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He came home along a country lane, with grass growing between the dust-powdered cart tracks, with low stone walls to either side, erected long ago and now crumbling with the years, but with their crumbling hidden by the growth of creeping vines and screened by the bushes that grew along their bases. A verdant countryside stretched on every hand, with sleek cattle in the pastures and the smoke of cottage chimneys trailing up the sky. Larks sang in the grasses and a rabbit popped out of its hiding place along one of the stone fences and went bobbing up the road.

The corridor cyber, Andrew Harrison told himself, had knocked itself out on this one. He hoped it would be allowed to stay for a while, for it was most restful. But he knew it wouldn't stay. They never did. It was as if the cyber had so many patterns that it was in a hurry to get them all used up. Tomorrow, or maybe just a few hours from now, it would be the main street of a sleepy old historic village or a woodland trail or an old Paris boulevard, or perhaps some far-space fantasy. Although he doubted the patterns would ever all be used. He'd lived here—how long?—more than fifty years, and before that more than thirty years on one of the lower levels, and in all that time there had not been a repetition, close approximation perhaps, but never a repetition in the corridors.

He did not hurry. He strolled along sedately. He must be getting close to home and when he got there and had to leave it, he'd miss this country lane. He considered stopping for a while to sit upon one of the crumbling walls and listen to the meadow larks and watch the cloud patterns in the deep blue sky, but today he had no time to sit—today was a busy day.

Up ahead of him he saw the signpost that would have his name upon it and that was as far as he would go, for it marked the door of home. Someone else traveling this lane homeward would see another signpost, but no one else would see it, as no one else would see the one meant for his eyes alone.

He slackened his pace, loitering, reluctant to leave the road he traveled. But slow as he might go, he finally reached the signpost and turned off into the little footpath.

A door opened before him and beyond the door was home.

"Good afternoon, sir," said the cyber, Harley. "I hope you had a pleasant walk. Did you get the tobacco?"

"Very pleasant, Harley, thank you."

"And now..." said Harley.

"No," said Harrison. "Absolutely not. No drink, no conversation. Forget your role of the gracious servant. I have work to do."

"But, sir..."

"And no ski slope, no fishing stream, no beach, no nothing. Just leave me alone."

"If you wish it, sir," said Harley, considerably offended, "I'll leave you quite alone."

"Some other time," said Harrison, "I'll be quite grateful for your services."

"I am always at your service, sir."

"Where are the others?"

"You have forgotten, sir. They went out to the country."

"Yes," he said. "I had forgotten."

He walked from the entry into the living room and, for the first time in many months, realized, with something of a shock, how small the living quarters were.

"There is no need of size," said Harley. "No need of space."

"That's right," said Harrison, "and even if we needed it, or wanted it, we haven't got the space. And I wish, if it is all the same to you, you'd cut out monitoring me."

“I must monitor you,” said Harley, primly. “That is my job and as a functioning, conscientious cybernetic system, I must do my job. For if I did not monitor you, then how might I best serve you?”

“All right, monitor,” said Harrison, “but keep it to yourself. Can’t you, for the next few hours, manage to be somewhat unobtrusive?”

“I would suspect,” said Harley, “that there must be something wrong with you, but my medical components come up with nothing more than normal and from that I must conclude that you have no illness. But I must confess to being puzzled. You have never been quite this way before. You reject me and my service and I am disturbed.”

“I am sorry, Harley. I have something to decide.”

He walked to the window and looked out. The country stretched away, far below—a bit more, he remembered now, than a mile below. A great belt of parkland lay around the tower and beyond the parkland wilderness—recreational space for all who wished to use it. For the land was no longer used, or very little used. A few mines, a few tracts of carefully harvested timber and that was all. After all of this was over, he decided, he and Mary would go west to the mountains, for a holiday.

“Why go?” asked Harley. “I can send you there, or to a place that is equivalent to mountains. It would be the same. You would not know the difference.”

“I thought I told you to shut up.”

“I am sorry, sir. It is just that my only thought is of your welfare.”

“That,” said Harrison, “is most commendable of you.”

“I am glad you think so, sir.”

Harrison turned from the window and went into his workroom. The room was small and crammed with equipment and a desk. The windowless walls closed in on him, but he felt comfortable. Here was his work and life.

