Holly Golightly, glittering socialite traveller, generally twirling, sometimes sideways and once in a while down.

She's a shoplifter, a delirious, a drifter, a tease. She's up all night drinking cocktails and Aerobic Hearts.

She hasn't got a past. She doesn't want to belong to anything or anyone.

Not to 'Rusty' Trawler, the blue-chinned, bull-shooting millionaire man about women about town;
Not to Salvatore 'Sally' Tomato, the Mafia sugar-daddy doing life forfive Singh;
Not to a starved writer. Not even to our one-eyed rag tag piece of a cat.

One day Holly might find somewhere she belongs.

Until then she's travelling.
I took a taxi in a downpour of October rain, and on my way I even thought she might be there, that I would see Holly again.

Holly Golightly had been a tenant in the old brownstone she occupied the apartment below mine.

She would wash her hair, and together with the cat, a red tiger-striped tom, sit out on the fire escape thumbing a guitar while her hair dried.

Whenever I heard the music, I would go stand quietly by my window.

I went out into the hall and leaned over the banister just enough to see without being seen.

It was a warm evening, sandy summer, and she wore a slim silk black dress, black sandals, a pearl choker.

For all her chic thinness, she had an almost soap and lemon cleanliness, a rough pink darkness in the cheeks.

Her mouth was large, her nose upturned.

A pair of dark glasses blotted out her eyes.

It was a face beyond childhood, yet this side of belonging to a woman.

She was not alone.

There was a man following behind her.

The way his plump hand clasped at her hip seemed somehow improper, not morally, aesthetically.

It was no novelty to encounter suspicious specimens among Holly's callers, quite the contrary.

When they reached her door she rummaged her purse in search of a key, and took no notice of the fact that his thick lips were nuzzling the nape of her neck.

Yes, I have a memory of spending many welcome and sunny days with Holly, and it's true we did at odd moments see a great deal of each other, but on the whole, the memory is false.

He was a man, said Madame Stangel, "morally objectionable", perpetrator of all-night gatherings that endangered the safety and sanity of her neighbours.

Though I refused to sign, secretly I felt Madame Stangel had cause to complain.

But her petition failed, and as April approached May, the open-win danced, warm spring nights were lurid with the party sounds, the loud-playing gramophone, and marling laughter that emanated from Apt. 2.
We were in the front room, where, though it was now nearly March, the enormous Christmas tree, turned brown and scentless, still occupied most of the space.

She sat down on one of the rickety red-velvet chairs, curved her legs underneath her, and glanced round the room, her eyes puckering more pronouncedly.

"How can you bear it? It's a chamber of horrors," "Oh, you get used to anything," I said, annoyed with myself, "for actually I was proud of the place.

"I don't. I'll never get used to anything.

Anybody that does, they might as well be dead.

Her disgusting eyes surveyed the room again.

"Darling, how do you feel?"
"Fine."
"But you haven't any pulse."
"That's not dead."
"No, but it's a sign of weakness. Look at me."
"Honestly, I don't feel anything, except a sense of weariness. Are you sure? Tell me the truth. You might have been killed."
"Don't worry. And thank you. For saving my life. You're wonderful. Unique. I love you."
"Damn fool." She kissed me on the cheek. I flashed dead away.
"I want you to behave, Rusty."

She spoke softly, but there was a governess threat of punishment in her tone that caused an odd flush of pleasure, of gratitude, to pink his face.

"You don't love me," he complained, as though they were alone.

She sat up on the arm of the chair, her face, her naked breasts, coldly blue in the sunlamp light.

"It should take you about four seconds to walk from here to the door."

"I'll give you two." He lost her to a quadrille of partners who gobbled up her stammered jokes like popcorn tossed to pigeons.

It was a comprehensible success. She was a triumph over ugliness, and he had no occasion to even mention that real beauty was often more beguiling than real beauty, only because it contained paradox.

In this case, as opposed to the scrupulous method of plain good taste and accenting peculiarity, the trick had been worked by exaggerating defects.

She'd made them ornaments by admitting them boldly.

It was the master stroke. That mattered, for it contrived to make her vulgarity sound somehow original, and curiously, despite her naughtiness, her assurance, it served to inspire in male listeners a protective feeling.

Mag Wildwood was employing Ashtrays. And after Holly had left the room, she emptied another, then said, slyly rather:

"It's really very sad."

But heaven knows, she isn't healthy. So, well, none. That's the extraordinary part, wouldn't you say she looked clean? Wouldn't you say she looked clean?

Holly couldn't understand it; the abrupt absence of warmth on her return; the conversations she began behaved like green logs, they fumed but would not fire.

More unforgivably, people were leaving without taking her telephone number.
Madame Sappho Spanella met me in the hall, wild-eyed and wringing her hands.

"Run," she said. "Bring the police. She is killing somebody! Somebody is killing her!"

It sounded like it. As though there were echoes in Holly's apartment. A riot of crashing glass, of ripping and falling and overturned furniture.

But there were no quarrelling voices inside the upper which made it seem unnatural.

"Run," shrieked Madame Spanella, pushing me.

"Tell the police murderer!

Since no one prevented me, I followed them into the apartment, which was tremendously wrecked.

