

## **A Short Trip Home**

by Francis Scott Fitzgerald

(Adapted book. Upper-Intermediate level)

### **Chapter 1.**

I was near her. I had waited behind in order to share with her the short walk from the living-room to the front door. For me that was a lot. She had flowered suddenly and I, being a man and only a year older, hadn't flowered at all. She had the sure, clear confidence that comes to attractive American girls at about eighteen. There was magic suddenly in the soft hairs at the back of her neck.

She was already moving away from me into another world - the world of Joe Jelke and Jim Cathcart, who were waiting for us now in the car outside. In another year she would pass out of my sight for ever.

As I waited, I was conscious of the others outside in the snowy night. I felt the excitement of Christmas week and the excitement of Ellen here, filling the room with a special electricity. A servant came in from the dining-room, spoke to Ellen quietly and handed her a note. Ellen read it and her eyes lost their brilliance. Then she gave me an odd, distant look; she probably didn't even see me. And without a word she followed the servant into the dining-room. I sat turning over the pages of a magazine for a quarter of an hour.

Joe Jelke came in, red-faced from the cold. He was a third year student at New Haven; I was in my first year. He was an important member of various clubs, and I admired and respected him.

'Isn't Ellen coming?'

'I don't know,' I answered. 'She was all ready.'

'Ellen!' he called. 'Ellen!'

He had left the front door open behind him and freezing air blew in from outside. He went halfway up the stairs and called again until Mrs Baker came and said that Ellen was downstairs. Then the servant appeared in the dining-room door. She seemed a little excited.

'Mr Jelke,' she called in a low voice.

Joe's face showed disappointment as he turned towards her. He sensed bad news.

'Miss Ellen says, you go to the party without her. She'll come later.'

He hesitated, confused: It was the last big dance before we all had to go back to college, and he was madly in love with Ellen. He wasn't the only one - there were three or four other young men with the same feelings towards Ellen. But he was rich and popular, and at the moment the most admired boy of St Paul. To me it seemed impossible that she could prefer another, but according to rumour she'd described Joe as much too perfect. I suppose he didn't have any mystery for her. And when a man is faced with a girl who isn't thinking of the practical side of marriage yet - well-

'She's in the kitchen,' said Joe angrily.'

'No, she's not.' The servant was a little afraid.

'She is.'

'She went out through the back door, Mr Jelke.'

'I'm going to see.'

I followed him. The Swedish servants washing dishes looked up as we came in. The back door was open and, as we walked outside, we saw the lights of a car turn the corner at the end of the back alley.

'I'm going after her,' Joe said slowly. 'I don't understand this at all.'

I was too surprised to argue. We hurried to his car and drove all over the district, looking into every car we saw. It was half an hour before Joe realized that the search was useless - St Paul is a city of almost three hundred thousand people. And Jim Cathcart reminded him that we had to pick up another girl too. Like a wounded animal, he sank into a corner.

Jim's girl was ready and impatient, but after what had happened her impatience didn't seem important. Joe Jelke was polite to her, but his conversation consisted of one burst of short, loud laughter. We drove to the hotel.

The driver approached the hotel on the wrong side. Because of that we suddenly saw Ellen Baker getting out of a small car. Even before we stopped, Joe Jelke had jumped excitedly from the car.

Ellen turned towards us. Her face had an absent look - a look of surprise, perhaps, but certainly not of alarm. In fact, she hardly seemed to see us. Joe approached her with an injured expression. I followed.

Seated in the small car was a hard, thin-faced man of about thirty-five. He had a scarred face and an unpleasant dark smile. His eyes were a sort of insult to the whole human family. They were the eyes of an animal, sleepy and quiet, observing the approach of a different kind of creature. They were helpless but fierce, unhopeful but confident. It was as if they knew that they were powerless to do anything, but extremely capable of profiting from a single sign of weakness in another.

In a curious way I recognized him. He was one of the sort of men I had seen standing around on street corners, in bars, garages, barber-shops and the entrances of theatres, watching through narrow eyes the people who hurried past. I had been conscious of this threatening type since I was a young boy and had always nervously avoided the half-lit borderland where he stood, watching and laughing at me. Once, in a dream, he had taken a few steps towards me and moved his head, saying, 'Hey, boy,' and I had run for the door in terror. This was that sort of man.

