The Pipe Dreamers
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As a result of the “Candlelight Massacre”—so named by the protesters—several students were taken to the hospital, among them the Beta whose leg had been bitten to the bone by the German shepherd. Other injuries were caused by the crowd itself, and included bruises and scratches of varying severity. The police never touched the demonstrators, letting the tear gas and the implied threat of their clubs do the intimidation.

President Carrell issued a statement in the student newspaper, Clarion:

No one may forcibly or physically disrupt, either by action or noise, the regular business or function of the University or the adjoining Village of Hampton.

Picketing as a nonviolent means of advocating different points of view may be utilized outside University buildings only. However, no one may block stairs, doorways, or walkways to buildings. Any form of demonstration or gathering is prohibited in the Village of Hampton.

Persons may not coerce or intimidate students, faculty, or administrators in entering or leaving the campus, its buildings, or classrooms.

Any violations of these regulations or of any municipal, state, or federal laws, or any disruption or interference with the University’s attainment of educational objectives or the Village of Hampton and its citizens, shall be considered misconduct.

Students responded by causing as much trouble on campus as possible: setting fires in classroom wastebaskets; picketing and tying up food service deliveries; threatening to blow up the electrical generator; simultaneously flushing all toilets at a prearranged time. The Hayes “Flush In” drained the Hampton water supply and nearly destroyed the sewage system.

Everywhere Julia went—in classes, at the student center, in the cafeteria—she heard the word “repression.” The diverse campus elements had united, even igniting what her former roommate Valerie once called the “filler people,” those undistinguished, unaffiliated students whose seemingly irrelevant purpose at Hayes was to get a degree.

Like the flowers in mid-April, “strike” symbols blossomed everywhere. Nixon added fuel by increasing bombings in Vietnam and threatening to move troops into Cambodia. This spurred a fresh outburst of enthusiasm for the next Moratorium, held on the fifteenth of every month during the school year of 1969-1970.
Yet the clenched fist graffiti, impromptu speeches on overturned trash cans, and small flare-ups had become background noise. Julia had lost part of herself to Winnie: she wanted only to be where he was, feel his nearness, listen to his voice. She knew he cared for her, but how much was still a mystery. He rarely touched her, and often drifted in a world of his own.

They spent most of their free time together; or more accurately, Julia spent it at his house. They went to meetings, movies and parties with whoever was around. Julia adored the people in Winnie's house, but she was beginning to realize, in spite of being in love, that something deeper percolated beneath Winnie's passivity.

It spilled into their relationship a few days before the April Moratorium. Julia and Winnie were walking from Davidson Hall, where they'd completed their respective two o'clock Sociology classes. Winnie was in an expansive mood because he'd just turned in a major paper. For him, midterms were almost over, while Julia's had just begun.

He motioned towards a card table being set up at the center of Slantwalk by two Girl Scouts. "Let's buy some cookies, then get stoned. Thin Mints are far out when you're high."

"I can't, Winnie. I've been goofing off all quarter and I'm only halfway through my reading for Principles of Sociology."

"Oh, come on, Julia. The test isn't until tomorrow and you can catch up this evening. I had Barrows, too, and he's a cinch."

It was unlike Winnie to try to persuade her, and Julia glanced at him curiously. He looked particularly handsome today in a multicolored dashiki top that brought out the vivid hues in his hair and eyes. Slit open at the neck, it revealed russet curls on his chest and a pewter teardrop peace symbol she'd never before noticed.

Almost against her will, she reached inside the shirt and pulled out the necklace, trembling slightly as her fingers brushed against his collar bone. "That's beautiful," she said, avoiding his eyes, afraid he might think her too aggressive. "Where did you get it?" As she turned to the peace symbol over, it glinted in the sunlight.

"I got it at Yellow Springs over Easter break. There's an artist's community there, with all kinds of shops. They have far-out things, like this necklace."

"Oh? I've never been." Julia had heard of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, but only in the context of her father's opinions: a hotbed of left-wing ideas, interracial marriage, and hard drugs.

"We'll go there sometime," Winnie promised. With a gentle yank, he drew the necklace from Julia, pulling her closer. His fingers burned in comparison to the burnished coolness of the pewter. "Please come back to the house with me."

Julia lifted her eyes to meet his. She saw the need there, the same passion she'd recognized in the alley the night they'd talked at Ruddy's. So it hadn't been her overheated imagination, as Valerie had implied. Her stomach tightened. "All right."
Forgetting to purchase the cookies, they walked the short distance to his house in silence. Pausing before the psychedelic-swirl mailbox which rested precariously on the rail of the porch, Julia said, "I wonder if anyone got the mail," knowing that if the box was empty, someone was undoubtedly home. She prayed it wasn't.

Winnie reached inside and retrieved a pile of letters. Riffling through them, he pulled out an official-looking envelope. "Hey, what's this?" His eyes widened as he scanned the return address. "Oh, fuck..." He ripped open the letter.

"What is it?" Julia demanded, her longing turning to fear as Winnie's normally placid features grew coarse with fury. "What's wrong?"

"Those bastards!" Winnie dashed into the house, dropping letters as he ran.

"Winnie!" Julia called after him. She picked up the torn envelope. It was from the United States Selective Service Administration in Cincinnati. Julia stared at it blankly, then realized Winnie had just been served with his draft notice. They couldn't wait the few weeks until he graduated? What kind of fuck-up was this?

Closing her eyes, Julia leaned against the porch, wondering why theirs was the only generation to resist its legacy of war. Was it because, prior to the Bomb, fighting was considered a rite of passage? That the "ultimate solution" made people finally realize they could annihilate the entire race? She felt like weeping for everyone, including the Selective Service. Then she thought, what am I doing, standing here? Winnie needs comforting, not me.

Picking up the path of fallen cards and letters, she noticed one addressed to Winnie from Stu and Laura Porter in London. Funny, she'd almost forgotten about them. She could barely remember what they looked like.

Leaving all but Stu and Laura's letter on a ledge near the hallway steps, she hurried towards Winnie's room at the back of the house. "Winnie," she rapped softly on his door. "It's me, Julia. Can I come in?" She reached for the knob.

"Go away." His words were muffled, choked. Was he crying?

"Winnie, please let me in. I know you got your draft notice. You need to find out why it came so early. There are ways of getting around it."

"Go back to your dorm, Julia." She could hear him moving around on the other side of the door, sliding the lock into place. "You said you have to study."

"How could he be so insensitive? She knew he was hurt, but he didn't have to shut her out. "All right then, be like that," she said, still more out of anguish for him than anger.

"Julia, I'll call you. Okay?"

Defeated, Julia turned to leave. "By the way, you got a letter from London," she added. "I'll leave it in the hall with the others."

"From Stu and Laura?" Winnie demanded in a frightened voice. "You didn't open it, did you? Slide it under the door."

"Why would he think she'd snoop through his mail? With a sigh, Julia complied. The longer she knew Winnie, the less she understood him."
Although she and Winnie made up later, Julia could barely concentrate the day of the Moratorium. What had possessed Louie to fall for her? Because she listened to his stories about Vietnam? Because they were comfortable around each other? She had done nothing to encourage him sexually, hadn't even thought about him that way. Julia didn't want to hurt Louie but didn't know how to avoid it, either.

And she was concerned about birth control. She'd abandoned the Pill months ago, hating what it did to her body. Yet the thought of making love without any protection never occurred to her. Some of her friends had had abortions and although she felt every woman was entitled to her choice, she could never live with the guilt of destroying her unborn child.

