

THIRTEEN

A change in the lighting.

The fingers of the left hand, still affixed to the chair, have become slightly more cramped. Otherwise, same as before.

Sometime later, as my thoughts returned,
 Spent
 If not chastened from their midnight
 Revels in the woods—
 Their apotropaic
 Circle-jerk over the disappearance
 Of a certain Mr. Three—
 Who probably never existed at all—
 The bastard!
 —As I began
 To feel whole again, in command
 Of my thoughts and feelings—
 Like a regular person, a person who doesn't need
 To count
 Or be counted—I mean, I was ready
 To let someone else
 Worry
 About the constancy of so-called
 Objects
 And the shakiness of the underlying laws of arithmetic! And so
 I decided
 That the thing to do—now that I was normal—
 Was to finish off
 This counting business once and for all.

What that meant
 Was for me to go ahead and count myself—
 To become the new
 Mr. Three,
 If that's what it took—and this time—
 Instead of just inserting myself
 Into the total
 With casual, logical, automatic
 Ease—
 With the vanity
 Of the observing subject who takes it for granted—since he

Is the one
Doing the counting—
That he himself is unquestionably
In the room—
This time, I would make it
A point
To point at myself, look at myself, prove
To myself that I was as solid
A part
As any stone pillar
Of that solid, too solid, place.