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A Parisian Dinner Ellen Smith

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Ellen Smith

A PARISIAN DINNER

Almost overnight, an agreement has been made between me and the man from Perigord. He is not to flirt with me. He is not to take a seat beside me in the resto-U without inquiring now, first with his eyes. He is no longer allowed to pretend he is, like the others here, a student with a future. Even with his briefcase full of soiled papers, even with his papers full of countless figures, he is not permitted to pretend he is someone to contend for me; he is old and bald and needs a bath; I couldn't eat; I was ready to gag; he had gone through the wastecans to make up his plate. I stood up as he came to sit down. "You 're not going to throw that out, are you?" he asked me furtively, the way he used to ask before: "Would you like to spend a weekend in Perigord with me?"