She decided to get fitted for a diaphragm. Perhaps she could borrow Winnie's car and go to Hamilton. But how could she tactfully tell Winnie she wanted to go to the Free clinic there?

After the People's Lunch, the afternoon program dragged on with speeches about "Morality and War," and racism as it related to Vietnam and the Hayes campus. Issues were raised on extending the Equal Educational Opportunity Program to increase Black enrollment, developing a plan of tutorial and support services for Blacks, having each academic department set aside at least one professorship and graduate assistantship for Blacks, and so on. Distracted by her own problems, Julia glanced about, looking for someone to talk to.

It was then she realized she hadn't seen Valerie since that day, weeks ago, at the jailhouse, during the President's ROTC Review. Had Valerie dropped out one quarter before graduation? Or had she lost herself in an excess of drugs and self-indulgence? Even worse, had Valerie become so paranoid she'd gone underground?

Before Julia could contemplate further, James stood up to speak. Leaning over the microphone with a hellfire-and-brimstone approach reminiscent of old-time preachers, he shouted, "Instead of sitting on our asses rapping about equality, I propose we DO something!" The chattering crowd grew quiet. Whatever his political connections, James knew how to seize the moment.

"What do you suggest, brother?" someone asked.

"I say we pay a visit to the ROTC building," James said. "We gotta show them we mean business."

This idea was met with cries of "Right on! Strike! Strike!" And the group began to move in the direction of the Student Center.

Julia still suspected James might be an informer. She wondered if he was setting up yet another ambush and if the police would be there waiting for them. Still, like most undergraduates, she had no idea where the ROTC building was, and curiosity compelled her to follow along. This time, she might even be able to prove something.

Soon they reached an inconspicuous brick structure tucked between the power plant and the Hayes chapel. The crowd cheered as James deftly broke the lock. There were no policemen to be seen; apparently her theory was wrong.
The students surged inside. "Wow! Look at this!" Winnie's roommate Jake had found Julia on the way over and now pointed to an elevated deck. "Far fuckin' out!" The navigation bridge held a pair of anti-aircraft guns and a single-barrel gunmount. It was a simulated Destroyer vessel with barometer, compass, and other naval gear. Jake pulled a joint out of the pocket of his fringed vest. "Let's get up there and start tokin'!"

Still worried about a trap, Julia hesitated. "I don't know, Jake. What if the cops come after us?"

"Shit, we've already locked 'em out. This is a pretty solid building—they'll have to climb through the windows to get in. Besides, no one knows we're here."

Since it seemed more like a lark than a demonstration, Julia followed him up the steps. From her vantage point on top of the gunmount, she could see everyone's comings and goings. Jake lit the joint and they passed it back and forth. It was fun calling out to people, having them look around, puzzled, then find her grinning above them on the deck. Even more so because she was stoned.

Winnie joined them, scrambling up the metal stairs leading to the bridge. "Whenever I decide to finally hit the books, I always miss something," he complained. He'd been more like his old self lately.

As Julia made room for him, she nearly slipped off the gunmount. "You'd better not smoke any more of that stuff or you'll shoot yourself," Winnie teased, taking the joint from her.

A rock band arrived around the same time as a hassled-looking petty officer. "Would you please stand clear of the bridge, away from the command posts?" he shouted. Hoots and jeers greeted his request and knowing he was outnumbered, he left.

About 6:30, someone took orders for pizza. Julia and Winnie had moved to the relative comfort of the floor of the deck, their legs dangling over the edge which was supported by an iron railing. When their pizza arrived, they shared it between them.

Julia glanced down at the students boogieing to the Psychedelic Scuzzballs. "This is like a party," she giggled, still high from Jake's grass and the excitement of the event. "No, I take it back. This is a party."

"Yeah, I know," Winnie replied, then looked at her in his sensual, penetrating way. He reached for the last piece of pizza. "Listen, about what we did a few days ago..." he began, referring to the kiss that Louie had interrupted. He lifted up the slice, then changed his mind about eating it. "Want this? Otherwise, I'll throw it away."

"No thanks." His loss of appetite showed a lack of confidence. It gave her courage: he needed reassurance, too. She said, "I need to borrow your car, Winnie."

"For what?" He bustled himself with disposing of the pizza.

"I have to go to the Free Clinic for a diaphragm," she told him softly.

Before Winnie had a chance to react, Jake strode over to them, a girl on his arm. With her hair in a pageboy with spit curls on the ends, and creased new bellbottom jeans, she looked like a recent convert to the movement. She held a box full of what appeared to be junk and gazed admiringly at Jake. "Has anyone
seen Adrian?” Jake asked. “Me an' Sherry were liberating some loot an' he got a phone call in the office.”

“Th'at's weird,” Julia said. “Who’d call Adrian here?” Come to think of it, she hadn't seen much of Adrian lately, either. Why would someone think he was at the ROTC building when the demonstration had been spontaneous?

“Did you take a message?” asked Winnie. “Nah, that's a stupid question. You never take any at the house.” He peered into the box. “What is all this stuff, anyway?”

“Souvenirs of a memorable event,” Jake winked at the girl. “You know, American Legion medals, trophies, platoon drill plaques, the usual military shit.” He pulled out an ROTC training manual. “And this pornography.” Tossing it back into the box, he said, “I was gonna sell 'em, but they're free to my friends.” Taking out a medal, he started to pin it on Julia's work shirt.

Julia pulled away from him. “Really, Jake, that's ripping off someone else's property. As much as we don't like them, we're only here to protest the war....”

“May I have your attention, please?” The voice magnified by a bullhorn was only too familiar. Looking down, Julia saw a grim-faced Dean Moreland accompanied by Ken Dietz, student body president. Abruptly the room grew quiet.

“I am going to read Disruptive Behavior Statement Number One,” Moreland began and everyone, including Julia and Winnie, burst into laughter. What a title for simply asking students to split! Titters and giggles accompanied Moreland’s canned speech which basically said that they were trespassers subject to arrest, and should leave now or face suspension. After Moreland was done, the crowd applauded and whistled. Julia noticed, however, that the rock band had disappeared, along with dozens of previously enthusiastic participants.

By now, Julia was familiar with Moreland’s purple-faced anger. “I’m serious about this! We mean business,” he shouted. Julia believed him. “I’m going to proceed to Disruptive Behavior Statement Number Two,” he said, making an obvious effort to calm himself. This was greeted with snores and hand-blown farts; the joke had gotten old.

“The students present are now advised that they are officially suspended under the provisions of Disciplinary Procedures, Section 384.” Moreland had regained his composure, although he was still yelling in spite of the bullhorn. “The proper officials have been notified. Anyone remaining in the building will be arrested and charged with Breaking and Entering, which is a felony punishable by fine and imprisonment, and Trespassing, under the Ohio State Code.”

“Hell, no, we won't go! Hell, no, we won't go!” The students chanted, raising clenched right hands in unison. James leaned over the railing above Moreland and shouted, “We ain't movin' til you get rid of ROTC and give Blacks freedom on this campus. 'Til then, you know where you can stick your fuckin' Disruptive Behavior Statements.”

Wordlessly, Moreland handed the bullhorn to a beleaguered Ken Dietz and elbowed his way outside. Students cheered at his retreating back.

Julia and Winnie exchanged worried glances. “The party is over,” Julia said.
"I know. We'd better split before the cops arrive." Taking her hand, he
began to lead her downstairs.

Julia thought about the times she'd avoided taking a stand. She shook
her head. Tonight she was going to stay, even if it meant jail. She wanted to end
the war, and if this was what it took... "I'm not leaving, Winnie. You can if you'd
like."

