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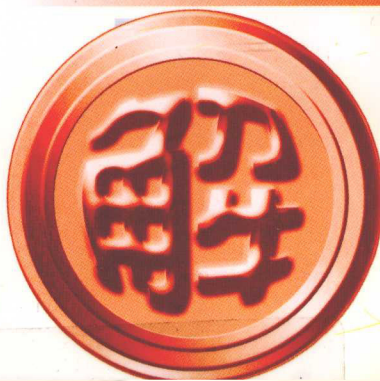
2012 考研专业课辅导系列

# 英语专业英美文学

## 考研真题详解

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考研专业课辅导系列

# 英语专业英美文学 考研真题详解

主编：圣才考研网

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中国石化出版社

## 内 容 提 要

本书是解答名校英语专业考研科目“英美文学”历年真题的复习资料。它根据众多院校“英美文学”试题的结构和难易程度,从全国13所院校近几年40份试题中挑选出英美文学方向的试题,并提供了详细的参考答案。

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# 序 言

目前我国英语专业硕士研究生入学考试没有采取全国统考的方式，没有统一的考试大纲，而是采取各招生院校自行命题、自行组织考试的办法，但是各校的考试要求、命题特点大同小异，一些学校的试题类型、内容难易程度都非常相似，因此，研究一些学校的考研试题非常有价值。我们参照一些名校英语专业硕士研究生入学考试大纲和要求，认真研究了50多所高校300多份英语专业考研科目“英美文学”真题，精心挑选部分试题和相关资料，并进行了详细的解答，以减轻考生寻找试题及整理答案的痛苦，让读者用最少的时间获得最多的重点题、难点题(包括参考答案)，这是本书的目的所在。

本书根据众多院校“英美文学”试题的结构和难易程度，从全国13所院校近年40份试题中挑选出英美文学方向的试题，并提供了详细的参考答案。可以说，通过本书，读者可以了解英语专业硕士研究生入学考试的最高水平和各个院校英语专业考研科目“英美文学”的出题思路。对于报考英美文学方向的考生来说，本书是一本不可多得的辅导资料。

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# 第1章 全国院校英语专业英美文学 考研真题分析

对于报考英语专业研究生的考生而言，“英美文学”是全国各院校英语专业研究生入学考试专业课科目(一般而言，英语专业专业课分语言学、文学及翻译等三个研究方向)。

需要说明的是，有的院校会将研究方向与考试科目紧密挂钩，即报考英美文学研究方向就只考英美文学试题，报考语言学方向就只考语言学试题，英美文学为单卷，分值为150分；有的院校试卷考察内容会同时涉及文学、语言学、翻译等内容(有的院校涉及两部分)，各占50分，满分150分。

## 1.1 英美文学考研真题分析

全国各大院校在制定本校英语专业考研考试大纲时，虽然“英美文学”科目一般都有指定参考书，但考生在复习中抓不住重点，在考试中生搬硬套，考试成绩不甚理想，所以对各大院校的英美文学历年真题分析则显得尤为重要。分析各大院校的英美文学试题能够使考生对“英美文学”考试有一个全面的了解，更加清楚出题者的思路，从而正确地制定出复习方法和学习步骤，使复习具有针对性，使复习的效果更上一层楼。

### 1. 考核要求

对于“英美文学”，全国各大院校自主命题，而且各院校的考核要求水平也有差异，所以没有相应的考试大纲来说明其考核要求。但国内大部分院校在命题时都会把1999年教育部批准实施的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》作为指导标准，因此，这个大纲仍能反映目前高校对英语专业学生英美文学课程的大体要求。其要求如下：

英美文学课程的目的在于培养学生阅读、欣赏、理解英语文学原著的能力，掌握文学批评的基本知识和方法。通过阅读和分析英美文学作品，促进学生语言基本功和人文素质的提高，增强学生对西方文学及文化的了解。授课的内容可包括：(a)文学导论；(b)英国文学概况；(c)美国文学概况；(d)文学批评。

