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The Sanatorium - Preface

Franz Koltien and Genevieve Klempner were born in Würzburg, Bavaria, Germany, in 1880 and 1882 respectively. Each grew to young adulthood there but resided in different areas of that distinguished city far from one another. Franz's father and mother, devout Catholics, had insisted that he pursue religious studies at the Jesuit seminary in Heidelberg. But following the discovery of the X-ray by Roentgen in 1895, and despite the objections of disappointed parents, Franz chose to study medical science at the University of Würzburg, where Roentgen had conducted his famous experiments. It was during their first year enrolled there that Franz and Genevieve eventually met, fell in love, and in 1902 were married.

Over the next several years, the young couple continued their research in the field of pulmonary diseases, with special emphasis on consumption, or tuberculosis, as it came to be more commonly known. However, events that were to change their lives forever loomed menacingly ahead. In May of 1915, disillusioned by Germany's tremendous social and economic upheaval following the outbreak of World War I, and fearing military conscription into the army of the Central Powers, Franz, with Genevieve and their two young sons, secretly emigrated from Würzburg to Le Havre, France, under a midnight sky of hard, steady rain, exactly three weeks after the RMS *Lusitania* had been torpedoed and sunk by a German U-boat off the Irish coast.

After landing safely at Ellis Island, New York, they continued their journey westward to Wisconsin. Genevieve had relatives residing near Milwaukee who would help acclimate them to their new home. After remaining in Milwaukee for one year, Franz moved his family fifty miles

north to Sheboygan, where he had recently been appointed director of pulmonary research at St. Nicholas Hospital. At that time, St. Nicholas had been affiliated with Marquette University's School of Medicine, nationally recognized for its pioneering work in the field of mycobacterium tuberculosis. Tirelessly working with members of the Anti-Tuberculosis Association and the Sheboygan County Board, by 1921 Franz had become both a proponent and outspoken advocate for the construction of a tuberculosis sanatorium in Sheboygan County, where over 100 cases of the disease had been confirmed during that year alone.

In 1924 construction of what was to become Rocky Knoll Sanatorium finally began. As the work progressed, everyone associated with the project had become thoroughly inspired, convinced that one day it should be known as the greatest tuberculosis treatment facility in the state, if not the entire nation. To those around him, it became apparent that Franz Koltien, M.D., was moving from strength to strength.

Sadly, in his own mind, however, such was not the case. Despite his remarkable success, only Genevieve secretly knew of the dark, inner turmoil which continued to haunt him incessantly. A tremendous guilt for having uprooted his family and for leaving behind his beautiful homeland and the colleagues with whom he had worked and forged close friendships, as well as his fully realizing the devastation wrought upon his beloved Germany as the result of the "damnable" World War I, made it increasingly difficult for him to conceal his depression. Franz had convinced himself that his returning to Würzburg would now be an impossibility. Furthermore, his fear that others with whom he now worked would soon discover his illness and perhaps ostracize him from any association with the Rocky Knoll project finally became more than he could endure. Early on a rainy Sunday morning, August 2, 1925, Genevieve and her

sons, arriving home from early church services, discovered Franz's lifeless body in his study, the result of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

News of Koltien's suicide spread rapidly throughout the county and state and was met with shock and incredulity. A short time later, his eldest son, J. Henry Koltien, took over his father's interest in the sanatorium. Together with his mother's monetary aid and assistance, J. Henry established the Franz Koltien Foundation Trust. Genevieve, in her husband's name, continued to bestow substantial sums of money upon Rocky Knoll and tuberculosis research in general, much of it anonymously.

The Koltiens' younger son, Leonard, had become completely devastated by his father's death. Emotionally fragile and introverted throughout most of his life, he suffered a nervous breakdown and was immediately placed under a doctor's care inside their home. A live-in nurse was employed to attend to Leonard. Eventually, after several months of Jungian-based psychotherapy, he gradually began to adjust to life without a father.

Genevieve Koltien continued her husband's crusade of public awareness in order to help reduce the number of tuberculosis deaths in Sheboygan County. Exactly one year to the day of Franz Koltien's untimely demise, Rocky Knoll Sanatorium was officially opened. Both she and her sons attended the rainy dedication ceremony. She continued to visit there and offer what support and encouragement she could to the victims of TB. However, in February of 1927, in a cruelly ironic twist of fate, Genevieve herself contracted tuberculosis. She died on May 24, 1927, spending her final weeks as a patient at Rocky Knoll. She was forty-five years old.

Part II.

J. Henry Koltien was appointed Durable Power of Attorney just prior to his mother's death. He had also been appointed sole executor of the opulent Koltien estate. According to stipulations set forth in their parents' will, each son was to receive an equal fifty percent share of all remaining family assets once liabilities had been satisfied. One month after his mother's funeral, Leonard again began to exhibit similar behaviors to those he had manifested immediately following his father's suicide. J. Henry, extremely upset with the manner in which his parents had crafted their will, and fearful that he might have to render perpetual care to an unstable brother, saw an opportunity to claim a greater portion of the Koltien estate for himself. Although he knew that contesting their will in court might generate negative publicity, a blemish on both him and his family's reputation, he reasoned that if he were able to have Leonard permanently institutionalized, he might be able to surreptitiously acquire a substantial portion of his brother's inheritance in addition to his own. He began to devise a plan by which he could dispose of his brother. His first act was to contact Hugh Rooney, family lawyer and close friend, in order to obtain Power of Attorney for Health Care of Leonard. Because of Leonard's current emotional condition, Rooney saw this to be a logical course of action, and, therefore, J. Henry aroused no suspicions.

On July 18, 1927, J. Henry Koltien telephoned Dr. Kenneth Meyer, a long-time trusted family friend and the administrative assistant to Miss Levina Dietrichson, the Superintendent of Rocky Knoll. During the call, Dr. Meyer thanked him for the magnanimous endowment which Genevieve had bequeathed to the sanatorium. J. Henry then explained how distraught Leonard had become since her death and how worried he was that Leonard might be reverting to the same emotional frame of mind he had experienced following his father's suicide. Feigning an inability to adequately care for him at that time, J. Henry requested that Meyer allow Leonard to

convalesce at the sanatorium until he recovered sufficiently. At first, Meyer appeared reluctant to grant his request, explaining that Rocky Knoll was not established to be that kind of treatment facility. Koltien countered by reasoning that because Leonard would not require the rigors of TB treatments but could, nevertheless, still receive proper *observation*, he would be in a much better position than if he were to remain at home under his care or anyone else he chose to hire in that capacity. That way he could recuperate more quickly and could be released that much sooner. Then, after making further not-so-subtle allusions to past family contributions as well as by implicitly promising him lucrative compensation, Koltien was able to persuade Dr. Meyer to allow him to bring Leonard to Rocky Knoll. Meyer's only stipulation was that no one was to know the true reason for Leonard's being there.

One week later, the Koltien brothers drove through the gates of Rocky Knoll toward the Main Building. After Leonard had been settled into a room and reassured by both his brother and Dr. Meyer that he would be there only temporarily, J. Henry hugged Leonard tightly and promised he would come to visit him in a few days. From his third-story window, Leonard watched the taillights of his brother's 1927 Packard fade into night. It was the last time he would ever see him. *The Story Begins....*

The Sanatorium

I.

Through the windy hiss of a dripping Sunday night, ruby taillights from a 1927 green Packard coupe dissolved like two cooling embers into tree-lined dusk. He watched from his third-story window. Wet eyes, frightened, added to the caliginous atmosphere. As his breath blew warm circlets onto the square, French-latticed windowpanes, dim yellow headlights, the color of an old man's broken eyes, wobbled toward him down the same tortuous road then veered off in another direction. He struggled to utter a single sound which might yield a fleck of normalcy to this unsettling drama. His big brother, the only one whom he could call family now, had just slowly faded up the drive and disappeared through the stately, split-black wrought iron gates. Nothing would come, only go. *I-I love you, Hank.* That was all.

Finally at the turning away, and growing ever louder, Leonard heard sharp, hard-soled shoes quickly click up the wooden hallway. They stopped abruptly. Filling the dim doorway stood a tall broom of a nurse whose starched white hat matched her clipped monotone voice and made him shiver as she clasped her cold clipboard to her breast. He stared at the floor, averting

his wet, red eyes from her. “Good evening, Mr. Koltien,” she chirped. “I have been instructed to inform you that this is to be your room temporarily until a suitable alternative can be located.” Her manner of speech was imperious, spoken with the air of someone greatly inconvenienced by having to remain after her shift had ended. “Breakfast will be served at 6 A.M. sharp. A floor nurse will be making rounds throughout the night, should you require any assistance. There is a sleeping gown beneath your pillow. Do you have any questions?”

Leonard half-turned and mumbled, “No, m’.”

“Very well then. Good night, Mr. Koltien.” Her pencil-thin smile disappeared as quickly as it had come. By the time he had looked up to reply, Leonard stood alone again in the shadows of his sterile white room. Ignoring the gown, he dropped face-first onto a starched pillow. In less than ten minutes, he had sobbed himself to sleep.

A tardy tangerine sunrise sliced upward through gray Lake Michigan clouds and slid its warm fingers into soggy September farm fields, spread just below that great wooded hill upon which Rocky Knoll had been erected. Leonard, despite exhausted body and mind, had lain awake since just after five, nauseated by the acrid stench of cow manure, wetly sloshed and splattered over nearby acres from which sweet corn had recently been harvested. A stiff, southerly breeze wafted these foul-smelling fumes through the open hallway screen door outside his room. He wanted to slam shut every door and window on the entire floor and burrow deeply beneath the thin, blue-cotton coverlet, which he had by now wrapped about his head and body, monk-fashion, and pretend that the past twenty-four hours had been someone else’s cruel nightmare, not his. He tried to shut out the world by squeezing his eyelids together as tightly as he could for several seconds until pink and yellow light appeared beneath his darkened lids. Then he quickly

shot them wide open, as a startled bird might, desperately wishing he could be magically transported, safe within his own room, listening while his mother delicately fingered piano chords as she had done so many evenings ago. But only the ugliness came flooding back: her coughing sickness; her slow, painful death; his own uncontrollable breakdown; and now, the manure. This day Leonard was suited for nothing but the darkness. He leaned his head over the far side of the bed, vomited into the metal wastebasket, and collapsed into another heartbroken slumber.

And Leonard dreamed....

At first, he restlessly rocked from side to side as if trapped inside a cradle. But soon thereafter his quavering subsided, and then he lay still. In the chaos of all things dreamlike, swirling scenes flashed past his eyes, incomprehensible. And as many of us, at one time or another, find ourselves in unfamiliar dreamscapes but with familiar place names nevertheless attached, so too did Leonard find those conditions painted within this dream. Through the formlessness of setting, he gradually discovered himself lying at the bottom of a fourteen-foot, deep-green wooden rowboat, its chipped oars resting in rusty metal oarlocks. He grasped one side and peered over the boat's edge. He recognized these surroundings as Erlabrunn Lake, the place his parents had taken him and his brother as young boys growing up in Würzburg, Germany. But it was not the same locale; there was no resemblance to it whatsoever.

The mist-covered lake upon which the boat teetered was not large; he had reckoned that fact in spite of the fog. Leonard had also determined the closest shoreline to him to be roughly forty yards away. He clumsily drew himself up and sat on the boat's middle seat. Reaching forward to grasp the oars, Leonard gingerly attempted to navigate the boat forward. However, as

he drew the oars toward him, he realized immediately that each stroke brought him not one inch closer to the hazy shoreline. The rowboat had become as immobile as if its hull were fused to the water's surface.

Leonard began to panic. He looked behind him to see rows of thick, portentous clouds swirling in the blustery wind around him. Tubular, white-capped waves began to rise from the once-glassy lake surface. Leonard cried out for help but quickly stopped, aware that no one would be around to hear his desperate entreaties. But just as he was prepared to surrender himself to all the raging, natural forces about him, the pervasive darkness began to dissipate as suddenly as it had come. It had been eclipsed by something greater than the turmoil that stirred about them. He glanced up and beheld a great shimmering light, slowly floating and descending, coming ever closer through the enormous cloud vortex that was the eastern sky.

Leonard's body trembled. His mouth opened wordlessly as his eyes became transfixed on the dazzling approaching light, which had by now stopped and hovered about ten yards above the water's surface. From the center of this cloud of light slowly emerged the enchanting figure of a woman, dressed all in green. Before he knew it, she was sitting beside him in the boat.

