

Writing for me, among other things, is a way to learn what I didn't know that I know. I may have some idea what I think a book is about when I start it, but it eventually lets me know what I'm really talking about. And that's certainly a good thing: as Frost says, "No surprise for the writer, no surprise for the reader." The way I get to that point of awakening is to sketch, sketch, sketch, sometimes sitting at the computer, sometimes with a pen and yellow sheets of paper. From there I hopefully have learned something about the story and characters from the rush of ideas when I return to the actual writing.

In the process of getting the first book of the Furnass Series, The Building, into a reasonable shape, I realized there was more to the story of putting up a high-rise building in this struggling mill town than I first thought and that it called for a second book. At the time I wrote the following Pre-Notes and Sketches, I had already taken a flying leap at a couple drafts of the book that would become Some Rise. Now it was time to step back, take what I had learned of the characters and story thus far, and figure out the best way to proceed before attempting the next draft.

In looking back over these notes, it is interesting to me to realize how much I didn't like most of the characters at this stage of the book's development. (Please see the note for the previous selection, regarding the development of the character's names. In these Pre-Notes, Quinton Todd, later Harry Todd, is just Quinton; and, Dickie is Dickie, not Clay. Interesting that he started out as Dickie, then became Clay as I wanted him to be more grounded, then went back to Dickie as his character grew, when he didn't need a name to signify who or what he was.) Liking the characters wasn't a problem in The Building because of my appreciation for the people I worked with in construction. But when it came to the second volume of the Trilogy, and the workings that set the building in motion, I initially wasn't so understanding of who I was writing about and their motivations.

I came upon that realization when I considered a criticism I was leveling at other contemporary writers. It had occurred to me that one of the reasons I disliked so much contemporary fiction was that the writers didn't seem to like their own characters. One rarely saw the compassion for characters that one finds in Dickens or Dostoevsky or Faulkner. Rather, the writers' stance was kind of a one-upmanship: I know what you're doing and I don't like it. Added to that was my own perversion of the Joycean idea of the epiphany. In the classic sense, the epiphany occurs at the end of the story when the character realizes the fruitlessness of all his/her actions that we've seen earlier. Added to that, I fell into a Freudian trap, based on bad tendencies bred of psychotherapy, of wanting to reveal the flaws of a particular character and how it explained everything they had done in the novel. I not only know what you did, I'm going to show the reader how misguided you were. Not a friendly way to be at all. That changed when I'd just shut up and let the characters tell me their story.

In these pre-notes, you'll notice this dislike—or perhaps disapproval is the better word—of the characters from the first entry. Thus far Quinton is still a painter and a former hippie; not that I have anything against the Dead, but I tend to dislike the hippie-dippie variety of Deadhead—I wasn't fond of my drugged-out brethren in the day, not fond of them now. And Dickie is said to take his role model from Donald Trump—of the early days of the TV show The Apprentice, but even so. Thank heaven Dickie himself set me straight in later drafts, to the point that whereas

Quinton was originally the central character, Dickie became his equal in my eyes, if not surpassing him. It didn't help that at this stage Quinton was apparently thinking—or afraid he was thinking—of killing his mother. Poor confused Quinton had so much to learn.

These pre-notes and sketches go on for another hundred pages or so, but this excerpt, up to the point where I got back to the actual writing, should be enough to give you an idea of what was going on in the author's head....

Pre-Notes and Sketches For The Wind and the Rain

9/1/95 --

Quinton, of course, is a deadhead. But an aging one.

Each character, in a way, is looking as their ideal a quintessential figure of the popular/entertainment culture: Quinton looks to the Dead; Dickie looks to Donald Trump; and the mother, who was a Rockette, looks back -- probably at herself, or at least to the pop culture of that time.

It is a weaving of these three stories, each of them with their concerns in the present, and each of them coming to terms with the stories of their past, in relation to the vision of the pop ideal.

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From note cards --

Mother sings: "When I grow too old to dream
I'll have you to remember
When I grow too old to dream
Your kiss will live in my heart."

It would be a mistake to make the tone too serious. He feels he is fated to kill his mother, and his rehearsals have a touch of whimsy, of ridiculousness about them.

Henry and Clare [Note: at this point I have no idea what this reference is] is about a man who took his cynicism and sarcasm too far: Henry took the negative approach to everything, and when he saw Booth behind Lincoln, he said to himself "So go on ahead, do it." Of course, as soon as Booth had, Henry realized his mistake, realized he had toyed with it too long, but by this time it was too late. How does that relate to Quinton?

It may not take place all in one day after all. It may develop longer between the three main characters. Starting out with Quinton seeing sister in the window, not going with killing his mother. Perhaps that develops later. But what is discovered to lead him to that conclusion?

In Quinton's mind's eye, as opposed to Diebenkorn, he sees billowing trees, billowing clouds of

smoke and flame from the mills. That's all gone now; and he sees Dickie as contributing to it, with his real estate deal, or at least profiting from it. (Profiting, as Quinton is unable to; Quinton wanted to profit from it in a sense by painting it; Dickie beats him again). Quinton is suffering flashbacks as well as visions (some of these he treats rather self-amused -- "Oops, here we go again..."). But at night he sees the ground open up and the open maw of the universe ready to swallow him up....

In his hallucinatory moments -- remember Toronto, much as Pollock did, page 538. He is unsure whether they are more of the ghosts he sees, or flashbacks, or something wrong with his sanity. Does he see one on the walk home, the first day?

Quinton, in the present, is experiencing being a teenager again, even though he's forty-something. It's being in the presence of his mother -- and that's the story of the present sections. See Pollock, page 511. And there's the contrast as to how Dickie saw him then...and now.

Dickie adores Quinton as a kid. And in SF. Quinton has everything that Dickie wants -- friends, a life, a wife, a home, a way of being.

Pollock, page 147 -- the pressure in high school to have a girl. A girl-friend. There is a real pressure there, when all your friends have one and you don't. Seeing others pairing off [Dickie would feel that, not Quinton, because he paired with everything that walked....]

Dickie's following Quinton to the West Coast should be seen as an extension of their interrelationship earlier...of Dickie wanting to live Quinton's life. How would that impulse be reflected in their relationship now that Quinton came back? Dickie already took his wife. But wouldn't he still have to work through the instinct to follow Quinton?

[Remember: Dickie took Quinton's wife once upon a time. There would still be that anger, revenge eating at him. Did he come back to get even with him? That would certainly occur to Dickie and his mother -- and did he?]

In the early sections, the mood swings of the mother, from dancing around the house, to sitting alone staring for hours.

And the fight between the boys for her love and attention -- and the lack of love and attention from the father....

There is the rivalry between Quinton and Dickie as children -- Dickie is envious of all the older things Quinton can do; and of Quinton for the affection she shows her "baby." See Pollock, page 64, etc.

Quinton's mother comes from the East and the Big City -- and she was a dancer. Like somebody else's mother, she was always on the outside.

His mother often uses the term "going down amongst them."

Quinton is a painter who has come back to paint the mills, to apply the aesthetics of Diebenkorn and the West Coast school to the mills, etc. But the mills are closed and he has now feel for

painting the hills [?]. Diebenkorn's view of the flatland, mudflats of Berkeley to his view from the tower windows. [Didn't he come back to paint the billowing, as opposed to Diebenkorn's flat lines, and finds the mills gone, he is too enervated to work, or whatever is holding him back....]

At times some of the scenes might appear as little playlets, as he sees the dialogues in his mind of the playing out of the relationship with his mother, he says....she says....

In Frisco, perhaps he ran a store, like Rik Cherney, and dressed in serapis, huarachies, etc. Used to drive down to Mexico in the Lesser Vehicle. Learned when he came back home not to dress foreign.

At times the ghost of his sister comes in the room and sits with him. He's wondering if its a flashback or what....

The sister's ghost is a real presence in the book. Quinton wonders if it's some flashback, but it doesn't matter. The sister comes in and often sits with him in the tower.

