

## WHALES AND MEN

EXT - THE FLORIDA COAST - DAWN

A beach off the main highway going to the Keys. It is gray dawn and a number of pilot whales are lying on the beach. The beach is sheltered by an embayment and in the water whales are circling. Their small cries are incessant. A truck passes on the highway.

## CREDITS ROLL

A number of people have gathered on the beach and others are arriving. It is now morning, the sun just up. Guy Schuler, a forty year old marine biologist, is moving among the whales. He carries a canvas bag over his shoulder. Several young people follow him, perhaps college age.

GIRL

Cant we get a boat and just tow them out?

GUY

I'm afraid it's too late. Besides you'd have to have a lot of boats. You'd have to have one for each whale.

GIRL

(Almost in tears) Well there must be something we can do.

BOY

Why would you have to have so many boats?

GUY

(Taking a large syringe from his bag and filling it from a plastic bottle) Because if you tow one out to sea he'll just come back. He wont leave the others.

Guy injects the whale with the syringe. He withdraws the syringe and strokes the whale.

BOY

What is that you inject them with?

GUY

Panabarbitol. It's a tranquilizer.

He turns away to go to the next whale. She follows after in tears. The others follow.

GIRL

You're killing them. Aren't you?

He continues on. She hurries alongside in tears.

GIRL

Aren't you?

GUY

(Stopping and turning to her) Yes.

GIRL

(Anguished) Why?

GUY

Listen. Cant you hear them?

GIRL

(In tears) Yes, of course I can hear them. It's pitiful.

GUY

These animals have been here since eleven o'clock last night. That was high tide. Even if we could get them back into the water they wouldnt live. There are now seventeen of them on the beach. High tide is in another three and a half hours. By this afternoon there could be fifty whales dying here. If you want to help, get your friends together and try to keep the other whales still out in the bay from beaching themselves until these have all been sedated.

GIRL

But why? I dont understand. You could try to save them.

GUY

I have tried. I've been trying for fourteen years. Look. Dont you see them out there? They wont leave. As long as there is one whale alive on this beach crying out in distress they will not leave. They will continue to try to come to its aid until it is dead. By Thursday there could be three hundred animals dying here.

GIRL

But why? They're supposed to be so smart.

GUY

No one knows why. No one knows anything about them. Cant you understand? They're like martians. What do you want me to tell you? Their love for one another overcomes all reason. They're not like other animals. They wont abandon one another. They wont allow any one of their kind to die alone. Not as long as he still has breath to call out.

He looks away. He looks back at her.

(Softly) If you want to help, get your friends together. Explain what's happening. Let's try to save the ones that are still alive out there.

EXT - BEACH - MIDMORNING

Twenty young people are splashing about in the water, heading off the pilot whales that are trying to get to the beach. Some older people have gathered about one of the dying whales. He opens his eye and looks at them. Reflected in the eye the people are distorted of face and figure. They lean closer. Then the eye closes again.

EXT - BEACH - DUSK

People are beginning to drift away. A car horn blows. Voices.

VOICE

Let's go, Jerry.

It grows dark. Some people build a fire. There is some singing on the beach. Just a few people around the fire. Later the fire dies down. The whales are dark forms on the beach and two hundred yards away are the lights of the cars passing on the highway. We can hear the traffic and we can hear the gentle surf in the bay. A truck passes. The water is dark. The calls of the whales in the sea beyond are intermittent and very lonely.

CREDITS END

INT - LE CLUB INTERNATIONAL - EVENING

Le Club International is a tennis and yacht club on the inland waterway in Fort Lauderdale Florida. It is frequented by the wealthy and by figures in sports and show business. A small combo band is playing and on a wall at the end of the bar color slides are being projected by an automatic carrel. The slides are candid photos of club members taken at recent events - tennis matches and regattas. The bar is crowded. John Western is turning away with two drinks when he comes face to face with Guy Schuler. He manages to shift the two drinks into his left hand and hold out his right.

JOHN

I enjoyed your presentation. I'm John Western.

They shake hands.

GUY

Guy Schuler.

JOHN

We're at the table in the corner there. Why dont you join us?

GUY

(Looking to where John has nodded) Thank you. I will. Let me get a drink.

John goes on to the table. Guy looks after him. He pushes through to the bar.

John at the table sets down the drinks. At the table is his girlfriend Kelly Mc Amon. She is a pretty blond in her late twenties. John is in his late thirties.

JOHN

The professor is coming over.

KELLY

Oh good.

PASSING MEMBER

Hey John.

JOHN

Hey.

KELLY

Now dont try to stump him with some bizarre question.

JOHN

I want to know about their blood groups.

KELLY

No you dont.

JOHN

Cheers.

KELLY

Cheers.

On the screen behind them are two consecutive slides of John and his friend Peter Gregory.

JOHN

Did you get hold of Eric?

KELLY

I didnt have to. He's staying on the boat.

JOHN

Good. Here he is. (Rising) Guy. this is Kelly McAmon.

GUY

Hello. Listen. I'm sorry but I cant stay. I didnt realize what time it was. I'm already running about a half hour late.

JOHN

How much sailing have you done?

GUY

Some...

JOHN

Have you crewed? Do you know about sailing?

GUY

Well I dont want to call myself a sailor. I've crewed some. Yes. Why?

JOHN

Why dont you go to Cat Cay with us on Saturday.

GUY

You're in the Regatta?

JOHN

Yes.

GUY

That's very interesting.

JOHN  
What are you doing in the morning?

GUY  
Well...

JOHN  
Do this. Sleep on it and come down in the morning and look at the boat.

GUY  
All right. The boat's here?

JOHN  
It's at Pier 66. They've had the auxiliary out of it.

GUY  
All right. What time?

JOHN  
Is eight oclock good?

GUY  
Eight oclock is good.

JOHN  
Great.

GUY  
Thanks. I'll see you in the morning.

JOHN  
Goodnight.

Guy lifts his hand.

GUY  
Goodnight.

KELLY  
Goodnight.

GUY  
Goodnight.

He leaves through he crowd. Kelly turns to John, smiling.

KELLY  
Does he look like a sailor?

GUY  
No. He looks like a marine biologist.

INT - LE CLUB INTERNATIONAL - MORNING

John comes down the stairs. He is dressed casually but well. He stops at the desk and picks up the morning papers. Ellen, the girl at the desk, smiles at him.

ELLEN

Good morning Mr Western.

JOHN

Morning Ellen.

He goes out onto the terrace, looking at the front page of the Fort Lauderdale paper. The terrace is empty and he takes a table near the pool. Margaret, a middleaged woman in uniform, comes out with a tray on which is a cup and a carafe of coffee and a glass of juice. She sets the tray on the table and serves him.

JOHN

Morning, Margaret. How are you?

MARGARET

Fine, Mr Western. Did you want your regular breakfast?

JOHN

Yes please.

Lambert, the club manager, appears. He looks out on the terrace and sees John and comes over to his table, smiling. John looks up.

LAMBERT

John how ya doin?

JOHN

Morning, Lambert. Sit down.

LAMBERT

(Patting John on the back.) Cant do it. Got a kitchen conferece in about three minutes. Did you get your boat glued back together?

JOHN

I think so.

LAMBERT

Chuck says those guys are good.

JOHN

I think they're good. That kid, Bill, has been to Detroit diesel mechanic school.

LAMBERT

(Smiling) When are you goin to let us sell you this place?

JOHN

If I bought it I'd have to move out.

LAMBERT

(Laughing) Isn't that the truth.

He pats John on the back again and leaves. John smiles, watching him go. He returns to his paper. Margaret is coming across the terrace with his breakfast tray.

EXT - LE CLUB INTERNATIONAL

A Ferrari starts up in the parking lot and the motor runs up. In the background beyond the wall of bougainvillea are the masts of boats. John is standing at the curb in front of the entrance. The car pulls up and the boy blips the throttle and gets out and holds open the door. The car is a 1984 Ferrari Boxer, red with tan interior. John hands the boy a bill and gets in the car.

JOHN

Thanks Dennis.

DENNIS

Thank you Mr Western.

The car pulls off down the drive and out the gate. There is a guard at the gate dressed in the uniform of a Bahamas police officer complete with pith helmet and he salutes smartly as the car goes past.

EXT - BOULEVARD - MORNING

The Ferrari moving along, passing the line of cars on the right, past the beach and the ocean.

EXT - PIER 66 - MORNING

The Ferrari pulling into the parking lot.

EXT - PARKING LOT

John walking along the rows of cars, looking toward the docks and the boats. A 1966 Oldsmobile Toronado pulls into the lot and turns into a space. Guy gets out and shuts the door and comes across the parking lot to where John is standing. John watches him.



Good morning. GUY

Good morning. JOHN

They shake hands.

JOHN  
That's an interesting car.

GUY  
(Looking back) The Toronado?

JOHN  
Is that a sixty-six?

GUY  
Yes. You like cars?

They are walking toward the docks.

JOHN  
I like cars.

Guy smiles. He looks around at the boats and they walk down the pier.

GUY  
I've never been down here.

JOHN  
Where do you live?

GUY  
Well, New York a good part of the time. I'm at Columbia. Actually I spend a lot of time travelling. I've been in Sri Lanka quite a bit in the last couple of years.

JOHN  
In Colombo?

GUY  
Yes. Have you been there?

JOHN  
No. I have a boat there, actually.

GUY  
You have a boat there?

JOHN

Yes. I just bought it. Or I'm in the process of buying it. Here. This is it. Eric!

The boat is a fifty-two foot sloop named FARFETCHED. A pretty young girl looks up out of the hatch. Her name is Debbie and she is Eric's wife and she works on the boat.

DEBBIE

Good morning.

JOHN

Morning Debbie.

They board the boat.

JOHN

Debbie this is Guy Schuler.

She comes forward and they shake hands.

DEBBIE

Hi.

GUY

Hello.

DEBBIE

(Turning) Eric!

GUY

Nice boat.

Eric comes up from below.

ERIC

Morning John.

JOHN

Eric this is Guy Schuler.

ERIC

Hello.

Eric holds out his hand and they shake.

JOHN

Guy is a deepwater sailor and he's going to Cat Cay with us. I want you to show him the boat. Spend some time with him. Answer his questions.

GUY  
 (Smiling) Dont listen to him. I'm strictly an amateur.

JOHN  
 You've got an hour, dont you? Just hang out and let Eric show you where everything is and I'll see you at the club Friday morning. You need to be down about six or six thirty.

ERIC  
 You had your breakfast?

GUY  
 Yes...

ERIC  
 Come on. You'll drink a cup of coffee wont you?

JOHN  
 (Starting down the gangwalk) See you Friday.

Guy looks after him, a bit bewildered.

ERIC  
 (To Guy) Or maybe you'd rather have tea?

GUY  
 (Looking after John's departing figure) No. Coffee is fine.

ERIC  
 You met my wife.

GUY  
 Yes.

Eric turns and starts down the hatchway. Eric looks back at Guy, who follows after him, looking back after John. Debbie is behind Guy, waiting for him to go below. She smiles at him. He turns away and starts down.

ERIC  
 So. John tells me you might be going to Sri Lanka with us.

Guy halts, puzzled and amused, then goes on.

EXT - THE ATLANTIC OCEAN - MORNING

The sloop is running in blue water. John is at the wheel and Eric and Debbie and Kelly and Guy are at different stations on

deck. In the cockpit with John is his friend Peter Gregory, a titled Irish aristocrat about John's age. He is sipping a tall cold drink and looking out to sea.

PETER

Now John I know that you have your own possibly suspect agenda for this voyage but I would like your reassurance that under no circumstances shall we lose sight of my continuing mission.

JOHN

Absolutely.

PETER

Under no circumstances.

JOHN

None.

PETER

I've pulled in my horns you know. Minimal requirements. Minimal.

JOHN

Very sensible, Peter.

PETER

These are prime grounds we're approaching and we've every prospect of success. Dont you agree?

JOHN

Absolutely, Peter. Every prospect.

PETER

I dont care where her wealth comes from. Truly I dont, John.

JOHN

Quite right, Peter. This is America.

PETER

She can be a sanitation heiress. I dont care. A Mafia princess. I wont even inquire John.

JOHN

Excellent attitude.

PETER

I'm simply no longer concerned.

JOHN

Nor with what she looks like.

Peter glances at John suspectly and then looks back out to sea.

JOHN  
(Smiling) You're hedging.

PETER  
Not a bit of it. Couldn't be more serious. The only absolute requirements are wealth and breasts. Beyond that it's anybody's game.

JOHN  
I hold you to your word.

PETER  
And that you have, John. Bob's your rud.

JOHN  
Banknotes and bosoms.

PETER  
Coins and cleavage.

JOHN  
Portfolios and pulchritude.

PETER  
Ducats and décolletage.

JOHN  
(Laughing) Ducats and décolletage?

PETER  
Absolutely.

There is a shout and from the foredeck Eric is pointing to sea. John and Peter look. In the distance a whale breaches wildly, standing on its tail and slamming into the water.

PETER  
God. What kind do you suppose it is?

JOHN  
It's a humpback.

The whale breaches again. All watch.

PETER  
Quite a magnificent thing to see, isn't it? I've never seen that.

They watch the horizon in silence.

JOHN  
He's gone.

EXT - PIER AT CAT CAY - EVENING

The FARFETCHED has pulled into a slip and the crew are making fast. Eric throws down a line to the dock. Officials from Le Club International are at the dock with a clipboard. A man in his late thirties and a young woman, both in sport clothes. John and Peter are coming up the dock.

PAUL  
Where have you been, John?

JOHN  
We stopped for lunch.

PAUL  
Pretty good time actually.

JOHN  
Is that the only other boat in?

PAUL  
(Looking to where he has nodded.) The Budweiser boat.  
Yes.

PETER  
Bloody factory entry.

Paul laughs.

LINDA  
John, if you all want rooms better let me have your names. It's first come first serve.

JOHN  
Right. Put me down for one. Peter?

PETER  
Right. Peter Gregory.

She enters their names. John looks down the dock. Kelly and Guy are coming along, talking, carrying hand luggage.

JOHN  
Let's get a drink. Paul, point the others toward customs, will you?

PAUL  
Right. And congratulations.

JOHN  
Thanks.

INT - CAT CAY - NIGHT

Lambert is on the stage. The club is full and the people at their tables are dressed casually but with elegance. Lambert is laughing and looking offstage, holding the microphone.

LAMBERT

The last item on our Club International-Cat Cay charity auction is very special. Bob. Wait till you see this little guy. Bob?

He makes waving forward motions. He turns aside and puts his hand to the side of his face and then looks back through his fingers, laughing.

LAMBERT

Bear with us a minute, ladies and gentlemen. Bob? We've had a little accident. Tell them to bring a mop. Tell them to bring two mops. Here he comes. Here he comes.

Bob leads a young lion cub out onto the stage. Oohs and aahs from the audience.

LAMBERT

He's a male. His name is Ralph. He's three months old. Okay. Who'll start it off? Let me have a thou. Let me have...Got it. Okay. Let me hear it. Back here. Two thousand. Two thousand.

At their table Guy and Kelly and John and Peter are watching the auction. Kelly has her fingers to her mouth in concern for the cub. Guy looks serious and worried.

LAMBERT

Five, I've got five. Do I hear six? Do I hear six? Fifty-five hundred. Okay. Do I hear six.

Kelly looks toward the rear to see who is bidding.

LAMBERT

I've got seven. Got seven. Seventy-five. Back here. Seventy-five. Do I hear eight. Do I hear eight. Seventy-five. Seventy-five. We're going to do it, folks.

KELLY

What is she going to do with him, John?

JOHN

You'll have to ask Frank.

She looks at the cub with concern. Guy is looking on with a dead expression.

LAMBERT  
Seventy-five. Seventy-five.

He lowers the microphone and looks at the crowd. Then he raises the microphone again.

LAMBERT  
That's it. Sold for seventy-five hundred dollars. Bob.

Bob picks up the cub and puts him under his arm and starts down through the crowd. He approaches John's table and holds the cub out to Kelly. Kelly pats him on the head and looks behind her to the table where the bidding has come from. But Bob doesn't take the cub away. He stands there smiling. She looks at Bob. She looks at John. He is sitting back in his chair, smiling.

KELLY  
John?

She looks up at Bob. She reaches and takes the cub.

KELLY  
Oh God, he's gorgeous. Look at his feet. Hi. Hi. Oh John what am I going to do with him?

People are coming over to see the lion and to touch it. Kelly holds him and pets him.

BOB  
Paul has the papers. You'll need them to get him back in the country...

Band music starts up. John rises.

JOHN  
We'd better go, Babe.

KELLY  
What am I going to do with him?

JOHN  
Come on. We'll take him to the beach. Guy. Dont let him keep you up all night. Peter.

PETER  
Good night John.

They leave, Kelly with the cub in her arms.



PETER

Well Schuler, I think we should adjourn to the bar.

GUY

What is he going to do with it?

PETER

(Rising) I expect they'll have to find a home for it eventually.

GUY

(Rising) She's already in love with it.

PETER

Yes. I bloody well wish they'd have left the little buggger with us for the evening. We'd scavenge up every unattached female on the premises.

GUY

Did you know he was going to do that?

PETER

No. John likes to keep the ball in the air.

They reach the bar. Peter is ordering. Guy has turned to look at the room. Peter turns back to Guy.

GUY

She's very nice, isn't she?

PETER

Yes. She's very nice. Listen, you mustn't worry about the cub. John's actually a quite responsible sort of chap.

Guy looks at Peter. He nods. The barman sets their drinks down and they take them up.

PETER

Cheers.

GUY

Cheers.

They drink.

GUY

Where did you meet him?

JOHN

At the club actually. I was coming out one morning and

he was waiting for his car and the boy pulled up in this Ferrari - not the one he has now but another - a Daytona Spyder. This was ten years ago. The car was just out and it was the first one I'd seen and I said something about it and he asked me if I'd like to go for a ride. I said yes I would and he walked around and got in on the passenger side. I leaned down and asked was it his intention that I drive and he gestured at the empty seat so I got in and shut the door. The motor was running of course. I looked at him and he was sort of smiling and I thought perhaps he knew who I was but of course he didnt know me from Adam's off ox. I introduced myself and we shook hands over the gearbox tunnel and I engaged the gears and we left.

GUY

So you went for a ride in his car.

PETER

We drove to Key West. We were gone for three days.

GUY

(Smiling) What did you do?

PETER

We talked. We began to talk and pretty soon we were in Miami and we just kept going. We had put the hood down and going across the Key bridges he said to punch it out and I did. We crossed from Marathon to Big Pine flat out at 180 miles an hour. We met some girls in Key West and we went to where the shrimpboats come in and filled a cooler full of shrimp and lobster and iced down some white wine and we went to the beach and grilled everything over charcoal. Still talking. We even managed to let the girls escape, if you can imagine. We went to some clubs on the strip. Stayed up all night and got rooms the next day and slept. Met some more girls. Finally got back to Lauderdale on the afternoon following and went to the club looking rather disheveled and sat talking until about midnight and then John went upstairs with a young lady and shortly after I went to my room and slept for about twelve hours. That's how I met John.

GUY

This was before Kelly?

PETER

Oh yes. Much before.

GUY

What did you talk about?

PETER

I cant think offhand of anything we didnt talk about.

GUY

Why do you think you hit it off like that?

PETER

(Shrugs) To quote Montaigne when asked the same question about his friend Boetie, "Because it was he, because it was I".

