



## **You Don't Make Wine Like the Greeks Did**

Fisher, David E.

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**Transcriber's Note:**

This etext was produced from *Amazing Science Fiction Stories* April 1960. Extensive research did not uncover any evidence that the U.S. copyright on this publication was renewed. Minor spelling and typographical errors have been corrected without note.

ON THE sixty-third floor of the Empire State Building is, among others of its type, a rather small office consisting of two rooms connected by a stout wooden door. The room into which the office door, which is of opaque glass, opens, is the smaller of the two and serves to house a receptionist, three not-too-comfortable armchairs, and a disorderly, homogeneous mixture of *Life's*, *Look's* and *New Yorker's*.

The receptionist is a young woman, half-heartedly pretty but certainly chic in the manner of New York's women in general and of its working women in particular, perhaps in her middle twenties, with a paucity of golden hair which is kept clinging rather back on her skull by an intricate network of tortoise-shell combs and invisible pins. She is engaged to a man who is in turn engaged in a position for an advertising firm just thirty-seven stories directly below her. Her name is Margaret. She often, in periods when the immediate consummation of the work on her desk is not of paramount importance, as is often the case, gazes somnolently at the floor beside her large walnut desk, hoping to catch a lurking image of her beloved only thirty-seven stories away. She rarely succeeds in viewing him through the intervening spaces, but she does not tire of trying; it is a pleasant enough diversion. There is an electronics firm just five stories above her fiancé, and perhaps, she reasons, there is interference of a sort here. Someday maybe she will catch them with all their tubes off. Margaret is a romantic, but she is engaged and thus is entitled.

Beyond the entrance that is guarded by the stout wooden door is a larger room, darker, quieter, one step more removed from the hurrying hallway. A massive but neat desk is placed before the one set of windows, the blinds of which are kept closed but tilted toward the sky so that an aura of pale light is continually seeping through. The main illumination comes from several lamps placed in strategic corners, their bulbs turned away from the occupants of the room.

To one side of the desk is a comfortable-looking deep chair, with leather arms and a back quite high enough to support one's head. In front of this is the traditional couch, armless but well-upholstered and comfortable. At the moment Dr. Victor Quink was sitting not in the deep chair but in the swivel chair behind the desk. His glasses were lying on the desk next to his feet, the chair was pushed back as far as it might safely be, his arms were stretched out to their extremity, and his mouth was straining open, as if to split his cheeks. Dr. Quink was yawning.

His method of quick relaxation was that of the blank mind; he was at this very moment forcibly evicting all vestiges of thought from his head;

he was concentrating intently on black, on depth, on absolute silence. He was able to maintain this discipline for perhaps a second, or a second and a half at most, and then his mind began, imperceptibly at the first, to slip off along a path of its own liking, leading Dr. Quink quietly and unprotestingly along. The path is narrow, crinkly, bending back upon itself. It is not a path for vehicles, but one worn by a single pair of boots, plodding patiently, slowly, wearily. The path runs, or creeps, through a wild and desolate district where hardly more than a single blade of grass shoots up at random from the bottomless drift-sand. Instead of the garden that normally embellishes a castle (there is in the vague distance a blurred castle), the fortified walls are approached on the landward side by a scant forest of firs, on the other by the snow-swept Baltic Sea. Spanish moss hangs limply from the evergrays, disdainful of the sun and of its reflection by sea; the scene is somber and restful, serene, and flat.

The buzzer rang once, twice.

Dr. Quink brought his feet down to their more dignified position, out of sight beneath his desk. His conscious once more took hold of his mind, only vaguely aware that it had not been able to achieve the incognito serenity it sought. He put on his glasses and the heavy wooden door opened and a man walked through.

He carried his hat in both hands, he was nervous, he was out of his element. He looked to both sides as he came past the doorway, and when Margaret closed the door behind him he jumped, though nearly imperceptibly, and advanced toward the desk. "I'm not sure at all I should have come here," he said.

Dr. Quink nodded, but said nothing. He judged the man to be on the order of thirty or thirty-one. His hair was black, curly, and sparse; perhaps balding, perhaps not.

"You see, I can't be quite candid with you. Nothing personal, of course. It just ... Oh, this is frightfully embarrassing," he said, taking a seat before the desk at Dr. Quink's waved invitation. "I just thought that perhaps, even without knowing all the details, you might be able to effect merely a *temporary* cure. So that I can get her back home, to our *own* doctors. Nothing personal, of course. I do hope I don't offend you."

"Not at all, I assure you," Dr. Quink assured him. "Just whom did you mean by her?"

"Why, my wife." He looked at Quink quizzically for a moment, then with sudden fresh embarrassment. "Oh, of course. You naturally assume

that it was *I* who is ... um, in need of treatment. No, no, you couldn't be more wrong. No, it is my wife. Yes, I've come to see you on her account. You see, of course, she wouldn't come herself. Ah, this is rather awkward, I'm afraid."

"Not at all," Quink answered. "If you would just tell me what your wife's trouble is?"

"Yes, of course. You have to know that, at least, don't you? I mean, do you? You couldn't possibly just treat her on general principles, so to speak, without being told of the immediate symptoms? You don't, I take it, have any technique that would correspond to penicillin, and just sort of clear things up in her head at random?"

Dr. Quink assured him that it was necessary, in psychiatry at least, to determine the disease before curing it.

"I suppose so," the gentleman said. "Incidentally, my name is Fairfield. Donald Fairfield. Did I mention that? But of course, you have all that on your little card there, don't you? Yes, I thought so. I do hope your secretary's handwriting is legible, it doesn't seem so from this angle. By the way, did you know that she is prone to staring at the floor? A spot right next to her desk. The right-hand side. I think I never should have come here."

Dr. Quink reassured him that he was free to leave at any moment, never to return. By a longish glance at the wall clock, in fact, Dr. Quink gave him to understand that he might do so with no hard feelings left behind. Mr. Fairfield, however, gathered his resources and plunged forward.

"I think you'll find this a rather interesting case, Doctor. Most unusual. Of course, I have little notion of the variety of situations one comes into contact with in your line of work, still I have every reason to believe this will come as a bit of a shock. I wonder just how dogmatic you are in your convictions?"

Dr. Quink raised his eyebrows and made no answer; he was desperately stifling a yawn.

"I mean no intrusion on your religious life, by any means. Not at all. No, that is the furthest thought from my mind, I assure you. No, I am concerned at the moment with my wife's problems, meaning no disrespect to yourself at all, sir. I merely asked, not out of idle curiosity, but because ... Doctor, I suppose there's no way for it but to explain." He gestured with his hat toward the desk calendar between him and Quink. "This is the year 1959, correct? Well, you see, sir, the fact of the matter is that I just wasn't *born* in 1959."

He stopped there, and the room relapsed into silence.

Dr. Quink looked at him for a few moments, but no explanatory statement was forthcoming. Dr. Quink removed his eyeglasses, opened his left drawer two from the top, removed a white wiper, and wiped his glasses carefully. Mr. Fairfield waited patiently. Dr. Quink replaced the glasses. He leaned forward across the desk.

"Mr. Fairfield," he said, "this may come as some shock to you, but *I* wasn't born this year either."

"You don't understand," Mr. Fairfield wailed. "Oh, I just *knew* I shouldn't have come. When I say I wasn't *born*—"

He stopped, at a loss to explain. He wrung his hat in his hands until it was crumpled probably beyond repair. Then he jumped up, pushed it onto his head, and quickly walked out of the office. As his back disappeared from the doorway Margaret's head poked up in its place. She looked quite startled.

"It's all right, Margaret," Victor Quink said. "He was just a bit upset. You get all kinds in here. This one claimed there's something abnormal with his *wife*. Better leave an hour free tomorrow. He'll come back."

