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and grabs a blow dryer, rooted content man. and I chase it out and Kurtz thanks me the local tribes come to him for haircuts. fascinates him) and my friend tells about his new apartment on 81st and job forking this Kurtz and the one in the short novel on the railroad and then a cockatu flies friend is agog at the difference between He's got nice chairs with seats not made He's got literary journals for customers and when we get to the bend in the river labled BARBER SHOP we jump into the warm He's completely repaired his reputation. now that he's found out what he is real! pounds since highering his self esteeom all angry that we are three months late to the appointment. He is so easy-going A local witch doctor made that for mim. meant to do in life. All the members of and he has recontacted his family back by Conrad. I say "You go first" and he a nice long mirror along one wall that of leather but something just like it. The bad old days are history. He's got to get our hair cut--go down by marge-and recover from malaria and then have a native to guide us to the shop (been fessors. He's lost at least a hundred to read as so many are writers or pro water and swim ashore and get malaria remerber the way) and Kurts is not at we go down the river together one day there a hundred times but I can never always close by and Kurtz snips, and tropical drink from thepitcher that gets in the chair and I pour myself I tell a friend who my barber is and reflects only your hair and nothing in England or wherever they are. My asks about New York City (theplace

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Went on he parachute ride at Coney Island

in 1963, around the time I was born. It cost quarter. What really sprised me was how

flimsy the chairs were, how fiew the chains and how thin the chains. I thought I was

going to die, at first, but then I reasoned with myself. You've just been born? You're not going to die! A clown had dared me to do it. I was so green that I didn't even

know that a dare usually involves a bet.

I unchained myself after the plunge and I

found that clown and slapped him on the toe

and thanked him for the suggestion. What a way to start a life! The Parachute Ride!

LOSS THREED

tuba, bleating to death As I sometimes do in this vast hospital that I run, I introduce patients who I think would like each other, in this case a woman gravetly damaged by her niceness and a poet who dreams of making a small revision to woke up in a trash can a poem of his that has, sadly, already entered posterity in a flawed form. I in my hospital have built a special room for patients to meet each other and wheel both of these sweethearts into it and watch the magic happen-both very shy at first, but in no time at all exchanging dingy dignity these lines, voices gentle and interested and patient. WOMAN STUNG BY PURSE MADE OUT OF A JELLYFIS so naturally I must pay." ou married the wrong man, case POET: I NICE WOMAN: YOU POET: I have what might be called an elephant on my Man in FUTURE LAWYER T-shirt handles my back right now, and it's hard to focus on much-suffored, suffured, suffreeed but I must say you have the nicest eyes and the nicest smile I have seen since my imaginings of the way the Brownings looked at each other at I jun the breakfast table. jump onto NICE WOMAN: You're too kind of course, but I'm glad is passing you are able to ignore the gaping wounds that my nice ness has earned me, and also the fact that I am, well, like yourself somewhat preoccupied with other issues, the and truly wondering if I will be albe to ever leave this place and reenter a world Ş, back of that seems to be fueld by four letter words and other forces that are not nice, and ever POET: Ungrateful? Is that the world you are searching for? NICE WOMAN: Exactly. Not that I expect anyone tobe all a motorized wheelchair feel lesscriplled that grateful for what I inparticular have to offer--but it seems to be--or seems tome-that one little splash of water onto a shore-that second of fresh and foam and movement is tailored like lace to fit that little bit on E inside of us that can be content, if we let it. POET: You are nit just nice, you are rigal. Į, g BKUP 1923 please remain the same restaurant until we arrive." You have our reservation, now one more thing:

remain the same restaurant until we arrive " BKUP 1967 loose string beans 19 20 21 22 23 sons songs 24 25

and reach destination said he through themoral, said he said she don't you think? Or said she said Į. about # time we too late?

GRACIOUSLY CONFINED

Kurtz asks me how I'd like my hair cut--short as usual? I tell him to take a little more off the top. It's New York in August that I'll be leaving the nice cool jungle for. My friend, who had his cut first, sits in a corner of the hut paging through The Paris Review -- a very old copy from the 1950s but that's the golden age compared to 2011 -- and he's paging and happy with the stories by Styron and happy too with his trim, nice layering on the sides, and the part on the left, just as requested. Kurtz is especioally confessional. He asks only briefly about the Yankee pitching, and is mostly saying these fasginatingly mysterious things like "I answered the bell but I wasn't ready to take the punches" and II would have made a great blethering Scottish patriarch if I hadn't been horn an American Boy." and "Theone time a car hit me, I won, but that was not for the best, as everyone knows." and "I'm still trying to find in all the world's literature an unassuming portrat of a madman and also an authentic portrait of niceness, which is related to goodness, but different in he way that ice cream is not sherbit. There's a niceness that is so hard to capture because it makes no claims of goodness and no claims on our time, really, but just does happen, suddenly, in a look or in the wya that words are said--the ordinariness of a hello or good bye or thank you ore your welcome granted a decency and too an energy that is anything but ordinary while also not being in any way extraordinary, and that's why it is so hard to depict--its so small and quiet and undemanding. Having been myself somewhat misrepresented on thepage-or at least slightly libeled -- I've become very fascinated by the shallownesses to whichwriterswill not go--so much of our surfaces-the human surfaces that define us--are lost when the compulsion is to go deep--or if not lost, eh, well, disrepsected--excuse me--but in my mouth--I said disrespected." I told him I knew what he meant, but howcould I, really? Here was a character who had been able to shed madness and start the barbershop with the hope of becoming the humble useful man that only he had known was hidden inside him. I closed my eyes, and let him do his work--the fingers kightly massaging myscalp and the applying shaving cream to the back of my neck-a warm drift of snow back there, between, under, my ears.

out. When in doubt, lay 'em

your mashed potatoes in the street!

the praises of

Madres shirt does not go so well with the Leather Festival.

