more restless later in the day than she had been in the morning. It was nearly evening now on a late-winter day and Holden tried to wind down after a long one. He didn't ponder things as much in the evenings although he often woke up later at night thinking about things after his batteries were recharged. He listened to classical music for a while, had a snack and went to bed where he slept soundly for the whole night until morning. In the morning Huysmans was still asleep at the foot of his bed, and Holden was glad to see her. This morning was a gray rainy day and she missed the sunshine coming through the windows of their apartment. It wasn't long after coffee and breakfast that Holden found himself thinking about Lana again as he waited for a reply from his email inquiry to Charles Barstow.

He saw Lana in his days back in Portland after a frenetic two years of traveling around and getting into some trouble. Then he and Lana moved in together out in Denver, Colorado which was a whole

new experience for Holden. He liked the West and rent was a lot cheaper than in Portland. People seemed a lot more easygoing than in New England and Holden traded his Bean boots for a pair of second-hand cowboy boots that he wore sometimes although they hurt his feet. At first he had lived in Denver alone, keeping in touch with Greg who lived in Denver now too and knew a lot of people and places to go.

Greg had a small space where he put on theater productions in a coffee house. He also knew Helen, who was a friend of his who lived in a building where someone was looking for roommates. She put Holden in touch with two women who lived in a three-bedroom unit upstairs in the building and soon Holden was living with two women, a cat and a six-foot boa constrictor that lived in an enclosure in one of the women's rooms. Holden started meeting a lot of new people immediately. Holden started working at the coffee house in the kitchen and waiting tables and he met a young woman at the coffee house who had her own motorcycle and was hanging out. She needed a place to stay so he let her stay in his room but they didn't get involved because he was being faithful to Lana who was still planning to move to Denver. Holden had never lived with roommates who were strangers before and one night he came home to find the snake out in the hallway stalking the cat. He got the cat out of its trance and saved it from the snake and then waited for his roommates to come home. It wasn't a very comfortable place to

live and he was glad when a one-bedroom unit opened up in the basement. Soon he was living on his own in a dark, small garden level apartment which he was glad to be in.

He had his old Underwood typewriter with him and he immediately set to work trying to write as soon as he had some privacy. He felt he had a lot of experiences he wanted to write about but his style expectations were too high. He had a chance to try writing prose in school but he wanted to write like Hemingway in terse dramatic sentences that revealed a lot as they went. Soon he was trying to write a little every day, but he was frustrated by his progress. Then he got a job and decided to get up early in the morning to add a few extra hours to the day. He was writing as much as he could but he only settled on a few sentences a day. It was difficult and discouraging. When Lana moved in he was ready for a break.

When Lana came to Denver they were living together as a couple for the first time. Nesting became a big thing. They sought out some old furniture and Lana cooked. She had gone to cooking school for a while so that worked out well. At first Lana worked at a Domino's Pizza and she brought home leftover pizza at the end of the night. It was a big change for her since she worked at the hospital back in Portland. Her mother had gotten her the job and she liked it. There was a big difference between working at a pizza place and working as a pharmacy tech.

Eventually Lana restlessly switched jobs to working in a deli, but she was never very content with work.

To Holden it was like learning to ride a bicycle, juggling all the different elements of independent living. Lana hung out with Greg a lot and eventually she had a role in one of his productions. Holden got a role too. They were doing a show called "Titanic" but it never got off the ground. Greg was unable to pay the rent on the space and the whole thing sank. To Holden this was no big deal but after that Lana was a lot less interested in living in Denver.

Holden had some friends from work who were college students from Santa Fe who were taking a year off from college and they hung out a bit. During those years it seemed like many of Holden's friends and acquaintances were in college but Holden was stiffly opposed to college. Even writing didn't make him want to go to college. In fact it made him feel more authentic, like Jack Kerouac on the road or something to be a high school dropout. To Holden, everything was the romance and adventure that he hoped to write about. In the end, Lana went back to Portland and he kept on working at his job with a book company which took him to Cleveland, Ohio. Lana kept in touch, coming out to visit at New Year's and flying on the plane with a dramatic fur coat but they were both sort of seeing other people.

Holden drank a lot in those days. He discovered the author Charles Bukowski and that stoked his recklessness. He hung around with drug dealers and

people in between stints in jail as well as lots of different girls. People who worked in the warehouse where he worked admired motorcycle gangs and anything dramatically counterculture. This was working class life, rebellion was the key, people didn't agree with their employers, they didn't agree with their landlords, and they didn't agree with the government. They came from all over to live on Capitol Hill in Denver. It was a big world, Holden discovered. He worked and drank and wrote about hitchhiking across the country a few short years before. When he lost his job as a book buyer he moved back to Portland and moved in with Lana and Christian.

Returning to Portland was a big change living with Lana and Christian. Lana had her old job back and Christian worked as a waiter. It was like a different world. He didn't wear old t-shirts and cowboy boots anymore and he drank a lot less. Holden wasn't sure whether he was more outlaw warehouse clerk or antiquarian bookstore clerk which is what he got for a job back in Portland. Important things were different. His employer lived in New Hampshire near Exeter and suddenly it was important to be law-abiding and sort of conservative again. He always marveled at how much a few resources changed a person's perspective and his new employer seemed bent on preserving his resources. He was also very young, barely thirty, but he had his own business and he liked to travel to Europe and Holden got a sense of how people acted when their situation was

enviable. Social skills were one area of a person that blossomed, Holden thought, and so was diligence. His employer was determined to succeed at the very pleasant business of antiquarian books. One dealer Holden met described his business as a “very nice way to make a very small amount of money.” Nevertheless Holden was thrilled to have the job. To him, Portland's Old Port might as well have been Paris and Holden threw himself into the job. He learned all about the value of old books and became a sort of "picker" who went to other shops and flea markets and the like to search for old books that he might be able to resell to his employer. He bought old books and decorative books and series books and his employer was very generous to him about his mistakes. He became a regular at all the shops in Portland and continued reading a lot when he was at home with Lana.

Things went well on the home front. At first Lana had been a little surprised that he wanted to get back together but there was still a mutual attraction and they all got along, even if they were a little cramped, in the two-bedroom apartment she had shared with Christian before Holden came back from Denver and Ohio. When Holden came back from Ohio the only thing he brought with him except his clothes were his books. Christian and Lana tried producing small theatre shows again and for a while they were all happy together, but eventually Holden and Lana decided to move out together and get a place of their own. They got a place in a large building on Congress

Street and it was the nicest apartment Holden ever lived in until he lived in Franklin Towers 25 years later. During this time he began to become more conservative, and to hedge his adamant position on staying away from organized education but not too much right away.

He decided to go through the process of getting a graduation equivalency diploma. He seldom told anyone that he was a high school dropout and he never told employers about that part of his history. He felt it just was an unnecessary complication in his job history to include. In the same way he never included information about getting in trouble with the police. But he decided it would be good to get a GED because he never knew what he would do in the future. He took the test and did so well that he won an award. He had apparently done better than anyone else who took the test that year and along with the other nine test takers who got the award he was invited to the governor's mansion to meet the governor, who was Jock Mckernan at that time. Holden still felt strangely about organized education and recognition for it. It took a lot of nerve but instead of going to tea at the Blaine House Holden wrote to the newspaper that had published the winners' names and explained that he objected to George Bush as an "education president". What Holden really was, was a snob because he didn't feel a GED really reflected his academic stature. Holden still had a lot of problems with school and there were a lot more worse ones to come. Instead of going to

tea, Holden and Lana took the \$100 prize and went out to dinner at a seafood restaurant on a boat.

Holden always had problems with school and recognition for it. He thought it was probably because if he had absorbed his father's worldview in early childhood, he probably didn't have much use for higher education and complicated debate or rules although education was where his greater advantage in life lay. Holden wasn't alone in his apostasy either. Lana had some friends around and of course Holden met them too. Holden kept working in the book and print shop and they had quite a comfortable young life.

It was nice and Holden liked it, although some of their friends had nicer situations. One of Lana's friends had married very well to a pleasant, rich fly fisherman who also was a writer who collected books. Holden and he got along very stiffly at first when the fly fishermen came into the store where Holden worked and sneered at the store because it was small and not very literary. The other young man had his own store that sold fly fishing gear. He only kept the store a few years. Holden never visited it because he was not a fisherman. But anyway since Lana and his wife were friends Holden got along with the other fellow who had gone to boarding school in Massachusetts since he was little and also decided he had no use for college when the time came.

During this whole time Holden did a lot of writing. He wrote three short stories that he made into a

chapbook. The shop where he worked had a computer with a word processor that Holden illicitly used to lay out the pages of the book and make a cover. He copied off 10 copies of his book and distributed them around town sort of like a tract. Lana and Holden were quite elegant together and Holden naively tried to get a portrait painted of Lana. Another fellow who worked at the bookshop for a while was an artist and Holden thought making a portrait would be a simple thing when he asked him to come and start sketching Lana. The fellow made a photograph and raised the price too high for Holden to consider. Holden had thought a painting would have cost only \$50 or something but the other fellow needed more money. The deal fell through and Holden was disappointed.

Holden also did other jobs in those days. He cobbled together interesting part time jobs and got by. These were the years he would have been in school and graduate school if he had been pursuing his opportunities to advantage. One day while he was minding the bookshop an elegant middle-aged man came in and started looking at the architectural prints the shop sold. Holden started talking with him about the prints and soon Holden was offered a job at a house museum in Portland. The man, who was very generous although very opinionated and full of aloof attitudes about everything, hired him to be a tour guide and weekend manager of the gift store. The man eventually revealed that he was a former banker who had gone to West Point and worked for

the Joint Chiefs of Staff early in his career. He chortled knowingly when Holden revealed that he had gone to Exeter. To Holden the man's snobbery was both alluring and off-putting because he had never settled in his own mind how he felt about those experiences. It was flattering to be recognized but he was deeply estranged from the wealth of many of his so-called peers and resented them. Somehow, in his youth, he always imagined that he would not have to leave behind his youthful pretense of elegance and deal with his own poverty of resources as a fact of life.

After a couple of years of semi-ignorant bliss Holden's job at the bookstore ended. It was always part time for the most part except for a couple of months in Summer, and in Winter of 1993 his employer made arrangements with a new shop owner that didn't include Holden. Portland was seasonal in those days and there were certainly few bookstore jobs to be had around town. At that time of year little was going on except restaurants and even they had slowed down some. Holden didn't want to switch professions at all because he had been lucky enough to spend four years in the book trade which he treated as the beginning of a career.

He started looking around for new opportunities, trying to find something clerical at best but probably the only thing there was, and Holden didn't consider it, was scullery work. He signed up for unemployment insurance and for the first time he was idle for a few months during the slow season. To

be freed from the drudgery of work responsibilities affected him a lot, and he wrote poems that Spring which he kept hidden away in a notebook until the days 20 years later when he lost them in an eviction. He thought about how insecure his work situation had been and how difficult it was to find jobs that were even a little bit pleasant and that you could grow and learn from. His expectations had been raised and one day waiting in line at the unemployment office it occurred to him to think that if he was going to be required to wait in line and fill out forms anyway he might as well go to college. To him that's what college meant; it was social promotion and clerical duty. It didn't occur to him that a measure of intellectual growth and Improvement in basic skills might come along with it.

So he formed a plan. He would apply to the University of Southern Maine and see how that went.

Holden found himself remembering those days with chagrin and amazement. At first he had been willing to consider debt in going to college because he had no idea that his test scores were still a desirable quality in college admissions after his dropping out. His life would have been so different if he had realized that college would have supported him right after high school. He didn't really regret his wild choices because he wanted to be a writer and he wanted a life to write about, but he was impressed by the gulf of conservative thinking between himself and others who threw themselves straight into

college and kept at it. Thinking this only made him more sure that education, for free, should be a lifelong social pillar. Manipulating people's cost and commitment to intellectual growth was wrong, he thought as he gathered himself together, petted Huysmans and made his midday meal.

7.

When he decided to apply to college it was the beginning of the end of his relationship with Lana, Holden thought. Holden changed a lot in those few months and sometimes it occurred to him that leaving Lana's shrewd security was a big factor in his breakdown after graduate school. He had approached college carefully but the optimism was contagious and as he went back his confidence grew to lampoonish proportions. Suddenly he had social credibility again and his chest ballooned with bravado.

He wasn't unlike some others at USM who were a little older and full of inflated ambitions that didn't really fit their prospects. One student was determined to be a lawyer and he already drove around in a used Mercedes Benz that you could tell was part of his idea of the trappings of a career. When he failed to get into law school he sold the car to pay debts and he became the laughingstock of the honors program because he had talked so much about his future. Holden failed to realize that college was a time-honored fishing hole for square fish and

the burial place of countless young people's hopes and dreams for a better-dressed life. It was a big leap for many, if not most, to a college-educated career and people were ill-prepared by admissions promises.

As he sat he heard the alert go off for his email and he checked to see if it was Charles Barstow. It was Charles and he opened the screen with baited breath. Maybe Charles knew what happened to Tammy! Maybe he would finally get some answers. The email went as follows:

To: William Holden '96

From: Charles Barstow '96

Dear William, I was both surprised and glad to get your email yesterday. My students are eager to find career mentors and only a few have been trickling in. Carrie Belton wrote in that she was working for a large insurance company where she was a department supervisor and she would be glad to show someone around. Edward Milham had his own car wash business and he wrote In. There are so many people to catch up with. I was surprised to hear your news. Hope you are doing well. It sounds as though things are okay which is good to hear. I saw the film "A Beautiful Mind." It must be a nightmare having mental illness. It's too bad College didn't work out. You would have been a great mentor. It probably would be best if you didn't talk to students although I will be sure to share your wisdom with them. It is such an important time for them and they

get dropped into a big world with only so much support. Everyone who has written in is married with children now and my wife, Elsa, and I have two children ages 10 and 12. My wife is also a teacher. We met in the extended teacher education program at USM soon after she graduated. She teaches fourth grade here in Standish and the kids are both going to school here. Both of the kids were in her class and one of them is still with her now. Having their mother for a teacher is a special experience and we shall see what happens when they get to high school. I shall look forward to having them if they are in my class. Sometimes I think you are right about the career world. Having lifelong education would surely make jobs for teachers! Students with a few exceptions are used to focusing on their social lives at their age so it would be good to have a safety net. There are a few who have dreams of higher education. There always are. Your advice is discouraging but I will share it with them. So few people report back about their experiences. They are either successful, which makes them aloof and busy or they fail and you never hear from these people. They just slink off into the sunset I guess. I have never been to a USM reunion so I don't know what that's like. About your inquiry about Tammy Marsden. Wow it sure has been a long time now. I remember only a little of what I heard about it at the time. They found her dead in the Archers' house. They found her and Professor Archer went mysteriously missing that same night. As far as I know he hasn't been seen or heard from since. I guess he is a suspect. There are few details

circulating. You know who might know something? Tom and Vicky Wylie. I think I heard Tom became a lawyer and he has an office on outer Congress Street. Vicky used to babysit for the Archers also so that's a lead. It was a terrible thing. Tammy had just graduated and everything and I remember meeting her at that dinner party we went to at the Archers'. She probably didn't find a new job right off since she studied archaeology I remember. Oh I remember something else too. Tammy was stabbed. It sounded so horrible. I wish I could help you out some more. I remember that you and Tammy dated for a while around graduation. I have to get back to the kids. Keep me updated if you find out anything.

Sincerely, Charles Barstow

So Tom Wiley had become a lawyer. Good for him Holden thought. Tom had never shared his ambitions very much, and he wasn't the type to be sailing through on test scores or personal wealth where school was one simple obstacle called homework. Tom and Vicky were going to school on the GI Bill and they worked hard at it. Holden remembered vaguely that Tom had once said something about trying to get a position with the Musky Institute School of Public Service to try and get into law school through the back door from his experience there. Tom's roots were in working-class Portland and he was proud of being in the Air Force. To Holden that seemed like a good background to bring to being a lawyer if you could imagine coming through the ranks the slow way. The challenges of being a lawyer were unique

but to Holden it was the social challenges above all that stuck out.

Holden had known few if any military veterans before going to USM and meeting them opened his eyes to the different ways people came into positions of responsibilities as careers. Self-respect was a big factor in motivating careers and Holden had observed that the military was one way people got self-respect. Tom was a quiet, modest soft-spoken guy whom Holden thought would think twice before he made demands of his down-and-out clients. There was such a wide social gulf between so many lawyers and their clients that many lawyers only seemed to want to emphasize. Lawyers just seemed to speak loudly and firmly over their clients' voices to work to keep things copacetic on behalf of some mythical scale corporation called government. Society's message was simple: get a job and don't rock the boat. Holden had seen on the news how that position often contributed more problems rather than solutions to legal trouble.

The law and courts shifted attention away from defendants and sometimes even victims so that privacy and property could reign supreme. Holden didn't know if he completely agreed with that. It seemed somehow to be human nature, or natural to many humans, to be vindictive. Life in the modern world was a different type of challenge than it was in the times that we so proudly remember as creating the law. Sometimes it seemed like law was still fixated on compelling and coercing conformity in an

age whose touchstone was trying to be diversity and inclusiveness. Violence was so clearly about discontent and depravity in a time when little was behind inequality but the impulse to conformity. That was the way things were and they always had been. Discontent had few authentic roots in anything except exclusion and a misguided impulse to the conservation of wealth.

It was perhaps too high-minded a sentiment but Holden felt the lack of virtue assigned to poverty. Ever since his first attempts at writing which were probably under the influence of the Pentecostal Evangelical Church he grew up in, Holden had seen value in simplicity and modest living. Probably because he grew up around his grandparents' depression-era roots as much as their influence on his parents, especially his mother who always valued simplicity, Holden held poverty as a virtue. It was not as though he would not have lived with a higher living standard so much as that as long as he could do certain things like write he was content with poverty. He saw no reason to have a choice of salt in your diet. So much of the economy was a triviality or a luxury option he felt it made people, especially poor people, feel likewise optional and trivial and discontent. It was an emotional challenge that education so extensive that people might object to it as mind control could meet. Attention to people was not mind control. When Holden first came in contact with mental health treatment he was terrified of it as mind control.

It was like the enormous weight of greed in the pursuit of security had taken over since the Neolithic age, and the one thing people could agree upon was to disagree. To each his own was treated as a high principle when it was nothing more than a reactionary influence. Insecurity was no longer universal and the means of support that people had to fend off hunger and maintain shelter was tested and extensive. It was like people needed to consider that the most fearful thing people needed to face was each other and their own choices. It demanded a revolution really.