Joe and Ellen faced each other silently. She seemed only half awake. Suddenly the man in the car laughed. It was a noiseless laugh, almost nothing more than a shake of the head, but it was a definite insult. Joe had a quick temper, and I was not surprised when he turned to the man angrily and said:

'What's your trouble?'

The man waited a moment, his eyes staring. Then he laughed again in the same way. Ellen moved restlessly.

'Who is this - this - ' Joe's voice shook with annoyance.

'Look out now,' said the man slowly.

Joe turned to me.

'Eddie, take Ellen and Catherine in, will you?' he said quickly.

'Look out now,' the man repeated.

Ellen made a little impatient sound with her tongue, but she followed me when I took her arm and moved towards the side door of the hotel. I thought it was strange that she should be so helpless. She seemed to accept the fact that trouble was about to start.

'Forget it, Joe!' I called back over my shoulder. 'Come inside!'

Ellen pulled my arm and we hurried on. As we went inside, I had the impression that the man was getting out of his car.

Ten minutes later I was waiting for the girls outside the women's dressing room when Joe Jelke and Jim Cathcart stepped out of the lift. Joe was very white and his eyes were heavy. There was blood over his left eye and on his white scarf.

'He hit Joe with brass knuckles,' Jim said in a low voice. 'Joe was unconscious for a minute or so. Go and ask for a bandage, will you?'

It was late and the hall was empty. The sounds of the dance came up from the floor below. When Ellen came out, I took her to a quiet room downstairs and told her what had happened.

'It was Joe's own fault,' she said. 'I told him not to interfere.'

This wasn't true. She had said nothing.

'You ran out of the back door and disappeared for almost an hour,' I protested. 'Then you arrived with a hard-looking fellow who laughed in Joe's face.'

'A hard-looking fellow,' she repeated, as if tasting the sound of the words.

'Well, wasn't he? Where on earth did you meet him, Ellen?'

'On the train,' she answered. Immediately she seemed to regret this admission. 'You'd better not interfere in things that don't concern you, Eddie. You see what happened to Joe.'

I was amazed. She sat beside me, looking so beautiful, and talked like that.

'But that man's no good,' I cried. 'A girl isn't safe with him. He used brass knuckles on Joe - brass knuckles!'

'Is that bad?'

She asked this like a little girl. She looked at me and really wanted an answer. For a moment it seemed as if she was trying to recapture an innocence that had almost gone. Then she hardened again. I say 'hardened' because I noticed that when she was concerned with this man, her eyelids fell a little, shutting everything else out.

It was a good moment to say something, I suppose. But in spite of everything I couldn't attack her. I was too impressed by her beauty and its success. I even began to find excuses for her. Perhaps that man wasn't what he seemed to be. Perhaps - more romantically - she was involved with him against her wishes. People began to drift into the room and we couldn't talk any more, so we went in to the dance. After a while I saw Joe Jelke sitting in a corner with a bandage over one eye. He was watching Ellen as if she herself had knocked him down. I didn't go to him. I felt strange - the way I feel when I wake after sleeping through an afternoon, as if something had happened while I was asleep.

The party continued until the early hours, and all the time I watched Ellen moving among the guests. I watched her with an indefinable sense of fear until the last sleepy groups had crowded into the lifts and then drifted out into the clear, dry Minnesota night.

## **Chapter 2.**

There is a middle part of our city which lies between the big houses on the hill and the business district down near the river. It is not a clearly defined area and is broken into odd, complicated shapes by streets and alleys. There are names like Seven Corners. There are not many people who could draw an accurate map of the area, though everybody travelled through it by bus or car or on foot twice a day. And although it was a busy part of town, I couldn't say what business went on there. There was a big cinema and many small ones with large posters. There were small shops with curious advertisements in the windows, and cigarettes and sweets inside. And on one side of a certain dark street women stood in doorways, offering their services to the men

that walked past. And all through the district there were moneylenders, cheap jewellers and small clubs and bars.

The morning after the party I woke up late, feeling lazy. I had the happy feeling that for another day or two there were no classes - nothing to do except wait for another party tonight. It was a fine, bright morning and the events of last night seemed far away. After lunch I set out to walk into town. It was snowing lightly. I was about halfway through that middle part of town when suddenly I began thinking of Ellen Baker. I began worrying about her more than I had ever worried about anything before. I was tempted to go back up the hill and find her and talk to her.