需要注意的是，个别院校英美文学试题涉及的范围与《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》指明的授课内容会略有出入，考生复习时应以报考院校所指定参考书的内容为主要参照依据。

### 2. 试题类型和出题形式

通过分析全国众多院校“英美文学”的历年真题，其题目类型大致包括填空题、选择题、名词解释(文学术语或对作家作品的解释)、简答题、作品选段分析、论述题、批判性思维(北外的特色题型)等，具体归纳如下：

#### (1) 填空题

填空题出题形式有两种。一种为一个留有空白的英文句子，要求考生根据句中提供的信息填出正确的答案。一种是考查作家与作品的匹配：一般为给出作品的名称，要求考生回答作家的名字；或是给出作品的简短选段，考生回答作品及作家的名称。如：

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote \_\_\_\_\_, which has been called “the Manifesto of Ameri-

can Transcendentalism,” and \_\_\_\_\_, which has been regarded as America’s “Declaration of Intellectual Independence.”

2. Read the following excerpts and identify their authors and the titles from which they are excerpted. Give full name of the author and full title of the work.

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

April is the cruelest month, breeding

Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing

Memory and desire, stirring

Dull roots with spring rain.

填空题考核的内容比较广泛，知识点也比较分散，但难度不大。采用这类题型的院校较多，有南京大学、中国人民大学、南开大学等。需要考生对各个时段的作家作品熟练掌握。

### (2) 选择题

选择题出题形式为一个留有空白的英文句子，要求考生从所给的四个选项选出正确的答案。其主要是考查作品与作家的匹配，或是对某个作品选段的分析，或是对文学基本知识的掌握程度。如：

The following selection was written by \_\_\_\_\_.

A. Washington Irving

B. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

C. Emily Dickinson

D. Walt Whitman

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;

The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won;

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,

While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

选择题不是特别常见，采用这类题型的院校有大连外国语学院、北京第二外国语学院等。只要考生对文学基本知识熟练掌握，此题难度不大。

### (3) 名词解释

名词解释题出题形式为题目给出一个术语，或是作家作品的名称，要求考生对其解释。如：

Define, in complete sentences, the following terms, writers or works in English and American literature.

Harlem Renaissance

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

*Death of a Salesman*

名词解释题是很多学校会采用的一种题型，如中国人民大学、西安交通大学、北京师范大学、上海交通大学等。

### (4) 简答题

简答题出题形式为给出某个作家或作品，要求考生对作家所属的流派，世界观及其主要作品的分析(包括主要人物、写作风格、主题思想的分析等)。如：

Give a brief answer to each of the questions below.

Why does Oscar Wilde put forward the doctrine “Art for art’s sake”?

简答题是很多院校都会采用的一种题型，如南开大学、上海交通大学、四川大学、武汉



大学、浙江大学、中国人民大学等。

### (5) 作品选段分析题

作品选段分析题出题形式为给出某个作品的选段，要求考生根据该选段回答相应的问题，如选段的作者，选段的主体思想、写作风格、艺术手法或是对某个单词、短语或者句子的理解。如：

Read the following poem by Robert Frost and do according to the requirements.

...

该作品选段为 Robert Frost 的一篇脍炙人口的诗《未选择的路》，要求考生根据这首诗回答以下两个问题：

1. Please analyze the symbolic meanings of this poem with your understanding of the theme implied in it (10 points);
2. Please point out one or two artistic features of the poem with the examples in the text. (6 points);

这种题型几乎每个学校都会涉及，要求考生对指定的教材中的作品选段要十分熟悉。有些学校会选择指定教材外的作品选段，考生对此不必担心，这样的题目弹性较大，只要能够把握选段的意思及主要思想，问题便会迎刃而解。

### (6) 论述题

论述题出题形式比较多样，但主要就是对作家作品的分析，相对于简答题而言难度稍高。有些院校擅长考查作家作品的对比比较（如武汉大学），有些院校题目中给出一些文学理论，要求考生根据理论选择作品进行文学批评（如南京大学）。论述题需要考生对英美文学有一个较为宏观的把握，但细节的东西一定要掌握牢固，能够做到活学活用。

