

XV

one April dusk the
sallow street-lamps were turning
snowy against a west of robin's egg blue when
i entered a mad street whose

mouth dripped with slavver of
spring
chased two flights of squirrel-stairs into
a mid-victorian attic which is known as
O ΠΑΡΘΕΝΩΝ

and having ordered
yaoorti from
Nicho'
settled my feet on the

ceiling inhaling six divine inches
of Haremina in
the thick of the snick-
er of cards and smack of back-

gammon boards i was aware of an entirely
dirty circle of habitués their
faces like cigarettebutts, chewed
with disdain, led by a Jumpy

Tramp who played each
card as if it were a thunderbolt red-
hot peeling
off huge slabs of a fuzzy

language with the aid of an exclamatory
tooth-pick
And who may that
be i said exhaling into

eternity as Nicho' laid
before me bread
more downy than street-lamps
upon an almostclean

plate
"Achilles"
said
Nicho'

"and did you perhaps wish also shishkabob?"