

went from his face so that Ole could no longer read him. 'It's sold?' he said. 'Already?'

'Yes,' said Liesel. 'Just like that. We're sorry to disappoint you.'

'All of it?' asked the Japanese man.

'Yes,' said Liesel. 'We're very sorry. We didn't even have time to take our sign down.'

The stiff expression of Kabuo Miyamoto's face didn't change even for a second. 'Who bought it?' he said. 'I want to talk to them.'

'Etta Heine's son Carl,' said Liesel. 'He came by around ten o'clock.'

'Carl Heine,' the Japanese man answered, with a hint of anger in his voice.

Ole had suggested that Kabuo Miyamoto go to see Carl Heine about the matter. Perhaps something could be worked out.

Liesel shook her head and wrung her hands in her apron. 'We've sold it,' she'd repeated apologetically. 'Ole and Carl shook hands, you see. We accepted earnest money. We're bound to our agreement. It's sold, you see. We're sorry.'

The Japanese man had stood then. 'I should have come earlier,' he said.

The next day Carl had come by again – Liesel phoned him about Kabuo Miyamoto – to take the sign down from the barn. Ole, leaning on his cane, stood below and told him about the Japanese man's visit. Carl, he remembered, had been interested in the details of it. He nodded his head and listened closely. Ole Jurgensen told everything – the way the politeness had gone out of the Japanese man, the unreadable Japanese expression on his face when he heard that the land he coveted had been sold. Carl Heine nodded again and again and then came down from the ladder with the sign. 'Thanks for telling me,' he'd said.

After the noon recess was called that day Kabuo Miyamoto ate lunch in his cell, as he had seventy-seven times. The cell was one of two in the courthouse basement and had neither bars nor windows. It was big enough for a low military surplus bunk, a toilet, a sink, and a nightstand. There was a drain in the corner of its concrete floor and a foot-square grate in its door. Other than this there were no openings or apertures through which light could seep. A naked bulb hung overhead, and Kabuo could turn it on and off by screwing and unscrewing it in its socket. Yet before the first week was over he'd discovered in himself a preference for darkness. His eyes adjusted to it. He was less troubled by the closeness of his cell walls with the naked light put out, less conscious that he was jailed.

Kabuo sat on the edge of his bunk with his lunch perched in front of him on the nightstand. A peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich, two carrot sticks, a mound of lime gelatin, a tin cup of milk, served on a cafeteria tray. At this particular moment his light was on. He'd turned it on in order to see what he was eating but also in order to look at his face in a hand-held shaving mirror. His wife had said he looked like one of Tojo's soldiers. He wanted to see if this was so.

He sat with his tray just in front of his knees, confronting his reflection in the hand mirror. He could see how his face had once been a boy's face and how on top of this was laid the face of his war years – a face he was no longer surprised to see, though it had astonished him greatly in the beginning. He had come home from the war and seen in his own eyes the disturbed empty reaches he'd seen in the eyes of other soldiers he'd known.

They did not so much seem to stare right through things as to stare past the present state of the world into a world that was permanently in the distance for them and at the same time more immediate than the present. Kabuo remembered much in this manner. Under the surface of his daily life was a life he lived as if underwater. Kabuo remembered how under the helmet of the soldier on the wooded hillside, underneath the steady droning of the bees, it had turned out to be a very young boy he had shot directly through the groin. When Kabuo approached from one side the boy had stared up at him and spoke through clenched teeth in tremulous German. Then the boy panicked and moved his hand toward his gun, and Kabuo shot him one more time in the heart at point-blank range. Yet still the boy refused to die and lay on his back between two trees while Kabuo stood five feet away, frozen, his rifle shouldered still. The boy held his chest in both of his hands and exerted himself to raise his head from the ground, at the same time gathering himself to take a breath, and sucked in the hot afternoon air. Then he spoke again, between his teeth, and it was clear to Kabuo that he was begging, pleading, that he wanted the American who had killed him to save him – he had no choice but to ask him for this, nobody else was present. All of it was too much, and when the boy stopped talking his chest twitched a half-dozen times and blood ran from his mouth and down his cheeks. Then Kabuo went forward with his rifle and squatted beside the German boy, on his right, and the boy put his hand on Kabuo's boot and shut his eyes and gave out. The tension stayed in his mouth for a while, and Kabuo watched until it faded. The smell of breakfast soon rose from the German boy's bowels.

Kabuo sat in his prison cell now and examined his reflection carefully. It was not a thing he had control over. His face had been molded by his experiences as a soldier, and he appeared to the world seized up inside precisely because this was how he felt. It was possible for him all these years later to think of the German boy dying on the hillside and to feel his own heart pound as it

had as he squatted against the tree, drinking from his canteen, his ears ringing, his legs trembling. What could he say to people on San Piedro to explain the coldness he projected? The world was unreal, a nuisance that prevented him from focusing on his memory of that boy, on the flies in a cloud over his astonished face, the pool of blood filtering out of his shirt and into the forest floor, smelling rank, the sound of gunfire from the hillside to the east – he'd left there, and then he hadn't left. And still there had been more murders after this, three more, less difficult than the first had been but murders nonetheless. So how to explain his face to people? After a while, motionless in his cell, he began to feel objective about his face, and then he saw what Hatsue did. He had meant to project to the jurors his innocence, he'd wanted them to see that his spirit was haunted, he sat upright in the hope that his desperate composure might reflect the shape of his soul. This was what his father had taught him: the greater the composure, the more revealed one was, the truth of one's inner life was manifest – a pleasing paradox. It had seemed to Kabuo that his detachment from this world was somehow self-explanatory, that the judge, the jurors, and the people in the gallery would recognize the face of a war veteran who had forever sacrificed his tranquillity in order that they might have theirs. Now, looking at himself, scrutinizing his face, he saw that he appeared defiant instead. He had refused to respond to anything that happened, had not allowed the jurors to read in his face the palpitations of his heart.

Yet listening to Etta Heine on the witness stand had moved Kabuo to bitter anger. He had felt his carefully constructed exterior crumbling when she spoke to the court so insultingly about his father. The desire had come over him to deny what she said, to interrupt her testimony with the truth about his father, a strong and tireless man, honest to a fault, kind and humble as well. But all of this he suppressed.

Now, in his jail cell, he stared into the mirror at the mask he wore, which had been arranged by its wearer to suggest his war and the strength he'd mustered to face its consequences but

which instead communicated haughtiness, a cryptic superiority not only to the court but to the prospect of death the court confronted him with. The face in the hand mirror was none other than the face he had worn since the war had caused him to look inward, and though he exerted himself to rearrange it – because this face was a burden to wear – it remained his, unalterable finally. He knew himself privately to be guilty of murder, to have murdered men in the course of war, and it was this guilt – he knew no other word – that lived in him perpetually and that he exerted himself not to communicate. Yet the exertion itself communicated guilt, and he could see no way to stop it. He could not change how his face arranged itself while he sat with his hands on the defendant's table with his back to his fellow islanders. In his face, he knew, was his fate, as Nels Gudmundsson had asserted at the start of things: 'There are facts,' he said, 'and the jurors listen to them, but even more, they watch you. They watch to see what happens to your face, how it changes when witnesses speak. For them, at bottom, the answer is in how you appear in the courtroom, what you look like, how you act.'

He liked this man, Nels Gudmundsson. He had begun to like him on the September afternoon when he first appeared at his cell door carrying a folded chessboard beneath his arm and a Havana cigar box full of chess pieces. He'd offered Kabuo a cigar from his shirt pocket, lit his own, then brought two candy bars out of the box and dropped them on the bunk beside Kabuo without acknowledging that he had done so. It was his way of being charitable.

'I'm Nels Gudmundsson, your attorney,' he said. 'I've been appointed by the court to represent you. I –'

'I didn't do it,' Kabuo had said. 'I'm not guilty of anything.'

'Look,' said Nels. 'I'll tell you what. We can worry about that later, all right? I've been trying to find someone with the free time to play chess for fifty years now, even more. Seems to me you just might be the fellow.'

'I am,' said Kabuo. 'But –'

'You were in the service,' said Nels. 'My guess is you play a mean game of chess. Chess, checkers, rummy, bridge, hearts, dominoes, cribbage. And what about solitaire?' added Nels. 'Solitaire might be the thing for you in here.'

'Never liked solitaire,' Kabuo answered. 'Besides, a guy who starts playing solitaire in jail is just asking to get depressed.'

'Never thought of that,' said Nels. 'We'll have to get you out of here, that's all there is to it.' He smiled.

Kabuo nodded. 'Can you?'

'They're not budging just now on anything, Kabuo. You're here until your trial, I think.'

'There shouldn't even *be* a trial,' said Kabuo.

'Alvin Hooks would disagree,' said Nels. 'He's putting his case together. He's serious about murder in the first degree, and he's serious about asking for the death penalty. We should be, too – we should get serious. We have a lot of work to do, you and I. But first, what about chess?'

The death penalty, Kabuo said to himself. He was a Buddhist and believed in the laws of karma, so it made sense to him that he might pay for his war murders: everything comes back to you, nothing is accidental. The fear of death grew in him. He thought of Hatsue and of his children and it seemed to him he must be exiled from them – because he felt for them so much love – in order to pay his debts to the dead he had left on the ground in Italy.

'You sit on the bunk,' he said to Nels, trying to calm himself. 'We'll draw up the nightstand for the board.'

'Fine,' Nels said. 'Just fine.'

The old man's hands fumbled setting up the chess pieces. They were darkly spotted, and the skin, translucent in appearance, was prominently veined.

'White or black?' Nels asked.

'Advantages to both,' replied Kabuo. 'You choose, Mr. Gudmundsson.'

'Most players prefer to open,' Nels said. 'Why is that, anyway?'

'Must see some advantage in going first,' said Kabuo. 'Must believe in taking the offensive.'

'And you don't?' inquired Nels.

Kabuo took up a pawn in each hand and put them behind his back. 'Best way to settle the problem,' he said. 'This way, all you have to do is guess.' He held his closed fists in front of Nels.

'Left,' the old man said. 'If we're going to leave it to chance, left is as good as right. They're both the same, this way.'

'You don't prefer it?' asked Kabuo. 'You prefer white? Or black?'

'Open your hands,' Nels answered, and tucked his cigar in between his teeth high up on the right side – dentures, it occurred to Kabuo.

As it turned out, the first move was Nels's. As it turned out, the old man never castled. He had no interest in an endgame. His strategy was to give up points for position, to give up men in the early going in return for an undefeatable board posture. He'd won, even though Kabuo could see what he was doing. There was no fiddling around. The game, quite suddenly, was over.

Kabuo set the hand mirror on his tray of food now and ate half of the lime gelatin. He chewed down his carrot sticks and what remained of his sandwich, then poured out the tin cup of milk and filled it twice with water. He washed his hands, removed his shoes, and lay down on the jail bed. After a while he stood up again and turned the lightbulb in its socket. Then in the darkness the accused man lay down again, shut his eyes, and dreamed.

He dreamed without sleeping – daydreams, waking dreams, as had come to him often in his jail cell. In this manner he escaped from its walls and roamed in freedom along San Pedro's wood paths, along the verges of its autumn pastures crusted over with skins of hoarfrost; he followed in his mind certain remnants of trail that gave out suddenly in blackberry riots or in fields of unexpected Scotch broom. In his thoughts were vestiges of old skid roads and forgotten farm paths that bled into vales of

ghost fern and hollows filled with skunk cabbage. Sometimes these trails faded at mud bluffs overlooking the sea; other times they wandered down onto beaches where thick cedars, sapling alders, and vine maples, toppled by winter tides, lay with the tips of their desiccated branches buried in sand and gravel. The waves brought seaweed in and draped it across the downed trees in thick oozing skeins. Then his mind moved outward, and Kabuo was at sea again, his net set, the salmon running, and he was standing on the foredeck of the *Islander* with the breeze in his face, the phosphorus in the water brilliant before him, the whitecaps silver in the moonlight. From his bunk in the Island County Jail he felt the sea again and the swells under his boat as it rode over the foam; with his eyes shut he smelled cold salt and the odor of salmon in the hold, heard the net winch working and the deep note of the engine. Rafts of seabirds rose off the water, making way in the first misty light with the *Islander* bound for home on a cool morning, half a thousand kings in her hold, the whine of wind in her rigging. At the cannery he held each fish in his hands before tossing it up and over the side – lambent chinooks, lithe and sleek, as long as his arm and weighing a fourth what he did, slick, glassy eyes held open. He could feel them in his hands again while overhead the gulls flew tangents. When he put off and motored for the docks the gulls followed on high with their breasts opened to the wind. Then he was amid a flock of gulls while he swabbed the deck of the *Islander*. He heard their squawking and watched them circle low, angling for scraps, while Marlin Teneskold or William Gjovaag shot at them with a side-by-side so that the gulls settled out on the water. The gun's report echoed from the hills of Amity Harbor, and then Kabuo remembered what he had missed this year: the birch and alder going golden, the red autumn hue of the vine maples, the rust and russet colors of October, the cider press, pumpkins, and baskets of young zucchini squash. The smell of dying leaves in the motionless gray morning as he shambled up onto the porch after a night's fishing, and the full, fine growth in the cedar trees. The *scratching* sound of leaves underfoot; leaves mashed

into paste after rains. He'd *missed* fall rains, the water dripping along the knobs of his spine and mixing with the sea spray in his hair – things he hadn't known he'd miss.

In August he'd taken his family to Lanheedron Island. They'd tied off to a float, and he'd rowed them up onto Sugar Sand Beach in the skiff. His daughters stood in the surf and poked at jellyfish with sticks and collected sand dollars; then they followed the beach creek up through a dell, Kabuo carrying the baby on his right arm, until they came to a waterfall, a cascade tumbling from a wall of moss. They ate their lunch there in the shadows of the hemlocks and gathered salmonberries. Hatsue found under birch trees a half-dozen destroying angels and pointed them out to her daughters. They were pure white and lovely, she explained, but fatal to eat. She pointed out, too, the maidenhair fern nearby; the black stems, she said, retained their shine in a pine needle basket's weave.

He'd admired her fully on that day. She collected the stems of wild ginger for seasoning rice and yarrow leaves for tea. On the beach she dug butter clams with a pointed stick, raking an arc in front of her. She found sea glass and a fossilized crab leg embedded in a concretion. She doused the baby with seawater. The girls helped Kabuo gather beach wood for a fire when evening came up. At the last of dusk they launched their skiff again. His oldest daughter hooked a true cod in the kelp beds off Lanheedron. He filleted it on the deck while Hatsue caught another on a hand line. They ate at sea – the cod, the clams, ginger rice, yarrow tea. His middle daughter and the baby slept on his bunk, his oldest daughter manned the wheel. Kabuo and Hatsue went forward. He stood with his chest against her back and his hands in the rigging until the lights of Amity Harbor came up to the south, and then he went in and repositioned the *Islander* in order to take the channel head on. His daughter leaned against him after he took the wheel from her, and he came into the harbor that way at midnight, the girl's head against his arm.

Then he remembered strawberry fields from before Manzanar

and he was in them as he'd always been, a sea of strawberries, rows and rows, a labyrinth of runners as intricate as a network of arteries feeding on the surface of a dozen farms he knew from childhood. He was in these mounded rows, stooped and picking with the sun on his neck, low against the land in a sea of green and red with the smell of the earth and its berries rising like a mist, filling by the labor of his hands the twelve woven pine baskets in his caddy. He saw his wife before she'd married him, he saw her picking at Ichikawas' farm, how he'd come toward her carrying his caddy and as if by accident, by happenstance, how she hadn't seen him coming, intent on her work, bent to it, but at the last minute lifted her black eyes, lissome as ever, continuously picking – berries lay gently like red gems between her fingers – and while she met his eyes fed one of her woven pine baskets, three of which already lay full on the caddy, mounded over with ripened fruit. He'd squatted down across from her and, picking, took her in – how she squatted with her chin near her kneecaps, her hair woven tautly into a long, thick rope, the sweat against her forehead and the tendrils of hair that had escaped from their arrangement – loose strands fell across her cheeks and nose. She was sixteen. Low to the ground, folded together with her breasts against her thighs, she wore woven sandals and a red muslin summer dress, its narrow straps running over her shoulders. He saw again the strength of her legs, the brown of her ankles and calves, the suppleness of her spine, the film of sweat at her throat. Then it was evening, and he'd left the South Beach wood path to look at her home of worn cedar slats and across the fields to where she lived: fields circumscribed by tall cedar trees and lit by spindly moonlight. A kerosene lantern flickered orange in the window of Hatsue's home, her door stood open, ajar ten inches, and an angle of lantern light spilled across her porch. Crickets and night toads, the brattle of a dog, laundry billowing on a line against the night breeze. And again he breathed in the green in the strawberry runners, the rain in the cedar duff, and the salt water. She padded toward him with a bucket full of kitchen scraps, her

sandals squeaking, moving toward the compost heap, and on her return trip she'd passed between the rows of raspberries. He watched while she held her hair back with one hand, the other moving in search of the sweetest fruit, grazing among the canes. Her heels lifted from the sandals now and then. She slid the berries in between her lips, still holding her hair, the canes rebounding in quiet arcs when she freed the berry caps from their cores. He stood watching and imagined that if he kissed her that night the taste of the raspberries would be cool in his mouth.

He saw her just as he had seen her in history class, a pencil between her teeth, one hand laid against the nape of her neck, lost behind her effusive hair. She walked through the halls with her books pressed against her breasts, in pleated skirt, argyle sweater, white bobby socks folded down crisply above the polished onyx buckles of her shoes. She looked at him and then away again quickly, saying nothing when he passed by.

He remembered Manzanar, the dust in the barracks, in the tarpapered shacks and cafeteria; even the bread tasted gritty. They'd worked tending eggplants and lettuces in the camp garden. They'd been paid little, the hours were long, they'd been told it was their duty to work hard. He and Hatsue spoke of little things at first, then of the San Pedro fields they'd left behind and the smell of ripening strawberries. He had begun to love her, to love more than just her beauty and grace, and when he saw that in their hearts they shared the same dream he felt a great certainty about her. They kissed in the back of a crew truck coming into camp one night, and the warm wet taste of her, however brief, brought her down for him from the world of angels and into the world of human beings. In this way his love deepened. Working in the gardens he would pass her by and, for a moment, slide one hand around her waist. She would squeeze his hand between her fingers, which had grown more callused and hard at Manzanar, and he would squeeze back, and they would return to their weeding. The wind blew desert dust in their faces and dried their skin and turned their hair to wire.

He remembered the expression on Hatsue's face when he told her he had enlisted. It was not the being gone, she said – though the being gone was a horrible thing – it was more that he might not ever return, or that he might return not himself. Kabuo had not made promises to her – he could not say if he was coming back, or if he would come back the same man. There was this matter of honor, he'd explained to her, and he had no choice but to accept the duty the war required of him. At first she had refused to understand this and had insisted that duty was less important than love and she hoped Kabuo felt the same way. But he could not bring himself to agree with this; love went deep and meant life itself, but honor could not be turned from. He was not who he was if he didn't go to war, and would not be worthy of her.

She turned from him and tried to stay away, and for three days they didn't speak. At last he'd come to her, at dusk, in the gardens, and said that he loved her more than anything in the world and that he hoped only that she would understand why it was he had to leave. He asked for nothing else from her, only this acknowledgment of who he was, how his soul was shaped. Hatsue stood with her long-handled hoe and said that she had learned from Mrs. Shigemura that character was always destiny. He would have to do what he must do, and she would have to do the same.

He'd nodded and exerted himself to show nothing. Then he turned and walked between the rows of eggplants. He was twenty yards off when she called his name and asked if he would marry her before leaving. *'Why do you want to marry me?'* he asked, and her answer came back, *'To hold a part of you.'* She dropped the hoe and walked the twenty yards to hold him in her arms. *'It's my character, too,'* she whispered. *'It's my destiny now to love you.'*

It had been, he saw now, a war marriage, hurried into because there was no choice and because both of them felt the rightness of it. They had not known each other more than a few months, though he had always admired her from a distance, and it seemed

to him, when he thought about it, that their marriage had been meant to happen. His parents approved, and hers approved, and he was happy to leave for the war in the knowledge that she was waiting for him and would be there when he returned. And then he had returned, a murderer, and her fear that he would no longer be himself was realized.

He remembered, too, his father's face, and the sword his father kept inside a wooden chest in the days before Pearl Harbor. A *katana* made by the swordsmith Masamune, it had been in the Miyamoto family, it was said, for six centuries. His father kept it sheathed and rolled in cloth, an undecorated and highly useful weapon. Its beauty lay in its simplicity, the plainness of its curve; even its wooden scabbard was spare and plain. His father had taken it, along with other things – his wooden *kendo* practice swords, his *sageo*, his *obi*, his *naginata*, his *hakama* pants, his *bokken* – and buried them one night in a strawberry field, laid them carefully wrapped in a hole along with the dynamite he'd used to clear stumps, a case full of books and scrolls written in Japanese, and a photograph taken of Kabuo at the San Pedro Japanese Community Center dressed in the feudal costume of a *bugeisha* and wielding a *kendo* stick.

Kabuo's training at *kendo* had begun when he was seven. His father had taken him one Saturday to the community center hall, where a *dojo* had been established in a corner of the gym. They knelt before an alcove at the back of the room and contemplated a shelf on which small bowls of uncooked rice had been neatly arranged. Kabuo learned to bow from a seated position. While he sat on his heels his father explained softly the meaning of *zenshin*, which the boy understood to mean a constant awareness of potential danger. His father finished by repeating the word twice – '*zenshin! zenshin!*' – then took down a wooden pole from the wall and, before Kabuo knew what had happened, slammed him with it in the solar plexus.

'*Zenshin!*' said Zenhichi, while the boy caught his breath. 'Didn't you say you understood?'

His father said that if he was to learn *kendo* more would be

expected of him than of the average person. Did he wish to learn anyway? The choice was his. He should take some time to consider it.

When Kabuo was eight his father put a weapon in his hands for the first time – a *bokken*. They stood in the strawberry fields early one July morning just after picking season was finished. The *bokken*, a curved piece of cherry wood three feet long, had been Kabuo's great-grandfather's, a man who had been a samurai before the Meiji Restoration and later – after the wearing of swords was outlawed – a farmer of government rice lands on Kyushu for ten days before he joined two hundred other rebellious samurai in Kumamoto. They formed themselves into the League of the Divine Tempest and attacked an imperial garrison with swords aloft, having fasted for three days. Its defenders, wielding rifles, killed all but twenty-nine with their opening volley; the survivors committed suicide on the battlefield, including Kabuo's great-grandfather.

'You come from a family of samurai,' Kabuo's father said to him in Japanese. 'Your great-grandfather died because he could not stop being one. It was his bad fortune to live at a time when the samurai were no longer necessary. He could not adapt to this, and his anger at the world overwhelmed him. I remember what an angry man he was, Kabuo. He lived for revenge against the Meiji. When they told him he could no longer wear his sword in public he conspired to kill men he hardly knew – government officials, men with families who lived near us, who were kind to us, whose children we played with. He became irrational in his behavior and spoke of purifying himself in such a manner that he would afterward be invulnerable to the Meiji rifles. He was always gone at night. We didn't know where he went. My grandmother bit her nails. She argued with him when he came home in the mornings, but he wouldn't change his ways or explain. His eyes were red, his face rigid. He sat eating from his bowl in silence, wearing his sword in the house. It was said that he had joined other samurai who had been displaced by the Meiji. They roamed the roads disguised, swords in hand,

killing government officials. They were bandits, thieves, and renegades. My grandfather – I remember this – was happy to hear of Okubo Toshimichi's assassination, the man who had been responsible for the confiscation of his master's castle and the destruction of his master's army. He smiled, showed his teeth, and drank.

'My grandfather was an expert swordsman,' Zenhichi had explained, 'but his anger overwhelmed him in the end. It is ironic, because how often did he tell me, when I was your age and he was a contented and peaceful man, of the kind of sword a man should wield? "*The sword that gives life, not the sword that takes life, is the goal of the samurai,*" my grandfather said then. The goal of the sword is to give life, not to take it.

'You can be very good with the *bokken* if you concentrate,' said Kabuo's father. 'You have it in you. You have only to decide to learn – now, when you are eight.'

'I want to,' replied Kabuo.

'I know you do,' his father said. 'But look, your hands.'

Kabuo adjusted them.

'Your feet,' said his father. 'The front turned in more. Too much weight on the back.'

They began to work on the vertical stroke, moving along between the strawberries, the boy advancing, the man retreating, the two of them together in it. 'The *bokken* strikes,' Kabuo's father said. 'The hips and stomach cut. You must tighten the stomach muscles as the stroke advances. No, you're locking your knees – they must give when you strike. Elbow soft, too, or there is no follow-through, the *bokken* is cut off from the power of the body. Hips sink, knees and elbows go soft, stomach is hard, cut, turn, again, strike . . .'

Kabuo's father showed him how to hold the wooden sword so that the wrists were flexible and liberated. An hour went by, and then it was time for field work and they put the *bokken* away. Thereafter, each morning, Kabuo practiced his *kendo* strokes – the vertical slash that would split a man's head down the bridge of the nose, leaving one eye on each side, the skull

cleaved into two parts; the four diagonal strokes – from left and right, upward and downward – that would cleave a man beneath a rib or disjoin an arm deftly; the horizontal stroke swinging in from the left that could sever a man just above the hips; and, finally, the most common of *kendo* strokes, a horizontal thrust a right-handed man could propel with great force against the left side of his enemy's head.

He practiced these until they were natural to him, part of who he was, the *bokken* an extension of his hands. By the time he was sixteen there was no one any longer at the community center who could defeat him, not even the half-dozen grown men on the island for whom *kendo* was a serious hobby, not even his father, who acknowledged his son's triumph without shame. It was said by many in the Kendo Club that Zenhichi, despite his years, remained the superior practitioner, the more pure between father and son, but that the boy, Kabuo, had the stronger fighting spirit and a greater willingness to draw on his dark side in order to achieve a final victory.

It was only after he'd killed four Germans that Kabuo saw how right they were, how they had seen deeply into his heart with the clarity of older people. He was a warrior, and this dark ferocity had been passed down in the blood of the Miyamoto family and he himself was fated to carry it into the next generation. The story of his great-grandfather, the samurai madman, was his own story, too, he saw now. Sometimes, when he felt his anger rising because he had lost his family's strawberry land, he gathered it up into the pit of his gut and stood in the yard with his *kendo* stick rehearsing the black choreography of his art. He saw only darkness after the war, in the world and in his own soul, everywhere but in the smell of strawberries, in the good scent of his wife and of his three children, a boy and two girls, three gifts. He felt he did not deserve for a moment the happiness his family brought to him, so that late at night, when he couldn't sleep, he imagined that he would write them a note explicating his sin completely. He would leave them and go to suffer alone, and his unhappiness would overwhelm his anger. The violence

might at last die out of him and set him free to contemplate his destiny and his next life on the Great Wheel.