### (7) 批判思维题

批判思维题出题形式为给出一段话，要求考生判断其逻辑错误。此题型较为新颖，但目前只有北京外国语大学采用此种题型（2010 年没有考查）。

## 1.2 重点院校英美文学考研真题比较

对于全国重点院校的英美文学考研试题，虽然各大院校自主命题，但各院校的历年试题之间以及不同院校的试题之间存在一定的可比性，具体分析如下：

### 一、各院校历年试题之间的异同

一般而言，大多数院校英美文学历年试题具有很强的沿袭性，即其试卷结构及分值比重变动很小或者跟去年一样，呈现出很强的规则性和规律性，如北京外国语大学 2007 到 2008 年的英美文学试题都是由“作家作品匹配”、“简短故事分析”及“批判性思维”组成。有时，对于同一个知识点，有的院校会连续两年考到，甚至题目完全一样。

需要注意的是，少数院校研招思路发生变革，考试科目变动较大，如中国人民大学“专业英语”，将研究方向与考试科目紧密挂钩，报考英美文学研究方向就只考英美文学内容，以往是将语言学、英美文学及文化等放在一张试卷中考核。因此，对于报考院校最新公布的硕士统考招简说明和专业目录，考生一定要给予高度重视。

### 二、不同院校历年试题之间的异同

#### 1. 考察内容及范围

对于报考英美文学方向的考生，由于院校自主命题，其考察内容的深度及广度会有所不

同，就考试科目而论，有的院校比较单一，试题内容仅涉及到英美文学，专业性较强，有的院校则把文学和语言学、翻译、文化等内容综合考察，考核的能力更为全面。

单就英美文学方面的试题而言，各院校的考察内容又有不同，有的院校指定的参考教材为《英国文学史及选读》(吴伟仁)、《美国文学史及选读》(吴伟仁)，有的为《美国文学简史》(常耀信)、《英国文学简史》(常耀信)，有的为《美国文学选读》(陶杰)、《英国文学选读》(王守仁)，还有的院校(如北京外国语大学)为外文原版教材，教材的不同也表明各院校出题范围会有所侧重。有的院校注重基础理论的掌握，有的注重考查文学鉴赏水平。

## 2. 难易程度

各院校考察侧重点的不同，一定程度上就导致了其考试的难易程度上的差异。有的院校由于侧重对指定教材基础知识的考察，试题就相对来说比较简单；有的院校灵活性就比较高，要求考生能对基础知识进行整合运用，因此相对来说，试题也就比较难。

## 3. 题量和分值

对于报考英美文学方向的考生，所考科目不管是综合试卷还是英美文学单卷，考试时间都是3个小时，满分150分(英美文学试题所占比重会有所不同)。这里所说的题量和分值不同是针对个别题型而言，比如有的院校客观题占相当一部分比重，而有的院校只有主观问答题，再比如不同院校考察同一题型，如名词解释，每小题对应的分值也会有所差别，低的2分，高的能达到6分。

总之，各院校的历年试题之间和不同院校的试题之间在能力要求、考察内容及范围等方面会存在一些差异，有时差异还很大。考生可以根据个人的实际情况选择不同院校，选择自己比较擅长的考试题型和所熟悉的院校指定的参考教材，使复习更加有针对性，从而获得理想的成绩。

## 第2章 名校英语专业英美文学考研真题详解

### 1. 北京外国语大学英美文学考研真题及参考答案(2007-2010)

北京外国语大学 2010 年英美文学考研真题

考试科目:英美文学

#### Section 1 Matching (30 points)

Match each of the following ten passages with its author. There are more authors than passages here, and one author may be matched with more than one passage.

Write the passage number (1-10) and the corresponding author letter (A-L) for each answer. For example, the following is Passage 2:

Only one same reason is shared by all of us; we wish to create worlds as real as, but other than the world that is. Or was. This is why we cannot plan. We know a world is an organism, not a machine. We also know that a genuinely created world must be independent of its creator; a planned world (a world that fully reveals its planning) is a dead world. It is only when our characters and events begin to disobey us that they begin to live.