But he didn't.

He didn't come back during the following three weeks, then one afternoon Margaret ushered him through the doorway. He walked to the chair before the desk, looking neither at the doctor nor to the right nor left, and sat down, holding his hat in his hands.

"My wife believes she's just," he waved his hat vaguely toward the shielded window, "just like everybody else here."

"And isn't she?" Doctor Quink queried, with the patience due his profession.

"No, she isn't. But she's forgotten. She hasn't *really* forgotten. I don't know your technical terminology; she refuses to remember. Oh, *you* know. Her subconscious, or unconscious, or whatever, is blinding her. She won't face reality. And it's time for us to go back. But she won't budge. She claims she's normal, and I'm the one who's crazy. In fact, she was very happy that I was coming to see you today. I *told* her I was going to see you, but she persisted in insisting that I was coming here because *I* needed help. She said I'm coming to you because subconsciously I know I need you. Well, enough of that. I'm here because we have to go home, and if you could just make her face life long enough to admit that, I'm sure that when we do get home our doctors will have no

difficulty with her case. It won't be so bizarre to them, of course, as it must seem to you."

"Frankly, Mr. Fairfield," Dr. Quink said, "you're not being entirely clear in this matter. First of all, you say you have to go home. You're not a native of New York then?"

"A native? How quaintly you put it, Doctor. You might better say a savage, mightn't you? But that's neither here nor there. I am, of course, a native, as you say, of New York. I thought I explained last time. I am simply not of this *time*."

Doctor Quink slowly shook his shaggy head. "I'm afraid the precise meaning of your phrase escapes me, Mr. Fairfield."

"I am not of this *time*, Doctor. Nor is my wife. We are from ... well, from the future."

"From very *far* in the future?" Quink asked quietly.

"Quite far. I'm not sure just exactly *how* far. Systems of time measurement have changed, you understand, between our time and this, so that the calculations become rather involved, though, of course, only superficially."

"Of course. Quite understandable."

"Quite. You *are* being understanding about this. Much better than I had hoped for, actually. At any rate, let's get on with it. For some obscure reason my wife has fled reality, and now that our vacation is up she refuses to return with me, stating flatly that she has never, to make a long story short, traveled through time—except, of course, at the normal velocity with which we all progress in the course of things—and that it is I who am out of my head and though, while not actually troublesome, it would be thoughtful of me to see a doctor or at least to shut up about this nonsense before the neighbors hear me. Could you see her tomorrow evening? She'd never come here, feeling as she does, but I thought if you would come to dinner you might hypnotize her unawares or—"

"I don't think that's feasible under the circum—"

"Isn't it really? I'm afraid I don't know much about this sort of thing. I'm quite helpless in this affair, really. I assure you I was driven to desperation to tell you all this; I mean, you must understand that absolute silence, secrecy, that is, is our most absolute sacred rule. Perhaps you could just slip something into her drink, knock her out, so to speak, and I could then bodily take her back—"

"Mr. Fairfield," Dr. Quink felt it necessary to interrupt, "you must understand that it would not be ethical for me to do as you suggest. Now it

seems to me that the essence of your wife's peculiarity lies in her relationship with you, her husband. So if you don't mind, perhaps we might talk about you for a while. It might be more comfortable for you on the couch. Please, it doesn't obligate you in any way. Yes, that's much better, isn't it. And I'll sit here, if I may. Now, then, go on, just tell me all about yourself. Go on just start talking. You'll find it'll come by itself after you get started."

"I suppose I asked for this. I mean, coming here as I did. I don't know what else I could have done, though. They prepare one for every emergency, as well, of course, as one can foresee the future, which is in this case actually the past, speaking chronologically. Your chronology, that is, not ours. I'm sure you follow me, though it seems to me I'm talking in circles. Are we accomplishing very much, do you think?"

"We mustn't be impatient," Dr. Quink said. "These things come slowly, they take time, if you'll pardon the expression. But of course, it's impudent of *me* to lecture *you* on temporal effects."

"Not at all, not at all, I assure you. I am no expert on the time continuum, no expert in the slightest. I daresay I don't understand the most basic principles behind it, just as you aren't required to understand electromagnetic theory in order to flick on the electric light. In fact, I believe it wasn't even necessary for Edison to understand it in order to invent the damned thing."

"You know about Edison then?"

"Oh, certainly. I've studied up quite a bit on this section of our history."

"You're sure," Dr. Quink went on, "that you simply didn't learn about Edison in grammar school?"

"Quite. Oh, yes, quite. No offense meant, sir, but you must certainly realize that between my time and this there have been a great many discoveries in the manifold fields embraced by science, so that people who in your own time were famous to schoolchildren are now, then, that is,—oh, I hope you know what I mean—known only to scholars of the period involved. In the time to which I belong the schoolchildren may know of Newton, Einstein and Fisher, but of such lesser luminaries as Edison, or even Avogadro or Galdeen, they are quite ignorant."

"Galdeen?"

"Yes, Galdeen. Surely you know of Galdeen. Perhaps I'm mispronouncing it. Oh, damn. I'm actually rather proud of my knowledge of your

histories, I hate to be tripped up on something like this. Galineed, perhaps?"

"Well, it's not worth bothering about."

"Damned annoying, just the same. It's on the tip of my tongue. Galeel?"

"Would you mind very much if we went on to some other subject? I don't think we're gaining much right here."

"You're the doctor, you know," Fairfield replied. "I was just explaining how I knew about Edison, though I never attended grammar school in this century. So, then, where were we? You asked me to tell you about myself, didn't you? You know, I'd much rather you told me about yourself." Fairfield suddenly sat upright on the couch, drew his legs up to his chest, crossed his ankles, and hugged his knees. "I was noticing that picture you have hanging on the wall," he said. "The sea, la mer, das Weltmeer, te misralub, et cetera. The roaring, crashing waves, the bubbling, foaming spray. The deep dank mystery of the green wet sea. Marvelous, marvelous. Do you indulge in sex? I mean you, personally, of course, not as a representative of your species."

Victor Quink laid down his pad in his lap. "I'm not married, Mr. Fairfield," he said. "Do you often ask such questions of people you've recently met?"

"The sun came up this morning, Dr. Quink," Fairfield answered jovially, "the sun came up. You'll pardon my answer, of course, I was merely trying to top your own non sequitur. Many of your people do indulge, you know. In fact, it would seem, from my own necessarily limited observations, that it is more universal in its appeal than any of your other sports. Do you classify it as a sport? It's amazing, really, how these simple connections escape one until one tries to formulate one's recollections into a consistent line of reasoning. Have you ever noticed? Of course, though, you do it for procreation, don't you? *Now* I mean you as a representative of your species, naturally. Seeing as you are not married, eh, doctor," and he winked at Quink. "It seems to me, however, and again I insist that I am no expert in the field, however it does seem to me that this matter of procreation is in many cases just an excuse; there seems to be an inherent taste for mating per se, or wouldn't you agree?"

"You seem to take a disinterested view of the whole business, Mr. Fairfield. Do *you*, ah, indulge?"

"Oh, no. No, no, no, no, no, no. I couldn't, thank you just the same. I'm really flattered, believe me I am, but thank you, no."

"That was *not* an invitation, Mr. Fairfield," Dr. Quink put in, "I was trying to—"

"Galui?"

"Mr. Fairfield, I was trying to ascertain whether or not you lead an active sex life, or whether your interest is purely, shall we say, metaphysical?"

"Yes, let's do say metaphysical. Rather clever of you, applying the term to sex that way. My estimation of your capabilities shoots up a notch or two, Dr. Quink."

"You mean to say," Dr. Quink kept up, "that you do not participate in the physical ramifications?"

