



1986

## Personals

Benjamin Wood

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throb through my veins, nod here and shake my head there, critique my ever-present performance, unsure any longer of how much is memory, how much is dream. I try to shut the memory out, to see nothing but a black spot where the shooting has been. I am able to force a nothingness in place of the memory, but my thoughts circle the black spot—wheeling, wheeling, in dizzying circles.

Diane, who has been lying with her back to me, rolls over, pulls the sheet tight against her chin, and whispers, “I’m glad you didn’t kill them.”

“Why do you say that?” I ask.

“Oh, I don’t know. I guess it would just be different. I’d feel different about you.”

She lies still for a long time. Her breath evens out, deepens. I turn toward her; a twisted strand of her hair is outlined by the green fluorescence of the alarm clock. I blow the hair into place softly. Her leg jerks, and I know she is dreaming. At work, the job board announced an opening for an officer to supervise the visiting room in the medium-security. And I remember a story another guard once told me about an old lady in baggy nylons who tried to smuggle homemade muffins to her son.



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### Personals:

Where rain and dirt  
mix thick as blood, green  
brothers hold reunions,  
and tulips fire  
before the wailing wall.  
Anyone please call.

Benjamin Wood