And its' author is [M] *Fowles*. Then your answer should be: 2M.

#### Passages

1. Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of our own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world.
2. It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger—but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. I didn't do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd a knowed it would make him feel that way.
3. While arranging my hair, I looked at my face in the glass and felt it was no longer plain; there was hope in its aspect and life in its colour; and my eyes seemed as if they had beheld the fount of fruition and borrowed beams from the lustrous ripple, I had often been unwilling to look at my master, because I feared he could not be pleased at my look; but I was sure I might lift my face to his now, and not cool his affection by its expression.
4. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.
5. Some say the world will end in fire,  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire,  
I hold with those who favour fire.

But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

6. I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.
7. Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:  
What if my leaves are falling like its own!  
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies  
Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,  
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,  
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
8. Another thing in Joe that I could not understand when it first began to develop itself, but which I soon arrived at *sorrowful comprehension* of, was this: As I became stronger and better, Joe became a little less easy with me.
9. All Nature is but art, unknown to thee;  
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good;  
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear: whatever IS, is RIGHT.
10. The grass-plot before the jail, in Prison Lane, on a certain summer morning, not less than two centuries ago, was occupied by a pretty large number of the inhabitants of Boston, all with their eyes intently fastened on the iron-clamped oaken door. Amongst any other population, or at a later period in the history of New England, the grim rigidity that petrified the bearded physiognomies of these good people would have augured some awful business in hand.

#### **Authors**

- A. Henry David Thoreau
- B. William Wordsworth
- C. Charles Dickens
- D. Alexander Pope
- E. Francis Bacon
- F. Charlotte Bronte
- G. Percy Bysshe Shelley
- H. Robert Frost
- I. Mark Twain
- J. William Shakespeare

K. Nathaniel Hawthorne

L. Ralph W. Emerson

M. William Blake

## Section 2 Short Story (120 points)

1. Summarize the plot of the following story in your own words. (30 points)
2. Define the major theme of the following short story. (40 points)
3. Make a brief comment on the characterization of the man and his wife. (30 points)
4. Comment on the ending part of the story. (20 points)

### The Enormous Radio

Jim and Irene Westcott were the kind of people who seem to strike that satisfactory average of income, endeavor, and respectability that is reached by the statistical reports in college alumni bulletins. They were the parents of two young children, they had been married nine years, they lived on the twelfth floor of an apartment house near Sutton Place, they went to the theater on an average of 10.3 times a year, and they hoped someday to live in Westchester. Irene Westcott was a pleasant, rather plain girl with soft brown hair, and a wide, fine forehead upon which nothing at all had been written, and in the cold weather she wore a coat of fitch skins dyed to resemble mink. You could not say that Jim Westcott looked younger than he was, but you could at least say of him that he seemed to feel younger. He wore his graying hair cut very short, he dressed in the kind of clothes his class had worn at Andover, and his manner was earnest, vehement, and intentionally naive. The Westcotts differed from their friends, their classmates, and their neighbors, only in an interest they shared in serious music. They went to a great many concerts—although they seldom mentioned this to anyone—and they spent a good deal of time listening to music on the radio.

Their radio was an old instrument, sensitive, unpredictable, and beyond repair. He promised to buy Irene a new radio, and on Monday when he came home from work he told her that he had got one. He refused to describe it, and said it would be a surprise for her when it came.

