

Daisy Buchanan, 1983 · *David Groff*

The estate a mile away and long since sold,
The garden ploughed and the house now level ground,
She supposes just the bay remains the same
And knows that even it has changed; boats, like cars, exist
As smaller crafts of pleasure now, and in the mist
That hides Connecticut, tankers oil the Sound.
In the dayroom, as the other patients play some game—
Coarser women, whose breasts (she notes) droop low—
She glances to her lap and finds she holds
The careless, weekly hand of her daughter in her hand,
Whose face is the earnest annoying white of the moon.
The window admits a shaft of sunlight and
She's warm (though she would never let them know);
She half-remembers certain green and linen afternoons.

She remembers well one green and linen afternoon—
It must have been last summer—when
They let her stay in bed till twelve, and then
Left her in the sun on the home's front lawn; soon
She felt supremely comfortable, iced-tea in one hand,
Watching the traffic light on Western Street
Turn like a leaf from green to yellow, red to green again.
The breeze felt pleasant and the drink was sweet.
But that was years ago. Or days, whatever.
When Pammy wheels her to her room the sun, spun gold,
Gleams east into her eyes; an orchid on the bedstand
Bends like a butler to greet her, with his single purple vein.
She thinks, I am an orchid. No, a craft of pleasure.
The estate was years ago. It's long since sold.