Sitting where he sat now, accused of the murder of Carl Heine, it seemed to him he'd found the suffering place he'd fantasized and desired. For Kabuo Miyamoto was suffering in his cell from the fear of his imminent judgment. Perhaps it was now his fate to pay for the lives he had taken in anger. Such was the nature of cause and effect, such was the impermanence of all things. What a mystery life was! Everything was conjoined by mystery and fate, and in his darkened cell he meditated on this and it became increasingly clear to him. Impermanence, cause and effect, suffering, desire, the precious nature of life. Every sentient being straining and pushing at the shell of identity and distinctness. He had the time and the clarity about suffering to embark on the upward path of liberation, which would take him many lives to follow. He would have to gain as much ground as possible and accept that the mountain of his violent sins was too large to climb in this lifetime. He would still be climbing it in the next and the next, and his suffering inevitably would multiply.

Outside the wind blew steadily from the north, driving snow against the courthouse. By noon three inches had settled on the town, a snow so ethereal it could hardly be said to have settled at all; instead it swirled like some icy fog, like the breath of ghosts, up and down Amity Harbor's streets – powdery dust devils, frosted puffs of ivory cloud, spiraling tendrils of white smoke. By noon the smell of the sea was eviscerated, the sight of it mistily depleted, too; one's field of vision narrowed in close, went blurry and snowbound, fuzzy and opaque, the sharp scent of frost burned in the nostrils of those who ventured out of doors. The snow flew up from their rubber boots as they struggled, heads down, toward Petersen's Grocery. When they looked out into the whiteness of the world the wind flung it sharply at their narrowed eyes and foreshortened their view of everything.

Ishmael Chambers was out walking aimlessly in the snow, admiring it and remembering. The trial of Kabuo Miyamoto had brought that world back for him.

Inside their cedar tree, for nearly four years, he and Hatsue had held one another with the dreamy contentedness of young lovers. With their coats spread against a cushion of moss they'd stayed as long as they could after dusk and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. The tree produced a cedar perfume that permeated their skin and clothes. They would enter, breathe deeply, then lie down and touch each other – the heat of it and the cedar smell, the privacy and the rain outside, the slippery softness of their lips and tongues inspired in them the temporary illusion that the rest of the world had disappeared;

there was nobody and nothing but the two of them. Ishmael pressed himself against Hatsue while they held each other, and Hatsue pressed back, her hips leaving the moss, her legs open beneath her skirt. He felt her breasts and grazed the waistband of her underwear, and she stroked his belly and chest and back. Sometimes when he was walking home through the forest Ishmael would stop in some lonely place and, because he had no choice in the matter, take himself in his hand. He would think about Hatsue while he touched himself. He would shut his eyes and lean his head against a tree; afterward he felt better and worse.

Sometimes at night he would squeeze his eyes shut and imagine how it might be to marry her. It did not seem so farfetched to him that they might move to some other place in the world where this would be possible. He liked to think about being with Hatsue in some place like Switzerland or Italy or France. He gave his whole soul to love; he allowed himself to believe that his feelings for Hatsue had been somehow preordained. He had been meant to meet her on the beach as a child and then to pass his life with her. There was no other way it could be.

Inside their cedar tree they spoke of everything in the intense and overwrought manner of teenagers and he found that she had many moods. There were times when she went cold and silent and he felt her distance from him so completely that it seemed impossible to reach her. Even when he held her it seemed to him there was a place in her heart he couldn't get to. At times he worked himself up to discussing this, gradually revealing to her how it hurt him to feel there was a part of her love she withheld. Hatsue denied that this was so and explained to him that her emotional reserve was something she couldn't help. She had been carefully trained by her upbringing, she said, to avoid effusive displays of feeling, but this did not mean her heart was shallow. Her silence, she said, would express something if he would learn to listen to it. Yet his suspicion that he loved more deeply than

she did nevertheless remained with him, and he worried about it perpetually.

Hatsue, he found, had a religious side he had only sensed when they'd been younger. He drew her out in conversation on this matter, and she told him how she tried to keep in mind certain basic articles of her faith. All of life was impermanent, for example – a thing she thought about every day. It was important for a person to act carefully, for every action, Hatsue explained, had consequences for the soul's future. She confessed to experiencing a moral anguish over meeting him so secretly and deceiving her mother and father. It seemed to her certain that she would suffer from the consequences of it, that no one could maintain such deceit for so long without paying for it somehow. Ishmael argued at length about this, asserting that God could not possibly view their love as something wrong or evil. God, replied Hatsue, was personal; only she could know what God wanted from her. Motive, she added, was very important: what was her motive in concealing from her parents the time she spent with Ishmael? This was the question that worried her most: determining for herself her motive.

Ishmael, at school, feigned detachment in her presence and ignored her in the casual way she gradually taught him to use. Hatsue was a master of the art of false preoccupation; she would pass him in the hallway, in her plaid blouse with its neat tucks, puffed sleeves, and ruffled collar, with a bow in her hair, pleats in her skirt, and books hiked up against her breast, and move on with an apparently artless indifference that in the beginning painfully astonished him. How was it possible for her to feign such coldness without feeling it at the same time? By degrees he learned to enjoy these encounters, though his indifference always appeared more studied than hers and he was always anxious, in a barely concealed way, to meet her gaze. He even said hello to her now and again as one element in his pretense. 'Hard test,' he'd say at the end of a class. 'How'd you do, anyway?'

'I don't know. I didn't study enough.'

'Did you do the essay for Sparling?'

'I tried. It's about a page long.'

'Mine, too. A little longer.'

He would move on, collect his books, and leave the room with Sheridan Knowles or Don Hoyt or Denny Horbach.

At the Strawberry Festival in 1941 he'd watched while the mayor of Amity Harbor had crowned Hatsue Strawberry Princess. The mayor had placed a tiara on her head and hung a sash over her left shoulder. Hatsue and four other girls made a promenade through the crowd and tossed strawberry-flavored candy to the children. Ishmael's father – owner, publisher, editor, chief reporter, photographer, and printer of the *San Pedro Review* – had a special interest in these proceedings. Year after year they provided a lead story, complete with a portrait of the crowned and comely maiden, candid photos of picnicking families ('The Maltons of Protection Point enjoy Saturday's strawberry festival'), and a beneficent editorial or boilerplate column approving the efforts of local organizers ('... Ed Bailey, Lois Dunkirk, and Carl Heine, Sr., without whom none of this would have been possible...'). Arthur wandered the picnic grounds in bow tie and suspenders, a porkpie hat pulled low over his forehead and the enormous weight of his camera slung from a thick leather thong around his neck. Ishmael stood beside him while he photographed Hatsue – he winked at her when his father put one eye to the camera, and she gave back the faint trace of a smile.

'Neighbor girl,' his father said. 'South Beach ought to be proud.'

He followed his father that afternoon, and they joined in the tug-of-war and the three-legged race. The strawberry floats, festooned with staghorn ferns, zinnias, and forget-me-nots – and with the royal court of the Strawberry Festival draped theatrically under cherry sprays and spruce boughs trained to wire guy lines – passed like ships before the somber eyes of the Strawberry Festival Association, which included the mayor, the chairman of the chamber of commerce, the fire chief, and Arthur Chambers. Again Ishmael stood beside his father while Hatsue,

on board her float, passed by waving to everybody majestically with her crepe paper scepter in hand. Ishmael waved back and laughed.

September came; they were high school seniors. A gray green stillness settled into things, and the summer people left for their city homes again: soft overcast, night fog, low mists in the dips between hills, road mud, vacant beaches, empty clamshells scattered among rocks, silent shops folded in on themselves. By October San Pedro had slipped off its summer reveler's mask to reveal a torpid, soporific dreamer whose winter bed was made of wet green moss. Cars slumped along the mud and gravel roads at twenty or thirty miles an hour like sluggish beetles beneath the overhanging trees. The Seattle people passed into memory and winter savings accounts; stoves were stoked, fires banked, books taken down, quilts mended. The gutters filled with rust-colored pine needles and the pungent effluvium of alder leaves, and the drainpipes splashed with winter rain.

Hatsue told him, one fall afternoon, about her tutelage under Mrs. Shigemura and the directive she'd been given as a girl of thirteen to marry a boy of her own kind, a Japanese boy from a good family. She repeated that it made her unhappy to deceive the world. Her secret life, which she carried with her in the presence of her parents and sisters at every moment, made her feel she had betrayed them in a way that was nothing less than *evil* – there was no other word for it, she told Ishmael. Outside, the rain dripped from the canopy of cedar boughs down into the under-growth of ivy. Hatsue sat with her cheek against her knees, looking out through the opening in the cedar tree, her hair a single braid down her spine. 'It isn't evil,' Ishmael insisted. 'How can this be evil? It wouldn't make any sense for this to be evil. It's the world that's evil, Hatsue,' he added. 'Don't pay it any mind.'

'That isn't so easy,' said Hatsue. 'I lie every day to my family, Ishmael. Sometimes I think I'll go crazy with it. Sometimes I think this can't go on.'

Later they lay side by side against the moss, looking up into

the darkened cedar wood with their hands folded behind their heads. 'This can't go on,' whispered Hatsue. 'Don't you worry about that?'

'I know,' answered Ishmael. 'You're right.'

'What will we do? What's the answer?'

'I don't know,' said Ishmael. 'There isn't one, it looks like.'

'I heard a rumor,' Hatsue replied. 'There's a fisherman who claims to have seen a German submarine just off Amity Harbor. A periscope – he followed it for half a mile. Do you think that can be true?'

'No,' said Ishmael. 'It isn't true. People will believe anything – they're scared, I guess. It's just fear, is all. They're afraid.'

'I'm afraid, too,' said Hatsue. 'Everybody's afraid right now.'

'I'm going to be drafted,' answered Ishmael. 'It's something I just have to face.'

They sat in their cedar tree thinking about this, but the war still seemed far away. The war did not disturb them there, and they continued to view themselves as exceedingly fortunate in the particulars of their secret existence. Their absorption in one another, the heat of their bodies, their mingling smells and the movements of their limbs – these things shielded them from certain truths. Yet sometimes at night Ishmael Chambers would lie awake because there was a war on in the world. He would turn his thoughts toward Hatsue then and keep them there until at the verge of sleep the war swam back to spill forth horribly anyway in his dreams.

Hatsue Imada was standing in the foyer of the Amity Harbor Buddhist Chapel, buttoning her coat after services, when Georgia Katanaka's mother told the people gathered there the news about Pearl Harbor. 'It's very bad,' she said. 'A bombing raid. The Japanese air force has bombed everything. It is bad for us, terribly bad. There is nothing else on the radio. Everything is Pearl Harbor.'

Hatsue pulled her lapels more closely around her throat and turned her eyes toward her parents. Her father – he'd been busy helping her mother into her coat – only stood there blinking at Mrs. Katanaka. 'It can't be true,' he said.

'It's true,' he said.

'It's true,' she said. 'Find a radio. Just this morning. They bombed Hawaii.'

They stood in the reception room kitchen with the Katanakas, Ichiharas, Sasaki, and Hayashidas and listened to the Bendix sitting on the counter. Nobody spoke – they merely stood there. They listened for ten minutes without moving, their heads down, their ears turned toward the radio. Finally Hatsue's father began to pace and scratch his head and then to rub his chin, long strokes. 'We'd better get home,' he said.

They drove home and listened to the radio again, the five Imada girls and their parents. They kept the radio on all afternoon and late into the evening, too. Now and then the telephone would ring, and Hatsue's father, in Japanese, would discuss matters with Mr. Oshiro or Mr. Nishi. More than a half-dozen times he made calls himself to discuss matters with other people. He would hang up, scratch his head, then return to his seat by the radio.

Mr. Oshiro called again and told Hatsue's father that in Amity Harbor a fisherman named Otto Willets had put up a ladder in front of Shigeru Ichiyama's movie theater and unscrewed the lightbulbs in the marquee. While he was busy at it two other men had steadied the ladder for him and yelled curses at the Ichiyamas, who were not present. Otto Willets and his friends, on discovering this, had driven out to Lundgren Road and sat in front of the Ichiyamas' in a pickup truck, where they pounded on the horn until Shig came out and stood on his porch to see what they wanted. Willets had called Shig a dirty Jap and told him he ought to have smashed every light in the marquee – didn't he know there was a blackout? Shig said no, he hadn't known, he was glad to have been told, he was thankful to the men for unscrewing the marquee bulbs for him. He ignored Otto Willets's insults.

At ten o'clock Mr. Oshiro called again; armed men had posted themselves around Amity Harbor out of fear of a Japanese attack. There were men with shotguns behind logs along the beach just north and south of town. The defense of San Piedro was being organized; there were men meeting right now at the Masons' lodge. The Osubos had driven by at eight o'clock and seen at least forty cars and pickup trucks parked along the road near the Masons'. Furthermore three or four gill-netters, it was said, had left the harbor to patrol San Piedro's waters. Mr. Oshiro had seen one drifting on the tide, its engine cut, its running lights out, below the bluff near his home on Crescent Bay, a mere silhouette in the night. Hatsue's father – he spoke in Japanese – asked Mr. Oshiro if in fact there were submarines and if the rumors of an invasion of Oregon and California were factual. 'Anything is possible,' answered Mr. Oshiro. 'You should be prepared for anything, Hisao.'

Hatsue's father took his shotgun from the closet and set it in the corner of the living room, unloaded. He got out a box of squirrel loads, too, and slipped three shells into his shirt pocket. Then he turned off every light but one and hung sheets across all the windows. Every few minutes he would leave his place

by the radio to pull back a corner of one of these sheets and peer out into the strawberry fields. Then he would go out onto the porch to listen and to search the sky for airplanes. There were none, but on the other hand the sky was mostly overcast and a plane would not easily be seen.

They went to bed; nobody slept. In the morning, on the school bus, Hatsue looked directly at Ishmael Chambers as she passed him on the way to her seat. Ishmael looked back and nodded at her, once. The bus driver, Ron Lamberson, had an Anacortes newspaper tucked underneath his chair; at each stop he flung the door open with a flourish, then sat reading a section of the paper while the children boarded in silence. 'Here's the deal,' he called over his shoulder as the school bus wound down Mill Run Road. 'The Japanese are attacking all over the place, not just Pearl Harbor. They're making raids all over the Pacific Ocean. Roosevelt is going to declare war today, but what are we gonna do about these attacks? The whole fleet's been destroyed out there, is the deal. And they're arresting Jap traitors in Hawaii and other places – the FBI's in on it. They're getting them down in Seattle right now, in fact. Arresting the spies and everything. The government's frozen Jap bank accounts, too. Main thing, there's a blackout ordered for tonight all up and down the coast. The navy figures there's gonna be an air raid. Don't want to scare you kids, but could be right here – the transmitter station at Agate Point? The navy transmitter station? Your radio is gonna be off the air from seven tonight until tomorrow morning so the Japs don't pick up any signals. Everyone's supposed to put black cloth on their windows and stay inside, stay calm.'

At school, all day, there was nothing but the radio. Two thousand men had been killed. The voices that spoke were cheerless and sober and suggested a barely suppressed urgency. The young people sat with their books unopened and listened to a navy man describe in detail how to extinguish incendiary bombs, and then to reports of further Japanese attacks, Roosevelt's speech before the Congress, an announcement by Attorney General Biddle that Japanese fifth columnists were being arrested in Washington,

Oregon, and California. Mr. Sparling became restive and bitter and began to talk in a desolate monotone about his eleven months in France during the Great War. He said that he hoped the boys in his class would take their duty to fight seriously and that furthermore they should consider it an honor to meet the Japs head-on and do the job of paying them back. 'War stinks,' he added. 'But they started it. They bombed Hawaii on a Sunday morning. On a Sunday morning, of all things.' He shook his head, turned up the radio, and leaned morosely against the blackboard with his arms seized against his narrow chest.

By three o'clock that afternoon Ishmael's father had printed and distributed the first war extra in the history of his island newspaper, a one-page edition with a banner headline - ISLAND DEFENSE SET!

Only a few hours after the outbreak of hostilities between Japan and the United States, San Piedro Island late last night was prepared - temporarily at least - for an air raid bombing or other serious emergency.

A meeting of the local defense commission was called promptly by Richard A. Blackington, local defense commissioner, at the Masons' lodge yesterday afternoon and attended by all defense commission lieutenants. An air raid blackout signal system, details of which can be found elsewhere in this edition, was established. It will rely on church bells, industrial plant whistles, and automobile horns.

Defense leaders, taking the attitude that 'anything can happen,' warned islanders to be on the alert to black out electric lights on extremely short notice.

Island watchers for the Interceptor Command will be on duty on a twenty-four-hour basis. Meanwhile members of the island's Japanese community pledged their loyalty to the United States.

Guards were trebled at the U.S. Navy's Agate Point radio transmitter station and at the Crow Marine Railway

and Shipbuilding Company. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company and the Puget Sound Power and Light Company indicated steps would be taken to guard their facilities here.

Arrangements were being made to bring summer fire-fighting equipment, stored for the winter in Anacortes, back to the island today.

Ensign R. B. Clawson, representing Comdr. L. N. Channing of the Agate Point radio transmitter station, addressed the defense commission meeting. Military and naval intelligence units, he said, have the situation well in hand and are taking proper local steps to guard against saboteurs and spies. 'The transmitter station went on prearranged war alert status immediately upon news of the Pearl Harbor attack,' added Ensign Clawson. 'Nevertheless, island civilians must do whatever they can independent of naval and military aid to safeguard their homes and businesses against sabotage or bombing.'

The following lieutenants of the defense commission were present at yesterday's meeting:

Bill Ingraham, communications; Ernest Tingstaad, transportation; Mrs. Thomas McKibben, medical supplies; Mrs. Clarence Wukstich, supplies and food; Jim Milleren, auxiliary police; Einar Petersen, roads and engineering; Larry Phillips, auxiliary fire force; Arthur Chambers, publicity.

Also present were Major O. W. Hotchkins, chairman of the separate local defense council; Bart Johannson, an assistant to Major Hotchkins; and S. Austin Coney, organizer of the island's Interceptor Command force.

At the bottom of the page, in bold sixteen-point type, was a message from the island defense commission:

AT THE SOUND OF PROLONGED RINGING OF CHURCH BELLS,
THE PROLONGED SOUNDING OF AUTOMOBILE HORNS, AND THE

PROLONGED BLOWING OF WHISTLES AT THE CROW MARINE RAILWAY AND SHIPBUILDING COMPANY, IMMEDIATELY TURN OFF ALL ELECTRIC LIGHTS. THIS INCLUDES THE TURNING OFF OF ALL PERMANENT NIGHT LIGHTS, SUCH AS STORE DISPLAY LIGHTS, WHICH ARE UNDER YOUR CONTROL. KEEP LIGHTS OFF UNTIL THE ALL-CLEAR SIGNAL, WHICH WILL BE A DUPLICATION OF THE AIR RAID WARNING SIGNAL.

There was also a statement issued by Richard Blackington that church bells and automobile horns should be used only in a manner consistent with the air raid warning system. Mrs. Thomas McKibben, in charge of medical supplies, requested that any islander with a station wagon available for use as an emergency ambulance should contact her at Amity Harbor 172-R; she was also registering emergency nurses and those with emergency first-aid training. Finally, the island sheriff, Gerald Lundquist, asked islanders to report suspicious activities or signs of sabotage to his office with all due speed.

Arthur's war extra included an article entitled 'Japanese Leaders Here Pledge Loyalty to America,' in which Masato Nagaishi, Masao Uyeda, and Zenhichi Miyamoto, all strawberry men, made statements to the effect that they and all other island Japanese stood ready to protect the American flag. They spoke on behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce, the Japanese-American Citizens' League, and the Japanese Community Center, and their pledges, said the *Review*, were 'prompt and unequivocal,' including Mr. Uyeda's promise that 'if there is any sign of sabotage or spies, we will be the first ones to report it to the authorities.' Arthur also ran his editor's column under the usual heading of 'Plain Talk,' which he'd composed wearily at two A.M. with a candle propped beside his typewriter:

If ever there was a community which faced a local emergency growing out of something over which it had no control, it is San Pedro Island this Monday morning, December 8, 1941.

This is, indeed, a time for plain talk about things that matter to all of us.

There are on this island some 800 members of 150 families whose blood ties lie with a nation which yesterday committed an atrocity against all that is decent. That nation has committed itself to a war against us and has earned our swift and sure action. America will unite to respond courageously to the threat now facing us in the Pacific. And when the dust settles, America will have won.

In the meantime the task before us is grave and invites our strongest emotions. Yet these emotions, the *Review* must stress, should not include a blind, hysterical hatred of all persons who trace their ancestry to Japan. That some of these persons happen to be American citizens, happen to be loyal to this country, or happen to have no longer a binding tie with the land of their birth could all easily be swept aside by mob hysteria.

In light of this, the *Review* points out that those of Japanese descent on this island are not responsible for the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. Make no mistake about it. They have pledged their loyalty to the United States and have been fine citizens of San Pedro for decades now. These people are our neighbors. They have sent six of their sons into the United States Army. They, in short, are not the enemy, any more than our fellow islanders of German or Italian descent. We should not allow ourselves to forget these things, and they should guide us in our behavior toward all our neighbors.

So of all islanders – of all ancestries – the *Review* would seek as calm an approach as possible in this emergency. Let us so live in this trying time that when it is all over we islanders can look one another in the eye with the knowledge that we have behaved honorably and fairly. Let us remember what is so easy to forget in the mad intensity of wartime: that prejudice and

hatred are never right and never to be accepted by a just society.

Ishmael sat reading his father's words in the cedar tree; he was rereading them when Hatsue, in her coat and scarf, ducked in and sat down on the moss beside him. 'My father was up all night,' said Ishmael. 'He put this paper out.'

'My father can't get our money from the bank,' Hatsue replied to this. 'We have a few dollars, and the rest we can't get. My parents aren't citizens.'

'What will you do?'

'We don't know.'

'I have twenty dollars from picking season,' said Ishmael. 'You can have all of it – you can just have it. I'll bring it to school in the morning.'

'No,' said Hatsue. 'Don't bring it. My father will figure out something pretty soon. I could never accept your money.'

Ishmael turned onto his side, toward her, and propped himself on his elbow. 'It's hard to believe,' he said.

'It's so unreal,' answered Hatsue. 'It just isn't fair – it's not fair. How could they do this, just like that? How did we get ourselves into this?'

'We didn't get ourselves in it,' said Ishmael. 'The Japanese forced us into it. And on a Sunday morning, when no one was ready. It's cheap, if you ask me. They –'

'Look at my face,' interrupted Hatsue. 'Look at my eyes, Ishmael. My face is the face of the people who did it – don't you see what I mean? My face – it's how the Japanese look. My parents came to San Piedro from Japan. My mother and father, they hardly speak English. My family is in bad trouble now. Do you see what I mean? We're going to have trouble.'

'Wait a minute,' said Ishmael. 'You're not Japanese. You're –'

'You heard the news. They're arresting people. They're calling a lot of people spies. Last night some men stopped at the Ichiyamas' and called them names, Ishmael. They sat out

front and honked their horn. How can this be happening?' she added. 'How did things get like this?'

'Who did that?' said Ishmael. 'Who are you talking about?'

'It was Mr. Willets – Otto Willets. Gina Willets's uncle and some other men. They were mad about the lights at the theater. The Ichiyamas left them on.'

'This is crazy,' said Ishmael. 'This whole thing is crazy.'

'They unscrewed his lightbulbs and then drove out to his house. They called him a dirty Jap.'

Ishmael had no answer for this. He shook his head instead.

'I went home after school,' said Hatsue. 'My father was talking on the telephone. Everyone is worried about the navy transmitter, the one on Agate Point. They think it's going to be bombed tonight. There are men going out there with shotguns to defend it. They're going to sit in the woods along the beaches. The Shirasakis have a farm on Agate Point, and some soldiers from the transmitter station came there. They took their radio and their camera and their telephone, and they arrested Mr. Shirasaki. And the rest of the Shirasakis can't leave their house.'

'Mr. Timmons was going down there,' Ishmael answered. 'I saw him, he was getting into his car. He said he was going to the Masons' first, where everything is being organized. They're telling people which beaches to watch. And my mother is painting these blackout screens. She's had the radio on all day.'

'Everyone's had their radios on. My mother can't move away from ours. She sits there and listens to everything and talks on the phone to people.'

Ishmael sighed. 'A war,' he said. 'I can't believe this is happening.'

'We'd better go,' replied Hatsue. 'It's getting dark already.'

They crossed the small torrent of the creek below their tree and followed the path down the hillside. It was dusk and the sea wind blew in their faces. Standing in the path with their arms around each other they kissed once and then again, the second time with greater force. 'Don't let this hurt us,' Ishmael

said. 'I don't care about what's happening in the world. We're not going to let this hurt us.'

'It won't,' said Hatsue. 'You'll see.'

Ishmael, on Tuesday, went to work for his father. He answered the telephone in the office on Andreason Street and took notes on a yellow legal pad. His father told him to call certain people and made lists of questions to ask. 'Give me a hand?' his father had asked. 'I can't keep up with it all.'

Ishmael made a call to the naval station. The pilot of a daily reconnaissance plane, said an Ensign Clawson, had noticed something he'd never noticed before: the Japanese strawberry farms on San Piedro Island were planted in rows pointing straight toward the radio transmitter at the end of Agate Point. The rows of berry plants could guide Jap Zeroes straight to their target easily. 'But those fields have been there for thirty years,' said Ishmael. 'Not all of them,' replied Ensign Clawson.

The county sheriff called in. Dozens of Japanese farmers, he speculated, had stores of dynamite in their sheds and barns which could be used for sabotage. Others, he'd heard, had shortwave radios. The sheriff asked that as an act of goodwill these farmers turn in such dangerous items to his office in Amity Harbor. He wanted, he said, a message in the *Review*. He was thankful for Ishmael's help.

Arthur printed the sheriff's message. He printed a notice from the defense authority telling Japanese nationals on San Piedro that as of December 14 they could no longer ride the ferries. Twenty-four men, he wrote in a news article, had been named by Larry Phillips to the civilian defense auxiliary fire force, including George Tachibana, Fred Yasui, and Edward Wakayama. 'Yes, I did, I singled those three out,' he explained when Ishmael asked about it. 'Not every fact is just a fact,' he added. 'It's all a kind of . . . balancing act. A juggling of pins, all kinds of pins, that's what journalism is about.'

'That isn't journalism,' Ishmael answered. 'Journalism is just the facts.'

He had been learning about journalism at school, from a textbook, and it seemed to him that his father had abridged some basic journalistic principle.

'But which facts?' Arthur asked him. 'Which facts do we print, Ishmael?'

