

ALICE

I'm Alice. You're Gertrude Stein.

GERTRUDE

Good to meet you.

ALICE

You have a lovely home.

GERTRUDE

It's my brother's.

ALICE

But you live here.

GERTRUDE

Yes.

ALICE

Are these all your paintings? Picasso and Matisse from *cimaise* to ceiling. This one is you; Picasso.

GERTRUDE

Nobody likes it.

ALICE

Do you?

GERTRUDE

I like it very well.

ALICE

Does Picasso?

GERTRUDE

Very well.

ALICE

That should be enough. What is this?

GERTRUDE

I don't yet know. It looks like a very complicated picture of three women.

ALICE

What do you think of Picasso.

GERTRUDE

Oh I follow him blindly.

ALICE

Me too.

GERTRUDE

Would you like tea?

ALICE

I don't think so thank you.

GERTRUDE

You won't mind if I have some then.

ALICE

No no please do.

(GERTRUDE pours herself tea.
Drinks while looking amiably
at ALICE.)

GERTRUDE

Did you get here by train or by boat.

ALICE

Both. I left San Francisco during a terrible fire which was spreading all throughout the city. I was worried my train would be cancelled as I had been looking forward to traveling to Paris for some time. There was very little confusion, though. People were herded onto the ferries and the trains but there was no confusion. The Portuguese musicians on the ferry were still playing their usual diverting music so I thought that things couldn't be that bad even though the Berkley newspapers were alarming.

GERTRUDE

What were you reading on the train?

ALICE

I was reading Flaubert's letters. Harriet was reading *Lord Jim*.

(Change: A train, two weeks
previous. A PROFESSOR OF
PSYCHOLOGY reads a newspaper
in a private train
compartment. A knock. HARRIET
peeks in, ALICE behind her.)

HARRIET

Pardon me sir.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

(Looking up from his reading.)

Yes?

HARRIET

Gosh I'm sorry.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 What is it? Please, come in.

(HARRIET and ALICE enter.)

HARRIET
 The porter is cleaning our room. Would you mind?

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 Of course not! Please.

(The PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 moves things out of the way
 for them to sit down.)

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (CONT'D)
 Pardon my mess, I...

ALICE
 Don't worry.

HARRIET
 Thank you.

ALICE
 Thanks.

HARRIET
 I'm Harriet Levy.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 Very good to meet you, Harriet.

ALICE
 I'm Alice Toklas.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 Alice. Very good to meet you both.

(They sit and read.)

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (CONT'D)
 What is that you're reading?

HARRIET
Lord Jim.

PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
 And how are you enjoying it?

HARRIET
 It passes the time.