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## 1. STRANGERS ON A TRAIN

The train tore along with an angry irregular rhythm. It was having to stop at smaller and more frequent stations, where it would wait impatiently for a moment, then attack the prairie again. But progress was imperceptible. The prairie only undulated, like a vast, pink-tan blanket being casually shaken. The faster the train went, the more buoyant and taunting the undulations.

Guy took his eyes from the window and hitched himself back against the seat. Miriam would delay the divorce at best, he thought. She might not even want a divorce, only money. Would there really ever be a divorce from her?

(Patricia Highsmith. *Strangers on a Train*. New York / London, Harper & Brothers / Cresset Press., 1950. Chapter 1)

## 2. RIPLEY'S GAME

March 28, 19—

Dear Reeves,

I have an idea for you, in case you have not yet found what you are looking for. His name is Jonathan Trevanny, early thirties, English, a picture-framer, married to Frenchwoman with small son. [Here Tom gave Trevanny's home and shop addresses and shop telephone number.] He looks as if he could use some money, and although he may not be the *type* you want, he looks the picture of decency and innocence, and what is more important for you, he has only a few more months or weeks to live, I have found out. He's got leukemia, and has just heard the bad news. He might be willing to take on a dangerous job to earn some money now.

I don't know Trevanny personally, and need I emphasize that I don't wish to make his acquaintance, nor do I wish you to mention my name. My suggestion is, if you want to sound him out come to F'bleau, put yourself up at a charming hostelry called the Hôtel de L'Aigle Noir for a couple of days, contact Trevanny by ringing his shop, make an appointment and talk it over. And do I have to tell you to give another name besides your own?

Tom felt a sudden optimism about the project. The vision of Reeves with his disarming air of uncertainty and anxiety – almost suggestive of probity—laying such an idea before Trevanny who looked as upright as a saint, made Tom laugh. Did he dare occupy another table in the Hôtel de L'Aigle Noir's dining-room or bar when Reeves made his date with Trevanny? No, that would be too much. This reminded Tom of another point, and he added to his letter:

If you come to F'bleau, please don't telephone or write a note to me under any circumstances. Destroy my letter here, please.

Yours ever,  
Tom

(Patricia Highsmith. *Ripley's game*. London, William Heinemann, 1974. Chapter 3)

### 3. FOUND IN THE STREET

– “You won't change your mind and buy a nice twenty-dollar steak for your dog?” Jack pulled out a twenty.

– “God? He eats well enough, I think. Fresh meat most of the time and not this old fatty hamburger stuff for animals. Maybe he eats too much. He tugged at the leash. 'God, say hello to this gentleman.'”

– 'His name's God?' Jack asked, looking at the black and white dog who stood knee-high. The dog had ears that flopped forward, a tail with a curve, giving a pig-like impression, except that its nose was rather pointed.

– 'Dog spelt backwards, that's all,' said the man. 'I'm an atheist, by the way, so naturally I returned your wallet.’

(Patricia Highsmith. *Found in the Street*. UK, Hachette, 2016 [1986]. Chapter 2)

### 4. THOSE WHO WALK AWAY

– ‘*Accademia the next stop!*’ shouted the conductor.

They chugged smoothly towards the arched wooden bridge at Accademia. Inez stood up, moved forward and to the left where the boat's door was. Ray walked along the port deck, keeping behind the ten or twelve debarking passengers. Inez, on the pavement in front of the Accademia di Belle Arti, looked all around her as if she did not know her way, and stopped a passer-by. The man pointed to the broad street that went across the island.

Ray followed her slowly. No need to rush now, to watch her turnings, because he knew where she was going. In the wide courtlike area behind the Seguso, Ray walked left, a direction that would bring him to the canal that went along the side of the pensione, but which was also a dead end, because no pavement bordered the canal just here. Inez also disappeared in the *sottoporto* which led to the Ruskin house. Ray retraced his steps quickly, crossed the open area diagonally, found another street which led to the little canal, but here, he knew, were pavements and also a bridge. He crossed the bridge over the canal, and turned right on the pavement. Now the Seguso lay on his right, across the canal from him. An arched stone bridge spanned the canal on the Zattere quay. Ray remained at the foot of the bridge, the end away from the Seguso.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Those who walk away*. London, Virago, 2014 [1967]. Chapter 7)

## 5. **SMALL G: A SUMMER IDYLL**

A young man named Peter Ritter came out of a cinema in Zurich one Wednesday evening around midnight. It was January, cold, and he hurried to fasten his thigh-length leather jacket as he walked. Peter was heading for home, where he lived with his parents, and he had decided to ring Rickie from there rather than from a bar-café. Peter took an alley that was a shortcut. He was buckling the jacket belt, when a figure leapt out of the darkness on his left and said, 'Hey! Give us your money!'

Peter saw a knife in the fellow's raised right hand, a longish hunting knife.

"OK, I've got about thirty francs!" Peter said, standing tense, fists at the ready. Sometimes drug addicts could be scared off, easily. "You want that?"

A second fellow had sprung up on Peter's right.

"Thirty with that jacket! mumbled the man with the knife, and struck—a hard stab under Peter's ribs on his left side.

Peter knew the knife had gone through the leather. He was reaching under the jacket for the wallet in the back pocket of his jeans. "OK, I'm *getting—*"

The second man gave a funny shrill laugh and stabbed Peter in his right side. Peter staggered, but he had the wallet out.

The man on the left snatched it. More laughter, and a blow to Peter's throat now – not a fist, but another stab.

'Hey!' Peter yelled, twisting, in pain and thoroughly scared. 'Help! Help me!' Peter hit the man on his left with his fist, fast as a reflexive gesture.

The second man bumped Peter, sending him toward the blackness of the house walls, where Peter hit his head. Trotting footsteps faded.

(Patricia Highsmith. *Small g: a Summer Idyll*. London, Bloomsbury, 1995. Chapter 1)