In the next issue Arthur reminded island businesses to extinguish display lights promptly at dusk; it was Christmas and the temptation was to leave them on. He announced that on New Year's Eve a public dance would be held under the slogan 'Remember Pearl Harbor - It Could Happen Here!'; men in uniform would be admitted at no charge; all islanders were encouraged to attend. Arthur informed his readers that a quota of \$500 had been set by Mrs. Lars Heineman of the San Piedro Red Cross Relief Fund and that the Japanese-American Citizens' League had immediately donated \$55 - the largest contribution to date. Another article reported that at the Japanese Community Center hall in Amity Harbor a reception had been held for Robert Sakamura, who'd been inducted into the army. Speeches were made and food was served; a salute to the American flag and the loud singing of 'The Star-Spangled Banner' rounded out the evening.

The *San Piedro Review* printed a reminder to its readers that it was pledged to remain silent on military news that might comfort or aid the enemy. It furthermore counseled islanders 'not to talk carelessly of army or navy maneuvers which may be observed.' The construction of the island's first fishing resort, at Protection Point, was delayed, Arthur wrote, because of the war. Nick Olafsen died while stacking wood; the George Bodines escaped death when their kitchen stove exploded, but Mrs. Bodine broke a leg and an arm. The PTA began a paper drive and took a special interest in Christmas wrappings. The island Grange committed itself to the defense of San Piedro and promised in a letter to the secretary of agriculture to 'see to the production of such fruits and vegetables as can be grown on our island and as our fighting forces might need.' The army asked owners of mules and horses on San Piedro to register

their animals with the county agent, describing the request in the pages of the *Review* as 'a patriotic obligation'; islanders were also asked to check their automobile tires and to drive in a manner consistent with preserving them: rubber was in short supply.

The navy warned islanders, in a message printed in the *Review*, 'to kill a rumor by refusing to carry it further.' Another benefit dance was held, and the enlisted men at the Agate Point station were invited as guests of honor. The defense fund committee came to the school board with a request that the high school auditorium be made available for two future dances; the board in return asked for written assurance that there would be no smoking or drinking. A draft registration desk was set up at Fisk's Hardware Center; meanwhile a sudden warm spell turned San Pedro's roads to mud and sank automobiles up to their running boards. Eve Thurmann, who was eighty-six, stalled out on Piersall Road in her '36 Buick, then showed up at Petersen's with mud caked on her knees; she'd walked two miles into town. Air raid rules, the *Review* reminded readers, were now posted on many electrical poles: keep calm and cool; stay home; put out lights; lie down; stay away from windows; don't telephone. Ray Ichikawa scored fifteen points for the Amity Harbor High School basketball team in its victory over Anacortes. A half-dozen residents of West Port Jensen claimed to have seen a mysterious creature sunning itself in the shallows; it appeared to have a swanlike neck, the head of a polar bear, and a cavernous mouth from which emerged puffs of steam. When islanders rowed out to get a closer look the creature disappeared beneath the waves.

'This doesn't go in the paper, does it?' Ishmael asked his father. 'A sea creature at West Port Jensen?'

'Maybe you're right,' answered Arthur. 'But do you remember the bear stories I ran last year? The bear who was responsible for everything, suddenly? Dead dogs, broken windows, missing chickens, scratched cars? A mysterious creature - that's news, Ishmael. The fact that people see it - that's news.'

In the following issue Arthur printed a public service advertisement urging islanders to buy war bonds. He explained that the civilian defense commission was registering boats that might be available in the event of an evacuation. William Blair, he told his readers - son of Zachary and Edith Blair of Amity Harbor - graduated in the U.S. Naval Academy's first emergency class and shipped out for the European theater. The island lost power for four hours one morning when a half-dozen of the army's captive balloons broke away and dragged down power lines. The defense commissioner, Richard Blackington, appointed nine district air raid wardens to be responsible for the effectiveness of an island blackout; he also attended, in Anacortes, a chemical warfare training class and afterward busied himself disseminating flyers about it. Meanwhile the children of San Pedro Island had been numbered and registered in their school classrooms against the possibility of separation from their families. Arthur published a War Department chart showing wing and tail markings of airplanes. He also printed a photograph of Japanese-Americans in Fresno, California, standing in line to get citizen registration cards.

Four more islanders of Japanese descent - this was a front-page article - enlisted in the United States Army. Richard Enslow, who taught wood shop at the high school, resigned his position and joined the navy. Mrs. Ida Cross of South Beach knitted socks for sailors, sent them off, and received a thank-you note from an anti-aircraft gunner stationed near Baltimore. The coast guard banned fishing on the west side of the island and bore down on gill-netters in the middle of the night who had set nets near restricted areas. In late January islanders experienced a temporary fuel shortage and were made to turn their oil heaters down by order of the civilian defense commission. The commission asked farmers for ten thousand sandbag sacks - gunny, feed, or flour. One hundred and fifty islanders attended first-aid courses offered by the Red Cross auxiliary. Petersen's store cut back on deliveries, citing fuel and labor shortages.

'Seems like you're favoring the Japs, Art,' an anonymous

Review reader wrote one day. 'You're putting them on the front page every week and writing all about their patriotism and loyalty while saying nothing about their treachery. Well, maybe it's time you pulled your head from the sand and realized - there's a war on! And who are you siding with, anyway?'

In January fifteen islanders canceled their subscriptions, including the Walker Colemans of Skiff Point and the Herbert Langlies of Amity Harbor. 'The Japs are the enemy,' wrote Herbert Langlie. 'Your newspaper is an insult to all white Americans who have pledged themselves to purge this menace from our midst. Please cancel my subscription as of this date and send refund immediately.'

Arthur did so; he sent a full refund to each customer who canceled, and a personal note written in a cordial style. 'One day they'll be back,' he predicted. But then the Price-Rite store in Anacortes canceled its weekly quarter-page advertisement; then Lottie's Opsvig's apparel shop on Main Street, then Larsen's Lumberyard and the Anacortes Cafe. 'We won't worry about this,' Arthur told his son. 'We can always put out four pages instead of eight if that's what we have to do.' He printed the letter from Walker Coleman and another one like it from Ingmar Sigurdson. Lillian Taylor, who taught English at the high school, wrote back in angry condemnation of the 'spirit of small-mindedness evident in the letters of Mr. Walker Coleman and Mr. Ingmar Sigurdson, two well-known islanders who quite obviously have lost their grip on their senses while in the grip of war hysteria.' Arthur printed that, too.

Two weeks later, on February 4, a black Ford threaded through the Imadas' fields, making for the house of cedar slats. Hatsue was standing at the verge of the woodshed, filling her apron with cedar kindling from a pile underneath a sheet of waxed canvas, when she noticed - this was odd - that the Ford's headlights had been blackened; she heard the car before she saw it. It came to a halt just in front of her house; two men emerged in suits and ties. They shut their doors gently and looked at each other; one of them straightened his coat a little - he was bigger than the other, and his sleeves were not long enough to cover even half of his shirt cuffs. Hatsue stood silently with her apron full of kindling while the men mounted the porch and knocked on the door, holding their hats in their hands. Her father answered in his sweater and sandals, his newspaper dangling from his left hand neatly and his reading glasses perched on the bridge of his nose; her mother stood just behind him.

'Allow me to introduce myself,' said the smaller of the men, producing a badge from his coat pocket. 'Federal Bureau of Investigation,' he announced. 'Are you He-say-o Imada?'

'Yes,' said Hatsue's father. 'Is something wrong?'

'Not wrong exactly,' said the FBI man. 'It's just that we've been asked to search this place. You understand, we're going to search. Now if you'll just step inside, please, we'll all sit down.'

'Yes, come in,' said Hatsue's father.

Hatsue dropped her apron full of kindling back onto the pile of cedar sticks. The two men turned to look at her; the larger one came halfway down the porch steps. Hatsue walked out of the

shadow of the woodshed and into the glow of the porch light. 'You come in, too,' said the smaller man.

They crowded into the living room. While Hatsue and her sisters sat on the couch, Hisao brought chairs from the kitchen for the FBI men – the larger one followed him everywhere. 'Please, sit down,' offered Hisao.

'You're real polite,' replied the smaller man. Then he took an envelope from his coat pocket; he handed it over to Hisao. 'It's a warrant from the U.S. district attorney. We're going to search the premises – it's an order, see, an order.'

Hisao held the envelope between his fingers but made no move to open it. 'We are loyal,' he said. That was all.

'I know, I know,' said the FBI man. 'Still, we've got to look around.'

While he spoke the larger man stood and shot his cuffs, then calmly opened Fujiko's glass case and picked up the stack of *shakuhachi* sheet music she kept on the bottom shelf. He picked up Fujiko's bamboo flute, turned it over twice in his hands – small hands for such a thick, cloddish man – then set it on the dining room table. There was a magazine stand beside the wood stove, and he pawed through the magazines there. He picked up Hisao's newspaper.

'We've had some complaints from local citizens that certain enemy aliens on San Piedro Island have in their possession items declared illegal contraband,' said the smaller man. 'It's our job to search the premises for these. We ask for your cooperation.'

'Yes, of course,' said Hisao.

The larger man went into the kitchen. They could see him through the doorway peering beneath the sink and opening the oven door. 'We're going to have to search through your private effects,' the small FBI man explained. He stood and took the envelope from Hisao; he put it back in his coat pocket. 'I hope you won't mind,' he added.

He opened the *tansu* – a chest of drawers in one corner of the living room. He took out Fujiko's silk kimono with its gold

brocaded sash. 'That's very nice,' he said, holding it to the light. 'From the old country, it appears. High class.'

The larger man came through the living room from the pantry with Hisao's shotgun seized in one hand and four boxes of shells against his chest. 'The guy's all armed,' he said to his partner. 'There's a big old sword back there, too.'

'Put it all on the table,' said the small man. 'And tag everything, Wilson – did you bring the tags in?'

'They're in my pocket,' Wilson answered.

The youngest of the Imada girls began to whimper, covering her face with her hands. 'Hey, little girl,' said the FBI man. 'I know this is kind of scary – but guess what? There's nothing to cry about, you hear me? We'll be done and out of your way soon.'

The large man, Wilson, went back for Hisao's sword. Then he turned his attention to the bedrooms.

'Tell you what,' said the first man to Hisao. 'Let's just sit tight until Wilson is finished. Then you and me, we'll take a walk outside. We'll tag these things up and load them in the car. Then you can show me around your outbuildings. We have to check everything – that's the way it is.'

'I understand,' said Hisao. He and Fujiko were holding hands now.

'Don't be nervous,' said the FBI man. 'We'll be out of your hair in a few minutes.'

He stood at the table putting tags on things. For a while he waited in silence. He tapped his foot and put his mouth to the flute. 'Wilson!' he said finally. 'Get your paws off the underwear!' Then he chuckled and picked up Hisao's shotgun.

'We gotta take this,' he said apologetically. 'All this stuff, you understand. They'll hold it for a while – who knows why? – then they'll ship it all back to you. They'll ship it back when they're done with it. It's complicated, but that's the way it is. There's a war on and that's the way it is.'

'The flute is precious,' said Hisao. 'The kimono, the sheet music – you must take those things?'

'Anything like that, yeah,' said the FBI man. 'Any old-country stuff we have to take.'

Hisao was silent, his brow furrowed. Wilson came back from the bedrooms looking solemn; he carried Hatsue's scrapbook. 'Pervert,' said his partner. 'Come on.'

'Crap,' said Wilson. 'I was going through the drawers. You do it next time if you don't like it.'

'He-say-o and I are going out,' the small man said firmly. 'You can sit here with the ladies and finish up with these tags. And be polite,' he added.

'I'm always polite,' said Wilson.

Hisao and the small man went outside; Wilson worked on the tags. When he was done he browsed through Hatsue's scrapbook, chewing on his bottom lip. 'Strawberry Princess,' he said, looking up. 'You must a been flattered by that.'

Hatsue didn't answer. 'It's a good picture,' added Wilson. 'It looks like you. Looks just like you, in fact.'

Hatsue said nothing. She wished Wilson would get his hands off her scrapbook. She was thinking of asking him, politely, to put it down, when Hisao and the other man came through the door, the FBI man carrying a crate. 'Dynamite,' he said. 'Look at this, Wilson.' He set the crate lightly on the table. The two men stood pawing through the dynamite – twenty-four sticks of it. Wilson chewed on his cheek and stared.

'You must believe me,' insisted Hisao. 'This is for tree stumps, for clearing land.'

The smaller FBI man shook his head gravely. 'Maybe,' he said. 'But this is still bad. This stuff' – he pointed a finger at the crate – 'this is illegal contraband. You were supposed to have turned this stuff in.'

They took the gun, the shells, the sword, and the dynamite and put it all in the car trunk. Wilson came back with a duffel bag and stuffed in the scrapbook, the kimono, the sheet music, and finally the bamboo flute.

When everything was loaded in the trunk of their car the FBI

men sat down again. 'Well,' said the smaller one. 'This is it. Guess what?' he said to Hisao.

Hisao didn't answer. He sat in his sandals and sweater, blinking, holding his glasses in his hand. He waited for the FBI man to speak.

'We gotta arrest you,' said Wilson. 'You're going on a trip to Seattle.' He unhooked a pair of handcuffs from his belt; they were clipped on next to his gun.

'You don't need those,' urged the smaller man. 'This guy here is a class act, a gentleman. There's no need for any handcuffs.' He turned his attention to Hisao. 'They're just going to ask you some questions, okay? We go down to Seattle, a few questions, a few answers, the whole thing is over.'

The two younger girls were both crying. The youngest buried her face in her hands, and Hatsue put an arm around her. She pulled her sister's head in close and stroked her hair gently. Hisao rose from his chair.

'Please not take him,' said Fujiko. 'He has done no bad things. He –'

'Nobody knows about that,' said Wilson. 'There's nobody who can say.'

'Probably in just a few days,' said the other man. 'These things take a little time, you see. We have to take him on down to Seattle. He's gotta be scheduled in and all. Maybe a few days, maybe a week.'

'A week?' said Fujiko. 'But what we do? What do you –'

'Think of it as a war sacrifice,' the FBI man interrupted. 'Figure to yourself there's a war on, you see, and everybody's making some sacrifices. Maybe you could look at it that way.'

Hisao asked if he could change out of his sandals and get his coat from the pantry. He wanted to pack a small bag, he added, if that would be acceptable. 'Both,' said Wilson. 'Go ahead. We're perfectly willing to accommodate.'

They allowed him to kiss his wife and daughters and to say good-bye to each. 'Call Robert Nishi,' Hisao told them. 'Tell him I am arrested.' But when Fujiko called it turned out that

Robert Nishi had been arrested as well. Ronald Kobayashi, Richard Sumida, Saburo Oda, Taro Kato, Junkoh Kitano, Kenzi Yamamoto, John Masui, Robert Nishi – they were all in a Seattle jail now. They had all been arrested on the same night.

The arrested men rode on a train with boarded windows – prisoners had been shot at from railroad sidings – from Seattle to a work camp in Montana. Hisao wrote a letter to his family each day; the food, he said, was not very good, but they were not really being mistreated. They were digging trenches for a water system that would double the size of the camp. Hisao had gotten a job in the laundry ironing and folding clothes. Robert Nishi worked in the camp kitchen.

Hatsue's mother gathered her five daughters together, Hisao's letter in her hand. She told her daughters, once again, the story of her odyssey from Japan on board the *Korea Maru*. She told them about the Seattle rooms she had cleaned, the sheets on which white men had vomited blood, the toilets full of their excrement, the stench of their alcohol and sweat. She told them about the waterfront cookhouse where she'd worked chopping onions and frying potatoes for *hakujin* stevedores who looked right through her as if she weren't even there. She knew, already, about hardship, she said – her life had long been difficult. She knew what it was to be alive without being alive; she knew what it was to be invisible. She wanted her daughters to know how to face this in a manner that would allow them their dignity. Hatsue sat motionless while her mother spoke, trying to guess at her meaning. She was eighteen now, and her mother's story held more weight than it had when she'd heard it earlier. She leaned forward and listened carefully. Her mother predicted that the war with Japan would force all her daughters to decide who they were and then to become more Japanese. Wasn't it true that the *hakujin* didn't really want them in their country? There were rumors that all the Japanese on the coast were going to be forced to leave. There was no point in trying to conceal anything or in trying to pretend they were not Japanese – the *hakujin* could see it in their faces; they were going to have to accept this. They

were Japanese girls in America during a time when America was fighting a war with Japan – did any of them want to deny it? The trick was to live here without hating yourself because all around you was hatred. The trick was to refuse to allow your pain to prevent you from living honorably. In Japan, she said, a person learned not to complain or be distracted by suffering. To persevere was always a reflection of the state of one's inner life, one's philosophy, and one's perspective. It was best to accept old age, death, injustice, hardship – all of these were part of living. Only a foolish girl would deny this was so, thus revealing to the world her immaturity and the degree to which she lived in the world of the *hakujin* instead of in the world of her own people. And her people, insisted Fujiko, were Japanese – the events of the past months had proved it so; why else had their father been arrested? The events of the last two months should teach them something about the darkness in the hearts of the *hakujin* and the more general darkness that was part of living. To deny that there was this dark side to life would be like pretending that the cold of winter was somehow only a temporary illusion, a way station on the way to the higher 'reality' of long, warm, pleasant summers. But summer, it turned out, was no more real than the snow that melted in wintertime. Well, said Fujiko, now your father is gone, folding laundry in a camp in Montana, and we all must get by, endure. 'Do you understand?' she said in Japanese. 'There is no choice in the matter. We will all have to endure.'

'They don't all hate us,' Hatsue replied. 'You're exaggerating, mother – you know you are. They're not so different from us, you know. Some hate, others don't. It isn't all of them.'

'I know what you're saying,' said Fujiko. 'Not all of them hate – you're correct. But on this other matter' – she still spoke in Japanese – 'you don't think they are very much different? In some big way, Hatsue? Different from us?'

'No,' said Hatsue. 'I don't.'

'They are,' said Fujiko, 'and I can tell you how. The whites, you see, are tempted by their egos and have no means to resist.'

We Japanese, on the other hand, *know* our egos are nothing. We bend our egos, all of the time, and that is where we differ. That is the fundamental difference, Hatsue. We bend our heads, we bow and are silent, because we understand that by ourselves, alone, we are nothing at all, dust in a strong wind, while the *hakujin* believes his aloneness is everything, his separateness is the foundation of his existence. He seeks and grasps, seeks and grasps for his separateness, while we seek union with the Greater Life – you must see that these are distinct paths we are traveling, Hatsue, the *hakujin* and we Japanese.’

‘These people seeking union with the Greater Life,’ argued Hatsue, ‘are the ones who bombed Pearl Harbor. If they’re so ready to bend and bow, then what are they doing attacking all over the world and taking over other countries? I don’t feel I’m a part of them,’ said Hatsue. ‘I’m a part of *here*,’ she added. ‘I’m from this place.’

‘Yes, you were born here, that’s so,’ said Fujiko. ‘But your blood – you are still Japanese.’

‘I don’t want to be!’ said Hatsue. ‘I don’t want anything to do with them! Do you hear me? I don’t want to be Japanese!’

Fujiko nodded at her eldest daughter. ‘These are difficult times,’ she replied. ‘Nobody knows who they are now. Everything is cloudy and unclear. Still, you should learn to say nothing that will cause you regret. You should not say what is not in your heart – or what is only in your heart for a moment. But you know this – silence is better.’

Hatsue knew immediately that her mother was right. Her mother, clearly, was serene and unruffled, and her voice carried the strength of truth. Hatsue fell silent, ashamed of herself. Who was she to say how she felt? What she felt remained a mystery, she felt a thousand things at once, she could not unravel the thread of her feelings with enough certainty to speak with any accuracy. Her mother was right, silence was better. It was something – one thing – she knew with clarity.

‘I could say,’ her mother went on, ‘that living among the *hakujin* has tainted you, made your soul impure, Hatsue. This

lack of purity envelops you – I see it every day. You carry it with you always. It is like a mist around your soul, and it haunts your face like a shadow at moments when you do not protect it well. I see it in your eagerness to leave here and walk in the woods in the afternoon. I cannot translate all of this easily, except as the impurity that comes with living each day among the white people. I am not asking you to shun them entirely – this you should not do. You must live in this world, of course you must, and this world is the world of the *hakujin* – you must learn to live in it, you must go to school. But don’t allow living *among* the *hakujin* to become living *intertwined* with them. Your soul will decay. Something fundamental will rot and go sour. You are eighteen, you are grown now – I can’t walk with you where you are going anymore. You walk alone soon, Hatsue. I hope you will carry your purity with you always and remember the truth of who you are.’

Hatsue knew then that her pretense had failed her. For four years now she had taken her ‘walks’ and come home offering fuki tendrils, watercress, crawfish, mushrooms, huckleberries, salmonberries, blackberries – even clusters of blue elderberries for making jam – anything to conceal her purpose. She had gone to dances with other girls and stood in a corner refusing requests, while Ishmael stood among his friends. Her girlfriends had sought to concoct dates for her; she was widely encouraged to make use of her beauty and to emerge from the shell of her apparent shyness. It had even been rumored for a while last spring that she had a secret boyfriend who was extraordinarily handsome, somebody she visited in Anacortes, but that rumor gradually evaporated. Through all of it Hatsue had struggled with the temptation to reveal the truth to her sisters and school friends, because the truth was a burden to carry in silence and she felt the need, like most young girls, to speak about love with other girls. But she never did. She persisted in the pretense that her shy demeanor in the presence of boys prevented her from dating them.

Now her mother seemed to know the truth, or to have some

inkling of it. Her mother's black hair was bound severely into a gleaming knot pinned to the back of her head. Her hands were folded majestically in her lap – she'd set her husband's letter on the coffee table – and she was perched with great dignity on the edge of her chair, blinking calmly at her daughter. 'I know who I am,' said Hatsue. 'I know exactly who I am,' she asserted again, but they were just more words to feel uncertain about; they were just more words to regret. Silence would have been better.

'You're fortunate,' said Fujiko evenly, in Japanese. 'You speak with great assurance, oldest daughter. The words fly from your mouth.'

Hatsue found herself walking in the woods later that afternoon. It was getting on toward the end of February, a time of only bleak light. In spring great shafts of sun would split the canopy of trees and the litter fall of the forest would come floating down – twigs, seeds, needles, dust bark, all suspended in the hazy air – but now, in February, the woods felt black and the trees looked sodden and smelled pungently of rot. Hatsue went inland to where the cedars gave way to firs hung with lichen and moss. Everything was familiar and known to her here – the dead and dying cedars full of punky heartwood, the fallen, defeated trees as high as a house, the upturned root wads hung with vine maple, the toadstools, the ivy, the salal, the vanilla leaf, the low wet places full of devil's club. These were the woods through which she had wandered on her way home from Mrs. Shigemura's lessons, the woods where she had cultivated the kind of tranquillity Mrs. Shigemura had demanded. She'd sat among sword ferns six feet tall or on a shelf above a vale of trilliums and opened her eyes to the place. As far back as she could recall the content of her days there had always been this silent forest which retained for her its mystery.

There were straight rows of trees – colonnades – growing out of the seedbed of trees that had fallen two hundred years before and sunk and become the earth itself. The forest floor was a map of fallen trees that had lived half a thousand years before

collapsing – a rise here, a dip there, a mound or moldering hillock somewhere – the woods held the bones of trees so old no one living had ever seen them. Hatsue had counted the rings of fallen trees more than six hundred years old. She had seen the deer mouse, the creeping vole, the green-hued antlers of the white-tailed deer decaying underneath a cedar. She knew where lady fern grew and phantom orchids and warted giant puffballs.

Deep among the trees she lay on a fallen log and gazed far up branchless trunks. A late winter wind blew the tops around, inducing in her a momentary vertigo. She admired a Douglas fir's complicated bark, followed its grooves to the canopy of branches two hundred feet above. The world was incomprehensibly intricate, and yet this forest made a simple sense in her heart that she felt nowhere else.

She drew up for herself, in the silence of her mind, a list of the things now cluttering her heart – her father was gone, arrested by the FBI for keeping dynamite in his shed; there was talk going around that before too long everyone with a Japanese face on San Piedro would be sent away until the war was done; she had a *hakujin* boyfriend she could see only in secret, who in a few short months was sure to be drafted and sent to kill the people of her blood. And now, on top of these insoluble things, her mother had only hours before probed into the pit of her soul and discovered her deep uncertainty. Her mother seemed to know about the gulf that separated how she lived from what she was. And what was she anyway? She was of this place and she was not of this place, and though she might desire to be an American it was clear, as her mother said, that she had the face of America's enemy and would always have such a face. She would never feel at home here among the *hakujin*, and at the same time she loved the woods and fields of home as dearly as anyone could. She had one foot in her parents' home, and from there it was not far at all to the Japan they had left behind years before. She could feel how this country far across the ocean pulled on her and lived inside her despite her wishes to the contrary; it was something

she could not deny. And at the same time her feet were planted on San Pedro Island, and she wanted only her own strawberry farm, the fragrance of the fields and the cedar trees, and to live simply in this place forever. And then there was Ishmael. He was as much a part of her life as the trees, and he smelled of them and of the clam beaches. And yet he left this hole inside of her. He was not Japanese, and they had met at such a young age, their love had come out of thoughtlessness and impulse, she had fallen into loving him long before she knew herself, though it occurred to her now that she might never know herself, that perhaps no one ever does, that such a thing might not be possible. And she thought she understood what she had long sought to understand, that she concealed her love for Ishmael Chambers not because she was Japanese in her heart but because she could not in truth profess to the world that what she felt for him was love at all.

She felt a sickness overtake her. Her late-afternoon walks had not concealed her meetings with a boy her mother had long had intuition of. Hatsue knew she had not fooled anybody, she had not fooled herself, as it turned out, either, she had never felt completely right. How could they say, she and Ishmael, that they truly loved each other? They had simply grown up together, been children together, and the proximity of it, the closeness of it, had produced in them love's illusion. And yet – on the other hand – what was love if it wasn't the instinct she felt to be on the moss inside the cedar tree with this boy she had always known? He was the boy of this place, of these woods, these beaches, the boy who smelled like this forest. If identity was geography instead of blood – if living in a place was what really mattered – then Ishmael was part of her, inside of her, as much as anything Japanese. It was, she knew, the simplest kind of love, the purest form, untainted by Mind, which twisted everything, as Mrs. Shigemura, ironically, had preached. No, she told herself, she'd merely followed her instincts, and her instincts did not make the kinds of distinctions having Japanese blood demanded. She didn't know what else love could be.

One hour later, inside the cedar tree, she brought this matter

up with Ishmael. 'We've known each other forever,' she said. 'I can hardly remember not knowing you. It's hard to remember the days before you. I don't even know if there were any.'

'My memory is like that, too,' said Ishmael. 'Do you remember that glass box I had? The one we took into the water?'

'Of course,' she said. 'I remember it.'

'That must have been ten years ago,' said Ishmael. 'Hanging onto that box. Being out there in the ocean – that's what I remember.'

'That's what I want to talk about,' said Hatsue. 'A box in the ocean – what kind of a start is that? What, really, did we have in common? We didn't even know each other.'

'We knew each other. We've always known each other. We've never been strangers the way most people are when they meet and start going out.'