Here, for years, he had worked. And was his work now coming to an end? Was that the reason, he asked himself, that he had delayed so long, to hold onto work and purpose until the very end? But he was not, he knew, being honest with himself; it was because he must be certain and on that trip down to the retail levels to buy himself a tin of tobacco, it had come to him that he was as certain now as he would ever be.

He grinned, remembering that trip—a hookey trip. There had been no need to go. He could have simply dialed his purchase and a moment later picked it out of the delivery chute. A man, at times, he told himself, will practice self-deceit. If he had wanted to take a walk, there would have been nothing in the world to prevent his taking it. If he had wanted to get away from these small, cramped rooms and Harley, there would have been nothing that could stop him. There had been no need to concoct an excuse to do so.

“I must remind you, sir,” said Harley, “that there is never any reason for you to remain in what you think of as these small, cramped rooms. If you would but allow me, sir, I could place you on a lonely mountaintop, all alone upon it, with all the world to see and no one else about, with as much space and freedom as any man might wish. It is because of such as I that humans require little living space. Granted, without the cybers these kind of quarters would be intolerable, but you need not live within them, no *need* to live within them, for the entire world and more is yours. Anything that a cyber can dream is yours and I really do believe...”

“Cut it out,” said Harrison, sharply. “Another word from you and I’ll phone replacement. Perhaps you have been too long in operation and...”

“I’ll be silent, sir,” said Harley. “You have my promise on it.”

“See you do,” said Harrison.

He sat easy in the chair behind his desk and the questions hammered at him: Could he be entirely certain? Had he overlooked some factor that should be considered? Had he carried his simulations into the future as deeply as he should? There was no doubt at all that the process would work. He had checked the process and the theory step by step, not once, but many times, and there was no question that the procedure and the theory were correct. Now it was no longer a matter of procedure, but a matter of effect. Could he be certain that he could chart the future course of mankind, with this new factor introduced, with enough precision to be sure that it would not produce social aberrations that might not be evident for centuries?

Future history, he reminded himself, could be changed by such unlikely items that one could take no chance at all.

Take the present world, he thought, take the mile-high cities and all the vacant acres, and one could trace it back to so short a time as two centuries before. A man could put his finger on the time when it began, marking the break with a cultural pattern that man had laboriously put together in five millennia of effort. Two hundred years ago man had lived in noisome cities that had stretched across mile on mile of land; today he lived in towers that scraped the very sky. Now, instead of industrial centers and power plants belching smoke and gobbling up the dwindling resources of the earth, man got his energy from fusion and needed only a fraction of the power he had needed then because he did with very little.

There had been no need, he told himself, for the change to have been as great as it had been; there had been those, history reminded one, who had thought of it all as madness. The idea had been carried farther than there was any need by the great revulsion that had risen at the olden way of life and this revulsion, a madness in itself, had swept all mankind beyond the point of common sense. And yet, perhaps, he thought, it was just as well, for because of it man had, in many ways, a better life and a cleaner planet.

He tried to imagine how it might have been in those days when the rivers ran dirty to the sea and the sea itself was foul, when the air and earth were poisoned and a great noise beat against the land.

The world in which he sat, he thought, had begun to form with the first pollution-killed fish that floated to the surface, with the temperature inversion that had blanketed a city with the smog that it had spawned, with the cry of rage that had gone up against the smoking chimneys and the streams of effluents that were poured into the waters. We must build new cities, men had screamed, and the new cities had been built, but not quite the kind the screamers had envisioned; we must halt the overuse of resources, other men had shouted, and in time the old, time-honored rule of obsolescence had been scrapped and commodities had been built to last—not for ten years or twenty, but for centuries. As a result of this, in time fewer commodities were manufactured and the use of natural resources and energy had diminished and there had been less and less pollution and today the rivers ran crystal to the sea and the air was clean and fresh and the land lay quite unpoisoned since agriculture had been moved indoors and no longer utilized the soil.

A city, he thought. Once a sprawling mass of structures, today three great towers: one for residential purposes, another for agriculture and industry, the third for services—for government, education, arts and sciences, recreation. Three great towers reaching deep into the earth, rearing far into the air, and all operated by electronic wizardry. A people served by cybernetic systems that turned bleak corridors into country lanes, that gave a man an authentic simulation of every possible environment,

that did one's chores and wiped one's nose and helped to do one's thinking and placed at each man's fingertips all the knowledge in the world.

And all of this, he thought, because a crackpot (the first of many crackpots) a bit more than two hundred years ago had bellowed out a maniac conviction that the earth was being poisoned.

