

SOME PLAIN TALK ABOUT MAC ARTHUR by Clark Lee

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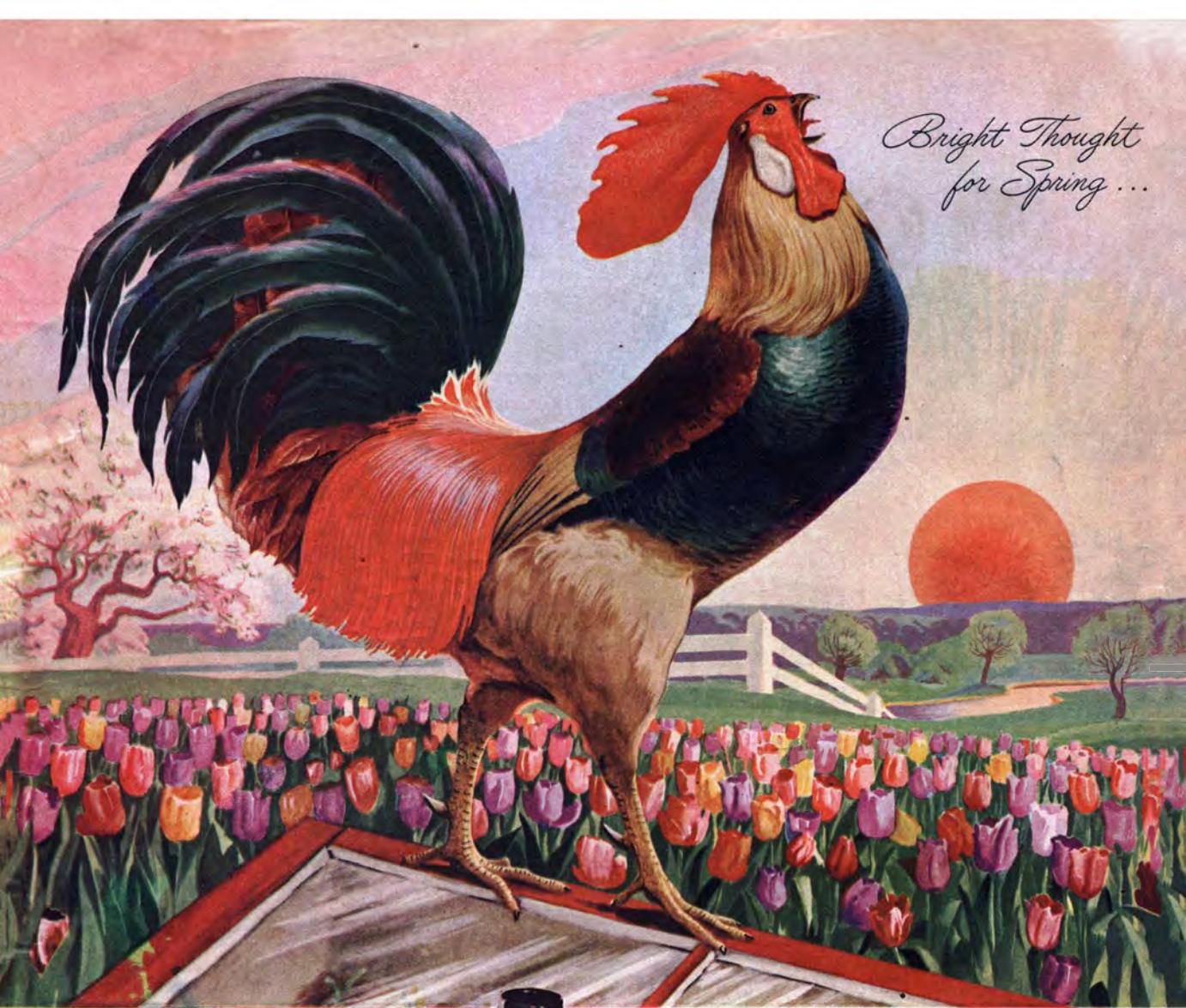
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Adoption: Pearl Buck interviews her own adopted daughter

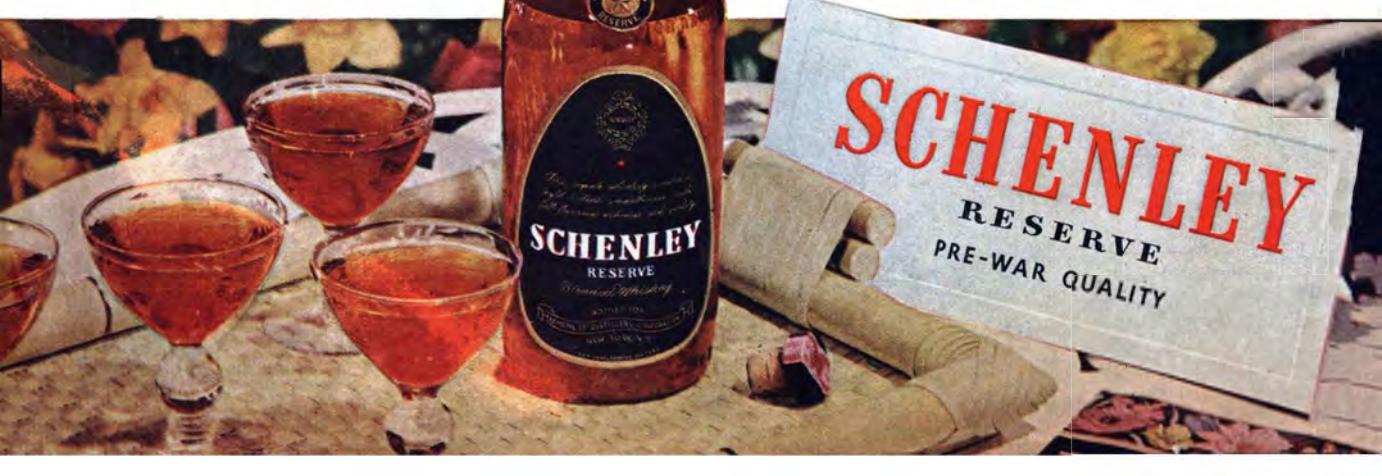
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But getting back to "pink tooth brush"
...Yes, let's! And right here we'll remind you—if your tooth brush starts flashing that tinge of "pink"—take heed. *Take off for your dentist's promptly!*

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A HENRY KOSTER PRODUCTION

Original Screen Play by Myles Connolly; Additional Dialogue by James O'Hanlon and Harry Crane

Directed by HENRY KOSTER
Produced by JOE PASTERNAK



We're off on our tandem in a whirl of delight! We've just seen M-G-M's high-spirited new musical hit, "Two Sisters From Boston", and—oh, those sisters!

Take it from one who knows: all the hectic gaiety that was New York at the turn of the century has been colorfully caught by "Two Sisters From Boston". It's a youthful and exuberant romance of those naughty and flamboyant days!

We are not sure just what makes Kathryn Grayson and June Allyson so special, but they are thoroughly delightful as the two capricious Back-Bay sisters caught up in the hurly-burly of New York. And we do mean hurly-burly, what with Jimmy Durante shouting delirious ditties in a Bowery beer hall, and the great Metropolitan Opera tenor, Lauritz Melchior, throwing his magnificent voice into the finest songs.

The two sisters from Boston, Kathryn and June, teeter between the quiet, cultured world they knew, and the lusty, gusty world they're curious about. When Kathryn makes a daring break and starts to sing in New York, June comes bowling down from Boston to rescue the wicked, wayward girl.

Peter Lawford meets one sister, falls in love with her, meets the other sister, falls in love, and—well, we're not going to tell you who gets who—but it's a stunning story as flip and flirtatious as a bustle.

And the songs! Tunesmiths Sammy Fain and Ralph Freed have spiced some unforgettable new melodies with a trace of nostalgia that suits our taste to perfection. Songs like "G'wan Home, Your Mudder's Calling". And everybody sings!

Do you gather we've gone and fallen for "Two Sisters From Boston"? Who wouldn't? Produced by Joe Pasternak (the "Anchors Aweigh" man), expertly directed by Henry Koster, "Two Sisters From Boston" definitely belongs in their family of hits!

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ARTHUR GORDON Editor

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What's Going On



On page 50 of this month's issue you will find *Cosmopolitan's* first **Blue Ribbon Story**.

When you read it, you'll be watching the beginning of a magazine experiment from which we confidently expect big things. We feel that the *Cosmopolitan* Blue Ribbon Story soon will become something readers will turn to first, something columnists and critics will discuss, something that young writers will study and experienced writers will regard with admiration.

Just what is a Blue Ribbon Story? It's not merely a good story. All our stories are good—we hope. A Blue Ribbon Story is a story that is good and also *different*. A different story, in our estimation, is one that stands out in your memory for months and years after you've read it. Sometimes, as is the case with this first one, "**The Whisper**" by **Gerald Kersh**, a young British writer who is being compared to Kipling by the reviewers, it will be a horror story. Or it may be a love story, or an action story or just a mood story. We won't require it to fit any particular formula except to limit the selection to short stories rather than novelettes or serials. Because of this lack of formula and lack of insistence on conventional editorial standards, the Blue Ribbon Story will usually be the kind of fiction you won't find in any other popular magazine. It may startle you. Sometimes it may irritate you. But we guarantee it won't bore you. Read next month's Blue Ribbon Story,

"**The Terrified Doctor**" by **Ben Hecht**,

and you'll see what we mean. After you've sampled a few of the Blue Ribbon Stories, let us know what you think of them.



Clark Lee

Clark Lee, who gets down to cases about those Navy and Marine tales of General MacArthur at Corregidor on Page 28, is well qualified to write on the subject. Lee was an Associated Press correspondent in Manila when the war broke out in 1941. He spent several days in the front lines at Bataan and wrote the first eyewitness combat reports of the Pacific war. He also covered MacArthur's headquarters in those gloomy days. Later he joined the International News Service, covered the fighting in Europe and went back to the Far East to write about the end of the war and our arrival in Japan.

Unlike most of the newspapermen who served overseas, Clark really looks and acts like a foreign correspondent. He is big and handsome, and he is married to a Hawaiian princess named Liliuokalani Kawananakoa. Lee and his friends just call her "Baby." He is one of those guys who knows people in every city in the world. In Japan during the early days of the occupation, for instance, an enemy admiral who used to play golf with him surrendered to him part of the Japanese fleet. A couple of days later he learned, from other friends, about the hiding place of a German Gestapo colonel. Lee went around and captured him.

Lee was one of the first American correspondents to enter Shanghai last August. The city was still in Japanese hands at the time. Lee persuaded the pilot of his B-17 to circle low over the downtown district and dropped a note out the rear door addressed to the manager of the Metropole Hotel. It greeted the manager by his first name and said, "Make my bed in Room 601. Get out the private stock and send transportation to the airfield for twenty men. We're coming in." It was signed "Chang," Lee's Shanghai nickname. (Cont. on page 14)



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COSMOPOLITAN'S CLOTHES HORSE *



"It's The Man Who Pays."

BEGINNING this month on pages 12 and 13 Cosmopolitan inaugurates another new feature, "Male-Tested Fashions." Should women dress to please their menfolk, or to merit the approval of other women? This has always been a much debated question. We at Cosmo take a firm stand. And we believe the boys win out by a wide margin. If brown has always been your favorite color, and HE goes all soft and sentimental with compliments when you chance to wear blue, you should make the transition from brown to blue—and effortlessly too!

At a recent party held, appropriately enough, in the Blessed Event Room of New York's famous Stork Club, our new idea was born. We invited a jury of prominent men, whose wolf-like leers are shown on this page, to view a fashion showing of suits—just suits. Because this is the time of year we think you want that kind of fashion news. There were no ironclad rules. We told them to select the clothes they liked best. Out of twenty suits shown, the boys selected their five favorites. And we substantiated the fact that the male animal is far more discerning than is generally supposed. Our judges commented on everything. They knew immediately what they liked best. They had their pet hates too. They didn't always approve of a hat—so we had the model remove it. They hated narrow-shoulders and any doodads that detracted from the lines of a suit.

All our jury members were enthusiastic at the thought of selecting women's fashions. They told us, in no uncertain terms, that they were experts; and indeed, we agree they did an expert job.

Each month Cosmo will present another jury and another male-tested fashion story. Fashion makes news, yes—but male-tested fashions—they make history!

Hinda Gold

P. S. Be sure to see page 210.

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Only the South could have produced Camille Kelley, and even there she is unique. She looks like a pocket-size duchess, dresses in the moonlight-and-mimosa manner, and flashes around Tennessee in a gray car lined with purple, like a comet with a trail of fiery, sparkling ideas. When she talks, which is continuously, she is totally unconscious of the size or character of her audience. She has a message in which she intensely believes, and since she genuinely loves all human beings, black or white, rich or poor, she expounds that message sixteen hours a day to civic leaders, waitresses, welfare workers, senators and bootblacks. An amazing number of people have become her devoted slaves. Men, women and children throng her court building daily, from celebrities like Mary Pickford or Dale Carnegie to soldiers and sailors back to see "who has their reserved seat in court now" or youngsters in overalls who stop by "to give their love to the Judge."

"Sometimes," said a woman she had helped, "welfare workers pin a bright, professional smile on their faces to 'get the right relationship with the client.' When Judge Kelley smiles at you, you stand two inches taller and feel you can lick the world." Camille Kelley not only believes that being a good citizen is a career to inspire any child; she makes the child feel the same way. "She is the only human being I know," said a businessman who (*Continued on page 148*)

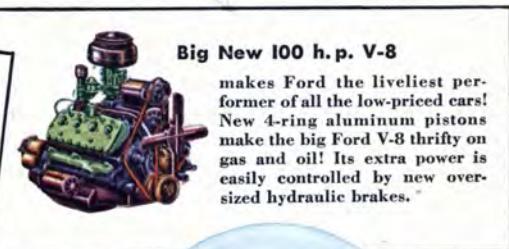
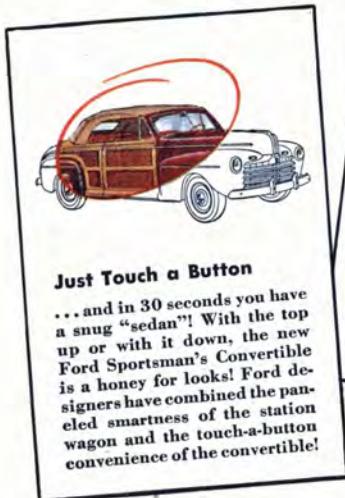
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Magazine pieces Don't Die

BY BOB CONSIDINE

SO MANY magazine articles die the death of "whatever became of" as soon as the new issue is out. But *Cosmopolitan* has been lucky twice in recent months in respect to digging up the aftermath of a by-gone edition. In some respects, the aftermaths have been as arresting as the originals.

Some time ago I radioed a piece to *Cosmopolitan* from London about the crew of a great Army Air Force B-17.

It was titled "Mission Complete" and concerned chiefly a copilot, Red Morgan, who took his bomber to and from Hanover, Germany, in the face of appalling trouble.

Briefly, the pilot of the ship was hit in the head by a shell from an accurate Focke-Wulf 109. Dying, he fell into the controls, and Morgan had thereafter to handle the ship with that much added weight. Besides, a gunner named Tyre C. Weaver, a Riverview, Alabama, boy, had his arm nearly blown off. The boys in the B-17 couldn't fix the proper kind of tourniquet to Weaver's arm and, fearing he'd bleed to death before the mission was completed, they dropped him out over Germany. They hoped he'd be picked up and properly treated.

Some months after the story appeared in *Cosmopolitan* Weaver's father wrote a letter to the editor with the amazing news that he had heard from his son who was alive in a German prisoner of war camp. He had indeed been picked up in time to save his life—by means of a quick amputation of the blasted arm and proper hospital care.

Last February I did a piece for *Cosmopolitan*, "God Said, 'Bail Out,'" about the adventures of Art Ross, Jr., son and namesake of the manager of the Boston Bruins hockey team, who served in the RCAF as a fighter pilot.

Ross's Typhoon fighter was knocked down while he was strafing a German truck and tank column, four days after D-Day in Normandie. An ammunition truck he was strafing blew up in his face. Ross's plane was doing better than 500 m.p.h. at about fifty feet above the road.

The blast from the exploding ammunition turned the Typhoon into a streaking torch. Dazed and with his clothes burning, Ross got the thing up to two hundred feet and, impelled by a firm yet gentle voice saying "Bail Out! ... Bail out!" Ross got out of the plane—somehow. He lived to tell the tale, after many scraps in occupied France.

Last August he took the money *Cosmopolitan* paid him and everything else he could scrape together, and got back to Normandie.

He wanted to do something for the courageous French men and women who had hidden him, fed him, nursed him back to health and started him on his way to that most precious of all estates—liberty.

Of the twenty persons who had helped him—plain people who risked their lives that he might live and fight again—Ross found nineteen. The twentieth had been killed, fighting for the liberty he had helped give to Ross.

Ross found and bought food and clothes for those who had helped him, and they all needed both. The populace of a little place named Moult, where he had been harbored in a room actually next door to a Nazi major, turned out in force to welcome him home. The Mayor of Moult, a great little patriot named René LeBourgoise, had a gift for Ross, too. It was Ross's wristwatch, found in the ruins of the Mayor's home after a raid.

Ross came home recently, determined to form a club of Americans who owe their lives to those courageous people.

He estimates that there are perhaps five thousand such veterans of World War II in this country. He'd like to set up an office at his own expense through which the saved could locate and repay the saviors.

Readers who were helped out of enemy territory, anywhere, and who want to get into Ross's non-profit club, can reach him at 20 Kilby Street, Boston, Massachusetts.



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caution!
beware!
it's

it's sleek
it's smart
it's startling

it's the new nail polish color by
La Cross
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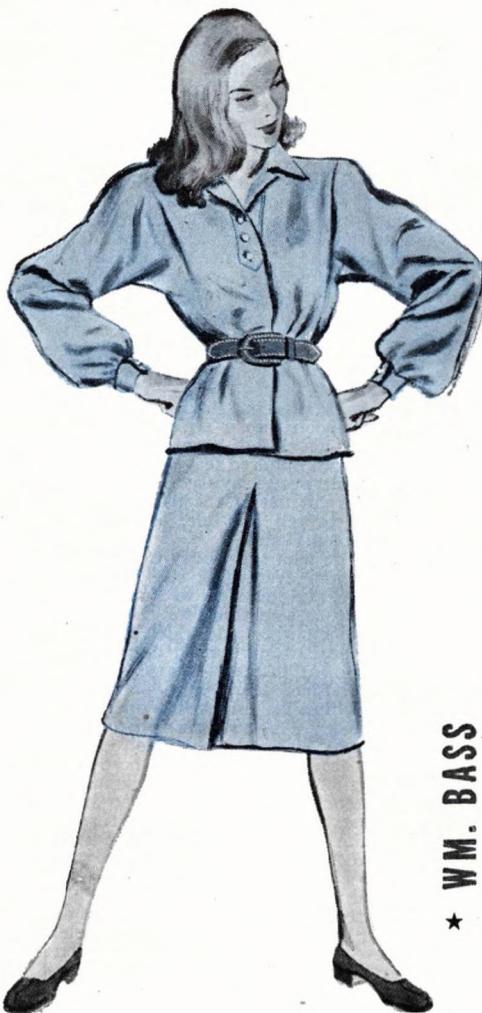
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COSMOPOLITAN'S

Male-Tested fashions



★ HERBERT SONDEHM



★ WM. BASS



★ KIVIETTE



Since the beginning of time men have been appraising milady's clothes as well as the lady in them. We firmly believe that men qualify as the best judges of women's fashions, that indirectly they are responsible for the success of a silhouette, or the downfall of a design. And if you don't believe they know what's right, see these suits which they selected as their favorites.

Our jury endorsed neutral colors and liked that young look. They were serious and intent about making their final decisions. They were emphatic about fit. And most important, all of them warned, "It doesn't matter if it is supposed to be chic. If it is not becoming, please don't wear it." You can see they appraise clothes not from a point of how new or original they are but what they do to enhance the appearance of the woman in them. And actually, isn't that the prime function of fashion?

Why they told us, men know much more about women's clothes than you could guess. After all, who pays the bills?

By Hinda Gould

Be sure to see page 210 for details.

LITTLE LULU

by Marge



*T. M. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

Watch for Paramount's latest LITTLE LULU cartoon in Technicolor at your favorite theatre

There are other tissues - but
there's only one KLEENEX

Only Kleenex* has the Serv-a-Tissue Box
that serves up just one double tissue at a time

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The hotel manager arrived at the airport with a bus a few minutes later. When Lee and the other correspondents and Air Force men who were with him walked into the Metropole, a row of martinis were all poured and waiting. And everybody in town crowded into the lobby to shake Lee's hand.



If, as **Dan Parker** intimates on Page 53, baseball is looking forward to a prosperous postwar world, perhaps there will be no recurrence of such incidents as the one that took place in the Brooklyn Dodgers' clubhouse during the depression. For economic reasons, the club decided not to let the wives of players accompany the team on road trips. One Dodger took exception to this rule and complained to the manager in no uncertain terms. "Listen," the player shouted. "My wife can play the outfield better than Winsett. If he can go to Boston with us, why can't she?"



Jack Dempsey

Speaking of sports, next month's *Cosmopolitan* will feature **Jack Dempsey's** article on the **Joe Louis-Billy Conn** world heavyweight championship bout which is expected to draw in June the biggest fight crowd since Jack's second battle with Gene Tunney in Chicago. We won't tell you Dempsey's choice.



In our May issue you'll also have the pleasure of beginning **Somerset Maugham's** "Then and Now," his first novel since "The Razor's Edge." It is a story of the younger days of that master medieval politician, Machiavelli, written as only the author of "Cakes and Ale" and "Of Human Bondage" can write a narrative.

William Knitter, striking illustration for the first Blue Ribbon Story on Page 50, is that young artist's

first contribution to *Cosmopolitan* since he left the Army in the Far East. During the war he drew propaganda leaflets and posters....



JOHN GANNAM has been flooded with letters from *Cosmopolitan* readers who want to purchase the original painting of his nude illustration for Dale Eunson's short story "The Sleeping Beauty" in our January issue. . . . Gannam is getting a little tired of requests for originals. "A carpenter was in here putting up some shelves the other day," he says. "On his way out he suggested that I present him with a couple of my original paintings. My gosh, I don't ask him to present me with some of his wood, do I?"



One *Cosmopolitan* reader who most definitely does not want the original of the Gannam nude, however, is a lady who wrote us the other day and just signed herself "Louise." She enclosed the illustration, torn angrily out of the January issue. "You can have it back—I don't want it!" she exclaimed. "And to think I have to spend three cents to send it back—ugh! I'd like to see this published in *Cosmo*!!!"

Okay, Louise. There it is.

Your heart doesn't look like this!  It is a complicated pump about the size of your fist,  daily circulating over 9000 quarts of blood through many miles of arteries. Given moderate care, this remarkable engine will be your friend for life. Enemies that place an extra load on your heart are — *high blood pressure . . . hardening of the arteries . . . unwise physical strain*  *infectious diseases . . . and infected tonsils or teeth.* Overweight makes your heart work harder, so keep your weight down!

Are you a friend of your heart? You can be! Be moderate in your habits of exercise. Avoid loss of sleep. Have periodic physical and dental examinations.

For more information about the heart, send for Metropolitan's free booklet, 46-B, "Protecting Your Heart."

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Bromo-Seltzer relieves ordinary headaches *fast*. It gives you 1-2-3-way headache help: (1) helps relieve the headache itself, helps (2) the upset stomach, and (3) the jangled nerves that may team up and cause trouble.

Take Bromo-Seltzer for *fast* headache relief. Bromo-Seltzer gets 90 separate laboratory tests for uniform quality and purity! Caution: Use only as directed. Get Bromo-Seltzer at your drug store counter or fountain today . . . four convenient home sizes for your medicine-chest.



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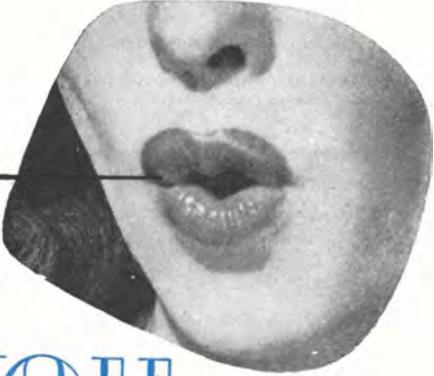
A
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HOW DO **YOU** SAY IT?



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LAST SUMMER I was swimming off Long Island with a friend. He's Swedish, powerful, with a rangy stroke. A Montauk wave, however, can somersault even the strongest of swimmers. He disappeared in a white froth for a moment, then rolled for the shore.

When I reached him he was sitting on the sand, rubbing his head mournfully. He looked up at me and said, "Wow!"

"Why, Olaf!" I marveled. "You said a 'W'!"

He stopped rubbing his head and sat with his mouth open. Then he began to repeat: "Wow! Wow! Wow!" His voice rose to a shout.

Others on the beach must have thought poor Olaf had been unbalanced by the tossing of the waves. But I knew better. It was simply the exuberance of a foreigner who had finally mastered the pronunciation of one of the sounds that belongs peculiarly to the English language.

But Olaf has many companions in misery. The majority of Americans, through carelessness or long habit, frequently mispronounce many of the sounds of their own native language. Olaf may say *ven* for *when*, but how many Americans say *wen*? Or he may substitute *vat* for *that*, but you don't have to converse with a foreign-born person to hear *dat*.

And very few people in fast conversation bother with their *th*'s and *wh*'s. Try this sentence: "Where is the wheel that whacked the wharf?" If you say "Wear is the weel that wacked the warf?" you're not speaking correctly.

What is correct pronunciation? If Brooklyn says "wotuh," South Carolina says "wotta," Indiana says "wawtuh"—how are you going to know?

The answer, of course, is that standard pronunciation is dictionary pronunciation. Now don't say, "Oh, well, I don't have to look up a word to know how to pronounce it." Because I'll bet you two to one you're wrong. Try this list of ten: If you get them all right without looking—well, you're wiser and more careful than most of us!

1. bouquet	4. constable	8. dour
2. larynx	5. athletic	9. cynosure
3. column	6. capsule	7. canteloupe
		10. avenue

R There are lots of chances for mistakes in that list. Most people say *bo-quet*, and *canta-lope*. They're wrong. It's *boo* and *loop*. It's also *doo* in *dour*—to rhyme, not with *sour*, but with *poor*. Did I catch you?

C *Column* and *capsule* are a couple of obstinate cases. Old-time vaudeville comedians used to imitate small-town hicks by talking about *col-yums*. Most moderns know better, thanks to radio "columnists." In *capsule*, however, the *y* sound is called for before the *u*; yet lots of folks call it *cap-sle*. And while we're talking about the *y* sound, did you miss number 10? It's not *avenoo*, but *avenyou*.

U Number 4 is a trick. It's pronounced *cun-stable*, for reasons nobody has yet written an article about. And number 9 is *sigh-nosure*—not *sinsure*.

V Number 5, of course, was put in to confound those people who say that they are going to buy some *fillum* and take a picture of the old *ellum* tree. They're the same folks who like *ath-a-leetics*.

W Particularly in the matter of accented syllables is our native tongue tricky. I'll give you even odds on these. The point is to indicate the syllable to be accented.

1. acclimated	4. autopsy	8. amenable
2. vehement	5. anathema	9. dirigible
3. acumen	6. abdomen	10. decorum
7. depot		

ANSWERS: 1—second; 2—first; 3—second; 4—first; 5—second; 6—sec-

ond; 7—first; 8—second; 9—first; 10—second.

Now please look away while I kneel before that statue of Noah Webster!

BY LEONARD PARIS

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"A beautifully told love story . . . one of the finest, most sensitive novels now being written." —A. C. Spectorsky, Chicago Sun.

"Everyone should read this book. Everyone who does will read it again and tell everyone else to read it. It is an absorbing novel of high literary merit, terrific and tender." —Boston Globe.

"It is an honest book . . . and it is beautiful. It will be widely and intensely discussed, and it will be remembered." —Los Angeles Times.

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"One of the best books I have ever made . . . thoroughly sympathetic and understanding." —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

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It's now sweeping the country! High on best-seller lists! Powerful! Exciting! Different! The story of handsome, ruthless Jabez Foiger; the many women in his violent life; and how he was freed from the sinister secret that possessed his soul. The Boston Herald says: "A lusty, full-blooded novel portraying one of the strangest and bitterest marriages in modern fiction."

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"A passionate novel about two decent people impossibly in love. Make no mistake about it, to read 'Strange Fruit' is an emotional experience," says Lewis Gannett, famed critic of the N. Y. Herald-Tribune.

Those few words from Lewis Gannett's long and enthusiastic review tell very simply why more than 700,000 men and women have already bought "Strange Fruit"—all at the original price . . . why millions have read it . . . and why you won't want to miss it, especially when you can read and own this famous \$2.75 best seller absolutely FREE—as an introductory gift to new members from The Fiction Book Club. Just mail the coupon below NOW!

You'll never forget this tender story of the love of Tracy Dean and Nonnie Anderson!

"Strange Fruit" tells the innermost secrets of its amazingly "real" characters . . . deals with the things people are afraid to talk about, the things hidden away in bureau drawers and locked in troubled hearts. Yes, "Strange Fruit" will open your eyes and—your heart—as it reveals the passions, hypocrisies, loves and hates of the men and women of a small Southern town . . . as it shows you what happens to this town's white and colored children when they emerge from childhood into a world where skin pigment is a pitiless barrier between human beings when they dare to meet on the same level of thought, of conversation and—of love.

Thill to the fearless and penetrating way "Strange Fruit" reveals shocking truths! Be spellbound with its unforgettable power as one of the most dramatic love stories of all times! Take advantage of this opportunity to get "Strange Fruit" absolutely FREE as a new member of The Fiction Book Club. Mail Coupon Now!



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C.M.-1



1 1910, 1915, 1921



2 1918, 1926, 1932



3 1925, 1933, 1928



4 1931, 1942, 1945



5 1929, 1939, 1943



6 1916, 1918, 1923



7 1922, 1927, 1936



Easter parade Quiz

Skirts go up to the knee one spring and down

below it the next, but there'll always be Easter fashions.

The idea is to pick the correct year from

the dates under each picture

Turn to page 196 for the answers.



Mind if we plant an idea?

PERHAPS the idea of a COLD Toddy hasn't occurred to you lately. If not, what a treat you've been missing!

It's so simple!

Just put a scant $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of sugar into a toddy glass, $\frac{1}{2}$ jigger of water, 2 lumps of ice, and a generous jigger of that magnificent whiskey — Four Roses. Then, twist a strip of lemon peel

over the top and drop it into the glass.

But, to get a Cold Toddy with the most gloriously distinctive, different flavor you've ever known, be sure you use Four Roses!

For Four Roses, being a unique combination of specially distilled straight whiskies, makes a Cold Toddy something very special indeed!

A blend of straight whiskies—90 proof. Frankfort Distillers Corporation, New York City

FOUR ROSES

*Still the same great whiskey
as before the war*





*"Some of my studies are tough. But they seem
much easier when my mind is fresh, because I'm
able to concentrate on them better."*

"fresh up" with Seven-Up

It's hard to concentrate
on a problem when your mind
is weary and stale. That's why it's a good idea to
interrupt your thinking now and then and "fresh up"
with 7-Up. For there's a cheerful quality about this
drink that helps to brighten your mood
. . . and a brisk, clean flavor that is the very
spirit of freshness. So, for a fresh viewpoint
and a fresh start, "fresh up" with 7-Up.

Just stop at any place displaying
the 7-Up signs.

*YOU LIKE IT...
IT LIKES YOU!*



Laugh with The
"Fresh Up" Show,
Mutual Network Every Wednesday evening.
8:30 ET—7:30 CT—6:30 MT—8:30 PT

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Their **BIG** Ambitions



PETER AND THE WOLF. Sterling Holloway claims he always wanted to be a wolf. So Walt Disney decided to give him a chance to fulfill his wish in the new animated revue "Make Mine Music." He will narrate the story of Peter and the Wolf against a background of Serge Prokofiev's music.

JERRY COLONNA



CASEY AT THE BAT. Jerry Colonna always fancied himself as a baseball hero. His favorite pastime is playing ball in the impromptu lunch-hour games on the Disney lot. Walt decided he was just the man to narrate the saga of the immortal Casey of Mudville fame in "Make Mine Music."



TWO SILHOUETTES. Dinah Shore has yearned to be a ballet dancer. Disney doesn't let her dance in "Make Mine Music," but she sings for the ballet sequence which shows a silhouetted boy and girl. The picture also has Benny Goodman and the voices of the Andrews Sisters and Andy Russell.

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Stay Beautiful...with

**LESS
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Self-Polishing Simoniz gives longer lasting beauty...makes floor cleaning so much easier



Discover today how Self-Polishing Simoniz makes floor care wonderfully easy and fast. To apply, just spread with cloth or mop applicator. No rubbing! No buffing! It shines as it dries. Self-Polishing Simoniz is crystal-clear on your floors...lets colorful linoleum and fine finishes "show through" with radiant freshness. Dust and dirt...soiled spots and spilled things wipe up with a damp cloth. Get better-by-far Self-Polishing Simoniz today.

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Recognized for over thirty years as authorities on preservation of fine finishes

DINAH SHORE

Sold by grocery, hardware, drug, paint, 5 cents to \$1, auto accessory and department stores.

Guaranteed by
Good Housekeeping
IF ADVERTISED THEREIN



Self-Polishing

Simoniz
FOR FLOORS

Doctors Prove 2 out of 3 Women can have Lovelier Skin in 14 days!



"You've just got to do better by me!"
Kathleen Posther of Hollywood, California, stormed at her mirror. "Don't let me catch you showing me this dull, dingy, coarse-looking complexion again! Other girls have nice complexions—and I want one, too!"



14-Day Palmolive Plan tested
by 36 Doctors on 1285 women
with all types of skin!

"Here's all you do:
Wash your face with Palmolive Soap!
Then, for 60 seconds, massage with
Palmolive's soft, lovely lather. Rinse!
Do this 3 times a day for 14 days.
This cleansing massage brings your
skin the full beautifying effect of
Palmolive's lather.
14 days after I started this Plan,
my complexion was fresher,
brighter—finer looking, too!"



If you want a complexion the envy of every woman—the admiration of every man—start the 14-Day Palmolive Plan tonight!

Remember, the Palmolive Plan was tested on 1285 women of all ages—from fifteen to fifty—with all types of skin. Dry! Oily! Normal! Young! Older! And 2 out of 3 of these women got noticeable complexion improvement in just 14 days! No matter what beauty care they had used before.

Reason enough for every woman who longs for a lovelier complexion to start this new Beauty Plan with Palmolive Soap!

YOU, TOO, may look for
these skin improvements
in only 14 Days!

Less Oily.....
Smoother, Younger looking.....
Less Coarse-looking.....
Fewer Tiny Blemishes—
Less Incipient Blackheads—
Fresher.....
Brighter, Clearer Color.....



DOCTORS PROVE
PALMOLIVE'S
BEAUTY RESULTS!

DON'T WASTE SOAP!
It uses scarce materials.



Cosmopolitan • April • 1946

THE *Alex Ross.*
GIRL

STORY ON PAGE 157



The havoc
Gail had created
exhausted her, yet
brought her peace.



By Laura Z. Hobson
ILLUSTRATED BY VARADY

Lucky Streak

NOBODY'S asking you to believe this is the way it happened. Nobody's asking you to believe there was any connection between the lucky streak and the rest of it. Maybe it was all just coincidence. Or maybe it was one of those queer hookups the unconscious mind neatly arranges to confuse cynics and doubters. If you're a cynic or doubter, you'd better not even begin Gail Varley's story . . .

Anyway, she sat there, that evening when it apparently started, and stared thoughtfully at the thirteen cards fanned out in her left hand. The Aces and Kings fairly jostled each other, and the spade suit went way past her middle finger. Her partner, reliable old Eve Murphy, had already passed.

"Six spades," Gail said.

"Double," Jess Brown said promptly.

"Pass." Eve sounded dejected. A quick tap of fingernails from Mary Lassman signaled, "Me too."

"Redouble." Gail said it calmly, and the three other players stirred in their chairs.

"Tonight *everything's* working for you, Gail," Eve said, spreading the dummy, "or I'd be scared stiff." She glanced across the table and smiled reassuringly as though to say that whatever happened, there'd be no chiding, no little lecture.

As the hand was played, there was silence except for the soft slap of the cards, the polite formalities of a proper bridge game. "No clubs, partner?" "Fresh out." Gail's face was as expressionless as she could make it, but her blue eyes held excitement, her slim hand, reaching, was sure. At the

TEN TO ONE IF YOUR HUSBAND ASKS YOU FOR A DIVORCE IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT THE GIRL HE MARRIED
HERE'S THE STORY OF A MARRIAGE THAT WAS RIGHT AND A DIVORCE THAT WAS WRONG
AND OF AN EX-WIFE WHO FOUND HERSELF WITH ONLY ONE INTANGIBLE ASSET—A LUCKY STREAK AT CARDS



Everyone was aware that some sort of personal duel was going on between the two girls. "Right now," Gail thought grimly, "I'd rather be lucky at cards."

end, with twelve tricks neatly tracking across the table before her, she listened with inward pleasure as Jess said petulantly, "Seven hundred for rubber, seven-fifty for slam, fifty for contract, and let's see, one-eighty, three-sixty, seven-twenty below. Over two thousand points on one hand. Really!"

"I'm just so darn lucky tonight," Gail said. "I've never seen a streak like this." "Except last time we played." Eve laughed. "And the time before that. You're holding them all right."

Jess Brown was already dealing the next hand. There was irritation in the briskness of her gestures. "Lucky at cards, unlucky at love," she said. "Better watch out."

"I must do that." But everything about Gail Varley—young, pretty, perfectly dressed—showed the inner security of a girl who knows nothing could go wrong in *that* department.

As she went on playing, she glanced down at the square-cut diamond and the gold wedding ring on her left hand, a sort of affectionate salute in her eyes. It wasn't that she was snug about her happy marriage; it was just that she felt sure and good about it. Five years ago she had felt sure and good about giving up her own job to marry Ted Varley and turn all her talents to helping him with his. The conflict that supposedly should have reared up screaming in a modern girl over abandoning her wonderful set-up at Brining's simply didn't rear. She wanted Ted and marriage and children and a home much more than she could ever want any other career—and with a full heart she had channelled all her thoughts and energies into the new life opening before her.

She had never dreamed that the promising young broker would turn so swiftly into one of the young financial geniuses of The Street, and she always pooh-poohed politely when people said she had helped him brilliantly. People. Her closest friend, Eve Murphy. Her family. People like that.

But when Ted looked down at her, his brown eyes pleased and approving, and said, "You're a secret part of this firm, darling," exultation raced in her. She had helped him in all the ways a wife can, and her reward had been the happiness they had always had. Except for losing the baby, there had been none of the heartbreak other young couples seemed to run into. Life kept changing of course—Ted had been morose about being kept out of the war because of the scarred lung—but change or no, their relationship had deepened into a rich sureness that was the floor under her, the sky above her.

Since the end of the war and the beginning of reconversion, Ted had been claimed more than ever by his clients. He (Continued on page 152)





SOME PLAIN TALK ABOUT

If a national election involving General of the Army Douglas MacArthur were to be held tomorrow, there is little reason to doubt that a large percentage of the Americans who served in Uncle Sam's Navy during the war and are now eligible to vote would cast their ballots against the man who contributed so much to our victory over Japan. There would be no hesitation in the minds of the boys who fought in blue, regardless of whether MacArthur's opponent was named Bilbo, Taft, Dewey, DiMaggio or even Browder.

Of course, there would be others besides ex-sailors voting against the General. Ex-GI's and some newspapermen and all sorts of people; those who disliked MacArthur's prose style, his hair comb, his cigarette holders or corn cob pipe; those who genuinely felt him unsuited for the office, and even those who were told how to vote by their district leaders.

There is, fortunately, no law requiring any American to like MacArthur; no statute making it a crime to disapprove of his policies and methods. Like any other man in public life, his acts, motives and methods are open to criticism. It is perfectly permissible to write satiric songs about him, to be sarcastic about his references to God in his communiqués, or to contend, as this writer does, that his public relations organization throughout the war was disgracefully inept, inefficient and biased.

But in the case of MacArthur, hero of two wars, demigod to the people of the Philippines, and at this writing ruler by Allied mandate over seventy million Japanese, such criticism has gone far beyond the bounds of legitimate faultfinding with his public deeds or derision of his personal foibles. It has, in fact, grown into a spate of vilification and slander

as intolerant and vicious as any in American history.

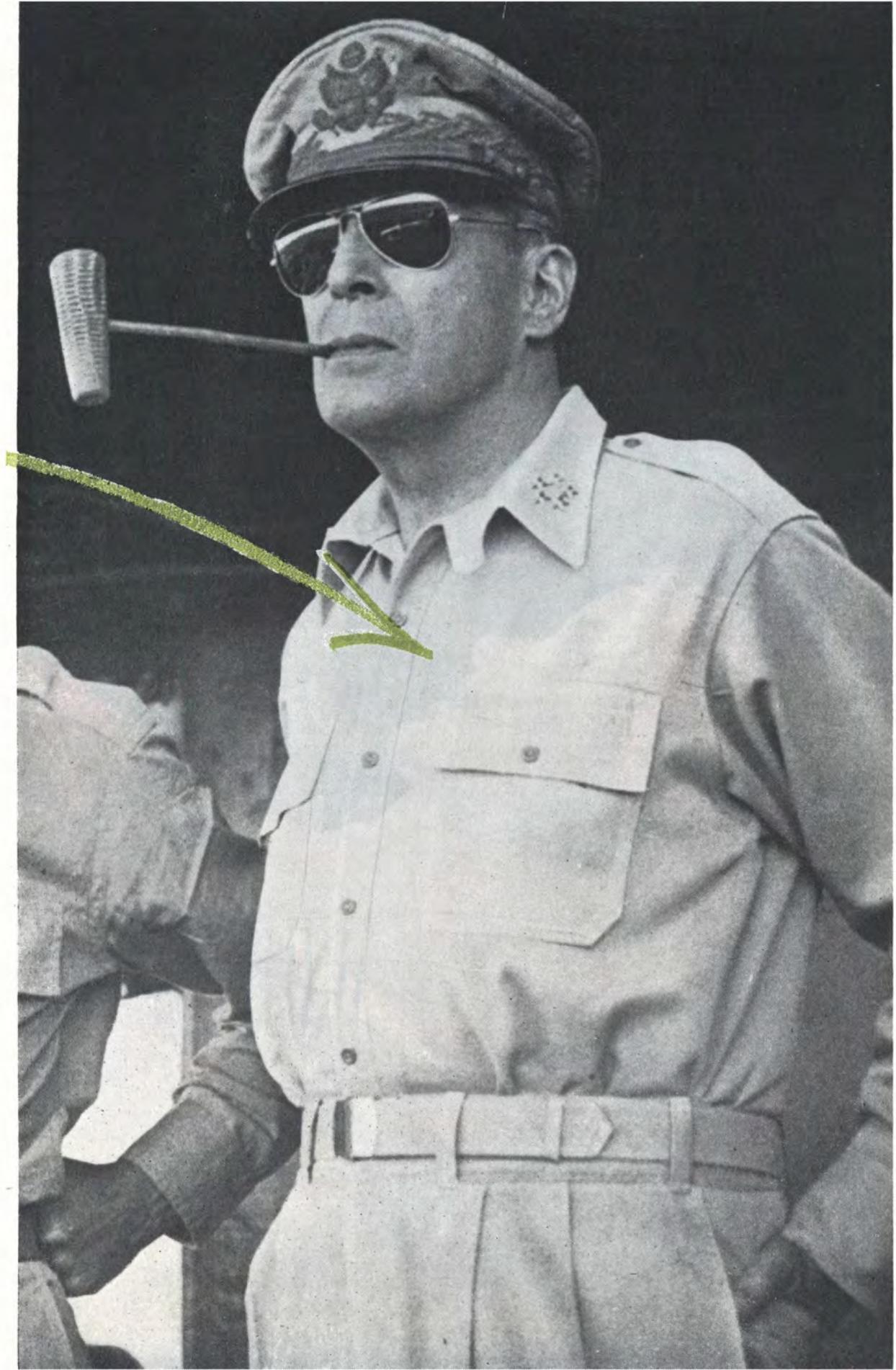
Countless lies and half-truths about MacArthur's personal courage, his patriotism and his honesty have been circulated to such an extent that they are now accepted as gospel by unnumbered thousands—if not millions—of Americans.

How did these stories originate? Some of them are based on actual events, distorted and exaggerated in the telling and retelling. Inevitably, you can hear with many variations tall tales about Nimitz or Eisenhower or Halsey or any other top wartime commander. But when the stories refer to MacArthur, there is a strange lack of variation in them. They are told with exactly the same circumstantial—and unfounded—details by a seaman in a San Francisco bar, a lieutenant (j.g.) in a Tokyo geisha house, an admiral at a Honolulu cocktail party or an airplane mechanic on lonely Canton Island.

Some of the men close to MacArthur believe that slanderous stories about the General were deliberately spread by two groups, which they describe as a "Navy cabal," and a "New Deal cabal," the latter supposedly composed of politicians who feared MacArthur as a presidential threat back in 1942 when he was frequently mentioned by the anti-Roosevelt press as a possible candidate. This latter group is said to have financed the reprinting and distribution of a million copies of a magazine story unfavorable to the General.

In any case, the tales have gained widespread if not unanimous acceptance among Navy men in the Pacific and have been extensively retold in the United States. I have discussed MacArthur with at least five thousand men of all ranks in the Navy during the past four years, (Continued on page 82)

CLARK LEE, the famous war correspondent, discusses the facts behind those widely repeated stories and rumors about General MacArthur





"I feel so nice and dreamy," Glen said.
"I'm not the least bit afraid."

WHEN TIME

By Alec Rackwe

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE HUGHES

THE ROOM was big and cheerful. It didn't look like a hospital room. The walls were cream-colored, the furniture early American maple. The room was in a corner of the new wing, and its casement windows looked out at the bare hills and down at the cold gray river.

In the maple bed, with its twin crank handles projecting from under the footboard, Glen lay against the piled pillows. Her chestnut hair was soft about her oval face. Her eyes, brown and lustrous, were turned towards the open door, and when Meredith came in she smiled and held out her hand, palm upward.

"I knew your footsteps," she said, curling her fingers about his. "Sharp and definite." The pressure of her hand increased, drew him down to her soft red lips.

She said, "Sit here," and patted the bed. Meredith sat down, one foot on the linoleum of the floor. It seemed odd to see her perfume and lotion bottles, her silver brushes, in this setting, but it gave the room a touch of her own warm personality.

She looked so very young, so vulnerable lying there. Less than her twenty-five years. Meredith Ames had long since stopped thinking of her as so much younger than he, but she was as a child to him now. "It isn't right," he thought. "Youth should be free of these things."

Her eyes were on his face. "Did you sleep well, darling?"

He smiled down at her; a tall man, his dark hair silvering at the temples. "I must have gone to sleep the moment I got into bed." His gray eyes darkened. "You?"

Her quiet smile lingered. "They gave me something. A sedative of some sort. I woke only once. I don't feel at all nervous." She pushed up the sleeve of his jacket to look at his watch. "An hour to go." Her fingers slid to his palm again, warm and dry. "Was there any mail?"

"It hadn't come yet."

"You had your breakfast?"

"Minna saw to that. Eggs and toast and jam. Two cups of coffee. She wanted to know when she could see you."

Glen's eyes smiled as well. "She's a treasure. I imagine I won't want to see anyone for the first day or two. Except you."

"No. I imagine not." He wished desperately that it were already a day or two later. A week. A month.

He drew a deep breath and Glen patted his hand. "Don't you worry, darling. I'm glad we found out what was wrong. In a year I'll be good as new. We can start our family then."

He didn't answer and Glen said, "You want children, don't you?"

Meredith said honestly, "I'm pretty old (Continued on page 138)



STANDS STILL

The hours spent in the waiting room of a hospital
have a way of seeming like eternity

Meredith stood by the boy
as a nurse came in at last.

Edna Ferber

*...The author of
"Show Boat"
reminisces
about her
favorite
brain child's
stage career*

"A WHAT?" I said.

Winthrop Ames repeated it. "A show boat."

"What's a show boat?" I asked.

He told me. It sounded so romantic, so colorful, so altogether improbable that I rejected his description as an example of wishful thinking. I never had heard of show boats. "But they are," he insisted. "They do. At least, they used to. They were floating theaters, and they drifted down the Southern rivers with the whole troupe on board, and they tied up at the landings and gave their show and the whole countryside for miles and miles around came flocking. And when we've straightened out this mess wouldn't it be wonderful if we could all pile on a show boat and drift downstream, playing our show—and to hell with Broadway!"

It was 1924 and we were huddled in a hotel sitting room in New London, Connecticut, where the play entitled "Minick" was being tried out. George Kaufman and I had written it, Winthrop Ames was producing it. It looked awful. The opening performance had gone badly. During the second act a bevy of bats had emerged from the dusty theater ceiling and had swooped and circled above the heads of audience and actors causing women to cover their heads and screech. This had not helped the situation. Now, at midnight, weary, depressed, doubtful, we were holding a post-performance post-mortem. It was then that Winthrop Ames had nostalgically reached back into his memory and brought forth the highly colored description of show boats. The amazing part of it is that the colors turned out to be true.

The moment after "Minick" opened at the Booth Theatre in New York (it turned out to be not quite so bad as we had feared) I started on the quest of a show boat. Surely few writers have had more fun and happiness and spiritual and material profit from any written thing than has come my way from "Show Boat." As a novel, as a musical play, in motion pictures and on the radio the unforgettable music and lyrics of the play, the dialogue and characters and situations of the book have somehow become part of the tapestry of American life. I've never yet been on the Mississippi, but when I die I'd like someone to pour a small vial of Mississippi River water over my ashes (Morrie, don't take this seriously).

All this is rather old stuff. It has been told before, and often. Perhaps too often. But now, twenty years after the publication of "Show Boat," the book again is in the bookstore windows. And almost twenty years after the first production of the musical play "Show Boat" at the Ziegfeld Theatre it is again playing at the Ziegfeld Theatre. But even that might not justify this recapitulation if it were not for a new and vital

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element in American life known as the younger generation.

The younger generation has been overseas and back—millions of it. It has conducted itself gloriously. I've seen it in action. I admire it more than any American manifestation encountered in my lifetime. I'm a little in awe of it.

April, 1945. It found me in the city of Weimar, Germany, before the Nazi surrender. To some Weimar may mean Goethe and Schiller and Liszt. To anyone who has set foot in it in the past seven or eight years it can mean only unbelievable horror and savagery. For just outside the city is the hideous concentration camp, Buchenwald. As a visiting correspondent under the protection of the United States Army Air Forces I had been shown through this ghastly charnel house of inhuman sadism. Revolted to the point of sickness, and heartsick, too, at what we had seen, we nevertheless followed the day's schedule which included dinner that evening at a Ninth Air Force headquarters with the commanding general and his staff. Dinners with Generals and Colonels (Brass to you) are all very fine. But there's old reporter's blood in these veins and I knew that the real story lay with the enlisted men. Under these circumstances it is difficult, not to say hazardous, to make an exit. Somehow, perhaps not too politely, it was managed.

The Enlisted Men's Club at nine at night. A vast room in a great solid building that once had been German barracks. A smoky, rather dismal room, lacking the graces and comforts that had made the Officers' Club attractive. Hundreds of men, and as always the impression that first struck the beholder was their youth. They were kids. Talking in little quiet groups, drinking bottles of wine at little bare tables, listening to the squawk of the radio, playing ping-pong, reading.

Drifting from group to group you heard good talk. Books, music, politics, when-the-war's-over. If you wanted fresh clear thinking and straight unvarnished opinion the Enlisted Men's Club was the place for it. One in a group looked at me sideways, impishly. A boy, scarcely twenty, slim, rather charming, not particularly handsome, and a little tight. Now he stood up, his face earnest and eager. We had been talking of the theater and I'd discovered that he, like myself, was stage-struck. He began to speak and to my astonishment (and delight) I realized that he was repeating, word for word, the lines from the book "Show Boat" in which is described the effect of the theater on the old-time simple audiences of the Southern rivers.

It is on pages 104 and 105, and in response to no demand whatever I shall now quote it: (Continued on page 201)



A Cosmopolitan Novelette

By

Phyllis Moore Gallagher

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED BUELL

BRENDA ROMULU got just what was coming to her!"

The voice was clear and resonant, and I wondered who had spoken. I glanced down the red bar at the two women sitting at the far end. They didn't look as if they were gossiping. They were smiling, and they looked rather as if they were wondering where to send their children to kindergarten this autumn. I glanced behind me. Most of the little tables were occupied: the lounge was noisy with talk, frenzied with it, and veiled with smoke. Even though all of the women were dressed differently, they looked alike somehow. Smooth and sleek and gay, as though no trouble had ever touched them. Then through the babble I heard it again: "Yes, indeed, Brenda Romulu got what was coming to her!"

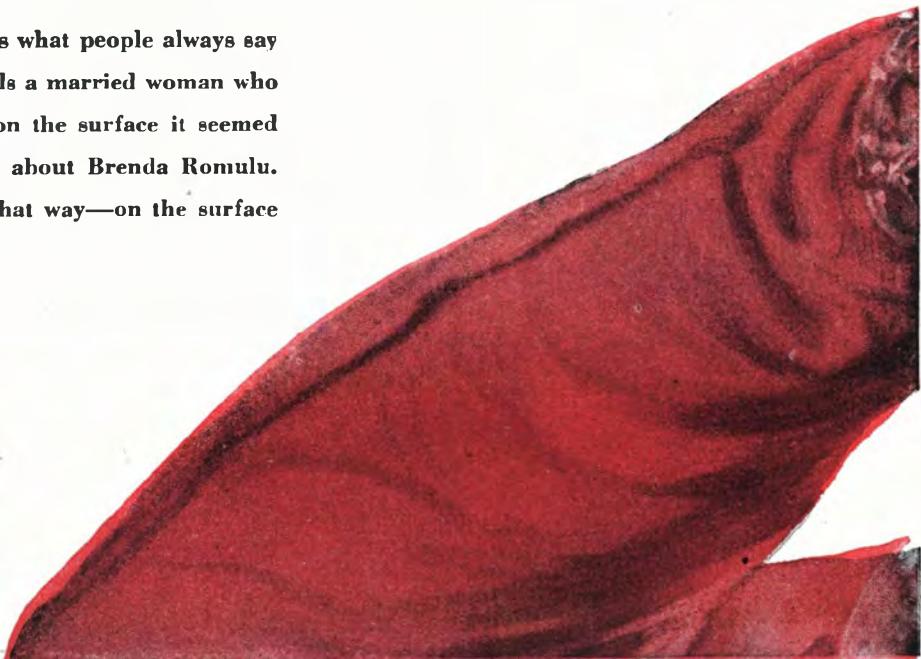
I wished the women I had agreed to meet for luncheon would come. I didn't want to sit here thinking about Brenda Romulu. I didn't want to know that there were women all over town who had been waiting for this day so they could whisper and gloat and say "Brenda Romulu got just what was coming to her."

I shall never forget the first time I saw Brenda at the Masons dinner. I had expected a woman with flaming lips and hard dark eyes and touched-up golden hair worn ridiculously long for her age: a sensuous, voluptuous creature who made a business of being attractive to men. I had visualized the women present moving possessively toward their men, hating and fearing Brenda, and wishing they'd known she'd been asked so they could have declined. In a sense all the gossip I had heard was right, but it was wrong too. It took me only as long as it takes one woman to look at another to know that Brenda Romulu—slim, lithe, far younger and lovelier than I'd been led to believe—was everything Washington had said she was, and something more too. Something much more dangerous.

She wasn't beautiful. I groped for a word to describe her, but the only thing that came to me was "disturbing." I liked the way she stepped down into the Masons' drawing-room in an aloof way that betrayed her British birth; I liked the soft sheath of white

She had it coming to her

That's what people always say
when disaster befalls a married woman who
plays around. And on the surface it seemed
they were right about Brenda Romulu.
It looked that way—on the surface





satin that flowed over the perfect bone structure of her body and the diamond and emerald clips at her throat and the way she stood out from the other figures in the room as if they were a tawdry background for the clear modeling of her charm. I liked the way the room suddenly sprang into life as Brenda Romulu's own personal sun shone through, lighting up the dullest corners. I knew somehow that her temperament was pure quicksilver, flashing from gaiety to black-flannel gloom—only the gloom would always be checked firmly within herself and never shared, showing only in shadows that lay behind her eyes. She's marvelously attractive, I thought. I want to really know her.

It was only after the party was over and Jim and I were home, dissecting the people we'd seen and the new gossip we'd heard, that I was conscious of a strange feeling of apprehension mounting into actual fear. I remembered the men watching Brenda, liking what they saw, wondering about her. The six feet of muscle-packed bronze that is my husband had been one of them too. I could see him looking down into Brenda's upturned face, throwing back his blond head and laughing at something she had said. I felt now that out of sheer deviltry, Brenda Romulu had set out to enslave my husband's imagination, to exercise the full power of her physical charm on him and had been arrogantly certain of success. She'd maneuvered to be near him practically all evening.

"How did you like Madame Romulu, Jim?" I asked, and there was in my voice a fine thread of pure anguish which I was afraid Jim would detect.

But he only yawned and said, "She's very attractive. Quite a person."

I searched his face again, convinced that he was simulating indifference; a simulation so perfect that he must have been guarding against this very question from the moment we'd left the Masons'. "Quite a person," I repeated and promptly changed the subject,

chatting on about trivial things much too gaily for a young woman who suspected her husband of being under another woman's glamorous spell. When Jim went back to the subject of Brenda Romulu, I laughed, though there was certainly nothing amusing in what he'd asked; I laughed because I was convinced he wanted the pleasure of speaking her name again. I was miserable because, for the first time in nine happy years of marriage, I found myself thinking: So this is how it feels to be jealous. And I knew that tonight there were other women appraising their husbands as I was appraising Jim, being afraid . . .

Jim's head bent a little to one side in a gesture of inquiry. "What," he asked, "is so hellish funny about my asking where Brenda Romulu's husband was tonight? Or are you a little tight, Dissy?"

"I'm not tight, and Bill Romulu is in New York on business," I said, and felt my starched mouth sliding into what I hoped would pass for a gay smile. But it didn't.

Jim was watching me. "Dissy, you little ape," he said softly. "I believe you're jealous."

"I am," I said, "and I—I don't know how to banter about it. I—haven't any technique. You forgot I was at the party because she—"

Jim's laugh interrupted me. "My, my," he said lightly, "but don't brown eyes when they turn green conjure up fantastic things. Look, honey, Brenda Romulu made a lot of verbal and ocular passes at me, but I wasn't the only one. She left Tom Vitters hanging on the ropes, and Clemmer and old Bob Norman."

"And—you?"

"A sturdy, sterling character, my love," Jim chuckled. "Untouched, unscathed, unsullied. Resistance something out of this world."

"Oh," I said with the alacrity of profound relief, for I believed him even as I wondered if I was the victim of that strange alchemy of the mind that converts a worthless wish into a precious conviction.

"But in all fairness to the

wench," Jim was going on, "I don't think it was because she meant to make trouble. I think Señor Romulu's wife just wanted to try out the instrument of her charm rather as a—well, as a musician tunes his violin, if you follow the poesy of my thoughts. She didn't want any of us. She just wanted our adoration. I could be wrong, of course.

"You certainly could be," I said. Then: "You've met Bill Romulu, haven't you, Jim? What's he like?"

"Size him up for yourself when you meet him. Five will get you ten that he has money."

Later I knew what Jim meant. At first glance you did wonder why Brenda and Bill had ever married, how they ever got together in the first place. Fifteen years her senior, Bill is a formal and ordered person, suave and distinguished, just what you'd expect the First Secretary of an Embassy to be. A casting director couldn't have chosen a more perfect type. A touch of premature gray at the temples very dignified. Clear brown eyes, a solemn mouth that smiled well but not often. Usually silent, so that other people had to tell you about his brilliance. Tall, too, and lean—very pale. I tried to convince myself that Bill Romulu was the only sort of anchor for an effervescent woman like Brenda, but too often I found myself wondering if he had money, or if he had had it ten years before when he'd married Brenda. Afterwards, in the several months that we were together, I felt I knew them both intimately, but it wasn't until Brenda and I went off to Virginia Beach for ten days that I really learned how little I knew Brenda or Bill or Pete Stacey or Lady Chase or myself. Or the whole human race, for that matter. But I mustn't get ahead of my story.

After the Masons' dinner, I didn't see Brenda Romulu again for three weeks, for Jim flew out to California to take testimony on a Court of Claims case, and young Jimmie, our six-year-old, was struggling through a foul (Cont. on p. 172)

Like a small agile cat, Brenda kept slipping out of his grasp until he





caught her by both wrists.



A famous writer talks with one of her five adopted children
about the things parents must understand if they want to
enjoy a happy and rewarding relationship with sons and
daughters who are theirs but not by birth

An interview with my Adopted Daughter

BY PEARL S. BUCK

Photograph by Serra

TWENTY YEARS ago I adopted my first child. I feel humble enough about my share in these twenty years, and before I sat down to write this article I wanted her advice about what I ought to say to people who might want to adopt children too. I told her I wanted an interview with her on the subject. She took it as seriously as I meant it, and we went off to a quiet spot and talked it all over.

Our daughter has the advantage of not being our only adopted child. We found four others, as the years went on, to be her brothers and sister. One learns a great deal from five children.

"In the first place," said our twenty-year-old, "I don't think just anybody ought to adopt children. And I don't mean rich or poor, either. That has nothing to do with it."

We discussed what sort of people were right for adopting children. She said, "I think the parents ought not to be too young. Very young people think mostly of having good times first. They might not really care enough about the child."

"But very young people quite often have children by birth," I said.

"Birth children they might just care for through an animal instinct. There has to be something more, maybe, for adopted children," she said.

"Of course parents shouldn't be too old, either," she went on, "else they'd not like children's noise. Only people who love children ought to be allowed to adopt them."

What she meant was something I myself feel very strongly. It is quite true that not every husband and wife should adopt children. If they want children to perpetuate themselves, to be extensions of their own lives, to be their "flesh and blood," then they should not adopt children. Many women love their own babies but do not love all babies. There is a deep difference. Only women who love all babies should be adoptive mothers; only people who love all children should be adoptive parents. Before considering adoption, therefore, men and women should discover what sort of people they themselves are. Do they love human beings? Can they love a little baby not their own?

But babies, like kittens, grow up. Let's go on with the questions. Do they enjoy freckle-faced, mischievous, reckless little boys and girls? Can they laugh at a certain amount of naughtiness? Can they love a child at the same time that they see his faults? Can they faithfully and patiently cherish the adolescent who is straining to break away from them as parents? If, basically, you love children and are not harassed by them, then you can adopt children. If children harass you, then don't adopt them. If you can love only your own, certainly don't adopt others. It is a simple rule, yet basic.

But granted that there is this deep love for all children, then what is the next step? It is to find the child.

This is difficult. Every child-placing

agency has a long waiting list of parents, and there are not many such agencies. I would like to say arbitrarily that you should find your child through a reliable child-placing agency. It is not wise to take a baby from an orphanage or hospital unless you are prepared for risk. Yet the sad truth is that child-placing agencies are so few, and the organized forces working against adoption are so strong, that adoption grows increasingly difficult. Of course the trend should be just the opposite. In spite of statistics proving high infant mortality or later social maladjustment for children in institutions, institutionalism is on the rise.

I reflect with increasing indignation on the difficulty of finding children for adoption. Our country is full of little children growing up in institutions who ought to be growing up in homes. It is a situation which shocks the visitor from such lands as China to whom the idea of institutionalism is abhorrent. To the Chinese nothing is more tragic than growing up without a family and without kin. But many thousands of our American children are growing up that way. They lie down to sleep in a bed that is just one of a row; they eat their meals at long tables; they are never "special," in the sense that children in a family are always special. And at the same time thousands of couples long for children and try in vain to find them, couples who ought to have children (Continued on page 96)

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A place to meet men

But how can you
be sure that the men you meet
don't belong to other women?

THE GIRL came into the Traders' National Bank too early to be a customer, and she entered, as if by duty or privilege, through a rear door in the foyer of the high building which bore the same name as the bank it housed. She spoke cheerfully to the auditor who said, "Good morning, Miss Frye. It's going to be hot again, isn't it?" And she smiled at a young bank messenger, who was only a dumb kid on a summer job and frightened all the time. As she went down the long room on the way to her own cage, Gwen Litney called to her softly. "When you have a minute, I've something to tell you."

"Good," said Phyllis Frye. "I'll be back when I get straightened out. About what?"

"About our mutual friend, Maynell," answered Gwen. "I think he's been snared at last."

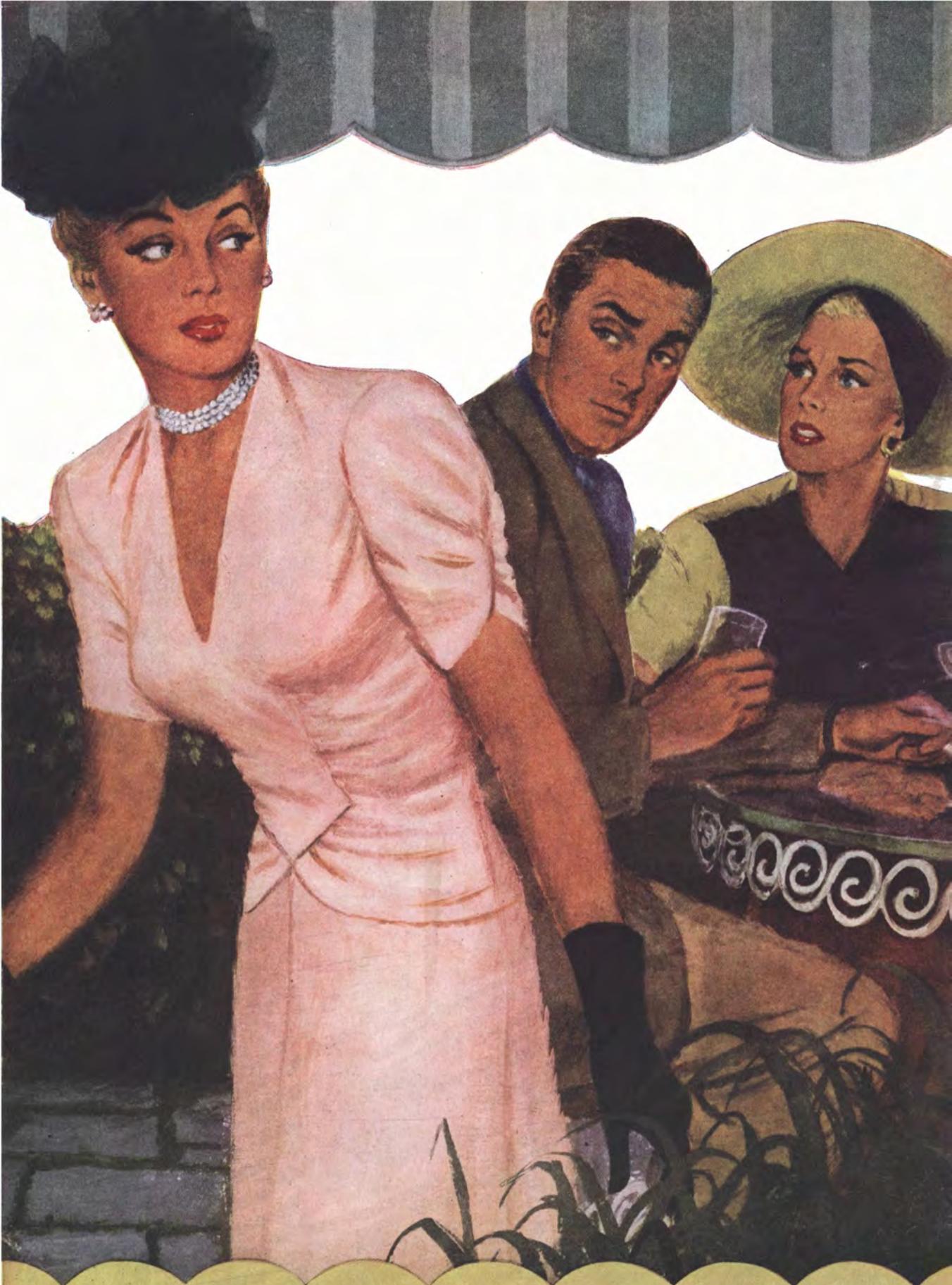
It was not, for many reasons, the best note on which to begin a hot day. But Phyllis began her routine with no change of expression. She went down to the vault and brought back the cash that she would need in her cage for paying checks. She stacked several piles of deposit slips ready for use, filled a desk fountain pen, put her various rubber stamps in position.

As she turned over a page of her calendar, she thought that there was only one more day before her vacation, (Continued on page 86)

BY MARGARET CULKIN BANNING

ILLUSTRATED BY BARBARA SCHWINN





Mrs. Thurston raised her voice. "How do people like that get in here, Jimmy? Isn't she a clerk in your bank?"



His eagerness to sacrifice their marriage for gain infuriated Ann. She picked up a powder jar and hurled it at him.

S.S. EMPRESS EUG

Clans

NINE TIMES OUT OF TEN A WOMAN IS WHAT THE MAN SHE LOVES
MAKES HER. ANN'S HUSBAND WAS A CROOK. SO ANN BECAME HIS ACCOMPLICE.
BUT WHEN A WOMAN TRADES HONOR FOR LOVE
SHE'S AS UNPREDICTABLE—AND AS DANGEROUS—AS A BUZZ BOMB

By Ketti Frings

FROM AN IDEA BY FRITZ ROTTER

INSIDE, he was a boy from Hell's Kitchen. Outwardly he looked like Long Island, the yachting crowd in the summer, New York in the winter. Not that he had ever actually lived in Hell's Kitchen, but had he lived there he would have fitted in. As a boy he would have been leader of a neighborhood gang; growing up he would have probably owned a saloon, a gambling parlor, and whatever else went with it. He had that little regard for principle and solid citizenry. As it was, he had grown up around race tracks; exercise boy at first, pal of jockeys and bookies; and he might have stayed there except for his good looks and the fact that he made such a wonderful picture on the polo field.

The wealthy Mrs. Wingate, who had three sons, hired Charlie Kent to teach her boys polo and be the fourth of their own private team. They played in California in the summers, Florida in the winters. Charlie lived with the Wingates and picked up a few

fancy manners: also a wardrobe—and, a little more cumbersome, he picked up a romance, of a kind, with Mrs. Wingate, fifteen years his senior. It all ended unhappily when Mr. Wingate had his eyes opened.

After that there were no more polo jobs, not in the States anyway; Mr. Wingate irately saw to that. Not only had Charlie infringed on the Wingates' personal life, but he had dug into their fortune too, by way of a padded expense account.

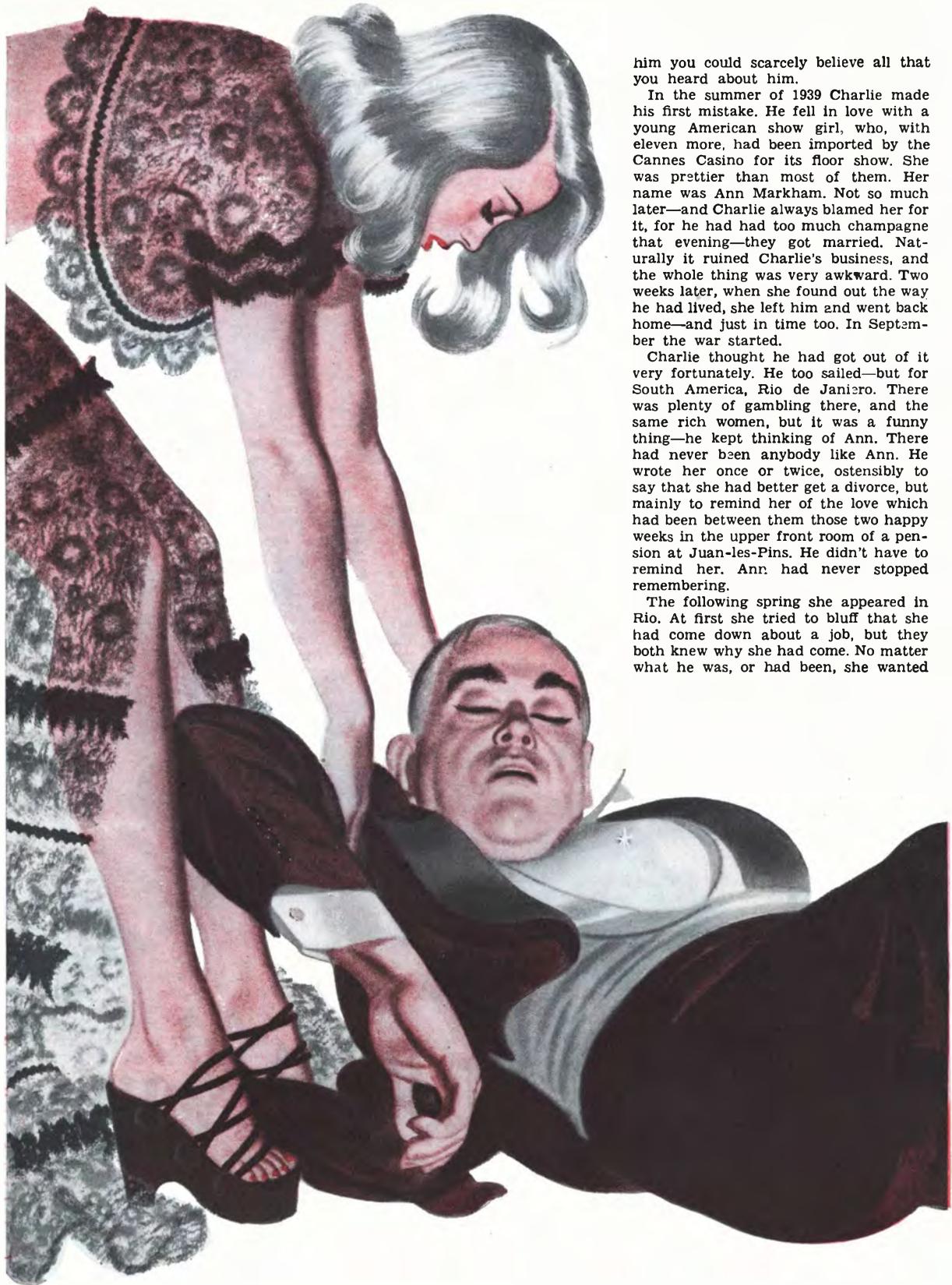
His name was not in good repute, so he went to Europe. There he found that European husbands were not so fussy. They were glad to have Charlie gamble with their wives, dance with them; if it went further—that left them

all the more free time for their own adventures. Charlie did very well; he was known all along the Riviera.