Peter is looking over the room

PETER

Women are a frightful problem. I dont know if you've noticed. There are some lovely things here, Schuler.

GUY

The problem is to know who's spoken for.

PETER

(Turning, seeming serious) No no. One mustnt think that way. It betrays a defeatist frame of mind. Fair field and no favor. Them's the rules.

A pretty young girl in a lowcut summer dress comes to the bar alongside Guy. She gives an order to the barman. Peter leans forward, speaking past Guy.

PETER

Hello.

GIRL

(Smiling) Hello.

PETER

You're rather lovely.

GIRL

Oh. Well thank you. You're English.

Irish actually. You're not an heiress by any odd chance are you?

GIRL

(Smiling, shaking her head) I'm afraid not. Sorry.

PETER

(Sighing, looking approvingly at her décolletage) Well. Two out of three isnt bad. Oh, I'd like you to meet my friend, Guy Schuler.

EXT - THE BEACH - NIGHT

John and Kelly are walking along the beach with the cub on his lead.

KELLY

He's going to break my heart, John.

JOHN

Would you rather someone else had him?

KELLY

No.

JOHN

There were at least two totally mindless drunks bidding on him.

KELLY

I know.

They stop. John turns to her.

JOHN

You dont always have a choice about everything. Sometimes things get handed to you just because you're the only one there who wont drop them.

KELLY

I know. But you wanted to be a hero.

JOHN

(Smiling) What's wrong with that?

She smiles, she shakes her head. They walk.

KELLY

I couldnt stand for him to be in a zoo.

JOHN

He wont be in a zoo. Annabelle will take him.

KELLY

We could ship him to France?

JOHN

Why not?

KELLY

Oh John, do you think they would take him?

JOHN

I dont know why they wouldnt. They've got lions all over the place. One more shouldnt be any problem.

KELLY

And I could visit him.

JOHN

And you could visit him.

She bends down and picks up the cub. She holds it and kisses it on the top of its head. There are tears in her eyes.

KELLY

Why do I feel that somehow everything is a lesson?

JOHN

I dont know. Do I do that?

KELLY

I dont know. Sometimes I think so. As if you were saying: This is the way the world is...

JOHN

It is the way the world is.

She holds the lion up.

KELLY

Ralph. I'm not going to cry over you. You're going to a beautiful place and you'll have lady friends and make babies and be happy. Do you think he'd go in the water?

EXT - THE BEACH - NIGHT

A retired English couple are walking on the beach. They see the cub. John and Kelly are out in the surf to their knees calling to him, patting the water.

KELLY

Here Ralph. Come on. Come on.

ENGLISHMAN

No, it's a lion.

ENGLISHWOMAN

A lion? Really?

She draws closer to her husband. He smiles.

ENGLISHMAN

Well I shouldnt think he's dangerous. He's quite young.

ENGLISHWOMAN

Well silly, I can see that. But there could be larger ones in the vicinity couldnt there?

EXT - CAT CAY - MORNING

The FARFETCHED pulls away from the slip. The crew is busy with the sails. Kelly is in the cockpit holding the lion. She waves to Paul and the others on the dock.

EXT - A BAY OFF BIMINI - NOON

The boat is anchored and the crew skindive for lobsters, bringing them to the boat and tossing them to Debbie.

EXT - THE DECK - EVENING

The crew having dinner. Lobster and a salad in a large bowl. Several bottles of iced wine.

PETER

They must be able to see the destruction going on among them. They must be aware of it.

GUY

Maybe hope springs eternal in the whale's heart too. I dont know. If you look at the history of species there seems to be no selective advantage to intelligence. It's the microbes who have totally ignored selection for three and a half billion years that remain with us and probably will remain. They seem almost immortal. The process of evolution appears to be about specialization and adaptation and yet these are the very things that seem ultimately to mediate against survival itself.

JOHN

Do you think the whale will survive?

GUY

No.

They sit quietly. The sun is setting.

KELLY

You think we'll kill them all off?

GUY

Yes.

PETER

Well doesnt that make your work... It makes it rather beside the point, doesnt it?

GUY

I dont know. I almost gave it up at one point. It was more than I could bear. They do have the power to totally ensnare you. (Shaking his head) I dont know. I have a resistance to large questions. I've always been a skeptic. We know next to nothing about almost everything. And we have no patience. Ideas are useless. We want ideologies. The only way the fix anything is to fix everything. So we fix nothing. The only thing worth knowing is the secret of the universe. So we sit in ignorance. Whales have been evolving for thirty million years. To our one million. A sperm whale's brain is seven times the size of mine. It is more complex in a number of ways. It has four lobes to my three. It has greater folding and fissuring in the cerebral cortex - itself an indication of a complex intelligence. The great size of his brain has little to do with the great size of his body, other than as a place to keep it. Dinosaurs had tiny brains. I dont have questions that can address these facts. I'm not sure what such a question would look like. I have What If fantasies. Little scenarios. What if the catalyst or the key to understanding creation lay somewhere in the immense mind of the whale? The question whether they are as smart as we are is not a real question. Smarter at what? From who's point of view? From the structure of the brain alone it's obvious that they think very differently than we do. And they have almost nothing else to do. Life is very easy for a whale. They have enormous leisure. Feeding takes little of their time. Some species go for months without eating anything. Just completely idle. So they have this incredible mental apparatus and no one has the least notion what they do with it. Lilly says that the most logical supposition, based on physiological and ecological evidence, is that they contemplate the universe. I know that sounds absurd. But is it? Do we know? He says the reason whales fail to take more evasive or aggressive action against whalers is not because they've evolved for millions of years without enemies but because to a whale a whale's body seems a rather strange place to be in the first place. So I dream up these scenarios. Suppose God came back from wherever it is he's been and asked us smilingly if we'd figured it out yet. Suppose

GUY (Cont'd)

he wanted to know if it had finally occurred to us to ask the whale. And then he sort of looked around and he said: By the way, where are the whales? And we said: Well, we uh... And he said: Yes? And we said: Well. We used some of them for axle-grease and fertilizer and the rest of them we fed to the dogs.

They sit quietly.

JOHN

Do you believe in God?

GUY

(Smiling) No. But I dont think the world is made up of things. I dont think it's that simple. I used to. I dont anymore. A whale is not a thing. That, ultimately, is what I've learned about them. I cried for them for ten years. Now people find me very unemotional about whales. I think they find that hard to understand. I guess I finally came to the conclusion that you could weep or you could work and I'd rather work.

PETER

But if they're to be all killed off anyway...

GUY

I know. (He meditates) I dont believe in God but I think the whale's force you into these theological metaphors. Mother Theresa was interviewed a while back by a Time correspondent and he asked her if she didnt get discouraged with her work. I mean all she does is deal with hopeless poverty and terminal disease. And she seemed puzzled by the question and she said: No. I dont get discouraged. And then she said: He didnt call upon me to be successful. He just called upon me to be faithful.

He leans forward, listening. On the deck is a speaker. We have been hearing very distant whale songs but now there is one that is louder.

GUY

That one's closer.

JOHN

How close is closer?



GUY

He's still a long way off. Several miles, probably.

JOHN

You spend a lot of time with a hydrophone in the water, just listening.

GUY

Yes. If you want to know about whales you have to listen. Among other things they are very sophisticated mobile sonar stations. They rely almost completely on sound for making their way in the world.

They sit listening.

JOHN

If you think the whales are doomed what about us? Do you think we're doomed to extinction too?

GUY

(Smiling) Dont you?

JOHN

Sometimes.

KELLY

Oftentimes.

GUY

I dont know. We dont seem equipped to deal with these questions. I dont think you can say what death is when you dont know what life is. If I dont know what the whale is how can I talk about his nonexistence. What is it that doesnt exist? There are times when I see the whale very differently. When I get a fleeting vision of the pure platonic whale and I have a sense that what we are after, the whaleness of the whale, does exist as an idea, but an idea with which we are inadequate to deal. I think that's why we kill them. I think their value as produce is secondary to their sacrificial value. It's our inadequacy to the overwhelming fact of the whale's existence that will doom the whale. I think Melville is right. It's like killing God. That whale's existence is the whale I cant deal with. That it is the whale who strings the world together on the vectors of his breath and I wont know in this world where that whale will have gone when the last whale is slaughtered and hauled from the sea. But that there can be no whale seems a sort of monstrous paradox. As if we were to say that the

universe, if it should contract again into the singularity from which it sprang, would then no longer exist. According to whom? Nonbeing requires a witness the same as being does and if the whale should come to no longer exist, still in some way I think I would disbelieve in our competence to say that that was so. (He smiles) At other times of course I see only the empty silent seas through which he has passed forever.

EXT - THE DECK - NIGHT

Guy comes up from below. In the cockpit in a soft light Eric sits at the wheel watching the compass heading. Guy comes into the light and looks down and Eric looks up at him. Dobie Gray's Drift Away is playing on the tapedeck in the cockpit.

ERIC  
Is everybody asleep?

GUY  
I think so.

He steps down into the cockpit.

GUY  
It's really moving, isn't it?

ERIC  
(Looking at Guy) You want to take it?

GUY  
Can I?

ERIC  
Sure.

He scoots over and makes a place for Guy. Guy comes more into the light and sits and takes the wheel. Eric releases it.

GUY  
What do I do?

ERIC  
Watch the compass. Your heading is Three - Oh - Two.

GUY  
Okay. Is it hard to hold?

ERIC  
No.

GUY

It keeps rolling off.

ERIC

It'll average out. Just watch the compass. You'll get the feel of it. A sea like this you should be able to hold it within a couple of points.

GUY

It's big.

ERIC

It's what?

GUY

It's big. The ship. You can feel it.

The tape finishes. Eric leans and punches it out of the tapedeck and opens a metal ammunition box on the floor of the cockpit.

ERIC

What kind of music you like?

GUY

Whatever. You say.

ERIC

There's some of John's tapes in here. You like Mozart?

GUY

Play what you like.

ERIC

Mozart's okay.

He puts the tape in. Mozart's violin concerto #2.

GUY

How old is the boat?

ERIC

It was built in fifty-seven.

GUY

Everything looks new.

ERIC

Everything is new. Above decks anyway.

GUY

Has it just been refurbished?

ERIC

Two years ago. It got defurbished. It was hit by a waterspout.

GUY

A waterspout?

ERIC

(Pointing to the compass, correction) Yeah. Off Hatteras. My brother and I were bringing it down from Long Island. John had just bought it and we were bringing it down to Lauderdale. They towed us into Beaufort and he flew up to look at the damage. He never said a word. Just asked us if we were all right and then went off to contract for the refitting.

GUY

How bad was the damage?

ERIC

It took off everything right down to the deck. Thirty-two thousand dollars worth.

GUY

You mean the masts? Everything?

ERIC

Everything.

GUY

Where were you?

ERIC

We were battened down below decks. Scott saw it coming. It didnt even make all that much noise. It just sucked everything up. It sucked the masts out of the steps. I didnt know what I was going to tell John. I didnt know him all that well at the time. I told Scott it looked like we'd pulled in someplace and sold everything.

GUY

What did he say?

ERIC

He didnt say anything. He got us a room at the motel and paid us and gave us tickets back to Lauderdale and we thought that was the end of it. But the tickets were round trip and he said the boat had been promised by the first of November and for us to keep in touch with the yard and he was going to Spain and he'd be back by Christmas.

They sit.

GUY  
That's rather remarkable.

ERIC  
I thought so.

GUY  
So, are you pretty good friends?

ERIC  
Well. He's the boss. I dont exactly hang our with his crowd.

GUY  
Does he have a crowd?

ERIC  
He hangs out at the club. I mean he lives at the club. I dont know. I think maybe if it wasnt for Kelly you wouldnt see that much of John. He's kind of a loner.

GUY  
What does he do?

ERIC  
What does he do?

GUY  
Yes. What does he do.

ERIC  
You mean like for a living?

GUY  
For anything.

ERIC  
I dont know what he does. He does what he wants. He doesnt have to do anything.

GUY  
But he doesnt have a business or anything?

ERIC  
I dont know.

They sit. The tape ends. Eric punches the tape and it replays.

ERIC  
He thinks.

GUY  
He thinks?

ERIC  
Yeah. John's into some very far-out stuff. I think mostly he just thinks.

GUY  
He has a lot of money.

ERIC  
He has a lot of money.

GUY  
Do you think he's happy?

ERIC  
(Smiling) You mean like can money buy happiness?

GUY  
No. I mean in general.

ERIC  
You'd have to ask John.

GUY  
(Smiling) You think he'd answer?

ERIC  
He might. He's a pretty up-front kind of guy. He might think it was a peculiar question.

GUY  
What about Peter?

ERIC  
No problem about Peter. He'll tell you he's unhappy. You dont have to ask.

GUY  
Is he really a Baron?

ERIC  
(Looking at Guy, then away.) Yeah. Peter doesnt bullshit. He doesnt have to.

GUY  
What about you?

ERIC  
(Smiling) What. Am I Baron? Or do I bullshit.

GUY  
(Smiling) About being happy?

ERIC  
I guess. What about you?

GUY  
I think so. For the most part. I didnt used to be. I think I am now.

Guy leans and turns the tapedeck off. He sits bent forward, listening.

ERIC  
What is it?

GUY  
Listen.

They listen.

GUY  
Can you hear it? Can you hear it?

ERIC  
What is it?

GUY  
It's a whale. Listen. You can hear it. You can feel it.

ERIC  
Without the hydrophone or anything?

GUY  
Yes. Yes.

ERIC  
Where is he?

GUY  
He's here. Right here.

ERIC  
Bring it around.

GUY  
What?

ERIC  
Come about.

GUY  
You sure?

ERIC  
Do it.

Guy hauls the wheel around and the ship heels and comes about into the wind and the sails luff gently. Eric is already out of the cockpit lowering the mainsail.

ERIC  
Just let the wheel go. Come up here.

They are on deck lowering and securing the sails. In a few minutes John comes up from below.

JOHN  
What's happened?

ERIC  
Whale.

JOHN  
Let me get Kelly.

GUY  
How long would it take to get the dinghy in the water?

ERIC  
About three minutes.

They are lowering the flying jib and stuffing it into a sailbag. Debbie has come on deck and is helping them.

DEBBIE  
Did you see him?

ERIC  
No. We heard him.

John and Kelly come up. They are lowering the dinghy. Peter comes up.

PETER  
Go on, Eric. I'll stay.

ERIC  
No. I want you to take Debbie.



PETER  
You're quite sure?

ERIC  
Yes.

Debbie is stowing gear. Eric calls over the side.

ERIC  
Can Debbie come?

JOHN  
Absolutely.

ERIC  
Go ahead.

She looks at him. Then she clambers over the side. Peter follows.

EXT - THE DINGHY - NIGHT

The five are sitting in the dinghy. There is a lamp in the floor. It is very quiet, the sea is very black. John sits at the oars. The oars drip in the water.

KELLY  
Do you think we'll see him?

GUY  
What I'm hoping is that we'll be able to hear him. The boat will act as a membrane to collect the sound.

JOHN  
Is it a humpback?

GUY  
Yes.

They drift. They listen. The water laps against the side of the dinghy.

PETER  
Perhaps he's pushed on.

GUY  
(Shaking his head) He's here. You can feel him.

They drift. Their faces are listening in the lamplight. They drift and the dinghy is a very small island of light on the black sea. Suddenly there is a long haunting moan out of the darkness. In the dinghy the sound reverberates among the castaways. They

look at each other in disbelief. The sound comes again. And then once more, somewhat different. It seems to echo in the sea's dark corridors. And again, a bit more distant. Drawing away from them. They sit. They hear it once more, more distant. Kelly turns her face away. Her eyes are wet with tears. She looks down.

KELLY

I'm sorry.

She shakes her head. She looks up. She is still crying.

KELLY

It's just that he's so terribly alone.

The dinghy drifts on the dark sea.

EXT - TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON

Peter and Guy and John and Kelly. A small village in the west of Ireland. It is a few days before Christmas. They make their way along the train platform. Peter waves. An old liveried retainer comes along with a handtruck.

PETER

Nelson.

They shake hands.

NELSON

Awfully good to see you sir.

PETER

Nelson these are my friends from America. This is Miss Mc Amon. And John you know. And...

Kelly holds out her hand but Nelson has taken off his hat and is bowing. Kelly puts her hand to her mouth.

PETER

No ceremony now. These are murricans. And this is Doctor Schuler. A distinguished scientist who's come to study the native fauna.

NELSON

An honor sir. A great honor indeed.

They shake hands all around.

GUY  
I'm sorry. I didnt get your name.

NELSON  
Nelson sir.

PETER  
Nelson we've a mound of shoddy about half a furlong down the platform if you'd be so very good. You know my things. It's all together there.

NELSON  
Right you are sir.

GUY  
Should we go help him?

PETER  
No.

They continue along the platform.

EXT - COUNTRY ROAD - EVENING

A station wagon winding along the narrow road past stone walls and fields and white cottages with thatched roofs.

INT - STATION WAGON

Nelson is driving. He has on his chauffeur's hat with polished bill and wickerwork and he wears black leather gloves that are out at the fingers. Peter sits in front and the others sit in the back seat with the luggage piled in the rear compartment. They crest out and below them is the sea with the sun descending into it.

KELLY  
It's very beautiful, Peter.

PETER  
Yes. God help me. It is.

He turns to the rear and looks at her.

PETER  
If you had said that to my grandfather his reply would have been: Thank you.

KELLY  
(Smiling) Is this far from the estate? I'd love to walk down here.

PETER

We've been on the estate for the last couple of miles actually. But we're almost there. There. You can see the house just to the left there.

GUY

It looks like a castle.

PETER

(Smiling) It's a country house, really. Well. Here now. You can see it. It's sort of a bastard country house or manor...

The car is turning into the estate grounds.

It appears in at least three books on Irish historical architecture, photos and the barest particulars. Mercifully silent as to comment. Burke's describes it as interesting. I say, Nelson, where are the pet deer? Poachers again?

NELSON

Beg pardon sir?

PETER

Just a joke. Sheep. Fought for sheep for years here. Graze the grounds rather nicely I should think. Mother wont hear of it. What do you think, John? Sheep?

JOHN

Sheep by all means.

KELLY

We like sheep.

JOHN

(Singing) And we like sheep.

EXT - CAR APPROACHING HOUSE

(All sing) And we like sheep, and we like sheep.

EXT - THE HOUSE

The car pulls up in front of the house and they get out. Nelson holds open the rear door for the guests. The front door of the house is open and a maid is standing there - a young girl - and a gentlemen in his sixties who is dressed in a sportcoat and tie.

PETER

Good evening Allen.

Allen comes forward slowly, smiling.

PETER  
Hello Elizabeth, Kettle's on I hope?

ELIZABETH  
(Obviously very happy to see him) Welcome home, Sir.  
Yes Sir. Tis.

ALLEN  
Welcome home, Peter. Welcome home.

They shake hands, Peter stowing his small bag under his left arm.

PETER  
Well I see it's still here. Reputable arsonists  
absolutely impossible to come by these days I suppose.  
Allen allow me to introduce you to my friends. John  
you know of course.

John and Allen shake hands

PETER  
This is Kelly Mc Amon. And Guy Schuler. This is my  
uncle Allen Creedy-More.

INT - THE FRONT HALL

Peter flips through mail in a silver tray on a long hall table  
and calls up the stairs.