Leonard tried to speak to her but to no avail. She raised a forefinger to her lips, and he stopped at once. It was then that he noticed the ornate lyre she carried, crooked in her left arm. Her gown, like a woven tapestry of green and gold, shone brilliantly. "Dear Son," she gently smiled, "you need have no fear of me; I have not come to harm you in any way. I know you have suffered dearly of late, but I want you to know that, in time, all will be whole in your life again." Her soothing voice calmed him, and he began to relax his white-knuckled grip on the oars.

"Please," he begged, "please, tell me, who are you?"

“I am called the Maid of the Emerald Eyes. I have been sent but for a short while, and I cannot remain here with you. But you must always remember to believe steadfastly in your dreams and always to bring comfort and show compassion to those around you; then, all will be well. Goodbye, Leonard. Farewell.” As she disappeared, the boat began again to rock slowly back and forth. Back and forth. And Leonard awoke with a start, completely worn-out. He looked about the room, realized where he was, and drifted off again, hidden beneath the covers of his disheveled bed.

II.

Dr. Raymond Bavét stared bleary-eyed at three poorly-stacked piles of manila folders strewn haphazardly about his desk, eerily reflecting his own unkempt appearance. Anyone giving him half a glance now could tell this young man sorely needed the sleep that this job had lately denied him. His first month at Rocky Knoll had been so chaotic that he wondered if he had made the right decision by coming there to practice. Just twenty-five, Dr. Bavét had accepted this position while still serving as an intern at the Trudeau Sanatorium at Saranac Lake, New York. His knowledge of the most up-to-date treatments for tuberculosis, as well as commendations for performance there, had aroused the attention of several others in charge of prestigious sanatoria continuing to spring up across the country. Dr. Oscar Miller of Waverly Hills in Louisville, Kentucky, had heard of Bavét’s talents and offered him a prominent position, especially for someone so young. Even Genevieve Koltien, Leonard’s mother, had read about him. But, most importantly, so had Levina Dietrichson. Levina herself had worked at Trudeau several years earlier under the auspices of the renowned Dr. Edward Livingston Trudeau himself. In letters she later received from former colleagues there, all spoke of the intellect, empathy, and aptitude of this promising young intern. Once she had been appointed superintendent of Rocky Knoll and

had begun to assemble her staff, she knew Dr. Bavét simply had to be had. Perhaps it was that both of them had worked at Trudeau; or maybe it was the chance to retain the small-town feeling of Saranac Lake with its pure Adirondack air, but in the end he declined all other offers and chose Rocky Knoll to practice medicine.

But there was also a private side to Dr. Bavét about which nobody knew, not even Levina, which had also factored considerably into his decision to come here to work. The area surrounding Saranac Lake, ever since the passage of the Volstead Act, had become notorious for bootleggers to ply their trade. Situated fewer than sixty miles from the Canadian border, Saranac Lake had become a popular, out-of-the-way locale for some of the syndicates from Manhattan, who had already attempted to set up shop there, to run their liquor north. They referred to this route as the Adirondack Booze Trail. It was with one of these gangs that Raymond's brother, Gustave, had become involved.

Infamous bootlegger Jack "Legs" Diamond had been a frequent visitor to the area, and was in need of a discreet, expert driver. Word had gotten to him that Gustave Bavét was the best in the area, knowing intimately all the back roads and places to hide out. One night, under Raymond's intense questioning, Gustave admitted to him of his association with Diamond.

"Are you insane, Gustave? You know what he'll do to you in time."

"What? He needs me here, Ray. I'm doing him a great service. He hasn't a clue of where to stash his hooch in this area. I do. Hell, he coulda picked anyone to be his driver. But he picked me. And he pays me pretty damn good."

Raymond paused as he walked slowly around the table in his apartment. "How long have you been with him?"

"Couple o' months. Six, seven maybe."

“Who else knows you’re involved with him?”

“What do *you* think, Ray? Look, I know you’re concerned, but this *my* business.” He paused in deference to his brother and softened his tone. “Listen, Ray, don’t worry. I’ll be careful. No damned Snooper is gonna bust us up here.”

Gustave was both right and wrong. True, the police had failed to thwart Diamond’s plan of controlling the liquor trade. But he had other problems: Rival New York gangs that had similar ideas. One rain-drenched night in November 1926, Gustave found himself pursued by a black Pierce Arrow on a side road three miles outside of Saranac Lake. He saw a red light spinning atop the car. Gustave floored the accelerator and frantically attempted to allude the other vehicle, ducking onto back roads, spitting gravel, and swerving around corners like a madman. But all was in vain. The right front tire, blown from a bullet’s puncture, caused his car to slam into the ditch and stop cold.

Four men flew from the pursuing car and ran toward them, flashing what appeared to be badges and yelling for them to get out of the car with their hands raised. Once the men had exited the vehicle, however, they realized that they had walked into a trap. These men were not the police. They were a rival contingent of Arthur “Dutch” Schultz’s gang. Early the next morning a farmer on his way into town discovered four bodies, all lying face down, with a single bullet hole in the back of each man’s skull. Raymond was summoned to the morgue, and identified one of the victims as Gustave Bavét.

In fear and humiliation, Raymond realized that he would have to leave Saranac Lake for good. He quickly assembled résumés as well as copies of his medical credentials and sent them to recommended hospitals. Upon hearing from Levina Dietrichson, he readily accepted the position.

And now here he was, planted in the dirt of dying Wisconsin farmers and rolling glacial moraines, today resembling not half the man these professionals had once praised in near-messianic terms. But, accolades notwithstanding, there was still much for Dr. Bavét to learn, not only about methods to treat an insidious disease that had indiscriminately consumed humans throughout Sheboygan County but also about this brand-new facility and the woman who ran it.

The rude jangling of telephone bells startled him from his reverie. He recognized her voice instantly. She needed to see him in her office right away. As he hastily made his way down the long, crowded corridor to the elevator, he adjusted his straggly gray tie, slid his fingers through his dark, stubborn hair with one hand, poked the elevator button with the other, and pondered what she might want this time. He promised himself that he *would* sleep that night.

“Good morning, Raymond. Please, come in. Close the door and have a seat.” Her attempt to sound pleasant failed to disguise the uneasy tinge in her voice. Trying to anticipate her reason for calling him in, Raymond began in a rather dry, textbook fashion:

“Good morning, Miss Dietrichson. I’ve scheduled the pneumothorax operation for Mr. Franzen for tomorrow at nine as you requested. I thought we’d try collapsing his left lung first before we attempt to take the two ribs.”

“Fine. But if he does not respond to treatment by the end of the week, we shall have no alternative; they’ll need to be removed.”

“Yes, I do realize that. But Jake is such a great old guy; never complains. I really hope this surgery will work for him.” Raymond began to peruse her office. It was large yet sparsely furnished. A great painting of puffy white peonies, lying big-bellied in a golden bowl, and several framed photographs filled the walls. Next to them, a brass floor lamp stood mutely at attention in the corner near the door. And although sunlight filtered through the tall, draped

windows behind her, the office, nonetheless, still remained partially darkened, especially in the morning, due to its position within the main building. He eyed an Art Deco statue of a barefooted dancer wearing a speckled burgundy skirt with a gold-flowered top, her right arm extending upward as if she were a marionette. He studied the expression by the amber glow of lamplight from atop the large oaken desk. Then he looked back toward Levina. He admired her from the first time they had met. And although they had spoken in person numerous times since his arrival at the sanatorium, it was only then that he realized he had never actually observed her closely. He guessed her to be about forty-five years old. Her gray, deeply-set eyes, like glistening moist pebbles, rippled straight through him from behind small, rimless spectacles perched partway down her nose. With fingers interlaced, she sat somewhat stiffly in her high-backed chair in a manner that exuded both authority and even, so it appeared, slight discomfort.

“Raymond, the reason I called you in here is that I need to share some sensitive information about a situation of which you are not at all aware. In fact, only one other person besides me knows of this.” Her tone softened. “Quite frankly, I could also use some advice. From our association and your commendations at Saranac Lake, I feel that I can trust you.”

This admission caught Raymond off guard. It was a side of her personality he had not observed since coming to Rocky Knoll. Levina Dietrichson had a reputation as a firm but fair woman of business. She had conducted herself with a degree of self-assurance that convinced him she could effectively handle any situation that befell her. This was something new. Whatever she had to say, he understood that she was greatly disquieted by it. “Well, yes, certainly, Miss Dietrichson. How may I help you?”

She slowly rose from her chair and walked to the window. He watched as she gazed out briefly at the crisscross pattern of the freshly-mowed sanatorium grounds. Then she turned and

slowly came around to the front of her desk. She folded her arms as she leaned against it. “I have very recently been put in a rather precarious position, and I am not entirely sure how best to proceed.” She paused briefly and exhaled audibly as if she wanted to begin her story again. “Raymond, have you ever heard the names Franz and Genevieve Koltien mentioned here before?”

“Well, y-es, I’ve *heard* of them, but, truthfully, I don’t really know very much about them.” He wrinkled his forehead as if trying to recall what exactly he had heard about them. “Let’s see, they did research around 1904-or-5 on tuberculosis patient rehabilitation, based on Dettweiler’s model in Germany. Then, for some reason—I forget now what it was—they later moved out here to Wisconsin, and, I guess, they had something to do with getting Rocky Knoll built, and...

“*Plenty* to do with getting Rocky Knoll built, she interrupted; in fact, this sanatorium would probably not exist today were it not for them. Such wonderful people. Sadly, Genevieve died six months ago-- tuberculosis, of all things. She insisted on continuing to work closely with the patients here and, regrettably, she contracted the disease.” Levina stopped speaking momentarily and glanced at a sepia-tinted portrait of the Koltien’s hanging on the opposite wall.

Raymond began to feel discomfited by the silence; he decided to press her further. “And what of Dr. Koltien, her husband?” At the mention of his name, Levina turned away slightly and stared at the floor. Judging by her reaction, he now wished he had not asked about him.

“Dr. Koltien died two years ago this past August.” She paused. “He killed himself.”

Raymond’s eyes widened and his jaw dropped slightly upon hearing these words. “Oh, God, that’s awful. I’m sorry. But why would he...”

“A lingering bout of depression is the story I’ve been told. Something to do with events in Germany. Apparently, he had lived with this condition for some time. No one except Genevieve knew about it. Dr. Koltien’s reputation was sterling. Not a hint of scandal. He was first-rate in all aspects of his life...except for that. Excellent physical health. His death came as a terrible shock to everyone who knew him. Totally unexpected. As you can well imagine, the family was devastated; they were the ones who found him.” She paused again, arose, and walked around her desk. “Genevieve held that family together—they have two boys—with remarkable strength. But, as I’ve said, now she’s gone as well.”

“So, who’s looking after the boys now?” Raymond was not sure whether he should continue to prompt her with his questions or just let her unravel the story at her own pace. He had also begun to wonder what any of this had to do with his being summoned to her office.

“Funny you should ask. Both boys have been well-provided for. Their parents saw to that. After Genevieve’s death, the older brother was appointed guardian of the younger brother.”

“*Guardian?* How old *are* these boys?”

She replied, “Twenty-four and twenty. I guess the term *boys* is somewhat of a misnomer; *young men* would be more precise.”

“Miss Dietrichson, excuse my asking, but does any of this have to do with the reason you called me in here?”

“Actually, Raymond, it does. You see, besides being skilled medical researchers, the Koltiens were also magnanimous benefactors. That’s what I meant before when I said that they had much to do with Rocky Knoll being built. Not only were large sums of money bequeathed to this facility through Dr. Koltien’s will and a trust fund following his death, but Genevieve also

continued to donate to the hospital anonymously. I was made privy to this story only after her death. She was....

A raspy buzz from the intercom interrupted her. As she leaned over her desk to depress the lever, a detached, lifeless voice squeezed through the tiny speaker:

“Miss Dietrichson, Mr. Lindsay was just in here. He said that he wishes to see you after he returns from talking to Dr. Meyer. He mentioned that it should take no longer than fifteen minutes.”

“Thank you, Jane,” she blandly replied. “Did he mention where?”

“Yes, he said the Board Room.”

“Very well. Thank you. Oh, Jane, please hold any calls for me till after the meeting.” She clicked off the intercom and turned back to face Raymond. “I had better make this quick.”

Sensing her urgency, Raymond suggested, “Look, if it’ll make things easier, I can always come back later this afternoon.”

“No!” she exclaimed. “I need to tell you now. I’ll take a rain check on the advice, but I feel you should know about this right away. This involves Maury Lindsay, too. I’m certain that’s why he stopped by just now. He is the other person who knows about these circumstances. I have no doubt that that’s what he wants to discuss with me.”

Noticing an ashtray on her desk, Raymond reached inside his white coat and pulled out a single Yankee Girl cigarette. He asked her if she minded. Normally, she would have objected; the ashtray was for outside visitors to use, not for her or her staff. A childhood bout with rheumatic fever was the life sentence she knew would terminate much too soon. Nevertheless, she acquiesced. He tapped the cigarette lightly on the back of his hand, lighted it, exhaled a smoky-blue cloud, and waited to hear what she had to say.