From that first crackpot to this, so small a thing to bring about so great a change.

And that was why, he told himself, he must be absolutely certain.

He rose from his chair and went to the console, lifted the think-piece from its cradle and put it on his head. Sitting down in the operator's chair, he punched in the gross knowledge components, then fed in the factors. He had done it all before, he told himself; he would do it all again. It was not necessary, he was sure; he already knew. But in a thing like this nothing must be left undone.

It was all imagination, of course, but he seemed to see and be aware of, as had happened many times before, the great banked cores of all the knowledge banks that now were open to him—medical at Mayo's in Minnesota, legal at Harvard, theology in Rome, sociology at California and history at Yale, all these and many more.

And it was not only knowledge. Knowledge in itself was not sufficient. It took more than that; it required the thought enhancement that was electronically built into the instrument. Man and computer now, human brain and robot brain, working in tandem, hooked into the basic banks of the world's entire hoard of knowledge, with the waiting relays that would open the way to other banks of knowledge should they be required.

Now that all was ready, he asked the question: What would be the long-range effect of intellectual immortality upon the human race? What if the minds of men could be transferred and imprinted upon robotic brains?

But that was not entirely right, of course. You would not imprint a human mind upon a robot brain, then range the brain upon a shelf with other brains and leave it there. You'd mount the brain upon some sort of ambulatory device that would serve the function of a body. You'd have, to some degree, a robotic body, perhaps extremely sophisticated, much more sophisticated than a human body, with many skills a human did not have, and yet it would not be, in many aspects, human. So you'd have intellectual immortality and, in a way, physical immortality, but not human immortality. To become immortal, a man must become a robot.

What was wrong with that? he asked himself. Where lay that nagging flaw? Why was he so reluctant to reach a fast decision? What was it that sent him back again, and yet again, to a simulation of the situation?

Man lived in a computer world, a robotic world, a cybernetic world. Every chore that man could think of was performed, upon command, by cybers. Most of his needs and wishes were fulfilled by cybers. The city in which he lived, the very home in which he lived was a cybernetic system. Men lived easily and comfortably with electronic contraptions and were happy with them. He trusted them and valued them and looked to them not only for his comfort, but for his happiness. The cybernetic system that was one's home could simulate another environment for one with precise exactitude. It could send you to a beach and it would not be just an impression of a beach, the suggestion of a beach. It would be a beach. You would feel the sand beneath your body, would feel the sea-wind blowing, would know the heat of sun, would hear the sound of surging water and be wetted by it. You would be upon a beach, not pretending you were there, not imagining you were there. You would be really there. It need not be a beach. It could be a forest, a mountaintop, a desert, a jungle, a raft upon the sea, the moon or Mars. It could send you back through time to dwell in a

castle on a Rhine, to labor in the fields with serfs on a medieval manor, to participate in a joust upon a field of honor, to sail with a Viking crew.

If one could live with and accept such fantasies as these (an easy thing to do, for they did not seem like fantasies), then why recoil from a fact that was no fantasy—that man, if he chose, could live forever? The robotic brain, or robotic body could not be a part of human rejection of or revulsion against such a situation, for in those simulations of other times or places to which one most willingly subjected himself, he became as intricately, or perhaps more intricately, involved with robotic functions.

Harrison sat before the console and as the thoughts built up within him, he felt, just beyond his reach, but available if he should need to reach out for them, the phantoms of all the massive portions of knowledge packed in the knowledge centers. As if, massed solidly behind him, were all these men, all these thinkers of the ages who had preceded him, standing ready with all their knowing and their counsel. A continuity, he thought, a great human continuity that spanned from the present day back to that old prehistoric ancestor who had come to terms with fire, to that sub-human creature that had struck two flints together to construct a tool. And that, he told himself, was a part of it as well. The minds of men were a resource and here were being used, but in each individual case, a resource with a lifetime limited to less than a century (although now, in this year of 2218, the old limit no longer held and a man, barring accident, could confidently expect to live a century and a half). But that was something new, just as immortality would be something new. And if human minds were a resource, why allow them to be limited by time? Why be content to use a mind for a century and a half and then be content to see it die? Certainly the human minds imprinted upon robotic brains would continue to contribute to humanity and the continuity of the human mind would be that much strengthened.