He was a handsome devil; looking at

I Know You

The Complete Novel



him you could scarcely believe all that you heard about him.

In the summer of 1939 Charlie made his first mistake. He fell in love with a young American show girl, who, with eleven more, had been imported by the Cannes Casino for its floor show. She was prettier than most of them. Her name was Ann Markham. Not so much later—and Charlie always blamed her for it, for he had had too much champagne that evening—they got married. Naturally it ruined Charlie's business, and the whole thing was very awkward. Two weeks later, when she found out the way he had lived, she left him and went back home—and just in time too. In September the war started.

Charlie thought he had got out of it very fortunately. He too sailed—but for South America, Rio de Janeiro. There was plenty of gambling there, and the same rich women, but it was a funny thing—he kept thinking of Ann. There had never been anybody like Ann. He wrote her once or twice, ostensibly to say that she had better get a divorce, but mainly to remind her of the love which had been between them those two happy weeks in the upper front room of a pension at Juan-les-Pins. He didn't have to remind her. Ann had never stopped remembering.

The following spring she appeared in Rio. At first she tried to bluff that she had come down about a job, but they both knew why she had come. No matter what he was, or had been, she wanted

Ashley's weight was a limp, stubborn mass. Could it be that he was dying

him. If they were to get along one of them had to make some compromises, and it was Ann.

I suppose you would say that that was where the married life of Ann and Charlie Kent really began. At least this time it was not a honeymoon of two weeks but of two long perfect months. They went up into the mountains; they skied and lazed away their time and came back broke. It just happened that when they returned to Rio no one knew that Ann and Charlie were married, and a wealthy Argentine cabinet minister began to make passes at Ann. He followed her to her room one night, and there Charlie surprised him, giving him a black eye and threatening to make the episode a public disgrace. The cabinet minister had a wife; he was glad to soothe Charlie's anger with twenty thousand pesos—and quite happily a new profession was born to Charlie Kent.

Ann didn't like it, but she loved Charlie; and love can get used to almost anything. They began traveling the luxury liners to the States and back again. It didn't work every trip, but in one out of two trips there was someone aboard who found Ann sufficiently attractive to make himself a nuisance.

They made half a dozen trips before America got into the war: they were stranded in Buenos Aires at the time it happened. For a while they traveled the smaller boats back and forth between Buenos Aires and Rio, but people began to be wary about them.

Finally Charlie said, "Let's sit this one out," and they did.

Ann began to feel guilty about it; she got herself a clerk's job in Rio. Charlie took a job with an American oil company's Rio branch; it was an essential industry. The company straightened out his draft status for him, and both remained in Rio.

It almost wrecked them. Their combined salaries were not much. They had to live normally. Get up at seven, go to work at eight. The decent dull life was telling on them—on Charlie particularly. Ann began to worry about it. Then Charlie got mixed up in a political riot one day, was hurt, and spent the next four months in a hospital.

In those four months Ann did a lot of thinking. She came to see him every day, sat beside him. She loved him more than ever when he was knocked out like that; he was almost docile, and she could do things for him and be wifely and sweet. She realized then that there was more than just tumultuous passion between them, that at least on her side there was a desire to look out for him. She supposed that in a way that was why she had always been drawn to him. He was not bad because the badness in him was so strong that it blocked out all else; he was bad through weakness. There was a difference. She was glad, because she couldn't have loved him otherwise.

And now, in the hospital, he too seemed to have become more thoughtful, more earnest. Illness sometimes gives people

new values. Ann hoped for it desperately and began to dream of a new future. She didn't tell him about the dreams; she had a feeling that he knew and that he shared them with her.

That's why it was for her a happy sailing when, shortly after the war the Empress Eugenie, as resplendent as ever, sailed from the port of Rio, bound for New York. They were traveling with practically nothing in their pockets; they had been hard pressed to manage the first-class fare and a new wardrobe—but no matter. There was the ocean, miles and miles of it, innocent and blue, cleared of its dangers. There was the wonderful sun and the fresh breeze and the old often-remembered pulse of the boat, its elegant salons, its stretches of polished deck, its magnificent dining room and bar. And smiles on the faces of everyone. A new world, this.

The captain remembered the young couple, of course, and so did the ship's doctor, and though neither of these two men knew what made the Kents such inveterate travelers, and though they were sometimes suspicious, they were glad to see them and greeted them heartily.

And the head dining steward, Taylor, whom Charlie sought out shortly after they boarded, remembered too and said of course the Kents could have a small table to themselves.

"Are many tables already taken? Let me see your plan," Charlie asked.

The steward showed him: the little squares which were the tables, with names written in here and there. There was one name for which Charlie looked. He found it: Morehouse.

"Right there by that pillar," Charlie suggested, selecting a table near the Morehouse table. "That'll do—nice view of the deck. Thanks."

Charlie had a few other things to arrange. Later Ann met him for a walk before lunch. She was in a wonderful mood. The cabin was luxury itself, and after the small dingy Rio flat it was a relief. "I feel



ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE EVANS

and she was free at last?



Ann's heart sank at the sight of Charlie and Bettina in a warm gay mood.

like we're beginning all over, Charlie . . . going home, and everything starting fresh." Exuberantly she talked on about it, and how like an exile she had felt. When she talked like this, with her eyes glowing and her hair blowing in the wind, she looked about eighteen. She wasn't so very many years older: she had met Charlie when she was seventeen.

She wanted to see their deck chairs, and he showed them to her. The chairs were at the end of a corridor, which was nice because it meant that there was only one other chair next to them. On the other chair was the name Morehouse.

"I hope Mr. or Mrs. Morehouse isn't prissy," Ann said, "because I'm going to hold hands with you the whole trip, maybe play footsie with you—I don't know. Oh, Charlie"—her eyes were shining even more

brightly—"this one's for us, isn't it? Just you and me. After those months you were away from me at the hospital, we need that."

Sure they did, of course.

They had a cocktail at their own reserved table in the bar. Next to them was a table reserved for Morehouse.

At lunch, not many were in the dining room; going-away parties still continued in the bar and many of the staterooms. The table next to them was empty. Charlie and Ann had wine. They were exhilarated and gay. Charlie, in a pleasant, relaxed mood, had never looked more handsome.

"Salt air becomes you, angel," Ann told him.

On the way out, she noticed the name on the table next to them. She began to frown. At the door she spoke to the head steward. "By the way, Taylor, the Morehouse table—who is that?"

"A. P. Morehouse. Republic Oils . . . You must have heard of him, Mr. Kent."

"He's traveling alone?" Ann asked.

"I believe so, Mrs. Kent. Yes."

She waited until the door had swung behind them. "You needn't look so sheepish, Charlie. If you'd just told me . . ." But she was deeply hurt.

"Look, Ann, like you said: this is a fresh start; we're going to have all the things we waited nearly four years to have—"

"After Mr. Morehouse," she finished for him.

He looked at her, saw she wasn't too awfully mad, just resigned. "After Mr. Morehouse, if we're lucky," he admitted.

"Okay, I just like to know."

"Sort of a down payment on what we're looking for."

"Sure, I know; we don't have to talk about it. I've got it now." But her voice was crisp, with too much indifference in it.

They entered their stateroom. Ann threw herself on one of the twin beds. Charlie turned on the radio, took off his coat, put on a sweater. "How about looking over the deck games?"

"Not just now. I'm tired."

He came over to her, looked down at her. Sometimes she got a catch in her throat that just killed him. For an instant there was even tenderness in him, but the main part of what was in him was the taut throbbing emotion which played back and forth between them like a current. They just had to look at each other sometimes. He pushed the curls



back from her forehead. He was wondering if maybe he shouldn't let the deck games wait. Coming back to their room like this, all full of food and wine . . . just pull the curtains and it would be wonderful. The question was there was there in his eyes.

"Not now," she said, and looked away from him. "I was just wondering, Charlie, which technique do we use this time? Is it the lonely one?"

"What do you mean the 'lonely' one? Silly—" But her eyes stopped him. "Sure, that's the one. Same as Whitley, nineteen-forty-one; last trip on this same boat as a matter of fact."

"Is this one a drunkard too?"

"Hell, no. This one is apple pie." He sat down beside her, told her how he had got on to Morehouse, what he was like. He had flown into Rio a week before. "Funny thing is, in a way I worked for him: Bryant Oll is a subsidiary. He's one of those millionaires who likes to keep in touch with his business. I heard a lot about him through the office, saw him once or twice from a distance; never expected to get this opportunity though. He's always been scared to death of women; managed to steer clear of them—in marriage that is, though there was one show girl who

wound up with a yacht in Santa Barbara."

"That's not exactly what I want. Just a simple little homestead—"

"She had no manager to watch out for her interests. Leave it to me now."

"How old is he?" Her voice was flat, disinterested.

"Fifty-four. Not very good-looking, but he's well-groomed. You won't mind, honey."

"But if there's no wife how do we scare him?"

"A husband has his rights. A man like that promising mink coats to my baby, breaking up our happy marriage. Hell's bells, that's an expensive pastime!"

"I wish you did love me that much," she said suddenly.

"I'll show you sometime."

"Okay," she said after a moment, her voice thick again. "Go ease your deck games."

He got up, moved to the door, turning off the radio on the way. "Rest and look pretty."

When he was at the door she stopped him. "Charlie, it was a nice lunch anyway, wasn't it?"

"Sure." He smiled, opened the door.

"See you around."

"Oh, I'll come home to roost, don't worry."

"Charlie, wouldn't it be wonderful if he were seasick the whole way?"

"Impossible. That's why he's taking the boat back. He got airsick coming down." He grinned, closed the door.

She lay there looking at the door. She knew then with a sinking feeling of helplessness that it didn't matter about Morehouse, or Whitley, or all the others: she'd do anything for him—just so long as he came home to roost, as he said.

Charlie was curled up in his deck chair, blanket-wrapped, for the evenings were chilly. He was practically alone on the deck. Dinner music floated out from the dining salon, and from another direction came the loud clatter-chatter of the bar. Ann came swiftly down the deck and stood in front of him. She wore a white evening dress, and she looked beautiful.

"Well?" he asked.

"Charlie, I want to talk to you. Come on, it's freezing out here."

"Share it with you." He opened the blanket invitingly.

She just looked at the blanket, didn't move. "Did you eat?" she asked.

"Sure—steak, scalloped potatoes, artichoke and crepes Suzette. It tasted pretty good to me. (Continued on page 182)

the
man
who
writes
the
Lyrics

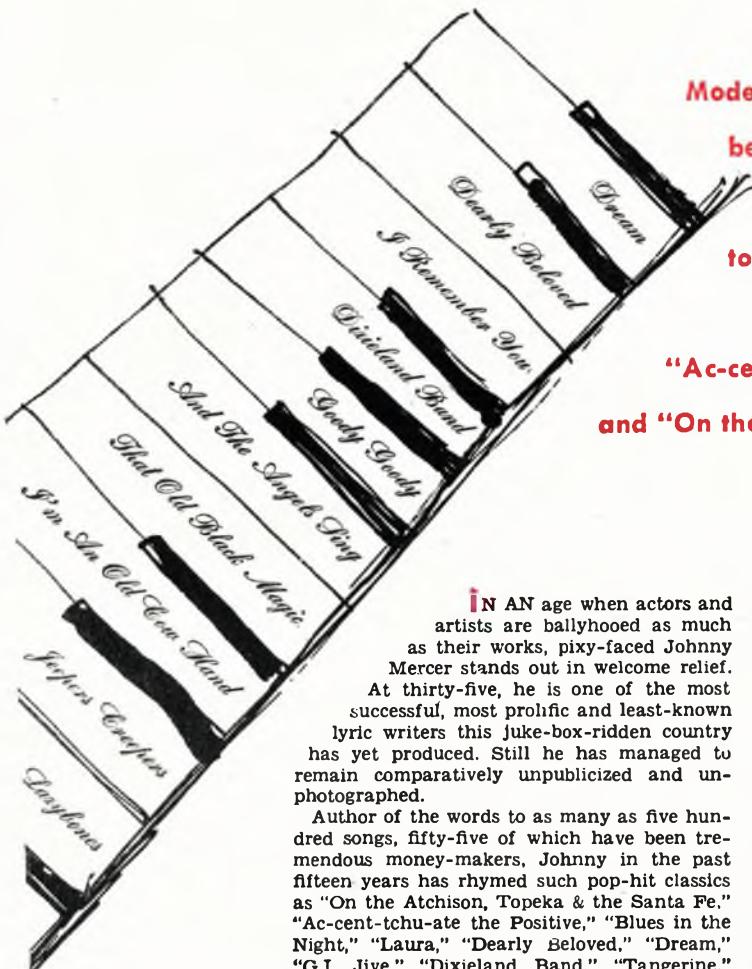


You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby
Gone of the Missing Dennis
Jargomine

Miss Delta

Skylark

G. G. Goo



Modest Johnny Mercer

became a big success in Hollywood

because he knows how

to think up the words for such songs as

"Blues in the Night," "Laura,"

"Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive"

and "On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe"

IN AN age when actors and artists are ballyhooed as much as their works, pixy-faced Johnny Mercer stands out in welcome relief. At thirty-five, he is one of the most successful, most prolific and least-known lyric writers this Juke-box-ridden country has yet produced. Still he has managed to remain comparatively unpublicized and unphotographed.

Author of the words to as many as five hundred songs, fifty-five of which have been tremendous money-makers, Johnny in the past fifteen years has rhymed such pop-hit classics as "On the Atchison, Topeka & the Santa Fe," "Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive," "Blues in the Night," "Laura," "Dearly Beloved," "Dream," "G.I. Jive," "Dixieland Band," "Tangerine," "Strip Polka," "I'm An Old Cow Hand," "That Old Black Magic," "Lazybones," "And The Angels Sing," and "The Girl Friend of the Whirling Dervish."

He's had at least one song on the Hit Parade each week for a year, and at one time in 1943 four of his numbers were played on the same program, an achievement yet to be equaled by any of his competitors.

In addition, he is a singer whose recordings have sold more than twelve million copies (he gets a two-cent royalty on each pressing), an astute businessman, who four years ago founded the Capitol Records Corporation now worth some five million dollars, and a juke-box favorite second in popularity only to his fast friend and golf side-kick, Bing Crosby. Yet he retains his genuinely retiring easy-going personality, has great talent concealed under a deceptive nonchalance. Such qualities are incredible for a man who lives in Hollywood.

The two leading misconceptions about Mercer—that he is a Negro, and that he is a composer—are the results respectively of his recordings on which he sounds like a gatay, groovy Harlem hep-cat, and the high-powered advertisements of music publishing companies which say that such-and-such a number is "the latest Johnny Mercer hit." When the

average radio listener, for example, is told that "Laura" is a Johnny Mercer hit, he assumes, naturally enough, that Mercer composed the music. The music of "Laura" was written by David Raksin for the motion picture of the same name. One of the girls in Mercer's office, raved about the melody so enthusiastically that Johnny scribbled some words to fit the tune. That's how "Laura" became a Johnny Mercer hit.

From time to time, Mercer has himself written the music to such of his ditties as "G.I. Jive," "Dream," and "I'm An Old Cowhand," but there occasions of composition are infrequent and come only when he has been carrying an insistent melody around in his head for several weeks. Then he usually calls in a pianist, sings the tune aloud and has the musician put the notes on paper. For the most part, however, he concentrates on lyrical gems and lets piano-pushers design the melody.

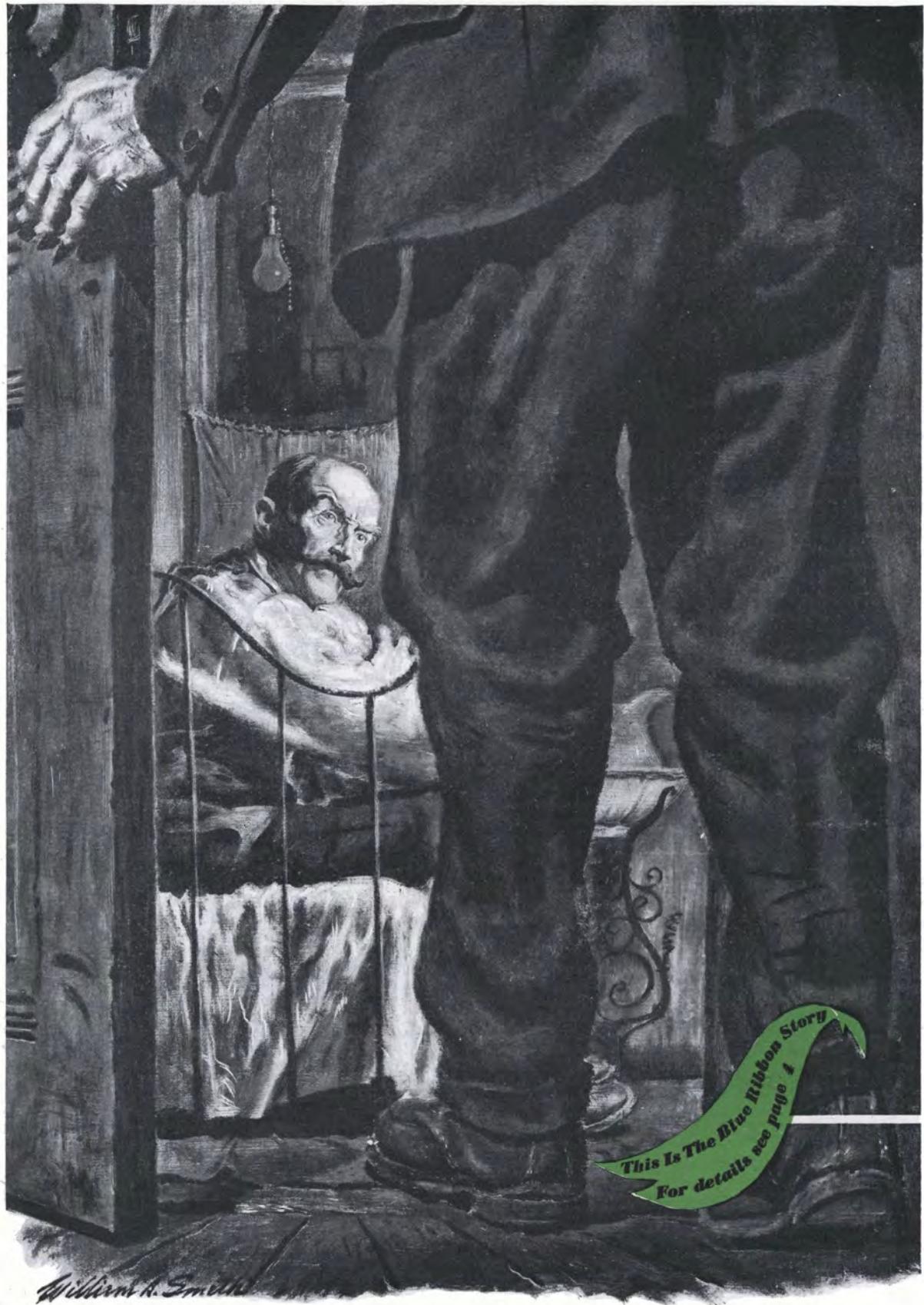
To be commercially successful nowadays, a lyric writer must be able to do more than rhyme "love" with "dove." He must have, among other things, prolificness, versatility, a sensitive ear for idiom, a natural perception of rhythm, an extensive knowledge of current events, an unusual facility for phrase and word juggling, an understanding of the elementary type of poetry, and the knack of getting along with all sorts of composers.

Merger is not only bountifully blessed with all these attributes but, in addition, has an uncanny sense of what the public is going to like next month.

The actual physical process of writing lyrics on a sheet of paper rarely consumes more than twenty minutes of Mercer's time. But before he takes pencil in hand, he usually drives around in his car for what adds up to a week, mulling over the basic theme of his lyrics.

"What I try to do," he explains, "is to take a current situation, like the Army or rationing or railroads, write a few catch lyrics about it, and then set those to a fast-swinging tune. In a pinch I use love—only that's really tough."

Like most efficient (Continued on page 180)



This Is The Blue Ribbon Story
For details see page 2

William R. Smalls

This very short story By Gerald Kersh is nicely calculated to make
your blood run cold. It probably will

AN UNEASY conviction tells me that this story is true, but I hate to believe it. It was told to me by Ecco, the ventriloquist, who occupied a room next to mine in Busto's apartment house. I hope he lied. Or perhaps he was mad. The world is so full of liars and lunatics, that one never knows what is true and what is false.

All the same, if ever a man had a haunted look, that man was Ecco. He was small and furtive. He had disturbing habits; five minutes of his company would have set your nerves on edge. For example: he would stop in the middle of a sentence, say "Sssh!" in a compelling whisper, look timorously over his shoulder, and listen to something. The slightest noise made him jump. Like all Busto's tenants, he had come down in the world. There had been a time when he topped bills and drew fifty pounds a week. Now, he lived by performing to theater queues.

And yet he was the best ventriloquist I have ever heard. His talent was uncanny. Repartee cracked back and forth without

pause, and in two distinct voices. There were even people who swore that his dummy was no dummy, but a dwarf or small boy with painted cheeks, trained in ventriloquist back-chat. But this was not true. No dummy was ever more palpably stuffed with sawdust. Ecco called it Micky; and his act, Micky and Ecco.

All ventriloquists' dummies are ugly, but I have yet to see one uglier than Micky. It had a homemade look. There was something disgustingly avid in the stare of its bulging blue eyes, the lids of which clicked as it winked; and an extraordinarily horrible ghouliness in the smacking of its great, grinning, red wooden lips. Ecco carried Micky with him wherever he went, and even slept with it. You would have felt cold at the sight of Ecco, walking upstairs, holding Micky at arm's length. The dummy was large and robust; the man was small and wraithlike; and in a bad light you would have thought: The dummy is leading the man!

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM A. SMITH

The WHISPER

The WHISPER

I said he lived in the next room to mine. But in London, you may live and die in a room, and the man next door may never know. I should never have spoken to Ecco but for his habit of practicing ventriloquism by night. It was nerve-racking. At the best of times it was hard to find rest under Busto's roof, but Ecco made night hideous, really hideous. You know the shrill false voice of the ventriloquist's dummy? Micky's voice was not like that. It was shrill, but querulous; thin, not real—not Ecco's voice distorted, but a different voice. You would have sworn that there were two people quarreling. *This man is good*, I thought. Then: *But this man is perfect!* And at last, there crept into my mind this sickening idea: *There are two men!*

In the dead of night, voices would break out:
"Come on, try again!"
"I can't!"
"You must."
"I want to go to sleep."
"Not yet; try again!"
"I'm tired, I tell you; I can't!"
"And I say try again."

Then there would be peculiar singing notes, and at length Ecco's voice would cry, "You devil! You devil! Let me alone, in the name of God!"

One night, when this had gone on for three hours, I went to Ecco's door and knocked. There was no answer. I opened the door. Ecco was sitting there, gray in the face, with Micky on his knee. "Yes?" he said. He did not look at me, but the painted eyes of the dummy stared at me.

I said, "I don't want to seem unreasonable, but this noise . . ."

Ecco turned to the dummy, and said, "We're annoying the gentleman. Shall we stop?"

Micky's dead red lips snapped as he replied, "Yes. Put me to bed."

Ecco lifted him. The stuffed legs of the dummy flapped lifelessly as the man laid him on the divan, and covered him with a blanket. He pressed a spring. *Snap!*—the eyes closed. Ecco drew a deep breath.

"Curious bedfellow," I said.

"Yes," said Ecco. "But—please!" He looked at Micky, frowned at me and laid a finger to his lips. "Sssh!" he whispered.

"How about some coffee?" I suggested.

He nodded. "Yes, my throat is very dry," he said. I beckoned. That disgusting stuffed dummy seemed to charge the atmosphere with tension. Ecco followed me on tiptoe and closed his door silently. As I boiled water on my gas ring, I watched him. From time to time he hunched his shoulders, raised his eyebrows and listened. Then, after a few minutes of silence, he said suddenly, "You think I'm mad."

"No," I said, "not at all; only you seem remarkably devoted to that dummy of yours."

"I hate him," said Ecco, and listened again.

"Then why don't you burn the thing?"

"For God's sake!" cried Ecco, and clasped a hand over my mouth. I was uneasy. It was the presence of this terribly nervous little man that made me so. I tried to make conversation.

"You must be an extraordinarily fine ventriloquist," I said.

"Me? No, not very. My father, yes. He was great. He taught me all I know; and even now . . . I mean . . . without him, you understand—nothing! He was a genius. Me, I could never control the nerves of my face and throat. So you see, I was a great disappointment to him. He . . . well, you know; he could eat a beefsteak, while

Micky sitting at the same table sang *Je crois entendre encore*. That was genius. He used to make me practice, day in and day out—*Bee, Eff, Em, En, Pe, Ve, Doubleyou*, without moving the lips. But I was no good. I couldn't do it. I simply couldn't. He used to give me hell. When I was a child, my mother used to protect me a little. But afterwards! Bruises—I was black with them. He was a terrible man. Everybody was afraid of him. You're too young to remember: he looked like—well, look."

Ecco took a wallet out and extracted a photograph. It was brown and faded, but the features of the face were still vivid. It was a bad face; strong but evil—fat, swarthy, bearded and forbidding. The huge lips were pressed firmly together under a heavy black mustache, which grew right up to the sides of a massive flat nose. He had immense eyebrows, which ran together in the middle; and great, round, glittering eyes.

"You can't get the impression," said Ecco, "but when he came on to the stage in a black cloak lined with red silk, he looked just like the devil. He took Micky with him wherever he went; they used to talk in public. But he was a great ventriloquist—the greatest ever. He used to say, 'I'll make a ventriloquist of you if it's the last thing I ever do.' I had to go with him wherever he went and watch him; and go home with him at night and practice again—*Bee, Eff, Em, En, Pe, Ve, Doubleyou*—over and over again, sometimes till dawn. You'll think I'm crazy."

"Why should I?"

"Well . . . This went on and on, until—*Sssh!*—did you hear something?"

"No, there was nothing. Go on."

"One night I—I mean, there was an accident. I—he fell down the lift shaft in the hotel in Marseilles. Somebody had left the gate wide open. He was killed." Ecco wiped sweat from his face. "And that night I slept well for the first time in my life. I was twenty years old then. I went to sleep and slept well. And then I had a horrible dream. He was back again, see? Only not he, in the flesh; but only his voice. And he was saying: 'Get up, get up, get up and try again, damn you; get up I say. I'll make a ventriloquist of you if it's the last thing I ever do. Wake up!'

"I woke up . . . You will think I'm mad . . . I swear. I still heard the voice, and it was coming from—" Ecco paused and gulped.

I said, "Micky?"

He nodded. There was a pause; I said, "Well?"

"That's about all," he said. "It was coming from Micky. It has been going on ever since; day and night. He won't let me alone. It isn't I who make Micky talk. Micky makes me talk. He makes me practice still—day and night. I daren't leave him. He might tell the—he might—oh, God! Anyway, I can't leave him . . . I can't."

I thought: This poor man is undoubtedly mad. He has got the habit of talking to himself, and he thinks—

At that moment, I heard a voice; a little, thin, querulous, mocking voice, which seemed to come from Ecco's room. It said, "Ecco!"

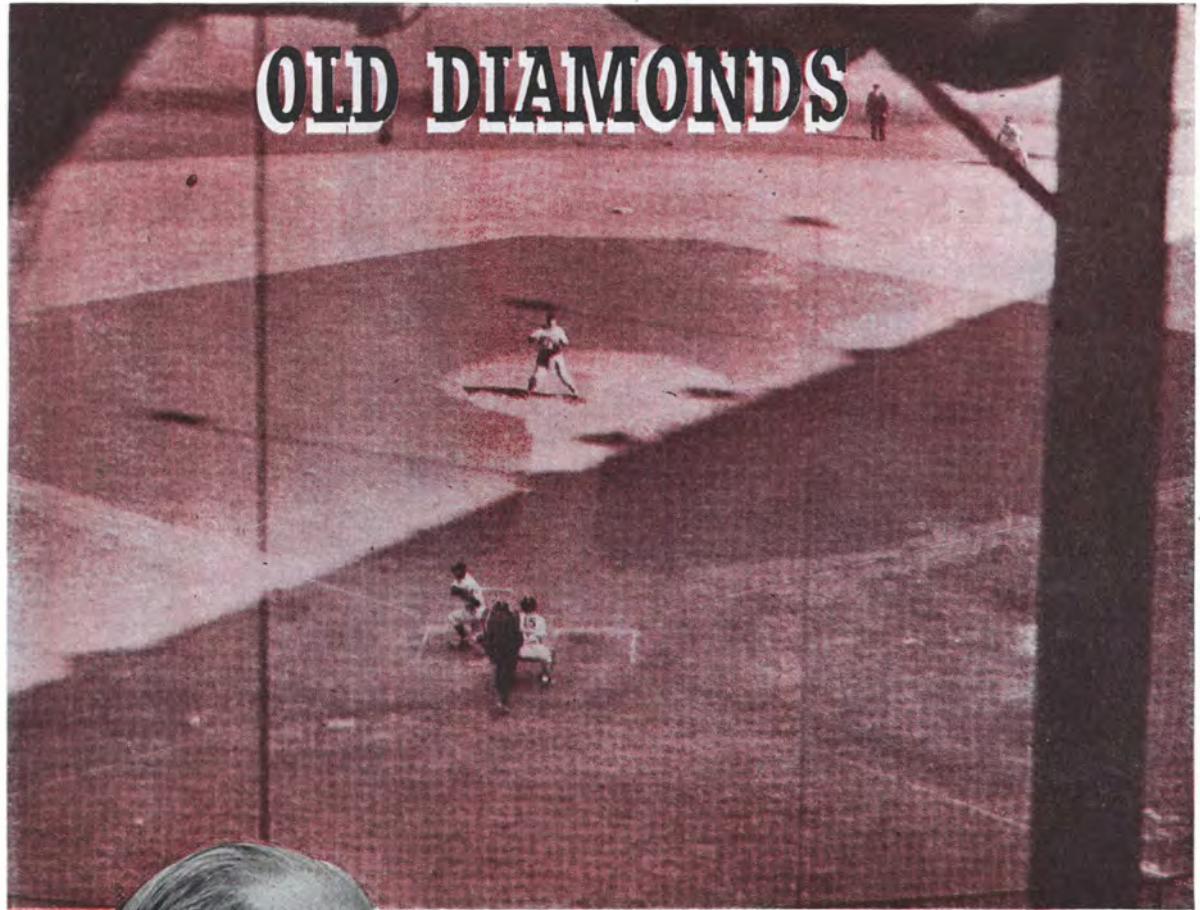
Ecco leapt up, gibbering with fright. "There!" he said. "There he is again. I must go. I'm not mad; not really mad. I must—"

He ran out. I heard his door open and close. Then there came again the sound of conversation, and once I thought I heard Ecco's voice, shaking with sobs, saying, "*Bee, Eff, Em, En . . .*"

He is crazy I thought. Yes, the man must be crazy . . . He was . . . calling himself . . .

But it took me two hours to convince myself of that; and I left the light burning all that night; and I swear to you that I have never been more glad to see the dawn.

NEW GOLD FOR OLD DIAMONDS



Rejuvenated by new money and new executives
with big plans, baseball looks forward to
its most glittering season since the

heyday of Babe Ruth

By Dan Parker
Sports Editor, New York Daily Mirror

BALL CLUBS winging their way through the stratosphere to their training camps near the Equator . . . magnates piloting their own two-seater planes around the circuit in the wake of their teams . . . women fans adjourning to luxurious lounges for cocktails and caviar between halves of a double-header . . . baseball offices in which one sinks ankle-deep in rugs while being overwhelmed by the dazzling murals (no longer "malapropos" referred to as "muriels," please note) . . . club owners shelling out sums of Lend-Lease magnitude for players who aren't even available for duty at the time.

This isn't a hop head's vision of the baseball world of tomorrow. In the idiom of Atlantic and Fourth Avenues, Brooklyn, N. Y., U. S. A., it's a description of "the dawn of a new area" which has been ushered in with the first peacetime season in seven years.

In the upsurge that has followed the crushing of the Axis, baseball, long considered one of the most reactionary of the professional sports, has been inoculated with the spirit of the times and has taken giant strides in the direction of modern design.

Practically every big-league team has joined in the forward-looking program, either through large outlays of money or the acquisition of new high-powered executives. These moves forecast the most glittering baseball season since Babe Ruth's heyday directly after the first World War. Millionaires, catching the spirit of the thing as if it were a gold rush or oil boom, are tripping over one another in their efforts to invest in major-league franchises, in direct contrast to the situation only a few years ago, when the National League had to go out and promote a purchaser for its Philadelphia club.

Not long ago, Colonel Larry MacPhail's quarter-



YANKEES



LARRY MacPHAIL plans to brighten the rather conservative Yankees with a few of his own inimitable grand ideas.

Phillies



BOBBY CARPENTER brings a fat new bank roll of du Pont money to that traditionally shabby club, the Phillies.

Tigers



GEORGE TRAUTMAN comes from the presidency of the American Association to the Tigers with progressive purpose.

million-dollar investment in Black Angus cattle was being discussed by baseball men. Colonel MacPhail, one of the new triumvirate which bought the New York Yankee baseball empire from the estate of Colonel Jacob Ruppert early in 1945, has gone into the business of raising blooded stock on his Glen Angus Farm, Bel Air, Maryland, as a sideline to his far-flung baseball interests. Some of Larry's contemporaries, who thought the only beefs he ever raised were those he made against umpires and brother magnates who crossed him, couldn't figure out why he should concern himself with cattle.

"It's all very simple if you've been following the trend of things," said Tom Gallery, head of the Yankees' football department. "Larry is spending a half million dollars on the Yankee Stadium, installing fifteen thousand new box seats, building a beautiful lounge and clubroom for the box holders and is going to spare no mill'on at his command to put the best baseball team of all time on the field."

"We understand all that," said one of the group, "but

what has it got to do with raising blooded cattle?"

"Well," exclaimed Tom with mock indignation, "you don't think Larry is going to ask his ballplayers to eat steaks that aren't pedigreed, do you?"

There's not much hyperbole in Mr. Gallery's remark. Larry practiced his grandiose schemes with the Brooklyn Dodgers while converting that property from a rundown outfit, famous only as the laughingstock of baseball, into the ball team that the nation adopted as its own. But all the while, Larry was conscious of the Dodgers' inferiority in every respect when stacked alongside the Yanks. There was a team that represented the tops in baseball, and Larry's rest'ess spirit knew no peace until he had succeeded in getting Dan Topping, tin plate heir, and Del Webb, wealthy Arizona contractor, to join forces with him in purchasing the Bronx Bombers. His next move was to lease an entire floor of a Fifth Avenue skyscraper and transform it into a Hollywood producer's conception of an Arabian Nights' palace.

The Yankee Stadium, now having its face lifted, will

\$175,000

THE GIANTS, WITH THEIR NEW FREE SPENDING POLICY, SENT THAT MUCH TO ST. LOUIS FOR WALKER COOPER.

\$65,000

AND THE BRAVES, NO LONGER TIGHT-FISTED, ARE SAID TO HAVE PUT UP THIS FOR WALKER'S BROTHER, MORT.

BRAVES

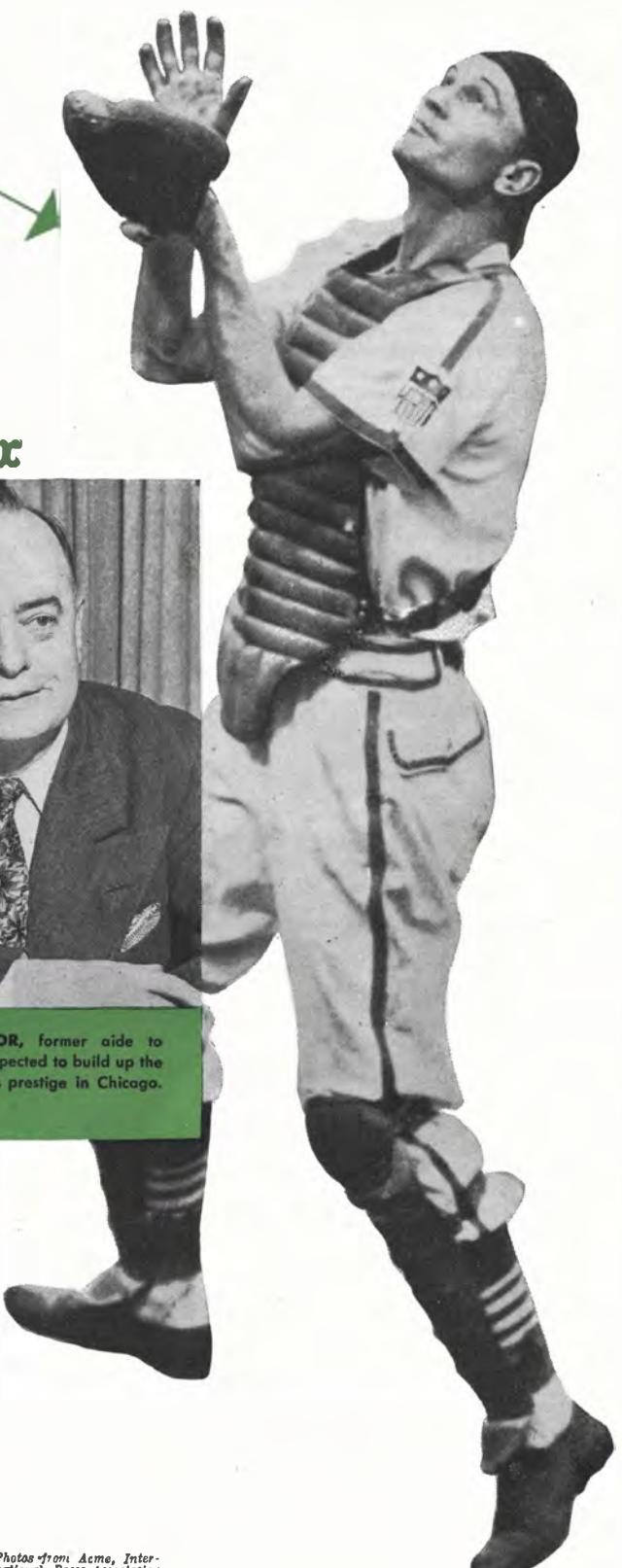


LOU PERINI heads an ambitious Boston trio that aims to make the Braves a big power in the postwar baseball era.

White Sox



LESLIE O'CONNOR, former aide to Judge Landis, is expected to build up the American League's prestige in Chicago.



Photos from Acme, International Press Association

be the most luxurious ball park in America when the improvements are completed. One innovation that will please fans no end is wider box seats which will not corrugate the posterior regions of their occupants. The new lighting system will be something out of this world. The cocktail lounge is expected to make several generations of honest brewers named Jake Ruppert revolve in their sarcophagi. Caviar will be available along with cocktails and vintage wine, a situation that should disturb the shade of the late Harry Stevens whose fortune was based on the simple formula of peanuts, cracker-jack, beer and hot dogs, the ageless diet of baseball fans.

For the spring training season this year, MacPhail even hired two camps—their old one in St. Petersburg, Florida, and another in Bradenton, across Tampa Bay.

Once upon a time—and not so far back as that fairytale cliché ordinarily indicates—the Boston Braves ball club, in bidding for a player who was on the sales counter, would mail its offer with a three-cent stamp. A special delivery stamp would be (Continued on page 204)

A PORTRAIT



FOR YOUR ROGUES' GALLERY BY EDITH MORGAN

The so-called Loves of John Dunning

IT WAS late afternoon. John Dunning walked aimlessly, drink in hand, about the darkening library of his apartment. From time to time he glanced at his watch. He was nervous and a little angry. It showed in the way he kept smoothing his neat little mustache and in the defiant upthrust of the arrogant, beak-nosed profile. Once he paused before a mirror and examined his face critically, turning his head from side to side, as if seeking reassurance in what he could find in the glass. He straightened his tie, then continued his slow pacing of the room.

Katherine was coming to dinner within the hour, and what happened afterward, how this evening ended, was a matter of tremendous importance. It was, in some vague way, a test.

He wanted to make Katherine Lewis his mistress but found himself possessed by an unreasonable fear of failure. And because it *was* unreasonable, because he couldn't understand it, it angered him. Success in this venture would mean only another pleasant episode in a long series of episodes stretching back over thirty years. He reasoned coolly and well—and in vain. The fear persisted.

It had never occurred to him that he was afraid of growing old, of being faced with irrefutable evidence that he was losing the charm he had spent a lifetime cultivating. When, since his fiftieth birthday, he'd found himself increasingly eager to seek out younger women, he had thought it was because he was a sensual and exceptionally virile man. He would have scorned the suggestion that women

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR SARNOFF



*Marion—cool, poised
and complacent.*



*Danielle—
vibrant, intoxicating and elusive.*

had become clear and shining mirrors into which he could look and find himself desirable. Young.

As he roamed the big library in the dusk Dunning reviewed the six weeks of courtship that had passed: the dinners at all the places Katherine liked; the concerts; his own impassioned playing of Liszt and Chopin for her; the casual love-making to which he had demanded no real response. He believed these things had been well done. He had to believe it.

When, shortly after dark, he went downstairs to call a taxi for the trip to Kay's rooming house, he found it was raining—a slow drizzle of a rain, with a chill in it. "An ugly night," he remarked to the doorman.

"Indeed it is, Mr. Dunning. We'll probably have some trouble getting a taxi."

While he waited he saw a young girl run out of the rainy darkness into the shelter of the canopy where he stood. She had no umbrella, and her shabby black coat was wet. As she came to a

breathless halt under the canopy, she shivered and from inside her coat drew forth a flat brown envelope. She pulled a paper halfway out of it, gently, and a smile of relief lighted her face.

Dunning, watching in mixed amusement and pity, saw that she had been worried about the fate of a charcoal drawing. He stepped closer and spoke to her. "Are you looking for a taxi?"

She was a little person, delicately formed, and as she smiled in answer, Dunning noticed that she was pretty in a blond, ethereal fashion. She had short curly hair, a small straight nose and beautiful eyes that turned upward at the corners.

When she spoke a dimple in her left cheek flicked into view and out again. "Yes, sir."

He wondered if the sir meant she considered him an old man, old enough to merit that bit of deference.

No. As quickly as the thought came, he pushed it away. He shrugged out of his topcoat and dropped it across her

shoulders. "Here. At least I can keep you warm until we do find a taxi." He gave her shoulder a friendly pat and felt warmly magnanimous when she accepted his offer of a ride home.

The trip proved to be a short one, but by the time Dunning had helped her out of the taxi he knew that her name was Willi Gunn, that she was twenty-two, and that she went to art school. She hoped to become a portrait painter someday. She lived, it developed, in a walk-up apartment house that was never quite warm enough in winter, and she liked New York—oh, ever so much. She was, Dunning decided, a natural and refreshing little creature, and he hoped quite sincerely that she'd paint good portraits. "Charming child," he thought. "I must tell Katherine about her."

Then he was alone again in the gloom of the taxi with rain splashing against the windows. The warmth engendered by Willi Gunn's friendliness died out of him and was replaced by the same cold, nagging, nameless apprehension that had

plagued him for months. His thoughts ran back, of their own accord and in spite of his efforts to curb them, to that morning in April when the affair with Marion Clubb had come to a close. It had ended abruptly, even as she lay in his arms—as he caught that unguarded look of appraisal she gave him, the smile of tolerant amusement that curved her lovely young mouth. No words, no questions, were necessary.

He simply knew, with a dreary finality, that she did not love him. That she never had. That what she had been giving was nothing more than—he chose the phrase carefully—than a passive acquiescence.

The knowledge had sickened him, filled him with a dark feeling of self-contempt; he had left her that very day.

He leaned forward and spoke to the driver of the taxi. "Cut through the park at Eighty-sixth, please." He sat back and hummed a gay little tune, determined to rid his mind of Marion Clubb and—what he knew deep down inside him was even more important—of Danielle Crochet. Danny had walked into his life in June, just after Marion.

Danielle Crochet, discovered in June, lost in August. It had been like catching a butterfly, holding it in your fingers for a moment, only to have it free itself and fly away. Danny was young and dark and vibrant. She had the sharp sweetness of mountain air. Danny was a double Scotch, a mad Slavic dance, a wild burst of applause. She was everything he needed to heal the hurt of Marion—until that night-club party where

she met and danced with the young Canadian lieutenant. Danced, and laughed, and danced again.

And now, he thought sadly, it was October. The trees in the park had turned to blazing reds and yellows, and Danny was gone with the summer green.

He was quickly ashamed of his mawkish sentimentality. "Here, driver." He sat forward. "This is the place." His voice sounded impatient, bad-humored, in his own ears. He wondered why he felt cross with the driver, and in self-conscious atonement gave him a bigger-than-usual tip.

When he returned to his apartment with Kay, Dunning found that Bobby, his Filipino houseboy, had lighted candles for the dinner table. In their light Kay's dark eyes shone like jewels.

He spoke the thought aloud. "You're a jewel, Kay. You look like one." His voice was soft, caressing. "You sparkle."

She reached across the small table to squeeze his hand. "Sweet old Johnny." She laughed, huskily, as always.

She had come from South Carolina two years before and had brought with her a deep strange voice which she hoped would make her a living as a blues singer once it had been properly trained. She had brought with her also an easy, friendly manner, the honesty and simplicity of a child, and a hearty, ever-ready laugh that made her very good company.

As they finished their coffee Dunning rose and moved (*Continued on page 202*)



*Willi—
just young and
gay and eager.*



THE STAR—Rita Hayworth in "Gilda" combines a compelling dramatic performance with sparkling dances and sultry songs.

The Number One authority on things cinematic selects the four outstanding Hollywood achievements of the month

Cosmopolitan's Citations of the Month



BY LOUELLA O. PARSONS

Motion Picture Editor, International News Service



THE PICTURE — Alan Ladd in action-packed "The Blue Dahlia," an exciting melodrama with Veronica Lake and William Bendix.



THE SUPPORTING ROLE — Louis Hayward gives a warm and sensitive performance opposite Jane Russell in "The Young Widow."

THINGS are looking up, Hollywood-way, my friends, so that this month I can offer you a murder mystery, a glamorous musical melodrama, a love story topical as today's headlines, and a genuine tear-jerker.

Having so much and varied entertainment to recommend makes me feel more relaxed than a grocer about to sell his customers a thousand pounds of butter.

Don't all start yelling when you observe that I put "The Blue Dahlia" at the head of this April list. It is a who-dun-it, no more and no less. But as I've told you before, I am Louella Pushover of 1946, where this ilk is concerned. To me, a tightly wrought murder mystery is escape entertainment of the most exciting order. When, as here, I get a yarn in this class which has no prop butler, no hard-boiled police sergeant, no tough coroner, and yet is tautly suspenseful from opening shot to fade-out, well, it gets me, pardners, it gets me.

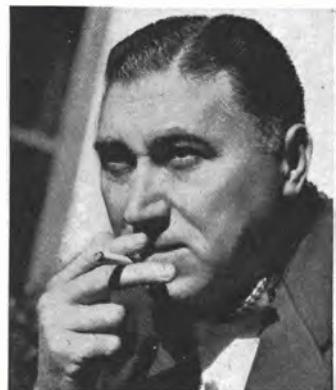
If you, too, are an addict for these yarns, you know that Raymond Chandler is the current writing king in this group. His four hard-hitting, fast-paced novels brought him to Hollywood, but

prior to "The Blue Dahlia," only one of his pictures has reached the screen. That was "Murder, My Sweet," which changed the course of Dick Powell's acting life from a singer to a slugger. A second Chandler picture has been made but not yet released "The Big Sleep" which stars the B & B knock-outs, Humphrey Bogart and his very own Baby, Lauren ("The Look") Bacall.

As for "The Blue Dahlia," which is the name of a night club and not a botanist's nightmare, it is the first picture on which this young master had a completely free hand—or perhaps I should say—typewriter.

As a member in good standing of the Loyal Order of Los Angeles Boosters, I suppose I should say a pox on him for once more setting his sexy knavery against the background of our fair city.

How is the rest of the world going to think of us, what with Chandler and the equally "kick-'em-in-the-teeth" style of writer, James M. Cain, perennially seeing us as a setting for adulterous chicanery? How is our Chamber of Commerce going to keep on selling the idea that we are all oranges and sunshine? Or is this, maybe, merely a case of vice and vice versa? (Cont. on p. 145)



THE DIRECTOR

Walter Lang makes "The Sentimental Journey" a memorable spiritual story and deftly keeps its fragile quality from becoming maudlin.

By Leonard Carlton

THE
RECONVERSION
OF
WELLINGTON WARREN

So you don't think life is amusing?
So you don't think spring is in the air?
Read this story, then, and think again



THREE IS no sweeter place in all the world than the capital of the Republic during the tranquil days of early spring. This was one of those days when even the great gray buildings seemed a bit less square and grimly eternal. This was a day on which even the problems of the

postwar world seemed not quite so pressing as they had been yesterday. This was a day for procrastination, for putting problems off until tomorrow. This was a day on which all of Washington was doing exactly that.

Well, not all of Washington. For on

this beamish day, in the seventh month of the era of reconversion, crisis had entered the life of Wellington Warren, veteran mailroom boy for the third floor of the huge Government building which some irreverent souls had been known to call Washington's Willow Run.

Wellington Warren, twenty plus, was the veritable beating heart of the whole third floor. Into his mailroom flowed the paper tide, the cascade of memoranda, administrative orders, action sheets, reports and forms, the river of pallid white corpuscles which is the blood stream of government. He was the pump which sped it on. And in the ordinary course of events Wellington was quite aware of his importance—aware and happy.

Wellington was not one of your rivotous boys. In his lightest moments he was inclined to carry the woes of the world on the bridge of his nose, along with the horn-rimmed glasses. But today even the casual observer would have noted extra overtones of melancholy. Said casual observer would have seen Wellington take a copy of a memorandum from a pile on the table before him; he would have seen Wellington read it with horror and consternation etched plainly on his face.

Actually, as government documents go, this one was a model of simplicity. Mr. Joseph P. Stanton, it said, in recognition of outstanding service and ability was, effective this date, appointed Chairman of the Review Board for Federal Agency Integration. The Board was indeed fortunate in securing his services. And it was signed by Ralph O. Hodges Senior Co-ordinator of Inter-Bureau Research.

Wellington Warren did not know much about Mr. Hodges. He did not know that, in a dazzling display of footwork on the Washington high wire, the Senior Co-ordinator had just waltzed over the abyss of reconversion and liquidation to land securely in an even better spot than the one he'd had before. He did not know that Mr. Hodges was a power of whom Bureau Chiefs spoke with respect and Division Chiefs with awe. He just knew he had to see Mr. Hodges. Right away. Hence, after several frantic phone calls, behold him crossing the threshold of 33765A, the outer office of Mr. Hodges. Mrs. Johns, the Administrative Assistant, favored him with a smile which he nervously passed on to Peggy, the pretty second secretary. But the Great Man's secretary, known from OSS to CPARBUSGBAC as the *Guardian Dragon*, said not a word; (*Continued on page 101*)



ILLUSTRATED THIS STORY

10 Killed Dozens Injured in Midtown Factory Blaze



YOU GET SOME STRANGE SITUATIONS IN THE CITY ROOM OF A BIG NEWSPAPER.



Second Edition

DAVE MANNING was not particularly pleased about going back to work. It was good to be home again, to be getting out of the car and climbing up the tree-shadowed steps where Molly, his wife, was waiting. But his mind didn't want to move any further than that.

It centered on Molly and Beth and the old, red-painted, rambling house; it refused even to consider tomorrow and the Courier office and the yellowed desk where he sat as news editor. He'd never realized until now how much he disliked the paper and the people on it.

His distaste had grown during the two long months in the sanitarium, and now that they were over and he was well again, it still remained.

Molly ran out on the porch and her hair shimmered in the light. "Why, Dave. I didn't expect you quite so soon."

He kissed her and it was nice that Molly was so comfortable; a plump, small woman who never took anything hard, who never got excited. Sometimes, he felt he was living in two worlds at once: the pleasant one where Molly and Beth moved about the quiet old house; the sharp, disagreeable one that was the Courier's city room.

This was the good world now, the bright, brave one; warm with love and understanding.

Molly rubbed her cheek against his shoulder. "You look fine, Dave."

Yes, he felt fine now after two months of rest. He didn't feel a bit like the battered old man who had collapsed across his desk that hot day and had stayed there, helpless, until they'd had to take him home.

The doctor had said he was worn out and had sent him to the sanitarium, deep in the green, cool countryside.

He gave a small sigh of satisfaction. "I feel fine, Molly. I feel like myself again."

There was the old red armchair waiting for him and Molly bustling in from the kitchen with a cold drink. Molly's cheeks still held that faint pink flush and her eyes danced, as if all life were a trifle comic.

She had the light, gay touch that he lacked; sometimes he wondered how she'd stood him all these years.

He held up the frosted glass. "Where's Beth?"

"It's her day off, dear. She's gone to visit a girl friend who lives on the South Shore."

Something was queer about that, and for a second he couldn't think what it was. For Beth was the fixed point about which he and Molly revolved. They'd married quite (*Continued on page 124*)

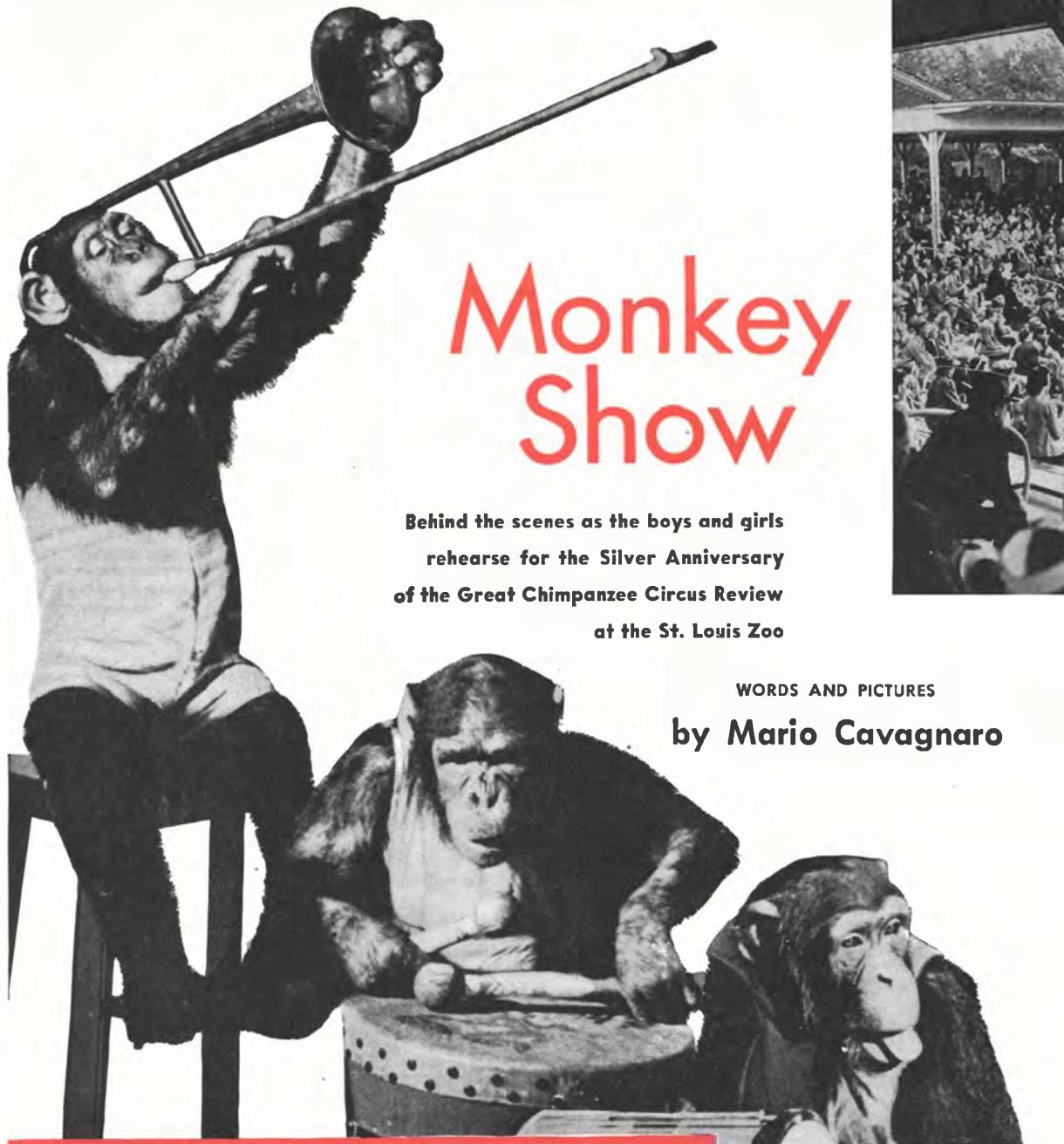
ILLUSTRATED BY JON WHITCOMB

By Gordon Malherbe Hillman

BUT EVEN THE DISILLUSIONED NEWS EDITOR WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THIS ONE

Dr. C. E. McClung, L.
Zoologist Dies

Spent lifetime Pa. Jan
burnt that were being
burnt for the cause
burnt for the cause
burnt for the cause



Monkey Show

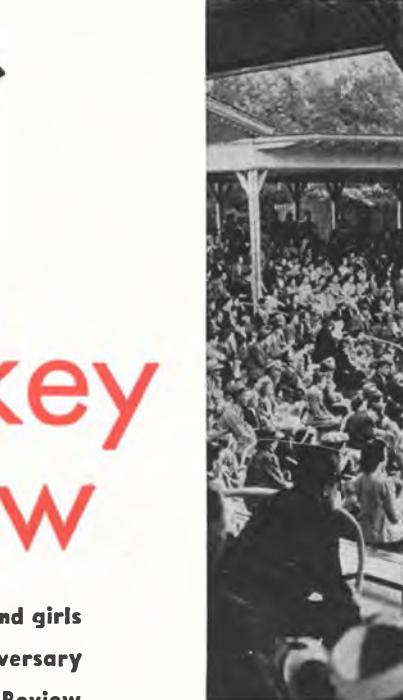
**Behind the scenes as the boys and girls
rehearse for the Silver Anniversary
of the Great Chimpanzee Circus Review
at the St. Louis Zoo**

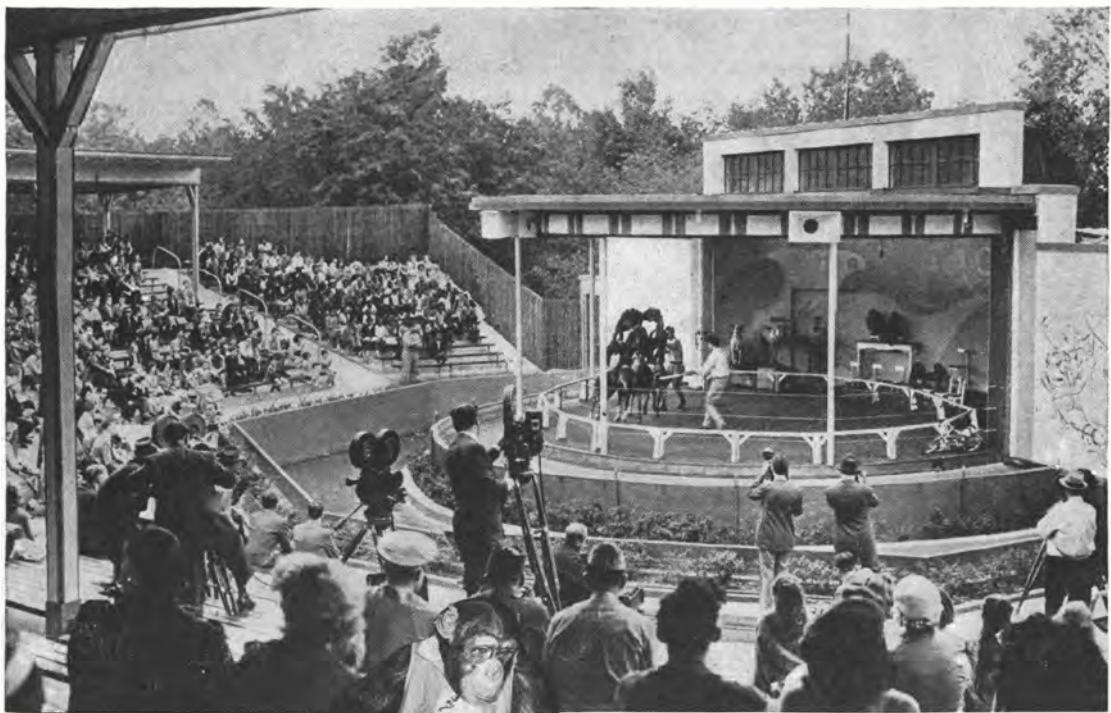
WORDS AND PICTURES

by Mario Cavagnaro

THE twenty-four-year-old Chimp Circus Review, which attracts a million spectators each season, is the Big Show at the St. Louis Zoo. It is only one of three animal acts staged twice daily from mid-May to mid-October, in separate arenas, on hourly schedules which do not conflict. The other performances are an elephant show and a lion-tiger-

bear act. The St. Louis Zoological Garden is the only zoo in the world supported by a direct mill tax—two cents on the thousand dollars of taxable property. The money derived can be used only for building and maintaining the zoo. Come flood, famine or epidemic, it cannot be diverted for any other purpose. Admission is free.





"Watch those turns!" Rudy is said to be the only chimp in the world to master the unicycle.

↑ "Oh-oh-o-o-o-o-o!" Boys, girls, and adults cheer as the show goes on. A moat keeps the chimps from joining the audience.



→ "Ride 'em Cowboy!" Sailor gets up on Red for a bit of Wild West.



"Pyramid, boys!" All dressed and ready to go for the equestrian act. Above right, Zoo Director George P. Vierheller inspects the chimps' wardrobe.

My heart's at Home



ILLUSTRATED BY AUSTIN BRIGGS



Have you ever been achingly,
unbearably lonely?

Have you ever felt like
a stranger, an outsider?

If so,

then this story
is
for you

By Brooke Hanlon

FIVE MONTHS after Hal Jackson's plane had been shot down in the Pacific Monica had come from Australia with small Roddy. She kept counting and recounting the months she had lived in the States with the Jacksons. It was a year now. The prosperous Pennsylvania farm had been lush with summer, it had been sere with autumn, and winterbound. Spring again then, and all the seasons upside down in a way to turn and turn homesickness in a heart.

Her aunt and uncle in Brisbane had thought it best that she come. There had been a note of pleading in the Jacksons' letters.

Now it was hot, fragrant summer again in Pennsylvania. It was the Fourth of July, and that meant something to the Jacksons, though Monica wasn't quite sure what it was. Working in the big summer kitchen even this early in the morning she had to lift a corner of her apron and touch her upper lip with it. The apron was fresh and pink and becoming. It made her skin glow and her eyes look very blue.

Not that she ever felt especially attractive when Hal's sisters were home, and they were home now. They came nearly every holiday, Jane from Washington and Marianna and her young husband from the western part of this same state. There was something they called know-how in the States, and the Jackson girls were filled with it.

Mrs. Jackson had thought the strawberries would keep over the holiday, but Monica had offered to do them between the two breakfasts. She was hurrying, but she was being careful about everything too. She had learned all of her

mother-in-law's ways of doing things. She'd learned to prepare all the strange foods the family liked. Roddy—her thoughts came up to it sadly at times—wouldn't know any other foods or living ways. He wouldn't know any of the ways of home. "In Pennsylvania we . . ." Hal's mother began many of her sentences that way, with affectionate pride. One could learn the outer ways of living in the States, but there was no way of belonging.

Monica was pouring paraffin on the last jar of preserves when her mother-in-law came in with fresh berries for the second breakfast. Roddy in a brief sun suit tagg'd at her heels. "I just don't know what I did before you came, Monica." Mrs. Jackson smiled appreciatively at the sparkling glasses.

"When I came—I surely was a dumb bunny then." Monica said it hesitantly, then closed her lips tightly. She went on trying to sound like Jane and Marianna, and not having it come off. Back home in Brisbane her tongue had raced sure and free. Back home in Brisbane . . .

There was no way of dealing with this longing to be on the other side of the world. One just stiffened and bore it. Most days it crept in, but on holidays and when the girls were home it rushed. She picked Roddy up to wash his hands, and the small body warm in her arms helped a little. "Fourth-a-July, Fourth-a-July," Roddy chanted, splashing water happily.

She set him down and he lurched off. Two years old. The sturdy legs were starting on a long trip, the one to being an American. Monica watched him, her lashes down to hide the shadow in her eyes.

In Pennsylvania we . . . she thought soberly. We send the boys to the university and to a good preparatory school. Mercersburg, Cornell. The names were on pennants in Hal's room, and Monica could close her eyes and see every letter of them, but without any feeling of having them belong to her.

"You have us a good Yank," Hal had said. He had been a boy with a lot of teasing in his loving, a boy with a laughing way of making everything right. Her memories of him were fading and fading, though. Theirs had been a short marriage. It was here in the States, wasn't it, that she had finally lost Hal? He was lost in the strange ways and in the very look of the valley. He was lost in the holiday rituals, and when his sisters were home he seemed completely gone.

If the older Jacksons had talked about their son, if they had made their part of him Monica's too . . . But it was as though they were unable to say his name. The girls . . . It was impossible to see, after a year, that the Jackson girls remembered their brother at all. Monica's heart tightened against them one more time.

"It's the first Fourth for Roddy," Mrs. Jackson was saying pleasantly. "Last year he was too little to go picnicking. He'll love the parade, too."

The Fourth. They called it simply that. It was stupid of her to have forgotten what it meant. It was just a day that stretched endlessly ahead for Monica, a day filled with heat and crowds of strangers and with the only half-intelligible talk of the Jackson young people. There'd be the picnic, the parade in near-by Normansville. (Continued on page 131)



Lorrie Baer

ILLUSTRATED THIS STORY

In Paris they met Julius Maloff, who concentrated most of his attention on Meg.

By Faith Baldwin

Comes the day in every woman's life when she must stop and face the music. To Meg at the height of her fame came another chance at happiness—and she knew it might be her last

THE STORY SO FAR: How do the problems of a married woman, launched on a career late in the nineteenth century, compare with those of the businesswoman with a family today? Was it Meg's career or adverse circumstances that ended the great love she and Johnny Lewis once shared? Saddled with the necessity of supporting her family while the husband she loved continually sought a fortune away from home, lovely dark-haired Meg prospered over the years as Mme. Margaret, dress designer to New York City's elite. The wealthy Mrs. Herbert Carrington had recognized Meg's talent and set her up in an exclusive establishment in the West Thirties. There Meg's mother, Rose, and the three Lewis children—Kitty, Marion and Jack—lived with her. Johnny's cousin, Agnes Charbon, was also part of the household until her unrequited love for Meg's brother, Ian, led her to a successful stage career.

Johnny refused to return to New York, having finally found his right place in Wyoming where he and his English partner, Hayward, operated a ranch. Because she felt responsible for Elsie Carrington's investment Meg refused to join him there.

She renewed an old friendship with Julius Maloff and his family and dined on several occasions with Derek Van Eyck, father of one of her clients. Van Eyck's suggestion that Meg be his mistress shocked her into the realization of her

Woman on
Her Way

Woman on Her Way

position as a married woman who was not a wife.

Sometime later, when Meg and Elsie Carrington went to Europe, Meg visited her mother's birthplace and ran into Hayward, Johnny's former partner, now Lord Linwood. He too found Meg desirable.

* * * * *

WHEN, OVER a year after Meg's first trip to Europe, Lord Linwood arrived in the United States, he came ostensibly to witness the Johnson-Jeffries fight on July fourth in Nevada. He traveled by way of New York, arriving in May and stopping at the Ritz. And Elsie said, sighing, "If Herbert were alive, he would have turned himself inside out to entertain him. He dearly loved a Lord!"

Meg was unconcerned. Linwood had written her regularly since their meeting in England; once a week his letters came, gay, amusing, but a trifle insistent. Rose, seeing them on the hall table, would turn the envelopes over in her hands; no good, she warned, could come of so unsuitable an acquaintance!

Elsie didn't agree with this, nor Ian; no one agreed, save Meg herself, and she mutely. Agnes, hearing of Linwood via the family grapevine, was entranced. The previous winter Agnes had married one of the great producers, Harlow Stone. He was twice her age and had been married before. He was insane about her; from now on, as long as she cared to continue on the stage, Agnes' career was assured, insofar as good parts and fine productions were concerned. The critics might consider this assurance as one strike against her; yet, as long as her ability was manifest, her beauty obvious, Agnes would remain a durable star in the backdrop heavens. Linwood, descending upon Meg and bearing her off to dine, found her preoccupied. Her replies to his letters had been few, without intimacy and therefore unflattering. Now he insisted she fill in the gaps.

"Your letters," he remarked, "were masterpieces of understatement. The *ave atque vale* type. I faintly gathered that you are moving your establishment and your home. Can you bring yourself to tell me about it?"

She explained that Elsie Carrington had had a good offer for the brownstone. She added, "So we have leased a house in the Fifties for the shop, and I've taken a West End Avenue apartment. It's time business and family life were divorced. We're moving in October."

He said, "Meg, you are looking extremely pretty—but a little tired."

Meg said, "Thanks. As for being tired, I am doing Agnes' clothes for her play. It opens in October. Her husband has to be consulted, as well as the playwright and the director. It's a little wearing. Of course, I

have dressed her and other actresses for some time. But this is different."

"I can see that. If you succeed, you will be much in demand. Tell me about your children. I hope I am going to see them while I'm here."

"They're growing up," said Meg, and her tone was astonished. "Kitty is nearly eighteen; she graduates from school in June. She wants to take a business course in the fall and refuses to consider college. Marion enters boarding school in September. Jack will go away too, but not just yet. I can hardly realize all this myself." The brownstone bulged with suitors, and Rose was a vigilant chaperone. Meg said, "It hampers the boys but is, I suppose, as well. One of Kitty's friends seems quite serious. A nice boy. I like him. He's a senior at Yale."

"Haven't you any life of your own?" Linwood asked, smiling.

"All I can handle."

"And the men in it?"

Meg said, "I'm still married, Edward."

"Need you remind me? I wish you weren't. Johnny? What have you heard?"

She said evenly, "Nothing since I last saw you."

He raised his eyebrows. He asked, "Do you wish me to go to Wyoming after my trip to Nevada?"

"Not for my sake," she told him.

She looked, under the shadow of her hat, absurdly young to be the mother of an eighteen-year-old. He asked abruptly, "How old are you, darling?"

Meg blinked. She did not love Linwood and never would; but she knew he was attractive.

She said, "I'm thirty-five."

"You'll live to be eighty," he prophesied.

"No doubt," agreed Meg politely. She enjoyed flawless health, for no good reason, except perhaps sturdy ancestry.

"And you intend to live your next forty-five years alone?"

"I'll have my grandchildren," she said, laughing.

"Will they compensate?"

She asked, "What is it they're playing? It's very familiar—from 'The Chocolate Soldier?'" Edward, have you heard Yvette Guilbert—she's wonderful. Elsie, Ian and I went—"

He said, "What charming chitchat . . . New York has greatly changed since I was last here; not for the better—too much traffic. What a stimulating climate; what delightful women," he added with savagery, "yet I cannot say that I approve the hobble skirt. . . Is that the way you wish me to talk?"

"I'd rather," said Meg.

"Very well." He lifted his glass, set it down. "You walked into that filthy little room," he said, "a thousand years ago. There was Johnny, looking as if you had brought him the world. I wondered if you had. I had been drunk for days. Do you know

what sent me away from England? I fell in love with my younger brother's widow. I couldn't have her, of course. He was killed at Spion Kop in 1899, and she looked beautiful in black. But there are laws—even if she would have had me. So, she had someone else. I drank like the proverbial fish, and my family shipped me to the States, hoping I'd die obscurely. No one dreamed that the two older sons would die before me, both without male issue. One broke his neck hunting, and the other drowned in Italy, and that left me—the last of the line. Amusing, wasn't it?"

She said, "I'm sorry, Edward. I didn't know."

"You know now, but how much good does it do me?" he said. "Meg, let me go to Nevada and ask Johnny to let you divorce him. Would you marry me then?"

She shook her head. "No," she said.

"Why, in heaven's name? I'm really quite eligible, though land poor."

"I don't love you," she said carefully, "and, even if I did . . ."

"Well?"

"It's a long way from Chelsea Village to The Towers," she said.

"What are you talking about?"

"Nothing. And you couldn't marry a divorced woman."

"I could," he said, "and move to the States and become a citizen."

Meg said, "It's no use. And a more irregular arrangement would be of no use, either."

"What makes you think I would ask an irregular arrangement?"

"I see it," she said readily, "in your eyes. It isn't the first time I've seen it—in yours and other men's."

He said angrily, "You can't forget my stupidity that one night, can you?"

"No—but it does not really matter." She leaned back in her chair and looked at him. The blue of her silk frock deepened the color of her eyes. The lace yoke was creamy; the color of her skin and the kimono sleeves displayed graceful arms. The high-waisted bodice and long skirt were embroidered, and pale pink roses bloomed on her black straw hat.

She said, "A woman in my position expects two proposals from men: the conventional proposal from the conventional man who would be satisfied with a wife who could support him, and the unconventional proposal, into which I need not go—"

He interrupted. "You sound a little cynical, and it doesn't become you."

"I'm not cynical," said Meg. "I've just been learning my way around. Have you read Gertrude Atherton's 'Tower of Ivory?'" There was an Englishman in the book rather like you." She smiled. "He married an American heiress—"

"Are you suggesting that I—?"

"It might not be a bad idea," said Meg serenely, "but he was in love with an opera singer. He couldn't marry her because she had a notorious past and (Continued on page 108)

Beginning a text and picture preview of the:

atomic bomb tests

MAJ. GEN. THOMAS F. FARRELL,
the Army atomic bomb expert, who
directed the attacks on Hiroshima and
Nagasaki that ended the war, gives a vivid picture of what
will happen to our battleships, carriers and cruisers and to
our established theories of naval warfare in the Marshall
Islands during the next few months when we stage the
greatest peacetime acts of destruction in world history



IT IS a hot clear morning in the central Pacific. The hour is eight-thirty. The time is late May, 1946. The place is Bikini Atoll, a necklace of coral islands surrounding a huge lagoon twenty-seven miles long and fifteen miles wide. The lagoon is the crater of a dead and submerged volcano. It is from twenty to thirty fathoms deep. Outside the Atoll the depths are enormous.