"Oh, you *do* have a turn for words, Doctor. No, of course not. None of us do."

"By *us* you mean your cohorts in the future?"

"Exactly. You have an analytical mind, keen, keen. We do not die, we do not give birth. And I never would have brought the whole morbid subject up except that it has a direct bearing on Mimi's trouble. So it is necessary that you realize that sex is entirely foreign to us."

"Then," said Dr. Quink, "if what you say is true, your physical, let us say, equipment, must have degenerated. And so a simple physical examination—"

"Evolution is slow, my doctor, slow, slow, slow. No, I'm physically indistinguishable from you. Assuming normalcy on your part, of course. To continue along this train of thought, though, it is the mental process that provides the difference. There is no desire in me or mine, Doctor, no urge, no depravity, no sexual hunger. It simply died out over the eons."

"Since it was no longer necessary," Quink prodded him.

"Or vice versa. With the urge dying, it might have been necessary for us to circumvent the entire business. An academic question, really. The chicken or the egg all over again. But since we have conquered time, so to speak, it must have occurred to you that there is no need for us to die, and thus no need for birth."

"You are immortal, then," Dr. Quink said, scribbling in his note pad.

Mr. Fairfield shrugged. "It beats sex. Which brings us to the problem we are discussing, if we can forget myself for a few moments. Mimi seems to have been awakened to the sexual urge, and that provides an embarrassing situation. Of course, its real significance is in relation to her problem as a whole, in the illumination it sheds upon her neurosis, yet in itself it is, as I say, embarrassing. Coupled with my complete

indifference, I mean. Have you any plans for this evening? Perhaps you could dine with us without delay?"

Dr. Quink would not ordinarily have accepted such an invitation, being of that class of physician which believes a disease, be it physical or mental, best treated in the antiseptic confines of the office or hospital. Mr. Fairfield, however, struck him as being the altogether unprepossessing possessor of an altogether distinguished psychosis. He was, in fact, rapidly supplanting in Dr. Quink's estimation his previous favorite. Already Dr. Quink was writing, mentally of course, the introduction to the paper he would present to his professional journal.

Throughout the automobile ride out to Long Island Donald Fairfield was quiet as, both hands tightly on the steering wheel of his new Buick, he alternately fought and coasted with the east-bound traffic. Dr. Quink forced himself to relax, to ignore the ins and outs of the commuters' raceway. He folded his arms across his chest, slumped down in his seat with his legs stretched out as far as they would reach, and observed the facial contortions of his driver-patient.

Fairfield's lips would twitch as he twisted the wheel and shot into the left lane. His foot pressed down on the gas and the right corner of his lip pulled back in sneering response, the sudden surge of the Buick seemed intimately linked to one muscular act no more than to the other. His eyebrows pressed intensely together, caressing one another, as the big car whipped back into line. A sharp outlet of breath between tightly clenched teeth preceded the sharper blast of the horn and then the Buick was swerving out to the left again with the accompanying lip twitch. A car they were about to pass pulled out in front of them, initiating a spasmodic clutching of the wheel by the left hand, a furious pounding on the horn by the right, and a synchronized twitch, sneer, and muttered "goddam it" from the lips, repeated twice while the eyebrows maintained their position of togetherness.

Dr. Quink closed his eyes finally. There was nothing more to be gained at the moment from observation. The patient's responses while driving were normal.

Mrs. Fairfield greeted them at the door with a martini pitcher in one hand and a modernistically designed apron around her waist. She uttered little squeals about them being early and ushered them into the living room where she settled Dr. Quink on one end of an eight-foot powder blue divan before she left the room with the martini pitcher still

clutched tightly in the one hand, the other rapidly undoing the apron of modernistic design. Donald Fairfield had not said one word since the front door had opened in response to their ring; none had seemed to have been necessary nor, in fact, possible, under the deluge of Mrs. Fairfield's effusive greeting. Now he sat in the tilted green armchair in one corner of the room and, closing his eyes, relaxed from the strain of the drive.

"Your wife is very pretty," Dr. Quink said.

"Yes, she's probably the most beautiful woman I know," Fairfield said. "That's probably why I took her along. There's something about a beautiful woman... . It was certainly a mistake."

"Feminine beauty is enjoyable even though you don't indulge in sex?"

"Of course, it is," he replied, with a gesture of annoyance. "You're still bound by that Freed—Freud, is it?—of yours. Damn him. That's really the main reason I hesitated so long before I brought her case to you. I was afraid you were going to place too much emphasis on the sexual aspects which, of course, by your standards are abnormal. It has really nothing to do with the problem, and I wish you'd forget about it, but I suppose you can't. To you, her sexual instincts will be normal and it will be *mine* which will appear abnormal, whereas in reality, of course, it's the other way around. You'll never cure her, I can see that now. But then, you don't have to really *cure* her. If you can just get her to admit the truth for just a moment or two, just temporarily, I can get her back to some really competent men. No reflection on your ability meant, you know. I realize you're the best available in this age, naturally."

"Naturally."

"But you can't know that, can you? Well, take my word for it, you are. So suppose you start acting like it and get to work on her, eh? Could it be Gilui? No."

Dr. Quink bent over and tied his shoelace once or twice before he replied. He would have to talk to Mrs. Fairfield in private, of course, Mr. Fairfield could understand that, of course, it was not that Dr. Quink did not want Mr. Fairfield around when the discussion took place but simply that one could not achieve rapport without absolute confidence and, of course, privacy.

"Of course," Mr. Fairfield agreed. "I'll go up and shower now, perhaps I'll take a bit of a nap before dinner. I'd like to avoid that horrible liquid she was stirring up when we came in anyhow. Somewhere she's picked up the idea that one should offer those things to dinner guests, and I can't stand them. Will you want a pen and some notepaper?"

When he had left the room to tread up the stairs one at a time, leaning heavily on the cast-iron bannister but making no sound on the wall-to-wall carpeting, Dr. Quink leaned back and had barely time to pass his hand wearily over his eyes in a circular motion that he found soothing when Mrs. Fairfield entered from behind a swinging door bearing a small circular tray on which were balanced the aforementioned martini pitcher and two high-stemmed glasses, properly frosted and rounded with lemon.

"Has he left already?" she asked. "Well, shall we get right down to business? You call me Mimi and I'll call you Victor. What did you think of his story? Pretty wild, isn't it? But he's harmless, I'm sure. I'm not in the least bit afraid of him. Do you think I should be?"

Victor smiled and accepted the proffered martini. He cradled it in long fingers and, elbows on knees, contemplated his hostess, analyzing her physical attraction. He finally decided it emanated in the main from her almond-shaped eyes and in their somewhat mystical synchronization with her wide, sensual lips. There was definitely a disconcerting correlation between them when she smiled, and as he was studying this phenomenon he realized that of course she *was* smiling.

"I'm sorry," he said. "It was rude of me to stare."

"Don't be silly," she said. "It was most complimentary. But I suppose in your position it's best to be extremely careful."

"My position?"

"Flirting with your patient's wife."

He put down the martini rather too quickly, splashing a bit over the edges of the glass, leaving colorless stains that evaporated in a few moments. "I don't want you to think *that*, Mrs. Fairfield," he said. "It's just that ... that ... "

But she didn't interrupt him to say, "Of course not," or "I was just teasing," or "Isn't it amazing how little rain we've had lately. Did you realize that this is the driest November in sixteen and a half years?" She just stared and smiled at him, and let him flounder and make noises until he gave it up as a bad job and took a long drink from the frosted glass he had so recently and abruptly put down. She refilled his glass and leaned back in her chair.

"Could you tell me about him, Mrs. Fairfield?" he said then. "Start as far back as you can, please."