The radio was delivered at the kitchen door the following afternoon, and with the assistance of her maid and the handyman Irene uncrated it and brought it into the living room. She was struck at once with the physical ugliness of the large gumwood cabinet. Irene was proud of her living room, she had chosen its furnishings and colors as carefully as she chose her clothes, and now it seemed to her that her new radio stood among her intimate possessions like an aggressive intruder. She was confounded by the number of dials and switches on the instrument panel, and she studied them thoroughly before she put the plug into a wall socket and turned the radio on. The dials flooded with a malevolent green light, and in the distance she heard the music of a piano quartet. The quintet was in the distance for only an instant; it bore down upon her with a speed greater than light and filled the apartment with the noise of music amplified so mightily that it knocked a china ornament from a table to the floor. She rushed to the instrument and reduced the volume. The violent forces that were snared in the ugly gumwood cabinet made her uneasy. Her children came home from school then, and she took them to the Park. It was not until later in the afternoon that she was able to return to the radio.

The maid had given the children their suppers and was supervising their baths when Irene

turned on the radio, reduced the volume, and sat down to listen to a Mozart quintet that she knew and enjoyed. The music came through clearly. The new instrument had a much purer tone, she thought, than the old one. She decided that tone was most important and that she could conceal the cabinet behind the sofa. But as soon as she had made her peace with the radio, the interference began. A crackling sound like the noise of a burning powder fuse began to accompany the singing of the strings. Beyond the music, there was a rustling that reminded Irene unpleasantly of the sea, and as the quintet progressed, these noises were joined by the many others. She tried all the dials and switches but nothing dimmed the interference, and she sat down, disappointed and bewildered, and tried to trace the flight of the melody. The elevator shaft in her building ran beside the living-room wall, and it was the noise of the elevator that gave her a clue to the character of the static. The rattling of the elevator cables and the opening and closing of the elevator doors were reproduced in her loudspeaker, and, realizing that the radio was sensitive to electrical currents of all sorts, she began to discern through the Mozart the ringing of telephone bells, the dialing of phones, and the lamentation of a vacuum cleaner. By listening more carefully, she was able to distinguish doorbells, elevator bells, electric razors, and Waring mixers, whose sounds had been picked up from the apartments that surrounded hers and transmitted through her loudspeaker. The powerful and ugly instrument, with its mistaken sensibility to discord, was more than she could hope to master, so she turned the thing off and went into the nursery to see her children.

When Jim came home that night, he was tired, and he took a bath and changed his clothes. Then he joined Irene in the living room. He had just turned on the radio when the maid announced dinner, so he left it on, and Irene went to the table.

Jim was too tired to make even pretense of sociability, and there was nothing about the dinner to hold Irene's interest, so her attention wandered from the food to the deposits of silver polish on the candlesticks and from there to the music in the other room. She listened for a few minutes to a Chopin prelude and then was surprised to hear a man's voice break in. "For Christ's sake, Kathy," he said, "do you always have to play the piano when I get home?" The music stopped abruptly. "It's the only chance I have," the woman said. "I'm at the office all day." So am I," the man said. He added something obscene about an upright piano, and slammed a door. The passionate and melancholy music began again.

"Did you hear that?" Irene asked.

"What?" Jim was eating his dessert.

"The radio. A man said something while the music was still going on—something dirty."

"It's probably a play."

"I don't think it is a play," Irene said.

They left the table and took their coffee into the living room. Irene asked Jim to try another station. He turned the knob. "Have you seen my garters?" A man asked. "Button me up," a woman said. "Have you seen my garters?" the man said again. "Just button me up and I'll find your garters," the woman said. Jim shifted to another station. "I wish you wouldn't leave apple cores in the ashtrays," a man said. "I hate the smell."

"This is strange," Jim said.

"Isn't it?" Irene said.

Jim turned the knob again. "'On the coast of Coromandel where the early pumpkins blow,'" a woman with a pronounced English accent said, "'in the middle of the woods lived the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò. Two old chairs, and half a candle, one old jug without a handle . . .'"

"My God!" Irene cried. "That's the Sweeneys' nurse."

"'These were all his worldly goods,'" the British voice continued.

"Turn that thing off," Irene said. "Maybe they can hear us." Jim switched the radio off. "That was Miss Armstrong, the Sweeneys' nurse," Irene said. "She must be reading to the little girl. They live in 17-B. I've talked with Miss Armstrong in the Park. I know her voice very well. We must be getting other people's apartments."