'That's another thing,' said Hatsue. 'We don't go out – that isn't the right word – we *can't* go out, Ishmael. We're trapped inside this tree.'

'We're going to graduate in three months,' answered Ishmael. 'I think we should move to Seattle after that. It'll be different in Seattle – you'll see.'

'They're arresting people like me there, too, just like here, Ishmael. A white and a Japanese – I don't care if it's Seattle – we couldn't just go walking down the street together. Not after Pearl Harbor. You know that. Besides, you're going to be drafted in June. That's the way it's going to be. You won't be moving to Seattle, either. Let's be honest with ourselves.'

'Then what will we do? You tell me. What's the answer, Hatsue?'

'There isn't one,' she said. 'I don't know, Ishmael. There isn't anything we can do.'

'We just have to be patient,' Ishmael replied. 'This war won't go on forever.'

They sat in silence inside their tree, Ishmael propped up against one elbow, Hatsue with her head perched against his

ribs and her legs up against the glossy wood. 'It's nice in here,' said Hatsue. 'It's always nice in this place.'

'I love you,' answered Ishmael. 'I'll always love you. I don't care what else happens. I'm always going to love you.'

'I know you do,' said Hatsue. 'But I'm trying to be realistic about this. It isn't that simple, is what I'm saying. There are all these other things.'

'They don't really matter,' said Ishmael. 'None of those other things make a difference. Love is the strongest thing in the world, you know. Nothing can touch it. Nothing comes close. If we love each other we're safe from it all. Love is the biggest thing there is.'

He spoke with such confidence and drama about it that Hatsue allowed herself to be convinced by him that nothing was greater than love. She wanted to believe this, and so she indulged herself and tried to be swept up in it. They began to kiss against the moss inside the tree, but the touch of it felt to her false somehow, an attempt to obliterate the truth of the world and to deceive themselves with their lips. 'I'm sorry,' she said, drawing away. 'Everything is complicated. I can't forget about things.'

He held her in his arms and stroked her hair. They didn't speak anymore. She felt safe there, as though she were hibernating at the heart of the forest with time suspended and the world frozen – the temporary safety of a quiet way station one must leave in the morning. They fell asleep with their heads against the moss until the light in the tree went from green to gray, and then it was time to go home.

'Everything is going to work out,' said Ishmael. 'You'll see – it'll work out.'

'I don't see how,' answered Hatsue.

The problem was resolved for them on March 21 when the U.S. War Relocation Authority announced that islanders of Japanese descent had eight days to prepare to leave.

The Kobayashis – they'd planted a thousand dollars' worth of rhubarb on five acres in Center Valley – negotiated an

agreement with Torval Rasmussen to tend and harvest their crop. The Masuis weeded their strawberry fields and worked at staking peas in the moonlight; they wanted to leave things in good condition for Michael Burns and his ne'er-do-well brother Patrick, who'd agreed to take care of their farm. The Sumidas decided to sell at cut-rate and close their nursery down; on Thursday and Friday they held all-day sales and watched pruning tools, fertilizer, cedar chairs, birdbaths, garden benches, paper lanterns, fountain cats, tree wrap, caddies, and bonsai trees go out the door with whoever was willing to take them. On Sunday they put padlocks on the greenhouse doors and asked Piers Petersen to keep an eye on things. They gave Piers their flock of laying chickens as well as a pair of mallard ducks.

Len Kato and Johnny Kobashigawa traveled island roads in a three-ton haying truck hauling loads of furniture, packing crates, and appliances to the Japanese Community Center hall. Filled to the rafters with beds, sofas, stoves, refrigerators, chests of drawers, desks, tables, and chairs, the hall was locked and boarded up at six P.M. on Sunday evening. Three retired gill-netters – Gillon Crichton, Sam Goodall, and Eric Hoffman, Sr. – were sworn in as deputies by San Pedro's sheriff for the purpose of guarding its contents.

The War Relocation Authority moved into musty offices at the old W. W. Beason Cannery dock, just outside Amity Harbor. The dock housed not only the Army Transport Command but representatives of the Farm Security Administration and the Federal Employment Service. Kaspars Hinkle, who coached the high school baseball team, stormed into the war relocation office on a late Thursday afternoon – everyone was just then preparing to leave – and slammed his roster on the secretary's desk: his starting catcher, second baseman, and two outfielders, he said – not to mention his two best pitchers – were going to miss the whole season. Couldn't this matter be thought through again? None of these kids were spies!

On Saturday evening, March 28, the Amity Harbor High School senior ball – its theme this year was 'Daffodil Daze' –

went forward in the high school auditorium. An Anacortes swing band, Men About Town, played upbeat dance tunes exclusively; during an interlude the captain of the baseball team stood in front of the microphone on the bandstand and cheerfully handed out honorary letters to the seven team members departing Monday morning. 'We don't have much chance without you,' he said. 'Right now we don't even have enough guys to field a team. But any wins we do get, they're for you guys who are leaving.'

Evelyn Nearing, the animal lover – she was a widow who lived without a flush toilet or electricity in a cedar cabin on Yearsley Point – took goats, pigs, dogs, and cats from a half-dozen Japanese families. The Odas leased their grocery to the Charles MacPhersons and sold Charles their car and two pickup trucks. Arthur Chambers made arrangements with Nelson Obada to act as a special correspondent for his newspaper and to send reports to San Pedro. Arthur ran four articles on the imminent evacuation in his March 26 edition: 'Island Japanese Accept Army Mandate to Move,' 'Japanese Ladies Praised for Last-Minute PTA Work,' 'Evacuation Order Hits Prep Baseball Nine,' and a 'Plain Talk' column called 'Not Enough Time,' which roundly condemned the relocation authority for its 'pointless and merciless speed in exiling our island's Japanese-Americans.' The next morning, at seven-thirty, Arthur fielded an anonymous phone call – 'Jap lovers get their balls cut off,' a shrill tenor voice had explained. 'They get their balls stuffed down –' Arthur had hung up and gone on typing a story for the next edition of his newspaper: 'Faithful to Praise Christ Easter Morn.'

On Sunday afternoon, at four o'clock, Hatsue told her mother she was going for a walk; her last walk before leaving, she pointed out. She wanted to sit in the forest, she said, and think about matters for a while. She left as if headed toward Protection Point, then circled through the woods to the South Beach trail and followed the path to the cedar tree. Ishmael, she found, was waiting for her there with his head propped up on

his jacket. 'This is it,' she said to him, kneeling for a moment in the entry. 'Tomorrow morning we leave.'

'I've got something figured out,' answered Ishmael. 'When you get where you're going you write to me. Then when the school newspaper comes out I'll send you a copy with a letter from me inside it and put Journalism Class for a return address. What do you think of that plan? You think that will be safe?'

'I wish we didn't even need a plan,' said Hatsue. 'Why do we have to do this?'

'Write me at my house,' said Ishmael, 'but put Kenny Yamashita's name for the return address – my parents know I'm friendly with Kenny, you can write me at home with no problems.'

'But what if they want to see Kenny's letter? What if they ask how he's doing?'

Ishmael thought about this for a moment. 'What if they want to see Kenny's letter? What if you collect maybe half a dozen letters and stick them all in one envelope? One from Kenny, one from you, one from Helen, one from Tom Obata – tell them it's a request from the school newspaper. I'll call Kenny tonight and tell him about it so it doesn't sound suspicious when you bring it up. Collect them all, stick yours in last, send them all to me, I'll pull yours out and take the rest to school. That should work out perfectly.'

'You're like me,' said Hatsue. 'We've both gotten good at being devious.'

'I don't think it's devious,' said Ishmael. 'It's just what we have to do.'

Hatsue undid the belt on her coat, a herringbone wraparound from the Penney's in Anacortes. Underneath she wore an austelle dress with a broad embroidered collar. On this day she'd brushed her hair out long and tossed it to flow down the length of her back, unfettered by plaits, braids, or ribbons. Ishmael pressed his nose against it. 'It smells like cedar,' he said.

'So do you,' said Hatsue. 'It's your smell I'll miss as much as anything.'

They lay on the moss, not touching, in silence, Hatsue with her hair coiled over one shoulder now, Ishmael with his hands in his lap. The March wind came up outside the tree and they heard it tossing the ferns together and the suspiration of the wind joined with the sliding of the water in the little creek just below. The tree muted and softened these sounds, and Hatsue felt herself at the heart of things. This place, this tree, was safe.

They began to kiss and touch each other, but the emptiness she felt pervaded it and she found she couldn't put her thoughts away. She placed an index finger against Ishmael's lips and shut her eyes and let her hair fall back against the moss. The smell of the tree was his smell, too, and the smell of the place she was leaving the next day, and she began to understand how she would miss it. The ache of it filled her; she felt sorry for him and sorry for herself and began to cry so quietly that it was only behind her eyes, a tautness in her throat, a tightening of her rib cage. Hatsue pressed against him, crying in this silent way, and breathed in the smell of Ishmael's throat. She buried her nose beneath his Adam's apple.

Ishmael moved his hands beneath the hem of her dress, then slowly up her thighs and over her underpants to the curves of her waist, where they stayed. He held her lightly in the curves of her waist and after a while lower, at her hips, and pulled her hard against him. She felt herself lifted, and she felt how hard he was and she pressed back into his hardness. The length of it pushed against his trousers, and his trousers pressed against her underpants and their smooth, wet silk pushed pleasantly. They kissed harder now, and she began to move as if to gather him in. She could feel the hard length of him and the silk of her underpants and his cotton trousers between. Then his hands left her hips and traced the line of her waist and traveled along up under her dress to the clasp on her bra. She arched off the moss to make room for his hands, and he undid the clasp without struggling and pulled the shoulder straps down onto her arms and softly kissed her earlobes. His hands traveled down her body again, coming out from the dress to hold her neck under

her hair, then her shoulder blades. She let her weight rest against his hands and arched her breasts to meet him. Ishmael kissed the front of her austelle dress and then began, from just below the embroidered collar, to undo its eleven buttons. It took time. They breathed into one another, and she took his upper lip between her lips while he worked on the buttons carefully. After a while the front of her dress came open, and he pulled her bra up onto her chest and moved his tongue against her nipples. 'Let's get married,' he whispered. 'I want to marry you, Hatsue.'

She was far too empty to answer this; there was no way she could speak. Her voice felt buried underneath her crying, and there was no way to bring it to the surface. So instead she ran her fingertips along his spine and against his hips, and then with both hands she felt his hardness through the fabric of his pants and felt how, for a moment, he seemed to stop breathing altogether. She squeezed with both hands and kissed him.

'Let's get married,' he said again, and she understood what he meant. 'I just . . . I want to marry you.'

She made no move to stop him when he slid his hand inside her panties. Then he was peeling them down her legs, and she was still crying silently. He was kissing her and pulling his own pants to his knees, the tip of his hardness was against her skin now and his hands were cupped around her face. 'Just say yes,' he whispered. 'Just tell me yes, tell me yes. Say yes to me. Say yes, oh God say yes.'

'Ishmael,' she whispered, and in that moment he pushed himself inside of her, all the way in, his hardness filling her entirely, and Hatsue knew with clarity that nothing about it was right. It came as an enormous shock to her, this knowledge, and at the same time it was something she had always known, something until now hidden. She pulled away from him — she pushed him. 'No,' she said. 'No, Ishmael. No, Ishmael. Never.'

He pulled himself out, away. He was a decent boy, a kind boy, she knew that. He pulled his trousers up, buttoned them,

and helped her back into her panties. Hatsue straightened her bra and clasped it again and buttoned up her dress. She put her coat on and then, sitting up, began meticulously to brush the moss from her hair. 'I'm sorry,' she said. 'It wasn't right.'

'It seemed right to me,' answered Ishmael. 'It seemed like getting married, like being married, like you and me were married. Like the only kind of wedding we could ever have.'

'I'm sorry,' said Hatsue, picking moss from her hair. 'I don't want you to be unhappy.'

'I am unhappy. I'm miserable. You're leaving tomorrow morning.'

'I'm unhappy, too,' said Hatsue. 'I'm sick with it, I feel worse than I've ever felt. I don't know anything anymore.'

He walked her home, to the edge of her fields, where they stood for a moment behind a cedar tree. It was nearly dusk and a March stillness had seized everything – the trees, the rotting deadwood, the leafless vine maple, the stones littering the ground. 'Good-bye,' said Hatsue. 'I'll write.'

'Don't go,' said Ishmael. 'Stay here.'

When she finally did leave it was well past dusk, and she walked out of the woods and into the open with the intention of not looking back again. But after ten steps she did so despite herself – it was too hard not to turn around. It was in her to say good-bye forever and tell him she would never see him again, to explain to him that she'd chosen to part because in his arms she felt unwhole. But she didn't say it, that they had been too young, that they had not seen clearly, that they had allowed the forest and the beach to sweep them up, that all of it had been delusion all along, that she had not been who she was. Instead, unblinking, she looked at him, unable to hurt him in the way that was demanded and in some undefined way still loving what he was, his kindness, his seriousness, the goodness in his heart. He stood there, Ishmael, looking at her desperately, and that was the way she would remember him. Twelve years later

she would still see him this way, standing at the edge of the strawberry fields beneath the cover of the silent cedars, a handsome boy with one arm outstretched, beckoning her to come back.

An army truck took Fujiko and her five daughters to the Amity Harbor ferry dock at seven o'clock on Monday morning, where a soldier gave them tags for their suitcases and coats. They waited among their bags in the cold while their *hakujin* neighbors stood staring at them where they were gathered on the dock between the soldiers. Fujiko saw Ilse Severensen there, leaning against the railing with her hands clasped in front of her; she waved at the Imadas as they passed by. Ilse, a Seattle transplant, had for ten years purchased strawberries from Fujiko and spoke to her as if she were a peasant whose role in life was to make island life pleasantly exotic for Ilse's friends who visited from the city. Her kindness had always been condescending, and she had always paid a bit extra for her berries with the air of doling out charity. And so, on this morning, Fujiko could not meet her eyes or acknowledge her despite the fact that Ilse Severensen had waved and called out her name in a friendly way – Fujiko studied the ground instead; she kept her eyes cast down.

At nine o'clock they were marched on board the *Kehloken*, with the white people gaping at them from the hill above, and Gordon Tanaka's daughter – she was eight years old – fell on the dock and began to cry. Soon other people were crying, too, and from the hill came the voice of Antonio Dangan, a Filipino man who had married Eleanor Kitano just two months before. 'Eleanor!' he shouted, and when she looked up he let go a bouquet of red roses, which sailed gently toward the water in the wind and landed in the waves below the dock pilings.

They were taken from Anacortes on a train to a transit camp – the horse stables at the Puyallup fairgrounds. They lived in the

horse stalls and slept on canvas army cots; at nine P.M. they were confined to their stalls; at ten P.M. they were made to turn out their lights, one bare bulb for each family. The cold in the stalls worked into their bones, and when it rained that night they moved their cots because of the leaks in the roof. The next morning, at six A.M., they slogged through mud to the transit camp mess hall and ate canned figs and white bread from pie tins and drank coffee out of tin cups. Through all of it Fujiko maintained her dignity, though she'd felt herself beginning to crack while relieving herself in front of other women. The contortions of her face as she moved her bowels deeply humiliated her. She hung her head as she sat on the toilet, ashamed of the noises her body made. The roof leaked in the latrine, too.

After three days they boarded another train and began a languid crawl toward California. At night the MPs who roamed from car to car came through telling them to pull down their window shades, and they passed the dark hours twisting in their seats and exerting themselves not to complain. The train stopped and started and jolted them toward wakefulness, and there was a constant line at the door to the toilet. Many people had lost control of their bowels altogether as a result of eating in the Puyallup transit camp, including Fujiko. Her rectum burned as she sat in her train seat, her brain felt light and unmoored inside her skull, and a cold sweat beaded on her forehead. Fujiko did her best not to give in to her discomfort by speaking of it to her daughters. She did not want them to know that she was suffering inwardly and needed to lie down comfortably somewhere and sleep for a long time. For when she slept at all it was with her hearing tuned to the bluebottle flies always pestering her and to the crying of the Takami baby, who was three weeks old and had a fever. The wailing of this baby ate at her, and she rode with her fingers stuffed inside her ears, but this did not seem to change things. Her sympathy for the baby and for all of the Takamis began to slip as sleep evaded her, and she secretly began to wish for the baby's death if such a thing could mean silence. And at the

same time she hated herself for thinking this and fought against it while her anger grew at the fact that the baby could not just be flung from the window so that the rest of them might have some peace. Then, long past the point when she had told herself that she could not endure another moment, the baby would stop its tortured shrieking, Fujiko would calm herself and close her eyes, retreat with enormous relief toward sleep, and then the Takami baby would once again wail and shriek inconsolably.

The train stopped at a place called Mojave in the middle of an interminable, still desert. They were herded onto buses at eight-thirty in the morning, and the buses took them north over dusty roads for four hours to a place called Manzanar. Fujiko had imagined, shutting her eyes, that the sandstorm battering the bus was the rain of home. She'd dozed and awakened in time to see the barbed wire and the rows of dark barracks blurred by blowing dust. It was twelve-thirty, by her watch; they were just in time to stand in line for lunch. They ate standing up, from army mess kits, with their backs turned against the wind. Peanut butter, white bread, canned figs, and string beans; she could taste the dust in all of it.

They were given typhoid shots that first afternoon; they stood in line for them. They waited in the dust beside their luggage and then stood in line for dinner. In the evening the Imadas were assigned to Block 11, Barrack 4, and given a sixteen-by-twenty-foot room furnished with a bare lightbulb, a small Coleman oil heater, six CCC camp cots, six straw mattresses, and a dozen army blankets. Fujiko sat on the edge of a cot with cramps from the camp food and the typhoid shot gathering to a knot in her stomach. She sat with her coat on, holding herself, while her daughters beat flat the straw in the mattresses and lit the oil heater. Even with the heater she shivered beneath her blankets, still fully dressed in her clothes. By midnight she couldn't wait any longer and, with three of her daughters who were feeling distressed too, stumbled out into the darkness of the desert in the direction of the block latrine. There was, astonishingly, a long line at midnight, fifty or more women and girls in heavy

coats with their backs braced against the wind. A woman up the line vomited heavily, and the smell was of the canned figs they'd all eaten. The woman apologized profusely in Japanese, and then another in the line vomited, and they were all silent again.

Inside they found a film of excrement on the floor and damp, stained tissue paper everywhere. All twelve toilets, six back-to-back pairs, were filled up near to overflowing. Women were using these toilets anyway, squatting over them in the semidarkness while a line of strangers watched and held their noses. Fujiko, when it was her turn, hung her head and emptied her bowels with her arms wrapped around her stomach. There was a trough to wash her hands in, but no soap.

That night dust and yellow sand blew through the knotholes in the walls and floor. By morning their blankets were covered with it. Fujiko's pillow lay white where her head had been, but around it a layer of fine yellow grains had gathered. She felt it against her face and in her hair and on the inside of her mouth, too. It had been a cold night, and in the adjacent room a baby screamed behind a quarter-inch wall of pine board.

On their second day at Manzanar they were given a mop, a broom, and a bucket. The leader of their block – a man from Los Angeles dressed in a dusty overcoat who claimed to have been an attorney in his former life but who now stood unshaven with one shoe untied and with his wire-rimmed glasses skewed on his face – showed them the outdoor water tap. Fujiko and her daughters cleaned out the dust and did laundry in a gallon-size soup tin. While they were cleaning more dust and sand blew in to settle on the newly mopped pine boards. Hatsue went out into the desert wind and returned with a few scraps of tar paper she'd found blown up against a roll of barbed wire along a firebreak. They stuffed this around the doorjamb and fixed it over the knotholes with thumbtacks borrowed from the Fujitas.

There was no sense in talking to anyone about things. Everyone was in the same position. Everyone wandered like ghosts beneath the guard towers with the mountains looming

on either side of them. The bitter wind came down off the mountains and through the barbed wire and hurled the desert sand in their faces. The camp was only half-finished; there were not enough barracks to go around. Some people, on arriving, had to build their own in order to have a place to sleep. There were crowds everywhere, thousands of people in a square mile of desert scoured to dust by army bulldozers, and there was nowhere for a person to find solitude. The barracks all looked the same: on the second night, at one-thirty A.M., a drunk man stood in the doorway of the Imadas' room apologizing endlessly while the dust blew in; he'd lost his way, he said. Their room had no ceiling either, and it was possible to hear people squabbling in other barracks. There was a man who distilled his own wine three rooms down – he used mess hall rice and canned apricot juice – they heard him weeping late on their third night while his wife threatened him. On that same night the searchlights went on in the guard towers and swept across their single window. In the morning it turned out that one of the guards had become convinced of an escape in progress and had alerted the tower machine gunners. On the fourth night a young man in Barrack 17 shot his wife and then himself while they lay in bed together – somehow he had smuggled in a gun. 'Shikata ga nai,' people said. 'It cannot be helped, it has to be.'

There was nowhere to put any clothing. They lived out of their suitcases and packing crates. The floor was cold beneath their feet, and they wore their dusty shoes until bedtime. By the end of the first week Fujiko had lost track of her daughters' whereabouts altogether. Everybody had begun to look alike, dressed in surplus War Department clothing – pea coats, knit caps, canvas leggings, army earmuffs, and wool khaki pants. Only her two youngest ate with her; the other three ran with packs of young people and ate at other tables. She scolded them, and they listened politely and then went out again. The older girls left early and came back late, their clothes and hair full of dust. The camp was an enormous promenade of young people milling and walking in the fire lanes and huddling in the lee

of barracks. On her way to the washhouse one morning after breakfast Fujiko had seen her middle daughter – she was only fourteen – standing in a group that included four boys dressed nattily in Eisenhower coats. They were, she knew, Los Angeles boys; most people in the camp were from Los Angeles. The Los Angeles people were not very cordial and looked down on her for some inexplicable reason; she could not get a word in with them edgewise. Fujiko fell silent about everything, collapsed in on herself. She waited for a letter from Hisao to come, but a different letter came instead.

When Hatsue's sister Sumiko saw the envelope with Ishmael's false return address – *Journalism Class, San Pedro High School* – she did not resist her urge to tear it open. Sumiko had been a sophomore before her exile, and although she knew the envelope was Hatsue's this mail remained irresistible. This mail was word from home.

Sumiko read the letter from Ishmael Chambers in front of the tarpaper YMCA building; she read it again, savoring the more astonishing phrases, out by the camp hog pens.

April 4, 1942

My Love,

I still go to our cedar tree in the afternoons every day. I shut my eyes, waiting. I smell your smell and I dream of you and I ache for you to come home. Every moment I think of you and long to hold and feel you. Missing you is killing me. It's like a part of me has gone away.

I'm lonely and miserable and think of you always and hope you will write me right away. Remember to use Kenny Yamashita's name for a return address on the envelope so my parents won't get too curious.

Everything here is horrible and sad and life is not worth living. I can only hope that you find some happiness during the time we have to be apart – some happiness of some kind, Hatsue. Myself, I can only be miserable until you are in my arms again. I can't

live without you, I know that now. After all these years that we've been together, I find you're a part of me. Without you, I have nothing.

*All My Love Forever,
Ishmael*

After a half hour of walking and thinking and of reading Ishmael's letter four more times, she took it regretfully to her mother. 'Here,' she said. 'I feel like a creep. But I have to show this to you.'

Her mother read Ishmael Chambers's letter standing in the middle of the tar-paper hut with one hand on her forehead. While she read her lips moved rapidly, her eyes blinked severely and often. Finished, she sat down on the edge of a chair, dangled the letter in her hand for a moment, then sighed and took off her glasses. 'Surely not,' she said in Japanese.

She set the glasses in her lap wearily, placed the letter on top of them, and pressed against her eyes with both palms.

'The neighborhood boy,' she said to Sumiko. 'The one who taught her how to swim.'

'Ishmael Chambers,' answered Sumiko. 'You know who he is.'

'Your sister has made a terrible mistake,' said Fujiko. 'One I hope you will never make.'

'I never would,' said Sumiko. 'Anyway, it isn't a mistake I could make in a place like this, is it?'

Fujiko picked up her glasses again and held them between her thumb and forefinger. 'Sumi,' she said. 'Have you told anyone? Have you shown this letter to anyone?'

'No,' said Sumi. 'Just you.'

'You must promise something,' said Fujiko. 'You must promise not to tell this to anyone – don't tell anyone about it. There's enough gossip here without something like this. You must promise to keep your mouth closed and never tell this again. Do you understand me?'

'All right. I promise,' said Sumiko.

'I'll tell Hatsue I found the letter. You don't have to take the blame.'

'Okay,' answered Sumiko. 'Good.'

'Go out now,' said her mother. 'Go and leave me alone.'

The girl went out to wander aimlessly. Fujiko perched her glasses on her nose once more and began to reread the letter. It was clear to her from the words in it that her daughter had been deeply entangled with this boy for a long time, for many years. It was evident that he had touched her body, that the two of them had been sexually intimate inside a hollow tree they'd used as a trysting place in the forest. Hatsue's walks had been a ruse, just as Fujiko had suspected. Her daughter had returned with *fuki* tendrils in her hands and a wetness between her thighs. *Deceitful girl*, thought Fujiko.

She thought for a moment of her own romantic life, how she'd been wed to a man she'd never seen before and passed the first night of her life with him in a boardinghouse where the pages of *hakujin* magazines had been substituted for wallpaper. She had refused, on that first night, to let her husband touch her – Hisao was unclean, his hands were rough, he had no money but a few coins. He'd spent those first hours apologizing to Fujiko and explaining in detail his financial desperation, pleading with her to work beside him and underscoring his talents and better traits – he was ambitious, hardworking, didn't gamble or drink, he had no bad habits and saved his money, but times were so hard, he needed someone at his side. He could understand, he said, having to earn her love, and he was willing to prove himself to her with time if she would agree to be patient. 'Don't even speak to me,' she'd replied.

He'd slept in a chair that first night, and Fujiko had stayed awake pondering ways to extricate herself from this situation. She did not have enough money to buy a return ticket, and at any rate, she knew in her bones, she could not return to her family in Japan – her parents had sold her and paid a percentage to the deceitful *baishakunin* who had assured them that Hisao had amassed great wealth during his years in America. She stayed

awake growing angrier about this; by dawn she had begun to feel murderous.

In the morning Hisao stood at the foot of the bed and asked Fujiko if she'd slept well. 'I'm not talking to you,' she answered. 'I'm going to write home for the money I need and go back as soon as I can.'

'We'll save together,' pleaded Hisao. 'We'll go back together, if that's what you want. We'll -'

'What about your twelve acres of mountain land?' Fujiko said to him angrily. 'The *baishakunin* took me to see it - peach trees, persimmons, weeping willows, rock gardens. None of that turns out to be true.'

'You're right, it isn't true,' confessed Hisao. 'I don't have money - that's correct. I'm a pauper and I work my fingers to the bone. The *baishakunin* lied to you, I'm sorry for that, but -'

'Don't talk to me, please,' said Fujiko. 'I don't want to be married to you.'

