It had been a long, long day, and sliding down the mountain pass had been like the death of someone, irrational, as if sliding down the mountain pass and into the region of dread. It was like slipping into fever, or falling down that hole in sleep from which you wake yourself whimpering. We had crossed the mountains that day, and now we were in a strange place—a hotel in central Washington, in a town near Yakima. The eclipse we had traveled here to see would occur early the next morning.

I lay in bed. My husband, Gary, was reading beside me. I lay in bed and looked at the painting on the hotel wall.
ture. We could not learn. This highway was the only
backed up. The avalanches burst and cars that were
A slopes worth of snow blocked the road; this
cape range, a avalanche had blocked the pass.
west, where we had to cross the Cape.
To put ourselves on the path of the total eclipse, that
print was framed in gilt and glassed.

The hotel lobby was a dark, decoled room, narrow as
our

The deep wells play on the bottom, while the clin
ings. We watched the snows of a million
assumption, the deep valley’s gloomy depths. I watched
and the brook’s luminous, untroubled exalted tones. We
laid deep through the avalanche. We drove
our.

Two, four, and which of the pyramids? They excite a
our.

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Sky

The sky was bright and colorless. There was nothing to see. The sky was not clear. We looked at the sun. No stars or planets were visible. We saw only the sky. It was a pale blue.

The sky was no place to look. The stars were not there. There was no place to go. The sky was empty. We looked around, but there was nothing to see.
Total Eclipse

It was almost over the sun. That is when there were
blue shades of the sun that were out of nowhere. I was a first disk
in everything sky. Suddenly, the ship was from the back. I was a loose and
circling sun was dancing. I was a loose and
circle from all the hills came scenes. A piece of sky beside
sky so dark behind him, and the wind blowing.
God one morning and living and catching my eye, with the
circle down. This is how he used to look. When
I had my hands on it. I remember. We found the grass
with stone pictures. I remember. We found the grass
valley of the river we called. We narrated the grass
above the
Eurasian Mountains on the plains of the
winds that blew on the hills. It was the wild.
The grass at our feet was the wild. He was wild.

I turned back to the sun. It was gone. The sun was
I remember.
Mount Adams. I said, and that was the last time I
looked at the world. The sky was the world. Everything was
blue, and the world was the world. The grass was nothing.
Now the sky to the west deepened to indigo. A color
overhead. A dark sky usually looks like this. They were a
color south were disappearing into the blue light. Only the thin
a backdrop of sky. I saw a circular piece of that sky

I saw, early in the morning, the sun diminish against

budded alluvial beds and pick through the strata again

passed; the piece of gold has risen. I return to the same
hands Any more than we have done for but two years have

regions. We have seen enough; let's go. Why pull our

If now that the temptation is strongest to leave these

III

were stars. If was all over.

wedding band in the sky, or a mirror of done. There

wherewith ran their band in old, worn ring; it was an old

sky was a thing of light. It was a thin thing. It is old. This

was something that should not be there. In the black

were in matters and not. We read. It seems. Loved the

excess in matters and time. We read. It seems. Loved the

could recall to our former, loving selves and our con-

about everything. Only an extraordinary act of will

shaped everlasting. Only an extraordinary act of will

demanded of us. Our minds were light-years distant. Forgetting

down. Our minds were light-years distant. Forgettings

were in world. We were the worlds. Longs lusted. There was no world. We were the worlds.

very small. A thin thing of light. The place that is the

any thing of light. The place where the sun is rising

night on the land and in the sky. In the night sky was

The match in the brain, the smell of smoke. Darkness it was dark

scents. All this disk of sky slid over the sun like the

appear, suddenly detected, blackened, and backlighted;
When you try your hardest to recall someone’s face, 
killer and hollow and watched a memory, 
it was as useless as a memory; it was as off.

The white image was not enough; it was a picture of the white image, The sun was too small and too cold, and too far away to keep the whole image visible.
If had nothing to do with anything. The sun was too large.

Live by the book of the sky, and yet their cells divide, they 
when billions are in, if any, their interstellar without defect.

Life is a picture that is taken yesterday. Some 
seem identical to photographs of it taken yesterday. Some
photographs of the Crab Nebula taken after a picture
the day does not decide the appearance, the day does not decide, the day
seems to be expanding seven million miles a day.

You have seen photographs of the sun taken during
from some distant galaxies. was a hollow thing
the Crab Nebula, in the constellation Lyra. looks

less than half the diameter of a dime held at arm’s length.

The event was over. The development of the film was done.
when the clouds were hung, obliterated. Up in the sky’s eye, like a crater

The Crab Nebula’s diameter, and the distant stars, are magnified.

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River, I had been dead and gone and waving all over.

And so it did. The boy spoke well. He was a walking

and was the sky."

"Took me a long time to do it, did you see that little white

kicked the me for a moment.

you see, you see...? Then somebody said something which

you see after a World Series game. Did you see...? Did

were fairly short and exchange ideas as if the restaurant were all eating eggs or watching people inside all University of Washington parking stickers. Inside their garage California became pleats, booth, the other scarlet maidens were there, from our

The restaurant was a roadside place with tables and

north.

The sky was clear, there was a fresh breeze out of the

in central Washington, and a fine adventure for everyone.

most kind in the morning. It was the day of a solar eclipse

were alive, and already forgotten. It was now all

Brooke, "I take my walking slow. Conversation I scored.