PETER  
Mother. Would you come down please. There's an  
American scientist here. He'd like to take a look at  
you. Also your old friend John Western and his lady  
whom you've not met. Elizabeth? Where's she gone off  
to? Elizabeth?

Nelson is struggling through the door with the valises.  
Elizabeth stands on tiptoes to see Peter.

ELIZABETH  
Right here, Sir.

PETER  
Elizabeth have you found beds for these people?

ELIZABETH  
Yes Sir. I think so Sir.

PETER  
Well I'm sure they'd like to freshen up.

ELIZABETH

I didnt rightly know how many rooms, Sir...

PETER

Oh yes. Well Dr Schuler is quite single, and I reckon we'll have to lodge Mr Western and Miss Mc Amon in separate quarters even though I suspect they've been intimate.

ELIZABETH

Oh Sir, You mustnt say that Sir.

PETER

Regrettable but apparently true nonetheless, Elizabeth. But we'll have none of that sort of thing here, shall we?

ELIZABETH

Oh Sir, you mustnt humiliate them.

PETER

No tiptoeing to and fro in the small hours either.

ELIZABETH

Oh Sir you mustnt...

PETER

Well, perhaps if done discreetly. I want everyone to note the bellpulls at your bedside and please to refrain from tugging at them as it annoys the servants. And Elizabeth, advise Dr Schuler that he'll have to be up a bit earlier than the others as we'll require his sheets for the breakfast table.

ELIZABETH

Oh Sir. Oh he's a terrible man. He is.

She leads them up the stairs with their luggage. Peter continues on along the hallway. In the distance several hounds are barking.

INT - THE DINING HALL - NIGHT

Peter's mother Lady Kilgore is at the head of the table dressed simply but elegantly. Her brother Allen sits at her right. At her left is David, her youngest brother, who is a Dominican priest. Peter sits at the other end of the table, the guests between.

Kelly is seated next to Allen and he is talking to her.

ALLEN

I was offering my condolences and he was quite distraught as you may imagine and he said to me "Thirty years married and I never raised me fist to her. Not once. Not in thirty years." Shaking his head and dabbing at his eyes. Well, I said that's very commendable. Very commendable indeed. "Aye, sir, he says. Always the flat of me hand."

Kelly puts her hand to her mouth, laughing suddenly.

PETER

She was turned out in this rather extraordinary great frilly pink gown. Like something waiting to be pollinated.

LADY KILGORE

Well let's be charitable, Peter, shall we? They are after all a truly wretched collection of beings and I see little to be gained in trotting forth their endless ludicrousities for inspection or comment. They've far transcended the merely amusing. Far transcended. I never see the name in the news but what I look for some enormity. Let Dr Schuler tell us about his whales. David has expressed an interest.

PETER

I rather think the good doctor might like a respite.

DAVID

Quite right, Emily. Quite right.

LADY KILGORE

Nonsense. Peter's being boorish. Every time he goes off someplace he comes back... Oh heavens. I'm incriminating our guests. Oh I do beg your forgiveness.

ELIZABETH

(Serving) Oh they're very goodnatured, Mum.

LADY KILGORE

Thank you Elizabeth. Elizabeth is very quick to come to my rescue. Peter, perhaps we could have a toast.

PETER

Yes. Of course. To our American guests. It is very good to have you here. Very good indeed.

They toast and drink.

DAVID

Miss Mc Amon. This is your first trip to Ireland?

KELLY

Yes. It is.

DAVID

And what is your impression thus far?

PETER

God, David. What's she supposed to say? She's just marking time until she can shake the last traces of this benighted bog from her heels and draw breath in a civilized land again. She's an intelligent woman. Ask her something interesting. Ask her if she believes in God.

LADY KILGORE

Now Peter, leave David alone. He may ask dull questions if he likes.

DAVID

(Smiling) At any rate I shouldn't ask her that. That would be quite rude.

PETER

True enough. But why is it rude? Why is that a rude question Kelly?

KELLY

Well. I suppose because the answer is assumed to be yes. Sort of like do you believe in bathing. Or do you believe in paying your bills.

PETER

See, David? A riposte. She comes right back with a sabrethrust to the very core of Irish society.

DAVID

Oh I'm sure that she didn't...

Kelly has put her hand to her mouth, her eyes smiling.

LADY KILGORE

Nonsense, David. Of course she did. Well done Miss Mc Amon. Put the viper in his place. What about those questions where the answer is assumed to be No? Really, it's simply the expectation of agreement, is it not?



PETER

(Smiling, waving the back of his hand) Stop her, David. You're closest.

KELLY

Yes. For instance if you asked a person... if you asked if a person believed in murder, for example.

LADY KILGORE

Precisely. The issue is really whether or not convention and opinion should take precedence over free discussion, I should think.

PETER

Ah Kelly. I'm afraid you're a disappointment after all.

LADY KILGORE

Pay him no mind, Miss Mc Amon.

KELLY

(Smiling) Peter is happiest when he has everyone at loggerheads.

LADY KILGORE

Very well said. Very well said indeed.

PETER

(Smiling and shaking his head at Kelly) Lost, lost.

LADY KILGORE

Very childish in some ways, I'm sorry to say. So tell me, Miss Mc Amon. Do you believe in God?

Kelly's face surprised, embarrassed, amused.

INT - THE LIBRARY - NIGHT

There is a fire in the hearth. Two wolfhounds are asleep and a third has his head in Kelly's lap where she sits in the floor. Peter is slouched in his armchair by the fire, a stack of books on the table at his elbow. He is intoning the last of Fern Hill, much in the manner of Thomas himself. The book lies open in his lap but his eyes are closed.

PETER

Nothing I cared in the lambwhite days  
 That time would take me up to the swallowthronged loft  
 By the shadow of my hand  
 In the moon that it always rising.  
 Nor that riding to sleep I should hear him fly with  
 The high fields  
 And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless  
 land.  
 Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means  
 Time held me green and dying  
 Though I sang in my chains like the sea.

There is a space of silence. Kelly looks up.

DAVID

It's quite lovely.

PETER

Yes. It is. There's a line in it that Thomas said was  
 "bloody bad." Can anyone guess it?

GUY

Let me see it.

Peter hands down the book. Kelly is looking into the fire,  
 rubbing the dog's head. She looks up at Peter.

KELLY

Ran my heedless ways.

Peter looks at Kelly, arching his eyebrows, then smiling.

PETER

Bravo Kelly.

DAVID

Very good.

Guy hands the book back to Peter.

LADY KILGORE

Peter. We'd like to hear the Pound poem. The one  
 about the river merchant's wife.

GUY

Pound as in Ezra?

PETER

Yes. Actually it's a translation. From the Chinese.  
 Or a transliteration, perhaps. It's in the form of a  
 letter from a young wife to her husband who is away on  
 a business trip. The poet is Rihaku.

## PETER

(Reciting)

While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead  
I played about the front gate, pulling flowers.  
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing horse,  
You walked about my seat, playing with blue plums.  
And we went on living in the village of Chokan:  
Two small people, without dislike or suspicion.

At fourteen I married My Lord you.  
I never laughed, being bashful.  
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.  
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.

At fifteen I stopped scowling,  
I desired my dust to be mingled with yours  
For ever and for ever and for ever.  
Why should I climb the look out?

At sixteen you departed.  
You went into far Ku-to-yen, by the river of swirling  
eddies,  
And you have been gone five months.  
The monkeys make sorrowful noise overhead.

You dragged your feet when you went out.  
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the different  
mosses,  
Too deep to clear them away!  
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.  
The paired butterflies are already yellow with August.  
Over the grass in the West garden;  
They hurt me. I grow older.

He pauses, breathes

If you are coming down through the narrows of the river  
Kiang,  
Please let me know beforehand,  
And I will come out to meet you  
As far as Cho-fu-sa.

The last three lines have moved Peter to the point where he falters just slightly with the words. The silence that follows is somewhat embarrassed. Kelly is watching Peter. Peter closes the book in his lap - which in any case did not contain this poem - and puts it on the table and looks at his guests.

## PETER

Yes. Well. Some poems are rather hard to say, aren't they? Well that's your lot. I'm taking orders for brandies. (Rising)

INT - THE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Handel's Messiah is playing on the stereo. Kelly is sitting with a brandysnifter in her hands. The dog is nestled asleep at her side and David is sitting opposite her on the floor, crosslegged, holding a brandysnifter also. Lady Kilgore and Allen have retired. Peter and Guy stand to one side where a number of racing cups are displayed among the books. Guy is holding one. He puts it back on the shelf.

PETER

There's half a roomful of them somewhere. The majority of the rooms in this house contain nothing but crates of junk. Of course nothing can be thrown out. Nothing. (He shakes his head derisively) My grandmother kept boxes of absolutely useless bits and pieces. She kept everything very carefully marked and she had two boxes for string. One was marked string long enough to use and the other was marked string too short to use. (He nods toward the shelf) And of course my father wasn't the only one to collect these. Before his time there was horse racing, always popular with the family. I'll show you about tomorrow if you like. Hard hats for the west wing. The plaster occasionally descends in perilously large sections.

Kelly swirls the glass in her hand and looks through the brandy into the flames. She looks at David.

KELLY

I dont know. I dont want to shock you.

DAVID

No no. Please continue.

KELLY

John and Guy both have a reverence for mind that I dont share I dont think that intelligence entitles. Oh I know it does in the natural world. But so do claws and teeth. They argue about evolution and causality and purpose in the universe but even as a skeptic it's hard for me to ascribe purposelessness to something that exists. Isn't existence a purpose? I think we confuse purpose with utility. It's as if existence itself were somehow not noble enough or sacred enough to justify its own undertaking I think the failure is ours. The failure in reverence. Even if God were only... What is it that Thomas says? The force that through the green fuse drives the flower? The purpose of our intellect seems to be largely to help us categorize and discriminate. I see your hand and I see my hand. (She

stretches her hand out and takes his hand and she puts their outstretched hands side by side.) And I see that the similarities are so much greater than the differences and I know that there is a connection there that no separation in time or space can invalidate. I know that you are my brother and at another level which is harder to reach but just as real I know that you are me. Not figuratively. Not a metaphor. For real. In the flesh. It's an understanding that has nothing to do with problem-solving. It's an act of pure cognition. It's an event. I guess what I would say is that yes I believe in God but I dont know who he is. I dont know what his name is. Why would he have a name? To distinguish him from what? (She pauses) I cant parse him out from all I see and feel. I want a God so large that there's no place to even stand outside of him to say that he's not so. I think Peter is right. The problem is that it's so simple we cant see it. It includes everything and everybody so that there's nothing left over outside of it with which to compare it. That's why we cant think our way to God.

DAVID

What about life after death?

KELLY

I dont know. I wonder if people who are really holy would even care? I think our egos force us to look through the wrong end of the glass. It's not that we have a soul. It's that the soul has us.

She looks down. She looks up again. David is moved by her views and turns and looks into the fire. On the other side of the fire John is sitting alone in the chair.

INT - THE HOUSE - MORNING

Peter and Guy going through rooms of the west wing. The rooms are filled with boxes and crates and the plaster is water-stained and the ceilings in bad disrepair.

PETER

There's nothing to be done, really. We've a problem just to maintain what is still inhabitable. These rooms have not been occupied since the latter part of the eighteenth century.

GUY

I see there's no electricity.

PETER

(Turning and smiling) There was no electricity in the house at all prior to 1956.

GUY

(Smiling) I think it's the innocence of Americans that you enjoy.

PETER

(Smiling) Largely.

GUY

So what will happen back here.

PETER

Ultimately the roof will give way and that, as they say, will be that. Two years ago in a plea for tax relief I hired an accountant to draw up a list of expenditures - everything we could think of by way of putting the place right and paying off all debts and taxes. It was like a wish fantasy. Builders in, making estimates. My chap was at it four months and at the end of that time when he had it all totted up we were talking about the thick end of two million pounds. The commissioner is a friend of mine and when I showed it to him we fell into each others arms laughing.

They are standing at a long table covered with books and albums. Guy idly opens an old book of photos.

PETER

God, dont expose them to the light.

GUY

Oh. I'm sorry. (Closing the book)

PETER

(Smiling) No. I'm just joking. Although I do half fancy they might peer about in alarm. Actually I find old photographs a bit unsettling. They do seem to accuse somehow. They're not like paintings. They're a more successful illusion. There are photos here of my great great grandparents going back a hundred and thirty years. They were taken in front of the house and in the photographs the house is exactly the same. It has not changed at all. Well, I think you get my point. I find it... The fact that we are sequential beings in a sense. (He opens the album.) That their most enduring reality - and mine - should take the form of a small square of tin or cardboard. Like a form of taxidermy, really. I just find it... It's not sad. It's just unnatural in some way.

EXT - THE GROUNDS - MORNING

Peter and Guy walking.

PETER

My grandfather died just after the war but I remember him quite well. He and his second youngest brother had a law practice in Sligo. You can probably imagine what they made out of that. The youngest brother had emigrated to New Zealand and would return periodically to bargain for a raise in his remittance. He at one time is supposed to have played a barrel-organ under their office window. My grandfather would take me for Sunday strolls over the grounds. Those were simpler times. All was not undermined by the worm of doubt. What I remember about him is his great serenity. And every bloody blade of grass he trod entailed to the root. There's no doubt in my mind but that the old ones were made of a sterner stuff.

GUY

Your father took his seat in Parliament?

PETER

Oh yes. I think it rather surprised him to find himself in the chambers of the Sassenachs. It's a complicated business. Of course he was educated in England.

GUY

And you?

Peter smiles. He shakes his head. They are walking through a meadow, along a stone wall.

PETER

All of this was under cultivation when I was growing up. Periodically they would plow up old armaments and the bones of men and horses. We've a bloody history. Not done with, either.

GUY

I'm not sure I understand what the entitlements are. What is it that a peer of the realm enjoys?

PETER

Other than the right to sit in Parliament? Well may you ask. It's quite simple really. A peer enjoys freedom from arrest on civil charges and he has the right to be hanged with a silk rope.

GUY

You are joking.

PETER

Not a bit of it.

EXT - THE GROUNDS - MORNING

Peter and Guy are standing in the doorway of a stone stable. Inside is parked a 1933 Aston-Martin roadster. Guy is looking it over.

GUY

Does it run?

PETER

I dont know. I used to turn the engine over occasionally. Probably seized up by now.

They continue their walk.

PETER

He'd been a Spitfire pilot in the war. He began racing... He'd raced some before the war but just MG's and Austins. After the war he bought a Maserati and went racing on the continent. He always had a great love for Italian machinery and he raced Maseratis and Alfas. He was quite good but there wa a chap from Argentina who was better. They both drove Type 158's and in 1951 the Argentinian was world champion. My father left Alfa and drove for Ferrari in 1952 and three and they had signed on a chap named Ascari who became world champion both of those years. So in 1954 he signed on with Maserati. And in that year they signed on a chap named Stirling Moss. I dont know if these names mean anything to you. What I'm telling you is that my father found himself competing with the greatest drivers of all time in their own vehicles.

GUY

The Argentinian was Fangio of course.

PETER

Yes. He was world champion five times. He was the greatest driver who ever lived. Those were the golden years of racing and the men who raced were indeed the few, the chosen few. Then in 1955 Mercedes introduced a car they called the 300 SLR and they raced it at LeMans against the new Jaguars, the C-types and against the Ferraris and Maseratis and the DB3S Astons. An absolutely extraordinary collection of machinery. Eighteen hours into the race Hawthorn's Jaguar was attempting to pit and there was an Austin Healey



PETER (Cont'd)

behind... The Jaguar had disc brakes, the first of their kind, and it braked very quickly and the Healey got sideways behind it and one of the Mercedes hit the Healey and became airborne - this incredible silver missile soaring through the air - and it went howling into the grandstands. The motor became separated from the chassis and went through the crowd like a mortarshell. There were ninety-one people killed. Oddly enough they didnt even discontinue the race, although Mercedes withdrew its own cars. Hawthorn won five hours later in the rain. But motor racing was never the same. Mercedes, Alfa, Jaguar, Lancia, all retired from racing. Racing was suspended in France and most of the remaining season was cancelled. Switzerland and Spain and Mexico banned the sport entirely.

GUY

Did you ever see your father race?

PETER

Yes. I saw him race twice in England. At Goodwood. And I saw him drive the Mille Miglia in 1957, the last year it was held. My father loved road-racing. He was out of the old school, one of the last of the gentleman drivers. (Smiling, shaking his head.) They wore coats and ties under their coveralls. He drove in the Mexican Road Race in 1953 when Fangio won. It was Portago's first race. There were eight or nine people killed that year. You've been in Mexico. They drove those roads at one hundred and eighty miles an hour. A form of madness really. The roads werent closed or anything. There were goats and donkeys and busses going on about their normal business. They would come through those little hamlets in the mountains in the dead of night like visiting spaceships. A spray of lights and this incredible racket and then darkness and silence again. One of the drivers killed was Bonetto. He hit a lamp post in the old Aztec city of Silao going one hundred and thirty miles an hour. The race was nineteen hundred miles long and my father drove it three times. 1953 was the year he came closest to finishing. The gearbox packed up just outside of Chihuahua City, two hundred miles from the finish line in Juarez. The Milli Miglia he drove twice. It was a thousand miles. From Brescia down the Adriatic coast through the Apennines to Rome and up through Florence and Bologna and back to Brescia again. He drove it first in 1955 the year that Moss won in the Mercedes. Six weeks before the disaster at LeMans. Moss had a navigator named Denis Jenkinson who was a motor

PETER (Cont'd)

journalist and Jenkinson had a map of the entire course - the entire one thousand miles - with notations on each hill and bend, everything. The map was eighteen feet long and it was on rollers and he held it in his lap in a wooden box and just sat there studying it with a torch and calling out instructions while Moss went into these blind corners at night at these incredible speeds. Indescribable, really. Allen took my brother and me in 1957. I was twelve and my brother was nine. We stayed at the estate of Count Maggi just outside Brescia. He was host to the British entries and he and my father were good friends. He gave a reception for the drivers and my brother and I sat in an alcove among old tapestries in our pajamas and watched the festivities below. The race began at night from the center of town with the drivers roaring off into the darkness at one minute intervals. The next morning we drove up into the mountains where we could watch the road between Florence and Bologna and we waited and waited and then we could hear the first cars and we could see them on the hairpins below us just briefly and then again, appearing and disappearing in and out of the trees. It was a beautiful thing to see. Beautiful to hear. Thirteen miles from the finish Portago's Ferrari left the road at 155 miles an hour. The car severed a telephone pole fifteen feet above the ground. Ten spectators were killed and both drivers. Portago's body was cut completely in two. They never held the race again. Later that year my father was killed in practice at Reims.

GUY

He must have been a hero to you.

PETER

Yes. He was. I think he sensed that it could make trouble for us. He always told us that it was a foolish thing to do. But of course we didnt believe him.

GUY

What about now. Do you think so now?

PETER

No. It wasnt a foolish thing to do. It was a noble thing to do. I dont believe in the utility of everything, you see.

They stop to rest at a boathouse on the shore of the lake.

GUY

Were your father and Portago friends?