It was four o'clock on a December afternoon when it is not yet dark but the street lamps are just going on. I passed a bar with a few men standing around near the door. As I went past, thinking hard of Ellen, one of them called to me, not by name, but obviously referring to me. I turned around. There was the scarred, thin-faced man who had hit Joe Jelke. He was standing in the group, looking at me with the same unpleasant smile on his face as the night before.

He was wearing a black coat, buttoned up to the neck as if he was cold. His hands were deep in his pockets and he had a bowler hat on his head. I was surprised, and for a moment I hesitated. But above all I was angry. Knowing that I was quicker with my hands than Joe Jelke, I took a step back in his direction. The other men weren't looking at me - I don't think they even saw me. But I knew that this one recognized me.

'Here I am. What are you going to do about it?' his eyes seemed to say.

I took another step towards him and he laughed soundlessly with that twisted smile and moved back into the group. I followed. I wanted to speak to him, although I wasn't sure what I was going to say. But when I approached the group, he had disappeared.

'Did he go inside?' I asked.

There was a short silence, and they looked at one another quickly. Then one of them said:

'Did who go inside?'

'I don't know his name.'

Another quick look passed between them. Annoyed and determined, I walked past them and into the bar. There were a few people at a lunch counter along one side and a few more playing cards. But he was not among them.

I went up to the man at the food counter.

'Did you see that fellow who just walked in here?'

He shook his head. Was he pretending to know nothing, or was it my imagination?

'What fellow?'

'Thin face - bowler hat.'

He shook his head again. 'I didn't see him,' he said.

I waited. The three men from outside had come in and were standing at the counter beside me, looking at me in a peculiar way. Feeling helpless and increasingly uneasy, I turned suddenly and went out. A little way down the street I turned again and took a good look at the place, so I'd know it and could find it again. On the next corner I started to run, found a taxi in front of the hotel and drove back up the hill.

Ellen wasn't home. Mrs Baker came downstairs and talked to me. She seemed cheerful and obviously knew nothing about the events of the night before. She said she was glad I had come because Ellen would want to see me, and there was so little time. Ellen was going back to New York at half past eight tonight.

'Tonight!' I said. 'I thought she was going back the day after tomorrow.'

'She's going to visit the Brokaws in Chicago first, and then she'll go on to New York,' Mrs Baker said. 'They want her for some party. We just decided it today. She's leaving with the Ingersoll girls tonight.'

I was so glad. Ellen was safe. I had been worrying unnecessarily. This business with the thin-faced fellow had been a short adventure, nothing more, and now she was going to leave him far behind. I felt like an idiot, but I realized how much I cared about Ellen.

'Will she be in soon?'

'Any minute now. She just phoned from the University Club.'

I lived almost next door, so I said I'd come back later. When I got outside, I decided to take a shorter route which we used to take in childhood - through the Baker's back garden. It was still snowing. Trying to find the path, I noticed that the Bakers' back door was slightly open.

I hardly know why I turned and walked into that kitchen. The Bakers' servants knew me, and there was a sudden silence as I walked in. They began to work quickly, making unnecessary movements and noise. One young girl looked at me in a frightened way, and I guessed that she was waiting to deliver another message. I spoke to her.

'I know all about this,' I said. 'It's a very serious business.

Shall I go to Mrs Baker now, or will you shut and lock that back door?'

'Don't tell Mrs Baker, Mr Stinson!'

'Then do as I say. If you trouble Miss Ellen-' I made some improbable threat about going to all the employment offices and making sure she never got another job in the city. She was thoroughly frightened. When I went out, the back door was shut and locked behind me.

At the same time I heard a big car arrive in front of the house. It was bringing Ellen home, and I went in to say goodbye.

Joe Jelke and two other boys were there. Evidently Joe had forgiven her, or at least he was too much in love to remember last night. But I saw that, although she laughed a lot, Ellen wasn't really paying any attention to him or any of them. She wanted them to go, so that there'd be a message from the kitchen, but I knew that the message wouldn't come. She was safe. I left and walked home, feeling slightly depressed. I lay for an hour in a hot bath, thinking that the holiday was now over for me because Ellen was gone. I felt even more deeply than yesterday that she had moved out of my life.

And there was something else - something I'd forgotten. It was something to do with Mrs Baker. Now I seemed to remember that I had first thought of it during my conversation with her. I'd forgotten to ask her a question.