It was like Martin Luther King when he said that the condition of black people as former slaves and captives was the universal condition. This was considered a part of Martin Luther King's beliefs that wasn't as successful as non-violent protest. The problem was convincing people who had resources to take a step back and consider themselves slaves. It didn't take, and that was how the lines of disagreement emerged around having more and having less. Those to whom the status quo was an advantage were conservative and some of those who were deprived wanted change. People needed to be idealists about resources and realize that there was a more substantial happiness than largesse and above all that until everyone had enough to stay out of trouble (at least!) everyone was diminished by the problems in consequence.

Universal equality and crime as a rare freak accident were possible. This fact alone should be enough to

cause change. Beginning from a very young age the kind of confidence that Holden learned in prep school should be instilled in children. It was the kind of confidence that stood by him into and through mental illness and made him believe in doing what was right. The only time he had failed was when he had betrayed himself for cynicism and tried to capitulate to the status quo.

The facts as he had learned them somewhere were that conservative ambitions for a successful job or a house and family were fickle and unforgiving. Holden wanted a very different world and one that he thought was possible because of modernity. People were capable of living much more peacefully and selflessly, and he felt he knew this because he had been privileged as a young person to experience what comfort, security and attention did for young people and also to understand how mistakes happened.

When his acquaintance at Exeter was killed it wasn't an oil or brewing Tycoon like some of his classmates were. Instead it was another scholarship student who got into trouble integrating their privileged life at home. Attitudes were expensive, and so were drugs. Holden got into more trouble at home than at school and he was introduced to that trouble by his affluent classmates at school. In one environment teenage exuberance survived and flourished, chalking up drugs and alcohol to a pleasantly thrilling learning experience. In another environment people got criminal records or worse, killed by police.

Holden personally knew a young man who was evidently quite tame and civil, but who in the environment of Harlem got shot and killed by an undercover detective when he was trying to mug him for money for marijuana.

Holden never forgot the consequences of the disparity, and this is why he thought school, extravagant school, should permeate civil life. Young people should not be dropped into a dangerous, separate world at the end of school. Their parents should have their own classes and recreation. There should be much more transparency about private life. Teachers should be like social workers, integrating people into a much more extensive state. Holden felt like education, boarding school education from a young age, could transform society as people knew it.

Holden would vote for all these things and he thought that others should too. As the afternoon drew into evening, Holden pondered what he had heard from Charles Barstow a little less and fell into his usual stress-reducing routine. He watched the news, constantly trying to extricate the facts from all the sensational rhetoric of the journalists and keeping in mind the bigger stories that journalists fit into. America was the richest and most militaristic power on earth. They were the Roman Empire with an extensive professional military in an age when geographic empires were becoming obsolete. America imprisoned more people and possessed more guns than any other country on Earth.

After the news he listened to soft music for an hour before bed. Music gave him a chance to unwind and think. When he wasn't directly stimulated by some news or event he let his mind drift and tried to think about any writing he might do. He remembered his childhood before becoming an adult overwhelmed him.

When he eventually went to bed and fell asleep he found himself thinking about the murders close to his home in childhood. They made him feel less innocent and he tried to sort out the brutality of rural poverty from the urban kind he experienced now. The two types of living situation intermingled in the buffer suburbs in between and it always reminded him of how people were terrifically isolated in families by their living situations. School as it existed was supposed to break down the prejudices and disadvantages of home life but it often didn't, merely replicating itself in new but similar family living situations.

Once asleep he slept fitfully and dreamed as he often did. He dreamed he was taking a history class. He was a more advanced student but he was mixed into the class he was in for some reason. The students were crowded into a big classroom sitting at tables. At the tables they were supposed to take a test but Holden couldn't cover his paper because he was sitting so close to the other students. He filled in a few answers but the person sitting next to him looked at his paper. He tried to cover his paper and warn the other student, but the student just leered

at him and showed the answer to the student next to him, who showed it again until four other students were jeering at his protests. They were challenging him openly and he reacted. "I'm going to narc you out," he said and told the teacher who was overseeing the test. Then he was outside the test because he couldn't take it anymore and he was moving around the campus. Other young people mocked him and pushed him and shoved him. He kept walking everywhere. He had his cell phone and continued to try and take the test on it. A student who was African American came up to him and asked if he could see his test. The student said his name was Banksy. He leered and wandered off. Then in his dream he was walking through a dark place on campus and he was suddenly surrounded by a crowd. Someone bumped into him and his phone went dead. He couldn't just take the test anymore. He went back to the classroom and the supervisor of the test said he couldn't take the test anymore. Someone had locked his phone. He thought it was Banksy. Then he woke up from his dream. It was morning again.

He went through his morning routine, and it occurred to him to start to try and get in touch with Tom Wiley. This case was getting more gruesome and awful to track down with every contact he made, but somehow that just made him more committed to tracking down the answers. It just seemed wrong to him when Tammy ended up dead. She was an earnest student who seemed to have so many

advantages. It just wasn't fair; the world just seemed far more cruel than it needed to be. And the fact that Archer was missing and the prime suspect seemed outrageous. Holden had thought a lot about Archer over the years. He tried with all his belated efforts to be like Archer, but Archer was an exceptional achiever. Where did that come from he wondered? People with exceptional careers had a way of acting like they had always been privileged and making it look easy. It was a function of all the years of professional school was Holden's considered and experienced opinion. Archer was rich and it didn't all come from his salary as a professor. He probably grew up with a lot of pressure to make his privilege seem like it was deserved.

It was like the class system America always claimed it didn't have but really did, or else they wouldn't have a professional system. Archer had the means to achieve and he felt the motivation to achieve. Not all young people felt the motivation. And Archer had to be shrewd. That was the subtle ingredient that Holden had noticed from his own experience. Holden's attempt to be a professor wasn't shrewd. He was naïve and didn't successfully exploit all the advantages provided to him. Archer had often talked about the concept of the “agon” or contest in Greek culture. It was the competitiveness of culture. When you thought about it and realized the Greek culture was rich and slave-exploiting and militaristic there was nothing surprising about it being contentious

and competitive. It was like Plato bringing strenuous thinking to his dialogues.

Rich people were well acquainted with strenuous thinking. It made them rich and kept them rich. The classical world had little to do with social problems. If you fell from your position and your society lost its wealth, you couldn't be advantageous to your soldiers and keep your society in order and you were conquered because of it and became a slave at the bottom half of society. The slave markets drove society. The modern world was so different. What would Archer do if he had to flee from his position? What would drive him to stab Tammy?

Holden picked up the phone book from the table that sat in front of his old couch. He flipped through until he was in the Yellow Pages section labeled "Lawyers and Attorneys". It wasn't difficult to flip all the way through the numerous pages to get to the W's, and soon he was looking at the name Tom Wiley Esquire with an address on outer Congress Street. He thought about what to do. Tom might be busy and he had no idea whether Tom's practice was just a modest simple shingle hanging out or a big practice. He didn't want to be a bother. Years before when Holden was living in Illinois and doing some very questionable things with himself, he had a habit of going on scouting missions to check out the places he visited before he went there. Courts, town offices, schools, all were thoroughly scouted so there were no surprises on his somewhat psychotic desperate visits there.

Holden decided he would go back to his old paranoid habit for this visit and he would go on a trip to see what Tom's office looked like. He looked up the address of a nearby landmark, Shaw's Westgate, to try and figure out where the address was. It wasn't too far out of town so that was encouraging. He would have to take the number Five bus, and after checking the schedule he dressed himself in his modest clothes and prepared himself for a trip out of his apartment. He didn't want to look too imposing, but he still wanted to blend in so he wore tan chinos and traded in his T-shirt for a pullover. There wasn't much chance of his looking too imposing he reminded himself, knowing that he looked like a skinny, humble, ill middle-aged man these days. He hoped he could pass for a prospective client.

After getting dressed and telling himself he would only drop by the lobby and ask for a business card he put his phone in his backpack and set out. First there was the walk up Cumberland Avenue to the bus station and he checked up on the neighborhood on the way there. His very first apartment in Portland was nearby, at the corner of Cedar and Oxford Streets, right next door to the homeless shelter, which was just a distressed property back in those days. He was 18 and it hadn't been much of an apartment, just a room with no door. He soon passed by and went to the Metro Bus Station, where he waited for a Five to come through. He watched the other people waiting. It was about noon on Friday and the station was moderately busy. He was waiting

for the Five bus which regularly shuttled people who worked out at the Maine Mall from intown.

Back in the days when he had lived with Lana he had ridden the Five out to work every day near the mall. He had read Albert Camus on the fairly lengthy, crowded ride and was glad he had gotten the reading in. There were young people waiting for the bus and he wondered if any of them needed a lawyer. Not many people really needed a lawyer he thought, indeed lawyers filled an odd space in society that only existed because mass culture was so huge. They were sort of ambassadors, or hatchet men if you will, for the laws created and ratified by distant masses who had finished their speaking in a sense when they finished making the laws. It was strange that way if you thought about it; people made the laws representatively but they didn't mediate the laws themselves. Why the distance it occurred to Holden to think. Holden remembered his days in a coat and tie at school and the difference you felt in muscle memory. Exertion was a completely different thing in soft formal clothes.

Holden got on the bus when it came, and he squeezed in for the ride out past the jail. Jail took a lot of effort Holden thought on his way by. Some people got frustrated and angry enough that they did things to put them in jail. To Holden it wasn't a simple story of contradicting the will of the people. People got into trouble for complex reasons that brutal punishment often did little to repair. Holden hoped Tom represented the specialized culture of the law

in a way that he could respect as he pulled the cord and got off at a spot where the addresses on the buildings began to approach the number of his destination. He figured he must be within a dozen buildings as he started to walk and counted the numbers as he went. It was a warm day he was glad to note and soon he found the address next to a simple sign announcing "Tom Wiley Esq." It was an older building that was due for a new coat of paint. Holden looked around and was glad he didn't see any evidence of a lot of lawyers or a lot of expensive cars parked next to the building. The building was just barely suitable to being a law office Holden thought as he opened the side door and found his way into a small reception area where no one was waiting. There was a fake fern plant and no pictures on the wall around the small desk where a paralegal, a woman about 40 with a stern smile, sat. "Can I help you," she asked.

"Oh thank you," Holden replied, looking around, "would it be possible for me to get a business card?"

"There you go," she said, handing him a small white card. Holden took the card a little nervously and smiled his missing-teeth, low-caste smile and said thank you. He quickly turned around and went back out the door where he started walking back towards the bus stop and a place to cross the road.

As he walked he got out his phone and checked the bus schedule. There wasn't a bus for 30 minutes he noticed as he put away his phone to cross the road

to the return trip side. He decided to walk and soon he was passing the jail again. Society was such a complex thing. There were so many people and they seemed to dote on being strangers, petrified to become involved or acquainted with each other. Not all people were like that, but many were and they had a way of becoming a stone-throwing mob when they perceived that a wrong had been done. It was not justice. It was a Stone Age reaction of shallow frustration, Holden thought. It blew him away that people accepted such archaic forms of a motivation when they considered the problem of crime.

Again, Holden thought, the world was so different from when there was no time and no resources for anything but indignant reactions to stolen cattle or murdered associates. Crimes were not nearly as embedded in the fabric of society anymore as they were then either. Holden felt confident in asserting that in the present time most crimes originated in stress brought on by inequality. There were crimes brought on by perceived inequality that wasn't real too, but the motivation was basically the same.

Crimes of passion were especially due to this kind of stress. It seemed to Holden that when you could describe this sort of phenomenon the vindictive reaction of many people to victimization should change. When the social fabric was torn by a crime the impulse should be to try to make an attempt to repair it instead of tear it further in the name of personal responsibility. In a way the system of personal responsibility was part of what was wrong

in the first place. It occurred to Holden as he walked that instead of, or in addition to, the confrontation between criminals and victims or accusers the law should require that the injured parties and the offending party should become acquainted with each other in an attempt to explore what brought about the break, or the crime itself, and to think about changing and repairing those sorts of problems.

Holden stopped at a stop sign before crossing the road. People adjusted to so many factors in accommodating each other, why couldn't they do more to reduce the problems that happened between them he thought. People were so accommodating when they were familiar with each other and so cold when they thought they were reacting to a wrong done to them. Social thinking could be so much more complex than this in the modern world. Retribution was so savage really, like the death penalty. The meeting between victims and perpetrators could be done in a constructive setting with facilitators. If people were going to be compelled to do something about crime they should be compelled to grow and try to share for the sake of improving the kind of situation that precipitated the crime. It was kind of a different model of crime where responsibility was diffused among all the parties, including the victims, and not treated like something that the responsibility of the perpetrator alone would solve.

As Holden made it back to Franklin Towers the walk seemed to pass quickly as thoughts passed quickly through his head. The walk seemed to be gone in no time. When he got back to the building he went inside and went back up to his apartment where he sat down on his couch and Huysmans greeted him.

8.

When William reached his apartment upstairs he was still thinking about the law and Tom Wiley's office. William didn't know whether it was his old friends going to law school or his level of schooling or just what it was, but something about the law fueled his civic pretensions. He just didn't feel comfortable with apathy. As long as someone was suffering or society didn't work as well as it could, William found himself ruminating upon the problems. Convicts should become acquainted with their victims, he thought, and this would be a step forward from the retributive justice of the Stone Age. He thought further about instances where convicts already knew their victims and it occurred to him that what was needed was an "Eco-jury". There should be a second committee not charged with fact finding but with becoming acquainted with the transgressor, composed of the person's peers. These so-called peers and fellow members of the community would be charged with being like the extended and more privileged household of the criminal and getting right to the heart of the problem of the crime, which was likely poverty or a social

problem. Serving on a jury of this sort would be a civic duty, like on a fact-finding jury but the goal would be to connect the convict better to the larger society. It sounded hyper-bureaucratic, but William thought bureaucracy was good when it came to crime. The more folds and corners where a person could find refuge the better.

William thought about how he would contact Tom Wiley. There was an email address on his business card but William thought he would use the phone number. That way maybe Tom would suggest a meeting because it seemed like that would be the easiest and most conventional for Tom who was likely busy. William resolved to try and call Tom that very afternoon. It was Friday and that would give him some time before they met, maybe next week or something. Huysmans was being especially friendly after his morning away and he was glad to see her. "Mrrkgow" Huysmans said and brushed against his legs where he sat on his couch. If he ever went to prison for something, he thought, having a cat would be the thing he missed most. Prison life would be awful without a cat, although he would keep writing and might actually get something done for a change.

"You are a very special kitty," he said, petting her. "I don't know what I would do without you." Huysmans had especially soft, long fur. William picked her out immediately at the Refuge League when he moved out of the group home and into Franklin Towers. Heather, the Shalom House client representative had insisted he get a cat right away because the whole

time he was at the group home he had gone on the weekly van trip to the Refuge League. He hadn't visited a single dog while he was there, just cats, and Heather insisted that he get a cat for company at his new apartment. Huysmans was the best thing that could have happened to him.

William made his daily meal and thought about calling Tom. Tom should remember him, but he didn't know about telling the whole story of his life. Tom should be used to people who have complicated stories he thought. He probably didn't need to tell his whole story, just a little to explain what he had been doing. Maybe it would be of use to him with his clients. Mental health and mental health circumstances should be important options for people in trouble with the law. Just realizing what was out there mattered a lot.

William thought about what to tell Tom. Schizophrenia was such an awkward thing. These days he had mellowed a lot from the early days before he was diagnosed and when he shied away from taking the prescribed medication. He was hardly a model patient. Most people who saw him those these days didn't think he was mentally ill, which had not always been the case. When he thought about it, he decided he would try not to get into details if he got Tom on the phone. He would just ask if he could see him about Tammy, maybe explain that he was a writer and how he had stumbled upon the news. He guessed that all there

was to do now was to try and ring Tom; so he got out the card and his phone and he called the number.

"Hello, Tom Wiley's office," the voice answered. William guessed it was the woman sitting at the receptionist desk he just visited.

"Hi, I was wondering if I could talk to Tom," William asked.

"Well, could I ask who is calling and what are you calling about," the woman continued.

"My name is William Holden and I'm an old college friend of Tom's. He should remember me I think," William said.

"Alright," the voice said, "I think I can put you through now." There was a pause for a moment before the phone was ringing.

"Hello, Tom Wiley speaking" another voice answered. "Hi Tom! This is William Holden from back in our days at USM. It's been twenty-five years now I think."

"William! How are you doing? Wow it sure has been a long time. What is going on? This sure is a surprise."

"Well it's a long story and I'll try not to get into it right now, but do you remember Tammy Marsden? I'm sort of a writer now and I was doing some research at the library and a story in the old newspaper I was reading said she had been murdered. I was shocked. I was away back in those days and it was news to me.

I'm trying to discover what happened and I have been tracking down people who might have heard something. Would you have time sometime to meet with me so I could ask you a few questions?"

"Why sure," Tom replied "what's a good time for you, how about next week?"

"That would be great," William replied, "any day would work for me."

"How about Wednesday afternoon at 2 pm," Tom suggested.

"Sounds great, thank you very much," William said.

"Okay, I'll see you then."

"Oh thank you again," William concluded and hung up the phone. Whew that was simple he thought to himself, I wonder if Tom has any information. If he does that will be a big push forward in finding out what happened to Tammy. He still couldn't believe what happened. He had been sort of happy when Tammy and himself were dating. He had even jokingly asked Tammy to marry him, something he had never really done with Lana, only giving her a ring at Christmas. Tammy had tapped into all his dreams for the future, going to college like no one in his family had done before him and then his aim of getting a professional job and a salary which was something he had never thought about before. Tammy inspired him like no girl ever had, she made him feel successful. William didn't know how to put it all together to make sense.

As far as he was concerned he and Tammy as a couple were meant to be, he thought, but as he thought he was reminded of what Vicky and Tom used to say. They had taken one look at Tammy when they heard William and she were dating and their pronouncement had been, "It wasn't meant to be." They realized like everyone else did that William came up short as a match for the beautiful, smart, friendly Tammy. Tom and Vickie had tried to soothe William's ego when it had all fallen apart after a few months. There really had not been anything to fall apart, William remembered realistically. He had asked Tammy out a half a dozen times before she finally went out with him and the first time they had gone out she had ditched him to meet someone else later in the night. William had not realized it at first but later it dawned on him. He wasn't really her type and never really had been he thought to himself.