In the lagoon a great fleet of warships is assembled: battleships, carriers, cruisers, destroyers, landing craft. They swing idly at anchorage in the light westerly breeze. Not a soul is aboard them. On the surrounding islands where palm trees rustle quietly, native huts stand deserted. The Atoll is marked for the most devastating destruction ever conceived by the mind or delivered by the hand of man.

Ten miles to the east, tense observers on another fleet of vessels strain their eyes to catch a flash of silver six miles high. Flying at more than thirty thousand feet, a Superfort of the 509th Bombardment Group drones toward the Atoll from its base on Kwajalein two hundred miles away. The B-29 carries an atomic bomb identical with the one that fell on Nagasaki. The greatest peacetime act of destruction in history is at hand.

The Superfort straightens out into its bomb run. The bombardier sights on a target painted on the deck of a large carrier in the center of the doomed fleet. Four miles short of the Atoll, the plane lifts perceptibly as the bomb is released. In a slow curve the missile arches toward the target. The Superfort banks sharply and races back to the west. Observers on the sea and in the air turn their backs and cover their eyes . . .

The description that follows is entirely imaginative. The ships used, their arrangement, the actual performance and effects of the bomb may vary in considerable detail from those to be described here. The known performance of the bombs already exploded and the serious thinking of people who know their capabilities form the basis for these predictions. This article is intended to give a preview of the kind and magnitude of things that *may* happen; quite different but equally startling things *could* happen. It is hoped that this story is not too far from reality.

This is the first of three tests of atomic power to be made against naval craft. In this test the bomb will explode about one thousand feet above the water. In the second test, which will also be described in this preview, the bomb will be exploded at surface level. In the third, tentatively planned for 1947, the explosion will take place under the sea.

For this first test, the ships are anchored in a pattern of rings that resembles a rifle-range target. Some of the battleships, large carriers, and heavy cruisers, are near the bull's eye in the center. The extent of damage they will suffer obviously varies with their distance from the explosion.

That veteran carrier of the Pacific war, the Saratoga, is in the fleet there. So is the carrier Independence. And the battleships New York, Arkansas, Pennsylvania and Nevada. Around them are the cruisers Pensacola and Salt Lake City.

sixteen destroyers, eight submarines, fifteen transports and forty-five landing craft of various types, plus the German cruiser *Prinz Eugen*, the Japanese battleship *Nagato* and the cruiser *Sakawa*.

The ships in the outermost circle are two miles from the center of the formation. Each of the four quadrants of the circle has the same types of ships, so that if the bomb misses the exact center, it will explode over all kinds of vessels. On the decks at varying distances from the center are guns, tanks, planes, trucks and other Army equipment, waiting to test their ability to withstand atomic blast and fire.

The bomb explodes with an indescribable flash which lights the lagoon with a blinding glare a thousand times brighter than the tropical sunlight. Observers feel it like a physical

shock. They uncover their eyes and, through special dark glasses, watch the great ball of fire dissolve into a boiling, surging, deadly cloud of brilliant colors. It is beautiful but highly dangerous. It contains the intensely radioactive fission products resulting from the explosion of the splitting plutonium atoms. The chain reaction of the explosion continues for a millionth part of a second before its tremendous energy tears the material apart and stops the reaction.

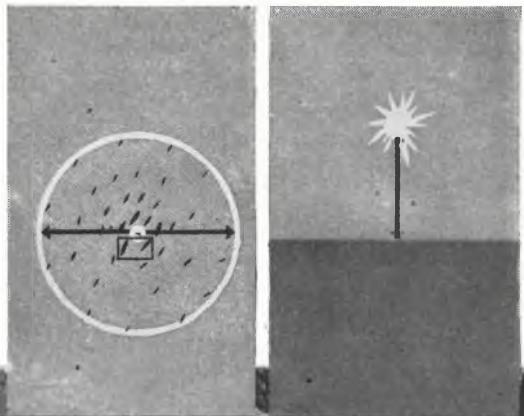
The initial intensity of the radioactivity from the products of the explosion is hundreds of thousands of times greater than that of all the radium that has been separated for use in the world. Unlike radium, however, they do not stay active for long. Radium retains its activity for hundreds of years. These fission products lose theirs in minutes, hours and days.

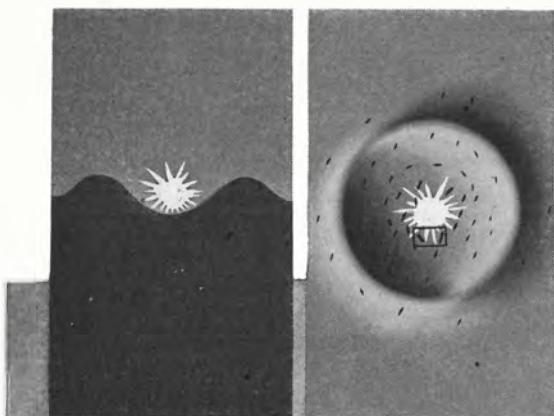


TEST ONE: EXPLOSION IN THE AIR.

For the first test the atomic bomb will be dropped from a B-29, exploding 1,000 feet above the center of a circle of ships four miles in diameter. Approximate positions of the battleship Pennsylvania and the cruiser Pensacola are shown in small square on diagram at the right. The artist's conception of what will happen to them appears in the drawing below. The Pensacola's mast is torn away by the blast.

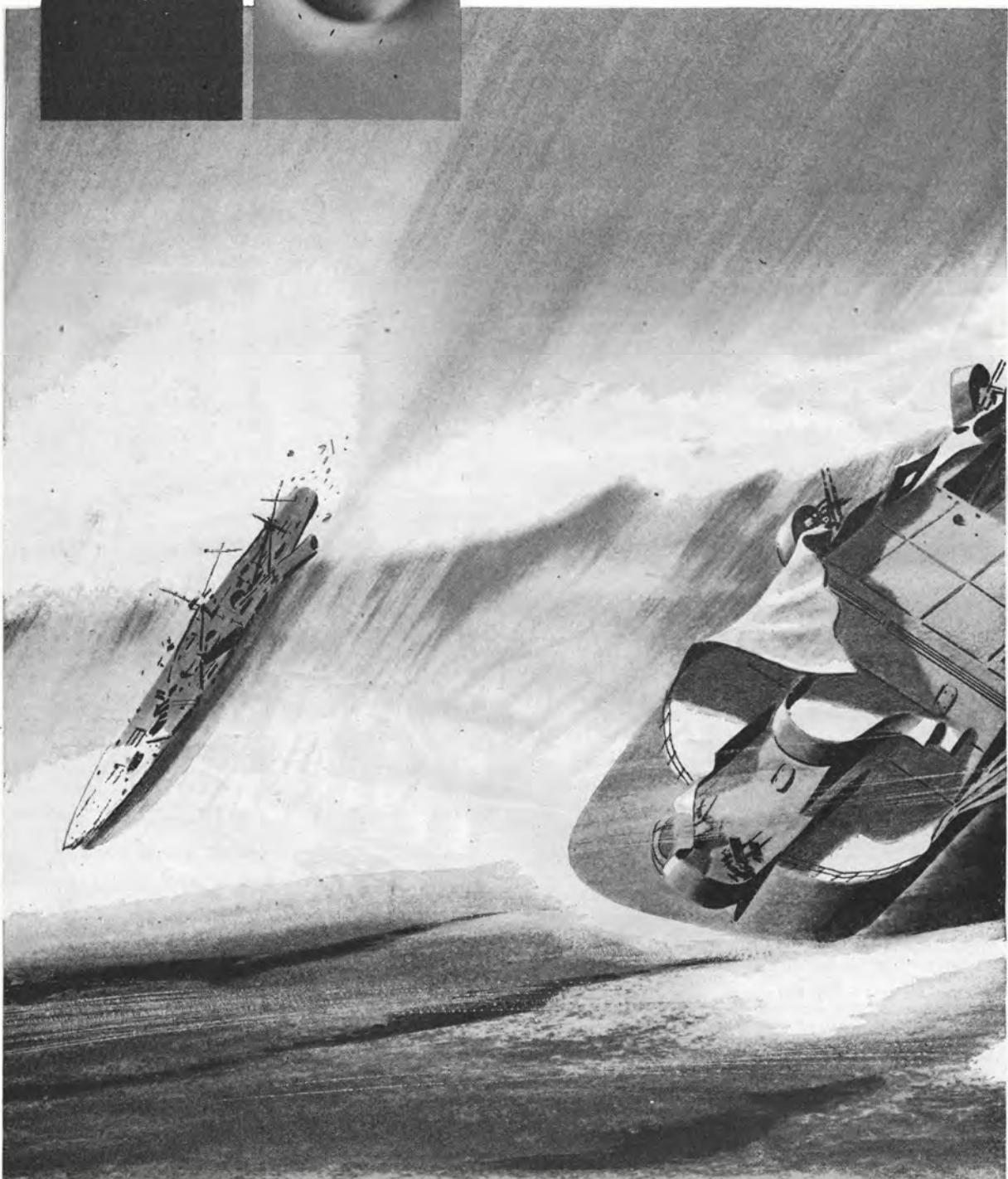
DRAWINGS BY MATT GREENE





TEST TWO: EXPLOSION ON THE SURFACE.

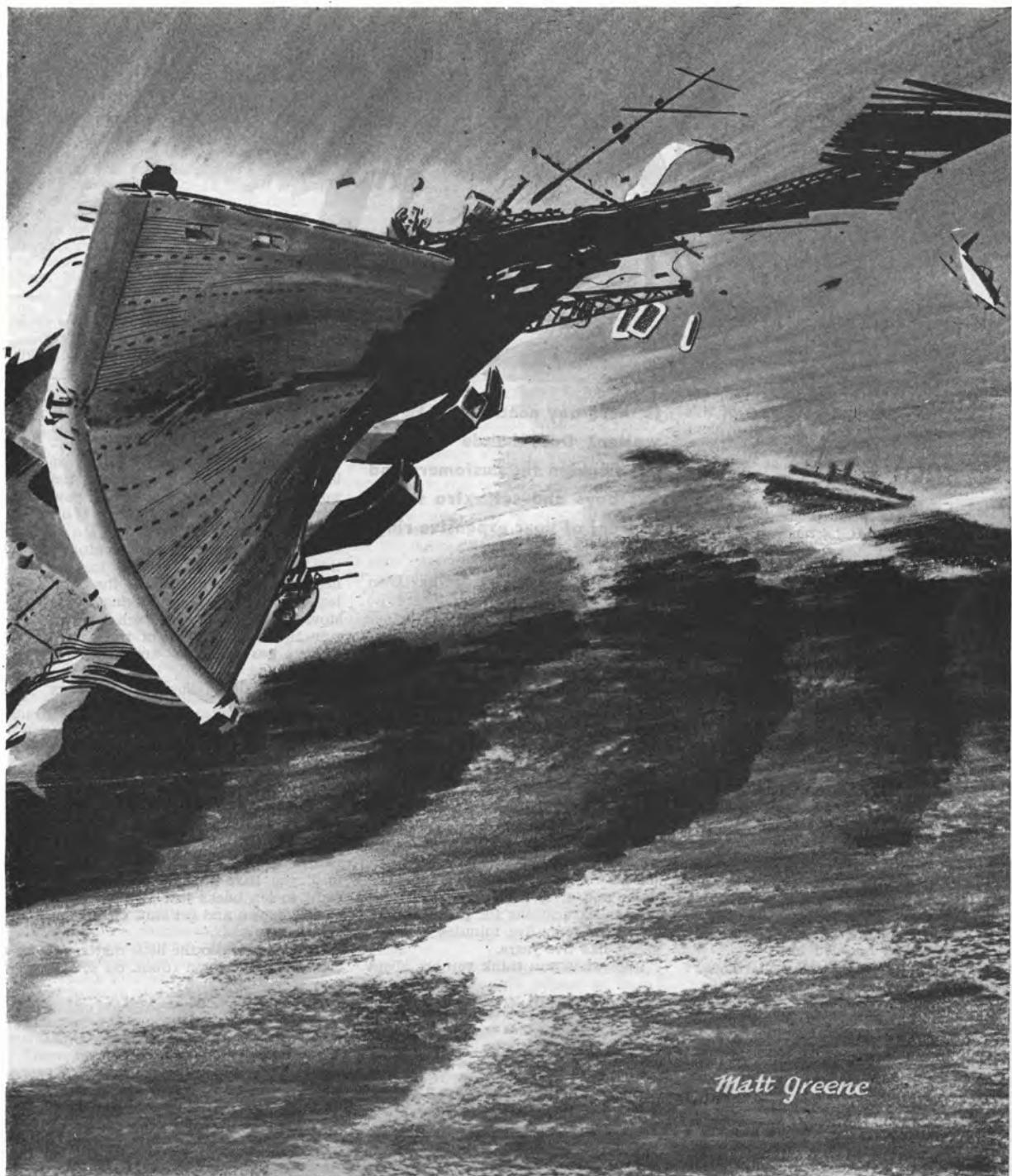
In the second test an atomic bomb will explode on the surface of the lagoon in the center of the circle of ships. As indicated in the diagram at extreme left, it will dig a deep crater 2000 feet wide in the water, throwing out 100-foot waves. The carrier Independence, right, is ripped by the explosion and the battleship Nevada almost capsizes in waves. The position of these ships is shown at the left.



As the cloud of fission products climbs upward, dispersing and mixing with air, it loses the intensity of its radioactivity and becomes less dangerous. But radioactivity does remain in measurable amounts for a length of time. Radioactivity from the Hiroshima bomb was measured on the engine filters of an airplane flying in the high atmosphere of the Northwestern United States. Winds had carried the minute particles all the way across the Pacific from Japan.

Still watching the cloud, the observers wait for almost a minute before they hear the roar of the explosion and feel

its shocking concussion. Down in the group of Target ships is a scene of havoc and destruction, ranging from the tearing apart and sinking of the carrier at the center, to minor damage to the upper works of some of the ships at the outer ring of the circle. The enormous pressure of the blast directly below the explosion crushes and rips the deck of the carrier wide open for most of its length and forces the ship quickly under the water. The tremendous heat melts and fuses most of the steel exposed to direct action of the bomb. She sinks in a matter of a few seconds with her (Continued on page 149)



Matt Greene



WHEN the founding fathers of this nation whipped up that self-evident truth in the Declaration of Independence to the effect that "All men are created equal," they forgot to add "... except in the eyes of Headwaiters." By what process we relinquished a free and democratic country and changed over to an absolute dictatorship operated by Captains of Waiters, I cannot tell you, but brothers and sisters, we've got it. Have you tried dining out lately?

Mind you, I do not begrudge a guy a chance to make a living, and maybe it was necessary to establish the equivalent of a commissioned-officer class among waiters, but I can't help feeling that these chaps don't do enough for their dough.

It used to be a simple and direct matter to order a meal in the old days. You went into a restaurant, café or hotel, consulted the menu, told the waiter what you wanted, and he went out to the kitchen and rustled it in. In gratitude to him for setting it before you instead of tossing it at your head or letting it slide into your lap, you gave him ten percent of the bill. That was before the party known as the Captain muscled in.

With him around the waiter doesn't

Is there any need of the Head-waiter? Does he do anything but frighten the customers and bus boys and set extra tables in front of your expensive ring-side seat?

even dare talk to you. He has been relegated to the position where he hands you the menu and beats it behind a potted palm. The Captain then saunters up and listens to your order while fighting to keep from his handsome countenance a sneer brought on by your deplorable ignorance of food. That's what made it so pleasant to deal with the old-fashioned waiter. He didn't care what you ate, or how much, or whether it matched.

So what great service does the Captain perform for you after he has taken your order and given you a proper feeling of inferiority? He merely writes your order on a slip of paper, digs the waiter out from behind the palm and gives it to him. All hands now take vacations for periods varying from forty-five minutes to what seems like five years.

Just when you think you are about

to pass out from hunger you see your waiter, obviously refreshed from his trip to Florida or the White Mountains, lugging in your grub. Ah, at last! But do you get it? Hell, no! It's worth the guy's life to give it to you, not to mention his job. He parks it on a siding and waits for the Captain to come back from Europe. Eventually this vital individual turns up looking healthy and rested. He puts the platters on one of those wandering table-stoves, giving it just enough heat to ruin the delicate work of the chef—if there has been any—and ladies out the portions.

And that, dear fellow sufferers, costs you five bucks.

If the waiter has been very, very good all day long, and hasn't quarreled out loud with any of the other waiters, he is allowed to hand you the plate of chow and lug out the empty dishes. And he still gets his full tip, and don't try to get away with any ten percent these days. If you are really throwing any sizable kind of feed, you have stood a rap of from eight to ten bucks just to make your wishes known and get stuff set on the table.

But there is also the little matter of the sum with which (Cont. on p. 81)



By Paul Gallico

IN EVERY SPOONFUL good taste—good nourishment

HERE are three soups to serve you well on any day that brings the family home hungry! All three are delicious and soundly nourishing. Each can be a happy choice for lunch or for supper.

● Campbell's Bean with Bacon Soup has a magical way with appetites! It's filled with the tempting taste of bacon, and plenty of plump beans.

● Campbell's Tomato Soup is America's favorite—and with good reason! Luscious tomatoes are blended with golden table butter, according to Campbell's exclusive recipe. Extra-delicious served as cream of tomato, by adding milk.

● Campbell's Beef Noodle Soup is beef straight through—rich beef stock, egg noodles and tender pieces of beef.



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THERE'S ONLY ONE BETTER BUY IN BONDS...SAVINGS BONDS!

O Captain! My Captain! (Continued from page 78)

you parted in the form of a fee, bribe, donation, subsidy or baksheesh to the Headwaiter to be allowed into the joint at all. And here is where we run afoul of the most absolute and exacting *tyranny* in all of these nominally free, independent and United States. And it is not the *trinkgeld* pocketed by this dictator which causes the most anguish and breaks up families and beautiful friendships with attractive mice, but his unassailable position as a kind of social arbiter. If you want to find out who you aren't, just buck up against one of those tail-coated cookies guarding the entrance to any of the swank joints in town.

You may be a big shot in the office or a hero to your wife, or even a respected pillar of the community in which you dwell, but just walk into a night spot, ex-speakeasy-turned-respectable, or famous hotel dining room and make the mistake of asking Andre, or Otto, or Emil, or Pietro for a table, and inside of thirty seconds you will have had an exact demonstration of your estimated value to society. It's all right if you can take it, but some sensitive souls never recover from it. Me, I know my place, and upon entering a trap for the purpose of loading some vittles, I head at once, like a homing pigeon, for the rear tables by the swinging doors leading to the kitchen, and give Headwaiters no trouble at all.

They appreciate this because theirs is exacting and delicate work. You may or may not know it, but in swank eat emporiums like Twenty-One, The Colony, Volsin, The Stork, the St. Regis and the Plaza, every table location has an individual social and economic significance which must be fitted to the hundredth part of a degree to the party that occupies it. If you are lucky and don't know which are the Big Shot locations, you can enjoy life just through being allowed into the joints at all. But many a little lady with social aspirations, who knows the secret of the seating plan, is eating her heart out because she never seems to be able to sit in the right place.

And oddly enough, this is one case where money won't turn the trick, though it has been known to help. For frequently it is more important to the undisputed dictator and arbiter of a dining room that customers shall be seated according to their degree of celebrity than it is to pocket a fat fee. A Headwaiter worthy of his position of power stays abreast of the Social Register, the society columns, the gossip departments of newspapers, and keeps posted to the last news item on the current publicity value of the clients.

If, for instance, Joan McBlonde, the movie queen, has been relegated to B pictures, and the Headwaiter, unaware of this, still seats her at a preferred table, the entire social system totters and threatens to collapse, like the dreaded chain reaction of the atomic bomb.

The problem of how much to tip this Czar and when and where and how to pass him the bribe is insoluble, and I cannot offer you much enlightenment. Native and veteran New Yorker that I am, I still live in acute terror of the breed. He is usually an elderly gentleman of great poise and breeding, slightly gray at the temples, clad in immaculate dinner clothes. He looks like a millionaire and sometimes is—or will be shortly. The prospect of slipping him a bill is paralyzing. After you have accomplished this, and he has transferred it to his pocket without looking at it, you can spend the rest of the evening fussing with your conscience as to whether it was sufficient, because HE will never let

you know by look or word. The idea seems to be to ruin your evening by forcing you to torture yourself. It always amazes me how the night-dining and late-entertainment world has managed to thrive on the psychology of making every man who bucks it feel like a cheap skat at one time or another.

For the most part, no great harm results from this business, since it was created for the suckers who expose themselves to it—people who need to be seen in the so-called right places—and the Headwaiter industry and dictatorship have not yet progressed to the point where they come into the street and force you into their *bistros* at the point of a gun.

I must, however, call attention to the double-crosser who operates the table concessions in the night club that offers a floor show to entertain the clients, and whose shenanigans with ringside tables I hereby intend to expose.

The ringside table is like the front-row seat at a prizefight. It is a precious commodity in the night club in spite of the fact that it has attendant hazards, such as getting nudged all night long by the rumba dancers passing by, or facing the threat of having your teeth kicked in by the hoof of a cutie being twirled by one of those adagio guys. But there are just certain times—for instance, when the big buyer comes to town—when you have to come up with a ringside table at the popular El Glittero Club.

So you go down there personally the day before and consult the Headwaiter, taking with you a deed to half your property, an interest in the business plus a cash down payment, and a trifle such as a chinchilla coat or cabochon ruby for his wife. You hand them over and explain why you simply *MUST* have a ringside table for Mr. Big Buyer tomorrow night. The Headwaiter disposes the gilt-edged securities, cash and jewelry about his person and says, "Yes, sir! We'll take care of you."

Still not too certain, you turn up the next night with the guy you are trying to impress and—wonder of wonders!—you HAVE got a ringside table, right in the middle and plumb on the edge of the dance floor.

By jove, this is living, and it was worth mortgaging the home and car to achieve it. There you are, right out in front of everybody; you hear people in the rear wondering who the important parties up front are, and Mr. Big Buyer is really impressed, and before he settles down to enjoy the show he pats you on the back and says: "Joe, my boy, you must be quite a guy around this town to get a table like this. First time I ever sat right smack up front." Brother, that contract is just as good as in your pocket. By golly, maybe you are a Big Shot!

And then three minutes before it is time for the show to begin a crowd arrives at the velvet rope. The Headwaiter rushes over, calling, "Yes, sir, Mr. Blotz! Good evening, Mr. Blimp! Glad to see you, Mr. Blab!"

You may have thought yourself a Big Shot for that night, brother, but these are Bigger Shots. The Captain claps his hands. As if by magic, waiters appear from all corners, bearing tables and chairs which are set out on the floor smack in front of you, and blooie, before you know what has happened, the show begins, and you and Mr. Big Buyer are now sitting in the fourth row behind a big fat dame who is wearing a fourteen-gallon hat.

O captain, my captain, you double-crossing louse you, how could you?



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Some Plain Talk About MacArthur *(Continued from page 28)*

and I have not found more than a dozen who were not convinced that MacArthur was a coward or villain or both. Many were almost pathologically eager to believe the worst; others, while too intelligent to accept unquestioningly all of the stories they had heard, did believe and did repeat one or more of them. Among this latter group were admirals, captains and commanders as well as seamen and gunners. In the dissenting dozen, however, were such top Navy commanders as Nimitz, Halsey, Kinkaid and other leaders who either fought beside or planned with the General. Regardless of any opinions they may have nursed in silence about MacArthur's vocabulary or his brand of tobacco, they were essentially fair in their judgment of him and unanimous in praising his valor and vision.

It seems reasonable to state that the stories about MacArthur would not have found such fertile ground if it were not that a good many people quite honestly and sincerely dislike him. There are many who think he is essentially a blatant show-off who inexcusably overworks the perpendicularly pronoun. The dislike of others stems from MacArthur's criticism of them, for it must be recorded that the General has not always been judicious in his statements about certain individuals or branches of the armed services that did not conduct themselves as MacArthur felt they should. Thus, part of the Navy's feeling is a defense against MacArthur's own openly expressed bitterness at the withdrawal of the Asiatic fleet—under orders—from the Philippines in the early days of the war, and his intimations that some of the admirals were overcautious about coming to grips with the enemy.

In the case of the Marines, it's an old feud. MacArthur once urged abolition of the Corps, and the Marines naturally still resent his stand. For his part, MacArthur felt that the Marines were given too much publicity for their deeds in the Argonne campaign in World War One and that the Army's doughfights were correspondingly slighted. This last fact may come as a grateful surprise to those who see MacArthur as a personal headline-hunter, but it has never led to good feelings between him and the Marines.

Many aviators, too, were anti-MacArthur until fairly recently. They believed, although it is not a matter of public record, that the General voted against Billy Mitchell in his famous fight for air power and that he did not appreciate the importance of air strength in modern war. All that changed, however, after General George Kenney went to the South Pacific at MacArthur's request to take over the minuscule and disorganized Army Air Forces and to beat the Japs out of those skies with brilliant strategy and relentless tactics. Today, MacArthur is regarded not only as one of the foremost exponents of air power but is a strong supporter of the campaign for a separate Air Force.

Nevertheless, there are still some airmen who blame MacArthur for the Clark Field disaster, and their allegations have stuck in the minds of many of the public. One version claims that MacArthur personally ordered the few B-17's and out-of-date P-40's which were our Air Force at Clark Field to remain on the ground where they were caught and destroyed by Jap planes some ten hours after the Pearl Harbor attack.

The truth is almost exactly opposite, as was eventually made public by the War Department in whose files the whole story is recorded, including the transfer

of the officers who failed to carry out the orders MacArthur had given. It is an absolute certainty that if MacArthur had been responsible, his opponents would have made public capital of it long ago.

But neither the Navy's resentment of MacArthur's criticism, the Marines' old disagreements with him, nor any lingering antagonism on the part of some aviators could in any sense justify the continuing peddling from mouth-to-ear of baseless slurs on the General's name and reputation. As a matter of essential American fair play, I believe that the time has come to discuss the falsehoods in print and, in the case of stories founded on truth, to correct the misleading interpretations that have been placed on them. Some of MacArthur's advisers oppose such publication, arguing that the denials will be forgotten and the lies remembered. However, these men have not been in the United States recently and do not know that the stories are still being widely repeated without any denials whatever, and that public judgment of MacArthur has been colored by them. Nor has his brilliant record in Japan been sufficient to check them.

In general, there are ten stories about MacArthur which have come to be accepted as fact by many people, and which are the nucleus of all the charges against him. Some of them are ridiculous, some inconsequential and some viciously unjust and harmful. These ten stories are printed below, together with the truth about them, which in most cases is known to me through personal observation and in others has been verified by unquestionably reliable witnesses.

1—MacArthur lived continuously in a dugout on Corregidor, fearing to expose himself to Japanese bombs and shells. For this reason he was given the opprobrious nickname of "Dugout Doug."

The truth is that MacArthur's headquarters on Corregidor were in an underground tunnel that ran the length of Malinta Hill, the razorback rise that splits the tadpole-shaped Island in half. The communications, supplies, hospital, quartermaster and other facilities were likewise buried in Malinta or one of the other tunnels honeycombing the Island, covered by rock and concrete to protect them from enemy attacks. For MacArthur to have maintained his headquarters in the open, when protection was available, would have been sheer military stupidity. The General, his wife, and his son lived in an unprotected house a half-mile from the tunnel. He spent every night there and most of the daylight hours when not in his office, to which he went only when necessary for conferences, reports or staff meetings, and to send or receive messages. Navy and Marine headquarters were in another branch of Malinta tunnel.

I first heard the "Dugout Doug" name used by Navy men on Corregidor who resented the criticism of soldiers and Army officers about the departure of the Asiatic fleet. It was later picked up by the P-T boys, who were themselves to be tagged with a nickname as unjustified as was MacArthur's. In song and story they became the "Expendables," whereas in fact they were considered about the least expendable bit of materiel in the Bataan campaign. They did their share, gallantly and unflinchingly, but their expendability may be judged from the fact that only one P-T boat was lost to direct enemy action. The real expendables on Bataan were the infantrymen.

But to return to MacArthur and the state of mind that led the Navy men to

apply the unwarranted nickname. There was in the first days of the Bataan campaign a great deal of bitterness between the Army and Navy, the former feeling that they had been deserted by the Asiatic fleet. Their attitude was that they had to remain and fight and be killed; and it was the duty of the Asiatic fleet to fight to the last for territory under the American flag. In point of fact, this feeling was not justified.

The Asiatic fleet, so-called, could not have stood up against the naval might that Japan concentrated against the Philippines in the early days of the war. The sailors and officers of the Asiatic fleet were as courageous as any other Americans. They were simply the victims of our blind national policy that thought Japan could be bluffed by a few old destroyers and cruisers. But the Navy men did not think of that when, angry at the Army's criticism, they applied the cowardly nickname to MacArthur.

2—Another charge against MacArthur, similar to the first, was that he had an impregnable air-raid shelter in which he cowered during enemy attacks. This statement was circulated especially at the time of the Leyte campaign in late 1944, when the Japs were over in force every night, and bombs showered around MacArthur's Tacloban headquarters.

The truth was that MacArthur had no shelter from air raids and would not have gone to it if he did. Bombings and alerts never interfered with his schedule from the first day of the war until the Japanese surrendered. It may not be remembered how he stood in the open on Corregidor during the first Japanese air attack on that island, in the face of repeated bombing and strafing runs, and that his chauffeur was wounded when shrapnel struck the hand with which he was holding a helmet half in front of his face and half protecting the General's.

These two accusations against MacArthur are still being repeated glibly by men who never heard a shot fired in anger, as well as by veterans of Pacific action. The fact is that MacArthur is one of the bravest men alive. Sometimes, he seemed to overdo his displays of courage as when he went ashore on beachheads swept by enemy mortars and artillery or insisted on going into areas which were crawling with Japanese troops. I have seen veteran American fighting men hit the ground and crawl into the dirt for protection while MacArthur simply paid no attention to the enemy fire. There was the time on Corregidor, a few days after our landing to recapture the Island, when MacArthur climbed over the rubble partially blocking Malinta tunnel and unconcernedly walked on inside alone. No other American soldier had gone inside and none went in for many weeks afterward. Any one of the five hundred Japs later found dead there might have killed MacArthur as he stood silhouetted against the light.

3—A third allegation is that MacArthur—presumably because of cowardice or stubbornness—refused to leave his command ship and go ashore at Leyte at a time when the ship was desperately needed to oppose the Japanese naval force in the second battle of the Philippine Sea. The story is that the ship was thereby prevented from entering action.

MacArthur's flagship in the Leyte landing was the cruiser USS *Nashville*. It was under the command of Admiral Kinkaid, who had his own flag on another vessel. In fact the whole operation was commanded by Kinkaid until MacArthur set up headquarters ashore. On



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Mr. and Mrs. Henry Philip Folwell of Jackson, Mississippi, have announced the engagement of their daughter, Arta Parvin Folwell, to Mr. Stephen Tyree Early, Jr., of Washington, D. C., formerly a Lieutenant in the Infantry.



MERCY STEEL—Arta helps sort and clean surgical instruments to be shipped to Europe. Since 1940 the Medical and Surgical Relief Committee has been sending supplies throughout the free world. Volunteer workers, like Arta, help collect, sort, and clean them before they are sent.

the night of October twenty-third, when Admiral Halsey's forces had presumably beaten back a Japanese task group coming through San Bernardino Strait toward Leyte, and when a second major enemy force had been sighted coming through the Surigao Gulf toward our anchored ships, Admiral Kinkaid dispatched a message to MacArthur informing him of the situation and suggesting that he might want to move ashore as our ships were in danger of being sunk. This message was in no sense an order.

The next morning, the Japanese battleships and cruisers which supposedly had been damaged and put out of action the day before by Halsey's fliers, suddenly broke out of the eastern entrance to San Bernardino Strait and fell upon our unalerted escort carriers. Kinkaid, as was his duty, urgently messaged the Nashville to put out to sea and engage the enemy force, which was being gallantly resisted by the carriers and their escorting destroyers and destroyer-escorts. Kinkaid did not delay issuing the order until he determined whether or not MacArthur was still aboard the Nashville. In fact, however, MacArthur was not on the ship. At dawn that morning the General had moved his headquarters ashore. He had, of course been ashore before with the assault forces.

4—One of the more persistent accusations against MacArthur is that he built an elaborate home for himself on a hill-top in Hollandia, New Guinea, where he had temporary headquarters during the preliminary campaigns that led to the recapture of the Philippines. The story was that this house and the road leading up to it cost seventy million dollars.

Actually, MacArthur's Hollandia headquarters were in a house constructed by knocking together two pre-fabricated huts. They were far less elaborate than those occupied by the American Admiral in command of naval forces in that area. The road, when finished, was a bumpy, gravel-covered highway which was constructed in the expectation that GHQ would be there a long time. The entire cost was infinitesimal. No troops or materiel were diverted from other uses.

5—MacArthur, it is repeatedly said, should not have left Bataan, where he "abandoned" General Wainwright.

In fact, President Roosevelt made it repeatedly clear before his death that he personally ordered MacArthur to proceed to Australia and leave the defense of Bataan and Corregidor in the capable hands of General Wainwright. Twice before his actual departure, MacArthur was ordered to leave, but each time he delayed in the expectation that the United States would not abandon the Philippines. It was then that the orders were so worded that he had to comply.

It was a typical military situation that arises in every battle. A colonel, who knows he is relatively safe in his foxhole, has to give orders to his lieutenants to lead their companies in an attack. The colonel knows and the lieutenants know they may not come back alive. But they go out anyway and lead the attack. That is their duty. So it was Wainwright's duty to remain, and he did it like the great soldier he was, without question.

As to MacArthur, there was no assurance that he would reach Australia. His chances seemed highly dubious. The Philippines, so it was thought at the time, were surrounded by the Japanese Navy, and the probability of running the blockade even to Mindanao, where MacArthur boarded a plane, was considered very slim. On the P-T boat that took him south, MacArthur was very ill. The mental strain, the dangers to which his wife and child were being subjected, the

thought of leaving behind, an isolated garrison for which no help was coming—although MacArthur still thought at the time that forces for an immediate counteroffensive were available in Australia—all these things were almost too much for the General. He was seized with a severe illness from which those with him on the P-T boat feared he would not recover. But in a few hours he was himself again, determined, even then, to come back and avenge his country and himself in the Philippines.

6—It is alleged that MacArthur loaded down the P-T boat on which he left Corregidor with furniture, baggage and other belongings, including his son's fire engine, and that by so doing he condemned a number of Army nurses to remain behind on Bataan and Corregidor where they were eventually captured and underwent the torments of Japanese prison life. This story has been magnified to the extent where MacArthur is reported to have taken with him a grand piano, a crystal chandelier, wicker furniture, a supply of liquor and numerous space-consuming cartons and cases.

Anybody who has seen a P-T boat knows how ridiculous this story is. MacArthur did not take any furniture with him. He left it all in Manila, and the only thing recovered when we recaptured the ruined city in 1945 was his wife's silver. He did take Arthur MacArthur's fire engine—a toy engine two inches long. The General and his party did have some seventeen pieces of luggage.

Even if a whole fleet of P-T's—or a battleship—had been available, the nurses could not have left the battle area. They were under military orders—soldiers in the Army—and it was their duty to remain and care for the sick and wounded. They did their duty as Wainwright did his and as MacArthur—in following orders from his Commander in Chief—did his.

7—MacArthur took his Chinese *amah* from Corregidor to Australia with him.

This is true. It was an act of human mercy to evacuate the aged Chinese woman who was the servant of Mrs. MacArthur and of little Arthur. The General could easily imagine the tortures the Chinese servant would have undergone if she had been left behind to fall in Japanese hands. As a Chinese, and as a member of the General's household, there was no doubt that some especially refined forms of torment would have been her lot. MacArthur likewise saw to it that several American-born Japanese who served with our Army in Bataan were evacuated to Australia. At that time, nobody could dream of the exact extent of the cruelties that were to be inflicted on prisoners by the Japanese, but it was a certainty that the *amah* and the Japanese-American interpreters would be singled out for punishment, and it was for that reason that MacArthur got them out.

8—A special Catalina flying boat was said to have been assigned solely to bringing the General fresh foods, thereby burning large quantities of gasoline and—to hear the story told—delaying victory over Japan. To this was appended the startling information that MacArthur had a refrigerator in his headquarters during the drive up through the Southwest Pacific.

Certainly MacArthur had a refrigerator, and so what? There was no special food plane assigned to him, but at times he did receive small shipments of food by air. So did Eisenhower and Nimitz and a lot of other people. Throughout the war, the General, like all officers back in general headquarters, ate better food than the GI's in the front line. Sailors did too, and so did correspondents

and other personnel attached to headquarters. Many Navy men assigned to the Hawaiian Islands made a great deal of the accusation that MacArthur unpatriotically used up vital gasoline. Strangely enough, this particular allegation was frequently heard from ensigns and j.g.'s who spent a considerable portion of their time piloting speedboats around Kaneohe Bay on Oahu and towing pretty girls on surfboards behind them. No small amount of government gasoline was consumed in this way.

9—MacArthur's communiques on enemy casualties were said to be deliberately falsified, exaggerating the number of Japs killed and wounded and minimizing our own losses.

This specific accusation is unfounded. Our own casualties were reported with mathematical exactitude. As to the General's reports of Jap losses, he necessarily based them on figures from front-line divisions as well as on estimates obtained by Intelligence through captured documents showing what Japanese units had been committed to a given battle and their fighting strength. When the battle was over and no more Japs were alive on a particular island, it was safe to "estimate" that so many hundreds or thousands in a certain unit had been killed. It is notorious, however, that battlefield estimates vary greatly, even in a supposedly accurate count of bodies. MacArthur did all he could to be accurate in announcing enemy losses; that is, he took the figures of his division, corps and Army headquarters. When enemy losses were "estimated," the communiques so stated.

On the subject of MacArthur's communiques in general, there were two occasions on which I believe they were inaccurate from the point of view of the newspaper reader. These were when he announced that the Leyte campaign had reached the mopping up stage although many weeks of heavy fighting still lay ahead, and when he proclaimed Manila had "fallen," whereas it actually took us four weeks more to kill the last Japs in the city. From the military viewpoint, the "broad strategical picture," MacArthur undoubtedly could have justified these announcements because the results he claimed were inevitable—in time. But for the layman, they were double talk.

10—MacArthur is accused of having forced the campaign in the Philippines against our best national interests, taking away supplies, ships and troops that would have been used by the Navy for a drive nearer the heart of Japan.

The truth, of course, was that at no stage was MacArthur an autonomous military power with the right to make such sweeping strategical decisions. He took orders from the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington and from the American Chiefs of Staff. The latter, after the President met MacArthur at Pearl Harbor in June of 1944 and heard him outline the objectives and potentialities of the Philippines campaign, voted three to one in favor of his plan, with Admiral King opposing. Then the Joint Chiefs of Staff gave their approval and made the necessary supplies available. President Roosevelt was in favor of the attack, and Admiral Halsey strongly urged it.

Those are the actual facts about the "MacArthur story." Oh, yes, there is one more. The General, it is said, being too vain to wear an ordinary Army cap, designed his special model with the famous gold braid "scrambled eggs" on its peak. The truth is that all Army generals wore such gold braid on the caps designed to go with the showy blue dress uniforms in peacetime. MacArthur merely transferred the braid to a khaki cap.



IN THE SPRING A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY

Ah, Spring! When birds are a-twitter . . . when the sap begins to run again (*no offense, Junior*) . . . and a fellow pops out of his cold weather covering like a butterfly from a cocoon!

Now's the time when harried mothers are more than ever grateful for Fels-Naptha Soap. With clean shirts in constant demand, it's a real relief to use this faster, gentler soap. . .

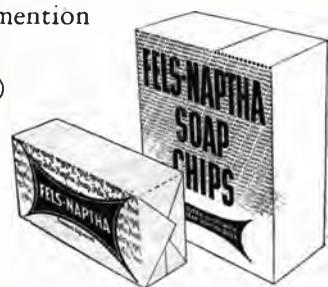
There's relief from endless hours in the laundry. Relief from ordinary washing wear on collars and cuffs. Not to mention relief from wear and tear on Mother's disposition.

Ah, Spring! Ah, Youth! (*and from the ladies, in chorus*)
A-h-h-h, Fels-Naptha!

Fels-Naptha Soap

BANISHES "TATTLE-TALE GRAY"

Buy Victory Bonds



A Place to Meet Men

(Continued from page 40)



WHEN the daughter asks advice about new things, new ways, the mother is not sitting in judgment—not really! It is she who is on trial. Is she up to date? Has she taken the trouble to follow new developments? Is she backward in her duty? Will her daughter continue to trust and confide?

Such situations arise when Tampax is discovered and discussed. This method of monthly sanitary protection for women is distinctly different. Invented by a doctor for internal wear, Tampax requires no belts, pins or external pads. It causes no odor and of course can cause no ridges or bulges under any costume. Tampax is inserted by means of a dainty throw-away applicator and you cannot feel its presence when it's in place.

The use of Tampax has spread tremendously. Millions now use it. Sold at drug stores and notion counters in 3 absorbency-sizes to meet varying needs. A full month's supply will slip easily into your purse. Economy Box holds 4 months' average supply. Tampax Incorporated, Palmer, Mass.

3 absorbencies { REGULAR
SUPER
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Accepted for Advertising
by the Journal of the American Medical Association

and that it was too bad if Jimmy Meynell was really hooked. Not that it was likely to make any difference to her in the long run, she told herself with grim lack of illusion. He hardly knew she existed outside of the bank. But she had been building up the notion—and at this moment it seemed a preposterous one—that she might in the next two weeks be able to make Meynell conscious that she did live and breathe outside of office hours. She had a guest card to his country club in her purse right now, and she had learned to play a very good game of golf at the public links. There had been a fancy in her mind that someday soon Meynell might watch with admiration a girl in a yellow sports dress making an extraordinarily good approach shot, suddenly recognize her—a servant-girl's dream, Phyllis now told herself contemptuously, and destroyed it.

He hadn't come to work yet. The bookkeepers were in their places. The third vice-president was already at his mahogany table in the cloister set apart for some of the higher bank officers. The president himself, looking modest and a little shabby as he always did, perhaps on purpose, went through to his office.

Meynell was here now, his arrival as easily timed and unhurried and accurate as one of his famous golf shots. He stopped for a word with the third vice-president, and they had a big laugh over something, the way men do over an incident they have shared. That was likely, for Meynell and the third vice-president and the timid bank messenger with the summer job all belonged to the same social group. The president and other vice-presidents might be more potent financially, but they did not rate so high socially.

Phyllis wondered once again how Meynell had happened—or had he managed?—to stay unmarried. Did he appear happier than usual this morning; as if what Gwen had said was true? Before Phyllis could figure that out, in her occasional glimpses of Meynell taking up his day's work as cashier, the teller in the next cage came in to speak to her.

She verified a signature which troubled him.

"Yes, I'm sure that's okay. Sometimes she signs Genevieve Thurston and sometimes Genevieve I. Thurston. And she evidently borrows blank checks whenever she needs cash and writes in the name of her own bank. I've seen worse-looking jobs of hers many times. But show it to Mr. Meynell if you're doubtful about it."

Clark, the other teller, looked wise. "You don't think I'd embarrass him if I did? I hear there's something doing between him and the beautiful widow."

Phyllis winced. So it was common talk. It was Genevieve Thurston who had caught Meynell, even if she couldn't make out a check decently. And what was more natural? It wouldn't matter if the widow couldn't read or write. She had so much else that was more glamorous. There was, of course, all that money, fallen into her hands almost casually because Emory Thurston had impetuously chosen a war bride after a week's acquaintance, lived with her for another week and gone away to die a hero. His young wife had seemed almost a heroine herself in his reflected glory. Pity for her had swept the city when he was killed.

At the time Phyllis had shared the public mood of sympathy, though she didn't have a speaking acquaintance with Mrs. Thurston. But she didn't pity her now. Phyllis knew a good deal about the beautiful widow, through those glimpses

a working girl can have of a social figure in the same city. She knew, for example, that Mrs. Thurston couldn't get along with her lawyers. The secretary of one of them had told Phyllis about her arrogance. Phyllis went to the best beauty shop in town for her own infrequent permanents, and she had heard about Mrs. Thurston there. The widow was vain. And once, when Phyllis had been taking tickets for a War Bond dinner, Mrs. Thurston had made a scene because a table hadn't been reserved for her.

It was obvious, even from Phyllis's distant vantage point, that Genevieve Thurston was ready for a new husband. But if Jimmy Meynell wanted a rich girl, he could have married a dozen. He had grown up in that set and been so popular he never had a free night. If he was only after beauty, Phyllis hoped he knew about the time Mrs. Thurston spent creating effects. Oh, don't fool yourself, she said sharply to herself. She is dazzling, and nothing wears that type out.

"I hear that Brady isn't coming back when he gets out of the Navy," Clark was saying now.

"No, he married that Charleston girl. They're going to live down there. He got a job in a Southern bank, I think."

"That's a break for you, isn't it? You won't have any veteran with a claim on this job. As a matter of fact, you're just as good as he was," remarked Clark.

"Thanks a lot." Phyllis meant that gratitude, for it was nice of old Clark to be so cordial. He hadn't been that way at first, when Phyllis had been stepped up from the bookkeeping department to her present job. A woman had never worked next to him before, and at first he had been frosty and suspicious. But now he was a good friend.

"You know, there aren't many girls who could handle both the paying and receiving jobs the way you do. I don't see why you can't stay right where you are indefinitely."

It was high praise from him, but it brought no exultation to Phyllis. For that was her ghostly fear—that she might be right here indefinitely.

"I'm sure Mr. Meynell thinks the world of you," Clark went on pleasantly. There was nothing personal in his tone, none of the sentimental insinuation that had been there when he had suggested it might embarrass Meynell to see Genevieve Thurston's blotted check.

"Shall I take that Thurston check to him for his okay?" inquired Phyllis. "I've got some others to ask about."

"Thanks—maybe you'd better, though it's probably all right."

Mr. Clark's kindly glance followed Phyllis as she crossed the floor to the desk where Jimmy Meynell sat, available for any banking consultation. He was glad that he had told Phyllis he thought well of her work. She deserved it. She was the bright color in Clark's day, the touch of drama. She wore the kind of clothes that he saw in shop windows, shaped to her figure. Sometimes her face looked like one that might be on the cover of a magazine, her eyebrows arching in surprise and her lips deeply red. She's a smart girl, thought Clark ineptly.

If the sudden sight of Genevieve Thurston's hasty handwriting made Jimmy Meynell's nerves quiver, he did not show it. He handed all the checks back to Phyllis and said, "Let's see, Miss Frye, when do you go on your vacation?"

"Tomorrow."

"I thought so. I wish now we'd set up this schedule a little differently."



Now, plan a . . .

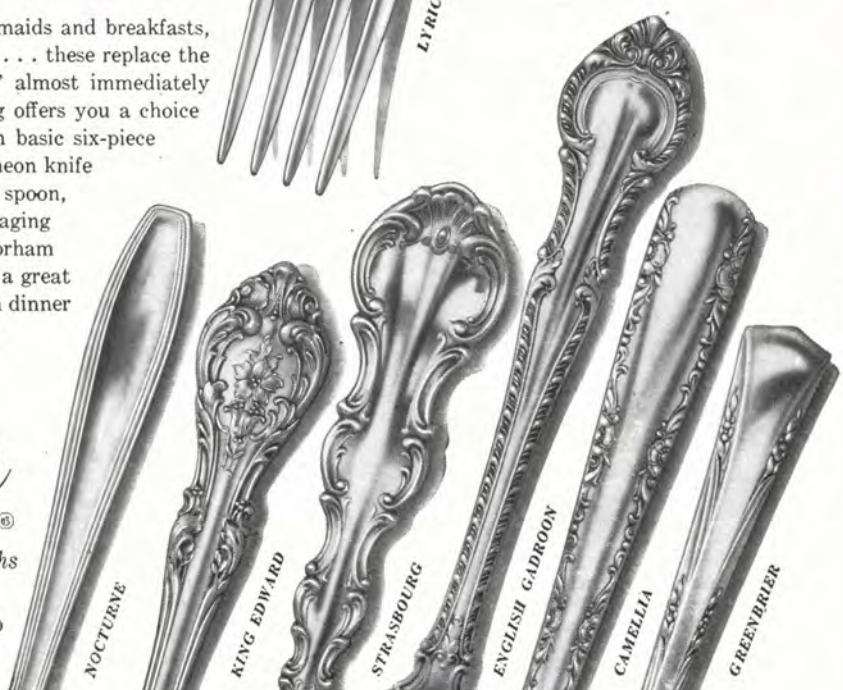
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Buy Victory Bonds



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**stops perspiration and odor
so effectively, yet so safely!**

It's the improved deodorant you've been waiting for! The new, soft, smooth, creamy deodorant that gives you the maximum protection possible against perspiration and odor with safety to your skin and clothes! No other deodorant of any sort... liquid or cream... meets the standard set by this wonderful new Postwar Arrid for stopping perspiration and odor with safety!

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The new, long Sarong skirt... slim and sleek. The casual black top, with the season's smartest sleeve! Wear it with short daytime skirts, too... but always protect it (and you) from perspiration and odor. Use Arrid daily! No other deodorant stops perspiration and odor so effectively, yet so safely... only Arrid!



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*Only safe, gentle Arrid
gives you this thorough protection*

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2. *Nearly twice as effective in stopping perspiration as any other leading deodorant cream.*
3. *Does not rot clothes. Greaseless and stainless, too.*
4. *Safe for skin. Non-irritating. Antiseptic.*
5. *Soft, smooth, creamy... easy to apply. Just rub in well, no waiting to dry!*

39¢ plus tax Also 10¢ and 59¢

ARRID...nearly twice as effective
in stopping perspiration
as any other leading deodorant cream!

(1) Based on tests of leading and other deodorants.

Some of the many Stars who use Arrid
Grace Moore • Georgia Gibbs • Jessica Dragonette • Jane Froman
Diana Barrymore • Carol Bruce • Barbara Bel Geddes

Black's the thing this Spring!

And heavy gold jewelry is lovely with it! But you'll spoil your dress, your glamour, too, if you don't guard against perspiration and odor! Use Arrid daily! Arrid is *twice* as effective in stopping perspiration as any other leading deodorant cream.

"Is it inconvenient for me to go?"

"It's all right. You will have made your plans. I just didn't realize that I may have to take a few days off about the same time and"—his glance rose to her face with perfect friendliness—"I guess I count on you, Miss Frye, for a lot of things. But we'll work it out."

She wanted to offer to postpone her holiday. But she would not let herself. Standing there, clutching at that cool little office compliment, she told herself not to be an utter fool. Let him work it out. Let him take a little of the time he would spend with the Thurston woman if her own absence put extra burdens on him . . . What was he going to take a few days off for? To get married?

"You just go and have some fun," Meynell said. "Everybody needs it and has it coming now that the war's over."

There was a smile on his brown, hand-somely weathered face, but Phyllis thought that he looked tired as well as kind. She suddenly felt that she not only heard what he said, but also read the thought behind it. Genevieve Thurston had some fun coming after her tragedy, and if she wanted him to give it to her, he was going to try. Or was it that the widow was his idea of fun, his way of recapturing his early youth? Of course he wasn't very young any more. Though he looked thirty-five, he must be at least forty-two or three, or he would have been drafted. The story was that he had been offered a big war job in Washington, but the president of the bank had begged him to stay and run the state War Bond drives. Another story was that Jimmy Meynell, though he wasn't in uniform, was really connected with the FBI.

If you listened, or even if you didn't, thought Phyllis as she went back to her cage, you could hear all sorts of things about Meynell. Phyllis had written off most of the rumors she had heard, but this gossip about Mrs. Thurston had something authentic about it. Gwen had sounded sure, and even old Clark had picked it up.

The day had begun in earnest now. People were lined up in front of all the cages. With deft, sure hands Phyllis counted and passed out crisp bills by the hundreds, received bundles of checks and bags of cash. It was only after her first successful year as receiving teller that Meynell had advanced her to do both paying and receiving. It was a good job, but she could go no higher in this bank. She could stay here indefinitely behind these bars, while life whirled on outside.

Ten years ago it had looked like an exciting life. When she had decided to leave Teachers' College and go to business school instead, her mother had approved. Even Aunt Carrie had sighed, out of a long schoolroom experience, "Perhaps you're wise not to teach, Phyllis. You're too apt to get stuck in a school the way I did, and you never meet anybody except other teachers. Now with a job in the business world, you'll come in constant contact with the public."

"You'll have a chance to meet so many fine men," said Phyllis's mother.

That was what Phyllis had thought too. Not that she worried about it, but it had seemed to be in the cards. Now she had been in the business world for more than ten years, and she had met plenty of men. And what good had it done her?

There had been some little nibbles of romance on her line, but the big ones always got away, and Phyllis threw the worthless ones back into circulation quickly. And there weren't as many now as there used to be. The very young men, who hadn't gone to war, all had younger girls, picked from the constantly ripening

high-school crop. The older men treated her respectfully.

She decided to avoid Gwen and the pending confidence. Meynell and his affairs, whatever they might be, were nothing to her after all. Besides, though Phyllis had never told Gwen very much about how she felt, the other girl delighted in exploring the personal lives of the people with whom she worked.

But Gwen caught up with Phyllis at luncheon in the washroom.

"I didn't get a chance to tell you the story about Meynell," she began. "It's that Thurston woman, you know. The glamorous widow. They say he's fallen for her, and how!"

"Well, what of it?" asked Phyllis. "He was bound to fall for somebody . . . Who says so?" She couldn't help that last question.

"Oh, it's common knowledge! He takes her everywhere. She's taking golf lessons so they'll be congenial—I heard that from a girl who knows the pro out at Highland. He says she's a terrible golfer and swears like a trooper. But the payoff was that she told someone in Filton's jewelry store the other day—several girls heard her—that if platinum wedding rings didn't come back on the market soon, she'd have to scratch the engraving out of her old one and use it again."

Phyllis dried her fingers carefully. "She sounds resourceful," she commented.

Gwen said, "I can't imagine Meynell married. I think it will spoil his style."

"Maybe you ought to tell him so," suggested Phyllis in light irony.

"You know, Phyl, I used to think that you might be the one yourself. You were such a pet of his and used to work with him on those bond drives. I thought good old propinquity might turn the trick."

That wasn't cruelty. It wasn't even unkindness. Gwen merely wanted to see what she could find out. Phyllis was very careful now not to give herself away by too violent a denial.

All she said was, "I doubt if Jimmy Meynell would even recognize me if he saw me outside of the bank. And so far as that goes, I'm not sure that I yearn for the sight of him on his frolics."

"Well, it's terribly exciting."

"Only second to the atom bomb," said Phyllis. "I must run along. I have to do some shopping on my lunch hour."

That was one way of escaping lunch with Gwen. But Phyllis felt that she had to be by herself. Thank heaven she was getting away from the bank for two weeks. By the time she came back, she would be used to the idea of Meynell's engagement.

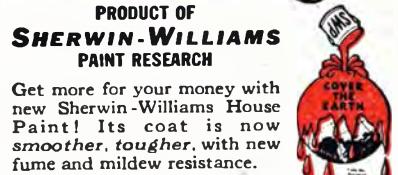
Jimmy Meynell had never shown any romantic interest in her. He had never given her the slightest reason to hope that she attracted him personally. But in the confidential overtime work over the War Bonds, they had seemed to share something, and evidently he had liked to have her on the job with him. Gwen had been wickedly right in her guess. Propinquity had been Phyllis's hope too. Meynell had worried over the huge quotas, and she had worried right along with him.

Once he had said to her, "Do you know you're a very pleasant person to work with? Calm. You never lose your head."

There wasn't more than that to go on. But after a girl had worked a long time and had become pretty realistic, she knew that princes didn't come riding. Not into business offices. You had to sell yourself as a personality if you were going to get anywhere. That was why Phyllis had taken up golf last summer, and why it sickened her to hear that Mrs. Thurston was now swearing over golf lessons for the same reason—to be

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Get more for your money with new Sherwin-Williams House Paint! Its coat is now smoother, tougher, with new fume and mildew resistance.

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congenial with Jimmy Meynell. Well . . . Phyllis had worked out a scheme. She had told her mother she was going to spend her vacation at home this year. Travel was still too difficult to make sense. Her mother had one girlhood friend who had married into wealth and prominence. An occasional gilt invitation, in memory of old acquaintance, sifted through to Mrs. Frye from Mrs. Copland.

"What I'd like best to do," Phyllis told her mother, "is to play some golf at Highland. It's a wonderful course, much better than the public one."

"But we don't belong to the Highland C'ub," Mrs. Frye reminded her.

"I know. But Mrs. Copland does.

"If I could get a guest card for these two weeks, it would be marvelous," explained Phyllis. "Members can have three guest cards a year. If Mrs. Copland hasn't used her guest cards, she probably wouldn't mind letting me have one."

There had been no problem at all about getting the card. Mrs. Copland had mailed it promptly with the most cordial of notes. And now Phyllis would like to tear it up, but she didn't know how she could explain that to her mother.

The lines of people in front of the tellers' windows lengthened. It was nearing the end of the banking day and cashiers from stores and restaurants were coming in with their day's take. Phyllis hardly looked up, only reading names from checks and deposit books as they were pushed toward her.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Jones. . . Yes, it's pretty hot outside. . . Good afternoon. How will you—" But she finished that question with a quick lift of her head, for the counter check before her, requesting five hundred dollars, was

scrawled with the hardly legible signature of Genevieve I. Thurston.

A tall, golden-brown girl was outside Phyllis's window. She wore a huge hat of sand-colored straw that shaded her face, but Phyllis could see also the bare midriff that other people were staring at. It took Mrs. Thurston to come into a bank in a getup like that.

"It doesn't matter," said Mrs. Thurston, "tens or twenties will do."

They were close, with only the bars between their faces. She's not so good close up, thought Phyllis. It's her effect that's exciting.

Mrs. Thurston counted her money. She did it clumsily and childishly.

"This doesn't seem right. I think you must have made a mistake." Mrs. Thurston's voice was imperative.

"Let me count it again for you," Phyllis offered.

She had been right, of course, and proved it, separating the bills and counting them swiftly and evenly.

"I never can see how you do that," remarked Mrs. Thurston, as of a monkey's clever trick.

Suddenly and definitely Phyllis despised her and all rich, arrogant women who didn't realize the depth of their own incompetence, who couldn't earn a dollar or even count what they had. Yet they had all the fun. Men preferred them.

"How are you today? Do you want a duplicate slip?" She must not delay her customers or hold up the line, but she wanted to see if Genevieve Thurston was stopping at the cashier's desk. *Don't look. What is it to you, Phyllis Frye?* Yes, she had stopped, and she looked like a lovely anomaly against the machinery of finance as she confronted Jimmy Meynell who stood up, laughing with her.

The big bank doors were closed at last. Phyllis closed her window and set about her routine tasks. It was automatic, but it took her longer than usual.

"All done?" asked Meynell pleasantly, when she reported to him. "Well, I hope you have a fine vacation. And I'll certainly be glad to see you back."

That was all. A girl didn't cry because of a wish like that; she only felt as if she might. Phyllis took a few personal things out of her cage and said to Mr. Clark, "Well, you've seen the last of me for a while."

"Going to miss you," said Mr. Clark. He added, as if she would like to know, "Someone told me that the Thurston widow came in to see Meynell this afternoon. I noticed a girl at his desk, but I didn't know who she was. She certainly had on some getup! Did you notice?"

"I was terribly busy," answered Phyllis, "and I don't know her."

There was, she felt, a proper time to imply lies without actually telling them.

She was in the same spot about telling lies at home because of that guest card to the Highland Club. Phyllis's mother, having obtained it, expected her to make use of it. And perhaps something more than golf might come of her visits to the club. Her mother and her aunt feared spinsterhood for Phyllis more than she feared it for herself.

Phyllis knew that she was expected to enjoy herself. She played the course at the public links and came home to give her mother a fiction version of a game at Highland. She explained that you weren't apt to meet people on the course.

"But in that lovely clubhouse," said her mother, "you must meet the finest people in the city."

"They have their own friends," answered Phyllis vaguely.

The next afternoon she let her mother assume she was off to play golf at the Highland Club, and drove to the public links to work off some of the restless energy that was rising in her. It was unpleasantly crowded. Phyllis tried nine holes, sauntering behind a woman whose husband was conscientiously trying to improve her game. Ahead of them was a foursome, so there was no chance of getting through. It was unbearably slow. But the afternoon was cool for August and too good to waste. She was tired of scenery. After all, why not play the Highland course? Phyllis put her excellent set of matched clubs into her little coupe and drove out to the Highland Club.

She sought the caddie master to show him her card and ask for a caddie. It was all very easy and unembarrassing. She went off the first tee with the best drive she had ever made in her life, and by the time she reached the third hole it seemed to her that she had never known what the game could be like. A thought of Jimmy Meynell crossed her mind, but she drove it away. No more of that dream. Let him have his widow; perhaps he'd enjoy her. For a while.

Phyllis was coming back to the clubhouse after seventeen holes when it happened. Not quite as she had fancied but close enough to show that her imagination had been realistic. A lesson was being given near the eighteenth hole and as the professional and his pupil saw Phyllis approach, they watched her shot. She might not have driven so well, but she recognized the pupil. Mrs. Thurston was learning golf to be congenial, and Gwen had been right for Phyllis heard an oath as she came closer to the pair.

Congenial, she thought, and swore to herself. Her ball flew high and straight but not too high. The professional nodded and the man who was crossing the links

And Whose Little Girl Are You?

BY MYRA CARR

These little girls of literature have found a warm place in our hearts. Can you pick out their authors from the list on the right? If you don't get 8 right, authors' girls are a mystery to you.

- 1. Snow White
- 2. Annie Rooney
- 3. Wendy
- 4. Alice in Wonderland
- 5. Elsie Dinsmore
- 6. Cookie
- 7. Mytyl
- 8. Thumbelina
- 9. Cinderella
- 10. Little Eva
- 11. Nancy Drew
- 12. Margery Daw

- a. LEWIS CARROLL
- b. MOTHER GOOSE
- c. MAURICE MAETERLINCK
- d. CAROLYN KEENE
- e. JACOB AND WILHELM GRIMM
- f. MARTHA FINLEY
- g. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
- h. SIR JAMES M. BARRIE
- i. CHIC YOUNG
- j. CHARLES PERRAULT
- k. DARRELL McCLURE
- l. HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

Answers on Page 182

MEET THE AUSTINS...

two generations raised on Clapp's!



"I guess Clapp's must hear plenty of stories about babies thriving on its baby foods," says Mrs. John Austin, of Rochester, N. Y. "But I wonder how often you hear about a family like ours—with *two generations* raised on Clapp's." And she continues . . .



"We have a baby, John, Jr., 15½ months old—and husky as they come! Johnny weighed 7 lbs. 10 oz. when he was born. And sometimes I wonder if he'll ever stop growing!"



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toward Genevieve Thurston paused admiringly. It had come true. Jimmy Meynell had met Phyllis, as she had hoped he would, on the Highland golf course.

Meynell looked at her casually, and then his face lighted with surprise.

"Well; what do you know? Phyllis Frye! So this is the way you spend your vacation."

"Hello," she said. "It's a good enough way, isn't it?"

"None better to my way of thinking. I didn't know you played golf."

"I try."

"You do better than that if the shot I just saw was a sample."

He was praising her game as she had hoped, but the commendation was just as flat as the compliment he had paid her in the bank. She knew that he was adding her golf game to his list of her capacities. She was a good bank teller, she didn't mind extra work for a good cause, and she could play golf too. Fine. And there it was, just a list of accomplishments that didn't make her in the least provocative.

Mrs. Thurston's voice interrupted. "Jimmy, come here and help me break these damned clubs!"

He laughed. "You see everyone isn't as competent as you are," he told Phyllis and strode off in the direction of the incompetent.

"You can leave your clubs in the caddie-house if you haven't a locker and want to play again," said the caddie.

"Oh, I'll take them along. I won't be playing, but—well, perhaps I will leave them," answered Phyllis. Why should those people drive her away?

"And right in there is the taproom for ladies and gentlemen if you'd like anything to drink," the boy suggested in such a matter-of-course way that she realized it was customary to go from the last green to the taproom. Phyllis hardly hesitated. She felt like having a drink.

Nobody stared at her, though the room was fairly full of people. She guessed that in the summertime many strangers came here. Phyllis found a table and ordered a Tom Collins. She lingered over it, alert and interested.

She was almost ready to leave when Meynell and Mrs. Thurston came in. Phyllis's table was not visible from where they stood. But she could hear them. And so, most certainly, could anyone else.

"I don't like to be mocked!" said Genevieve Thurston.

"But I wasn't mocking. I don't know what I did that makes you think so."

"You ought to know."

"What do you want to drink?"

"I don't care. Anything," she answered petulantly.

"Don't be like that," he begged. "I honestly don't know what I did to hurt you."

Listening, Phyllis analyzed it for him. You didn't do anything to hurt her. She knows she wasn't at her best out there, and she's trying to put you in the wrong.

"You'd know if you cared," said Mrs. Thurston, "or understood about how a girl feels."

Phyllis put down the money for her drink. She got up and went past the unhappy pair at the bar. Meynell saw her in the mirror and half turned. But Phyllis was in the lounge by that time and Genevieve Thurston was being aggrieved about something else.

On the porch of the unimportant house which Phyllis and Aunt Carrie kept going, the moon poured down that night. Aunt Carrie rested in the creaking glider. Mrs. Frye had gone to bed, after listening to Phyllis's story of meeting some people she knew at the Highland Club and stop-

ping to have a drink. It sounded gay and as if it might lead to something.

Sitting on the top step, Phyllis went over it again. He had said, "Phyllis Frye" as if her first name was quite familiar. In the bank he always called her Miss Frye.

To think of his being trapped by that woman! And he was, apparently. He'd sounded so troubled and pleading.

And I'll end up like Aunt Carrie, glad to rest my feet in a porch swing, I suppose.

"Aunt Carrie, how did it happen you never got married?"

"Oh, I don't know, my dear. I honestly don't know. At one time I thought I might marry one man I knew."

"Why didn't you? Did he bolt or did you?"

The older woman laughed. "It never really got that far. It didn't work out, that's all. Looking back now, I think perhaps I made things a little too easy for him. Men seem to like the women who make it hard for them, poor things."

"I'll say they do," said Phyllis. "You hit it right on the nose, Aunt Carrie!"

She went to bed, the bitter thought seeping in her mind.

The days of vacation raced on too fast. They always did when Phyllis was on a holiday, but this year it seemed to her they broke all previous records for speed. She was learning a great deal about golf, for after that first day she couldn't resist playing again on the smooth greens of the Highland Club. After the pro had watched her drive a second time, he asked the caddie master who that girl was. He was shown her registration, with the note that Mrs. Copland was her sponsor. That placed Phyllis on a firm social basis, and the next day she was asked to join a mixed foursome, in which the pro himself was playing.

From then on, Phyllis made the Highland Club her headquarters during daylight hours. She made no secret of the fact that she worked in the bank. But plenty of girls whose families belonged to the club had held jobs during the war. A girl as pretty as Phyllis, who also played excellent golf, not only fitted into the picture at the club but did her share to improve it.

She learned about people as well as golf. She saw many of the important men in the city, whom she already knew by sight or by their signatures, now at their play. It was revealing and amusing.

Also, listening, though never asking, she heard gossip. Some of it went in one ear and out of the other, but the talk about Jimmy Meynell and Genevieve Thurston stuck in her mind. Here, as in the bank, people speculated on why Meynell hadn't married earlier. There were stories of his indifference, of the girls who had tried to get him and failed. But this time he seemed to be caught.

Some of them were amused, for Genevieve Thurston had been frank about her deliberate selection of Meynell as a second husband, and such female victory always had a touch of comedy in it. But others were sorry. The young widow was no more of a favorite at the club than at the beauty parlor, though she had a way of always getting the center of the stage. Phyllis heard that Meynell wanted the Thurston money. She heard it denied. She heard that he had been attentive to Mrs. Thurston because he was sorry for her, and had got in too deep. Phyllis realized that nobody knew the facts. It was just the way the girls and men in the bank gossiped and guessed.

The circumstantial evidence under her eyes gave Phyllis a better idea of the truth. For she had worked with Meynell so long that she knew when he was wor-

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ried. He looked puzzled and absent-minded, even when he was with Genevieve, as he was most of the time. Phyllis did not again overhear anything that they said to each other, but there were signs that could only go with trouble.

Meynell's game of golf, once so brilliant, had gone off. Phyllis saw the men's scores tacked on the wall in the caddie-house one day, peered at Jimmy's and was astonished. Of course it couldn't improve a man's game to go around a course with a petulant young woman who was too self-conscious to hit a ball without wondering who was looking at her. But the sight of that bad golf score made Phyllis sorrier for Meynell than anything else.

It was an exciting, successful vacation with a core of misery. It was so much better than she had hoped, yet it was coming to such a dead end. On Monday she must go back to work, and she did not relish the idea. But she determined to make the most of her last free Saturday. By flattering invitation she played eighteen holes with Helen St. John, the woman golf champion of the club, in the afternoon. Phyllis played so well that she surprised herself. But the thought that this might be her last chance for a game on the beautiful course was behind every accurate stroke.

"You're a wonder!" Mrs. St. John said as they came back to the clubhouse. "I must buy you a drink before I rush home to my children. Won't the boys around here fall flat when they hear about that score of yours today?"

"They've seen better ones," laughed Phyllis. But she was excited as she took a cold shower and then put on the light coral-colored dress she had brought with her. It was very becoming, especially now that she was brown as a nut. She thought: It really was quite a score, and I hope Jimmy Meynell hears about it.

He heard about it. As Phyllis reached the taproom Helen St. John was announcing it to him as golfing news.

"There aren't four women who have ever done it on this course! Seventy-eight!"

"Well, good for you!" exclaimed Meynell and put out his hand. He held hers while he went on with admiration, "I've seen your game from a distance several times. You know what they meant when they got this game up. Done you a lot of good too, hasn't it? You're looking wonderful. When are you going to go around the course with me?"

Probably never, she thought, but she smiled at him and wondered if she hadn't better pull her hand away, since Genevieve Thurston was approaching. Jimmy Meynell didn't seem to notice. He said as Genevieve spoke to him, "Do you know what Phyllis Frye did this afternoon? She went around in seventy-eight."

"Who did that?" someone exclaimed, and Phyllis turned to accept congratulations.

"This calls for a drink, Phyllis," Meynell said. "Let's all have one together."

"I don't want a drink," said Genevieve Thurston. "Are you coming, Jimmy? I'm fed up with all this professional golf. It's ruining the club."

Meynell looked at her, then again at Phyllis. It was a clear glance of comparison. It was very obvious that Genevieve Thurston was angry. She couldn't bear to lose the center of the stage, and no one was paying attention to anyone except Phyllis.

"I think we ought to celebrate," Meynell insisted.

"Then celebrate without me," declared Genevieve, and her voice was sour.

"Thanks so much," said Phyllis to Jimmy, "but I'm having one with Mrs.

St. John."

She was not quite out of hearing when Mrs. Thurston's voice reached her again. "How do people like that get in here? Isn't she a clerk in your bank, Jimmy?"

Phyllis didn't hear his answer. But after they'd finished their drinks and Mrs. St. John was leaving, Phyllis took one look across the room to where Meynell and Genevieve Thurston were sitting together. Only once had she ever seen his face as it was now, angry and contemptuous. That had been in the bank when one of the tellers had tried to make a scapegoat out of a bookkeeper.

Phyllis went outside on the terrace and discovered that she didn't want to go home. Not just yet, on this very last day. She settled herself in a comfortable basket chair as if she were waiting for someone. When she was back counting out tens and twenties, she could remember what this was like.

Meynell came out of the taproom, and the wrench of her nerves told Phyllis that she had been waiting for this. He came straight to her, and his face was tense and serious. "Waiting for someone?"

"No. I'm going home in a minute."

"Do you mind if I sit down with you?"

"Of course not."

"I want to tell you again how proud I am of you."

"Oh, what's a golf game?"

"But it's not just because of the golf game. I have just been explaining—to other people—what else you do. How much you've got in that head of yours. 'And,' he added, 'it's a very lovely head."

"Not easy to turn," said Phyllis.

"Good. I've missed you at the bank. I'll certainly be glad to see you back on Monday."

"I'm there."

"What do you mean? You're coming back, aren't you?"

"I don't know." She suddenly meant it. Why go back and stay there forever? "I don't want to stay there indefinitely."

"Of course not. But you won't."

"I shall—unless I make a break. I've been there for years. There are other jobs. Other banks."

"But you wouldn't walk out on me without talking it over, Phyllis?"

"Talking over what? I'm being paid all the job's worth."

"I don't mean that. I mean—I'd like to explain how much everyone appreciates you. In the bank. Here. You stand out. And I've hardly had a glimpse of you out here, except at a distance."

"You're a pretty busy man—especially here."

He reddened. He said, "I'm not going to be so busy. I guess everyone will know it pretty soon. I've just been told I'm a complete flop."

"Flop?" she repeated with contempt for the one who had said it. "You? Most people don't think so."

"I hope most of all that you don't."

"What do I count?"

"You're beginning to count surprisingly. I didn't realize it, but I think perhaps you began to count when we did those long war jobs together. Then I got a little off the track. Phyllis—let me go home with you and talk things over."

"Not tonight. You must think things over first."

"But why not help me?"

Because I must make it hard for him, thought Phyllis. Hard enough. But not too hard, as Genevieve Thurston did. "Not tonight," she said, smiling.

"But you will promise me to come back Monday?"

"Well—if you want me to—for a while," said Phyllis, hoping she spoke prophecy. She felt as if it could come true.

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An Interview with My Adopted Daughter (Continued from page 39)

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because they would be good parents.

Recently there has been a great deal of noise in magazines and newspapers about the so-called "black market in babies." Why is there such a black market? The answer is the same as for any other black market—the legitimate avenues of finding children for adoption are so impeded by jealous institutionalism and laws, which those with vested interests in institutions and social welfare organizations make in order to prevent adoptions, that people are compelled to satisfy the deep desire for children in ways outside the law. You may be sure that unscrupulous persons could not "sell" babies if there were not this desire for children in the hearts of those who cannot have them by birth and cannot pass the requirements of too-stringent laws. The remedy is not more laws and more difficulties, but more opportunity and more freedom in bringing parentless children and childless parents together.

