

to enjoy disturbing her just for money . . .” Selena delivered the incomplete sentence with all possible aplomb.

Ginnie was, in fact, slightly put off by this information, whatever its degree of truth, but not to the point of sentimentality. “I didn’t give it to her,” she said, and followed Selena into the elevator.

When Selena had rung her apartment bell, the girls were admitted—or rather, the door was drawn in and left ajar by a colored maid with whom Selena didn’t seem to be on speaking terms. Ginnie dropped her tennis things on a chair in the foyer and followed Selena. In the living room, Selena turned and said, “Do you mind waiting here? I *may* have to wake Mother up and everything.”

“O.K.” Ginnie said, and plopped down on the sofa.

“I never in my life would’ve thought you could be so small about anything,” said Selena, who was just angry enough to use the word “small” but not quite brave enough to emphasize it.

“Now you know,” said Ginnie, and opened a copy of *Vogue* in front of her face. She kept it in this position till Selena had left the room, then put it back on top of the radio. She looked around the room, mentally rearranging furniture, throwing out table lamps, removing artificial flowers. In her opinion, it was an altogether hideous room—expensive but cheesy.

Suddenly, a male voice shouted from another part of the

apartment, “*Eric? That you?*”

Ginnie guessed it was Selena’s brother, whom she had never

seen. She crossed her long legs, arranged the hem of her polo coat over her knees, and waited.

A young man wearing glasses and pajamas and no slippers

lunged into the room with his mouth open. "Oh. I thought

it was Eric, for Chrissake," he said. Without stopping, and

with extremely poor posture, he continued across the room,

cradling something close to his narrow chest. He sat down

on the vacant end of the sofa. "I just cut my goddam finger,"

he said rather wildly. He looked at Ginnie as if he had

expected her to be sitting there. "Ever cut your finger? Right

down to the bone and all?" he asked. There was a real appeal

in his noisy voice, as if Ginnie, by her answer, could save him

from some particularly isolating form of pioneering.

Ginnie stared at him. "Well, not right down to the bone,"

she said, "but I've cut myself." He was the funniest-looking

bov. or man—it was hard to tell which he was—she had ever