He had thought of Tammy those first difficult nights in the mental hospital he remembered as he looked back, passing Friday afternoon in the way he usually did, glad to unravel after the week was over. He had clung to the memory of Tammy for a while as a reminder that once upon a time he had gotten started having a normal, successful life. In those days of mental illness he had grabbed onto anything to keep himself going, but probably he just made himself worse because his illness had been all about trying to make himself succeed. He refused to fail after all hope was lost and that was what pushed him over the edge. His head was never in the right place

for professional success; you had to be humble. Being able to remain humble was an important key to success he had learned in the 20 years since those days he thought. Tom was humble, and he had always been that way. It was an important characteristic of success. William remembered the first time he visited a lawyer, back in Illinois when he was having disastrous problems in school and with his landlord.

Moving from Maine to Illinois was quite a project, but he was full of energy and fresh credit cards, so he had a yard sale to reduce his belongings to a shippable amount and he sold most of his books to a book dealer. He kept a few, his best ones, but he got rid of the big collection he had put together. He was so eager to facilitate his move that he bought a plane ticket and flew out to Urbana-Champaign to find an apartment before school started. A special call from the chairman of the classics department where he was going really got his excitement up, and he could hardly contain himself as he descended on the small Midwestern city to live. He searched the want ads for an inexpensive apartment and found an ad for a "nice cottage" at an extremely low rent. It turned out to be a converted garage with a cement floor but he was thrilled to rent it anyway. At first he was glad about his landlord too because his landlord said he was a faculty member at the University. He taught economics he said as they signed the lease across from each other at a table at a nearby McDonald's restaurant. William thought having someone from

the university as a landlord would be a convenient thing that would make things easier. It didn't occur to him in his naivete that his faculty member might be cheap, contentious and litigious. These were all new experiences for William the degree candidate.

His landlord apparently used his rental business as a sort of learning laboratory in economics Williams learned too late. A few short years later when trouble arose he had done a little research to find out more about his landlord's business dealings and the student landlord tenant association had a dozen complaints against him and he had as many open cases at the courthouse. William had never dealt with someone who was an imperious bully who apparently liked to spend his spare time in court. On top of that curious perspective William felt ashamed and confused to be dragged into court. He was already paranoid and people were suggesting he visit a psychiatrist at school, but insecurity where he lived put him over the edge. He remembered how his psychosis had begun. He was finished with school and had made a big scene on his exit, screaming at the professors and thoroughly indignant about his dismissal. He was unable to bring himself to believe that he had not met the academic standard. He completely transformed himself, dressing in rags and crouching in mock fear when he met other people. He started looking up laws and rules to pursue consequences to what he perceived was a great injustice to him.

William slid into a sort of funk just thinking about those days 25 years before. It was two years after Tammy died he thought. It made him depressed and anxious just thinking about those days. He had called a lawyer to ask about suing his professors for libel. Everything all ran together now but he remembered clearly how he had some physical sort of symptoms rooted in how we felt about the people around him. His perception was like uncontrollable rages so that he arched his back, bent his knees, and twisted his hands to keep himself from appearing menacing. At the same time he was terrifically afraid of drawing attention to himself for being hubristically violent. People treated him as sort of a repulsive troll. His physical posture was also about clearing his head to think because he kept having intrusive trivial thoughts like everyone he was talking to was speaking a sort of doublespeak. He was so determined to not speak like other people that he squeaked at the top of his voice and paused a long time before he replied to people. The thing about remembering it all, William thought, was that he still thought there was a grain of truth in his indignation. He was determined to not take events lightly. This was key to him. When his landlord took him to court he had been trying to be extra scrupulous during the years renting from him. He had asked for inspections and his landlord had neglected to do them. As William kept thinking about these things time passed. First the weekend was gone and then it was Monday and he found himself thinking about his visit to Tom Wiley coming up.

At his visit to a lawyer back in those days he had first tried to inform himself about the laws for landlords and tenants in Illinois and the ordinances in the town where he lived. William was impressed by how many there were but not surprised. Court had such a nasty reputation and he worried about being in jeopardy and being ripped off. Regardless of whether or not he felt he had done anything wrong he considered it possible that the court could do anything. His landlord had sent him a notice to move and he took this to a lawyer's office to ask about it. The office was in an old train station and in the paranoid way that he thought in those days he thought this was significant. You had to know the train schedules, or the laws, so to speak, he thought to himself. At the office there was a paralegal with a desk outside the lawyer's office and he had waited a few minutes before going in. It was a bigger office than Tom Wiley's but not that big. The lawyer was a short, squat, bug-eyed man who looked overworked and wore high-heeled boots to answer the door to his office. He only stayed for 20 minutes while the lawyer explained what he could do about his notice and made a phone call to the other lawyer who had sent the notice. The lawyer talked tough and skeptical and kept things as simple as possible. William remembered the meeting as a landmark in his life, the first time he consulted a lawyer. More time passed as he thought about it and he was reminded of two things from those days in his life. One was that he was not looking for any trouble and he didn't want to threaten anyone, and the other

was the sobering knowledge that had started during this period of his life that he was ready for anything if not eager for trouble.

Wednesday morning he lay in bed thinking about the upcoming meeting with Tom. He was glad that Tom's office was not ostentatious but he was humbled in anticipation of Tom's success. He wondered if Tom had any experience with mentally ill clients. That sort of thing might prejudice him about William's condition; he didn't know but maybe that was good. He got himself together that morning and remembered Tom from back in his USM days. Tom was quite soft-spoken and reserved and didn't seem to be the ill-fated type who wanted to go to law school to dress impressively. In fact Tom had never really seemed like the type to want to be a lawyer in the first place. He wasn't the most quick or clever student, but he seemed to get by. He was just a soft-spoken, determined Air Force veteran who had been an airplane mechanic. You could guess that he was pretty thorough and dependable. It was a long morning waiting to go out to Tom's office. He thought about what Tom would think of his researches into past crimes. Somehow he thought Tom wouldn't be very intimidating as a lawyer and this would be a good thing in his profession. Too many lawyers were just hatchet-men for the law he thought. The law should not inspire such blind loyalty. It should be a fluid set of established guidelines for reacting to problems. He guessed that Tom's cases were pretty mundane, and he wondered

if he had ever tried a murder case. He wondered what Tom would think of the case he was working on when he discovered Tammy's death. He had been looking for information about a double murder near his home in childhood, but he had seen Tammy's name on the front page of a stack of nearby papers.

He had breakfast and coffee and watched television in his usual way until it was time to go and catch the bus out to Tom's office. He would skip his dinner until later after we got back. He got dressed in his usual plain clothes, said goodbye to Huysmans, and started walking to the bus station. It was an overcast spring day but not too cold. He wondered if Tom had a lot of clients. He didn't want to take up a lot of Tom's time. When he got to the bus station he looked around as he waited. It was like the week before, and it occurred to him to think that the people who really needed a lawyer were the ones waiting in jail. He wondered if Tom was a public defender. Being a public defender seemed like the noblest thing you could do as a lawyer. Otherwise people were just wasting their own money to try to influence the system. He got on the bus and rode the short ride to outer Congress Street and got off near Tom's office. There were no cars in the parking lot, and he went right into the waiting area.

The paralegal said, "Hi, I'm Jean, Tom will be out in a minute," and he sat down to wait.

Soon Tom came out in his shirtsleeves wearing a dignified but not very expensive-looking shirt. He

looked older and he had put on some weight, something that William went to great lengths to avoid with his medication, and as soon as he saw William he put out his hand and said "Hey man, it's been awhile, how are you doing?"

"Well it's a long story but these days I'm doing pretty well thanks." William got up and followed Tom into his office where Tom sat back behind his modest desk and William found himself sitting across from him. "How is Vicky these days," William asked, wondering if it was polite to ask questions after not seeing someone for so long.

"Vicky's doing well thanks. We have three kids now. There's Joe, who was born back when we were at USM, and there's the twins, Mary and Theo, who were born after I finished law school. Joe just graduated from Bowdoin and the twins are still in high school out in Scarborough where we live. How about yourself, are you married, do you have any kids?"

"That's a no on both fronts. It's been kind of a wild ride. I went off to graduate school 20 years ago never thinking it was going to affect the rest of my life in a good way, but things kind of went South. It was a disaster. I wasn't really a good enough Latin and Greek scholar to make it in advanced study and that really took me by surprise and upset me. I wasn't prepared for the experience at a really big university either, and I think the new stresses I experienced were simply a strain I couldn't take. So I was

dismissed after my three years, and I tried to move on. I was devastated. I was out of money, so I started looking around for a new career with the new computer I bought for school. What I found was the military. I decided to try to join the Army; I was about 33 years old when I discovered it and I kept going to the recruiter until I was 35. It was a messed up situation and I got frantic. Eventually I got stopped trying to board a train in Chicago, and I was taken to the hospital where I was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Most of my time since has been taken up with trying to settle down and find a healthy place to live. I have mellowed out a lot over the years and now I live in Franklin Towers with my cat. I try to write to pass the time and stay alert, and I spend some time researching at the library."

"Wow I'm sorry to hear that, glad you're doing better these days. You seem to be doing okay," Tom put in.

"Yeah that's what brings me here. You remember Tammy Marsden don't you? Well I was wondering if you had any information on what happened to her. I just found out recently that she was killed. Blew me away."

"Well I thought back a little after your call. It's really been a while. I think I remember that when it happened I was just applying to law school after a couple years as an assistant at the Musky Institute. Vicky was still occasionally baby sitting out at The Archers, just like Tammy was doing, so we were especially concerned when we heard the news. I

heard it in the newspaper too, the Press Herald I think. They didn't give a lot of details, so Vicky called Lucinda to offer to help and to try to find out what was going on. Lucinda seemed blown away but she was oddly calm Vicky said. Of course she had the kids to look after, so she couldn't really fly off the handle. Apparently it was she who found Tammy, but there weren't too many details that she could share. Oh I remember, it was apparently out in the study that Tammy was killed and it was early in the evening. Pat had gone out that night and Lucinda too. Pat had apparently gone to a Baxter Society meeting and Lucinda was at an exercise class. They were both going to meet up at a restaurant afterwards but it never happened. Pat and a few of his belongings were gone when Lucinda got home. Oh and I remember Vicki said she was killed with Archer's replica sword. You remember the one he had hanging from the wall in his study. It was probably the only weapon nearby out there." Tom shifted his position in his seat.

"Sounds an awful lot like Archer's the prime suspect. Makes you wonder what could have happened. Archer was so respectable and everybody thought he and Lucinda were close. So Archer has stayed away all these years?"

"Yes no one has found a trace of him. Vicky kept helping out Lucinda with the kids for years after it happened, and Lucinda was never quite the same although she kept up a brave face. They found a replacement for Archer at the University, another

candidate from the University of North Carolina and he got tenure years ago. Vicki and I haven't really caught up with Lucinda in years now but I'm sure no one has heard from Pat. His return would make the news I'm sure. Everyone was shocked when this happened."

"Have you ever dealt with a missing persons case like this before? How does someone just disappear like that?"

"Well, the important thing is having plenty of money I'd say. Lucinda has shared a little about Archer's business ventures. Apparently Pat had some thriving businesses out West, gold mining interests and a cattle ranch. The Falmouth police officer who was on the case back then was named Wes McNally. In conjunction with the state police he investigated the crime scene in Archer's study and tried to pursue Archer. I guess from the sound of it Archer disappeared pretty thoroughly. He cut up his credit cards, closed his accounts, and pretty much disappeared off the face of the planet. The police thought he had left the country. You should look up McNally out at the Falmouth Police Station. Last time I knew he was still there, probably got promoted."

"Thanks a lot," William concluded, and they both got up to shake hands.

"Great to see you again. Call me if you find out anything won't you." Tom wrapped up and showed William the door. There still didn't seem to be anyone around the office except Jean, the paralegal.

William went out past the waiting area, wishing her a good day on the way past, and soon he was out of the office on the street in the Spring weather. He started walking back toward the peninsula.

So that's what Tom knew, he thought to himself as he walked. It was just an ordinary evening for the Archer's and Tammy ended up dead I guess. And Archer is the prime suspect, what a tragedy. What on earth could Archer have done? Dropping off the face of the Earth like that was no easy trick. He could have gone to South America if he had offshore bank accounts. He might be living there today, in exile from his wife and children, afraid to come home and face the law. William mused to himself as he passed by all the private homes and apartments of Portland, wondering what took place behind so many doors and window curtains. Humans were a secretive, puzzling species he thought, especially when it came to wrongdoing. He kept walking and soon he was back at Franklin Towers, glad to be back in his refuge.

The next day back at Franklin Towers Huysmans woke up William in her usual way. She came up to the side of the bed and meowed and eagerly waited for him to get up and feed her. On days with sunshine she was especially affable and today was a sunny day. Huysmans was ebullient. She reared up on her hind legs and climbed his leg and nibbled at his fingers. William made coffee and fed her and got his orange juice from the refrigerator. He'd had a fitful night, and he remembered falling out of bed from a dream and clambering back in.

The dream had been odd and tense. He dreamed he was in a small rural town and it was sort of like an old movie and it seemed like another time. He wore a fedora hat and smoked cigarettes as he was sort of shown around the town and its people by a young woman who was sometimes very helpful and sometimes sort of ditched him and left him to fend for himself in the strange town. Apparently what was happening was that the town was having a sort of tournament and the tournament was very violent. Some black people who were sort of like blacksmith Gladiators fought with each other and there was a big parade of all the industries in the town. Logging and potatoes were the big Industries in the area and an enormous train packed with piles of firewood interspersed with potatoes passed through the

town. In the dream William was sort of a city slicker compared to the locals whom William needed the young woman's help to avoid. The locals dress in rough clothes and a fight always seemed ready to break out. He smoked as much as possible in the dream to calm his nerves. Eventually as the tournament wore on he had thrashed about and fallen out of bed and awoken.

William was ready for a quiet day because it had been an eventful week. He lived very quietly to keep himself in balance with his medication and he told himself he was going to turn into a cat as he sat down after his breakfast on his daybed. Huysmans joined him, curling up in his lap and going to sleep. William didn't sleep, instead he picked up his papers and tried to work a little bit on the essay he had been working on when he ran across the news that Tammy was dead. He was only a half-hearted investigative journalist really because these days he wasn't as eager to get in trouble as he once had been. He didn't really grow up getting into trouble but as he grew into adulthood he had changed dramatically and some things about his life had confirmed his resolve a great deal. He had found the things which his ambition imagined were much harder to do than he expected and his imagination which was fired from a lot of reading as a teenager didn't want to give up. He got sort of angry and frustrated as adulthood came around.

He wondered what had been the story of the teenager who murdered two strangers in the woods

when he was a boy. He didn't have much to go on, just a couple of news stories, one on the front page of the Evening Express, the old newspaper his father used to pick up at a variety store on the way home from work everyday. The story didn't tell much, just that the suspect was in the custody of the State Police. Probably the story was tight-lipped about details because the suspect was a juvenile. He was trying to write a short story from the point of view of the murderer, and he had to imagine details to fit together and do a story.

The story began with the work that supported the family. He imagined that the father of the four sons worked at a construction site or maybe at the paper mill in the neighboring town of Westbrook. The family had a home which was more than many around them who made do with a more or less habitable house trailer. The house is very small though, for four teenage brothers, and they are often too cramped to have any breathing space. The brothers too were somewhat large, burly young men like their father and that didn't make living in the house any easier. The house was next to some small inexpensive homes, and there was a sort of rural neighborhood around with a dozen other young people. The fellow at the center of the story was a quiet, sullen young man of 16 who didn't like school and resented having to go. He felt frustrated and thwarted by the social life of the neighborhood because his older brothers would pummel him in front of the other kids and this made him angry. He

spent a lot of time in the woods alone, and when hunting season came, he went hunting. There were a lot of guns in his household, as many as his father could afford, and there were few other symbols of power or authority to compete with them. Guns were effective and powerful in a world where little else really functioned well.

The young man went on long walks with his gun during hunting season. When he spotted his two victims it had been another long dismal afternoon. He had gone hunting to get away from the house where he lived and he didn't know why he pointed his small-caliber gun at the two men, a father and son, but he did. There had been a little thrill in it at the time at the moment he did it. There was more thrill when he pulled the trigger and hit his targets. It was a sort of fantasy of having power for a change instead of always being the weak underling. He didn't feel anything except the satisfaction of having good aim when he killed them. It was like he was dead inside also. His life was so unsatisfying and discouraging that it just came to him without thinking. If anything the killings were a protest against everything that left him to his own devices and didn't seem to care about him.

His mother was distracted somehow and only paid attention to his older brother and his father and his father was always exhausted from work and was silent except for his sharp outbursts. After he killed the two men he felt a passing fear that he would get into trouble but he didn't care and he walked home

where he put away his gun in the boys' room and ate supper with his family like it was an ordinary night. Next day instead of going to school he just walked off from the bus stop and spent the day hiding around the neighborhood. He went in the opposite direction from his killing and didn't talk to anyone all day. In the afternoon he came back hungry and his brothers told on him for skipping school when they got off the bus. When the sheriff came to the door the next day asking if anyone had been over in the vicinity of the killings or seen anything suspicious one of his brothers volunteered that the troubled youth had been hunting over in that area the day before last. The sheriff took his gun away and said they would be in touch with them.

The troubled youth was just numb about the whole thing. He skipped school every day after that and considered himself dropped out. It didn't take long, only a week or two until the sheriff came around again this time to arrest him and he didn't protest when they handcuffed him and let him away. They were eerily silent on the way to the county jail except to tell him that he was being charged with the murder of the two men. He was kept in confinement at the jail only a short time until he was handed over to the state police because they said he was being charged as an adult.

All the while they were moving him around and keeping him in tiny, bare rooms he just laid around and didn't care what they were doing. Eventually a forensic psychological examination was ordered for

him at Augusta Mental Health Institute and he was transferred there. William's research left off there. He didn't know anything else about what happened because he hadn't found anything in the newspaper accounts. It took a lot of imagination to put together stories like this because there were so many holes to fill in the private events. William stopped writing his story for the day but stayed on his day bed, thinking about it.

Thinking about Augusta Mental Health Institute reminded him of his own experiences in Augusta. He'd only seen the outside of the old building in Augusta but he imagined that the inside was like old hospitals and infirmaries that he had seen with white painted walls and rooms with old steel beds and asbestos-insulated pipes running across the ceiling. In those days it was a joke among the school kids to jeer that someone had been to Augusta Mental Health Institute, and he wondered what it was like for the troubled young murderer. William's own story was from a different time after the new Riverview Hospital was built and he began to think back on what awful times those were.