At last the Christmas tree had been dismantled, very literally; its brown dry branches sprawled in a waster of torn-up books, broken lamps, and gramophone records.

Even the icobox had been emptied, its contents tossed around the room; raw eggs were sliding down the walls and in the midst of the debris Holly's no-name cat was calmly licking a puddle of milk.

In the bedroom, the smell of smashed perfume

In this squalid context even her clothes (she was still wearing her riding costume, windbreaker, and blue jeans) suggested a gang-moll hooligan with an impression dark glasses, disarrayed coiffure, and a cigarette dangling from tattooed lips did not diminish.

June, July, all through the warm months she hibernated like a winter animal who did not know spring had come and gone.

Her hair darkened, she put on weight. She became rather careless about her clothes; used to rush round to the delicatessen wearing a raincoat and nothing underneath.

What is not to imply that she had lost interest in life? far from it, she seemed more content, altogether happier than I'd ever seen her.

Quite rightly, too; it was not under surveillance, whether by police or reporters or other interested parties one couldn't tell — simply a man, sometimes men, who hung around the stoop.
"Darling," she instructed me, "would you reach in the drawer there and give me my purse. A girl doesn't steal this sort of thing without her lipstick."

"My dearest little girl, I have loved you knowing you were not as others."

But conceive of my despair upon discovering in such a brutal and public style how very different you are from the manner of woman a man of my faith and career could hope to make his wife. Verily I grieve for the disgrace of your present circumstance, and do not find it in my heart to add my condemnation to the condemnation that surrounds you. So I hope you will find it in your heart not to condemn me, I have my family to protect, and my name, and I ama coward where these institutions enter. Forget me, beautiful child, I am no longer here. I am gone home. But may God always be with you and your child.

Holly said:

"Kind, dear Mr Bell. Look at me, sir."

"He wouldn't;"

"Never love a wild thing, Mr Bell!" Holly advised him.

Hat was Doc's mistake. He was always hoping more wild things. But you can't give your heart to a wild thing; the more you do, the stronger they get. Until they're strong enough to run into the woods. Or fly into a tree. Then a taller tree. Then the sky.

If you let yourself love a wild thing, you'll end up looking at the sky.

"She's drunk eight martinis before dinner and enough wine to wash an elephant." Joe Bell informed me.

He wrenched the flowers from the vase and thrust them at her; they missed their mark, scattered on the floor.

"Good-bye," he said and, although he were going to vomit, accosted to the men's room.

We heard the door lock.
Good-bye?

In rather a trance, I let her lead me down to the street.

As we rode in a cab across Central Park,

It seemed to me as though I, too, were flying

desolately floating over snow-peaked and perilous territory.

But you can’t. After all, what about. Well, what about.

Well, you can’t really run off and leave every body.

"I don’t think anyone will miss me. I have no friends."

So the days, the last days, blow about in memory,

hazy, autumnal, all alike as leaves:

until a day unlike any other I’ve lived.

Let’s steal something,’ she said, pulling me into the store,

where at once there seemed a pressure of eyes,

as though we were already under suspicion.

Holly picked up a mask and slipped it over her face;

she chose another and put it on mine;

then she took my hand and we walked away.

Outside, we ran a few blocks, I think to make it more dramatic

We wore the masks all the way home.

They’re from Tiffany’s.

I don’t want to own anything until I know

I’ve found the place where me and things belong together.

I’m not quite sure where that is just yet. But I know what it’s like.

We just met by the river one day; that’s all. Independence, both of us.

We never made any other any promises. We never ...

She smiled, and let the cat drop to the floor.

"It’s like Tiffany’s,’ she said.

"Not that I give a hoot about jewelry. Diamonds yes; but it’s tacky to wear diamonds before you’re forty; and even that’s risky. They only look right on the really old girls.

Wrinkles and bones, white hair and diamonds; I can wait.

But that’s not why I’m mad about Tiffany’s.

she said, and her voice collapsed, a tic in invalid whiteness seized her face.

The car had paused for a traffic light.

Then she had the door open she was running down the street; 3 and I ran after her.

She looked not quite twelve.
“But what about me?” she said, whispered, and shivered again. “I’m very scared, Buster. Yes, at last.
Because it could go on for ever. Not knowing what’s yours until you’ve thrown it away.
I’ll have no part of it. If you’re going to hell, you’ll go on your own. With no further help from me.”

Apparently no attempt was made by American authorities to recover her, and soon the matter diminished to an occasional gossip-column mention. As a news story, it was revived only once on Christmas Day, when Sally Tomato died of a heart attack at Sing Sing.

“See?” she shouted. “It’s great!”
And suddenly it was.
Suddenly, watching the tangled colours of Holly’s hair flash in the red-yellow leaf light, I loved her enough to forget myself, my self-pitying despair, and be content that something she thought happy was going to happen.

I sat down on Holly’s bed, and hugged Holly’s cat to me. I felt as badly for Holly as she could feel for herself.

“Holly! It’s dreadful!”
“I couldn’t agree more; But at least it came from Tiffany’s. I thought you wanted it.”

Very gently the horses began to trot, waves of wind splashed up, sparked our faces, we plunged in and out of sun and shadow pools, and joy, a glad-to-be-alive exhilaration, jolted through me like a jigger of nitrogen.