In HJMS there is a point where the Inspector's feelings for the Countess go completely in reverse, he totally hates her for a while.

Some sort of similar change should happen to Quinton, perhaps about his mother? It engages the reader -- something happens to keep them interested.

He is reading the diamond sutra, or something similar. Zen text? [I wonder if in fact he does....]

The opening has overtones of the House of the Seven Gables, Turn of the Screw, and Sound and the Fury.

2/18/96 -- from file cards of this date.

Quinton has been home for a short while. Can't paint and has to take a job housepainting for Dickie.

On way home sees sister in the window.

Doesn't know if it's a flashback or not. Starts asking about how she died. He was in SF when she died and didn't pay much attention to it.

While Dickie was there in SF, and he came home soon afterwards.

Eventually Quinton blames mother...though it was heart attack? Smoke clogged her lungs.

Decides that his mother through her blindness killed her, or helped kill her.

Keeps seeing sister. Funny at times. Wonders if he's supposed to kill his mother.

Blind, of course, himself. Endless battles with his mother. His own rage.

Dickie perhaps tells Quinton how she died, with smoke around her like incense.

How does this work on Shakesperean terms? One person turning one against another...?

Father died shortly after. Quinton will find out that his father was literally in love with the daughter.

Does Quinton find a fragment of a note? Some mention of a rendezvous? Thinks it's his father's lover? Was his sister?

Maybe too overt. Daughter knew father loved her, the whole family did. Nothing ever really happened. He was just wanting to.

Maybe father's ruminations in letter about his love. Quinton thinks its for his other girl friend, and father has a lot of them around town, but it turns out to be to or about his sister.

They all loved her.

Quinton thinks he's going to kill mother. Afraid he will. When it comes to it though, he can't. Loves her too.

He's in the woods whacking off the heads of plants. Remembers when he was younger?

Daughter is restless. Kathleen. Her spirit. Quinton wonders if that means something. Starts the chain of consequences.

There's a girl-friend of father's. Quinton thinks that father was setting her up in a new office. In the note he finds father talks about setting her up, his love for her, then thinks about her thighs, her milk white skin, etc. Quinton thinks it's about his mistress. After is going to kill mother, and can't, she wants him to hug her, he finds out that his father was actually setting up sister in the other office, the father was thinking about the chance to be with her at nights, a chance for them to meet and be alone, to see if something happened, to make it real if he can't avoid it any longer. Realizes that it was about his father being in love with Kathleen.

2/20/96

Through the book, Quinton is painting a picture of his mother. And as she sits for him, they have conversations -- the sittings -- where they talk about things that have happened in the past. Talking about the family.

He has decided to paint her picture, perhaps after the gig of housing painting for Dickie went bust. Didn't work out.

Is there sometime that they kid about her posing naked? Or does he have a dream about that?

There are times that the cat looks off into space. Ooooh boy, he thinks, I don't need this.

2/21/96

The house may be a Romanesque Revival, from a disciple of Richardson. A stone house, the sandstone stained black from this time because of the mills. Wasn't it originally the house of the owners of Buchanan steel? Put up in the 1880s, and done of stone after the previous showcase home of the area, Sycamore House, burned down? There is an irony here, of course, that Sylvan is living in the original house of his family, back to when the original mill started, and the Sutcliff's are living in the Buchanan's old house.

2/23/96 --

Quinton is making a big deal about his sister's death. And Dickie tears into him about it, because he was the one who was there, Dickie was the one who there at home and saw her day-to-day dwindling away, he was the one who there when she died? (That would change the earlier scenario, of Dickie being in SF when she died and him going back right away.) It would seem, then, that Dickie has gone back to Furnass before she dies, in order for him to be there to see it. Does she die in his arms?

Flow of beginning sections: When Quinton sees face in tower window, he's afraid its a new kind of flashback. It does, however, trigger him asking his mother about his sister during their sittings. Then he goes through genuine flashback -- like the experience in Toronto. Then sister walks into room....

Is the house Romanesque, or Queen Anne? I don't have a clear picture of it at this point. Romanesque seems almost as if it would be too castle-like, too reaching for significance. A Queen Anne, however, seems improbable, as if it would have never have lasted that long in town, or be in any shape at this point. And red brick -- on one hand it seems too close, on the other too contrived. At the time it was built, there were no clear cut styles as such, everything was pretty much a hodge-podge. Plans were taken from books -- it's more than conceivable that the owners would have picked a design out of book and asked the builders to built it, only out of brick or stone.

Does this go along with the story of the fire, and the greatest brick salesman who ever lived? Is this in fact his house, the one he did out of brick, after selling the town a makeover? Whenever it was done, and whomever for, it seems that it was done after the fire, after fire swept up the hillside and destroyed Sycamore House.

There was great economic prosperity in the 80s and 90s, so a lot of people were building houses and such. Expanding.

Early profile of Quinton Todd: He's a painter who got sidetracked in SF by running a mexican import store during the hippie era. Now, after a few years on the road (my, doesn't this sound familiar), he's come back to Furnass to try to paint, to try to focus on the landscape of the area much the same way that his teacher Diebenkorn did in Ocean Park. During his time on the road - what, do we dare have him on a grant in the Southwest? I can see flashback scenes of him at the Wurlitzer or somewhere, talking to other artists, his inability to find his subject, remember V? The hopelessness of that man? And Frankie and Kate? Overtones here of O'Keeffe, Agnes Martin... -- he was unable to find himself, and perhaps he tries the southwest, Seattle and Mark Toby, Morris Graves, then onto Nantucket, Pollock country, Wyeth country -- he was unable to accomplish what he was trying for. So he's come back to Furnass to hole up in the attic and try to paint; and he finds he's unable to do much better here.

To make ends meet, perhaps, he has had to take a house painting job for his brother Dickie -- either that, or he wants to and Dickie won't give it to him; or he has already done it and Dickie isn't real quick paying him. Perhaps he's gone that morning to talk to Dickie, and he walked to save money. He's also in the midst of painting a portrait of his mother. She's insisted that he do it, and he's gone along with it, even though he doesn't usually do portraits. He may be doing a rather straightforward one of her, and in his room he's got another one he's doing, more expressive, a violent image. At any rate, during their sittings are a time for him to ask her questions, and it fills in history of the family. Ideally, the story will go back in time at the same time that it goes forward, as things become clear to present motives....

It begins with his climbing the steps to home, when he looks up at the tower window and sees a face, somebody looking back at him. At first he's afraid he's having drug flashbacks. And he refers to it rather comically. Then he's afraid that perhaps his mother has found the other painting of her, that she's poking around in his room. Then remembers that he's locked it, she couldn't be in there. (Later, incidentally, at the crisis, she will have seen the painting, she did get into his room somehow, and she doesn't think it's awful, thinks it's good, and encourages him, at least to the degree that it shows his real feelings.) He then wonders if it could be his sister, Kathleen. But she's dead. Goes on into house. Thinking it has to be the flashbacks. (Perhaps somewhere he'll think about the fact that Pollock supposedly had hallucinative visions, that he really saw the world in the distorted shapes he portrayed.)

That's more or less the starting point of the novel. What are his conflicts? He's always blamed his mother for his sister's death. And when he starts asking her questions, it's not kindly, he's thinking perhaps that he'll get the deadliness to her by talking about it, that he'll touch a nerve. But she's rather blase about it, and she may say that she often hears them in the house, and it's a comfort, to think that Kathleen and her husband are still around. The mother's name is Katherine, incidentally: Kathy Todd. Quinton has blamed her, as sort of indicative of the whole destructive, repressive nature of the culture, something he was rebelling against in San Francisco. He actually doesn't know much about how she died -- he didn't pay that much attention when it happened. Perhaps he goes to the family doctor, who tells him that her heart just stopped. Or

confirms that the asthma powder undoubtedly hurt her lungs, closing passages in the bronchiae, but that the actual cause was simply that her heart simply stopped. There are things that happen for which there are no explanations.

2/24/96 --

[Profile of Quinton, continued...]

