The Old Woman Speaks to the Old Man

Dave Thomas*
Pedden droned on. "... and as we can see, with four million births here every year, there are going to be many, many new opportunities for teachers. And you people are probably already aware of the many fringe benefits in teaching such as group health insurance and group life insurance and disability insurance and retirement plans and ..."

As Stephen's eyes began to roll under his eyelids, shapes began to lose their edges as they wavered before him. Pedden's words lost meaning as they ran on and on, becoming smoother and smoother and smoother, until the syllables fused into one humming monotone. Letting his eyes shut themselves completely, he began imagining the girl's dress creeping further and further up her legs, their tan growing lighter and lighter. He rubbed his eyes, and very ... slowly ... opened them again.

The Old Woman Speaks
to the Old Man

by Dave Thomas

Come here old man. Don't I remember you?
Of course, why many's the time I've seen you pass
This very way; You haven't changed much
Have you? The same white beard, the limp, the cane,
The old brown hat. They used to say (when we
Were young) they used to say you lived in a cold
Stone house in the woods, and carried folks away
At night. We'd run to Father then in fright,
And I think that even he was half afraid
To see you come. But now I see—you have
A kindly face, a face that we old folks
Can understand. Come close old man, come close.