PETER

Yes. Portago was an extraordinary man. His mother was Olga Leighton and she was Irish. All you hear is that he was a playboy and liked to sleep with actresses. He was an extraordinary athlete and his mind was as quick as his reflexes. Olga had been widowed by an American financier before she married Portago's father so they were quite well off. His father died in the war. Portago was the thirteenth Conde de la Mejorada and the seventeenth Marquis de Portago. He was a direct descendant of Cabeza de Vaca. He raced horses and airplanes as well as cars. He used to like to fly airplanes upside-down beneath bridges. He spoke half a dozen languages. He was as without fear as you can be and still cross a street and women worshipped him. He was twenty-eight when he died.

GUY

How did the car happen to leave the road? Was he just going too fast?

PETER

(Smiling) No. A tire burst. They had wanted to put on new tires at Bologna. The suspension was bent and the tire was rubbing against the bodywork. He waved them away. Those cars were the new Type 335. My father was in the 250 Berlinetta. Peter Collins was in the lead in the other 335 when the transaxle packed up. Collins had placed second the year before behind Castelloti with Musso placing third. Castelloti was killed the same year as Portago and my father. Testing at Modena. Collins was killed at the Nurburgring and Musso at Reims. Fangio would not drive in the Mille Miglia. He had left Ferrari the year before. When he shook hands with the Commendatore the other drivers were all standing there. Castelloti, Collins, Hawthorn, Musso, Portago, my father. All of them were dead in two years.

He throws a pebble out into the lake. Far out on the lake is a rowboat with three people in it.

GUY

You mentioned a brother. What became of him?

PETER

He died. He contracted polio the year following my father's death. I thought he would be crippled and it was very hard for me. Then he died.

GUY

I'm sorry.

PETER

Yes. I used to torture the life out of him.

He turns from looking at the distant boat and the figures and looks at Guy.

PETER

We must be careful. We must be careful. Those we torment have the upper hand. If they should die.... It's the dead we have to deal with, isn't it? There's no getting rid of them.

They sit. Guy looks back at the house and at the surrounding grounds.

GUY

It's very beautiful.

PETER

Beautiful as it is and much as I love it I have not always been able to exclude ennui from its precincts.

GUY

That's a quotation?

PETER

Yes. What cant be improved upon must be quoted. It's George Moore on Moore Hall.

They sit.

GUY

John enjoys coming here.

PETER

Yes.

GUY

He likes to travel.

PETER

Yes. Takes his mind off things, I expect.

GUY

What things.

PETER

His investments. (Smiling) I'm just joking. He can be quite a serious bloke, actually. Worries about the state of the world. That sort of thing. It was one of the things we used to joke about. Being blown up. Seems to have lost its zest these days. It's almost as if John were disappointed that it hasn't yet occurred.

He looks at Guy. He smiles.

PETER

John has a very quick mind. He picks up things easily. But in the end it only seems to make him distrust what he knows. He's one of those people who could have excelled at anything. So he excelled at nothing. I'm not talking about him out of school. It's a thing we've discussed. And discussed. I can at least in part identify with his situation. I was always very quick with words. I spoke four languages before I started school. And I distrust language above all things.

GUY

Language?

PETER

Yes. I always had the Irish gift. Odd too, because I was a late talker. A late walker for that matter. I think I mistrusted things from the beginning. Mother says that my grandfather would come up and look at me lying there - I refused to even sit up - and he would say: He's going to be a philosopher. Of course the rest of them thought me simply retarded. Then one day, as my father used to tell it, I got up and went down and got the mail and asked for tea.

GUY

(Laughing) But why distrust language?

PETER

I suppose it was brought on by the measles.

GUY

The measles?

PETER

I had the measles when I was seventeen. Rather late. I lay in a darkened room for three weeks and I thought a great deal. The thoughts of youth are long long thoughts indeed. I'd lost my father and my brother and I thought I was going to be blind and I thought about my own misery and the misery of the world and I wondered if I were being punished for something and from there I was led to ponder the nature of evil. Which almost immediately had me in over my head by quite a good deal. Like many before me I could not reconcile the existence of evil with the existence of God. Saint Augustine said that he sought for the origins of evil and got nowhere. But of course I was ignorant of his undertaking so I forged ahead. It struck me that I had no working definition of evil. I

PETER (Cont'd)

knew that it was not just an opinion. One man's evil another man's good. Also I didnt know where it came from. I put the first question aside for the moment and concentrated upon the second. Where does it come from? I could find no evidence for its free existence in the world. I couldnt see that flood and famine were evil. They were just misfortunes. I knew enough biology that I couldnt attribute evil to animals. I knew that a shark attack was not a manifestation of evil but simply of hunger. (He looks at Guy and looks away again.) Before you go inquiring about the nature of things you need to consider that whatever it is you uncover for good or ill its unlikely you shall be able to put it back where you got it. The idea that I was going to be blind was very much with me and I could see no point in mucking about. So I took a good grip on the rock and raised it up and looked under. How do you like the story thus far?

GUY

I like it very much. What was under the rock?

PETER

(Rising, smiling) It was the chap at the Waldorf Astoria.

GUY

The what?

PETER

It's a dumb joke. I shant burden you with it. (They walk along the lakeshore.) The point is that it appeared to me that the source of evil must be in ourselves. Not only was mankind the source of evil but he was the agent as well. You couldnt find evil anywhere except where he was. Except where he had been. We were quite right to have postulated Satan. We should be very happy to have him. We need to read Genesis more carefully. There was no evil in the garden until we got there. It was never the serpent at all. It was us. Evil was a manmade creation. Like hydro-electric dams and argyle socks. Or so it appeared.

GUY

All right. Where does language come in?

PETER

(Smiling) Bear with me. All shall be revealed. I still had not properly grappled with the problem of what evil was. It appeared to be something primal and

PETER (Cont'd)

monolithic and yet it now seemed it was our own invention. A paradox. We know what happens to the works of man. That we could have come up with something as enduring as evil seemed a bit grand for us. So. Perhaps we were simply that which rendered the expression of evil possible. We were what evil had been waiting for. All right. What was there about us that made us so suitable? What was there about us that did not occur anywhere else in nature? (Smiling) Keep this question in mind. I will return to it.

GUY

(Smiling) All right.

PETER

Good. Very well then. What was evil? You see I knew that it existed. It wasn't just a sort of platonic elaboration. It was real. That for me was a given. Not only was it real in its effects, it was more real in its effects than anything else one could name. And I knew it was not just a stew concocted of equal parts of greed, hatred, and ignorance. Rather those were only expressions of the basic commodity. Well. I was stuck. I couldn't come up with anything. I tried some other approaches. I tried to think of something that it was like. Not easy. The closest I could come was fear. Evil was like fear. It was more like fear than anything else I could think of. Why? What was the connection. Well, I thought about that and I got to thinking about the saints - about whom I'd heard a great deal in my young life without ever giving them much thought one way or the other. But now it occurred to me to consider them and the thing I noticed was that while they were very different sorts of people there was one thing which they all had in common. And that was fearlessness. Oh, one could say they also had in common an ability to care for others etcetera etcetera. But these were things they did. I was after something more basic. Something they were. And what they were was brave. They were brave in a way that other men were not. It wasn't as if they struggled against fear and managed to win. It was as if they had actually rid themselves of it altogether. Well this was interesting. Was evil simply cowardice? If you put enough cowardice in a container could you reach a critical mass that would exfoliate into evil? Was evil the grand gestalt that could not be divided back into its origins? Was it the genie in the bottle after all?

They have been walking along the shore of the lake and Peter stops and looks out.

PETER

I began to see that fear and courage were opposites in a way that most such sets were not. They occupied the same space. There was no such thing as neutral ground. I saw that courage was absolutely essential. Without it not even charity was possible. Without courage a desire to come to the aid of others was just a useless longing. Love itself was helpless in the face of fear. Anywhere that courage did not live evil would enter and commence at once its awesome escalation into the colossus that it yearns to be. It was like a universal ether that would take over the forms of all those beings from whom love had been withheld because of fear. And I knew that we hadn't invented love. It was here when we got here. And it is probably what we fear most.

He looks at Guy and looks away again. They walk.

PETER

The paradoxical thing was that all evil acts are identical. It took me a very long time to see that. It's what accounts for the so-called banality of evil. It's very lack of variety is what addicts people to it. Is what makes it obsessive. While every act of love is brand new.. Anyway a number of things became clear to me. Simple things, really. I saw that the need for power, for instance, was driven by fear. If you were not afraid what would you need the power for? That was why power corrupted, why there could never be enough of it.

GUY

Was that what was unique about us? Our fear?

PETER

No. The thing that made us unique, the thing that made us even godlike - as we fondly supposed - was the very thing that made us aliens in the world. The record of the bones seemed clear enough. We had our origins in this earth. Yet something made us long for another nativity altogether. Something had made us almost despise the earth. What was it? What was it that had made us outcasts in this paradise created for us. What had made us refugees from joy and orphans of delight. What was it that characterized our species, that was found nowhere else in nature?

GUY

Language?



PETER

Yes. I had sense enough to know that there was no such thing as an unalloyed benefit. Everything comes with a pricetag. And I thought: the thing that has most benefitted man is language. Not fire or an opposable thumb. So what are the penalties? Naming gives us power over things. What is the cost? Has anyone ever thought to ask? What gradually became apparent to me was that language was a thing corrupted by its own success. What had begun as a system for identifying and organizing the phenomena of the world had become a system for replacing those phenomena. For replacing the world. Language was like the evil aliens in the horror movie that take on the forms of things and gradually replace them altogether. Only no one knows. They look like the thing but they are not the thing. Language usurps things. That is what it does. More and more I began to understand that we were not living in the world as given. We no longer even knew what it was. When you say apple I hear the word and I see the letters A P P L E and you say no, the real apple, and I go: Ah, yes. Of course. Red. Juice. Sweet. What we live in is a linguistic model of the world. We have no way of even knowing what's been lost.

GUY

That's quite an indictment.

PETER

Yes. You see what I was really after was why the world was going to be destroyed. I thought there had to be a reason. More and more language seemed to me to be an aberration by which we had come to lose the world. Everything that is named is set at one remove from itself. Nomenclature is the very soul of secondhandness. We endow things with names and then carry the names away with us. But the name is not the thing and we experience nothing. We end up like tourists, having seen nothing in our travels but the ground glass mirror of a camera. We'd even come to confuse language with intelligence. Language was intelligence. It was the only definition we had. When I began to think that way I began to see the true extent of our alienation. What if there existed a dialogue among the lifeforms of this earth from which we had excluded ourselves so totally that we no longer even believed it to exist? Could it be that dialogue which we still sense in dreams? Or in those rare moments of peace when the world seems in some sense to be revealed to us and to be proper and right? I knew that dreams were prelingual. I'd seen my dogs dream by the fire, running in their sleep. I used to look into Rowdy's eyes and try to communicate with him without talking. I could see that he thought me daft. But why do we feel so alien in this world? Isn't it in a

PETER (Cont'd)

very real sense because we are no longer here? Language is a way of containing the world. A thing named becomes that named thing. It is under surveillance. We were put into a garden and we turned it into a detention center.

They walk.

GUY

Well. This is a pretty alarming view of things. What's the solution? You cant rescind language.

PETER

No. You cant. I dont have a solution. I began to think about the silence of monks and contemplatives. Some sense among them that language was at the root of all evil. I began to see all symbolic enterprise as alienation. Every monument a false idol. Language had conditioned us to substitute our own creations for those of the world. To replace the genuine with the ersatz. The living with the dead. The world simply was not good enough for us. Every structure stood in testimony to our distrust of reality. Our longing for godhood. And ultimately to our pathological fear of death. I saw that there was a reason why the two activities engaged in by men of power everywhere were building and killing. They were in a very real sense helpless to do anything else. I saw that the psychological truth of Genesis was impeccable. We always knew that our desire to be God would kill us off. It was told from the very beginning. and finally, the one thing that characterized all evil everywhere was the refusal to acknowledge it. The eagerness to call it something else. Which condition is now very nearly universal.

He looks out at the lake. He looks at Guy.

PETER

John thinks that the laws of the universe may themselves be evolving. He asks such questions as where were the laws of physics before the universe was created. Was there, is there a matrix, a mother field, existing outside of time? All this is a bit thorny for me. I dont know. I believe that the laws are the laws. I believe that the reason there are millions of planets is the same reason that there are millions of eggs. To allow for failure. There must be countless experimental stations like this one. The only thing that is not expendable is the experiment itself. Our

notions of our own uniqueness are precisely that. Our notions. We will not be missed. When we have slaughtered and poisoned everything in sight and finally incinerated the earth itself then that black and lifeless lump of slag will simply revolve in the void forever. There is a place for it too. A nameless cinder of no consequence even to God. That man can halt this disaster now seems so remote a possibility as to hardly bear consideration.

They walk in silence.

EXT - THE LAKESHORE - AFTERNOON

They are sitting looking out at the lake. The boat is still there, Nelson at the oars, John and Kelly flyfishing, very small figures.

PETER

Sorry, old man. I didnt mean to cast a pall over a lovely day.

GUY

No. No. It's all right. I was just thinking.

PETER

Beware gentle knight. There is no greater monster than reason.

GUY

(Smiling) Yes. You said we were afraid of love. Why is that do you think?

PETER

Baffling isnt it? I think it's because if we truly believed it existed then we would have to change. And we cannot. We have too much invested. We would have to change or else admit to being frauds. Frauds to the deepest recesses of our being. And we cannot. We will not be exposed. We would rather die.

GUY

You attribute all this to the measles?

PETER

(Smiling) Absolutely.

GUY

So what became of these speculations?

PETER

Nothing. I recovered. My eyesight was normal. I became a rather good footballer - soccer as you call it. I was a passable student and an excellent dancer and girls liked me. I forgot all about evil. For the most part.

GUY

Do we deduce from this that only sick people think about these things?

PETER

Seems a bit harsh put that way. I'm not sure that I'd disagree with it though.

GUY

What is John's illness?

PETER

Mmm. I'd have to think about that. I think that if John has a problem it is simply that he has always gotten what he wanted.

GUY

You see that as a problem?

PETER

Yes. Very much so.

GUY

Do you speak from personal experience?

PETER

No. I was always much more fortunate than that. I always got what I needed.

They sit.

GUY

Will they catch anything?

PETER

Oh I should think so.

GUY

Kelly's a good sport. She's always up for anything.

PETER

(Cutting him short.) I'm in love with her.

He looks at Guy and then back out at the lake again.

PETER

Sorry. Shouldnt have lumbered you with that.

GUY

It's all right...

PETER

Does it surprise you?

GUY

Yes. No. It shouldnt.

PETER

Yes.

GUY

What about John?

PETER

What about him?

GUY

Well. Does he know?

PETER

Of course he knows. John's a very astute chap.

GUY

You've never discussed it.

PETER

Not a great deal to discuss I shouldnt think.

Peter rises.

PETER

Cheer up, Schuler. The world goes on. Come along.

They walk along the lake.

GUY

I notice John's been very quiet. Is that...?

PETER

No.

They walk.

PETER

John is very fond of my mother.

They walk. Guy looks at Peter. They walk. Peter looks at Guy.

PETER

She's dying.

Guy stops walking. Peter takes another step or two and then stops and turns facing him.

PETER

Or we think she's dying. She has Hodgkins disease. She's had it for years. No business being alive at all at this late date, really.

GUY

I'm very sorry.

PETER

Yes.

GUY

She's an amazing woman.

PETER

Yes. I'm afraid she is.

Guy comes forward. They walk.

GUY

What is the treatment for it. Is there a treatment?

PETER

Oh yes indeed. The more forbidding the ailment the more treatments they have. When it was first diagnosed seven or eight years ago she underwent extensive radiation therapy. She was quite well for some time after, and then it recurred - as it does of course. Since then she has been taking little pills. Presumably they help.

GUY

What are the pills?

PETER

Something called Cyclophosphamide.

GUY

It's a disease of the lymph nodes, isnt it?

PETER

It's a progressive enlargement of all the lymphoid tissues. That and the fact that it's twice as prevalent in males as in females is absolutely all that is known about it. Believe me. I've made a rather thorough investigation.

GUY

I'm very sorry, Peter.

GUY

Yes. Well. It cant be helped, can it?

INT - PETER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Peter is standing looking out the window from the second floor watching his mother and Kelly walking along the garden path. Lady Kilgore is pointing out across the grounds, talking. Kelly nods. They walk on.

INT - THE HALL - MORNING

Nelson has on his chauffeur's cap and is carrying bags to the station wagon from the front door. Peter and John are in the hallway. Guy comes down the stairs. Elizabeth is in the inner doorway in tears. Kelly and Lady Kilgore come from the salon.

JOHN

You wont change your mind?

PETER

No. Thank you John. I'd better stop here. Try to stick out the winter, nasty prospect. Frightful lot to be done.

LADY KILGORE

You are seeing them off at the station, Peter.

PETER

Yes, yes. Of course. Come along now, we're about to be late. Elizabeth buck up now and say goodbye.

They are crowding out the door with their handluggage.

KELLY

(Coming forward) Where is she?

ELIZABETH

(Waving her handkerchief, in tears.) Goodbye Sir.  
Goodbye Doctor. God bless.

KELLY

(Crossing the hall to where Elizabeth is standing)  
Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

Goodbye Miss. God bless.

KELLY

I wanted you to have this. (Holding out her closed hand.)

ELIZABETH

Oh no, Miss. Oh I couldnt take anything.

KELLY

No no. It's not money. It's a gift. It's a memento and I want you to have it so that you'll remember me. (She lets slip a thin gold necklace into Elizabeth's hand.)

ELIZABETH

Oh Miss...

KELLY

And because I want something in return.

ELIZABETH

Oh Miss I've nothing...

KELLY

I want you to do something for me.

ELIZABETH

Oh yes Miss. Anything.

KELLY

I want you to pray for John.

ELIZABETH

Oh sure and I'll pray for all of ye. I will.

KELLY

No. Listen to me. I want you to pray for John. I want you to ask God to guide him. Not keep him safe or for his health or anything like that but just to give him guidance. Will you do it?

ELIZABETH

Yes Miss. I will.

KELLY

I'm an opportunist, Elizabeth. I suspect you have some favors coming and I'm betting that you dont ask for things for yourself. (She looks down, she looks up



again.) I dont know how to pray. I have no faith in my powers of persuasion in high places.

ELIZABETH

Because you've been bad, Miss? (Then putting her hand suddenly to her mouth.)

KELLY

(Smiling) Yes. And because my motives are not pure. I'd be asking God to guide John in my direction and John needs to be guided in John's direction. Or God's. You won't forget?

ELIZABETH

Oh no Miss. I wont.

KELLY

Goodbye.

ELIZABETH

Goodbye Miss. God bless.

EXT - THE DRIVEWAY

The others are in the car. Nelson is standing holding the rear door open. Lady Kilgore is standing just outside the front door with Allen.

KELLY

Goodbye Allen. Thank you so very much.

They shake hands.

ALLEN

You must come again.

KELLY

I hope to. Thank you Lady Kilgore. Please say goodbye to David for me.

She holds out her hand and Lady Kilgore takes her hand and kisses her on each cheek and steps back.

LADY KILGORE

I do hope you'll come again.

KELLY

Thank you. I would like that.

LADY KILGORE

Look after John.

KELLY

Yes. I will.

She turns and goes to the car and gets in and Nelson shuts the door.

INT - THE CAR - COUNTRY ROAD

Peter turns and looks into the back seat. Kelly is crying, looking out the window.

PETER

Come on, Kelly. You're as bad as Elizabeth.

KELLY

(Smiling) Sorry.