From here it's more or less speculation. After the discovery about his sister, the continued sightings of her, and the continued building of his frustration about the inability to really paint or get his life on track, he decides, perhaps regretfully, perhaps fearfully, that he should or might kill his mother. Is afraid that that's what his unconscious is telling him, afraid that that's where all his frustrations and rages are leading. Perhaps he thinks he wants to do it well, so he doesn't make any mistakes with it, and goes down into the woods and starts lopping off plants.

I would think it all leads to a scene at night where they get into an argument, and it does look as if he's going to kill her -- maybe not with the samurai sword but with the broomhandle. Stops and snaps it in two. Or something of the sort. The earlier playfulness turns deadly serious. Then to some sort of denouement?

So far we've talked about Quinton's relationship with his mother. What of the relationship with Dickie? Dickie, no doubt, is angry that Quinton's come back into his world, and there's probably fear there that Quinton has come back to somehow gain from the family business, to get involved with it, or at least to sponge off the mother. That's not really Quinton's thinking, I don't suspect at this point he's actually thinking of going into the family business at all. He's trying to paint, and can't. Perhaps later, in another book actually, he's given up the painting and is involved with the business, but that's not his thinking here. But that's not Dickie's perception/fear/concern. Dickie has spent a long time, and gone through a lot of shit from the father, in order to have the business, and he doesn't want Quinton butting into it now. He's always lived in Quinton's shadow growing up; he's come into his own now, and he doesn't want to lose it. One interesting thing, however, is that Dickie still falls into patterns of acquiescence to Quinton, reliving the old relationship, the same way that Quinton finds himself falling into the teenager's role with his mother.

Quinton has always more or less dismissed Dickie -- in SF he took him around and showed him things, but that was a reflection on himself, he was showing off, ego-tripping by showing his little brother his world and what he thought he had become. So now here he is back in town, and little brother is now a big shot, and is hell-bent to become even bigger. And Quinton finds himself in the position, at one point, of having to ask Dickie for a job, or accept it when Dickie offers it. Painting houses. Quinton really has no choice, he's out of funds, his unemployment ran out years ago, and he's barely eligible for food stamps. He's also doing the portrait of his mother for some cash, though he's not sure how much he'll charge her -- she's always trying to grubstake him, and though he takes it, he doesn't like it.

Quinton and his sister were close in age; Dickie came a bit later. Did Quinton ever consider Dickie a threat with his sister? Maybe not consciously, but I would think that would be part of it, in the same way that he considered Dickie a big threat in regards to his mother. Perhaps that's the largest realization for Quinton at the end: that he always hated Dickie, feared Dickie, for taking his mother away. His anger, I wonder, wasn't so much at his mother as it was at Dickie. Hmm.

That's got to play all the way through the early sections -- with them as children. Trying to get away from Dickie as they play on the hillside and in the yard. And it's got to be reflected in the scenes with the mother and father.

The love of Quinton for his sister. And Dickie's love for her as well. Dickie actually slept in the same bed with her, was closer to her in many ways than Quinton was, because Quinton repressed his feelings about her. Perhaps Dickie tells Quinton in SF of a time he crawled into bed with her, saw her naked. And Quinton is infuriated, would like to try to beat up Dickie and finds he can't. That Dickie could actually take him. Is it after this that Dickie goes back home? What is the time frame to Kathleen's death?

There is another important aspect of Quinton that has to be considered: Dickie fucked his wife in SF, was essentially responsible for Quinton's marriage breaking up. Did he come back for revenge? No, he's back here because he's desperate. But the idea of revenge to Dickie has occurred to him; and he's aware that Dickie may well be expecting some kind of revenge from him. The essential irony here, if that's what you want to call it, is that Quinton is aware it may look like he's come back for revenge -- perhaps trying to take part of company to get back at Dickie. An irony, that at one time in his life that would have actually been the case. But the fact is that he's here now simply because he ran out of options. He had no place else to go. He was desperate to try to make his dream come true, to paint.

This aspect of Quinton's motives for being here is covered in good measure from Dickie's point of view. He's both explaining or reflecting upon this aspect of Quinton, while showing his own motivations. Quinton thinks that Dickie took his wife in SF to get back at him, or perhaps just to get him -- sibling rivalry. That's both true and it isn't. Being with his girl there was Dickie's desperate bid to establish himself: he wanted Quinton's life, he didn't necessary want Quinton's wife; he wanted Quinton's life but not at the expense of taking away those things from Quinton, that they were in fact Quinton's was incidental. Yeh, I know something about that, and how nobody would probably ever believe it...

So when Quinton comes back he would still be furious with Dickie; but we're joining the story after he's been here for a while. He's having to put that rage away, in order to ask him for a job - or he's taken a job from him after swallowing that anger. Or is it that Dickie offers him a job as a housepainter, Quinton hasn't taken it at all, Dickie offers out of some sort of sense of duty (and also expediency: if Quinton gets enough money maybe he can pull on out of here again).

So the theme at the beginning is about the brothers; then where does the sister, and where does the mother come in?

At the beginning, there is great tension, great animosity about the brothers. So we're traveling back in time to find out why. With Dickie, we're traveling back through the time in SF, when Dickie went to see him there, and he ended up having an affair with Quinton's wife; with Quinton, we're traveling back, I guess, to the relationship between the boys and their sister. Quinton has seen the sister, and thinks there's something she's trying to tell him, about setting her soul to rest.

Okay, at the beginning, Quinton has aversion to Dickie, but not real hatred. Dickie's is more overt, because he's expecting retaliation. Quinton is demoralized in many ways; he doesn't know what he's doing. So he's traveling back, remembering the relationship between them all as children. Quinton doesn't know where his thoughts are leading; Dickie does, his sections are more or less explaining why he's anti-Quinton now. Quinton only discovers his deep and residing hatred for Dickie through his memories of their times as children. He comes to point of discovering how much he hates his brother? (And is that the lead-in to the next book?)

Does he discover in his thinking that Dickie did it to him again in SF? He never realized but taking his wife was taking his mother all over again, at least to him. He is discovering these things even as he insists on his hatred and death wish of his mother, because there's something else involved too, isn't there? Is it in fact easier to hold on to his hatred of his mother? Because on the one hand if he can blame his mother he doesn't have confront so many of his own feelings? [nope, that's muddled.] And what of the role of his father here? The fact that his father was in fact in love with his sister? Is the book not so much about people hating each other as it is loving each other? That's it's easier to see the hatred; it's not so easy to see that what's driving it is love, wanting to be loved and wanting to love.

Because perhaps the even deeper shock is that there's every indication that the sister was in love with the father, too. There's every indication that if everything had played out, she might very well have ended up sleeping with her father, she loved him that much. And the father, for all his unpleasantness, for all his other playing around, wasn't going to let that happen, he wasn't going to let himself sleep with her. And the daughter realized she was never going to have him, and had nothing to love for. And did Dickie know all this? Or had come to learn it?

We don't want this to be just a novel of explicaton, though. There's got to be action for it's own sake. Besides the revelations that explain everything that's gone before.... Like Trevor's Silence in the Garden....

Perhaps there is a girl-friend, a friend of the sister's, whom Quinton goes to talk to after he talks to his mother, or sometime....

There is a secret here. Eventually Quinton thinks it's that his father wanted the daughter. But it ends up that the sister wanted the father.

Does Quinton early on think that Dickie and sister had an affair? And where's the mother here?

And didn't Quinton and sister have sex at one time? As teenagers?

Quinton calls Carol Brown. Or a younger girl. "I'm probably not doing you any favors by calling. But I wanted to hear you." "What do you want, Quinton?" Is that perhaps Dickie's daughter?

Opening: In his mind's eye, when he was away from here, he sees the smoke billowing up from the mills, smoke lifting like geniis from the smokestacks, from the coke ovens and blast furnace along the river, sees the smoke covering the valley, drifting through the trees on the hillsides and the tree-lined streets, sees the building's edges and planes softened by the billowing leaves.... [And later, he sees the smoke drifting through the house, his sister sitting in front of the ashtray with the burning asthma powder.]