"All right, Victor," she said. "But it won't be much help, I'm afraid. Did he tell you he came from the future?"

"He said that both of you did."

"Yes, that's right. Both of us. And I refuse to go back, is that it?"

"Because of some deep-seated neurosis which he wants me to cure. His story is plausible, logical, once you grant the basic premise that time travel is an actuality. You see, Mrs. Fairfield—"

"Mimi, please, Victor. After all, we're not in your office, and I'm not really your patient, am I? Or am I?"

"Of course not. Well, Mimi, then, the first step is to break down his story. Show him for once and all that it is *not* plausible, that it is not even possible, that it is plainly and simply a lie which he himself has made up to hide something that he is afraid of. Once we can get him to see this, or at least to wonder about it, once we can break the granite assurance of his that he comes from another time, then perhaps we can probe into his festering secret. But we can't do that, I'm afraid, until he begins to admit, at least to himself, that he *is* sick and that he needs help. In this case it shouldn't be too hard."

"My, you *are* brilliant. I wonder how you do it. Oh, you shouldn't gulp a martini so quickly. Here, let me pour you some more, but sip it this time. I know, I can't stand the taste either, but it's really the only way."

"Mrs. Fairfield—"

"Mimi," she insisted.

"Mimi," he said, then hesitated.

"Mimi," she prompted.

"I forgot what I was going to say," he admitted. "Cheers."

"Don't gulp," she said. "Here, I'll pour you another one, but sip it, now promise."

"God, it does taste awful, doesn't it?" he said, grimacing. "I don't think I ever *tasted* one before. Do you think limes might help?"

"We have some in the kitchen, but it doesn't sound like a good idea to me. Why don't we just throw the mess away and whip up something else? I just wanted you to think I was chic this season to serve *martinis*."

"What season? Football?"

"Hunting," she said, and the eyes and lips smiled together again.

"Mimi," Victor said a bit pompously, standing up and leaning over her, "I hope you are not flirting with me. You are, remember, a married woman and are, in fact, married to a patient of mine."

"First of all," she said, "you're being pompous. Second of all, he's not your patient, he says I'm your patient. Third of all, I'm not married to

him. And fourth, of all ... is it fourth or fifth ... well anyway, fourth or fifth of all, let's try the limes. We've nothing to lose, it couldn't taste worse."

"First of all," he said, following her to the kitchen, "I am never pompous. Second of all, he *is* my patient because he came to my office obviously seeking psychiatric help but too sick to ask for it. I feel it only my duty to help him and besides, his case is fascinating."

"And his wife isn't, I suppose," she said over her shoulder.

"Third of all," he said, "and I ignore the interruption, what the hell do you mean you're not married to him? And fourth of all, it is fourth, not fifth, I think the limes will help immeasurably."

"Well, I think it all comes back to your original question. You know, about telling you all about him, and how it started, and all that. You see, I can't, because I don't remember. Here, you cut the limes while I look for the squeezer."

While Dr. Quink was cutting the limes he didn't exactly talk to himself, but thoughts did present themselves to his mind with very nearly verbal exactitude. The immediate progression towards a solution of this case did not seem to be so clearly cut out as he had assumed it would be. There were, it now became more and more obvious, complications he had not foreseen. Mrs. Fairfield was not exactly acting toward him as a psychiatrist normally expects the wife of a patient to, so that, although he found her pleasant and indeed invigorating, if that is the word and he was not sure that it was but the only alternative that came to his mind, stimulating, had connotations that he was not yet ready to accept, although he did find her pleasant and *et cetera* yet he found her behavior also disturbing, in the clinical sense this time, and the revelation as to her distinctly limited memory should be described not as a disturbance but as a downright earthquake, to ring in a seismological metaphor that occurred to him as he nicked his finger during the slicing of the fourth lime.

"Oh, did you cut yourself?" she said, straightening up from the lower shelves of a pine cupboard. "I'm so sorry, but never mind. Here's the squeezer."

The apparent non sequitur, coming in the midst of his thoughts that were already confused, bewildered him for the moment, but he felt it would be more fruitful to get back to the problem at hand and, blotting

his seeping blood with a handkerchief, he inquired after her reticent memory.

"Oh, let's mix in the lime juice first. Aren't you at all anxious to see how it will taste? Honestly, men have no curiosity."

Well, as it turned out, it tasted pretty good. At any rate, that was the consensus of opinion, alcoholic as it might have been, as they returned with the pitcher of green martinis to the living room. "The furthest back that I can remember," Mimi said after they had settled themselves on the divan, "the absolutely first thing I can remember is relieving my bladder, if that makes any sense to you."

"As a matter of fact," Victor said, "it makes extremely good sense indeed. If you will pardon me and kindly direct me towards the wash room?"

When he returned after an absence of a few minutes, during which time the muted sound of snoring emanated from the master bedroom into the silence left by his absence, he attempted once again to take up the thread of conversation that had been so abruptly snapped. "You were telling me, I believe, about the first thing you can remember."

"Yes," she said. "Have another martini. Here, I'll pour. I was on a train, you see, at this moment when my memory begins. It was, by the way, eight months ago. As I emerged from the ladies' room I could not remember from which direction I had come. That is, I didn't know in which direction my seat was, if you follow me."

Victor nodded more vigorously than he had intended, and she went on. "I didn't know whether to turn to right or left. That's a frightening feeling to have in a train, not knowing where your seat is, when you're all closed in anyhow and you can feel the floor beneath your feet and the walls and ceiling all rushing somewhere so terribly fast and carrying you with it and all. I wasn't really *frightened*, you understand, but anyway, as I say, it's a terrible feeling. So I leaned back against the wall and tried to collect my wits. But I couldn't think of anything. That really frightened me. So I said to myself, now just relax and think back to where you're going and when you got on the train and who you're with and everything like that and just relax and you'll remember where your seat is in half a moment. But I didn't. Remember, I mean. And suddenly I realized that I didn't remember where I was going or who I was with or when I had got on the train or anything, anything at all. I simply couldn't remember anything previous to a moment ago. I was scared silly by this time, and that damned train kept on rumbling and shaking and rushing on into I

didn't know what. So I said to myself, now just relax and keep calm. This is all very silly. Now, then, I said after taking two deep breaths and exhaling slowly, my name is ... my name is ... And by God, I didn't know my own name! It was such a queer feeling I got goose pimples all over, just like that. I mean, I felt as if I knew my name, it was on the tip of my tongue, but I just couldn't say it, I just couldn't remember my own name.

"Then I began to run. I didn't know where I was going but I was scared to hell and I just ran. I ran through five or six cars and the panic kept getting worse, and then I turned around and began running back the way I had come, just running as fast as I could and you know what that's like on a train, I kept falling against people and pushing them off and running and suddenly this man grabbed me and said, 'Mimi, Mimi,' he kept saying that and I guess some more and finally he calmed me down and, of course, it was Donald. He told me I was all right and to be quiet and what the hell was the matter with me anyhow. Well, to make a long story short, we got off the train here and stayed in a hotel for a while and then Donald bought this place and here we are. But I don't know if I'm really his wife or not. Did he mention sex to you?"

Victor nodded and she said, "So you know I'm not his wife *that* way, at least. And I have only his word that we were ever married."

"You don't have a marriage certificate, or pictures?"

"We don't have anything that would prove our existence prior to that date we were on the train. Naturally, he'd have left all that behind when we left wherever we were coming from. Any documents at all would ruin his story. For all I know he just picked me up at the train station."

"And you just picked up life here?" Victor asked. "As simple as that!"

"What else could I do? I was terribly frightened, and Donald was so calm and assuring. I didn't really think I had lost my memory, you know. I mean, I *couldn't* believe it. I didn't seem bewildered or anything, I just could not remember anything. Am I making sense? Anyway, I felt it would all come back to me any moment, and I went on living from one moment to another, and here I am and I still can't remember anything."