He had been living in an old apartment near Grant Street in Portland. It was the first place he had lived since being shipped back from Illinois after he ended up in the hospital in Chicago. He lived with his parents a while and made an effort to try and hold a job but eventually his heart wasn't in it and after giving up his disability support for a time he was living precariously in the apartment that he had

started out paying for with a subsidy but now had to use almost his entire reinstated disability check to cover. He passed the time at first writing a novel and then some stories, he played music for himself on some old instruments he got at the Goodwill and he tried to continue the misguided Greek studies he had started while he was in Illinois. He grew plants in window boxes and experimented until he knew how to make a sort of weak wine for himself from sugar and bread yeast. He had stopped taking his medication when he went back to work and everything went well at first. He sort of self-medicated and kept himself busy.

He was desperately trying to make himself a little happy again. He couldn't accept that he was diagnosed mentally ill and his life was terrifically different than he had ever imagined it. He still believed that not going further in his studies was a sort of grim conspiracy to thwart him. He believed, just as he had believed since soon after it happened, the dismissal was a sort of privileged hazing of newcomers and he was a persona non grata until he wrote a book to present to the university. He couldn't bring himself to believe that the university wasn't interested in him at all and as far as they were concerned he could just go away. Don't go away mad just go away. He felt as if all the nurturing and encouragement school had provided over the years was a mercenary lie. Even though he was on disability those years life was hard. He tried to write a nonfiction expose of the conspiracy through the

ages ever since the misdirection of Agamemnon to the Greek host to call off the Trojan expedition.

His complicated theory grew out of the study of Pindar, who had been his original topic of advanced study and he convinced himself that Odysseus the wrestler was the first priest, a crafty fellow who achieved reconciliation with Agamemnon. He convinced himself that ordination was dependent on a close reading of Homer and had been a sort of secret cult ever since the earliest days, even before Christianity. He believed the books of The Iliad and the Odyssey combined for a sort of lunar calendar that counted out the days of the moon phases in between the equinoxes and solstices. As he remembered he was a little embarrassed at how eccentric his theories were but reminded of just how much school and his studies had affected him. He lost all conservatism and modesty in his scholarship and he was obsessed with vindicating himself intellectually.

His housing situation deteriorated drastically. He was living in an old building that had a serious plumbing problem, and things took a turn for the worse when water started coming through the ceiling from the apartment above. He was afraid of the other tenants who seem to have their own problems to deal with and no one seemed to be very secure in their situation. A big change seemed to happen when one tenant, who received a subsidy, moved out and the annual inspections that had been a part of her subsidy had stopped. He kept sending his checks

every month but the building seemed completely neglected. He found himself yelling uncontrollably in the streets as his rage and frustration overcame him. His problems in public became worse too.

He had very little money so his clothes became ragged and eccentric and he began to have problems with the security guards at the library where he went to use the computers. He was panicked, and it was one cold morning in January when one of the most harrowing experiences of his life began. He was at the library and the security guard was eyeing him suspiciously, because he stiffened his demeanor and walked with an unusual gait to clear his head. He couldn't sit calmly and comfortably at the computer screen in those days. He was too paranoid about what was happening behind his head so he had to sort of hold his breath and freeze to concentrate on the flickering and abrupt transitions of the screen. When he finished using the computer that day the guard sort of ran him out of the library like he was throwing him out, and out on the sidewalk William began to yell about everything that was bothering him. He was out of his mind.

"Oh that's okay! Nothing wrong here! Everything's perfectly fine," he began to yell at the top of his lungs, his sarcasm transporting to new heights of indignation. "That's okay! Nothing wrong here! Everything's perfectly fine," he screamed again and again. When he was distressed he would burst out screaming the same things over and over again until he was exhausted. Usually people ignored him

as crazy but occasionally people called the police and he began to make his way down Preble Street and away from the Portland Public Library in the square. Around the corner the police pulled up and got out of the car to confront him. Sometimes he remained calm during these encounters but not this morning. That morning at about 11am, in the freezing January cold he lost control of himself. As the officer approached, he made a fist in his big puffy mittens like boxing gloves and swung around. It was like slow motion with his emaciated 135lb form and one officer pointed out what he was doing while the other one stuck out his chin to be an easier target. His intention was to strike the officer but he didn't have much effect, and he was quickly brought to the ground.

"He's charged with assaulting a police officer," one of them said as he was loaded into a police car. He remained silent, his rage not having yet subsided; it was a grim ride to the jail. He'd been captured by the police before and taken to the hospital but had never done anything as awful as this. He desperately tried to compose himself but it was futile. He was totally enervated and didn't know what to do. First they searched him and then they started to check him into the jail. All he could think to do was remain silent and he started using sign language which was what he had been teaching himself as an antidote to going out of his mind yelling. It was a difficult thing to do, and he was glad he had learned as much as he could. Being silent helped him compose himself, and he

wrote down his answers to the sheriff deputies' questions. They put him in the medical unit in a special cell when they were done.

He didn't realize that instances of assaulting a police officer by mentally ill people were one of the most common forms of trouble that a mentally ill person could get into. Instead he was in a panic, a panic that he stayed in for six long months. At first he was worried about court, and it was his obsession to write down a statement so he wouldn't be helpless when court started to happen. He was pretty banged up from when he was taken into custody when he went to his arraignment at court which was so stressful that he felt like he was becoming psychotic again.

He had a very realistic hallucination that his father was driving the bus full of inmates that took him across town from outer Congress Street to the Cumberland County Courthouse. At the courthouse he was taken to a special cell near the doors of the courtroom and left to wait. It was a gruesome place and he could hardly move from his bruises stiffening up. There was graffiti scratched everywhere on the walls and an old toilet stall. Instead of being brought into court a man in a sheriff's deputy's uniform who was probably the bailiff came in. He tried to sign for something to write on but the man just looked disgusted and went away again. It took immense concentration to sign in handcuffs. As he lay on the steel bench in the room he felt more desperate than he had ever felt in his

life. After what seemed like an eternity of waiting a young looking man in a blue suit came in with a clipboard. He propped his foot up on the bench with a smirk and asked him some questions which William tried to answer silently. They were yes or no question so he guessed the man got what he wanted and left. Eventually he was put back on the bus, still hallucinating that it was his father driving. They put him back in his cell where he was alone with one small window out of which he could see the fleeting moon and the sun.

He was determined not to be complacent or apathetic about his situation and he implemented a strict discipline on himself in his cell. He signed for paper and a pencil to write with. The pencil was taken away again every night, but he kept at writing daily until he finished an essay for people to read. He wrote about his life and writing and memories from his childhood. He didn't want to be anonymous as he went through the system, and he wanted to prove that he was a writer, someone who used themselves and their time productively. He also drew pictures of the police officers and the events that took place from his point of view. He suspected the writing and his pictures were still a part of his records at Riverview. It wasn't long before the jail psychiatrist came and stood outside his cell a moment. As soon as he could he handed his papers to her and she looked dismayed like she didn't have time to do any extra reading. At any rate William went on a long

silent ride to Augusta with two sheriff's deputies within a few days.

The difference between the Cumberland County Jail and the Riverview Hospital Special Care Unit was like night and day. Riverview was silent and clean and the halls were carpeted, and mental health workers regularly came to his room to bring him paper and books and he could watch television on the weekend. The television was available most of the time but William kept up his discipline and only left his room to watch it on weekends. It took extreme effort to keep his discipline, but thinking back he realized he must have seemed only like someone looking for something to do. At Riverview at first when the psychiatrist prescribed medication for him he strenuously objected, wrestling every night with the staff who gave him an injection in a gang of half a dozen nurses. Eventually he felt silly wrestling with them over it, and he acquiesced and took his pill. There were other patients too who heard him yelling and wrestling. He remembered that there was a large man, a professional athlete who had been brought in for out-of-control yelling in the street like William, and there was a woman who was brought in after attacking her husband.

He read some while he was there. When he said he was interested in ancient history they found a book of essays on biblical archaeology and he read an intriguing essay on Levitical marriage. And when he asked for a copy of Paradise Lost because he was studying seventeenth-century New England at

home, one of the nurses brought in her copy from home. It wasn't long before he was moved out of the Special Care unit to the regular forensic ward, and once he was there he began a long ordeal of waiting to find out what would happen to him. He lay on his bed day after day, and he let his discipline lapse. It was time for his forensic examination eventually after he had started voluntarily taking his medication. The forensic examiner was a large, expensively dressed man who looked like he testified in court a lot. He remembered that it was an intimidating process and it went on and on with a meeting once a week for a couple of months.

He didn't remember a lot about the exam except that it was challenging to concentrate and be as serious as possible every time. He especially remembered the Rorschach test and how it tested the levels of his belief in authority to stare at the blobs of ink and come up with something to say about them. He remembered that he eventually completely stopped trying to use ASL and concentrated on trying to answer the questions as well as possible. When it was over he was glad, but there was still no word on what would happen to him and he managed himself strictly like there was an upcoming trial in which he would be accused of a felony. His room was isolated at the end of a long hallway and he spent long suicidal days there telling himself that if he ever got out again he would kill himself at the first chance. There was a set of wooden shelves in his room that

was 6ft tall and 2ft wide and he imagined himself sealed away in it like a coffin for eternity.

What sort of happened over the 6 months that he was incarcerated was that depression overtook him and he gradually gave up his habits and disciplines as time passed. He remembered it as one of the most horrible times of his life ever. When he got out and they told him that the charges against him were dropped and the police just wanted him to get the help he needed, he was overwhelmed with relief and stumbled to thank the social worker who told him the news. But that didn't really control his depression and when he was finally back in his apartment, which his father had kept for him all this time, he tried to hang himself from the ceiling supports in his bedroom. He couldn't actually accomplish it so he survived his attempt, but everything he did now was tempered by the knowledge that he had sincerely tried to take his own life and failed. As he lay on his daybed in Franklin Towers, the day passed and he was thankful that times had gotten better since those days.

10.

For the rest of the day on Saturday William was a little depressed. Just thinking about his suicidal feelings got him down. He resolved to do something to clear himself up and relieve his anxiety a little. The next day, Sunday, after a restless sleep that night he got up again and went for a walk around Back Bay. It was a nice day and there were a lot of people out walking on the wide trail. When he got home he felt better. He made himself a good dinner and thought about contacting Wes McNally at the Falmouth Police Department. Probably giving him a call was the thing to do he thought, so he decided to Google the department and see where they were and get their number. It looked like it would be a long ride so he thought about how he would get there. If he could take a ride out to the station he guessed he would be taking a taxi. William didn't ride with Uber or Lyft or any of the other new services. He just took a good old taxi and it got him where he wanted to go.

That night he dreamed he was in a bookstore looking at art books with a friend from school. There were many books to look at and his friend who studied art history looked at some elegant ones. He looked at some that were labeled "American Art" and they

were very rich and impressive looking on the inside. He had some difficulty reading and comparing the price tags on a couple of books. Eventually he chose the more expensive one and his friend chose a book too. They checked out and paid for their books and left. They went to a lavishly decorated mansion that William owned. At the house there was a young woman. There was also a young man who was very short. They all began looking at all the books and objects at Williams house and they were all impressed. William was somehow involved with the young woman. The short young man was an artist and he was jealous. He began trying to steal the books and objects he was looking at. William tried to stop him and the young man began to try to damage objects that he couldn't steal. At first William just warned him and told him to stop but eventually he started grabbing him to restrain him. He felt like a bully. He got into a fight with the young man and he woke up wrestling with the covers. He almost fell off the end of the bed and the dream ended.

In the morning he got up and made breakfast and fed Huysmans. Huysmans was on a special diet so she wouldn't become overweight and William didn't leave her food out overnight although she would have liked to have had food at night. William ate lightly too, having eggs and coffee, and he was glad his life was going better these days than it had been at times in the past. Huysmans sat and watched him eat his breakfast, watching him adoringly in a way that always cheered him up. Soon after breakfast he

began Googling again and he looked at the maps and pictures of the department to preview where he was calling. He thought about questions to ask McNally, and he hoped McNally wasn't too busy to talk to him. Calling in the morning should be a good time to call a police station. After a while he just dialed the number and a serious voice answered, "Hello, Falmouth Police Department information line, how can I help you?"

William answered, "I was wondering if I could speak with Wes McNally please."

"Chief McNally is on another line right now, can you hold?"

"Oh, yes I can hold," and William was transferred to a hold line playing country music. He sat and listened to the music for a couple of minutes, petting Huysmans occasionally who was sitting patiently at his feet. Soon a friendly, businesslike voice came on the line, "Chief McNally's office, what can I do for you?"

"Hi, good morning, my name is William Holden and I was told I could contact you by my friend Tom Wiley in Portland. The reason I'm calling is about a murder in Falmouth in 1998 at the residence of a person who was a professor at the University of Southern Maine at the time. The victim was a friend of mine, we dated in college, and her name was Tammy Marsden. I just recently learned about the murder, 20 years later, because I didn't live in the area at the time and I thought we had all just lost touch. It's my

understanding that the murder was at the home of Patrick Archer. Do you happen to recall the incident? Tom said you were the first on the scene."

"Yes that was a while ago but we still have an open case. Do you think you could come in to talk about it?"

"Oh yes, I'd like that. I'd like to find out all I can about the case."

"How does tomorrow morning sound?"

"Yes that's fine. Is there a particular time that would be good?"

"How about eleven?"

"Fine, I can be there."

"Okay I'll see you then, goodbye."

"Goodbye." William ended the call and was glad to have made it. He would have to spend a lot of cash to get out there in a cab but he didn't mind. It was worth it to get some answers. He sat and thought about what to ask. He was curious about details of the crime scene in case there was any chance that it wasn't Archer who should be the prime suspect. This seemed unlikely given that Archer cut up his credit cards and left signs that he was leaving as Tom said at his office. He wondered if the police had made efforts to track him down. He wondered what the police did with missing person cases to track down a suspect. He wanted to know exactly what he wanted

to ask before he went to visit the police because he knew he would be nervous from his past history with them. The police were generally friendly and helpful he thought, but he was prepared for them to keep their distance. A small town Department might have half a dozen officers he guessed and they probably patrolled mostly on weekends.

He thought about the time he'd gone to the first day of an Introduction to Policing class at a community college in Illinois. It was complicated, but he had planned at first to go to the class because he was planning to go into the Army and he thought it would be good training. And he would qualify for loans, money that he needed. He got stopped by an administrator on the community college campus before he got very far. In those days he made a small scene with his behavior everywhere he went because he walked bent over on his toes and was reluctant to interact with people, so when he was questioned he lost his nerve and withdrew from the class. It was just one more nerve-racking episode in those days.

He spent the day trying to wind down and get ready for the trip to Falmouth. Huysmans kept him company for a while at home and then he decided to go for another walk. It was getting warmer out and he enjoyed walking. He went walking around the East End by East End Beach and he was glad of it. There were few people out at this time of year. He saw one man who looked rather unkempt and had a shaggy beard. He knew the man from Franklin

Towers in the elevator and he sometimes saw him out walking along the shore. William usually saw him at low tide and he wondered if the man was the mystery stranger who piled rock cairns all the way around Back Bay and anywhere else there were rocks to pile on the beach. The tide always came in and knocked over his piles but they were such an elegant addition to the beach and William enjoyed them as well as many others he was sure. He always waited to see where the cairns would be next. The sailboats at the two marinas he could see along his walk were still put away for the Winter so the ocean was wide open and there were no large ships. He hoped the Summer season would be nice again this year and he expected it would be. When he got home he was relaxed and refreshed and he was glad for taking the walk. To pass the time he cooked some and then eventually when it was evening he went to bed ready to go out to visit Chief McNally in Falmouth. He slept well and didn't have any dreams that night.

In the morning he got up in plenty of time to call John Welsh at the Defender Taxi to pick him up and give him a ride. He called about 10 and John was there in a few minutes.

"Hi John, good to see you," William said as the car pulled up and he got in.

"Hi William, how are you doing," John replied from behind the wheel. He drove a big old Lincoln Town Car that had lots of room to ride. "Did you see that Celtics game last night? Geez I don't know if they're

going to make the playoffs this year." John always chatted obligingly when he got a call for a ride and that was very pleasant. "Where are you going today," he asked.

"Today I've got to go on a long ride. I need to get out to the Falmouth Police Department. They are located off of the turnpike spur out there, you know the connector between Route 95 and the turnpike. I have my phone to get directions if we need them."

"Okay I'll just head out 295, we should be able to find it."

William fiddled with his phone to get directions as he settled in for what would likely be a fifteen-minute ride.

"Reminds me of back in the days when I was in the Army. Me and my buddy were in a Jeep looking for a post and we got lost. The roads we were on just kept going and we ended up way out in the jungle next to this tiny village. Me and my buddy were so lost that we got out to see if anybody could point the way back for us. We must have been twenty miles out of our way. When I got to the door of this hut that was there a shot rang out and I realized I was shot in the leg. It was just the two of us, my buddy and me so we ran and jumped back in the Jeep and took off driving as fast as we could. Fortunately it was a flesh wound on my leg and didn't hit any arteries or I would have bled to death before we flagged down a tank with a radio and they helped me and radioed for a

helicopter. I spent a couple weeks after that in the hospital before being sent back to my unit."

"Wow that must have been quite a thing. You got off lucky I guess. I tried to join the Army a while back after I finished up school. It didn't work out so well. I failed the physical because of mental problems. The directions say to get off at Bucknam Road and go over to Route 9. You take a left at the three-way intersection after going over the spur."

"Okay gotcha."

"Yeah I really wanted to get into the army in those days. Made a big embarrassing stink over it. Kind of lost my mind."

"That's too bad. Hope things have eventually worked out for you."

"Well it was a bumpy road for a while but I'm doing okay now. Here it is up here on the left. I'll call you again when I get finished. Shouldn't be too long but it might be half an hour or more, I'm running a little early," William said as he paid John and got out. "See you in a bit, shouldn't be too long," he concluded. William was now in front of a long, one-story building that was at the end of a short drive. There were cars in the parking lot and some police cars parked over at the end of the building. There was a sign saying "Falmouth Police Department" next to the door so William headed over that way to make his way in. When he went through the door he found himself in a little waiting area with a plexiglass partition on one

side. There was someone sitting on the other side of the partition at a desk.

"Hi," the person said, "what can I do for you?"

William replied, "My name is William Holden and I have an appointment at eleven with Wes McNally."

"Well, looks like you're running a little early. You can have a seat and I'll tell the Chief you are here. The person didn't have a uniform so William guessed they were a dispatcher or something as they went to the other side of a big open room and poked their head into an office there. William had a seat and waited. It wasn't long before the person behind the partition answered a call at her desk and got up to go to a door in the wall of the waiting room. She called to William, "Okay the chief says to come on in" and led him back through the open area to the office she called into and brought him in the door where there was a middle-aged, good-looking man wearing a police uniform and sitting behind a desk. He looked up and motioned to William.