What have we got so far? Quinton sees the image of his sister in the tower. In the next sitting with his mother, he talks about his sister's death, more to jag her than anything else because he blames her for Kathleen's death. Mother holds up very well under the scrutiny, says yes, she hears her and father all the time, makes her warm to think that everybody is still here. Something has peeked his interest though, and he mentions her death to somebody else who indicates there's more to it than Quinton ever imagines. Does he go to Doctor next, who tells him about the asthma, that it clogged her lungs, but no, in fact she died of simply stopping. He performed an autopsy, he should know. Why would they want an autopsy? Because somebody was afraid of poison? Or that the asthma did in fact kill her.

No, the doctor episode I would think would come later. Quinton is still locked in his idea that mother killed her, snuffed her out as it were. He would be talking to Dickie all this time, and perhaps Dickie is the one who fuels it, either intentionally or inadvertently. Does Dickie say something to the point that well, if he feels that way, what is he doing living there? And from that does Quinton start to fear/dread that he's actually thinking of killing her? Dickie mean time is wary of what he is up to, thinking he is trying to horn in on the business in revenge for everything else.

Perhaps back there Quinton goes to see Dickie at home and finds his wife. And she is the one who says there's more here than he can imagine. And is there a daughter there too?

So it would seem that by midpoint of book, Quinton has gone through the phase of thinking he was going to kill his mother, and goes on to discover more of father, and of Kathleen. What he finds out is that father and Kathleen are implicated as would-be lovers. He blames the father; but it will turn out equally that Kathleen wanted it. And mother knew all this and didn't want to face it. Could sympathize with her daughter, even while she wanted her husband to herself. Perhaps,

her view was that if it was the daughter she could control it, her husband would never leave her. A dirty secret for all of them.

All that's well and good; but what's the daily action? What is Quinton doing day to day? For one thing he's trying to paint. And he's trying to get his finances in order. Is he actually painting a house? Or going to state for aid? Trying to get a job somewhere, at the Merrick, or doing something else? Would it be enough for the painting, or the sketching?

Even so, early on, Quinton goes through his mother's desk, or maybe his father's, and finds the note. A love note, that he at first thinks is to another mistress, indicating setting her up in a new office and hoping something will happen between them. Then finds out through somebody that he was actually going to set up Kathleen in an office. Then, what, does the mother give him the other notes of the father that says he wasn't going to let it happen. (Is there in here at the same time something about Kathleen having a secret love, who Quinton thinks is Dickie?) Then it turns out that it was the father.

Getting pretty damn complicated, and probably too convoluted. Also seems to depend too much on uncovering the past, rather than present actions. It would seem to have to revolve around Quinton's dealings with Dickie. Or perhaps Quinton's something of a love affair with someone. The daughter? Ouch. Or with Dickie's wife? He's courting one of them, taking them places, doing things with them. Leading up to some sort of inevitable seduction he would think, though he's careful not to think about it. The daughter, she's interested in the hippie era. She knows her father went out there, she knows that Quinton lived there even longer. She's interested, and interested in the Dead, listens to them all the time, like Mary Bowman. She's probably interested in her roots, what lead to her father coming back and doing the things he's doing, as much as Quinton is in finding out about his own past. Does it become then a love story, of Quinton and this younger girl?

He goes, after talking to the mother, to see Dickie at his house, though of course he's not there, the wife's there, who gives him clues to there being more than he realizes, and the daughter is there too. She's overheard them talking, and later in the day, when Quinton looks down from the tower, he sees her on the lawn. Sunbathing. Goes down and talks and she's overheard them talking and brings it up, brings up the Dead or something, letters she's found perhaps about her father, or something she's heard about, why he came back, or his relation to Kathleen, and it goes from there....

2/25/96 --

In the foyer of St. George, kidding with Lisa about my hat, she places her breasts against my arm as she puts the hat on my head -- does it twice, touching me both times. The incredible softness, giving. Did she know? Did she do it on purpose?

Quinton comes into the kitchen at Dickie's and plops his hat on his niece's head. Or she comes

in later, after he and Jitters have had their talk. She wears it for a while, then reaches up and puts it back on his head, touching her breast to his arm. Her mother says it's on backwards, and she reaches up to turn it around, touching him again. Was she aware that she was touching him? Did she do it on purpose, do it twice? He doesn't know, but it certainly gets him thinking....

It's going to be delicate, his thinking about this younger girl, because he's going to come off as a leech or vindictive or unlikeable, and it's probably not that at all. Perhaps, if I can pull it off, he starts off likeable, and then it looks like he's going to do this dastardly thing. At the beginning reader doesn't know why having an affair, or at least screwing his niece, would have such added appeal. It's only through Dickie's flashbacks to the time in SF when he ended up bedding Quinton's wife that the full meaning of his actions becomes clear.

There's a marked progression of Quinton's feelings about this younger girl. Remember, he's had a lot of experience, so for one thing he's simply interested in her as a girl, a tumble. Then it's got to occur to him about the getting back at Dickie, even if it's that he's telling himself that he knows it could look like that but that's not it. Maybe milking it for all its worth, while he knows that isn't it -- it's just that he's simply attracted to her. And there's something else too -- it starts, beyond his looking at her as he does with any girl, any young girl who's very attractive and running around in shorts and all, with his getting drifts that she's interested in him. And he finds that hard to believe, for one thing he's now so much older and he's feeling it, why would a younger girl like that be interested in him?

She's interested in the Dead. What else? Does he take her with him, perhaps up to Pittsburgh? Perhaps out painting? They go somewhere. Perhaps she has to pick up her car and he drives her there, or she drives him. Perhaps to get something for his mother? She's coming over and spending time there, laying out. Did she do that before he came home, he's got to wonder.

Or, does she offer to pose for him in the nude? Gulp.

Maybe she never actually gets around to it, but offers. And thinking about it is enough to keep him going.

This is no flighty young woman, though. Not an air-head. Eventually she bests him, she's the one who is actually in control, of herself and of the situation. This is a really top-notch young woman, though we're never really sure what she's thinking. Does she have a section of her own? Sections? To show what her motives are? Have to see.

Niece's name is Jennifer, of course. She tells him some time that she always feels very peaceful around him. Which of course is just the opposite from the way he wants her to feel, and how he feels being around her.

A reoccurring question here is what does this have to do with the mother, and with the sister? Jennifer asks the moral questions, such as "If you hate your mother so much, why are you staying at her house? You don't seem to have any problem taking her money or her help." She's

also interested from the beginning about the rift between Quinton and Dickie. Interested why all the bad things she's heard about him over the years, and why everybody thinks that way about him, if he's really that way.

She is sort of a punk -- not spikey hair or anything, but her hair is a shade of red that never appeared in nature. Can't quite understand why she would do that to herself. She also does sketches of elongated and pointy-nailed feet -- really ugly things. Some kind of fetish? Does she cut herself or burn herself, because she thinks scars are interesting, something that's been added on. Oddly painted nails. Tattoos.

Perhaps he takes her up to Pittsburgh to see the Diebenkorn's. She nails him, likes him in some way. Perhaps interested in the nudes. Quinton wonders if she's leading him on, or even if she's a lesbian. Totally baffled by the girl. Short section, driving in the car. Would you like me to pose in the nude?

When he does try to push it eventually, she tells him it's just energy.

Okay, that's what he's doing in the present -- chasing her up, seeing where that is going, at the same time that he's doing something with getting some money, house painting or something. But what does this have to do with the hatred for his mother? And what about the story of the sister?

His interest is in finding out what happened to his sister, after Jitters tweaks his interest and after his sister wanders into his room. Along the way, he's also getting interested in Jennifer. He's probably not chasing up money from Dickie; he's done one house-job, perhaps, and Dickie wants him, needs him, to do more, but Quinton won't do it, he's got enough money for the time being, he doesn't want to do any more than he has to -- which the town sees as his being lazy, and for him it's in order to keep working on his painting.

