They sat at the zinc bar drinking absinthe and looking out through the windows at the street. It was noon and the street was hot and they saw how the horses of the soldiers who passed there kicked up little clouds of dust that floated around their legs. They had watched this scene before without saying anything and they knew now that this was the last time they would see it.

“Next week there will be only motor cars to watch,” she said.

“What difference does it make?”

“It doesn’t make any difference.”

“Then why say it?”

“Why say anything?”

He looked at her a moment over the rim of his glass and then took a drink and set the glass on the table. He motioned for the bartender to pour them two more.

“The only thing to do is to get drunk,” he said. He lit a cigarette.

“What good will that do?”

“It won’t do any good but it will make you forget about the soldiers riding by on horses.”

“And the little clouds of dust? The puffy clouds?”

“Motor cars raise dust. There will be plenty of dust.”

“But it’s not the same.”
“It is the same if you get drunk enough. It’s all just clouds of dust.”