Especially must I protest against the evil effects of the foster home. Foster homes are a poor substitute for the real home. Foster parents frankly take a child for money. At any time they may decide against keeping the child. Little children may change foster "homes" a half a dozen times. Stability is very important to the growing child. The continual shifts in foster homes breed insecurity into the child's heart. A foster home should be used only as an alternative to the asylum and only for children whose parents are in temporary difficulties. It is, even so, a doubtful alternative.

For the sake of the children, adoption should be made as easy as possible. Parents and homes must be investigated, of course. Evil people should not be given the care of children. But what makes anyone think that evil people in private homes are worse than evil people in foster homes and institutions? The public allows itself to be agitated over the possibilities of children being adopted by the wrong people, yet gives very little thought to whether those same children are not in the hands of wrong people in asylums and boarding places.

There is only one adequate substitute for good parents for a child, and that is other good parents.

My daughter said, after more reflection, "I don't think adopted children should be treated specially, though. They ought to be taught and be loved and punished just like all other children. They shouldn't be shown special favors, because then they'll feel they don't belong."

I liked her saying that. Our children have to take us just as we are. They share our good fortune, and they share our inevitable times of bad luck, too. When we overwork, as we have to do fairly often, being average parents with a big family and proportionate bills to pay, they have to take our fatigue and our occasional impatience. But they can always count on our love.

Parents, too, must take the child as he comes. Whatever the environment, there is an unchangeable nature in every child. The moment he is conceived, his essential qualities are determined. Training and example can inspire and develop only what is already there. To expect too much of a child is to insure disappointment and unhappiness for everyone. To expect too little is equally wrong.

But how can one know when he has found the right child to adopt?

A person's background is individual and emotional. It may even be determined by a certain amount of prejudice. You may, for example, be prejudiced in

favor of dark eyes, and that prejudice helped you to fall in love more easily with a dark-eyed person than with a blue-eyed one. Some of your birth children may be dark-eyed as a consequence of your prejudice against blue eyes. They may all be dark-eyed if you yourself also have dark eyes, although you always run the risk of some blue-eyed ancestor turning up in your child.

The same prejudice should guide you, then, toward dark eyes, if you want to adopt a child. Are eyes important? They are if you think they are. Anything is important if you think it is, because such thinking is really feeling, and feeling is very important between parents and children. Emotions must be considered first of all, for emotions are most significant in establishing relationships with the new child.

I have chosen a physical trait only as an example. Traits of character and disposition are of course even more important. For hearty extrovert parents to adopt a shy sensitive introvert child would be catastrophe for both. Yet how are we to know? Granted that there are no absolute ways, certain definitions can be made. The child's racial backgrounds should be as near as possible to those of the adoptive parents. Even the basic national strains should be as near as possible. If you come of warm Italian blood, do not adopt a child of cool Scandinavian ancestry—unless you happened to have married someone like that—for love.

Cultural backgrounds are just as important as racial and national ones. Parents who care little for books, who left school early, should not adopt a child whose birth parents were college professors, or vice versa. The odds would be against a successful parent-child relationship as time went on.

Whether the child is to be a boy or girl depends again upon your preference. More people want to adopt girls than boys, on the theory that girls are "easier" than boys. Actually, I have found that boys are "easier" than girls in many ways. On the whole, boys are more independent and more naturally frank. There should, of course, be both boys and girls in every family just to add interest. But one should think of the adoptive child first as an individual rather than as a boy or a girl. "We'll be glad for what we get, whatever it is," is the usual conclusion of expecting parents, and it is a sound and normal conclusion. What they want is their own child, boy or girl. This is what adoptive parents want, too—their own child, someone who fits their home, whom they can love, not just a girl doll or a boy doll.

"But there shouldn't be only one child," my daughter said positively. "It would be too hard to be an only child. The adopted child must have brothers and sisters to love and live with as well as parents. It makes his life more secure."

Yes, everybody needs the relief and comfort of more than one relationship in the home. When there is only the single tie, it may become too tense. Expectations mount too high and hopes are too fervid when they are all focused upon one child, and the child suffers from the strain. So do the parents.

There ought always to be a family for all children. It may mean harder work to make a living and the living may have to be simple, but there will be more happiness. Children help one another as well as the parents. Thus thinking, I put another question to my daughter. "Did I do right in telling you from the beginning that you were adopted?"



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This was what I had done. She was only a tiny baby when she came into our home. But as she grew old enough to be told bedtime stories, I told her the wonderful story of how I had found her, and why I had chosen her out of all the other babies I might have had. I told her of the pretty clothes ready for her coming, of the little white bed, the room of her own, everything that was waiting for her. The story was told many times, over and over, as the years went on.

Then one evening when she was seven years old she yawned when I began it again. She was lying in bed, bathed and ready for sleep, looking so sweet, with her hair all yellow curls, that my heart yearned to be sure she knew how well she was loved. So I began, "Shall I tell you the story of how you came home?"

That was when she yawned. "I know all about that!" she said. "Tell me something new."

My heart eased. It was now realy an old accepted story. It was quite safe to forget all about it. We were secure in each other.

Now at twenty she said thoughtfully, "I am glad you told me before I could even remember. I've always just taken it for granted that people could have babies by birth or adoption, and that is all there is to it. If I hadn't always known, though, I might have been upset when I found out."

"But suppose you never found out?" I asked.

"Someone would have told," she said. "I'd rather have had it from you, Mother."

I was never afraid at all after that night when she was seven. Two years later, when she went to her first summer camp, I went one week end to visit her. She ran up to me breathlessly. "Oh, Mother, I'm so glad you've come. Mother, will you come and talk to one of my friends? I feel so sorry for her."

"Why sorry for her?" I inquired.

"She's adopted," my child whispered.

I tried not to smile. "But you know, darling, that's nothing," I said.

"Oh, but she's *really* adopted," my little daughter said. "You see, she hasn't any mother. She only lives with her aunt!"

That was one of my secret rare moments of deep happiness. My child did not feel adopted—she had her mother.

To my mind, therefore, there can be only one answer to the question: Should an adopted child be told? He should know as early as possible that he is adopted, so early that he cannot remember when he was first told the story of his home-coming. The story, told simply and with love, should be part of his earliest memory, mingled with the dim background of childish experience. It must be told not once but many times, for a little child forgets. It should be told at all ages and in different ways. The first time it should be as simple as this: "I'll tell you how we found you. We had been waiting for you such a long time and wondering where you were. Then one day . . ."

Yet even with the most careful and loving telling, there may come a shock to the child. The ideal of adoption presented to him by the parents who love him may not be the one he meets outside the home. One—and only one—of our children, the most high-strung, sensitive one, came into the kitchen one morning when I was busy preparing school lunches.

I shall never forget how he looked. His blond head was held high, his hands were deep in his pockets. There was something frightened in his eyes.

"Is it true you aren't my real mother?" he demanded.

It was the most hectic hour in my day.

We live in the country, and the children must be driven a long way to school. That means everybody up and dressed, breakfast over, lunches packed and everybody off by quart past eight, every school day. But one look at my little son's face, and I knew that nothing was so important as answering his question.

He had always known the story of his adoption. He had seen himself in our motion-picture record of all the children coming home on the train when he was five weeks old. But he had not known the story from the point of view of the boy who had shout'd at him on the school playground, "She isn't your *real* mother."

It was hard on both of us. But I answered truthfully. "I am your real mother, and Daddy is your real father. When we went to find you and bring you home, we had to take you into court with us and promise, before a judge, that we were taking you for our *own* child, and that we would be your true parents, just as if you were born out of our bodies. The law of our country makes you our real child."

Other questions followed, heartbreaking, searching questions of the awakened and troubled mind. I answered them honestly. He came into my arms of his own accord at last, gave me a quick hard hug and then said briskly, "If we hurry, I won't be late for school."

But it was not enough just to talk with him. I talked with his teacher; we sent a letter to the parents of the boy who had not known that American law makes no distinction between the adopted child and the birth child. It is one of the most enlightened of our laws and balances the less fortunate circumstances of the child without parents.

The parents of the other boy responded well, and the school atmosphere was cleared. Apparently our son has forgotten the episode. But I keep watch. Indeed, love learns to keep watch. Our younger daughter asked me one night as I was tucking her into bed. "Did all of us brothers and sisters get borned out of different ladies, Mother?"

"Yes, you did," I said casually.

"But it doesn't matter because we all have you for our one mother," she said.

"It doesn't matter at all," I agreed.

In a few minutes she was asleep . . .

There is only one rule for answering all questions—answer them honestly. The younger the child, the more briefly and casually the questions can be answered. As adolescence comes on, questions should be dealt with more fully, with profounder explanations. And then the child should be told that if he wants to dig back into his birth and his ancestry, he has the right to do so. Usually, if the home relation has been right and there has been no moment of shock in learning of adoption, there is no desire in the child to seek unknown persons for his parents. Yet it is perhaps inevitable that as the adoptive relationship grows there come moments of wandering pity for the physical parents of the child. The child is so precious. How great the loss to those who did not or could not keep him! Then it must be remembered that the child, as he is, is a product of the environment, too. Given an environment less welcoming and less warm, he might have grown into a human creature timid and defensive, fighting his way against a society not kind to nameless children. The very fact that a mother can give up her child means she should not keep him, either because she does not love him enough or because the environment she can provide for him is not good enough.

And yet I have never been able to acknowledge to a child the possibility of lack of love at his birth. When the child

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asks his adopting parents, "Why was I given up?" let the answer never be, "Because you were not wanted." That is too hard for the child to bear. And it is unjust, perhaps, to that other one who gave him up. Let the answer be, "I'm sure it was only because she couldn't make a home for you, and she wanted you to have a real home." It is easiest of all if you can truthfully say, "She died."

What I have written, of course, presupposes that the child is adopted at an early age. I do believe that very early adoption, as near birth as possible, is the best foundation for later happiness with the child. Both parents and child need to share the experience of babyhood. Even at a year the child is older than he should be for adoption. By then the early weeks, the first months, are lost to the parents. They will not know the precious, newborn look of their child, and something will be missing from their memories.

I know that some persons feel a greater security in taking a child who has passed the mental and physical tests of the first year or two. But parents take certain risks with all children, by birth as well as by adoption. A mentally defective child or a physically deformed one can be born into any family. Parents actually take far less risk in adoption than in birth. Most types of physical malformations are apparent at birth. So far as mental defects are concerned, the more obvious sorts can be detected at birth, though others less obvious may escape detection until the child is of school age.

To adopt a child and be ignorant entirely of his inheritance is indeed a grave risk as grave as to marry in haste and ignorance a person to share parenthood with you. Reliable child-placing agencies can do the preliminary sifting for you.

This is a co-operative process. The par-

ents go to the agency and describe themselves and the child they want. Someone from the agency visits the home. Of course no one can adopt children who cannot offer them reasonable security based upon a stable home, emotional as well as financial. A child should not be used, for example, to "save" a marriage. It is unfair to the child to bring him into an unhappy home.

Can the relationship between the adopting parents and their child be as close as though the child had been theirs by birth? It is possible that it can be even closer. The very fact that the parents choose and always want the adopted child gives the relationship the right start. Love often develops through the sense of responsibility of the parents and the response of the child into something more real and warm than the tie of blood.

I have thus far dealt exclusively with the child adopted in early infancy. However advisable it is to adopt children very young, there are also older children who need parents. Should the parents' choice fall upon an older child, common sense must be the guide for the new relationship. There must be no jealousy of the child's past relationships. The new parents should simply accept them as they seem to the child, allowing him to talk freely of them. To suppress the child's memories is only to deepen them. If he learns that his new parents dislike his past, then his instincts, anxious to please and so to establish his security, will make him hide what is past.

The older child will have, too, certain established habits. These may not fit the atmosphere of the new home. Patience is then the word. New habits can only be formed when the child himself wants to form them. He must first feel sure of security in his home; sure that he is wanted, sure of love. Then he will, of himself,

want to become part of the family, and his old habits, which he sees separate him, will drop the more easily.

"Have we said all we should say?" I asked my daughter at this point.

"One more thing," she said. "I think an adopted child's own private past should be kept between the parents and the child. The child ought to have a chance to start even."

She is right. Sometimes it is necessary, in fairness to the child, to explain a certain background that will help a teacher, for example, to further patience and understanding. But what is told should be kept as confidence.

"Of course," my daughter went on thoughtfully, "it isn't only the parents—there's all the rest of the family, too."

Our family is large. She was thinking of aunts and uncles and cousins, of grandmother. We are fortunate in that they have received our adopted children as warmly, in almost every case, as though they were birth children. But often relatives need to be helped to understand that people fit to be parents have the right to have children when they want them, whether by birth or adoption. Parents must steadfastly insist that their adopted children be full members of the family circle, as indeed they are.

"I think that is all, Mother," my daughter concluded.

But her father, who had joined us a short while before, had a question to ask, too. "One thing more," he said, "would you yourself adopt children?"

It was a good question. Our daughter answered with comforting vehemence.

"Of course I would. If I don't have plenty of birth children, I'll adopt all I can take care of."

And perhaps that really is all there is to be said.

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Reconversion of Wellington Warren

(Continued from page 63)

coldly she waved him into the Sanctum. Mr. Hodges was small and brisk and bald enough to care. Mr. Hodges was very busy with papers. Wellington cast down his eyes and stared hard at the maroon rug. Mr. Hodges frowned to himself and put in a phone call to San Francisco.

Wellington was properly impressed. He skated his glance across the quarter acre of shiny mahogany conference table, flickered an eye over the wall charts, the squat little safe in the corner, the bank of phones on the side table. Finally he fixed his gaze hypnotically on the shiny water jug at the Great Man's elbow.

Wellington had learned a number of things about government. For one thing, he had learned to read the government totem pole, to gauge the importance of the bureaucrat by the symbols planted about the tent. The totems here were very clear: secretaries in tandem, conference table, safe, phones and—by no means least important—the water jug. They added up to power, authority and about ten thousand dollars a year.

Mr. Hodges now had his papers under full control. He put in a call to Miami, sighed gently, removed his spectacles and looked upon Wellington.

"Yes?" said Mr. Hodges.

Wellington had trouble with his breathing. "Wellington Warren," he explained. "Third-floor mailroom."

The Great Man nodded benignly. "Of course. The young man who phoned a few minutes ago, aren't you?"

Wellington brought a loose-leaf book out from under his arm. He laid it on the Great Man's desk.

"It's about this," he said. "I think you'd like to read it. Anyway, I think you ought to."

Mr. Hodges glanced at the thing and politely questioned with his eyebrows.

"Well," said Wellington, "it's just that I've been keeping a sort of diary since I began to work here. Because of what Professor Larkin—at Yale—told me."

"And what did he tell you, my boy?"

"He said I was going to have an experience of great value—working for the Government in Washington. So he told me to note down very carefully all the things I saw and heard. You see, sir, it was his idea I could write a Ph.D. thesis about it. So I kept this diary."

"A very sensible idea, too," applauded Mr. Hodges, "and I'll be very happy to read it." He smiled broadly. "Not today, I'm afraid. Rather busy today. But you just leave it with me, and I'll surely get around to it. In a week or so, perhaps."

He waved a cordial dismissal, but Wellington made no move to go.

"I'd appreciate your reading it right away," he said.

"Quite out of the question," said Mr. Hodges. "Here." He placed the book on a pile of documents to his left. "That's my priority reading. I'll get to it sometime in the next few days. It's a promise."

Wellington stood his ground. "Better read it right away," he said.

The Great Man opened his mouth, but Wellington Warren cut in ahead of him.

"I'm sorry to be so persistent," he apologized. "But since your secretary sent me those memos on Mr. Stanton's appointment—well—I think you'd better read my diary."

"What in the world has Mr. Stanton got to do with this?"

"It's those memos on his new appointment," Wellington explained unhappily. "I had them in the mailroom. Three hun-



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dred copies. To go to all the agencies, the Drag—your secretary said. And to the newspapers."

Mr. Hodges was indignant. "Those were my instructions," he snapped.

Wellington interrupted. "I threw them away," he said.

Mr. Hodges sat up very straight. "Well!" he said. "Well, really!"

"Please, sir," Wellington smiled sadly. "You didn't want them circulated. Not actually. I know just how you feel. But you can't do it, you know. Appoint Mr. Stanton to that kind of job, I mean."

The man stared open-mouthed.

"It's all in the book," Wellington said.

Mr. Hodges fought for self-control. "I'm sure," he purred in suppressed fury, "that you know of some good reason why Mr. Stanton shouldn't have that appointment—some very good reason."

Wellington sighed. "That's just the point," he said. "I do. I'm Mr. Stanton."

There was a thunderous silence in the room. The Great Man stared at Wellington. Wellington stared at the water jug. The swivel chair trembled as its occupant emerged from the padded depths. He put a hand on Wellington's shoulder and pushed him into a chair.

"I haven't time for jokes, my boy." His tone was almost pleading. "What was it you really wanted to see me about?"

But Wellington stared owlishly from behind his black horn-rims and slowly shook his head. "That's it. Mr. Hodges. I'm Joseph P. Stanton. The only Mr. Stanton there is."

The phone rang. San Francisco on the wire, the secretary announced. Mr. Hodges didn't want to be disturbed. But it was San Francisco. He didn't care, snapped Mr. Hodges, if it was Hirohito. He threw the phone back into its cradle and turned again to Wellington.

"If you'll just think it over," the boy went on, "I'm sure you'll see just how it all fits in. You've never seen Mr. Stanton in the flesh, now have you, sir? And you don't know anyone else who has, either. Because there never was a Mr. Stanton; not really, I mean. I invented him."

The Senior Co-ordinator gazed upon Wellington as though the boy had suddenly sprouted horns.

"I never meant to cause trouble, sir. It's all in the book. If you'll just read—"

"How can you sit there," the Great Man interrupted, "and say such wicked, wicked things?"

Wellington swallowed hard. "You can't call it wicked, sir. Not when it started, anyhow. It seemed to be my patriotic duty: to help out the Excello Metal Company. I'm sure you remember them: the firm out in St. Louis that kept writing for a decision from us and never got it. Remember, sir?"

"In a way," said Mr. Hodges. "Go ahead."

"Well, the Navy canceled all their orders—they were making fuses for shells, Mr. Hodges. But we wouldn't let them reconvert. They had to have our permission, sir; and someone here thought that perhaps their plant would still be needed. But the point was, we wouldn't tell them anything definite. So there they were."

"Well informed, aren't you?" Mr. Hodges was being sarcastic, but Wellington didn't catch the tone.

"You know how it is in the mailroom," he explained. "All the letters and the wires come in there. We get to know a lot of things. Anyway, I just couldn't stand it, sir, knowing it was all our fault. All those men out of work and the factory closed down when the country needed production so badly. That's why I had to invent Mr. Stanton, sir."

Wellington swallowed again. He looked

at the Great Man solemnly. "I'm not telling this right," he said. "You'd understand it all much better if you'd just read my diary. It's all in there."

He took up the book and rifled through the pages. "Here's where it starts. Just read the sections with the red mark in the margin. There isn't much to it, Mr. Hodges. And then you'll understand."

Warren laid the volume down. The silence was absolute. Wellington's ears reddened. He opened his mouth again—hesitated—then got up and walked away: past the Dragon and Peggy and Mrs. Johns, out of 33765A, down the corridor, back to the shelter of his mailroom.

And Mr. Hodges? Well, Mr. Hodges sat there quietly for quite some time. Then, thoughtfully, he took the volume up. With great deliberation he raised both his feet to the edge of the handsome desk and hoisted the book comfortably into reading position astride his stomach. This was the Hodges battle crouch.

He adjusted his glasses and found his place. Yes, here it was. January twenty-eighth was the date. He read:

I do not think I am learning the things about government that Professor Larkin expected me to learn. Everything he taught me has so little connection with the things that happen here. Am I in the wrong job? Or could Professor Larkin be out of touch?

I had lunch with Tom Jenkins (he is an office boy in the Fiscal Section) in the basement cafeteria today. I asked him about it. He is not a student of government like me, but he has had lots of experience in Washington. He told me not to worry. He says that jobs like ours are the very best for finding out things. He says the important people have to spend all their time making sure they stay important, so they do not get around to see what's going on the way we do.

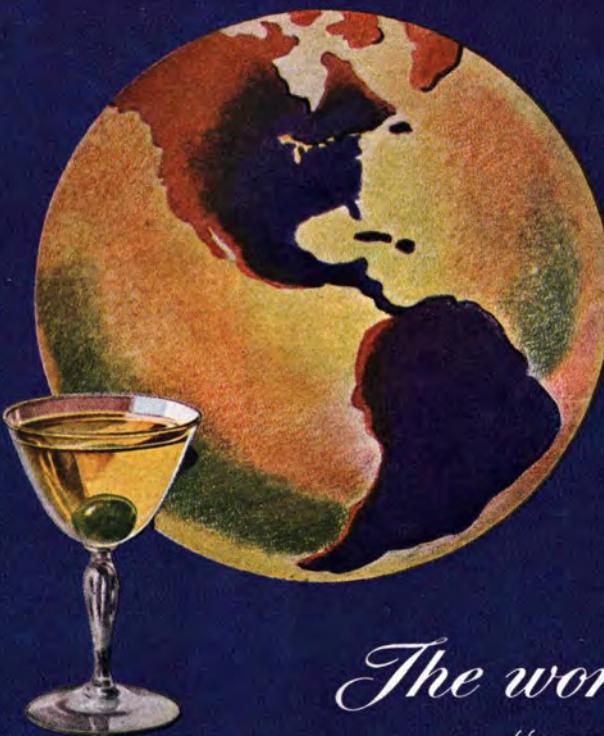
Tom Jenkins pointed out a determined-looking lady at a table near ours and said she was an example of what he meant. She was Mrs. Parton who works in the Special Projects Division and is a very good friend of Senator Edgeworth's. Tom said he knew about her three months ago, but his boss, Mr. Duval, only found out the other day. That was after he scolded her severely for sending through incorrect returns on Form FA273J. The next day Senator Edgeworth made his speech in Congress about officious bureaucrats, and now everyone is very angry with Mr. Duval, who is going to be in real trouble when his budget goes to Congress again. The Senator is on the Appropriations Committee.

Tom Jenkins says things like that happen all the time.

The Senior Co-ordinator clucked sadly to think that the affair Parton-Duval had been bandied about on such a low level. He sighed and returned to his reading:

February 4—Another wire (their fourth) came in today from the Excello Company in St. Louis. It was addressed to Mr. Kleber in Complaints. I took it up right away, and I do hope something will be done about it soon or the Excello people are likely to lose their faith in us. Professor Larkin used to tell us (I remember his words exactly) that "the cornerstone in the arch of democracy is perfect understanding and trust between government and industry."

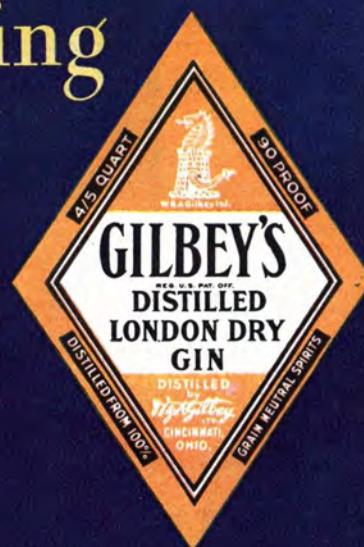
The trouble seems to be that the Excello Company wants to buy a lot of new machinery to reconvert their plant, but they can't because we won't tell them whether they are still needed to make fuses for naval shells. At least we ought to answer their letters and wires. Today's



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telegram said their plant is all closed down, and a lot of men are not working because they have not heard from us.

February 5—Miss Jane Reynolds was today made Deputy Chairman of the Overseas Requirements Review Panel. She was Assistant Dramatic Critic of "Arise" (a very liberal magazine) before coming here four months ago as a secretary. She is said to be a real authority on Oriental theater costumes. McCoy (in the fourth-floor mailroom) told me about this. He says the State Department is questioning whether she has enough background for the job. He knows all about it because he carried the message to Mr. Miller, who is Chairman of the Panel. He says Miller got very red in the face and dictated an answer right away which said Miss Reynolds was a young genius. McCoy says, anyway, Miss Reynolds is certainly a very pretty girl.

No answer sent out to Excello yet.

February 6—Still no answer to Excello. Very disturbing.

February 7—Still nothing on Excello. I met Miss Rogers (she is Mr. Kleber's secretary) in the elevator today and reminded her about it. She gave me a nasty look. She said it wasn't enough for all the Division Chiefs to be sniping at her boss; now the mail boys were doing it too. She said if I knew so much more about Mr. Kleber's business than he did, why didn't I take care of it myself and write them a letter.

February 8—I have been thinking about what Miss Rogers said. Why shouldn't I write Excello? After all, no one around here would ever know, and it might make them feel much better about government people out there in St. Louis. Of course, I couldn't promise them anything; just make them feel that someone was worrying about their problems.

February 11—I just can't get up the courage. About Excello, I mean.

February 13—I did it today. I sent them this letter:

Gentlemen:

My attention has been called to your various communications. This is just to assure you that I am now giving the matter my undivided personal attention, and that I feel confident everything will be cleared up very soon. Please do not become too impatient, as I am sure you will agree with me that the keystone in the arch of democracy is perfect trust and understanding between government and industry.

Very sincerely yours,

Joseph P. Stanton

That is the name of my cousin who works in the bakery back home. I hope I have done the right thing.

February 14—Something terrible has happened. A wire came in today from Excello—for Mr. Kleber:

MOST GRATIFIED AT LETTER FROM JOSEPH P. STANTON. HIS AUTHORITATIVE AND WELL-CHOSEN WORDS GIVE PROMISE OF REAL ACTION DESPITE PAST RECORD OF INACTION OF YOUR OFFICE. ALL WE NEED IS WORD FROM YOU DIRECTING TO MOVE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. WE DO NOT CARE WHICH YOU DECIDE BUT DECIDE SOMETHING. GLAD YOU HAVE ONE TOP MAN WHO REALIZES WE HAVE WAR TO WIN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT. WE HEARTILY SECOND HIS SENTIMENTS ABOUT BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT CO-OPERATION.

I have delivered this to Mr. Kleber's office. What will happen?

This, Mr. Hodges told himself ironically, was one he knew the answer to.

Kleber had been sore; which was nothing new, Kleber being built that way. Kleber had poured out all his indignation on the telephone, and while Mr. Hodges listened, making sympathetic

noises, he had been thinking pretty fast: Stanton. Joseph P. Stanton. That was a new name, yet it had a familiar ring. Mr. Hodges, as a Washington veteran, knew that the important names weren't necessarily the ones that got into the papers. There were the men who had the connections and represented the right people. Every agency had a few like that—men who kept an eye on things for the Speaker of the House or for the Chairman of the Democratic Committee or even for the White House itself.

Joseph P. Stanton . . . A man who jumped into a situation as brashly as Stanton had was either a complete novice or else so sure of himself he could ignore the usual rules of Washington knife-play. And it was always best, so Hodges told himself, to take no chances with a man like that.

So when Kleber had paused for a moment in his clamor, the Senior Co-ordinator had let him have it.

Kleber and his friends had never heard of old Joe Stanton? Well, that didn't prove too much, now did it? Or perhaps it proved that Kleber and his friends didn't get around much in the right places? He could assure him of this: Joe Stanton was no man to monkey with. And if Joe wanted to have his say in the Excello matter—well, there was no man in Washington who had more right.

This Excello business, Mr. Hodges had said further, was just the kind of thing those snoops from the Budget Bureau were always looking for. And wouldn't it have been a nice story to have leak out to Capitol Hill?

He didn't resent Stanton's action one bit. He welcomed it. In fact, after this sign of J.P.'s interest in the agency's work, he was going to draw old Joe a good deal closer: and the day would come when Kleber would be thankful for it.

He had hung up and made a note on his calendar pad to find some excuse for having lunch with Stanton to clear up matters. Well, he'd certainly cleared them up. There was the evidence, in Wellington's cursed diary.

February 15—This has been a very confusing day. It began just fine this morning when the authorizations came through for Excello to reconvert. Mr. Kleber's secretary said to send them right out to St. Louis by courier. She looked hard at me, as though she was daring me to say anything, but I didn't. I was too happy that everything was all right, though I didn't have any idea what had happened.

But then I got a terrible shock. The phone rang and it was Mr. Hodges's secretary. She wanted to know Mr. Stanton's office number.

"Mr. S—S—S—Stanton," I stuttered.

Yes, she said, Stanton. Joseph P. Stanton. Was he in this building or the other one? (They always call me for information like that because I'm supposed to keep track of where people are.)

I didn't know what to say. So I said, "Isn't he the—the liaison man?" That's the safest thing I could think of.

That sounded like the one, she said. "I've got a letter here for him from Mr. Hodges. It's to be delivered immediately. Will you send a messenger out with it?"

I went down, and then for quite a while I wondered what to do with it. After all, it wasn't really for me. On the other hand, it was more for me than for anybody else. So I finally opened it, and it's a very curious letter:

From: Ralph O. Hodges
To: Joseph P. Stanton

Please accept the sincere thanks of this office for your prompt and useful action in the matter of the Ex-

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cello Company. It had the effect of calling to my attention a situation which had developed here—entirely without my knowledge, I need hardly say—to a point which might have caused us real damage. I want to assure you that I've taken all necessary measures, and that I've personally impressed upon all concerned the importance of preventing other incidents of this kind. A personal word. We don't see nearly enough of you, over here. Are you ever free for lunch? One of my favorite restaurants is at your end of town, and I'll run over if you can ever make it.

February 18—Mr. Kleber has sent Mr. Stanton a copy of his monthly confidential report. What should I do with it?

February 21—I do not understand at all how it is getting around, but more and more people—important people—seem to be learning about Mr. Stanton. In the last three days, fourteen pieces of mail have come in here addressed to him. Not only from Mr. Kleber and Mr. Hodges, either; from Mr. Kenton in Applications, Mr. Morgan in Enforcement and Mr. Rauch in Policy Clearance; and someone has put his name on the list for the Daily Conference Digest. I am becoming very nervous about all this.

February 25—This is getting serious. Today a letter came in from Mr. Hodges asking me (Mr. Stanton, I mean) to serve on the Bureau Executive Committee for Postwar Operations. I am going to have to discuss this with someone who's had more experience.

February 27—I have talked it over with Tom Jenkins from the Fiscal Section, and now I really feel much better. I made him swear he wouldn't tell and gave him the whole story. I thought he would never stop laughing. Then he said he'd heard about Mr. Stanton himself. He said Mr. Duval had told his secretary that Mr. Stanton was going to take over war agency reorganization for the Budget Bureau; so now Mr. Duval was going into one agency after another to find out whether they were still needed.

Jenkins said not to worry. Government agencies were so big that nobody knew everybody. He said that even if Mr. Stanton were real, he could be around forever without Mr. Hodges getting to meet him. I said all right, but how about that invitation to join the Executive Committee. He said I ought to write Mr. Hodges an answer. He said the letter ought to hint that the Executive Committee offer was practically an insult for a man like Mr. Stanton. Then Mr. Stanton could hint at some really big job he would accept. That would discourage Mr. Hodges from writing any more letters, because he wouldn't want to be in the position of turning down such an influential man.

I did not know how to write such a letter so Tom Jenkins offered to do it for me. He wrote:

From: Joseph P. Stanton
To: Ralph O. Hodges.

Thank you for your kind letter asking me to join the Bureau Executive Committee for Postwar Operations. However, this is not the kind of thing I do best. I'm sure you'll understand if I say that my preferences are for assignments which give me executive responsibility on a rather high-level basis. Besides that, we keep rather busy over here, and I'm afraid that accepting your offer would force me to divert precious time from my present pressing duties.

This does not mean that I am unaware of the important work you are doing. In many ways, your agency seems to me to be a key to the whole reconversion plan. For example, I hear that you are setting up a Review Board to integrate government research activities. That's the kind of

thing which would tempt me very much. Get the right Chairman for that Board, and you'll have something which could do wonders. So I do appreciate the work you are doing. But as things stand now, there isn't enough time for my present work, much less taking on the relatively unrewarding chore of attending Bureau Executive meetings.

It was diabolical. Every step that wretched brat had taken in retreat had resulted in another pursuit. That letter had been a beautiful bid for the Chairmanship of the Review Board without actually asking for it.

How could the Jenkins boy (a lad to keep an eye on, Mr. Hodges told himself, a useful lad to have around) have known the importance of that job? For it was a key spot—a very juicy spot. The man who held it would carry a lot of weight in the right places. Stanton had certainly seemed to be the right man for it. He obviously had the right connections. And he'd remember that Hodges had fixed it up for him.

So Ralph O. Hodges, the smart operator, had gone out to get that job—for a phantom. He had wangled and teased and cajoled the others into accepting that phantom; he had made some enemies as you always do when you go out to make powerful friends. And now this.

His mind began to backtrack along the path catastrophe had taken. Somewhere along the line there was a way out.

First thing, obviously, was to keep the boy quiet and get him out of Washington. Shouldn't be too difficult. Send him to Nevada—the Las Vegas office—with a salary reclassification if he could get it through those monsters in Civil Service. And burn that book; definitely burn that book.

But how to get out of that Joseph P. Stanton appointment? That was the real headache. Everybody who'd tried to get the job would be very much interested in finding out why their successful competitor had suddenly vanished.

There was a timid knock on the door. The Dragon poked a nose inside.

"That boy," she said, holding out an envelope. "That boy said you'd want to read this right away."

Mr. Hodges viewed the thing with dislike and apprehension. What was the brat going to explode now? He tore open the envelope and extracted the contents—a couple of pages, closely typed:

I know that you won't want to keep anyone around who has done such an awful thing. I realize that I deserve to be fired, but I hope you will let me resign, so I will not be exposed as a disruptive influence. I could never show my face in Professor Larkin's class again if that happened.

Also, that would make it impossible for me to accept a nice job which has been offered to me.

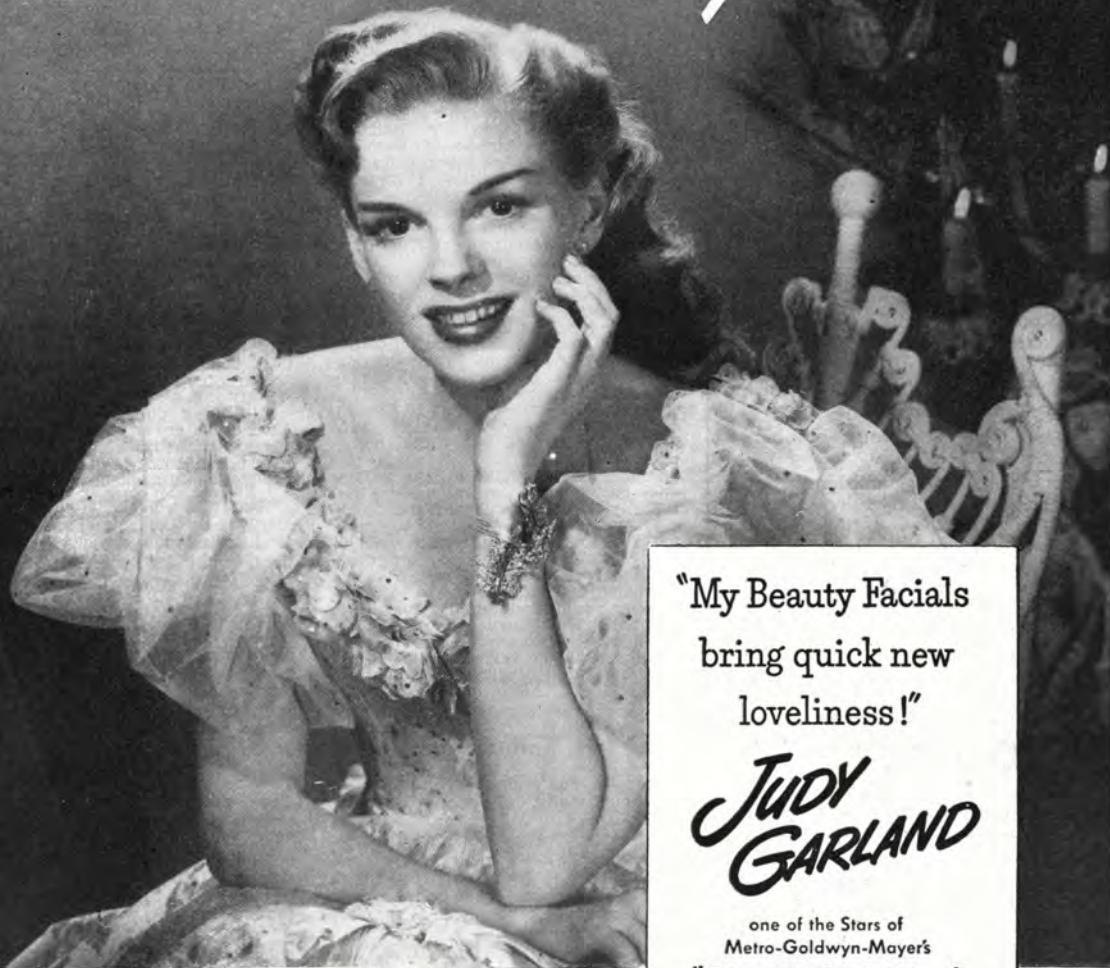
It is a very nice job, indeed, with a firm in St. Louis. In fact, it is a job with the Excello Metal Company. Since this will probably surprise you I will explain how it happened.

When I invented Mr. Stanton, and he fixed up things for the Excello Company, I decided to send them a little letter. A letter from Mr. Stanton, that is. And in that letter I told how we were trying hard to be helpful. I thought that would make for better feelings all around.

Well, I guess they thought Mr. Stanton was really quite a wonderful man. Anyway I—Mr. Stanton, that is—got a very friendly letter from Mr. Krispin (that's their president) in which he said he was happy to find one clear-thinking man in this Washington muddle.

I am just quoting their words, Mr. Hodges, as I have always felt you

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had a wonderful organization here, and I would never do anything to convey any other idea.

In fact, I felt so strongly about it, that I wrote back to Mr. Krispin, pointing out in a diplomatic way how easy it was to get things done here if you knew the ropes and the right people. I said that as a student of government, I knew it had nothing to do with politics, but was just a matter of knowing government practices and important persons intimately.

In a little while I got another letter—whenever I say "I" you know I mean Mr. Stanton—saying that I was far too modest, which was unusual in Washington (I'm just quoting Mr. Krispin again, Mr. Hodges) and offering me—him—a job as their Washington representative to do for them the kind of thing I was so eminently fitted to do.

He said that it seemed that all smart business firms were going to have to keep watchdogs in Washington for some time to come.

It is a very attractive offer, Mr. Hodges, but I'm sure you will realize how delicate my situation is. If I could be Mr. Stanton to Washington, I know I could be Mr. Stanton to St. Louis too. And I would take the job in a minute, if I knew I would not be cheating the Excello people.

I would be sure of that if I were certain that some important man like yourself would be willing to cooperate with me. In fact, such cooperation would make all the difference between success and failure. So I really hope you will help me.

If you do not promise to help me, I will not be able to take the job with Excello. And if I do not take the job with Excello, I will have to go back to Yale where Professor Larkin would undoubtedly force me to publish my diary as a thesis on Problems of Government.

This would be very humiliating to me, Mr. Hodges, since it would re-

veal what a shabby trick I played on a big government agency engaged in reconversion. And when you consider how embarrassing it would be for me to have this story revealed to the public, I am sure that you will help me do justice to my job with the Excello Company.

Mr. Hodges bobbed up and down in his swivel chair and thought it over.

He decided that his course from now on presented no problems whatever. He buzzed for his secretary. "Bring your book," he directed when she appeared.

Tranquilly and easily he dictated a memorandum to a dozen of the capital's illustrious citizens:

Once again government's loss is industry's gain.

I regret and yet rejoice to inform you that Joseph P. Stanton, upon whom we had agreed as Chairman of the Review Board for Federal Agency Integration, is resigning to accept a big job with an important Mid-western industrial firm.

While this means that we must find another man worthy to fill this important post, I'm sure you will be happy that private industry has thus vindicated my own opinion as to Mr. Stanton's sterling qualities. Mr. Stanton's assignment will bring him into close contact with me on a variety of government-industry problems. I hope that all of you will make a special effort to help me help him solve those problems.

That was all. Mr. Hodges nodded benignly to the Guardian Dragon. He walked to the window and looked with approval upon what he saw. The green grass stretched unbroken to the Capitol a mile away. What other city was so gracious and so pleasant to work in? What other city had so many interesting and unusual people? In what other city did Gordian knots untie themselves?

Woman on Her Way (Continued from page 72)

besides, she was a singer. *His past*," said Meg thoughtfully, "didn't matter apparently."

"You talk," said Linwood, "like a—
a suffragette!"

"I am one. As I earn a living for my family and pay taxes, I see no reason why I should not select the people to represent me in my Government."

Linwood shook his head. "I can't see you staging a hunger strike or marching in a parade."

She said, "Maybe you will someday."

Rose and the children went to Long Island, and Elsie, bored with visiting, turned up at the nearest hotel. Meg remained in town conferring with Agnes and her husband, working late hours over her designs for costumes. The play was a period piece of the 1860's.

Agnes would be enchanting in the crinolines, and if the play were a success thousands of people would see her wear them. It would be known that she had been dressed by Mme. Margaret.

Linwood paid duty visits to Americans whom he had met abroad, but he returned to town often, took Meg to tea, to dinner and drove out in a borrowed car on Sundays. The car was a Lessing, and Linwood was interested in Meg's account of Ian's identification with the company.

The company had been reorganized, and Ian was treasurer. This and a few personal concerns took all his time. Lessing, drawing an income, was satisfied, happily fussing over airplanes, all but killing himself on several occasions. But record-breaking flights were the order of the day. Hamilton had flown from New

York to Philadelphia and back. Lessing was content to derive his money from a vehicle which no longer interested him. The car was becoming popular, despite competition, Ian told Elsie. "One of these days you will be richer than you ever were, but don't spend the money in anticipation."

"I don't like Ian," said Linwood.

Meg looked mildly surprised. She said, "He likes you."

"He would," said Linwood. "By the way, why hasn't he married?"

Meg's cheeks grew hot. Yvonne was still in the Mme. Margaret picture, and many people were accepting the fact that Elsie Carrington was more likely to dine with you if you asked that interesting Mr. Duncan. She said shortly, "I don't know—maybe he isn't the type."

"There is no such thing as a man not the type."

Linwood went off to Nevada to watch the big man from Galveston bring home the bacon. Meg spent a week end with her family and another with the Maloffs on the Hudson. Leah was now a chronic invalid. She had attended the party Maloff gave when the new store opened, getting out of bed to do so. She had gone back to bed to stay—months of pain, the inevitable drugs, the boys tiptoeing about when they were home from school. Julius was a distraught man.

They moved Leah in the early spring to the country house. Her wide windows gave on sloping lawns, bright gardens and the silver flow of the river. She wept, not because of pain, but because of Julius and her sons. She saw no one, save them,

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her worried brothers and sisters and Meg.

Julius said, walking the floor of his paneled library with its leather chairs and many books, "She is dying."

Meg watched him anxiously. She said, "Julius, it is wicked not to hope."

"There is no hope." He came to stand before her. "I wish you had known her when we were married," he said. "A little thing, so pretty and quick." He sighed heavily. "If only she would die—since she must—now, tonight, and suffer no more."

"You mustn't say that."

"I suppose not. I do say it. I mean it. God knows."

The night nurse came quietly to the door. Meg knew her. When Harriet Gifford had had pneumonia, this good, gentle girl had nursed her. Harriet, now retired and living near Boston, had said she was the best nurse anyone could wish for. Meg had told Julius about her.

Miss Waring said, "Mrs. Maloff is going to sleep, Mr. Maloff, and wants to say good night to you."

Meg rose. "May I . . . ?" she began, but Miss Waring shook her head. She said, "Tomorrow perhaps."

Julius and Miss Waring left the room, and Meg relaxed in her chair, looked out of the windows at the black sky. What must it be like to be Leah? She was forty and she was dying.

Meg did not see Leah again. When Leah died, Meg was on a train going West. Linwood had telegraphed from Wyoming:

ADVISE YOU COME AT ONCE. VERY IMPORTANT. TELEGRAPH ME FROM CHICAGO. I SHALL MEET YOUR TRAIN. ADDRESS FRONTIER HOTEL.

Rose said, "It's a trick."

"What sort of trick?" Meg demanded, trying to pack. If only Rose hadn't taken it into her head to leave the cottage and the children under Elsie's supervision and come to town to see the dentist!

"To get you out there alone," Rose augmented darkly.

"Don't be silly," said Meg. "You like Edward really; you can't suspect him of—melodramatic designs!"

"Nothing good can come of it," said her mother.

Meg cried childishly, irritated beyond endurance but also frightened, "What if I told you he wants to marry me—if I were free?"

"Marry him? You?" Rose looked aghast. She said feebly, "It wouldn't be suitable." Her face was rosy with astonishment, her eyes shone. She added, "You? Lady Linwood?"

"Now, everything's lovely," said Meg. "What a dreadful snob you are, Ma!"

Rose said, "I know my place." Her flush subsided. "But you can't marry him, you have a husband. You're never thinking of divorce?"

Meg said, "Of course not." She had not told her mother she had once offered Johnny his freedom. She patted Rose's shoulder. She said, "Look, Ma, I wouldn't marry him if I were a hundred times free."

"That," said Rose, "is crazy. The fine position he'd give you!"

Meg said wryly, "Mine's all right as it is, if people would let it—and me—alone."

She turned suddenly, cast herself at her mother, felt herself drawn onto that ample lap.

"What is it?" asked Rose softly.

"Johnny," said Meg, choked, "he's ill, or in trouble—else why would Edward . . . ? The dreadful thing is—sometimes I hardly remember what he looks like, unless I see him in Kitty, or Jack. It's as if I'd gone on and Johnny stayed behind, and I'd gone so far I can't look back and

see him. Ma—Ma—suppose he's *dead*."

Rose said, "It comes to us all."

Linwood was waiting at the little station. He came forward to take Meg's suitcase. She wore black, as if by instinct; her face was smudged with dirt.

He said, "We'd best go right to the hotel. I booked a room for you. It's a dreadful place but the best we can do. I'm stopping there, too."

"We aren't going to the ranch?"

"Not yet," he said gently.

The street was broad and treeless. The mountains seemed closer than she remembered. The dust was gray.

"*Johnny*?"

"Wait just a little, Meg," he said. "I'll tell you about it at the hotel."

Meg's room, with its depressed-looking bed and wooden washstand, opened on the upper porch; Linwood's was across the hall. There was fresh water in the pitcher... He would come back presently.

She took off her hat, her suit jacket and shirtwaist. She washed, then brushed her hair.

When Linwood knocked she was ready; she was sitting in the rocker by the window. He opened the door and came in with tea. He said, "Drink this, Meg. It's all right. I carry the tea with me, and I made it myself in the hotel kitchen."

She drank gratefully. She said, "There's no use not telling me. *Johnny's* dead."

He said, "He's been dead six months."

"Six months! It isn't possible."

"It is true. I've seen the physician who signed the certificate. I've seen his grave, Meg."

She cried, shaking, "What happened to us; what happened to *Johnny* and me that *I didn't know*?"

He answered, not understanding, "Rosita had no intention of ever notifying you, my dear."

"I didn't mean that." She rose, walked past him stiffly and threw herself down on the bumpy bed as if she too must die. She did not cry but shook helplessly.

Not to know, not to suffer the intolerable premonition. Where had they lost each other along the way? Had he thought of her, before he became thoughtless, seen her before he went blind, heard her voice before his hearing ceased. Had he spoken, and if so, of her?

She would never know.

Linwood came to sit on the bed, smoothing back her hair in a simple, hesitant gesture. Such a waste of emotion, he thought. Poor girl, foolish girl. This hideous bedroom, this shabby hotel, this quiet, desirable woman whose heart visibly shook her because of a man who has been dead for six months. Yet, how long since he had been really alive for her?

Linwood said, "I would give a great deal to help you. You did not ask me to come out here; I came to ask *Johnny*, without your consent, to permit you to divorce him. For your own sake. So I came, and he was dead. Manuela runs the ranch, with the help of half a dozen alleged relatives. There's a fellow, José, who manages the outfit. Rosita takes no part in it. I sent for you because I think you should consult a lawyer. This is as good or bad a time as any to tell you that *Johnny* left the property to Rosita. It should be yours. In a few years you could sell profitably."

She said, "I don't want anything."

"Quite. Not now—but what about your children? I believe you can break the will."

"I don't want to; I sha'n't try. But I want to ask her how he died."

"I know," said Linwood immediately. "A horse threw him."

"I don't believe it."



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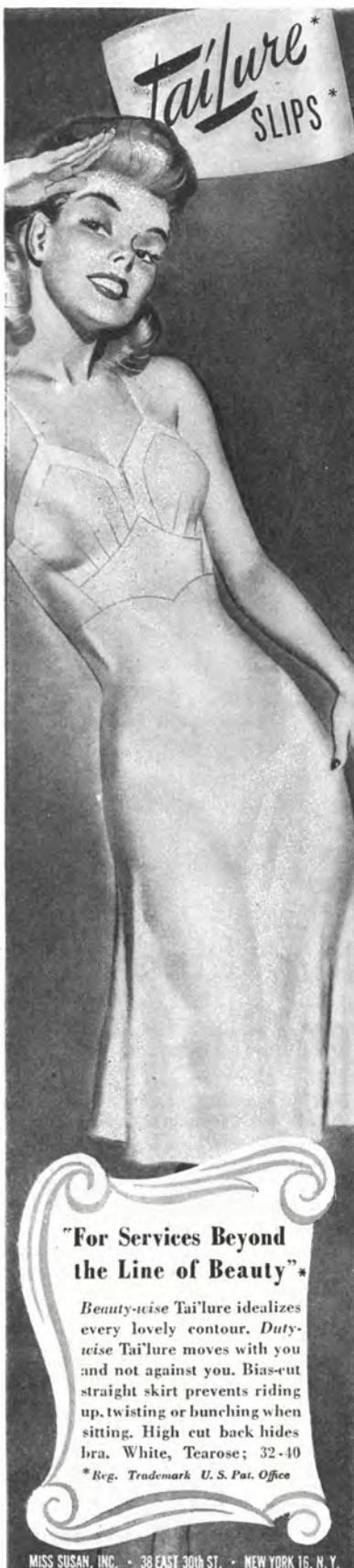
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"For God's sake, why?" he asked her. Johnny Lewis, cold sober, had died of a knife thrust in a family brawl. Rosita had said, "They came here drunk, asking for money. The one who was to have married me long ago—he hit me in the face. He ran away. He was not caught."

Why should Meg know that?

"All right," she said. "Perhaps I'll never know. He's dead, and I don't want the ranch or anything of his. But I must see the children."

"Meg—are you out of your mind?"

She sat up. She said, "If you won't take me, I'll go alone if I have to walk."

In the end he took her. He made her eat something in the dining room, and people came and went and stared. Everyone knew about Johnny Lewis and Manuela's girl; some had known Linwood when he was Edward Hayward, a blond and laughing man, a good hand, all right with men and horses, but bad medicine for women, and very often drunk.

The way was as long and rough as she remembered it.

The ranch house was dark.

"Wake them up," said Meg.

Linwood swore. He told the driver, "Wait for us," and helped Meg down. He took her hand, and in the light from the wagon lanterns they groped their way. Linwood hammered at the door.

After a while a woman and then a man, became voluble behind the door, and Linwood spoke again; the door opened, the rapid Spanish increased. "Por Dios!" cried Manuela, her jaw sagging. She nearly dropped the lamp she held. José, her cousin, clutched a dirty blanket about his rotund middle and at the same time waved a gun. Manuela was huge, formless in her voluminous nightgown. She was beside herself with astonishment and fear. But Linwood was fluent. He shouted her down.

They went in. The place was a pigpen. Manuela turned, spitting like a cat at José, who vanished toward the kitchen quarters. The door to the bedroom opened, and Rosita came out.

She screamed at her mother, at Linwood, looking away from Meg.

Meg raised her voice. "Edward, tell her I want nothing, except to see the children."

Linwood translated. "She says you cannot see them, and we are to go away, or she will have José call the hands."

"In that case," said Meg, "tell her I'll see a lawyer tomorrow and break the will."

Linwood looked at Meg with reluctant admiration. Whatever she wanted, she must have; however insane. He spoke to Rosita at some length.

"What does she say?" asked Meg.

The interpreter role was not pleasant. He replied, "Nothing of any moment."

"Tell me. Every word."

He replied irritably, "Very well. She says she loved Johnny and bore his children. She says this place is hers by right, but so far as she is concerned you can take it from her. She has the children. She says you left Johnny. She says, go back where you came from."

Meg was white as paste. "Tell her I'll go after I have seen the children."

Rosita stood aside and Linwood took the lamp and he and Meg went into the little room with the bunks. The children, naked as the day they were born, dirty, healthy, were asleep like kittens.

The smaller was a girl, Rosita in miniature. She was brown and dimpled, her mouth like a kiss. She was a little over a year old now. Beside her was the boy; a year older perhaps. He opened his eyes, staring at the light and the strange people. He was Johnny Lewis over again. He smiled—that was also Johnny.

Meg stood with her hands behind her, and looked long at what she saw. Her face was grave and composed. Linwood's heart twisted, and he became aware that he loved her. He had known, of course, that he was in love with her; the other, he had not suspected.

She said, "He looks exactly like Johnny." Linwood's throat closed. It was impossible to speak.

She said abruptly, "I've seen enough."

They returned to the big room where Rosita stood very straight against the wall. Perhaps Manuela and the greasy little man looked out from the kitchen; if so, no one noticed. Rosita flung herself against Meg, beat at her with strong, small hands, and Linwood dragged her away. He was exasperated beyond endurance. He cursed her, and she shrank back against the wall, her eyes fixed on him.

He turned to Meg and said rapidly, "She says you can't have her children. She says she would rather kill them and herself."

Meg said, "Tell her I don't want him."

Linwood. The boy. She had forgotten that the girl existed.

She walked past Linwood, and Manuela lumbered out of hiding, screaming, after her habit. Linwood made a short speech to them all. They were going, he said; they were not returning; nothing was wanted; nothing would be asked at any later time. Johnny's ranch was theirs.

So they went out into an idle wind, cooling and sweet, into a great indifferent darkness. Their driver, waked from his drowsing, turned the wagon and they jolted down the road.

Meg suffered Linwood's arm around her, but she did not speak until he said gently, "He's buried on the ranch, Meg. If you wish to return tomorrow—"

"No."

Linwood said, "I'll see about getting our tickets back, then, in the morning."

She asked, "Johnny still owed you for your share, didn't he?"

He replied uncomfortably, "It wasn't much to begin with. I wanted to give it him outright, but he wouldn't have that."

She said, "I'll pay it, Edward."

He started to speak; thought better of it and named a figure, not too low, for that would be transparent as glass to her. And she said quietly, "Johnny must leave no—debts."

When they reached the hotel, she nearly fell getting down from the wagon, and Linwood helped her up to her room. He said, "If you'd take some whisky . . ."

"No thanks."

"The doctor's just down the street. He may not be the best, but he would give you something to make you sleep."

"I don't need it," she said. Her eyelids faltered. She was so drained that she was empty of everything—a shell, waiting to be filled with forgetfulness.

"Maybe you are right," he said. The doctor had signed Johnny's death certificate. He might ask questions.

After Linwood left her, he went to bed, leaving his door open. Men came and went, stumbling up the stairs, crashing down the hall. He listened for Meg's weeping, but he did not hear a sound. It was not until later that she wept for Johnny; not until she sat with Julius and wept also for Leah.

In the train Linwood talked. Meg listened. Before they reached Chicago he asked her, "Are you sure you have always felt this way about Johnny? Are you not, perhaps, holding to a memory of something which hasn't existed for some time?"

She said after a while, "Now I am decently free. Is that what you are trying to say? And in another six months or so

'Vibrant'

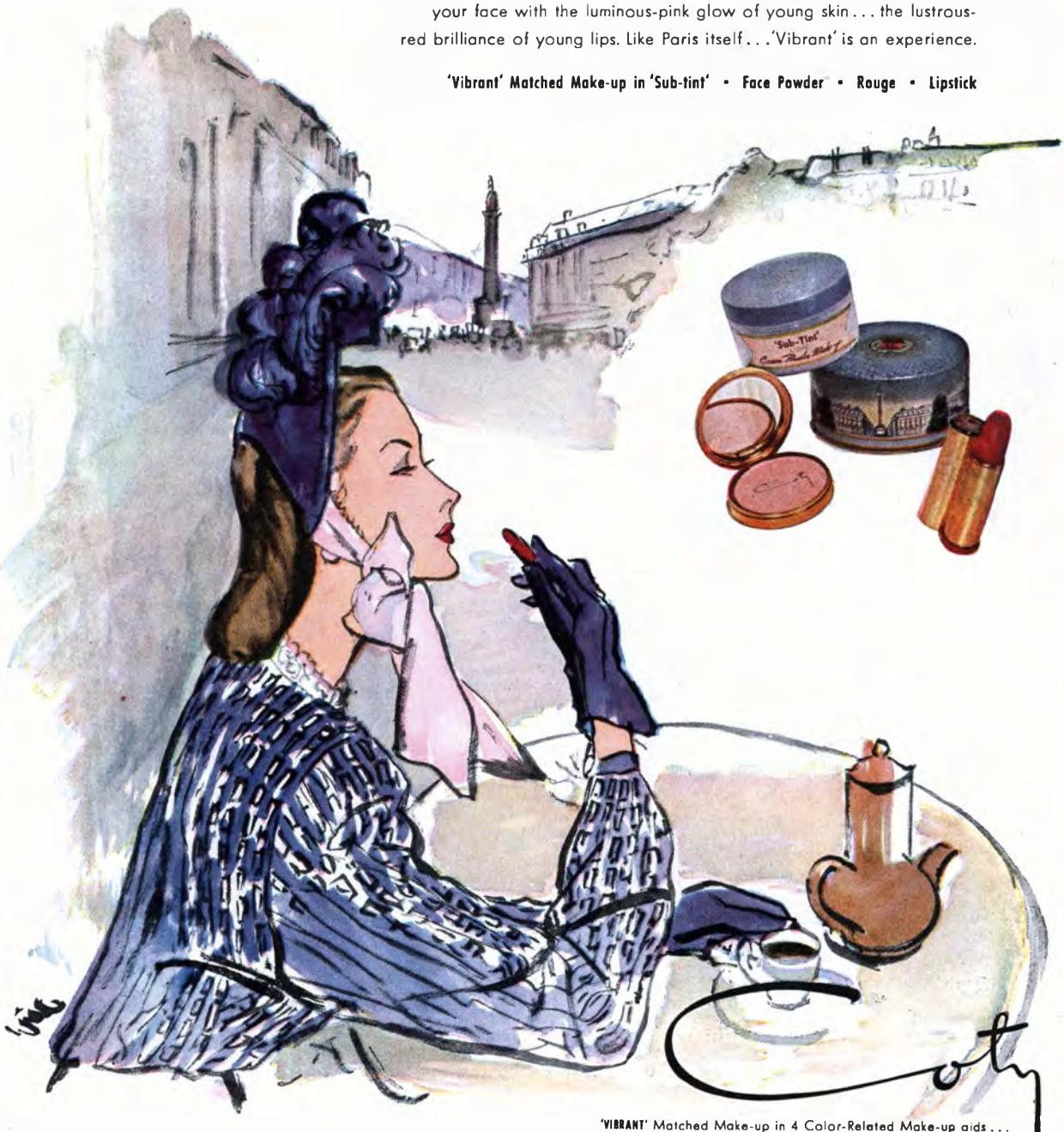
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I could remarry? But you are still too conventional to ask me, now—six months too soon."

He said, startled, "My darling girl—!"

"I'll spare your asking me at a more appropriate date. I thought I was a little in love with you. Perhaps I was, I don't know. But you wouldn't understand about Johnny. I don't myself. There was something we shared. Although we were never together long enough to make a marriage. But we had something. It wasn't," she said, groping, "what I might have felt for you . . ." She stopped. No use. Linwood was clever and articulate. But she could not tell him. She thought: There is no one I can tell.

She said, "Edward, whatever we might have wouldn't be good enough. Not ever."

Now she was a widow and wore mourning because Rose would have been distressed had she not. Rose did not mourn for Johnny. She remembered him as an unsatisfactory husband to her older girl, and as a man at whose door she could lay the responsibility for her older boy's death. But Meg was a widow and, as such, must outwardly mourn.

She would not let Meg go to Agnes' mid-October opening. What would people think? In vain the argument that no one knew beyond the family, Elsie, and Linwood, who had returned to England. So, who would care?

"You'll go over my dead body," said Rose, and Meg stayed home.

Elsie, Ian, and innumerable others went to the opening, and Jim Brady sat in the front row and applauded with violence. Elsie rang up quite late. The play was wonderful, and everyone had raved about the costumes. It was a success. Stone, beside himself with pride, had taken them all to supper.

Kitty's beau, the nice boy, now in his father's brokerage office, had come and gone. Kitty was in bed. Marion had gone at ten; Jack too, trailing last week's

funny papers and a book about heroes. He was still quicksilver. He loved everyone; everyone loved him, but you could not put your hand on him and keep it there.

Rose looked in after the telephone call to ask, "How did it go?" and Meg told her. Yawning, Rose went to bed, and Meg sat alone in the living room. Her new apartment was large and pleasant. It was also a place which Johnny had never seen; therefore a good place in which to learn to be a widow.

Really a widow, this time.

She thought of Kitty, flushed because young Evans had managed to hold her hand. Kitty might be ardent about her business-school lessons, but she was sure to marry soon. And Meg thought with a wild, crazy regret: I'm grown up, I'm grown up!

The awareness of personal maturity may come at any age, from adolescence to the threshold of the grave. So at thirty-five Meg laid away the privileges, rebellions and irresponsibilities of youth, and with them, the expectation of immature emotional adventure.

A year after the move to West End Avenue, Kitty was competent to act as her mother's secretary. She enjoyed it. She liked the atmosphere of workroom gossip, and going home to the good lunch Rose planned for her, sitting at the table over a cup of tea, telling her grandmother all that had happened that morning.

Her tenure of working did not long endure. In the spring Meg announced her older daughter's engagement to Robert Evans. The Evans family was well-to-do, a trifle stuffy but broad-minded. It was a shock to Mrs. Evans that her child had chosen to marry into a dressmaker's family, but that gave her an excuse to patronize the establishment.

It was with a sense of adventure that she asked Meg to design the frock she would wear to the wedding, for it was

Career women find time to salvage kitchen fats

Of the 601,000,000 pounds of used cooking fat salvaged in the past 41 months, 425,000,000 pounds of it have come from civilian sources. The rest represents the turn-ins of the armed forces in domestic installations.

A good share of that civilian salvage total, according to recent surveys, comes from part-time housewives, career people, and bachelor chefs, people who have full-time jobs outside the home. These are the people who order their groceries over the phone from the office, shop on the way home from work at delicatessens, or other stores that stay open beyond the usual 9 to 6 schedule.



standard equipment

They realize that saving used cooking fat is a part of every cooking operation. The fat salvage can is as much a part of standard kitchen equipment as the eggbeater, measuring cup or skillet. Practically every meal offers some opportunities for fat salvage. From a full course dinner, there are meat scraps to be rendered, skillets to be scraped, and soup to be skimmed. From luncheon sandwich meat, there are scraps of fat and gristle to be rendered and added to the salvage container. Oils from canned fish help fill the salvage container, too.

Every drop of used cooking fat turned over to the meat dealer for four cents a pound, keeps soap shortages from getting worse. The Department of Agriculture states that unless fat salvage continues to account for 10% of the domestic supply of inedible tallow and grease as it did during war years, there will be even less soap on grocers' shelves than there is now.



other uses, too

In addition to substituting for soap fats and oils that still cannot be imported from the South Pacific, used cooking fat helps industry make electrical appliances, rubber products, fabrics, ink, papers and hundreds more everyday necessities.

That is why the government urges everyone to continue their fat salvage at top speed. It is a peacetime responsibility that everyone—whether she keeps house two hours a day, or 18 hours a day—must assume.

Fats and oils are still one of this nation's most critical shortages, which can be licked only by greater and greater quantities of used cooking fat.



save FATS

well known that the gray house in the Fifties, with its huge bay window displaying only an antique chair with a length of supple silk flung across it, had witnessed the arrival and departure of the fashionable, the professional and the Four Hundred. Things get about.

The Evans family received Kitty without too much misgiving and found her well-mannered, considerate and charming. More conventional, too, they decided, than many girls of her age. Bob was much in love, and he was a good boy who worked hard. One day he would be a partner in the firm.

Kitty was married in the Presbyterian Church the Evanses attended. She was a pretty bride, and her two attendants were Bob's pleasant, plain sister and Marion. Elsie sat beside Meg and beamed in Marion's direction. Marion's hair was a bright flame, and her frock the tender green of spring. Elsie pinched Meg. "Kitty's lovely, but wait until Marion marries." She closed her eyes to visualize that wedding. She opened them and said, "Of course, it's a long time off, I hope."

Meg watched Kitty come down the aisle. Mrs. Evans sobbed, watching her tall son look down at his bride. And Meg thought with a shiver: Does every woman see herself a grandmother at this instant? But her love for Kitty banished this irreverent thought, and she turned to lay her hand on Rose's. No tears for Rose. She sat erect and proud in her beautiful—and inevitable—black gown. For if Meg shivered at the thought of becoming a grandmother, Rose could not wait to become an even more distant ancestress.

The Evanses went off on a wedding trip and returned to live in a Greenwich Village flat, in a remodeled house not far from the one Elsie had once owned, and one chapter seemed ended—or begun. Marion was a difficult adolescent given to tempests and tears, running to Elsie with complaints and pettulances. She was suspended from boarding school for smoking, but Elsie found it amusing and daring. Marion attracted boys as easily as she breathed; she fell in love with matinee idols and wrote to them without discretion; and by the time Linwood returned to the States he found that Meg's occasional letters had not prepared him for the growing complexities of her family life.

He came in May, sobered by the knowledge that he had booked, then canceled, earlier passage on the *Titanic*. He came because he wished to see Meg and to consult Ian on American investments. He had great faith in Ian's acumen. And coming to the apartment for dinner, he looked long at Meg, trying to trace the events of the past two years in her face. He found none, not even the indication that she had recently become grandmother to Kitty's first son.

He said, "Thirty-seven, isn't it? I think you have set something of a record!"

During dinner he talked to Rose of England, and of the fact that the increase in Germany's naval budget was causing some consternation. "The usual foreboding," he said, "but there may be something in it. I spent last winter in Germany and saw disquieting things."

Rose said roundly, "That's nonsense; they'd never dare. If it weren't for people always talking war and being afraid of it, perhaps there wouldn't be wars. It's putting the notion in other people's heads." She was strikingly handsome, looking her fifty-five years; her face still rosy and not much lined, her hair white as flour.

Meg said, "War?" and shook her dark head. It was so remote a possibility. She

thought: It couldn't affect us, no matter what happens; and was conscious of a stab of anxiety. Jack was a sturdy, irrepressible fifteen-year-old, ready to enter a military school in the autumn. He was obsessed with war and warriors; he had never outgrown the toy-soldier stage; he was venturesome and restless; more than anything in the world he wanted to drive a car of his own and to see an airplane fly.

Linwood said, "I understand that there was a suffrage parade shortly before I landed. I remember your threat, Meg."

"It wasn't a threat. I marched in it," she said.

Rose said, "I begged her not to."

After dinner Rose established herself in the study and knitted diligently. Linwood and Meg sat in the living room and talked.

He picked up a photograph of Marion and looked at it, smiling. "Marion?" he asked. "What a beautiful girl she is. You'll soon have your hands full."

"They are now."

They talked as old friends do, for a time. Then he asked abruptly, "This once, and not again. Is there any chance for me now that some time has gone by, Meg?"

She looked at him, smiling. She said, "No, and I think you are relieved. You have a stubborn type of loyalty. But you've met a woman you can be fond of, haven't you?"

"I wish you wouldn't read my mind," he said irritably. "Yes, I believe I have. A girl, really."

"How old?"

"In her twenties. She's an artist, Meg;

her parents are dead; she lives in London."

She said, "I'm glad for you, Edward." Then she smiled. "No American heiress after al.?"

He said, "No, I could never live up to one." He looked up gravely. "It's lonely in that pile of masonry I inherited and can't sell. Entailed and all that. I dare say if I had a wife and family to share it—"

She said quickly, "You'll be very happy, and you know it."

"It's a comparative sort of thing, really," he said.

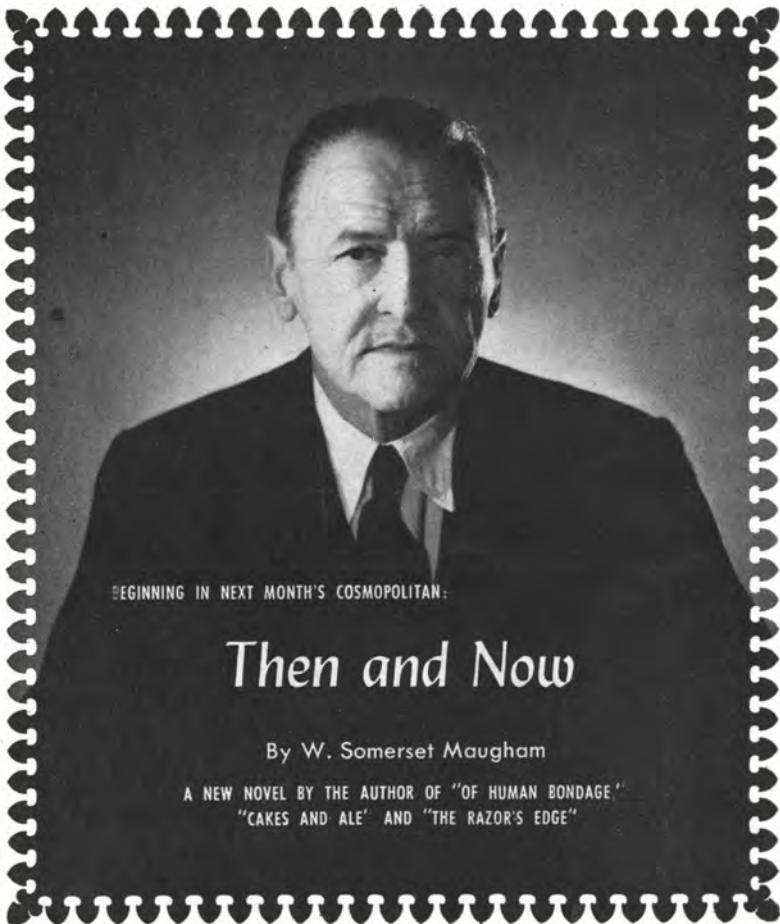
She said, "I haven't told anyone this, but I had a letter from Doctor Major some months ago."

"Major?" he asked. "Why?" He frowned, remembering this physician who had once attended him.

She said, "Rosita had been very ill, some sort of fever. He didn't go into details, said merely they'd sent for him. She was sure she was dying. She had something on her conscience—a letter Johnny wrote me shortly before he died. He had not mailed it and she found it. She was afraid to destroy it, she told Doctor Major. Afraid Johnny might haunt her. But when she saw me, she could not bring herself to give it to me. She had opened it, and must have looked at it many times. She could not read much of it, for though she speaks English fairly well, she cannot write or read it."

He asked gently, "Do you want to tell me what it said?"

"It was a—business letter," she said. "It told me he had made a will, leaving





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what he had to Rosita. He said he owed it to her."

"Was that all?"

"Almost. Somehow, it made things—right."

Meg, not Rosita, had destroyed the letter. It was short and she could remember it. He said someday he would be out of her debt; he told her of his provision for Rosita, without apology; and then he said, "I have always loved you, Meg."

Linwood said, "So now you have forgiven him, having paid his debts."

"There was nothing to forgive, really," she said. "You don't forgive the people you love. You try to understand them and hope they understand you. Usually you fail."

She saw Linwood again in the spring of 'fourteen. Marion was out of school and had created a situation by an attempted elopement with a young actor, the juvenile in Agnes's current play. Marion was nineteen, the boy twenty-two. She had met him casually through Agnes, had been meeting him less casually ever since, notably in his dingy little hotel suite in the West Forties. Shortly after the New Year, on a Sunday, they left in a borrowed car for Greenwich. But Agnes put two and two together. A telephone call to the boy's hotel resulted in information from a switchboard operator; another to a girl in the company known to have been semiattached to young Nelson, brought further information. Agnes rang up Meg, found she and Rose had gone for the week end to inspect the little house Kitty had acquired in Montclair. So she called Elsie, and Elsie went into action; she and Ian arrived just in time.

There was, as Elsie said afterwards, nothing against Nelson except that he was a juvenile and would remain so; also he drank considerably, and his reputation with women was well known.

In the spring Elsie, Marion, Rose and Meg went to Europe. Marion's trip was by way of reward for behaving herself since January and also to keep her in sight. Jack was safe at school.

Paris was business and pleasure; and London was meeting an old friend. Rose took Marion to look at The Towers. They drank tea with the aging Althea, and Rose, returning, reported that The Towers was smaller than she recalled it.

Linwood and his young wife took them about London, saw them off for Paris again. And Lady Linwood said, holding Meg's hand briefly, "I suppose I'll always be a little jealous of you."

Meg smilingly told her, "Perhaps it's a good thing. It will keep you—interested." But, she thought, there was no need for jealousy. This was a good marriage if ever she had seen one.

In Paris, they met Julius Maloff by rearrangement. He had been to Germany and Belgium on business for the firm. He was head of it now, his father having retired. He sailed for home with them, and while Marion walked deck miles with all the young men on the ship, while Rose knitted and Elsie summoned the steward at brief intervals to satisfy the appetite the salt air gave her, Julius and Meg talked.

She wanted his reassurance that there would be no war; she had felt the tension in both London and Paris. But he could not reassure her. He said gravely that nothing he had seen in Germany could bring anything but apprehension.

Jack Lewis, David and Seth Maloff enlisted within a few days of one another, shortly after the United States entered the war. And Marion married a Canadian

flier whom she had met during a winter holiday in Palm Beach with Elsie. He was a charming likable boy, and soon to go to England for further training. The wedding was hurried and at the apartment. They had a week together, and then Marion came home to live. She talked about taking Red Cross courses and going overseas, but she did not. She went out a good deal, leaving the apartment at lunch time, getting in very late. She was twenty-two, married, her own mistress.

On the night she came home, accompanied by two young men in uniform and obviously quite drunk, Meg put her to bed, thanking heaven that Rose was asleep. In the morning Meg phoned her establishment that she would be late. She had a very competent manager. Yvonne had returned to France—tired, she said, of working, having saved enough to live modestly in her home village.