"What was Donald's reaction when you told him you didn't know who you were?" Victor asked her.

"As a matter of fact, I didn't tell him right away. I was so afraid, I just went along with him... . Oh, it's so hard to explain."

"He didn't realize that you were acting strange, bewildered?"

"Well, you know," Mimi said, "we're not talking about a normal man, remember. I suppose if I acted sort of, you know, lost, he attributed it to

our recent trip through time. *I don't know. Anyhow, he seemed to accept me.*"

"Let's get back to this time-travel bit. When did you realize that he thought you had both come from another time?"

"The limes really make the drink, don't they?" she asked. "Well, it came out sort of gradually. I'd listen to him really closely whenever he talked about the past, naturally. I was trying to find out about me without telling him, I thought he'd get all excited and all, and of course he did when I finally told him but by then it was all so different and I'm afraid I've gotten confused. Where was I? Oh, you need a refill."

"Thank you," Victor said, "I forget myself exactly where it was you were. Is that right? Where you was it were? No, I'm sure *that's*wrong. Where were you it was, I think. Does that sound better to you?"

"Isn't that peculiar?" she answered. "Could it be where I was you weren't? No, now I'm being silly, and I can't for the life of me understand why. After all, this is a serious affair. Or at least I wish it were. Was."

"What?"

"I remember, damn it," she said. "We were talking about *Donald* again. Well, he kept making these remarks about coming through time and of course I didn't understand what the hell he was talking about but I thought because of my not remembering anything and all that I better just not say anything so I didn't, but he kept on and little by little I got the idea, the general idea anyhow, but what on earth could I do about it? And then he started talking about it was time to go back and all that, and I *certainly* wasn't going to go floating off in any old *time* machine whether he was nuts or not, so I just kept putting him off the best I could but he started getting so impatient that finally—what was that? I think there's something wrong."

They both sat suddenly quite still and listened, but they heard nothing.

"I hear nothing," Victor said.

"That's it," Mimi hissed. "He's not snoring anymore. He'll be here any minute. Act natural. Have another martini."

"Thank you, perhaps just one more," Victor said as Donald Fairfield came into the room.

He strode across the room crossing in front of them without turning his head or acknowledging their presence and made straight for the buffet in the opposite corner. He bent over and extracted a thick black cigar,

struck a match, lit the cigar, puffed several times, dropped the match into a gigantic ashtray made of marble, or something that looked like marble, puffed several more times, finally inhaled deeply and exhaled slowly before he turned and nodded at his two spectators. "You make better cigars than we do, I'll say that for the twentieth century," he complimented Victor in the manner of all tourists, as if Victor himself were the cause and not the product of his age. "One of the mysteries of history," he continued, "how a simple technique, like making a good cigar or a good mummy, can be lost once it's been perfected. Always seems to be though. Each age has its secrets. You can't make wine now like the ancient Greeks did."

"As," Mimi interpolated. "As the Greeks did."

"I hate to be bombastic," Donald answered her, "not to say dogmatic or pedagogical, or impecunious too, for that matter, at least in this particular day and age, but I believe my original adjectival usage to be the correct one."

"If your thought had called for an adjective," Mimi countered, "but properly, according to the accepted grammar of the present day, that is, you should have used an adverb."

"Whatchamacallit tastes good *like* a dum-dum cigarette should," Victor put in, in an attempt to settle the subject.

"That's ridiculous," Donald answered, "it's completely wrong."

"I *know* it's wrong," Victor cried, "that's the point, *everybody* knows it's—"

"Of course it is," Mimi agreed. "Why on earth *should* a cigarette taste good? Who says it should? If one wants to taste something good, why then one takes a bite of cake, or a smidgin of candy, or a plate of cold borscht. If one cares for borscht. But you certainly don't smoke a cigarette to taste something good, they all taste horrible. Horribly? Oh damn, look what you started, Donald. Now I can't think straight. Anyhow, people smoke because of the phallic symbolism, right, Victor?"

Donald looked with distaste from Mimi to the big black cigar he was holding in his right hand, and thence to Victor for a denial. Victor, however, shrugged his shoulders, and murmured something to the effect that this consideration might possibly have some bearing on the subject, that it was really a matter of interest more to the applied psychologists and advertising men than to the pure scientist or doctor, and that even so it didn't necessarily follow that—

"You're hedging," Mimi said. "All you have to do is watch a woman smoke and then watch a man and—"

"I thought we were talking about wine," Donald interrupted, crushing out his cigar in the oversize marble, or nearly so, ashtray. "What were we saying about it?"

"You were commenting on the relative excellence of our wines and those of the Greeks," Victor told him. "I was wondering if perhaps you've visited them too?"

Donald Fairfield did not answer the query. He stared at Victor contemplatively, drew in a deep lungful of acrid smoke-filled air from above the smoldering ashtray, and let it out again. "This is not going to be as simple an affair as it should be," he said finally. "I can see that now, but I suppose there's nothing to be done but to see it through. I take it you've settled everything between the two of you while I've been gone?"

"Oh my," Mimi ejaculated, "I've got to see about dinner. See if you two can find something to talk about while I'm gone." She hurried out of the room, one hand already reaching for the apron of the modernistic design as she passed through the swinging door into the kitchen.

"Well," Donald began, "what did you discover from my little wife?"

"To begin with," Victor answered him, "she seems to have lost her memory. Everything previous to an experience on the train some eight months ago is a total blank. Were you aware of this?"

"I was not only aware of it, I told you about it," Donald answered. "What in God's creation is this moldy brew?" he asked after taking a deep gulp from the lip of the pitcher and spitting most of it into the first ashtray he could reach.

"Lime martinis, like a daiquiri, only dryer. If you don't care for them you might refill my glass. That's right, you did tell me she didn't remember, but of course—"

"You didn't believe me," Donald finished for him. "Naturally. Look, Dr. Quink, I think I'm a reasonable man. Damn it, I *know* I am. I don't expect you to believe me right off the rat when I walk in and tell you—"

"Bat," Victor interrupted.

"I beg your pardon," Donald countered.

"Bat. Right off the. Not rat, right off the bat. It's a colloquialism, comes from baseball, that's a sport we play. Perhaps you haven't come across it, if you've only been here some eight months?"

"Yes, just about eight months. I've heard of the sport, of course, but haven't gone to see a game yet. Do you think it's worth my while?"

"Probably not. Strictly a partisan sport."

"Yes, I see your point. Not an idiom, you wouldn't say?"

"No, definitely not," Victor said. "Takes time to make an idiom, but only God can make a tree. O Lord, I better have another martini. Would you pour, I think I might miss. Still, a colloquialism, not a doubt about it. The expression hasn't lasted to your day, I take it? If it had, then it might be an idiom. Might, I say, only might. I promise nothing."

"And quite right you are," Donald said. "Still, I want you to understand that I don't expect you to believe me right off the bat when I wander into your busy little office and tell you—by the way, what is your receptionist doing always staring at the floor right next to her desk?"

"She's in love. He's an advertising man."

"Oh, well yes, of course. When I tell you I come from the future. Obviously you're not going to accept that right off the bat, as I say. I mean, no one could expect you to. However, after talking at length to me in your office and then holding a private conversation with my wife, you should, I think, as a trained and highly competent psychiatrist, certainly the foremost of your day—"

At this point Victor had waved a deprecating hand.

