

Smiling to myself I tucked the coin back into my wallet. It stuck to the yellow sheet of paper.

(13)



“To master a language you must understand the people that created it, the culture that provoked it. To understand a people and its culture you must master the language that shapes them both. You must find inspiration in the eleven words that are not just words:

the word that regardless of context will surely bring laughter;
the single word that causes the ear to bleed with shame, and
the heart to burn with indifference, and
the eyes of men to moisten;
the word that is whispered in moments of passion, and
that is used to soothe the deepest despair;
the one spoken without reverence, and
the word that means absolutely nothing;
the utterance that at once expresses the soul of both speaker and
listener, and
the word that is not and cannot be in any other language.

(14)

But it is the eleventh word that is most elusive because you already know it. Unlike the others, it will change and be changed until it will seem to be hopelessly beyond your grasp.

Live for all of these words, but do not seek them; in time they will come themselves. And when they have come, when you have understood that you understand, when all of the words are yours — only then will you know that their story has been told.”



(15)

My earliest memory of Aunt Helen is also one of my most vivid: I am four or five, my mother, who at that time is still my mother, has people over. There is loud music and everyone is laughing and I laugh too because it's funny to see Mother smoking. At first I like all the new people and run between their legs and squeal when they chase after me with drinks