The Brokaws - that was it. Ellen was going to visit the Brokaws in Chicago, Mrs Baker had said. I knew Bill Brokaw well; he was in my class at Yale. Then I remembered with a shock - the Brokaws weren't in Chicago this Christmas; they were at Palm Beach!

I leapt out of the bath, threw a towel around my shoulders and ran to the phone. A servant answered; Miss Ellen had already left for the station.

Luckily our car was in and the driver brought it round to the door. The night was cold and dry and we drove quickly to the station through the snow. This business was wrong - all wrong. I dropped any idea that it was harmless. I was the only person that stood between Ellen and some unknown disaster. Or else it was the police and public shame. There was something dark and frightening here, and I didn't want Ellen to go through it alone.

There are three trains from St Paul to Chicago that all leave here at around half past eight. She was travelling on the Burlington. As I ran across the station, I saw that the Burlington had just left. But I knew that she was together with the Ingersoll girls, so she was safe until tomorrow.

I managed to catch one of the other two trains. However, I knew that Ellen would arrive in Chicago ten minutes before me. She would have ten minutes - more than enough time to disappear into one of the largest cities in the world.

At eight o'clock the next morning I pushed violently past a line of passengers and jumped out of the train onto the platform. For a moment the confusion of the great station, the sounds and echoes and bells and smoke left me helpless. Then I ran towards the exit; it was the only chance I knew.

I had guessed right. She was standing at a counter, sending off a telegram to her mother. Heaven knows what black lie she had written. Her expression when she saw me was one of terror mixed with surprise. She was thinking quickly. She would have liked to walk away from me as if I weren't there, but she couldn't. So we stood silently watching each other and each thinking hard.

'The Brokaws are in Florida,' I said after a minute.

'It was nice of you to take such a long trip to tell me that.'

'Well, you know it now, so don't you think you'd better go on to school?'

'Please leave me alone, Eddie,' she said.

'I'll go as far as New York with you. I've decided to go back early too.'

'You'd better leave me alone.' Her lovely eyes narrowed and her face had a look of refusal. Then suddenly her expression changed and she gave a cheerful smile that almost persuaded me.

'Eddie, you silly child. Don't you think I'm old enough to look after myself?' I didn't answer. 'I'm going to meet a man, you understand. I just want to see him today. I've got my ticket to go East on the five o'clock train. If you don't believe me, here it is in my bag.'

'I believe you.'

'You don't know this man, and - honestly, I think you're being awfully interfering and impossible.'

'I know who the man is.'

Again she lost control of her face. That terrible expression returned and she spoke almost fiercely:

'You'd better leave me alone.'

I took the telegram she had written out of her hand and wrote another one, explaining things to her mother. Then I turned to Ellen and said a little roughly:

'We'll take the five o'clock train East together. Until then you're going to spend the day with me.'

The sound of my own voice saying this so firmly encouraged me, and I think it impressed her too. Anyway, she followed without protest while I bought my ticket.

When I start to piece together in my mind the events of that day, a sort of confusion begins. It is as if my consciousness didn't want to let any of it pass through. It was a bright morning. I remember driving about in a taxi and going to various large shops where Ellen tried to escape from me. As we drove along Lake Shore Drive I had the feeling

that someone was following us in a taxi. I tried to see them by turning round quickly or looking suddenly into the driver's mirror. But there was no one, and when I turned back, I could see that Ellen's face was twisted with cold, unnatural laughter.

All morning there was an icy wind from the lake, but while we were having lunch in a restaurant by the shore, a light snow began to fall, and we talked almost naturally about our friends, and about little things. Suddenly her voice changed; she grew serious and looked me in the eye, straight and sincere.

'Eddie, you're the oldest friend I have,' she said, 'and you should be able to trust me. If I promise you faithfully that I'll catch that five o'clock train, will you leave me alone for a few hours this afternoon?'

'Why?'

'Well-' she hesitated and hung her head a little, 'I suppose everybody has a right to say - goodbye.'

'You want to say goodbye to that-'

'Yes, yes,' she said quickly, 'just a few hours, Eddie, and I promise faithfully that I'll be on that train.'

'Well, I suppose nothing much can happen in a couple of hours. If you really want to say goodbye-'

I looked up suddenly, and saw a look of such fierceness in her face that I was shocked. Her lip was curled up and her eyes were narrow. There wasn't the slightest sign of fairness and sincerity in her whole face.

