

I got out and dried off, selected my short-sleeved blue shirt
tan pants
loafers ...
green bikini underwear ...

the good life of the California sportsman.

SLAUGHTER

the first seven rows were roped off for The Counsellors of Exceptional Children, the Airport Group, and the German Society.

it was a Saturday at the track and they were all talking at once, standing up, sitting down, waving, laughing.

when the winner of the first race came by, most of them leaped up and down screaming and some of them hugged each other.

it was difficult to believe that they all had the same winner.

I tried to pick the Exceptional Children people from the Airport people and the German people but they all looked very much alike, and as each race went by they became quieter and quieter, and some of them vanished.

by the last race only about one-ninth of them remained and they looked very tired and very sad and said nothing. they had learned something: losing one's money was very much like death and although the horses were very beautiful, it was easier being with the German people or with the Exceptional Children and to fly about the country at reduced rates.

the racetrack was finally nothing to jump up and down about and to scream and hug each other about. it got dark and it got cold and the wind came off the Sierra Madres, and as they put them into the gate for the last race, even a winner couldn't cure them now: the jocks hustle from the gate in various colors as the machines have shut down, taking the last bite, freezing the odds forever.

the favorites don't win enough
the longshots don't win enough
the medium prices don't win enough

next Saturday they'll bring in 3 new groups
and rope them off.

THOSE

they sit down
batten down
talk
move their arms
they have nothing to
do
and since they have
nothing to do
they'd prefer to do it
around you

I am astonished at the
many people with
nothing to do
but batten down
talk
move their arms

they knock on doors
like people with
nothing to do

and when they talk
their desperation is
without agony
it's more like a nervous
affliction with
nothing to do

sometimes I simply tell them
to leave
and they do
and then I feel guilty
as if I had misinterpreted
their mission
I feel that I have offended
them

not so
they return
they always return
each and every one of them
they sit down