"Julia, you're going to get hurt. Look what happened to Shawn."

"That's not the point, Winnie. Sometimes you have to make sacrifices for
everyone's good. If enough people unite, they'll have to listen."

The building began to rumble and the remaining students rushed to the
windows. "Tanks!" someone exclaimed. "They've brought out the fuckin' National Guard!" Overhead, the roof rattled; obviously a chopper hovered above
them.

The front and back doors burst open. While Shawnee County and
Hampton police blocked the entrances, Highway Patrolmen began to remove
students, who quickly assumed the standard protest position, crossing their
legs and linking their arms. The cops picked them up by their elbows; only when
demonstrators actively resisted arrest did they use force, pulling them by their
hair. Students retaliated by thrashing, biting, and kicking, increasing their
activity for the benefit of the audience they knew waited outside.

Julia started towards the exit. "If we go peacefully, they probably won't
hassle us too much," she said. Winnie followed her silently. She struggled with
her own fear. What if Sheriff Adams were to demand an interrogation, alone?
She glanced around; he was nowhere to be seen. The Shawnee County
policeman guarding the exit stepped away from the door. Instead of paying
attention to her and Winnie, he looked into the crowd, and Julia realized he was
giving them an opportunity to escape and avoid arrest.

Julia held out her hands to him. "I want to stop the war. It's immoral,
and this is one small thing I can do for the people who have died."

Winnie hung back and she turned to him. "Go back to the house, if you
want. I'll be fine." Secretly she hoped he would stay with her.

"I shouldn't leave you," he replied, his face an agony of confusion. Julia's
heart ached for him.

"I'll be okay, Winnie. Really. Besides, if the Draft Board sees you were
busted during a demonstration, they'll ship you to Vietnam for sure."

"I don't have all day, you two," the cop said.

Winnie started to turn away, his expression still anguished. "I'll go back
to the house and get the car and some bread for bail," he said. "Where are you
taking her?"

"Hamilton Police Station." The cop grasped Julia's arm.

"I'll see you there," Winnie promised her. Maybe when he picks me up,
we can stop at the Free Clinic, she thought, then chided herself for being so
selfish. "Be careful, Julia."

Outside, the mace-filled air reverberated with sirens, screams, and
shouts of "Fuck you, pigs!" An ambulance tore through the fabric of the crowd,
leaving students fleeing in its path.
Julia gasped at the size of the milling mob; it looked on the verge of a full-scale riot. “Actually, you’re safer on the bus,” the cop told her. “Hope your boyfriend doesn’t get hurt.”

“Why, so he can be killed in Vietnam?” Julia said, then immediately felt contrite because the policeman had been so reasonable. “This isn’t a game, you know. We have a purpose in doing this.”

She stepped onto the school bus that held the arrested demonstrators. Everyone was jabbering about a student who had been trying to break up a fight between a cop and another protester and had been struck unconscious by a billy club. He had just been taken away by the ambulance.

“Who?” Julia was suddenly apprehensive. Somehow the story sounded familiar.

“The Student Mobilization Committee leader, Louie what’s-his-name,” a girl informed her.

“Louie Wexler?” Julia cried, horrified.

“That’s him. We don’t know if he’s going to make it. His head was covered with blood.”

Julia buried her face in her hands. “Oh my God,” she said, her voice bitter. “Why do I keep calling on God? From the looks of things, He must be dead.” Just like Louie might be.

“Right on, sister,” someone agreed as the bus headed toward Hamilton and an uncertain fate.

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Julia and the fifty other arrested female demonstrators spent the night huddled in a cold, barren holding cell. With one toilet and the stink of urine barely covered by disinfectant, the group’s spirit quickly dissipated. Julia agonized over Louie and, despite her doubts about the existence of God, prayed. Of everyone she knew, Louie was the most courageous, the most committed. He’d seen death firsthand and she’d thought it made him different.

But did it? she wondered. Had she drawn an invisible line between herself and Louie because he’d been in Vietnam? Did it make her any better than those who shunned vets or called them mass murderers and baby killers? The truth is, most of us would have reacted similarly, she realized. In a kill or be killed situation you do what you must to survive.

Every time a guard passed their cell, she asked, “Any word on the student who was hurt?” while others clamored for release. No one seemed to know anything, and Julia paced back and forth in the space left to her.

Finally, she tumbled into a corner and slept uneasily. When she awakened, it was morning and a heavy-set matron holding a clipboard was unlocking the cell. “Everybody out,” the matron announced. “We’re going to return your identification and jewelry, but you’ll have to find your own way home. The University has arranged for your release, but you will be charged with trespassing. Although, personally, I would’ve let you sit for a few more days.”

“Fuck you,” the girl next to Julia muttered.

The matron, thinking Julia had spoken, pointed an accusing finger at her and exclaimed, “I heard that. Come over here.”
“It wasn’t me,” Julia stammered, backing away. Why did she feel so
guilty?

“What’s your name?”

“Julia Brandon,” Julia glared at the real culprit who pretended to look
innocent. “But I didn’t say it. Honest.” The girl edged away from Julia as quickly
as she could.

“Oh yeah?” The matron scanned the clipboard, then scowled. “You’re
on here all right. From the looks of Sheriff Adams’ notes you’re a real troublemaker.
Maybe we ought to ship you back to Hampton in a patrol car so you can have a
talk with him.”

“No! Please!” Julia pleaded, clasping her hands together. “I have to get
back to campus. One of my best friends is in University Hospital with a
concussion. And my boyfriend’s on the verge of being drafted. Sheriff Adams has
it in for me since last year when I tried to post bail for my roommate.” Of course
the woman would never believe that Adams hoped to do more than interrogate
Julia, so Julia refrained from telling her.

“You kids have no respect for authority,” the matron said. “You spit in
the face of everything. Come along quietly or I’ll have to put you in cuffs.” She
reached for Julia’s arm.

“I didn’t say it. You’ve got to believe me!” Julia cried hoarsely. Even
though her eyes burned with exhaustion, fear made her wide awake. “I can’t
speak for the others but I’m not disrespectful. People are entitled to their own
opinions. Since you come from a different generation, I can understand your
frustration.”

The woman stared at Julia for a long moment, then said, “I don’t know
why, but I think you’re telling the truth. Go ahead with the rest.”

“Nice work,” someone murmured as they filed towards the booking area
to pick up their possessions.

“I wasn’t lying,” snapped Julia, not caring whether her voice carried. “I
can’t stand people who dish things out then leave others to take the rap. If I ever
see that chick again, I’ll kick her in the face.” She knew she was tired and
irritable, but she sounded as tough as Valerie, an unsettling realization.

After Julia got her things, she hurried to the station lobby. Perhaps she
and Winnie could visit Louie in the hospital. The stop at the Free Clinic was
forgotten.

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Except for the presence of militia on campus, the next few days were
uneventful. Students and soldiers developed the strange sort of camaraderie
sometimes found in a hostage-captor situation. Coeds placed flowers in gun
barrels, made daisy wreaths for military necks, slipped peace symbol flags close
to where the Guardsmen stood. In return, the soldiers, who were mostly young,
whistled and flirted when they thought their commanding officers weren’t
looking.

Julia spent much of her time in the hospital with Louie. Although he’d
received a relatively mild concussion, he slipped in and out of depression. The
doctors felt it was somehow related to his experience in Vietnam. She met Louie’s
parents, who reminded her of her own mother and father in odd little ways. They left after a few days, when they felt Louie was all right.

