

FROGGY. 'Ere we go, then, Charlie, 'ere we go. This is the old place, all right. (*Calling out.*) Hullo? Bet? (*Rings the bell.*) Betty, my love? (*To Charlie.*) Wot time d'yer make it? (*Charlie doesn't respond.*) Well, not gone 'alf nine, I shouldn't think. (*Calling.*) Betty! Well—never mind. She can't 'ave gone too far, with the front door wide open like that. Fire in the grate. Unless it's like one o' them ghost ships, eh?

CHARLIE. Oh, *do* hurry . . . Hello? May I speak with Staff Sergeant LeSueur, please? Charlie Baker. No, it's not a code, it's my name. . . . Hello, Froggy? Could you come get me, please? Froggy, you don't know what you've done. No, I mean my pretending not to speak English. . . . No, well, I decided to, after all. Oh, I overheard something I shouldn't have, and—well, it seemed best. But Froggy—they don't leave me alone. No! The old woman does nothing but shout at me. The others talk about me as if I were a potted palm. That screaming girl, and her poor addled brother? One thoroughly unpleasant chap began saying the most awful things about my mother. . . . Well, something to the effect that he doubted there were enough of her left to spread on toast. I don't know. No, of course I sha'n't tell Mother, but still—. And that minister, something very odd going on with him, I think. I don't know. What is a "Christian hunt club"? No. Nor I. Yes, I'll hold on. (*Ellard enters, and stands looking at Charlie. Charlie smiles back at him.*)

ELLARD. (*Looks around.*) Well—that's all the important stuff in here. You wanna—what do we wanna do now? You wanna—? We could go outside—check out the trees, 'n' stuff? We don't have to, but—we could. Or—yeah. No, let's just take a break, right now. All right? Rest up. An' then we'll check out the trees and all, directly. 'Cause you will, that's, those are all things you'll want to know about, too. 'Cause, like if you ever want to ask somebody, like, where a tree is, or sump'm? Then—you'll want to know that. Or cars? Or chipmunks, or things, 'n' all? All that outdoorsy stuff? But . . . yeah. Or. You know what I *could* do. . . . (*As if deciding how to spend ten thousand dollars.*) I could go outside and bring some stuff in. I just might do that. 'Cause, since that way we wouldn't—we won't have to go outside, or anything, and we'd have everything right in here where—where we want it. Okay? (*Hopping up.*) All right, you wait here, then. (*Charlie stands.*) No you wait here, I'll be right back. No. *Stay.* (*Charlie stops.*) All right. (*Ellard starts out as Betty enters.*)

BETTY. Laws. (*Going to clear the remains of breakfast.*) You done with yer breakfast, Charlie? You must be. Ye took off your little head-glass. (*Charlie, as if to answer, tears his paper napkin in half.*) That mean yo're done? I reckon it must. (*Experimentally, Charlie stands and, straight-faced, does a brief, wild little dance.*) Ohhh! (*They look at each other.*) That mean ye enjoyed it? (*Charlie does his little smile.*) It does? (*Charlie dances around some more, shading his eyes à la hornpipe, flapping his arms like wings, and doing a fairly complex series of meaningless gestures.*) And—let's see, I don't know if I got all o' that, er not. Sump'm about—was it sump'm about yo're lookin' forward to more o' my cookin'? (*Charlie smiles, watches her.*) And—and ye hope I'll cook ye some chicken? (*Charlie just smiles.*) Well, don't you worry none, Charlie. 'Cause ye know what we're havin' fer dinner this very night? *Chicken!*

CATHERINE

Talkin' to Betty, or Ellard, you know, there's always that slim little chance you might be understood. Cain't have that. And David, of course, he's off someplace — instead of stickin' around here gettin' to know me. I just keep thinkin' if he — (*An odd laugh.*) if he knew me a little better, he wouldn't —. Ohh, boy. You ever know anybody that — what's your name? Charlie? Charlie. Anybody that was just so good, that you just feel *vile*, most of the time? Yeah. And he is, he's so sweet, and he does for people, and he's so patient. And you get with him awhile, you just realize you've spent your whole life bein' selfish and silly? Doin' dumb things like (*Picking up the paper.*) this, I was one of these little cutie-patooties, 'bout a year ago. Yeah. One year. Lord. Dressin' up, flouncin' around, boppin' all over in my Daddy's plane, sippin' at drinks in revolvin' restaurants. Dumb, dumb, stupid, useless, mindless bullshit.

OWEN. (*Quietly, smiling.*) Hey, dummy. (*Charlie turns to him.*) You still here, huh? Well, well. You havin' a nice time? Bet you are. Suckin' around, playin' like yo're one a' us? I tell you one thing, dummy-boy. You enjoy it now. 'Cause I get t' be county sheriff around here—an' I got that Invisible Empire t' back me up—man, they ain't gonna be none o' you left in this county. Foreigners. Yeah. Gonna wipe you all right out—all you dummy boys, black boys, Jew boys. We gonna clean up this whole country, by and by. An' ye know whar it's gonna start? Right here. Thass' right. This' gonna be the most important spot in the U.S. of A., come next couple a' years. It is. You ain't gonna see it, though. No, sir. We gonna ride y'all outta here ever' way they is. Plane. Boat. Yeah, 'n' we can afford it, too. We gonna have lots a' money, real soon. An' you know what I hope? I hope some a' you fights back, too. I jest hope you do. 'Cause I wanna find out what you got fer blood. (*Pause.*)