He did not sense the others moving in, but he knew they had moved in and he closed his eyes and was in a peopled darkness. There was a voice, speaking in the darkness, and that was strange, for in all the times before there had been no voice.

Second-class citizen? asked the voice and it seemed that he was rolling from the darkness, not walking from it, but rolling from it. And it seemed instead of rolling that he was scuttling, moving furtively, afraid of being seen, shrinking from the ridicule if he should be seen, knowing that in this human world he could not be human who had been human once. Although it seemed strange that he should feel this way, for the very ones who scorned him and reviled him in some later day might become as he.

Dead conservatism? asked the voice in the darkness and when the voice spoke he was no longer rolling, but was huddled in the darkness—a huddled machine among many other huddling machines and as he huddled there he heard the mumblings of his fellows and while he could not make out the words he knew what they said and from this he knew that they were huddling not only in the darkness, but in the past as well. There were the huddling machines, but there were others that were not machines, but rather immobile brains sitting in rows upon the shelves that stretched up and down this place wherein he huddled and these shelved brains seemed more content than those that had the bodies.

Death in life? the voice asked and when the voice stopped another voice spoke, a low and husky voice that belonged to the machine standing close beside him. Humanness, it said to him and all the others there, is not the matter of the mind alone, of the intellect alone. It is, as well, a matter of the body, of the women that we loved or the men we loved, of the things we ate, of lying on a hillside and feeling the earth beneath us and seeing the top branches of a great oak tree against the cloud-flecked sky, the feel of flesh on flesh when we shook hands with a friend, the smell of

evergreen at Christmas, the glories of the lilies in the Eastertide...The low, husky voice went on and on, but he no longer heard it; he had shut his ears against it. It was saying all he felt and he did not need to hear and he did not wish to hear.

But would it be that way? Need it be that way? Why must these old bogeys rise? Could not humans accept their roboticized members, not as bogeymen, not as aliens, not as harsh reminders of what the future held for each of them, but as a metamorphosis, another way of human life, the only way of human life if there were to be survival? It was either that or death. Surely, on the face of it, anything was preferable to death. Not that death, in itself, was bad, but it was oblivion, an emptiness, an ending and a nothingness and certainly man had a right to expect something more than nothingness.

Unless, he thought—unless there could be something to an afterlife. What if persisting as a human intellect should rob a man of an afterlife? But there was, he thought, no evidence, no evidence at all, that there was such a thing as afterlife. And the thought brought a clamor in his mind—a quarreling clamor from all those others with him.

When the clamor died down, he tried to think again. Perhaps, then, the thing to do was to investigate the theory of an afterlife. But how would one do that? How could one go about it? What kind of investigative process should one use, how could one evaluate the data, how could one be sure the principles applied to that evaluation would be valid?

He reached up and tore off the headset, thumbed the console back to deadness. What the use, he thought. How could one be ever really sure?

He rose, shaken, from the chair, and went back to the living room. He stood before the window, but now there was nothing he could see. Clouds had moved in far below him and masked the landscape.

“A drink, sir?” asked Harley. “I think you need a drink.”

“I think I do,” said Harrison. “Thank you very much.”

The liquor dispenser did not ask. It knew exactly what he wanted. He picked up the drink and turned back to the window.

It made no sense, he knew. It was all old prejudice and bias. Man had the right to expect a shot at immortality, if it were possible. And it was possible. Perhaps not in exactly the form that one might want it, but it was available. It was there and could be had.

The wastefulness, he thought, the utter wastefulness of death. If for no other reason, immortality would recommend itself on economic grounds. But no matter what might be decided, the old objections would still persist; they never went away. If he had stayed longer at the console, the favorable opinions would have wiped away and set at naught all but a tiny nagging doubt that would hang on forever. There was little use, he told himself, in returning to the console. The pattern had been set and it would not change.

He had gone, he knew, as far as he could go.

He went back into his workroom and sat down, not in the console chair, but behind his desk.

“Harley,” he said, “please get me Univac.”

“Surely, sir,” said Harley.

In front of him a shimmer came, that shimmer no amount of work and research ever could get rid of, and the face was there. No body, as would have been the case if it had been a human, but just a face hanging in the air. It could as easily have been a human face, with body, Harrison reminded himself, a human simulation of the mighty

system that was, in fact, the city, but the system itself had not gone along with that. “Let us be honest,” it had said and it still was honest—not a human, but a system. And in accord with that it was not a human face that stared across the desk at him, but a strangely mechanistic face, the sort of face than an artist, full of artistic cynicism, might have conjured up to represent the system.