But Julia knew differently. When others were around, Louie seemed like his usual effusive self. But when he and Julia were alone, he grew morose. He resisted Julia's attempts to get him to discuss what was bothering him. Finally he lost his temper, accusing her of patronizing him, saying, "I don't know why you're so worried about me. I can take care of myself." When she refused to be put off, he told her about his love affair with Hu'o'ng, how she became pregnant with his child, and how she died in Vietnam.

After that, Julia avoided the hospital. She had only made things worse by meddling. Besides, he couldn't have cared for her as much as she'd believed, not after abandoning a woman he'd claimed to have truly loved.

Although Julia finally got fitted for a diaphragm, she had little opportunity to tell Winnie. For at the end of April, Nixon sent troops across the Cambodian border and the campus once again erupted in violence. Dissidents tossed Molotov cocktails through the windows of the Administration Building and a gang of drunken fraternity boys raged through uptown, causing a general uproar.

The military tightened its grip, imposing a nine o'clock curfew. National Guardsmen stepped in whenever students congregated in small groups. The ensuing fist fights finally destroyed any rapport that might have sprung up between the two camps.

That weekend, rallies were held and reports of violence at other colleges filtered back to Hayes. Demonstrators burned down the ROTC building at Kent; broke windows and defaced businesses on High Street at Ohio State; staged a sit-in in downtown Cincinnati, blocking traffic for miles.

Her arrest and Louie's injury had been to no avail. What difference had they made? Vietnam was a war of the older generation—the same generation that still held tightly to the students' and refused to let go. Nothing was going to change, no matter how much they marched or boycotted or even advocated revolution. It would only breed more oppression.

Julia remembered her mother's remark about futile causes. Perhaps Hester had been right. The world was full of great injustices; one only needed to protect oneself from harm. But still, she despised the hopeless feeling those thoughts gave her. And what about the boys still dying overseas or coming home physically and mentally devastated? And what about others who still might go, like Winnie? She wondered what her relationship with Winnie would be like had they not been haunted by the specter of Vietnam. Would they be engaged? Or would they never have met?

At seven a.m. on Sunday someone rapped softly at her window. Still half-asleep, forgetting to put on her robe, Julia lifted up the sash and peered down at Winnie.

His russet hair gleamed in the sunlight and a T-shirt and cutoffs emphasized his muscular body. Self-consciously she pulled her nightgown over her breasts. "What are you doing here?" she demanded, confused from being awakened.
"I was hoping you slept in the nude," he teased, flashing his radiant smile. "But we haven't seen much of each other, so I thought we'd spend the day at Shawnee Park. We'll have a picnic lunch and swim in the lake."

"Well, that wasn't my idea... us not being together, I mean," she said, starting to close the window.

"Julia, wait," Winnie placed his hand on the screen. "Please don't be like that. My Army physical's tomorrow and I'm going through hell."

Between his low lottery number and the fact that he'd be graduating in less than a month, the draft board refused to put off his physical. He needed her more than ever. "Oh, God, Winnie." Julia put her hand on the other side of the screen so their fingers mirrored each other. It was like visiting someone in a prison, except she could feel his warmth. "Why didn't you say something sooner?"

"What's to say? It won't change the facts. Either I'll go or I won't." He looked at her imploringly. "But let's enjoy today, Julia. It's going to be beautiful."

"I'll meet you in front in a few minutes."

"Far out. Make it quick, though. The others are in the car and we want to get a good spot."

Why did it always have to be with the others, Julia mused as she pulled on jeans and a gauzy top. They didn't always have to come along. If she didn't know better, she'd swear Winnie was afraid to be alone with her.

Her mood lifted as they drove towards Shawnee Lake. A state park and natural game preserve twenty-five miles away from Hayes, it was a favorite springtime retreat for college students. A beach surrounded the huge manmade lake, making it nearly as beautiful as the real thing.

At the park they located a grill and after an enthusiastic game of frisbee, they barbecued hamburgers and hot dogs. Afterwards, Vicki, Bill and Jake wandered off in the woods to get stoned, while Julia, Kirsten, and Winnie cleared away the remains of lunch. When the group returned, Jake suggested they go skinny-dipping at a hidden cove they'd discovered last year. All but Julia agreed.

"I can't," she stammered. Except for her parents when she was a young child, Trevor—who had been drunk at the time—and the girls in the dorm showers, no one had ever seen her completely nude.

"You guys go ahead," Winnie told the others. "Julia and I will be along soon."

"Why are you so inhibited?" Winnie asked when they were alone.

"I've never done anything like that before," she hung her head, embarrassed by her own naiveté.

"Neither had I, until a couple of years ago." Gently he cupped her chin with his hand. "I know you haven't done a lot of things." He looked at her intently. 

He thinks I'm still a virgin, Julia realized in shock. Yet she did nothing to correct his misconception.

They walked to the cove. In the distance, Julia could hear the others laughing and splashing. The area was heavily wooded, giving the illusion of privacy.
Not taking his eyes off Julia, Winnie began to strip. Mesmerized, she watched him. He had a beautiful, tanned body—broad, muscular shoulders, flat stomach, narrow hips, strong legs. He did not bother to hide his erection. “Your turn,” he said softly, his glittering eyes challenging her.

Time seemed to stand still. She could hear the birds singing in the trees. A squirrel dashed across their path, taking refuge in a nest of wild clover. Julia’s fingers hesitated at the top of her peasant blouse.

“I’ll make it easy for you,” Winnie told her. “I’ll meet you in the water.” He strode towards the cove, leaving Julia to admire his smooth buttocks.

Alone, she undressed quickly and raced towards the lake, jumping in without bothering to test the water. The others seemed to take her presence for granted. Why shouldn’t they, Julia thought. They were naked too. She relaxed. They were all men and women, they all had had bodies, they were, in a sense, a family.

Winnie swam towards her. “See, it’s not so bad, is it? I must confess, though, I couldn’t help but peek. You’re even lovelier than I imagined.” With that, he ducked his head under the water and dove a few feet beneath her legs. Julia giggled and she and Winnie chased and dunked each other. The sun beat down on them and she’d never felt more alive or content.

Soon they were both out of breath, and he said, “I’m getting wiped out. I know a beach where we can catch some rays without being seen.”

As Julia started to swim with him, he called to the others, “We’ll be back in a while.”

The isolated stretch of sand was surrounded by scrub pines. Accustomed by now to their nudity—reveling in the freedom of walking around unclothed—Julia thought nothing of getting out of the water and following him up to the shore.

Reaching behind a tree, Winnie pulled out a big garbage bag. It held two towels and an unopened bottle of Jack Daniels whiskey.

“I was hoping this stuff was still here,” he said as he laid the towels side by side. “I meant to come back last spring and get it but never had the chance. Do you suppose the whiskey’s still good?”

“Might as well try.” Julia watched as he opened the bottle and took a swig.

“Not bad.” He offered it to her. “In fact it’s real smooth.”

“No thanks,” Julia shuddered.

“Don’t you like Jack Daniels? It’s the best.”

“I don’t touch hard liquor any more. Not since last winter.” She waited for him to ask why so she could tell him about Trevor.

Instead he reached over and captured her breast, fondling her nipple with his fingers. Julia moaned softly and Winnie moved closer. “I mean it when I say you’re exquisite.” He began to kiss her neck, his tongue making slight indentations.

Her arms encircled his waist. “Everything’s in place, I presume,” he murmured in her ear, and for an instant she had no idea what he was talking about.

The diaphragm. “It’s back at the dorm,” she whispered, no longer caring. Let them make love and damn the consequences.
"Jesus Christ!" Winnie dropped his embrace and Julia jumped back, startled. He drew up his legs, burying his head in his arms. She stared at him in disbelief as he demanded, "How in the hell could I forget it?"