Peter looks forward out the window. He looks back at Kelly again. She is looking out the window in tears. Peter looks at John. He looks at Kelly again.

PETER

Ah.

KELLY

I'm so sorry, Peter.

PETER

Yes. Well buck up now. You'll have Nelson crying and he's got to watch the road.

EXT - RAILROAD STATION

The train is pulling away. Peter standing on the platform.

PETER (V/O)

I shall not die for thee  
Oh woman of body like a swan,  
I was nurtured by a cunning man  
O thin palm, O white bosom,

PETER

I shall not die for thee.

INT - HOTEL IN COLOMBO - EVENING

John is looking out the hotel window at the waterfront and docks. Kelly comes in from the adjoining room. She is dressed in a light summer dress. John turns and looks at her. He looks back out the window again.

JOHN

Do you think you could live here?

KELLY

I dont know. Is that a loaded question?

He turns and smiles. She has come to the window.

JOHN

This place is a powder keg. Are you ready?

KELLY

Yes.

INT - HOTEL DINING ROOM - EVENING

John and Kelly at the table among a heap of dishes. The maitre-d is standing at their table. John is looking at Kelly.

JOHN

So what do you think. Look no further?

KELLY

Not for me. (Looking up at maitre-d) It really was delicious.

JOHN

This is the man with sea experience?

MAITRE-D

Yes. This man is very experienced.

JOHN

Ask him to come to the boat tomorrow. What's his name?

MAITRE-D

His name is Justin.

JOEN

Thank you Alex.

MAITRE-D

You are very welcome, Mr Western.

EXT - VERANDA OVERLOOKING THE BAY - NIGHT

John and Kelly at a table with drinks. Lanterns reflected in the black water. Music in the background.

JOHN

He worked in a foundry. He had no education. He had no money. He was about fourteen or fifteen and one day he had a day off and he went to this other foundry to apply for a better job. They sent him to the foreman and he introduced himself, said he was John Western and he was there to apply for a job, and the foreman looked him over and he said: Well John, what can you do? And he was young and cocky and he said: I can do just about anything. And the foreman shook his head and he said: John, I dont think we can use you. You come back when you can do something.

KELLY

(Smiling) And did he?

JOHN

Go back? I dont know. I know he took the man's advice. He got himself apprenticed as a mechanic - what we would call a machinist today. The first thing you did back in those days was to make your own tools. When they sold the house I went up there and the tools were already gone. I couldnt understand that. It took me months to get them back.

KELLY

Why did they sell the house?

JOHN

I dont know. They didnt have anyone to take care of it. It was too big for the two of them.

KELLY

What were you doing then?

JOHN

I was at Ann Arbor.

KELLY

Your father only outlived him a few years.

JOHN

(Nodding) About five years.

KELLY

You were at Johns Hopkins then.

JOHN

Yeah.

KELLY

And you just never went back.

JOHN

No.

KELLY

What did they say?

JOHN

I dont know. I didnt ask.

KELLY

What did you tell them?

JOHN

I told them the truth. That my father had died and I was going home.

KELLY

I wonder what they thought.

JOHN

You know what they thought.

KELLY

What, that you had inherited a lot of money and didnt need to be a doctor?

JOHN

Something like that.

KELLY

Was that true?

JOHN

No.

They sit. John looks out at the water.

JOHN

I drifted through school and I drifted through medical school. I went because it was expected of me. I've never cared about things. When I was little I used to have these images of how I would be when I grew up. Some way that I would be that would be agreeable with everybody. Then I stopped having them. These daydreams or whatever. Finally more than anything I just wanted to be left alone.

KELLY

Was it just the fact that your father had died? That you didnt have to please him any more...?

JOHN

He was never that pleased anyway.

KELLY

He should have been.

JOHN

He was smarter than that. He could see through me. I never liked to admit it, but it was true. People die. They dont ask your permission. They seldom tidy things up. They just go.

KELLY

Yes. I know. Do you think that's something you and Peter have in common?

JOHN

(Smiling) You dont think we have much in common?

KELLY

I dont know...

JOHN

Peter has real problems. Mine are just a luxury. Maybe he cant solve his problems. But at least they're willing to stand up and be counted.

They look at the water. John shakes his head.

JOHN

I dont know. Maybe he's as restless as I am. People seldom know what it is that's eating them. They dont know what they're after. What is it that Hoffer says? You can never get enough of what you dont really want?

KELLY

What about Guy?

JOHN

(Shaking his head, smiling) Guy is a scientist. He's a special case. What makes a good scientist is that he refuses to adopt some particular notion of how the world should be. Of course what makes a great scientist is that he does have some such notion. Guy has his whales. He continually suggests that there's nothing that extraordinary about them. That they're just large intelligent animals that live in the sea.

KELLY

You think he protests too much?

JOHN  
I dont know.

KELLY  
(Smiling) You wouldnt have qualified as a great scientist?

He smiles. He shakes his head no. They look at the water.

KELLY  
Would you have made a good doctor?

He looks at her and then looks away again, out at the bay and the boats anchored among the lights. Kelly looks down. After a while he answers.

JOHN  
I dont know.

EXT - THE DOCKS - MORNING

The ALBION at berth, a sixty-eight foot sloop. There is some activity going on. Local workers are engaged at repairs on the boat and supplies are being carried aboard from a truck at dockside. John and Kelly come along the deck of the boat and meet Guy. He has a clipboard in his hand. Kelly carries a large notebook.

JOHN  
Morning.

GUY  
Morning.

JOHN  
How's it going?

GUY  
I dont know. My list keeps getting longer instead of shorter.

JOHN  
I see Eric and Debbie got back from Kandy all right.

GUY  
They got in some time this morning.

JOHN  
(Smiling) They didnt get shot at?

GUY  
They didnt mention it.

JOHN  
 (Going past and down the deck) Eric!

Eric is on the foredeck in a yoga position. He rises instantly and gracefully.

GUY  
 (Turning to Kelly) I forgot to tell John. That old man was asking for the captain.

KELLY  
 (Looking down onto the deck) Who is he?

GUY  
 I dont know.

There is a small old man standing patiently on the dock with a cardboard suitcase alongside him. He is dressed in an ill-fitting coat and tie and he has a hat on.

KELLY  
 I'll go see what it is he wants.

INT - SHIP'S SALON

John and Eric have blueprints spread out on the table. A carpenter's foreman looks on with them. Kelly comes down from the deck with the old man. John looks up.

KELLY  
 John, this is Justin. Justin, this is John Western, the captain.

JUSTIN  
 (Coming forward) How do you do sir. A great pleasure.

They shake hands. John looks at Kelly.

JOHN  
 Yes. Would you excuse us a minute.

John and Kelly in the stateroom.

KELLY  
 But you have hired him.

JOHN  
 How old is he? Did you ask him?

KELLY  
 No.



JOHN  
 (Shaking his head.) Jesus. Okay. Very experienced,  
 Alex said.

EXT - SHIPDECK - NIGHT

The crew of the ALBION are having dinner on the deck. White tablecloth and candlelight. John and Kelly, Eric and Debbie, Guy, the American Consul and his wife. They are sampling various bottles of wine prior to stocking for the voyage.

VOICE  
 Permission to come aboard.

KELLY  
 (Rising) That's Peter.

John rises and pushes back his chair. Kelly has rushed off. Eric goes to get another chair. Debbie disappears. Kelly comes into the light with Peter by the arm. John comes forward and gives Peter a hug and a slap on the back and they shake hands.

JOHN  
 Peter this is the American Consul Mr Nance and his wife Vivian. Our good friend Peter Gregory.

PETER  
 How do you do.

They shake hands. Peter and Guy shake hands. Eric has brought the chair.

JOHN  
 Sit down, sit down. Here, Eric. I cant believe it. Are you going with us?

PETER  
 I rather thought I might. If the invitation is still open.

Debbie has brought extra plates and silver and glass and napkin and she sets a place for Peter.

JOHN  
 Absolutely.

Debbie finishes setting the place and she smiles and pats Peter on the shoulder. He looks up at her.

PETER  
 Thank you Debbie. Lovely to see you all again. Rather nice craft, John.

JOHN  
 Thank you.

PETER  
 So, Schuler. How is the expedition shaping up?

GUY  
 Fine. I think. We're sampling the wines Kelly brought today. (Pouring) I think we should have your input as to the selection. We dont want to be lumbered at sea with crates of the dread impotable.

PETER  
 Absolutely.  
 He swirls the glass and sniffs.

PETER  
 Cheers.

The others raise their glasses and Peter sips the wine and tastes it and then without looking he quietly empties the glass overboard behind him and returns the glass to the table again.

PETER  
 Well. I thing we can move along to the next selection then.

INT - THE SALON - NIGHT

Peter and John looking at charts on the table.

JOHN  
 We make our first port of call at Djibouti...

PETER  
 Djibouti.

JOHN

Yes. Then through the Red Sea to the Suez and Alexandria and then across the Mediterranean to Athens.

PETER

It's a bloody long way through the Red Sea. What is the distance from here to Athens?

JOHN

About forty five hundred miles.

PETER

And in Athens?

JOHN

I've got the boat chartered to a party that will deliver it to the Canary Islands. From there I've still got to find someone to bring it across to Lauderdale.

PETER

So from Athens everyone flies home.

JOHN

Them's the plans.

PETER

Are they the best-laid plans?

JOHN

I hope not.

EXT - THE DOCKS - MORNING

The ALBION is pulling away from the slip under her auxiliaries. A crew of local workmen are on the dock waving a send-off. The consul stands a little apart, waving with his panama. He puts it on again, quite soberly, and watches the ship pull out into the roads.

EXT - THE INDIAN OCEAN - MORNING

The ship is moving under full sail through a blue and sunlit sea. Peter is at the helm. John is in the cockpit with him. They are drinking tea.

JOHN

What do you think?

PETER

I think she's bloody marvelous.

JOHN  
What made you change your mind?

PETER  
I'm running away from my responsibilities. It's a family tradition. Porpoises there, John. See them? God they dont half tear along, do they?

JOHN  
They're supposed to be good luck.

They watch.

JOHN  
(Watching) They're gone.

EXT - INDIAN OCEAN - SUNDOWN

The ship under full sail with the sun in the ocean off her starboard bow.

INT - THE SALON - NIGHT

Justin pours coffee for Peter and Guy. John comes down from the deck and Justin brings another cup and John sits down.

JUSTIN  
Good night, sir.

JOHN  
Good night Justin. Thank you.

PETER AND GUY  
Good night.

PETER  
Well skipper, are we on automatic pilot or whatever you call it?

JOHN  
We're at the mercy of the winds.

Peter smiles.

PETER  
Just as long as you brought enough loo rolls.

Guy smiles. He pushes away his cup and pushes back his chair and rises.

GUY  
Gentlemen.

PETER  
Turning it in are you old chap?

GUY  
Whales tomorrow.

PETER  
Whales tomorrow.

JOHN  
Good night.

GUY  
Good night.

PETER  
Do you think he's quite serious? About the whales being doomed to extinction?

JOHN  
Yes. I think he is.

PETER  
He was telling me about the killer whales. Amazing animals apparently. He studied them for several years off the coast of British Columbia. He used to paddle out to them in a kayak and they would stop and wait for him. They would keep an eye on him and see that he stayed up with the group. They're quite fast in the water and you couldn't keep up with them in a kayak normally. They would wait for him while he paddled out and then they'd all set off together through the rain to hunt salmon. He said he's been with them as long as three days and nights running and he would find himself in some sort of emotional state where he was half mad and he'd return to shore and simply collapse on the beach exhausted from paddling and weeping into the sea.

John studies him.

PETER  
The question that plagues him is why they don't eat people. Seems they eat practically anything else and they actually appear to favor the flesh of mammals - seals and otters, even other whales. So why don't they eat people? What's the reason? Why are we so special? (Smiling) He became quite earnest about it and my suggestion to him that we might not taste good was not well received. Now here is what he said: "My objection to being eaten is my objection. It has no validity in the world. It's not a principle." Well, I started to laugh. I couldn't help it. He's worse than you, John.

JOHN  
(Smiling) Surely not.

PETER  
Credit where credit is due. He did come around and he began to laugh himself.

JOHN  
But you like him?

PETER  
Oh yes. Very much.

EXT - THE SHIP UNDER FULL SAIL - NIGHT

INT - GUY AWAKE IN HIS BUNK - NIGHT

EXT - GUY COMING ON DECK - NIGHT

He comes to the cockpit where Eric is at the helm. He sits down.

ERIC  
How's it going?

GUY  
Fine. Fine. Beautiful night.

ERIC  
Yes. It's going to rain.

GUY  
When do you sleep?

Eric smiles.

GUY  
How long have you been up here?

ERIC  
About an hour.

GUY  
What brought you up?

ERIC  
The wind.

They sit. Eric watches the compass.

ERIC  
It freshened out of the north about an hour ago. I saw a chance to make some headway so I came up.

GUY  
You were awake.

ERIC  
No. I was asleep.

They sit.

GUY  
Well how did you know the wind had changed?

ERIC  
I wasn't that asleep.

GUY  
How long have you been doing yoga?

ERIC  
About four years.

They sit.

ERIC  
I met an Australian and he used to do his little routine every morning and I got interested in it.

GUY  
What do you think it does?

ERIC  
(Looking at Guy) It keeps you in shape.

ERIC  
But it's supposed to have some sort of mental or spiritual component to it.

ERIC  
I suppose it helps keep you sane.

GUY  
How do you suppose it works?

ERIC  
Well. I don't have a theory about it. (Smiling) I guess I don't care how it works.

GUY  
I would think you'd be curious.

ERIC  
I am. But not the way you mean.

They sit.

ERIC

I'm curious enough about it to do it. I've tried to get John into it but John's only curious enough about it to do a sort of analysis of it.

GUY

Which is not the same thing.

ERIC

Not the reverend thing itself.

GUY

Do you and John talk about these things?

ERIC

We talk. I dont pretend to follow everything he says. He thinks that what's in your head is the same thing as what's in the world. That's a big maybe for me. I think there's a lot of misguided thinking going on. John's ideas about Yoga are ideas about Yoga. In the meantime the Yoga's still there.

GUY

You dont think it can be discussed?

ERIC

Well. I dont know. You can talk about it. Or around it. I guess I think if you're interested in it why not just do it.

GUY

Well that seems reasonable.

ERIC

(Smiling) We get into discussions about these things but John, he's soon way out there somewhere. He'll start talking about things like Fibboniaci numbers - these ratios that occur everywhere in nature and in the universe that you find in the Parthenon or the size of playing cards. Things designed by people who never heard of Fibboniaci or his numbers.

GUY

It's an interesting argument.

ERIC

It is if you overlook the one thing that all numbers have in common.

GUY

Which is?



ERIC  
We're the ones doing the counting. They're our numbers. A number's not the thing.

GUY  
(Smiling) The reverend thing.

ERIC  
(Smiling) The reverend thing. You got it.

They sit.

GUY  
So what is John's interest in whales?

ERIC  
You know what John's interest in whales is.

GUY  
He wants to know what they think?

ERIC  
Basically. His interest in whales is the same as his interest in you.

GUY  
He wants to know what I think?

GUY  
He wants to know if you know something that he doesn't.

EXT - THE INDIAN OCEAN - DAY

The ship sits with bare poles in a dead calm in a driving rain. A whale rolls through the rain peened water. Another.

EXT - THE DECK

Debbie in a rainslicker runs down the deck and calls inside.

DEBBIE  
John! Whales!

All come running out on deck. Eric goes forward and starts to lower the dinghy. The others stand looking out in the rain. The dinghy with Eric at the oars comes around the bow of the ship and drifts alongside. Eric looks out to sea. All watch.

JOHN  
They're gone.

INT - MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

John sitting at his desk filling in the logbook by the light of a small lamp. The desk is covered with books on whales and dolphins.

JOHN (V/O)

January 24th, 1984. Sixty-eight degrees thirty minutes east. Eight degrees forty-six minutes north. Eight hundred miles west of Colombo. Five days at sea. We have seen no whales since the second day. It is three o'clock in the morning. The crew is asleep. Temperature seventy-four degrees. Barometer steady at 82 inches of mercury. (He leans back in his chair) At one time I thought the sea was a good place for thinking. Now I'm not so sure. It sucks up everything. Things get dispersed, continuity is difficult. The frailty of conjecture is accentuated in the curvature of the earth. The gravity of the water. The night stars are too populous. What is needed above all else is position. Schuler has spent some time aboard whalers, which I was surprised to learn. He found the men likable, generous. Many of them seemed to have a feeling for the whales. He thought if he could find out why men kill whales it would help him to stop it. Instead this question led him into mazes in the human psyche from which he felt fortunate to escape with his soul intact. I think it may have been that experience as much as anything that led him to pretty much abandon his conservation efforts. That led him to resolve to devote himself wholly to science.

Kelly comes up to him and stands behind him rubbing his shoulders. She is dressed in a white nightshirt. She looks over his shoulder at a book open on the table.

KELLY

Are you coming to bed?

JOHN

Yes.

She leans over his shoulder, rubbing his other shoulder with one hand, pointing at the book.

KELLY

What is that?

JOHN

It's a right-whale's hand.



KELLY (Cont'd)

Englishman thinks this is just marvelous and he laughs and laughs and he goes home to England and he goes to his club or whatever and he tells his friends: My father had a child and it wasn't my brother and it wasn't my sister. Who was it? And of course no one can answer and they all give up and he says: It was the chap at the Waldorf Astoria back in the Colonies!

Guy stares at her bleakly.

KELLY

I told you it was silly. It's become a sort of metaphor for John and Peter. For a certain kind of halfwitted disavowal of responsibility. Or maybe even for an inability to recognize oneself. I think Peter feels sometimes that we are all the chap at the Waldorf.

PETER

Peter wishes he were the chap at the Waldorf.

They smile. Debbie comes to the table and sits down and puts a roll on her plate and looks at it and then gets up again and goes out. John looks at Eric.

GUY

I think Debbie doesn't have her sea-legs yet.

JUSTIN

Miss Debbie has her sea-legs.

They continue to eat. Debbie returns to the table and sits and takes her juice and drinks. She looks at the others. She looks at Eric.

DEBBIE

I have an announcement. We have a stowaway.

The others look at each other. They look at Debbie.

KELLY

(Excited) Really?

DEBBIE

Really.

PETER

You're quite sure?

DEBBIE

Pretty sure.

PETER

Well. I'll be damned.

He sinks back. Then he leans across the table to shake hands with Eric.

PETER

Well. Congratulations old man.

JOHN

Well Justin, I think we'll have to say that the sun is over the yard-arm.

JUSTIN

Yessir. What will it be sir?

JOHN

Oh I think champagne.

INT - THE SALON

The crew toasting Debbie and Eric, quietly and with good cheer.

DEBBIE

Thank you. I'm embarrassed.

They drink.

DEBBIE

(Raising her glass.) Thank you John.

JOHN

(To Eric) We cant set her adrift at sea. We cant spare the lifeboat.

ERIC

That was her biggest worry. She wanted me to hole them with the fireax.

KELLY

Leave her alone now. She's in a delicate condition.

DEBBIE

No I'm not.

INT - THE SALON - NIGHT

The table has been cleared except for a few coffee cups. John and Guy are sitting listening to the hydrophone speakers and drinking coffee.