"Come on in and have a seat. How are you this morning?" William went in and sat down and the Chief continued, "so what brings you out to Falmouth this morning?"

"Well, I'm trying to find out all I can about the murder of Tammy Marsden. I was at the library a few weeks ago and I discovered that she had passed away in mysterious circumstances years ago. I hadn't been in touch with her so this came as a complete surprise

to me and I have been trying to track down details and find out what happened. Tom Wiley, an old friend from college, said I should get in touch with you."

"So what is your connection to Tammy Marsden," the Chief asked.

"Well, we dated for a while in college back in the '90s. It was kind of a one-sided thing I guess. I was a lot more infatuated with her than she was with me. We met because we had almost the same major and we were both taking Greek. I had to keep asking her out a half a dozen times before she would agree to go out with me. This was in 1996. She was renting an offseason rental out on Peaks Island and we would take the ferry back and forth to go out there and stay. It was all very romantic, at least to me anyway. I think for her part she just didn't like staying alone in that remote house on the island during the winter. I did what I could to help her with the shoveling out and things like that. She was an amazing young woman to date. I wanted to get married and for her to have my children but she thought that was ridiculous. She was right of course, and I was just carried away because I was getting ready to go to graduate school and my head was full of these stories of a successful future. She was thinking of going to graduate school for archaeology too but I think the money dissuaded her a lot on that. She was doing odd jobs cleaning houses and babysitting. She could have easily married for the money she was so attractive but she was much too independent-

minded for that. I don't think she liked the idea of getting married and having children very much. It was fine with me because I just liked her and didn't care that she didn't want to get married.

"Wow it's been a while to remember all that. How did your relationship end?"

"That was another story. After a while she got tired of having me hanging around and she got a roommate to help her share the rent. I was really beginning to be a sort of jealous fop. When I introduced her to any of my friends they immediately threw in their lot and flirted. It made me very depressed because I was so proud of dating her but I knew she wasn't at all serious about me. This was all during the holidays and when New Year's Eve came around I knew I wasn't going to be around much longer. I was still in school and she had already graduated that year it so I was busy with school. We didn't make plans together that night and when I asked her if she'd done anything she said she'd gone out but didn't give any details. It did not seem like a good sign to me. I was taking a Shakespeare seminar in school, and I decided to try and write a sonnet addressed to her. I wrote one and I gave her a copy. I can barely remember it."

"An atom 'twixt thy lips and me wouldn't/
Know bliss more complete than any physick/
You could say. No particle of dust couldn't/
Be as full of ichor or as lovesick/
As I am for you, and even a star/
Is not so far away imagination/
Doesn't think of you once

there. A dream afar/ Is enough to populate a nation/
And explode matter's pretense of limits/ For a
purpose overall, once a desire/ Has found a place to
propagate all its/ Proposals. And if only one could
require/ Everything be in natural order a woman/ Of
gravity could travel like no man."

"I was very proud of myself but she treated me like I
was ridiculous, which I was, so I wasn't able to win
her with a sonnet. Then Valentine's Day came
around and we didn't do anything then so I looked
around and decided it was over. I couldn't have been
more disappointed.

"Did you stay in touch afterward?"

"No not really. I saw her when I graduated but that
was the end of it. I was so busy and full of myself that
I soon got along okay."

"Well, this has been a terrible tragedy, what
happened to her. We still have an open case but I'm
sorry to say we have not had any leads in a while,"
said the Chief and picked up a sheet of paper from
his desk and held it for a moment looking at it. "Do
you recognize this man?" He handed William the
sheet of paper which had an artist rendering of a face
and the letters "WANTED FOR MURDER" scribbled
across the bottom.

William paused for a long time looking at the face
and realized it was a picture of Pat Archer. "It looks
like Patrick Archer, who was my advisor and Greek
teacher," he replied, about to hand back the paper.

"No you can keep the wanted poster, we are still trying to find him," the Chief said, settling back in his chair. "Now where were you back in 1998 when this happened?"

"I was in Illinois studying for a master's degree in graduate school. I had been out there for about two years, and I had not been back for a visit. I wasn't in touch with anyone and I didn't hear about Tammy until just a few weeks ago when I was at the library going through old newspapers. I was shocked to learn that it was at the Archer's house and that apparently Archer did it. There must have been some sort of mistake I think."

"Did you know Archer very well?"

"Not really. He was a nice, generous professor type, which at the time I didn't realize was pretty significant."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, people always focus on how smart professors are and think that's the defining quality that made them professors. In my experience it's more the motivation and discipline to learn Latin and Greek well enough to qualify. It's a pretty tricky thing, not everybody makes it that far. It was a complete surprise to me and I thought I was pretty good student. You have to be sort of passive aggressive to secretly do all that work to outdo your peers. It helps to be sort of determined careerist too. It takes a lot of a sort of material ambition. Professors are sort of

extraordinary people and the way the system works now there are only so many of them. It always seemed to me like you would want to include as many scholars as possible to advance the field and that professors were sort of the last people standing who were the squares who wanted to keep studying. Instead the competition is intense and exclusive and people do it for the money. It seems to me like it's a less-than-ideal situation. Archer seemed to me like he was all these things, a cutthroat competitor, an extreme scholar, and someone determined to succeed at great cost. Other than that he was a great guy I guess, sort of a family man."

"Well thank you for sharing that. Is there anything you were wondering about in the case when you came here today," the chief asked and shifted in his seat again.

"Yes I was wondering how the progress was coming along in the search for Archer. I was wondering if I could find out what you had done in your search," William asked, holding his copy of the wanted poster in his hand.

Chief McNally picked up a file on his desk and glanced through it briefly. "After we tried to track his credit cards and did extensive interviews to discover where he might have gone soon after the murder, we have been up against a stone wall for clues to track him down. Apparently he's got friends or he has left the country, we can't really say. There were a couple of clues I can share with you though. Our interviews

revealed that he had some business interests and second homes across the country that he might have gone to. Elko, Nevada was one of them we heard about and alerted the authorities there, sending them a copy of the poster you have in your hand for their wall. It's just a small place in Nevada, but we checked it out because we thought he might have gone there. Nobody has turned him in yet. Then there was another lead in Panhandle, Texas where we made contact and sent him a wanted poster as soon as we had one. No one there has turned up anything there yet either."

"Can I borrow a pen from you? I want to write these down," William interrupted, and the chief graciously handed him an old ballpoint from a container on his desk. William used the back of the wanted poster to write down the clues." So you sent these to Elko, is that E-L-K-O Nevada, and Panhandle, Texas," he repeated.

"Yes it hasn't turned up anything though I would let you know if it had. That's about all we have though that might be of interest. We have really come up empty on this one. He just disappeared.

"Well thank you very much for your time, "William said, standing up again," at least I have some idea where things are at. I really appreciate it."

"Sure anytime," the chief concluded and pointed the way across the big open room to the door where he had come in. William made his way across the room

and the woman sitting at the reception desk let him back out into the waiting room.

"Thanks again," William said to her as he stepped into the waiting room again.

"Have a nice day," she said and closed the door. Once in the waiting room William got out his phone and called Defender Taxi. John Welsh answered his phone and said he was in the area and would be right over. William went outside and waited. He had a couple of more clues now and he was eager to get home. His visit to the police had not gone too badly. Chief McNally was really helpful. He wondered if it would have been different if he mentioned that he had a mental illness. The police, like many people, tended to err on the side of being a little too intrusive when they learned that a person had a mental illness. People with mental illness surrendered a lot of their privacy. William was a little used to it now but at first it had really bothered him. Now his feeling was that everyone could use a little less special privacy, and transparency was a good thing for society. Privacy was one of the main reasons people were spoiled and tended to live in their own fantasy worlds that ignored other people a lot. If there was anything that mental health illness treatment had changed about William, it was that he was a lot more sensitive to other sensitive people and their problems. Soon John drove up in his cab and William got in. John was one of those people that William appreciated. You could tell John had been through some adventures in his life and had a lot of self-

reliance and self-respect. Those qualities were key to a person's personality he thought. "How did it go," John asked William when he got in.

"Oh fine," William said, but didn't mention the details of his visit or the reason for it. He wanted to mull over all the new details a while before he talked to anyone else. "You must have been a regular Achilles in Vietnam back in those days, it must have been something over there. I think a lot of young people have a skewed view of military service, that is, if they even think of it. I know when I read The Iliad all I could think of was the glory of it, which is something I don't know if real soldiers dwell on. It must be like living a real adventure story, and that must be heady stuff. But the real thing, the military life, that must have been very similar among the Ancients just as it is now, the drama of life and death and horrible injuries, the tensions between soldiers and leaders. It's a real tragedy the way it all feeds together to perpetuate military culture."

"I'm still very proud of my service. Boy when I first came back from boot camp back in 1962 I was so proud I couldn't contain myself." John put in, and after that William was quiet for the rest of the way back home. John got out on the highway, and in a short time they made it back to Portland. It was a little past noon when William got out and paid John.

"Take care John, thanks a lot for the ride," William said and went in the back door to Franklin towers and rode the elevator up to his apartment.

William got back to his apartment about 1pm and was glad to be home again. His search was becoming a little strenuous, and he told himself to take it easy because he knew that was his first responsibility. Taking care of himself was always his first goal and he had trained himself to notice if his intensity was getting a little higher than he wanted to handle. Nothing jacked him up like an encounter with the police and he was glad it was a positive visit. He always felt a little strange when he left out the details of his diagnosis because he knew people would probably treat him a little differently if they knew, but he didn't regret it with Chief McNally because it was his right to remain silent about certain things if he wanted to. He decided to do something calm for the rest of the day to recover from his outing and he sat still and was quiet sort of meditatively for a while.

It was time for his daily meal eventually and he felt soothed to put it together and eat. After eating he decided to listen to music. It was so convenient to listen to classical music now from the internet and he could choose his favorites which were from the Baroque period. He'd Listen to George Frederic

Handel and Telemann and Pachelbel and Vivaldi, feeling the calming formality of the music. He even liked vocal music from the Baroque period, although he often found vocal music a little too enervating and he chose instrumental music most of the time. One type of music that made him climb the walls with anxiety was rap music although he sometimes found the lyrics interesting. For a while he lived in a group home where his housemates listened to music at all times of the day and night as loud as possible. Technically it was against the rules at night but the councilors were lenient if no one complained. He didn't complain because that seemed to be the culture of the house and he didn't want to stick his neck out.

When the afternoon ended he found himself sitting and watching the news and he noted strange innuendos in the stock market report. That "the market was up" was somehow an announcement of sexual potency bothered him and he reminded himself that the announcer was being matter of fact. When his anxiety rose he sometimes found himself experiencing intrusive thoughts like this, and he was glad he was taking it easy. It had been a productive day even if it was a little hectic. It had been interesting to hear John Walsh's story in his cab, and it reminded him of the different times he had been in the cab talking to John. Once he'd been talking to John and William mentioned to him that he went to high school away from home and John had immediately asked about where and related that his

son had also gotten a scholarship to go to school like that. His son has gone on to college and become a military officer after that. William was always humbled when he heard about the success of other people and it often reminded him of pressures he would like to forget.

As he sat and remembered Huysmans was running frenetically about the room and the cat distracted him for a while. She would run wildly across the room and try to climb up the base of the wall as far as she could leap, tumbling back down to the floor nimbly and taking off running again. Then she would leap up to the shelf by the windows and look out frantically, her head jerking about suddenly like a goofy chicken as she looked everywhere to find the source of her panic. In the end William watched her calm down and get ready for bed and he followed her lead, looking forward to the time she would climb up to his bed and curl up to sleep. At times like this he was reminded of how much he depended on her for distraction, and he was simply grateful for her company.

After he went to bed he lay awake for a long time gazing at Huysmans asleep at the foot of the bed and eventually drifted off and slept soundly with no dreams that he remembered. In the morning He woke up and Huysmans was still there. He didn't know if his kitty had slept through the night in the same place or gotten up for a while and come back while he was sleeping, but he was glad she was there as he sat up and thought about the searching he was

about to do to try and find Archer. It seemed impossible that the professor could have completely disappeared from the face of the Earth. Maybe he did escape to another country. Maybe he was in South America living under an assumed name. The only thing to do was to try to track him down because he was the most significant clue possible to the mystery of Tammy's death.

The key would be that he couldn't completely change himself to hide, William thought. Archer was an ambitious scholar and a teacher. People didn't just suddenly change when they had gathered together the momentum to do ambitious things like that. Somehow the business interests that Tom had mentioned had to be a clue. Maybe if he searched out information about the places Chief McNally sent the wanted posters something would turn up. Huysmans eventually turned over and leaped down from the bed and William followed. He started his morning routine of making coffee and putting food back in Huysmans bowl for morning while Huysmans nibbled at the shoots of grass growing in a pot in the window enthusiastically, just as she did every morning. It was a cloudy day but not extraordinarily cold, William thought.

William decided to begin searching for Elko, Nevada on a map application and found it way out on route 80 in eastern Nevada, right on the cross-country route. It was basically another small town in the West located near some modest mountains. Elko was practically the gold mining capital of the United

States although it was only a little town of twenty thousand people. He remembered Archer's interest in gold mining and thought this must be the place. He wondered whether Archer was just an investor or if he had more connections to the company. Elko would be a reasonable place to hide if you knew someone to show you the local ropes he thought. He imagined Archer living up in the local Hills completely unnoticed by the public and paying cash for rent with just enough contacts to remain hidden and get by. He remembered Archer as a practical man who liked doing things with his hands and it all seemed somehow possible. There were probably dozens of shareholders scattered throughout the hills, descendants of early residents of Elko and prospectors from the earliest times. The more he thought about it the more it made sense as a possible lead and he decided to learn about gold mining to see if any clues turned up. Gold mining was a vast subject he learned when he searched the words. There was gold mining all over the world but Nevada was the place to find it in the United States.

After a while trying to understand modern cyanide gold mining and locate mines around Elko William concluded that even if Archer was interested in one of the large mines near Elko it was unlikely that he blended in by being employed there. Modern gold mining was rough, dirty and technical. There were a lot of jobs for equipment operators. It was just as possible that Archer connected with the international operations of the big companies in

Nevada. It was still possible Archer picked a remote place like Elko to hide but it was a needle in a haystack. Instead William shifted gears to try and think what Archer, the poet with literary ambitions and the scholar would have done. There might have been an income for him somehow from the gold mines but Archer would have looked for something to do among his old habits. He would have had to acquire books and paper and simple research tools for himself, and his ambitions would have likely tried to encourage him to publish.

What would Archer have written, he asked himself. It would have been cumbersome to continue with philology he thought, and the poetry community might have been a little exposed for someone trying to hide out. Some sort of pseudonym could have fit very well for writing fiction he thought. Archer would try to write literary fiction he was sure. William didn't know where to start except considering historical fiction a possibility. William considered himself a wiz at finding books from his early days working in the book trade. He remembered the days when he was an assistant and his supervisor came back from a book fair with the news that everything was going to be done with computers in the future with everyone able to browse and buy books at home on their desktop computer. The company he worked for had a large computer that was called a "mainframe" computer. They kept a list of 80,000 titles they warehoused kind of like a library catalog with title, author and publisher.

Now he just took for granted that books were on his tablet and he occasionally found himself searching for books that were mentioned in magazines. Now it was simple, or at least deceptively simple to start, and he decided to try to browse "ancient historical fiction" in a search to see what turned up. A sizable list turned up on the first try and he started eliminating candidates right away. He wasn't very scientific, just guessing possibilities, and he soon found himself looking closer to see if he could sample the reading from a couple. One was a novel about the Greek gods that looked like a possibility but it didn't have a reading sample attached to the title. The next one did. It was a book of short stories set in the ancient world that was written by someone using an obvious pseudonym. The writing sample he clicked on was entitled "To Olympia":

Far in the distance snowcapped mountains bounded the horizon to the East, and in the rolling hills around the river Neretva an observer would have found two boys and a dog. They crouched along the river's banks busily engaged in their task. The dog scampered eagerly in the underbrush surrounding the bank of the river, catching sight of small birds and leaping after them in earnest from time to time. The hound was notably unsuccessful in his hunt but seemed to enjoy the activity. Nearby the two youths, both on the brink of manhood although one was clearly the much taller and sturdier of the two and the two were a conspicuously mismatched pair, squatted in their crude woolen tunics next to the

water which they systematically scooped into the beaten copper pans they held in their hands. At about 14 years old they needed no coaching to stay focused as they scooped the sand in the water and swirled until there was nothing left but a few grains in the bottom of the pans. One of the boys, the larger, had a tiny sack tied to the belt of his tunic on one side and from time to time one of the two would pick a tiny piece from the grains of sand remaining in their pan and transfer it to the sack. The boys seemed pleased with their finds and both kept at it, searching for more. From time to time one or the other would exclaim with pleasure at their discoveries, "Oh look there's another one, look how large it is." Eventually it was the larger boy who found something that they both stopped their activity to examine in amazement. It was a golden nugget about 1/4 inch in diameter that rewarded their diligence. The larger boy picked it up and showed it to his companion. "I knew we would find something, this is always a good idea. Ditus will be pleased. Let's stop and hunt around for a while. We need to slay something for dinner."

"Okay" his companion, who was named Varo, said in reply, giving his vessel one last swirl before carrying it up the bank. "Come here Can, come on boy, leave that bird alone! That's a good boy, good Can," he called out to the dog who was a small distance away and the dog scampered over at the sound of his name. The other boy who was called Thrasymachus did the same thing with his pan, carrying it up the bank and putting it down to rub the dog's ears.

Thrasymachus' name was an exotic one, given to him by his father when he returned from India, and the boy ever eager for recognition tried to live up to it, for his father told him it meant, "manly battle" in the language of the far-off Greeks. The two walked to a nearby camping spot where their spartan gear was stored. The only thing that they really carried was too long spears, hunting javelins made of dogwood, that they picked up after they tied their pans to their respective backs and prepared to set off. "I think I remember a good boar thicket along the way from when we walked out here," Varo said.

"Good, we will keep our eyes peeled," Thrasymachus replied, and the two set out walking to the east where the new walls of their village lay two days away. They climbed over boulders and walked around small hills, orienting by the sun, which was high in the sky at first, as well as the distant mountains. It was a difficult country to get lost in. No other humans greeted them along the way in this distant area and they tried to make note of their location so they would be able to return to it to find more gold. Across the river it was another long walk to the sea, and thinking of it, Thrasymachus wondered aloud to his best friend, "I wonder if my father will take us along to visit Nebris and his ship when we get back."