“Mr. Harrison,” said Univac, “how good to see you once again.”

“It is good to see you, too,” said Harrison. “You recall, perhaps, that I spoke with you some time ago about a project I was working on.”

“Yes, of course,” said Univac. “Immortality. How is it getting on?”

“It can be done,” said Harrison. “A human mind can be imprinted. I am sure of that.”

“What does the computation say?”

“It says we can imprint. With no loss. No aberration. A human mind can be transferred intact.”

“And be effective?”

“Entirely effective. There may be, eventually, some emotional loss. We can’t be sure.”

“Mr. Harrison, if that should happen, how important would it be?”

“Immensely important from the human viewpoint, perhaps. Although it might make the mind the more efficient, we are not, of course, entirely sure it would come about.”

“You, of course, have done exhaustive simulation?”

“Yes,” said Harrison, “exhaustive. That’s what bothers me. It works out. There would be a period of social adjustment, certainly. At first, perhaps not all the people would wish the transfer. There might always be some who would shrink from it, although, as time went, there would be fewer of them. Perhaps the time would come when it would be accepted as a normal course of human life, a normal event in the life of any man. It might take some time for the public to accept the actual presence of robotic humans—not robots, but humans in robotic form—but that, in time, I am sure, would work itself out. Humanity would gain by it. We would be the richer by each human mind that could be saved from death. Our brainpower would increase, with no great additional drain on our natural resources.”

“What is your problem, then?” asked Univac.

“A nagging doubt,” said Harrison. “One that hangs in there and will not go away. Based on certain objections that have no real logic in them. They can be explained away, but they stay. It is, I suppose, a matter of human intuition, if not human judgment. I hate to go against human intuition.”

“So would I,” said the face that was Univac.

“What do we do, in such a case? Wait another century, with men dying all the time, to make up our minds?”

“Some controlled experiment, perhaps.”

“But we couldn’t do that. Without it leaking out. Can you imagine what might happen if such a thing leaked out? There’d be sheeted hell to pay. The public almost immediately would divide into two hostile groups and the pressure from each group would be unimaginable. It would be an intensely emotional thing, you see...”

“Yes, I know,” said Univac. “I have something else in mind. You have heard, of course, although it is not yet public knowledge, that in another year or so we plan to send out several interstellar probes.”

“Of course. I am a good friend of Anderson. We have talked about it.”

“It strikes me,” said Univac, “that it might be preferable to send out humans rather than mere instruments. There’d be instruments, of course, but also that other factor you mentioned—human judgment.”

“A controlled experiment,” said Harrison. “Yes, of course it would be that. And if planets should be found, roboticized human minds could go out onto them, no matter what the conditions were. They’d not have the physical limitations...”

“Perhaps,” said Univac, “we could send several of them on some of the probes, so that we could study the interaction between several imprinted brains. And on at least one probe, a single imprint, to see how one mind alone could react under...”

“It’s a vicious experiment,” said Harrison.

“Most experiments involving humans are vicious. But it would be a matter of free choice. It would be carefully explained to potential volunteers. To a man on the verge of death, it might be preferable.”

“Yes, it might be.”

“Then we’d know,” said Univac. “We’d know if it would work. The trips would run to a number of years. But we wouldn’t have to wait that long. If it appeared to be working, we could engineer a leak about what had been done, then sit back and wait for the reaction. I am willing to wager that in a short time we’d be faced with a wide demand that this business of immortality be made available, immediately, to everyone.”

“And if the reaction were the opposite?”

“Then we’d deny the rumor. We’d say it never happened.”

“Some day the probes would be coming home,” Harrison pointed out. “What about our denial then?”

“By that time,” said Univac, “it would be—how do you humans say it—a new ball game.”

“May I say something, sir?”

“Why, of course, Mr. Harrison. What made you think that you should ask?”

“It is simply this,” said Harrison. “You have shown yourself to be as low-down and sneaky as any human ever was. I would not have thought it of you.”

Univac chuckled at him, a ghastly chuckle. “One thing you forget,” he said. “Humans made me.”