We argued. I refused to let her persuade me or infect me with any - well, there was evil in the air. She kept trying to make me believe that everything was all right. She was waiting for any weakness or doubt in my mind which she could use to her advantage. But she was getting tired. Two or three times she was close to tears. I almost had her - then she slipped away again.

I forced her into a taxi at four o'clock and we set off towards the station. The wind was icy again, and the people in the streets, waiting for buses, looked cold and unhappy. I tried to think how lucky we were with our comfortable lives and our comfortable homes; but all the

familiar, respectable world I had known until yesterday had disappeared. We were carrying with us something that was the enemy and the opposite of all that. With a touch of alarm I wondered whether I was becoming like Ellen.

Ellen and I got on the train and found our car. We went into Ellen's compartment, shut the door and sat down.

'Ellen,' I said helplessly, 'You asked me to trust you. You have much more reason to trust me. Surely it would help if you told me a little.'

'I can't,' she said very low. 'I mean, there's nothing to tell.'

'You met this man on the train coming home and you fell in love with him, isn't that true?'

'I don't know.'

'He has some sort of hold over you,' I went on. 'He's trying to use you; he's trying to get something from you. He's not in love with you.'

'What does that matter?' she said in a weak voice.

'It does matter. Instead of trying to fight this thing, you're fighting me. And I love you Ellen. Do you hear? I'm telling you this for the first time now, but it isn't new with me. I love you.'

She looked at me with an unpleasant smile on her gentle face.

'Ellen, I want you to answer one question. Is he going to be on this train?'

She hesitated. At that moment I knew without any doubt that he was just outside the door. She knew it, too, and turned pale. I held my head in my hands and tried to think.

We must have sat there without a word for more than an hour. I was conscious that the lights of Chicago were moving past. Then we were out on the dark flatness of Illinois.

After a while I persuaded myself that I was strong enough - that my faith in people and things was strong enough - for the struggle that was coming. I had no doubt that this person's purpose was criminal, but there wasn't any reason to believe that he had more than human intelligence. He was a man. But I suppose I already half knew what I would find when I opened the door.

When I stood up, Ellen didn't seem to see me at all. She was curled up in a corner, staring into space. I knelt beside her and kissed her two hands. Then I opened the door and went out into the corridor.

I closed the door behind me. The corridor was dark except for the two lights at each end. A man was standing further down the car outside the men's smoking-room. His collar was turned up, as if he was cold, and he was wearing a bowler hat. When I saw him, he turned and went into the smoking-room, and I followed. He was sitting in the far corner on the long leather seat; I sat in the single armchair by the door.

As I went in I nodded to him and he gave one of those terrible, soundless laughs. But this time the laugh seemed to go on forever. Mainly in order to cut it short, I asked: 'Where are you from?'

He stopped laughing and looked at me through narrow eyes. When he decided to answer, his voice seemed to come from a great distance.

'I'm from St Paul, Jack.'

'Have you been making a trip home?'

He nodded. Then he took a long breath and spoke in a loud, threatening voice:

'You'd better get off at the next station, Jack.'

He was dead. He was as dead as hell - he had been dead all this time. The force that gave him a sort of life, the force that had carried him out to St Paul and back, was leaving him now. Another figure was becoming visible behind the solid shape of the man on the seat opposite me - it was the figure of a dead man.

He spoke again with difficulty.

'You get off at Fort Wayne, Jack, or I'm going to finish you.' He moved his hand in his coat pocket, and I saw that he had a gun.

I shook my head. 'You can't touch me,' I answered. 'You see, I know.'

His terrible eyes moved quickly, trying to guess whether or not I did know. Then he gave a noise like a wild animal and seemed to be about to jump to his feet.

'You climb off here or else I'm going to get you, Jack!' he said fiercely. The train was slowing as it approached Fort Wayne. His voice was loud in the stillness, but he didn't move from his chair — he was too weak, I think. No one got into our car. After a while the train slid out of the station and into the long darkness.

I remember the next five or six hours as if they were a dream. It must have been five or six hours, but looking back now it seems like something outside time - five minutes or a year, I cannot say. There was a slow, purposeful attack on me, wordless and terrible. I felt a strangeness take hold of me - like the strangeness I had felt all afternoon, but deeper and stronger. It was like the sensation of drifting away. I gripped the arms of the chair, as if to hold on to a piece of the living world. Sometimes I almost lost consciousness. I almost looked forward to it and was tempted to let go. Then, with desperate willpower, I pulled myself back.