Meg went into Marion's room and found her shuddering at the thought of coffee and with a headache of gigantic proportions. Headache or not, they would have to talk, Meg said firmly. "I think you and your grandmother would be quite happy on the Island this summer."

"I'd die of boredom!" said Marion.

Meg asked sharply, "What do you suggest? You cannot continue in your present routine, Marion. I won't permit it."

"I can live on what Peter sends me."

Meg's heart was sore for Peter McLean. She liked him as a person and because he so loved her child.

She said evenly, "If you prefer."

"I don't," said Marion, "and you know it—it isn't enough." She threw herself against the pillows. She said, "I was crazy to marry him; it was a deadly mistake."

Meg's lips tightened. She was forty-two now and felt every hour of it. She looked younger, because of her mobile features, her figure. Her hair was still soot black, save for one little feather of white.

She said, "If you feel that way, you didn't love Peter."

"Of course I loved him," cried Marion, "but you can fall out of love, can't you? When he comes back," she added, "perhaps he'll give me a divorce."

"If he comes back, you mean," said Meg. She snatched her thoughts away from Jack, still safe in this country.

"He'll come back," said Marion. She added, "I could live with Aunt Elsie, you know."

Meg said, "You could, of course." She thought with astonishment that Marion was free to live anywhere she wished, provided the bills were paid.

"She told me," said Marion, "about wanting to adopt me when I was little. Why didn't you let her?"

Meg was white. The stupid tears rushed to her eyes. At Marion's age, she had wept easily, but not for a long time now. She said, stammering, "But—but you are my child."

"You've never cared for me much," said Marion; "or for Kitty. Jack's your favorite. Of course Kitty was always so good, you never had any trouble with her. I don't believe," she added, "that you've cared too much for any of us. You had the shop."

Meg's mouth shook. She said, "I've loved you all, and if, as you say, I had the shop, it was for your sakes."

"Maybe," said Marion, "at first. Oh, you're sweet to us, Mother," she admitted "and fond of us in your way. But you never seemed to be—with us somehow. Not nearly as much as Gram, although, to be honest, she could never stand me, really, she's so besotted over Kitty. And I've often wondered why you never married again. It couldn't have been on our account!"

Meg rose; her bones felt stiff. She said, "You make your own plans, Marion."

She left the room and went on to the shop. She could not think about Marion, she was too occupied. It was not until she was alone in her office, after dusk, that she could think. The soft-footed saleswomen had left; the sewing girls and the models had all gone. She had a businesslike desk, but there were flowers on it. The chairs were comfortable, the decoration subdued. On her desk, photographs of her children.

She looked at Marion's picture. She thought: Well, it's funny, really. It was not a matter for laughter; but it was funny. Long ago when Elsie and Herbert Carrington had asked her to give them her child she had refused; every instinct, inborn and acquired, had rebelled. You didn't give up your child unless circumstances forced you to—illness, death, hunger. She had made the only possible decision, and it had always been wrong. Marion still belonged to herself first, and after that to Elsie. All these years she had been Elsie's, and not through love. What Marion had wanted, Meg could not give her. Not even now. It was more than the background money could buy. She thought: If I had given her up, she might have become fond of *me*.

She rose, took the sables which had been Elsie's Christmas gift, turned out the lights and left. She would talk to Marion again when she felt less confused, and to Elsie. She knew the clamor Rose would set up, but this time it would not be as loud. Marion was a married woman; she must be permitted to manage her own affairs.

At the close of the war there were parades on Fifth Avenue. The Maloff shop, moved to Fifth in nineteen-eighteen, afforded a vantage point. Julius lived on top of his beautiful specialty shop in a small penthouse. His windows overlooked the marching men.

One such parade Meg watched with him. Seth and David marched in it, and thousands of other young men in that particular division. Jack did not march. He would march no more. He had been killed at Bellecourt.

Kitty, her husband and two children watched also. Marion was there, extremely smart, thinner than she should be; and Elsie, no longer young, but with a smooth, remarkable beauty, part complacency. She and Marion were now living in an apartment at the Ritz. When Peter McLean returned to the States, it would be Elsie who would see him, make the explanations and quietly shepherd Marion to Reno for her divorce.

Julius drew Meg aside. They stood together, and he took her hand and held it. He was quite gray and looked much older than he was. But there was something so durable about him, you never thought of him as aging. He said, "I know what you are thinking."

"Thank you," she said. They all knew; she could read it in their eyes; even Marion's, but in none as well as Julius's.

Meg was bitter; she was unremitting in her bitterness. Jack had died with thousands of others. Her bitterness was directed mainly at herself. She had known him for twenty-one years, but she had not known him well, nor long enough. A quicksilver child, a mischievous boy, a restless adolescent . . . And then, a young man who went to war. If it were possible, Meg would have gone back to twenty-one years ago, to live every hour of those years with him as closely as she could.

Meg thought of her sister Daisy. Herman had retired, selling his business for an enormous sum shortly before the war. He had invested much of the money, at

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If stranded on a dance floor, should you—

- Join the wallflowers
- Retreat to the dressing-room
- Yoo-hoo to the stag line

If ever a goon-guy thanks you for the dance and leaves you marooned—what to do? Walk nonchalantly to the dressing-room. There you can regain your composure and reappear later—with no one the wiser. Such trying episodes challenge your poise. Just as trying days often do... but not when you have the help of Kotex! For Kotex has special *flat, tapered ends* that don't show revealing outlines. So why be shy of the public eye? Just rely on Kotex!



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Ian's suggestion, in very certain securities, and some in more speculative ventures—in motion picture concerns, in airplane factories. He and Daisy lived in a vast, hideous stone house in Jersey; they had three hundred acres and a model farm. The war had subdued Herman. He had met with a chill among certain of his friends because of his attitude before nineteen-seventeen. His sons had enlisted, held commissions and survived. He was proud of them, but uneasy with them. He was a man of divided loyalties and comfortable only with Daisy, his plump and docile shadow.

Meg spoke to Julius. She said, "Pray heaven it never happen again."

He spoke thoughtfully. "War brings out the best and worst. The sacrifice, the nobility of an ideal—that is the best. The hatreds, the confusion, the profiteering—that is the worst. There is a lot of fine oratory, before and during and after. And after the oratory . . ." He shrugged. "Then what?" he asked. "Someone said to me the other day that each man in a normal lifetime experiences at least two major wars."

She wasn't listening. He thought, with his sensitive tenderness: She is thinking of Jack. But she was not, not directly. She was thinking of Johnny Lewis and his other male issue . . .

The thin, brown child whom she had looked at by lamplight and illogically hated. Linwood had spoken of him in 'fourteen. He had said, "I wonder what happened to him?" Linwood had seen service throughout the war; the sort of hard, unsung departmental service a man of his age, who had a bad leg, would see. He had his own son now.

Julius said presently, "We are going to launch a custom-made department in the fall. It has become a familiar feature of both specialty and department stores, as you know." He smiled. "It may supersede the dressmaker."

"Are you warning me?"

"I'm offering you a job, if ever you tire of your present one. Supervision and designing. You could name your own salary."

She said, "Do you know, it's tempting?"

Responsibility, yes, but not the responsibility she now carried. There was of course Elsie to be considered. But Elsie was far richer than Herbert had ever been, thanks to Lessing, killed in his own plane some years ago; thanks too, to Ian. Elsie need never worry about anything again; she had Marion; she had Ian after her peculiar, bloodless fashion; and now and then he vaguely alarmed her, which was good for her. He was very eligible, a distinguished bachelor; even the debutantes, thrilled by heroes, breathless over uniforms, or fascinated by the current university crops, knew that. He was the hostesses' pride, the extra man; he decorated a stag line, he gave marvelous parties. And Elsie said bluntly to Meg, "Just as long as he doesn't lose his head over some idiot girl and marry her when he turns fifty."

In the summer of nineteen-twenty, Rose died in her sleep. She had given no indication of illness; she had always been very strong. She saw a doctor regularly because Meg insisted. Her heart was perhaps a little tired; yet her death was wholly unexpected.

Meg thought: When I was born, she was eighteen. When I was eighteen, Kitty was a baby.

Rose had gone, protesting almost to the last. On the evening before her death Ian, Daisy and Herman had come to dine. Rose had been voluble on what the world was coming to—the short skirts, the short hair, the cigarette smoking, the speak-

easies, the barefaced murders and the vulgar, noisy tempo of the postwar world. "To think I have lived to see it," she said.

Just barely...

Meg was forty-five. She had outlived her father, her husband, her mother and her youngest child.

She said to Julius, shortly after her mother's death, "I did not think I could feel like this."

"How?" he asked gravely.

"Lost," she said, and then after a moment, "alone."

He said what is always said at such a time: she had her children, she had her friends; yet he did not much believe in this consolation. His own father and mother were still alive, and for their age, vigorous. Leah was dead, and he had not forgotten her; he was still alone.

He said, partly to distract her, partly because he wished to share his distress with her as a token of his affection, "I am alarmed about David."

"Why?" she asked, rousing herself.

"He is unhappy at the shop. He wishes to leave, to go on with his music."

She asked in astonishment, "Why shouldn't he continue with it?"

"It would not be for his pleasure," said Julius patiently, "but to make it his profession. Can you understand that?"

"Well, yes, I suppose I do. You could have made it your profession, Julius."

"I never wished to," he said firmly. "It was always a joy, a form of retreat or escape. But the business I have built on the foundations my father laid down, for my boys and their sons after them. Why cannot David be satisfied with music as—his pleasure, as I was?"

She said, "I understand that, Julius, but unless you give him what he wants more than anything in the world, he will resent it. Seth is—different. He is all business. He can carry his share and David's too."

He said sadly, "When I taught David to play he was a very little boy. I made him practice. Sometimes he cried. I told him, 'When you are a grown man your fiddle will bring you great happiness—as it has me when I am tired, when I wish to relax.' But," he said, "a professional!"

She smiled. "He isn't good enough?"

"Of course he is good enough," said Julius, "or will be." He added, "But the Maloffs are shopkeepers."

"And musicians," said Meg, "don't forget that, Julius."

He did not forget it. In the autumn David came to thank her. "It was partly your doing," he said. "Dad's still reluctant, but I'm to try it for five years." His eyes shone. He was much as his father had been years ago: thinner, taller, but as sensitive and quick. He fell easily in love and clawed his way out. His passion was for music. And his father had said, "Very well, I shall finance you for five years. If at the end of that time . . ."

But in five years a man could accomplish anything.

David told Meg this, and added, "Seth's sore, of course; he thinks I'm crazy. I'm twenty-eight, and I have a lot to learn. He's twenty-seven, married, settled down, and with his mind on shopkeeping." He said, "Some day I'll write a violin concerto and dedicate it to you."

That was the autumn Meg went West, traveling in comfort. She went without explanation except that she was tired and needed to go away by herself. Elsie asked, "What are you up to?" Elsie was dieting. Rose's death had frightened her. She was not a great deal younger than Rose had been; she was nearly sixty.

"Nothing," said Meg. "I'll wire you, Elsie. Don't worry."

Elsie said, "I always worry." She added, "Marion's been running around with



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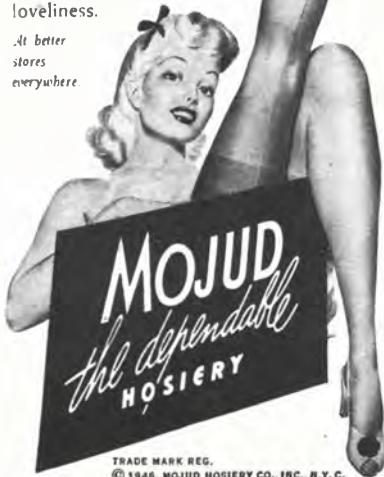
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that idiot again. I'm worried about her." Marion had her divorce. She had Elsie. "That idiot" meant anyone current in her life. Meg looked at Elsie and smiled. She said, "Marion once told me I should have let you adopt her. She was right. But it wouldn't have been any different than it is now, I think."

Elsie said, flushing, "I do believe she's fond of me, Meg."

Meg had that to think about on her way West. Elsie was content, believing Marion fond. She excused Marion, defended her; she did all the things one does for the object of exacting devotion. Ian lost his temper with her frequently. He did not approve of his beautiful and maddening niece. "She's as selfish as they come," he said, and Elsie answered, "She's very like you, Ian."

But Ian too had his one devotion, and it was not Elsie, nor any one of a discreet succession of women. Elsie knew, if Meg did not. But she did not tax him with it.

The depot was larger; there were as many Fords as horses. The hotel had been rebuilt. Meg went in and registered and afterwards talked to the manager.

He could tell her little. The Lewis ranch had been sold before the war, and the Mexicans had cleared out. Some said they had gone back across the border. The younger woman? He wrinkled his forehead; he was comparatively new here. Fat, wasn't she, and pretty? He thought she had married.

There was no one she could ask except Doctor Major. She went to him and sat in his little dusty office, and the old man regarded her thoughtfully. He could fill in the gaps. Yes, Rosita had sold to Easterners and got a good price too. She'd married—a cousin, he thought. He understood they had gone to Mexico.

"The children, too?"

He nodded.

She asked, "You didn't see them much, did you?"

"Not after Rosita was sick, and I sent you the letter." He paused. "I often wondered. Should I have done so?"

"Yes, of course. I have been grateful always."

He said, "Once they brought the little boy into the office. He had cut himself."

She admitted slowly, "It's the boy I am interested in."

He shook his bald head. He said, "I won't inquire into your reasons. Maybe I can guess. Forget it. He's a regular little Mexican. You wouldn't be happy with him, nor he with you; even if they'd let him go. The grandmother would, I dare say, for a price. Rosita might, now that she's married. But take my word for it, it wouldn't be any good."

She rose, thanked him and went back to the hotel. On the following day she took a train East and wired Elsie from Chicago. When she returned to New York, she went back to work.

The apartment was all emptiness. Something strong and simple and enduring was gone from it. She had never stopped to say to herself, "I love my mother very much." She had not known it consciously. It was simply there. She had often been impatient with Rose, her funny little ways, her tealeaf reading, her class consciousness, her narrowness. But she had depended on her. She had known too that no matter what she did, no matter how much Rose disapproved, Rose would be there. Now, she was not.

The following year Agnes retired and went to live in Connecticut. She had had all she wanted of success. Now she could enjoy herself. She liked people; she liked

a garden; she was fond of her husband. She enjoyed being lovely and legendary, sitting on village committees, giving garden parties for charities. Agnes had always known what she wanted and where she was going, and she never went places too late. She got there on time.

She asked Meg that summer, during a week end, "Why don't you quit? You've made enough money, haven't you? Or does Elsie keep your nose to the grindstone?"

Meg said, "Hardly; there was a time when she needed a share of the income, but that was long ago, and I have repaid her since, all she put into the business."

"Give it up," said Agnes, "live on the income of whatever investments Ian has made for you. Come to the country to live."

"I'd loathe it!"

"Then get married. I assure you there's nothing like a second marriage, at your age, to bring back a woman's youth."

Meg returned to town. She talked to Elsie and to Ian. She talked to her manager, Miss Carter, a competent young designer. Many of Meg's clients would stay with Miss Carter if she decided to take over the business. After the details had been decided Meg had dinner with Julius one summer night on top of a hotel roof. She asked, "Still want me in the store?"

"Do you mean it?"

"Yes." She said, "It is time that American designers stopped being afraid of French competitors. You import a great many French clothes, Julius. I'd like to compete with them."

He said, "We'll talk about this tomorrow in my office, at eleven. And it will be very legal, with Seth sitting in, some of the other executives and a lawyer perhaps. You will ask for a large salary and you will get it. Unless you prefer another arrangement?"

"Such as . . . ?"

He said, "This is a family concern, and to share, in that fashion, you would have to be one of the family."

"Julius . . . ?"

He said, "I have always been fond of you, Meg. I think you are fond of me. We are friends; we understand each other. Would you marry me . . . ?" He hesitated. "I warn you, if you do, you may meet with family objection."

Her eyes blazed blue. She said, "What has my family to do with it? Besides, Marion and Kitty are devoted to you."

"As their mother's friend, not as her husband," he suggested. "This is not a romantic proposal, but perhaps you would not wish that—still, I do not pretend that it is entirely for companionship that I ask you to marry me." His face looked very young at that moment, and somewhat mischievous. He added, "You are a lovely woman, Meg, and I am not yet fifty!"

She flushed. She said after a moment, "Will you think me going girlish if I say I would like to think it over?"

He said promptly, "I would rather you did. You have a considerable adjustment to make. You've cried on my shoulder, literally. I have kissed you in meeting and parting, lightly, as friends do. But not as a lover, Meg, and that might make much difference. If," he added, "the idea of—let us call it a courtship—does not displease you . . . suppose we leave it at that . . . for a time?"

She said, half laughing, "You've courted me, in a way, for years; flowers, dinner, supper, the theater, packages of books—all the trappings."

He said, "Not as I intend to now."

In the concluding installment Meg finds new happiness and real companionship in marriage

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late and they'd not really expected any children, and there suddenly had been Beth: small Beth with the great, laughing, blue eyes and that shining flood of golden hair. He could see her now with that slight spray of freckles across her nose: a bright girl, a brilliant girl, a girl who was almost ready for college.

"Day off? What do you mean day off?"

Molly sat there with her mending. "It's just a job she's taken for the summer, dear."

Dave was vaguely displeased, for that hadn't been planned. What had been planned was that Beth should have everything, that all her ways should be happy ones and smooth.

"What kind of a job, Molly?"

"Nothing much. She's just sort of an office girl."

He still didn't like it when he went upstairs to the east bedroom where the vine wove across the window screen. For Beth didn't need a job, and she shouldn't have one. He'd been saving steadily for years so she could go to the best college there was, so she'd have as good a time there as any other girl.

Molly was still bustling about, but she moved so lightly you hardly noticed her. "They were very nice at the paper. Mr. Chipman called up every week to ask after you and if there was anything they could do. And Mr. Andrews phoned and that polite Mr. Duane."

Molly plainly expected him to be pleased, but he wasn't. Chip was managing editor, and it was his duty to phone when members of the staff were sick. And Andrews was a disreputable old drunk, and Duane someone he detested.

For that matter, he hadn't really ever liked any of them. But tomorrow he'd

have to be back with them all the same.

Tomorrow came altogether too quickly, a fall morning with a clammy chill in it. Even the smell of one of Molly's best breakfasts didn't cheer him up.

He came down the stairs heavily: not a very tall man, gray-haired, growing a little thickset but somehow distinguished-looking. His face was burned brown now, and there were small fine lines around the pale blue eyes. The mouth beneath the tight trimmed gray mustache showed a trace of bitterness.

He would have been much better looking if he had smiled more.

He took up the paper automatically and then put it down again. For he'd be seeing more papers than he wanted to now. He'd be seeing them when they weren't actually papers at all but only thick pencil lines on page dummies: when they'd grown to being typewritten copy which he'd slash; when they were stacked type in the composing room.

He looked out into the dull gray day. "Isn't Beth here, Molly?"

"No. She has to go to work early. You'll see her later, Dave."

He sat down, disappointed. For Beth, young, sunny Beth was so much the beginning and ending of each day; she was really the reason for each day, and he fell to wondering if most fathers felt that way about their daughters. He decided they didn't.

"Hi, Mr. Manning. Glad to see you back, Mr. Manning!"

That was Harry, the elevator man at the office, and Harry, small and short and tough, was just an awful nuisance. If Dave didn't look out, Harry would start slapping him on the back.

So he just nodded to Harry and turned into the big, barn-like city room. As always, it was disordered and dirty, and at this hour, the staff were gathered in little, chatting knots.

Dave didn't join them; he never had. He simply went through his regular routine that hadn't varied in years. Hat and coat on the rack, the slow rolling up of shirt sleeves, the two pencils laid neatly on the green blotter on his desk, then the light snapped on as he sat down.

He drew the paste pot to dead center, unlocked the top drawer, got out his shears and was ready to begin the day.

Nobody had noticed him; nobody'd be glad he was back; nobody'd bother with Old Man Manning except when they wanted something done right and in a hurry.

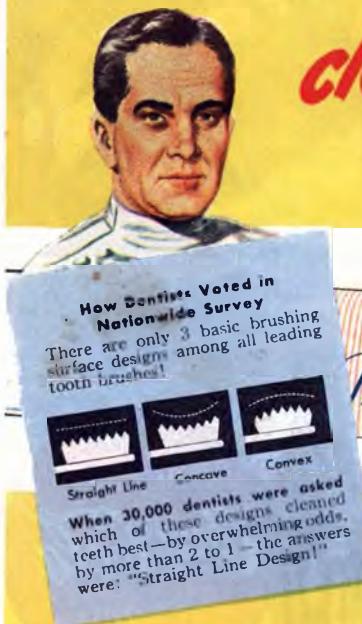
There was a quick scurry of steps, and Mr. Andrews thrust his face down near Manning's. Mr. Andrews was bald; his eyeglasses, tied to a black cord for safety's sake, were so far forward on his nose he couldn't possibly see through them; his shirttail hung outside his trousers.

"Well, if it isn't the Soul of Sin!" he cried. "Welcome home, you old reprobate. How are you, David?"

"Fine," Dave said as shortly as he could, for Mr. Andrews, the feature editor, was the most thoroughly unregenerate member of the staff. He was frequently drunk, entirely disreputable, and gloried in it like a small, leering satyr.

Mr. Andrews perched gleefully on the desk and disturbed things. "You missed it, David. I indulged in the fruit of the vine last week and caused a seismic disturbance. They suspect me, it seems, of wrecking the Sunday department and

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throwing it right out the window."

Dave didn't doubt it.

"I have no memory of same," said Mr. Andrews, "but it seems an excellent idea. But, for some reason, I am now under a slight cloud... Well, take it easy, David."

He went away in a queer, scuttling run, and Dave wondered dully why the staff were so fond of Andy. They seemed to find him amusing, but Dave never had. He considered him just an irritating nuisance.

He straightened his desk top again and drew the morning papers toward him as Chip came in the door with his old brown hat pulled down over his eyes and his raincoat flung across one shoulder.

Chip was managing editor, but he never bothered to look like one and, in Dave's opinion, shouldn't have had the job at all.

He was short and chubby with fire-red cheeks, and he still had an absurd air of youth about him. His blue shirt and blue bow tie were altogether too youthful too. Three bright trout flies were stuck in the band of his hat.

He hurried over to Dave's desk, smiling. "How are you, Dave? Do you really feel all right?"

Dave tried hard to smile back but wasn't too successful, for it still rankled in his mind that he wasn't managing editor himself. It had been a choice between Chip and him two years ago, and they'd chosen Chip.

"I feel fine, thanks."

"Well, we're certainly glad you're here," Chip said, and went over to the water cooler.

"You bet you are," Dave thought, "because I'm a good news editor, and I take a load off your shoulders."

He half turned in his chair and shouted, "Boy!"

Nothing happened, and he thought bitterly what a slack office it was. If he'd been managing editor, it would have been better.

"Boy!"

There was a scurrying sound at his elbow, and he growled, without looking up, "Where in hell have you been?"

A soft voice said, "I'm sorry, sir. I was watching the wires."

He spun around in his chair and there stood Beth, small and golden in her short dress.

He never spoke to her sharply, but he was so astounded that he did now. "What the devil are you doing here?"

Beth's smile was just as sunny as ever, and he had a curious feeling that the whole room was watching him, waiting to see how he'd take it.

"I work here, Dad."

Well, he wasn't going to please the whole room by going into a fit of fury. "All right. Go get me some copy paper, then."

She went lightly away, and Chip leaned across the city desk. "She's a good kid, Dave. She just walked in and asked for a job. For two weeks we didn't even know she was your daughter."

Chip was trying to be kind, but Dave was all a deep smoulder inside. Pretty Beth, sunny Beth, stuck in this miserable place, working with the gum-chewing office boys, and Marie, the fat Portuguese copy girl, and Hilda, the tall Swede; young Beth exposed to Mr. Andrews' alcoholic imbecility and the general bad language and bad example of the staff.

"She's going to college," he told Chip shortly.

Chip looked a trifle worried and put his hand to the back of his head as he always did when he was disturbed.

"Sure, Dave. Sure. But there's always a job here summers when she wants it."

Only one soap gives your skin

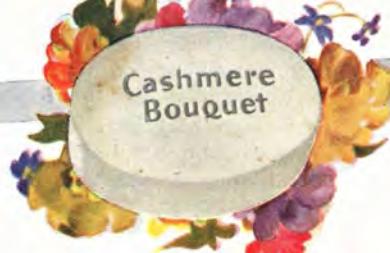
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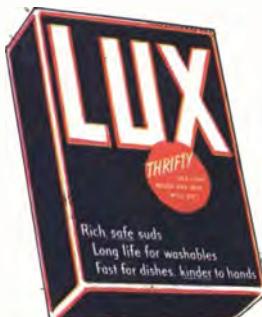
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There might always be a job, but Beth wouldn't have it. Not if he knew it. He was going to get her out of here as quickly as he could. He wondered dully how Molly had ever consented to her coming here and then remembered how evasive Molly had been about Beth's job. Molly had never deceived him before. He felt suddenly old and utterly alone.

But he wasn't, for Beth was back at his elbow now, her blue eyes bright. There was a shining quality all about her as if she were happy.

"Copy paper, sir?"

There was a thunderous bawl and that was Mr. Andrews. "Where's the Infant Hercules? I want the Infant Hercules!"

Beth was running down the room, her short skirt flying. "Yes, Mr. Andrews."

Andrews had the audacity to pat the top of her head. "Pop down and get me some proofs, Hercules."

Dave wrenched at the top of his paste pot, and it fell to the floor with a tremendous clatter.

He'd talk to Beth tonight, he thought; he'd have her out of here by Friday. He'd fought and saved and scrimped so she could have great, golden, shining things, and here she was, just where he'd been almost all his life, in this shabby, jumbled, untidy place.

"Beth! Beth Manning!"

That was Duane, lounging, long and lean and a little saturnine, in his chair: Duane who had been the office drunk for years, that handsome, worthless rewrite man who disappeared for days at a time while the staff did his work.

When Dave had been assistant city editor he'd tried to have Duane fired, but Chip wouldn't do it.

And suddenly Duane had straightened out and was sober and reliable and one of the best rewrite men anywhere.

Dave had been dead wrong about Duane, but that didn't make him like him any better now.

Dave was reaching in his pocket and handing Beth something. "Go get me a cup of coffee, will you, Baby Doll?"

That was the life she had got into, Dave thought bitterly; rushing proofs for old Andrews, running to get coffee for some worthless fellow like Duane.

She stopped as she came past, and there still was that aura of utter happiness about her as if she were at home in this dingy hole.

"I'm going out for Mr. Duane, Dad. Can I get you anything?"

She was so happy, he didn't have the heart to be curt. "No, Beth. Thanks all the same."

She was staring down the room. "Mr. Chipman's marvelous, isn't he, Dad?"

Dave blinked because it was so unexpected. "Is he?"

"Oh, yes! He's always around at the right time, and he never seems to interfere, but everything gets done all the same."

He sat there for some time, staring into space, for he'd never thought about Chip that way before.

But he had more things to think about as the morning went and the afternoon began to wear on.

The dummies coming down from the advertising department and his pencil marking in cuts and heads as he laid the paper out; the steady flow of the important wire and local copy he had to look at; the thousand and one little troubles and interruptions of a working day.

At his right hand, the copy desk slaved; at his left, the little lights blazed up on the city desk switchboard, and Eddie James answered the telephones endlessly.

The hands of the big clock wheeled

slowly to half past three, and the assistant city editor rose.

"I've got to go up to get that tooth fixed, Ed."

Eddie just nodded. He was slim and olive-skinned and incredibly efficient.

Three-forty and a dull, quiet day coming to its end with the paper all laid out and the dummies down; and pretty soon Dave would have some time to think about his daughter.

Eddie wheeled in his chair. "Beth Manning!"

There she was again, all gold and blue. "Yes, sir."

"Sit on the desk for a minute, will you? I'm going to the washroom."

Dave had to smile because he couldn't help it. For his daughter was so small, so helpless, sitting there all alone at the big desk.

A light flashed yellow on the switchboard, and she snatched up the phone. "Courier Desk."

Her face changed suddenly, sharply, as Dave watched it. "Yes, sir. An explosion and a fire. Where?"

She reached out a small hand for the news-tip blanks. "Broadway and Fourth. You say it's bad? What's your name?"

In the corner, the fire tapper began to clang. "One-four-five-four."

Dave could feel it coming, that sharp sense of something about to happen, something that would be news and might rip the paper apart. He sat tense, for he wanted to jump up and take over the city desk himself. But he knew he mustn't.

He kept his voice calm and low. "What is it, Beth?"

"An explosion and a fire in a factory. The man said they're jumping out the windows."

He mustn't let Beth get rattled, for, after all, even if she was only a copy girl, she was in charge of the desk.

Soft and low did it. "Better send a boy to get Eddie, Beth."

Beth turned, and only the flush in her cheeks showed how excited she was. "Maria! Go out to the washroom and get Mr. James. On the run. Tell him of an explosion and fire."

Some of the copy readers looked up, and the whole atmosphere of the dull, lazy room changed in a flash.

Dave looked at the clock. It was quarter of four with copy close at half past. "Better call the photo, Beth, and have them send all their cameras out."

Beth was so small, so young, she'd never be able to keep her head. But she did. "Photo! . . . City desk. Have everybody you've got packed up and ready to go."

Lights flared on the switchboard, and she snatched up the phone again. "Courier desk. The fire at Broadway and Fourth? We've got it, thank you."

She looked like a diminutive doll with the light shining on her hair, and Dave leaned toward her. "We're pretty close to edition, Beth. Maybe you'd better get Jim Twomey started."

He'd never known she could be so quick: she surely must have watched Eddie run the desk for she knew just what to do.

"Mr. Twomey!"

The little man with the big nose came over from the water cooler with a cup still in his hand.

Beth wheeled around. "Mr. Twomey, there's an explosion and fire at Broadway and Fourth, and I guess you'd better get going."

Jim stood staring; he was hot-tempered, and it would seem odd to him to take orders from a small girl.

Chip came shambling out of his office as if some hidden sense had told him



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news was breaking. He'd taken it all in quickly.

He nodded at Jim. "Get on the phone as fast as you can," he said, and Jim was already gone.

The fire tapper began to pound out "TWO—TWO—TWO."

In a second, Dave thought, Chip would push Beth out and take over the desk himself. It would be a shame because she was doing so well.

But Chip didn't. He stood there, cool and easy, his hands shoved deep in his pockets. His voice was easy too. "Fourth and Broadway and two fast alarms. Might be bad. Better tell Marion to put her hat and coat on, Beth."

Dave saw what Beth had meant when she'd said Chip was marvelous. For he had a big story breaking and edition quite close, yet had time to be tactful and considerate. He was working through Beth instead of tossing her aside because she was young and a girl.

Beth spun around. "Miss Glenn! Put your hat and coat on, please."

Yes, Dave thought, Chip's forming Beth into a newspaperwoman already. He's training her this minute. It's right he should be managing editor because he knows how to handle people, and I never did.

Beth at the phone again. "Yes, Mr. Sullivan. You're going over to the fire? All right."

The door slammed open, and Eddie James came running in, wiping his hands on a towel. "Where is it?"

Beth's voice was quick and crisp. "Broadway and Fourth. Two alarms so far. Mr. Twomey's gone and all the cameras are coming out. Johnny Sullivan just phoned from police headquarters to say that he's on his way. And Miss Glenn is putting on her coat and hat."

Eddie said, "Fine! That's what comes of having a good man on the desk."

He stood still for a second, his eyes seeing everyone in the room, picking, choosing, organizing.

"Marion, go to the fire with the cameras! Al, City Hospital. Jerry, hop over to State General. Names of the injured as quick as you can get 'em. Duane, drop what you're doing and get set to write fire. Paragraph at a time. Hilda, fix up carbons and copy paper for Duane."

It was going as smooth as silk, as it always did when Chip and Eddie were working together, and for almost the first time in his life, Dave felt genuine pride in it.

The cameramen were all at the desk now, bored and uninterested as ever.

"Broadway and Fourth," Eddie said. "An explosion and fire. Bruce, bang something quick and shoot it back for edition. Hat and coat, Beth! Go with Bruce and bring back his plates in a hurry. Take a cab."

"THREE—THREE—THREE," clanged the fire tapper and outside the wide windows a siren began to scream.

Dave had just time to catch a glimpse of the golden head going out the door, and then he swung around. "Boy! Go down to the composing room and get back the page dummies for one, two, three and six."

He turned to the copy desk. "Cut the mayor's speech to two sticks. Throw that gasoline story on the floor."

Chip came lounging over, hands still in pockets. "Five-column fire picture on page one if we can make it in time. And what would you say to throwing that junk off three and starting the fire story there—if it's any good?"

It was wonderful how acute Beth was, Dave thought, for she had said that

Chip never interfered, and he didn't. He only suggested the right things in a way that made you feel you were supremely wise yourself and he was merely asking your advice.

Dave felt suddenly humble. He realized now that he had been underestimating Chip for years.

The fire tapper struck "FOUR—FOUR—FOUR," sharp and staccato, and the building shook as the big ladder truck roared by.

"It's going to be good," Dave said.

Four o'clock. Four-five. Dave and Chip had made the paper over, and they hadn't heard from the fire yet. Chip put his hand to the back of his head and began stroking it.

"Never knew it to fail, Dave. A big story always breaks on deadline."

Dave nodded, for he and Chip were quite close now; closer than they'd ever been before.

At the city desk, Eddie James caught up his phone. "Yes, Jim? All right. Give Duane all you've got."

Eddie turned. "Ten dead so far. Dave. Dozens injured. Duane, take Jim off twenty-four. Hilda, stand by Duane's desk and rush his copy up."

There was a sharp fury of intensity in the room as if this was what it really existed for: all the phones and typewriters and desks and people. In this hour, it came alive while the big clock on the wall ticked off the minutes in rapid succession.

"We'll start fire in five-column measure," Dave said.

The door slammed, and the picture editor jumped up from his desk to snatch the photographic plates from the small, sodden figure who came rushing through the room.

He said in a shout, "First fire pix are in!"

Beth stood there, her hair wet and in strings. Her hat was off; her coat was dripping.

"Hey, what happened to you?" asked Chip.

A huge taxi driver came lumbering in behind her and began muttering something about ninety-five cents.

Beth said in a gasp, "A hoseline broke," and started stripping off her coat.

Across the room, Duane's typewriter began its steady beat, and the taxi driver said to no one in particular, "I never was in a newspaper place before."

Eddie James swung around in his chair, cursed briefly, and put down his phone.

"Beth Manning!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Sit down at the desk and take the names of the injured from Al. Then type 'em out."

The small girl was a damp, pathetic huddle at the desk, and Eddie said almost apologetically, "Damn sorry to pile it onto her this way, but I haven't anybody else."

If Beth wanted to be a newspaperwoman, Dave thought, she was certainly getting a good dose of it, and then Duane's first copy was coming up, crisp and clean with big black legend across its top: "LEAD ALL—FIRE."

A long time later, Dave came up, exhausted, from the composing room. The first edition was in at last and not a bad job, considering.

From the tail of his eye, he saw Duane going down the stairs, and he thought automatically: Slipping across to the gin mill for a quick one.

But his next thought wasn't automatic, and it was one he wouldn't have had

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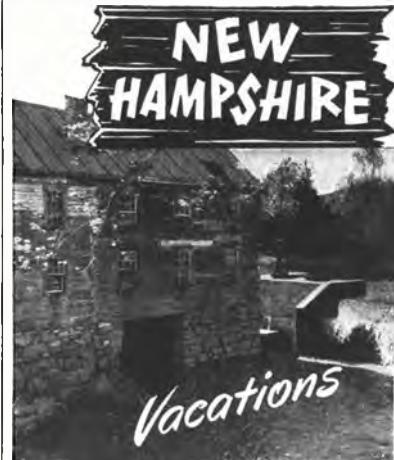


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this morning: Well, he's got it coming to him, I guess. He wrote a swell fire story.

He came slowly into the room, and it was still bedlam with Eddie James' assistant back and all the phones snarling at once.

He stopped at the water cooler and let all his muscles go slack for a minute. They'd certainly replate on the fire and then there'd be the second edition after that.

He stared at Mr. Andrews' desk and then walked over.

Mr. Andrews was down on the floor, stripping off Beth's sodden shoes. "Now, Infant Hercules," Mr. Andrews was ordering, "take off those stockings and then haul yourself up to my radiator to dry." As Beth started to obey, Mr. Andrews added, "And when you go to a fire next time, don't get drowned."

It was odd how Mr. Andrews had changed; he wasn't a drunken old satyr any more, but only a kindly, likable little man.

Beth's shoes were on the radiator and her stockings. She, herself, was as close to it as she could get, and her eyes were shining.

Dave put his hand on her shoulder with a small, caressing motion. "Well, how does it go, daughter?"

Even under the wet hair, her eyes were still like stars. "Why, Dad, it was wonderful!"

Mr. Andrews' glasses fell entirely off his nose. "That's what you think," he said sourly. "For my money, you'd be much better off working in a button factory."

That was what they all said, Dave thought, and none of them meant it. They'd rather be in this noisy, dirty room than anywhere else in the world, and now Beth would too from the look in her eyes.

Duane came in with a paper carton in his hand. "Here, Baby Doll, drink this down."

"But you shouldn't go out to get me coffee. Mr. Duane," Beth said.

Duane leaned against the desk, long and lazy and handsome. "Don't know why not. You go get it for me."

Dave winced. For he'd been wrong again. Duane hadn't had a quick one. He'd just gone over to get a hot drink for a small girl who was wet and cold. He'd always been wrong about Duane, Dave thought, and it was time he made amends.

"That was a fine fire story you wrote," he said, and suddenly all the old dislike between them was gone.

"So-so," Duane drawled and leaned over to pat Beth's head. "You know, Dave, the second edition of the Manning family's going to be good."

Dave smiled, for Duane had hit it just right. The first edition is always a poor thing, full of slips and flaws and errors, just as he was himself. But in the second, they've all been fixed, so that it's pretty nearly perfect.

At the desk, Eddie James swung around. "Duane, sorry to interrupt your social life, but you'd better take Johnny Sullivan with more fire stuff on twenty-six."

Dave went slowly back to his chair, and he knew that Beth would be a good newspaperman: a much better newspaperman than he. For she had one shining quality that he'd never had and was only slowly gaining now: the great gift of liking people and being liked by them.

He picked up the phone to call Molly and tell her that everything was working out all right. Yes, everything was working out all right.

My Heart's at Home

(Continued from page 69)

Then the memorial service, and the dedication of a plaque on which were inscribed the names of the boys who, like Hal, would not come back. Her mind followed it, step by painful step.

But keep moving. Keep busy. It was more than ever necessary on days like this one. The three young guests would be coming down for breakfast.

"I'm glad Jane had a good sleep," Mrs. Jackson said. "She got in late and Galen Richards met her. That's young Dr. Richards, you know. He's back from the Navy. It has always been Jane and Galen, and now . . ." She laughed a little.

It was easy to see what Mrs. Jackson's hope was. An engagement and a wedding, Monica thought. A wedding would be worse than any holiday. "It's—lovely." She found halting words.

"Yes. Galen will be with us today. It's an old Fourth of July custom."

Another one that Monica didn't know. One more of the things that had been going on forever. But her hands moved as steadily as before. Berries on the table in a blue bowl now. Jane and Marianna liked to dip them in sugar. Roddy was shrieking gleefully upstairs. He had found the visiting firemen, as they called themselves.

Monica ought to change her face. It was a face which twisted a little, wryly and helplessly, at finding one more expression of the girls on her lips. She went into the first-floor bathroom; she lined up cosmetics from the kit that had been a gift from Marianna.

The face that met hers in the mirror looked fresh and young and dewy with heat. It looked vulnerable too, but she'd cover that. She'd paint a smile on and keep it there, and sometime this day would end. Her fingers moved nervously. Her mouth kept tightening, but that was a way of holding it steady. Smart and smooth were the words the girls used most. "My face is smooth enough, it is." The thought came stormily, unbidden. "Oh, if they just had not come. If they just—would not . . ."

The girls didn't care about Hal. They didn't care about anything, just filled the house with their chatter and laughter. They'd be down in play clothes, their legs bare, the nonsensical words of new song hits on their lips.

Tears had spoiled Monica's make-up, and she washed it hurriedly away. None of it mattered. She could never be like Jane and Marianna and would not if she could. Her hair fell smooth and shining, and her speech was different. Her heart was different. Her home had been different. She looked the way Aunt Grace had liked her to look. She didn't smoke because Aunt Grace had not approved. She said "egg flogger," and other things that made the Jacksons smile. She called cakes "biscuits" and biscuits "scones," as was proper. But that wasn't important. What mattered terribly was that she get back to where she had been with Hal.

Slumped and miserable on the edge of the tub now, eyes wet again, feet in sturdy brogues thrust out in front of her—Monica White Jackson. An American citizen, or so they said, but she did not know what their holidays meant. There was nothing to hold to in this strange country. There was no way of knowing the sort of people who . . .

The Jacksons had been good. Desperately Monica tried to steady herself with that thought. The money which Mr. Jackson gave her each week and called spending money was more than enough for all of her needs. Mr. Jackson had

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said that Hal's insurance money should not be touched. It was all in the bank. It was in bonds and the bonds were hers. They were in a box with a key. The key was hers. Her hands were clasped tight. "The money need not stay there." It was in words at last. "I'll go home. Roddy and I will go home."

The insurance money would be more than enough. It was just telling the Jacksons that would be difficult. Saying to Hal's parents that Roddy had to go. When Mr. Jackson swung the baby to his shoulder all the lines of his face eased. When Mrs. Jackson's eyes rested on her grandson's face Monica had to turn her own eyes away.

I'll do it today, while they are all here. Tight bands were breaking about her heart. I shall say it tonight, when the holiday is over. Once it's said, even if I can't go right off . . .

She breathed, just once, deeply down to where the new freedom was.

"Sit down and have a cup of coffee with the children, Monica." Mrs. Jackson was pushing her gently toward the others, as she often did. A chorus of welcome sounded from the table. "Before the day starts I have an announcement to make." Jane, twenty-four years old, Hal's twin, sang it gaily enough. "Oh, it's nothing." The head went down a little. "Just that a certain famous young medic will not be with us today."

"That's a doctor's life for you," her brother-in-law pointed out lazily.

They loitered about the table a long time when they came home on visits. So Hal must have done, home from those schools that were on the pennants upstairs. Hal's words would have raced too. "They can go two hours on one hair-do, Monica," Carter Brown was telling her solemnly. "But when the styles in bonnets change. You wait."

"Why don't you make a song of it, Carter? But when the styles in bonnets change. It sounds good."

"He has made a song of it. Styles in bonnets—it's his musical signature." *I'll go home. I'll tell them tonight.* Monica's hands were clasped under the table.

Packing the picnic hampers made up a small family ceremony too, but Monica knew all the ways of it now, and her hands moved deftly. The girls straightened the house, their voices ringing upstairs and down.

Swim suits in the car, and sun mattresses. At eleven they were on their way. Their destination, called simply the Grove, was a picnic spot four miles away.

Monica had come this way often enough to know all the landmarks. Red oak, white oak, black oak, she thought monotonously, looking steadily out the car window. Buttonwood, catalpa, hemlock, wild cherry. She frowned at the fields and fences and tree-shaded runs as the car bowled along. One could learn all the outer things, asking questions, remembering. "That's locust, Monica." Mr. Jackson would say, pleased, when she asked. "That's wild honeysuckle."

She pushed her thoughts forward. At one end of the Grove there was a natural spring pool, its water clear and cold. She would swim a long time. Closing her eyes and tumbling under water, she'd be in a world that was no world at all. Not Pennsylvania, not any state. If she climbed out on the forest side of the pool she could lose herself in the dense pines.

It was cool under the big trees of the Grove, and when the Jacksons parked the car and unpacked things one could picture them doing this always on this holiday. One could hear the rapid clickings of Marianna's movie camera on other years, too. July 4, 1945 now—the

picnic. The family moving as a clan. The Jacksons in the safe shelter of one of their holidays, this one filled with sun and sweet with summer.

When Mr. Jackson looked speculatively toward the low mountain the rest of them smiled. When he asked Monica if she would like to climb up to see if the huckleberries were ripe they called advice to her. "The berries are never ripe."

"It's just that Dad always has to climb the mountain on the Fourth."

"You're elected, Monica. Take my shade hat."

They drove part of the twisting and climbing way on a dirt road. They went on foot then, upward in strange country. It was no more strange than the valley. Monica thought, heavyhearted. There was no at-homeness to any of it. She repeated the names of the things Hal's father found on the way, though, looking at them carefully. Hardhack. Loosestrife. Sumac. Wild grape vine.

"This was the old tannery road, Monica. In a few weeks the laurel will be out on it like snow."

"I remember laurel from last year." Her voice was stifled. *I could tell Mr. Jackson now. I could say it, alone up here.* Her heart began to beat rapidly.

"Two or three more years and I'll be coming this way with Roddy." He was holding a low branch back for her, his smile deep in his eyes.

The road was a grass-covered trail now, and Monica looked down at it. It had been with Hal, of course, that Mr. Jackson had climbed other summers.

"We're coming to the lookout." His pace and his voice quickened. They were out in a clearing, the sun full on them again. "You can see for miles and miles." He shaded his eyes, standing on the flat granite boulder. "Look, Monica."

She was on her knees, learning the way of mountain blueberries growing. She stood up, the frown between her eyes as she looked up and down the valley.

"There it is." Mr. Jackson didn't seem to mean just the valley. He seemed to be seeing the whole land—all of its hills and plains, its towns and rivers and lakes, its mountains and prairies. The way one saw it in an atlas, reaching from sea to sea. "One can see a long way," she said politely.

"If Hal could see it today." There was something new in his voice. "If Hal could see how the ways of peace and free men can go on and on here now, God willing. But he'll know. Hal couldn't be a place where he wouldn't know how it is with the valley. He'll know that it's going to be safe again, safe for Roddy, for all the children. Safe and at peace—and strong and always ready."

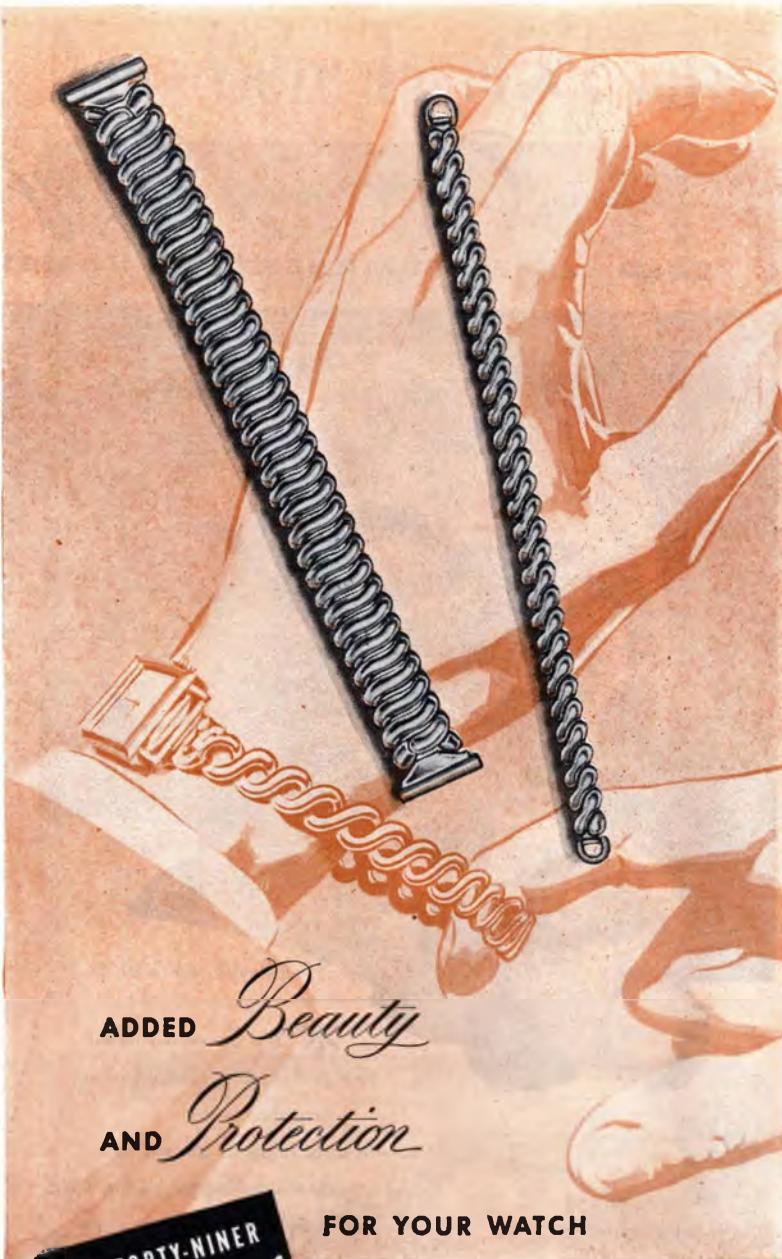
"Safe and at peace—and strong and always ready." A new lesson. She repeated it. She searched up and down the valley and then searched Mr. Jackson's face. "That's what Hal would say." She spoke with sudden gentleness. "I'm sure he knows, Mr. Jackson." It seemed a long time that they stood there, reluctant to leave. "It's Independence Day, isn't it?" she said timidly. At last she had remembered.

"It's Independence Day, Monica."

It wasn't only that Hal's father had spoken his name. It was that he had said it easily and surely, his head up and his eyes serene. Side by side, in the open sunlight, they had talked about Hal.

The family lingered a long time about their picnic table. Monica's eyes began to wander longingly toward the water.

Mr. Jackson had wandered away to watch the swimmers, and he came back hurrying. "General 'Brick' is home," he called excitedly before he had reached



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them. "He's right here in the valley. Flew from Washington last night, spent the day with his mother. He's to speak at the service. Oh, and Monica"—his voice slowed uncomfortably—"the parade marshall wants you to ride in the parade. They're trying to get the wives or mothers of the boys whose names... It will mean sitting on the platform during the exercises and—"

"I couldn't." She was frightened. "Truly, I had rather—" But the Jacksons were looking at her, waiting. "Yes," she said, her voice low. "Of course."

A parade made up of strangers, she thought wincingly in the pool. A hall crowded with all the people who belonged here, the ones whose holiday it was. She swam faster and faster, but there was no escaping it. *Tonight I shall tell them.* She swam to a more dogged rhythm. *It need not be hard.*

Tingling and dripping, she climbed out at last on the wild side of the pool. She broke into the tiny clearing so suddenly that there was no time to retreat. Jane was sitting on the fallen tree by the spring, her face white, tear-marked. She looked at Monica numbly.

"Jane—I'm—sorry."

"Don't be." The girl turned her face carefully away. "Just—just a moment."

"I'll go back."

"No. Sit down. You may as well be the first to know that—that Janie Jackson got her heart broken. They say it that way in the lovelorn columns, don't they?"

"I'm so sorry. It's that doctor—"

"He told me last night." Jane said it dully. "It's another girl. It's—that very simple thing. He met her in... The wedding's in September. I came running like a fool, didn't I?" Her lips twisted a little. "All the bells were ringing. We were never—exactly engaged—"

Monica was holding the dark head quite naturally against her shoulder. She could feel the slender body shaking, and her words came in a rush.

"I'll be all right," Jane said after a while, desperately. "All right." She fought to steady her lips. "It's—nothing prepared me. We never wrote the sort of letter—"

"I know. You go on and cry, Jane. It's the best thing." Her fingers smoothed Jane's hair.

"You're a sweet kid." The words came muffled after a long time. "I'm glad you came up—no one else. I couldn't have stood anyone's coming but you." Jane held Monica's fingers tightly.

"You'll think this silly." Monica said timidly. "But your young doctor is alive, Jane. He's back, and he's safe. This sun is shining on him today and—if Hal could be here, somewhere—it would be enough for us, wouldn't it? Do you see?"

"I see a little bit. I'll try to." Jane bit her lips helplessly. "You're brave, Monica. I'm not. It's all show with me. Hal's gone. Now Galen's gone."

"Your dad and I talked about Hal up on the mountain. We felt he will always be here, somehow."

"Dad talked about Hal? That can't be."

They went back along the rough path, their fingers still linked, and all the while Monica talked. It didn't matter that she didn't know the catch words of Jane and Marianna, what counted was that her voice was warm and aware of Jane's hurt. "What you do is start putting things in—putting them in where the ache is," she said as they got back to the water. "Right off, and all the time, and steady, Jane."

"The famous Dr. Richards didn't think of that prescription. I'll try, Monica. I'll cover up. We can't let Mother and Dad know that Marianna has lost another little Brown, or that Carter's heart is kicking up again. Cheer is our watch-

word these days." Jane's lips twisted again. She turned the twist into a painful half-smile. "I'll put swimming in." She dived.

The parade formed at four o'clock at an athletic field on the edge of town. Hal's father found the car in which Monica was to ride, a convertible with its top down. Three soldiers and a seaman joined her, and one of the soldiers was on crutches. All of them had campaign ribbons, and one of them wore wings.

Monica sat stiff and silent until she saw that the boys were sending disarming half-grins her way. "It's a scorcher, isn't it?" one asked. "Are you from Normansville?" another one put in. "McCabe and I are natives, and we can't place you."

"I came from Australia. My husband was Hal Jackson."

"Oh!" They looked at her helplessly for a moment. "We knew Hal, McCabe and I did. There was no one like him."

They were quiet then for a while, watching the procession assemble.

"This field, Mrs. Jackson"—one of the boys was bursting with something—"it's the high-school athletic field, you know. We played football here with Hal."

"This is the field where Hal played? This one?" Her question was urgent.

"Yes . . . Burke, do you remember the game . . ."

Monica didn't hear. "Imagine me, the high-school hero." Hal's head was back and his eyes smilingly half closed. "Dad getting this prep school bug, and me going to turn my suit in . . . the longest walk, Monica. The blackest hour."

"I said"—the boys' voices came through—"I was in Australia three weeks ago. It's still there, Mrs. Jackson. It hasn't changed. I'm Lieutenant Winship."

"You were there?" Her fingers were pressing into his arm. "I have to go back," she said. "I have to go home."

"Sure." His voice was easy. "You're homesick. A lot of us found out about that."

The parade was getting under way. A breeze had sprung up; it stirred the flags on lawns and at windows. It picked up flower scents and scattered them. The parade moved to the music of its small-town band.

People in groups watched from big front porches or leaned against fences or lined up at curbstones. To Monica it seemed a sea of faces, old ones and young ones. The people of Normansville in light clothes, their heads bare. They held children aloft, and the children waved flags; small boys went importantly up and down on their wheels, riding herd on their parade. Now and then a boy would put his hand on the slow-moving car and coast with it, his eyes shining.

Monica went on watching intently.

"That's the high school, Mrs. Jackson." The Yanks' voices again. "I was in Hal's class, you know, before he went away to school."

"He edited the school paper, Hal did. 'The Bug,' we called it. He was on the basketball team and—"

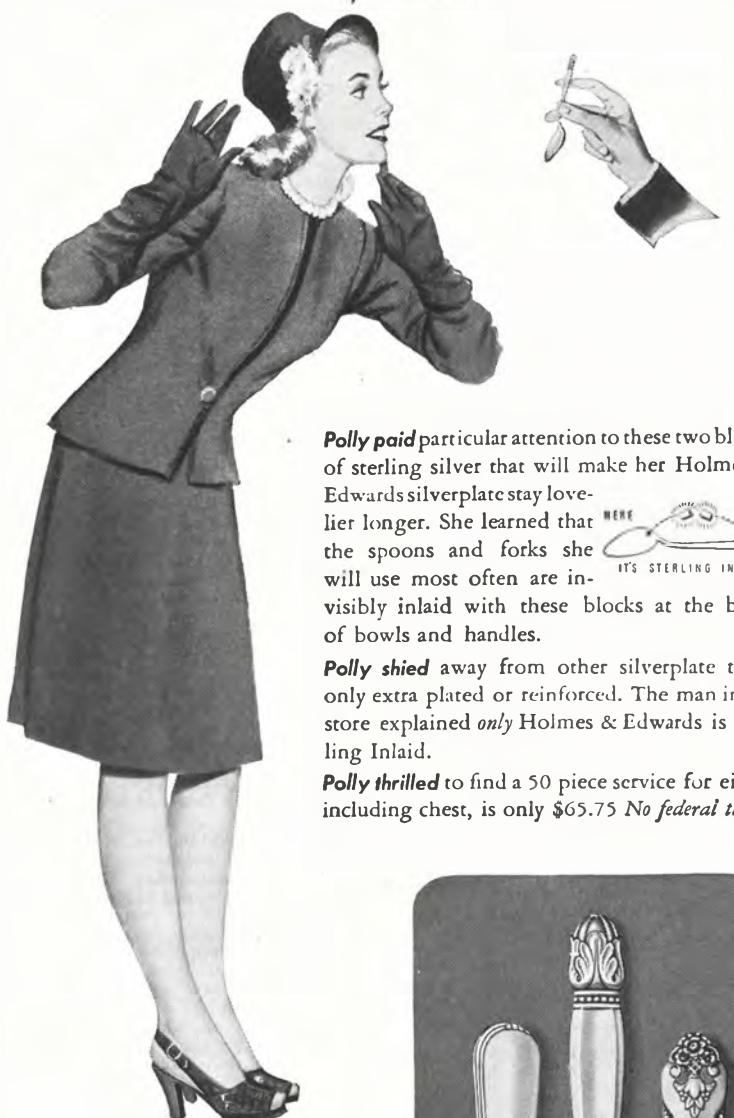
But Hal was talking: "It was the day my team won the prize for debating. Six high schools competed and gosh, it was different from all the other days, Monica! There was no day like it all the time I was a kid."

There, in that old red brick building, white steps leading up to it, ivy smothering it. The best day for Hal. She was turning to watch the building.

"Look, Mrs. Jackson. There's Ingram's drugstore. Pop Ingram's. It's where we lived after school, just about. We fed the inner man there. We—"

"A funny thing, the way I missed that

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drugstore. I must have written a lot about it in my letters from prep school. The folks started asking if I wanted Ingram's drugstore for Christmas. I was sixteen. But look—here's the funny part. In the Army it's been that way all over again. I keep thinking of the chocolate malts. Old Pop Ingram's hamburgers. Your first date in the States is no Stork Club, baby—it's just Pop Ingram's."

She hadn't wanted to go to Pop Ingram's, or even see it, but there it was now. Its plate glass front gleamed. Her lips were curving gently.

"That's the Y, Mrs. Jackson. There's the library. Hal's mineral collection is there. It was a project we—"

"That's Hal's church."

Monica's eyes were hazed; the faces of the people of Normansville, smiling and affectionate and proud, came and went. The Boy Scouts marched sturdily in front of the cars, turning into Commerce Street. Monica closed her eyes . . .

"Guys are superstitious about all kinds of things, I guess. This is what I'm superstitious about. This old Scout knife, Monica. It goes everywhere with me."

She kept her eyes closed. The speech of the boys in the car crackled about her. "Boy, is it hot?"

"This hot, boy? You should have been where I was."

"Well, you're home now. You're right on Richter Avenue, brother."

They laughed in short barks. Their talk was like corn popping. The Yank way didn't change.

From her place on the bunting-draped platform Monica watched the people assemble. The sun from the west windows showed the worn faces of people who had prayed a long time. Some in light, some in shadow.

She stood erect for the national anthem. She listened while a chaplain spoke to the people of Normansville.

"Did you find them?" Lieutenant Winship was smiling down at her when the talk ended.

"No, I—yes." She pushed her hair back uncertainly. She had been trying to find Hal's people, hadn't she? Those States people he had belonged to and had gone out to fight for. They were looking up now, their faces easy to read. All the well-worn words applied to them. Plain, she thought. Good. True. Strong. Strong to root out evil and patient to pay its cost, and the things that Mr. Jackson had seen in the valley would be safe with them. They'd be safe. And if she had been trying to find Hal, too . . .

The General of the valley called Brick was making his short talk. The plaque was dedicated then, and at the end of the final prayer, as at a signal, all the church bells of the town began to ring.

The bells went on ringing. It didn't matter that Monica's eyes were wet, going out with these people.

Lieutenant Winship had to touch her arm outside. "I thought I'd lost you. I've been thinking, Mrs. Jackson. How badly do you want to go home? Oh, you don't have to tell me. I know. It would be easy for you to go, you know. I flew the General up last night, and we go back this evening. He would write a letter, the General would. That's all. A plane going—mine, maybe—and there you are. So why not give me your phone number?"

She looked dazedly at him. "Your phone number," he urged. "If the news is good I'll call you tonight at—"

"—at Elm 08R2," Monica said slowly. Lieutenant Winship, his cap over one eye, pushed through the crowd.

A spatter of rain had cleaned the air, leaving it fresh and fragrant, cooler. It

was an average summer evening at the Jacksons'—Mr. Jackson's pipe smok trailing on the screened porch, the glider creaking to the rhythm of Mrs. Jackson's knitting. Jane and Carter arguing over a card game, and Marianna tending the record player.

"You were the prettiest girl in the hall, Monica," Mrs. Jackson said.

"Don't mind her, Monica." Jane laughed resignedly. "Her girls always have to be the prettiest everywhere, or else."

"This is an all-Gershwin, Monica." Marianna stood for an instant at Monica's shoulder. "I'm playing all Hal's favorites for her," she explained to the others simply.

It was like all summer evenings at the Jacksons', but it was different, too. Marianna's look was new. It was a look that was but an hour old. She had asked if she might bathe Roddy and put him to bed, and Monica had gone in to find her holding the baby and looking down into his face. Marianna had lowered her head to brush her eyes with her sleeve.

"You caught me out proper that time, Monica. Isn't that the way you say it? It's just that I used to put Hal to bed. I'd hear his prayers. I was so big—seven, and Hal only two."

It hadn't been just walking across a room to Marianna—it had been walking all the long way down a year, to lean with Hal's sister over Roddy's crib. "I do it too," she'd said softly. "Every night. I tell him about Hal."

"You tell him about Hal? I'm glad, Monica. I thought no one spoke of Hal. All this long time, shutting him out. At first Mother couldn't, so we . . ."

They were pulling the light blanket up, fixing the shades. "But today"—Marianna's voice had been softer, quicker—"oh, Monica, did you hear Mother talk about him in the car coming home? Easy and quiet, talking about Hal. We've waited so long. We've come home and come home, acting like goons, I expect—trying to make Mother and Dad break through, hoping they would—oh, be themselves and just talk about our brother again." Marianna had looked at Monica shyly. "It's as though something happened today. I don't know what. It's beginning to be like home again. Do you feel it?"

"I—do—feel it," Monica had said haltingly.

The Gershwin program was over now. Marianna disappeared. "I'm leaving in the morning after all, Mother," Jane said carelessly, intent on her cards. "Galen and I found that the two years had done nothing but let us grow apart. When the war ends I'm coming to spend a whole summer though, if you'll have me. There, Carter—I've got you, got you." Jane spread her cards. Monica went to look at them. She stood for just a moment protectively close to Jane.

She was on her way to the kitchen for more fruit punch when the telephone rang. She put the pitcher down slowly.

"It's Winship," the quick voice said. "I'm talking from what they call their airport out here. It's all set. The Brick will write the letter—"

She made it clear to him without speaking too loudly. She made it clear against bursts of piano music. "I'm staying on, Lieutenant Winship. Roddy and I are staying. We'll go back for a visit after the war. We—belong here—you see. Thank you ever and ever so."

The Jacksons would wait a long time for their fruit punch, probably. Monica had to move to where she could look out at the Jacksons. She had to tiptoe up the stairs to look at Roddy one more time. You have us a good Yank. There was no need to say the words. They were in her heart now.

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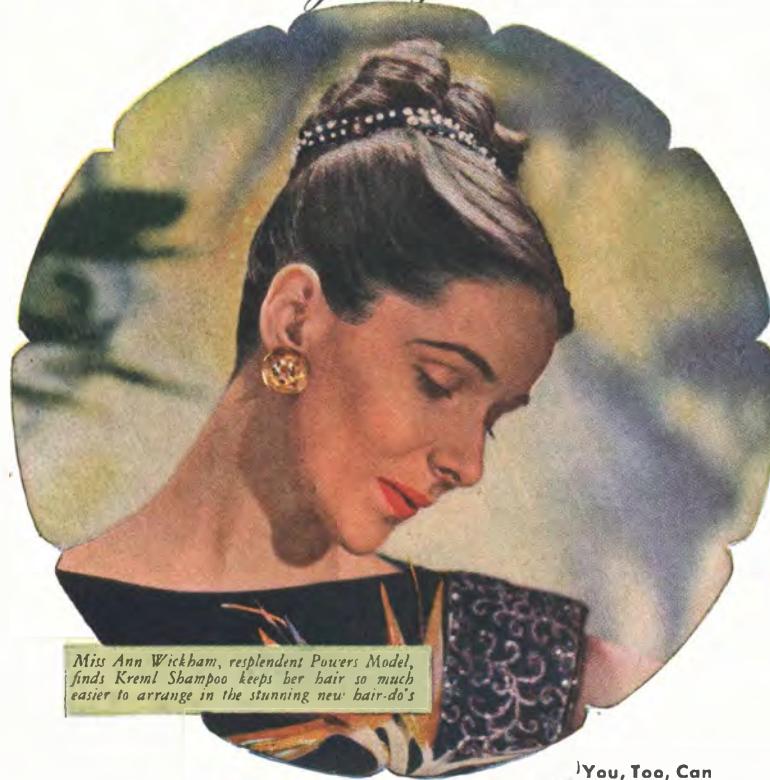
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When Time Stands Still

(Continued from page 31)

for all the trials and tribulations of fatherhood. The wailings and colics and broken sleep. I'd probably hate an infant until it developed some personality."

Glen gurgled. "You would not. You'd love it. Children adore you."

He raised her hand to his lips. "I love you. More and more every day. When I pray, I thank God for you. Whatever you want is what I want."

"And I love you." Her fingers lay relaxed in his. He felt the little knot at his stomach grow larger. The moments slipped by with amazing rapidity. A bell tinkled in the corridor: a buzzer sounded. Meredith looked at his watch. The hour was gone. Glen raised her brows, and he showed her the dial.

She said softly, "There's always some delay."

He knew then they must have given her something, because she had been terrified when she had learned she must undergo an operation. He felt his own anxiety sharpen; the knot in his stomach spread into an even discomfort.

Glen's smile deepened. "Dr. Michael says it's nothing of an operation. As common as appendicitis. As safe. And I'll feel ever so much better without the silly tumor or whatever it is."

She was trying to reassure him. He did not need reassurance. He knew it would be all right. It was Glen. It was having her go through this. All his life he had taken responsibility upon his shoulders. He was used to it. Used to bearing burdens; to protecting others. But he could not protect Glen from this. He could not carry it for her. It was something she must go through herself, and it shook him that he was so helpless.

Glen said, "I'm lucky. A full set of nurses and a room all to myself. You don't know how hard it is to get nurses."

"They're lucky too," Meredith told her. "You'll be an admirable patient."

She wrinkled her nose at him, pleased with the compliment. Her lashes flickered. "I hope the scar will fade soon. I'd hate an ugly scar."

A staff nurse, white-capped, serious, came into the room. An interne followed, pushing a wheeled table. He ran it alongside the bed. He grinned down at Glen. "Ready for the chopping block?"

"Ready as I'll ever be."

Meredith got up. He looked at the nurse. She said comfortingly, "We've got to prepare Mrs. Ames. You can see her before she goes up."

His throat was tight. "Will she—?"

The nurse, busy beside the bed, said. "She won't be asleep. We'll call you."

Meredith looked down at Glen. She moved her head, and he bent and kissed her. "I'll be outside. See you."

He went into the corridor. Down the shining black floor towards the small reception room. At her recessed desk opposite the elevator, the head floor nurse looked up. She said, "They're painting the waiting room, Mr. Ames. There's one downstairs on the next floor. We'll call you before Mrs. Ames goes up."

Meredith thanked her and went down to the floor below.

The walls were different here. Animals in bright colors raced along its length. He found the waiting room. It was bigger than the one upstairs. There were worn leather chairs and two settees. A table with magazines and several vases of flowers.

A handful of people were in the room. Three men, two women and a couple of children. The children fidgeted. One of the men smoked. One read a magazine.

The third looked out of the big windows at the roofs and leafless trees of the city.

He was a young man. A big man. Not, Meredith thought, the sort he would know. But as he sat down, aware that everyone in the room looked at him, yet excluded him as they excluded each other, he felt that that was not fair to himself. There was no social significance in it. No snobbishness. It was just that the young man was of the type Meredith never came in contact with. Not in business. Not in his and Glen's social life.

The women whispered; spoke sharply to the children. The big young man turned his head to look. He walked across the room to the door. Once there he seemed unsure of why he had come and walked back again to the windows.

He was even younger than Glen. A burly lad with a florid face and a shock of yellow hair. Blue eyes, clear as a child's, but dazed as a child's might be.

Meredith took out a cigarette. He lighted it, realizing where he was. This was evidently the maternity floor, and these were people waiting while even doctors waited upon Nature. He puffed at the cigarette. He could not imagine himself ever acting as this young man was acting. Looking out of the windows with unseeing eyes. Talking to himself. Unaware of the eyes on him. Of the women exchanging secret, ageless smiles. Of the children giggling. Cracking the knuckles of his big hands as he came back to the middle of the room. Showing no signs of self-control. Abandoned to some emotion that was like an anesthetic.

He came across to Meredith. Meredith looked up. The young man's fingers worked. "Got a light?" he asked hoarsely.

Meredith said mildly, "You haven't a cigarette."

The boy didn't smile. He dug into his pocket and fumbled out a packet of cigarettes. Meredith struck a light and held it. The young man bent, his hand shaking, and achieved a light.

He didn't thank Meredith. He looked at the door, then sat down heavily in the chair alongside Meredith's. His blue eyes touched Meredith's face with a glimmer of awareness. "Your wife here, too?"

"Yes. She's here."

The young man looked at Meredith a long moment. He turned his eyes to his cigarette. "It's our first." He looked at Meredith again as if hoping that from Meredith's greater years and assumed parenthood he could find some assurance. But Meredith had none to give him.

A nurse appeared in the doorway. The young man got to his feet and stumbled to the door. The nurse said, "Mrs. Esken." The two women and the children got up and moved across the carpet.

The young man put out his hand. "Nurse. Is—?"

The nurse looked at him with a half smile. "Nothing, Mr. Kane. Really, you shouldn't take on like this. Remember, we've never lost a father. It'll be all right."

The women tittered. The man with the magazine lowered it to grin widely. The boy said, "Sure, sure." But he hadn't heard. Meredith was certain of that. He felt no desire to smile. It wasn't funny.

The staff nurse from upstairs came to the door and nodded. Meredith got up, his mouth dry, and went across the room. The big young man got out of his way dazedly, yet with envy in his eyes.

Meredith gave him no thought. He went up the stairs and along the corridor. They were just wheeling Glen from the room. She lay shapeless under the coverings, a white wrapping about her bright hair. But her face, shining and clean as it was when she woke in the mornings beside him, was calm and aware. Meredith bent over her as the order-

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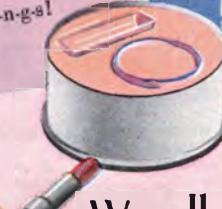
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lies stopped at the elevator. He could not speak. He could only look down at her and from somewhere find a smile to answer hers.

She said, "I feel so nice and dreamy. So very comfortable. I'm not the least bit afraid. Isn't that funny?"

"It's nice."

"Nice." She echoed the silly word. "You'll be here?"

His voice deepened. "I'll be here."

The elevator door opened. Meredith turned away and heard the door clang to behind him. The head nurse looked up and smiled. "Dr. Michael said to wait for him after Mrs. Ames comes down."

"When—when will that be?" He tried to keep his voice even.

"A couple of hours. Maybe less. Maybe more. One never knows with abdominals. You've quite a wait. Why don't you go and have some lunch, Mr. Ames?"

"I think I will," Meredith said. "Thank you, nurse."

He went down to the cafeteria in the main lobby. It was filled with nurses' aides and nurses. With hospital clerks and doctors and technicians. Meredith had no appetite, but he ordered a sandwich and coffee, pie. The talk flowed about him and over him. It was comforting but strange to hear such cheerful voices. He could not eat the sandwich, but he drank the coffee, ate some of the pie and ordered more coffee. He smoked two cigarettes, but it was barely one o'clock when he paid his check and went to the elevators.

There were two women in the waiting room. One had been crying. The other was evidently her friend. They had quite an argument about the friend staying so long. She said, "I came with you. I'm not going until Bert comes down."

There was silence. They sat, three people in a room, strangers and wanting to be strangers, yet held by a common bond. Nurses went past. The woman who had been crying went in and out of the room. Each time she came back she shook her head, and her eyes were redder than before. It was the friend who said at last. "I think that was Bert they wheeled past just now."

The wife went out of the room quickly. She came back in a minute and stood at the door. She did not speak. She nodded and the other woman stood up, crushed her cigarette and went out.

Meredith hoped this Bert was all right. But he was glad to be alone. It was almost two now. Glen should be coming down soon. She would be unconscious, but he hated to think of her on the operating table. Lying so still. He wanted her out of that, desperately.

The tray in the ash receiver grew thick with cigarette stubs. Meredith's mouth was dry. He no longer could endure to smoke. He laced his fingers and leaned back. It was very quiet.

Dr. Michael would come and tell him about the operation. Tell him what he had found. Glen would want to know. The very first question she would ask would be, "Is my uterus all right?"

Meredith knew that. He remembered when he had gone with her on the final visit to Dr. Michael. A thin man, with a sensitive, understanding face. Leaning forward to explain. "I am not sure whether the uterus is involved. I hope it isn't—or if it is, that it can be preserved so that the child-bearing function is not destroyed. I believe it will be all right, but in these matters one never knows until the mass is revealed. I do know that this young lady must undergo an operation. The sooner the better."

Glen's eyes had sought Meredith's, frightened, appealing. He had said, "As soon as possible then, Doctor."

He had heard her sigh, even as she nodded like an obedient child. Dr. Michael had risen. "I'd like another opinion. Dr. Protheroe is a very good man."

Dr. Protheroe had agreed. He had been even more sanguine about the uterus. Meredith was not sure just what the uterus was. He knew, but he didn't know. But then, he was not a doctor. He was a lawyer.

