

**HEMINGWAY**

***THE KILLERS***

**extract from the short story**

Outside the arc-light shone through the bare branches of a tree. Nick walked up the street beside the car-tracks and turned at the next arc-light down a side-street. Three houses up the street was Hirsch's rooming-house. Nick walked up the two steps and pushed the bell. A woman came to the door.

“Is Ole Anderson here?”

“Do you want to see him?”

“Yes, if he's in.”

**Nick followed the woman up a flight of stairs and back to the end of a corridor. She knocked on the door.**

**“Who is it?”**

**“It’s somebody to see you, Mr. Anderson,” the woman said.**

**“It’s Nick Adams.”**

**“Come in.”**

**Nick opened the door and went into the room. Ole Anderson was lying on the bed with all his clothes on.**

**He had been a heavyweight prizefighter and he was too long for the bed. He lay with his head on two pillows. He did not look at Nick.**

**“What was it?” he asked.**

**“I was up at Henry’s,” Nick said, “and two fellows came in and tied up me and the cook, and they said they were going to kill you.”**

**It sounded silly when he said it.**

**Ole Anderson said nothing.**

**“They put us out in the kitchen,” Nick went on. “They were going to shoot you when you came in to supper.”**

**Ole Anderson looked at the wall and did not say anything.**

**“George thought I better come and tell you about it.”**

**“There isn’t anything I can do about it,” Ole Anderson said.**

**“I’ll tell you what they were like.”**

**“I don’t want to know what they were like,”**

**Ole Anderson said. He looked  
at the wall. “Thanks for coming to tell me  
about it.”**

**“That’s all right.”**

**Nick looked at the big man lying on the bed.**

**“Don’t you want me to go and see the police?”**

**“No,” Ole Anderson said. “That wouldn’t do any good.”**

**“Isn’t there something I could do?”**

**“No. There ain’t anything to do.”**

**“Maybe it was just a bluff.”**

**“No. It ain’t just a bluff.”**

**“The only thing is,” he said, talking toward the wall, “I just can’t make up my mind to go out. I been here all day.”**

**“Couldn’t you get out of town?”**

**“No,” Ole Anderson said. “I’m through with all that running around.”**

**He looked at the wall.**

**“There ain’t anything to do now.”**

**“Couldn’t you fix it up some way?”**



**“No. I got in wrong.” He talked in the same flat voice. “There ain’t anything to do. After a while I’ll make up my mind to go out.”**

**“I better go back and see George,” Nick said.**

**“So long,” said Ole Anderson. He did not look toward Nick. “Thanks for coming around.”**

**Nick went out. As he shut the door he saw Ole Anderson with all his clothes on, lying on the bed looking at the wall.**