

LARRY: When's your plane tomorrow?

ANNA: Noon. But I'm back the day after. Here for a week, then go to Seattle for no more than six days, and then that's it. No more teaching other companies Charley's dance.

LARRY: Concentrate on your own work.

ANNA: Whatever that is. I've already signed up for a class just to get Charley's damn movements out of my muscles. No lie; I could walk down the street, it's Charley walking down the street, it isn't me.

LARRY: Should we have waited for you? After the funeral. Kelly had to work.

ANNA: No, I should have come with you. God. Just as I think I'm out of there, some relatives drive me back to the house. The place is mobbed. I'm dragged through everybody eating and drinking and talking, to some little back bedroom, with all the aunts and cousins, with the women, right? Squashed into this room. His mother's on the bed with a washcloth on her forehead. I'm trying to tell them how I've got to get a bus back to civilization.

LARRY: This is very moving, but I'm double-parked.

ANNA: Exactly.

LARRY: This is a *wake*?

ANNA: I couldn't tell you *what* it was, Larry, I guess. In about eight seconds I know they have no idea that Robbie's gay.

LARRY: I could have told you that.

ANNA: They've never heard of Dom. God, I'm making up

stories, I'm racking my brain for every interesting thing anyone I know has done to tell them Robbie did it. Wonderful workaholic Robbie, and I couldn't tell them a thing about him. It was all just so massively sad.

LARRY: Oh, Lord.

ANNA: It gets worse, it gets much worse. And they *never saw him dance!* I couldn't believe it. All the men are gorgeous, of course. They all look exactly like Robbie except in that kind of blue-collar, working-at-the-steel-mill kind of way, and *drink?* God, could they knock it back. So then it's midnight and the last bus has left at ten, which they knew, I'm sure, damn them, and I hadn't checked, like an idiot. So I have to spend the night in Robbie's little nephew's room in the attic. The little redhead, did you see him?

LARRY: I didn't see him.

ANNA: He's been collecting butterflies all day, and they're pinned around the room to the walls—a pin in each wing, right?

LARRY: I'm not liking this little redheaded nephew.

ANNA: Darling, wait. So. I get to sleep by about two, I've got them to promise to get me up at six-thirty for the seven-something bus. I wake up, it's not quite light, really; you can't see in the room much—but there's something *in* there.

LARRY: Oh, God.

ANNA: There's this intermittent soft flutter sound. I think what the hell is—Larry, the—oh, Lord, the walls are just pulsating. All those butterflies are alive. They're all beating their bodies against the walls—all around me. The kid's put them in alcohol; he thought he'd killed them, they'd only passed out.



LARRY: Oh, God.

ANNA: I started screaming hysterically. I got the bedsheet around me, ran down to the kitchen; I've never felt so naked in my life. Of course I was naked—a sheet wrapped around me. This glowering older brother had to go get my clothes, unpinned the butterflies, who knows if they lived. I got the whispering sister—

LARRY: What a family!

ANNA: —to drop me off at the bus station; they were glad to get rid of me. I was an hour and a half early, I didn't care. I drank about twenty cups of that vending-machine coffee. Black; the cream and sugar buttons didn't work. The bus-station attendant is ogling me. I'm so wired from the caffeine, if he'd said anything I'd have kneecapped him. There's these two bag ladies yelling at each other, apparently they're rivals. I fit right in.

LARRY: Oh, God. To wake up to those—I can just see them.

ANNA: Oh, Lord, I shrieked like a madwoman. They were glad to get rid of me.

LARRY: I was going to ask if you wanted coffee.

ANNA: No, I don't think that's going to do it.

LARRY: Not one of your better nights.

ANNA: Not one of my better nights. Not one of my better mornings.

LARRY: Jesus. What are we going to do about Robbie's mail?