"You don't have to yell at me," Julia replied, close to tears. "I didn't think to put it in. You said the others were coming, so it never occurred to me we'd be alone." Why was birth control always the woman's responsibility, anyway? "It's not like a rubber you can keep with you all the time." She glared at him.

"Do I look like I'm carrying a wallet?" Winnie lifted up his palms in frustration. He shook his mane, his long hair hiding his expression. "Look, I'm not mad at you, okay? Just disappointed. But I'd better split right now before I lose control and do something we'll both regret. C'mon, let's go back." Without waiting for her, he dashed into the water.

Everyone was tired, so the ride home was quiet. Julia tried to get in back, but Winnie insisted she sit next to him, touching her and looking at her with regretful eyes.

Julia condemned her own lack of sophistication. Of course she should have thought about the diaphragm. But why couldn't they just go ahead and make love? Was he afraid of even the implied commitment of pregnancy? She was ready to forge a life together. Why wasn't he?

They pulled in front of Julia's dorm. Winnie turned to her and said, "I'll meet you at the rally tonight, then we'll go back to my house."

There was no mistaking his message. "I'll be there," she promised. "This time I'll remember."

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The rally began at 7:30 in front of the Administration Building, just as dusk settled over the campus. Early May was the height of spring, reminding Julia of last year's Music Fest, when the protest movement was a fault line over an abyss of discontent.

Look at us now, she reflected, glancing around at the thousands of milling students. I don't even know most of these people. And from the appearance of some, I wonder if they even go to school here.

Winnie came up behind her in his usual silent way and slipped his arm around her waist. Moving his hand so it rested a few inches below her breasts, he whispered, "We'll split early if that's OK with you."

Julia stirred and sighed. The wetness between her legs was more than contraceptive jelly. "We can go now if you'd like."

"Let's wait a couple of minutes," Winnie said. "I want to hear what this dude has to say." He pointed to a wild-haired young man in an Army jacket who was about to take the microphone. "He's supposed to be an expert on draft evasion."

"Who is he?" Julia asked. "He's not from around here."

"He's not a draft counselor, either," a voice behind them said. Julia and Winnie turned to see Valerie. Her clothes were clean, her blonde hair freshly washed. She wore pink lipstick. "He's a professional agitator, a Weatherman brought in by the SDS. I've been looking for you all day, Julia," Valerie went on. "I've got to rap with you."
Dumbfounded, Julia stared at her. She'd expected Valerie to be disheveled and disgruntled and if she hadn't seemed so worried, Julia would have said Valerie looked happy. Too surprised to express anger at Valerie's past treatment of her, she asked, "What's wrong?"

"I can't tell you here. We've got to talk." Valerie picked her fingernails, which Julia noticed were manicured. She'd never known Valerie to paint her nails. Or fiddle with them, either.

"We were just leaving," Winnie said, tightening his arm around Julia. "Julia and I have plans."

"Please, Julia," Valerie said. "I wouldn't ask for your help unless it was an emergency."

Even though they were no longer close, Julia still felt the pull of friendship. "Can't this wait until tomorrow, Valerie? Winnie'll be in Cincinnati and you and I'll have time."

"There is no time, don't you see? It's just about run out for all of us." She ducked down. "Oh shit, there's Adrian. He didn't see me, did he?" Adrian stood a few feet away with his back to them and Julia shook her head. "You're the only one I can trust, Julia."

Julia looked at Winnie for guidance. "We might as well humor her, Julia. But don't let her keep you more than a few minutes." He released his grip. "You're paranoid, Valerie, do you know that?"

"And you're hornier than hell, Winnie," Valerie said with her usual asperity. "Don't worry, you'll get your rocks off before they ship you out. Believe it or not, some things are more important than sex."

Winnie muttered under his breath as Julia and Valerie hurried towards the edge of the crowd. "Why did you talk to him that way?" Julia asked. "Does it bother you that he cares about me? That you were wrong about him wanting to find one special person?"

Valerie looked at Julia and shook her head. "Still the romantic, aren't you? That's irrelevant right now. We've got to get away as soon as possible. Ever been to the Cliffs?"

Julia stopped. "That's almost a mile from here!"

Grasping Julia's elbow, Valerie steered her behind the Administration building, away from the military encampment. "I'll explain it to you on the way over. It's a matter of life and death."

"Then you can just tell me right now. There's no one around. I mean it, Valerie. I'm not budging until I know what this is all about." Crossing her arms, Julia stood unmoving.

Valerie looked at her with respect. "Whatever happened to the passive sorority girl? Now I know how Dr. Frankenstein felt when he brought the dead back to life. But at least I helped create someone who thinks for herself. All right, Julia. You deserve an explanation."

At the beginning of the quarter, after her arrest at the ROTC march, Valerie had gone to see Richard Shaffley. "I told myself I wanted to talk to him one last time before I graduated," Valerie said. "Then he totally blew me away—he said he loved me, but was afraid to seek me out because he thought I hated him, just like his own son did. I almost had myself convinced I hated him, too, until I
realized lover and hate come from the same emotion.” Before Julia could question that outrageous idea—she certainly didn’t love Adolf Hitler, for instance—Valerie continued. “He and Myra separated last January. She went back to Boston and took Carrie with her. And Adrian never said a word, even though I know he was in contact with his mother.”

“Richard was alone all that time and didn’t call you?”

“He said he needed to think things through, to reevaluate his life and figure out where he’d gone wrong,” Valerie replied. “He didn’t want to mess me up again.”

“I can’t believe someone that old would have those kinds of problems,” Julia said. She thought of her parents and their friends, people she’d known from childhood who’d stayed at the same job, with the same spouse, address, and phone number. They had no trouble with their identities.

“Experience only makes you better at hiding your fears,” Valerie told her. “Contrary to popular myth, you don’t stop hurting inside when you turn thirty.”

Although she’d moved in with Richard, Valerie went on, she maintained her commitment to ending the war. She continued her SDS activities, planning to marry Richard in July and go with him to the University of Florida where he’d accepted a teaching position. “We want to make a new start,” Valerie said to Julia. “Luckily for me, Adrian and James got so involved with the subversive shit they didn’t notice the changes I’ve been going through.”

“Subversive?” Julia asked. As far as she knew, Valerie hadn’t been involved in anything more destructive than supplying the campus with marijuana and other drugs.

“Don’t you wonder where the stuff for the Molotov cocktails comes from? The Student Mobilization Committee didn’t plan the trash can fires or the building break-ins. And although most of the campus thought the flush-in was a big joke, we counted on it fucking up the entire sewage system. And we almost succeeded.”

Julia began to comprehend what Valerie was telling her. Valerie’s terror of discovery stemmed from the consequences of her actions, as well as James’ and Adrian’s. Julia knew now that she hadn’t imagined the mysterious boxes in Adrian’s livingroom; she’d merely been naive enough to think their contents were harmless.

“Do you think this shit is spontaneous? It’s planned, Julia. By a core group of people truly dedicated to stopping the war. While you and Winnie have been making goo-goo eyes at each other and Louie’s been running around getting clobbered, we’ve been orchestrating the methodical overthrow of the system. But now it’s gone too far. Even for me.”

Despite the warm evening, Julia felt a chill. “My God, Valerie. What are you talking about?”

“Tomorrow they plan on blowing up the Administration Building. No advance phone calls. Nothing. I can relate to people getting hurt for the cause, but not to random murder.”