So where does the trail lead him -- is it too soon to get into that? He probably roots around in his father's study, in his old desk, and finds a letter, some notes to himself, where he talks about setting up an office for "her" and that way they'll be close, there will be many late nights together, and the chance to be with her, for the chance of something happening. And he doesn't think that much about it, that's just his father being his father, though he's got to wonder why his mother didn't do something with it or if she never looked in here. It's only later that he finds out that his father was setting up an office for Kathleen. He's got to think there's somebody else. Is Carol Brown working in Dickie's office? Took the job after he left, to be in some way close to him? And does she fill him in on some of these things? He's sure it must have been for another girl, but Carol makes it clear it was for Kathleen.

From there, does he wonder if the mother actually killed Kathleen, or let her die, because of her jealousy towards her? No, he's convinced she caused it by keeping her sheltered, by never letting her have a life of her own. Squeezed the life out of her, as symbolized by her rubbing her neck as she was dying and then saying she was getting warmer. Then he's got to wonder if Kathleen is

coming back to him to cause revenge, and he goes off afraid and dreading that he's supposed to kill her. Remember, too, that he's attracted to the mother too -- what it is to have an oedipal complex, with a mother with great legs. Sees her as sort of hellhound, a spider.

And eventually he thinks he is going to kill her -- after the fights they have about the car, etc. But when it comes down to it he can't, she just wants to be held. Which he does, and she says it was years since she was held. Where does it go from there, though? Does she intimate then that the father had a thing for Kathleen?

Does he go to see Carol who fills him in about Kathleen loving his father? But what then? What's the issue? Dickie coming to warn him off Jennifer? Jennifer setting him straight about something? I should think there would be a choice here, somewhere. Perhaps earlier with the mother, instead of confronting her then, she leads him on about the story, tells him enough about Kathleen's feeling that he goes on. From there he talks to Carol, who assures him that Kathleen was in love with his father, but Quinton continues to insist it was only his mother, it was still his mother who was to blame in some way, and then more than ever he's going to kill her. Finds that she shit herself instead? Meeting with Dickie, and some kind of resolution. No, too pat. Dickie comes over and lays into him, and Quinton lets him, too tired or something to fight, accepts what Dickie says about him, and goes to the attic. Resolution with Kathleen's spirit? And himself?

Maybe when he goes to Dickie's house that morning, he talks to Jennifer rather than Jitters -- too many characters otherwise?

The story here may be Quinton's insistence that his mother was to blame -- for whatever happened. Taking a clue from DeKooning, and his great women/mother paintings. Here to paint her, and can't decide perhaps whether to be figurative or abstract. Looks like I've got to do more with DeKooning....

So when sister appears he takes it as validation for his initial feelings, the reasons why he's come back here, to paint her, to confront his feelings, to make something of himself. He's doing a straight portrait of her, in order to do sketches, but in his tower he's doing others, or trying to, doing sketches, though can't decide whether to be figurative or abstract. With the appearance of Kathleen to him, he thinks it must mean that she wants him to do more, which leads to his being afraid he's going to kill her? At one point he's afraid he's going to kill her; on reflecting on it later, he starts to wonder if that isn't why he's come back here, and if that isn't what Kathleen is trying to tell him. When he's down in the woods lopping off flowers, it's Jennifer who comes down to talk to him.

What is Dickie's conflict/story in all this? Dickie once upon a time followed Quinton to SF and ended up having an affair with his wife. That was a while ago, but it is still fresh in Dickie's mind -- why? Because he still thinks of Quinton's wife? I wonder -- did Dickie in fact have an affair with his wife? Is that more complications than we want to deal with? No, it would seem to have to be in a way, to give Quinton's involvement with Jennifer more push. But maybe it's not

needed. The conflict for Dickie may be that he's simply threatened to have Quinton come back here at all -- threatened that he'll in some way demand some part of the business. Maybe the issue here is that yes, Dickie went to SF, but didn't stay that long, he didn't like it. Maybe it gets too complicated with all of them traveling back through time -- unless we show something more here, if he did have an affair with her, it had to do with his continual feelings of inadequacy to Quinton. Boy, I don't know, that's going to get complicated. And then there's the whole thing with Kathleen....

I think there are scenes in the beginning of the three children playing -- of Quinton and Kathleen running away from Dickie, leaving him. And he probably always felt that the life of the other two was beyond him.

Let's get back to Dickie's feelings when Quinton comes back. He's got to be thinking that he's here for some reason. He wants some of the business; or he's here to turn the mother against him...something. He's in the middle of some large deals, involving the closing down of the Buchanan works and turning it into an industrial park. So he's wondering what Quinton is up to. Then he gets wind of Quinton starting to see Jennifer? I wouldn't think that would make him happy. Would confront Quinton to leave her alone. What's the matter, afraid I'll do to you what you did to me? You leave her out of it. It might come out then that Dickie's always been in his shadow. That might be a revelation for Quinton.

Dickie's also got to shed some light for Quinton about his father and Kathleen -- which impacts Quinton's feelings about his mother. See section above, on page 15, about Quinton's talk at the end with Dickie, letting him win it for once, giving over. So far it's the best explication I've come up with as to what happens at the end.....

2/26/96 --

Jennifer says that her Dad is obsessing about Quinton, and about his being back here. She asks Quinton if her Dad should be so concerned. He replies rather sadly that yes, he supposes Dickie should; but it's not for the apparent reasons. Dickie thinks it's because Quinton's back for revenge or crudge of some sort; Quinton's actually means that his presence alone is enough for concern, that being back he's inevitably going to stir up things that had pretty much settled down.

Dickie's point of view throughout is his obsession, his concerns about Quinton being here, it forms the basis for all his sections.

Before Kathleen died she called Quinton in SF, he's remembered parts of that conversation over the years but only as he wanted to view it, about his view that Kathleen was tied down to the mother and couldn't get a life of her own. In the conversation he kept blaming the mother, and

Kathleen made some vague responses, such as “Do you know how scary it is when you might get what you want?” Quinton would respond about how they’ve unprepared her to accept her desires, kept her down, made her afraid of the world, his grand theories of how the mother repressed her. Kathleen remains vague about it, though definite in the fact that she called him.

Then at the last encounter between Quinton and Dickie, Dickie says something about Kathleen’s reaching out to Quinton and how Quinton failed her. Which totally stymies Quinton. He goes back to the letters and reads how Kathleen was actually in love with the father, and it looked increasingly as if they would actually become lovers. Quinton’s massive realization that he’s had it wrong all these years.

And at the end, with him in the tower, Kathleen comes in and sits with him again, rocking, and that’s how it ends.

Is there a rocking chair up there in the tower? Has to be if she’s going to rock. Needs set up early.

The focus, then, of Quinton’s sections is the burning hatred for his mother; and the action is based on three factors: his trying to paint, his trying to find his point of view; his questions about Kathleen and more of how she died; and his pursuit of Jennifer.

Dickie has his own concerns. He has built up an entire world here, and done quite nicely for himself, thank you very much. And then here comes Quinton, the mother’s favorite again, and he falls into the old feelings of inadequacy. This to a man who is obviously a failure, a latter-day hippie, and painter for god’s sake, and not even a good one at that. Dickie finds himself falling into the old patterns of relationship he had as a kid; and he’s aware that Quinton might have good cause to want revenge, as well as not-so-good cause for wanting to cash in now on the some part of the business. At the time the father died, Quinton didn’t want any part of it; now it’s conceivable that he thinks he’s entitled to a part of it, and Dickie is protecting his interests.

Possible scene, of Dickie at a Stop-N-Go, somebody asking him how his brother’s doing. Or something of the sort. Scenes of the day-to-day activity, going to the store, gas station. The guys talking at a bar. Scenes of Furnass, though with a purpose, making the characters aware of what other people are thinking.