The two had visited the sea once before and seen the warrior Nebris' great may-oared ship that brought back Ditus and Messor safely from Alexander's campaign in India many years before, just before the

boys were born. Ditus was the village chieftain and Thrasymachus' father Messor had returned from India with a slave wife, Aadya, who became Thrasymachus' mother. Thrasymachus and Varo had known each other from birth it seemed and they did everything together, walking to distant locations and camping to look for gold or making javelins to hunt wild boar. They were both proud of their Illyrian tribe the Ardiaiei and they aspired to grow up and become warriors.

Soon their walking brought them to it a thicket where they sent Can ahead with the command, "Go get him boy," and they began to carefully stalk around the edges of the thicket part to see if they could scare up anything. They heard a sudden crashing through the underbrush and froze to discover which way their prey was trying to escape the dog. The crashing went to their left so they stealthily trotted around to where they anticipated the crashing would emerge. Once there at the end of the thicket it was a moderately large boar, its tusks looking fierce and defiant. Varo threw his javelin first, striking the animal in the hind leg. Then Thrasymachus threw, bringing it down with a throw in the midriff. They exulted wildly because there would be a feast that night. They decided to camp at a spot nearby next to a small stream.

After the board died they trussed it up to one of their javelins and carried it together to their campsite where they efficiently set to work preparing the feast and building a fire. By nightfall the boar was roasting on a spit that they prepared with sticks and they ate

their fill, stowing the rest of the meat to be packed along for the next day's meal.

In the morning they set out, and even though their packs were heavy with meat they made good time, not even stopping to eat but instead eating on the trail until they reached another stopping point at nightfall. As they were falling asleep without a fire at their rudimentary campsite Varo said aloud to Thrasymachus, "I wish we could just live like this forever. I don't need to go visit Nebris. It's a terrible thing to go off and fight and kill other warriors."

"Yes but think of the gold we would be paid. People need that and Kassander isn't the first king who offered to pay Illyrian warriors. This is the way it is and the way it always has been." Thrasymachus spoke in the dark and Varo didn't reply. In the morning they got an early start and made it to the village where slaves were hauling rocks from all around to fit into the rising walls. "Halloo," they cried out to their acquaintances as they made their way down the main street of their village on the shores of Lake Skadar. As they came upon Messor's hut Can ran ahead to greet the other neighborhood dogs. From 50 yards away they could see that someone was visiting Messor, standing out in front of the house and talking.

Thrasymachus and Varo stopped to wait respectfully while the two figures talked. They can see from afar that the two tall, sturdy figures are Messor and Ditus, the village chieftain. His graceful figure and dignified

poise set him apart from the rest of the village. The talk is short and soon Ditus comes striding by and they can see his torque, the band of iron he wears around his neck as a symbol of his status. He doesn't nod or acknowledge the boys as he strides purposefully past and when the boys look up and see Messor looking in their direction Varo decides he will head home, continuing down the street in the direction of his family's hut. Thrasymachus continues in the direction of Messor until he is in the family's yard with him.

"Hello Thrasymachus, I have good news. Ditus has just come to tell me that we are going to Greece to the Festival of Olympia as the delegation from the Ardiaiei. You are coming along as my Squire. The warriors Samuntio and Paio are also coming along. We leave to meet the ship of Nebris tomorrow. Look sharp it is a great honor." Messor speaks and Thrasymachus breaks into a stern and serious smile. He remembers the gold and hands the small sack to his father, who accepts it stoically. Thrasymachus thinks with grim pleasure that his career as a warrior has begun but worries for his friend Varo left behind.

William Holden stopped reading the story here with guarded curiosity. What if Archer had become an author while he was in hiding? It made sense, gold mining was an unlikely pursuit, but Holden didn't really know. He browsed the book entry to see if he could find the author. "Aureus" was the only name listed, an obvious pseudonym. Archer would have to use a pseudonym, though even publishing with a

pseudonym would be a risk. Holden looked around further and decided to look for the other place that Chief McNally had mentioned. Panhandle, Texas was a small ranching town near Amarillo, and from what Holden could figure out it was also a good place to hide. There was a small main street and the map was dotted with medium to large cattle ranches all around. Archer could have blended in as a cowboy perhaps and spent some of those years there. Holden remembered that Archer had published a book way back when Holden was still a student, and he decided to look it up even though finding it was unlikely 20 years later. The book was about ancient shoemaking and Holden remembered from reading it that ancient shoes were made from vegetable tanned leather and Archer had even found an example of ancient shoes that were found in a cave in Israel and had a picture of them in his book.

Holden looked up Archer and shoemaking and there it was, an entry for Archer's book which was still in print. But the remarkable thing was that the book was published by the same publisher as the book of stories Holden had found! It couldn't be a coincidence. Holden thought for a minute. There must be a way to contact Archer. He was sure he had found him after all these years. The publisher, Hellas Books, 15 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02101, must be in touch with him and he wondered if they would forward his address or if they had a confidentiality agreement with Archer. Holden decided to find out by sending a letter to Aureus care

of Hellas Books. They must accept fan mail he thought. It had been an eventful morning, and he decided to write a letter after dinner. He wanted to think about it for a while because he had to be careful not to blow Archer's cover.

Would Archer even reply? Archer had been in hiding for a long time without being in touch with his family. His children were grown up now, and even they weren't aware of his whereabouts as far as Holden knew. Archer also didn't know Holden's story or any of the events that led up to him being diagnosed with schizophrenia. Maybe Archer had made a decent life for himself in hiding and was reluctant to reveal himself. But on the other hand, what if Archer was finally ready to turn himself in and reveal the story. What would happen to him?

12.

After eating and a rest Holden sat down again to write a draft of a letter to Aureus trying to delicately inquire if he was really Dr. Patrick Archer PhD, who had been his teacher back in the mid-90s. He wrote as follows:

Dear Aureus,

I noticed your book of stories recently and after reading the first part of the one entitled "To Olympia" I wanted to contact you. I was a Classics major in college and I found your writing very interesting. Do you have any more books coming out in the future? Maybe I should tell you a little more about myself before I go any further. I have schizophrenia and I am a writer. I went to graduate school for Classics but didn't go as far as I wanted which really upset me. I've had symptoms of mental illness throughout my life but in the days after graduate school they were most extreme. I was more upset than I have ever been at any time in my life. It sort of makes sense really because I had never attempted anything else so ambitious before. I would have settled on becoming a teacher but mental illness prevented that. People are very

particular and demanding when it comes to public roles. It's one of those things that I would change if I could change the world. Teachers have had a big effect on my life because I was the first person in a long time to go to college in my family, and I have been a somewhat slow learner when it comes to independent achievement. I got the idea very early on that school was a sort of social promotion institution and I was sort of cynical about studying and scholarship. There were teachers too who fostered the idea of mercenary cultural achievement and this set me back a lot I think.

One such teacher was Augustus T. Broomwood who was the director of the museum where I had a chance to work. He was a snob but that was a comparatively minor character flaw. When I look back I really resent his influence because although it might have seemed that he was just representing the status quo that he grew up with his influence was really pernicious. He trained and taught the museum guides and staff. His point of view was really to aggrandize decorative and fine arts as well as and especially the resources they required to be produced. He was always the first to criticize less than impressive art of all kinds and I think that his influence was toxic. It's art with a small "a" that should matter not expensive commercial productions that only the rich can afford. He was an example of a teacher I came to resent over time.

I am writing to you because I am searching for another teacher from my past who was named

Patrick Archer. This is sort of an awkward thing to ask but are you, Aureus, Dr. Patrick Archer? I am sending this letter along care of the publisher of your book on ancient shoemaking which is thoroughly fascinating. I am enclosing my email in case you want to get back to me. It is WHolden298@gmail.com. Please contact me if you can. It's urgent.

Thank you,

William Holden USM '96

Holden finished the draft of the letter and thought for a minute. He would have to type it up to send in care of Hellas Books and the library would be the place to type it. He thought that waiting until the next day would be wise because it was getting late and the library would close soon. He set aside his letter and remembered his days as a museum tour guide. Those were some of the first days he was sober and content as a young person. It was before and during his years in college and had been a big part of his deciding to go to college. He was so naive in those days, and he still imagined that wealth and security were just a matter of his compliance, relinquishing his cherished rebel status. He had no idea how much he would have to relinquish just to get by. He imagined he was like a puzzle piece just searching for a place to fit in. Really what he imagined in those days was that there was a place ready made for him to fit but he wanted to fashion his own unique place. What he eventually discovered was that because the world was like a round hole he

was a square peg. He was more reluctant than he thought at first to mold himself to fit in. It seemed to do too much violence to himself and leave too much behind. He wanted the accomplishment of doing something creative but he was still discovering how much time and commitment that took, things that were more likely associated with a different class identity.

The one example from his teenage years of someone who didn't make it into adulthood loomed large because it was so connected with his ambition and his sense of identity. The story of someone else who was supposed to have so much opportunity but fell so far as to end up dead symbolized his own accumulating disappointments as he grew older. It seemed like so much depended on resources that were in other people's hands and a greed for resources that had seemed to make sense to him once in his early teens no longer seemed to matter much as he went through his early twenties. The sort of mythology that teachers told about industry and wealth didn't seem to apply to him because he had no particular resources to commit. It was really like he had failed to complete the bridge over to college just like his dorm mate had in high school. And then there was Tammy too. Those were difficult years and he was beginning to discover how he had been overeager and premature in this leap out into the world.

He finished up his day pensive. A lot had suddenly happened. He had found Archer he was sure of it and

the mystery of Tammy's death was possibly about to be solved. It hadn't been a very long journey really, just knowing where to look and making a few contacts. Tammy was somehow like the other person Holden had known who famously didn't make it past their youth. Tammy didn't have all the fame and prestige challenging her, for what that was worth, but Holden had really wanted her to be able to succeed with the cultural identity that she wanted. He thought she imagined being an archaeologist's assistant or something like that. College was so attuned to fishing for people's ambitions but being very stingy with opportunities to get further than entry-level. This was unfair, and it was usually justified by people like Augustus T. Broomwood shaking their heads and referring to how demanding life at the top was. Holden thought that there should be a lot more opportunities for cultural involvement. School and college were a brief, ostentatious spending spree for the affluent that only tried to groom fanatics and people who could purchase their own opportunities. College simply ended too soon and was all about money.

Holden listened to his music that night filled with anticipation. He wasn't sure what justice would be for Archer if he had killed Tammy, but he doubted that Archer was a terrible murderer at heart and he hesitated to leap to conclusions. Surely Archer's explanation would make a difference. Holden and Huysmans got ready and went to bed. He needed the sleep after the excitement of that day and he slept

soundly until he got up again in the morning and made coffee and filled Huysmans's bowl with water and food. Huysmans was as excited to see him as any other day, and she greeted him enthusiastically. He petted her back as he searched for an envelope and stamp which he addressed to Hellas Books in Boston and got ready to go to the library. At the library there was a computer available and he sat down and typed the letter, adding "please forward if possible" in the subject line. The computer was an old desktop model, not as old as the computer Holden used to have, which he had used a credit card to buy when he was in graduate school. It was a big purchase and he was thrilled to finally have a word processor. He had collected old typewriters for a while when he was a teenager, and he thought a word processor was what he finally needed to become a writer. Eventually the computer had gotten old and obsolete and the printer didn't work anymore. He lost it along the way without the too many regrets because he discovered that he wrote better if he wrote things out longhand, and he didn't really need the word processor anymore except to type finished drafts. He wasn't completely a luddite because he had a phone and a tablet he used but he definitely tried not to be very dependent on technology. He finished up his letter and put it in his envelope, dropping it in the mail on his way home.

Snail mail would take some time he thought when he got home and fixed lunch for himself, but he had included his email address for a quick reply. He

hoped Archer wouldn't have to think about his reply very long. He imagined that Archer must be ready to return after all these years. After lunch he sat down to think some more and he remembered when he first got a computer and all the things he could do without leaving home. He discovered that he could read books of all kinds and even print them out if he wanted, and there was quick information about almost anything that popped into his head. He was also amazed to discover that he could access all sorts of laws from local landlord ordinances to Federal statutes. The computer didn't so much make new things possible as it made some things mundane and convenient. When he was first sued by his litigious landlord in Illinois he had been desperate to save his computer. His computer had become his new life line for trying to dig his way out of the bind he was in. He developed so much momentum going to school, and school had been the most affluent and independent living he had ever experienced. His whole outlook on the future had changed, and he didn't let go of his new standards of optimism easily. He also gave himself new, false standards because he had been to graduate school. He still believed somehow in a new status like it was a meaningful social promotion and not just a few years of official hazing. He was in despair when he thought about how he was going to make a living.

In many ways having a new degree made him less employable than he had been before he went to college. College just raised the standard for

references and he had spent six years in college without doing much to help himself on that front. In fact, he came to believe that more than anything that was what college-level employment was all about. Employers hired people with college degrees when they wanted more commitment and involvement from their new hires. It wasn't really about the skills that much because any ambitious person could acquire skills on the job. These were big, unstated expectations that Holden was slow to realize. He began to try really hard to discover a future that would suit him. It didn't help that he was sort of paranoid and delusional either. During these years he believed in a sort of conspiracy on the part of higher education to control and manipulate professional candidates. Being a professional was something his parents had always pronounced with envious skepticism and Holden was no different. Despite his different educational background he still carried his parents suspicious feelings. Professional jobs weren't like social roles that you stepped into readily, with opinions and brazen self-righteousness ready to go. There was new territory to explore personally.

Inevitably he typed a search for employment opportunities into his computer. What he found was an employment guide used by most high school students but to which he had not really been referred by his guidance counselors. It was the Career Outlook Guide online which had job availability and salary projections for all kinds of jobs.

He also found the Department of Labor Statistics online. They made him think about getting a trade school education. Nursing seemed appealing but he would have to get a second bachelor's degree so he looked at nursing assistant statistics. He also looked at something he had long considered, school for being a printer, but it was when he looked at the prospects for military careers that his outlook really changed.

The military had long been a part of his imagination, and in childhood he had loved the simplicity of war games but his mother saw to it that he didn't have any toy guns. His father on the other hand helped him to make a replica hunting rifle that he got in trouble for bringing to school to show his friends. He never actually went hunting as a boy although he liked to play cowboys and Indians a lot. Through his teenage years as well he had not really contemplated the military even when he spent a few weeks one Summer staying with his cousins on an Air Force base in New York. For some reason he had not really set his sights on the military and he didn't really consider it an especial outlet for ambition in itself.

His view was that the military wasn't very lucrative either, and it was this part of the story that really changed his mind. When he was around his aunt and uncle, who were in the Air Force, he got the impression that although housing and travel were paid for, pay was not very extraordinary in the military. He never imagined that pay was nearly double that of the civilian world at entry level and he

always thought his opportunities were elsewhere than the military. The Career Outlook Guide online completely changed this information and his first reaction that this was good to know but the military was still not for him quickly changed a few days after as he thought about his prospects.

He had never thought about risking his life for pay before and it sort of sunk in slowly that he was willing to do this. He was sort of like a jilted lover who decides to enlist because he feels he has nothing left to lose. His college career had ended disastrously and the more he explored other paths the more apprehensive he was about his prospects. Nothing seemed like it would pay enough to pursue his personal goals which were related at that time to writing a book on Greek poetry. He spent his nights cleaning in a restaurant and his days studying Greek. He was determined that he would show the scholars who had rejected him that he could meet and exceed their expectations. As well he had a secret conspiracy theory that consumed his every waking moment that all PhD candidates were summarily rejected and only after writing a book were they reconsidered. It wasn't a very likely theory but it completely consumed him and he truly couldn't bring himself to accept that he had been rejected.

He was really obsessed with all of these things and the military, drastically different and ethically questionable, was like a bombshell of opportunity being dropped into his life. He did a complete about-face and this new direction began to sink into every

dimension of his life. It was like he had an identity to believe in again, and he thought constantly about the step he was getting ready to take. The social dimension especially bothered him. How did one get along with people when your objective was to fight together? There would be a lot of esprit de corps he thought and this bothered him. He didn't want enthusiasm for unity to make fighting more likely, like a sports team. Thinking about school subjects made it feel strange too. He had been an enthusiastic fan of Homer when he was in college, and his imagination led him to think about the courage of an Homeric warrior. It seems like everything caught his imagination. He watched war movies with new fascination and he set about trying to find out everything he could about military life.

The first thing he wanted to decide was which branch of the military to join. He was especially intrigued by being a submariner because of special pay but he realized that being 6ft 2in tall would possibly be difficult on a submarine. He also noticed with incredulity that careers as a military officer were incredibly lucrative, but he was apprehensive about starting out as an officer knowing nothing about the military. It occurred to him that he might be interested in trying to be an officer after he tried being in the military for a little while, but starting out in that role was not something he wanted. His imagination got completely carried away. He was 30 years-old so he imagined that he would be older than a lot of the other soldiers, and he thought about that

from the perspective of being a leader. His experience as a teaching assistant might come in handy he thought. In the military he wondered if he could be an instructor since he had experience with that.

It wasn't very hard to find information about the military on his computer. Just as Holden had been able to inform himself when he was being harassed by his landlord he was able to figure out bits of information about the service like how large each of the branches was. What he wanted was opportunity and a predictable experience. He wanted to be certain of his every step. There was nothing risky or haphazard about his approach. For this reason he decided to focus on the Army because it was the largest branch by far. Once he had decided this he thought about the steps he would have to take once he went to the recruiting station. He was determined to be thoroughly informed and ready to go once he talked to someone at the recruiting station which he located a short bus ride away from his apartment. He walked by, sort of checking out the place, once he found out where it was. His assumption, which didn't really turn out to be correct, was that everything would be hurried once he made contact with the recruiter, so Holden decided he would talk to them about the armed services vocational aptitude battery first. This meant getting a preparation book and doing some preparation tests ahead of time. He noticed the electronics section was the most difficult so we put in some time studying that section. What

he had hoped was that by doing well on the ASVAB and having a lot of educational background he would get a good job in the military, maybe as a linguist.

It was July, 2001 when he finally decided to go to the recruiting station. He had been preparing for a year already at that point. He also attended a few Talks by the ROTC lieutenant colonel in Champaign, Illinois because he wanted to make contact with people in the military as well. He made quite a scene walking into the talks and sitting at the table in the back row because his posture was sort of contorted as he tried to keep his blood pressure low by squatting with his legs and reducing his tall stature. He raised some eyebrows but was tolerated at the talks on the American Revolution, which were given by the colonel as a hobby for history buffs in the community. To Holden those days were about having the temerity to stick out in a crowd, something he had seldom done as a youth in the countryside of Maine. For other things, like imagining the absurdity of battle, his imagination and movies were more than enough. He was trying to understand history and the recurring nightmare of military conflict from a new, up close angle, and the closer he got it seemed to Holden that people seldom did something drastic to avoid something drastic. The way he thought about it was to consider what he was willing to die for. To him, his country was a small thing he could live without and the thing he was willing to die for was paradoxically non-violence. After giving it a lot of thought he decided it would be better to get

shot than to actually pull the trigger and hurt somebody. He kept his thoughts to himself because he wasn't sure how others would feel about having a comrade with this strategy. It was like he was determined to bring *The Catcher in the Rye* to life and just go along and make a good show of it.