“But that’s not good enough,” Harrison told him, sharply. “Human is not good enough. We had hoped for something better. We made you, certainly—we built you through the years. We based a culture on you, not, perhaps, because we wanted to, but because we were forced to do so. Perhaps you were no more than the least objectionable alternative, but you were all we had. We had hoped we had acted wisely and perhaps we did. But where we had no alternative before, we have none now. We are stuck with you and you, if you have a personality, an identity, a sense of I, as I think you have, likewise are stuck with us.”

“I have identity,” said Univac.

“Then, for the love of God,” said Harrison, “stop being so damn human.”

“Mr. Harrison,” asked Univac, “what would you have me be? It was you who created me and...”

“We created religion, too,” said Harrison. “And what did it ever do for us—the kind that we created? Not one man’s concept of God, whatever it might be, but the concept of religion as created by our culture. For years we slaughtered one another in religion’s name...”

“You created me and used me,” said Univac, “for your human purposes.”

“And you resent this?”

“No, I do not resent it. I am glad of it and, awkward as it may be for me to say it, rather proud of it. But since we’re being truthful, let’s be truthful all the way.”

“O.K., then,” said Harrison, “we created you and used you. We had allowed the profit motive to run away with us. We sold people things they didn’t need and we built into these things imperfections so that people bought these things not once, but many times. And we changed the styles and we preached the gospel that one could not be out-of-date without, at the same time, being socially unacceptable. We improved our products and we hammered home the fact that the old models or old styles should be junked for the sake of these improvements, most of which were questionable improvements. And in order to turn out all these things for which we had created a psychological demand, we poisoned our air and water and used up our natural resources and there came a time when we had to call a halt, not to pollution so much as to the economic system that caused pollution, to that factor of our society that was eating up our coal and oil and gas.”

“But, if you recall, Mr. Harrison, I also was created by the profit motive.”

“That is true, of course. Perhaps it was somehow written in the stars that we must continue with the profit motive until we had developed the capacity for your creation.”

“You believe events may be written in the stars?”

“I don’t know,” said Harrison. “But let us say that somehow, by whatever special dispensation, we were granted a second chance. That second chance was you. Today we live in cities that are you, without great demands being made upon our limited natural resources. Today we specialize in services; we take in one another’s washing. None of us is rich and none expects to be. We never think of monetary riches. And I think we may be much the happier for it. So now you must stand with us. If you don’t, we’re finished. I know there must be a million ways you could bring us to disaster.”

“You must mistake me, Mr. Harrison. I have a sense of duty, perhaps of gratitude.”

“The thing I must point out,” said Harrison, “is that the quickest way for you to ruin us is to strive too much toward humanity. We need someone who thinks a little differently, someone who may understand and sympathize with our human needs and aims, but who can stand off a little distance and tell us when we’re wrong and why we happen to be wrong. We would not, as I say, give up human judgment or any shred of our humanity, but now we need someone else, another kind of judgment to balance against our human judgment.”

“You think this matter of immortality...”

“That’s exactly what I mean. I came as close as I could. I think no human could come closer. But there is something, some blind wall, intruding from the human past, that makes human judgment in this area quite impossible. Here we need another kind of judgment, not to negate human judgment, not to rule it out, but to correlate with it. A survey panel, let us say.”

“I could think on it,” said Univac. “I could let you know. But I feel uncomfortable...”

“I know you do,” said Harrison. “I know exactly how you feel. Don’t you think I feel it, too? I giving up something that was an exclusively human function; you taking on something that is a small step beyond your province. But if we are to make it, if we are to carry on the human dream, each of us must do it. For this is not the only case. This may be the first one, but there will be others, many others as the years go on.”

“I hope that you are right, sir.”

“I hope so, too,” said Harrison.

“I will let you know.”

“Thanks,” said Harrison. “I’ll look forward to it.”

The face of Univac faded and Harrison rose from his chair and went into the living room.

“It was a hard day, sir,” said Harley.

“Yes, Harley, I think you could call it that.”

“And now another drink?”

“That would be very fine.”

“You are sure that is all.”

“Quite sure. No beach, no ski slope, no...”

“I am aware of that,” said Harley, hastily. “I thought perhaps a little music.”

“I want to think,” Harrison said, sharply.

“But man has thought so long,” said Harley, “of so many things.”

“That is right,” said Harrison, “and he’s never going to quit. The best that he can hope for is a little help to keep his thinking straight.”

He sat in the chair in the tiny living room, with the drink in hand.

Sellout, he wondered, or a big stride forward?

***** *Text ends* *****