Suddenly I realized that I had stopped hating him. I didn't feel he was a stranger any more. I went cold and started to sweat. He was beginning to work on my feelings. He had won control of Ellen in the same way.

He must have seen my hesitation because he spoke in a low, steady, almost gentle voice: 'You'd better go now.'

'Oh, I'm not going,' I forced myself to say.

'Whatever you say, Jack.'

'What do you want from this girl?' I said in a shaking voice. 'You want to turn her life into a walking hell, is that it?'

His eyes showed surprise, as if I had accused him unfairly. I went on blindly: 'You've lost her; she's put her trust in me.'

His face went suddenly black with evil, and he cried: 'You're a liar!' His voice was like cold hands at my throat.

'She trusts me,' I said. 'You can't touch her, she's safe.'

He controlled himself. His face grew calm and I felt that strange weakness begin again inside me. A feeling of hopelessness came over me.

'You haven't got much time left,' I forced myself to say. Then I suddenly guessed the truth. 'You died, or you were killed, not far from here!' - Then I saw something I had not noticed before. There was a small round bullet hole in the middle of his head. 'And now you're sinking. You've only got a few hours. The trip home is over!'

His face was suddenly as ugly as hell. It was not human, neither living nor dead. At the same time the room was full of cold air and there was a sound of horrible laughter. He was on his feet.

'Come and look!' he cried. 'I'll show you-'

He took a step towards me and it was as if a door had opened behind him - a door which opened onto unimaginable darkness and evil. There was a scream of pain and suddenly the breath went out of him in a long sigh and he sank to the floor...

I don't know how long I sat there in terror and exhaustion. The next thing I remember is our arrival at Pittsburgh. There was something lying on the seat opposite me - something too pale to be a man, too dark and heavy to be a shadow. While I watched it, it slowly disappeared.

Some minutes later I opened the door of Ellen's compartment. She was asleep where I had left her. Her lovely cheeks were white, but her breathing was regular and clear. The thing that had taken control of her was gone and she was exhausted, but she was herself again.

I laid a blanket over her, turned off the light and went out.

### **Chapter 3.**

When I came home for the Easter holiday, I went straight down to the bar at Seven Corners. The barman naturally didn't remember my visit three months before.

'I'm trying to find a certain person who used to come here a lot some time ago.'

I described the man accurately. When I had finished, the barman called to a little fellow who was sitting at one of the tables.

'Hey, Shorty, talk to this fellow, will you? I think he's looking for Joe Varland.'

The little man gave me a slow look. I went and sat near him.

'Joe Varland's dead' he said. 'He died last winter.'

I described him again - his coat, his laugh, the habitual expression of his eyes.

'That's Joe Varland alright, but he's dead.'

'I want to find out something about him.'

'What do you want to find out?'

'What did he do, for example?'

'How should I know?'

'Look, I'm not a policeman. I just want some information about his habits. He's dead now and it can't hurt him. And I won't pass on the information.'

'Well' - he hesitated, looking at me closely - 'he travelled a lot on trains. He got into an argument in the station in Pittsburg and a policeman shot him.'

I nodded. Broken pieces of the puzzle were beginning to fall into place.

'Why was he a lot on trains?'

'How should I know?'

'If you can use ten dollars, I'd like to know anything you've heard about the subject.'

'Well,' said Shorty, 'I only know that they used to say he worked the trains.'

'What do you mean "worked the trains"?''

'He had some business of his own which he never talked about. He used to get money from girls who travelled alone on trains. Nobody ever knew much about it - he didn't talk about it. But sometimes he came here with a lot of money, and we knew he got it from the girls he met on trains.'

I thanked him and gave him the ten dollars. I went out, thinking deeply.

Ellen didn't come West at Easter, and even if she had come, I wouldn't have gone to her with the information. But at least I've seen her almost every day this summer and we've managed to talk about



everything else. Sometimes, though, she gets silent and wants to be very close to me, and I know what's in her mind.

She's finishing school in New York this autumn and coming back to St Paul, while I have two more years at New Haven. But things don't look as impossible as they did a few months ago. She belongs to me - even if I lose her, she belongs to me. Who knows? Anyway, I'll always be there.

- THE END -

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