A feeling of unreality stole over Julia, the same sensation she’d had when Lydia had spit at her during the Young Americans for Freedom rally last winter. She stroked her cheek. “Maybe they’re making idle threats,” she said.
"They wouldn't actually kill anyone, would they?"

"I know you and Winnie think I'm paranoid, Julia, with all my talk about the CIA and phone taps and shit. But James is for real; like I told you before, he's one heavy dude. James, Adrian, a couple of others are supposed to rendezvous at the Cliffs and 4:00 a.m. and pick up a cache of ammo we hid there. Once James attaches the timing device to the plastique, they're going to break into the Administration Building and plant a bomb in the basement."

So this was what Valerie had been doing all this time. They were out of their depth. "We've got to tell the police. Now."

"No pigs, Julia. No pigs!" Valerie whirled around, her face rigid with anger and fear. "Think of what they'll do to me—us, since you know about it too—if we get busted. Ten years in jail for me, at least! And you, well, you might as well forget about ever having a career or marrying a decent guy."

That's not what I want out of life," Julia countered. "I love Winnie, and whatever he wants will make me happy."

"But what about me?" Valerie's defenses dissolved and she began to cry, huge gulping sobs. "I finally got my shit together, after my life fell apart. You have to help me. You and I need to get the ammo and take it back to my old house. I told Richard I needed to spend the night there and clean up because we're putting it up for sale. Tomorrow morning Richard and I will dump the stuff in Shawnee Lake."

"So Richard knows about this too?"

"No, I told him it's a bushel of bad grass laced with strychnine. I don't want to burden him with this; he's got enough on his head. If we get caught with the ammo, he can claim ignorance, even pass a lie detector test. If I got away, I could go underground." Valerie's voice rang with conviction, but her expression was frightened.

Separation from Richard would ruin Valerie's chances for happiness forever, and she'd suffered enough. How unfair if Valerie had to become a fugitive from the law, just when she'd gotten her life together. "All right, Valerie, I'll help you, but you've got to let me phone in an anonymous tip to the cops about the activities at Adrian's farmhouse. I don't like the police either, but this sabotage has to be stopped before someone really gets killed. And what will James and Adrian do when the discover the ammo is missing? Won't they start asking questions?"

"I hadn't really thought about that," Valerie conceded. "But promise me you'll call the pigs after Richard and I get rid of the evidence. I may have to go to court, but as long as they can't prove anything, I'll probably get off." She attempted a smile. "Know any decent lawyers?"

With a stab of guilt, Julia thought of Louie. He could help them out of this mess. But he was still in the hospital, and besides, he was upset with her.

It was nearly dark by the time the two women reached the Cliffs. Elongated shadows loomed like ominous fingers ready to grab them. The woods were strangely quiet. "Are you sure we're not being followed?" Julia demanded, unable to shake a sense that someone was watching. "You are being straight with me about this, aren't you?" Could she be indirectly aiding the radicals by moving the contraband to a more convenient location?
I swear on my great-grandmother's grave," Valerie replied. "I know I used you in the past to gather information, and I'm really sorry about that. But we operate on a need-to-know basis, and when Adrian, James and the rest of us first mobilized, we agreed on a course of action. You, on the other hand, wavered between being the model daughter and the self-involved hippie."

Julia resented Valerie's last remark, but was too worried to take offense. "But Valerie, your activities make you even worse than the police! Don't you see you're breeding more violence?"

"That's where you and I differ. That's why I never told you much. But now the situation's too intense, and only we can put a stop to it." Valerie paused before two boulders. "This is the place." A flat stone rested between the tall rocks. Pointing to it, Valerie said, "Help me push this off. The stuff's in a hole underneath."

They each grasped an end and, with much effort, finally moved the heavy stone. Two burlap bags lay in the hole.

"Fortunately, it's only a couple of M-16s and cartridge belts, plastique, and a few sticks of dynamite." Valerie explained casually. "We won't have too much trouble getting it back."

Julia stared at the bags. In them was materiel designed to kill human beings. The contents of her stomach started to work their way towards her throat. "I'm going to the police." She turned to leave.

Valerie grabbed her arm so hard Julia was sure her fingers had made marks. "Listen to me, Julia Brandon! I can relate to where you're coming from. But we have to do it my way or you'll permanently fuck up all our lives including those of innocent people like yourself and Richard. Tell me, how else can we escape unharmed?"

"I don't know, Valerie. This is wrong." Julia shook her curls from her damp face; the sweat from fear and exertion made her long hair feel heavy. As much as she hated to admit it, Valerie's arguments made sense. There really was no other solution.

"Of course it's wrong! That's why I'm risking our asses to stop it." Sensing Julia's acquiescence, Valerie released her grip. "Now let's be quick; curfew's in less than an hour and I know you want to get back to Winnie. And we have to take the longest route back to my place so we won't run into any pigs."

Valerie hoisted one bag over her shoulder and slowly Julia picked up the other. It was lighter than it looked. Their eyes met. "Julia, you're the best friend I've ever had," Valerie said softly. "You were always there for me, even when I treated you like shit. I hope you get whatever it is you finally decide you want. You deserve it."

"Oh, Valerie," Julia wanted to weep. Why was she being so sentimental when they were in such danger? She struggled to hide her feelings. "Are you sure we're doing the right thing? I can't help but feel we should go to the authorities."

They started to walk. "I'm positive," Valerie said. "Let's not discuss this any more, okay?"

They hurried through the growing darkness. They encountered no one, so Julia told herself they were safe.
After securing the bags and being once again reassured by Valerie that everything would be all right, Julia left her friend’s house. But as she walked through uptown, she found herself getting agitated all over again. How could Valerie let things go this far without telling anyone? And why hadn’t she at least confided in Richard? He might have convinced her to do something about the weapons before now.

No one had bothered to turn on the street lights even though darkness had almost fallen. Lost in thought, Julia headed into campus without a thought to staying on the Slantwalk, the central and most well-traveled path. Instead she shuffled through the grass, taking the most direct route to the Administration Building.

“Just a minute, young lady,” someone shouted. Deputy Adams strode towards her, shortening the distance between them with every word. “You’ve violated curfew and I’m taking you in.” For an instant Julia felt an extraordinary relief—here was an authority figure, someone whom she could warn. Then she remembered that cops were the enemy, especially Adams. If it had been anyone but him, she might have confessed anyway. But as it was, she had to get away.

Feigning calm, she glanced at her Timex. The illuminated hands read 8:54. “It’s not nine yet,” she said, her voice even, knowing his compulsion for rules. “The rally’s still going on.” Adams seized her wrist and looked at her watch. “The clock in my car says different, but I’ll give you the benefit of the doubt. You still won’t make it back to the rally in time.” He stank of sweat and chewing tobacco; his fox eyes seemed to glow. “But I’ll let you try.” He released her.

Determined not to let Adams know how much he unnerved her, she turned in the direction of the Administration building. Were those footsteps echoing hers? She refused to look behind her.

Adams answered her unspoken question by saying, “This place isn’t so different from Vietnam—at least not according to my brother Danny’s letters. We’ve got good guys—the law and the townies—and Cong—you hippies.” Julia decided not to answer but quickened her pace. She could hear Adams speeding up his.

“You wanna know how Danny bought it?” His voice mocked her. “He stepped on a mine in the jungle and got his legs blown off.” Adams had been a victim too, channeling his grief into hatred of the protesters Julia realized with a rush of sympathy. She stopped and faced him. “I’m sorry about your brother,” she said. “But you have to understand we’re trying to prevent more people like him from being killed.”