III.

Sunshine on a breezy morning in September could mean only one thing at the sanatorium: The “cure chairs,” as they were called, were lined up in long rows under the covered veranda, and patients would be walked or wheeled outside to absorb as much fresh air as they could draw into their battered lungs. On those days when reception was particularly good, radios would softly play music or perhaps broadcast a baseball or football game, but for most of the time the veranda remained quiet. Those who did not suffer from pulmonary tuberculosis occasionally had their beds rolled outside to receive the direct benefit of the sunlight. *Heliotherapy*, as this treatment was called, was said to kill bacteria and promote healing. Younger patients enjoyed this treatment best of all because it reminded them of sunbathing at the beach with their friends, something most of them longed to return to.

Even in the wintertime, nurses would wheel several of their patients, bundled up like caterpillars, into the crisp, clean outdoors. There they would be left to ingest crisp, fresh air and squinting sunshine. Similarly, on the days when it snowed, if the wind were not too blustery, patients would still be taken outside where snow would accumulate on beds like cold cotton; this fleece-like insulation was also thought to be therapeutic for the patients. In order to incorporate some exercise into the session, a sandbag might be placed upon a patient’s chest to increase strength and breathing power. But there remained one key element for all of them: Rest. Their lungs had been severely damaged. They had become infected, fragile sponges. Every patient knew it. And though the sanatorium was the best place for them, they also knew that for too many, too often it was their last dance. If they had any chance at all of ever getting out and returning home, mothers to their children, husbands to their wives, they would need bed rest most of all.

Sheboygan lay eighteen miles due east of Rocky Knoll along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Because it was the largest city in the county, many of the sanatorium's current residents had originally come from there. When the idea of building a sanatorium was initially proposed, several prominent businessmen adamantly insisted that it be built closer to Sheboygan. Even Everett Namitz, considered to be the wealthiest man in the entire county, wanted it constructed closer to Lake Michigan which, he claimed, offered better, more invigorating air to aid in treatment. But the County Board of Supervisors examined criteria established by other reputable sanatoria across the country. In the end the rural setting won out.

Pamela Burton was the adopted daughter of Everett and Amanda Namitz. As a young man, Namitz had amassed an enormous fortune in the coal-exporting business, which he had inherited from his father. When his partner, Benjamin Burton, and wife, Natalie, were lost in the *Titanic* tragedy fifteen years earlier, the Namitzes, who had no children of their own, legally adopted three-year-old Pamela. Possessed of an independent spirit and an unfettered imagination, Pamela spent many carefree hours alone, walking through the park next to her house or else sitting beneath fiery-leafed maples in autumn, writing poetry or reading romances. She had once told her father how she imagined the park pathways and the large buildings within it to be her own Thrushcross Grange, as she would lose herself within Emily Brontë's novel. When Pamela was ten, she discovered that she had a prodigious musical talent. Her dream throughout high school was to study music at Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin, and one day to perform professionally.

In October of her senior year, however, all her musical dreams collapsed. Pamela had begun to experience shortness of breath whenever she would sing or play her piccolo. Initially,

her parents dismissed her complaints as merely fatigue from overwork. But when her symptoms worsened over the next month, they took her in for tests. Her doctor told the family that X-rays indicated signs of one who was already in the early stages of tuberculosis. Quiet tears welled up in Pamela's eyes; she knew college would have to be postponed. Once Rocky Knoll had been erected, their family physician, Dr. Kenneth Meyer, advised Namitz and his wife that because Pamela's condition had worsened, she should continue her treatment there without delay.

Early on a sunny Monday morning, Namitz drove his gray Nash 240 through the gates of Rocky Knoll. Amanda rode in the back seat with Pamela, attempting all the while to allay her fears.

"Pammy, dear, isn't this such a beautiful sana, er, *facility* they have out here? My gracious, with such a nice new building, I can tell already that these doctors here will have you well and back to us in no time at all!" In her heart she needed to believe this, for her nervous laugh and rapidly blinking eyelids indicated that she was as frightened as her daughter.

Everett, the stub of an unlighted cigar protruding from his lips, chimed in, "Why sure, little darlin'. And I understand that the food out here is the best anywhere in Sheboygan County; plus, they even let you have ice cream and cake now and then. Now don't you go worrying about a thing. Ol' Doc Meyer tells me he's got everything all worked out." He parked under the portecochere in front of the main entrance. After taking her valise from the small trunk, he opened the car door where Pamela was sitting and helped her out. Her emaciated body and wan complexion bore tell-tale signs of the disease. A young nurse, not much older than Pamela, pushed a wheelchair to the car and gently helped her into it. As they made their way through the main entrance, Namitz caught a glimpse of an ambulance quietly worming its way along a narrow road to the north of the building. He thought to himself: *One in; another out.*

“Now, Pammy dear,” Amanda said, as they walked past the solarium on their way to the elevator, “do try and be a good girl for Mommy and do try to get some rest and, darling, don’t make any trouble for the nurses—Lord knows, they get paid so poorly as it is.” Another nurse walking a few steps behind overheard her and shook her head. She knew only too well that most nurses like herself had a greater chance of dying from disease there than from poverty.

Pamela had hardly spoken since they left Sheboygan. Her blue eyes sank deeply against her pale skin. And she was little-girl scared. When she wasn’t clasping her father’s hand as he walked beside the wheelchair, she was clutching onto the white lap blanket. Her neck appeared Tin-Man stiff, for it moved neither left nor right for fear of what she thought she might see. At last, they reached her room. As she was wheeled inside, she started in surprise: The bed, the bedding, the furniture, the radiators, the walls: Everything--was blindingly white—whiter even than she. “This room hurts my eyes,” she half-whispered.

“Oh, Pammy, for goodness sake, it’s only the sunlight reflecting off the reservoir tower through your window.” Amanda quickly clip-clopped her heels across the room to the offending window and snapped close the drapes. “There, you see? It’s all better now, isn’t it, darling?”

But a blinding brightness deep inside Pamela’s mind still remained.

IV.

“Mr. Koltien? Mr. Koltien? Wake up, Mr. Koltien.” It felt as if someone had put petroleum jelly into Leonard’s eyes. He knew he was awake, but his exhaustion refused to allow him to focus. “Time for breakfast, Mr. Koltien.”

Leonard realized now that he had fallen back to sleep. The voice he heard was unfamiliar to him. “Oh...uh...well...um, what, er, where do I go?” Words faded in like rolling fog. “Breakfast. Yes...I...what time is it?”

The nurse, sensing his disorientation, said, "Why don't you follow me, dear; I'll take you downstairs to the dining room." Once they got to the elevator and stepped inside, she extended her hand and said, "I'm Nurse Schaefer. Honey Schaefer. I work third floor mostly." Leonard smiled, shook her hand weakly, but said nothing. "I been workin' here since the place opened, an' I ain't missed a day yet," she declared proudly. The elevator opened right in front of the dining room. "Well, here you be. Looks like most of the places are taken already. Oh, just go on in and sit wherever you can find a place. First, grab yourself a tray and get in line. Once you got your food, just go sit down. When you're done, you can go back up the way you came from. I got to head back up to third. This ain't my break time yet." She saw the uncertainty in his eyes, so she tried to reassure him. "You'll be just fine, dear. Don't worry."

Leonard entered the dining room and glanced at a few of the men eating there. The sanatorium believed in feeding its patients amply. Breakfast consisted of eggs, steak, bacon, oatmeal, bread, and a quantity of fruits, juices, coffee, and other foods. The doctors wanted their patients to regain some of the weight that the disease had stolen away from them.

He spotted a nearly vacant table near the corner that, if filled, could have easily seated six persons. Only two men occupied it now. Leonard walked over timidly and in a low voice asked if he could join them. Both men briefly looked up at him, and one man, who continued chewing a mouthful of steak, motioned with his knife for Leonard to sit down. Despite the din that filled the dining room, all three men ate in silence at first, not even looking at one another. Leonard picked tentatively at his potatoes, and the man who had motioned for him to sit slurped his too-hot coffee to wash down his food. As Leonard lifted a forkful of scrambled eggs to his mouth, he glanced up to see the other man at the table eyeing him intently. Suddenly, this man broke into a wide grin and began to chuckle.

“Well, I’ll be jiggered! When in da Hell did *you* get here?”

Leonard appeared startled and said uncomfortably, “I just sat down a few minutes ago; you watched me.”

“Haw, haw! Heiny, you ol’ S.O.B. Still wit’ the jokes. Course, I don’t mean *now*. When did ya get in dis place here, Rocky Knoll, I mean?”

Leonard could not figure why a perfect stranger would be talking to him in this familiar fashion; nonetheless, he responded, “Last night.” He began to eat quickly so he could leave before this man bothered him with any more questions.

“Well, den,” the man said, “no wonder I ain’t seen youse around. Jeez, it’s sure been a long time, Heiny. I t’ought maybe you forgot about me. I suppose Laverne brung you out here too, enso?”

By now Leonard was becoming greatly agitated. “I-I don’t know who you are talking about, but you must have me confused with somebody else. My name’s not Heiny, I don’t know anyone named Laverne, and I’ve never seen you before in my life!”

As Leonard got up to leave, he looked at the confounded expression on the man’s face. “Now, now, ho-old on jus’ one minute here. Yer tellin’ me you ain’t Heiny Bauer? Hell, I lived down the road from you purt’ near my whole life. I sure oughta know ya.” He stopped speaking for a moment and looked incredulously at the other man who was all this time licking the rest of his breakfast off his fingers. “You hear dat, Emery?” he chuckled. He says he ain’t Heiny Bauer; can you believe dat?”

“Who the Hell is Heiny Bauer?” Emery growled.

“Jeez Louise, I told ya jus’ t’ree days ago. He’s my second cousin. He’s comin’ to get me outta here in a couple a days sos we can head up to Wabeno and fish. Why doncha ever listen

once when I talk to you?” He sounded more hurt than angry. “We sit toget’er at dis here table every damn day. You t’ink maybe you’d listen just for once.”

Emery yelled back, “Ach, will ya just shut up, John, fer a half hour once sos a guy can eat his food in peace?”

The two men had forgotten all about Leonard who had been the entire time watching this argument brewing while silently holding his tray. Then, in his haste to be rid of this scene, he stumbled backwards against his chair and dropped the tray onto the table with a crash, food and drink spilling everywhere. He turned and ran as quickly as he could toward the elevator. A large nurse and an orderly with slicked back hair and thick glasses were coming straight at him. He didn’t know whether to freeze or make a break for it in another direction. As they came toward him, he just stopped and covered his eyes with his hands, trembling, waiting for them to grab him. But all he felt was wind as they streamed past him on either side. He opened his eyes and turned back to look where he had just been sitting. He saw each of them take the man who had been yelling at Emery by the arms. He could hear the nurse say to him, “Now, now, John, you know better than to act like this during breakfast; you had better come along with us till you can calm down.”

“I am calmed down, goddammit!” Then in a pleading voice he said, “But Heiny’s coming to pick me up soon. I gotta go get my t’ings ready. We’re goin’ fishin’, you know.” There were tears in his voice.

The orderly muttered under his breath, “Third time this month. We better get him back up on three.”

Leonard stared at them as they moved John out of the dining room. As they walked past him, John, who still had food crumbs stuck in his stubbly beard, stopped and spoke to him. “Hey,

Buddy, look, I'm, uh, sorry I called ya Heiny Bauer over dere before. Now as I see ya again, you don't look nuttin' like him!"

V.

J. Henry Koltien took a long pull off his cigarette and scowled as he scanned the papers before him. He knew that if his plans were to work, each piece of the scheme had to fit seamlessly, and this was an obstacle which he had not anticipated. "Operator, ring Twinbrook 6-0-4-1." Hugh Rooney would be able to advise him, he reasoned, without his having to divulge anything to him. The fewer who knew of his intentions, the more likely he was to succeed. "Hugh Rooney, please. Tell him it's Hank Koltien." He nervously tapped the eraser end of his pencil on the glass plate covering his desktop. Each time he thought about it, he became more upset. *Well, none of that now*, he thought. *Must remain calm. Hugh would advise him and, by God, he'd get the money coming to him. He deserved it. The idea of her leaving Leonard so much and him so little!*

"Good morning, Hugh. We missed you at the smoker Thursday night. Everything all right?...Oh, sure, I understand. Some of the guys were asking about you is all.... Right you are; he *was* one of them." J. Henry picked up the papers he had been perusing earlier. "Say, Hugh, I have a copy of Mother's will here before me. I know that you drafted it and all, but, well, quite frankly I'm having a hard time reconciling the unequal money split between my brother Leonard and me. Am I legally able to contest this will?...I'm not. Well, that certainly wasn't the answer I was hoping to hear. Can you give me any idea why she apportioned the money in the manner in which she did? I mean, 70-30 seems rather lopsided, wouldn't you agree? At first, I assumed it

was because of the *problems* Leonard was experiencing, especially after Father died, but...Oh, it actually *was*. Well, at least I was correct about that. But, come on, Hugh, as his legal guardian I'm already overseeing his affairs.... Yes, I know he'll be twenty-one next May, but...okay...Okay, I see where you're going with this. Look, Hugh, I'm not trying to make a scene here. I just had some questions, and you've answered them." He was becoming upset; he knew he'd better hang up. "Listen, how about if I drop by your office next week and we can discuss this further... You bet... Sure, I'll call first. Goodbye."