GUY

Whales inhabit a wilderness completely unknown to us. The last unexplored continent is the floor of the sea. Twice the size of all the other continents combined, with mountains and valleys and rivers and plants and animals. And that is where the spermwhale goes hunting. Two miles deep in the sea, alone in icy cold and pitch blackness. He could as well be cruising the dark side of the moon for all we know of his experience. Robert Ballard sent a camera down nine thousand feet off the Galapagos and when he switched on the lights he was at a hot springs in the ocean floor - what is called a hydrothermal vent - and gathered around this oasis was a bestiary that depends not on sunlight and photosynthesis as all living things do but creatures who derive their energy from chemical reactions. There are whole other orders of beings down there. Blind crabs that are pure white. Gigantic tubeworms ten feet long. Huge glowing creatures that look like a form of jellyfish. Clams the size of turkeyplatters that are bright red in color. When the spermwhale comes back from these deeps he has returned from a journey as alien and strange as a journey in space.

JOHN

Do you think there are squid down there so large that a spermwhale just wouldnt tackle them?

GUY

I dont know. They've found some enormous sucker marks on spermwhales.

JOHN

How big do squid get, do you think?

GUY

I think they get to be a hundred feet long.

JOHN

That would be an impressive animal.

GUY

That would be an impressive animal.

JOHN

Could one that size kill a whale?

GUY

I dont know. He might be able to break his jaw. He

JOHN

Are they that smart? Do they know whales breathe?

GUY

No one knows.

JOHN

The whale knows.

GUY

The whale knows. You like it that they're hunters.

JOHN

Yes. I think hunting builds character.

GUY

You think it builds character?

JOHN

In the species. I think the qualities we admire are the ones we share with the predators.

GUY

Qualities associated with aggressiveness.

JOHN

There's more to it than that. Having to kill in order to eat has brought the predators into a much more elaborate relationship with the world. They not only have to be quicker and stronger than the animals they eat, they have to be smarter. And they have to understand each other. They share in the work of hunting and they share in the kill. Cooperative society among grazing animals scarcely exists. Hemingway said that hawks don't share. But of course hawks do share. It's rabbits that don't share. And of course it's also the grazing animals that fight to the death. If you're a hunter you have to learn to control your aggression. Wolves never kill each other.

GUY

I guess that's probably true.

JOHN

Human society seems to be based largely on wolf society. I don't think we've asked what it means that dogs exist in almost all cultures. Are they really that useful? Or why the myth of wolves raising human children is so prevalent. Other than a shared ancestry we have little in common with the apes. Our ability to work together and share what we have is something that has evolved out of a million years of hunting. It's

not bred in the bone. We learned it. And I think mainly we learned it from the wolf. The thing we havent learned is how to stop killing each other.

GUY

Why, do you think?

JOHN

I dont know. Maybe we just havent been at it long enough. We're not really hunters. Real hunters probably understand life and death in a way that is impossible for us. They stand in a relationship to the primary facts of existence that we only play at. People who have worked with wolves say that you cant lie to them. They read you with an infallibility that is totally convincing. Their concern for each other's welfare is second only to that of whales and dolphins. The reports on chimpanzees and gorillas are just now coming in. Organized raids and battles. Murder, rape, parricide, cannibalism. Their brutality is incredible. What we have in common with them is our rage. Some sort of atavistic self-loathing at our own impotence. We can pick up a club. But we cant put it down again.

GUY

So what are you saying? That we're biologically doomed to self-destruct?

JOHN

Who knows. The anthropoid experiment could be a blind alley. Intelligence is lodged primarily with the carnivores. The apes seem to be an exception. I think it's because we have no real understanding of death that we cant stop killing. I think that there's a connection between bloodshed and love that we dont understand at all. We talk about love and courage and honor but we have no real understanding of them. We talk about them as if they were creations of ours. Something we'd invented. But we didnt. We think that truth and love and courage have to do with human character and they dont. They have to do with life and death. We cant even talk about it. We dont know how.

GUY

(Smiling, draining his cup) Well. I accused Peter of being pessimistic. But I dont think he's even in the running.

JOHN

I tell you these things only to raise you from your gloom.



GUY  
(Laughing) God help us.

There is suddenly an incredible boom from the speakers. John grimaces and whistles. Guy reaches wildly for the volume control on the hydrophone receiver. He puts his finger in his ear and wags it and stands up.

GUY  
Damn.

JOHN  
What in the hell was that?

GUY  
Blue whale. Let's go up.

John follows him up onto the deck.

JOHN  
Where is he?

GUY  
It sounded like he was right under the boat.  
Eric and Debbie come down from the foredeck.

ERIC  
Did you hear that?

DEBBIE  
Is it a whale?

GUY  
(Looking out at the moonlit sea.) Yes.

They watch.

GUY  
There they are.

A whale breaks water about a hundred yards out. Then another.

JOHN  
Can we keep up with them?

GUY  
We can try.

JOHN  
(Moving.) Let's put on some sail.

GUY

(Moving.) I'll bring up the hydrophone.

All move to their stations. Kelly comes on deck. A Genoa hugely in the moonlight.

EXT - THE COCKPIT - NIGHT

Peter is at the wheel. John and Guy and Kelly are in the cockpit drinking tea from insulated plastic cups. The ship is heeled over under full sail.

GUY

Blue whales transmit sound at very low frequencies. The lower the frequency the farther it will travel in water. But also the lower the frequency the more difficult it is to locate the direction it comes from. It requires a greater distance between the ears. The method by which the source of sound is determined is a form of triangulation. So the reason why blue whales are a hundred feet long may just be so that they can talk long distance.

JOHN

How great a distance are we talking about?

GUY

I'm not sure you'd believe me.

JOHN

Try me.

GUY

All right. I'll even tell you how it came about. Because it was probably the most moving experience I ever had with whales and it didnt happen at sea. It happened at my desk at Columbia one week-end at about three oclock in the morning.

JOHN

Spoken like a true scientist.

GUY

(Smiling) I'd been working with data on blue whales. The frequencies at which they transmit sound - down to twenty cycles per second and probably lower - I knew were capable of travelling great distances in water. And a friend of mine at Woods Hole had put me onto a book called Underwater Sound for Engineers by a man named Ulrich. And with the help of this book I was

GUY (Cont'd)

spreading losses and everything, and I suddenly realized that at certain angles of incidence these sounds were bending... they were not reflecting off the bottom and off the underside of the surface in the normal way but were refracting and that what was being gained was an entire order of magnitude. When I realized this I realized simultaneously that blue whales were sending and receiving signals the entire width of the Pacific Ocean and I cant describe the feeling. I had a sudden realization of their natures on a level I'd never even imagined. I cant describe the feeling. The feeling that gave me.

EXT - THE OCEAN - MORNING

It is sunrise and the ALBION is riding in easy swells. Kelly is standing on the foredeck. Before her the sun is coming up out of the sea. Blue whales are rolling through the water. She folds her hands together palm to palm and touches her forefingers to her lips in a gesture somewhere between prayer and wonder and stands so.

EXT - THE OCEAN - MORNING

The zodiac is in the water alongside the hull and the crewmembers are preparing their gear.

GUY

We want as many pictures as we can get. The first thing is to be able to identify the separate individuals. There's always some characteristic mark and if we get enough photos we can identify them and then we can see who does what, find out which ones are males and which are females, what the family groups are. It's just like detective work. You'll be amazed at what we can deduce once we get the individuals isolated and known.

The zodiac sets out among the whales. What follow are scenes of the whales with the zodiac passing alongside. Scenes of the crew in delight and amazement at the whales. Guy and John are in the two-man kayak moving easily among the whales and photographing them.

INT - THE SALON - EVENING

Guy and John and Kelly and Peter and Eric. They are sorting through their equipment. Packing up rolls of film in plastic boxes. Spreading the polaroid prints out on the table.

JOHN

So what do you think?

GUY

I think we've done very well. A good day. A hell of a day, actually. I don't think you realize how lucky we were. This can be a frustrating business.

KELLY

Will we see them tomorrow?

GUY

I hope so. We know the direction of their movement. They're not in any hurry. I think we can keep track of them. We'll need a watch on deck and another person to monitor the hydrophone. I'm going to try and work up a composite here. I think we must have photos of everybody. If we can catch them lollygagging around in the morning I think we ought to go underwater.

JOHN

Great.

GUY

So what do you think. Kelly?

KELLY

(Looking at the polaroids) They're just... (Looking up at Guy) I think they've clouded my mind. I don't know what they are.

EXT - THE SHIP - MORNING

The crew are donning wetsuits and filling tanks. Eric comes up from below.

ERIC

Any sign of them?

JOHN

Not yet. Are you still picking them up?

ERIC

Yeah. We still got em.

PETER

There they are, John.

GUY

All right. All right.

EXT - THE OCEAN

The zodiac bobbing among the whales. The kayak moving among them. The divers go over. Shots of them swimming underwater with the whales. Kelly turning underwater as a whale goes past. His great eye turned upon her. A mother with a calf. The calls of the whales.

EXT - THE OCEAN - SUNSET

In the floor of the Zodiac John and Kelly. They lie facing each other. He has his forehead on her chest and she lies with her knees drawn up in a fetal position, her arms around his neck. He has his arms around her waist and his knees drawn up beneath her. They are naked and they lie without moving as the boat rocks in the swells and the sun descends into the sea.

INT - THE SALON - NIGHT

John and Guy and Peter are at the table. Justin is serving. A tablecloth is spread and the table is illuminated by candlelight. The men are freshly scrubbed looking and tanned. Kelly enters and takes her place. She is dressed in shorts and a freshly laundered blouse. Debbie enters and similarly dressed and freshlooking and takes her seat. John smiles at them from the head of the table and pours the wine.

EXT - THE COCKPIT - NIGHT

Guy is at the wheel. John sits opposite, a cup in his hands.

JOHN

What do you think could be discovered that would intercede for the whale?

GUY

The most likely would be extraordinary intelligence. But it's doubtful that people would be convinced unless it were a very human type of intelligence. And it's doubtful that it is.

JOHN

Can it be so different?

GUY

Probably. What we think about is the world and the whale's world is not ours. I doubt we can ever know what he thinks. Not really. Aside from never having the experience of articulating a hundred tons of flesh and blood through the sea there's the problem of perception. The world the whale inhabits is above all else a world of sound. And that world is invisible to

GUY

us. It's not just another way of looking at the world. It is the world. Perceived with an immediacy that is foreign to us. When we describe something we see, we translate visual images into sounds and then speak them. But the whale sees with sound in the first place. We want a translation of the whale's language but it's not that kind of language. There's really no analogy. The thing they are talking about can't be separated from the language in which it's spoken. For a whale the name and the thing are the same. We're like Helen Keller without a nurse. We're not even that close. And because their language is not a code the way ours is it evolves continually. Humpback whales repeat phrases over and over and each year these phrases change and evolve into new expressions and all the whales learn them and add to them and change them. And this has been going on for millions and millions of years. (He looks up.) Do you see what I mean? There's no Rosetta stone. There's nothing. It's another way of being altogether. I used to think that it was just that you couldn't put up markers in the sea. Milestones or monuments. That it was just that hands were no use. But it goes beyond that.

JOHN

What you work on is yourself.

GUY

Yes.

They sit.

GUY

We want everything to be for something. We're prisoners of a religion of utility. That's why the whale is doomed. He has to be for something too. There's a quotation from Beston's Outermost House. I don't remember the whole thing. But he says: "We need another concept of animals. They are not brethren. They are not underlings. They are other nations, caught up with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendor and travail of the earth."

They sit.

GUY

What got you interested in whales?

John shakes his head. He looks up. He looks at Guy.

JOHN

Have you ever seen a whale fetus?

GUY

I've seen photos of them.

JOHN

Yes. You know the theory that ontology recapitulates phylogeny.

GUY

Pseudo-theory.

JOHN

I think it does. I think the question is what it means. If you look at a human fetus in the early stages you can see the vestigial gills. If they're not gills I don't know what they are. Anyway in the whale fetus you can see the little hindfeet drawn up at either side and you can see the fingers and thumb and the little nostrils and ears and at one point it looks alarmingly like a human fetus. And one day I was at the Oceanographic Institute and that's what I saw. Curled up in a glass vial. A blue whale fetus. Holding out its little hands like so. I had an uncanny sense that we were somehow included in the whale's history. That we were what the whale might have been. And that he was what we would never be.

INT - MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

John sits at his desk watching Kelly sleep on the other side of the room. He turns and bends to his log.

JOHN (V/O)

January thirtieth, nineteen eighty-four. Eleven days at sea. Approximately fourteen hundred miles west of Colombo. Our position is uncertain. Too tired to take a fix. Or too stimulated. We are somewhere west of the 60th meridian over the Carisberg Ridge. Approximately ten degree north latitude. In three days I will be forty years old.

The whales have made mutes of us. There is nothing to say. They treat us with great gentleness. Even with regard. We want to know what they are thinking. Like children at the zoo. Schuler is right. It's not even a question. We all have these assumptions about logic

JOHN (Cont'd)

and language and intelligence and there is no ground for them. What argument could you advance for the principles of logic that did not presuppose them? We occupy a small band of visible light, a small band of audible sound, a small band of shared existence. We are imprisoned by what we know. Schuler talking about the dolphin's ability to transmit very precise information over long distances almost instantaneously. My analogy was that they must key shades of light and dark to sound frequencies and transmit visual pictures much in the way that wirephotos are sent. But I was thinking like a human and I wanted their world to be a visual world and it is not. Schuler didnt argue with my analogy but whales and porpoises can get along-very well without sight altogether. The porpoises in the Ganges river are almost totally blind. I wanted the whale to translate his images into visual ones and the whale doesnt have to do that. He sees with sound. What does that mean? That it cannot be preserved, yes. It vibrates and is gone. Schuler is right. It's not just that the sea is hostile to monuments. It's the other thing. The state of immediacy. That other way of being. This is where we divide. What he says is true, and yet the case is that the whale has no need for monuments because the whale has no history. It's not the other way around. It's not the other way around. What we are talking about is the whale's perception of time. Does Schuler know this? Our history - which we are at such pains to preserve and which we imagine contains our freedom - is exactly what enslaves us. For it really exists only in the individual memory and is lost with that memory forever. We perceive it to be a summation, a communal enterprise, and it is not. History particularizes. What we hold in common is not the past but the future. Everything unexpressed is still whole. What is experienced is broken down into parts it was never even made of. We have no faith in being because we have fractured it into history. And this is the way we live. In archives of our own devising. Among sketches and bones. (He looks at Kelly asleep) There is no book where the world is written down. The world is that book. The way the whale lives is the way the world is and the difference between us and the whale is the difference between us and the world. Or us and God. For he is not divided. He has no life elsewhere. (He looks at his watch) One-twelve a.m. January 31st. In two days I will be forty years old.



EXT - THE OCEAN - MORNING

The ship is running closehauled against the wind with the sun rising out of the sea behind her.

EXT - THE DECK

Eric is sitting crosslegged on the foredeck with binoculars. John comes on deck with his coffee and stands behind Eric. Eric looks up, then looks out through the glasses again, finally hands them up to John who takes them and looks out with one hand holding the binoculars.

ERIC

Do you think we could have overrun them in the night?

JOHN

It's possible. We'll find them. We're still picking them up.

In the distance is a muffled explosion. Eric looks to the south, John turns to scan the southern horizon. Guy comes on deck and stands looking out, down the deck from them.

ERIC

Do you see anything?

JOHN

No. Here. Take a look.

Eric rises and takes the glasses. All look.

ERIC

There's a ship out there.

GUY

(Calling) Can you see it?

ERIC

(Handing the glasses to John) Yeah.

Guy comes up the deck to where they are standing. John lowers the glasses and hands them to him. He glasses the southern horizon.

JOHN

Can you make out a registration?

GUY

No. It doesnt make any difference. It could be registered anywhere.

JOHN  
What is it?

GUY  
(Lowering the glasses) It's a whaler.

JOHN  
A whaler?

GUY  
Yes.

JOHN  
I thought the Indian Ocean was closed to whaling? To the 55th latitude.

GUY  
It is.

There is another muffled explosion.

JOHN  
(Looking through the glasses) It's a pirate whaler.

GUY  
Yes.

JOHN  
What do you think we should do?

GUY  
What do you mean what should we do?

Kelly has come on board and approaches the group.

KELLY  
What is it, John?

John and Guy exchange glances.

JOHN  
(Decisively, to Eric) Let's come about.

KELLY  
What is it?

JOHN  
It's a whaling ship.

KELLY  
(Softly) Oh no.

Eric has moved to bring the boat about.

GUY

You dont know what you're getting into, John.

JOHN

Well, I dont expect it's a pretty sight.

GUY

You dont have any idea.

JOHN

I take it you'd like to stay clear.

GUY

What's the point?

JOHN

I dont have a choice, Guy.

EXT - THE SHIPDECK

All hands are trimming sail. Eric is at the wheel. Their mood is somber. Debbie comes forward with a sailbag and drops it on the deck and she and Guy and Kelly open it and start taking out a Genoa.

EXT - THE SHIPDECK

John is on the foredeck with the glasses. Guy comes forward.

JOHN

What other whales could they be?

GUY

If they're not spermwhales then they've just about got to be blue whales.

JOHN

Would they really kill blue whales?

GUY

Of course they would. Why wouldnt they?

There is an explosion in the distance, closer than the others.

GUY

It's not too late to turn this thing around.

John lowers the glasses and looks at Kelly down deck and looks at Guy.

JOHN

Yes it is.

EXT - THE SHIP

The ALBION is bearing down on the whaler under full sail. She passes a dead whale in the water with a buoy, a flag and transmitter. The whaler is in pursuit of a whale. The gunner at his station. The whale plunges wildly ahead of the ship. The ALBION is coming on quarterwise to the whaler and is now only a couple of hundred yards off. The gunner fires. The harpoon strikes the whale. Kelly on the deck of the ALBION gasps. The whaler passes on and slows. There is a more muffled second explosion from the shell exploding inside the whale. Kelly looks wildly toward John. He looks toward Eric at the wheel. They cross the wake of the whaler and Peter and Debbie turn to their stations and the ALBION comes about and the crew make fast and they begin to close upon the whaler which has slowed as it comes up to the wounded whale. The whale breaches and spouts a column of blood thirty feet into the air. The ALBION is running only a couple of hundred feet off the whaler's port side. A helicopter swings overhead and circles the ALBION's masts and swings away again. The ALBION pulls closer to the whaler. The sea is red. The crew aboard the whaler look curiously toward the sailing vessel. The whale spews blood and comes to rest and the whaler pulls up alongside the whale. The ALBION swings about and drifts across the whaler's bow. Now crewmembers from the whaler are standing atop the whale and they run a pipe through the side of the whale with a hose attached and give a handsignal and air begins to pipe through the hose. They put down a buoy and a bamboo pole about twelve feet long with a flag. Aboard the ALBION Guy is snapping pictures. The gunner leans down and wags his finger in a negative gesture. He swings the gun and points it at them. The workers on the whale gesture with clenched fists. The helicopter swings back across. John comes to stand alongside Guy.

GUY

(Lowering his camera and shaking his head) They dont even care. Look at them.

The crewmembers on the whaler are being taken back aboard and the whaler is getting ready to move on. John moves downdeck to where Kelly stands numbly. Peter comes up to Guy.

PETER

It's frightful. A frightful thing to see.

GUY

I tried to warn John away.