So Dickie’s scene-to-scene movement in regards to the book has to do with finding out about what Quinton is up to. Is there something else? He would be checking up periodically on his mother, though she may note that he didn’t come around much until Quinton was back. He’s also involved in the project of converting the Buchanan Works into an industrial park. Is the demolition of the furnaces, etc., going on during this time? The pulling over of the blast furnaces, the dynamite charges....

Destroying the very things that Quinton’s come home to paint. He would make some comment

such as sure, Quinton, I'm tearing down these entire plants, just because you wanted to paint them.

It does seem as if that could be Dickie's central activity at this time -- tearing down the mills. And Quinton would be blaming him, taking away his subject matter, though that's not a primary motivator, I would think.

The smokestack dropping straight down, collapsing in upon itself, the huge clouds of smoke choking the valley. The blast furnace simply toppling over....

Dickie lying in bed with Jitters, or somebody else? Talking over Quinton's plans, what he's up to.

Quinton's wife's name was Laurel. Were they in fact married? Or just living together?

Does Dickie in fact have a girl-friend as well? One hell of a lot of girl-friends, etc. He's spending his days in preparation for the monster stack coming down. A symbol of the progress of the new development. Quinton might comment that usually you erected phallic symbols to show progress; Dickie tears them down, and looks forward to it.

Is Quinton threatening to form a save the smokestack movement? He's toying with the idea, but Dickie takes him seriously. He's threatening to get landmark status to the stack and the blast furnace. He's not really serious about it, says it just to dig at Dickie, but pursues it a bit, asks around, says he's thinking of taking it to the newspapers, do some radio broadcasts and interview shows, just sees what's going on with it. Dickie takes the idea very seriously, to the point of threatening him? No, Dickie says, I wouldn't think of harming you myself. Don't you suppose that if I'm as powerful as you think, I can't have somebody do it for me? You don't know what you're playing with Quinton, the fact is I'm not playing, you do anything to stand in my way and I'll make it so you wish you hadn't.

Dickie then comes out to actually be quite powerful in the town. Would Quinton go to see Sylvan Bates, about what the possibilities are? Still just toying with the idea, but he's heard that elsewhere in the valley other groups have started up to ban tearing down the mills and building a kind of historical park. He's all just speculating, starts as a wild idea and simply grows. And he lets it, pursues it a bit through town. Somebody along the way, perhaps his mother, has to call him on it, says that they know he's just putting everybody on. He's aware of it himself. And yet he can't resist the temptation to dig at Dickie, make him squirm a bit.

2/27/96 --

Notes from the videos from the demolition of the Duquesne Works: it took 40 lbs of explosives to take down the two blast furnaces. Each one was eight stories high. Clouds of dark smoke, red oxide in the air, rust.

The book needs external movement, something happening, going on, and perhaps that's it, the story of Dickie getting ready to level the blast furnace or one of the old buildings, and Quinton playing with the idea of trying to stop it, giving trouble about it, threatening to try to get historical status for it.

Dickie would ask him, what the hell do you care about the mills, you never worked there, you tried it for a summer and quit the first week, at least I worked there. You couldn't stand the noise and dirt, remember? Why are you doing this? [And Quinton would ask him, why the hell do you care about doing anything for the town? You don't give a shit about the town, this is just another deal to make money.]

Jennifer, as she walks past him, trails her hand across his back, as Kristin does at work.

Dickie has got to be sympathetic from his own side, however. Here he is, going through with his plans, the biggest deal of his life, and one that, incidentally, could have great significance for Furnass, and here's Quinton, butting in again, making trouble, giving his opinions where they're not wanted. Just like when they were kids, he feels like he's trailing after him again, overshadowed by him, even though the guy's a goddamn hippie, a useless painter. He wants to get away from Quinton, wants to be recognized on his own, and he has been, until now, all of a sudden here he is again, causing trouble, getting himself in interviews with the papers perhaps, or threatening to do so. Butting in where he's not wanted. He's been living out on the coast for the past twenty years, what the hell would he know what's what, what the town has gone through, the people here. He's just doing this to get back at Dickie, for what somebody wants to know, and gradually we see for what, with Dickie taking his wife in SF.

Not only that, but Dickie gets wind that Quinton is sniffing around Jennifer, or vice versa, and that drives him looney. He knows what he's up to, he's trying to get to him any way he can.

How can Quinton be sympathetic in this, though? He's actually taken with the mills, he can't imagine the town without them. He asks himself, Was he just doing this to bug Dickie? No, but he knew it would. It didn't bring him any particular happiness at this point, he was serious in a way, but he knew how Dickie would take it. Well, that was Dickie's problem. Somebody had to raise these issues. He couldn't imagine the town without the mills, they were part of its heritage. They were part of what was unique about the area.

And in truth he couldn't imagine the town without the mills. They haunted his fantasies. He wondered if he should be raising this issue, but it was started now, it seemed to take on a life of its own, and he was just riding the wave at this point. It was a chuckle that it would throw a monkey wrench in Dickie's plans. Well, somebody should. Keep him honest. He knew Dickie, he knew he would work every scam he could think of. He was his father reincarnated, at least to that degree. Him and his big car and foreign-cut suits. His aftershave.

Have to decide what it is exactly that he's taking down. I guess he would already be cutting apart the large buildings. The BOP shop. There would probably be some very old brick buildings -- part of the original Keystone Steam Works? And maybe that's how Dickie decides to get Sylvan involved. At one point, the Buchanan Works expanded and absorbed the Keystone Steam Works. They truly are fine old brick buildings, some of them built even before the fire because the fire went on up the hill not down. Hmm, interesting thought. Was it Sylvan's grandfather who set fire to the town inadvertently? A steam engine started it? I wonder....

Anyway, there are some of the fine old buildings. And Quinton goes to Sylvan to ask him about his sister, and to ask him about the buildings. Ostensibly about the buildings, secondly, though perhaps the real reason, about his sister. The question of the buildings is a lead in, something to ask him about, as an intro for his sister.

Then Sylvan apparently mentions it to Dickie; and Dickie comes flying up, raising a ruckus about it, and that amuses as well as pisses off Quinton. Sees that it gets under his skin, which makes him pursue it a little bit further. So has anybody looked into the possibility of landmark status? Has anybody considered that an industrial park might not be the best thing for the city? Calls a reporter and talks to him; an article in the paper, complete with photo of Quinton in front of the furnace. I just thought I'd ask.

His mother isn't taking sides. Wishes they'd get their differences straightened out. Somewhere she has to talk to Dickie, there's a question of the fact that he took Quinton's wife in SF, and she says if she went she must not have wanted to stay. If she went along with it, there must have been a lot of other things wrong. Giving sort of a blanket...not endorsement, but at least an understanding of it.

This is sort of weird, I don't really like this story, but it's just rolling along, picking up its own momentum, and I'm just writing it down.

Quinton's going along, sort of pursuing his blocking of the demolition, but moreover making inquiries about Kathleen. And does it occur to him after a while that perhaps Dickie was screwing her? Or that there was something there? It is through the letters he finds, the notes (there may be some of her notes in his desk as well). And he finds them and thinks his father was taking care of them, and that Dickie had had her along the way too, nothing was sacred to that animal. Then he finds that it was the father, but that's not the kicker either; the kicker is that for all purposes, though he wanted her, his father actually did everything he could to forestall it (not true in a way, if he set up the office and hoped to be with her there). The real kicker is that Kathleen actually wanted him and was getting to the point of actually thinking about it. Considering actually going to bed with him. Realizing that her love for him superceded any other love she would ever know, and why not make it real. And there is the implication here that the realization of that was too much on one level of her mind, and her asthma got worse and she simply stopped living.

There is a hell of a lot going on in this story.... Too much?

The time of the story is summer -- remember the heat. It is the summer following the autumn which was the time of SUN WITHOUT HEAT. Sylvan has seen his own plans for a building come to a grinding halt. The tower sits in the middle of town, for now at least abandoned. Sylvan wants to see Dickie succeed, because if Dickie can bring new business to the area with the industrial park, it might mean that Sylvan can find additional financing for his tower, or have the chance to sell it to somebody who might finish it. So, Sylvan's a little torn about this -- would like to see his family's buildings restored and not leveled, and yet wants Dickie to bring in new business.

