

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.