When the time rolled around for the ASVAB test he was prepared. He had visited the recruiting station to schedule an appointment for the test a week before, and he showed up for the test a week later at the appointed time. He aced the test and afterwards he rode back to the station in a Humvee. When he got there he made an excuse that he had to leave. On his way out he asked for a copy of the military newspaper that was on the table in the waiting area. To him, he couldn't be too cautious and he left that night feeling like he had accomplished his first mission.

Holden felt himself get tense just remembering those days, and all the sense of gusto that had once animated him was completely gone now. He wrapped up another day and went to bed after taking his medication.

13.

Two weeks later in the morning on a Tuesday Holden got an email. It was from Aureus, or as he soon found out, Professor Archer who revealed he was Aureus. The email went as follows:

Dear William Holden, I don't know whether this is a good thing or a bad thing that you have tracked me down, but yes I am Professor Patrick Archer and I use the pseudonym Aureus. It has been a long time since I've been in contact with anyone from my old job but it is somehow heartening to hear from you. I don't know how much you are aware of about that night back in 1998 when I left but I wanted to ask if I could trust you not to turn me in if I was in contact with you about that. A lot has happened since then and I feel differently about it now. I remember you were my advisee for a couple of years back then. It has been a long time. I'm glad you found my story "To Olympia". I write to pass the time now and I guess I was sort of hoping someone would discover me with my pseudonym. Does anyone remember that night back in the 90s? I came home early and then everything was a mess. Well please let me know how things are. It's good to hear from you. Your friend, Patrick Archer.

Holden paused for a minute in amazement. So Aureus was Archer just as he had suspected. He sounded friendly and open so Holden's suspicions were somewhat allayed. What should he do? Archer wanted to confide in him. Maybe he would tell him the whole story. Maybe it was a horrible mistake. It must have been a horrible deprivation being away from his family all these years. Suddenly Holden started remembering back around that time again. It was just a short three years from 1998 to 2001 and so much had happened to him. He had gone from being deeply thrilled and enthusiastic about school to raving mad and barely able to contain himself. He decided to email back to Archer right away. He typed as follows:

Dear Professor Archer, thank you for responding to my letter. It has taken some time and some luck to finally track you down. I hope you are doing well. Please know that you can trust me with difficult information. I'm trying to track you down because I was researching at the library a while back and I ran across some terrible news. Tammy Marsden the other Greek student at USM back in my days was killed and she was found at your house of all places. You must know the police are still looking for you. They have been looking for you all these years. Please know that I won't turn you in right away, but that is probably inevitable unless there are extenuating circumstances. Do you know what happened to Tammy? I was so shocked to discover the news of her death. Please let me know what

happened so I can help you if that is possible. Tom Wiley became a lawyer and he might help but I don't think I should share this information with him until you are sure you want to. Charles Barstow might help too. He is a teacher here in Standish. Please get back to me and let me know if I can help. Yours Truly, William Holden.

Holden was still amazed that he had found Archer. It was cathartic really with everything somehow coming together. For two weeks he had been distracting himself, trying not to get his hopes up or think too much about those days back in his life. Instead of thinking about the summer of 2001 he found himself catching up on some cleaning and getting plenty of exercise at the gym. He thought about how different he was from his neighbors in that way yet somewhat similar in others. Nobody else in the building exercised.

Exercise was something that yuppie young people did throughout the city but not here in Franklin Towers. There were people who smoked cigarettes too but not quite as many as you might expect probably because it was a long ride down in the elevator that took almost as long each way as it took to smoke a cigarette. Holden felt similar to his neighbors in other ways. It was like the people he lived with were also patient, persistent people who had waited through the bureaucracy to get a place to live that was affordable. People were also humble here because people elsewhere were brisk and brazen. Holden hated the larger culture that had no

use for others except a brisk trade. No fuss socializing was one thing but coldness was another and there was a lot of that out in the world.

Holden kept thinking until midday about his situation and then he realized it might be a while until he heard back from Archer. For some reason he was irresistibly drawn back to his days at the turn of the millennium. His mind went through them again and again, but he knew there was in some ways nothing he would do differently although in others he would change everything. Getting evicted by his landlord and going to court for the first time steeled him against a lot of things. He became shameless and desperate and he intensified the things he had started doing when school ended, because they were things that strengthened his resolve. He cringed and set his jaw and spoke firmly about everything when it was necessary to speak.

He didn't speak effectively or attractively though, because he had a strange paranoia about people who spoke smoothly or neatly. He felt so many simple, ordinary interactions betrayed people because they glossed over real differences and real needs. Looking back his behavior didn't make sense. He shrieked at the top of his lungs and paused for uncomfortably long periods of time before answering questions. Questions were another thing he was extremely sensitive about. He never asked them himself and he resented it when others asked questions. He wondered what the military recruiters thought of him because he didn't seem brave or

assertive or gallant like they did. Instead he seemed caught up in every exception there was to niggle about in everything.

In July 2001 he had taken the ASVAB test, and he was determined to make a new start with the Army. When he went to the recruiting station to take his test he borrowed a copy of an army newspaper which he used for information to subscribe to start receiving the weekly newspaper. He started getting up at 4am to read it as well as other books about military and national history which he got at the library. He read about the Ottoman Empire and Iran and the American Revolution and the English Civil War. One thing kept him going and that was thinking about how conflicts could be avoided. The American Civil War seemed especially important in this aspect. He was amazed that the Confederate Constitution was basically identical to the US Constitution except for one phrase about service. It astounded him that so much bloodshed could take place with so little articulation of differences. It was a terrible thing really. The issue of economics and slavery was so unspoken, yet it was enormous enough to provoke mass murder. He read about the Ottoman suicide soldiers, the Janissaries, and post-revolutionary Iran. He read the Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook from cover to cover, absorbing the vital statistics for every recognized country in the world.

For the first time he got an accurate sense of how large the populations of the countries of the world were and he began reading in the Statistical Abstract

of the United States to get a clearer picture of the country he lived in. Military conflicts, he concluded, usually happened from the top down, and without absolute loyalty to leaders he imagined that conflicts would never organize. Even the grassroots volunteer army of the American Confederacy would have had little focus without the professional Union Army to defend against. When people took up arms for a cause or gave up negotiating it always seemed like they gave up too early.

To Holden, fighting was an unmediated, clear and present issue. He thought about what would trigger him to fight, and the thing that moved his efforts was to avoid being physically touched. He decided that he would draw the line at physical contact, and after that anything was possible. It puzzled him when he thought about it that so much military conflict was at a distance. For all of modernity military battles had been a rifle shot away and to Holden there was an odd psychology to this that made him think about why people fought. At one hundred yards away he imagined a soldier had to be extraordinarily cold and calculating to start attacking the enemy.

Holden found himself being approached by security guards and police because his behavior looked odd, and he thought a lot about that sort of interaction. It was made especially unstable by guns, he thought. All the parties involved were on a hair trigger because they were guns present but the issues at stake were seldom life and death. The more he thought about it the more intensely upset he

became. He thought so much trouble was avoidable if people were more careful and tolerant. It was like most conflict was triggered by discontent and terrorizing. When September 11th 2001 happened he was staggered.

Holden went out running early that morning and when he got back he turned on the television just before the first tower collapsed. He remembered later how people's behavior changed at the grocery store. They suddenly started looking at each other in desperation and sympathy. People were stunned. Holden felt oddly prepared to carry on through the emergency. He grabbed the ground with his feet and persisted with his plans. Although his plan wasn't to train as an officer at first, he often thought of himself in a leadership role because of his age, and his imagination went through the roof when he watched the first troops fly into Afghanistan. He imagined they felt like they were on a suicide mission and the unknowns ahead of them were huge.

It was about this time that Holden decided to return to the recruiting station and complete the enlistment process. He picked a day for his mission and he went. When he got there wasn't too much waiting and he signed an enlistment contract as the recruiter told him to come back the next day for a trip to St Louis and the intake center there. He got ready the next day and made the 4 hour trip. It was an overnight stay, and when they got in in the evening he found he had a roommate in the hotel where they were staying. He felt awkward and wanted to dissuade the

young man from enlisting. He tried to set an example with his odd behavior, walking with his knees bent and his back straight when everyone went to dinner that night. The doctor would probably have thought it was Simianism, but Holden was determined to do things his way if there was a prospect of violence. The next day he got up early and did all the tests they put recruits through, but he found himself pulled aside and detained for an interview with the lieutenant colonel who was the doctor. The doctor briefly chatted with him about what he had studied in college and told him he had a disqualifying condition.

Holden was panicked. He had not planned for not passing the physical and he was numb as the doctor led him back to the waiting area and he waited for the long ride home. He didn't know how to react except to try and be calm as he met with the recruiter briefly at the recruiting station before he asked for a ride home. At home he was exhausted after the long trip and he went to sleep immediately, waking up early as had become usual for him over the preceding year. As he sat in his study chair that next morning he began to form a paranoid theory that was the product of his isolation and his intensity about almost everything since his rejection from graduate school. His imagination took over, and he began to think that his string of rejections and troubles were all intended as obstacles for him that he had the new challenge of overcoming.

He was totally out of touch with reality but his imagination grimly plodded on. His bizarre theory came to him slowly. It began with the assertion that what was happening could not be true and got stronger when he thought about all of his studying in college. It seemed to him in a sort of nightmare and misguided impression that he was an ideal candidate to be a military officer because he was so educated and cautious. Only in the most extreme circumstances if any would he ratify choosing violence and he didn't believe in resorting to violence even for self-defense. Holden thought to himself as he remembered that he still believed in non-violence and thought even the Army could be non-violent. It was a test of wills.

In his confused thinking back in 2001 he believed he was being especially groomed for an important military role. He remembered the Iliad when the expedition to Troy was briefly called off before reassembling after the argument of Achilles and Agamemnon. Homer's depiction of a sort of chaos in military culture seemed to Holden like it was an important clue to solving his problem. He believed it was his duty and a choice for his ambition to try and persist in joining the military. He thought about it and thought about it and concluded that what was necessary was arbitration. To him, his landlord's taking him to court was a clue about how to proceed. His thinking was that a military officer needed to demonstrate that they were committed to the process of Justice before fighting. Eureka, he thought

to himself in his twisted logic. This had been the test of military leadership throughout all history he thought and in his isolation it made sense.

So he resolved to take the matter to court. He resolved to get himself into court to declare his intention to enlist in the military, any court, even small claims court, because it was the thought that mattered. He went to small claims court and got the paperwork, which he filled out simply, saying "plaintiff seeks to effect military service enlistment." When he filed it at the court the clerk rolled her eyes at him and took his money for the filing fee. In a few days he got a notice in the mail saying his case has been removed to Federal Court which was next door in Urbana, Illinois. He took it as a sign that he was doing the right thing. The court date was in a couple of months. The days passed slowly and he continued to practice his temerity above all. The court was solicitous. They sent him inquiries and set up a discovery meeting, trying to ascertain what the trouble was. To the court, he was bringing up a case for military jurisdiction, which was in the court's power, so they tried to do all they could to take the case. Holden had a different idea of the case though. He thought the object was simply to get into court to declare his intentions because it was a crucial test of a new military officer. His mouth got dry and his tongue got heavy with anticipation of high honors. He theorized that all university professors had military experience. It was only just he thought, and

it was crucial to civilization that the different parts of a civilized culture were integrated.

When the day came for court he could barely stand he was so awed by the proceedings. People patronized him on his way into the courtroom, warning that he could get into a lot of trouble. He sat down and answered yes or no when asked questions but no one asked him if he wished to enlist in the Army. After some objections were raised by the defense attorney for the United States, the "case" as Holden called it was dismissed on procedural grounds. Holden was led out of the court by the bailiff and allowed to go free. Totally out of his mind now, Holden vowed to pursue his legal options as far as they would go and spent the next year traveling to Chicago and Washington DC to pursue his appeals. His new conclusion was that a military officer had to take his case to the limit to make the grade and be accessioned into the military. On his way back from Washington DC on an ordinary Summer day he drew the suspicions of a Transit Authority police officer in Chicago and after he was barred from getting on the train because he seemed disoriented and in distress, he was taken to the hospital. Holden found himself thinking again and again about those gruesome days of bizarre behavior, and a few days later when he was sitting one day and thinking another email from Archer arrived. Holden was glad for the interruption and distraction.

Archer hadn't taken very long to reply but it was longer than last time so Holden anticipated a fuller

answer from Archer this time. The email went as follows:

Dear William, thank you very much for being willing to help me. The years have been long since I've had anyone to confide in or get any help from in my predicament. I live a very simple existence out in Elko, Nevada now supported by wages paid to my alias Aureus Glidden at the ranch I own as Archer in Panhandle, Texas. I worked as a cowboy on that ranch for years when I was first on the run. The ranch foreman there knows who I am and is loyal to me and covers for me as if I were a sort of illegal alien, which I suppose I am in a way. The foreman's name is Juan Estevez and he has worked at the ranch for a long time. I knew him when I was a kid visiting my father's ranch and he remembered me when I showed up there waiting in the line for new cowboys and ranch hands trying to blend in and hoping against the odds that just some similar thing would happen and someone would recognize me and take me on even though I was lacking documentation.

I got to the front of the line, and when it was my turn I stood face-to-face with Juan and I handed him my application filled out with an alias. He looked at me and started to smile but thought better of it as he took my application and waved me past to the bunkhouse. I breathed a sigh of relief and made my way along, claiming a bunk at the end of the building and settling into it a few days after I had gotten an advance on my pay. Juan still seemed to recognize me but didn't say anything. He sort of treated me as

his undercover boss and I don't know what happened to the paperwork. I suppose it put him into an awkward position. He must have grasped that I was in trouble.

I worked at the ranch for 10 years, until I was the oldest ranch hand there who had been there the longest except for Juan. It was a regular labors of Hercules and I treated it as a sort of penance for what had happened back in Maine. Eventually I sort of wrote my own ticket around the ranch, and I decided to strike out and take a take a risk as a sort of "free-agent" for the ranch, moving here to Elko, where I also had family interests in gold mining. I wanted to take the time to get back to writing, and that was when I settled down and wrote some short stories which I published under my pseudonym. Over the years I have created a sort of alter ego, a fictitious persona that I share with anyone who seems curious. At the ranch, long before I moved here, I said I had been a mine worker in Nevada, and now that I am in Elko full-time I tell the few people I talk to that I used to be a cattle rancher. Stories are essential things in these rural places, and I have to satisfy people's curiosity.

What happened in 1998 was horrific, and I think I'm ready to face whatever has to happen to move on from it. I feel so awful about Tammy and full of regret for those moments I have lived in my head so many times over the years. As you know, I am, or I should say I used to be, an an ambitious person. It was just really the way I grew up. I never felt a lot of

insecurities in my circumstances as a child and I really took to the achievement culture of school as a sort of approval system that I could get attention and rewards from. There was never the sense that I must achieve goals to make a living, just a sort of compulsive urge to outdo others. When I got older this amounted to a sort of status system where I collected objects to mark my achievements and sort of kept score. It was what civilization meant to me. I was sort of alienated from a more natural pace of life and I worked hard, cranking out my book and getting tenure. I thought of myself as a sort of craftsman-merchant, carving out goods from nature and trading them to accumulate my wealth, which turned out to be a goal in itself. The key to my existence was property. Without property, which was a sort of fetish, I could have been much less distracted and socially entangled in meaninglessness. When I think about it I suppose what happened was completely avoidable.

It was just another fall evening the night that it happened. Lucinda was out at exercise class and I was at the Baxter Society for a talk by an author who had written a book on the Revolutionary War. Tammy had come by at about 6 o'clock in the evening to take care of the kids. We always let her have the run of the house when she babysat, and I think she enjoyed our house while she was there. But that night, I don't know how it happened, I came home thinking about the talk I had been to and Kentucky long rifles and British regulars, and when I

pulled up to the house about nine I couldn't find anyone around. I parked in the garage and got out and began to look around. I was proud of my house and all my possessions, and for some reason I felt exposed and threatened as I stumbled around in the Autumn evening, first going into the kitchen in the downstairs of the house where I found no one about and no lights on. In the main house I didn't hear any sound so I went back outside again where I imagined I was a soldier on guard duty checking doors and poking into shadows as I looked around puzzled and growing more and more concerned as the time passed. I don't know why I didn't go upstairs to check on the kids, it just didn't occur to me as I just felt an odd presence around my property and I was determined to find out what was going on.

When I got to my study I was on high alert because I thought I heard a sound, and I went in in the dark, inching around until I got to my Roman replica sword, which I took down off the wall and held out in front of me defensively. I stumbled around a chair in the dark and then I paused for a moment to listen again.

"Hello, is anybody there" I said softly, and suddenly there was a movement in front of me. I stabbed wildly at the dark and felt my sword strike someone. I attacked in a fit of self righteous indignation that there was an intruder on my property, and when I heard them fall I turned on the light to see who it was.

When I turned on the light I saw it was Tammy horribly wounded on the floor. I cried out, "What are you doing in here" and immediately knelt down beside her but she couldn't talk and was bleeding terribly. I immediately got up and ran to the main house to use the phone because I still didn't have a cell phone back then. I called an ambulance and told them to hurry but it was too late. In my panic I had wounded Tammy too badly. She was gone before the paramedics arrived.

Tammy passed soon after I called the ambulance. I suddenly realized what a horrible mistake I had made and the urge to flee overtook me. I realized I had no time to think about what I was doing but I had to take off immediately so that's what I did. I got back in my car and drove away, passing by the ambulance on the road. I drove all that night and the next day and parked the car behind the barn at the ranch in Texas, where it sits to this day. I never got to apologize to Tammy's family or explain my panic to anyone afterward, and these things have been my focus for all these years that I've wondered about the later details of what happened.

I'm so sorry about what happened. Do you think I would be charged with manslaughter? I have thought a lot about what happened, and I would be willing to give up most of my property out of regret for my actions. I have changed my thoughts completely about excesses of property and I would only keep enough to live on minimally like I have been for these twenty-five years. Excesses of

personal property are an ethical mistake that leads to horrible misdeeds like my own. Moderation brings humility and peacefulness.