He shifted position. He looked at his watch. It was almost three. Fear took hold of him then, but years of discipline kept him still. There was no use going outside. They would tell him nothing.

He was standing by the window when Dr. Michael came in. The man looked fraile than ever. There were circles under his eyes. The doctor took out a cigarette, and Meredith automatically struck a light for him.

The gynecologist inhaled gratefully. "She's sleeping. Doing very nicely."

Meredith found his voice. "It took a long time."

Dr. Michael nodded. His voice was low, hesitant. "It was very difficult. Two abnormally large tumors. A mass of adhesions. I thought I would have to give up. Then I found a line of cleavage."

Meredith found himself asking the question. "Her uterus?"

"Quite all right, but—" The tired eyes met Meredith's, sympathetic, helpless somehow.

"But what, Doctor?"

"The ovaries were involved."

Meredith felt a coldness, a numbness steal along his arms. "You didn't—?"

"There was nothing else to do but remove them."

"Both?"

"Both."

The gentle voice was like a muffled bell. Meredith put out his hand blindly for the chair. Dr. Michael said something about "endometriosis." Meredith heard no more. He must have turned white for Dr. Michael put his hand on his arm. The surgeon said, "It is shocking, I know. She is so young. But it happens time and again. A fearful disappointment to you both. But after a time, you may consider adopting a child. I can assure you, Mr. Ames, you will—"

Meredith's voice caught in his throat. "Oh, my God, do you think I care? It's Glen. She wanted children so. She—" He drew a shuddering breath. He looked at the eyes that suffered with him. "She'll ask. It's the first thing she'll ask."

"She should be told. I'll tell her if you want me to."

"No," Meredith said hoarsely. "I will."

"Perhaps that will be best." Dr. Michael carefully crushed his cigarette. "She will be a healthier girl; a perfectly normal one. It is all a matter of mental attitude. That is up to Mrs. Ames and to you. She'll need an understanding; a bolstering of—well—the ego. But you will help her."

"Yes," Meredith said steadily. "I'll help her." He wasn't thinking of that. He was thinking of Glen looking at him with her great brown eyes and asking, as he knew she would ask, "Is my uterus all right?"

He would say truthfully, "It's all right, darling." But if she asked further? He had never lied to her. He never could. Not to that direct, that childishly trusting, honest gaze.

He asked, "May I see her?"

"If you wish. She is asleep though. I've ordered an intravenous for her; to replace the lost fluid. She'll sleep a great deal. When she wakes up she may know you, but she will drop off again."

"When will she wake up?"

"Tonight. For a moment or two only. You can be with her if you like, but she has most capable nurses. It might be bet-

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THE BEER THAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS

ter if you came tomorrow. She will be awake then and looking for you."

"Yes," Meredith said slowly, "it would be better." He picked up his hat and overcoat. "Thank you, Doctor."

Dr. Michael said, "I wish . . ." but Meredith said quickly, "You did the best that could be done. I know that. It's just . . ." He didn't finish. He bent his head and went out.

The early winter twilight was gathering as he came out into the deserted street. The lights of the business section were already making a faint glow on the underside of the solid bank of clouds.

He didn't want to go home. Glen would be too achingly not there. Minna would ask him about her. The phone would ring and people would ask questions. All their friends. All the women who had said, "Oh, Glen, it's really nothing. I had a tumor. My goodness, yes. Two weeks, and you'll be out and telling all about it."

They'd ask. They'd want to know. He couldn't go home.

He moved aimlessly along the sidewalk, still caught in the grip of a complete numbness of body and mind. A blurred figure standing beside one of the trees said, "Got a light?"

Meredith struck a match. By its glow he saw the florid face of the young man who had been in the maternity waiting room. The hand that held the cigarette shook even more now. Meredith was conscious of a sudden stirring of anger that was not directed against the boy. What was his name? Kane.

He shook out the match; threw it away. "The baby hasn't come yet?"

Young Kane peered at him in the dusk. Apparently he recognized Meredith. Remembered him, if only vaguely. He shook his head. "No. She—" He gulped. "They think maybe they'll have to do one of them operations. The head gee was telling me. One of them—"

"A Caesarean," Meredith said gently.

"Yeah." The boy caught up the word as if it had comfort in it. "Caesarean. That's bad, ain't it? My wife read me a book once about a soldier in Italy and a—a nurse. She had one. Went out, too."

"It's not bad," Meredith said, grateful for this interest apart from Glen. "In the hands of a good surgeon it is almost routine, and they have good men here."

"Silverman," Kane said. "He's the one."

"A fine man—one of the best." Meredith had never heard of the surgeon, but he was glad he had spoken for Kane nodded his head.

"Yeah, they said so. They're gonna wait a little. They said I should go out and get my supper. But I dunno."

Meredith took the boy's arm. "It's a good idea. Have something with me."

Young Kane drew his arm away. "Your wife—"

"She's sleeping."

"You coming back, too?"

"I'm coming back."

The boy moved with him, unwillingly. Meredith did not know why he bothered. It was none of his business. He didn't want company. He wanted to be alone. To wait for this numbness to pass. To emerge from the shock of what Dr. Michael had told him so that he could grasp it fully. He couldn't now. It would be better if he were alone. To walk through the chill of the night until his mind stopped whirling and he could think clearly.

Yet he shepherded young Kane along until they came to the business section. To the lights and traffic and the cafés.

They sat at a counter. Meredith ordered. The boy just sat, hunched forward, his eyes blank. He ate when Meredith

said, "Your food's getting cold." He ate and drank his coffee and accepted a cigarette, but Meredith knew he was there only in body.

They did not speak to each other, even when they had finished and Meredith had paid the check. They walked back to the hospital. The boy shambled. He wore no hat and seemed not to notice the cold. The streets were dark, save for the lonely lamps. The houses had gone to bed early, and the hospital was very quiet.

No one stopped them when they came in. The elevator man took them up. The corridor of the maternity ward was deserted, save for the nurse on duty at the desk. Her eyes touched Meredith, then went to young Kane. "You're Mr. Kane?"

Meredith saw young Kane's throat work. When he spoke his voice was a croak. "Yeah. My wife—she—"

The nurse smiled. "She's upstairs now. In O. R. We'll let you know."

Her eyes turned to Meredith again, questioning. He put his hand on the boy's arm and turned him towards the waiting room.

It was empty. Meredith sat down, taking off his coat. Young Kane looked at him blankly and then sat down too. "O. R. What's that?"

"Operating Room," Meredith said softly.

He saw the big knuckles whiten. "They're doing it then?"

"Yes."

The boy got to his feet, trembling. "She c'd die."

"She won't die," Meredith said angrily. He put his hand on Kane's arm and drew him down again. "There's nothing you can do but wait."

The boy's body was taut. Meredith felt him go limp as he took away his hand. He passed over a cigarette, and the boy smoked it until it burned his fingers. He dropped the end onto the carpet and put his foot on it, and Meredith was sure he did not know he had done so. He sat, breathing hard and laboriously. Noisily.

It was the only sound in the room. Meredith leaned forward, his hands between his knees. On the floor above Glen was sleeping her drugged sleep. She would wake and sleep again. But inevitably she would waken and stay awake. And she would ask and he would answer that first question.

He could put off the rest for a time. He could say, "I don't know any more. When you're better Dr. Michael will tell us all about it."

He would tell her that, and she would be satisfied. But the time would come when he would have to tell her the whole truth.

Glen would be happy in her convalescence. Happy in her release from the hospital. In her own home, her own room. And he would tell her. He would have to. He knew the expression that would come into her face. The way it would grow quiet. The way her eyes would widen. And then, when he told her—when she grasped it—the look that would come before she wept. A look of dumb hurt. A look that asked of him, as older and wiser, as the one to whom she looked for protection and guidance: "What did I do? Why should I be punished like this?"

The groan that came from Meredith's lips was almost a snarl. Young Kane did not move.

Meredith's teeth bit into his lower lip. Glen would weep. She would say, "I'm not a woman any longer. I'm no good to you."

Meredith let his breath go, sighing: almost sobbing. He would take her in his arms and press his cheek against her wet, hot face and tell her, over and over again, "I love you. Oh, my darling, that's

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all that counts. Nothing else. Nothing."

She would not believe. That, he could see, was his job. He would have to make her believe.

It would be terribly hard. That he could not grieve for the children who would never be theirs, simply because they did not exist, was something a woman could not understand. It was so. But the only thing that mattered was to make her understand that he loved her and needed her and nothing else. Nothing in all the wide world.

Yes. That was his job, but first he would have to tell her, and that would be a kind of murder. At one stroke to kill the Glen he knew, irretrievably. And yet it had to be done, and it was his job.

Young Kane's breath rattled. Meredith turned his head. The boy's face was white and drawn. Meredith touched his shoulder. He knew now what had made him come back with Kane. "Easy. Take it easy," he said gently. "We can only wait."

It was past midnight when the nurse came to the door. "Mr. Kane?"

Meredith rose with the boy. He put his arm through Kane's. The nurse said, "You have a son, Mr. Kane. Nine pounds, six ounces."

Young Kane gestured angrily. His voice came, agonized, "Kitty. My wife."

"Mrs. Kane is doing fine. She's asleep."

"Could—could I see her?"

"You mustn't disturb her, but you can peek into her room. Come with me."

The boy moved, stumbling. The nurse took his arm and led him out.

Meredith stood quite still. He felt very weak and tired, yet the discomfort was gone from his stomach and the pain, though deeper, was easier in him.

He was putting on his coat when young Kane came back. His face was not so white; his eyes not so dazed. He looked at Meredith. "She—she's asleep."

"She'll be all right," Meredith said. "She won't mind at all. Your son will more than repay her for everything."

"Yeah," Young Kane said. "Yeah."

He shrugged into his coat. "It's past twelve, ain't it?"

"Almost one."

Kane buttoned his coat with fumbling fingers. "I got to go down to the terminal. They'll give me a first run, an' I can get my truck back in time to see Kitty in the morning."

He went towards the door, and Meredith went with him. In the elevator young Kane stood quietly, shaking his head now and then, his big body stooped.

It was bitterly cold outside. The boy shuffled. He cleared his throat. "You—your wife?"

"She's going to be all right," Meredith said quietly.

"That—that's swell," Kane thrust his hands into his pockets. "I'll see you again, maybe. I feel like—I dunno—but you and me. We—it's something I won't ever forget. I can't explain, but I ain't never felt for no other guy . . ." He didn't finish.

"I know," Meredith put out his hand. "Good luck."

His fingers tingled from the boy's crushing grip. As young Kane moved away in the dark, Meredith turned up his collar and started towards the bus. He went slowly, wearily.

Sorrow was still before him, while everything was behind for young Kane, but Meredith knew what it was they had in common. What the bond was that the boy had been unable to put into words. He settled his chin deeper into his collar and felt the wind cold on his cheeks where the tears rolled unchecked. "It's because we died together," he said softly. "As every man dies at least once for the woman he loves."

Cosmopolitan Citations

(Continued from page 61)

"The Blue Dahlia" starts off with three discharged veterans, Johnny Morrison (Alan Ladd), Buzz Wanchek (William Bendix), who isn't quite right in the head on account of a steel plate he wears there due to a battle wound, and George Copeland (Hugh Beaumont) having a quick one in a bar, to celebrate their return home from overseas duty with the Navy before they separate to go to their respective homes.

Johnny, the best-heeled of the trio, heads out to see his wife in the fashionable Cavendish hotel-apartments in Hollywood. He finds her very tight, giving a party, and casually kissing one Eddie Harwood, who is the owner of the Blue Dahlia night club and who, Johnny surmises, has been more than a pal to her during his absence. In fact, Johnny pops Harwood one, straight to the jaw, which the victim takes smilingly. Not surprising that it breaks up the party and leads to a quarrel between Johnny and his wife. During their fight, she reveals that their little son, who died during Johnny's absence, did not succumb to illness, but as the result of an automobile accident caused by her drunken driving.

Johnny walks out on her after this confession and, wandering along in a daze and also a mean rain, is picked up by an attractive blonde (Veronica Lake) who drives him to the beach. While he is with her, he hears over the radio that his wife has been found murdered.

Right there, as you perfectly well know, the plot thickens. Buzz has been seen with Johnny's wife. So has Harwood. The blonde turns out to be Harwood's wife. It's all a wonderful turgid muddle, and the ending is slickly concealed and completely satisfying.

I have two complaints to make. The first is that I think it is high time that such a standout personality as Alan Ladd should be given a real stellar rôle as befits his tremendous popularity. I like him in "The Blue Dahlia" and so will you, but I think it is a waste of talent to keep on putting him in films where he has so little footage. Ladd is too powerful, too distinctive, to be frittered away in roles that any average actor could play. If Paramount wants to make me very, very happy (and I'll bet they don't care a darn) they will give Alan one of those vehicles built for one.

My other complaint is Doris Dowling as the wife. She acts with less restraint than a 1914 vamp. Here she's got it bad, and that ain't good, and neither is she.

Outside of these minor flaws, I recommend "The Blue Dahlia" wholeheartedly for the Cosmopolitan Citation as the best picture of the month of April.

A little more than a year ago, our musical comedy darlings got smitten with a lust for drama. Don't ask me the reason. Why the lassies with the classy chassis should all have yearned to outweep Bette Davis, I'll never know. But they did.

Deanna Durbin essayed it first. She's still up to it, and her box-office rating is down. Judy Garland was the next to try it with "The Clock." Personally, I thought that was a charming picture, even if Judy didn't give out with so much as a note or barely a glimpse of an ankle, but the customers snubbed it; whereas, "The Harvey Girls," Judy's current picture and a musical, is breaking all records. Most recently, it was Alice Faye who went Bernhardt in "The Fallen Angel," being very dead-pan and fully clothed, and I thought the result about as cheerful as a December week end in the Aleutians.



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Elizabeth Arden

This month's happy news is that Rita Hayworth, whose face is beautiful and whose torso is more so, has gone dramatically in "Gilda," and she is completely glamorously, charmingly and enchantingly triumphant therein.

"Gilda" is the story of a bad girl's meeting Johnny, a bad boy, in Buenos Aires. She is the wife of the owner of a gambling casino, an eerie character who makes your blood run cold just to look at him. The boy is this Satanic person's most trusted employee, so trusted, in fact, that he puts his wife in Johnny's care. What the husband doesn't surmise is that Gilda and Johnny have known each other in the past all too well, and that they hate each other in a big way.

The entire production is glittering and lavish and the subtlety of it is that it does permit Rita to run on her beautiful gams along one of those so-called gamuts. In her venture into drama, she had the good sense to retain the best features of her song-and-dance popularity. She warbles two tunes, "Put the Blame on Mame, Boys" and "Amado Mio," both of which are plenty torchy and sultry, and she dances a samba in a manner that glorifies her Spanish ancestry. Furthermore, she wears a wardrobe that is out of this world, and her natural beauty has never been photographed more seductively and compellingly.

You can't ignore Glenn Ford, back from two years' service with the Marines. He is exciting, believable and delightful as Johnny. George Macready plays the husband with a chilling, sinister force, but throughout, it is Rita who dominates—a Rita whom you delight in watching. That is really being a star.

Therefore, with my whole heart, I give Rita Hayworth the Cosmopolitan Citation for the best starring performance of the month of April.

One of the current plights interesting Hollywood is that of the independent producer.

An "independent" chronically inhabits that state Lincoln detested. He's half-slave and half-free. Technically, he can produce whatever he likes. He works outside an established "major" studio, subject to no dictates save his own artistic conscience, if any. It is all just dandy until he gets ready to release his picture. Then he must go back to the major studio releasing organizations, which control the theaters, if he desires to get his film before the public.

This explains why "independent productions" are so rarely anything off the beaten path. They are forced to stick to pretty conventional plots in order to assure release.

That has, up until now, been their chief handicap, but now they've got another. This is the lack of stellar personalities available to them. Along with the acquisition of theater chains, the big companies have for some time now been signing up acting talent under long-term deals. Big companies may "borrow" or "lend" a star to another big company in return for an actor of equal prominence, but the independent gets shut out. He has nothing to barter with.

Yet sometimes—very rarely—this works out to the advantage of the independent. Such an advantage is visible in "The Young Widow," which was produced by the veteran Hunt Stromberg, who used to be a pillar of M-G-M, but who is now out on his own.

"The Young Widow" is, to begin with, a touching and charming story, compounded in nice balance of sadness and laughter. It presents an important contemporary problem: that of the attractive girl who has lost her husband in the war. Other men desire her. She herself

desires a complete life, yet loyalty to a memory holds her back. Shall she accept or renounce a new love?

When Hunt Stromberg decided to film this story (given a particularly brilliant script by Richard Macaulay and Margaret Buell Wilder) he managed to borrow Ida Lupino from Warner Brothers for the leading rôle. But just as he was about to go into production, Warners' recalled Lupino, and Hunt was left nameless.

He suddenly thought of Jane Russell. Certainly you have heard of Miss Russell. She was the most publicized actress you have never seen. That publicity hit the newspapers in 1940, and while you may not recall the Russell face, I am sure you will remember a couple of her other features which were so pointedly stressed in the advertising of "The Outlaw."

I was one of the few who saw "The Outlaw" at that time. It has, as you probably know, only recently been released by the censors. I go on record as saying that the last thing I ever expected was that Jane Russell would, five years later, be revealed as an actress. But she is an actress here, and quite a good one. I understand she has, most sensibly, spent the past five years in dramatic coaching, and I must say she has learned her lessons very well.

Yet, while I suspect it will be Jane who will make you go to see "The Young Widow," the greater reason for your enjoyment of it will be Louis Hayward's performance as the fier who falls in love with her.

Before he went into service, nearly three years ago, I had always regarded Hayward as a brilliant, but somewhat annoying, actor. Was it the terrible weeks he spent on Tarawa and the other Pacific Islands that gave him the sensitiveness, understanding and warm charm he ex-

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hibits here? One can only guess at that, but I'm sure you will agree with me in cheering his work here as one of the most artfully shaded, thoroughly human and romantic performances of a long time.

Without him, "The Young Widow" would still have been a good picture, but with him, it is lifted into being at once realistic, tender and romantic.

I am very happy to give Louis Hayward the Cosmopolitan Citation for the best supporting performance of April, 1946.

When at the end of this past year, the list of 1945 leading box-office earners was released, little Miss Margaret O'Brien's name was very much among those present.

Not since Shirley Temple grew to adolescence has any child so led audiences. Naturally, such baby stock was duly noticed by rival producers.

In "The Sentimental Journey," you see another little girl with straight-parted hair braided in pigtails, a big sailor hat pushed back on her head, and a homely wholesomeness that goes straight to your heart.

Connie Marshall resembles Margaret only in that she, too, is a rather plain child. There is none of the cuddly, dimpled beauty that made Shirley Temple's name a household word. That little Connie walks right into your heart is due largely to the direction Walter Lang has given the little girl in this, her debut, picture.

"The Sentimental Journey" is very accurately named, and I loved every minute of it. I had a beautiful time weeping and didn't mind ruining three perfectly good handkerchiefs. There is a lovely spiritual quality about "The Sentimental Journey" that is another proof of Mr. Lang's ability to take a fragile story of this kind and make it believable without ever once letting it go maudlin.

You see, it's almost another "Mary Rose" in idea. I don't suppose many of you, in fact, none of my youngest readers, are familiar with Sir James Barrie's enchanting play, "Mary Rose," in which the heroine dies when she is young and comes back to guide the lives of the loved ones she leaves behind.

A young wife, in this movie a celebrated actress adored by her husband, comes back to earth to their little adopted daughter to enlist her help in getting him back to his work and over his lonely grief. He ignores the child, whom he has always regarded as an intruder, but she thinks of him as a sacred trust from the dead mother and struggles on until she wins him around.

Admittedly, it is a slight story, and I can think of no director but Walter Lang who could have kept it so exquisitely alive.

His adult leads, John Payne and Maureen O'Hara, are two of our handsomest people—but to me, they have always seemed two of our most unyielding actors. But I have never seen John or Maureen better than they are in "Sentimental Journey," and as for small Connie, you won't be able to forget her.

Walter's understanding of children is so apparent here. He is married to Madalynne Field who was Carole Lombard's closest friend and confidential secretary for many years. They have an unusually bright little boy of their own. I know John Payne feels close to him, for Walter was best man at his wedding.

In fact, Walter is one of the most popular gentlemen in Hollywood. I herewith give him the Cosmopolitan Citation for the best direction of April, 1946. As for Mr. Lang in private life, I assure you, I couldn't possibly award a nicer guy.

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appeared before her as a boy, "who can make being respectable sound as glamorous as joy riding or stealing apples from the Greek's."

Judge Kelley's courtroom is cheerful, personal and yet dignified. There are comfortable chairs, with rungs the right height for restless feet, and a mahogany library table, always bright with flowers, instead of the conventional bench. Cases are conducted at leisure and informally, and the Judge keeps her language down to the Tennessee grassroots. "This is just a little old round-table court," she will tell those involved in a case. "Everyone is going to have a chance to talk, and no one is going to leave this room in a bad frame of mind. Now, let's all get together and rassle this case out." Before long, angry adults and sulky children are pouring out their stories. And once the stories are fully clear, all sides are likely to agree on the best solution for the children. When a distinguished lawyer tried to rush a case through recently, the Judge simply gave him her famous smile. "I will not be hurried," she said. "This is a character court, and I will take all the time I need to build character."

To the envy of some of her fellow jurists, Camille Kelley can take all day, if she likes, to straighten out a case. Memphis is so actively back of her that she has been able to hire a large, efficient court staff. For the same reason she can make probation work far better than it does for some judges.

"You can't whip bad behavior out of a child," she says, "and you can't scold it out. Children have little turnoff switches in their minds, and after you've moralized a while, they literally can't hear you. When a child's behavior is sick, you must find the underlying cause and cure it." Physical punishment by parents she considers worse than useless.

If a child has spirit and temper ("the motor fuel of life"), the Judge is doubly sure he has possibilities. "You help a placid, ineffectual youngster, and you have to carry him around for life," she says, "but you turn a little old wildcat of a boy around, and you have real upstream pulling power."

Children on probation progress from small successes to bigger ones. Almost before they know it the Judge has scrappy youngsters organizing a new playground with city help, or she forms a junior citizens' committee under an American Legion leader and presents all the boys, at a solemn ceremony, with certificates of citizenship in dazzling if inexpensive folders from the ten-cent store. Each child gets individual help in developing his own special gifts. Parents are urged, for instance, to be proud of a boy who is good with his hands, to help him to become a satisfied craftsman instead of a second-rate white-collar worker.

Once children and parents can manage alone, the Judge pulls the court from under them. She believes everyone should stand on his own feet, talks turkey to malingerers and hates coddling.

Though she was born into one of Tennessee's most distinguished families, the daughter of the well-known surgeon Dr. J. P. McGee, Camille Kelley never fitted into the conventional magnolia-rich pattern. A wild little scrap of a curlyhead, she spent most of her childhood up trees and in haylofts, safe from adult fussing. "I was determined to be a lady preacher," she says. "While my cousins practiced their embroidery on the sofa, I stalked the roads delivering eloquent sermons to the weeds."

She was left an orphan young and

gradually her ambition changed. She would be a doctor like her father and save bodies instead of souls. She persuaded her guardians to let her enter her father's old medical college in Philadelphia. Then an older sister died, leaving small children, and Camille abandoned her own career to look after them. One day, still a girl in her teens, she met a young lawyer named Thomas Fitzgerald Kelley, as handsome and fiery as herself. They made a radiantly happy marriage, and for some years Camille's career was Tom Kelley and the three little Kelleys—Heiskell, Gerald and Evelyn.

Tom Kelley liked his wife's mind as much as her pretty face, and he wanted her to use it: so he urged her to study law in his office. She worked with him evenings for two years, helped out part time in his office for another eighteen months. Then one day, watching her son trot off to school, she wondered what sort of people he met in the bigger world beyond her control. "A good mother's job doesn't end in the home," she realized.

Pinning on her prettiest hat, young Mrs. Kelley walked up to her son's school and introduced herself to the teachers. Before long she helped found a local Parent-Teachers' Association and got the first woman member elected to the Memphis Board of Education. Then she cast an eye around the city itself to see what happened to children after school. She didn't like all that she saw.

By the time Memphis needed a new juvenile court judge, a few years later, Camille Kelley had a city-wide reputation as a woman who could melt any citizen into joining her crusade for children. In spite of her legal training, she had never followed through and taken a bar examination. But the Tennessee State Legislature passed a special law to allow her to become the first woman officeholder in the history of Tennessee, the second woman juvenile court judge in the entire country. Though she still hasn't taken those bar exams, her judgments have been reversed only once in eight years in higher courts.

Having succeeded so well with Memphis children, she is now at work on their parents. "Delinquency isn't juvenile," she says. "It's parental. Most of what's the matter with America's little folks is the big folks."

All kinds of parental failures parade through the Judge's court. There are the parents who, as the Judge says, "chip little bits off the law and then are surprised when their youngsters go ahead and break them"; the fathers who "collect" hotel towels, who tell the children to "watch out back for the cops" before they push the family car up to sixty, who boast of outsmarting the ration rules. There are the quarrelsome parents, who never seem to realize that their youngsters are drinking in every word. There are the mothers who say nothing but: "Wipe your feet, Bobby... Stay off that sofa, Bobby." That isn't a home—it's an invitation to real boys to go right out into the street.

Worst of all are the parents who refuse to take on the responsibilities of parenthood. "Children are going to get mothering and fathering somewhere," says the Judge. "Many immoral girls are simply reaching out blindly for the love they never got at home. Parents who try to buy their way out of parenthood by giving a child his physical needs, and then leaving him to a school or a servant, are breaking that child's heart." Though Judge Kelley has backed much legislation for working women, she thinks mothers

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should work only as a last resort.

The Judge has already spread her gospel to many other towns. Local governments in six states have borrowed the blueprint for her pleasant court building. Several towns have modeled their probation systems after hers. But she remains happiest when she can work with people as individuals. "The worst thing about Judge Kelley," a friend said despairingly, "is that she can't seem to distinguish between respectable people and the other kind. She never remembers whether she met a girl at her debut or in the Detention Home." In the warm democracy of Camille Kelley's heart, there is no dividing line.

Atomic Bomb Tests

(Continued from page 77)

shattered bow going under first.

Ten other ships are sunk. Besides the carrier, the battleship Arkansas, the German cruiser Prinz Eugen, the cruiser Pensacola, two destroyers and one submarine are sunk; three other landing craft also go down. The blast either rips holes in the ships so that they take on water and sink, or it capsizes them and they go down. The sturdy turrets on the big ships hold together but are pushed out of line. Many gaunt steel masts ride out the blast, although they are twisted and bent. Smoke stacks are torn off. The bridges of several ships are out of place.

All glass is broken into splinters and, in the lighter ships, doors are blown either inward or outward depending on just how the blast-wave strikes. Life-boats, rafts, everything on the decks not firmly tied down is blown into the sea which is littered with wreckage. Electric wiring and piping on the upper works of lighter ships suffer considerable damage.

The ships within three-quarters of a mile from the point directly under the blast have most of their upper works torn apart and left in a twisted mass. For the ships beyond that distance, the blast damage is less and several of them can be made serviceable with minor repairs. Fire also sweeps through the ships within a distance of three-quarters of a mile from the blast. Those fires are intensified by the burning of the fuel and the exploding of the ammunition aboard the ships. The upper works of the burned ships are a twisted, scorched tangle of steelwork. Most ships beyond the three-quarters of a mile suffer only blast damage. On the outer ships, wood and other inflammables are set afire by the intense flash of radiant heat at the instant of the explosion; then the flames are blown out by the great wind of the blast which arrives several seconds later, leaving the surfaces charred where they faced the center of the explosion.

The heat of the fires generates a whirlwind with its vortex near the center of the ships. It acts like a huge chimney, sucking the flames upward and making the fires burn intensely until the inflammable materials are consumed. A water spout several hundred feet high is seen briefly in the center of twisting wind.

The explosion sets up waves about thirty feet high which go out in all directions. Two of the smaller ships are capsized; all larger ships ride out the waves.

Still and movie cameras in shelters on shore and in airplanes make accurate records for future study. It is essential to have a time record, to know what happens at various intervals after the blast. The camera's eye is a better reporter than the human eye for that purpose.

Observers do not attempt to enter the blast area for the next six hours. Then

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scientists and technicians work their way in slowly from the outside of the two-mile circle, testing for dangerous amounts of residual radioactivity in the various ships. Three ships near the explosion point have intensities considered excessive, and they are not boarded for the first day. Others are pronounced safe.

During the first examinations of the ships in the inner circles, observers find the Army air and ground force equipment on their decks badly twisted and torn by blast pressure. Only the armored vehicles withstood the blast, and they are severely damaged by fire.

About eight of the ships are beyond repair. Others, although badly battered, can be patched up.

The complete story of the first test will not be known until weeks later when the study of the recordings of cameras and instruments and the minute analysis of the wreckage is completed. The first reaction of the observers, though, is that the Navy should never allow a number of its ships to be caught in close formation by an atomic-bomb attack from the air. The test shows that capital ships cannot survive a hit or a near-hit and that an atomic explosion is also lethal to lighter vessels at distances beyond three-quarters of a mile. And even dispersal is no sure protection, since any atomic attack will almost certainly be made with more than one bomb.

While the Evaluation Board and other observers collect the evidence of the first bomb's work, the rest of the Atomic Bomb Test Task Force starts preparing for the second stage of its program.

Before the explosion of the second atomic bomb, there will be a preliminary "dry run" test blast of one hundred tons of TNT on the surface of the water to calibrate instruments and to check the diffusion in the lagoon water of radioactive materials. The explosive will be piled in boxes on a barge in the center of the main test area, where the second atomic bomb will also be exploded. The pile of TNT will contain a number of tubes filled with a solution of radioactive fission products. As the charge explodes, these products will be spread over the water. Their diffusion will be studied in preparation for the second atomic test.

In the second atomic test, the pattern of the ships is similar in size and arrangement to the circular formation of Test One. This time, instead of simulating ships in motion in the open sea, the pattern represents ships anchored in a harbor. The explosion of the bomb from a barge or other surface craft might be carried out by the enemy in a surprise attack on a base like Pearl Harbor. The idea of this surface explosion test is to show what could happen if we allowed our warships to be trapped at anchor.

Undamaged heavy ships from the outer rings of the Test One formation are moved into the inner rings to take the place of vessels sunk or badly damaged. The doughty old battleship New York takes the position of the sunken Arkansas.

The atomic bomb is on a steel barge in the center of the inner circle of ships. It is exploded by remote control.

The effect of Test Two is even more spectacular than that of Test One. The steel barge is instantly vaporized and rises into the ball of fire as a cloud of gas. A great saucer-shaped crater appears on the surface of the lagoon. It extends one thousand feet from its center. Out of the middle of this compression rises a boiling, surging mass of poisonously radioactive steam, mist and spray. Then the water comes rushing back into the crater. Towering one-hundred-foot-waves surge out in every direction.

The waves capsize and sink two de-

stroyers and two other lighter ships. Reaching shallower waters, they pick up a transport and a landing craft, lift them high in the air, drop them on the sandy bottom and break them open.

The pressure of the explosion goes through the water to the New York, the aircraft carrier Independence, the Salt Lake City and the Japanese cruiser Nagato, and tears holes in their sides and bottoms. They all sink quickly. Other capital ships manage to remain afloat, but the huge waves almost capsize them.

A destroyer, torn loose from its moorings, is sent careening crazily through the rings of outer ships. It smashes against a merchant ship, sinks it and ploughs into the shore of a near-by island.

However, the upper works of the ships remaining afloat are less damaged than those of the survivors of Test One. The ships close to this surface explosion momentarily shielded the outer ships from the full effect of the blast.

After Test Two, no one is allowed to enter the surviving ships or the surrounding shore installations for several weeks. Splashed by intensely radioactive spray, they are fatal territory. The test, however, does not start an uncontrolled chain reaction of explosives in the ocean.

Test Two will prove vividly that in the future naval vessels cannot be anchored in large numbers at close intervals. It will show that a harbor full of shipping is a most vulnerable target for a surface attack from the bomb.

It will prove that we must expect atomic bombs to make our harbors unusable for weeks and perhaps months at a time. Therefore we must be prepared to build and operate emergency harbors.

Both atomic-bomb tests in Bikini Atoll will demonstrate beyond doubt that one bomb can sink at least one capital ship and other near-by ships, the number of the additional sinkings being dependent upon the types of ships involved and their distance from the burst.

When the data from the tests is exhaustively studied, we will be able to determine a safe approximate distance from the burst for each type of naval vessel. Such new information will change our standard formations for ships at sea and in harbors and should minimize losses if we are attacked by atomic bombs.

Our naval tactics in general will have to be revamped. And we will have to work out new methods of maintaining control over widely separated ships.

The atomic tests will also prove that certain important types of surface vessels will have to be converted into submarines.

Naval architects already visualize capital ships of many thousands of tons traveling under water for long periods. The submarine has a place of growing importance in the Navy of the future.

Studies of the atomic tests will indicate the need for other revisions in ship designs. Exposed upper works will have to be streamlined and strengthened. Hulls will have to be stiffened and further compartmented to withstand heavy underwater atomic pressure. All ships will have to provide more protection for their men against blast, heat and radiation.

The battleship will be proven a vulnerable target. Just what type of capital ship will supplant it, whether a fast carrier or a huge submarine, is not yet clear.

Radio-directed projectiles with atomic war-heads may be a defense of the future to keep enemy surface vessels hundreds of miles from our shores. But even with such weapons to protect our homeland from invasion, the far reaches of the oceans and the air will belong to the nation with the strongest navy. Our Navy must be built and maintained for that purpose. The Bikini test will point the way

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Lucky Streak

(Continued from page 26)

was a junior partner now at Braiken, Darrow, and he lived in a welter of refinancing old business, underwriting new business, floating new stock—all very conservative and S.E.C.-ish, of course, but increasingly successful just the same.

Gail was proud of him. And she saw less of him.

His work often carried on 'way beyond office hours; wealthy clients were as apt to do big business over dinner at a men's club or at their Long Island mansions as over any walnut desk. With her own work for the American Red Cross Motor Corps over, she found herself fretted by the jump in time to be got through alone. Their charming house in the East Seventies needed no more than two hours of her attention each day, for she had it running perfectly. She liked being known as a "marvelous housekeeper." Now, once menus and ordering were done, everything else could be left to the full-time Bessie and the part-time Claudine. Through the first postwar winter, Gail had fed her starved self on the books she had missed reading for the last two years, had seen more of her friends, had gone to theaters and concerts with Eve, whose doctor husband showed no sign of disconnecting himself from the Navy's Medical Corps. And she had played bridge.

More bridge than she'd ever played before and always with a slight stir of unease at being "a bridge-playing wife." She rationalized that it was wiser to follow her hobby two or three evenings a week while Ted was in this spate of overtime than let herself stew around the house and look dour and challenging when he got home. He had enough on his mind. Besides, she loved him too much to want to fret *him* with guilt about her empty evenings. Anyway, she liked bridge.

Recently she'd been playing in an unbeatable run of luck. Tonight, when the game broke up just before midnight, she smiled apologetically at the three other girls. Even at the half-cent limit which was their regular stake, she had won fifty dollars.

"Lucky" is your middle name, all right," Jess Brown said, more acid than honey in her tone as she counted out bills. Eve winked at her, and said, "Hi, Lucky," but Gail only shook her head as if to say, "I don't understand magic."

She dropped Eve at her apartment house and went on alone. In the middle floors of the remodeled brownstone house, lights shone a welcome to her, and she let herself in eagerly. The shaggy beige rug in the vestibule was askew and she stooped automatically to straighten it. Then she ran up the carpeted stairs, calling, "You home, darling?" From behind the library door, Ted's voice answered. She shoved the door open, making a note to get a handy man in to plane down the warped edge that made it stick.

"Again, Ted! My luck was as hot as a two-dollar pistol—it's getting embarrassing."

He said "Hello," and her little triumph went dead. Something was wrong. Something more than strain and fatigue.

"Darling, I'm sorry," she said. "Did something go sour on the Sanders thing?"

"Sanders looks okay." He turned away abruptly, and she stopped her next sentence in its tracks. Had she done anything? Had he heard some serious news? "He doesn't *really*," he went on irritably. "Nothing's right at the office any more. I've been so damned tense the last couple of months everything I touch snarls up."

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"Why, Ted! I didn't know anything was worrying—"

He turned back to her, and she saw that he was struggling against something. Only that night at the hospital when they'd told him about the baby had his face looked like this. But then his struggle had been to hide his pain so as to lessen hers. Not in the three years since then had she seen his eyes so hard, his jaws so rigid.

"I've got to come clean, Gail," he said all at once. "I've crawled away from this long enough, giving excuses about business."

She sat down carefully, as an old woman sits down. She waited, but he said nothing. "Go on, Ted," she prompted.

"It's—God, I hate to hurt you."

"Better go on."

Again she waited. She looked up at his lanky tall body, his thin, almost-handsome face, and knew only that she must hide the explosion of fear inside her.

Then it came.

"I've fallen in love with someone else."

"No." It was more a breath escaping than a formed word.

"A girl I met about two months ago. I tried not to. I—I've been in hell. I—you can't help things."

Somewhere inside her own stunned silence Gail heard again Jess Brown's ridiculous "Unlucky at love—watch out." It buzzed and hummed at her, idiotic, exasperating. At the same time her mind sternly counseled, "Don't make a scene—don't scream and cry and beg. It's no good. It's never any good." Aloud she only said, "Anybody I know?"

"It's Carol Jeffron."

"But she's married!"

"She's getting a divorce. She's already started West. I—I've been trying to—to tell you."

"Oh."

She reached down into some unplumbed place for a second try at self-control. She took a cigarette from the gleaming silver box on the table. Ted lighted it for her. The small politeness flared into tremendous significance. He could preserve his manners while he was obliterating everything that mattered.

"She's already gone West for it?"

"To Nevada, but not—she's not in Reno. It's a big state. You wouldn't run into her."

"You mean you want me to go to Reno right away? I mean, you're sure you're going to get *married*?"

She hardly took in his stumbling reply about how he had met Carol through a business deal with her father, the wealthy Amos Bentley, how he had fought away from the upheaval of his immediate reaction to her, and fought even harder away from admitting to himself that he hadn't been fully happy or completed in his marriage for a long time. Gail could hear the slashing words, but she seemed riveted to the task of finding out what she already knew about Carol Jeffron.

She had never met her, but like everybody else who read tabloids and columns in New York, she knew who she was and where she went and who were her beaux. Ever since she'd been a debutante, back in 1940, this only daughter of the Bentleys had been in and out of romantic tangles. One thing she had not yet done, though, was divorce one man to marry another. And suddenly Gail felt sure that if this spoiled and beautiful girl had now put her mind to that, nothing could prevent her.

Ted was still talking, explaining, trying to ease the uneasiness. Gail's clearest feeling was a sense of disbelief that this kind of untidy mess could hit into her pleasant tidy life. But larded all over that

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clear feeling was a thick misery of grief that the man she adored could want to be rid of her. And all at once the sternly counseling mind was futile, was a wispy broom sweeping back an ocean. Tears stung her eyes.

"But darling, wait," her voice was crying out to him. "You can't take five years of marriage—and sort of throw them in, like losing tricks at a bridge game."

He didn't answer. His face was drawn at the sight of her weeping.

"Our marriage has been a *real* thing," she went on, "a—oh, I *can't* advertise it and sell it to you."

"You don't have to. I'm not going in for recriminations. You've been wonderful. I owe you half of everything I've accomplished. But"—he threw his hands out in bewildered admission—"something just went out of our life. I don't even know what. Or exactly when. Maybe a year ago. Maybe before that."

"What went out?" She looked at her cigarette. She didn't want to hear him say it. "You mean, love went out?"

"Oh, everything. We never laugh any more. We never do crazy things any more. It isn't your fault—or mine—it's just the way it happens to a lot of couples."

"It's awful." She only whispered it. "It's just *awful*."

"It's the way it is."

He went over the same ground again and again, like a mad farmer plowing back and forth over the same furrow, grooving deeper each time but never moving to fresh earth. Soon there was a trench cut in Gail's mind deep enough to bury any last hope that this might be a quickie affair that time would dull. Ted had never been casual in his emotions; he was not casual about this. There was in it something not to be denied. It was marriage or nothing.

All the things a wife can say, Gail said. Sometimes quietly, reasonably; sometimes with thick voice and helpless tears. But by the time she went off alone to her room, she knew her whole life was splintered beyond mending. The usual advice-to-the-lovelorn technique of waiting it out wouldn't work. Thwarted, feeling trapped, Ted would only get to hate her—and his native stubbornness would only deepen. He had got one thing through to her tonight above all others: he really meant it about Reno, and right away. He felt that the only sane thing would be to start as soon as legal arrangements were completed. He had already seen his lawyers—he would leave her the house, provide well for her, move out to his club the very next morning, do anything to make the shock easier. She was young and beautiful; she would marry again.

There wasn't any sleep for her that night and little for several nights. Confiding to Eve, or tearing at her own mind, she kept asking, "Why did it have to happen to me?" It wasn't just a rhetorical question. Under the veneer of her "modern" personality, there was a very straight-thinking girl who could look at herself inquiringly instead of merely putting all the blame on Ted and Carol. Two or three nights later, awake and wretched, she still pondered that "Why?" What had Ted meant when he said, "Something just went out of our life?"

Her mind drifted back to their early days together. She saw herself again as a business girl, first secretary, then assistant to James Brining of Wall Street. She suddenly remembered Mr. Brining's saying to her one day, "There's a kind of crazy flair to you, Gail—you'd make a great adventuress or spy or promoter." That's the way she'd been when Ted fell in love with her—ready to take chances, never predictable, never cautious.

A longing for those dear first days of

Ted's love suddenly drenched her heart. Memories of a lost happiness washed through her mind, one after another...

The first moment she'd laid eyes on him, she'd felt an unusual interest. Love at first sight was something she didn't believe in, but the moment she came out to the reception hall that first time to explain that Mr. Brining had been delayed, and Ted Varley had said cheerfully, "That guy's always late," right away, then, she'd felt his presence as somehow special.

"You'd be more comfortable waiting in his office," she'd said.

"Wouldn't it disturb you?"

"Not unless you're planning to talk my ear off." He'd looked at her quickly and laughed. And as he followed her down the hall to the office, she'd been glad she'd worn her new beige dress. She'd felt a small pride in the gold lettering on the door: JAMES BRINING—and in smaller letters below it: Miss Norton.

"You're Miss Norton?"

"Yes."

"His secretary?"

"His assistant now." She'd waved to a big chair, offered the morning newspaper. He took it without looking at it, sat down and proceeded to look her over. She answered her phone, talking intelligently about debentures, the six percent preferreds and the control of the voting common. She saw that he was impressed—not scared off as some men are by a girl with brains. He was still looking at her. She gestured in command to his newspaper. In mock obedience he clattered it open.

"And no lip-reading," she said severely and turned to her work.

That time he guffawed.

That's the way she'd started with him. Impertinent, impulsive, devil-may-care...

The office scene faded, as in the movies, to the sidewalk in front of the first house they'd lived in. She was jumping down from a truck where she'd been sitting beside the driver, seeing Ted's astonished face in the window of their small apartment. Then the face disappeared, and she knew he was on his way downstairs.

That morning, for his first anniversary present, he'd handed her a thousand-dollar check and told her to get the fur coat she'd fallen in love with. The whole day after that flashed by now: her image in the mirror as she tried on the Persian Lamb reefer... the crazy decision... the feeble excuses to the salesgirl... the excited rush over to Sixth Avenue... the begging for special co-operation for delivery that very afternoon.

Then there was Ted, rushing out to the sidewalk, looking inside the truck. Ted, so moved she thought he might cry at the sight of the gleaming baby grand piano.

"My darling, you mustn't. You've been wanting that coat."

"And you've been wanting a piano."

They'd stayed up half the night, a little drunk maybe with love and happiness, while he played everything from Boola-Boola to the easier Mozart sonatas...

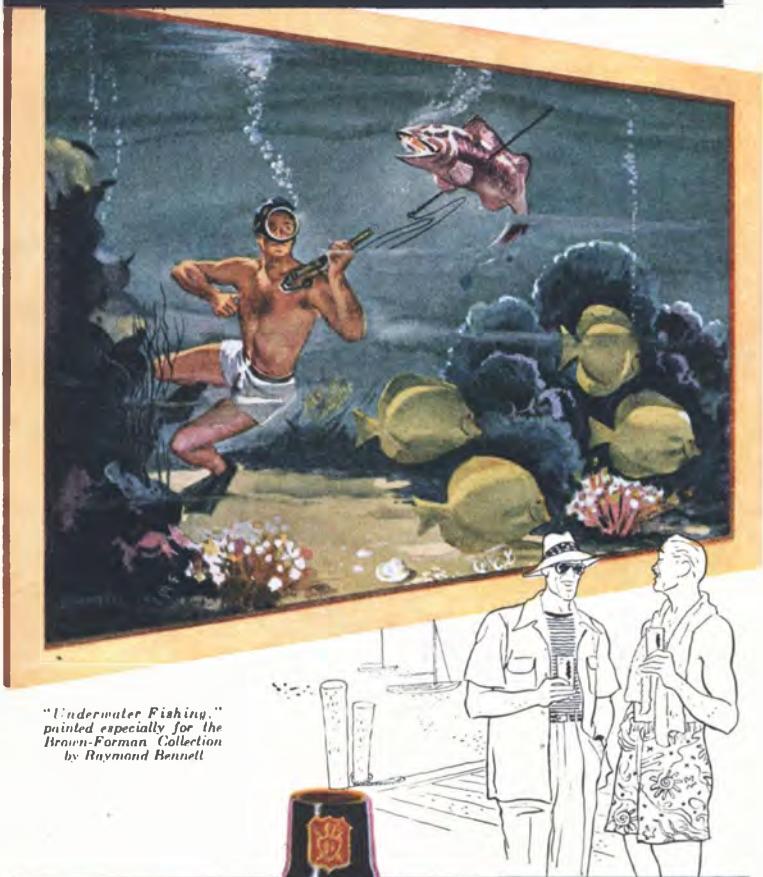
And there was that night the following August when it was too hot to sleep in a city bedroom. New York was whitely beautiful under a full moon.

"Let's drive out and play golf," she'd said, "while the light holds."

And at three in the morning they'd teed off, silly as a pair of school kids in mischief. The club had a new caretaker, though, so five minutes later they'd been practically arrested as prowlers...

Everything she had done in those long-gone days had been a delight to Ted. Looking back now, she seemed to be spy-

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Toni Joyce

THE *Alex Ross* GIRLS

WHEN you look at an illustration of mine I hope you'll never be able to say (without a peek at the credit line), "That's a Ross girl." If that's a sinister betrayal of instability in character, it's my character and I'm stuck with it, and the analysts' line can form on the right.

I have no definite preference for blonde, brunette or redhead. I like to look at beautiful girls, and I like to draw them, provided they're wholesome and intelligent and the seams in their stockings are straight. (I have so been able to find some.) Whatever similarity you detect in the result is in spite of my brush and intentions rather than because of them. I seldom use the same model more than two or three times (with one notable exception); and I like to think the girls in my drawings are truly representative of the America-at-large ideal of feminine beauty rather than Fifty-second Street, and that you'd find their counterparts in Keokuk or Atlanta, Butte or Boston as readily as you would at a New York first night.

Maybe that is why the faces that come to life on my canvases turn out to be composites—of models, of girls I remember, and of girls I someday hope to see. I do know that some of my models have departed after a day's work with a bewildered expression on their faces. Doubtless they've wondered why that Ross guy has bothered to look at them at all.

Recently I've worked with Toni Joyce who happens to come from my home town, Pittsburgh. I like her because she's natural, has ideas and ambitions and is not frozen-faced. After she left home she taught at Arthur Murray's for a while and, less than a year ago, became a Conover Girl. She's equally at home in illustration or fashion but particularly enjoys posing for artists because that gives her Thespian yearnings a workout. Any day now Toni will probably turn her back on the studios and step out into the glare of the footlights.

I expect to have better luck though with another Ross girl over whom I have a little more control—it says here—because she happens to be my daughter, Wendy. At three and a half she's already been a cover girl for two years, appearing a number of times on my covers for Good Housekeeping. So far I've managed to keep her exclusive. There's something to be said for growing your own models, keeping them under lock and key.

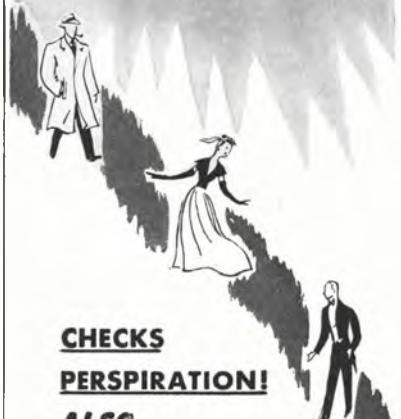
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Buy Victory Bonds

ing on another woman named Gail. And everything that other Gail had done was fresh and sassy—and young.

Once in a great while, they had quarreled, being human, being emotional people. But even about those early quarrels there'd been a vitality . . .

"Ted, do get over it—you're like a Japanese Emperor!"

"It isn't ancestor worship! Pride in your background is perfectly normal—"

"Pride? You practically glow whenever you say the name 'Varley.' So it is a fine old American name. So you do stand ready to defend its honor. So what? Who's threatening it, anyway?"

It was one of his touchy points, and in another moment she was in his arms saying she was a pig to want all the touchy points herself and not allow him even one. It was all over then, and the energy they'd worked up for quarreling channeled over into their love for each other.

Time went on, and the fresh, careless something in that other Gail passed through different phases, and the new Gail Varley began to emerge—the current Gail Varley. When Ted's income had jumped, she'd suggested moving from the small apartment to a larger place more compatible with their advancing position. She'd fallen in love with the idea of a house on one of the expensive side streets on the Upper East Side. She'd begun to think Ted needed a perfectly managed establishment, flawless dinner parties for twelve, to impress colleagues and prospects with "the young Varleys."

Slowly the deadening process of "growing into a wife" had taken her into its grip. It had changed the essential characteristics she'd had when Ted met her. How idiotically gratified she'd been that she had turned into the perfect wife, the perfect hostess! Now—and not till now—she could see that.

For a little time after that fierce night when their baby had lived for only twenty minutes, the mysterious process had halted, and she had been her real self, not gay, not young, but freed of the new overlay. The house didn't matter; there were no dinner parties; there was nothing but pain-scarred love between them.

Now, in her lonely bed, straining to understand, Gail could look back even on those weeks and long for the closeness there had been . . .

It had changed. It had vanished. Not all at once, but slowly, unheeded, oozing away when nobody was watching. When? There must have been some line of demarcation in their marriage between the first phase and the second, some meridian crossed. She tried to remember the later period that must have been readying Ted for a moment when he could be helplessly drawn to another woman. But a gray succession of samenesses was all that came to her mind now . . . the tired, quiet evenings . . . the hiring and firing of maids . . . the tidy budgets . . . the bills paid on the tenth of the month, never on the eleventh or the ninth.

No more could anyone say she'd make "an adventuress or spy or promoter." As she'd dulled down, Ted had apparently misted over with grayness too; business claimed him more, evening appointments a blunting of his personality had come about without her noticing it. Whose fault? And what matter the apportioning of blame? The fact was she'd grown into a person he'd never proposed to, a girl with no flair at all. So that, inevitably when a woman with audacity . . .

Unable to endure the pounding her own mind was giving her, Gail sprang out of the rumpled bed. She began an almost stealthy wandering around the house, looking for she knew not what. In the hall, she opened the linen closet: neat

stacks of monogrammed bath towels, face towels, guest towels, piles of fine percale sheets, snowy dozens of dinner napkins and luncheon napkins. They seemed to scream starched epithets at her.

She slammed the closet door and went into the dining room. She opened the upper drawer of the sideboard: tidy arrays of gleaming silver mocked her. She fled back to her bedroom, glanced into her roomy closet—every shelf edged with quilted blue satin, every hanger matching every other hanger, shoes lined like soldiers on the shoe racks.

This was what she'd let her life become. Everything correct, everything predictable.

And all at once she began tearing things off the ranked hangers, rumpling up the bureau drawers, flinging her hats off their velvet stands, chucking shoes around, not in pairs.

"What can I do?" she thought desperately. "I've got to do something or I can't stand it."

Gail wasn't sure just when she thought of trying to get her job back. One day she began a letter to James Brining, then decided against it. Instead, she dressed carefully, went down to the old offices.

She almost cried out in disappointment when the receptionist said Mr. Brining was still in uniform. But when she talked to one of the senior partners instead, she managed to sound sure, confident, modern about things. Old Mr. Hohenlaub probably thought she was the one who wanted this divorce.

"Jim ought to be out by the time you get home from Reno," he said. "Come in then. We'd all like to have you back, Gail. You have a gift for this kind of thing."

She'd gone home, telephoned Eve, sounded as if life might go on after all.

Then came reaction. Her self-searching gave way to hate, blame, recrimination. For days she lived in the blackness of unspoken accusation. Unspoken because, during that time, she did not see or speak to Ted. She went to the telephone and broke off after dialing half his number. She wrote letters and tore them up. She held bitter conversations with him in her mind, but she knew that, if he were in the same room, she would keep the blistering words back.

"It's never any use. It never does any good."

And when she had spent days hating him, she went back to self-blame. It was somehow more convincing. She could and did call Ted "weak," "adolescent," "a heel," "a silly dreadful fool," but she knew that he was none of these things. He was a man who'd found his marriage stale, who'd hungered for a long time for something vital and alive—perhaps hungered more sharply because of his disappointment about not being in uniform.

"The real psycho-neurotics," she had said to Eve, "are the civilians of military age who couldn't make it."

"That's true, dear," Eve said. "It's this uneasy tension the whole world's in, too. Everybody's looking for something different."

Gail laughed. "My lawyers can't even get me a room at a Reno hotel. They say forty percent of the war marriages are already ending in divorce. The housing shortage out there is worse than during the war."

Eve was the stand-by, the one who saw Gail through the weeks of waiting.

Theater, movies, concerts—and bridge. Eve arranged them all. And of them all, Gail learned that bridge and an occasional game of low-stakes poker offered the surest escape from thinking. At a play or movie thoughts could go on; sentences about eternal love and unchang-



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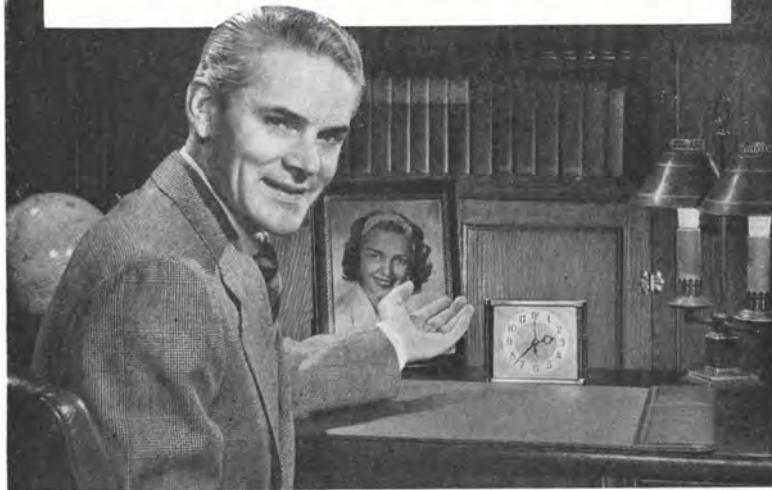
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ing happiness could stab and claw. At Carnegie or the opera your mind was even freer to be an instrument of memory and feeling. But at a bridge game, you had to pin your mind to counting spades and clubs and diamonds and hearts—your mind had no freedom to wander. She was grateful for bridge in a new way, though the Aces and Kings which still flowed automatically toward her didn't seem so funny now.

"Him! I'd rather not be so lucky at cards," she said wryly one night. Everybody laughed and Gail thought: Good for you. You're covering up, all right. Nobody dreams how it is with you. Except Eve.

Nobody did. Even Ted. She saw him just once, though he had telephoned her about details of the settlement. On the phone she had managed a cool, controlled friendliness. And that once when they did meet, she was certain that the hammering awareness of him was veiled by her quiet voice and pleasant manner. It was in her lawyer's office.

She brushed aside the apologies of her lawyer about the single room they'd finally reserved for her at the hotel in Reno. She listened to technicalities about the transfer of the house, the payment of legal fees, alimony.

"By the way," she said, "alimony only until I get a job again."

"Until you what?" Ted turned sharply toward her.

"Get a job. I've decided to go back to—"

"Gail! You don't need to. You know you'll always have plenty of money."

"I don't want alimonyish money," she said blandly. "Not after I get a job."

It was as much of a surprise to her as to him, this decision to refuse alimony once she was working again. But now that the words had spoken themselves, a cool, sweet rightness blossomed up inside her. If the baby had lived, it would have been different. But for herself—if Ted had no need of her any more, she'd have nothing from him.

"Gail, it's quixotic." Ted was saying. "You can't earn enough at any job to run that house."

"Oh, the house! I'll rent it and get a bachelor girl's apartment." She smiled engagingly. The idea of moving was as much an improvisation as the idea of no alimony. Yet it also felt right, once it was said. She'd go back to where she'd been when everything started—a girl with a job and a small apartment of her own. It might save her from cracking up when the last ties were really cut.

And as Ted's bewildered look deepened, as he tried to dissuade her, she had a moment of insight into his own state of mind. A handsome payment of alimony each month was something he'd counted on to ease his sense of guilt. Then he did feel guilt? That meant he knew conflict, insecurity of some kind. That meant that he wasn't completely happy with his new love. She was glad. She hated herself for being glad, but she was human and hurt and so—she was glad.

That night, alone at his club, Ted was in a strange mood for a man newly in love. His thoughts would not stay with Carol. He was angered that Gail would not accept his support, at least until she should marry again.

He had visualized her as beginning a new life right there in the background which was so right for her, which she had created over a period of years—giving small parties, superb dinners, welcoming new people until one day the right man would ask her to marry him. Now she was throwing all that away like an empty cigarette package, useless and unwanted. If she'd wanted that back-

ground, she'd have needed the big check he was ready to send every month. It was her due—and in a way, his own. A man couldn't help falling in love again—but he never had had the slightest intention of changing Gail's physical surroundings as well as her emotional life.

He thought of her trying to stretch a small pay check, and he squirmed. This made him feel like a heel.

He thought of telephoning Carol and discussing it with her. "Tolucca, Nevada 56," he told long distance, but a second later canceled it. One of his rules had been no discussion of Gail. He must be losing his grip or he wouldn't have even considered it now.

He seemed to be losing his grip in plenty of ways. He'd had a fight with Braiken that morning over the Sanders blowup. He'd yelled his resignation at Braiken, like a kid. He'd never, during all his years in business, worked himself up to such a pitch as he had in the past couple of months. But this morning he'd passed a new milestone. "Okay, I'll get out," he'd shouted at Braiken's astonished face.

And then *he'd* been the one with the astonished face.

"Maybe you'd better, Ted. Unless you can be one of the team as you've always been. Let's think it over."

It would pass, he knew. But he had been throwing his weight around. Probably what lost him the Sanders account.

The hell with Sanders! The hell with Braiken! The hell with everything! If Gail wanted to make him into a heel who had loads of money while his ex-wife struggled along in a one-room apartment, the hell with that too!

He hadn't *planned* any of this. A man could do many things, but he couldn't control his reaction when he found the girl who made him young again . . .

The image of Carol was suddenly there with him, warm, inviting. He'd fought against falling in love with her; had choked back all invitations to her to go out with him, all requests to let him see her at her house. But every time he'd gone out to old Bentley's place, she'd been there. After the fourth time—that time the old man had gone upstairs right after dinner for bicarbonate and had stayed upstairs, leaving them alone for the evening—after that he'd been lost. She was so feminine, so beautiful.

She'd turned on the radio, and the dance music was there. He was standing across the room from her, and he watched her as she came toward him. She was married; he was married; but he watched her come toward him as if he could never take his eyes away from her.

She stopped an inch away from him. She said nothing. She just raised her arms to him and . . . the next moment they were dancing.

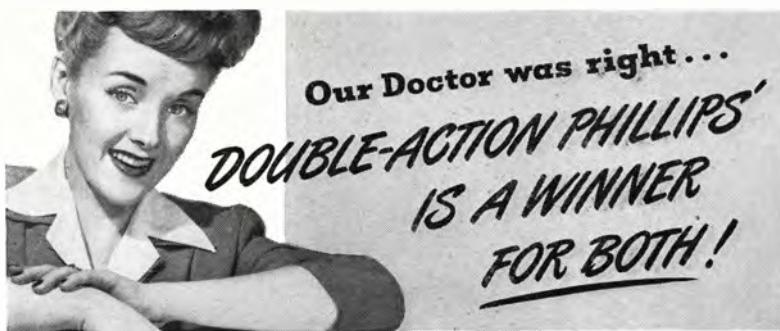
Lost . . . Only another man could understand the instant certainty in his mind, the huge necessity. There was nothing arguable any more—except whether he could hurt Gail who was dear to him, but whom he could never again make happy on the old high level.

Then had come the reluctant dates made, the inescapable need to talk. Carol agreed that there was no way open for them. No clandestine affair would suit her kind of girl. She seemed so fragile to him, yet so alive with gay and clever talk. He said amusing things back, and she laughed and made him feel stimulating and bright. At home he hadn't said anything bright and young for years.

And then one night, came the decision. She looked straight at him. "Darling, if I get my divorce?" she asked.

"We have to, Carol, don't we?"

She nodded. He had kissed her then,



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for the first time. The doubt, the conflict, the struggle was over. A week later, she'd left for the West, and the night after that he'd told Gail.

Gail. Suddenly a rage swept through him. She'd been outlandish that afternoon, turning down the alimony like a suffragette or something. She'd done it out of some streak of meanness he didn't know was in her—to embarrass him, to make people think he wouldn't be generous enough to fix things perfectly for her. It was casting dishonor on him, on a Varley. All right, he was childish about things like family honor, but there it was. There had been Varley divorces before this, but never had anyone said that any Varley dodged his financial duty.

The only out was that Gail had spoken on impulse and that she would change her mind. That comforted him a little.

"I hope that hotel room isn't too grim," Eve said.

The moment had come at last. The legal papers had been rewritten and signed, and in another moment Gail would actually be on her way to Reno.

"You've been so swell, Eve," she said. "So generous about sticking by—fixing things for evenings—"

"I'll say I was generous," Eve cut in. "When I knew I'd lose a fortune every time we got near a card table."

The look on Gail's face made her clamp her teeth together in rage at herself.

"Eve, do you suppose there is anything to this superstition about lucky at cards, unlucky—"

"Phoo! Coincidence, that's all. Old wives' tale." She waved the whole thing aside. Then she suddenly looked thoughtful. "Gosh, maybe there is something else at that." She scrutinized Gail as if she were suddenly a stranger. "You know, the last few games, you were different—in a kind of nuts-to-everything mood. Bold, and—oh, I don't know. Boldness makes lucky streaks last, I think. I've even been thinking—"

There was a sound from Gail which might have been a laugh. "That I'm more the way I used to be? The devil-may-care girl. When it's too late."

"It's never too late, darling." Eve kissed Gail and squeezed her arm in reassurance. Then Gail was getting on the train alone.

The trip was exhausting as no other trip had ever seemed to her. She hated the very syllables of Reno—yet like a patient being wheeled through endless hospital halls on the way to the surgery, she wanted to get there faster.

Finally, Reno. At the hotel, the clerk heard her name in obvious consternation. "But Mrs. Varley, this is February!" "Of course it's February," Gail snapped. "February, nineteen forty-six."

"But March—your lawyer wired March. I'm certain it was March. There isn't one room, not one."

"Well, I'm certainly not going back to New York. So now what?"

The manager was summoned. There was no room. Not anywhere. Nor in any other hotel.

The manager clucked sympathy, chagrin. "The shortage here is worse now than—"

"I know about all the war divorces," Gail said. "But I'm not going back to New York."

"Would you mind a dude ranch—out in the country? Not too far maybe?"

"Anything." She watched him coldly as he called number after number. She felt that this was life's final insult. Not expected, not wanted anywhere. "Oh, shut up," she told herself. "It's only a hotel after all."

"Good! Yes, I think so," the manager

was saying with a sudden energy. "I'll ask Mrs. Varley. Hold it." He turned toward her, beaming. "The Sierra Ranch? Very fine, first class—"

"Take it," Gail said.

"You won't object to sharing a cottage with another lady; it's done everywhere now; fine cottage, plenty of privacy."

"Take it, whatever it is."

The Sierra was about fifteen miles outside Reno's limits. As Gail drove through the grounds toward the main lodge, she caught sight of people in riding clothes, of stables. There was a gleaming pool; stone cottages were spotted around under great trees.

The manager, a Mr. Leyden, welcomed her as if he at least were glad to see her, though his eyes remained unhappy even while he smiled. Then, murmuring embarrassed explanations that they'd never dreamed it would still be impossible for any single tenant to rent an entire cottage, he walked her over to one of them. There was a low, wide porch, latticed windows, terrace furniture.

"It's nice," Gail said. Her spirits rose.

Mr. Leyden knocked on the door. He waited. He knocked again. "She's out," he said. He unlocked the front door and stood aside for Gail.

"You'll have all the privacy in the world," he said. "You see, only the living room and porch and hall are community rooms. Your bedroom and bath are at that end of the living room and hers at this end."

"It's fine," Gail said firmly. "I like it. What heavenly flowers."

On every table in the charming living room a vase of fresh flowers made a pool of brilliant color. The room itself was done in gray and yellow, with good chairs, a stone fireplace comfortably blackened by frequent log fires.

Her bedroom pleased her too. It was a frilly, lighthearted room, pale pink and white and green. Had an endless procession of women wept in that pretty bed? She closed her eyes quickly, but the smile never left her lips. Mr. Leyden withdrew, and she turned to her unpacking.

Halfway through, she came on the bathing suit she had put in almost unwillingly. Impulsively she got into the suit, glanced into the mirror. She was still slim. Her face was still the same face it had been when she'd heard the words that were to change her life. None of the stains of grief were on her. Thank heaven I wear well on the outside anyway, she thought.

Down at the swimming pool, she felt the brilliant warmth of the sun; the bite of the cold water stimulated her. A woman, sun-bathing on a beach cot, smiled at her. A woman who was still striking and handsome even in middle age. Gail smiled back cheerfully, dived in, and came out stretching as if surprised that it was still good to be alive.

"I'm Ann Jeremy," the woman said, "with two more days to go. You just starting?"

Ann Jeremy was virtually a New Yorker too—White Plains. Her hair was hennaed; her manner was brittle, but when she said casually, "I'm here for my third—isn't that shocking?" Gail liked her for her honesty.

"Your third divorce?"

"And I'm going to marry for the fourth time. It's really not so much shocking as revealing—oh, about things like failure and that eternal business of hope."

The words were so easily spoken, yet with so clear a regret and awareness of shortcomings within herself, that Gail liked Ann Jeremy even more. Gail had felt superior to and disdainful of the much-married, much-divorced people she'd read

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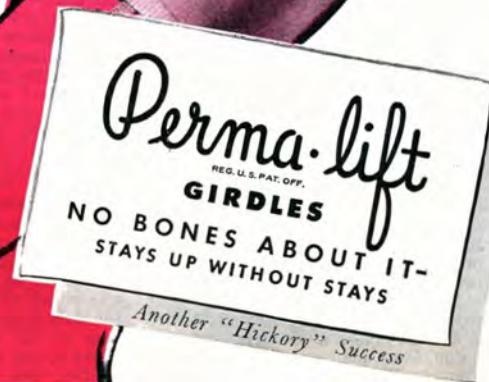
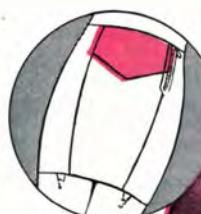
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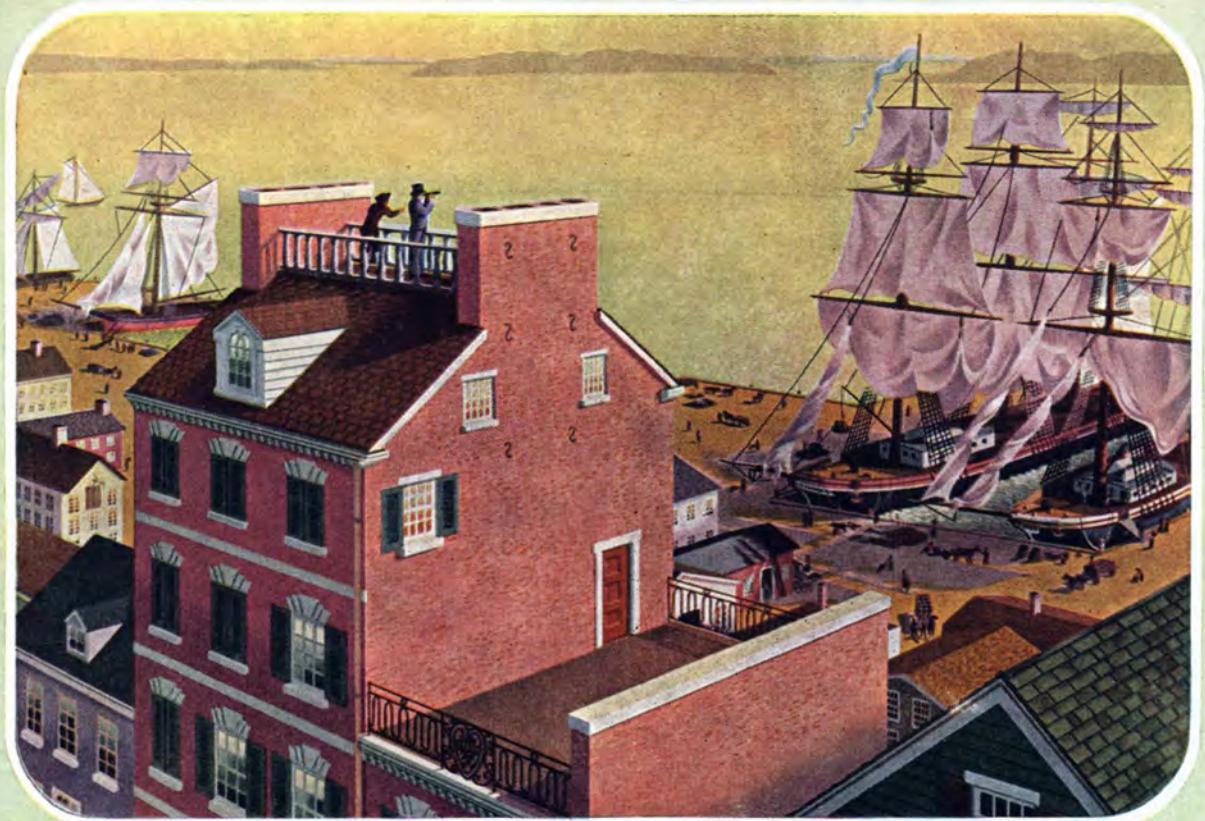
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ago on my honeymoon. That one time cured me. I was jinxed, absolutely the unluckiest—" She broke off. Yes, she'd been unlucky in those days. "I lost every cent I wagered, and that's the best cure there is. Since then it's just been bridge, family poker—"

"Years ago," he said. "You'd better have a whack at it again right now, while 'Luck' is your middle name."

"Lucky," she corrected.

"Okay, Lucky. How's for playing these for me?" He dug yellow and blue chips out of his pocket. "Five hundred," he said, shoving them across to her.

At two that morning, when they left the *chemin de fer* table where he had stood watching her for two hours, they stopped at the cashier's cage in the main hall and turned in their chips. She was shaking her head in stubborn refusal.

"But you ought to take a commission, Lucky. Three thousand profit for me and no cut?"

Long before the drive through the cold moonlight was over, he gave up. He switched on the radio, and dance music from a Hollywood band came over softly. This first day in Reno had its features, no doubt about that. Apart from the dreadful fact that Carol was near enough to be able to drive into Reno for gambling, this beginning made Gail feel vaguely hopeful. Pat was fun; it was nice that he'd be around for the first days anyway. He was explaining he'd be tied to business all day tomorrow, but would she dine with him, go dancing?

At her cottage, one set of bedroom windows were ablaze. She hoped that her housemate wasn't one of the "lovesick weepers" Ann Jeremy had spoken about. Sorrow was too contagious. She said good night quickly and went inside.

As she crossed the living room, a voice sang out cheerfully, "Be out in a minute to say hello." She turned slowly.

Outlined in the streaming light from her bedroom, still struggling into a pale blue dressing gown that matched her silken nightgown, was Carol Jeffron.

For one moment it was a toss-up as to which was more stunned. Then there was a burst of laughter from Carol. "This is too modern," she said. "The housing shortage really does do the weirdest things."

Gail struggled for words. She was without practice in the things of malice.

"First you take me to the cleaners," Carol went on, "and then you move in on me."

Gail's astonished ears heard her own voice say calmly, "Moving in on people is anybody's game. But I'll move out in the morning." It was a neat retort, a dig to be proud of.

Carol laughed once more. She seemed actually to relish this ghoulish situation. "Move where? To the prairie? I've only got five more days here—might as well be civilized about it."

Gail wanted only to run out, slam a door, pack her things. But she'd hate herself if she did. Not yet. A minute later, but not yet. To sit across a poker table from this woman had been bad enough. But to find herself living under the same roof was a bizarre cruelty that choked and clogged. Again rage at Ted's duplicity avalanched through her.

"I suppose you're sore at Ted," Carol was saying, as if she'd read her mind. "For letting you come out while I was here." Gail didn't answer. "Well, he doesn't know I'm any place *near* Reno. The Sierra Ranch, Toluca, Nevada, might be a thousand miles from Reno." Absurdly, relief shot through Gail's mind. He hadn't tricked her. He hadn't been callous. "Fact is, I made him think it was practically across the state. Reno has

such a—well—such a *tarnishing* sound."

"I see" Gail started toward her bedroom.

"So anyway, here we are and really, it's kind of funny more than anything else. I mean, it doesn't bother *me*, and I should think you'd just stay put. But of course if you can't *take* it for five days—"

"Take it? Why not?" Gail opened her door. "Good night," she said pleasantly. "Sleep well."

But alone in the narrow be-frilled bed, she knew the hollowness of her chipper "Why not?" To stay on would be a vulgarity she could not stomach—a show of indifference that would be an inhuman lie. She would get out in the morning. She'd make them put up a cot in the stables if necessary, but stay in the same house with her husband's next wife—that she would not do.