"Please allow me to say that I am certainly a better judge of your position in this world than you could possibly be. Seeing it in the proper perspective, I mean. I did not intend to compliment you when I described you as I just did, I merely state a fact already known to my confreres. Then you should, as I say, under these most favorable circumstances, and certainly being forewarned, then you should be able to tell who is suffering from a delusion and who is not. Apart from what the delusion is, and whether or not you choose to believe in it, simply studying the behavior of the people involved, you should be able to tell who is acting normally and who is not."

"I agree with you in every particular," Victor said. "I certainly should. And I think I can, and have. In point of fact—"

"Dinner is ready," Mimi said. "And no shop talk, please. I want you to taste my squash and applesauce piece. And no one, absolutely *no* one, comes into my dining room with a stinking black cigar."

"Could it be Galilililu?" Donald murmured. "Damn."

"This is excellent," Victor said. "How do you make it?"

"Why, thank you," Mimi replied. "It's very simple. You just take the squash and then pour in the applesauce and cinnamon."

"There must be more to it than that," Victor insisted, smiling around a mouthful.

"Of course there is," she said. "But I'm not telling you all my secrets. You'll have to come back if you want it again."

"Damn it," said Donald, "stop jibber-jabbering! We know why we're here, so let's talk about it. Can you cure my crazy wife?"

"Donald!" Mimi spluttered.

"Now, Mr. Fairfield," Victor said, "let's not be unfair. Your wife has amnesia, but she's not crazy. As a matter of fact, psychiatrists no longer recognize the term as such—"

"Pass the roast," Donald said. "Do you think *I'm* crazy or don't you?"

"I most certainly do not!"

"Do you think I was born in the future?"

"Mr. Fairfield, talking like this isn't getting us anywhere. Now Mimi—I'm sorry, Mrs. Fairfield—doesn't remember anything previous to that train ride we were talking about... ."

"Naturally," Donald said. "That's when we got here. We'll skip the technicalities, but it's always easier to land on something that's moving. Standard procedure. I don't really understand it myself, but I'm no engineer. We landed in the twentieth century—is it the twentieth or the twenty-first?"

"The twentieth," Victor assured him.

"Isn't that silly of me. I'm always getting mixed up. It doesn't make much difference, though, you know. Not much of a change from one to the other. Not like the nineteenth and twentieth, nothing like that at all. Do you ever find yourself wondering if it's the twentieth of the month or the twenty-first?"

"I have a calendar on my desk."

"Oh," Donald mused. "I didn't notice it." He stared intently at Victor Quink while he munched his celery. "It's not hard to see why you've risen to the top of your profession. Calendar on your desk, eh?" He looked at his wife and tapped the side of his head significantly.

"You landed aboard this train some eight months ago," Dr. Quink prompted. "What are you doing here, anyhow? Are you an historian?"

"Nonsense," he replied at once. "Haven't you noticed all the books you people are writing? Every one of your presidents, every general, every field-marshal, every scientist, manufacturer, tennis star, and juvenile delinquent has written a book, or at least a serial for the *Post*. No reason at all for any historian to come back to this particular age. No other age in

all history, I might add, has been so fond of itself or so cognizant of the need for preserving itself and its records for posterity as has yours. And with very little reason. But of course that last is only a personal observation, and I may be prejudiced, having lived here, so to speak, for these past months. You get to see the seamy side of a civilization, you know, when you live there yourself. Incidentally, would you be interested to know how your age has been classified by posterity? Of course you would, silly of me to ask. Well, to get on with it, you know how historians are always *naming* periods, and groups, and whatever. The Age of Darkness, you remember, then the Age of Awakening, the Age of Enlightenment, the Age of Reason, et cetera? As it turns out, you've come down to us as the Age of Verbiage. Amusing, eh? No? Well, you can't please everybody. I thought it was cute. But in answer to your question I'll have to say no, I'm just a tourist. I'm on vacation. Nothing more sensational than that, I'm afraid."

"And naturally you took your wife with you," Victor added.

Donald looked down at his plate for just a moment or two, then answered "naturally," without raising his eyes at all.

"Somehow, Mr. Fairfield," Victor said, "somehow I get the feeling you're holding out on me, you're not telling me all."

"Damn it, the more I tell you the less you believe. I never should have told you the truth at all. I should have just said my wife's suffering from amnesia and let it go at that."

"I'm not an engineer either," Victor answered. "I can't just twist a screw and restore the proper functioning of the memory mechanism. I've got to know the whole truth, Mr. Fairfield, the whole truth."

"How come my wife is Mimi and I'm Mr. Fairfield?"

"I'm sorry," Victor stammered, "I—"

"Donald, you're embarrassing him," Mimi interrupted.

"Just joshing, pulling your toe, or leg, or some such," Donald assured him. "We might as well be friends, at least. Make it Donald too. I might even take your autograph back with me. I think the fights are on television. Want to watch?"

"I'll just do up the dishes, dear," Mimi said.

"I'm afraid I don't care much for the prize fights," Victor said.

"Just sit where you are then, and relax. I'm going to watch them. Won't see many more of them before we go," he said, throwing a lowering glance at his wife as he left the room. He returned in a few moments, however, before the two of them had had time to begin a conversation,

and addressed Victor, "Sorry to interfere, promise I won't interrupt again. I'm sure you two are making just miles of progress and I dislike the role of an impedance, but a phrase just popped into my head and I'm sure I won't be able to concentrate on the fights properly until it's resolved. I wonder, Dr. Quink, if you could possibly tell me if this is the age that is so fond of saying that idiots walk with God? You know what I mean, that they don't need their wit because God's hand is on their shoulder, so to speak, and that's why et cetera? Childish, perhaps, but touching, don't you think?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Fairfield," Victor replied, "but I hadn't heard the phrase before. Perhaps I'm just unfamiliar with it, or more probably you picked it up elsewhere on your travels."

"Mmmm," Donald answered, somewhat noncommittally, "perhaps. Well, don't let me detain you. I'll just run along. Vaya con Dios," he waved as he left the room. They waited a few seconds in silence, but he didn't return.

"Will you take him on as a patient?" Mimi asked when they heard the first roaring of the crowd from the living-room.

"I'd like to very much, if you want me to. He's a fascinating case. But it won't be easy, it's going to take time."

"Oh, that's all right," she assured him. "He's not dangerous, and we've plenty of money. Take all the time you want."

"You know," he said, "I don't mind admitting I'm pretty bewildered by now." He shook his head two or three times, as if to clear it, then asked, "Where does the money come from?"

"I don't know."

"I mean, what does he do for a living?"

"I don't know. Did you ask him?"

"Not yet. He'll probably say he brought the money from the future."

"Uh-huh," she agreed.

"Well, don't you even know where your husband gets his money?"

"No."

"What a combination you two are," he muttered.

"I can't hear you," she called from the kitchen. "The water is making too much noise. Come in here." He went in and leaned against the powder blue refrigerator while she soaked the dishes. "He won't come to your office for examinations or treatments," she said. "He thinks I'm the one who's nuts."

"That's probably true," he agreed, somewhat ambiguously. "It would be better if you were my patient at the same time. You do have this amnesia anyhow, I'd like to clear that up. Would you be willing?"

"Oh, I'd love it," she cried. "I can come see you for regular treatments, and then you can come to the house for supper several times a week and see him then."

"Let's go see if he agrees to that," Victor said. Mimi dried her hands in a hurry on a dish towel, grabbed a handful of his fingers, and pulled him after her to the living-room. Her fingers were still cool and damp.

He saw a lot of the two of them in the few weeks following that night, but he learned nothing more. Donald Fairfield was sulky and uncommunicative, muttering only over and over again that he had already said too much and Lord knew what would become of him when he got back but he didn't see what else he could have done under the circumstances and no one else had ever gotten into such a fix why the hell did it have to happen to him, a quiet and thoughtful and considerate man who wouldn't swat a fly, or anyhow not a pregnant fly. This opened up an entire new line of discussion. Mimi didn't know, in reply to his query, whether flies got pregnant or not. At least, she had never seen one. Donald was forced into a short lecture, barely remembered from second year biology, but it seemed to satisfy them. "We don't have lower forms of life at home, you know," Donald apologized.