It had taken her three months to learn how to sleep with him. When she did she found that she had learned to love him, if love was the proper word to use, and it occurred to her then, sleeping in his arms, that love was nothing close to what she'd imagined as a girl growing up near Kure. It was less dramatic and far more practical than her girlhood had led her to believe. Fujiko had cried when her hymen broke, in part because sacrificing her virginity to Hisao's need had not been what she had hoped for. But she was married now, and he was a steady sort of a man, and she grew, gradually, close to him. They'd been, already, through much hardship together, and he had never once complained.

Now she stood with this letter in her hand - a letter a *hakujin* boy had sent to her daughter about love inside a cedar tree, about his loneliness and misery and how horribly he missed her and how she should write to him with a false return address - 'use *Kenny Yamashita's name*,' he'd written. She wondered if her daughter loved this boy or if she knew the first thing about love. It made sense to her now that Hatsue had been so silent and

morose - more silent and morose than her other daughters - since the day they left San Piedro. Everybody had been unhappy and Hatsue had used this, the general unhappiness had been convenient, but still she had sulked more than anyone; she'd been listless and had gone about her chores with the sluggishness of someone grieving. She missed her father, she said when asked; she missed San Piedro Island. But she did not say to anyone that she missed the *hakujin* boyfriend who had been her secret lover. The depth of her deceit became vivid to Fujiko, and she felt in herself a mother's rage at the weight of this betrayal. The rage mingled with the general melancholy that had been growing in her steadily since the bombing of Pearl Harbor; it was one of the rare times in Fujiko's adult life when she felt inconsolable.

She reminded herself to behave with dignity no matter what the circumstances. It was a lesson she'd forgotten in her early days in America, but with time she had rediscovered it as something worthy passed down from her grandmother in Kure. *Giri* was her grandmother's word for it - it could not be precisely translated into English - and it meant doing what one had to do quietly and with an entirely stoic demeanor. Fujiko sat back and cultivated in herself the spirit of quiet dignity that would be necessary in confronting Hatsue. She breathed deeply and shut her eyes.

Well, she told herself, she would have a talk with Hatsue when the girl came back from wandering aimlessly around the camp. She would put an end to this business.

Three hours before dinner a group of San Piedro boys knocked on the door of her room. They had with them tools and scraps of lumber, and they were prepared, they said, to build for the Imadas whatever was wanted: shelves, a chest of drawers, chairs. She recognized all of them as the sons of island families - the Tanakas, the Kados, the Matsuis, the Miyamotos - and she told them yes, she could use all of those things, and the boys set about working in the lee of the barrack, measuring and cutting and sawing while the wind blew. Kabuo Miyamoto came inside and nailed up brackets while Fujiko sat on a cot with her arms

crossed and the letter from the *hakujin* boy behind her back. 'There are some scraps of tin at the side of the block kitchen,' Kabuo Miyamoto said to her. 'We can nail them over those knotholes in the floor – they'll do a better job than tar paper.'

'Tar paper tears like *that*,' answered Fujiko in the English Kabuo used. 'And it not help keep cold out.'

Kabuo nodded and went back to work, his hammer striking efficiently. 'How is your family?' Fujiko said. 'Your mother? Your father? How everybody?'

'My father is ill,' Kabuo answered. 'The camp food is bad for his stomach.' He paused to slip another nail from his pocket. 'And you?' he said. 'How are all of the Imada women?'

'Dusty,' said Fujiko. 'We eat dust.'

At this moment Hatsue came through the door, her face reddened by the cold outside, and tugged the scarf from her head. Kabuo Miyamoto stopped his work for a moment to gaze at her while she shook her hair free. 'Hello,' he said. 'It's good to see you.'

Hatsue tossed her hair once more, gathered it in her hands swiftly, and smoothed it down the back of her head. Then she stuffed her hands in her overcoat and sat down beside her mother. 'Hello,' she said, but nothing more.

They sat for a moment watching in silence while Kabuo Miyamoto went about his work. He sat on his shins with his back to them, tapping carefully with a hammer. Another of the carpenters came through the door with a stack of freshly sawed pine boards. Kabuo Miyamoto laid each on the brackets and tested each with a level. 'They're straight,' he announced. 'They should work out well. I'm sorry we couldn't do better.'

'They're very nice,' said Fujiko. 'It's kind of you. Our thanks.'

'We're going to build you six chairs,' said Kabuo, looking at Hatsue now. 'We're going to build you two chests of drawers and a table you can eat on. We'll have them to you in a few days' time. As soon as we can get them built.'

'Thank you,' said Fujiko. 'You're very kind.'

'We're glad to do it for you,' said Kabuo Miyamoto. 'It isn't any trouble at all.'

Still holding his hammer, he smiled at Hatsue, and she dropped her eyes to her lap. He slipped the hammer into a cloth ring on his pants, then picked up his level and measuring tape. 'Good-bye, Mrs. Imada,' he said. 'Good-bye, Hatsue. It's good to see you.'

'Our thanks again,' said Fujiko. 'Your help is greatly appreciated.'

When the door had shut she reached behind her and handed Hatsue the letter. 'Here,' she spat. 'Your mail. I don't know how you could have been so deceitful. I'll never understand it, Hatsue.'

She had planned to discuss the matter right there and then, but she understood suddenly that the strength of her bitterness might prevent her from saying what she really meant. 'You will not write again to this boy or accept his letters,' she said sternly from the doorway.

The girl sat with the letter in her hand, tears gathering in her eyes. 'I'm sorry,' Hatsue said. 'Forgive me, Mother. I've deceived you and I've always known it.'

'Deceiving me,' said Fujiko in Japanese, 'is only half of it, daughter. You have deceived yourself, too.'

Then Fujiko went out into the wind. She walked to the post office and told the clerk there to hold all mail for the Imada family. From now on, she herself would come for it. It should be handed to her only.

That afternoon she sat in the mess hall and wrote her own letter addressed to the parents of the boy Ishmael Chambers. She told them about the hollow tree in the woods and how Ishmael and Hatsue had deceived the world for a number of years successfully. She revealed to them the contents of the letter their son had written to her daughter. Her daughter, she said, would not be writing back, now or at any time in the future. Whatever had been between them was over, and she apologized for her daughter's role in it; she hoped that

the boy would see his future in a new light and give no more thought to Hatsue. She understood, she wrote, that they were only children; she knew children were often foolish. Still, both of these young people were culpable and must look to themselves now, examine their souls, consider this a matter of conscience. It was no crime to find oneself attracted to another, she wrote, or to believe what one felt was love. The dishonor lay instead in concealing from one's family the nature of one's affections. She hoped that the parents of Ishmael Chambers would understand her position. She did not wish for any further communication to pass between her daughter and their son. She had expressed her feelings clearly to her daughter and asked her not to write to the boy or accept his letters in the future. She added that she admired the Chambers family and had great respect for the *San Pedro Review*. She wished them well, all of them.

She showed this letter to Hatsue when it was folded and ready to go in its envelope. The girl read it over twice, slowly, with her left cheek resting on her left hand. When she was done she held it tightly in her lap and looked blandly at her mother. Her face, strangely, was drained of emotion; she had the look of one exhausted from the inside, too tired to feel. Fujiko saw that she had gotten older in the three weeks since they'd left San Pedro. Her daughter was suddenly grown up, a woman, weary from the inside. Her daughter had suddenly grown hardened.

'You don't have to send this,' she said now to Fujiko. 'I wasn't going to write him again anyway. I was on the train, coming down here, and all I could think about was Ishmael Chambers and whether I should write him a letter. Whether I loved him anymore.'

'Love,' spat Fujiko. 'You not know about love. You -'

'I'm eighteen,' replied Hatsue. 'I'm old enough. Stop thinking of me as a little girl. You have to understand - I've grown up.'

Fujiko removed her glasses carefully and, as was her habit, rubbed her eyes. 'On the train,' she said. 'What you decide?'

'Nothing, at first,' said Hatsue. 'I couldn't think very clearly.

There were too many things to think about, Mother. I was too depressed to think.'

'And now?' said Fujiko. 'What now?'

'I'm done with him,' said Hatsue. 'We were children together, we played on the beach, and it turned out to be something bigger. But he isn't the husband for me, Mother. I've known that all along. Anyway I wrote him, I said that whenever we were together it seemed like something was wrong. I always knew, deep inside, it was wrong, I felt it down inside somewhere - this feeling like I loved him and at the same time couldn't love him - I was always confused, every day, ever since we met. He's a good person, Mother, you know his family, he's really a very good person. But none of that matters, does it? I wanted to tell him it was over, Mother, but I was *leaving* . . . it was all *confused*, I couldn't get the words out, and, besides, I didn't really know what I felt. I was confused. There was too much to think about. I needed to straighten it all out.'

'And is it straighten out now, Hatsue? Is it straighten?'

The girl was silent for a moment. She ran a hand through her hair and let it fall, then the other hand, too. 'It's straight,' she said. 'I have to tell him. I have to put an end to it.'

Fujiko took her letter from her daughter's lap and ripped it neatly down the middle. 'Write your own letter,' she said in Japanese. 'Tell him the truth about things. Put all of this in your history. Tell him the truth so you can move forward. Put this *hakujin* boy away now.'

In the morning Sumiko was reminded of the importance of revealing nothing about this episode. She promised her mother she would keep silent. Fujiko took Hatsue's letter to the post office and paid the postage on it. She licked the envelope shut herself and, because the notion took hold of her suddenly - a kind of caprice and nothing more - she pressed the stamp on upside down before putting the letter in the mailbox.

When Kabuo Miyamoto brought his chests of drawers, Fujiko asked him to stay for tea, and he sat with them for more than two hours, and again on the next night when he delivered the

table, and on the following night when he delivered the chairs. Then on the fourth night he came to their door with his hat in his hand and asked Hatsue if she would go for a walk with him underneath the stars. She said no on that occasion and did not speak to him for another three weeks, and yet she saw that he was polite and handsome, the clear-eyed son of strawberry farmers, and anyway she couldn't grieve over Ishmael Chambers until the end of her days.

When the time came, a few months later, that Ishmael was mostly a persistent ache buried beneath the surface of her daily life, she spoke to Kabuo Miyamoto in the mess hall and sat beside him to eat lunch. She admired his impeccable table manners and the graciousness of his smile. He spoke softly to her, asked her about her dreams, and when she said she wanted an island strawberry farm he said he wanted the same thing precisely and told her about how his family's seven acres would soon be transferred to his name. When the war was over he planned to farm strawberries back home on San Pedro Island.

When she kissed him for the first time, she felt the grip of her sadness, how it seized more tightly around her, and how different his mouth was from Ishmael's. He smelled of earth and his body's strength was far greater than her own. She found she couldn't move within the circle of his arms and struggled against him, breathless. 'You'll have to be more gentle,' she'd whispered. 'I'll try,' Kabuo had answered.

Ishmael Chambers trained as a marine rifleman with seven hundred and fifty other recruits at Fort Benning, Georgia, in the late summer of 1942. In October he fell ill with fever and dysentery and was hospitalized for eleven days, during which he lost considerable weight and passed his time reading Atlanta newspapers and playing chess with other boys. Sprawled in his bed with his knees up and his hands behind his head, he listened to radio news accounts of the war and studied the diagrams of troop movements in the papers with a lazy, unruffled fascination. He grew a mustache for six days, then shaved it, then let it grow again. Through almost every afternoon he slept, waking in time to feel dusk settle in and to watch the light die beyond the window three beds away to his right. Other boys came and went, but he stayed. The war wounded came to the hospital but convalesced on two other floors he had no access to. He lived in his T-shirt and underwear, and the smell from the open window was of dying leaves and of rain in the dirt and turned fields, and it began to seem to him strangely apt that he lay so many thousand miles from home and was so alone in his sickness. It was the kind of suffering, after all, he'd yearned for during the last five months, since receiving Hatsue's letter. It was an easy, sleepy kind of languid fever, and so long as he did not try to move too much or exert himself unnecessarily he could live this way indefinitely. He surrounded himself with his illness thoroughly and embedded himself in it.

In October he trained a second time, as a radioman, and was sent to a staging area on the North Island of New Zealand as part of the Second Marine Division. They assigned him to B

Company in the Second Marine Regiment, Third Battalion, and he soon met men who'd been at Guadalcanal, and he replaced a radio operator who'd been shot during the fighting in the Solomons. One night a lieutenant named Jim Kent recollected how the former radioman had taken an interest in a dead Japanese boy with his pants turned inside out around his muddy ankles. The radioman, a Private Gerald Willis, had propped the boy's penis up by placing a stone under it, then had lain down carefully in the dirt and shot carbine rounds until he'd blown the head of it off. He'd been proud of himself afterward and had bragged about his aim for a half hour or more, describing for others how the boy's penis had looked with the head of it severed and how the head itself had looked lying on the ground. Private Willis had been killed two days later on patrol, by friendly mortar fire he'd called for at the direction of Lieutenant Kent himself, who'd given the correct coordinates. Seven men in the platoon had died on that occasion, and Kent had lowered himself into a foxhole and watched a Private Wiesner toss a grenade unsuccessfully toward a pillbox while at the same moment a stream of machine-gun fire caught Wiesner at the waist and forced his viscera out. A piece of it had landed on Kent's forearm, blue, fresh, and glistening.

They trained incessantly and practiced landing maneuvers at Hawkes Bay, where the tides were bad. Men died during these exercises. Ishmael tried to take maneuvers seriously, but the veterans in his squad went through them hung over or bored or both simultaneously, and their attitude of indifference had its influence. On liberty he drank ale and at other times gin with boys who like him were new to the war, and they played pool in Wellington together. Even at those times, drunk at one o'clock in the morning, leaning against his pool cue in the smoky light while another boy lined up a shot and a Wellington band played dance tunes he didn't recognize, Ishmael felt a peculiar detachment from everybody. He was numb to it all, uninterested in drinking and pool and other people, and the more drunk he became the more lucid his mind was and the colder he felt toward

everyone. He did not understand the laughter of his compatriots or their ease or anything else about them. What were they doing here, drinking and shouting at one o'clock in the morning in a country so far from the homes they knew; what were they so feverishly happy about? One morning, in a heavy downpour, he wandered back to his Wellington hotel at four-thirty and lay down heavily with his writing tablet to compose a letter to his parents. After he'd written to them he wrote one to Hatsue, and then he took both letters and ripped them up and fell asleep with some of the pieces jammed into his coat pocket and the rest scattered across the floor. He slept with his shoes on and at six-fifteen awoke to vomit in the toilet closet down the hall.

On the first day of November the Second Division left Wellington, presumably on maneuvers at Hawkes Bay again, but ending up instead at Nouméa on the French island of New Caledonia. By the thirteenth Ishmael's regiment was on board the *Heywood*, a transport ship traveling with more than half of the Third Fleet – frigates, destroyers, light and heavy cruisers, half a dozen battleships – all headed for an unknown destination. On the second day his company was assembled on the top deck and told that they were moving toward Tarawa atoll, where they would go ashore at Betio, a strongly defended island. A major stood in front of them sucking on his pipe stem, with his right elbow tucked into his left palm. The idea, he explained, was to let the navy obliterate the place – it was less than two square miles of coral sand – then wade in and mop up the leftovers. The Jap commander, he said, had boasted that Betio could not be successfully invaded by even a force of a million soldiers with a thousand years to do battle. The major pulled his pipe from his mouth and proclaimed the Japanese commander laughable in this regard. He predicted a battle lasting two days at most, with few if any marine casualties. It was a matter the navy guns would take care of, he repeated, a tailor-made place for shipboard artillery to do the dirty work.

On the night of the nineteenth a quarter moon rose over the sea while the fleet stood seven miles off Tarawa. Ishmael ate a

last meal on the *Heywood's* messing deck with Ernest Testaverde, a boy he liked, an anti-tank gunner from Delaware. They ate steak and eggs, fried potatoes and coffee, and then Testaverde put down his plate and took a pad of paper and a pen from his pocket. He began to write a letter home.

'You better write one yourself,' he said to Ishmael. 'Last chance you're going to get, you know.'

'Last chance?' answered Ishmael. 'There's no one I really want to write to in that case. I –'

'It isn't up to you,' said Testaverde. 'So just in case – write a letter.'

Ishmael went below and got his pad of paper. He sat on the top deck with his back against a stanchion and composed a letter to Hatsue. From where he sat he could see twenty other men, all of them writing intently. It was warm for so late at night, and the men all looked comfortable with their collars open and the sleeves of their uniform shirts rolled up. Ishmael told Hatsue how he was about to go ashore on an island in the South Pacific and that his job was to kill people who looked like her – as many of them as he could. What did she think about that? he wrote. How did that make her feel? He said that his numbness was a terrible thing, he didn't feel anything except that he looked forward to killing as many Japs as possible, he was angry at them and wanted their deaths – all of them, he wrote; he felt hatred. He explained to her the nature of his hatred and told her she was as responsible for it as anyone in the world. In fact, he hated *her* now. He didn't want to hate her, but since this was a last letter he felt bound to tell the truth as completely as he could – he hated her with everything in his heart, he wrote, and it felt good to him to write it in just that way. '*I hate you with all my heart,*' he wrote. '*I hate you, Hatsue, I hate you always.*' It was at this point that he ripped the sheet from his writing pad, crumpled it, and threw it into the sea. He watched it floating on the water for a few seconds, then threw his pad in after it.

At 3:20 in the morning, wide awake in his bunk, Ishmael heard the order delivered to the troop hold: 'All marines lay

topside to your debarkation stations!' He sat up and watched Ernest Testaverde lace his boots and then began to lace his own, stopping once to drink from his canteen – 'Dry mouth,' he said to Ernest. 'You want some water before we die?'

'Lace up,' said Ernest. 'Get topside.'

They went up, dragging their gear along with them, and Ishmael felt wide awake now. There were already more than three hundred men squatting and kneeling on the top deck of the *Heywood*, rearranging their equipment in the dark – C rations, canteens, entrenching tools, gas masks, rounds of ammunition, steel helmets. There had been no firing yet, and it did not feel so much like war – another nighttime exercise in tropical waters. Ishmael heard the whine of the landing craft plummeting over the sheaves of the boat blocks; then men were going overboard into them, snaking their way down the cargo nets with packs on their backs and their helmets strapped on and timing their lunges to coincide with the bobbing of the boats below.

Ishmael watched a half-dozen navy corpsmen busily packing medical field kits and stacking ambulatory litters. This was something he hadn't seen on maneuvers, and he pointed it out to Testaverde, who shrugged and went back to counting antitank rounds. Ishmael turned on his TBX, listened for a moment to the static in the headphones, then switched it off and waited. He did not want to strap it to his back too early, then have to stand around with its weight burdening him until his turn came to crawl down the cargo net. Sitting beside his gear, peering out to sea, he tried to make out Betio, but the island could not be seen. Each of the LCP landing craft that had left the *Heywood* in the past half hour appeared as a dark spot against the water, though – Ishmael counted three dozen of them.

The three squads of Third Platoon were briefed on the top deck by a First Lieutenant Pavelman from San Antonio, who explained in detail the role of B Company in the larger scheme of things. He had before him a relief model of the island made out of three square sections of rubber and with

a pointer began to point out its topographical features, doing so with no flourishes. Amtracs, he said, were going in first, followed by waves of Higgins boats. There was going to be air cover – dive-bombers and Hellcats on strafing runs, then B-24s from out of Ellice Island, right up to the point of attack. B Company would go ashore at a place called Beach Red Two, he said, and the mortar section would place itself at the disposal of the weapons platoon leader, a Second Lieutenant Pratt, for the purpose of establishing a base of fire. Second Platoon would come in simultaneously on Pratt's right and advance over the seawall behind its light machine guns, then collect on higher ground and move inland. There were bunkers and pillboxes, said Lieutenant Pavelman, directly south of Beach Red Two; marine intelligence was furthermore of the opinion that the Jap command bunker was perhaps located in this area, possibly at the eastern end of the airfield. Second Platoon should look for it and fix the location of air vents for the demolitions teams, who would come in directly behind. Three minutes after Second went ashore, Third Platoon – Ishmael's – would beach and come in close or, according to the judgment of Lieutenant Bellows, go to the support of whichever platoon appeared to have made a solid advance. The platoon could expect support from K Company, which was scheduled to come in with the headquarters group and a heavy machine-gun platoon just behind the Third. They would land from more amtracs, which could be used against the seawall; the theory, said Lieutenant Pavelman, was to come in fast and hard with full support behind the initial wave of riflemen. 'Another name for it is suckers first,' someone in Third Platoon called out bitterly, but no one laughed at this. Pavelman pushed on mechanically with his briefing: rifle platoons, he explained, would cut a careful but persistent advance, followed by reinforcements in the second wave, command and support in the third tractor wave, then more rifle companies and more support and command, until the beachhead was well established. Then, with his hands at his belt, Lieutenant Pavelman called on a Chaplain Thomas to lead them in a recitation of the twenty-third

psalm and in the singing of 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus.' When they were done, everyone fell silent on the deck and the chaplain called on the men to contemplate their relationship to God and Jesus. 'That's fine,' a soldier called out in the darkness. 'But, look here, I'm an atheist, sir, the exception to the rule that there ain't no atheists in foxholes or firefights, and I'm gonna stay a goddamn atheist to the goddamn end, goddamn it!'

'So be it,' Chaplain Thomas answered softly. 'And may God bless you just the same, my friend.'

Ishmael began to wonder how any of this would direct him once he hit the beach. He had listened to Lieutenant Pavelman as closely as he could but had not discerned the relationship between his words and the specific direction in which his own feet should move once he landed on Betio. Why was he going there? To do what exactly? The chaplain was passing out pieces of lucky candy and rolls of military toilet paper, and Ishmael took one of each from him chiefly because everyone else had done so. The chaplain, a Colt .45 strapped to his belt, encouraged him to take more of the candy – 'It's good stuff,' he said. 'Come on.' They were peppermints, and Ishmael popped one in his mouth, then strapped his radio onto his back and pulled himself into a standing position. The entire weight of his equipment, he guessed, was more than eighty-five pounds.

It was not easy to crawl down the cargo net so loaded, but Ishmael had been able to practice on maneuvers and had taught himself to relax. Halfway down he spit out the peppermint and leaned out over the water. A whistling had begun to sound in his ears, growing louder by the second. He turned to look, and at the same moment a shell plunged into the sea seventy-five feet to stern. A spray of salt water broke across the boat, dousing the soldiers there; the phosphorescence boiled up green and luminous against the darkness. The boy next to Ishmael, a Private Jim Harvey from Carson City, Nevada, swore softly under his breath twice, then leaned in against the net. 'Shit,' he said. 'A goddamn shell. I don't believe this shit.'

'Me neither,' said Ishmael.

'I thought they blew the shit out of this place,' Jim Harvey complained. 'I thought they dusted all the big guns off before we had to go in. Jesus fucking Christ,' he added.

'The big boys are still coming out from Ellice,' Walter Bennett down the net pointed out. 'They're gonna dust the Japs with daisy cutters before we ever hit the sand.'

'That's bullshit,' said another voice. 'There aren't going to be no daisy cutters coming. You're a motherfucking dreamer, Walter.'

'A fucking Jap shell,' Jim Harvey said. 'Goddamn it to shit, I -'

But another shell came whistling down and slammed into the water a hundred yards in front of them, sending up a momentary geyser.

'Fuckers!' Private Harvey yelled. 'I thought they softened the bastards up! Thought we was just mopping up!'

'They been fucking up for days, lobbing 'em long,' a boy named Larry Jackson explained calmly. 'All that softening-up bullshit don't mean a rat's ass. They fucked it all up, and now we're going in, and there's all sorts of fucking Jap fire.'

'Jesus,' said Jim Harvey. 'I can't believe this bullshit. What the fuck is going on here?'

The LCP pushed on toward Betio with Third Platoon aboard. Ishmael could hear the whistling of shells now distantly across the water. He sat low beneath a plywood gunnel a navy crew had jury-rigged during down time in Nouméa. He was weighted down now heavily by his pack, with his helmet pulled to his brow. He could hear Jim Harvey chattering hopefully: 'The fuckers been pounding 'em up for days, right? There ain't nothing left there but sand and bullshit and a whole lot of little Jap pieces. That's what *everyone's* been hearing. Madsen read it off the radio and Bledsoe was right there in the room with him, it's no bullshit, they fucking dusted 'em . . .'

The seas, as it turned out, contrary to all plans, were running high and choppy. Ishmael did not stand up well on high seas and had become addicted to Dramamine. He swallowed two with

water from his belt canteen and peered out over the plywood gunnel with his helmet on but not strapped. The boat thrummed under him, and he saw that they were running alongside three other transports immediately off to the left. He could see the men in the boat next to his; one of them had lit a cigarette and the glow of its tip was visible, though he'd tucked it down inside his cradled palm. Ishmael lowered himself against his pack again, shut his eyes, and put his fingers in his ears. He tried not to think about any of it.

For three hours they pushed toward Betio, the waves coming in constantly over the gunnels and soaking everybody on board. The island became visible as a low black line almost on the horizon. Ishmael stood to stretch his legs now. There were fires glowing all up and down Betio, and a man beside him with a waterproof watch was attempting to time the battleship salvos being fired on the island. On the other side two men were complaining bitterly about an Admiral Hill who was in charge of things and who had timed matters such that they were going in at daylight instead of under cover of darkness. They could see that the navy was firing heavily - black smoke rose from the island in great billows - and this began to have a positive influence on the disposition of Third Platoon. 'There ain't gonna be nothing left of the fuckers,' Private Harvey asserted. 'Them five-inch guns'll do the trick. They're pounding the shit out of them.'

Fifteen minutes later they ran the big current at the entrance to Tarawa lagoon. They bobbed past two destroyers, the *Dashiell* and the *Ringgold*, both of which were firing in waves at the beach; the noise of it was deafening, louder than anything Ishmael had ever heard. Strapping his helmet on now, he decided he was done looking over the gunnel. He had peered up once and seen three amphibious tractors going up on the beach far ahead. They were taking a lot of machine-gun fire; one fell down into a shell hole; another caught fire and halted. There were no more divebombers coming in at all, and the B-24s had not appeared. The best thing to do was to tuck down, strap up, and keep well out of the line of fire. Ishmael had somehow arrived at the war

moment little boys are prone to dream about. He was storming a beach, he was a marine radioman, and he felt like shitting his pants, literally. He could feel his rectum puckering.

'Holy shit,' Jim Harvey was saying. 'Goddamn it to hell, the motherfuckers, goddamn those assholes, the fucking shitheads, goddamn it, this ain't *right!*'

The squad leader, a man named Rich Hinkle from Yreka, California, who had made Ishmael an excellent chess partner in New Zealand, was the first among them to die. The transport ground up suddenly on the reef – they were still more than five hundred yards from the beach – and the men sat looking at one another for thirty seconds or more while artillery pinged off the LCP's port side. 'There's bigger stuff coming,' Hinkle yelled above the din. 'We'd better get the hell out of here. Let's move it! Move! Let's go!' 'You first,' somebody answered.