"That's impossible," Jim said.

"Well, that was the Sweeneys' nurse," Irene said hotly. "I know her voice. I know it very well. I'm wondering if they can hear us."

Jim turned the switch. First from a distance and then nearer, nearer, as if borne on the wind, came the pure accents of the Sweeneys' nurse again: "'*Lady Jingly! Lady Jingly!*'" she said, "'*sitting where the pumpkins blow, will you come and be my wife?*" said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò . . .'"

Jim went over to the radio and said, "Hello" loudly into the speaker.

"'*I am tired of living singly,*'" the nurse went on, "'*on this coast so wild and shingly, I'm aware of my life; if you'll come and be my wife, quite serene would be my life . . .*'"

"I guess she can't hear us," Irene said. "Try something else."

Jim turned to another station, and the living room was filled with the uproar of a cocktail party that had overshot its mark. Someone was playing the piano and singing the "Whiffenpoof Song," and the voices that surrounded the piano were vehement and happy. "Eat some more sandwiches," a woman shrieked. There were screams of laughter and a dish of some sort crashed to the floor.

"Those must be the Fullers, in 11-E," Irene said. "I knew they were giving a party this afternoon. I saw her in the liquor store. Isn't this too divine? Try something else. See if you can get those people in 18-C."

The Westcotts overheard that evening a monologue on salmon fishing in Canada, a bridge game, running comments on home movies of what had apparently been a fortnight at Sea Island, and a bitter family quarrel about an overdraft at the bank. They turned off their radio at midnight and went to bed, weak with laughter.

The following morning, Irene cooked breakfast for the family—the maid didn't come up from her room in the basement until ten-braided her daughter's hair, and waited at the door until her children and her husband had been carried away in the elevator. Then she went into the living room and tried the radio. "I don't want to go to school," a child screamed. "I hate school. I won't go to school. I hate school." "You will go to school," an enraged woman said. "We paid eight hundred dollars to get you into that school and you'll go if it kills you." The next number on the dial produced the worn record of the "Missouri Waltz." Irene shifted the control and invaded the privacy of several breakfast tables. She overheard demonstrations of indigestion, carnal love, abysmal vanity, faith, and despair. Irene's life was nearly as simple and sheltered as it appeared to be, and the

forthright and sometimes brutal language that came from the loudspeaker that morning astonished and troubled her. She continued to listen until her maid came in. Then she turned off the radio quickly, since this insight, she realized was a furtive one.

Irene had a luncheon date with a friend that day, and she left her apartment a little after twelve.

Irene had two Martinis at lunch, and she looked searchingly at her friend and wondered what her secrets were. They had intended to go shopping after lunch, but Irene excused herself and went home. She told the maid that she was not to be disturbed; then she went into the living room, closed the doors, and switched on the radio. She heard, in the course of the afternoon, the halting conversation of a woman entertaining her aunt, the hysterical conclusion of a luncheon party, and hostess briefing her maid about some cocktail guests. "Don't give the best Scotch to anyone who hasn't white hair," the hostess said. "See if you can get rid of the liver paste before you pass those hot things, and could you lend me five dollars? I want to tip the elevator man."

As the afternoon waned, the conversations increased in intensity. From where Irene sat, she could see the open sky above the East River. There were hundreds of clouds in the sky, as though the south wind had broken the winter into pieces and were blowing it north, and on her radio she could hear the arrival of cocktail guests and the return of children and businessmen from their schools and offices. "I found a good-sized diamond on the bathroom floor this morning," a woman said. "It must have fallen out of the bracelet Mrs. Dunston was wearing last night." "We'll sell it," a man said. "Take it down to the jeweler on Madison Avenue and sell it. Mrs. Dunston won't know the difference, and we could use a couple of hundred bucks. . . ." "Oranges and lemons, say the bells of St. Clement's," the Sweeneys' nurse sang. "Halfpence and farthings, say the bells of St. Martin's. When will you pay me? say the bells at old Bailey. . . ." "It's not a hat," a woman cried, and at her back roared a cocktail party. "It's not a hat, it's a love affair. That's what Walter Florell said. He said it's not a hat, it's a love affair," and then, in a lower voice, the same woman added, "Talk to somebody, for Christ's sake, honey, talk to somebody. If she catches you standing here not talking to anybody, she'll take us off her invitation list, and I love these parties."