On days when he didn't come to their home for supper, Mimi would have the last appointment of the day with him, and after her hour they would leave together, waking up Margaret before they left the office, stop off for cocktails before Mimi had to catch her train, miss the train, have dinner, miss the next train, catch a show or walk in the park, drive Mimi home, and finally part. They talked a lot, they talked seemingly without reserve, but Victor learned nothing new. Her life before that train ride was simply a blank.

"I'd like to try hypnotism," Victor said to her one day in his office.

"No," she replied.

He was surprised. "I don't think you understand," he said. "I want to hypnotize you and try to take you back before that train ride, back to your childhood—"

"No," she said.

"It's perfectly safe," he said.

She filed a rough edge off her nail, second finger, right hand.

"It's standard analytic procedure. I've used it dozens of times. I'm quite competent—"

"No," she said.

"But why not?" he asked.

"You'll find out all about me," she said. "I'll have no secrets left."

"But you shouldn't want to have any secrets from your psychoanalyst. I can't help you then."

"Perhaps," she agreed. "But I want to have secrets from you," she said softly, and looked up quietly from her fingers, staring directly into his eyes, and her lips and her eyes underwent that mysterious synchronization once again. "I don't want you to know me like a book, with everything spelled out in black and white, but like a portrait, with hidden shades and nuances... . I want you to know me gradually, slowly... ."

"Mimi," he said, and paused. He pushed back from his desk, swiveled completely around and back to his original position, cracked two knuckles, tried to force some saliva into a suddenly dry mouth, and started to speak again. "Mimi, it's not unusual for a patient to develop a feeling of affection for her psychoanalyst. In fact, it's the usual—"

"It's not like that with us, though, is it?" she asked, more quietly, more softly and deeply, than before.

After a long pause he said, "No. No, it's not."

And so they sat there while the daylight faded outside them and the twilight crawled up sixty-three floors to encircle their window and continue unhesitatingly upward.

"What are we going to do?" she asked.

"We're not going to do anything, Mimi," he finally said. "When I'm with you, it's all so light and fantastic and funny, that I forget. But it would be unforgivable to fall in love with a patient, and the wife of a patient. I can't do it. We'll have to stop right away. I'm no good as an analyst to you anymore, anyway. I'm sorry, I'll send you to someone else. And now you'd better go."

She stood up, walked around his desk, and put her hands lightly on his neck. "You're such a dear," she said. "I'll always love you. I've never seen you so serious before. We always laugh and talk and giggle when we're together, and I loved you then. But now that you're sad and serious and oh so pitifully tragic I love you more than I could ever tell you. But please don't worry, don't worry about a thing, darling. You'll see, it will all work out."

"It can't work out, Mimi, there's absolutely no way on earth for it to work out. There's no solution at all."

"Please don't worry, darling," she said, picking up her gloves. "I can't bear to see you looking so tragic. Life isn't so serious, especially as you're loved." She walked out and closed the door behind her. Victor sat quite still. He could barely hear her saying "Margaret, wake up, Margaret, it's time to go home," through the thick wooden door.

The phone rang in his office three days later. He was alone at the time, going over some notes he had just taken with another patient. Margaret was out, presumably peering through the floor of the ladies' lounge down the hall, and he picked up the receiver himself.

"Victor, come quick," Mimi screamed through the wires. "He's trying to kill me!"

She said more, but he heard none of it. His fingers went numb, the phone dropped, he was out of his seat and skidding around the desk before it hit the carpeted floor. He had to wait at the elevator. He thought for one silly moment of racing to the exit and running down sixty-three floors, then compromised on stamping his feet and slamming one fist into the other palm and striding up and down while three other men and two women also waiting for the elevator stared at him. He thought of calling the police just as the elevator door opened, and he nearly turned and left it, but couldn't and leaped in just as the doors were closing. "I'm Dr. Quink," he shouted at the elevator operator. "This is an emergency. Take me straight down."

The elevator went straight down. The doors opened on the ground floor and Victor shot out, leaving behind two nearly mortally sick women and several acid comments to the effect that he was probably late for a matinee. "I couldn't take any chances," apologized the elevator operator, "it might really have *been* an emergency."

It wasn't raining in New York that day, so he was able to get a cab immediately. He took it to his parking lot and roared off from there. He sped through the city traffic, incurring the widespread wrath and disapproval of the police department. A patrol car caught up with him on Grand Central Parkway and forced him off the road. He explained who he was and that a madman was threatening to kill his wife, no, not *his* wife, the madman's wife, and that he didn't have time to sit here and talk about it. The police officer told him to follow him, and, siren blazing, they roared off once again.

It occurred to both of them nearly simultaneously that Victor couldn't possibly follow the police officer, it had to be the other way around, and so Victor took the lead, the red siren hanging on behind. But when Victor left the parkway he saw in his mirror no flashing red light, somewhere he had lost the police. He touched the brake a second, for the first time in the past fifteen minutes, then accelerated again and hurried on. He had not the time to wait.

The door to the Fairfield's home was unlocked and he burst in without ringing. "Mimi," he cried, then, hearing vague noises from the upstairs bedroom, he hurried there.

He didn't find Mimi there. Donald Fairfield was alone in the bedroom, and the bedroom was a mess, and there was a gun in Donald Fairfield's hand.

Victor stopped in the doorway, a gas pain shooting up his side. He thought at that moment, inanely, he should play more handball.

"Galileo," Donald Fairfield said, "it came to me just a few moments ago. Galileo. It was on the tip of my tongue all the time, I just couldn't think of it. What were we saying about him, do you remember? What brought it up?"

Victor braced himself up against the doorway, breathing hard. He stared at the gun in Donald's hand. Donald followed his gaze down his side to the gun, and seemed surprised when he saw it. "Oh, yes. She's in the bathroom," he said, waving his gun towards the closed door. "She's locked the door."

Victor belched.

"For God's sake," said Donald. "There's a time and a place for everything."

Victor crossed to the door. "Mimi," he called. "Mimi, it's me, Victor."

The lock clicked, the door opened, and Mimi walked out and folded herself into his arms. He held her until she stopped shaking, then until he himself stopped shaking and until his breath came more easily. He kept all the while his back toward Donald and the gun, and his arms folded around her so that she was safe from him. Then he turned and calmly as he could, he asked what in the holy hell was going on.

"He wants me to go back with him, right now," Mimi said. She was shivering in his arms. "I'm not going, I'm not going with him."

"Of course, you're not," Victor said. He turned back to Donald. "What's the rush all of a sudden?" he asked. "What's the big emergency?" he smiled.

"Don't turn on the personality, Dr. Quink," Fairfield said. "It's too complicated to explain, but time's run out on us. We've got to go tonight, and I'm taking her with me dead or alive, I don't give a damn which way anymore, she's coming with me dead or alive."

Victor let go of Mimi and took a step toward him, but the hand with the gun came up and gun was pointed straight at him, and the voice was flat and tired and desperate, "I can't leave her here, you can see what it would mean. They're very strict about time traveling, they have to be, and she can't stay here. She hasn't lost her memory, she knows damned well where she comes from, and she's going back now, one way or the other. I don't know what'll happen to me when we get back if I kill her, but it's my decision and I can't let her stay behind, no matter what." His voice started to rise and the words began to come faster. He was working himself up dangerously near the breaking point.

"If you'll just calm down for a few moments," Victor tried, "I'm sure we can talk this out sensibly enough."

