Discussion Questions for “Sophistication”?

1. Why is George Willard leaving Winesburg? How did he feel after her mother died? What is puzzling him?
2. What has brought Helen home from college? Who is the stranger visiting at Helen’s home? What makes Helen restless and distraught?
3. Where do George and Helen go after they find each other? What special psychological experience do they undergo when they stay together in the evening?
4. At the end of the story, what do George and Helen gain from the silent evening together that “makes the mature life of men and women in the modern world possible”?
5. **1. 离开原因与母亲去世的影响 | Why George is Leaving and His Feelings**  
   乔治离开温士堡为追寻成长与事业机会；母亲去世后他感到孤独，困惑于人生意义与身份认同。  
   George leaves Winesburg to seek growth and career opportunities. After his mother’s death, he feels lonely and grapples with life’s purpose and self-identity.
6. **2. 海伦归家与烦闷根源 | Helen’s Restlessness and the Stranger**  
   海伦因思乡与大学不适暂时回家；陌生人是其父的访客，象征她与家乡的疏离，加剧她对未来的迷茫。  
   Helen returns home due to homesickness and academic stress. The stranger, her father’s guest, highlights her disconnect from hometown life, deepening her uncertainty about the future.
7. **3. 二人相遇与心理共鸣 | George and Helen’s Evening Together**  
   他们前往秋夜空旷的市集广场，沉默中共享深刻的情感联结，体验了超越言语的理解与存在孤独的暂缓。  
   They wander to a deserted fairground at night. In silence, they share a profound emotional bond, temporarily easing their isolation through unspoken understanding.
8. **4. 静默夜晚的启示 | The Meaning of Their Silent Evening**  
   他们领悟到成人世界的成熟在于接受孤独但互相信任，无需言语的联结支撑现实生活的复杂与艰辛。  
   They realize maturity lies in embracing solitude while trusting human connection. This wordless bond makes navigating modern life’s complexities possible.