and touches my forehead as though checking to see if
i have a fever. when i open my eyes they meet hers.
before giving me a peck on the cheek she reminds me
that pot roast is the special for today.

THE LONE WOLF VISITS OLD FRIENDS FOR DINNER

i sat at the big table telling
my story with what i thought was
just the right amount of dramatic flare,
but when i looked over at the two people
whom i was talking to i noticed very plainly
that they were not at all involved in
what i was saying. so i tailed off with
as little fanfare as possible, and then i
yawned as though yawning would somehow show
that i was in complete accord with them.
so for the rest of the meal we ate in silence,
commenting only on the good flavor of the roasted
chicken, drinking coffee afterwards, slowly
stirring with spoons that seemed to have the ability
to hypnotize. it was a dark, dark night outside,
and other than the small portion of the woods lit
by the floodlights there was nothing else to see.
it was a superinsulated house so the rain which
was falling could not be heard, not even on the
roof. after awhile she put her head down on
her arms which were folded on the table
and she started to take a snooze, and when
he saw this he did likewise, also pushing his
coffee mug towards the center of the table where
hers was. what could i do but join them.
i pushed my mug towards the center, folded
my arms, lowered my head and with zero trouble
i fell into a deep sleep which must have lasted
for at least a few hours. when i woke i was the only
one at the table, and the only light that was on
was the one on the stove which was used to light the
stove's clock. this clock revealed that it was
well past midnight. looking around i wondered
where the other two had gone to. i found them
in their bed locked in each other's arms, sleeping
like satisfied babies. as i tiptoed out of the
house, suddenly the urge for another bite to eat
swept over me, and so i went back into the kitchen
and took a chicken leg out of the refrigerator and
i ate it with great relish. as i stood there
i watched the second hand on the stove's clock
as it ran smoothly and quietly and steadily
through the seconds.