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Guest

Josephine Saunders

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JOSEPHINE SAUNDERS

GUEST

During world war two, when just about all
the men were overseas, we
were married at my Father's house in
the presence only of the immediate family, and one
of my two best friends.

Partly out of exhaustion,
partly out of fear that
I would be a burden to you (and
I have been a burden to you, dearest, more
than I ever dreaded being),
I got drunk at the wedding.

Seated on the terrace after the ceremony,
"Do you
see what I see?" said
the friend. Across the lawn between
my house and my Father's approached
the only boy I knew who had not been drafted.

He drew up a chair to join our minute group,
"What's new with you?" he asked me.
"I got married," I said, "a few minutes ago."

He flushed and made polite remarks about
having missed the boat.

But what interested me was that this
was apparently the way
he imagined we spent our suburban afternoons:

the men city-suited; the women hatted, gloves
and purse in lap—and all
sipping champagne without even
the excuse of a party.—