After he hung up the phone, J. Henry hurled the pencil he had been tapping on his desk against the wall. *If Rooney can't change that will, I'll make damned sure that my name is on every letter, contract, and document that pertains to my dear brother from now on.* He bit his thumbnail and stared at the glistening chandelier, hypnotized, imagining each piece of cut Bohemian crystal were a real diamond... J. Henry liked diamonds.

VI.

A side door opened from her office into a back hallway. Levina Dietrichson and Dr. Bavét paused briefly before heading in different directions. "Raymond," she asked quietly, "will you stop back here this afternoon? I can arrange to have you meet with Leonard privately. As long as this thing is going forward, we should have a system worked out right away that will be in this young man's best interest."

"Sure. I can be back here around two o'clock if that works for both of you. I look forward to meeting Leonard." Raymond didn't know what else to say that might make her feel better. Because he was brand-new to the sanatorium and its inner workings, he knew he was powerless to do anything but proffer his understanding and support. He hated Lindsay for putting her through this unwarranted anxiety. But he now fully apprehended the predicament in which she

had been placed: If it ever became public knowledge that she had been aware of a non-tubercular patient residing there, while the waiting list of those who applied for and required treatment approached fifty or more, she would be fired immediately and undoubtedly cited for ethics violations. Her lifelong career and reputation would be utterly destroyed. “Thanks, Miss Dietrichson, for your confidence in asking me to be the one to look after him,” was the best he could muster. “Good luck in your meeting with Mr. Lindsay.”

She nodded slightly, turned, and made her way toward the Board Room on the second floor. She knew she was late, but then it did not seem to matter that much. Raymond had needed to be informed. Besides, now that she had a trusted ally in him, she had begun to regain some of her confidence. She would need it. As she peered into the Board Room, she could see Lindsay through the narrow window, squinting over some papers he had just pulled from his double-buckled leather briefcase. She knocked and entered. “Mr. Lindsay, you wanted to see me?” She could smell the odor of freshly painted walls clash with the scent of a man who wore too much after-shave lotion.

“Yes, Miss Dietrichson, come in. Close the door behind you.” Maury Lindsay was a rather short man, wide in the waist, who within the past year or two had bid farewell to middle-age. Appointed head of the Rocky Knoll Board of Trustees in 1926, it was actually he who two years earlier had recommended to the Board that they hire Levina as Superintendent. Nevertheless, she had always found him to be a rather odd character. Whenever he was angry, which Levina noticed to be quite often of late, he had a peculiar habit of seeming to cough and laugh simultaneously while spewing his vitriol. And Lindsay adored power. He had begun to explore politics while still in junior college. After being appointed alderman in a local election, he was instantly hooked. Five years ago he had become president of the Sheboygan County

Board, and there were rumors afloat of his planning to explore much grander vistas with a run for the U.S. Senate in 1928. He was an absolute megalomaniac, who assuredly had the ego for political office.

As she sat across the table from him, she watched him dip his fountain pen into a small jar of dark blue ink, scrawling incomprehensibly on a legal pad as if she were not even there. Finally, after a minute or two of awkward silence had passed, and without looking up, he asked, “Have you worked out the arrangements I asked you to regarding that Koltien lad?”

She could feel the blood rising to her face. She so much wanted to upbraid him for the callous way he was compromising her position; instead, with great self-control she tersely responded, “Yes, it’s been taken care of.”

For the first time since she had come into the room, he looked up from his writing. “Good. Now, Miss Dietrichson, you and I both know the consequences should this Koltien thing ever be made known to anyone either on the Board or within the sanatorium. I’m counting on you to see that this does not happen.” Levina said nothing but continued to stare at him. She refused to be intimidated. “Who will be looking after the needs of this boy?”

She had had a feeling he was going to ask her this question, and the last thing she wanted was to compromise Bavét’s role in the process. She too felt that it was really none of Lindsay’s business who would be performing the service as long as it were done discreetly. “Mr. Lindsay, I’ve appointed someone who is quite capable of dealing with Mr. Koltien’s *issues*. He understands the importance of discretion in this matter. Who he is is not relevant, and I would prefer to keep his name confidential.”

He glanced at her momentarily as if he were going to demand that she tell him; instead, he cleared his throat and with his cough-laugh said, “Very well. I shan’t persist in this. But, if I

get wind that any of this has gone awry, and I mean *anything*, I will not only disavow any involvement, but I shall hold you personally responsible, and you *will* divulge his name. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly. If there is nothing else to discuss, I have other duties I must attend to." She rose from her chair and left without another word from either side. As she walked outside the door, she glanced down and noticed that her hands were trembling. *God, I hope he didn't see that.*

Lindsay finished his writing, folded it and placed it inside an envelope, sealed it, and sat back in his chair, his hands behind his head. He grinned smugly. He knew who was boss at Rocky Knoll.

VII.

September of 1927 had been an exceptionally warm month. Many of the residents at Rocky Knoll were happy to see autumn finally arrive on the cool back of October skies. Those who remained healthy enough were allowed to walk serpentine paths on the grounds before dinner or supper. As leaves changed colors and rode chilly breezes to the ground, those patients who could move about outdoors were grateful, for there were many who were confined within the sanatorium, their lungs in such hurt and delicate condition. Children whose mothers or fathers were patients there could visit them only once a month, and for fear of contamination, they could remain with them for a mere twenty minutes. Broken hearts rested against broken lungs.

During the nineteenth century, before the groundbreaking discoveries of Dr. Robert Koch in Germany, authors and composers would sometimes romanticize consumption, making one's death from it a perfectly picturesque departure. In reality, tuberculosis was the cruelest disease.

The “White Plague,” as it was known, ravaged the body, broke the mind, and shattered the heart. Sputum cups were exchanged daily, the old ones holding the evidence, good or bad, and the new ones always holding out promise. But one needed a microscope to ascertain the verdict from within the cups. Patients were never allowed to see the glass plates displaying the tiny bacilli that held them hostage. But it was the weekly weigh-ins that rendered the most crucial judgment for them. It could be the most exhilarating or most traumatic of all the sanatorium rituals. Standing on the scale’s wobbly platform, watching the nurse slide the weights left or right across the bar, was an ordeal that few, if any, ever forgot.

Pamela Burton languished during her first month at Rocky Knoll. As her weight and temperature fluctuated, she found it increasingly difficult not to become despondent. Knowing that she should be starting her first semester of college instead of being confined to a hospital bed for who knew how long was sometimes more than she could bear. Her parents came to see her as often as was permitted. Her father always wore a smile, and he would kiss her forehead as soon as he would see her even though kissing was frowned upon by the staff. No matter how poorly she felt, the sight of her father always lifted her spirits. Her mother, conversely, would at times irritate her with her incessant, nervous jabbering, mostly about topics of little relevance to Pamela. She knew that Amanda meant well, and she was grateful for the love and concern she showed her, but there were days Pamela had wished that only her father would come to visit her.

During one of their Saturday afternoon visits, her father said to her, “Little darlin’, your mother and I stopped to talk with Dr. Meyer before we came up here to see you. I said to him, ‘Doc, you and I’ve been friends a long time. Give it to me straight. How’s my little girl doin’?’ And he said, ‘Everett, I’ve always played it straight with you. Pamela’s had a rough go of it this first month and a half here, but I checked her X-rays and sputum samples, and over the past few

days I am starting to notice some improvement. Now she's still got a ways to go, but I am encouraged by what I'm *not* seeing.' Now isn't that just wonderful news, little darlin'?"

She still had not recaptured the color in her skin, but this news caused her eyes to brighten slightly and a brief smile to fall across her lips. Her father had had a reputation as a tough businessman, but when he saw her smile for the first time in such a long while, two tears began to well in the corners of his eyes.

Amanda chimed in, "Ooh! This is so exciting, isn't it, honey? I'll bet you'll be out of here in a week!" Everett looked over to where Amanda was sitting and flashed her an unsettling look. Amanda pursed her lips and exclaimed, "Oh, don't worry about me; I do understand this situation completely!" She tried to change the subject. "Listen, Daddy, I have an idea: Before we leave, why don't we walk Pammy down and sit in the solarium awhile. It will do you good, Pammy, and it should be quite comfortable this time of day with the windows open. Perhaps we'll even run into somebody who knows me."

Pamela's room was the last one on the far north wing of the third floor. There was a fire exit door leading to the stairway just outside of her room. At times she regretted being so far removed from the center of the building where many of the patients stayed, but then there were other days when she was happy to be isolated for the privacy it afforded her. Because she was still too weak, they rode the elevator rather than take the stairs to the solarium.

The double doors of the solarium stood wide open like a huge mouth when Pamela and her parents arrived. Two black ceiling fans whirred overhead to circulate light breezes blowing in from the few windows that had been partly raised. The panoramic scenes of farms and white houses in the valley below could easily be observed through the solarium's wall of glass.

Visiting hours soon ended, and Pamela bade her parents goodbye, deciding to remain in the solarium a little while longer.

Promising her parents that she would not remain there long, Pamela continued to gaze wistfully, far beyond the windows, daydreaming of the time when she would walk down to visit every one of the farms she now observed from these heights. While she continued to enjoy the idyllic landscape outside, a young man entered the almost empty solarium and seated himself at a nearby table. He positioned himself near one of the radios in the room. It was a brand-new 1926 *Radiola Senior*, one of many that had been donated to the sanatorium by RCA-Westinghouse and placed throughout the building. He positioned the earphones comfortably and slowly began to move the dial's black handle to home in a clear frequency. When he seemed satisfied with the reception, he sat back, closed his eyes, and began to nod along to the rhythm of the music. Soon he had forgotten where he was as he began softly singing, "Blue skies, smiling at me, nothing but blue skies, do I see...."

Recalling himself, he opened his eyes to see Pamela looking over and smiling at *him*. "That's my favorite song," she said. "I love Irving Berlin."

He blushed, not knowing what to say, but he managed, "Yeah, I like the song very much myself. Um, would you care to listen to the rest of the song?"

"Sure. I mean, if you don't mind." She gingerly walked over to the table and sat beside him. He helped her with the earphones. She smiled and nodded to let him know that she could hear clearly. In a moment, the song was over. She removed the earphones. "Thank you for letting me listen."

He quickly tried to think of something more to say to her. "Do you like music?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, very much. In fact, I planned to study it in college." She then grew serious.

“Well, why didn’t you?” he asked innocently.

She extended her arms slightly outward, palms upward. “This,” she replied. “My doctor discovered tubercle bacilli in my lungs nearly a year ago. Fortunately, the disease was progressing slowly enough so that I could finish my final year of high school at home, but the TB got worse throughout the summer. I’ve been out here since early September.”

“That’s a coincidence; I arrived here about the same time.” He looked at her a little sheepishly. “I’m sorry. Forgive me. My name is Leonard. Leonard Koltien.” He extended his hand to her.

She reached out and gently squeezed it. “Pamela. Pamela Burton. Pleased to meet you, Leonard.” The unmistakable flutter she felt inside had to be more than an aberration in her chest, she thought. “I hope you don’t mind my asking, Leonard, but how have your treatments been going here? You seem to be doing quite well.”

Leonard appeared confused. “I’m sorry, Pamela. I’m not quite sure what you....”

“Leonard! Here you are.” Dr. Bavét walked up to the table where they had been sitting. “I wonder if I might have a word with you in your room before dinner.”

“Of course, Dr. Bavét. Dr. Bavét, this is Pamela Burton. Pamela, Dr. Bavét.”

They shook hands. Pamela looked at Leonard and knowingly remarked, “I’m going to have to be getting back to my room anyway. It was nice meeting both of you. Perhaps I’ll see you around?”

“That would be nice,” Leonard nodded.