I'm so glad you got in touch. You can bring others in on our secret as you see fit but as for me I'm going to turn myself in. Thank you so much, Patrick Archer, a.k.a. "Aureus".

Holden couldn't believe his eyes as he read his email. There would be a conclusion and closure for Tammy after all. Aureus confessed and resolved to give up his property and seek the mercy of the law. Holden sat in stunned amazement as he thought about his quest to find out what happened. He and Tammy had only dated for a little while but somehow she symbolized everything he had been trying to do in school and college. He had expected his life to become more compliant and prosperous, to be more socially integrated than it had in his old milieu. In his naivete he actually thought the world had trouble attracting people to careers that were too square. Tammy temporarily put a prettier picture over all that. The world was larger and more numerous and impersonal than he thought at first, but instead of becoming more cautious and careful because of the scale of the world people became more pushy and demanding. To Holden it was a messed up situation.

Somehow to Holden it all seemed remarkably extreme. Everyone in the world wasn't like him but somehow to himself his story was one of an agreeable, peaceful, cooperative young person being taunted and challenged to the point where they

were ready to fight for their life. It puzzled him, but he didn't disagree anymore that it was treated as mental illness. His experience included worse things than mental illness treatment, but he thought it was revealing that mental health treatment was so extreme. In many ways he thought it was because civil life was so edgy and people lived so deeply in their own privacy. It was a shock just being drawn out into a place where people had to be considerate of other people. Holden remembered when the crackdown had come for him. His freedom was all used up apparently. Holden was trying desperately to pursue an extreme opportunity when people begin to object to his strange behavior. It was important to realize that the only real objection people had to him when he was brought to the hospital for the first time in his life was that he looked in distress.

Holden remembered only a few things from the encounter which the doctors took so seriously that they took away his freedom for six months, only changing his behavior a little but reassuring themselves that he wouldn't be disruptive again. He was in the train station in Chicago, a very big place, although he couldn't see much of it because he refrained from looking around and kept his eyes focused on the floor directly in front of him. It was about 4 in the afternoon and he had been waiting in the station since noon. His watch had stopped working so he had to walk over and use the station clock which forced him to look up to see it. He

remembered that there was a little child sitting near him in the waiting area, playing with their parents, and he remembered being afraid the child would come over and say hi to him as children do. He wanted nothing to do with children or other people as he sat there in his own stiff-necked, uncomfortable cocoon. It was noisy and bustling all around him, but he kept to himself. He was dressed in plain working clothes with work boots although he was traveling far from home to Washington DC because he didn't want to draw attention to himself. He carried his papers and sandwich in a paper grocery bag at his side and a large jug of water along with that.

When he got to the train steps finally he was at the end of a long line. The conductor had no problem blocking his way and refusing his ticket. There was a security guard standing by to take over as the train pulled away and his heart fell. He didn't know what he was going to do as the officer blocked his way off the platform and took his bag and water away from him. Holden remembered the humiliation as the officer went through his bag and found his papers. The officer's eyes grew wide as he read them and he called for backup. Soon paramedics came and loaded him in the back of an ambulance. Throughout the whole encounter Holden was still and uncomfortable and didn't say one word. He continued to be silent in the emergency room and the doctor said one word as he reached up and moved his head around, which Holden didn't hold as stiff because he didn't want to

be injured. "Headcase," he said to the other doctor accompanying him, and they posted another police officer to guard him until another doctor came. Stiff, silent hours later, it was apparently a psychiatrist who ordered that he be sedated since it was getting late. When he woke up it was late the next day. He was in a strange place and a movie with George C Scott in it playing General Patton was blaring loudly across a large room. In his delusion, Holden thought he must be in some sort of CIA intake Center. He was completely disoriented as they showed him a bed and left him in the dark to sleep again. He was totally unable to deal with his new surroundings.

In the morning he was in a panic. He could hear sounds from all around his room as he laid in a fetal position on his bed after getting up and getting dressed, ready for anything. It was sort of Ground Zero for him as his thoughts raced trying to imagine what was going on and what to do. He was resolved to be stalwart at all costs. Someone came in and said he could go to breakfast, and he got up and went to the eating area which was a medium-sized area off the large open area outside his room. Sounds echoed off the large space of tile floors. At breakfast, in the loud room full of 35 or 40 people one new inmate reacted violently to his table mate over at the next table from where Holden was sitting. The young man, who looked out of sorts, flipped over the table they were sitting at and lunged over at the other young fellow. Everything grew silent as the attendants, whom he learned later were psychiatric

nurses, moved in and broke it up. Holden couldn't see very well what was going on although he was right next to them because he kept his eyes narrowly focused on his tray. Soon they were gone and then the noise started up again. Holden didn't finish his tray because he was eating carefully and keeping up the diet he was on before he was captured. After eating he went straight back to his room and lay down in a fetal position again.

He couldn't remember if it was right away or a few days later a small group of people came in and stood in the room by the door. Time stood still for quite a while for Holden and he just lay on the bed in a catatonic position only getting up for meals. People came and talked about him and he remained stiffly on the bed. At night he thought of good things like dating Tammy and other things that were all gone from his life now. He wondered if he would ever get out of the hospital again. He was nearly completely silent as he lay on the bed day after day only getting up for meals. He could hear people outside his room laughing wildly and screaming from time to time. Soon there was a roommate who smuggled a pencil into the room and drew a picture of a topless woman life-size on the wall next to his bed. Holden kept clear of the other inmates because they were so chaotic. To himself, Holden was still on his mission to the court in Washington DC and he was determined not to waiver until he got home. He could hear one man outside his room who sounded like he was being restrained. "I'll keel you," he would cry out, "I'll keel

you," he said in an accent that reminded him of his former landlord that he kept thinking of as his guardian somehow paradoxically undercover to guide him along his way to a prominent military career and success. Holding didn't think really clearly as he lay on the bed and his panicked thoughts raced about all the strange things around him.

One day an assistant came with an electrocardiogram machine and tried unsuccessfully to measure Holden's EKG. Holden was uncooperative. He pulled off the sensors and refused to let the young man take the right measurement. During those days Holden accounted every touch and interference to be hostile and unwelcome. He stopped the EKG with deliberate precision, trying not to be any more firm than was necessary and after a while the young man gave up trying, realizing any interference wasn't going to be tolerated. From Holden's point of view he was in a military facility on a military mission and he was trying to defend himself. He considered the situation extreme and wasn't thinking very clearly. Another day they tried again, this time with a group of people assisting, but Holden wrestled strenuously to stop them. To him he was implementing his military strategy and he was trying to be non-violent without being cooperative. He wrestled silently to defend himself, not using his fingernails or kicking too hard, but he was determined that he wouldn't have an EKG.

For the most part, he was left alone with his thoughts. For years now he had used a notepad to

keep his thoughts straight. He made detailed plans in writing for everything he did and prioritized his actions. He used a small oblong cardboard box as a lap desk at home where he lived and imagined he was a general in former times when correspondence was entirely conducted by hand. In the hospital he devised a new way to help himself think. He made up word puzzles and memorized them. The hospital ward made him think of a violent movie where the smell of caustic chemicals permeated the air. The hospital was sort of modern, like it was forty or fifty years old, and it smelled like floor cleaner. As far as Holden could tell it was huge, and he guessed it was in Chicago. The other inmates were ragged and wild, which made Holden think of the movie "Mad Max" and memorize an acrostic on the word O.X.I.D.E., with O. standing for "octane", X. for "xerox", I. for "intentions", D. for "dearth", and E. for "errant". He memorized the device and used it to remember and focus his thoughts each day. Above all though, Holden got ready to die. He had been preparing to go into the military for so long that death preoccupied him now, even in a hospital, and he trusted no one and was constantly alert for danger.

Holden thought he was prepared. When he thought about dying prematurely he reviewed his life so far and told himself that he was luckier than 99% of people who had lived on Earth to date. He thought of himself as a nobleman who had lived an exceptional life and now had to make an exceptional sacrifice. He had felt like he was putting his very life

in jeopardy by going to court to make his declaration of the intention to join the military, something in his own mind that he thought was appropriate and necessary, and he had sometimes chosen the specific days to visit court to make a meaningful statement. On one of the days he visited the federal court in Urbana there was a federal execution of the death penalty in Indiana. The death penalty was something Holden opposed because he thought death was always something to be avoided in all situations. One of the clerks had walked in behind him and quipped "Just walked in late, so kill me," he overheard. Another time he made a strenuous trip to the Appellate Court in Chicago on March 23rd, 2003, the date of the Iraq invasion. The whole time he imagined himself in charge of a military column and when he got back at home at night to turn on the television to the news coverage, he was amazed that he had picked the same day to make a trip to make a trip to court. Of course his premonitions of the death penalty for his temerity were exaggerated, but they felt real. So far he had not been restrained in the hospital.

Soon he was semi-restrained in an attempt to perform an EKG, but that time failed as well. Holden was put on a gurney and strapped down and taken to another part of the hospital where there was a room filled with medical equipment. He felt a little intimidated but he was resolved to resist the medical procedure because it was part of his plan for survival. It didn't matter to him that the doctors and medical

personnel evidently meant no harm and that they were just assertively curious. Holden had sort of drawn a line in the sand and he was defending it. To him it was all about boundaries. He wrestled and wrestled for what seemed like an hour in the small room with the table in the middle. He was exhausted when they put him back in restraints on the gurney and fed him a sandwich before they took him back to his room. They were administering medicine also at the end of the day but he didn't resist the sharp prick of the needle. He had a sort of primitive strategy of classifying the things they did to him, and he imagined that he was being held by a savage tribe. He didn't consider needles to be weapons but he objected to any other strange procedures or objects. He went to meals and he still presented himself on alert in a sort of ape-like posture when he went outside of his room. You could say he was lost in a world of his own, ignoring others' sensitivities and reactions and expectations, or you could consider him oddly exploring the limits of human behavior without regard to what others thought.

One day he deliberately went out and explored the entire ward to reconnoiter his surroundings. He got up on the side of the bed and put his shoes on, which took a little while because they were heavy combat-work-type boots that he was wearing when he was captured. Then he stood up with his knees bent and his back sort of stiff in a position he had trained himself to do to keep calm in the middle of chaos. The bent knees lowered his blood pressure which

you could tell from his pupils which were enlarged when he looked in the mirror to check them. From there he sort of hobbled out into the large open area in the middle of the ward and struck out in the direction opposite the eating area. The wall was about 150 ft long and he gingerly explored its length until he reached the far wall of the big square area. There were chairs and a television in the middle of the open space, which he didn't really see except out of the corner of his eye until he passed close by them tracing out the perimeter of the large room with his feet. There were also small tables and chairs along the wall and a pay phone mounted chest high on the wall. He passed by a large bulletin board on the side of the room where the television was. When he got to the side of the room opposite where his room was someone informed him, "This is the women's side" and he kept his distance, staying near the middle of the room until he got to a fourth side of the room where there was a long, high desk. He inched along next to the desk still not looking up and he could now see the nurses on duty rolling their eyes at him. Except for one trip around the perimeter he never left his room except for the dining area which was contiguous to the larger room, and being taken away to attempt medical procedures. The whole time he feared his life was in jeopardy and he trusted no one.

The next day during the morning a slight man dressed in a suit jacket came into his room, said a few words to his back as he lay on his bed and left a piece of paper on the table next to his bed. William didn't

look at the paper or understand anything he said but long after he realized from his memory that this person was to be his lawyer at the electric shock therapy hearing the next day. William didn't know it but the doctors wished to prescribe electric shock therapy for him and this could only be done with a court hearing. Apparently the paper from his lawyer was a notice for the upcoming hearing. When the next day came someone with a guard came to William's room and he was immediately more alert. The guard had no firearm at his side but William had a policy of treating all people with uniforms like they had a firearm.

"Mr. Holden, can you come with us please," someone asked and William got up from his bed and put his shoes on. Next he stood up and put his hands ready at his sides like he was a gunfighter in the Old West. This type of interaction was what he had been preparing for ever since he decided he wanted to join the Army. Maybe they were coming at last to induct him. He continued his bizarre behavior as he slowly followed them out of the ward and down the hall.

Every few steps the guard and the people leading him had to stop and wait for William to catch up. William had long practiced walking so that he didn't unduly raise his heart rate. He was obstinate and determined to be in charge of himself in a crisis in this way. The mental health center campus was huge and the walk to the courtroom on the grounds was long. William remembered how he must have looked terrifically strange as he strutted in a sort of bent

over position behind the uniformed mental health guard. William remembered that he was completely psychotic on that day like the times he had travelled to various courts to try and get into the Army. He was completely focused and physically as stiff as possible as they finally reached the entry doors for the courtroom which was a large modern room with a large desk on one side of the room a little removed from the rest and a seating area for an audience. At the entrance the person bringing him from the ward to do the courtroom called out, "Hello judge" to a woman wearing a judge's robe who was coming through the turnstiles at the same time. The proceedings were apparently somewhat different for a mental health court and the judge didn't enter from a special entrance. William was too drained by his alertness to notice much. He had thought a lot about court proceedings in the last couple of years before being there as well as the special accommodations that judges were afforded. In his extensive reading in preparation for being in the Army he had read about circuit rider judges who didn't reside in their jurisdictions like in medieval France and he was especially interested in someone called a "qadi" in Muslim terminology and Ottoman history. He had seen a drawing of an Ayatollah in the seventeenth century who was bent over on his toes and standing with his hands taught and extended in front of him in an archaic Middle Eastern robe that intrigued him. In fact in his own mind this was how he imagined himself handling military powers. He was in many ways as much a fanatic of the law as

fundamentalist Muslims but he did not share the fetish for bloody violence. It was all a part of the extensive psychotic fantasy that he had in preparation for joining the Army with a likelihood of going to the Middle East.

In the large courtroom with a few nurses observing in the audience area he was shown where to sit at a table next to his lawyer, who was already there. At the other table was one of the doctors who had come into his hospital room from time to time. William didn't have to say or do anything during the proceedings, which was good because William could hardly move a muscle the stress was so intense and he was doing everything he could possibly think of to sit stone-faced and still. He could barely focus on what was happening. He didn't look left or right when the doctor rose to speak at the microphone standing between the two tables. William could see him a little bit out of the corner of his eyes. During the preceding it was the doctor who spoke most. The judge greeted him, "Good morning, it's my understanding that we are here today to consider the possibility of ECT for William Holden, who I believe is seated here in front. Good morning Mr. Holden." William didn't move a muscle to reply but sat as still as he could and rubbed his beard with his fists from time to time. It may as well have been a trial with the prospect of capital punishment, William was so tense and his whole body so involved. "You may go ahead, Doctor," the judge continued.

"Thank you, your honor, I am here today because I am concerned about Mr. Holden. He came to the hospital about 30 days ago and has not been doing well. He has not talked to us at all and he has spent the whole time with us bedridden and catatonic and we have decided to seek help from electric shock therapy or ECT to try and treat his symptoms. We have diagnosed him with schizophrenia and in our opinion his condition is genetic. In a large percentage of cases ECT has been shown to be effective in relieving a patient's symptoms of catatonia and it has been used safely for decades with success." The doctor now went on for about 20 minutes about the effectiveness of ECT and William's condition which they were concerned about. Eventually the judge addressed the table where William and his lawyer were sitting and asked if they were any questions they would like to ask.

William's lawyer immediately spoke. "Are there any risks involved with the procedure," he asked.

"Yes there is a slight risk in some cases that the patient may break his own bones during the convulsions that are induced by the electric current." The doctor went on to explain that they would take full body x-rays before and after to make sure that they documented any fractures that might occur.

William's lawyer asked next if there were any side effects from the procedure, and the doctor answered. "Yes there is an effect of general anesthesia induced after the procedure and the

patient will sleep for a period of hours or days after the procedure."

"What do you think of Mr. Holden's prognosis," the lawyer asked.

"We don't know what will happen to Mr. Holden. We are concerned that if we don't do anything he will only get worse." After that the lawyer said he had no further questions and the judge spoke for a few moments and pronounced her opinion.

"Thank you to everyone for being here today and for your vigorous statements regarding Mr. Holden's condition. I have heard your arguments and I understand them. It is my opinion after hearing your arguments that Mr. Holden is authorized to have ECT and I wish him the best possible outcome of the procedure. Thank you all for coming today."

As the session of the court ended and people began to file out of the room, William sat stunned and unresponsive. He had hardly moved a muscle during the entire proceedings and now he sat motionless. His lawyer gathered up a few papers, stood up and left without saying a word. William was left sitting at the table alone while everyone else was standing and leaving the room. In some ways it didn't seem like court to William in that the judge got up and left with everyone else. Soon the man with the guard came and asked if he was ready to go back. William didn't answer, instead he just stood up and followed him for the long walk back to the ward. William's hands went back to his side like a gunfighter but he was

already going through the motions empty. He felt like he had to react to the judgment, but he wasn't sure what to do. It all felt surreal like something out of a movie. After the long walk back he was left in his room but he didn't lay down on the bed. Instead he sat on the edge of the bed and thought. To him the pronouncement was like the declaration of the intention to attack him. It was just that the weapon was electricity. He didn't want to make the effects any more severe than necessary and it felt to him somehow that the stiffness he had hidden behind for years might make it worse. He tried to relax himself a little and soon it was lunchtime in the dining area. He wasn't very successful at being around all the other patients but he began to try a little. It seemed like he had to prepare himself mentally and physically for the treatment.

Later that afternoon he went out and sat in the open area of the ward. As he sat he was only slightly more relaxed than he had normally been for years. For years whenever he was in public around other people he was taught and alert and kept his legs bent and his back arched. Now as he sat a little more vulnerably a nurse approached him. She sat down in the chair next to him with a needle. At first William didn't know what she was planning to do, but when she tried to roll up his sleeve he got the idea that she was trying to do a blood test and she wanted to draw some blood. William immediately objected and gently pushed her away and refused. She didn't insist and went back behind the nurse's desk, but within a

few minutes there was an alarm sound blaring in the huge echoing room. A crowd of nurses and assistants converged on William and grabbed his hands and feet, immobilizing them. The crowd like a hive of chaos moved him immediately into an empty room on one side of the ward.

"Unhand me now," William cried out, but they didn't listen to him and went about their business strapping him onto a steel bed in the middle of the empty room. "This is what it's like to die," William thought to himself as he tried helplessly to wrestle with them. They poked a vein in his arm and got their blood then released him as quickly as they had come. William was terrified and hyperventilating. He sat slowly and stiffly up on the side of the bed. "So this is what it's like to die," he thought. "So this is what it's like to die."