The whaler moves off. The ALBION swings about under a slack sail and drifts in the reddening sea. Kelly has slumped to the deck and John has squatted down and put his arms around her. The sails luff softly. In the distance is another explosion.

EXT - THE SALON - EVENING

Justin is serving dinner. They begin to eat in a subdued silence. Kelly puts down her fork.

KELLY

What was the hose they connected to the whale?

Guy looks up. He is the one being spoken to.

JOHN

(Softly) Come on, Kelly.

Guy looks at John.

KELLY

I want to know.

GUY

It's an air hose. They pump air into the whale to keep it from sinking.

KELLY

And that thing is a radio transmitter? So they can find it again?

GUY

Yes.

KELLY

And they use the helicopter to locate the whales.

GUY

Yes.

KELLY

And they can go anywhere they want to and kill even protected whales in protected waters.

GUY

Yes.

They sit. Guy looks at John. Kelly sits looking down at her plate. She looks up at Guy again.

GUY

One of the most notorious of the pirate whalers was the Sierra. It almost destroyed the Caribbean humpback whale population in the early seventies despite the supposed protection of the International Whaling Commission. The ship was finally rammed off the coast of Portugal in 1979. I give it as an example. It was registered in Lichtenstein with a flag of Somelia, a Norwegian captain and a South African crew. And it was owned by a Japanese fishing company. The company that largely sponsors these ships is a company called Taiyo. It's the largest privately owned fishing firm in the world. Because Japan is a signatory to the Whaling Commission it owns these boats in secret and registers them in other countries. They operate wherever they like and they kill everything they see. They use sonar to track the whales under water and they use ultrasonic devices for herding them. A few choice parts of the whale are used for consumption but mostly the whales are converted into dogfood and fertilizer.

They sit in silence. Kelly looks up.

KELLY

The harpoon. It has an explosive head or something. There are two explosions.

GUY

Yes. The harpoon is a ninety millimeter cannon. The head of the harpoon contains a shell. A grenade. It explodes inside the whale.

Kelly looks down. She takes a small bite of food. She looks up again.

KELLY

Those were our whales. Werent they?

GUY

Yes.

KELLY

Thank you.

EXT - THE DECK - MORNING

Kelly comes on deck. It is just sunrise. She walks along the deck and stands looking out at the rising sun. There is a strange moan and she looks down at the water. She gasps and puts her hand to her mouth. She turns and runs to the hatchway.

KELLY

John! John!

EXT - THE DECK

Kelly and John and Eric come up the deck running and stop and look over the side. Lolling in the water alongside the hull is a whale about twenty-five feet long.

JOHN

Eric, run get Schuler.

ERIC

Here he comes.

Guy and Peter come to the rail. - Guy looks down.

GUY

Oh Jesus.

KELLY

What is it?

GUY

It's a whale.

KELLY

What's it doing here? It's just small. What kind of a whale is it?

Guy looks at John. Kelly follows his gaze. She looks back at Guy.

KELLY

It's a baby. It's a baby whale. Isnt it?

GUY

Yes.

KELLY

A baby blue whale.

He nods his head.

KELLY

It's from the whales they killed yesterday. It's an orphan.

GUY

Yes.

PETER  
Bloody bastards. How old do you make it to be,  
Schuler?

Guy shakes his head.

KELLY  
How old is he?

GUY  
I dont know.

KELLY  
Yes you do.

John looks at Guy.

KELLY  
He's brand new in the world. Isnt he?

GUY  
Yes.

He looks at Kelly. She is waiting.

GUY  
If you look down there you can see the tip of the  
umbilical cord. He's not more than three or four days  
old.

Kelly leans on the rail and looks down. With the full realization of the whale's plight she puts her hands to her forehead, her eyes shut. Eric goes forward and begins to loosen the fastenings to the dinghy. Peter goes forward to help him. John has turned with his back to the rail and stands looking out across the deck with the steadfast expression of one who has received news he can do nothing about. Kelly goes forward. Guy stands looking down at the whale. The dinghy comes around the side of the boat and alongside the whale. In the dinghy are Eric and Peter and Kelly. Kelly reaches out her hand and strokes the whale along his side and back. Peter is examining the whale.

GUY  
(From the rail) Is he injured?

PETER  
He doesnt appear to be.



Eric steadies the little boat in the swells and looks up at Guy. Peter looks up at Guy. Kelly continues to stroke the whale. Peter looks at her and then back up at Guy again.

INT - THE SALON - MORNING

The crew is sitting to breakfast. John and Peter, Guy and Debbie, Eric and Kelly are absent.

PETER

So that, as they say, is that?

Guy doesn't answer.

JOHN

This animal has no hope of survival, does it?

GUY

No.

PETER

You said that there were so few blue whales left in the world that any single one could be the turning point for the survival or death of the species.

GUY

Yes.

PETER

This chap, for example.

GUY

Yes.

PETER

That's a rather sobering thought.

They eat.

JOHN

Would the others come back if they heard it?

GUY

Maybe. Assuming there are some still alive.

JOHN

A large assumption I guess. What about another pod of whales?

GUY  
Your assumptions are getting larger.

JOHN  
That they would adopt it?

GUY  
That there is another pod.

They sit.

JOHN  
Maybe it could just quietly drift away in the night.

GUY  
I dont think she'll leave it.

PETER  
I dont think she will either.

JOHN  
I think you're right.

EXT - THE SHIP - EVENING

The ship sits in the sea under bare poles. The dinghy alongside. Eric and Debbie and Kelly in the dinghy.

EXT - THE DECK - NIGHT

Peter and Eric on the foredeck. Peter is lying stretched out on the deck looking up at the stars. Eric is sitting in a semi-lotus position.

ERIC  
What does John want to do?

PETER  
I dont know.

ERIC  
There's really not anything to do. Is there?

PETER  
No. Debbie's quite upset too.

ERIC  
Yeah.

PETER

Is she still in the skiff?

ERIC

Yeah.

Peter lies looking up at the stars. The foremast of the ship leans across the constellations like a stylus. Then it leans back.

PETER

I should never have come on this trip.

ERIC

Why?

PETER

I dont know. Bloody whales. I dont see how Schuler stands it. That business yesterday. Then this. There's no question that these are extraordinary creatures. I dont need this. I lack faith as it is. I dont believe that people will cease their maiming and looting and killing once you point out to them that it's cruel. If it werent cruel they wouldnt be doing it in the first place.

ERIC

You dont have much of an opinion of humankind.

PETER

I dont understand them. There are times when I think them noble and generous and... all those things we celebrate by the word humanity. And then there are times that I agree with John at his darkest.

ERIC

Which is?

PETER

Oh. You know John. Still, he said something yesterday that even I found a bit shocking.

ERIC

What did he say?

PETER

He said that he thought mankind was a misfortune without measure or bound.

Eric smiles.

PETER

It seemed... It sounded more like a curse than an opinion. There was something quite bitter about it. In a way it was not like John at all.

Peter lies looking up.

PETER

Do you suppose they ever look up at the stars at night? Yes. Of course they do.

EXT - THE DECK - NIGHT

Guy is standing on deck with the composite of whale photos. He looks at them in the soft light from the lamp on the aft deck. One by one they flutter down into the dark sea.

INT - THE MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

The bed is empty. John sits at his desk.

JOHN (V/O)

February first. 1984. Tomorrow is my fortieth birthday. It's inconceivable to me that the whales might come back and rescue this orphan among us but Schuler says it's possible. I can hear its cries through the hull of the ship. The whales can hear it possibly a hundred miles away. The question remains whether there are any survivors. Peter and I talking about communication. He doesn't believe it can help avoid bloodshed. Points out that the civil wars are the bloodiest and that most murder victims are killed by members of their own household. But it isn't pure proximity that triggers rage. It's betrayal. It's not communication but the shattered illusion of it that sets us at each others throats. What we are driven mad by is our own lies. We long for communion but we have no real belief in it. We hardly believe even in the grief of others. It is doubtful. A thing of conjecture. Even in the presence of their cries. Eventually we cease to hear them. Even in our suffering we are narcissists. For each of us our pain is like a gift which we make to the world. Which will not see its like again.

EXT - THE SHIP - NIGHT

The dinghy floats alongside the hull, dipping in the slight swells. A single figure sits in the center, lit softly from underneath by a lantern in the floor.

EXT - THE SHIP - MORNING

Kelly has been curled up on the rear seat of the dinghy with a blanket and a pillow. There is a rope ladder down the side of the ship's hull and the dinghy is secured to the ship with a pair of lines. Kelly wakes and looks immediately to see that the whale is still there. She reaches out and strokes the animal. John comes to the rail and looks down.

JOHN

Good morning.

KELLY

(Looking up) Good morning.

JOHN

How about some coffee.

KELLY

Yes. Thank you.

John comes down the ladder and steps into the dinghy. He has a thermos and cups and he sits facing Kelly and pours the coffee and hands one cup to her and holds the other in his two hands as if for warmth. She sips the coffee and looks at him across the rim of the cup.

JOHN

You know this is going to end badly.

KELLY

Everything ends badly.

He sips his coffee and glances at the whale and looks out to sea where the gray morning has broken.

JOHN

This wont change anything.

KELLY

I know.

They sit.

KELLY

There's no way to give it even a little milk, is there?

JOHN

No.

They sit.

JOHN

Their milk is thick. It's like cottage cheese. It has ten times the fat cows milk has and he needs over a hundred gallons a day.

KELLY

I know. Guy told me.

JOHN

Wouldnt it be better just to let it go?

KELLY

I cant.

She looks at the whale. She looks at John.

KELLY

I cant. You wont ask me to, will you?

JOHN

No. I wont ask you to.

She sips her coffee. He looks out to sea. He looks at her.

JOHN

Why dont you go up and get some breakfast.

KELLY

Will you stay here?

JOHN

Yes.

She looks at the whale.

JOHN

Do you remember what Guy said?

She looks at him.

JOHN

He'll break your heart, Kelly.

KELLY

He already has.

She puts down the cup and steps alongside him and puts one hand on his shoulder.

KELLY

I'll go up.

He sculls forward with the oar. She puts her arms around him. She leans and kisses him.

INT - THE SALON - AFTERNOON

Guy and John at the table.

JOHN

If we shut off the generator would it just go away?

GUY

I dont know. Is that what you want to do?

JOHN

No. I just wondered if that was the attraction pure and simple. (Looking up) How long do you think it can live?

GUY

(Shaking his head) Probably longer than you'd like.

EXT - THE DINGHY - EVENING

Guy and Kelly. Kelly is laving water over the whale's back with a plastic bucket to keep it wet. Guy is listening to the whale's heart with a stethoscope.

KELLY

Do you think John has a point? That it would be better just to leave him?

GUY

(Looking at her) No.

KELLY

Do you think he's suffering?

GUY

(Smiling) Guy?

Kelly smiles.

GUY

Blue whales in the wild probably go five and six months without eating. I doubt that going hungry is a real trauma for them.

KELLY

You're not just trying to cheer me up?

GUY  
Well. I am. But it's also the truth.

KELLY  
Am I being unfair to the others?

GUY  
No.

She laves water over the whale. He sits with the stethoscope in his lap.

GUY  
No one feels that way.

EXT - THE SHIP - NIGHT

There are lights on the foredeck. A table is set up. The company sing Happy Birthday.

EXT - THE SHIP - NIGHT

The dinghy alongside the ship, the lantern in the floor, a solitary figure lifting and falling slowly in the yellow round of light.

INT - THE SALON - NIGHT

John and Peter.

JOHN  
(Looking up) What do you want me to do?

PETER  
Nothing. There's nothing to be done. She keeps looking out to sea. Schuler told her that any whale would come. But they havent, have they?

JOHN  
No.

PETER  
It's bloody pitiful, John. She wants to put her arms around it and comfort it and it's the size of a truck. Just the fact that it is so huge. To be orphaned. It's like a stranded alien. You're right. There's not a bloody thing to be done. That's just it. This vast helplessness. This absolute waste of compassion. It's not that the universe has no ears to hear the cries of the wretched rising night and day out of this bottomless pit of misery. It's not that. It's that it's all wrong. It's all wrong. An intelligent child of six could have designed a painless universe.



John smiles thinly.

PETER  
There's nothing on the hydrophone.

JOHN  
No.

PETER  
They're not coming back. Are they.

JOHN  
No.

PETER  
Because they're all dead.

JOHN  
Yes.

They sit. Peter shakes his head. He does not look up as he speaks.

PETER  
When the whales are gone, John, where is it they will have gone? What is nothingness that it is so vast as to contain them?

INT - THE MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

John at his desk alone in the cabin.

JOHN (V/O)  
February second. My birthday. We are simply drifting. No sight taken. Schuler says that anyone who's worked with dolphins will tell you that they can pick sympathetic people out of a crowd. They know what is in your heart. The thing that struck him about the killer whales in British Columbia was that they would all breathe together. Like a single living organism. There's a meaning here hardly touched on. These animals can discriminate with their sound echoes down to sizes of one hundredth of a millimeter. They can tell the difference between two kinds of metals even when the pieces are adjusted for mass so as to make them appear acoustically identical. Something we can't do without sophisticated spectral analyses. Blindfolded they can distinguish between species of fish of identical size. Sound behaves very much like x-rays. Only more so. Every density of tissue and liquid down to the smallest particle. They read each

JOHN (Cont'd)

other's emotional states. Much in the way a lie detector works. They are literally transparent to each other. I said that they must be unable to lie to each other but Schuler thinks they could learn to. To fake their own body-chemistry. But why? Why would they? I think they have no secrets among them. We might recoil at the lack of privacy but we dont know. We dont know. The one thing we have no name for is the longing in our hearts.

EXT - THE DINGHY -DAWN

Kelly is sitting in the stern of the dinghy with the blanket over her shoulders. She is sipping coffee from a thermos cup. Guy is sitting opposite her with his own cup. The sea is calm and just brightening.

GUY

When I was in New Zealand there was an abandoned whaling station there on the Great Barrier Island... Well I guess it's still there... And we went out there one day to visit it. It was a very desolate spot. Very lonely. There was a lot of junk just lying around rusting. It was cold and the wind was blowing and we walked around and looked at everything. The try pots and the sheds and the flensing areas. What sticks with you is the thought and planning that went into it. To establish an enterprise whose most enduring product was pain. Some years later I was in Europe and a friend of mine and I went out to Dachau one Sunday morning. It was in November and it was cold and there werent many tourists. There was something about the place that was familiar and I tried to place what it was. And it was the abandoned whaling station. You could see the care that had gone into it. The care. Human consideration had laid out those compounds. Decided where the messhall should be. The baths, the guardstations. The furnaces. It was a cold windy day and it was very lonely. Someone told me that the local dogs wouldnt go near there. What I thought about most was the fear that had been there. Just the enormity of it. It's so terrible. I was always that way. I can see hunger or illness... But a frightened child. (Shaking his head) I just... I kept thinking: What if beings from another planet should see this? What would they say? What would we say? What could we say? What could we possibly say? I looked-at that place and I had a thousand thoughts. I tried to think of something worse than man and I couldnt. Not something that could still survive. I thought: What if the reason we no longer believe in God has nothing to do

with science? What if it's just that we can no longer bear to have him see us? I thought that place was a monument to our inhumanity but it's not. It's a monument to our perdition. To our lost-ness. (He looks at Kelly, looks out to sea.) I had an understanding there of why it was that our works could not save us. There's an ambiguity to the Parthenon or the plays of Shakespeare or the paintings of Rembrandt. They can be different things to different people. But there's nothing ambiguous about cruelty. Dachau has no second meaning. It can never be anything but what it is. And even the dogs understand it.

They sit.

KELLY

You said one time... You quoted Mother Theresa about being faithful. But you werent. Were you?

GUY

Faithful?

KELLY

Yes.

GUY

No. I wasnt.

They sit.

GUY

I couldnt. I pretended it was a matter of keeping an emotional distance from the whales so that I could do the work. But there was more to it than that. I saw where the sort of commitment I contemplated could take me. That there could come a point somewhere where I would have to choose. Between whales and men. That I could be called upon to take sides in some irrevocable way and that ultimately it could mean taking human life. And I knew that if I did I was lost.

He shakes his head. He sits back. He drains his cup.

GUY

I can contemplate the empty oceans of the world with a certain equanimity. For me the loss of the whales is of a piece with the loss of other good things. Of justice and human freedom and even of love. So I think about that. What I try not to do think about are the last survivors. Roaming the seas. Calling and

GUY (Cont'd)  
calling. Into that immense emptiness. Into that immense silence.

They sit. Kelly looks out to sea. About fifty yards out a gray back breaks water and she stands excitedly.

KELLY  
Guy! Guy! (Reaching for his shoulder)

He stands up and looks out, shading his eyes. She looks at him happily but his face tightens and she looks again. Another back breaks water. They are sharks. She crouches and gropes blindly along the rail for the oar, not taking her eyes from them. With the oar in her hands she stands on the seat in the transom, clutching it. Guy has the other oar. The first shark passes silently forty feet out. They follow it with their eyes. In a few minutes it returns, now half the distance. They clutch their oars. When it comes back it is no more than six feet from the dinghy and Kelly grips her oar and leaning with all her might she rams the paddle into the shark's side. It shudders and rifles off into the sea. They watch. They look at each other.

EXT - THE DECK - MIDMORNING

Guy and Debbie and Kelly are in the dinghy. Debbie holds a long boatpole. The zodiac is about fifty to eighty feet out with Eric at the motor and Peter standing in the front with another boatpole. Beyond this circle of protection cruise half a dozen sharks.

INT - THE SALON - AFTERNOON

John and Guy at the table.

JOHN  
What's going to happen when it gets dark?

GUY  
You know what's going to happen.

JOHN  
We could rig some lights.

GUY  
They're not going to go away, John. The ones coming in now are whitetips and they run in packs. Big packs.

They sit.

JOHN  
(Looking up) Do you have panabarbitol in your bag?

Yes. GUY

And a syringe? JOHN

Yes. GUY

They sit.

What if we rigged... JOHN

John. GUY

John looks up.

There is no what if. This is it. If you want me to tell her I'll tell her. GUY

I'll tell her.. JOHN

Guy gets up from the table.

Do you want me to tell her to come up? GUY

Yes. JOHN

Guy goes out. John sits staring at his cup on the table.

EXT - THE SHIP

The crew fending off the sharks. There are now about a dozen in sight. Peter standing in the Zodiac rams his boatpole into one. Kelly is not in the dinghy.

EXT - THE DECK

Kelly comes up from the salon very slowly. She stands on deck holding onto the bulkhead of the cabin as if for support, looking out at the horizon.

EXT - THE SHIP

EXT - THE DECK - LATE AFTERNOON

Eric is on deck tightening ropes with the winches. He goes to the rail and looks down. Guy looks up and raises one hand okay. They have passed a pair of lines under the whale so that it is supported.

EXT - THE DINGHY

Guy and Kelly. Guy opens his bag. Kelly sits with her hand on the whale.

GUY  
Why dont you go up? There's nothing else to be done.

KELLY  
No. Do it.

She turns her head away. He takes out the syringe and bottle and fills the syringe and pumps it. He looks once at Kelly. He bends and injects the whale. She sits looking out to sea.

KELLY  
Is it done?

GUY  
Yes.

She turns back to the whale. He has already put the paraphernalia away in his bag. She sits stroking the whale. Her eyes are wet.

INT - THE SALON

John sits stonily at the table.