After Pamela left, Dr. Bavét and Leonard walked to Leonard’s room. When they arrived, Dr. Bavét turned to him and said directly, “I hope you don’t mind my saying this, Leonard, but I

believe I detected a slight twinkle in your eye regarding Miss Burton. I wouldn't be incorrect now, would I?"

Leonard blushed and stammered, "Yes, I mean no, I mean, well...I..."

"Leonard, look at me. Miss Burton seems like a very sweet young girl, but you have got to remember that she has tuberculosis and, more importantly, that you don't. Miss Dietrichson has asked me to look after you here at the request of your brother. I have already told you that you are here for mental rest and recuperation and perhaps some therapy in order to help get adjusted following your mother's...*passing*. You have been progressing very well, Leonard, and I am extremely proud of you. But this is a sanatorium. People here are very sick, and I'm sorry to say that Pamela is one of them. By your continuing to come into contact with her, you are greatly risking contracting the disease yourself, and that would be devastating. Do you understand what I'm saying?"

"But, Dr. Bavét," he said, rising from his chair, "she's the first, I mean, couldn't I just, you know, take precautions so that we..."

"No, Leonard. It's too risky for you to be around her right now," he said emphatically. "I'm sorry." He then softened his tone. "Look, why don't we go down and have supper? You'll feel better after you've had something to eat."

"I think I'd rather stay here if you don't mind, Dr. Bavét."

"Suit yourself, Leonard. Perhaps we can discuss this more on Monday when I come to see you again. Good night."

After Bavét left, Leonard went over and lay on his bed. As he stared at the ceiling, he could hear water running into a tub a short way down the hall. A nurse was arguing with the patient with whom she had been working, trying to get him to cooperate: "Mr. Star Mountain!

John! Get back over here and let my orderlies assist you. You know you're in no condition to take a bath all by yourself!" He then heard the man bellow back at her, "Yeah, well, when Heiny Bauer comes here to get me t' come fishin', den you ain't gonna be actin' so paticiler high and mighty!"

Leonard, his thoughts wholly on Pamela, wondered if she were also thinking about him now. Deep in his heart he knew Dr. Bavét was right. But he also knew that he wanted to see her again. He slowly drifted to sleep with the sounds of Irving Berlin smiling in his ears.

VIII.

From the tabletop radio in her small, second-story apartment in Plymouth, Honey Schaefer could hear Bix Beiderbecke's cornet blasting Dixieland jazz as she rummaged through her bedroom closet in search of a suitable dress to wear for the evening. For the past two months she had been dogged by Eddie Eiger, head of maintenance at Rocky Knoll, to go on a date with him. He had admired her from afar ever since he came to work at Rocky Knoll. Eddie had originally worked with his brother, Marc, at Eiger Brothers Auto Shop. Marc told Eddie that he had gone out on a few dates with Honey a year earlier and thought that Eddie would greatly enjoy Honey's company.

But Honey was not thrilled about the idea of dating either of them. She perceived both as "birds of a feather," and she did not care for their plumage. But, in order to halt Eddie's persistent calling, Honey finally agreed to go out "on one date only" with him. Honey, although not particularly well-educated, was nevertheless a warm and quite attractive woman. Her

confident smile and easy-going manner made her a favorite among both patients and other staff at Rocky Knoll. It was easy for anyone to see why men should want to date her.

As she clipped on her ruby earrings, Honey scrutinized herself in the bedroom mirror. She had turned twenty-seven in July and had hoped to be married by now. She tried to convince herself that she enjoyed an exciting social life. In reality, she was rather lonesome. Honey had also grown weary of her everyday lifestyle, going in to work early, coming home late, exhausted, and then either sitting quietly with Sadie, her cat, or seeing an occasional movie at the local theatre. But Honey had not always been so reclusive; she had gone on many a date in the past. In fact, while in high school and shortly thereafter, Honey had acquired a somewhat unsavory reputation for indiscriminately enjoying several young men within a short period of time, all of whom had identical designs as far as Honey was concerned.

Her thoughts were broken by a rapping upon her door. “Be right there,” she yelled. Regaining her composure, Honey opened the door. Before her stood a short man about thirty-three years old; Honey thought he looked closer to forty. “Hello, Eddie. My, aren’t we all spiffed up tonight!”

He giggled and walked past her into the apartment. “Why, uh, thank you. Oh, these here are for you.” He held out a small bouquet of mixed flowers wrapped in newspaper. I hope you ain’t allergic to ‘em, but if you are, I can take ‘em back wit’ me, lickety-split.”

“No, no, they’re lovely. Thank you. Let me just put them into some water; make yourself comfortable till I get back.” She walked into her tiny kitchen thinking, *Why do I get myself into these predicaments?* He seemed to be a nice, well-meaning fellow, but she could tell that he was really not her type. At all.

Because Eddie had no car, they decided to walk over to the Cinderella café. A gentle rain had begun, but they were only two blocks away. Once inside, the waiter ushered them to a table near the back. They placed their orders and looked about. There were several paintings on the wall, each one depicting a storybook prince rescuing a maiden. Eddie began laughing and pointing at one of the pictures. “Hey, Honey, get a load of that picture over there. That knight is charging a windmill. What a nut!” Honey smiled weakly and said nothing.

After they had finished eating, Eddie lighted a cigarette and loudly slurped his coffee as he waited for the waitress to return with their bread pudding. Honey sensed that Eddie wanted to ask her something. “Yes? What is it, Eddie?”

“Uh, I hope you don’t mind me askin’ this to ya, but what’s your name, Honey?” She stared at him incredulously. “I mean, that ain’t yer real name, right? I mean, nobody would name their kid *Honey*! So, c’mon, tell me yer real name. Somethin’ tells me we’re gonna be seein’ a lot of each other, so no secrets, OK?” He leaned in closer to her. “Listen, I got a idea: Hows about you comin’ over to my place for a little romanticizin’? Then when we’re snugglin’ up, you could whisper in my ear, nice and close-like, and tell me yer name..

At that moment the waitress brought their dessert. Honey stared at the bowl for just an instant. Then she stood up, picked up the bowl of bread pudding, and dumped it over Eddie’s head. “There, you homely little creep! I never want to see you again!”

As Honey strode away in anger, she could hear Eddie call from behind her, “Hey, whatever your name is, Who’s gonna pay fer this here food!”

IX.

The mahogany grandfather clock in his hall bonged eleven times. J. Henry Koltien strode through its echoes on his way to pull the morning mail through the brass door slot. As he

thumbed through the usual diet of bills, his eye caught an envelope with a handwritten script he could not distinguish at first. Sliding a shiny letter opener through it, he noticed the return address was imprinted County Board of Sheboygan. This was the letter he had been expecting.

He scanned its contents:

Hank,

Your brother's situation at Rocky Knoll has been handled according to plan. I have been assured that every precaution has been addressed for both his safety and well-being in strictest confidence.

Wish to discuss campaign finances with you as soon as possible as deadlines are approaching. Call.

Maury

He folded the letter and tucked it back inside the envelope. Lindsay had held up his end of the bargain. Now it was time for him to make good on their agreement. If he had only known about the disparity in Genevieve's will sooner. Now everything had changed. The money he had guaranteed Lindsay was no longer viable as it had once been. But J. Henry knew that if he could persuade Hugh Rooney to help get Leonard's share of the estate nullified, or at the very least, reduced, he would have nothing to worry about: He would have the means to finance Lindsay's campaign surreptitiously, thus assuring him a nepotistic advantage if Lindsay were elected; he could invest in stock futures or any other pet project he desired; but best of all, he would have Leonard stuck at Rocky Knoll indefinitely so that no one, not even Leonard himself, would ever be in a position to challenge him. Yes, working with Lindsay could afford him all of that.

But, so far Rooney had refused even to consider such a proposal. J. Henry began to mull over his options. He hadn't many. Perhaps he could bribe him. But would Rooney really accept that? He knew him to be a man of great integrity. At least, J. Henry had always *thought* him as a man incorruptible. But, maybe, he reasoned, if he were to offer Rooney a respectable portion of the estate's assets, in exchange for getting him either to argue that the will was invalid through

some arcane technicality, or to rework the will slightly, he just might go along with that. If so, his dilemma would be over. Time was running out. *I have to get to Rooney right away.* He picked up the telephone....

Scowling from behind his black walnut desk, Everett Namitz slammed down the receiver of his telephone in disgust. The stock reports had just come in: Coal production was down again for the eighth straight month. He regretted his having invested so much in anthracite coal. His father, Arthur, had begun the business in 1900 when “experts” promised anthracite would become the “fuel of the future.” Everett eventually took control of the company from his father and had made his fortune. But ever since the end of World War I, business had stagnated, and within the past two years it had actually taken a nose-dive. But Namitz was an astute businessman and had foreseen this coming. He believed the solution was to integrate bituminous coal which of late had become a much more profitable commodity on the market.

But to do that would require buying more land as well as getting a zoning ordinance modified. He had come before the County Board the previous year to make this proposal. Everything appeared to be on the fast track for approval. But at the last minute, his proposal was refused. Several reasons had been given for the rejection, but eventually the rumor got out that Maury Lindsay had been the person most instrumental in getting the proposal voted down. Since then, Namitz had nothing but contempt for Lindsay, and he swore he would make him pay if it were the last thing he ever did.

Hugh Rooney sat behind his desk with his fist beneath his chin and stared straight ahead in stunned silence. That someone would walk into his office and have the unmitigated audacity to ask him not only to break the law but also to jeopardize his membership in the Bar was

effrontery too much to take. Yet Hank Koltien had done just that. By forestalling his response until the following Thursday, though, Hugh had allowed himself time enough to plan his strategy. Koltien had profaned the lawyer-client privilege; he had to be stopped. Hugh buzzed his secretary. “Betty, I’m going to need you to reschedule my afternoon clients. Something’s come up that requires my immediate attention. I’ll be gone for the rest of the day. Sorry to do this to you, dear, on such short notice.”

“Don’t worry, Mr. Rooney; it wouldn’t be the first time,” she laughed.

“Thanks. I’m leaving by the back door. Have a good weekend. Be sure to lock up when you leave. I’ll be back around six-thirty. Oh, Betty, I noticed that there is a two o’clock appointment with Miss Levina Dietrichson. She’s a new client. She is also the Superintendent at Rocky Knoll. Did she happen to mention what she wanted to see me about when she called?”

“No, sir.”

“OK. Thanks.” As he drove away from the lot, Hugh had already begun to plan the first phase of thwarting J. Henry Koltien’s illegal subterfuge.

X.

Time stands still for the person struck down by any disease who yearns to return to life as it once was. Sanatoria across the nation were filled with inmates who from that perspective were all of one mind. Libraries were brimming with books and magazines of employment alternatives, hobbies, or any other skill or avocation that the disease may have forced the patient to consider for the future. And while the primary focus for the patient was to ultimately recover and go on to lead as productive a life as possible, doctors and nurses knew that one of the greatest obstacles they themselves faced was the impatient patient.

To counteract this challenge, Rocky Knoll and other TB facilities embarked on a crusade of confidence building and positive thinking. One's body, they reasoned, could be healed if one infused the mind with thoughts of health, beauty, and wellness. The library housed magazines expressly for that purpose. Patients could also read upbeat aphorisms and maxims framed and placed on several of the walls to remind them to think pleasant thoughts. Staff members were absolutely forbidden to discuss the death of any patient for fear of depressing the other patients and impeding their progress of regaining their health.

October had become November that without notice disappeared into December. Floating snowflakes frosted evergreens and excited children, for they knew Christmas was quickly drawing near. Sanatorium employees provided much "comfort and joy" for all patients during this time. Volunteers from the city baked cookies, cakes, and pies in preparation for the second annual Christmas party being planned. Local businesses throughout the county donated presents of all kinds so that Santa Claus would have something to hand out to children and adults alike. Indeed, it was surely destined to be a grand evening!

And ever since that October afternoon in the solarium, Leonard had not stopped thinking about Pamela. He understood the logic behind Dr. Bavét's warning, but he also believed that she would one day recover from the TB that still infected her lungs. Although Rocky Knoll had a strict segregation of the sexes policy, occasionally there were times when boys and girls were permitted to associate with each other. For Pamela and Leonard, sometimes it might be a wave and a smile in passing. Other times they could steal a few moments with each other on movie night. But being together occurred infrequently, and it was never as often as the young couple desired.

On the morning of December twenty-third, Leonard had just finished a session with Dr. Bavét and was on his way back to his room when he rounded a corner and stood face to face with Pamela, nearly knocking her to the ground. “Oh, I’m so sorry. Are you all right?” a very embarrassed Leonard said, taking her arm lest she fall.

Regaining her composure, Pamela smiled and replied, “Hey, mister, you could run over someone if you’re not more careful.” She said it with a twinkle in her eye, and Leonard smiled timidly.