Hinkle went over the starboard gunnel and dropped down into the water. Men began to follow him, including Ishmael Chambers, who was maneuvering his eighty-five-pound pack over the side when Hinkle was shot in the face and went down, and then the man just behind him was shot, too, and the top of his head came off. Ishmael wrestled his pack into the lagoon and splashed in hard behind it. He submerged himself for as long as he could, came up only for a single breath – he could see small-arms fire flashing along the shore – then went deep again. When he came up he saw that everybody – the ammo carriers, the demolitions guys, the machine gunners, *everybody* – they were all dropping everything into the water and going under like Ishmael.

He swam back behind the LCP with three dozen other soldiers. The navy coxswain was still exerting himself, cursing and ramming the throttle back and forth, to free the landing craft from the reef. Lieutenant Bellows was screaming at the men on board who had refused to go over the gunnels. 'Fuck you, Bellows,' somebody kept saying. 'You go first!' screamed someone else. Ishmael recognized the voice of Private Harvey, now at a hysterical pitch.

The LCP took more small-arms fire, and the crowd of men who had crouched behind it began to wade toward shore. Ishmael kept to the middle of the group, swimming and keeping low, breaststroking, and tried to think of himself as a dead marine floating harmlessly in Betio's lagoon, a corpse borne by the current. The men were in chest-high water now, some of them carrying rifles above their heads, and they were dropping into seas already tinged pink by the blood of other men in front of them. Ishmael saw men go lurching down, saw the machine-gun fire whipping the water's surface, and lowered himself even farther. In the shallows ahead of him a Private Newland stood up to run for the seawall, and then another man he didn't know made a run for it and was shot dead in the surf, and then a third man ran for it. The fourth, Eric Bledsoe, was shot in the knee and lay down again in the shallows. Ishmael stopped and watched the fifth and sixth men draw fire, then gathered himself and thrashed out of the water while the men ahead of him ran for it. All three of them made the seawall unharmed and crouched there watching Eric Bledsoe; his knee had been shot away.

Ishmael saw Eric Bledsoe bleed to death. Fifty yards away he lay in the surf pleading in a soft voice for help. 'Oh, shit,' he said. 'Help me, you guys, come on, you guys, fucking help me, please.' Eric had grown up in Delaware with Ernest Testaverde; they'd gotten drunk together a lot in Wellington. Robert Newland wanted to run out to save him, but Lieutenant Bellows held him back; there was nothing to be done about it, Bellows pointed out, there was far too much gunfire for something like that, the upshot of it all would be two dead men, and everyone silently agreed. Ishmael pushed his body up against the seawall; he was not going to run down the beach again to drag a wounded man to safety, though a part of him wanted to try. What could he have done about it anyway? His equipment was floating in the lagoon. He could not even offer Eric Bledsoe a bandage, much less save his life. He sat there and watched Eric roll over in the surf so that his face was pointing

toward the sun. His legs were only partly in the water, and Ishmael could see plainly where one of them had come off and was moving with the undulations of the surf. The boy bled to death and then his leg floated away a few feet on the waves while Ishmael crouched behind the seawall.

At ten o'clock he was still there, unarmed and without a job to do, hunkered down with hundreds of other men who had come ashore and been shot at. There were plenty more dead marines on the beach now, and plenty more of the wounded, too, and the men behind the seawall tried not to listen when they moaned or called out for help. Then a sergeant from J Company, from out of nowhere, it seemed, was suddenly standing above them on the seawall with a cigarette hanging from the corner of his mouth, calling them 'a bunch of chickenshits.' He berated them relentlessly, a stream of invective, characterizing them as 'the sorts of cowards who ought to have your balls chewed off real slow and painful like when this goddamn battle is over,' men who'd let 'other men do the dirty work to save your own sorry asses,' men who 'aren't men at all but cornhole-fuckers and jack-off artists with half-inch hard-ons on those days once a year when you can get your sorry dicks to stand at half-mast,' and so on and so forth, while the men below pleaded with him to take cover and save himself. He refused and was shot through the spine with a shell that ripped open his shirt front and dropped some of his guts onto the beach. The sergeant had no time to be surprised and simply fell over face first into the sand and squarely on top of his own intestines. Nobody said anything.

A tractor at last breached a hole in the seawall, and a few men began to go through. All of them were shot immediately. Ishmael was commandeered to help dig free a half-track that had been deposited on Betio by a tank lighter and had promptly buried itself. He dug on his knees with an entrenching tool while the man beside him threw up in the sand before lying down with his helmet across his face and fainting. A radioman from K Company had set up against the seawall and was railing loudly about interference; every time battleship guns were fired

offshore even the static died out, he complained. He couldn't raise anybody.

Ishmael realized, in the early afternoon, that the sweetish smell coming at him from off the beach was the odor of dead marines. He, too, vomited, then drank the last of his water. As far as he knew, no one else in his squad was even alive anymore. He had not seen any of them in over three hours, but he had been given a carbine, an ammo pack, and a field machete by a crew of cargo handlers moving down the wall with resupply orders. He fieldstripped the carbine – it was full of sand – and cleaned it as carefully as he could under the conditions, sitting against the base of the seawall with his steel helmet unstrapped. He was sitting there like that with the trigger assembly in hand, dabbing at it with the tail of his shirt, when a new wave of amtracs came up on the beach and began drawing mortar fire. Ishmael watched them with interest for a while, men spilling out and falling to the sand – some dead, some wounded, some screaming as they ran – then lowered his head and, refusing to look, went back to cleaning his carbine. He was still there, huddled in the same place with his carbine in hand, his machete in a sheath that hung from his belt, when darkness fell four hours later.

A colonel came down the beach with his entourage, exhorting the noncoms and junior officers to re-form and improvise squads. At 1900 hours, he said – less than twenty minutes from now – every man there was going over the top; anyone who stayed behind would be court-martialed; it was time, he added, to act like marines. The colonel moved on, and a Lieutenant Doerper from K Company asked Ishmael where his squad was and what the hell he thought he was doing dug in by himself against the seawall. Ishmael explained how he had lost his equipment going over the gunnel of an LCP and how everyone around him had died or been wounded; he didn't know where anyone was. Lieutenant Doerper listened impatiently, then told Ishmael to pick out a man along the wall, and then pick out another, and then some more, until he had himself a squad formed, and then to report to the command

post Colonel Freeman had set up beside the buried half-track. He had, he said, no time for bullshit.

Ishmael explained matters to two dozen boys before he'd gathered enough of a squad. One boy told him to go fuck himself; another claimed to have an incapacitating leg wound; a third said he'd be along in a minute but never moved. There was gunfire coming from off the water suddenly, and Ishmael surmised that a Jap sniper had swum out and was manning the machine gun left behind on an amtrac destroyed in the lagoon. The seawall was no longer safe.

Moving down the wall, staying low and talking rapidly to people, he came at last on Ernest Testaverde, who was returning fire over the coconut logs with his gun held high and his head down. 'Hey,' said Ishmael. 'Jesus.'

'Chambers,' said Ernest. 'Jesus fucking Christ.'

'Where is everybody?' asked Ishmael. 'What about Jackson and those guys?'

'I saw Jackson get hit,' Ernest answered. 'All the demolitions guys and the mine detector guys got hit coming up onto the beach. And Walter,' he added. 'And Jim Harvey. And that guy Hedges, I saw him go down. And Murray and Behring got hit, too. They all got hit in the water.'

'So did Hinkle,' said Ishmael. 'And Eric Bledsoe – his leg came off. And Fitz – he got hit on the beach, I saw him go down. Bellows made it, but I don't know where he is. Newland, too. Where are those guys?'

Ernest Testaverde didn't answer. He pulled at his helmet strap and set his carbine down. 'Bledsoe?' he said. 'You sure?'

Ishmael nodded. 'He's dead.'

'His leg came off?' said Ernest.

Ishmael sat down with his back to the seawall. He did not want to talk about Eric Bledsoe or remember how he had died. It was difficult to know what the point would be of talking about such a thing. There was no point to anything, that was clear. He couldn't think straight about anything that had happened since the landing craft had ground onto the coral reef. The situation he

found himself in now had the sodden quality of a dream in which events repeated themselves. He was dug in against the seawall, and then he found himself there again, and again he was still dug in beneath the seawall. Occasionally a flare lit things well enough so that he saw the details of his own hands. He was weary and thirsty, and he could not really focus, and the adrenalin had died inside of him. He wanted to live, he knew that now, but everything else was unclear. He could not recollect his reason for being there – why he had enlisted to fight in the marines, what the point of it was. 'Yeah,' he said. 'Bledsoe's dead.'

'Goddamn it,' answered Ernest Testaverde. He kicked the first log in the seawall twice, then a third time, then a fourth. Ishmael Chambers turned away from him.

At 1900 hours they went over the seawall along with three hundred other men. They were met by mortar and machine-gun fire from straight ahead in the palm trees. Ishmael never saw Ernest Testaverde get hit; later he found out, on making inquiries, that Ernest had been found with a hole in his head roughly the size of a man's fist. Ishmael himself was hit in the left arm, squarely in the middle of his biceps. The muscle tore when the round entered – a single round from a Nambu machine gun – and the bone cracked jaggedly into a hundred splinters that were driven up against his nerves and veins and lodged into the meat of his arm.

Four hours later, when the light came up, he became aware of two medical corpsmen kneeling beside the man next to him. The man had been hit in the head, it seemed, and his brains were leaking out around his helmet. Ishmael had maneuvered behind this dead man and taken the sulfa pills and a roll of bandages from the medical kit at his belt. He'd wrapped his arm and had used the weight of his body to keep his blood from spilling out. 'It's okay,' one of the corpsmen told Ishmael. 'We're bringing up a litter team and a squad of bearers. The beach is secured. Everything's fine. We're going to get you shipboard pronto.'

'Fucking Japs,' said Ishmael.

Later he lay on the deck of some ship or other, seven miles

out to sea from Betio, one boy in the middle of rows and rows of wounded, and the boy on the litter to his left died from the shrapnel that had pierced his liver. On the other side was a boy with buckteeth who'd been shot squarely in the thighs and groin; the blood had soaked his khaki pants. The boy could not speak and lay with his back arched; every few seconds he groaned mechanically between forced, shallow breaths. Ishmael asked him once if he was all right, but the boy only went on with his groaning. He died ten minutes before the bearers came around to take him down to surgery.

Ishmael lost his arm on a shipboard operating table to a pharmacist's mate who had done only four amputations in his career, all of them in the past few hours. The mate used a handsaw to square up the bone and cauterized the stump unevenly, so that the wound healed more slowly than it would have otherwise and the scar tissue left behind was thick and coarse. Ishmael had not been fully anesthetized and awoke to see his arm where it had been dropped in a corner on top of a pile of blood-soaked dressings. Ten years later he would still dream of that, the way his own fingers curled against the wall, how white and distant his arm looked, though nevertheless he recognized it there, a piece of trash on the floor. Somebody saw him staring at it and gave an order, and the arm was scooped up inside a towel and dumped into a canvas bin. Somebody else pricked him once again with morphine, and Ishmael told whoever it was that 'the Japs are . . . the fucking Japs . . .' but he didn't quite know how to finish his words, he didn't quite know what he meant to utter, '*that fucking goddamn Jap bitch*' was all he could think to say.

By two o'clock on the first afternoon of the trial, snow had covered all the island roads. A car pirouetted silently while skating on its tires, emerged from this on a transverse angle, and slid to a stop with one headlight thrust into the door of Petersen's Grocery, which somebody opened at just the right moment – miraculously – so that no damage was done to car or store. Behind the Amity Harbor Elementary School, a girl of seven bending over to pack a snowball was rammed from behind by a boy skidding down a hill on a piece of cardboard box. She broke her right arm – a greenstick fracture. The principal, Erik Karlsen, wrapped a blanket around her shoulders and sat her down next to a steam radiator before going out to run his car engine. Then, gingerly, peering out through the crescents of glass his defroster had carved from the icy windshield, he drove her down First Hill into town.

On Mill Run Road Mrs. Larsen of Skiff Point ran her husband's De-Soto into a ditch. Arne Stolbaad overloaded his wood-burning stove and ended up with a chimney fire. The volunteer fire department was called out by a neighbor, but the pumper truck driver, Edgar Paulsen, lost traction on Indian Knob Hill and had to halt to put on tire chains. In the meantime Arne Stolbaad's chimney fire expired; when the firemen showed up at last he expressed to them his delight at having burned clean the flue creosote.

At three o'clock five school buses left Amity Harbor with their windshield wipers battling ice from the windshields and their headlights casting into the snowfall. High school students walking home hurled snowballs at them; the South Beach bus

slid off the road shoulder just beyond Island Center. The schoolchildren climbed out and walked home in the snow-storm with Johnny Katayama, the bus driver, escorting them from behind. As each child turned off toward home, Johnny handed him or her a half stick of spearmint gum.

A boy on a sled that afternoon broke his ankle against the base of a cedar tree. He had not quite understood how to make the thing turn, and the tree had come up on him suddenly. He'd put his foot out to ward it off.

A retired dentist, old Doc Cable, slipped hard on the way to his firewood shed. Something in his tailbone twisted when he went down, so that Doc Cable winced and curled fetally in the snow. After a while he hauled himself up, lurched inside, and reported to his wife through clenched teeth that he'd injured himself. Sarah put him on the couch with a hot-water bottle, where he took two aspirins and fell asleep.

Two teenagers engaged in a snowball-throwing contest from the dock at Port Jefferson Harbor. The point was to hit a mooring buoy at first, then a piling on the next dock. One of the teenagers, Dan Daniels's son Scott, took a three-step running start, threw out to sea, then pitched headlong into the salt water. He was out again in five seconds, steam rising off his clothes. Running home, racing through the snowfall, his hair froze into icy tufts.

The citizens of San Pedro made their run on Petersen's and cleared the shelves of canned goods. They brought so much snow into the store on their boots that one of the box boys, Earl Camp, stayed busy all afternoon with a mop and a towel, cleaning up after them. Einar Petersen took a box of salt from his shelf and spread its contents outside the door, but two customers slipped despite this. Einar decided to offer free coffee to shoppers and asked one of his checkers, Jessica Porter – who was twenty-two and cheerful looking – to stand behind a folding table and serve.

At Fisk's Hardware Center the citizens of San Pedro bought snow shovels, candles, kerosene, kitchen matches, lined gloves,

and flashlight batteries. The Torgerson brothers sold out their supply of tire chains by three o'clock, as well as most of their ice scrapers and antifreeze. Tom pulled ditched cars free with his freshly painted two-ton wrecker; Dave sold gasoline, batteries, and motor oil and advised his customers to go home and *stay* home. Dozens of islanders stopped in to listen while Dave pumped their gas or put on their tire chains and made grim predictions about the weather. 'Three-day blow,' he'd say. 'Folks'd better be ready.'

By three o'clock the branches of the cedars were loaded down with snow. When the wind came up it blew right through them, whirling flurries to the ground. San Pedro's strawberry fields became fields of white, as untouched and flawless as desert. The noise of living things was not so much muted as halted – even the seagulls were silenced. Instead there was the wind and the collapse of waves and the withdrawing of the water down the beaches.

Everywhere on San Pedro Island a grimness set in, accompanied by a strained anticipation. Who knew what might happen now that a December storm had started? The homes of these islanders might soon lie in drifts so that only the sloped roofs of the beach cabins would show and only the upper stories of the larger houses. The power might fizzle when the wind blew hard and leave them all in darkness. Their toilets might not flush, their well pumps might not draw, they would live close to their stoves and lanterns. Yet on the other hand the snowstorm might mean a respite, a happy wintertime vacation. Schools would shut down, roads would close, no one would go off to their jobs. Families would eat large breakfasts late, then dress for snow and go out in the knowledge that they'd return to warm, snug houses. Smoke would curl from chimneys; at dusk lights would come on. Lopsided snowmen would stand sentinel in yards. There would be enough to eat, no reason for worry.

Still, those who had lived on the island a long time knew that the storm's outcome was beyond their control. This storm might well be like others past that had caused them to suffer,

had *killed* even – or perhaps it might dwindle beneath tonight's stars and give their children snowbound happiness. Who knew? Who could predict? If disaster, so be it, they said to themselves. There was nothing to be done except what could be done. The rest – like the salt water around them, which swallowed the snow without any effort, remaining what it was implacably – was out of their hands, beyond.

When the afternoon recess was over that day, Alvin Hooks called Art Moran again. The sheriff had left the courtroom for two and a half hours in order to contact the volunteer fire department and to call out his volunteer deputies, men who could be counted on in times of trouble. Generally their role was to keep order at the Strawberry Festival and other public occasions; now they would divide up the island terrain according to the locations of their homes and businesses and assist those stranded on the roads.

Art fidgeted in the witness stand for the second time that day. The snowstorm, just now, preoccupied him. He understood that Alvin's case necessitated his appearing twice at the trial, but on the other hand he wasn't glad about it. He'd eaten a sandwich during the fifteen-minute recess, sat in Alvin's office with a piece of wax paper laid across his knees and an apple on the edge of the desk. Hooks had reminded him to tell his story methodically, to pay attention to those minor details that might seem to him irrelevant. Now, on the witness stand, pinching the knot of his tie together and checking the corners of his lips for crumbs, Art waited impatiently while Alvin asked the judge to admit four pieces of rope into evidence. 'Sheriff Moran,' Hooks said at last. 'I have in my hand four lengths of rope of the sort fishermen use for mooring lines. May I ask you to inspect them, please?'

Art took the pieces of rope in his hand and made a show of looking at them carefully. 'Okay,' he said after a moment.

'Do you recognize them?'

'Yes, I do.'

'Did you refer to these pieces of mooring line in your report,

Sheriff Moran? Are they the same four referred to in your report?'

'Yes, they are. They're the ones I wrote about in my report, Mr. Hooks. These are them.'

The judge admitted the lines as evidence, and Ed Soames put a tag on each. Alvin Hooks put them back in Art's hands and asked him to explain where he'd found them.

'Well,' said the sheriff. 'This one here, marked with an A, came from the defendant's boat. It came off the port side cleat, to be exact, *third* cleat up from the stern. It matches all his other mooring lines, you see? Matches 'em all except the one on the port side cleat *second* up from the stern. That's this one here, the one marked B – that one was new, Mr. Hooks, but the rest were worn. They were all three-strand manila lines with a bowline knotted into one end, pretty well worn down, too. That's how Mr. Miyamoto kept his mooring lines – bowlined and pretty well worn out, except the one. It was brand-new but had the bowline in it.'

'And the other two?' asked Alvin Hooks. 'Where did you find them, sheriff?'

'I found them on Carl Heine's boat, Mr. Hooks. This one here – the one marked C' – the sheriff held the line up for the benefit of the jury – 'is exactly the same as every other line I found on Mr. Heine's, the deceased's, boat. You see here? It's a three-strand manila rope in new condition with a fancy eye braided in at one end – braided in by hand, Mr. Hooks, the way Carl Heine was known to do them. All his lines were braided up in loops, none of them had bowlines.'

'The fourth line you have there,' Alvin Hooks pushed on. 'Where did you find it, sheriff?'

'Found it on Carl Heine's boat, too, but it doesn't match up with the rest of them. Found it on the starboard side, second cleat back from the stern. Peculiar thing is, it *does* match up with the lines I found on board the defendant's boat. It's pretty well worn, and it's got the bowline in it just like the other one I showed you, just like *all* his mooring lines except the new one.

It looks so much like all the others, it's clear it came from the same set. Worn down just the same.'

'This line looks like the ones on the defendant's boat?'

'Exactly.'

'But you found it on the deceased's boat?'

'That's right.'

'On the starboard side, second cleat from the stern?'

'Yes.'

'And the defendant's boat – do I understand this right? – had a new line on the port side, sheriff – again the second cleat from the stern?'

'That's right, Mr. Hooks. There was a new line there.'

'Sheriff,' Alvin Hooks said. 'If the defendant had tied up to Carl Heine's boat would these two cleats in question line up?'

'You bet they'd line up. And if he – Miyamoto there – had gotten in a hurry to cast off from the deceased's boat, he could have left a line behind tied off to that second cleat.'

'I see,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Your inference is that he left a line behind, then replaced it with that new one – exhibit B, right there in your hand – replaced it when he got back to the docks.'

'It is,' said Art Moran. 'Exactly. He tied up to Carl's boat and left a line on it. That seems to me pretty clear.'

'But sheriff,' said Alvin Hooks. 'What led you to investigate the defendant in the first place? Why did you think to look around his boat and to notice something like a new mooring line?'

Art pointed out that his investigation into the death of Carl Heine had led him, quite naturally, to ask questions of Carl's relatives. He'd gone to see Etta Heine, he said, and explained to her that even in the case of a fishing accident there was a formal investigation to proceed with. Did Carl have any enemies?

After Etta, he said, the path to Ole Jurgensen was clear, and from Ole to Judge Lew Fielding's chambers: Art had needed a search warrant. He intended to search Kabuo Miyamoto's boat, the *Islander*, before it left that night for the salmon grounds.

It had been the judge's bailiff, Ed Soames, who'd answered the door when Art Moran knocked at five after five on the evening of the sixteenth and asked to see Lew Fielding. The bailiff wore his coat and held his lunchbox in his hand; he'd been on his way out, he explained; the judge was still working at his desk.

'This about Carl Heine?' inquired Ed.

'I guess you heard,' the sheriff answered. 'But, no, this isn't about him. And if you go down to the cafe and say it is, you know what? You'll be wrong, Ed.'

'I'm not that way,' said the bailiff. 'Maybe others are, but I'm not.'

'Course you're not,' said Art Moran.

The bailiff knocked at the door to the judge's chambers, then opened it and said that the sheriff was present on business he wished to keep private. 'All right,' answered the judge. 'Send him in.'

The bailiff held the door open for Art Moran and stood aside to let him pass. 'Good night, judge,' he said. 'See you in the morning.'

'Good night, Ed,' the judge replied. 'Could you lock up on your way out, please? The sheriff here is my last visitor.'

'Will do,' said Ed Soames, and shut the door.

The sheriff sat and adjusted his legs. He set his hat on the floor. The judge waited patiently until he heard the lock click. Then he looked the sheriff in the eye for the first time. 'Carl Heine,' he said.

'Carl Heine,' the sheriff answered.

Lew Fielding put his pen down. 'A man with kids, with a wife,' he said.

'I know,' Art answered. 'I went out this morning and told Susan Marie about it. Christ,' he added bitterly.

Lew Fielding nodded. He sat morosely with his elbows on his desk, cradling his chin in his hands. As always he looked to be on the verge of sleep; his eyes were those of a basset hound. His cheeks were creviced, his forehead furrowed, his silver eyebrows grew in fat tufts. Art remembered when he had been more spry, remembered him pitching horseshoes at the Strawberry Festival. The judge in his suspenders with his sleeves rolled up, squinting and half bent over.

'How is she?' the judge asked. 'Susan Marie?'

'Not good,' Art Moran replied.

Lew Fielding looked at him and waited. Art picked his hat up, set it in his lap, and began fiddling with its brim. 'Anyway, I came down to get you to sign a warrant. I want to search Kabuo Miyamoto's boat, maybe his house, too - I'm not sure yet.'

'Kabuo Miyamoto,' the judge said. 'What are you looking for?'

'Well,' the sheriff answered, leaning forward. 'I've got these concerns, judge. Five of 'em altogether. Number one, I've got men telling me Miyamoto worked the same waters Carl did last night when this thing happened. Number two, I've got Etta Heine saying Miyamoto and her son were enemies from way back - an old dispute over land. Three, I've got a piece of mooring line somebody left on Carl's boat wrapped around one of the cleats; seems like he could have been boarded, maybe, and I want to take a look at Miyamoto's mooring lines. Four, I've got Ole Jurgensen claiming both Carl and Miyamoto were out to see him recently 'bout buying his property, which Ole sold to Carl. 'Cording to Ole, Miyamoto went away hopping mad. Said he was going to have a talk with Carl. And, well, maybe he did. At sea. And things . . . got out of hand.'

'And what's the fifth?' asked Lew Fielding.

'Fifth?'

'You claimed to have five categories of cause. I've heard four. What's the fifth?'

'Oh,' said Art Moran. 'Horace did a . . . pretty thorough autopsy. There's a bad wound in the side of Carl's head. And Horace said something interesting about it that fits in with what I'm hearing from Ole. And from Etta, too, for that matter. Said he'd seen wounds like this one during the war. Said the Japs made 'em with their gun butts. Said they were trained to fight with sticks from the time they were kids. They were trained in *kendo*, Horace called it. And one of these *kendo* blows, I guess, would leave the kind of wound Carl has. Now at the time I didn't make nothing of it. I didn't even think of it when some of the guys down at the docks said Miyamoto'd been out on Ship Channel Bank last night - same place as Carl. Didn't even occur to me then. But I did think of it this afternoon when Etta told 'bout all the problems she'd had with Miyamoto, and I thought about it even more after Ole Jurgensen said his piece. And I decided I'd better follow this lead through and search Miyamoto's boat, Judge. Just in case. See what signs there are, if any.'

Judge Lew Fielding pinched the tip of his nose. 'I don't know, Art,' he said. 'First of all, you've got Horace's off-the-cuff-statement regarding a coincidental resemblance between this wound in Carl Heine's head and ones he saw inflicted by Japanese soldiers - now does *that* really point us toward Miyamoto? You've got Etta Heine, who I won't go into, but suffice it to say I don't trust that woman. She's hateful, Art; I don't trust her. And you've got at least fifty gill-netters out in the fog last night - any one of them as contentious as the next when he figures some other guy is cutting into his fish - and then you've got Ole Jurgensen. And I admit Ole is interesting. I admit you've got something worth thinking about with Ole. But -'

'Judge,' Art Moran cut in, 'can I say something? If you think about it *too* long we'll lose our chance altogether. The boats'll be going out soon.'

The judge pulled his sleeve back and squinted at his watch. 'Five-twenty,' he said. 'You're right.'

'I've got an affidavit here,' the sheriff pressed on, pulling it free of his shirt pocket. 'I did it up fast, but it's right, Judge. Lays it all out plain and simple. What I want to look for is a murder weapon, that's all, if there's a chance of that.'

'Well,' replied Lew Fielding. 'No harm, I suppose, if you do it properly, Art.' He leaned across his desk toward the sheriff. 'And for technicality's sake let's make *this* move, too: do you swear that the facts in this affidavit are true, so help you God — do you *swear*?'

The sheriff did.

'All right. You bring a warrant?'

The sheriff produced one from the opposite shirt pocket; the judge unfolded it beneath his desk lamp and picked up his fountain pen. 'I'm going to put this down,' he said. 'I'm going to allow you to search the boat but not Miyamoto's house. No intruding on his wife and children, I don't see there's any hurry to do something like that. And remember, now, this is a *limited* search. The murder weapon, Art, and nothing else. I won't have you running roughshod over this man's privacy.'

