

PERIPATETICS

4

It was but Sunday; sitting and walking and talking, it is all the same. We were all waiting for a lady. The sun the wind the rain were sitting and walking and talking.

All unsuspecting I was seated on the terrace and was left for a moment by the unknown gentleman beside me (evil in motion) whose cane you know was left too . . . gingerly balanced against the bench—our bench for a moment when two minutes later what does the stick do but slide down and strike me at the knee? The evil that men do lives after them . . the evil that men do after them . . . the evil that men do after. I stalk about in a world of ill-humor and ill-humor stalks me. Make way! I am young-and-smiling.

But the taxi the beggar the horses the sailor the policeman the old man the coal man the octogenarian the flower lady? Way! Black soul shall I ever outlive the light stinging rebuff of that stick in that moment of warm delicious relaxation in front of my beer before friend world? . . . the quick cool rap that flicked my life away that soured the beer that spoiled my stomach that twisted my faith in you and the street and the afternoon.