“I was hoping I would see you today. You’re going to the Christmas party tonight, aren’t you?” he asked.

“Yes, of course. Isn’t everyone?”

“Uh, yeah, I guess so. Sure.” Since Leonard had come to Rocky Knoll, the directive had been to make him as inconspicuous as possible. Dr. Bavét had done a remarkable job keeping Leonard relatively unseen. Because Leonard knew that this procedure was part of the overall plan, he began to wonder if he would be permitted to attend this evening’s festivities.

“You don’t sound very certain, Leonard,” Pamela noticed. “You *will* be there, won’t you? Anyway, I hope so because I have a special surprise.”

“Well, I’m *planning* on coming” was the best assurance he could think of. “Really, a surprise? What is it?” he asked, trying to change the subject.

“Can’t tell. You’ll see at the party tonight,” she teased. “Bye.”

Leonard walked back to his room dejectedly, wondering if he *would* see her tonight along with whatever “surprise” she had planned. He then decided to stop by Dr. Bavét’s office first to elicit his opinion about attending the party. As he approached Bavét’s office, the elevator door opened suddenly and out stepped both Levina Dietrichson and Dr. Bavét. Levina smiled at

Leonard when she saw him and asked, “Well, Mr. Koltien, are you getting excited for this evening’s festivities?”

“Well...uh...yes, Miss Dietrichson, I certainly am.”

“Good. It should be a wonderful time for everyone, I’m sure. We’ve selected a beautiful tree for the assembly room. But we want you to come to dinner first, of course.”

Leonard looked at Dr. Bavét, who nodded and smiled in agreement with what she had said. “Thank you. Thank you both very much.”

“Leonard, I’ll stop by to see you around five-thirty. We can walk down to the dining room together, if you’d like.

“That would be nice, Dr. Bavét.” Leonard walked down the corridor to his room. He could barely conceal the excitement he felt. He began dancing around his room, laughing like a tickled child. But his exuberance had winded him, and he began to cough. Just a slight grain of cough. But he knew that he would be seeing Pamela tonight. Everything was good.

XI.

From his back room office, J. Henry Koltien sat poring over campaign strategies sent to him that morning from Maury Lindsay. Everything was set: New Year’s Eve just before midnight was the hour at which Maury Lindsay would officially declare himself a candidate of the Republican party of Wisconsin for the United States Senate in 1928. Hugh Rooney had told Koltien that it might take some time to rework the will to J. Henry’s advantage, but Koltien could live with that. The opportunity to work for Lindsay was just too good to pass up, so rather than wait for the will to be amended, he liquidated nearly all of his current assets to use as capital with which to invest in the campaign. He reasoned that once the will had been modified, he would have more than enough money to replenish his funds. And now that Lindsay had asked

him to be his campaign manager, his future was turning out to be even better than he himself had imagined. With only eight days until the announcement, J. Henry knew that he would have to work indefatigably to have everything ready by New Year's Eve.

At the same hour that J. Henry was designing his political future, dinner was coming to an end at Rocky Knoll. Some of the patients who were deemed healthy enough had obtained permission to return to their homes for a few days to share Christmas with their own families. At the other end of the spectrum, patients who were too weak to eat in the dining room had to take supper in their rooms.

Fourteen children were currently receiving treatment at the sanatorium. None was well enough to return home, but as a group they nevertheless remained happy and excited and impatient to see what Santa had placed under the tree for them. After a hearty welcome by Miss Dietrichson to patients, staff, and invited guests, everyone adjourned to the assembly room. A number of patients who were unable to attend the dinner were brought to the assembly room to see the pageant and the Christmas tree. Some were in wheelchairs, while the others were carried in chairs or were supported by nurses or orderlies.

Leonard blended inconspicuously with the rest of the group and found a chair off to the side of the room. He looked around to see if he could locate Pamela, but he did not see her. After everyone was settled as much as possible, a woman, introduced as the schoolteacher for the young children, came forward with some of the older children and began to direct them in holiday and religious songs. Another girl, about sixteen years old, served as accompanist. After each selection, the audience applauded loudly, pleased by the obvious preparation these children and their teacher had put into the show.

Finally, the teacher announced, “Now, for our final selection, we have a special treat for you. Miss Pamela Burton, one of our very own residents here at Rocky Knoll, will be playing the closing number. Miss Burton.” With that, Pamela appeared with her piccolo, stood next to her music stand, and with her piano accompanist began to perform the English carol “What Child is This?”

Leonard’s eyes grew wide in disbelief. She had once before mentioned her love of music to him, but he had never heard anything quite so lovely as Pamela’s rendition of this song. He could feel a lump tighten in his throat. When she finished, the audience thundered their approval. Young or old, weak or strong, all had loved it. A beautiful way to conclude the show.

As youngsters madly dashed toward the presents awaiting them beneath the tree, Leonard attempted to press his way through the crowd in the opposite direction to where Pamela was standing, surrounded by admirers and well-wishers. When he finally caught her eye, she excused herself and went over to him. “You made it,” she said cheerily, seeking out a place for them to sit. “Did you like my surprise? I couldn’t see you, so I didn’t know if you made it. But in case you *were* here, I played it as well as I could just for you.”

“Oh, Pamela!” Leonard exclaimed, filled with emotion, “I had no idea you were so talented! Do you feel all right? I mean, would you like something to drink? I mean, are you winded after playing like that?”

She began to cough a little; then, she started laughing at him playfully. “I’m fine. Really, I am. Perhaps, if you don’t mind, you might get me some water. Maybe then we can sit here for a moment and talk.”

“Sure, Pamela, sure. Whatever you’d like.” Leonard was back instantly with her water, and they sat quietly together as she caught her breath. He could not take his eyes off her. They

continued to talk until an announcement was made over the public address system that it was time for bed. As they got up to leave, Leonard turned to her and said, “Pamela, I hope you won’t mind my saying this, but I would love to continue talking with you tonight. I mean...well...you look so...so pretty, and I feel so peaceful when I’m with you.” He knew he was treading precariously, especially since Dr. Bavét had warned him. But he could not help himself. His life had been fraught with tragedy upon tragedy. For the first time, he felt that his life had some meaning to it. She comforted him.

Pamela blushed at his words. She took his hand into hers and looked into his eyes. “For the past four months I had believed that I was experiencing the worst ordeal anyone could possibly face. But since I’ve met you, Leonard, I’ve found a reason to believe that this was supposed to happen to me, and that maybe in the end all of this will be all right.” She squeezed his hand tightly and leaned forward confidentially. “There is an exit door next to my room. They always lock it after seven o’clock at night. But they don’t use a key; they just turn the dead bolt. I’ll go up to my room now, but I’ll unlock that door first. If you can get to the back stairway without being seen, come to the topmost floor. The lights will be out in the rooms and the hall lights should be dimmed. There will be a nurse on the floor, naturally, but her desk is farther on down the hall. After tonight’s festivities, she won’t be expecting much activity. There is a small window in the door, and I can see it from my room if I’m standing at the correct angle. I’ll watch for you. Then I could come downstairs with you for a while. We’d have to stay in the stairwell area, naturally. Nurse Schaefer always begins her rounds at the top of the hour. If we plan this right, we can still have a little more time together. I had better be going.” With that, Pamela picked up her piccolo case and headed up to her room.

Leonard watched until she disappeared. He then made a pretense of going up to his room by walking toward the elevator. An orderly walked past him, headed in another direction; otherwise, the area was relatively quiet. Once he saw that nobody was watching him, Leonard walked to the north end of the floor. He pushed open the inner door and found himself standing next to the stairway. In the dimly-lit stairwell, Leonard slowly, and as quietly as he could, began his ascent toward the top floor. The wooden stairs were for the most part solid, and yet despite the newness of the building, some creaked and moaned beneath his feet. With each sound, he would freeze and listen for any approaching footsteps. It was cool inside the stairwell, yet Leonard was perspiring from nervousness. He coughed a little grain of cough and swallowed hard. He was on the final landing; there was no turning back now. But would Pamela be there to meet him? What if she were caught leaving her room? What if Nurse Schaefer were there to meet him instead? All these thoughts and more crowded his mind as he made his way to the top flight. As he stood outside the door of the third floor and gazed through the window, two dark eyes peered back at him.

XII.

Leonard gasped. The door slowly opened. "I-is that you, Pamela?"

"Hi, Leonard; yes, it's me."

"Oh, God, I couldn't tell if it was you or not in the shadows," replied Leonard, quite relieved.

Pamela passed through the door onto the landing, giggling. He whispered, "I don't think we should go all the way to the bottom; some of these stairs are a little noisy. How about if we just go down to the next landing and sit awhile. No one can see us there."

“Oh, Leonard, where’s your spirit of adventure?” Pamela teased. “No, of course, I don’t mind. That might be better anyway.” They made their way quietly down the steps, Pamela wrapped snugly in her long robe and slippers.

Once they were settled, Leonard looked at her and asked, “Are you sure you’re going to be warm enough? It’s a bit cool in here. You don’t want to catch pneumonia on top of everything else.”

“I’ll be fine. Besides, if I get cold,” she winked, “you’ll keep me warm.”

For the next half hour, they discussed the evening’s events, Christmastime, music, Pamela’s illness, and many other topics. It was as if they had not even begun to talk when Pamela said, “Leonard, I really think I’d better be getting back upstairs; I’d rather not find out what would happen if we were caught out here.”

As they stood up, they faced each other. It was the briefest of pauses. Leonard softly wrapped his arms around Pamela and gently kissed her mouth. And she kissed him back, tenderly at first, and then passionately. And nothing existed in the world. They drew slowly apart and gazed into each other’s eyes. Pamela shyly smiled as Leonard again held her closely. Then they slowly rocked to the rhythm of the music within themselves. There is no word for this ritual.

As Pamela laid her head on Leonard’s shoulder in the floating dance, the door above them suddenly opened! They clutched each other, afraid to breathe. There was no sound at first. Then it began. “Eloo, eloo, eloo! Heiny, is dat you down dere? I kin be ready to go in a couple a minutes, but I gotta git my pants on first!”

Then from behind him they could hear the voice of Honey Schaefer. “John. What are you doing out here? You should have been in bed an hour ago! Now get back in here and get in your room, and, for God’s sake, put some pajama bottoms on.”

“Ya, but Nurse, dis here door was open, I tell ya. I didn’ open it, an’ I know dat’s Heiny down dere waitin’ to take me ice fishin’ wit’ him up by Wabeno. I tell ya, he’s down dere someplace!”

“All right, John. I’ll put you to bed, and then I’ll come back and tell Heiny that you and him can go fishing when he gets them chores done. Come on.”

Pamela and Leonard were afraid that Nurse Schaefer was going to turn the dead bolt to lock the door. That would mean that they would be forced to go downstairs, where it was certain they would be spotted. Leonard began to worry that Dr. Bavét would then discover their little escapade and all Hell would break loose. But apparently Nurse Schaefer was prepared to go along with the charade for John’s benefit because neither of them heard the latch turn. They quickly made their way to the top of the stairs. They looked through the same small window and tried the door. It was still unlocked.

After giving Pamela a quick goodnight kiss on the cheek, Leonard quietly descended the stairs, retracing his steps toward the elevator. Three minutes later he was safely in his room. Everything had worked perfectly. No harm was done. As the moon shone through his window, Leonard drifted to sleep, still feeling her lips on his.

XIII.

It was Christmas Eve day, and the weather had been awful all morning. A freezing rain-snow mixture, blowing hard from the north, promised treacherous driving for the better part of the day. Everett Namitz had been tucking his scarf into his long, black overcoat when Amanda walked into the kitchen. “Now, Everett, you be careful out there; the streets are very icy.”

“Yes, yes, dear,” he grumbled.

“And pick Pammy up something nice that she can wear out there. Some of the things they give those patients to wear are absolutely frightful.”

“Whatever you say, dear,” replied Everett, not listening at all to his wife. “Good-bye, dear.” In an instant he was in his brand-new 1927 Pontiac sedan, a Christmas present from his stockholders, sliding toward Prange’s Department Store in search of a Christmas gift to take to Pamela the following day.

Across town, J. Henry Koltien was just leaving the bank with a newly-inked cashier’s check which he would be presenting to Maury Lindsay an hour later. The Mason’s Lodge had been secured for the New Year’s Eve gala, and all plans were falling neatly into place.

After he arrived home, Koltien decided to telephone Hugh Rooney to check on the progress of the issue of the will. It had already been nearly two months. Surely, Rooney should have some news by now.