The next hours were grim with tossing, turning, smoking, fighting off her thoughts. "It's kind of funny more than anything else"—the words boiled in her mind. "High comedy" was what Carol would call it back among her chic friends, and they would chortle over the delicious absurdity of it. Ted would never hear it; Carol was too clever ever to tell him. She had been too clever ever to let him see her for what she was. Suddenly Gail felt she could blueprint every step of their relationship, every nuance of it. She had shown him only the pretty shell of her personality, the bright remarks, the darling feminine gestures, her beauty—she would be appealing to any man, Gail thought, and again jealousy screamed inside her. Jealousy was shameful; it was weak; it was a sin against one's own dignity—but how could you help it?

SOMETIMES before dawn she fell asleep, but even the thin sleep was just a waiting for morning. By nine she was in Mr. Leyden's office, hearing that he was at the bank and would be back in an hour or so. She was still searching for some plausible excuse to offer him. There was none. To tell him the truth was beyond the possible—nobody would ever hear it from her. Would Carol be malicious enough? No, since she'd lied to Ted, it would not be to her own interest to start her amusing recital out here where there were so many New Yorkers.

Back at the cottage, Gail stretched out in a chair on the terrace. A page-boy approached with parcels, magazines, letters. For her there was one letter from Eve, forwarded from the hotel, where she'd been too annoyed even to ask for mail.

The boy was handing more mail to her: two air-mail letters, a heavy package, a long florist's box. They were all for Carol. Except for the flowers, every address was written in the handwriting Gail knew so well.

From her finger tips which touched the letters, a fierceness lunged through her. Somehow the simple fact that Ted wrote letters to Carol had never occurred to her.

She stared helplessly at the assortment in her hands. Dignity, dignity; hang on to yourself; don't be obvious. She took firm hold of herself and deliberately carried everything inside to the hall table.

"Anything for me?" Carol came out ready for the pool. She made a face at the florist's box. "But I can't get vases for any more! I told him."

Gail's eyes traveled slowly from vase to vase of the flowers she had so admired. There was a knock at the front door, but she could not turn away from the fat faces of purple pansies that seemed to be grinning sardonically at her.

"Good morning, Gail," Ann Jeremy came in, in riding clothes. She had never been so welcome in her life, Gail was sure

Automatically she made the introductions.

"You trying again?" Carol asked Ann.

"Yes. You?"

"Oh yes. Right away. To the most divine man in the world."

Ann smiled. But Gail broke in with

praise of the Club Mesquite.

"How'd it go after I left?" Ann asked.

"Mrs. Varley beat the pants off me," Carol answered for her. "I couldn't hold a pair." She smiled brightly. "Oh, well, unlucky at cards . . ." She picked up the heavy package, and the two letters, left the flowers with "the maid will fix them," and went out the front door.

Ann looked at Gail and wrinkled her nose. Gail said nothing. Then automatically, as after a spoiled child, Ann went to the front door left swinging wide in that nonchalant exit. She closed it, saw that Carol's bedroom door was open and went over to close that too. At the door she stopped. She was looking at something in the room.

"He does look pretty grand at that," she said over her shoulder to Gail. "How'd a nasty dish like her ever manage it?"

Gail was powerless to keep away. She looked over Ann's shoulder. There, on Carol's bedside table, facing her with laughing, happy eyes, was a large new studio photograph of Ted.

By the time Pat Manoble was announced that evening, Gail's one wish was to knock herself out with sleeping pills. But even as she considered crawling into the dark hole of drugged sleep, something in her snapped its fingers in a gesture of defiance.

"The nuts-to-everything girl," she told herself. "At least during waking hours."

For a matter of seconds after she'd stepped sharply back from the threshold of Carol's room, Ann's unspoken: What's the matter? seemed to resound in the room between them. But she had managed some irrelevant remark, and a few minutes later she'd gone off to see if Mr. Leyden were back.

Plaintively he asked why she had to change this very day? Yesterday she'd praised the cottage.

"I'm allergic to pink bedrooms," she said coldly. He was not amused. Patiently he began a recapitulation of the whole situation.

"Put a cot up in the stables," she interrupted. "I'll sleep with the horses, but I will not stay where I am."

"But the cowboys, Mrs. Varley?"

In spite of herself, she laughed. She glanced toward the stables. Ann was helping a cowboy saddle her pony. She beckoned Ann over, explained without really explaining anything, and ended. "So I wondered if I could swap to your room." Mr. Leyden began a protest about upsetting schedules.

"Nonsense, Mr. Leyden." Ann put in briskly. "There's nothing sacred about schedules. You can certainly turn my room over to Mrs. Varley tomorrow, and whoever was to get it can take hers."

"But that's tomorrow. Mrs. Varley demands—"

"Tomorrow's soon enough, isn't it, Gail?"

For one instant Gail felt she'd scream. "No—it's got to be *now*." For another, she thought she'd ask Ann to let her move in with her for one night. She did neither. She knew that after all, she would have to "take it" for another night. Well, she could stay away from the cottage except for changing clothes and sleeping.

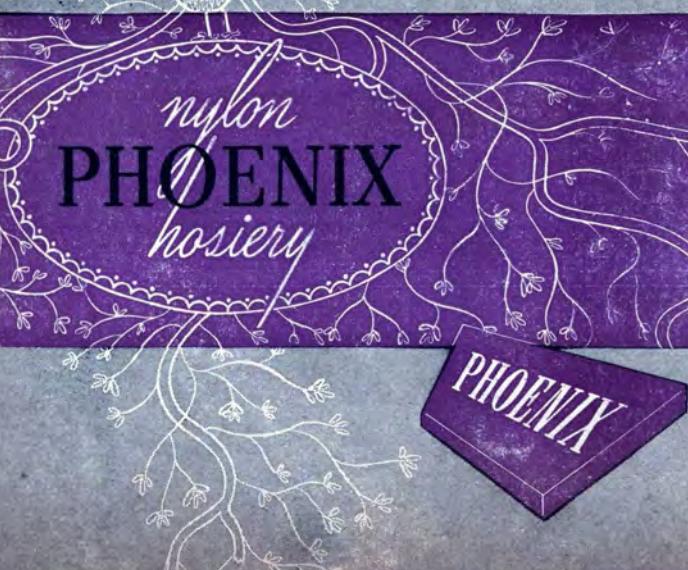
"Of course, tomorrow's all right," she said heartily. "Good heavens. I'm not that allergic, Mr. Leyden."

She left the perplexed and perspiring

*The only thing
more precious
than Nylon*

is

*Phoenix
Nylon*



man and walked Ann back to the stables. "Whatever's the trouble," Ann said at last, "could I just say you're a nice gutsy girl, Gail?"

The unexpected compliment warmed her as she went off for a day of exile. She was to meet Ann in town at five for tea. She rented a car, went driving, had luncheon alone near Lake Tahoe. Above and around her were amber sunshine, racing clouds and the eternal reaching mountains. But the usual joy and sense of security she drew from such a day did not get through. Some instinct told her Carol would be at the casino again tonight, seeking a "revenge game," and she already felt braced against the encounter. She could give Pat some excuse and not appear there at all . . . No, she couldn't do anything of the kind.

It was past six when she finally got back to the ranch. The date with Ann had been spoiled by the talkative June Fiorey, a gossip columnist, who came over to "chat for a minute" and stayed for nearly the whole time. As Gail was driving Ann back with her, tension began to rise in her. The moment was swooping along when she'd have to walk into the cottage again. "Pat'll be here at seven," she told herself sternly. "You'll be in your own room dressing—you won't even see her."

She waved a cheerful good-by to Ann, walked firmly across her own porch. Before she opened the door, Carol's singing came to her. A happy girl, singing. A cherished, desired girl, singing. Gail went to her room and shut the door softly.

Half an hour later, when she heard the front door slam and Carol's "hello" to people outside, she wandered into the living room, strangely impatient for Pat and a restaurant and a band and light surfacy talk. On the center table, face down and spread-eagled, was a bulky book, its title large and legible across the room. "LOVE POEMS—A New Anthology." Underneath it lay the manila wrappings and strings in which it had rested that very morning in her reluctant hands.

"Oh, really!" She said the words out loud. She felt some obscure desire to laugh out loud too. At Ted for being too boyish for words. At Carol for being obvious enough to "forget" the book there, with its billboard lettering. "Funny more than anything else." Maybe it was, at that. "High comedy." Could be.

She giggled. The sound surprised her. She was changing. Like Ann Jeremy's unexpected compliment that morning, the notion warmed her.

Sudden voices sounded on the porch. And there was Carol, inside again, saying, "Oh, hello, better take a coat; it's gone cold," and disappearing into her room. Gail did nothing. "What d'you know?" Carol said on the way out a second later, an emerald-green sports coat over her yellow dress, "Ted's going in with my Dad."

"He what?"

"You knew he'd finally quit Bralken?" "I'd heard."

"Week or so ago. I phoned Dad with my bright idea right off, and Dad invited him to, and he just wrote that he'd accepted. I think it's cute, don't you?"

Gail didn't answer. The green coat flashed out the door, the voices fell away. This was disaster. Ted, going in with his future father-in-law, not standing on his own? He couldn't.

All at once exhaustion took her. She wanted only to crawl into bed, hide, make herself sleep so deeply that not even dreaming could happen to her. She sat, limp. She'd do nothing of that kind, either. Outside she heard Pat drive up.

"Hi, Pat," she called out. Her voice was young, sure. The voice of a happy

girl, a cherished, desired girl. Not alone.

They dined, they danced, they talked like old friends. He regaled her with a story about his barber's busy chatter ("So this beautiful dame from New York goes to the Mesquite last night and cleans the place") and she told him that the maid and the headwaiter at the lodge had congratulated her on her luck too.

"Another night like that, Lucky," he said, "and you'll be famous all over Nevada. Play mine for me again?"

When they got to the casino, Carol was at the roulette tables, and Gail was relieved. Perhaps she'd given up the "revenge game." Maybe she wouldn't have to see her right across the green baize at all this evening. But an hour later, Carol nonchalantly led her friends over to the poker game. She stood there, watching, as though she were undecided about playing.

She did play. The towers in front of her were shorter than last night. It took less time to make them shrivel to nothing. When they had disappeared, Carol stood up, looked Gail over as if she'd never seen her before, said something that made her friends laugh loudly and then wandered off with them.

"She's a good sport," Pat said. "But a dope to tangle with a better girl."

"A better poker player you mean," she said, and then because it had sounded a little bitter, quickly added, "Or do you?"

It was almost three before she would leave. Going home was nothing to rush into tonight. But the moment could not be delayed forever. Outside they saw a man leaning up against the wrought iron gates in front of the casino. He was the most colorful character she'd yet come upon in the West, and she frankly stared at him. Tall, lanky, complete with plaid shirt, chaps, jeweled and embroidered riding boots and huge sombrero, he stopped talking to the stubby man with him and gave her a lazy salute and smile. Pat took her arm as if to protect or hurry her. She looked up inquiringly.

"It's Roddy Wisser," he explained when they were in his roadster. "I'll bet somebody's tipped *him* off about your big winnings." He seemed worried at her chuckle. "It's nothing to be pleased about. He runs a rigged joint that's for strangers and suckers—they'd fleece you if you ever went there."

"Maybe he'll play here some night. I'd love to try him, aces up the sleeve and all—at least till this streak breaks."

"He's not allowed in places like this. The minute they suspect somebody's shady or a pro—they slam doors."

The cottage was dark when they drove up. Gail said good night quickly and tiptoed into her room. Five minutes later she was in bed. She wouldn't let herself think out the puzzle of Ted's decision now. She must blank her mind of everything and sleep. Think of the present; think of the evening she'd just had.

Pat had talked to her a lot about business. He seemed interested in her ideas: he'd pumped her about her work at Brings. He—

A weird noise pulled her mind alert. Was it outside her open window? It came again. Now she knew what it was. A muffled scream of pain—inside the house, from across the living room.

She lay as if strapped down. It came again, Carol, ill. So what? The cry came again, louder this time. She might enjoy strangling that beautiful creature with her bare hands, but it wasn't possible to lie there, doing nothing, listening to those harrowing moans. She caught up her dressing gown.

"It's appendicitis," Carol gasped at her. "I had it once before." She was doubled up, clutching herself with rigidly

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outspread fingers. "Get a doctor. Wake—somebody—up."

"Lie down," Gail ordered. "Maybe it's not." Her nurse's aide work had taught her control and calmness; she was not surprised to see Carol obey her. "On your back; try to relax."

She leaned over her patient, gently began prodding her right side, her left side, though touching her gently didn't come easy. She watched Carol's face and saw no special grimace when she prodded her right side. Suddenly she felt scorn for this much fuss over a bad case of indigestion, painful though that could be.

"It's a stomach ache," she pronounced. "Maybe you drank too much."

"Oh, it couldn't be. I can't bear—"

"You'll be all right. Got any bicarb?" More sounds of pain were the only answer. "I've got soda mints."

She went back to her room. She crushed four tablets in water, went back and made Carol drink it. Soon the signs of mortal agony lessened. Carol would live.

Only when her patient took a deep sigh and said, "I do feel better," did Gail notice her again as a woman she despised. That blond spread of hair on the pillow, the petulant mouth, the diaphanous pink chiffon nightgown . . .

Carol saw the appraising look. Faintly, she smiled.

"I'm so weak-minded," she said. "No will power at all. It's from my trousseau, but I just couldn't wait to wear it."

Gail made no answer. She picked up the glass she'd brought in and left the room. The swift poison of that last arrow went with her. Troussseau—that was the way Ted would be seeing her.

Two nights later Gail and Pat were having a farewell nightcap in the casino bar at the Club Mesquite. He was flying East in the morning. Gail's bag, bulging with chips, lay on the table, proof that her lucky streak had not yet petered out. Her eyes were alive with the excitement of playing and winning for the fourth evening in a row. Twice more Carol had sat in on the poker game; twice more she had been trounced.

For two days they had seen each other only in the dining room of the main lodge. In the room that had been Ann's, Gail felt a release from danger, and her wary nerves relaxed. She felt better—and somehow Pat felt the change in her.

"You're having fun out here, aren't you?" he'd said at dinner that evening.

"Finding you here was a break." She meant it. Often in these four days, she'd thanked her stars for Pat Manoble. Though he'd been able to arrange only two extra days for the vacation he'd spoken of, yesterday and today had been free of business for him, and they'd spent all their waking hours together. He swam well, he rode well, he talked well. He told her briefly he had never married because the one time he had been deeply in love had ended "in a smash-up instead of a marriage," and she did not press him for confidences. That was the closest he ever came to personal talk, but his whole manner gave her the heady sense of being sought after, wanted, admired. It was, just now, a priceless balm. Only when she picked up some conversational gambit about financial and investment matters did he let his admiration express itself in words.

"You're a funny girl," he said once. "You look like a movie star and you think like J. P. Morgan."

"Oh, Pat," she said impulsively, "you're being awfully good for me. You make me remember that it was fun to know my stuff at Brining's; you make me just die to get back there and go on again."

He'd nodded as if he understood more

than she'd meant to tell him. Now, in the dim bar, he seemed to be turning something over in his mind.

"Look, Lucky, this may knock you over—"

"Don't say it, Pat."

"I'm nowhere near a fool," he said, and grinned. "This is business."

"Business?"

"Serious, too. Main reason I can't stay longer is, I'm starting a new combine, a sort of offshoot of our main line. It's going to depend on skill, experience—and a little luck. I've got the dull things like skill and experience."

"Yes?"

"And I want to be damn sure of that other department. So I'm asking you to be one of my partners. Legal, official."

"You're just fishing around for some way to hand over those commissions you harp on every time we win."

"Nope, this is straight. You'd even have to invest."

"Invest?" A small shock of suspicion clicked through her.

His eyes went to her crammed bag "Invest those and call it a deal."

She shoved the bag at him, relieved ashamed of her cynicism.

"It isn't even money," she said. "Just a lot of plastic things I won tonight."

He pocketed the chips without counting them. "You've just bought a ten percent interest in the Patrick Manoble Holding Company of Chicago. You'll get legal documents saying so. AND I might lose it for you, remember."

"Play your hunch; it's okay."

"It's no hunch." Now he looked at her in serious appraisal. "You know, Gail, there's a quality to you I'd bet on any time. I've been trying to put a name to it ever since that first night. A sort of boldness or flair. You'd make a grand—"

"Adventuress," she said, a little breathlessly, "or promoter. Or spy."

He laughed. "Or an invaluable kind of person in business. No wonder the Brining bunch wants you back."

He couldn't know the lift his words gave her. Maybe she had released some of her essential personality from the clothy wrappings of newer habits.

"I hate Brining for his inside track," he was going on. "Did you give him your word?"

"Oh, no. He's not even back yet, but Hohenlaub, the senior partner, acted as if it were a sure thing."

"You're not committed?"

"Heavens, no. Did I give you that impression?"

He shook his head. He looked at her thoughtfully. "I meant that, you know. About your being grand in a business like ours. What chance you'll work for us instead of Brining? In our New York office, sort of a 'customer's lady,' making contacts?"

"Pat, don't kid me about a job."

"I'm not kidding. The right mixture of brains and dash—that's what makes a successful business personality. That's what gets new clients for any firm."

"Oh, Pat. You don't know how crazy I am to get back to a stimulating job. I'd work for free, if I had a chance to prove —"

"How's for fifty a week and commissions to start?"

"You mean it's all set?" she asked solemnly they shook hands on it. She wanted to squeal with delight, like a child. The world was round—life did go on. She'd been in Reno less than five days. A lot of things had happened. Some were hideous. But others were exciting and good.

At the door of the cottage, contentment was in her voice when she said, "Au revoir, Boss." There was an awkward

pause. "I'll miss you, Pat," she added. "It's been grand."

He looked at her with a directness that flagged her to a special kind of waiting. If he spoiled things now by . . .

"So long, Lucky," he said. "I bet you have a great career if you want one."

She watched him drive off. He did have an impeccable sense of timing, a flawless kind of good manners. She knew he had wanted to say other things, to come right out with what he felt toward her. If he had, he'd have wrecked the chance of her taking the job. Later, much later, after she'd made good on her own—

That problem could keep. Right now a triumph over this sudden turn of fortune filled her. She went inside. She was much too elated for sleep. She went straight to her desk.

"Dear Ted,"

It seemed a long time since she had written those dear, familiar words, and for a moment she closed her eyes tight again, pushed her lower lip up against its mate so that her chin squared off.

"This is just to tell you I have a job all set after my return home. I also have plenty of money for finishing here, too. So please arrange to cancel the alimony as of now. Everything fine here.

Gail."

She addressed the envelope quickly. She was wider awake than ever. Through the window she saw the whiteness of the moonlit night. She glanced at her watch. It was past three. Still, she'd sleep better if it were mailed—somehow it was an affirmation to Ted that she was going on, a survivor in the world of pain to which he had given her the passport.

She walked slowly across the grounds. She was a survivor. She had been through shock and grief and jealousy, and there would be more of them ahead. She knew too much about the human heart to believe in fairy tales of quick new happiness as deep as the happiness she'd lost. But she was a survivor, and that was good to know. Even the special cruelty of a Carol could not crush that fact. And tomorrow afternoon Carol's trial would be held; she was leaving on the midnight plane—the remaining weeks in Reno would at least be free of her evil presence.

In the dimmed lobby of the lodge, the slotted wooden postbox was just inside the main door. The place was deserted except for the night clerk and the cleaning-man, gossiping together at the front desk. As she dropped her letter into the box, their voices came to her clearly.

"She's no amateur gambler," the cleaning-man asserted. "An' everybody's catchin' on."

"G'wan, Joe. Just because that dizzy Jeffron dame says—"

"But all the time! It ain't natural, Mike."

"Nah, Mrs. Varley's no cheat, and she's no pro neither. Lay you six bits to two, she's strictly on the level."

Gail slipped outside. Dizzied with anger, she leaned against the pillar of the porch. The moonlight was soft as ever, the clean air mountain-fresh, invigorating. But her elation was forgotten, her sense of triumph lost. This move she had not foreseen.

"I'll get out of this rotten place tomorrow," she savagely told herself. "I won't get this divorce. I won't let her get her dirty hands on Ted."

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She Had It Coming to Her (Continued from page 36)

case of measles that ran eight days before he broke out, and another two weeks before he was back in school. I emerged weakly from my apartment, and the first person I saw in the lobby of our hotel was Brenda Romulu. She was at the desk asking if there was any mail, and I felt a back thrust of that jealous panic I had experienced after the Masons' dinner. I knew the Romulus had been staying temporarily in the Pattens' Georgetown house and would have to move soon. But—here! My mind fumbled weakly for what this would mean to me.

It would mean that Jim and I would be seeing Brenda all the time. Not only at parties, but in the hotel lobby, on the tennis courts, in the drugstore and flower shop, in the corridors, the dining room, the cocktail lounge and—if she had a housekeeping apartment as we did—in the basement grocery store too. Shortly the swimming pool would open and the garden benches would be set out and we'd all be together through the long, hot summer. I didn't like it. Maybe Jim's resistance was something out of this world, but I didn't want him exposed to Brenda Romulu that often. Then I sternly reminded myself that jealousy was born of inferiority and insecurity.

"Madame Romulu."

She turned slightly, frowning. Then she recognized me and her whole face lighted up. I forgot how dangerous she was and remembered only that I had liked her at the Masons' and wanted to know her.

It was weeks before we reached the first-name stage. Weeks of running across Brenda everywhere and having both the Romulus in to our larger parties and Brenda in for teas and buffet luncheons.

We fell into the habit of going to The Mayflower for luncheon in the cocktail lounge twice a week; we marketed together and borrowed silver and crystal and linen from each other; we rolled bandages at the Red Cross and sewed at the Belgium Embassy. We grew very intimate without exchanging a single real confidence. Brenda knew the basic things about me: that I'd married Jim when I'd returned from school in Paris; that I'd nearly died when young Jimmie was born and that I yearned for a daughter. I knew that Brenda was the daughter of a retired Army general who had been knighted for his services in India; that she met Bill Romulu in London when he was a very small-fry diplomat; that she'd married against the wishes of her father who objected because Bill was foreign; that she'd been presented at Court and had lived in Denmark, Norway, Spain and China.

I was no longer afraid of her bedazzling Jim. Actually, I wondered why I had ever considered her dangerous, or why our Washington women still wished passionately that Bill Romulu would be transferred to the jungles of darkest Africa. I wondered why Jim, thinking Brenda amusing and attractive, was annoyed because I saw so much of her. I know now that he was afraid Brenda would be a Bad Influence, that I might pick up an unbecoming sophistication. I know he was worried lest I find out that some married women have their cake and eat it too. The truth is I was so bemused, so charmed with Brenda that I completely lost my perspective. I'd forgotten that all men weren't like Jim, and that all marriages weren't as happy and gay and unbreakable as ours.

Jim would return from the office in the afternoon invariably to find Brenda and me racing in breathlessly from someone's cocktail party, or planning parties of our

own. He would smile when he said: "Brenda, for God's sake, scat! You've an apartment of your own upstairs!" He smiled, but he meant it. I knew Jim's eyes. And over and over he cautioned me about seeing too much of her.

"She's really getting talked about now," Jim said. "She's getting one swell rep for being man-crazy, Dissy."

My eyes blazed. "And without reason!" I flared. "She just looks like a threat to every woman's security and they're jealous. I was myself at first. Remember? Brenda's as harmless as a stray kitten."

"Yeah?" Jim snapped. "The rabid kind! Look, honey, let me tell you something. Brenda Romulu is a trollop at heart and if she isn't one in action, it's only because she's afraid of Bill. Physically afraid of him. Or maybe he has money. Or maybe he's going to be an Ambassador in the not-too-distant future and that'll suit Brenda right down to the ground. Hell, I don't know *why* she sticks in a marriage that certainly isn't wedded bliss, judging from the way she acts, but she sticks and—"

"Oh, *phoo!*" I interrupted furiously. I was to remember it all a little later when—but I kept getting ahead of my story.

Finally it was June, and most of the Washington we played around with was off to beaches and mountains and summer cottages. Brenda and I were marooned in town, for I wouldn't leave Jim at home alone, and Jim was all wrong about Bill Romulu having money. Bill was living entirely off of his Embassy salary of ten thousand a year, and there was the expensive apartment and the more than expensive activities of keeping up a necessary facade, for a diplomat's career is built up, stone by stone, like a solid medieval cathedral. Brenda simply couldn't afford a holiday: any surplus cash must be hoarded for the laying of more stones in next winter's social edifice. She was helplessly bored with the lack of parties, the hot and humid weather, the endlessly empty days.

"Washington is like an overheated catacomb and just about as lively!" she'd fume. She even grew tired of the swimming pool and tennis, the movies, the occasional garden party, and our war work. She grew increasingly moody. After the most volatile friendliness, she would suddenly grow cold, almost hateful, and these fits were always followed by a contrition that was even more distressing.

It wasn't until after we met Lieutenant Peter Stacey that Brenda's mood lifted. We began to have fun again. Certainly a crazy, irresponsible adolescent sort of fun for two married women in their late twenties. Mr. Scott, who manages our tennis shop, had fallen into the habit of calling Brenda and me in making up doubles, and through him we met Peter Stacey and several other young Naval officers. I know now that if Pete Stacey had been sent to Hawaii to conquer his combat fatigue instead of the Naval Air Station in Washington it would have been better for all concerned.

Pete was not more than twenty-seven, and at a casual glance you would have sized up that boyish, sunburned face as belonging simply to the young man he had been before the war: Harvard—the beau of debutante parties from the Bachelor's Cottillion in Baltimore to the New York Assemblies and back to the Richmond Germans. Tall, erect and oh, so casual. A demon with a tennis racket and on a polo pony. But twenty-two months in the Pacific had changed all that. Pete's mouth now curved cynically, his eyes were dark and intense, speculative. Filled

with the self-consciousness that comes of introspection and nerves.

The first time Brenda saw Pete on the tennis courts, she stood very still, staring at him through lowered, contemplative lashes. "That is the most marvelously built man I ever saw," she announced as if she were a judge at a horse show. "I wonder if he's clever—or did everything concentrate in that superb body?"

"I certainly can't tell from here," I said—and forgot Pete Stacey. I don't know now why I didn't see Peter Stacey falling in love with Brenda, or realize the full significance of that little scene in the tennis shop.

Brenda and I had played doubles that afternoon with Pete and a Lieutenant Jim Dodge. Four fast, exhausting sets under a broiling sun, and we staggered off the courts. Brenda went straight toward the ice-water fountain in the tennis shop. "I'm parched, dehydrated. You could dust me into an envelope and drop me in a mail slot," she laughed. "I am now going to founder myself!"

Pete reached the fountain before she did and held out a restraining brown arm. "Don't drink ice water when you're overheated," he cautioned.

"And why not?"

"Because it's bad for little girls."

"I don't care. I'm dying anyway."

The expression in Pete's eyes changed from the appraisal that had been in them on the courts to something else. Admiration? Interest? Amusement?

"No, no," he said. "Pappy says you mustn't touch."

In the silly, youthful tussle that followed, Pete blocked the fountain by force, but his hair was pulled and his hand bitten, for Brenda was strong, and like a small agile cat she kept slipping out of his grasp. "Oh, no you don't!" Pete laughed. "Thar, thar, little gal. Set yo'self down and behave yo'self!" The struggle grew more earnest than play. I sensed that Pete was seriously determined to establish his masculine prowess, but he was desirous of doing it effortlessly so that Brenda would know her resistance to be futile. He finally held both her wrists in one hand, an arm around her waist, laughing at her. Brenda gave up then.

"Okay, pappy!" she laughed. "Ah think ah'll ask Cousin Wash to git his ole squirrel rifle out and slug yo' full of holes. Yo' done insult me, suh!"

I thought Pete's arm drew Brenda closer. I had a strange feeling that he would kiss her and would find her mouth sweet and passionate and responsive. Then Brenda slipped out of his grasp, and she and Jim Dodge were laughing about something. Presently Brenda was asking if we were going to play again the next day. Pete was the one who answered. "Tomorrow is okay by me," he said, and I had a feeling that he would have agreed if it had been cyanide, and not tennis, that she was suggesting.

I recall now another hot, humid afternoon when Brenda and I had done our marketing and were rather at loose ends. We considered tennis and decided we couldn't take it. For a long time then we talked about Pete Stacey. I don't remember what we said, or even how Brenda looked in speaking of him. My mental eye, usually accurate in picking up imperceptible distinctions, failed me completely. Then suddenly Brenda said, "Dissy, let's do something idiotic. I'm so bored. . . . Wait! I've got an idea!"

"I'm waiting! What is it?"

"I'm going to call up Pete Stacey and Dodge and those other two birds we play tennis with and leave messages for them to meet a blonde with a red rose in her hair in the lobby of the Shoreham to-



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night at nine. It'll be a panic! They'll all show up at the same time and try to avoid one another to keep the rendezvous!"

"That ought to be idiotic enough." I laughed, as Brenda dialed the numbers and left the messages.

We were dining with the Archers that night, but we slipped away as the guests began to drift toward the drawing-room after supper, and nine o'clock found us at the Shoreham; at the lighted lobby windows, crouched down, staring at the young men who were milling about expectantly, avoiding one another. On the way back to the Archers what we had witnessed seemed to have aftereffects like laughing gas. We became uncontrollably silly, mimicking Pete as he'd stood watching the revolving door with intense concentration; mimicking Jim Dodge as he'd started toward a blonde with a red rose only to discover it was a gal who'd streamlined and mud-packed her fifty years into a possible forty.

By the end of June we'd played innumerable practical jokes on several other people we knew and some that we didn't. The tricks we thought up seemed terribly smart at the time, but the Lady Chase affair wasn't a joke at all—and it backfired tragically.

Brenda loathed Essie Chase. She was plain Mrs. Frank Chase when she came to Washington in 1940. Frank Chase was wealthy, brilliant, an inventor of some sort, aged—a giant, bloodless ghost of a man with a face of wax. Shortly before escaping the blitz he had married his thin, blond, youngish secretary; then after living over here two years he was knighted on the King's Birthday—and it was Sir Frank and Lady Chase. The title weighed heavily upon Essie, as if it were something made of concrete that she balanced on the top of her head and mustn't make a false move lest it topple off and reveal her humble origin.

Stretched out on one of my beds one rainy afternoon, Brenda told me why she despised Essie. "Do you know, Dissy," Brenda said disgustedly, "that Essie dismissed her cook because that poor domestic was so used to calling her 'Mrs.' that she couldn't change over to *Lady*, or even understand *why* she should! And she raged with a department store because they sent parcels addressed to 'Mrs. Lady Chase' and you know how she's always saying to the hotel people 'It's *Lady Chase*, please!'"

I laughed, remembering how Essie strolled about the hotel gardens now, a distorted echo of elegance, speaking only to the little cocker spaniel on the end of an expensive leash.

"It's not funny!" Brenda said. "It's damned serious for a British woman to come over here and create the opinion that we're all like her. Honestly, Dissy, I shudder when I realize that many Americans must consider Essie typical. She's not! She's common! What your Southern people call *trash*! For heaven's sake, Dissy, don't judge us by Essie!"

It was crowded in the garden the afternoon Brenda's disgust boiled over, and she acted impulsively without realizing that Essie Chase was as placidly dangerous as a lake with a quicksand bottom—and would plot to even the score. Brenda and I were sunning our bare legs, gossiping desultorily, when Brenda saw Essie. "There's her ladyship, complete with title," Brenda laughed, and when Essie passed our bench, Brenda extended one long shapely leg—and Essie Chase lay sprawled flat on the walk. Her flounced skirts showed filmy lace panties, golden pompadour was askew, one nylon stocking had a gaping knee—and just a foot away from

this human wreckage was a bridge with six small white teeth.

Brenda was instantly on her feet, formal, dignified, with only the wild blue light in her eyes giving her away. "Lady Chase! My dear, I'm so sorry! I didn't see you, *Lady Chase*! My dear, you should have been looking *down*! Here, let me straighten your skirt, *Lady Chase* . . . And . . . No; surely these don't belong to you, *Lady Chase*!"—and in Brenda's palm lay the small white teeth.

In the background, on the tennis courts, was Pete Stacey. He had stopped playing and was leaning against the net post, laughing. His dark eyes followed Lady Chase as she hurried out of the garden; then he waved to Brenda and lifted two fingers in a V. As he began playing again I wondered how Pete knew it hadn't been an accident? When and where had Brenda had an opportunity to tell him how she felt about Essie?

There was zest to the jokes we played that mad June, for there was an element of danger in them. "Oh, lord, Dissy, if Bill ever finds out I did *that*!" "Dissy dear, if word of this got back to the Embassy!" "Dissy, aren't we mad! Do you suppose we're really *sane*! Wouldn't Washington stand on its ear if it really knew us?

I said once, "All you need, Brenda, is Bill's presence to insure decorum in your conduct."

Her eyes were thoughtful. "It's true, isn't it, Dissy? I am different with Bill. Different. And you're the same when Jim's around. He's mad about you, Dissy. I never saw anything like it."

Toward the first of July, Pete Stacey was sent on a two weeks' flight to California, and our other tennis partners were away on leave. Brenda was more irritable than I'd ever seen her, and I was a bit fagged myself for I'd lost my fifth cook in a year to the Government, and Jimmie isn't quite old enough to race about the hotel grounds without supervision. Just follow an energetic six-year-old for twelve hours a day and you've got your tongue lolling out.

So when Mother went off to Newport and insisted on taking Jimmie with her, and Jim had to go to Atlanta to try a case that would run well over two weeks, I decided to go to Virginia Beach. Since I knew Brenda couldn't afford a holiday, I invited her, being careful to handle her sensitive pride with velvet fingers.

So there we were, sprawled on the beach, burning to the deep, dark, becoming bronze that we'd dreamed of for weeks.

It wasn't until the third day there that I began to realize that I didn't know Brenda at all. Away from Washington and gossip and the Embassy and people we knew, Brenda flung aside the personality I'd grown familiar with, as if she were relieved to abandon the artificial role she'd been playing too long. I had always been amused at the way masculine attention stimulated Brenda. It accelerated her natural vivacity, sharpened her wit, and men were able to resist her only because her interest snapped off like a thread in a flame before she was dangerously entangled.

But once in a while the thought of Brenda would remain with some man like a haunting melody, and there would be a telephone call.

"I don't see what could possibly have given you the idea that I would dine with you in your apartment," she would say in a voice that was knife sharp, and I would visualize the chap hanging up, bewildered and confused, wondering what cue he'd misinterpreted. And always, when Brenda slammed up the receiver her eyes would be sparkling, her face

radiant. "Don't I get 'em!" she'd laugh—and I'd remember what Jim had said about her trying out the instrument of her charm on the men she met; that she didn't really mean to make trouble.

And I'd remember, too, that Brenda in company with Bill Romulu was definitely *Madame Romulu*, poised, cool, gracious; even her youth seemed to drop away from her as if it were a cloak that she wore only occasionally to suit a mood. It's difficult to explain, but when Bill Romulu was around Brenda seemed caught in a web that imprisoned her every faculty and sense, a web fragile as a breath upon a windowpane, yet unbreakable as steel. She would smile at him from across the room, and you could tell that she was wishing he would come and talk with her or dance with her.

But I saw a glimpse of the real Brenda that third night at the beach when Lieutenant Thomas Bradley was assigned to our table in that overly crowded dining room. He was a handsome man, perhaps thirty-five, streamlined, with silver-blond hair, a deeply bronzed face and the glamour of far places about him. As he sat down I saw Brenda look up at him, half smiling, as if she had an inner conviction of power sheathed in herself like a sword—and Tom Bradley's appraisal was too long, too penetrating for a man who simply meant to eat his dinner with two unescorted females and be on his way. As dinner progressed, I jeered at myself for reading so much into the looks and words that passed between those two. I told myself that once Bradley tried to step over that imaginary line he'd find his ears pinned back. Brenda always withdrew when things became dangerous.

Brenda and I drifted apart after dinner for I was mad about the slot machines, and she didn't have money enough to indulge in that crazy pastime. I struggled with the dime and quarter monsters until nearly midnight, then I wandered out to the porch and lighted a cigarette. I wondered vaguely where Brenda was.

I remember being rather disgusted when, accidentally, I saw a little scene among the cedars in the garden. I could see in the moonlight a girl's white dress and another tall, slender shape with the silver radiance of the moon touching silver hair that could belong to no one but Tom Bradley. I saw the two figures melt together and stay together. I flicked my cigarette over the balustrade and started toward the door, feeling annoyed with men in general. I didn't know who the girl was with Tom Bradley until I heard my name called, and Brenda was running toward me through the moonlight.

"Dissy! Dissy! Darling, wait."

As she reached me I could see, even in the wan light, that there was remorse—or was it panic?—in her eyes. Eyes that were begging me to understand, not to probe, to forget what I'd seen.

I admit I'm about as modern as an old lace valentine, but since my world is one of brittle sophistication, I really try to stay in character. "Do you recommend the lieutenant?" I asked gaily. "Does his technique curl up your toes and send your circulation in reverse and all that sort of thing?"

There evidently was something wrong with my voice for Brenda said sharply, "Don't, Dissy! Don't be so callous!"

I prattled on because I was embarrassed and trying to cover up. I don't remember what I said but Brenda's voice was still sharp. "Stop, Dissy! You're—being silly."

"Maybe you're being a spot silly yourself," I said, and there was the old lace valentine coming to the fore. "I've a hunch that Bill would think it was damned silly and damned dangerous.



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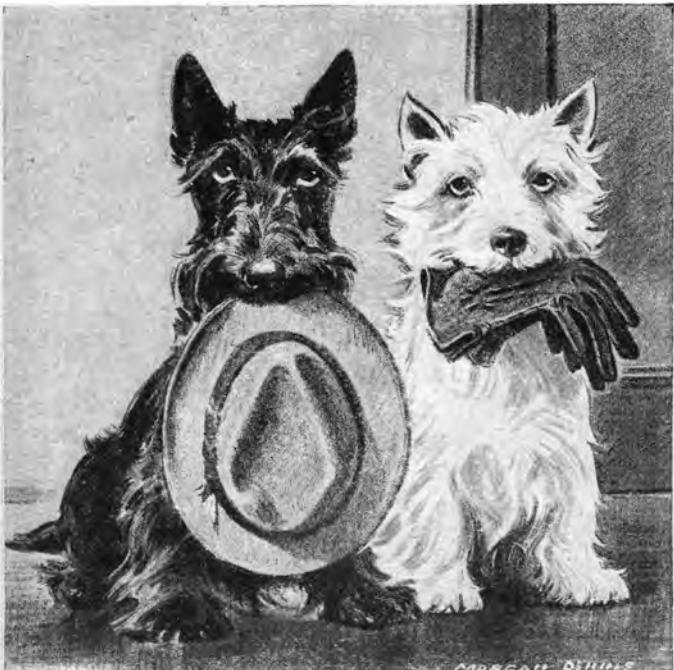
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That was a sixty-four buck clinch back there, and it could lead to a lot of things, most of them pretty ugly."

I saw all the color had left Brenda's face. "I'm—sorry," she said quietly. "You—you don't understand." And she vanished into the shadows where Tom Bradley waited.

I walked slowly into the hotel, unable to analyze my own emotions. I wasn't really shocked: there wasn't anything very wrong in what had happened. It was something about Brenda herself that I had no name for that was disturbing and frightening. There had been a strange restlessness about her ever since we'd arrived, betrayed in nervous laughter, a voice pitched too high and irritation over petty things. Frequently back in Washington I'd seen her like this. Sharp with waitresses, quibbling with taxi drivers, riding the hotel housekeeper over the maid service, being rude on the telephone to some of her closest friends. "Damn, I'm in a filthy mood," she'd say, and I'd taken her at her word. But it was more than that. Much more.

Later I understood. Everything. Later, after Tom Bradley checked out and Peter Stacey turned up in Virginia Beach at our hotel, at our very table, on a seven days' leave. I knew by the way Brenda looked up as the headwaiter led Peter toward us that she had been waiting impatiently for this moment. And watching the feigned surprise enacted for my benefit, I wondered what had happened between those two back in Washington.

It was unfortunate that Sir Frank and Lady Chase chose Virginia Beach—and the hotel where Brenda and I were staying—for their holiday. Brenda's lips parted in a little panting execration of those two when they trailed into the dining room after Peter Stacey had joined us.

Later, Brenda paced up and down the floor of my bedroom nervously. "Of all the people I don't want to see, they're tops!" she raged. "Why the devil did they have to come here! It makes me furious even to look at that woman! Honestly, Dissy, wouldn't you think the British Embassy would realize what black eye she's giving England over here. They've sent scads of women back home who weren't half as obnoxious, and what they did wasn't a raindrop in the ocean to what Essie's doing to Anglo-American relations."

That Essie didn't love Brenda was very obvious too. There was something in those pale blue eyes as she watched Brenda and Pete Stacey that made me feel as if I had worms crawling on me. Like Essie, I watched those two for one long week; and unlike Essie, I was tense, feeling within myself a gathering of fear for Brenda. I tried not to see anything, tried to act toward her as I always had. But self-consciousness bloomed between us. Our friendship had been gay and frank and easy, and now the ease was gone. I knew that Brenda felt watched and that she resented it: I knew, too, that my disapproval intimidated her like a reproach of conscience.

The night before Brenda and I were to leave for home both Essie Chase and I were in on the Great Farewell Scene, only it wasn't a Farewell Scene as Brenda meant it to be. Pete Stacey wasn't a young man you could play with for several, exciting days and then calmly command to run along about his business.

I awoke around three A.M. and lay there a moment. Then I heard a sound in the corridor that jerked me into full consciousness. Tiptoeing across my room I edged the door open. Brenda and Peter were standing at Brenda's door . . .

"I won't be able to sleep all night for thinking about us, Pete," Brenda was

whispering. "It's all over. You know that, don't you, darling?"

"What do you mean, Brenda?" And I knew by the quick intake of Brenda's breath that Pete's fingers were on her wrist; that he wanted to hurt her physically as she was mutilating something deep within him.

"I've told you and told you, Pete. You mustn't try to see me in Washington," Brenda went on. "It's unfortunate you're to be at Anacostia for so long—"

"Brenda, what are you trying to tell me?"

"That I can't see you any more—ever, Pete. Since there's nothing for us in the future, there's no use in making it any worse."

"It couldn't be any worse!" he said, and I knew that he wanted Brenda more than he'd ever wanted anything in this world. And he could be ruthless.

"Don't you understand, Pete," she said. "I'm married. Married! I can't see you now any more than I could before you came down here. It's all over, Pete. You must realize and accept it. Oh, tennis, yes—and if we should meet at parties, you'll be careful, won't you, darling?" Both of their voices fell low then, and I caught only disjointed snatches of sentences. "Dissy and I are going home tomorrow . . . boat from Norfolk . . . No, Pete. Darling, you *mustn't*!" She stamped her foot.

"Theatrical!" he said contemptuously, but there was fear under that sharp word; fear and longing. "Look, Brenda, I'm coming back in. I've—got to."

I closed the door softly and went over to my bed and sat down, feeling irresponsible and uneasy. Something I had seen and yet hadn't really seen was pushing against the back door of my mind, clamoring for admittance. Suddenly I jerked erect and went to the telephone. I lifted the receiver and asked the operator for Lady Chase's room number.

"Twenty-six," the girl said. "Shall I ring, Madam?"

"No, No, thank you."

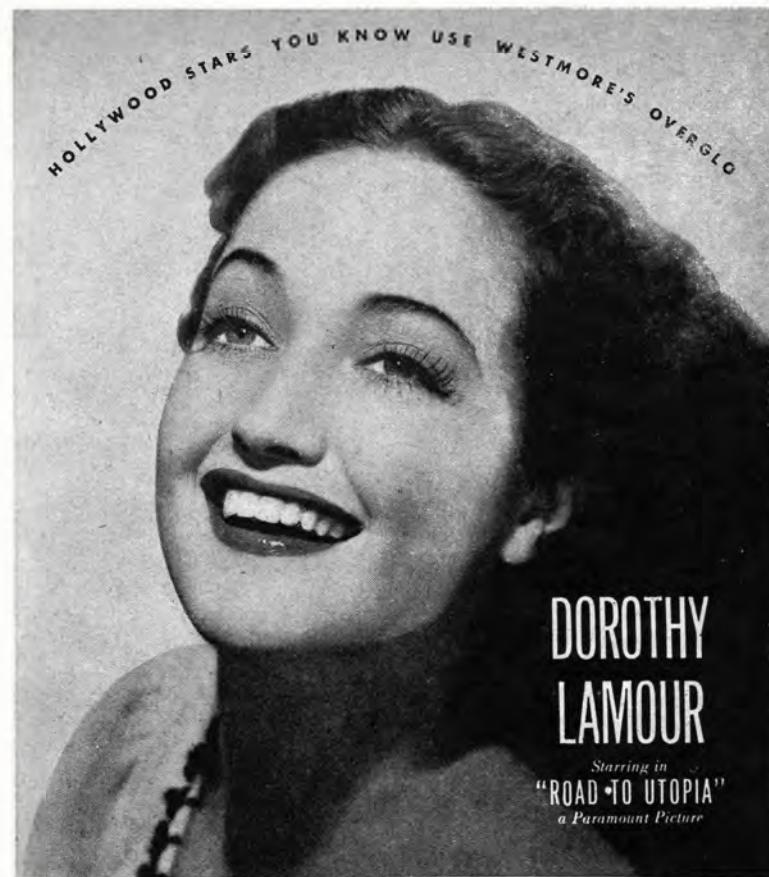
I hung up and a moment later I was running down the passageway, looking for that number. As I finally stood staring at the small brass figures, I knew that it was Lady Chase's door that I had seen closing so silently as Peter Stacey went back into Brenda's room.

I don't know how long I had been sitting on the side of my bed, my mind vacant with weariness, when there was a timid knock, and Brenda came in and leaned against the door. Her face was very white, and her mouth was trembling. "I—I saw your light on," she began, and giggled softly, a strange hollow sound with no mirth in it. She put one white hand against her lips to check that strange quiver of laughter. Then she moved away from the door, threw herself face down on my bed, her head buried in her arms, weeping.

"Brenda, darling, Brenda, you *mustn't*. Please."

I didn't know what to say or do next, so I was silent.

Gradually the sobs subsided. Her words came then, pinched out between fumbling breaths. "I hate myself Dissy. I loathe, despise, abominate myself . . . I—I didn't want any of this to happen, not really, but I—I couldn't help it. Pete's so—so strong and young and healthy. From the first day I saw him on the tennis courts I . . ." But she didn't go on with that. She sat up and lighted a cigarette, and her hand trembled as she lifted it to her lips. "I love Bill," she went on more calmly. "I want you to understand Dissy. You've got to understand. You're the only real friend I've ever had and I—can't have you hate me. I can't have you



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go on thinking I'm—rotten clear through. I'm not . . . I'm not . . . Dissy, turn off the light. I can say what I've got to say better in the dark."

She talked for a long time and, unused as she was to clarifying her mind, I could see her words like broken, flaming scrolls in the darkness. When she was through, she lay back on the bed, her eyes closed. Peace had come to her. The lovely peace of exhaustion and shared trouble—and I stood at the window, seeing nothing for a mist across my eyes. I was looking down into the ten years of Brenda's marriage: Brenda wildly in love with Bill as only Brenda could be, defying her father; the fine blaze of that whirlwind courtship, the rapture of a winter honeymoon in Naples; the unbelievably lovely things, the silly crazy ardent things whispered in the quiet of the night. They must have been a magnificent couple: Bill, tall, dark, virile—a great brute of a man, of which the Bill I knew now was a cruel caricature.

They'd known ideal happiness for four years, those two; then Bill was stricken with a gland infection and septicemia. For six months he was desperately, dangerously ill—and in that tragic fact lay the shattered ruins of their marriage. For four years Brenda's vitality, fathoms deep, flowing swiftly, urgently, furiously, had met its complement in Bill's own deeply sensual nature—and then suddenly it was stemmed, blocked, frustrated—and a strange dark enemy brooded inside of her like a crouching animal.

"Bill needs me, Dissy," Brenda said. "If I—I left him, he'd marry again; I know he would for he can't bear to be alone and she—she wouldn't understand. She might laugh at him, Dissy; she'd laugh and she'd hurt him, and I—I couldn't bear that. I'm the world's greatest actress, Dissy. I'm little torn bleeding pieces of Sarah Bernhardt and Helen Hayes and Katherine Cornell and all the fine actresses who've ever lived or will ever live, playing out to the end the most tragic rôle any woman was ever called upon to play." Over and over Brenda had told herself, "That's not important; it's only one side of marriage. A small, unimportant side. Bill and I have so much together: memories, ambitions, hopes, plans." She had spoken those words to herself endlessly because she'd hoped that by saying them often enough they might in time prove true—but it never got any easier. And a moment ago, her eyes stricken and frightened, she had said, "Dissy, I fear old age worse than anything on earth: old age, the slow disintegration of the body, the withering. But someday—someday I'll be old, Dissy, old, old . . . —and I'd known what she meant. The harvest would bring its compensations. The struggle with her own personal enemy, the flesh, would be over. For the first time I really understood Brenda Romulu.

Washington wears the gay, painted face of a sophisticate and a cosmopolite, but actually it is only a mask and beneath it lies a small-town hag, full of gossip and scandal and whispers. Lady Chase returned home from the beach shortly after Brenda and I did—and her gossip fell into the receptive pool of the city like a dropped stone, its circles ever widening until there was no one left to hear about Brenda and Peter Stacey. Brenda was wild with worry for she interpreted knowledge in Bill's silence, his strained smile. "Dissy, Bill's heard. I know he has," she would say nervously. "I know it, Dissy. He doesn't believe it—yet. He's charging it off to malicious gossip. But he's worried and unhappy!"

And there was Peter Stacey back from

a flight to Florida, telephoning every day, sending flowers, demanding to see Brenda, insisting, never giving up.

"Dissy, why can't he understand it's over? Why doesn't he realize that none of it meant anything? He'll do something horrible. I know he will. I've never come up against any man like him before . . . Darling, what shall I do? I can't think. My brain feels as if it's on fire."

And so the first week in August passed in tension and fear—and people talked. You heard it everywhere. Brenda Romulu and young Lieutenant Peter Stacey. At cocktail parties. At dinners. At embassy receptions. You heard it when you were having your hair done, and the operator in the next booth tittered and said, "Don't tell me? Madame Romulu? A Navy guy, huh?" And she'd tell it to the next customer and the next and the next . . . "Listen, have you heard . . . Lady Chase said she saw with her own eyes . . . Madame Romulu, my dear. Isn't it priceless? . . ."

I was at the desk that afternoon waiting for the clerk to hand me my mail when Bill Romulu came into the lobby. He smiled that rare smile of his and said, "Ah, Dissy! You're looking very glamorous. Party?" And he touched the tips of my fingers with his lips as he always did no matter how frequently we met. I don't remember what we said for I was searching his face for signs of distress. But he looked as he always did, and for a second I was reassured. Then I wondered if the fringe of gossip had failed to flick him, or whether his sameness was possible because of his reverence for convention and respectability, or because it was vital to his career.

We went up in the elevator together, for I was dropping in at the Martins' for tea. Their apartment is just down the corridor from the Romulus', and I was

laughing at something Bill was telling me as he inserted his key and opened the door. Then I was leaning back weakly against the wall, my heart pounding, and Bill Romulu was standing perfectly still, like a statue of himself—seeing what I had just seen: Brenda in Pete Stacey's arms. Brenda trying to twist out of that strong, young grasp as she had that day in the tennis shop, only she wasn't laughing now. Her eyes were full of fear: not of Pete—but of herself. I heard her say, "Pete, darling, stop—please." I couldn't hear Pete's voice. Then Brenda was speaking again, "Of course Bill doesn't get in until after seven, but it's too risky. I've told you and told you . . . You shouldn't have come up here. Darling, if you'll just be good . . . if you'll just be patient . . ."

Then the door closed, as swiftly as a dropped curtain, and that scene—that tragic Last Act—was shut away, and I was alone in the corridor. I walked weakly toward the Martins, pressed the bell.

Myra Martin opened the door herself. "Dissy, darling, what's the matter? You're white as a ghost!"

"I'm all right," I said. "I'm really all right, Myra."

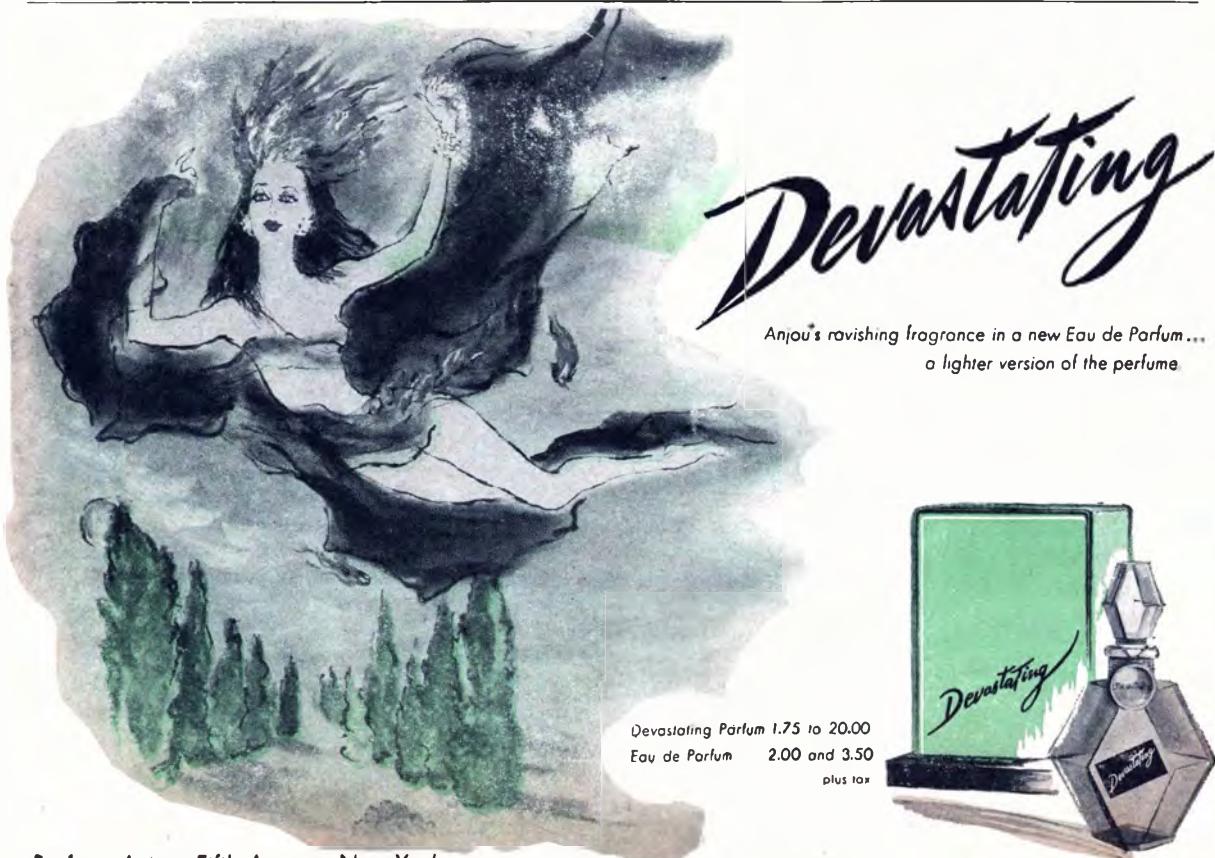
I don't know what happened in that apartment next door. I don't think Brenda, frozen in regret during those tragic few seconds, knows what happened either. Only two pictures emerge clearly for me out of her broken, sobbing words. One is of Bill: I can see him standing inside the door, leaning against it as if for support, his hand so tight on the doorknob that his knuckles show white. For one brief second he stares at Brenda, not really seeing her—seeing instead the true image of himself, perhaps banishing for the first time the comforting picture he'd painted in which his own

tepid identity had receded further and further, the static shadow of reality so blurred that he'd come to doubt it had ever existed and had achieved peace. I can see him stepping out into the corridor, closing the door softly behind him, walking slowly away and ringing for the elevator, thinking about Brenda, wondering what he can do to forget her—and knowing that if he went to the ends of the earth he would not be able to leave behind him the medley of humiliation and unhappiness that was himself . . .

And the other picture is of Peter Stacey and Brenda: Peter watching the door close behind Bill, then turning with relief and expectancy to Brenda, reaching out for her—and Brenda rigid with fury, lost in a mad nightmare from which she could not awaken. Covering her face with her hands, crying, "Get out, Pete! Get out!" And Brenda alone, pacing the long drawing-room, knowing what she must do so that Bill's career won't be touched; knowing it's the last thing she can ever do for him; knowing that his career is all he has or ever will have . . .

It's all over now except the gossip: "Have you heard? The Romulus are getting a divorce." "My dear, what did you expect? A woman like that." "They say Pete Stacey won't marry her. He won't, of course. They never do." "Bill's been made an Ambassador, and don't tell me Madame Romulu wouldn't have loved that! I'll bet she wishes she'd behaved herself!" "Imagine Brenda Romulu working as a receptionist in a New York store! You know she loathes it! She can't get a penny out of England either until everything is straightened out over there." "Brenda Romulu got just what was coming to her."

"Yes, indeed, Brenda Romulu got just what was coming to her!"



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The Man Who Writes the Lyrics (Continued from page 49)

workmen when the pressure is on, Mercer has been known to turn out a set of lyrics in record time.

Mercer derives his inspirations from diverse sources. A laundry advertisement which read: "Jeepers! Creepers! We can do your laundry in 24 hours" inspired Johnny's lyrics for "Jeepers Creepers." His wife, looking at a snapshot of him in the nude when he was an infant, cracked, "You must've been a beautiful baby." That one sentence was sufficient ammunition for another song.

"Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive" resulted from Johnny's recollection of a psychiatrist's advice to a patient, and "On the Atchison, Topeka & the Santa Fe," was inspired by a passing freight train. The romantic belief that only a beautiful woman can truly inspire a beautiful song or set of lyrics is to Mercer just so much traditional nonsense. He is convinced that landlords banging furiously on doors, demanding their rents, are more responsible than anything else for successful works of art. He writes sweet stuff, jazz, nostalgic or novelty lyrics, Western ballads, love poems, tear jerkers—anything. The words and ideas flow quickly and easily; so naturally, in fact, that he lives in constant fear that each lyric is his last. This recurrent fear prevents him from fluffing off any assignment or just coasting along on the job. He gives it his best effort. He is the one lyric writer most in demand by all producers; or in the more picturesque parlance of Hollywood, "He's a dream boy who's hot."

Mercer has no hard and fast technique. No good lyricist does. Sometimes he writes a set of lyrics, recites them over the phone to the composer he's working with, and says, "Harry, let's see if we can get something jumpy for these words." On other occasions, a composer will have a tune completed, save for the words. Johnny will hum it a dozen times or so, line by line, and then fit it into syllables.

Usually, however, when a song is a hit, it's the composer who receives the lion's share of the acclaim and credit. Relatively few people, for example, can tell you who wrote the lyrics to George Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" or Jerome Kern's "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes." Worse yet, few people care. All they want is a good, catchy song, and who wrote what part of it is an irrelevancy.

Mercer knows this, and it means little to him. Above and behind his smiling eyes and button nose, he hides a trigger-like mind, an amazing memory, and a first-class intelligence. Despite the "out of this world" impression he gives, he is really an exceptionally alert character—as hep as they come in the razor-sharp music business. Proof of his shrewdness lies in his founding of Capitol Records Inc., a concern which is now giving such old-line recording companies as Victor, Columbia, and Decca a series of weekly conniptions.

One spring day, four years ago, Mercer shuffled into a Hollywood music shop on the corner of Sunset and Vine and had a talk with Glenn Wallichs, the owner of the establishment.

"I used to ask myself," he said later in his rich Southern drawl, "what talented people around Hollywood did in between picture and radio jobs. I thought maybe I could organize them into some sort of co-operative and start a radio program. After talking with Wallichs, however, I decided to go into the recording business and use these people who weren't working steadily. I went to see Buddy De Sylva, a unit producer over at Paramount and a great lyric writer himself,

and I asked him if he would let us sell our recordings in the lobby of the Paramount Theatre. Buddy wasn't crazy about the idea but said he'd like to join the business with us. He supplied some of the dough and away we went."

On July first, 1942, the company issued its first release: "Cow Cow Boogie" and "Strip Polka." These two sides, featuring Ella Mae Morse, Freddie Slack, and Mercer himself, were instantaneous successes. Within a month, because of war-time restrictions plus those of union leader James Petrillo, Capitol, in effect, was flat and finished almost before it had really begun.

For the next seventeen months, the company did nothing but buy up five hundred thousand pounds of scrap records at six cents a pound. The interlude of inactivity, however, afforded Johnny the opportunity to scout around and audition talent, which he planned to record as soon as Petrillo relaxed his ban. When Capitol finally worked out a deal with the labor chief in November, 1943, it was primed and prepared with artists and materials.

On Johnny's request, a drummer in a small-time dance band named Andy Russell, made a record of "Besame Mucho" for Capitol, and it sold half a million copies. Mercer got Stan Kenton and his orchestra to record "Her Tears Flowed Like Wine," the King Cole Trio to wax "Straighten Up and Fly Right"; and these too, reached the half million mark. Johnny then talked his old boss Paul Whiteman into signing with Capitol and followed Whiteman with Jerry Colonna, Benny Carter, Gordon Jenkins, Jo Stafford, Dennis Day, Billy Butterfield, Betty Hutton, Harry Owens, Tex Ritter and Martha Tilton.

Executives of rival record companies began to sit up, puff angrily on their cigars and sputter. Meanwhile, Johnny and Capitol opened distributing branches in seventeen leading cities, organized a music publishing subsidiary, and continued to audition the young and new talent other companies had no time for—the Pied Pipers, Peggy Lee, Connie Haines and the Dinning Sisters.

A few months ago, Johnny got the idea that children might like to hear little Margaret O'Brien recite a series of fairy tales. Result: Capitol put out a Margaret O'Brien album which is selling like nylon hose. This was followed by a Fibber McGee & Molly album and recordings by the Great Gildersleeve.

Mercer used to supervise most of the actual recording sessions himself, but of late he's had to relegate many of his former duties to Paul Weston, the company's musical director. By May of this year, the company hopes to be selling three million discs a month.

While Johnny vehemently insists that he has no business brains at all—"I just rhyme a few words every now and then"—it's entirely possible that he inherited or acquired some from his father, George A. Mercer, a well-known real estate operator of Savannah, Georgia, where Johnny was born.

He wrote his first set of lyrics at the age of fifteen but only his family evidenced the slightest interest, so Johnny, piqued and discouraged, went off to prep school and decided to become an actor. His looks were against him from the outset, but this didn't prevent him from joining a little theater group and going up to New York to take part in a David Belasco play contest. "The other members of the troupe were smart," he recalls. "They went back to Virginia, but I de-

cided to stay and career it in the big town." He almost starved. The best he could do was to get some bit parts.

His first break came in 1930 when the Theatre Guild turned him down for a part in its annual review, "The Garrick Galettes," but accepted his song, "Out of Breath and Scared to Death of You." The song was performed by Sterling Holloway and provided Johnny with a modicum of professional reputation and a wife. One of the show girls in the Garrick Galettes, named Elizabeth "Ginger" Meehan, ran into him one day backstage, liked his button nose, the thin line of his mouth, his utterly incomprehensible accent, and married him. "To this day," says Johnny, "I'm sure she thought I was some kind of a big-shot producer."

With a wife to support, Johnny went to work in Wall Street. To supplement his income, Johnny decided to enter a contest for unknown singers which Paul Whiteman was conducting at the time.

"I won the contest," Johnny admits, "and Paul let me sing on his radio program once, but that's the last I saw of him for a year. Then one day he phoned me and asked how I'd like to form a trio to sing with his band. I scooted around town, formed a trio and went to work. Brother! We were murder. We lasted exactly one week."

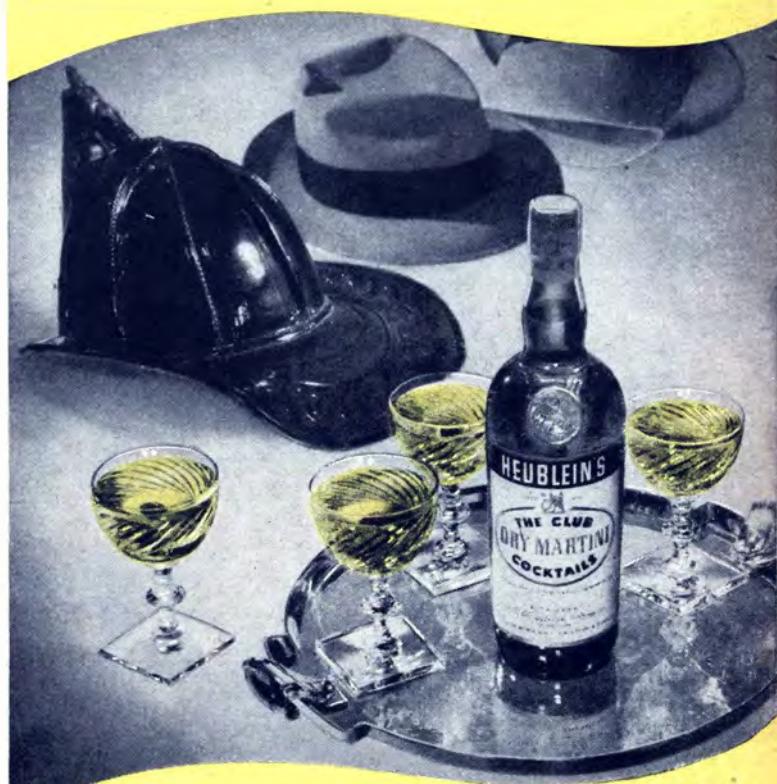
Fortunately Whiteman kept Mercer on. He liked his style of singing, which he christened "recitation in rhythm." Whiteman says now, "I knew the kid had something, a genuine feeling, a soul for jazz." Securely employed, Johnny in his spare time continued writing lyrics. He made friends of Hoagy Carmichael, the Dorsey Brothers, the Lombardo clan, Glenn Miller and others. They liked and respected him and frequently consulted him on new tunes. One afternoon Hoagy Carmichael played a new composition for Johnny. "It goes along okay for a while, but then it stops. What's wrong with it?"

Johnny listened and went home, humming the tune. The next day he offered Hoagy a set of lyrics entitled "Lazybones." The song became a smash sensation. After "Lazybones," Hollywood waved its flag of greenbacks and beckoned. Mercer came. He helped write the musical scores for such pictures as "Rhythm on the Range," "Varsity Show," "Hollywood Hotel," "To Beat the Band," "The Harvey Girls," and the list is too long. Studio after studio pleaded with him to write lyrics for their musicals. Camel Cigarettes put him on the radio with Bing Crosby and Benny Goodman. Chesterfield gave him a regular radio show of his own. For awhile he turned down all radio offers to emcee "Mail Call" for the Army occupation forces overseas. Now he is again on The Hit Parade. If he's not a millionaire by now, he can't be too far away from that figure.

But the Mercers and their six-year-old blond daughter, Amanda, live in a simple unpretentious eight-room house in the heart of Hollywood where he works. deprecates his efforts, and entertains his friends by improvising lyrics which he sings with his eyes closed. His voice is throaty, untrained, tremulant and small, and his range is extremely narrow, but he sings with such bounce and intense feeling that on occasion he approaches almost religious fervor. At any rate, the bobby soxers and jitterbugs love it.

Hollywood people point to him as one of the few successful men in that grasping, ambition-struck town, whose success has not aroused envy, antagonism and the usual flood of disparaging rumors about his private life. This may be because he is one of those successful men in Hollywood who is very busy minding his own business.

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I Know You (Continued from page 47)

"I'm glad you ate." She sounded pathetic, like some starved street urchin, and he laughed.

"Come here, stope." He dragged her down beside him. She began to shiver and tremble all at once—comically. "No response yet, is that it?" he asked.

"None. And I was really so hungry, and there I sat, looking at my watch, tapping my foot because you didn't come. And you should have seen him stuffing it in. Charlie, he's the most ravenous eater you ever saw. That's why he never even looks at me; he's too busy."

"Not at all?"

"Oh, yes, once or twice of course. He saw me just dabbling at my olives. He asked me if I was seasick. Me—half-starved, that's all!"

"You can't eat and still put over the fact that you're about to lose your husband."

"No, I know. I told him I was just waiting for you. I thought maybe I could sit him out and eat after he left. But he's still in there. I was drooling. I had to leave finally. Did you leave anything to eat in the cabin?"

"Yes, sure," he laughed. "Come on."

They started down the deck. They paused at the dining salon windows and looked in. There, not far from them, sat Morehouse. He was a large man, heavy-set though not fat. He looked all of his fifty-four years, and yet you knew that he had lived them well. He looked powerful, important, and completely self-contained.

Later, after Ann had eaten the scraps of Charlie's dinner, she felt better. They went up to the bar which opened onto the dance floor. At the other side of the dance floor was a card room. Ann and Charlie were just beginning to enjoy their dance when Charlie spied Morehouse playing cards with Ettinger, the ship's doctor. Charlie stepped on Ann's foot and she said, "Whatever's the matter?"

"If you'd let me lead," he muttered. "Can't you get it in your head that I won't be dragged around! If you don't want to dance, just say so. I've got plenty of other things to do." He was allowing his voice to get louder. She understood then. They went into their old patter.

It was all very silly, but it was practically a domestic fight right there on the dance floor.

They finally broke the dance and went over to a card table and sat down. A steward asked if they wanted a drink. Charlie said he'd have one, but there'd be nothing for the lady, intimating that she'd already had enough. That made Ann bridle and they appeared to argue though in reality they were asking each other, "Is he noticing? What's he doing?"

"Going gin," said Ann, who had a pretty good view. "Our tactics are wrong, honey. We haven't got the old finesse."

Charlie looked over, and it was true. Morehouse was gleefully adding up a score. Dr. Ettinger had a patient he had to look in on, and was leaving.

"You leave now too," Ann whispered. "I'll try again."

"That's too obvious. Try the deck. He's got to exercise that dinner sometime."

She got up, looking unhappy, and went out past Morehouse's table. He nodded, one of those shipboard nods.

Morehouse watched the dancers for a moment. Charlie also watched the dancers, then their eyes met.

Morehouse indicated the cards. Would Charlie like to join him in a game?

This was a hell of a note, but Charlie moved over. "My name's Kent."

"Mine's Morehouse. Pick the stakes you want. I played with the doctor for a

nickel a point, or we can make it five bucks. Doesn't matter."

"Five bucks," Charlie said without batting an eyelash. "I ought to be lucky tonight, considering everything. You know that adage." He picked up his cards. "I'm certainly making a mess of the love business, so I suppose—"

Morehouse wasn't in the least interested. "Three across?" he asked.

"Three across." Charlie glanced toward the deck. "I hope my wife won't be cold out there."

"She'll know enough to get a coat, won't she?" Morehouse asked, indicating that he didn't like conversation along with cards. They began to play.

Charlie came in about three. Ann was only half asleep. She sat up, turned on the light. He looked at her squarely, and turned his pockets inside out.

"That's fine; you're a big help," she said wearily. She turned out the light again. Charlie didn't mind the dark; his eyes ached from cards, smoke and liquor.

"Everything?" she asked.

"Everything. Even gave him a check. We're not fooling now, Annie. Or I start my home-coming in jail."

"Checks are one thing you said you'd always steer clear of."

"What could I do? I thought maybe I'd save you all the bother if I made a good winning!" Even as he spoke, he was

Answers to quiz on page 90

1. e	7. c
2. k	8. i
3. h	9. j
4. a	10. g
5. f	11. d
6. i	12. b

surreptitiously slipping his winnings, a large roll of bills, into his shoe. It didn't bother him that he was lying; you had to force things sometimes to get action.

"Did you learn anything about him?" she asked worriedly.

"Sure, he takes a cold dip every morning at six-thirty." He was getting into his bed by now.

"Aren't you coming over here?" she asked softly.

"It's three now. Six-thirty'll come soon enough." He knew how to handle her; deprive her, so that she'd get busy.

She looked perfect in a bathing suit. It was cold if you just sat around the pool, so she swam. She was a bit like a young porpoise, rolling and diving. A few early morning walkers came and watched her admiringly. But there was no Morehouse. She pulled herself up at the side of the pool. It was nearly eight, and the breakfast gongs were sounding.

Twenty minutes later she was eating as fast as she could in the dining salon, hoping to be done and finished by the time Morehouse came in. She had cereal; she had pancakes and sausage. And now she was ordering more toast and coffee.

She did not know that Morehouse had changed his table, to sit by the window in the sun, that he was behind her instead of in front of her, and was watching her. She did not know it until Charlie came in, and she said radiantly, "Good morning, darling. Did you ever see such a day! I could push this boat to New York myself I feel so—"

Then she saw Charlie's expression. She did not have to look behind her to know what had happened. Charlie sat down. The steward brought them each a copy of the ship's paper; they set the papers up between them like two walls of Jericho.

Morehouse, on his way out, stopped at the table. "Good morning. I'm glad to see that you're not angry because I kept him up so late, Mrs. Kent."

She murmured something, and Morehouse went on.

"Practically ready for a divorce, of course," Charlie said sarcastically.

She began to giggle. She couldn't help it. "Charlie, it's a sign, don't you see? We're just supposed to give up this crooked business. We've lost our knack for it."

Charlie wasn't listening. She saw that his eyes were following an attractive young girl who was entering the dining salon alone. She was very cute, not as pretty as Ann, but with a saucy bright face, and a figure that was perfect. She wore a short flaring white sharkskin skirt, with a matching bolero jacket over a bare midriff. She had all the aplomb and the chic of the world's number one debutante.

Ann knew that Charlie was thinking up something.

"Charlie, what is it?"

"Nothing," he said, smiling innocently. Ann went back to her morning paper, but from behind it she was studying the girl, and for some reason not liking her.

The feeling grew with the day. Ann made inquiries; all she could find out was that the girl's name was Bettina Baker. She could have saved herself the trouble; she could have found out later from Charlie all about her. But she scarcely saw Charlie the entire day, except from a distance, and then he was with Bettina: playing deck tennis with her, or ping pong, or breezing down the deck, laughing and talking. Ann was always coming across them someplace, and always Bettina was wearing a different dashing costume. That annoyed Ann; everything annoyed her. When she walked into the cocktail lounge around six, they were there too. Ann walked to the bar. An instant later Charlie was at her elbow. "Aren't you going to sit with us?"

"I don't know why I should exchange my own good company for that of a clotheshorse," Ann said snippily. "Even for effect, how do you endure it? I've counted six changes today. Of course I don't blame her for trying to impress you—"

"Not me; she's trying to impress you."