'Got it,' Art Moran said. 'The murder weapon.'

'You don't find anything on the boat, come see me in the morning. We'll talk about his house at that point.'

'All right,' said Art Moran. 'Thanks.'

He asked, then, if he might use the telephone. He dialed his office and spoke with Eleanor Dokes. 'Have Abel meet me down to the docks,' he said. 'And tell him to bring along his flashlight.'

San Pedro fishermen, in 1954, were apt to pay attention to signs and portents other men had no inkling of. For them the web of cause and effect was invisible and simultaneously everywhere, which was why a man could sink his net with salmon one night and catch only kelp the next. Tides, currents, and winds were one thing, the force of luck another. A fisherman didn't utter the

words horse, pig, or hog on the deck of a gill-netter, for to do so was to bring bad weather down around his head or cause a line to foul in his propeller. Turning a hatch cover upside down brought a southwest storm, and bringing a black suitcase on board meant snarled gear and twisted webbing. Those who harmed seagulls risked the wrath of ship ghosts, for gulls were inhabited by the spirits of men who had been lost at sea in accidents. Umbrellas, too, were bad business, as were broken mirrors and the gift of a pair of scissors. On board a purse seiner only a greenhorn would ever think to trim his fingernails while sitting on a seine pile, or hand a shipmate a bar of soap as opposed to dropping it into his washbasin, or cut the bottom end off a can of fruit. Bad fishing and bad weather could result from any of these.

Kabuo Miyamoto, as he came up the south dock toward his boat that evening — carrying a battery for the *Islander* — saw a flock of seagulls perched on his net drum and stabilizer bars and sitting atop his cabin. When he moved to board they lofted themselves skyward, thirty or forty birds, it appeared at first, a clamor of wings, more of them than he imagined possible, half a hundred seagulls rising from the *Islander*, exploding out of her cockpit. They circled overhead a half-dozen times in arcs that took in the entire breadth of the docks, then settled on the swells to seaward.

Kabuo's heart worked hard in his chest. He was not particularly given to omens, but on the other hand he had never seen this before.

He went in and pried up the battery well cover. He slid his new battery into place and bolted the cables to it. Finally he started his boat engine. He let it run, then flicked the toggle for the number-one pump in order to run his deck hose. Kabuo stood on the edge of the hatch cover and washed gull droppings out the scupper holes. The gulls had disturbed his equilibrium, put him ill at ease. Other boats were pulling out, he saw, motoring past the buoys in Amity Harbor on their way to the salmon grounds. He looked at his watch; five-forty already. It occurred to him to try his luck

at Ship Channel that evening; the good sets would be taken at Elliot Head.

When he looked up a lone gull had perched arrogantly on the port gunnel ten feet away and to stern. It was pearl gray and white winged, a young herring gull with a wide, flaring breast, and it seemed to be watching him, too.

Kabuo reached back delicately and turned the hose valve full open. The water shot harder against the aft deck and ricocheted to stern. When he had fixed in on the gull again he watched it for a moment out of the corners of his eyes, then shifted his weight to the left swiftly and aimed his hose at it. The stream caught the surprised bird broadside in the breast, and while it struggled to escape from the force of the water its head smashed against the gunnel of the *Channel Star*, which was moored in the adjacent berth.

Kabuo, the hose still in his hand, was standing beside the port gunnel staring at the dying gull when Art Moran and Abel Martinson appeared beside his boat, both carrying flashlights.

The sheriff, twice, slashed a hand across his throat. 'Cut your engine,' he called.

'What for?' asked Kabuo Miyamoto.

'I've got a warrant,' replied the sheriff, and took it out of his shirt pocket. 'We're going to search your boat tonight.'

Kabuo blinked at him, and then his face hardened. He shut the nozzle off and looked the sheriff in the eye. 'How long will it take?' he asked.

'I don't have any idea,' said the sheriff. 'It might take quite a while.'

'Well, what are you looking for?' asked Kabuo Miyamoto.

'A murder weapon,' answered Art Moran. 'We think you might be responsible for the death of Carl Heine.'

Kabuo blinked a second time and dropped the hose to the deck. 'I didn't kill Carl Heine,' he insisted. 'It wasn't me, sheriff.'

'Then you won't mind us searching, will you?' Art Moran said, and stepped up onto the boat.

He and Abel Martinson rounded the cabin and stepped down into the cockpit. 'You'll want to take a peek at this,' the sheriff said, and handed Kabuo the warrant. 'Meanwhile we're going to start looking around. We don't find anything, you're on your way.'

'Then I'm on my way,' Kabuo answered. 'Because there isn't anything to find.'

'Good,' answered Art. 'Now cut your engine.'

The three of them went into the cabin. Kabuo hit the kill switch beside the wheel. It was quiet now without the engine running. 'Have at it,' Kabuo said.

'Why don't you just take a load off?' replied Art. 'Have a seat on your bunk.'

Kabuo sat. He read the search warrant. He watched while the deputy, Abel Martinson, went through the tools in his toolbox. Abel picked up each wrench and examined it in the beam of his flashlight. He ran his beam along the galley floor, then knelt with a flathead screwdriver in his hand and pried ajar the battery well cover. His flashlight beam ran over the batteries and down into the recesses of the well. 'D-6s,' he said.

When Kabuo did not reply to this, Abel slid the cover back into place and put the screwdriver away. He turned his flashlight off.

'Engine under the bunk?' he said.

'That's right,' Kabuo answered.

'Stand up and haul the mattress,' said Abel. 'I'll have a look, if you don't mind.'

Kabuo stood, rolled the bedding aside, and opened the engine compartment hatch. 'There you go,' he said.

Abel flicked his flashlight on again and poked his head into the engine compartment. 'Clean,' he said after a while. 'Go ahead and put your mattress back.'

They went out onto the aft deck, Abel Martinson leading. The sheriff was laying hands on things - rain gear, rubber gloves, floats, lines, hose, life ring, deck broom, buckets. He moved slowly, pondering each. He circumnavigated the boat carefully,

checking the mooring lines on each cleat as he went, kneeling to look at them closely. For a moment he went forward and knelt beside the anchor, brooding in silence over something. Then he made his way back to the stern and tucked his flashlight into his pants waist.

'I see you replaced a mooring line lately,' he said to Kabuo Miyamoto. 'One right there on that second cleat to port. It's a brand-new line, isn't it.'

'I've had that one around for a while,' Kabuo Miyamoto explained.

The sheriff stared at him. 'Right,' he said. 'Sure you have. Help me with this hold cover, Abel.'

They slid it to one side and peered in together. The stink of salmon flew up at them. 'Nothing,' said Abel. 'Now what?'

'Jump down in there,' urged the sheriff. 'Poke around a little.'

The deputy lowered himself into the hold. He knelt and flicked on his flashlight. He went through the motions of looking. 'Well,' he said. 'I don't see nothing.'

'There's nothing to see,' said Kabuo Miyamoto. 'You guys are wasting your time and mine. I need to get out there fishing.'

'Come on out,' said Art Moran.

Abel turned to starboard, his hands on the hatch combing. Kabuo watched while he peered up under the starboard gunnel at the long-handled gaff wedged against the wall. 'Look at this,' Abel said.

He pulled himself out of the hold and grabbed it – a stout three-and-a-half-foot gaff with a barbed steel hook on one end. He gave it to Art Moran.

'There's blood on it,' he pointed out.

'Fish blood,' said Kabuo. 'I gaff fish with that.'

'What's fish blood doing on the butt end?' Art asked. 'I'd expect maybe to see blood on the hook, but on the *butt* end? Where your hand goes? *Fish* blood?'

'Sure,' said Kabuo. 'It gets on your hands, sheriff. Ask any of these fishermen about that.'

The sheriff took a handkerchief from the rear pocket of his trousers and held the gaff with it. 'I'm going to take and have this tested,' he said, and handed it to Abel Martinson. 'The warrant allows me to do that. I wonder if I could get you to stay in tonight, stay off the water until you hear from me. I know you want to go out and fish, but I wonder if you shouldn't stay in tonight. Go home. Wait and see. Wait there until you hear from me. Because otherwise I'm going to have to arrest you now. Hold you in connection with all this.'

'I didn't kill him,' repeated Kabuo Miyamoto. 'And I can't afford not to fish. I can't let the boat sit idle on a night like this and –'

'Then you're under arrest,' cut in Art Moran. 'Because there's no way I'm letting you go out there. In a half hour you might be in Canada.'

'No, I wouldn't,' replied Kabuo. 'I'd fish and then I'd come home. And by the time I did, you'd know that gaff of mine has fish blood on it, not Heine's. I could go out and get my salmon, check with you in the morning.'

The sheriff shook his head and slipped his hands to his belt, where he hooked his thumbs over the buckle. 'No,' he said. 'You're under arrest. Sorry, but we're going to have to hold you.'

The investigation, it occurred to the sheriff, had thus far taken five hours. *Sherlock Holmes*, he remembered. Horace Whaley had laughed at his queasiness about the corpse, the peeled-back head, the bone splinters in Carl's brain. There was that diaper spread over Susan Marie's shoulder, and her gloved index finger pointing out the church cake, that white finger inviting him to slide a mint between his lips. She'd collapsed on the stairs with her feet splayed out, the baby bottle beside her toes. All right, in the end he had played Sherlock Holmes, yes: it had been a sort of game. He had not really expected to find anything other than that Carl Heine had drowned. Fallen into the sea like other men before him and died because that was the nature of things. Art Moran was a believer in circumstances. To him the occasional

misfortunes of life were simply part of things. The misfortunes he'd seen in the course of his work remained painful and vivid in his memory, and because he had seen them for so many years he knew that more would come his way; that was how things went. Island life was like life anywhere in this regard: bad things now and then happened.

Now he began to believe, for the first time, that he had a murder on his hands. He should have expected that sooner or later the course of things would bring him to this pass. He was satisfied to have conducted himself, in the face of it, professionally; he had pursued his investigation as well as anyone could have. Horace Whaley would not ridicule him now about playing Sherlock Holmes.

It occurred to him, too, that for all his arrogance Horace Whaley had been right. For here was the Jap with the bloody gun butt Horace had suggested he look for. Here was the Jap he'd been led to inexorably by every islander he'd spoken with.

Art Moran looked into the Jap's still eyes to see if he could discern the truth there. But they were hard eyes set in a proud, still face, and there was nothing to be read in them either way. They were the eyes of a man with concealed emotions, the eyes of a man hiding something. 'You're under arrest,' repeated Art Moran, 'in connection with the death of Carl Heine.'

By eight-thirty on the morning of December 7, Judge Fielding's courtroom was filled with citizens who were thankful for the heat from the boilers. They'd left damp overcoats hanging in the cloakroom but still carried the smell of snow in their hair and on their pants, boots, and sweaters. Ed Soames had again turned the heat up; he did so because the foreman of the jury had reported that certain of the jurors had passed a cold night in the Amity Harbor Hotel. Groans from the hapless radiators, coupled with the slamming of the wind against their windows, had kept them awake through the dark hours. They had been sequestered on the second floor and had speculated before going to bed, said the foreman, that the snowstorm would interrupt the trial. They'd been sleepless, most of them, and had shivered in their beds while the storm rattled the hotel.

Ed Soames apologized to the members of the jury for the inferior nature of their accommodations and pointed out to them the urn of coffee in the anteroom, which they were welcome to serve themselves from – the coffee was hot – at any time during the day's recesses. He showed them, as he had the day before, a cabinet inside which fourteen coffee cups hung on angles from brass hooks. He pointed out the sugar dispenser and apologized to them for the fact that there was no way to make cream available: Petersen's had run out. He hoped they could make do despite this.

The foreman indicated that the jurors were ready, so Ed Soames led them to the courtroom. The reporters found their places, the defendant was brought in, Eleanor Dokes took her seat at the stenograph. Ed Soames asked all of them to rise,

and as they did so Lew Fielding emerged from his chambers and strode to the bench as if no one were present. As always he looked disinterested. He propped the weight of his head against his left fist and nodded at Alvin Hooks. 'A new day,' he told him, 'but still your day in court, Mr. Prosecutor. Have at it. Call your witness.'

Alvin Hooks rose and thanked Judge Fielding. He was fresh looking and clean shaven, neat in his serge suit with its exaggerated shoulders. 'The state calls Dr. Sterling Whitman,' he announced, and then a man stood up in the gallery whom nobody had seen before, passed through the low gate, and approached the witness box, where he was sworn in by Ed Soames. He was tall, six foot five at least, and seemed too large for the suit he wore; a large portion of each shirt cuff showed; the coat bunched at the armpits.

'Dr. Whitman,' said Alvin Hooks. 'We thank you for battling the elements this morning in order to give your testimony. I understand that only a handful of mainlanders were brave enough to travel the waters to San Piedro on the 6:25 ferry run - is that correct, sir?'

'That's right,' said Dr. Whitman. 'There were six of us.'

'A thrilling ride through a blinding snowstorm,' added Alvin Hooks.

'That's right,' repeated Dr. Whitman.

He was entirely too large for the witness box and had the appearance of a stork or crane packed into a crate.

'Dr. Whitman,' said the prosecutor. 'You are a specialist in hematology employed by the Anacortes General Hospital - is that correct? Do I have that right?'

'That's correct.'

'And you have been employed there for how long?'

'Seven years.'

'And during this time, doctor, what precisely has been the nature and content of your work?'

'I've been a hematologist for the past six and a half years. Strictly a hematologist.'

'A hematologist,' said Alvin Hooks. 'A hematologist does what exactly?'

Dr. Whitman scratched the back of his head, then above and below the left stem of his glasses. 'I specialize in the pathology and therapeutics of the blood,' he said. 'Mostly blood testing and analysis. I consult with attending physicians.'

'I see,' said Alvin Hooks. 'So for six and a half years it has been your profession - let me find a way to put this simply - to perform blood tests? And to analyze the results of those tests, doctor? Is that correct?'

'In a nutshell,' said Sterling Whitman.

'Very good then,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Now, Dr. Whitman, could we accurately characterize you as an expert in the matter of blood testing? Given your six and a half years of experience? Would you say you have gained a degree of expertise in, for example, determining human blood type?'

'By all means,' said Sterling Whitman. 'Blood type is a . . . standard matter. A standard procedure for any hematologist - typing blood.'

'All right,' said Alvin Hooks. 'On the evening - the late evening - of September 16 of this year, the sheriff of this county brought you a fishing gaff, did he not, and asked you to test a bloodstain he found on it. Is that correct, Dr. Whitman?'

'It is.'

Alvin Hooks swiveled and looked at Ed Soames; Ed handed him the fishing gaff.

'Now, Dr. Whitman,' said the prosecutor. 'I'm showing you what has already been admitted into evidence as state's exhibit 4-B. I'm going to hand it to you and ask you to look it over.'

'All right,' said Sterling Whitman.

He took the gaff and examined it - a long-handled gaff with a barbed hook at one end, tagged as admitted around the butt.

'Okay,' he said. 'I've looked at it.'

'Very good,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Do you recognize this fishing gaff, Dr. Whitman?'

'I do. It's the one Sheriff Moran brought in on the evening

of September 16. It was bloodstained, and he asked me to do some tests on it.'

Alvin Hooks took the gaff and placed it on the evidence table in full view of the jurors. Then he selected a folder from among his papers and returned to the witness stand.

'Dr. Whitman,' he said. 'I'm now handing you what has been marked as state proposed exhibit 5-A. Would you please tell me whether you recognize it, whether you can identify it for the court?'

'I can,' said Sterling Whitman. 'It's my investigative report. The one I wrote after Sheriff Moran brought me the fishing gaff.'

'Examine it for a moment,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Is it in the same condition as it was when you prepared it?'

Sterling Whitman went through the motions of turning pages. 'It is,' he said after a moment. 'It seems to be. Yes.'

'And do you recognize your signature thereon?'

'I do.'

'Thank you, doctor,' Alvin Hooks said, and took the folder in his hand again. 'The state moves the introduction of exhibit 5-A, Your Honor.'

Nels Gudmundsson cleared his throat. 'No objection,' he said.

Lew Fielding admitted the exhibit. Ed Soames, with a flourish, stamped it. Then Alvin Hooks returned it to Sterling Whitman.

'All right,' he said. 'Now, Dr. Whitman. I'm returning to you what is now in evidence as exhibit 5-A: your investigative report concerning this fishing gaff, among other things. Would you please summarize for the court your findings?'

'Certainly,' Sterling Whitman said, pulling uncomfortably at a cuff. 'Number one was that the blood on the fishing gaff I received from Sheriff Moran was human blood, it reacted immediately to human antibodies. Number two was that the blood was of a sort we can describe as B positive, Mr. Hooks. I obtained a clear identification in this regard, without any difficulties, under a microscope.'

'Anything else significant?' asked Alvin Hooks.

'Yes,' said Sterling Whitman. 'The sheriff asked me to check our hospital records as to the blood type of a fisherman named Carl Heine, Jr. I did so. We had the records on file. Mr. Heine had been admitted after the war at our hospital for a series of physicals, and we had obtained his medical records. I looked these over and have included them in my investigative report. Mr. Heine's blood type was B positive.'

'B positive,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Do you mean to say that the blood of the deceased *matched* the blood found on the fishing gaff?'

'Yes,' said Sterling Whitman. 'It did.'

'But, Dr. Whitman,' said Alvin Hooks. 'Many people must have this type of B positive blood. Can you say with any certainty that it was Carl Heine's?'

'No,' said Dr. Whitman. 'I can't say that. But let me add that B positive is a relatively rare blood type. Statistically rare. Ten percent of Caucasian males, at best.'

'One out of every ten Caucasian males? No more?'

'That's right.'

'I see,' said Alvin Hooks. 'One out of ten.'

'That's right,' said Sterling Whitman.

Alvin Hooks crossed in front of the jurors and approached the defendant's table. 'Dr. Whitman,' he said. 'The defendant's name here is Kabuo Miyamoto. I am wondering if his name appears in your report.'

'It does.'

'In what regard?' asked Alvin Hooks.

'Well, the sheriff asked me to check his records, too. As long as I was checking on Carl Heine, he asked, could I bring out Miyamoto's records? I did so and examined them at his request. Again, service medical records were available. Kabuo Miyamoto had been typed upon entering the service as O negative: he has an O negative blood type.'

'O negative?' said Alvin Hooks.

'That's right. Yes.'

'And the blood on the fishing gaff that Sheriff Moran brought you, the one he found while searching the defendant's boat – the one you held in your hands a moment ago – was B positive, doctor?'

'Yes. B positive.'

'So the blood on the gaff was not the defendant's?'

'No.'

'It was not salmon blood?'

'No.'

'It was not fish blood or animal blood of any kind?'

'No.'

'It was of the same type as the deceased's? As Carl Heine, Jr.?'

'Yes.'

'A blood type that you would characterize as rare?'

'Yes.'

'Thank you, Dr. Whitman. That's all.'

Nels Gudmundsson now tottered to his feet in order to cross-examine Sterling Whitman. By the morning of this second day he had become an amusement to the newspapermen, who smiled to themselves each time he cleared his throat and at his awkward attempts to stand or sit. He was an old man in suspenders, one useless eye wandering loose in its socket, poorly shaven wattles of skin at his throat – raw, chafed, and pinkish folds with sparse silver bristles poking out of them. Yet, though Nels Gudmundsson was at times vaguely laughable, the reporters fell serious when he passed in front of them and allowed them to see up close how his temples pulsed, the depth of the light in his good eye.

'All right,' said Nels. 'Dr Whitman, sir. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?'

Sterling Whitman said he didn't mind at all; that was what he'd come to San Pedro for.

'Well, then,' said Nels. 'About this fishing gaff. You say you found blood on it?'

'Yes,' said Sterling Whitman. 'I've testified to that effect. Yes, I did.'

'This blood,' said Nels. 'Where *exactly* did you find it?' He picked up the gaff and brought it to the witness. 'On what part, Dr. Whitman? The butt end? The hook?'

'The butt,' the doctor answered. 'This end' – he pointed – 'opposite the hook.'

'Right here?' said Nels, and put his hand on it. 'You found blood on this wooden handle?'

'Yes.'

'It hadn't soaked in?' Nels Gudmundsson asked. 'Wouldn't wood of this sort absorb blood, doctor?'

'Some soaking had occurred, yes,' said Sterling Whitman. 'But I was still able to obtain a blood sample.'

'How?' said Nels, still holding the gaff.

'By scraping. It's the procedure with dried blood. You have to scrape.'

'I see,' said Nels. 'You used a blade, doctor?'

'Yes.'

'You scraped it onto a microscope slide? You placed the slide under a microscope?'

'Yes.'

'And you saw what? Blood and wood scrapings?'

'Yes.'

'Anything else?'

'No.'

'Nothing. Only blood and wood scrapings?'

'That's right.'

'Doctor,' said Nels Gudmundsson. 'Were there no bits of bone, or strands of hair, or particles of scalp, on this fishing gaff?'

Sterling Whitman shook his head firmly. 'None,' he said. 'It was just as I have said. As I testified. As I wrote in my investigative report. Blood and wood scrapings only.'

'Doctor,' said Nels. 'Does this seem odd to you? If this fishing gaff were in fact used to inflict a head wound, would you not expect to see evidence of that? In the shape of, say, strands of hair? Or bits of skull bone? Or particles of scalp? The sort of

things we might normally associate with a head wound, Dr. Whitman? As evidence that the instrument in question had been used to inflict such a wound?’

‘Sheriff Moran asked me to perform two blood tests,’ said the witness. ‘I did so. We determined that –’

‘Yes, yes,’ Nels Gudmundsson cut in. ‘As you have testified previously. The blood on the gaff was of the type known as B positive: no one is contesting *that*, doctor. What I want to know is, to the best of your knowledge as a man who has for six and a half years made his living looking at blood under a microscope, would you not expect to see hair or bone or scalp particles as *well* as blood if this gaff were used to inflict a head wound? Would you not, doctor? Would it seem logical?’

‘I don’t know,’ said Sterling Whitman.

‘You don’t know?’ asked Nels Gudmundsson. He still carried the gaff in his hand, but now he perched it on the ledge of the witness box between himself and the expert hematologist.

‘Doctor,’ he said. ‘The coroner who examined the deceased in question included mention in his report of, if I remember it correctly, a “secondary and minor laceration of the right hand extending laterally from the fold between the thumb and forefinger to the outside of the wrist.” A cut on the palm, in other words. An ordinary cut on Carl Heine’s right palm. Would it be possible, Dr. Whitman, that a cut like this – if the hand were wrapped around the butt end of this gaff here – that a cut like this might have caused the B positive blood you spoke of to soak into the wood? Would that be possible, doctor? *Possible?*’

‘Possible, yes,’ said Sterling Whitman. ‘But I don’t know anything about that. My only job was to perform the blood tests that Sheriff Moran asked me to perform. I found B positive blood on this fishing gaff. How it got there, I have no idea.’

‘Well,’ said Nels Gudmundsson. ‘It’s good of you to say so. Because, as you’ve said, one of every ten Caucasian males has blood of the B positive type, don’t they? And on an island like this one that means, probably, two hundred men, doctor? Would that be about right?’

‘Yes. I suppose. Ten percent of the island’s Caucasian male population. It –’

‘And isn’t the percentage even higher, doctor, for males of Japanese descent? A higher percentage of B positives among the island’s Japanese – Americans?’

‘Yes, it is. Somewhere around twenty percent. But –’

‘Twenty percent – thank you, doctor. That’s quite a large number of island men we’re talking about who have B positive blood. But let’s suppose, for purposes of argument, that the blood on the fishing gaff *was* in fact Carl Heine’s, even though it might have come from hundreds of other men – let’s just suppose that hypothetically for a moment. It might have gotten there, it seems to me, in at least one of two ways. It might have come from the deceased man’s head, or it might have come from this ordinary cut on his hand – his head or his hand, doctor, either one. Now, given the fact that the blood is on the *butt* end of this gaff where a person would normally place their *hand*, and given the fact that you found only blood there and no bone or skin or hair, doctor – the probable evidence of a head wound, I would think – what seems to you to be likely? That the blood on the gaff, if it came from Carl Heine at all, came from his head or his hand?’

‘I have no idea,’ said Sterling Whitman. ‘I’m a hematologist, not a detective.’

‘I’m not asking you to be a detective,’ Nels said. ‘I just want to know which is more *probable*.’

‘The hand, I suppose,’ Sterling Whitman confessed. ‘The hand, I guess, would be more probable than the head.’

‘Thank you,’ answered Nels Gudmundsson. ‘I appreciate your having battled the elements to come here and tell us so.’ He turned away from the witness, made his way to Ed Soames, and handed him the fishing gaff. ‘You can put that away, Mr. Soames,’ he said. ‘Thank you very much. We’re done with that.’

Three fishermen – Dale Middleton, Vance Cope, and Leonard George – all testified for the court that on the evening of

September 15 they'd seen Carl Heine's boat, the *Susan Marie*, with her net set on the fishing grounds at Ship Channel Bank; furthermore they'd seen Kabuo Miyamoto's boat, the *Islander*, in the same vicinity at approximately the same time. Ship Channel, Leonard George explained, was like many other places island men netted salmon: a narrow and limited seafloor topography which forced you to fish within sight of other men and to move about with care lest, in the night fog general to Island County in early autumn, you motor across a set net and destroy it by winding it up in your propeller. That was why, even in the fog, Leonard had made out both the *Susan Marie* and the *Islander* between eight and eight-thirty at Ship Channel Bank: he recalled that as he cruised past he'd seen the *Islander* come about, that ten minutes later he'd come across the *Susan Marie* and seen that Carl Heine was backing net off his drum by motoring away from his jacklight. They'd been fishing, in short, the same waters, with Carl a bit farther toward the north and down current: a thousand yards closer to the shipping lanes that gave Ship Channel Bank its name.

Nels Gudmundsson asked Leonard George if it was common among gill-netters to board another's boat at sea. 'Absolutely not,' replied Leonard. 'There aren't many reasons why a guy'd do that. If you're stalled out and somebody's bringing you a part maybe – that's about it, no other reason. Maybe if you was hurt or broke down or somethin'. Otherwise you don't tie up to nobody. You do your job, keep to yourself.'

'Do men argue at sea?' said Nels. 'I've heard they do. That gill-netters do. Are there arguments out there, Mr. George?'

'You bet there are,' said Leonard. 'A guy gets corked off he – 'Corked off?' interrupted Nels. 'Can you explain that for us briefly?'

Leonard George answered that a gill net was constructed to have a top and a bottom; that the bottom of the net was called the lead line – bits of lead were crimped onto it in order to weight

it down – and that the top was known as the cork line: cork floats allowed it to stay on the surface, so that from a distance a gill net appeared as a line of cork with the stern of the boat at one end and a warning jacklight at the other. When a man set his wall of net up current from your own he'd 'corked you off,' stolen your fish by getting to them before they could get to you. It meant trouble, said Leonard: you had to pick up, motor past him, and set your net somewhere up current, in which case the other guy might decide to play leapfrog and force both of you to waste your fishing time. Still, in all of this, Leonard pointed out, no man ever boarded another's boat. It wasn't done; he'd never heard of it. You kept to yourself unless you had some kind of emergency and needed another man's help.