Rooney had been working in his office alone that morning. When he realized who was on the phone, a dark cloud swept over him. “Yes, hello, Hank. Happy holidays,” he said, trying hard to feign cheerfulness. “Yes, I think I have a pretty good idea why you’re calling...I *have* spoken to him, yes... Well, this is going to take just a little more time, Hank... Not much happens this time of year, you know... Well, I would say right after the first of the year. I’m going to be out of town with my family for the holidays myself, but I plan on being back by the second. I’ll find out from him then how he wants to handle this, and I’ll get back to you. How would that be?... Good. Thanks for calling... Yes, you too.”

Hugh hung up the phone. “Damn him! Why did I ever get mixed up with this guy anyway?” He knew that time was running out, just as he knew he had done nothing and would do nothing to help him pull off his illegal deception. Rooney had lied to him about leaving town.

He used the story as a pretext to buy some time in order to put a stop to him once and for all. His next move was to contact the district attorney, something he now realized he should have done long ago....

“Well, well, WELL,” Maury Lindsay smiled, holding out the cashier’s check that J. Henry Koltien had just handed to him. “You’re willing to invest *this* much money into my campaign?”

“Every last zero,” Koltien responded with a laugh.

“Well, Hank, I must say, this is much more than I had expected. Considering the incumbent’s record and now having this kind of financial windfall, we’re sure to be a shoe-in come April.” He chuckled heartily and slapped J. Henry on the back. “This calls for a little Christmas cheer, my friend,” he said, pouring each of them a tall glass of Irish whiskey from the crystal decanter. “Here’s to good friends, good money, and a *great* campaign!” As their glasses clinked together, each smiled at the other, dreaming of his own unfettered ambition.

Back at Rocky Knoll, Levina Dietrichson sat in her office, pondering what course of action she might take. Although she had twice postponed her rescheduled appointment with Hugh Rooney back in October, her need to discuss with him how Maury Lindsay had been pressuring her was starting to get the better of her. Since that time, however, she had come to take a real liking to Leonard. In him she found a young man who was in some ways as much a victim of Lindsay as she was. Conversations with Dr. Bavét confirmed the quality of Leonard’s character as well as his polite, sensitive nature. Bavét went on to say that Leonard’s state of mind

had improved tremendously since he had been institutionalized, and he felt that Leonard could live very well if he were remanded to his brother on an outpatient basis.

And yet this *brother* had not once visited Leonard since he dropped him off that rainy evening in early September. It was now apparent to her that Maury Lindsay had some greater association with J. Henry Koltien, but she failed to discern what that was. What kind of control could Koltien have over Lindsay that he would continue to pressure her to keep Leonard at Rocky Knoll? As she gazed at Franz and Genevieve Koltien's picture again, she found it difficult to fathom how these two wonderful people could have had such an unscrupulous son.

As she continued to weigh going to see Rooney, she knew, too, that any disclosure of these events and her part in them would likely terminate her career as superintendent of Rocky Knoll. Lindsay knew of her impeccable reputation across the state and even the nation. That was how he knew he could exploit her in this manner. But it was wrong, and she knew it, and she had had enough of it.

Come what may, she picked up the phone and dialed Twinbrook 6-0-4-1. "Hello, Mr. Rooney. This is Levina Dietrichson from Rocky Knoll. I must see you right away."

XIV.

There came a knock at the back door of Hugh Rooney's law office. Levina kicked the snow from her shoes as he showed her into his office. "Let me take your coat, Miss Dietrichson. Would you like some coffee; I just brewed a pot."

"Thank you, no. I really cannot stay long. As you can imagine, it's a rather busy day at the sanatorium, so I'll need to get back out there as soon as possible. Oh, and thank you so much for taking time to see me on such short notice."

"How may I help you, Miss Dietrichson?" Rooney asked concernedly.

Levina did not know for certain how to begin. “Mr. Rooney, something has been occurring at the sanatorium over the past several months. I and some others have been involved, and I need some advice from you on how to best deal with the circumstances.” She clasped her hands together to keep them from shaking.

Hugh took out a pad and pencil and began to take notes. “Please, try to relax, Miss Dietrichson. Can you explain these “circumstances” to me?”

Levina went on to tell him how Maury Lindsay, member of the Sheboygan County Board, had applied pressure on her to get a non-tubercular patient admitted to Rocky Knoll, even though there had been a long waiting list of patients who actually did need the facility for treatment. Since the time in which Leonard had been placed at Rocky Knoll, ten would-be area patients had died from tuberculosis because they were unable to be admitted there. She went on to say how Lindsay had threatened her, saying that if she refused to comply, he would make her life miserable there and see that she was eventually terminated.

Hugh continued to write. “Does Mr. Lindsay have any association with this patient?”

“Not directly, but apparently he knows the patient’s brother quite well,” she replied.

“What’s the brother’s name?”

“J. Henry Koltien.”

Hugh Rooney’s head jerked upward. “J. Henr...Leonard Koltien is a patient at Rocky Knoll!”

Levina was startled by his reaction. “Why, why, yes. He’s been there since September. I take it by your reaction that you know the Koltien’s?”

Trying quickly to regain his composure, Hugh replied, “Uh, yes. Yes, I do. I did some work for Mr. and Mrs. Koltien in the past.”

“Mr. Rooney, can you advise me how best to handle this problem? I’m tired of having this nightmare haunting me. It no longer matters what happens to me, but Mr. Lindsay needs to be held accountable for his extortive actions.”

“Well, Miss Dietrichson, I do agree with what you’ve said regarding Mr. Lindsay, but why should it not matter what happens to you?”

“Mr. Rooney, my sister Agnes works at Rocky Knoll as an X-ray nurse. I just found out yesterday that she has an advanced case of TB. She had a premonition about this, but she told no one for a long time, not even me. She’s probably not going to live much longer than a month or two, if that. Therefore, I have decided to resign my position and take her back to our home in Menomonie where I can care for her. So, you see, Mr. Rooney, Mr. Lindsay can do nothing to me anymore, but I do care about Leonard Koltien.”

“Has someone in particular been looking after Leonard during this time?”

“Dr. Raymond Bavét has been caring for Leonard. We have tried to keep Leonard’s presence at Rocky Knoll as low-key as possible for a number of reasons. Dr. Bavét is the only other person who knows about any of this. He is a trusted professional on whom I can depend for anything.”

“If Lindsay is accused of doing what you have said he’s done, wouldn’t Dr. Bavét’s position be jeopardized? That wouldn’t be good either.”

“Mr. Lindsay has no idea that Dr. Bavét has been working with Leonard. I never disclosed Raymond’s name to Lindsay. All Lindsay knows is that *someone* has been looking after Leonard.”

Hugh sat back and exhaled a soft sigh. “Miss Dietrichson, thank you for coming to me with this information. I will organize my notes, based on what you have told me, make some

inquiries, and get back to you in a couple of days. Right now, this situation regarding Lindsay may seem rather overwhelming to you. But I suggest that you return to Rocky Knoll, try to relax about this matter, look after your sister, and allow me take care of this. Will you do that?"

They both stood and shook hands. "Thank you very much, Mr. Rooney; I'll await your call."

"You're quite welcome, Miss Dietrichson. God's blessings to you and your sister."

After Hugh had shut the door, he stood a moment with a sly grin on his face. Finally, the puzzle was coming together.

XV.

Christmas had come and gone uneventfully at Rocky Knoll. The excitement of earlier festivities gave way to a kind of lethargy that pervaded the building. Everett and Amanda Namitz had happily come to give Pamela her Christmas presents. She accepted the gifts graciously, but she also mentioned that she had not been feeling as vivacious as she had of late. Her parents told her that it was probably just a case of post-holiday blues. But Everett made a mental note to speak with Dr. Meyer about it later.

J. Henry had sent a holiday card to Leonard. Inside of it was a crisp ten-dollar bill with a short note promising he would stop out to see him very soon. Leonard rationalized that it was a good thing his brother had not come to see him during this time, for he had begun to develop a ticklish cough which he was convinced was merely the result of sitting in the cool air while perspiring the night he and Pamela had met on the stairway. He reasoned that a few good days of bed rest would cure it.

With arms folded and a smile that implied satisfaction, Maury Lindsay stood in the middle of the large banquet hall at the Mason's Lodge. The event for which he had been waiting long months was now just a few short hours away. He and J. Henry were putting some last-minute touches to the evening's program. *The Sheboygan Press* and a local radio station would be on hand, knowing only that they would be covering "a special event" without knowing any of the specifics. "My friend," said Lindsay to Koltien, "we are going give these people one New Year's Eve they shan't soon forget."

Koltien grinned and nodded in agreement. "Everything will be shut down on Monday, the second, but come Tuesday, we'll have this campaign underway in spades."

"You know, Hank, I've been thinking. Everett Namitz and I haven't hit it off ever since I killed his plan to annex that lakeshore property for his coal business. But, damn it all, that guy's loaded! Now, don't get me wrong...that check you gave me last week will help out tremendously. But maybe if I were to go see him, offer him an apology, and tell him I can guarantee him that property by March, he might be willing to come aboard and help further fill the election coffers. Yes, I'll phone him next week."

Ever since Levina Dietrichson had come to see him, Hugh Rooney had been methodically working out the plan he had ignored the past few months. He knew that the courthouse would be closed that day, so he telephoned the district attorney, Herman Runge, at his residence. Because of their many past associations, he and Runge had become close friends. He knew he would have no objection to his calling him at home, even if it were New Year's Eve day.

"Good morning, Herman. It's Hugh...Fine, thanks...Yes, I do plan on filing the brief by Wednesday...No, I don't think we should have any problems; it looks pretty standard to me.

Listen, Herman, the main reason I'm calling is that I'm sitting on something big. I am going to need your help with this along with Ernie Zehms... Yes, as sheriff, he's going to need to know about this. But it's an extremely sensitive matter all the way around... Yes, well, we're talking about a prominent member of the County Board here... That's right... Well, it's Maury Lindsay... Yes, I know. I had heard the same thing. Supposedly, he'll be announcing his candidacy tonight at a gala he's throwing at the Mason's Lodge... Oh, yes, I'm quite aware he's also on the Board at Rocky Knoll; in fact, this whole issue has to do with Rocky Knoll... Well, for a couple months... Because I had to take client confidentiality into account... Wait. There's more. The guy Lindsay's using as his campaign manager is up to his eyeballs in all of this as well... Look, Herman, I hate to ask you this, but do you think I might come by your house in an hour to fill you in on the rest of the details? We're looking at a number of serious charges here, and the sooner we set this in motion, the better for all parties involved... Good. Thanks. See you then."

At 11:55 P.M. Maury Lindsay stood onstage before approximately six hundred jubilant party-goers in various states of bootleg drunkenness or sobriety, and after some peremptory remarks announced his candidacy for U.S. Senate as falling balloons, fatalistic countdowns, and "Auld Lang Syne" spewed forth 1928 like an ominous, icy breath.

XVI.

Gray clouds told the story. Everett and Amanda sat ashen-faced across the desk from Dr. Meyer. When he spoke, Dr. Meyer's voice echoed in the words but stabbed in the message. Pamela had relapsed. In her joy at knowing she was improving, she had overexerted herself. The tubercle bacilli had returned with vengeance, as her fluid samples bore witness. Certainly, they were prepared to try everything at their disposal, but Meyer had said it all: "I'm afraid it does not

look good.” And in spite of all his money, Everett Namitz would have never once considered sending her elsewhere for treatment. He knew this was as good a sanatorium as there was anywhere in the entire country. Whatever may happen, he would see this through to the end.

Dr. Meyer walked with them up to Pamela’s room. She was asleep. They would not disturb her now. Everett wished to go to her bedside. He looked down at his “little darlin’” as she slumbered. Her breathing was labored. Amanda remained by the door with the doctor. They watched as Everett stood over her bed. He whispered something to her, unintelligible from where they stood; then he leaned over and kissed her forehead as he’d done so many times before. He returned to where the two of them had been standing. He stopped, looked at them as though they were complete strangers, and kept walking, deep into the early night shadows.

From his front porch J. Henry quickly unlocked his front door to the sound of his telephone ringing. “Hugh!...Happy New Year! I had been hoping to hear from you one of these days...News? What news? Something good, I hope...” But in a brief moment, the smile on his lips faded, first to a frown, then to a portrait of genuine fear.

Rooney was informing him that an arrest warrant had just been issued for Maury Lindsay on extortion charges and misuse of political office for personal gain. “As you may or may not be aware, according to Wisconsin statutes that’s a Class H felony. Furthermore, Mr. Koltien, the district attorney will be preferring charges against *you* for attempting to bribe me last October in trying to get your mother’s will changed. Oh, and by the way, I am fully aware that your brother has been an involuntary patient at Rocky Knoll, thanks to you and Mr. Lindsay.”