EXT - THE DINGHY - EVENING

Guy sits listening with the stethoscope. Off from the ship a few yards Peter and Debbie are standing watch in the Zodiac. Guy looks up and takes the stethoscope from his ears. Kelly is watching him.

KELLY  
Is he gone?

GUY  
Yes.

She lowers her head. Guy lifts his hand to Eric on deck. The ropes go slack, first one, then the other. Eric drops them over the side and then draws them up. The back of the whale begins to

sink. Slowly it draws down into the water and then it is gone. Guy and Kelly sit. Kelly has turned her face away to look out. When she looks back she has been crying. They sit.

KELLY

When I was little we used to go to the beach at Sanibel Island. I always loved the ocean. I used to stare out to sea for hours. It was like a living thing. I was very religious as a child. I wanted God to speak to me. It was like a hunger that I had. I thought he might be more approachable there because there was nothing else there and I used to sit on the beach at night and pray to him. The summer I was fourteen my father died and I prayed for his soul because we were supposed to do that but I couldn't forgive God for what he'd done and after a while I stopped praying at all. But I still loved the sea. I thought it had a soul in some way. But it doesn't, does it. It's just water. It's just water.

EXT - THE SHIP - NIGHT

The sails coming up slowly in the twilight. The western reaches of the sea still carry the marks of the sun's descent.

EXT - THE SHIP - NIGHT

The ship under full sail. In the cockpit Eric alone at the wheel. The moon rides with the ship through a black scud of clouds.

INT - THE MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

John alone at his desk.

JOHN (V/O)

I always wanted something grand for mankind even in his folly. It may be death with which we are obsessed, but what we seize upon is only pain. Pain is the one god before whom we bow without question or reservation. The one obsession which has power to consume us completely. It is a universe complete unto itself. Schuler I close upon you. You said that our claim to need the whale's products was like the inquisitor's claim to need his victim's information. The vast apparatus of the enterprise suggests something different. Because the true object of these inquiries is agony. Pain is the perfect obsession because its requirements can never be satisfied. It is the preeminent undesired, the one thing which we so little wish for that we can pursue it forever. The one thing so all-consuming that it can replace the world. So what is that thing which we do want and cannot have?

What is it that we desire that even blood cannot satisfy and that only blood can legitimize? What is there about our existence that is so fraudulent that only bloodshed can redeem it? Why is torture, God help us, a moral inquiry? What is it that we expect to hear in the screams of the suffering? (He leans back) Truth? Forgiveness? If pain is excruciating enough will it not at last ferret out God himself? Is it really the confession of crimes and the whereabouts of companions that the torturer hopes to elicit? Or isn't his inquiry far deeper and more perverse. What we are talking about is a form of alchemy. With these howls we hope to provoke the silence of the universe into its own betrayal. For what we require above all else is a witness. Something to say that we are here and justified to be so. What else could this man possibly be about with his irons and thumbscrews? This man who goes home at night to supper with his family. This man whose hands are so bloody. This man who is me. What else could he be seeking except evidence for the reality of the world? That is why we cannot stop. That is why we cannot stop. Because deep in our hearts we fear that we do not exist. In Lopez's book he talks about their being so sensitive to touch that at a bird's footfall a whale asleep at the surface will start wildly. The fiery pain of a harpoon strike can hardly be imagined. But the pain of one whale is the pain of all whales. A thousand miles across the sea the outraged blood and nerve and muscle convey their agony unchecked. And that is the meaning of their community. We lack the power to share another's pain. We can imagine it, but we cannot feel it. But the pain of the whale is shared by all. For him the unspeakable itself goes screaming through the seas and he has no power to stop it. This is as far as Schuler got. This is where he turned back. Because we have turned a community of birth and death and life and love into a community of agony and horror. Amplified and repeated throughout the living web of those beings until the seas themselves vibrate at a single frequency of unendurable anguish. All this in an effort to appease a god who because he is cast in our own image is inappeaseable. So that nothing will stop us except silence itself.



EXT - BEACH - EVENING

John and Kelly walking on the beach at Djibouti. John is barefoot and unshaven. The ship is anchored offshore. They are very subdued. She turns to John.

KELLY

Do you remember the last time we walked on the beach?

JOHN

Yes.

KELLY

Do you think there are lions on the beaches here?

JOHN

I dont know.

KELLY

Will you come back to the hotel now?

JOHN

I'll be along.

INT - THE HOTEL - NIGHT

The hotel room has white plaster walls and a tile floor and there are white gauzy curtains blowing in from the open french doors to the patio. Below is the beach and the sound of the surf. Kelly turns on the lamp and gets up and goes out onto the patio. She is dressed in a white nightshirt. John is sitting in a wicker chair. In front of the wicker chair is a low wicker table and Kelly sits on the table in a semi-lotus position facing John.

KELLY

Do you hate people?

JOHN

No. You know that's not true.

KELLY

But you dont think they're fit to reproduce.

John does not answer. She looks out at the sea. Then at John again.

KELLY

I think the most interesting aspect of these conversations are the circumstances under which they're held.

JOHN  
Which are?

KELLY  
Secrecy. Whispers almost.

JOHN  
You dont think it's a private matter?

KELLY  
It's not that private.

JOHN  
What is it then.

She shakes her head. She looks down. She looks out to sea.

JOHN  
What?

KELLY  
Shameful. It reminds me of conversations that people have that are shameful.

They sit.

KELLY  
I dont know what you think, John. (He looks up) Not really. You talk about what you dont think. It's not that you dont have opinions or that you dont share them. You do. But they're opinions about what is not so. I keep waiting for you to get down to the core. Some hard and impervious center where the incontestable resides. I mean, there has to be something to strip the illusion from, doesnt there?

He looks down.

KELLY  
And finally I dont know what you think of me. I must be a doubtful entity as well.

JOHN  
No. You're not.

KELLY  
You think you're the only outlaw, John. God. Do you know what my mother thinks of me? I dont care. I dont care about being married. I want children, yes. Even if I didnt love you you're still the most interesting man I know. I dont want dull children. But I dont want scared ones either. And for all that you may be

right about our future. Yours, mine, the universe's. Whatever. It still comes down to being afraid. All times are perilous. It's beneath us, this excuse that we're beset with the greatest woes ever to face mankind.

JOHN

You dont think that's true?

KELLY

That's not the point. Giving up is the point. I cant know the future. You cant. But I can live this life I've been given with grace and dignity and honor.

JOHN

Dont you think I've thought about all this?

KELLY

Yes. I know you have. Do you love me?

JOHN

Yes. You know I love you. I cant do what you ask.

They sit. The curtains blow. The surf rolls.

EXT - BEACH - MORNING

The ship anchored offshore. Peter and Kelly walking on the beach.

KELLY

He hasnt slept for days. He walks on the beach all night. He hasnt eaten.

PETER .

What does he say?

KELLY

He doesnt say anything.

EXT - A COURTYARD - EVENING

The courtyard is a mudwalled enclosure with an iron gate in one wall beyond which are the beach and the sea. There are eight or ten tables with folding metal chairs set about them. There are white plastic tablecloths on the tables held down against the wind by large bowls of sugar. Some of the tables are rigged with canvas parasols. At the table in the center of this compound sit Peter and John. John has not shaved in five days and is haggard

looking. They have glasses in front of them and a black waiter in makeshift livery hovers at the door of the cantina which the courtyard adjoins. Very faintly in the distance is some African music and closer is the sound of the surf on the beach.

PETER

Tell me, man. Whatever it is. Just tell me.

JOHN

Do you think I'm mad?

PETER

No. I think you're very upset. I think you should tell me what it is.

John leans with his elbows on the table, rubbing his closed eyes with the ball of his thumb and the forefinger of his left hand.

JOHN

Do your eyeballs ever squeak?

PETER

(Almost smiling) Yes.

PETER

(Looking up) Really?

Peter looks away toward the beach. He looks back at John.

PETER

Maybe that's your whole trouble, John. You don't understand that other people's eyeballs are just like yours.

JOHN

(Smiling thinly) You may be right.

PETER

What are you going to do?

JOHN

I don't know.

PETER

We've been here five days. I think we've fairly well exhausted the local entertainment possibilities.

JOHN

Will you do what I ask you to do?

PETER

What do you want me to do?

JOHN

Will you do what I ask you to do?

PETER

What do you want me to do.

JOHN

I want you to take Kelly to Athens. There's a plane on Thursday. Eric and Debbie and Guy will take the boat on. We've already talked...

PETER

When?

JOHN

This morning. Eric's signing on two men here. The agent's name in Athens is Agassiz. If Kelly will go to see him he can make whatever arrangements are necessary through my broker in Miami.

PETER

What in God's name are you talking about? What are you going to do?

JOHN

I dont know.

PETER

What do you mean you dont know.

JOHN

I dont know.

PETER

You cant stay here.

JOHN

Why not?

PETER

What will become of you?

JOHN

It already has become. Peter. It already has become.

PETER

We cant just leave you here. Look at this place.

JOHN

You dont have a choice.

PETER

And Eric has simply agreed to all this?

JOHN

Eric works for me.

They sit.

JOHN

You dont understand.

PETER

No. I dont.

JOHN

We dont get to say. Not if we want to save ourselves. We cant question everything. We have to be able to give the help that is asked for. Not what we think is needed. What is asked for. We justify ourselves with a thousand small acts of grace or charity. Petty kindnesses. It's all meaningless. We want to be liked. To be liked. (He is staring out at the sea. He lifts one hand and lets it fall again.) God. It goes beyond lacking all conviction. At the very core of despair is the convictions that convictions do not exist. That their reality resides solely in the claims of criminals and lunatics. I was on the beach last night and there was a bright light out to sea. I dont know what it was. A flare. Something. And I thought: What would happen if chaos should come? Would we be worse off? What if this were the sun misrisen at midnight. What if all order were suddenly in abeyance, the skies given over to the access of sudden random moons, everything mindless and migratory. So that all that we knew to be so was set aside and we found ourselves dwelling in a silent pandemonium. Would we be worse off? Would we be more damned under the transit of constellations unknown to us? What if suddenly we knew nothing? Nothing at all?

PETER

Is that the way that you feel?

JOHN

Yes. I think so. I think I've lost it, Peter. I've just lost it. Someone once said that Limbo must be a worse place than Hell. Everything has fallen away... I just...

He shakes his head.

PETER

If you lose yourself, who are you lost to?

JOHN

(Turning, with tears in his eyes) Yes. And who can find you.

The canvas flaps overhead in the wind. The surf rolls on the beach.

INT - KILGORE HOUSE - NIGHT

Lady Kilgore is propped on pillows in bed. A bedside lamp. Kelly folds a book she has been reading to her and places it on the table. She is about seven months pregnant. She looks at Lady Kilgore.

LADY KILGORE

I've never been fond of women, you know.

KELLY

I've suspected as much.

LADY KILGORE

You're losing your American accent. I've meant to speak to you about that.

Kelly smiles.

LADY KILGORE

My father had a fantastic memory. Quite remarkable really. It's the sort of thing one envies in later years. My mother was never properly appreciative of him. I dont know. Perhaps she was more lively as a younger woman. At the time I knew her she seemed to have developed almost a passion for mediocrity. I feared that all my life. I always feared that. She told me once a year or so before she died that she had had for much of her life a recurring dream in which she was molested by members of a bowling team. I dont know why she told me that. We were never very good friends. Let me say goodnight now. I rather fancy I might be able to sleep.

Kelly bends and kisses her on the cheek.

INT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kelly enters a bedroom and by the light from the hall lamp studies her two-year old daughter in her crib. She reaches down and brushes the hair from her cheek.

KELLY

The angels are stooping  
Above your bed.  
They weary of trooping  
With the whimpering dead.

INT - HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A small operating room in a hospital in a third world country. Two doctors and two nurses are operating on the leg of a young girl. The older doctor is supervising the work of the younger doctor who is a native.

DOCTOR

Otra vez. Eso es.

The young doctor is suturing, closing up.

DOCTOR

Mas fuerte. No esta fragile. Bueno.

The older doctor turns away and peels off his gloves and pulls down his mask and takes off his cap and walks to the door. He stops and looks back at the other three.

DOCTOR

Gracias.

He goes out. He is John Western. He goes slowly and tiredly up a flight of stairs. He goes out a door and stands on a balcony looking out over the sea. There is a muffled sound of artillery in the distance.

INT - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Kelly descending the stairs in her bathrobe and slippers.

INT - THE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Peter is sitting in his chair before the fire. The dogs are stretched out on the floor. Kelly sits on the floor in front of him and opens an envelope and takes out a letter and reads to him. He sits with his eyes closed.



## KELLY

Dearest Kelly. And Peter too of course. It's two in the morning here. I've just finished rounds. There is a little girl here who was brought in this evening shot in the leg with a rifle. She is seven. She is very beautiful and very brave. Everything there to win my heart, as you know. The fighting continues and I do not see an end to it but strangely it no longer weighs on me so heavily. Maybe I am just too busy. They dont know what to make of me here. That I dont know what to make of them goes without saying. We started breaking ground for the hospital eighteen months ago but it was only when the first patient was discharged to take the news out with him that the people actually began to believe it was a hospital and not a barracks or a prison. So much for my architectural abilities. Thank you for the photographs. Miss Emily is very beautiful. I trust the heir to the title is incubating nicely and that he will grow up to be a financial wizard and relieve his father's weary shoulders of every care. I had a long letter from Guy. He's still in Argentina. He'd met a man who had been a professor of mathematics at some eastern school but who had some sort of spiritual experience or crisis and was making his way in the world as a card counter playing blackjack in the casinos. They met in a cafe in Buenos Aires and they talked from ten oclock in the evening until three the next morning. The man spoke to him about evil and the power of evil and the last thing he said was that ultimately there was nothing to worry about. Because everyone who is greater than us will love us. I've thought about this. I do think about this. At night when there's a quiet moment I think of you two and I think of Guy and I think of the whales. They changed us all. I know that one life can change all life. The smallest warp in the fabric can tilt all of creation to run anew. Choice is everywhere and destiny is only a word we give to history. To that which is accomplished and done with. The whales changed us and I think of them out there at night on their endless reachings. As if their crossings and recrossings stitched the world together just as Schuler said. I dont know if they can be saved. I dont know if we can be saved. Ultimately it is a single question. The empty sea will reflect back to us the emptiness of our souls. Having banished God we are now compelled to do his chores and we live in a continuing surprise at the indifferent results. We return again and again to the shabby resources of our own vanity. Like imbeciles at a poisoned well shuffling to and fro with cup and dipper through an ever mounting pile of corpses. The universe is cold and black and silent and our loneliness becomes us.

KELLY (Cont'd)

Yet I cannot believe that whales and men are alien beings. I believe we are arks of the covenant and our true nature is not rage or deceit or terror or logic or craft or even sorrow. It is longing. I know that we are lost but I no longer believe that we are doomed. That which we are lost to still exists and if there is a way out then there is a way back. Our natures cannot be so different from theirs and I think of them out there in the cold and the dark, those separate nations. I think of the temperateness with which they pursue their destinies. I think of their great hearts beating in the sea. Kelly, Kelly. I take back what I said about destiny. All this was known from the very beginning. I send you all the love my very small heart contains. It is my hope that in the emptying it may grow larger. Please remember me to Lady Kilgore. Hug Peter for me and tell him that I love him very much.

Your friend,  
John

He sits with eyes shut. He opens them and looks down at her. His eyes are wet. She climbs into his lap and puts her arms around him.

CREDITS ROLL

EXT - LONDON STREET - MORNING

Peter hails a London cab and steps in. He is dressed in a morning coat and carries under his arm an old cylindrical leather case about three feet long in which are his Letters Patent. The cabbie leans an ear to the rear seat.

PETER  
Houses of Parliament.

CABBIE  
Right, sir.

The cab pulls away.

CABBIE  
Members entrance is it sir?

PETER  
Yes.

Right you are sir. CABBIE

EXT - MEMBERS ENTRANCE

The cab passes through the gate. The two policemen on duty salute. Peter lifts a hand in salute.

EXT - HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Peter going through the entrance. He is uncertain where to go. A policeman approaches.

PETER  
I am Lord Kilgore. I've come to take my seat. Could you direct me to the Prince's Chamber?

POLICEMAN  
Lord Kilgore? It will be a pleasure m'Lord. I knew your father.

INT - APPROACHING THE STEPS TO WESTMINISTER HALL

POLICEMAN  
I followed motor racing very keenly. Sad to see what it's become. Your father was a great sportsman. Now. Just up these steps. Chap at the top there will see you right.

INT - PEERS' CORRIDOR

Peter being led along by another affable and chatting policeman.

INT - LOBBY OF THE PRINCE'S CHAMBER

Clerks and officials pass to and fro. Peers in groups of two or three, talking. Peter stands at a table on which are displayed the writs of summons, tied up with red or blue ribbon in a scroll. His solicitor arrives and they shake hands and the solicitor takes the Letters Patent - a large parchment scroll - from their case and examines them and nods approval. A roll of red ribbon is produced from the pocket of an attendant and the solicitor ties up Peter's writ into a small scroll.

INT - CHAMBER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Peter enters and takes a seat on one of the crossbenches. He waits. The Lord Chancellor enters through the archway from the Peers' Lobby with a flourish and comes up the center aisle

preceded by a macebearer. There are some forty peers in attendance and they bow as the Lord Chancellor passes. Peter bows as well. The Lord Chancellor takes his seat and the Bishop begins to intone the prayers.

INT - CHAMBER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Prayers are concluded. All say amen. Peter stands up. He walks to the table and hands his writ to the clerk. The clerk hands him a card with the Oath of Allegiance printed on it.

INT - CHAMBER

Peter standing.

PETER

I, Peter Donal Gregory, Baron Kilgore, do swear by almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, her heirs and successors, according to law. So help me God.

CLERK

(Leaning forward to Peter) Now the Lord Chancellor.

Peter moves forward and shakes hands with the Lord Chancellor.

LORD CHANCELLOR

Lord Kilgore?

PETER

Yes m'Lord.

The Lord Chancellor smiles.

INT - CHAMBER

Peter taking his seat on one of the last benches in the Liberal section. He sits, very peacefully, looking out over the House.

INT - CHAMBER

Peter standing and delivering his maiden speech.

PETER

The matter I wish to put before you is not parliamentary in nature. There are too many precedents wherein subjects of a particular urgency transcending immediate interests of state have been introduced before this body for me to feel obliged to cite them,

but nonetheless I beg your indulgence. I would like to speak to you on behalf of a nation that cannot speak for itself. A nation that has never made war upon another nor encroached upon the trade of another nor coveted its lands. A nation whose members are models of rectitude and forbearance and whose family and communal life is nothing if not exemplary. A nation holding no brief - either real or ideological - with any other on earth. And a nation persecuted without tolerance or mercy or abatement, subjected to so energetic and continual an enterprise of slaughter and attrition, that its continuing existence on this planet is at best wholly conjectural. Because it bore no arms against others it was put to the sword. Because it spoke an alien tongue it was given no hearing. Not in the world's courts and not in men's hearts.

INT - CHAMBER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Peter speaking. The members listening.

EXT - THE BEACH - NIGHT

John looking out to sea. In the mountains the muffled boom and flare of the artillery. The roll of the surf at his feet. The calls of the whales. A great bulk passing in the dark sea. The whale's great eye. His receding. The sea vast and empty. The calls fading. The silence.

THE END