Jim came home at about six the next night. Emma, the maid, let him in, and he had taken off his hat and was taking off his coat when Irene ran into the hall. Her face was shining with tears and her hair was disordered. "Go up to 16-C, Jim!" she screamed. "Don't take off your coat. Go up to 16-C. Mr Osborn's beating his wife. They've been quarreling since four o'clock, and now he is hitting her. Go up there and stop him."

From the radio in the living room, Jim heard screams, obscenities, and thuds. "You know you don't have to listen to this sort of thing," he said. He strode into the living room and turned the switch. "It's indecent," he said. "It's like looking into windows. You know you don't have to listen to this sort of thing. You can turn it off."

"Oh, it's so terrible, it's so dreadful," Irene was sobbing. "I've been listening all day, and it's so depressing."

"Well, if it's so depressing, why do you listen to it? I brought this damned radio to give you



some pleasure," he said. "I paid a great deal of money for it. I thought it might make you happy. I wanted to make you happy."

"Don't, don't, don't, don't quarrel with me," she moaned, and laid her head on his shoulder. "All the others have been quarreling all day. Everybody's been quarreling. They're all worried about money. Mrs. Hutchinson's mother is dying of cancer in Florida and they don't have enough money to send her to the Mayo Clinic. At least, Mr Hutchinson says they don't have enough money. And some woman in this building is having an affair with the handyman—with that hideous handyman. It's too disgusting. And Mrs. Melville has heart trouble, and Mr. Hendricks is going to lose his job in April and Mrs. Hendricks is horrid about the whole thing and that girl that plays the "Missouri Waltz" is a whore, a common whore, and the elevator man has tuberculosis and Mr. Osborn has been beating his wife." She wailed, she trembled with grief and checked the stream of tears down her face with the heel of her palm.

"Well why do you have to listen?" Jim asked again. "Why do you have to listen to this stuff if it makes you miserable?"

"Oh, don't, don't, don't," she cried. "Life is too terrible, too sordid and awful. But we've never been like that, have we, darling? Have we? I mean, we've always been good and decent and loving to one another, haven't we? And we have two children, two beautiful children. Our lives aren't sordid, are they, darling? Are they?" She flung her arms around his neck and drew his face down to hers. "We're happy, aren't we, darling? We are happy, aren't we?"

"Of course we're happy," he said tiredly. He began to surrender his resentment. "Of course we are happy. I'll have that damned radio fixed or taken away tomorrow." He stroked her soft hair. "My poor girl," he said.

"You love me, don't you?" she asked. "And we're not hypercritical or worried about money or dishonesty, are we?"

A man came in the morning and fixed the radio. Irene turned it on cautiously and was happy to hear a California-wine commercial and a recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, including Schiller's "Ode to Joy." She kept the radio on all day and nothing untoward came toward the speaker.

A Spanish suite was being played when Jim came home. "Is everything all right?" he asked. His face was pale, she thought. They had some cocktails and went to dinner to the "Anvil Chorus" from *Il Trovatore*. This was followed by Debussy's "La Mer."

"I paid the bill for the radio today," Jim said. "It cost four hundred dollars. I hope you'll get some enjoyment out of it."

"Oh, I'm sure I will," Irene said.

"Four hundred dollars is a good deal more than I can afford," he went on. "I wanted to get something that you'd enjoy. It's the last extravagance we'll indulge in this year. I see that you haven't paid your clothing bills yet. I saw them on your dressing table." He looked directly at her. "Why did you tell me you paid them? Why did you lie to me?"

"I just didn't want you to worry, Jim," she said. She drank some water. "I'll be able to pay my bills out of this month's allowance. There were the slipcovers last month, and that party."