

1998

## From Those Uninvolved

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### Recommended Citation

Walker, Justin (1998) "From Those Uninvolved," *Exile*: Vol. 45 : No. 2 , Article 28.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol45/iss2/28>

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“There were four men in the house. It was a beautiful old house—vases, paintings, tapestries, it had everything. I can still remember it like it was yesterday,” Grandpa scratched his unshaven chin.

“I think it was Teddy’s idea to take that stuff.” He nodded, agreeing with himself. ““Those people won’t miss ‘em,’ Teddy said, ‘and with the Germans coming, these houses are gonna be leveled in a couple of days anyway.’”

“And I said—I’ll never forget it—I said don’t take that stuff, your wives would kill you if they knew how you got it.

“I left the mansion alone, for no one else was taking my advice. And as soon as I got out I heard them. A soft whistling at first, then a screaming, from the hills to the north. I knew instantly that the Germans had targeted the mansion.”

“So what happened?” I asked with furrowed eyebrows, not used to unhappy endings.

“What do you think happened?” he answered dryly.

I was uncomfortable. I felt I had to say something.

“So did you ever tell Grandma that story?” I asked finally.

“Yes,” Grandpa replied. “She asked what the vases looked like.”

—Justin Walker '99