

her. We didn't recognize each other. We got on a ship and went as far away as we could. That was here. I had ninety-four steamer trunks and there wasn't anything in them but shoes."

The dictator's wife stops talking. She stares greedily at the visitor, as if the visitor is delicious. She looks as if she would like to eat the visitor up. She looks as if she would like to eat the visitor up in one bite, spit out the visitor's shoes like peach stones. The visitor can hear Effie coming down the aisle, but the dictator's wife doesn't say another word. She just lies there on the bed with her teeth out again, in the glass beside the bed.

Effie motions for the visitor to follow her. Each case has a name printed on a tiny card. You can't see over the top of the stacked cases, but you can see through them. Light has collected in the boxes and the glass is warm.

Effie says, "Here. These shoes belonged to a famous opera singer."

The opera singer's shoes have tall green heels. They have ivory buttons up the side. The visitor looks down at Effie's feet. She is wearing wooden sandals—Dr. Scholl's—with thick red leather buckles. Her toenails are red. They match the red buckles. When she sees the visitor looking, she bends over. She turns a small key in the side of the shoe. Red wheels pop out of the bottom of the Dr. Scholls. She turns the key in the other shoe, and then she straightens up. Now she's quite tall.

She rubs a glass case with the dusty dress one more time, and then raps it sharply. It rings like a bell. "Museum's closed now," she says to the visitor. "There's a three o'clock matinee with a happy ending. I want to see it." She skates off down the narrow glass aisle, balanced precariously on her splendid shoes.