"It won't work, Dr. Quink, it won't work. You're trying to talk it out like I'm nuts, you're trying to reassure me, but it won't work because you can't. Because I'm *not* nuts! I'm telling the truth and she knows it! Damn you, Mimi, tell him!"

"All right! All right, I'll tell him," she cried. "And I'll tell you, too. And I'm not going back with you, you'll see. Because I planned this from the start. My God, what a day," she sighed, and sat down on the bed. "Now listen, both of you, you, too, Donald, because you don't know it all either."

"He's not crazy, Victor, we do come from the future. I was reading about all the Nobel prize winners, darling, and of course, I came across you, and right from the beginning you fascinated me. Do you know you were the first psychiatrist ever to win the award, and then you won it twice? Oh, I can tell you, I was terribly impressed! And when I saw your picture, you know the one, the portrait by Videl in the Museum of Ancient—oh, but of course, it hasn't been done yet. You have gray sideburns then, and there's not a touch of gray in your hair now. Anyway, you look absolutely distinguished with gray, it's certainly your color. And I thought you were just the handsomest Nobel winner I had ever seen, and darling, you are, not the slightest doubt about it. Don't you think so, Donald?"

"He's charming," Donald replied. "Just terribly, terribly charming. Would you mind getting on with it?"

"Please," Victor started to interrupt.

"Don't be modest, darling," Mimi went on. "So then I read a biography, and then another, and soon I was doing nothing but studying you. I fell in love with you, dear, I fell in love with you a thousand years after you were dead. You never married, you know, and you needed me, and I guess that helped, but at any rate I fell, and I fell all the way.

"We're not married, Donald and I. There's no sex then, so there's no need for marriage. Right, Donald? Right. But he was coming here on vacation and he was nice enough to take me along, and we had to fit in, so we came as husband and wife. Just a matter of convenience, really. But then we were here for all those months, and I didn't get to meet you, and something about this age just got into my bones, I loved it so, people really *live* now, not like back home. And I nearly forgot about you, Victor dear, although I can't understand that now, and all I wanted was to live here like a normal person, a normal wife. But *he* couldn't understand that. At any rate, I went native, I went whole hog native.

"And then it was time to go home. But I wasn't going. So I made up this story about forgetting everything and I pretended I thought he was nuts or something and he went and got you and suddenly there you were in my living room and it all came back, darling, it came back so fast and strong I thought I'd die on the spot. And I love you now, darling, I love you now and forever, and I won't go back alive, I swear that."

"Mimi," Donald begged, "think of the future. If you don't go back it'll be all upset. We can't have people just popping up in the past from the future, there has to be discipline. It's one thing to come here quietly for a few months of harmless vacation, and then just as quietly to disappear. But to settle down brazenly in another time, to ... to immigrate, as it were, well, it just can't be done. There's no precedent, just none at all. *Nobody* would think of doing such a thing. Why, who knows what would happen if you stayed here? It could upset the whole pattern of the future!"

"The future will just have to take care of itself," Mimi answered. "I love him, and you can't argue with that. There's nothing you can say that can argue with that. I don't care poof for the future."

Victor sat down quietly on the edge of the bed, he felt a bit weak around the general vicinity of the knees. Mimi stood up and strode over to the window, her back to the conversation. "Mimi," Donald pleaded, "just think of what you're doing. You'll lose your immortality, for one

thing. You know, it's not something you're just *born* with, it's the result of careful medical science. Why, almost *anything* could happen to you here. They have all *sorts* of ugly diseases. And if you should last just a few years longer, just maybe fifty or sixty more years, your heart will almost certainly pop off. They don't have any sort of arterial rejuvenation now, nothing at all. You're trading immortality for a mere *moment*."

"I don't give a damn or a wild pig's snort," she replied.

"Don't be vulgar," Donald said. "Let's keep this on a civilized plane."

"That's not vulgarity," she answered. "It's poetry. 'I don't give a damn or a wild pig's snort, but you cut just one strand and the fashions be damned, I swear that I'll boil three in lime!'"

"Lime?" Victor asked rather weakly.

"I think so, dear," Mimi said. "Would you care for a martini?"

"How about the toilet!" Donald suddenly thundered. "How about *that*, hey?"

"I beg your pardon," Mimi replied.

"The toilets, the toilets," he repeated impatiently. "Do you want to spend the rest of your short life with this old-fashioned plumbing?" He waved wildly toward the tile bathroom. "It's all right roughing it for a few months like we did, but can you honestly imagine spending the rest of your *life* under such vile conditions? Ha, you didn't think of that, did you?" he continued when he saw the sudden stricken expression on her face. "You don't like the idea, do you?"

Mimi clenched her fists at her side and stamped her little foot. "I don't *care*," she spit out, "I absolutely do not care! I will stay with him, I will, I will, I *will*." She turned and looked at the bathroom that opened off the bedroom, and blanched for one moment, then she shut her eyes, gave another kick, and insisted. "I will, I will, I will!"

Donald sighed and slapped his hands at his side. He turned around, hesitated for a few seconds, then said to the wall, "I've tried. I've tried everything I could think of." He turned again and faced them, and he raised his gun. "You're coming, Mimi. One way or another, you're coming."

So quietly he hardly realized what he was doing, but thankful that the gas pain had vanished, Victor stepped between the gun and the girl. "You'll have to kill me, Donald," he said. "You won't take her out of here without killing me, I promise you that, and what will that do to your future? A man from the future killing somebody here? Oh, no, that'll upset

everything. And before I've become famous? Your whole history will be changed. You'd better think twice, Donald."

The gun wavered, and lowered.

"Would you care for a martini, Donald, dear?" Mimi asked.

Donald turned and ran from the room. They heard his feet slipping down the stairs, they heard the front door slam behind him.

Victor started after him, but Mimi held him back. "What are you going to do," she cried, "chase after him? What will you do when you catch him? You're needed more here. After all," she continued, "think what I just went through? I'm a nervous wreck, almost getting carted off to God knows where like that. I need the care of a competent physician."

He turned back to her in a daze, she clucked and patted his cheek, and pushed him down onto the bed. She pulled out his handkerchief and mopped his face. "Aren't you proud of me?" she said. "Wasn't that fast thinking? How did you like that little story I told? It really threw him, didn't it? He didn't know *what* to think."

"You mean," Victor stammered, "you mean you didn't mean it, you just made it up? Just like that?"

"Darling," she began to giggle, "you didn't believe that wild story? About the future? Oh, *darling*, you couldn't possibly believe it."

"Of course not," he said. "Of course not. Quick thinking, Mimi, yes, very quick thinking. It *was* a convincing story, you know. Very good. But, my God! I've got to catch him."

"Don't be silly," she said, pushing him down. "You'll never find him, you'll never see him again. He'll be lost in the crowd. One more screwball in New York, they'll never notice him. He'll fit right in. He may even become President some day, or at least Dean of Students at some small New England College. You just take my word for it, darling, and relax a moment. I'll rush downstairs and bring you up a martini. We deserve one. He'll be all right now. As long as he's made up his mind that he can leave me here, he'll trot off somewhere and dig up another neurosis, or psychosis, or whatever. He's not dangerous anymore. And you heard him say we were never married, and we have no marriage certificate, so I guess we're not. Can't we just forget about him, just as if he never existed? Maybe he never *did* exist. Maybe he was just a figment of our imagination. Maybe he was just an instrument of kismet to bring us together. Maybe he was just a wandering minstrel, or a memory looking for a chance to be real?"

"Maybe you'd better not talk so much, but just bring up the martini. Better bring a pitcher. Green ones."

And so she did. Their first honeymoon they spent in Bermuda; they took their second on a trip to Sweden ten years later, when Victor went to accept his first Nobel prize.

**THE END**

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