“Look, Rooney,” J. Henry’s voice growing louder, “this will never hold up in court; I’ll deny everything, and so will Lindsay!” It was a pitiful stab at false bravado.

Rooney calmly replied, "Perhaps. But if I were you, I'd be expecting a visitor to your residence very shortly. And I would also add that your campaigning days are probably over for a while. Goodbye, Mr. Koltien."

In panic, J. Henry immediately telephoned Maury Lindsay. "Maury, this is Hank."

"Well, good morning, Hank," Lindsay replied cheerily. "How are we feeling this morning? I must say that last night's extravaganza went even better than I had expected. I must admit I may have had just a wee bit too much of that champagne. Thanks again. Oh, the grape juice labels...perfect! Nice touch." He laughed jovially.

"Maury, shut up for a minute and listen to me! I just got a call from Hugh Rooney. The D.A. intends to bring charges against you. He said the sheriff will be at your house any time."

"Charges!" he scoffed. "What the hell for?"

"I don't know, extortion, misuse of office, other stuff I can't remember. He also said that he knows Leonard is at Rocky Knoll and the circumstances behind it. Look, Maury, this is probably gonna kill the campaign. I can't go through with this anymore 'cause I'm also in big trouble. I'm sorry to have to do this to you, but I am going to need the money I gave you returned."

With feigned sympathy, Lindsay said, "Oh, Hank, I am very sorry, but I won't be able to do that. You see, that money is already spent." He quietly opened his desk drawer and pulled out the check that Koltien had given him. A wicked smile crossed his face.

"Spent! But that's not possible. I gave you that check only a few days ago. I gotta have that money, Maury. Rooney's ruined everything! Please, Maury, you gotta help me out!"

"Hey, I know just how you feel, Hank. And believe me, if there were anything I could do to help I would, but if what you say is true, then we're both in a bit of a financial scrape here.

Oh, don't worry, Hank; you'll be *just* fine; trust me on this. Goodbye, Hank," Lindsay hung up the phone with a nefarious laugh.

J. Henry slowly put down the receiver. He was angry; then, he became frightened again. Very frightened. How could this scheme have failed? It was perfect. The horrible realization hit him hard: He was now nearly penniless. He had liquidated all of his property on the premise that the rewriting of the will would supplant the capital which he had just funneled into Lindsay's campaign. But there was no campaign anymore. Beads of sweat began to form on his forehead and upper lip. In a very short while there would be a pounding on his front door from a man with a warrant in his hand. The room was suddenly becoming smaller. All alone. Betrayer. Betrayed. With trembling hands he reached for the decanter of whiskey atop his desk. In his distorted mind he could see no way out. He slowly reached down and opened the bottom drawer of his desk and removed its contents....

XVII.

It was already dark by four o'clock that afternoon. A small lamp had been turned on in Leonard's room. Dr. Bavét sat near him in a small saddleback chair, speaking to him at a low volume. He had sat there for almost an hour. Neither man smiled. In the four months since he had resided at Rocky Knoll, Leonard came to trust Dr. Bavét unconditionally. With the exception of Pamela Burton, and for the first time since his mother died, Leonard again felt loved. Both he and Dr. Bavét knew, without having to say it, that their relationship transcended that of merely doctor and patient.

But Leonard had transgressed, and it was Dr. Bavét's duty to bring him the news: Leonard was now in the throes of the early stages of tuberculosis. Bavét had tried to warn him how easily one could contract this disease and how imperative it was to exercise caution while

around the infected patients. But both of them knew, without having to utter a word, that Leonard had really contracted his TB from only one patient, a beautiful young woman who had lifted his fears far, far beyond the stalwart evergreens that swayed to and fro across the frigid grounds of Rocky Knoll, and a woman who had kissed love, life, and death into his lungs, all at once, in a brief moment on a Christmas stairway that now seemed ages ago.

“You are fortunate, Leonard,” Dr. Bavét said after sitting quietly for a minute. “We were able to detect this onset very early. Now if you follow the regimen I’ll design for you, with no deviation whatsoever, I believe the prognosis looks quite good for a full recovery.”

Leonard only nodded slightly. “I will,” he promised.

Dr. Bavét rose slowly from his wooden chair. He walked over to a latticed window away from Leonard’s bed, staring at the reflection of himself against the darkness beyond. Frost had formed in each corner of the windowpanes; he scraped unconsciously at one of the corners with his fingernail. This was going to be searing for him, but there was no point in tarrying further. “I have some news to share with you, Leonard; I think it’s best you heard it from me first.” His tone of voice caused Leonard to involuntarily sit up in his bed. “Leonard, it has to do with your young friend, Miss Burton...”

“Miss Burton?...Pamela?...She’s all right, isn’t she? Oh, God, she’s not...?”

“No, Leonard, not that,” Bavét said, trying to reassure him. “But she is very seriously ill. Her TB has returned threefold. Leonard... though she is not dead, she is likely to die.”

The room froze to silence, and tears welled up in Leonard’s eyes. The hope against hope for her recovery for which he had prayed often and hard appeared to lie beyond his greatest wish. Of all the trials he had been through since coming to Rocky Knoll, this was the very worst.

“Can’t her doctor do something for her...I mean, isn’t there...?”

Dr. Bavét interrupted him. “Dr. Meyer has scheduled surgery the first thing tomorrow morning. All we can do for now is to wait and pray, said Bavét. He paused for a moment then began again. “Leonard, I debated whether or not to tell you about Pamela, given your own illness, but I knew you would want to know. Right now it’s vitally important that you try to get some rest. For the present, so much is out of our hands. We have to accept that and act accordingly. Do you understand, Leonard?”

Leonard lay with his hands folded behind his head, staring at the stark white ceiling. One tear rolled down either side of his face. He tried to process the words he was hearing, but his brain refused to cooperate. In his mind he stood at the taking-off point, preparing to fly from one nonsensical dream to another, but the gravity of it all held him down. This was really happening. Dr. Bavét patted his hand encouragingly on the side of Leonard’s bed before rising to go. This sad young man needed a chance to grieve alone.

As Raymond walked into the hallway, he immediately noticed Levina Dietrichson standing at the far end speaking to someone. When they saw him approach, they both slowly came forward to meet him, Levina leading the way. She said, “Dr. Bavét, this is Police Detective Carl Wittkopp. He has just been informing me of news regarding Leonard Koltien’s brother. Would you mind stepping into this room and telling Dr. Bavét what you’ve just told me, Detective Wittkopp?”

“Not at all, Ma’am. Doctor, about three hours ago I sent one of my men to the residence of J. Henry Koltien. When there was no response to his knocking, the officer went around to the back of the house. While peering into one of the windows, he noticed a body slumped over a desk. Certainly, there will be an inquest, but from all indications it appears that Mr. Koltien shot

and killed himself.” Bavét stared incredulously at the officer. “We were told that Mr. Koltien’s brother has been residing here and that he is the next of kin.”

“Y-yes, that is correct, Detective. However, I have just come from his room. He is having a rather difficult time right now, both physically and emotionally. As his physician, I strongly recommend that we not disturb him anymore tonight, especially with such traumatic news. Nothing is lost by waiting until morning. I will tell him then.”

“Very well, Doctor. Thank you for assisting with this difficult chore.” Detective Wittkopp tipped his gray fedora and bade them farewell, as Dr. Bavét and Levina stared at each other in stunned silence.

XVIII.

It is interesting to note how one’s body, even when ill, still keeps the channels to the mind always alert, for fear it may miss that which must not be avoided. And just as we are, all of us, in our dreams, hopes, and desires, mysteries to even those standing beside us, we continue to enact our own dramas, most often to audiences of none.

Leonard tossed his mind through a restless night. He had worried away his fingernails thinking about Pamela. Pink and russet-colored clouds gave first hints of daybreak through iced-up windows. Shakespeare had once written that time and the hour ran through the roughest day. Leonard knew well that Pamela would be in surgery soon. There was nothing to do now but wait and hope that this play would turn out well.

An hour later there came a soft knocking on his door. It was Dr. Bavét coming to check on Leonard. He exchanged sputum cups with Leonard, and they spoke briefly. “How are you feeling this morning, Leonard?”

“Honestly? Not too good. I didn’t get very much sleep. I’m sure you can guess why.”

“Yes, I imagine I can,” replied Dr. Bavét. “But Dr. Meyer is as fine a surgeon as there is. He has been Pamela’s physician since she was a child. He will do everything in his power to help her.” He paused a moment to let Leonard digest his words. “Leonard, I know you have much on your mind now, but there is something else, regarding another matter, that I must discuss with you...It has to do with your brother.”

Without going into specifics, Dr. Bavét broke the news that J. Henry was dead. Leonard took the news unsteadily at first. He wanted to know all of the circumstances behind his brother’s death, but Bavét had already determined that it would be best to remain intentionally vague. He feared Leonard might revert to behaviors similar to those he exhibited when his parents died. That J. Henry had died in the same manner as his father was an issue of which Dr. Bavét was quite aware. Knowing that what Leonard needed now was to try to get some sleep, Dr. Bavét administered a cachet of Veronal. He sat with Leonard for a short while in order to give the medicine time to work. As Leonard faded groggily into sleep, he began to mumble, “Blue skies...Smiling at me...Nothing but blue skies....” The skies were indeed blue; they were not smiling.

Pamela Burton never awoke from surgery. The bacilli in her lungs had ravished her frail body until it could take no more. Everyone fought the battle valiantly until the very end, and all wept bitterly in the defeat. Leonard would learn of her death later. For now, the two of them danced as one inside his secret dreams, painlessly.

On August 2, 1928, exactly two years to the day that Rocky Knoll had been dedicated, Leonard Koltien was wheeled through the front doors of the sanatorium, free from the tuberculosis that had kept him there longer than anticipated. He was now legally an adult and

heir to the Koltien family fortune. Both Dr. Raymond Bavét and attorney Hugh Rooney would continue to look after him for the next several years.

Levina Dietrichson, whose sister did perish as Levina had predicted, and who never forgot this wronged young man, made a special trip down from Menomonie to Rocky Knoll to see Leonard off and to wish him well. Just as Leonard had watched his brother drive away through the gates of Rocky Knoll almost a year earlier, so too did Dr. Raymond Bavét, Levina Dietrichson, and other doctors, nurses, and patients, who had come to know and love him, come to watch Leonard about to be driven away through those same iron gates.

As Leonard sat in the back seat and looked out the window, Dr. Bavét approached the car. Leonard rolled down the window to speak to him. “To say ‘thank you’ does not begin to do justice in expressing my gratitude, Dr. Bavét. I owe you my life; my sanity; my wholeness of spirit.”

“Dr. Bavét responded, “Leonard, it is I who owes you the great thanks. Since I’ve come to Rocky Knoll, I have seen countless times how patients can also become the healers. You have helped me more than you will ever know.” With that he reached into his pocket and drew forth a small ornate box. When Leonard saw it, he went pale and his eyes opened wide.

“Leonard, after Pamela died, her parents came to claim her personal belongings. When her father saw this music box, it broke his heart. He told me that he could not bear to keep it, for it was too difficult a reminder of her. He gave it to me; I’ve kept it for you all this time; I want you to have it.”

Leonard lifted the fragile lid after winding the key. A soft, tinkling melody began to pour forth. Leonard turned to Dr. Bavét with eyes filled with the last tears he would ever shed at the

sanatorium. He smiled gently and said, “Pamela played this song for me one time. It’s called “Rumination.” He gently closed the lid and the music stopped.

The poignancy of this tender scene needed an immediate counterweight. Only one person there would be perfect for the task: “Crazy” John Star Mountain. He stuck his head all the way inside the car, flashed Leonard a nearly toothless smile, and vigorously shook Leonard’s hand.

“Ya, an’ listen here, Lenny, if youse ever wanna go fishin’, you jus’ gimme a call out here, enso? Heiny’s got room in da boat for da bot’ of us. He wheezed a laugh at his own unintentional pun. Leonard assured John that he would, and the car slowly flickered in the afternoon shadows until it dissolved from view.

As Doctors Bavét and Meyer stood together, their conversation drifted around to the topic of Pamela Burton. “You know, Ray, Pamela’s death was a sad, terrible tragedy. But I must admit that this entire incident still rather perplexes me. She had been improving so nicely until just after Christmas. For tubercle bacilli to increase in her that rapidly, she would have had to be in intimate contact with another TB carrier. It’s very strange. It would be similar to what would happen if two people carrying the disease had *kissed* each other.” He stopped walking. He turned and looked at Dr. Bavét, furrowed his eyebrows, but said nothing more. He turned slowly and pensively gazed at the great wrought-iron gate at the top of the hill. Others would too soon pass through it. They would be ready. The two men walked in silence back inside the sanatorium.