

Michael Lewis

extracting cube roots. . . you know you're *alive*. You know it completely, thoroughly. And though it only lasts less than an instant—this twinge—there's no greater feeling—not even in heaven. *(Pause.)* I want to feel that twinge again. *(Resolute)* Very well. I may be a fool, but I'll give it another go. I'll give it another go—for the *twinge!* *(Pause. Eyes light.)* There it is: sunrise on the earth. Time to *be!*

There is strength and hope on his face as the lights black out.)

About Time

Oliver Hailey



PHOTO: ED KRIEGER

At rise: a middle-aged couple sit rocking on a front porch. They rock in silence for a beat.

HER: What'd he say?

HIM: When?

HER: When he fired you, of course.

HIM: What time is it?

HER: How'd he put it? Just. . . . "You're fired"?

HIM: What time is it, dammit!?

HER: How would I know?

HIM: What's that on your arm?

HER: The watch you gave me last Christmas.

HIM: Well—can't you look at that and tell me what time it is?

HER: You've got to be kidding. This thing stopped three weeks after you gave it to me.

HIM: And you're still wearing it? You're such a sentimentalist.

HER: Not really. The clasp is stuck. . . . I can't get it off. *(Beat.)* Come on, tell me what he said.

HIM: Here—let me see what I can do with it. *(He wrestles with it—to no avail.)* Well, shit. Have you tried soaking it?

HER: Soaking it? It's not a ring, it doesn't slip off over a knuckle—it