

**ALPAY ULKU**  
**Garage Sale**

**1**

*Remember the keyboard?* asks my wife. She's holding one in her hand.  
*Now there's a packrat. I'm not so bad.*

I offer my opinion that the packrat is the one who buys it.

*I was only looking.* She's mad at me now.

*Who wants to get some chocolate ice cream?* I call out. *Chocolate!*  
*Chocolate ice cream! Hey, "the only emperor is the emperor of ice cream."*

She ignores me and pokes at a cell phone.

**2**

*What's that you're watching, son?*

Of Mice and Men, he says. *American Lit.*

I watch some with him. . . . *They've changed the meaning there.* It bothers me more than it should. This business of not printing books anymore, of letting them interview their parents in place of a history core. *Hey! That's not how it goes!*

He looks alarmed.

*It's okay,* says my wife. *It's just a movie.*

**3**

Applause.

I turn it down, and we listen to the rain instead.

The President strides on. He has chosen George C. Scott as his avatar today, our flag behind him with its 39 stars. He's playing Patton.

*I think we're going to war,* she whispers.

*Not yet,* I say. I minimize the screen so it no longer covers the entire wall.  
*He'd use his own image for something like that.*