Why would Quinton ask Sylvan about his sister? These two are about the same age, and played together up on Orchard Hill, though they probably never what you would call really close. Still, Sylvan might have been the family attorney -- the family's, if not Dickie's own. Does some work for Dickie, personal things, but also his mother's attorney, and he thought he might have some info. A place to start. Also there's an in, a thing to break the ice, what with the questions of the buildings.

In order for Quinton to get interested in saving the buildings, something has to happen to call his attention to them. Talking to his mother she mentions it during the sitting? How much Dickie's looking forward to it? Then he might go and look at them. Would go along with his painting, I suppose. Not that he's figurative, but this is part of the texture of the town, he doesn't want to see it go away. More than that (and less), he doesn't think it should go away for the town. Something to talk to Sylvan about.

Perhaps: Jennifer's at the house when Quinton gets there. They talk, there is some shared jokes about his mother, then Jennifer has to go downtown. Quinton insists on taking her; when they're in the lesser vehicle, she's sort of bemused and calls him on the fact that he was just downtown and is going to the trouble of taking her again. Maybe she makes some reference that maybe he's as dirty-minded as his father says he is. Asks about Kathleen, says what? Takes her to see her father, drops her off, at the site of the demolition. From there, or sometime, goes to see Sylvan and asks about demolition, per the above, then Sylvan asks about how it feels to be home again, Quinton says it's a little weird, brings up something about Kathleen, then it is Sylvan who leads that there was something strange going on there, something he says, remember, Sylvan was the father's attorney and might know quite a bit about what the father was thinking. Perhaps it's now that the first sitting occurs with the mother. And he quizzes her about Kathleen's death; she also talks about coming demolition and how important it is to Dickie. Soon afterwards, Dickie comes over and bawls him out, is threatening, about his asking Sylvan about blocking the demolition, Quinton chiding, which when he sees Dickie's reaction, gets him going more about the demolition, talks it up a bit around town, and before you know it there's even a newspaper interview.

After Dickie chews him out, two strains need picked up: Jennifer and Kathleen. Is he watching

Jennifer from the tower? Or does she come up to his room sometime? Is she the one that puts him in touch with the TV crew? Knows that they are going to be there? She's working her own side of the street, chiding her dad? Or is it because she thought that Quinton was truly interested and is trying to please him? Is she also a coconspirator about digging up information about Kathleen?

Perhaps Quinton goes to her house, says it's to see Dickie but Jitters is there and asks why he would suppose Dickie's there at this time of day. He's come to see Jennifer, but ends up talking to Jitters instead, who gives him more information to push the story ahead.

Quinton has shown a bit of immaturity, making fun of his mother in the early scene to Jennifer. But the girl sees an ally, with her own feelings/problems with her own father. It's beginning to sound as if she's really working him in a way, taking advantage or at least playing to his weakness, which is his rage at his mother.

Jennifer might also tell him about Carol, that she was his father's secretary and perhaps still works at the firm. She will know a lot about the relationship between the father and Kathleen.

Okay: we've got the first of it going; but what happens with the demolition theory? Or does it drop out after a while, as he gets more involved in the Kathleen story?

Perhaps Jennifer's the one who is most concerned with blocking the demolition; and Quinton only gets caught up in it. Why would she care so much about it? Well, she might see it as the town's heritage or something; and there's probably all kinds of hidden meanings in her digging at her father, in contrast to Kathleen and her father.

Perhaps throughout, it is Jennifer who is interested in it, who is trying to organize something to stop them tearing it down; and Quinton gets mixed up in it to impress her, meanwhile as he's following the trail about his own father and the relationship with Kathleen.

To pursue the theme of the demolition further: what could Quinton do, once he has talked to Sylvan, and once Dickie has talked to him about it? He could talk it up at a bar or something; he could get himself in such a position as to call the newspapers or radio and make a statement; he could join Jennifer in her plans, or suggest things to her -- start a mail campaign, do some bit of sabotage, chain somebody to the gate, spread the word. I don't know.... Would he talk to his mother about it? And what of her, and what of his anger towards her?

As a painter, he might suggest illustrating something for Jennifer's flyers. Or do a painting, donate an illustration....

What have we got so far: he takes Jennifer down to the mill and she's talking about what a shame it is to see them go. He goes uptown to talk to Sylvan, and finds out that he's ambivalent. Quinton's also scratching around about his sister. Dickie comes over and says something to him

about butting out. The idea of needling Dickie appeals to him...but what can he do?

2/28/96 --

A storm, lightening and thunder, wakens Quinton one time in the middle of the night. He's lying there, thinking about how there are never storms like that in SF. Thinking about how now everybody in town is lying awake listening to the rain, sort of perverted sense of community, the whole town awake in the middle of the night. He sees movement out the corner of his eye and looks in the shadows but there's nothing there. Laughs at himself for being spooky. Thinks of something else. Looks over and Kathleen is sitting in the old rocking chair.

Jennifer is a first year college student. She wants to be an architect. Quinton thinks because of that that she's an intellectual ally of sorts, a sympathetic ear. Scene when he takes her to the museum to show her Diebenkorns, de Koonings, etc. Thinking that she'll respond favorably to them, respond favorably to them. A chance to show-off in a way. But she doesn't care for them. Says something flip, like a kid could do better. She's only a first-year college student after all. It brings negative feelings towards her, which go away again later when she's friendly and attentive to him again, when he gets lustful towards her again.

Jennifer is there at the house that first day; she's asked his mother some questions about Kathleen and Kitty is rummaging around looking things up for her. Quinton says something about not stirring things up. As story progresses, they become allies in the search for the truth of what happened. He's got to wonder at some point if the reason she brought up the issue of Kathleen is because of him, to get closer to him. Part of Quinton's self-centeredness, of course, but also a legitimate question. She didn't; perhaps the reason she did is because she's interested in her own father, because she sees Kathleen as an early competitor for his feelings, Dickie's feelings? Or she's interested in what happens to daughters who are too interested in their fathers....

Her interest in Kathleen, running alongside her interest in bucking Dickie, in giving him trouble about the tearing down of some of the fine old brick buildings at the Buchanan Works. He gets interested primarily in Kathleen, and peripherally in the Works, because he's interested in her.

At the beginning, whenever Jennifer asks him anything about her death, Quinton thinks he's already got the answer, that it was the mother who suffocated her life. After a while, Jennifer would ask him if it didn't bother him, hating her the way he does, and still sponging off her. Gradually, unwittingly, Jennifer leads him to the major revelations about Kathleen, about the love between her and her father.

Kitty is leading them along, easily providing them information, probably even leaving things around for them to find. Because she desperately wants to be understood, and loved; she wants someone to know about Kathleen and the father, how her own love was put aside in favor of the daughter. She wants the world, and Quinton, her favorite, to know what she went through. She's

feeding them information, casually, surreptitiously, leaving them clues for them to discover. At the end, after all the other realizations, he'll realize that that's what Kitty has been doing, and think about why. I doubt if he goes running down to make everything right, but he does come to a new realization.

Sketch: Why are you stirring up these old memories? "Why, aren't you interested in why she died?" "No, I know she did, that's all." "It was a stroke or something, wasn't it?" "That's right, or something. Nobody ever seems to talk about that." "I've heard it was a heart attack, and I've heard it was a stroke. Doesn't that make you curious?" "I don't suppose they'd do an autopsy on something like that." [Is that why he goes to see Sylvan, to ask if there was an autopsy, or if he knew anything about it? "How would I get a copy of a thing like that?" "I'd just ask the doctor," Sylvan says bemused at his naivete.] "Are you suggesting she was poisoned or something?" "No, I can't imagine anything like that. But aren't you curious?"

