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‘My God,’ said my father to my mother. ‘Again no money? But I gave you twelve dollars at the beginning of the week. What have you done with it?’

‘I don’t know. It went away.’

‘So quickly...by Thursday? Impossible.’

(1)‘It couldn’t be helped. Some of it I used to pay old bills. We’ve owed money to Jacob for I don’t know how long.’

‘But did you have to pay him this week?’

(2)‘He’s right in the block. For two months now I’ve been coming home the long way around. I gave him three dollars.’

‘How could you! Haven’t you any sense? And what did you do with the rest? Joshua,’ he said, turning to me furiously. ‘Take a pencil and write these things down. I have to know where it all went. I bought eggs and butter on Tuesday.’

‘Seventy-five cents to the milkman,’ said Ma, earnest and frightened. She must have believed she had done something wrong.

‘Write it,’ he said.

(3)I had taken a piece of Ma’s checkered stationery and placed the figures carefully within the tiny boxes. I was shaken, too, and eager to escape condemnation.

‘Willie had a tooth out. It cost fifty cents.’

‘Fifty?’ he said.

‘Yes, it’s usually a dollar an extraction. I sent him up alone and told him to say it was all he had. And after he was done, I waited for him downstairs. I was ashamed to show my face to Dr Zadkin.’

‘Did it have to come out?’

‘There was nothing left of it but the walls. Do you want to look at it? The child was in pain...Then there was fifty cents to have the boys’ hair cut.’

(4)‘I’m going to buy a pair of clippers and do it myself Pa said. He was always resolving to do this.’

‘Fifty cents for the gas meter. Twenty cents for a coal shovel. Twenty-five cents to the insurance man. Twenty cents for a flatiron handle. I haven’t even started on the bigger things yet, such as meat.’

‘We have meat far too often,’ Pa said. ‘We don’t need it. I prefer milk soups anyway.’

‘Don’t expect me to stint\* on the stomach,’ my mother said with determination. ‘If I do nothing else, I’m going to feed the children.’

(5) ‘They don’t look starved,’ said Pa. ‘Especially this one. I never look at him but he’s chewing.’

My appetite was large and I seemed never to have had enough. I ate all the leftovers. I chewed down apple parings, cold vegetables, chicken bones.

(6) ‘If I knew how to do things more cheaply,’ said Ma, as though she now consented to take the blame.

‘You don’t bargain enough,’ my father said to her harshly.

‘And do you know how much money I’d have now if it weren’t for you and the children?’ he roared at her. ‘I’d be worth ten thousand dollars. Ten thousand, do you hear? And be a free man. Do you hear what I say?’ he glared with a strained throat.

(7) ‘Why don’t you leave then?’ My mother wept.

‘That’s what I will do!’

He hurried out. It was night. He was gone for about an hour, and then I saw his cigarette glow on the front step, and he said to me, meekly, that he had only gone to buy a package of cigarettes.

解答欄

(1)


(2)


(3)


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(6)


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次の文の下線をほどこした部分(1)～(3)を和訳しなさい。

Susan Lichtman is sitting in the crowded reception area of the dentist's office. She is waiting for her daughter, Nicki, to arrive, even though Nicki's last words out the door this morning were to forget it, she had no intention of letting anyone put braces on her teeth, and that no one could make her. Not even her mother. *Especially* not her mother, Susan thinks now, the emphasis hers.

She checks her watch. Almost four o'clock. Still a few minutes before Nicki's scheduled appointment. Even if she does show up, Susan recognizes, she'll be late. Nicki is always late, unlike her mother, who is always early.

(1)She stares toward the reception room door, willing it to open and Nicki to walk through. But Nicki has been remarkably resistant to her mother's will of late, and the door stays firmly closed. Are all fifteen-year-old girls so stubborn? So argumentative? What happened to the little girl whose love for her mother was once so absolute and unquestioning, whose every glance was filled with sweet and total admiration? Now whenever Nicki deigns to look her way, it is through eyes heavy-lidded with disgust, as if she is overwhelmed that this woman so out of touch with reality, this archaic, irrelevant remnant of the dark ages, could actually be her *mother*. Surely someone, somewhere, has made a terrible mistake.

The mistakes are all hers, Susan acknowledges silently. She's the one who is either too lenient or too strict, too inquisitive or too disinterested, too old-fashioned or too trendy, too much or too little. Too angry. Too protective. Too moody. Too intense. Too tired. Whatever she can be, she's too much of it, except for the one thing all the books say mothers should be — consistent. Unless consistently inconsistent counts for something, she thinks hopefully.

Not like her own mother.

Susan's eyes automatically brim with tears, as they do every time she thinks of the mother she lost to cancer just months after Nicki was born. So beautiful. So patient. So instinctively correct in everything she said and did. (2)What would she think of the mother her daughter had become? What advice would she give her? How would she have handled the increasingly challenging young woman her infant grandchild had grown into?

As if on cue, the door to the reception area opens and Nicki sweeps through. Nicki always sweeps. She moves as if there is a camera following her, recording her every gesture, her eyes on guarded alert for the camera's telltale red light that signals she is "on." Susan watches in awe of her daughter's total self-absorption as Nicki removes her jacket and hangs it up, fluffs her long brown hair in the small mirror next to the coat rack, then retrieves a magazine from the coffee table in the middle of the room. She has yet to acknowledge her mother's presence.

"Hi, sweet thing," Susan whispers as Nicki occupies the seat beside her.

She hears a grunt, close-mouthed, barely audible. Maybe "Hi," maybe not. Nicki stares straight ahead, then without warning flicks her hair away from her shoulders, absently whipping it across the side of her mother's cheek.

"Ow! Watch that," her mother says, a touch too loud.

(3)Nicki's entire body tenses, her soft features hardening into a frown not here two minutes. Susan thinks and I've already managed to offend her. She wonders only briefly why it's her daughter who's angry when she's the one who's been hurt.

解答欄

(1)


(2)


(3)
