

## The Meeting

I had to meet you and there was no more time. The way was blocked so I scaled the wall to the rooftop and began swinging like a chimpanzee through the trusses that connected one building with the next.

When I reached the bus stop you were not there. I looked at my watch. I was five minutes late. Where had you gone? Would you not even wait five minutes for me?

A path led from the bus stop up a long sloping hill. Perhaps you had taken it. Perhaps I would find you at the top. Perhaps I would not but I knew I must try.

Grass turned to trees the higher I climbed. I came to an old mountain hut with gray wooden panels. Men with grizzled beards were sitting on the veranda, drinking bourbon and telling bawdy stories.

“Has anyone passed by recently?” I shouted to them.

The men fell silent but ignored me.

“I say,” I repeated. “Have you seen anyone—”

One of them, without looking up, motioned with his arm for me to go away. I started back up the trail. The men resumed their laughing.

At the top of the hill there was no one. I looked up and saw a clear blue sky with nothing in it. There was no point turning back.