

京大過去問 1993年 第2問

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It was a dull and cloudy day when we arrived at the railway station outside Upper Harford and, in the diffuse grey light, they seemed older and more frail. I took my grandmother's arm as we waited for the train that would bear me away to London. (1)I may have imagined it, but I believe that I felt her body shaking slightly; it was only a faint tremor, but nevertheless it communicated itself to me, and made me more afraid for her than I had been since my arrival all those years before. Yet there was very little that could be said — very little to say — on this grey morning of my departure.

'Come back soon,' she called out as eventually I boarded the train. 'We'll miss you.'

'I won't be long,' I said. It was as if I were leaving for a morning or for an hour; but in truth the interval would be much greater than that.

I believe my grandfather suspected as much, because he came up to me as I leaned out of the window and put his hand against my cheek. 'Remember,' he said. 'Be true to yourself. And then you will be true to others.'

I watched them standing quietly together as the train pulled out of the station; the steam gathered all around them in clouds but, when it cleared for a moment, they were still gazing after me intently. I waved, and then they were gone.

I had not been in London since I had left with my father and grandfather; it had become unfamiliar, almost threatening, and as the train made its way through the suburbs to Paddington Station, I could feel the tension rising within me. It was as if I were pushing my way, physically, through a crowd which might overwhelm me.(2)I do not recall experiencing anything of this kind before — this sensation of millions of lives surrounding my own — but, when I last lived in the city, perhaps I possessed no real awareness of my own self. Now everything had changed, and it was with a newly awakened self-consciousness that I walked from the platform into the main concourse of the station.