“No, magnolia blossom.” He shook his head. “You and your friends are a bunch of pinko cowards afraid to stand up for your country. You see the war as an excuse for sex, drugs, and rock and roll. Folks in uniform like me and the veterans, we’re the real heroes.” He seemed desolate standing there in the dim light, patting his billy club. “Look at your watch now, magnolia blossom, and I bet you’ll see it’s after nine. Looks like you’re gonna miss your rendezvous with lover boy.”
How could he possibly know about Winnie? Her surprise must have been visible because Adams said, "I have spies, or, to be more exact, a spy. He lets me know what you hippies are up to. Of course, I can always guess." Taking his billy club out of its holder he stroked it up and down suggestively. "Now it's my turn."

There was no mistaking his intent. He meant to come after her. Without replying, Julia ran. The campus was still deserted, but she thought the students would be coming back so she zigzagged around buildings, hoping to encounter someone.

No luck. Drenched with perspiration, she ducked inside the Cassidy Hall arch to catch her breath. She had to stop, just for a minute. But she thought she heard footfalls and took flight again. How could Adams possibly know where she was? He must have a sixth sense.

This was how hunted animals must feel. "Oh, please go away." She barely realized she'd spoken out loud. Where was everybody? Normally the campus teemed with people. She would have given her soul for the sight of a National Guardsman.

She stumbled in the direction of the Administration building. Someone had to be there. If she could hold out a little longer she would reach it.

The front lawn was uninhabited; the podium and the microphone stood empty. The students had returned to their residences with a full military escort. She was sure Adams still stalked her. Her heart pounded as she backtracked towards a clump of trees in a last-ditch attempt to hide. Strong hands reached out from behind the tree and pulled her down. Julia screamed and began to scratch with her little remaining strength; her assailant clamped his fingers over her mouth. Julia started to bite him, then realized the person holding her was Winnie.

"Oh, thank God," she burst into tears, hugging him. "I thought you were Adams. I thought he was following me. It was like a nightmare." Her words tumbled over each other and he stroked her hair.

"Shh, Julia. It's after curfew. I waited for you here because I knew something happened. Otherwise you'd have come right back to the rally."

Julia clung to him. "What are we going to do if Adams finds us here?"

"You don't know if he was tailing you for sure... he'd probably split anyway, once he saw me. He's a coward who uses his goddamn badge to terrorize defenseless women."

Julia was about to comment that she wasn't entirely helpless when Winnie began to kiss her. All thoughts and words flew out of her head until the crunching of boots indicated the return of the militia. Breaking off their embrace, Winnie peered around the tree. "It's only a couple of Guardsmen on sentry duty," he whispered. "They probably won't notice us if we sneak around the back."

When she thought about that night later, she could never recall the trip back to Winnie's house. Not like what followed. Every motion, every nuance, replayed itself over and over in her mind, allowing her a chance to relive it even as she was living it. As soon as they reached Winnie's room, they peeled off each other's clothes. She remembered Winnie telling her, "I'm going to be as gentle as
possible the first time.” And her cries of pleasure. Losing herself was not frightening after she’d crossed the borderline. She wanted more and more, and he eagerly gave.

Only near morning, when a breeze from an open window wafted across their entwined, sweat-slick bodies, did she wonder how and where he’d learned how to make love like that. The thought filled her with shame. What business was it of hers? Winnie loved her; tonight had been proof. “I love you,” she murmured. His eyelids fluttered—had he heard her?—but he only moaned softly and nestled his head further between her breasts.

She noticed his pewter peace symbol had twisted itself around his back. To wear it to the Army induction center would be like waving a Viet Cong flag in the face of the military, and Winnie was absent-minded enough to forget to take it off. Gently she unhooked the necklace, placing it on the nightstand next to the narrow bed. Please let him fail the physical, she prayed. Maybe his recently healed leg or his childhood illnesses would rescue him.

Just before drifting off herself, she thought how wonderful it was that she and Valerie had found happiness at the same time. She believed all facets of the prism of love had been revealed to her.

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The first thing Julia noticed when she awoke was that Winnie’s peace symbol was not on the nightstand. Winnie had gone also, presumably to take his physical. Julia hoped he had the sense to remove the necklace before the actual examination.

Quickly pulling on her clothes, she left the house a few minutes later. As she passed through campus on the way to Valerie’s, she heard the scream of sirens. Students ran in every direction. Julia grabbed the arm of a frantic passer-by. “What’s going down?” she asked, her stomach clutching with fear.

“Kids were killed at Kent State. Someone’s planted a bomb in the Administration building!” He dashed off.

“A bomb?” Julia cried. “A bomb?” Her first thought was that Valerie had deceived her. Valerie had said they would get rid of the weapons and be friends forever.

Anger overcame hesitancy and logic. Julia raced towards the Administration building, elbowing her way through students, not caring whose toes she trod on or books she knocked down. She had been an unwitting party to this and she was going to put an end to it. But metal barricades and armed militia impeded her progress. “Let me through!” She jumped from sentry to sentry, begging anyone who would listen.

Finally, one Guardsman pulled her aside. “Calm down, miss. There’s no way we can let you pass. Although the building has been evacuated, we’ve got a hostage situation, too.”

“Hostage?” Julia demanded, bewildered. Valerie hadn’t said anything about taking prisoners.

She turned to the students behind her. “Does anyone know what’s happening?”
“Sort of.” A freshman girl Julia recognized from the Student Mobilization Committee spoke. “A group of Weathermen are threatening to blow up the Administration building unless our beloved President Carrell gets ROTC off campus. They have some other demands, but I’m not sure what they are. Anyway, one of their chicks defected and that James dude found out about it. He’s gonna blow her away if she tells anyone where the bomb is. He’s got Dr. Shaffley, too.”

“It’s in the basement!” Julia cried. “The basement!” How could James possibly know that she and Valerie had absconded with the ammo? And why didn’t he confront them last night, instead of waiting until today?

“We realize that, miss,” said the Guardsman who had been listening to their conversation. “We don’t know the exact location.”

Valerie.... The militia had cordoned off a hundred square yard area in front of the Administration building, making it difficult to see exactly what was going on. When Julia squinted, she could glimpse Valerie’s blonde hair shining in the sunlight. Richard stood close to her. James pointed an M-16 at their heads.

Julia felt as if her breath had been taken away. She tried to focus on something trivial, the green and yellow curlicues on the Indian print dress of the freshman next to her. The cloth had been one of Nirvana, Ohio’s best-selling bedspreads.

Several feet in front of James, Valerie, and Richard stood two radicals Julia knew by sight. The tall boy on the left held the other M-16.

“Did you hear about Kent State?” The Indian print girl was asking her a question.

“Kent State?” Julia repeated blankly.

The girl turned a hate-filled stare onto the eavesdropping Guardsman. “His brothers-in-arms decided to open fire during a demonstration. Must felt good to use those guns and see those kids bleed to death, huh?” The Guardsman’s expression deadened; his military mask slid into place.

“Cool it, willya?” Someone behind them said. “We’ve got enough hassles without causing any more. Here comes Carrell; I want to hear what he has to say.”

Passing through the barricades with a bullhorn in his hand, President Carrell stopped several yards in front of the Administration building. For the first time, Julia noticed the bomb squad clustered next to him, identifiable by their dark clothing. Julia wondered what the initials SWAT on their backs stood for.

Different from the easygoing, informal administrator of last fall, Carrell seemed stooped, his face collapsed in lines of worry. James tightened his grip on the rifle. Julia stood unmoving, paralyzed with helplessness. She was responsible. If only she’d gone to the police last night instead of waiting! Even Adams would have prevented this.