That's all well and good...but what does it have to do with Quinton's preconceived notions that his mother caused it, that she simply stopped living. Maybe that's the terrible part, he tells Jennifer that that's what happened, that the family, the mother snuffed the life out of her. And then Quinton talks to doctor and finds out that it was actually true. That they could find no actual cause of death. That apparently her heart simply stopped. For no apparent reason. It unhinges him in a way, unsets him. Why, Jennifer says, isn't that just what you said. Some thing's you'd rather not be right about.

Sketch. The mother says, "Do you remember Quinton, how the three of you used to play in the yard." Quinton thinks about how Dickie always tagged along; Dickie in his flashback scene will remember I tentirely differently, not at all kindly, of the other two always out in the lead, always leaving him behind. Quinton will remember it as he could never be alone with Kathleen, that Dickie was a whining pest. Mother will dig around and find some photos. The kids used to make tunnels in the yards, they called them tunnels, when the grass got so high? How could grass get that high?

Maybe they dragged large cardboard boxes into the yard, like trains, pushing them around in the grass, the boxes that her appliances and the things she bought came in, pushing them around, though Quinton always tried to set it up that he was in a box by himself with Kathleen, and Dickie was left out, in his own box. Pushing it around by himself, while the two of them huddled together. Later, I would think that Quinton would have his own memories of those experiences, of huddling there with her as Dickie ran around pounding on the sides wanting to come in. A key experience for all of them, that Kitty starts off remembering that first afternoon and telling Jennifer about.

Quinton pushing Kathleen around, her in the darkness at the other end, the off-centered weight of the thing. Dickie trying to get in too, Get away Dickie. Pushing it close to the house, pulling it close to the house from within by grabbing on to the water hose or something. Huddling inside there together, with Dickie running around outside beating on it trying to get in. Huddled in the

dark. What would she say to him?

3/1/96 --

After a couple days off...

There are probably two or three early trips of Dickie to SF, showing the ever-closer relationship between Dickie and Laurel. It's possible, though, that it happens all at the one time he is there...but the fact that he came out a number of times to SF reinforces the idea that he was following Quinton, that he envied his life.

When he comes out, Quinton is painting and pays little attention to Dickie; he and Laurel are left alone a lot. They go for walks along the beach, to the store. At night when there are revels, they end up together. Eventually she tells him that she just wants to go on with him, to get in the car and just go. He goes back to her then, the last trip there it's to see her, to see how serious she is. Though they're fucking, she can't go like she says, and he realizes that it's pointless. Dickie goes back to Furnass, and is resigned to take over his father's firm.

This becomes a whole story in itself...I'm a little antsy that it may just be too much. Or this is going to be just too big and complicated a book. Have to see....

To return, though: Going to SF to be with Laurel, this becomes a central event in Dickie's life. Quinton is going through a lot being back and having to deal with Dickie. But the fact is Dickie is going through a major trauma as well. See Quinton again, and suspecting that Quinton is trying to cause revenge, brings back to Dickie the whole affair with Laurel, and that it was a turning point in his life. He went back to San Francisco to see her, to perhaps make it real; he had began to work already for his father, though he was uncertain whether or not that's what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. It looks as though he's taken over the father's business because of his own greed, and there's that element to it. But more to the point, he decided to go into his father's business because when he went to be Laurel, and though they did in fact have an affair, perhaps went off for a time together, he was ready to just get in the car and go, to make it real, as she had told him the year before. And for whatever reasons, whether she felt that moment had passed, or there was something reluctant with her, for whatever reason, when Dickie came to be with her and do that, she said she couldn't go just yet, she had things to take care of. And Dickie became discovered and disillusioned and came back.

Perhaps there's a scene between Quinton and Dickie, when they are throwing accusations back and forth, and Quinton tells him that he blew it, that Laurel was testing him as she did everybody, she wouldn't go at that moment, but she would have, and Quinton tells Dickie that Dickie blew it, that if he had only waited she would have gone with him, they could have been together. It is a major moment for Dickie, both of them: the moment that he left her in San Francisco, and the moment that Quinton tells him that he should have waited and been with her. Does that leave some kind of resolution between the two brothers? Not a hugging kind of thing,

but at least a draw, a neutral ground where they both understand they lost.

Again, though: what that's got to do with Kathleen? Is there a scene of Dickie lying in bed with Kathleen, her older than he is, and marveling at her, a much different scene than of the closeness between Quinton and Kathleen.

Suddenly Dickie is pretty interesting....

So being involved with Quinton again brings this all back to Dickie. And Jennifer is interested in what's going on between her father and uncle. Though Jennifer has other things on her mind as well. She's heard mention somewhere along the line about the animosity between the two brothers over some girl. And that piques her interest about Quinton. He may tell her, after an initial spit of anger, that it actually didn't mean that much to him. It seemed to have pretty much run its course. Can't pooh-poo the fact though that he would take it against his manhood and all, he's still angry at Dickie if he thinks about it. It's more an overall dislike, distaste. He'd be showing off in a way to Jennifer, saying it didn't bother him, trying to be suave, cool, etc. Doesn't want to appear that he's hung up over Laurel, because he's now toying with the idea of getting involved with Jennifer.

The fact is that Quinton is more interested in Kathleen than Laurel. Dickie is interested in Laurel because that was a major turning point of his life. And seeing Quinton and having to deal with him brings it all back.

And Quinton may be more interested in Jennifer than either of them....

When Dickie is involved with Laurel, Kathleen hasn't died yet. That all comes later.

Quinton blames his mother for Kathleen's death. Dickie, on the other hand, blames Quinton: he thinks that Quinton let her down. Kathleen was reaching out to him, and wanted to come see him, and Quinton ignored her, was busy with other things. (So, when Kathleen did call him and reach out, he wasn't with Laurel at that time, she had already left. Or did he take her back for a while, after her affair with Dickie, and he didn't pay that much attention to her?) That, and Dickie also knows it was his father's involvement with Laurel that ultimately killed her, probably killed the both of them. And Quinton doesn't want to hear that, he's insisting that it's the mother. Why, because it reflects somehow on himself? And also there's his own attraction for Kitty.

So, what is Quinton chasing again? He's interested, after seeing the face in the window, in what happened to Kathleen. And he's sort of interested in bugging Dickie about his tearing down the old building of the Buchanan Works. And his pursuing his theme of blaming his mother for everything. He's out to paint her, and to explore how to portray her in terms of de Kooning; later, as he talks more to Jennifer, and she calls attention to his hatred for his mother, he wonders if subconsciously he's come back to kill her. Which in fact he has, though through his painting.

It is the hatred for his mother that forms his ruling action, that drives him forward. And he is wondering how to portray that through his painting.

He is here to paint his mother. Concurrently, he also ran out of money elsewhere, he had no options if he was going to keep painting. He wanted to explore that about his mother, and he wanted to come back to paint the landscape like Diebenkorn. Perhaps at the beginning he is still locked into painting the landscape; but as he becomes increasingly frustrated in his dealings with her -- his return to being a teenager when dealing with her -- he decides that that should be his real subject, the mother.

And as he's painting her, he's digging into the history about Kathleen, in order to get her reactions to what he says, in order to see how she snuffed her life. Kitty, however, isn't bothered by it, at least from anything he can see; she's feeding him the information so he can judge for himself, so he can find out for himself about the relationship between Kathleen and her father.

He had tried to do the abstractions of Diebenkorn, but his own voice never came, he was always an imitator. He came back here to get the more flowing, billowy forms in his work; but he's been equally unsuccessful. Now he's decided to paint her. As in his life, he hasn't been able to abstract his thoughts away from her, and away from Kathleen.

The question remains: where was he this morning? Why is he out walking about? Has he already set up the appointment with his mother to paint her? It would take too long in the book to have him go through that decision; it has to be a given. So, where has he been this morning? Out to get a drink, to steel himself for the encounter? And in seeing Kathleen in the window, does he just think it's a drug flashback? Did he try a drink, and then stop on the hillside to have a joint? Then he goes in and starts to paint. And Jennifer is there? Did she take the mother to get her hair done? That has to be a bit touching, I would think, but we can't get sentimental....