

The Apartment House

by Jake Barnes

A Drama in Five Acts

I

The Crier lived next door. Everybody called her The Crier because from time to time we would hear her crying. The sound carried. Once I knocked on her door and asked her if she was all right. "I'm fine," she said and closed the door in my face.

II

I had a brief fling with a nurse who lived in an upstairs apartment in another wing. Her secret was that she had very small breasts. Black hairs grew out of one her nipples. Also for a time I dated a redheaded girl named Annie. She wasn't very pretty, but she was nice. It surprised me that her pubic hair was blonde, not red. I thought for a time that might be her secret, but it wasn't.

III

A girl with one boob who lived on the second floor was a home-wrecker. I spent one night with her. By coincidence, I also knew the woman whose husband left her for the woman with one boob, but she wouldn't go to bed with me, so I never did find out how many boobs she had.

IV

The ballroom dancers lived on the other side of the quad. They may or may not have been married. The girl was pretty and graceful but coarse. She referred to her partner as "him"; she did not seem to think highly of the poor fellow. He was a little guy with red hair. Maybe her secret was that she was going to leave him.

V

The one I liked best was a middle aged woman who didn't wear underwear. She was a bit long of tooth, but she had a terrific figure. I got to know her a little because I would see her in the laundry room when I was washing and drying my clothes. I talked her into coming back to my apartment with me one night, but after a few kisses she panicked and left. She called him later and apologized.

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Her husband drove a truck. She was afraid that he would come back from a trip and raise hell if she weren't home. She didn't say what would happen if that occurred, but I had a pretty good idea.