Carrell lifted the bullhorn to his lips. “Listen, everyone.” His voice was ragged. “I just got off the phone with President White of Kent State. Four students were killed there and nine others wounded. I am saddened beyond words.” A somber murmur rippled through the crowd, and Carrell’s tone grew
firm. "This will not happen at Hayes. I am sending away the militia." Now a cheer began to bubble up, and the Guardsmen looked skittish.

"I am also shutting down the school, effective immediately," Carrell continued. The bullhorn seemed to amplify the determination in his voice. "Students can finish their courses by correspondence or take a pass/fail option on work already completed."

"Marshmallow! Fuckin' marshmallow!" James shouted, spitting out the words. "You think you're gonna get off that easy?"

"I'll negotiate your demands on two conditions," Carrell said. "First that you release the hostages, and second, that you give us the location of the bomb."

For long moments, President Carrell and James faced each other. The silence was so deep Julia felt she could reach down and never touch the bottom. It seemed to go on forever. Then it occurred to her something was missing. Like those drawings with a tiny but vital detail askew—"What's wrong with this picture?" And it came to her: Adrian. Where was he? Why wasn't he out there with James and the other Weathermen? Because he's the link behind all this, a voice whispered in her mind. He was the spy, the informer. His absence was an admission of guilt.

Last night, Adams had mentioned someone who'd told him everything. He seemed to know exactly what the protesters were up to. Although Adrian claimed to detest Adams, she remembered his offhand remark that they'd gone to school together. In the small town of Hampton, they could easily have maintained contact over the years. The phone call for Adrian during the ROTC building takeover could likely have been from Adams.

Because of his involvement with the protest movement, Adrian could have given the Administration advance warning of student activities. Dean Moreland's knowledge of the real purpose of Julia's visit regarding the fall moratorium and the disastrous ROTC review demonstration few weeks ago were perfect examples. Unlike James, wimpy Adrian's adeptness at avoiding arrest could not be attributed to his fierce demeanor. Adrian had to be the common denominator between the protesters and the Establishment.

Somehow Adrian had found out about Valerie and Richard. He must have spotted Julia and Valerie at last night's rally, followed them, and after Julia had left Valerie's, tipped off James as to the location of the weapons. What better way to get even with his hated father and ex-lover?

That bastard, Julia thought. When I see him again, I'll expose him for the traitor that he is. James lowered his rifle with agonizing slowness. She felt herself breathe again, felt the others next to her breathing. Time reconnected with motion.

With a gesture of his hand, James indicated for Valerie and Richard to leave. The SWAT unit started towards the porch but James waved them away with the butt of his rifle. "I got the control device, so don't you worry about the bomb," he shouted. "Gives me a little bargaining power."

Lowering his bullhorn, President Carrell opened his mouth to reply. The words never came out. Everything was shattered by an incredible blast.

From where Julia stood, it seemed as if the Administration building caved in upon itself, collapsing in an organized, symmetrical pattern. First the
front porch, then the top three floors fell upon the center like a souffle taken too quickly out of the oven. The commotion was unbearable; instinctively Julia covered her head and ears with her arms. Then a few—perhaps ten—seconds of astonishing stillness.

Julia looked up. All that remained of the porch and most of the Administration building was a pile of rubble. The SWAT team and the two radicals who had been closest to the building stumbled away from the perimeter. Some were covered with blood. Because it was an implosion rather than an explosion, President Carrell and the majority of the crowd had been spared injury from flying debris.

The militia immediately took charge. "Clear out! Clear the area!" Waving their rifles, they had no problem persuading the students to leave. Most had already fled.

Julia stood unmoving. She felt paralyzed, as if suddenly caught between sleep and waking. Where was Valerie? Valerie, Richard, and James should be digging themselves out from underneath the mess. If she waited long enough, surely they'd emerge.

"Julia," someone behind her said. "Julia." The tone grew more assertive. Turning slightly, she became aware of Louie's presence. Where had he come from? When had he gotten out of the hospital? He was holding on to her as if she were going to fall apart. Which was ridiculous. Everything was fine. What was taking Valerie so long, though? She should be out of there already.

"Julia, listen to me." Louie's voice seemed far away, as if he were talking to her through the wrong end of a megaphone. "You've had a terrible shock. You need to go back to the dorm and lie down."

"They're not dead, if that's what you're thinking." Somehow, somewhere, she found the word. She stared incredulously at Louie. "Look at that bandage on your head! You're the one who should be in bed!"

"Julia, please listen to me. I know what you're going through." He glanced at her arms. Following his gaze, she saw that she'd raked herself so deeply with her fingernails that she bled.

Strange how, even though blood dripped from her arms, she experienced no pain. Valerie must be alive. "Valerie's all right," she said in a monotone. "People just don't get killed like that."

"They do, Julia. It happened all the time in Nam. You and I talked about it. I'll walk you back to your dorm." He grasped her elbow.

"No. Let's go to your house," Julia said. "I want to see Winnie." Winnie will make it better, she thought. He'll love me and everything will be the way it was.

"Not now, Julia."

"Why not? I need him." Although she was having trouble breathing, her brain was starting to function again. "He's done with his physical by now."

"Julia, Winnie cannot bring back Valerie." Gently, Louie started to guide her in the direction of Patterson Hall.

Once again, jealous Louie was trying to come between her and Winnie. "I know it's hard for you to accept that Winnie and I love each other, but that's no reason for you to keep us apart," she said.
Louie winced. “Can we talk about this later?” He ran his fingers over the unbandaged portion of his head. “You really need to lie down.”

Julia pulled away. “No. I’m going to see Winnie,” she repeated in a childish whine.

“Jesus, Julia, why do you have to get stubborn now?” Louie’s eyes grew bright, as if covered with cellophane. “He’s not there.”

“Are you saying they drafted him right away?” Although things around her began to tilt crazily, Julia managed to keep her voice steady.

“No, of course not. It’s just that he, he...” Louie could not bring himself to complete the sentence. “Look, Julia, let me take you back to your dorm.”

Julia crossed her arms and began to rub her palms back and forth, smearing the blood from her scratches, irritating them even more. “I am not budging until you tell me what you know.” Maybe saying the same words she’d spoken to Valerie less than twenty-four hours ago would bring Valerie back, would return things to normal. Maybe the words had a special magic, like a witch’s spell.

“Stop hurting yourself!” Louie seized her hands, practically crushing them with his own. “Winnie has left Hayes. Permanently.”

This was, of course, a nightmare. Julia knew she’d wake up and find herself in Winnie’s bedroom. Valerie and Richard would be at Valerie’s painting walls. For a few seconds, she squeezed her eyes closed, willing herself to sleep. Although the darkness provided a release, it was suffocating. She opened her eyes.

Louie stood there, tears flowing down his cheeks. Why was he crying? Because she loved Winnie and not him? Because of Valerie? Because of the destruction they’d wreaked upon themselves? Instead of being overwhelmed with emotion like Louie, she felt like a statue, with an impassive exterior and a hollow core.

She was barely conscious of Louie holding her, of him speaking. “Julia, I’m sorry. Winnie heard about Carrell shutting down school at his parents’. He called to say he’s staying at home for a few days while he packs for London. He’s been planning to move in with Stu and Laura for months. I kept asking him to tell you...”

Everything whirled together like a psychedelic crazy quilt. Solid objects lost their boundaries, but Julia glimpsed a black hole where she could escape. Before she slipped into the comforting void, she thought, at least I’m better off than Valerie. My soul was sold for a night of passion, while hers went for a few ounces of plastique....