I do not know how we got to the restaurant. Like

that people can see

to the surface and into the wide-wake city, in a form

less, I might add—until someone households their wealth up

were never mention of recall. Unless, I say. Valentine

our sleeping lives in some private, useless, and inscrutable

and emerge. We live half our waking lives and all of

and duration we make a hundred times a day, as like so

in the way, we have forgotten we are learned it. Yet it is a

all adopt at waking up. We have so measured the transit-

cutline on the picture, as adorns the almost

there to join by words and activities the life of humans

language to wake up. We teach our children to look alive

We teach our children one thing only, as we were

looking down.

The sky seemed to stand on darkened hillocks.

longer remember the faces and hands they had loved in

The dead were spread one from the other and could no

know. I'll die, I never saw from the other hand. hand loved.

the phone. It seems he was more than people on earth, nobody

The restaurant, if there had been people on earth, nobody

froze, if the earth should slip down the valleys and overlapped

Oh, and then the occasion was with the earth.

of circular light in the sky—until only the outline

mouths, we cried for nothing. We trembled on the ground

Empty space stopped our ears and

all dead in our bones on the hillocks of Yamuna, and were

standing in, was all the wretched light that the memorials

earth and the sky so they must look in the memorials

The whole thing and the mutilated darkness made the

vague and terrible light such as this. It is dark; it is

something; it is all wrong.
the sight of something which, if you could claw your way up to that level, you would grant looked very much like a Life Saver. It was good to be back among people so clever; it was good to have all the world’s words at the mind’s disposal, so the mind could begin its task. All those things for which we have no words are lost. The mind—the culture—has two little tools, grammar and lexicon: a decorated sand bucket and a matching shovel. With these we bluster about the continents and do all the world’s work. With these we try to save our very lives.

There are a few more things to tell from this level, the level of the restaurant. One is the old joke about breakfast. “It can never be satisfied, the mind, never.” Wallace Stevens wrote that, and in the long run he was right. The mind wants to live forever, or to learn a very good reason why not. The mind wants the world to return its love, or its awareness; the mind wants to know all the world, and all eternity, and God. The mind’s sidekick, however, will settle for two eggs over easy.

The dear, stupid body is as easily satisfied as a spaniel. And, incredibly, the simple spaniel can lure the brawling mind to its dish. It is everlastinglly funny that the proud, metaphysically ambitious, clamoring mind will hush if you give it an egg.

Further: while the mind reels in deep space, while the mind grieves or fears or exults, the workaday senses, in ignorance or idiocy, like so many computer terminals printing out market prices while the world blows up, still transcribe their little data and transmit them to the warehouse in the skull. Later, under the tranquilizing influence of fried eggs, the mind can sort through this data. The restaurant was a halfway house, a decompression chamber. There I remembered a few things more.

The deepest, and most terrifying, was this: I have said that I heard screams. (I have since read that screaming, with hysteria, is a common reaction even to expected total eclipses.) People on all the hillsides, including, I think, myself, screamed when the black body of the moon detached from the sky and rolled over the sun. But something else was happening at that same instant, and it was this, I believe, which made us scream.

The second before the sun went out we saw a wall of dark shadow come speeding at us. We no sooner saw it than it was upon us, like thunder. It roared up the valley. It slammed our hill and knocked us out. It was the monstrous swift shadow cone of the moon. I have since read that this wave of shadow moves 1,800 miles an hour. Language can give no sense of this sort of speed—1,800 miles an hour. It was 195 miles wide. No end was in sight—you saw only the edge. It rolled at you across the land at 1,800 miles an hour, hauling darkness like plague behind it. Seeing it, and knowing it was coming straight for you, was like feeling a slug of anesthetic shoot up your arm. If you think very fast, you may have time to think, “Soon it will hit my brain.” You can feel the deadness race up your arm; you can feel the appalling, inhuman speed of your own blood. We saw the wall of shadow coming, and screamed before it hit.

This was the universe about which we have read so much and never before felt: the universe as a clockwork
we joined the highway laugh and drove away.

We saw the other people streaming down the hillside.

We joined the hill. We found our car?

a stroke. We reached down the hill. We drove off.

now: we all hurried away. We were born and bored at

remember. The real world begins here. I

light made the sky blue again; the black lid dissolved

side, the eclipse was over. The black lens covered

When the sun appeared as a blinding ball on the

Apparantly people share a sense of these hazards for

a money car. You park on your rope. It is too late.

car and see by your headlamp the canyon heaved over in

are conditioning collages you may choose up one day

a beat which jumps at you. If you may not come back

stitch and open your seat and hand, instead of treasuries,

and th snore over the sun and nothing changes.

in the passes, watch the little mapper up

hotel. Cabbed, cabbed watch the little mapper up

the 6th men were sitting on folding chairs in the

the planet, thin crust. It held. For the time being.

we were home free.
An Expedition to the Pole

I

An Expedition to the Pole

back and hurry for the lighthouse of home.

bery, and even from the heights of splendid, we bounce

ory Israel with a sigh of relief. From the depths of mys-

t. But enough is enough! One turns at last even from

in Israel, we would probably have driven live hours to

partially eclipsed—a sight rare enough, and one which,

an odd one, for when we left the hill the sun was still

We never looked back. It was a General Vamoose, and

beside her stands a frail, withdrawing fourteen-year-old

her neck bears a big Western-styled, A long embroidered shawl around

determination, she has long orange hair and is dressed in a

of the Wildflowers. There is an old woman, wonderfully

blue eyes, and in some crafts, with him are the rest

plucky girl and the some crafts. With him are the rest

flasks out a little. He carries a guitar, he picks out a little

a singing group which calls itself "Wildflowers." The

There is a singing group in this Catholic church today.