Alvin Hooks called Army First Sergeant Victor Maples to the stand after that morning's recess. Sergeant Maples wore his green dress uniform and the insignia of the Fourth Infantry Division. He wore his expert marksmanship and combat infantryman's badges. The brass buttons on Sergeant Maples's coat, the insignia on his collar, and the badges on his chest all caught the meager courtroom light and held it. Sergeant Maples was overweight by thirty-five pounds but still looked distinguished in his dress uniform. The extra weight was nicely distributed; Maples was a powerful man. He had short, thick arms, no neck, and a pudgy, adolescent face. His hair stood up in a razor cut.

First Sergeant Maples explained to the court that since 1946 he had been assigned to Fort Sheridan, Illinois, where he specialized in the training of combat troops. Prior to that he'd trained troops at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, before taking part in the Italian campaign in 1944 and '45. Sergeant Maples had been wounded in fighting on the Arno River – he'd taken a German round in the small of his back which narrowly missed his spine – and had been awarded the Silver Star on account of it. He'd also, he said, been at Livorno and Luciana and seen the 442nd – the Nisei regiment to

which the defendant had been attached – in action along the Gothic Line.

Sergeant Maples had in his time trained thousands of men in hand-to-hand combat. Hand-to-hand was his specialty, he said; he'd worked in other areas of basic training but generally found his way back to it. Sergeant Maples recollected for the court his astonishment in early 1943 when the 442nd – composed of Nisei boys – began training at Camp Shelby. These were boys from the internment camps, enlistees headed for the European theater, and among them, Sergeant Maples recalled, was the defendant, Kabuo Miyamoto.

He remembered Kabuo from among the thousands who'd come his way because of a . . . peculiar episode. Ten squads of trainees had surrounded Sergeant Maples on the drill field at Camp Shelby one February afternoon – ten squads composed of Nisei boys, so that he found himself in the midst of a hundred Japanese faces while he explained the particulars of the bayonet. Sergeant Maples informed his trainees that it was the policy of the United States Army to preserve their lives until they reached the battlefield; that was why a wooden staff would be substituted for an actual weapon during drill sessions. Helmets would be worn as well.

The sergeant began to demonstrate bayonet thrusts, then asked for a volunteer. It was at this point, he told the court, that he came face to face with the defendant. A young man stepped forward into the ring of trainees and presented himself to the sergeant, bowing slightly before saluting and calling out loudly, 'Sir!' 'First off,' Sergeant Maples scolded him, 'you don't have to salute me or call me sir. I'm an enlisted man, just like you – a sergeant, not a warrant officer or a major. Second, nobody in this army bows to nobody. There's plenty of officers who'll expect a salute, but a bow? It isn't *military*. Not *American* military. It isn't done.'

Sergeant Maples gave Miyamoto a wooden staff and tossed him a sparring helmet. There was something aggressive in the way the boy had spoken, and Sergeant Maples had heard it.

He was vaguely aware of this particular young man, who had built a reputation during basic training as a thoroughly eager warrior, ready to kill and businesslike every bit of the time. Maples had seen many such boys come his way and was never cowed by their youthful swagger; he was only on rare occasions impressed or prepared to view them as his equal. 'In combat your enemy won't be stationary,' he said now, looking the boy in the eye. 'It's one thing to work out on a dummy or a bag, another to spar with a trained human being who represents more accurately live movement. In this case,' he told the gathered recruits, 'our volunteer will seek to avoid the model bayonet thrusts put to him this afternoon.'

'Yes, sir,' said Kabuo Miyamoto.

'No more "sir,"' Sergeant Maples replied. 'That's the last time with that.'

He explained to the court how astonished he was – how thoroughly astonished – to find he couldn't hit the defendant. Kabuo Miyamoto hardly moved, and yet he slipped every thrust. The one hundred Nisei trainees looked on in silence and gave no indication that they approved of either man. Sergeant Maples fought on with his wooden staff until Kabuo Miyamoto knocked it from his hands.

'Excuse me,' said Miyamoto. He knelt, picked up the staff, and handed it to the sergeant. Once again, he bowed.

'There's no need to bow,' the sergeant repeated. 'I already told you about that.'

'I do it out of habit,' said Kabuo Miyamoto. 'I'm used to bowing when I'm sparring somebody.' Then, suddenly, he brought his wooden staff up. He looked Sergeant Maples in the eye and smiled.

Sergeant Maples acquiesced to the inevitable and did combat with the defendant that afternoon. It lasted all of three seconds. On his first rush the sergeant was swept off his feet, then felt his head pinned to the ground with the point of the staff, then the staff was withdrawn, the defendant bowed and picked him

up. 'Excuse me, sergeant,' he'd said afterward. 'Your staff, sergeant.' He'd handed it to him.

After that Sergeant Maples availed himself of the opportunity to study *kendo* with an expert. Sergeant Maples wasn't stupid – he told the court this about himself without a trace of irony – and so he learned all he could from Miyamoto, including the importance of bowing. Sergeant Maples became a master with time and after the war taught *kendo* techniques to the army rangers at Fort Sheridan. From his point of view as an expert in the ancient Japanese art of stick fighting, Sergeant Maples could say with certainty that the defendant was eminently capable of killing a man far larger than himself with a fishing gaff. In fact, there were few men known to him who could ably defend themselves against such an attack by Kabuo Miyamoto – certainly a man with no training in *kendo* had little chance of warding him off. He was, in Sergeant Maples's experience, a man both technically proficient at stick fighting and willing to inflict violence on another man. He had made, the record showed, an excellent soldier. No, it would not surprise Sergeant Victor Maples to hear that Kabuo Miyamoto had killed a man with a fishing gaff. He was highly capable of such a deed.

Susan Marie Heine had been a widow for nearly three months by the time of Kabuo Miyamoto's murder trial but had not grown very much accustomed to it yet and still passed long hours – especially at night – during which she could think of nothing but Carl and the fact that he had gone out of her existence. In the gallery, with her sister on one side and her mother on the other, dressed in black from head to foot and with her eyes shrouded behind a chenille-dot veil, Susan Marie looked mournfully attractive: she exuded a blond, woeful distress that caused the reporters to turn in her direction and ponder the propriety of speaking intimately with her under the guise of professional necessity. The young widow's thick hair had been plaited and pinned up beneath her hat so that the alabaster neck Art Moran so much admired when Susan Marie poured coffee at church socials lay exposed to the crowded courtroom. The neck and the plaits of hair and the white hands folded decorously in her lap all stood in sharp contrast to her black mourning outfit and gave Susan Marie the air of an unostentatious young German baroness who had perhaps just recently lost her husband but had not in the face of it forgotten how to dress well, even when she dressed to suggest grief. And it was grief, foremost, that Susan Marie suggested. Those who had known her for a long while recognized that even her face had changed. The superficial among them attributed this to the fact that she'd neglected to eat heartily since Carl died – shadows had formed just under her cheekbones – but others recognized it as a deeper alteration, one that involved her spirit. The pastor at the First Hill Lutheran Church had on four successive Sundays asked his congregation

to pray not only for Carl Heine's soul but for Susan Marie's 'deliverance from grief in the course of time' as well. In pursuit of this latter end, the church women's auxiliary had provided Susan Marie and her children with a straight month's worth of hot suppers in casserole dishes, and Einar Petersen had seen to it that groceries were delivered to her kitchen door. It was through food that the island expressed its compassion for Susan Marie in her widowhood.

Alvin Hooks, the prosecutor, knew well the value of a Susan Marie Heine. He had called to the witness box the county sheriff and the county coroner, the murdered man's mother and the bent-over Swede from whom the murdered man had planned to buy his father's old farm. He had proceeded to a variety of secondary witnesses – Sterling Whitman, Dale Middleton, Vance Cope, Leonard George, Sergeant Victor Maples – and now he would finish matters by presenting the wife of the murdered man, a woman who had already done much good merely sitting in the gallery where the jurors could view her. The men especially would not wish to betray such a woman with a not-guilty verdict at the end of things. She would persuade them not precisely with what she had to say but with the entirety of who she was.

On the afternoon of Thursday, September 9, Kabuo Miyamoto had stood at her doorstep and asked to speak with her husband. It was a cloudless day of the sort San Piedro rarely saw in September – this year there'd been an early string of them, though – a day of deep heat but with an onshore breeze that tossed the leaves in the alders and even ripped a few loose to fall earthward. One minute it was silent, the next a rush of wind came up from off the water smelling of salt and seaweed, and the roar of the leaves in the trees was as loud as waves breaking on a beach. A gust caught Kabuo Miyamoto's shirt as he stood on the porch so that the collar of it brushed his neck for a moment and the shoulders ballooned out, filled with air. Then the wind died and his shirt settled, and she asked him to come in and sit in the front room; she would go, she said, to find her husband.

The Japanese man had seemed uncertain about entering her house that afternoon. 'I can wait on the porch, Mrs. Heine,' he suggested. 'It's a nice afternoon. I'll wait outside.'

'Nonsense,' she replied, and stepped aside from the door. She gestured in the direction of the living room. 'You come in and make yourself comfortable. Get out of the sun and sit, why don't you? It's nice and cool inside.'

He looked at her, blinked, but took only one step. 'Thank you,' he said. 'It's a beautiful house.'

'Carl built it,' Susan Marie answered. 'Please come in now. Sit.'

The Japanese man passed her, turned to his left, and perched on the edge of the bench sofa. His back was straight, his demeanor formal. It was as if he considered making himself comfortable an insult of some kind. With a deliberation that bordered, to her thinking, on something stylized, he folded his hands together and waited at attention. 'I'll go after Carl,' said Susan Marie. 'It'll only take me a minute.'

'Fine,' said the Japanese man. 'Thank you.'

She left him there. Carl and the boys were out culling raspberry canes, and she found them down among the southward trellises, Carl cutting free the older stock, the boys filling the wheelbarrow. She stood at the end of the row and called to them. 'Carl!' she said. 'There's someone to see you. It's Kabuo Miyamoto. He's waiting.'

They all turned to look at her, the boys shirtless and small against the walls of raspberries, Carl bent at the knees, his knife in hand. He, a giant with a russet beard, closed the knife, and slipped it into the sheath at his belt. 'Where?' he said. 'Kabuo?'

'In the living room. He's waiting.'

'Tell him I'm coming,' said Carl. And he swung both boys into the wheelbarrow and planted them on top of the culled canes. 'Watch out for thorns,' he said. 'Here we go.'

She went back to the house and informed the Japanese man that her husband would be with him shortly; he'd been out

among the raspberry canes working. 'Would you care for coffee?' she added.

'No, thank you,' replied Kabuo Miyamoto.

'It's no trouble,' she urged. 'Please have some.'

'It's very nice of you,' he said. 'You're very kind.'

'Will you have some, then?' Susan Marie asked. 'Carl and I were planning on a cup.'

'All right, then,' said Kabuo. 'Thank you. I will. Thank you.'

He was still seated in the same position, perched on the edge of the worn bench sofa precisely as she'd left him minutes before. Susan Marie found his immobility disquieting and was about to suggest that he sit back and relax, make himself at home, get comfortable, when Carl came through the front door. Kabuo Miyamoto stood up.

'Hey,' Carl said. 'Kabuo.'

'Carl,' said the Japanese man.

They came together and locked hands, her husband half a foot taller than his visitor, bearded and heavy through the shoulders and chest and wearing a sweat-stained T-shirt. 'What do you say we go out,' he suggested. 'Take a walk 'round the property or something? Get out of the house, go outside?'

'That sounds fine,' said Kabuo Miyamoto. 'I hope this is a good time,' he added.

Carl turned and looked at Susan Marie. 'Kabuo and me are going out,' he said. 'Be back after a while. Going to walk.'

'All right,' she said. 'I'll put coffee on.'

When they were gone she went upstairs to check her baby. She leaned over the side of the crib and smelled the girl's warm breath and let her nose brush against the girl's cheek. From the window she could see her boys in the yard, the tops of their heads as they sat in the grass beside the overturned wheelbarrow. They were tying knots in the culled raspberry canes.

Susan Marie knew Carl had spoken with Ole Jurgensen and had put down earnest money on Ole's farm; she knew how Carl felt about the old place at Island Center and his passion for

growing strawberries. Still, she didn't want to leave the house on Mill Run Road with its bronze light, varnished pine boards, and exposed roof rafters in the upstairs room, its view of the sea beyond the raspberry canes. From the window of her baby's room, looking out across the fields, it was more clear to her than ever that she didn't want to move. She'd grown up the daughter of a hay farmer and shake cutter, a man who couldn't get ends to meet; she'd cut thousands of shakes, had hunched over a cedar block with a froe and a mallet, her blond hair hanging in her eyes. She was the second of three daughters and remembered how her younger sister had died of tuberculosis one winter; they'd buried her on Indian Knob Hill in the Lutheran part of the cemetery. The ground had been frozen, and the men had difficulty digging Ellen's grave. It had taken the better part of a December morning.

She'd met Carl Heine because she'd wanted to meet him. On San Piedro a woman with her looks could do such a thing if she did it with the proper innocence. She'd been twenty and employed at Larsen's Pharmacy, where she clerked from behind an oak sales counter. One Saturday evening at eleven-thirty, on a hill above the dance pavilion at West Port Jensen, she stood beneath the branches of a cedar tree while Carl ran his hands up under her blouse and caressed her breasts with his fisherman's fingers. The woods were lit with lanterns, and far below in the bay, through the interstices of trees, she could make out the deck lights of moored pleasure boats. Some of the light came to where they stood so that his face was visible to her. This was their third dance together. By now she knew definitely that she admired his face, which was large, weathered, and durable. She held his face between her hands and looked at it from a distance of six inches. It was an island boy's face and at the same time mysterious. He'd been to the war, after all.

Carl began to kiss her throat so that Susan Marie had to throw back her head to make room for him – him with his russet beard. She looked up into the branches of the cedars and breathed in their perfume, and he moved his lips over her

collarbones and then down into the space between her breasts. She let him. She remembered clearly how she had let him, how it was not resignation as it had been with two other boys – one near the end of her senior year of high school, the other during the summer before this one – but instead intensely and deeply what she wanted, this bearded fisherman who had been to the war and on occasion, if she pressed him, spoke about it without exaggerating. She stroked the top of his head with her fingers and felt the odd sensation of his beard against her breasts. 'Carl,' she whispered, but there was nothing to follow that with, she didn't know what other words she wanted to speak. After a while he stopped and pressed his hands against the bark of the cedar tree behind her so that his blunt muscled arms passed on either side of her head. He looked at her closely, with an intimacy and seriousness that did not seem to embarrass him – this somber man – then tucked a strand of blond hair in behind her ear. He kissed her and then, still looking into her eyes, unbuttoned two of the buttons on her blouse and kissed her again so that she was caught gently between Carl and the tree. She pushed back against him with the muscles of her pelvis, something she'd never done with a man before. It was an admission of her desire, a revealing of it, and it surprised her to the root of her being.

Yet in another way she was not surprised at all to find herself, at the age of twenty, pressing herself against Carl Heine beneath a cedar above the West Port Jensen dance pavilion. After all, she had brought this about, willed it into being. She had discovered when she was seventeen that she could shape the behavior of men with her behavior and that this ability was founded on her appearance. She was no longer astonished to look in the mirror and find she had developed the breasts and hips of an attractive, grown-up woman. Her astonishment gave way quickly to happiness about it. There was a roundness and firmness to her, a clean, strong roundness, and her heavy blond hair cast a glow over her shoulders when she wore a bathing suit. Her breasts turned just slightly away from one another and brushed against the insides of her arms when she walked. They

were large, and when she got over her embarrassment about them she was able to take pleasure in the fact that boys became unnerved in their presence. Yet Susan Marie never flirted. She did not let on she knew she was attractive. She went out with two boys before meeting Carl and insisted on their politeness and reserve. Susan Marie did not want to be foremost a pair of breasts, but on the other hand she was proud of herself. This pride remained with her into her mid-twenties, until she'd given birth to a second child and her breasts were no longer so important to her as the most visible locus of her sexuality. Two sons had tugged at them with their gums and lips, and her breasts appeared different to her now. She wore a bra with stiff wire along its base in order to lift them up.

Susan Marie knew within three months of marrying Carl that she'd made an excellent choice. In his grave, silent veteran's way he was dependable and gentle. He was gone nights fishing. He came home in the morning, ate and showered, and then they got into bed together. He kept his hands smooth with a pumice stone, so that even though they were fishermen's hands they felt good stroking her shoulders. The two of them moved from position to position, trying everything, the sunlight just behind the pulled shade, their bodies moving in morning shadow but plainly visible. She found she had married an attentive man whose pursuit as a lover was to ensure her satisfaction. He read all her movements as signs and when she was close to coming retreated just enough so that her excitement became more desperate. Then it was necessary for her to put him on his back and rock high with her spine arched while he, half-sitting now, his stomach muscles clenched, stroked her breasts and kissed them. She often came this way, in control of her sensations, guiding herself along Carl's body, and Carl timed matters so as to begin to come while she was and thus carry her back up so that when she was through she did not feel satisfied and was compelled to press on toward a second coming that the pastor at the First Hill Lutheran Church could neither approve nor disapprove of

because – she felt certain of this – he had no idea that it was possible.

Carl would sleep until one o'clock in the afternoon, then eat again and go out to work on the property. He was happy when she told him she was pregnant. He did not stop making love to her until she asked him to stop at the beginning of the ninth month. Sometime after their first son was born Carl bought his own boat. When he named it for her she was pleased and came aboard, and they took the baby out into the bay and west until the island was nothing but a low black line on the horizon. She sat on the short bunk nursing their son while Carl stood at the wheel. She sat there looking at the back of his head, his short, tousled hair, the broad muscles in his back and shoulders. They ate a can of sardines, two pears, a bag of filberts. The baby slept on the bunk, and Susan Marie stood on a pallet board piloting the boat while Carl, behind her, massaged her shoulders and the small of her back and then her buttocks. She gripped the wheel more tightly when he lifted her skirt and slid her under-pants out of the way, and then, leaning forward against the boat's wheel and reaching back to slide her hands along her husband's hips, she shut her eyes and rocked.

These were the things Susan Marie remembered. In her estimation of it, their sex life had been at the heart of their marriage. It had permeated everything else between them, a state of affairs she sometimes worried over. If it went bad, would they go bad? Somewhere down the road, when they were older and less passionate, when their desire for one another had staled and worn out – then where would they be? She didn't even want to think about that or to mull how one day they might have nothing except his silence and his obsession with whatever he was working on – his boat, their house, his gardens.

She could see her husband and Kabuo Miyamoto walking the border of the property. Then they went over a rise out of view, and she leaned downstairs again.

In twenty minutes' time Carl returned alone, changed into a

fresh T-shirt, and hunkered down on the front porch with his head in his hands.

She came out with a cup of coffee in each hand and sat down next to him, on his right. 'What did he want?' she asked.

'Nothing,' answered Carl. 'We had some things to talk about. Nothing much. No big deal.'

Susan Marie handed him a coffee cup. 'It's hot,' she said. 'Be careful.'

'All right,' said Carl. 'Thanks.'

'I made him some,' said Susan Marie. 'I thought he was going to stay.'

'It was nothing,' said Carl. 'It's a long story.'

Susan Marie put her arm around his shoulder. 'What's the problem?' she said.

'I don't know,' sighed Carl. 'He wants seven of Ole's acres. He wants me to let Ole sell them to him. Or sell them to him myself. You know, step out of his way.'

'Seven acres?'

'The ones his family had. He wants them back. That thing my mother talks about.'

'That,' said Susan Marie. 'I had a feeling it was that when he showed up. *That*,' she added grimly.

Carl said nothing. It was like him at a moment like this not to say very much. He did not like to explain or elaborate, and there was a part of him she couldn't get to. She attributed this to his war experiences, and for the most part she let it be, this silence of his. But it irritated her at times.

'What did you tell him?' she asked now. 'Did he go off angry, Carl?'

Carl set down his coffee. He leaned his elbows against his knees. 'Damn,' he answered. 'What could I tell him? There's my mother to think about, you know her, I have to think about that business. If I let him get back in out there . . .' He shrugged and seemed hapless for a moment. She saw the lines the sea wind had etched at the corners of his blue eyes. 'I told him I'd have to think it over, have a talk with you. Told him

how upset my mother was with him – 'bout his dirty looks and mean faces. He froze when I brought that up. Real polite, but frozen. Wouldn't look at me no more. Wouldn't come back up to the house for coffee. I don't know, I guess it was my fault. We got into a scrap, I guess. I couldn't *talk* with him, Susan. I just . . . didn't . . . know how to do it. I didn't know what to say to him . . .'

He trailed off. She recognized it as one of his *moments*, thought it over, and held her tongue. It had never been very clear to her if Carl and Kabuo were friends or enemies. This was the first time she had seen them together, and it seemed to her – it was her impression – that there remained some measure of kind feelings between them, that after all this time they held inside at least the memory of their friendship. But there was no way, truly, of telling. It could be that their cordiality and hand-shaking had been nothing but stiff formality, that underneath they hated each other. She knew, anyway, that Carl's mother had nothing but ill feelings for all the Miyamotos; she sometimes spoke of them at the dinner table on Sundays, rattling on obsessively. Carl generally fell silent when she did, or agreed with her in a perfunctory fashion, afterward dismissing the subject. Susan Marie had grown accustomed to these dismissals and to Carl's reluctance to speak about the matter. She was accustomed to it, but it pained her, and she wished she could clear it all up right now, while they sat together on the porch.

The wind came up and tossed the tops of the alders, and she felt the odd fall warmth in it. Carl had told her more than once – he'd repeated it just the other day – how since the war he couldn't *speak*. Even his old friends were included in this, so that now Carl was a lonely man who understood land and work, boat and sea, his own hands, better than his mouth and heart. She felt sympathy for him and rubbed his shoulder gently and waited patiently beside him. 'Damn,' Carl said after a while. 'Anyway, I guess as far as you're concerned I could hand the whole business over to him and let him do what he wants with it. I guess you don't want to move out there anyway.'

'It's so beautiful here,' replied Susan Marie. 'Just look around for a minute, Carl.'

'Look around out *there*,' he said. 'That's sixty-five acres, Susan.'

She understood that. He was a man who needed plenty of space, a vast terrain in which to operate. It was what he'd grown up with, and the sea, despite its size, was no substitute for green fields. Carl *needed* room, far more room than his boat could offer, and anyway in order to put his war behind him – the *Canton* going down, men drowning while he watched – he would have to leave his boat for good and grow strawberries like his father. She knew this was the only way for her husband to grow sound; it was what made her willing, ultimately, to follow him out to Island Center.

'Supposing you sell him his seven acres,' Susan Marie said. 'What's the worst your mother can do?'

Carl shook his head emphatically. 'It doesn't really come down to her,' he said. 'It comes down to the fact that Kabuo's a *Jap*. And I don't hate Japs, but I don't like 'em neither. It's hard to explain. But he's a *Jap*.'

'He's not a *Jap*,' Susan Marie said. 'You don't mean that, Carl. I've heard you say nice things about him. You and he were friends.'

'Were,' said Carl. 'That's right. A long time ago. Before the war came along. But now I don't like him much anymore. Don't like how he acted when I told him I'd think it over, like he expected me to just hand those seven acres to him, like I owed it to him or –'

There was a boy's cry from the back of the house then, a cry of pain instead of argument or upset, and Carl was already moving toward it before Susan Marie could stand. They found their older boy sprawled on a flagstone with his left foot gripped in both his hands; he'd sliced it open against the sharp edge of a strut on the overturned wheelbarrow beside him. Susan Marie knelt and kissed his face and held him closely while his foot bled. She remembered how Carl had looked at the wound, tenderly,

transformed. He was no longer a war veteran. They'd taken the boy in to Dr. Whaley, and then Carl had gone off fishing. The two of them hadn't discussed Kabuo Miyamoto again, and Susan Marie soon recognized that the subject was somehow forbidden. It was forbidden in her marriage to open up her husband's wounds and look at them unless he asked her to.

Their marriage, she understood after Carl was gone, had largely been about sex. It had been about sex right up to the end, until the day Carl went out of her life: that morning, while the children slept, they'd shut the bathroom door and pulled the latch and taken off their clothes. Carl showered, and Susan Marie joined him when the stink of salmon had been washed down the drain. She washed his large penis and felt it harden in her fingers. She put her arms around his neck, locked her feet at the small of his back. Carl held her up with his strong hands clenching the muscles in her legs and leaned the side of his face against her breasts and took to licking them. They moved that way, standing up in the bathtub with the water pouring over them and Susan Marie's blond hair pasted to her face and her hands clutched around her husband's head. They washed each other afterward, taking their time about it in the friendly way of certain married people, and then Carl got into bed and slept until one in the afternoon. At two, having eaten a lunch of fried eggs and Jerusalem artichokes, canned pears and bread spread with clover honey, he went out to change the oil in his tractor. She saw him from the kitchen window that afternoon gathering early windfall apples and dropping them in a burlap bag. At three forty-five he came up to the house again and said good-bye to the children, who were seated on the porch drinking apple juice and eating graham crackers and rolling pebbles back and forth. He came into the kitchen, wrapped himself around his wife, and explained that unless the fishing was excellent he was coming home early the next morning, would be home, he hoped, by four A.M.. Then he left for the Amity Harbor docks, and she never saw him again.

Nels Gudmundsson stood at a distance from the witness stand when it was his turn to question Susan Marie Heine: he did not want to appear lecherous by placing himself in close proximity to a woman of such tragic, sensual beauty. He was self-conscious about his age and felt that the jurors would see him as disgusting if he did not distance himself from Susan Marie Heine and appear in general detached from the life of his body altogether. The month before, Nels had been told by a doctor in Anacortes that his prostate gland had become moderately enlarged. It would have to be removed surgically and he would no longer be able to produce seminal fluid. The doctor had asked Nels embarrassing questions and he had been forced to reveal a truth about which he was ashamed: that he could no longer achieve an erection. He could achieve one briefly, but it would wither in his hand before he had a chance to take pleasure from it. The bad part was not really this so much as it was that a woman like Susan Marie Heine inspired a deep frustration in him. He felt defeated as he appraised her on the witness stand. It was no longer possible for him to communicate to *any* woman – even those his own age he knew in town – his merit and value as a lover, for he no longer had this sort of worth and had to admit as much to himself – as a lover he was entirely through.

Nels remembered as he watched Susan Marie Heine the finest years of his sex life, now more than a half a century behind him. He could not quite believe that this was so. He was seventy-nine and trapped inside a decaying body. It was difficult for him to sleep and to urinate. His body had betrayed him and most of the things he once took for granted were no longer even possible.