"I'm sure. Who is she?"

Next to them, unnoticed until now, Morehouse was talking with someone. He turned, hearing the argument between them. There was no doubt about it; for the first time he was sympathetic about Ann's distress.

As Charlie led Ann toward the table where Bettina waited, he whispered, "You see, it finally begins to look like the real article. We're doing better."

"I can do without this prop," she said.

"You're wonderful when you're jealous, Annie."

"Shut up."

She was pleasant and nice enough on the surface when she met Bettina. It was almost impossible not to be, with Bettina. Looking at the girl was one thing; she looked rich and spoiled and demanding. But talking to her you found out she was quite different; for one thing, her elaborate wardrobe existed only because she was a designer—just

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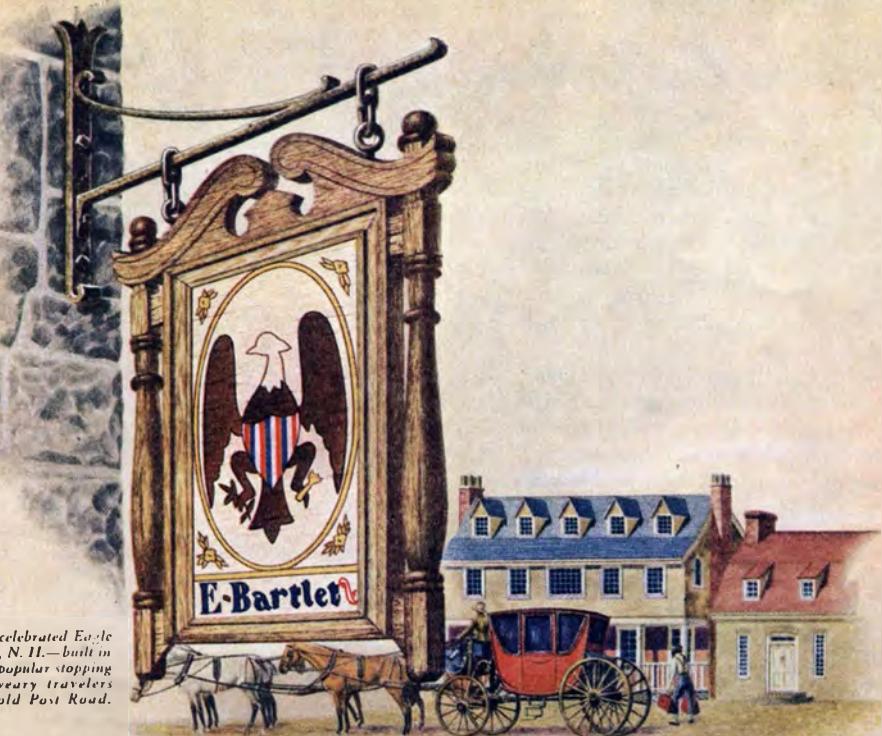
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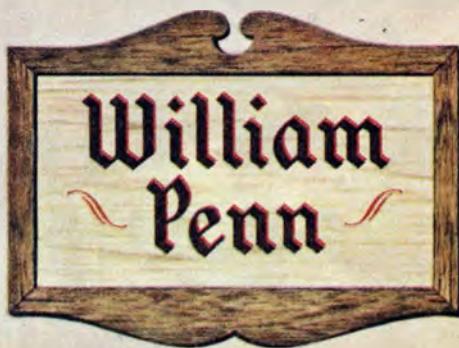


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starting, but filled with ambition. She owned a small shop on Madison Avenue. "Wait till you see my new Gaucho sports clothes," she told Ann eagerly. "And fabrics! I think I've bought out every loom in South America, not that they're paid for yet, but I have hopes. Mr. Kent was just giving me a few ideas—"

As the girl babbled on, Charlie winked at Ann. But Ann wondered. She saw how closely together they were sitting; how Charlie's arm brushed the girl's.

It preyed on her mind, and that evening Ann was again watching them. She was outside on deck looking in on the dancing salon. Bettina dancing with Charlie; Charlie holding her close.

Behind her, Morehouse spoke, and she turned guiltily. He saw how upset she was, and he had seen Charlie and Bettina.

"Does it happen often?" he asked.

"Oh, please!" Her tone begged him not to torment her.

He watched her for a moment, and then said, "You get used to loneliness. It's like everything else; you have to learn how to handle it."

"I guess I haven't, that's just it."

"You're shivering. Let's go in. I'll buy you a drink."

"Not in there. I couldn't."

"In my stateroom, then?"

"If you like, Mr. Morehouse."

It was amazing; the whole thing had such a familiar sound to it. First get him to ask you to his stateroom. Funny that when you didn't even try . . .

She began to like him; that was the silly part of it. Seated with him on the couch in his stateroom, she told him a lot of lies about her life, and every lie made her feel guilty because he accepted them so wholeheartedly. She told him that she had fallen out of love with Charlie a long time ago, that she had thought for a while that she was in love with someone else . . . and Charlie had never forgiven her, treated her this way now to get even with her.

She couldn't stand it much longer, she told him. She said it had turned her against all young men, with their agonizing jealousies. She only wanted peace in her life, quiet and contentment. She was giving him all the old stuff, and somehow it made her uncomfortable. He was entirely impersonal. He didn't drink—though he had ordered champagne for her—which made it difficult. When she started to cry—which was a part of the act—he didn't make one little move to comfort her.

Instead he told her a funny story, and she wound up laughing.

"You're very lovely," he said suddenly. There was a kind of earnestness in him which startled her. "Ann, let's you and me talk like real people."

"I ought to go," she said. "It's late."

"No, don't," he begged. "Please. You and I are in the same boat, you know. Let me tell you now, about me."

"Yes, Mr. Morehouse." She was expectant and a little frightened.

At the same moment, on a canopied section of the deck, things were getting warmer between Charlie and Bettina. When Charlie finally got around to kissing her, all Bettina's niceness and sweetness and fairness got entangled with a sudden new emotion. She drew her wrap around her, started inside. It really wasn't her habit to let things like this happen. She felt ashamed and cheap, and told him so. "I like Mrs. Kent, and I suddenly don't like me," she told him honestly.

It was a new experience for Charlie. Here was decency, wrapped up in the most enticing body he'd met in a long

time. It bothered him. Ordinarily, with some babe who'd say no, he'd have said to hell with it! There'd be another babe along if a babe was what he wanted. This was different. He found himself saying quickly, "Look, there's nothing between Ann and me. Hasn't been for a long time; we just sort of hang on; I don't know why."

"I'm sorry, Charlie. That doesn't change it." She turned and left him.

Charlie was annoyed. Marriage was always getting in his way. Right from the beginning, on the Riviera. And he hadn't had sense enough to let well enough alone when Ann had first left him. And there'd been other times, off and on, having to live that stupid dull life in Rio the last few years with Ann; slaving along when he might have been a house guest at any one of a dozen big Argentine haciendas.

Damn it, when would he ever learn? He was upset; he wandered into the bar for a drink, found himself alongside Ettinger, the ship's doctor. They got to chatting, though Charlie's mind was on Bettina. Then he started to wonder how Ann was getting along with Morehouse. He found himself asking Ettinger about him. What did he know about him?

"Why are you so interested?" Ettinger asked. "Seems to me you've asked me about him before."

"Because my wife's seeing too much of him," Charlie covered. "I saw her on deck with him tonight."

"I wouldn't worry. His heart keeps him taking it easy. A little weak when it comes to wine and women."

"Oh, I didn't mean that of course." Charlie laughed awkwardly. Then abruptly he got worried. If Morehouse was one of those cautious hypochondriacs—no drinks, no playing around—Annie wouldn't have a chance.

"Does he take it pretty seriously?" he

asked, puzzled about Ann's chances. "Wouldn't you, if they allowed you a year or two at the most?"

"Oh, I see." So it was as serious as all that. Charlie quickly changed the subject, and a moment later was leaving.

Charlie began to think that maybe Annie was right; they were wasting time with Morehouse. He wondered what other possibility was on the boat.

When he got into his own room he was surprised that Ann wasn't there. When she came in finally he asked, "Well?"

"We might as well give it up, Charlie. We're never going to compromise him, not in a million years."

He was afraid of that, but it was his habit to make her at fault. "You mean you're not trying hard enough."

"Oh, no," she corrected coldly. "I've succeeded perfectly. Only you picked the wrong man. You should have found a married one. Married ones like to cheat."

He got it. "Will you stop thinking about Bettina! I told you she doesn't mean anything—except to help us."

"We're past helping in this case." She moved about, undressing. "He thinks I should call it quits with you and have a nice gentle life with him."

She had said it so calmly that at first he didn't think he had heard right. "What was that?"

She repeated it.

"He proposed?" Charlie still couldn't quite get it.

"Sometimes I think it's what I ought to do too." But she didn't really mean it; she was thinking of all the bad moments there had been in their life—moments like Bettina. She turned on him, demanding that he cut that out from now on.

"Forget Bettina," he said. "Tell me more about Morehouse."

"Nothing more to tell about him. Love to him means companionship, sharing of



"Would you mind a suggestion?"

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interests, mutual endeavors. You can't blackmail a man for words, can you? Unless they're on paper. And he's said them all; there's nothing more to say. I'd rather have had him kiss me."

"I've got something to tell you about him," Charlie said pointedly. "Annie, sure he wants companionship and all that stuff. He's got a bad heart. It's only a question of a few more years."

"That's supposed to make me feel sorry for him."

"It's true. The doctor told me." He paused. "It's not supposed to make you feel sorry, Annie, but feel smart. I'll let you go; you can marry him."

He picked up a powder jar, threw it at him. It landed on his wrist watch, broke, and cut his hand. He paid no attention to the cut, beyond winding a handkerchief about it. All the hardness came out in him.

"You idiot," he said. "We dribble along, picking up a few thousand here, a few thousand there. Don't you think it's going to get harder? Every time lessens our chances for the next one. Or do you want me to go back to working in an oil company?"

"Anything. Anything'd be better."

"You say that because you're sore now about Bettina. How was it, living in a dingy flat, scraping along on a stinking salary? Did you like it?"

"There were times when it wasn't bad."

"How long do you think you and I would last that way?"

He got up, moved to the window, looked out. She saw the restlessness in him. She knew he was remembering a way of life which had existed before she had come along. Cars, and evenings at gambling clubs, and the yachts in the Cannes basin. They had never quite attained that since, even with their combined efforts. She was suddenly hating him for his cheapness, but it was only a brief hate.

He turned and said suddenly, "I wouldn't be too far away, Annie; and if it's only for a couple of years, it'd be worth it, wouldn't it? This time'd be the last. Nothing to worry us ever again"—he smiled infectiously—"except clipping coupons and collecting dividends."

"He doesn't look like a dying man to me," she said evenly. She was steeling herself; she wasn't going to weaken.

"Ask the doctor. Why do you think Morehouse doesn't drink?"

"He eats, though."

"That'll end him all the quicker. It plays hell with the blood pressure."

Annie got hold of herself then and said, with conviction, "Not if he was the last man on earth, Charlie Kent."

"Okay, suit yourself." He turned out his light, settled down into bed.

She got into her own bed after a moment. She lay there, staring into the darkness.

"Charlie," she said quietly, "you were lying to me about the check you gave him. He told me."

"All right, so we've got six hundred dollars. How long do you suppose that'll last us?"

"Are you lying to me too about what the doctor said?"

"You can ask him. Ask Morehouse; he'll probably tell you too, except it might make him suspicious."

"I don't care if he's suspicious. I'm not going to do anything about it."

"I guess it is too much to ask. I just keep thinking of all we've been through. I don't want to go through it again, and this could fix us up once and for all."

There was a long silence.

Then Charlie said slowly, "Ann, I've been thinking. Maybe when we get to New York we ought to split up anyway

—for the looks of things. I think we'd both get along better. We've got to think of quick money first. Esther Browning's back from Paris, I hear. She'll loan me enough to carry on for a while. I just don't see where we're getting any place this way."

Ann just lay there thinking.

Divorces are so easy you scarcely have to mention them any more. You take a train trip, and come back, that's all.

Fifth Avenue wedding: A. P. Morehouse, balding, portly tycoon and lovely doe-eyed Ann Kent. *Fortune-hunting* Ann Kent, which is the way everybody thought about her. What else could they think? A girl of twenty-three marrying a man in his fifties. Wall Street financiers came with their wives. There were a Senator or two, several South American diplomats; numerous business associates, countless would-be associates, and, as the newspapers would later report, "a host of relatives and friends."

Only Ann had nobody to represent her. She was "given away" by the lawyer who had handled her divorce.

In a way she was grateful that there was no one there whom she knew. It was enough to face the knowing look of strangers. Every face into which she looked as she came down the aisle made her feel embarrassed. She concentrated on Morehouse—Ashley, as she had learned to call him.

He smiled at her pleasantly. He was the only one who seemed calm, assured, confident. Again, even more violently, the guilty thoughts surged through her. She noted his sophisticated calm, and there was suddenly something lecherous and frightening about him. Her mind went back: for an instant, in his place, she saw Charlie and another ceremony—more than six years ago. No smart Fifth Avenue edifice then; the crumpled ancient *mairie* at Antibes. And Charlie reckless and wild-looking, but with youth looking out of his eyes into hers. And the unspoken yearning on his mouth: "Baby." She heard the present minister's singing song, ". . . for better or for worse, till death do us part . . ."

She was conscious then that they were waiting for her. The image faded and she saw Ashley Morehouse's kind, encouraging smile.

"I do," she acknowledged.

She lived the next few moments in a weaving wave of confusion and nausea. She clutched Ashley's arm tightly and hurried down the aisle with him.

She saw beyond her at the doors now being thrown open the horde of newsmen and flash-photo boys. Big news, the wedding of A. P. Morehouse.

She had an instinct to duck the photographers, to hide her face behind her hand as guilty people do. Then, just inside the door, at the rear of the aisle, she saw Charlie. He was smiling at her faintly. It shocked and further upset her. For a moment she couldn't go on; everything swam before her. Then she felt Morehouse's slight pressure on her arm. He was beaming down at her. She smiled up at him, gave the cameras a good imitation of a happy-bride look.

Charlie was at the reception too. The reception was held in the Palm Room of the Waldorf-Astoria, from six to ten. Some thirty floors above was the Morehouse suite. Ann longed to get up into it, away from all this throng of people. She had to meet so many, one after another . . . and across the Palm Room, lounging in the doorway, was Charlie. Finally she found the chance to slip over to him.

She was quaking inside, and all her anger burst out at him in a harsh sotto

voce: How dared he come here? Wasn't it enough—what she was going through—without having him standing around watching her? That wasn't in the bargain. Later, yes, later she wanted to see him, but didn't he have any decency? Must he be here now to remind her what a shabby trick they were pulling?

"That's not what I'm here to remind you about," he said quietly. "You should have had a dress like that at Antibes. I never saw you looking like this, Annie."

"And you don't have to make love to me now, either," she whispered sharply. "There's only one thing lacking." He was looking at her throat, at her hands. "Where's your wedding present?"

"He hasn't given it to me yet."

He picked up her left hand, looked at the plain gold wedding band. She knew what was in his mind, and she said a bit defensively, "It was his mother's."

"Very sentimental. Where's the rest of it, Annie?"

"There isn't any 'rest of it' yet."

"Pearls would be pretty with that dress, or emeralds. Or a diamond bracelet."

"Oh, Charlie, for heaven's sake, people are looking at us. There hasn't been time yet to buy me anything."

"Funny how things get reversed. I'd like to get you a present too. I've had time but no money."

"Charlie, please. I'm sorry if you're broke again, but I can't help that now."

He continued calmly, "And it's such a shame because I found such a wonderful jeweler. He can copy anything, make it look like the real thing. Naturally I can't afford the real stuff, but I thought in place of whatever he gives you, you might, for sentimental reasons, wear my present instead."

Her eyes came up to his slowly. What a heel he was. And yet there was youth looking out of his eyes again.

"It's only because I promised you I wouldn't borrow from any of that old crowd," he reminded her. "I wouldn't be in this spot if I did."

"All right, when I get the chance, Charlie." Then quickly, "I've got to go now. He's looking for me."

"Bridegroom getting impatient?" he asked, with an odd tone.

"Oh, now, let's not go into that too." She knew what he was thinking, the way he was looking at her. He had been willing to turn her over in name; now that the wedding night had arrived, he was worried about the rest. She was worried too, sick at heart about it, but she managed to say firmly, "It's too late for that now, Charlie. We can't expect him to be that much of a fool."

Still he just looked at her in such a strange way that she said, "And don't do anything foolish."

"You won't mind if I walk up and down outside and hate the old fool, will you?"

She looked away quickly. Sometimes Charlie could say things that very nearly put tears in her eyes.

Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock, and instead of the party crowd diminishing, it was growing; more and more people dropping in. Ann was trying to be gay for politeness' sake, but she was conscious that the dreaded moment was approaching. Once she looked at the clock and then saw that Morehouse had noted her glance. "Had enough?" he asked.

"Yes, let's go."

"If we slip out through the service corridor, we'll miss the newsmen. You go now. I'll follow. I'll meet you at the service elevators."

She met him at the service elevators. They stepped in. Morehouse said to the elevator operator, "Down please, to the truck entrance."

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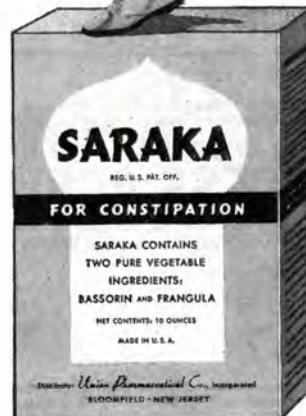
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Ann looked at him oddly. "Aren't we going up—home?"

"Just leave it to me," he said easily.

They stepped out into the dungeon-like underground loading terminal. When she saw that a taxi was waiting, and when the driver immediately stepped out and opened the door, she had the feeling of being abducted.

She looked doubtfully at Morehouse. "Go on," he smiled.

She stepped in. He followed her inside the cab, and an instant later they were on Lexington Avenue.

"You look frightened," he observed.

"I'm just puzzled, that's all."

"Ann, I've been watching you all evening. It wasn't too easy, was it?" His uncritical tone surprised her.

"Call me psychic if you like," he continued. "I'll people sometimes are, but I know exactly what you went through. It hurts you, doesn't it, to have people think you married me for my money?" She looked at him in surprise, and he went on, "It's very natural that they should think so, and naturally you're hurt. It's a hurt I've had all my life. How would you like to be me? To know that nobody ever says good morning to you without thinking about your twenty million dollars? It's like an ugly leering shadow following you around. I've lost track of the shadow though. You'd like to slip away from it too, wouldn't you, Ann?" He smiled at her, and she couldn't answer.

"I mean," he added, "even if you had married me for my money, you wouldn't like to be accused of it, much less so since you didn't."

She still suspected some trick. "Where are you taking me?" she asked hollowly. "Home."

He saw her puzzled stare. "Oh, I keep the floor at the Waldorf, but I haven't slept there for nearly eight years."

They drew up in front of a small hotel on Irving Place. A very old hotel, with a slightly French atmosphere and a very French name, Pompadour. They got out. Morehouse didn't bother to pay the taxi driver. "See you in the morning, Tim." She knew then that the driver must be Morehouse's chauffeur.

They went in. It was a late hour for the Pompadour, and only a few old habitués played cards in the cafe room to the left of the entrance. The hotel was very much like the Lafayette, an old grillwork elevator piercing the center of it. The cafe room to the left, the dining room in the rear, and the old-fashioned neat little writing room and other small salons scattered about.

A middle-aged man came from behind the desk to greet them eagerly, calling them "Mr. and Mrs. Morton." Ann could hardly believe her husband's real identity was unknown here. "We've been hearing about you for weeks, Mrs. Morton. We're so glad to have you here." For the first time in the whole day, compliments and congratulations rang true. The man was ushering them to the elevator as he spoke.

Not zooming up thirty floors in the Waldorf elevator, but with Morehouse alone in this little steel cage mounting squeakingly, slowly, up six floors.

The elevator came to a stop. "I'm sorry it doesn't go on from here," Morehouse said. "It always sticks at this point. You see the penthouse was added only a few years ago."

"Penthouse?"

"The elevator resents it."

They got out and climbed a flight. Morehouse used his key and they went in.

It was the coziest, most charming place she had ever seen. A small duplex.

One large room opening onto a small terrace. A stairway leading up to a balcony. Doors opening off the balcony.

"Only a few rooms," he said.

"How many?" she asked. She couldn't help it; she had to know about the bedrooms. She was looking up the stairway.

"And the view's the best part of it. Close, low down, you can almost touch the trees. I've always preferred being close to trees than up among the stars anyway. And look, Annie"—he scuffed his feet along the braided rugs on the floor—"here you can walk and not get a shock. People should be insulated against those inch-thick rugs at the Waldorf." He smiled at his little joke, moved around easily, happily at home.

She was still looking around. It was cozy all right, but it was a love nest. Somehow she preferred the Waldorf. "No servants?" she asked.

"Nobody—except the house staff. Just us. But you'll get good service," he added smiling. "Go on upstairs, and see how you like the bedroom. I'll be up in a minute." He started for the kitchen, called back, "Anything you'd like? I'm getting some milk."

"No, No, thank you."

Slowly she went up the stairs.

The bedroom was as lovely as the rest of it. But her heart sank, for there on the bed lay her nightie and robe, and along side them his pajamas and robe.

She heard his step outside, and turned quickly. She was ready to call it all quits.

He came in with his milk. "There was a place I lived in Paris, looked just like this."

She didn't move or answer.

"What is it? You don't mind being just Mrs. Morton, do you? You can always go uptown any time you like."

"It isn't that."

"You won't want to. You'll like this hotel, Annie. At least I hope you will."

"Oh, I'm sure—"

"Because it's my present to you."

"Your—what?"

"Your wedding gift. It's the only home I have, and I'm giving it to you. A man always gives his wife his home, doesn't he, if he wants to show her that he's in earnest?"

"You own it?"

"For eight years. I've been trying to manage it, too, but it gets pretty difficult. That's your job now."

"I don't understand."

"You expected to run my home for me, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"You'll run this place, that's all. Manage the staff, order the meals."

She couldn't help it; she was trembling—partly because of what he had said, partly because of the clothes laid out on the bed. "I didn't marry you for a job."

"What did we marry for?" He came toward her slowly. "I thought we'd agree—companionship, a home, stability. A man in my position can't have an ordinary home. It would be filled with favor seekers, people like you met today. Can you blame me if this means home to me, because they don't know, or care, who I am here?"

She was scarcely listening; she was staring at his robe and pajamas which he had picked up from the bed. He followed her gaze.

"The maid," he explained. "They don't know around here. Good night, Annie. We'll make a go of it."

"Good night," she said.

He turned and went out. She went to the door and looked after him. He went along the balcony, turned in at another door.

She slowly closed her door. She couldn't believe it. It was too much; she had

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been too lucky. It was too heavenly. A long time later she still couldn't sleep. She got up first and made sure that Morehouse was in bed. His door was ajar. He was heavily, soundly asleep. She slipped back into her room, closed and locked the door, then went to the phone. She dialed a number and an instant later was speaking to the night clerk of an apartment house in the East Sixties, asking for Mr. Kent. She was told that Mr. Kent hadn't come in yet. She hung up, a little disappointed; then smiling to herself, she phoned the Waldorf, asked to be connected with the front doorman, Park Avenue entrance.

He answered, and she said, "This is Mrs. A. P. Morehouse. Is there a young man outside, walking up and down? A young man alone. Please, would you look . . . I'd like to speak to him."

He went to look. There were a few people waiting for cabs, but that was all.

"There's no one, Mrs. Morehouse."

"Was there someone earlier?"

"Not that I've noticed. I'm sorry, Mrs. Morehouse. If there's trouble . . . ?"

"Oh, no—just a sort of—joke," she finished with difficulty. "Thank you."

"A hotel?" Charlie asked indignantly, unbelievably, as they sat at lunch at the Fairmont Club. "What kind of a hotel?" His voice was harsh, his manner sulky.

Ann tried to explain it to him. It was nearly a week after the wedding, and there was a lot to explain—about the Pompadour itself, and how busy she had been.

"How do you mean, busy?"

"Inspecting linens; I have to talk to the chef every day, meet new guests, talk to old ones." She felt on the defensive, and she didn't like the feeling. "Did you ever try managing a hotel?"

"No, but I'd like to, if it was the Plaza or the Ritz, and there was something in it. What are you trying to hand me? Maybe you like being married to a stuffy old-bank roll. Maybe you don't see any reason now to cut me in."

For a moment she felt sorry for him. She saw the strained lines around his mouth and eyes. He was as handsome as ever; his clothes were still the same good clothes he always wore, yet there was something—he looked uncared for, nervous, or maybe he was just drinking too much. His remarks hurt her, and yet she managed to say crossly, "Oh, be yourself. I've never been so bored in my life, and I've never had to work so hard. It's a nuisance. But you don't want me to let him catch on, do you, about what we're after?"

And so they argued, bent close together at a corner table. Once the waiter interrupted, "It's two o'clock, Mr. Kent."

"I know. I'll be there right away."

"What is it?" Ann asked after he had gone.

"A business appointment. Forget it."

His mood led her into a pouting moment or two. "I don't know what's happened to you. You might at least be pleased that he's never even made love to me."

"Of course I'm pleased. But why does he have to be so miserly? No charge accounts anywhere, no jewelry. What are you getting out of this?"

"You said that it might take a year or two."

"But what about the meantime? Can't you say you have to have some clothes?"

"He knows I don't. He bought me a closet full of things. They were there when I got there. Oh, Charlie, if you'll just be patient . . ." Her eyes softened, and she looked at him with yearning. "If only I weren't so busy all the time and could slip out to you . . ."

WHY CAN'T MARRIAGE BE LIKE THE MOVIES?



The movies usually wind up with a happy ending. But Bill and Joan couldn't seem to patch up their troubles. She didn't realize that their fights were her fault! She thought she knew about feminine hygiene. She didn't know, though,

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"He knows why he's keeping you busy." "That's not true. He's not like that. He believed me when I said I wanted my own world, wanted to be independent. He thinks the hotel's doing that for me."

"Is the hotel in your name?" "She was getting weary of it now. "I'm not sure. I suppose so."

"Is it making money?"

"I'm afraid not."

His interest sagged again.

"What does he do with all his money?" Charlie asked. "If he's so damned big-hearted, as you say."

Patiently she explained to him Morehouse's many important interests: a farm for delinquent boys, a scientific laboratory, scholarships. "Oh, I don't know—hundreds of things. Charlie, you'll just have to get a job."

"Yes, sure. Well, I'm trying."

"I'm glad, Charlie. Maybe we'll both learn a lot from this experience."

"Yes, sure."

She saw that he was ready to leave; their luncheon was over. She said longingly, "Maybe we could meet somewhere some afternoon—at your place."

"If I still have a place by then," he said cryptically. "I'll let you know."

They were out on the sidewalk now. "Here, Charlie, you can take this." She removed the sable scarf from around her neck, held it out to him. "I'll say I left it in the taxi."

"And what do I do," he asked harshly, "tuck it in my umbrella? No thanks. I'm not in the old rags business."

"Charlie, don't look cross like that."

In a moment her cab was going away from him. She looked back, saw him standing there trying to look independent and angry, but actually looking only forlorn and muddled.

Charlie didn't take another cab. He went back into the club, up through a side entrance, through a couple of gambling rooms which were all a part of the club, though darkened now, and came out into a swanky office. A waiter was bringing up food from the restaurant part of the club. Charlie followed him in, into the office where Thyson, the club owner, was about to have lunch with a young woman.

"Come in, join us, Charlie." Thyson introduced the girl.

"No thanks, I just ate."

"Oh! Then your missus kept the date?"

"We had lunch downstairs. You saw us. You sent the waiter."

Thyson laughed. "Sure. I thought you might forget us. Lunch with your ex-wife—beautiful girl too. I'm glad to see you are still friendly with her."

"I told you I was."

"Then turn up the corners!" Thyson turned to the girl. "He dropped a little money here. He's worried about it!"

"We said two o'clock today. I just thought you might be getting anxious."

"With me you got credit for a long time. And maybe tonight you'll get it back, who knows. Have a drink with us."

"Sure. I guess I've got time." Charlie was feeling easier.

There were occasions, of course, when Ashley Morehouse had to carry on with his uptown rich man's life. He used the Waldorf apartment for that. He had business meetings there, and luncheons. It was his office and his front for the world.

This part of his life was run by an efficient middle-aged secretary, Mrs. Beeman. Ann was seldom present; she was too busy downtown with the Pompadour.

Yet there were certain occasions—dinner parties mainly—when Ann had

to be present. She would come into the Waldorf suite, breathless, with some trifling worry on her mind which she shared with Morehouse as they dressed, calling back and forth to each other from their dressing rooms. The problem might be old Mr. Brian, the artist, who hadn't paid his hotel bill for weeks. Or the chef who was temperamental.

Once as Ashley Morehouse, his dinner jacket over his arm, came into her room so that she might tie his tie for him, he found a strange mood upon her. A moment before, from his dressing room, he had heard her light laughing voice, and now suddenly the happiness was all gone from her. She was staring at her dress, aware that it had cost four hundred dollars; her perfume, she knew, cost forty dollars an ounce. In an hour or two she would sit down to a dinner that would easily come to fifteen dollars a plate. Here she was, surrounded by all the good things of life, the things Charlie loved. She was suddenly thinking of him again, and the thought made her desolate. For the past few weeks there had been only telephone calls between them.

Morehouse saw her staring at her gown. "There's something lacking, isn't there?" he asked.

"Sort of—yes." But it was merely lip service; she was still thinking of Charlie.

"I've been awfully thoughtless!" Cheerfully Morehouse moved to a hidden wall safe and opened it. "I've been collecting these for years, and I'd forgotten for what!" He brought out a jewelry tray, selected a ruby and diamond necklace, brought it to her.

She stared at it blankly. "I didn't mean that. I just meant—"

He paid no attention to her, placed it around her neck. "I'll write down the combination to the safe so you can get out anything any time you want."

"No, don't—please!" He looked surprised. "I just—well, I wouldn't want the responsibility," she added quickly.

"Whatever you say. There, do you like it?" He finished clasping the necklace.

She turned back to the mirror to admire it. She started to thank him, awkwardly. "You've been so nice—"

"I made a good bargain," he interrupted, smiling, and kissed her cheek.

She was touched, liking him very much. Poor dear old idiot! She would wear the jewelry evenings like this, and then later, before they went downtown to the Pompadour, Morehouse would put it away for her. She would tell Charlie that it was Morehouse who was being cagey about it.

And there again was the thought of Charlie haunting her.

"You seemed so happy a moment ago. I don't understand it."

"I can't lie to you," she said suddenly. "Would it upset you awfully if I told you I'm worrying about Charlie?"

"No." His manner was questioning.

"I was just realizing how nice he was about the divorce. He didn't make any trouble. He could have, but for my sake he was very decent. But I don't think we've been very nice about it."

"You'd like to invite him here, is that it?"

"No hurry, but sometime, just to show him there are no hard feelings."

"Why not? Ask Mrs. Beeman to schedule him for some party."

He turned to leave. She couldn't tell whether he was upset or not. She was a little frightened, wondering if she had gone too far.

The annoying thing was that Charlie showed up with Bettina, looking confident, secure. The hour before dinner he

had sent Ann an expensive showy array of flowers. And to see him now at dinner, so on top again, so amusing! Talking of a week end at Lake Placid where he had been skiing, talking of shows he had seen. All during dinner Ann forced herself to be pleasant, and tried not to think too much of Bettina, whose every word and look concerning Charlie indicated possessiveness. Later at the bar Ann had a moment alone with him. She told him how she worried about him, "And you breeze in here as if you own the world, as if you're happy to be divorced."

"It's an act."

"And I suppose Bettina is still also a part of the act?"

"Certainly. You didn't expect me to show up alone and follow around moose-eyed after you, did you?"

"How often have you been seeing her?"

He smiled his old slow aggravating smile. "You never used to be jealous."

"No, not really," she said. "Because I knew that underneath it was always me. It's still true, isn't it, Charlie?"

She was begging now, and he liked that. Quite different from the last time he'd seen her, when they'd had lunch. He'd been the low one then, pleading, but he'd got hold of himself now—to hide his shame and guilt he was throwing himself on the town, and at Bettina, and he was a success at it. "I'm quite safe with Bettina," he told her. "She wants to get married. She insists upon it. Are you satisfied?"

He might be telling her the truth; he might not. She studied him. "There's something, Charlie—I don't know quite what. Something's happened to us. I'm frightened."

"Just because I'm enjoying my freedom? They say married people should take time off from each other. That's all it is. We'll make up for it later."

She shook her head. No, that wasn't it; there was something else; she couldn't quite put her finger on it. "Charlie, what have you been up to?"

"You see me with money in my pocket again—that's all."

"What kind of money?" she asked.

"I've got backers. Everything's okay; we can take our time now. Somebody else is counting on Mr. Morehouse's dying too." He had spoken lightly, but he saw that she was displeased. "What's wrong with it? What's the difference if I get some of it now or later?"

She couldn't quite answer. A strange sense of disaster closed in on her. "Charlie, I'm not going on with it. I'm going to get a divorce."

He laughed. "On what grounds?"

"Incompatibility—his illness—anything."

"Well, if you like." He shrugged, took an envelope from his pocket on which some figures were scribbled. "But I'll tell you what we're in for up to now. I haven't been very lucky lately." He consulted the envelope. "Eighty-four thousand dollars. You think a divorce will square that up and still leave us enough to live on?" His voice hardened. "He's not sap enough for that. Don't be a fool, Annie. If you had anything to hold over him—but you haven't."

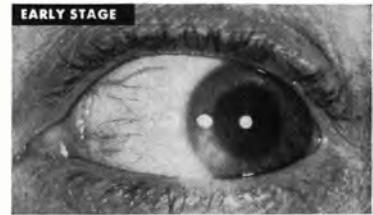
Yes, she supposed she was being a fool. But eighty-four thousand dollars! "Why isn't it working out then?" she asked desperately. "You made it sound so easy, so perfect before. I thought we'd at least be seeing each other."

"That you'd be able to keep an eye on me you mean?"

"No, Charlie. Don't you miss—us?"

For an instant there was that old look between them again. "Yes, of course I do," he said tersely, but with emotion,

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vation" due to vitamin deficiency is a frequent and basic cause. To help prevent this form of "Tissue Starvation", you should take multiple vitamins—take ALL the known needed vitamins, not just one or a few. One-A-Day (brand) Multiple Vitamins bring you vitamins A, B₁, B₂, C and D, plus Niacin, Calcium Pantothenate and B₆—all in a single capsule.

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"That was made by a champagne bottle. This set was the first off the assembly line."

then moved quickly away from her, taking a drink to Bettina.

She watched them together and her jealousy flared.

They saw more of Bettina and Charlie. From then on, somehow, their names became a permanent part of Mrs. Beeman's guest list. Ann was certain that they were listed under "amusing young couples, fill-ins." In a way it was torture to her; on the other hand it was seeing something of Charlie.

Once Morehouse was talking about Bettina to Ann. "I like that girl. She's honest and forthright, but not dull about it. She seems to be good for Charlie. Maybe you could give her a break by going to her for some clothes."

"No, I have enough clothes," Ann said. She had begun to hate the sound of Bettina's name. She had watched Bettina with Charlie, and she could never decide, watching him, whether they were lovers or not. She was quite sure that if she could see Bettina alone and talk to her, she could find out how serious it was.

The impulse would seize her at odd moments, usually in the midst of something she was doing at the hotel. Then one afternoon, right in the middle of a discussion, she left the decorator who was remodeling some of the Pompadour's rooms, grabbed her coat, and a moment later was in a taxi heading up Madison Avenue.

She went to Bettina's shop. Bettina lived in the apartment above it. It was a pleasant shop, small, filled with a colorful disarray of sketches and fabrics. Bettina was not there. A young assistant, Helen, explained that it was Bettina's birthday, and she'd been invited out to lunch, but she'd be in soon if Ann would like to wait for her.

Ann waited. She wandered into a small room at the left to watch another girl working at the cutting table. From

there she saw the taxi drive up to the door, and to her dismay, saw Charlie and Bettina get out. They were in a gay mood. Charlie had a wine bottle in each arm. They came through the shop, heading straight for the apartment. Charlie paused to toss a bottle to Helen. "Boss says you two go out and get drunk."

It was then that Helen announced that a customer was waiting.

They saw Ann then. She could not longer hope to speak to Bettina as she had intended—not with Charlie there. She had to pretend she had come to order clothes.

Bettina was delighted: her first really important customer. Wholeheartedly she accepted Ann's gesture as the gracious one it appeared to be. She insisted that they all have the wine together, while she made sketches of Ann's figure.

Ann and Charlie looked at each other. He knew that she had not come here to order clothes, but to find out if he were only seeing Bettina at Morehouse parties to allay Morehouse's suspicion about him and Ann, or if he were seeing her other times. Well, she knew now, and he was glad she was upset: maybe she'd get busy and start seeing what they could get out of all this.

A little later Ann left, and a long time later Charlie and Bettina came out of the darkened shop, heading for dinner.

As Charlie whistled for a cab, a girl stepped out of the shadows.

"Charlie!" she called.

About to get into the cab, Charlie turned, recognized Thyson's girl. He had seen her now and then, enough to know the rôle she played in Thyson's life. She was no gangster's moll; she was a modern feminine version of the plug-ugly. She did a lot of Thyson's dirty work for him.

On the surface her manner was pleas-

ant, casual. "Where have you been, Charlie? We haven't seen you for a week or two. Aren't you coming around to see us any more?"

"Sure, I'll be around. Say hello for me."

He let it go at that, got into the cab with Bettina. He saw her questioning look and smiled. "Can't a man have a passing acquaintance?"

"Not my man," she said.

She was so sweetly serious that as he looked at her his blood started pounding.

"I've got the mark on you, don't you know that, Charlie?"

He took her in his arms and kissed her. After she had regained her breath: "Charlie, why is it everyone wants us to get married—except you?"

"Who wants us to get married?"

"I do, and I think Ann wants us to. She'd stop worrying about you then. And I'm sure Mr. Morehouse does."

"What makes you think so?"

"Why does he keep throwing us together all the time? Everybody who's happy wants everybody else to be happy."

"What kind of trash were you brought up on, anyway?"

She laughed, snuggled against him.

He stood in front of Thyson and Thyson's girl in the office on the second floor of the Fairmont. "The amount keeps going up, you know, Charlie," Thyson reminded him.

"What are you worried about? That's what you asked me a couple of months ago."

"But things have changed since then."

"How changed?" Charlie was acting as though he were on sure ground, but he was all thin ice inside and he knew it. "Three's a crowd in a setup like this."

"I don't get you."

"The little dressmaker. Not that I blame you. But wives sometimes get sore. I know. I've had 'em."

"They sometimes get vindictive," the girl said.

"Maybe it doesn't make you nervous," Thyson said coldly, "but it does us, and we need a little something to quiet our nerves. Something like a hundred thousand dollars—due, say about the first of the year?"

"I'll handle it all right, don't worry."

Charlie left quickly. Once outside he began to get a little desperate.

When he got into his apartment the phone was ringing. He was pretty sure it was Bettina, so at first, remembering Thyson's cautioning, he didn't answer it. Then, a few instants' later, remembering Bettina's kiss in the taxi, he did.

After he had talked to her, Charlie wondered how such a heel—and he knew that he was one—could be so trapped by a girl like Bettina?

He found the answer later, or thought he did anyway, on New Year's Eve.

Again the A. P. Morehouses, not the Mortons of the Pompadour, were entertaining. It had been Morehouse's New Year's Eve habit for years. As he had often said to Mrs. Beeman: "Invite all the leeches we know, and let them go to it. Once a year I'll get drunk myself and pretend to really like them."

So tonight it was one of the Waldorf private-ballroom suites. There was an orchestra, and tables, and dancing, and a bar, and a glass-enclosed terrace. Morehouse moved about, having a drink with anyone who asked him.

Ann was dancing with one of the guests, her own thoughts worrying her, and not noticing anybody.

From across the room Charlie was

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watching Ann, and he thought he knew why he had been spending so much time with Bettina. It was odd that looking at one girl he suddenly knew why he was attracted to another.

Suddenly he moved across the room to Ann, cut in. It was a long moment before they spoke to each other, just danced. Then womanlike she had to spoil it. "You're not alone tonight by any chance?"

"No. She's over there—with your husband."

Ann looked; Bettina and Morehouse were starting to dance.

"I thought so. Silly of me to hope."

"Ann"—the pressure of his arm increased—"did you ever think how much she's like you were six years ago? That's all that draws me to her. When I'm with her I think of you as you were then. So young, so eager, so sweet."

"Have I changed so much?" she asked

"I changed you. It's my fault."

She looked at him, stopped dancing.

She moved ahead of him out onto the terrace. They stood for a long time with their noses up against the glass, like kids at a toy shop window, gazing at the glistening lights beyond.

"I wish you wouldn't say things like that," she managed finally. "You'll make me think you're in love with me again."

"Haven't I always been?"

"That's what I don't know." She turned to search his face. "I wish I knew. It'd make everything easier."

He seemed upset and looked away. He lighted a cigarette. She watched him. There was some reason for his honesty tonight, his almost-desperate honesty.

"Ann, I wonder if you've guessed the mess we're in."

"I know I don't like it. Any of it."

"An expensive mess, Annie." Her frown deepened. "My backers are backing out on me. Very brave fellows, except when it comes to the clinches."

"Didn't I beg you to give it up?"

"You just don't. You keep thinking you'll settle the score by betting higher, like you keep thinking seventeen's got to come up sometime." He tried to laugh.

She sensed that there was nothing funny about it. "Why are they worried?" she asked evenly.

He looked straight into her eyes. "Because they think Morehouse might live too long."

It was his look more than his words which alarmed her, the sudden sharp lines which appeared around his mouth.

"I'm getting impatient myself," he continued. "If he'd only fall down the stairs and break his neck." He glanced in toward the bar where Bettina and Morehouse could be glimpsed. "Or if he always drank like this, that would help." He again looked at her. "Ann, you take too good care of him."

"I like him," she said quietly.

"I'm afraid that's what he's counting on. One of these days he really expects to win out."

She began to walk. It was an unconscious effort to get away from him. But he moved along beside her. Neither was aware that all about them were the sounds of the midnight celebration. Whistles and sirens and auto horns sweeping up from the city, and from inside the horns and singing, and all such wonderful foolishness. Ann strode along, her sequined skirt rustling. "What's your hurry, Annie?" Charlie asked.

She stopped, faced him. She was white, her voice thin and horrified. "You're asking me to get rid of him."

"Wouldn't you do that—for us?"

"Charlie, we're crooks: we always have been. I've called it by different names—

smart, clever, only getting what was due us—but really just cheap conniving crooks. I can face that—but what you're asking now, that would be the end of us!"

"Or the beginning."

"Murder—if I could get away with it—that'd be the beginning to you?" Her voice was mounting. She was miserable.

"Not so loud, Annie. He's said himself he only has a year or two. We'd only be hurrying things."

"I had a dog once, Charlie, an old one. I couldn't—even then. How can you ask me to? What's happened to you?"

She turned away from him, put her hands over her face.

"I can't say 'Forget I mentioned it, Annie, but I am really sorry. Come here now.' He drew her to him, kissed her. But not on the lips. "I just thought," he murmured, "if some easy way turned up . . ."

She shook her head. "No, Charlie, I couldn't—even if it meant that something might happen to you." She looked up, worriedly. "They wouldn't do anything, would they, Charlie?"

"Don't worry about me. We'll just play the waiting game. Only I'd better do the waiting somewhere else—a safe distance from Thyson. Unless—"

He paused, as he saw her eyes go beyond him to one of the doors leading into the dancing room. He had been about to say, "Unless you have a hundred thousand dollars handy." He turned, saw Bettina bounding toward him happily, calling him. "Come in, Charlie, please. Quick. Mr. Morehouse wants to talk to you. It's New Year's Eve, darling; you haven't even kissed me! Come on, hurry." She grabbed his arm, pulled him away. "Excuse me, Ann, but you can come in and hear too!"

HEY went away from her. Ann stood there for a moment, then wandered inside.

The press of the people and the excitement had completely swamped Morehouse, Charlie and Bettina, and they had been buffeted into a spot far down the bar. They were huddled close. Morehouse was drunk and was talking loudly. To Ann he suddenly looked ridiculous and horrible. She had never seen him like this, his hair awry, his neatness gone. He just seemed like a drunken old fool.

Ann drew closer.

"Why shouldn't I?" Morehouse was saying. "You're nice young people, and young people've got to get along in the world. Consider it a wedding present. Build that big building if you like. Tell all those French lugs to move over. Don't you think she can do it, Charlie?" He looked up at Charlie. "Where will she ever get with that shop she has now? Got to put on the elegance."

"Oh, Charlie," Bettina begged. "Don't be such an old hard-to-get. He just doesn't want to marry me, Mr. Morehouse. He just doesn't want to!"

"Of course I do," Charlie said evenly. "I just always wanted to be sure that I could do her some good, that's all."

"Well, if you can't put me on top with a business like that, then you'd just better give up, Mr. Snooty Puss."

"Whatever it takes, you let me know," Morehouse said. "Come in right from the City Hall, and I'll make out the check. And all I'll ask out of it is some original models for Ann." He laughed, then looked up. "Isn't that right, Ann?"

The stupid drunken idiot had the nerve to repeat it to her. Charlie and Bettina were getting married. He was going to set them up in business as a wedding present.

Was it all guilelessness and goodheartedness? She wondered. She glanced at Charlie, then she looked again at her husband. He had tricked her. He was sly, under all that patient kindness. He wanted to get Charlie out of her life, wanted to enough to pay for it.

He even insisted that the crowd at the bar drink a toast to Charlie and Bettina.

He was certainly a sorry sight in the cab going down home. Confetti all over him. Nodding against her shoulder. Ann moved away from him. He babbled about the New Year—everything of the old year washed up, all its messiness, its ugliness. She let him babble. She watched him closely. His color seemed unnaturally high.

"Poor little Ann; you don't like me when I drink, do you? But it doesn't happen often. It can't."

"I was just thinking how you'll feel tomorrow." But she wasn't, at all. She was wondering . . .

"I know how I feel tonight," he said. He moved closer to her as though about to kiss her. She pulled away, and at that moment they drew up before the Pompadour.

Tim helped him out. She followed slowly, wondering, thinking.

Morehouse stumbled against Tim. Tim said, "Had a little too much, I'm afraid, sir. Take it easy, won't you?"

"Sure, Tim, sure."

"Good night, sir. Happy New Year."

"Happy New Year, Tim."

It was her job from then on. She took Morehouse's arm and led him to the elevator.

"Something I can do for you, Mrs. Morton?" the slightly bleary-eyed clerk asked, worried that she might notice he'd had a few drinks on duty.

She paid no attention, moved on into the elevator with Morehouse.

He caught her glance and winked foolishly. "Certainly no fool like an old fool," he muttered.

Up that last flight on foot, and then into the apartment. He murmured and babbled about the evening. Drunken prattle. She didn't want him to go to his room; she wanted time to think what she could do, and if she should do it.

"I might let you have one more drink if you're good," she said suddenly.

"I'll be good, but don't tell Mrs. Bee-man. She watches me." He moved on.

"Don't you want it now?"

"Got to get this collar off first." He went on ahead to his room, went in.

She followed slowly, went into her room. She stood a moment in front of her dressing table, looking at the tremendous gift basket, the New Year's greeting to her from the Pompadour staff: wine, brandy, candy, fruit, all tied up with bright ribbon bows. On the basket was a card: "To Mrs. Morton with affection and gratitude from her Pompadour family." She took out a brandy bottle, looked at it. Then she set it down and looked at herself in the mirror. She was remembering one thing Morehouse had said: "I know how I feel tonight."

And the way he had looked at her. Sure, liquor and women—they went together. Morehouse being so cautiously impersonal, platonic all this time. Sure, no excitement, that was it; that was what he was afraid of. Dangerous, maybe fatal.

But why then was she so hesitant? She was hesitant because the last good graces of her being were halting her.

Then she forced herself to move. She unhooked her dress, let it slip away from her. Then she went to the closet, put

on her sheerest dressing gown. She came back to the mirror, touched up her lips. Then she looked at the bottle.

She picked it up, went to his room.

His door was closed; she stood for a moment outside, then slowly opened it. As she entered, there was a crash of glass from the bath and dressing room.

"Ashley?" And then because he didn't immediately answer, more urgently: "Ashley, are you all right?"

"Yes, sure—yes."

He had probably drunkenly knocked over a glass. She set down the brandy, got glasses from his night table, set them beside the bottle. She turned out all the lamps but one. She sank down across the foot of the bed, watching the dressing-room door.

The silence grew longer and louder. She half sat up, listening more acutely. Intuitively she became alarmed. In one swift movement she swept across the room, threw open the door.

A startled little gasp escaped her. He was stretched out on the floor, unearthly still, his head turned to one side.

What she did in the next few moments was purely automatic: a call to the clerk downstairs asking him to call Dr. Phillips who lived in the Pompadour; then, trying to arouse Morehouse, finding his weight a limp stubborn mass in her arms. She ran for a glass of water then, but by that time the clerk was there. Between them they got Morehouse onto the bed. If the clerk asked her questions she heard none of them for in her own mind were her own questions, demanding, insistent, unanswered. Was it a stroke, and was he dying, and would she be free now? Free. What a wonderful word it was suddenly! Free, without the haunting guilt of the rôle she might have played.

She found herself in the awful position of being torn between hope and memory: hope for his death and memory of his kindnesses to her. When the doctor arrived and asked her to wait outside, she was glad to go.

She never knew how she lived those next few minutes. She only knew that she sat in her room, very quiet, very white, her hands lying listlessly in her lap—until the knock came at the door.

She went to the door, opened it. Dr. Phillips was a round, pleasant little man.

"Mrs. Morton, I'm glad to report that there's nothing wrong with your husband that eight hours of sleep won't cure. I guess I don't have to say Happy New Year. Apparently it was! Good night, Mrs. Morton."

He went on his cheery way. She went to her bed, sank down on it. And in that moment memory won out over hope, for she was suddenly crying—partly from nerves and exhaustion, partly for the unsolved problem still ahead—but mainly because she had not killed Morehouse; he was not dying, and she was glad.

It was early afternoon, New Year's day. As Ann moved through the penthouse living room to open the outer door, where the bell had just sounded, she looked as if she hadn't slept. She was nervous: during the night she had made countless telephone calls to try to locate Charlie, remembering the resignation in his eyes as the toast had been drunk to him and Bettina. She had found him nowhere. She had even phoned Bettina's, and she was afraid when no one answered: two people in each other's arms don't bother with telephones.

Dr. Phillips was at the door. She was not surprised, for she had left a message for him. It had surprised him however, and slightly irritated him: he

hadn't had a moment to himself all morning. "New Year's Day," he said, by way of greeting, "is quite a day for doctors."

"I'm sorry. I know you're busy; I tried to get you earlier."

"I only came back to the hotel because I couldn't stand any more of it," the doctor was murmuring. "There's only one solution"—he smiled weakly—"have you a drink for me?"

"Of course. I meant to ask you anyway."

She poured him a drink, tried to think of how to phrase her questions without being too obvious. "Dr. Phillips, just because there are so many hang-overs today, don't you think you might have jumped to conclusions about Mr. Morton?"

He showed faint surprise. "Well, I must say I don't see him that way very often—but, definitely, that's all it is."

Ann ventured further. "Mr. Morton doesn't usually drink—for a reason."

"Damn good reason too." He paused, then: "Mrs. Morton, I've been his doctor for a good many years. At times he's sent for me to come to the Waldorf, so you see I know who he is. You can't handle an empire such as his and befog your

that there's nothing wrong with my heart—except that you never asked me. Aren't you at least pleased to know that Charlie didn't lie to you?"

A lot of complex thoughts were swirling through her mind. Embarrassed and nervous, she wanted to get away and think them out. "Ashley, I've had a long difficult night worrying about you. I'm glad to see you're feeling better." She started for the stairs, hoping to go safely to her room. He was in her way and didn't move. She paused, waited.

"You can both be forgiven for believing I'm on my last legs, since a lot of other people have also believed it. As the doctor said, it has always amused me to see them 'waiting' from year to year. It's only regrettable that my little joke meant more to you and Charlie than to the others. The widow always gets the major portion, I believe."

"I don't know why you mention Charlie," she said steadily, not understanding why she should try to protect him, but compelled to it.

"Then it was just *your* idea—marrying a dying old man so that—"

"Women have always been inclined to look to their futures."

"Ann, sit down. I want to talk to you. Have a drink. You can fix me one too."

She was panicky. Guilt and shame, like nausea, waivered through her, and to overcome it she summoned up all her anger. Her voice became harsh, her eyes blazed. "You've been playing a cheap game with me, and you did it purposely," she accused. "I don't see why I'm any more at fault than you are. You must have known I didn't marry you for love, or to look forward to twenty or thirty years of *happiness* with you!"

A man may know the truth, but reminders hurt. "Yes, I'm afraid I knew it wasn't that." He moved past her to the small portable bar, poured a drink. Her sympathy for him, and her liking for him again swept over her. If only he wouldn't be so calm and quiet and so nice. She tried, more gently, "You must have known it wouldn't work, Ashley. It's not that I haven't been fond of you. And it's true I did want to get away from Charlie—"

"Or Charlie wanted to get away from you," he said coldly, turning to look at her then. "Oh, I know you . . . I know you so well, Ann. Don't try to cover up for him. I've known for a long time about you both—from the boat, even. Don't you think that a man in my position is always running up against your little game? To make sure, I radioed Rio. Ann and Charlie Kent, quite a team. Not nice people. And the husband getting bored, hampered by marriage—"

"You don't have to try to get back at me through Charlie. My marrying you was purely business." Desperately she was trying to convince herself that it was; whatever else Morehouse said was not true.

"Think back on those four years in Rio; I've heard something about them too. How was it then? Wasn't he always irritable, moody, restless? Didn't he often suggest your splitting up, trying your little careers separately?"

She said with less assurance, "It was difficult for him. It wasn't what he was used to."

"That's what I'm saying, Annie. And when I turn you out without a penny, won't it be the same again?"

It was an instant before she realized what he had said; even then her first concern was for Charlie. "Oh, no, Ashley—no, we've got to help him. He's in a jam. Ashley, please—he owes money. He's been gambling. He—"

"You two have managed similar jams

ANSWERS TO EASTER PARADE QUIZ

(Questions on page 18)

1915	1926	1928
1	2	3
1945	1939	1918
4	5	6
		7

mind—at least a smart man doesn't."

"Then it's not because of his heart?" she asked hollowly.

"His heart? Oh, he lets people think it is." He laughed. "It appeals to his cynical sense of humor. In fact I've heard him tell it better than that—that we doctors have only given him a couple of years. He says he loves to see the greed on his dear ones' faces. I suppose a rich man does have relatives who—"

He stopped abruptly, realizing that Morehouse's wife must have known all this, and if not, why not? "Mrs. Morehouse, why did you ask me up here?"

She flushed guiltily, unable to answer.

"You can't blame a good wife for being cautious," said Morehouse's voice from above them.

They both looked up. He was standing on the balcony, had been there apparently for some minutes. He was freshly shaved, his own immaculate self again. Easy in manner, he came down the steps, still addressing the doctor, teasingly, "Don't be insulted, Phillips, just because she wanted to be sure you gave me a good going-over." He put a friendly hand on the doctor's shoulder. "I suppose I didn't look long for this world!"

The doctor was partially at ease again. "Well, see that it doesn't happen again"—then, smiling—"until next year anyway." He thanked Ann for the drink, looked at her again a little oddly. There was something strange here. Maybe it was because he himself was tired and unnerved; he was imagining things.

Morehouse went to the door with him, closed it after him, then turned to face Ann, unsmiling.

"Ann, I would have told you before

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before. I suppose you're going to promise me you'll never see him again if I help him?"

"He wouldn't agree to that."

"Because he still loves you? Oh, come now, Annie." He saw how unbelieving she was, but he continued, "He'll get out of this mess all right through Bettina."

"Because you're forcing him to. Because you want it that way!" she challenged.

"How do you want it, Annie?"

She hesitated, then said earnestly, "The only way it can be—we've got to be together again."

"And take up where you left off?"

"No, I think I've learned finally."

"Has he? Oh, poor Annie! Do you really think it'll ever cease? You haven't even asked why, knowing about you both as I did, I put up with it. Because I hoped you'd see him for what he is and be cured. I endow hospitals and homes for crippled children; it seemed interesting for a change to make the work more personal. Good heavens, do you think your life'd ever really be any different with him? Do you think he'll stop at blackmail and deception? Next thing will be murder. I'm surprised that that hasn't already occurred to him. Not that he'd do it. It'd be you—and if you got caught, that'd put you very nicely out of the way, wouldn't it? Leave him to go back to where he was before you started cluttering up his life."

He had been speaking emotionally, didn't notice the way she was staring at him. "Next thing'll be murder," he had said. It was as though he knew what had been in her mind last night. Had Charlie suggested it for the reason Morehouse said; did he want to get rid of her, hoping that she'd get caught? Was he in earnest about Bettina? She remembered Bettina's possessiveness and Charlie's apparent willingness. Then, on the other hand, she remembered dancing with Charlie the evening before, the old longing between them stronger than ever; remembered the moment on the terrace when he had drawn her to him and kissed her. In spite of Bettina, in spite of all Bettinas—and no matter what a crook he might be—the important thing was, did he still love her?

She found to her surprise that she was not only thinking these thoughts, but blurting them out loud. "I wish I could feel sorry for you, Ashley, and hate myself for all this, but I can't. I'm sure he still loves me . . . Bettina was only a blind so you wouldn't be suspicious of us. If you hadn't led us into this, none of this would have happened. If you knew we were after blackmail, why didn't you have your satisfaction then? It would have been so easy, so simple! But no!" she scoffed bitterly—"you wanted to reorder our lives. Sit and wait and laugh and watch what was happening to us!"

"I'm afraid you misunderstand my motives completely."

"What were they then?" But even as she asked she knew; she sensed that he was also in love with her. "Ashley," she asked, suddenly tender, tremulous, "why did you never ask anything of me? Why was it that—"

He didn't answer. He didn't have to. She knew then that he hadn't wanted to share her; he had known all along that she was still in love with Charlie. It seemed to her suddenly wonderful to know a man who was willing to wait for wholehearted response. It touched her; weakened her. She turned then and went away from him quickly, up the stairs.

He stood for a moment looking up after her, troubled and miserable. He had tried to keep his love out of his eyes, but it had been impossible. And he had





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seen the way she had looked at him, tender and a little awed. He hated that look; it meant she felt sorry for him.

He went up to her door, stood there, tempted to go in . . . but what more was there, really, to be said? He had failed; they all had failed. Charlie had hoped for money, Ann had hoped for Charlie, and he had hoped for Ann. The only one to get anything was Bettina, and she had a bad bargain in Charlie.

He moved on to his own room.

To Ann the silence in the small apartment was unbearable. She had quickly thrown on her fur jacket and was waiting. She eventually opened the door and looked out, hoping that she would not have to speak to Ashley or look at him again. The very thought of him made her feel small. Relieved to see the living room empty, she went out quietly.

She went to Charlie's apartment house, and as she entered and asked for him, the desk clerk said, "Yes, I believe he just came in." He asked who was calling.

"Mrs. Kent," she said, for she was again thinking of herself as Charlie's wife. The name surprised the clerk who looked at her oddly. He announced her, and then said, "Will you go up, please?"

Charlie's door was open when she stepped out of the elevator, and he was standing there waiting for her. One look at him, and she was no longer worried. Somehow, at this moment, she remembered him as he had been in the hospital in Rio those months . . . subdued, gentle, almost beaten. He hadn't shaved, and he looked as if he'd been through a horrible time. Something so humble and beseeching about him . . . Charlie Kent, the crook, the not-very-strong fellow who was always getting into jams. She didn't know what made him look like this; she only knew he seemed to be needing her. She went straight into his arms.

"Darling, where have you been?" she murmured. "You look actually sick. What is it, Charlie?"

He drew her into the apartment, closed the door, again took her into his arms.

"Charlie, I don't understand. You're glad to see me!" Both wonderment and happiness in her voice.

"Is Morehouse all right?" he asked.

"Perfectly."

"That's a lucky break."

"But last night—"

"I had a change of heart. To hell with Morehouse. To hell with them all."

"Charlie, what's happened to you?"

"You—all over again, like it was the first time. You know where I've been since last night? With Thyson." He began pacing about the room. "I thought I could talk him out of the whole thing. I offered to work it off for him—as croupier, bouncer, anything he wanted."

"For me, you did that?"

"I even offered to learn a little fancy dealing if I could pay him back that way. Annie, we belong together. I just found it out last night, thinking about a lifetime with Bettina."

She was still doubtful. "Morehouse hasn't called you, has he?"

"About what?"

She saw then that he didn't really know. "Charlie, our little plan would never have worked anyway. He's been on to us both from the beginning."

"That lousy—"

"No." She stopped him quickly. "Whatever he did, he meant well." She decided not to tell him too much; she didn't dare tell him how thinking of Morehouse now suddenly made her want to cry. "Just some silly idiosyncrasies of his," she continued, "thinking that he could cure us of each other. I'm afraid there's no chance of his dying, or of our get-

ting anything. We'll have to forget it."

"I'd already decided it wasn't worth it." His eyes had grown warm again. "One thing you can get from him though—a divorce. You will, won't you?"

"As soon as possible."

"Oh Annie, I'm nothing without you; you know that, don't you?"

"And together?" she asked. "I'm afraid together we don't amount to much either, Charlie."

"Together we'll do all right—if we can only figure now about Thyson. He's so smooth he frightens me. There'll be no ride, no being thrown into a ditch. He's more legal. He's got those papers I signed for the loans; that means a suit—and why he made me the loans—the whole thing splashed out pretty."

"Does it matter now?"

"If we have to live with it the rest of our lives?"

"I don't care." He had sunk into a chair. She slipped down onto his lap. They looked at each other, the old passion blazing between them.

"You really think you can chance it with me again?" he asked.

She smiled faintly. What foolish questions. "We don't have to live here, Charlie. Let's make it really right, with no ugly shadows following us. We'll go somewhere where no one knows."

"Would you mind Panama?"

"Why not? They must have homes there, and jobs, and that's what we want."

"I checked on boats just in case. We can't give Thyson much time. There's one sailing at eight tonight."

"That doesn't give us long, does it?" She was wishing there was more time. She wanted to stay here in Charlie's arms.

"You've got to pack," he reminded her.

"Yes, sure." But she wasn't thinking of packing. She was thinking of Morehouse. She just couldn't run out on him like this, without some word of gratitude.

"I'd better hurry." Love would wait.

"Nothing'll go wrong, will it?"

"Of course not. You'd better come for me though, in case."

It was shortly before six o'clock when she returned to the hotel. The little Pompadour had come to life again. And how nice it looked as you came into it out of the cold: its soft shaded lights, its old-fashioned furnishings.

Ann asked Harrison, the day clerk, if Mr. Morton was in. No, he had gone out, he told her. Had he asked for her? She couldn't keep an anxious eagerness out of her voice. No, he hadn't, but the chef had been screaming for her; he'd been feuding again with the headwaiter.

After soothing the chef, Ann looked into the dining room. It hadn't yet opened, but would in a moment or two. The fireplace had been lighted. The tables looked pretty; a busboy was setting flowers around on them. One of the waiters smiled at her.

Yes, everything was all right here. The Pompadour had weathered New Year's Eve, and was back in stride again.

As she went up in the elevator, the head housekeeper passed her on the stairway, carrying linens. She called cheerily to Mrs. Morton through the grillwork of the elevator. Ann smiled but didn't answer. She had a lump in her throat.

Damn it, why was it so hard? Being sentimental about a hotel! How foolish. But was it just sentimental about a hotel? Maybe it was because she had done a good job here. Well, she couldn't help being a little proud of that.

She didn't pack much: a few dresses, lingerie, mainly the things she had arrived with. Then she looked at the time.

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She wished Ashley would come back. It got to be six-thirty. She couldn't waste much more time. She sat down and wrote a note. "I didn't want to go off without a good-by," she wrote. "But in a way I suppose it's best. It would be difficult to say it, and to say how much I admire you. Try to forgive me." She signed it, "Ann."

She went to the window, looked down.

She saw a taxi drive up, saw Charlie get out. She picked up her suitcase, put the note on her dressing table and left.

Charlie was waiting anxiously for her when she came down. They went out and got into the cab. His luggage was already in it.

"I'm late," he said, "but I had a little trouble digging up space. A fellow at the Plaza got it for me. We'll have to stop there and pick up the tickets."

She wasn't listening. She was looking back at the hotel as they drew away from it. Silly, funny little old hotel with its front canopy sagging. They ought to have a better canopy, a stronger one.

"Annie—hey!"

She faced front again, put it out of her thoughts. "How about the tickets?" she asked. "Did you get them?"

"I just told you. Where were you?" He looked at her, smiling.

"I'm here now."

"Thank God."

"Charlie—no jewelry, no furs even. I had a chance once at his safe, but I—"

"Forget it."

"I just wanted to be sure you know."

"I only know it's like six years ago." His eyes were looking into hers, remembering. "I guess we've just got something, Annie."

"You shaved. You look nicer," she observed.

"One usually does when setting off on a honeymoon. By the way, do you suppose he'll divorce you, or do we have to go to the trouble?"

"I'd like it both ways for good measure."

"Well, but if we can save ourselves the expense."

"Charlie, speaking of that, what do we do for money?"

He hesitated. "You said something about jobs. I suppose we'll both have to work for a while, though that's a hell of a slow way of getting ahead in the world. I mean, if you'd lost your looks, or something like that . . . good God, Annie, you're beautiful. I don't think I could blame any man in the world for falling for you." Then, quickly, because he felt awkward about his own thoughts: "I'll see if I can find a gin pigeon on the boat. We'll get a little something to start on that way."

"I don't want you to do any more gambling."

"Well, something."

She could read it in his mind. She knew him so well that it was as though he had already said the words, though it was she who said them: "Or find, maybe, just one more tiny little millionaire for me?"

He looked at her, and laughed with relief. "Oh, Annie angel, how we know each other. Reform just doesn't become us, does it? One, shall we say, very very tiny millionaire?"

She laughed too, as he leaned over to kiss her. At least she made the sound of laughter.

They drew up at the side entrance of the Plaza.

"Want to eat in here?" he asked.

"We've got time."

"Charlie, I just thought of something." Her voice had changed, but he didn't notice it. "There's quite a bit of cash at



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the hotel. Harrison usually brings it to me every night at seven to check it before it goes into the safe. It doesn't have to go into the safe tonight."

She didn't need to sell it. "I'll meet you on the boat," he said. "You take another cab, and I'll keep an eye on the luggage." He led her to a cab which was parked in front of theirs. He felt forced to say, "After all, you've worked for that money; you deserve it."

"Yes, sure."

He told her the pier number. "Forty-third Street, Annie. You won't forget it."

"I've got it."

She returned to the hotel, returned to the penthouse, which was still empty . . . sank down on the couch to wait. She had no bag to unpack, but she wished there were something she could do to make herself feel that she had really returned home. Something that would help her forget Charlie and the disappointment he had been to her. She remembered then. She called the head porter and asked him to get some estimates on a new canopy.

After that, she felt better. Then she heard the elevator creeping up, and she stood up expectantly.

As Ashley Morehouse entered, he stared at her, surprised. "I never expected to see you again, Ann," he said.

"Why? People say things in anger which they don't always mean. I've had a chance to think about things. Maybe you're right about Charlie's never changing. Maybe you're right that he doesn't love me enough."

He turned away from her to put his coat in the closet. That way he didn't have to look at her; his face might show what he was feeling.

"Ashley, I was thinking—shall we have dinner downstairs tonight, instead of up here? The dining room looked so pretty, and—"

He turned back then, and she saw his face. "Ashley, what's the matter?"

"You came back to your job here at the hotel, you didn't come back to me," he said steadily.

"You are my job," she said fondly. "If you'll forgive me for being so wrong, I'll make it up to you. I figured out why you went through all this. You kind of got caught too, didn't you?" She went over to him and kissed him. He was touched by the kiss; it was almost more than he could stand.

"No, Ann, you've got it wrong. Just experimenting. You were right the first time—meddling—and now it's over. I'm fond of you, of course. But I'm so much older than you. I wouldn't want you for just a little while, and it never could be more than that. The difference in our ages is too great. There is somebody though who has always been important to me. We understand each other. Mrs. Beeman. I should have done something about it a long time ago."

She knew he was lying. She knew that Mrs. Beeman was a widow, that she adored working for Morehouse—but beyond that. She slowly shook her head.

"You fool," he said. "Don't you understand what I'm saying? The door is open."

"I don't want it to be open."

"Though naturally the manager of the Pompadour should still live in the hotel . . . perhaps in some of those rooms you had done over. Oh, you little fool. Go on out now; get some fresh air. Mrs. Beeman'll be here any minute. We have some letters to do—I've been neglecting them the last few days—and then we're going to dinner. Go on, Annie."

The phone rang, and he answered it. "Yes; have her come up, please."

Ann was just standing there, looking at him, adoring him.

"Go on, Ann—for the evening anyway. I'll have your things moved by the time you come back." He lifted her coat from the chair, put it around her. "Walk fast, Ann, and breathe deeply . . . and remember, there's a nice fellow on some street corner, waiting for you, if you'll only look for him."

The elevator was again coming up; she knew that Mrs. Beeman was in it. She gave him one last grateful look, then went out and down the stairway.

In the lobby, headed for the street, she suddenly stopped as she saw a familiar figure. It was Bettina. Bettina seemed puzzled and unhappy, then seeing Ann, came to her immediately.

"Ann, I had to see you. I've been at the Waldorf several times and Mrs. Beeman kept insisting that you weren't there. Then when she left I followed her. Please don't look angry."

"I'm not angry, just surprised."

"Where's Charlie? I've been trying to get in touch with him all day. I thought you two might know."

"Is it so very important to you?"

"Everything. You know that."

"Come along then." Ann strode out onto the sidewalk and Bettina followed her. They got into a cab. Ann gave the pier address to the driver.

"I've got to talk fast, Bettina. There's not much time, and you've got a big decision to make. I have to tell you a few things about myself and Charlie." She told them as brutally as she could, not elaborating, just the cold unpleasant truths. Their early years together, then their plan about Morehouse, then even their New Year's Eve discussion about killing Morehouse. Through it all Bettina listened unbelievingly. "You just want to get him back from me," she accused.

"I wouldn't be telling you this in that case. Charlie has two tickets; my luggage is aboard. There's the ship now." She nodded ahead as they turned onto the pier. "At the last minute he wanted me instead of you. But I imagine he can be persuaded to change his mind again, if you want him to."

They sat there for a long moment, looking at the brightly lighted ship, with its last few passengers hurrying aboard.

The taxi driver craned around. "Is this it? Is this what you want?"

"Just a minute, please," Ann said. She watched Bettina for her answer.

She saw Bettina's eyes fill with tears. "The gangplank's going up now," Ann told her, "but there's still time, if you want to get out and yell."

She still waited, but then Bettina spoke to the driver. Her voice was filled with hurt, but otherwise she was quite contained. "It's all right; we can turn around now."

At the street, Ann said, "If you don't mind I think I'll walk from here on. Will you be all right, Bettina?"

"Yes, sure. Good-bye, Ann—and thanks."

Ann got out, and the taxi moved on. She thought how surprising and comforting it was that she had seen that gangplank go up without a qualm. Charlie was gone forever, and she was glad.

She walked happily, leisurely, enjoying the frosty night. She passed a street corner without remembering what Ashley had said, "a nice young fellow on some street corner waiting," until after she had passed. She looked back, but she was too far away to really see anyone who might be standing there.

Oh, well, there was always another street corner ahead. She strode on. There was a contentment about her . . . and a freshness . . . and an eagerness.

THE END

It Just Keeps Rollin' Along

(Continued from page 33)

The curtain rose. The music ceased jerkily in a mid-bar. They became little children listening to a fairy tale. A glorious world of unreality opened before their eyes. Things happened. They knew that in life things did not happen thus. But here they saw, believed, and were happy. Innocence wore golden curls. Wickedness wore black. Love triumphed, right conquered, virtue was rewarded, evil punished.

They forgot the cotton fields, the wheatfields, the cornfields. They forgot the coal mines, the potato patch, the stable, the barn, the shed. They forgot the labour under the pitiless blaze of the noonday sun; the bitter marrow-numbing chill of winter; the blistered skin; the frozen road; wind, snow, rain, flood. The women forgot for an hour their washtubs, their kitchen stoves, child-birth pains, drudgery, worry, disappointment. Here were blood, lust, love, passion. Here were warmth, enchantment, laughter, music. It was Anodyne. It was Lethe. It was Escape. It was the Theatre.

Well, then, for that moment I forgot the agony and horror I had seen at Buchenwald Concentration Camp. I forgot the dead flat things. I momentarily forgot the children with their numbers branded on their wasted wrists; I forgot the men with their skull-like faces, the chamber with the blood marks on the walls and the heavy doors clawed in the desperate agony of the trapped and dying. For a few minutes I was happy because this boy, this peace-loving warrior in a strange land, this lad who had not even been born when "Show Boat" was written, had read it, remembered it; to him, too, it meant something of beauty and romance and color in the midst of death and destruction. If, in all my many years of writing, that had been my only recompense, I'd have felt repaid.

Combat ceased. Summer came. Back in New York Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein announced a revival of the musical play "Show Boat." Mmm! Tastes change; it's been almost twenty years; it may be dated; they'll compare the new cast with the old. They'll say, "Oh, but you should have heard Paul Robeson! Oh, but you should have seen Charlie Winninger, Edna May Oliver, Helen Morgan."

Oscar Hammerstein plunged into work. Jerome Kern arrived from his home in Hollywood to collaborate in the huge production. Then came Jerome Kern's tragic death. Alone, Oscar Hammerstein tackled the gigantic task. There, at rehearsals, were two or three of the original company. There, as assistant stage manager, was Oscar Hammerstein's son, just discharged from the Navy. He stands with the working script in his hand and I know that when his father first produced the play this young man was an infant. Now he sees the play come alive, not only under his father's masterly guidance but under his own supervising eye. There seems to be in this something right and satisfactory. A kind of good continuity.

Helen Hayes says, "I'm taking Mary to see 'Show Boat.' I can't wait." Mary is her daughter, fifteen.

Peg Pulitzer says, "I'm trying to get seats for Susan and four of her boy and girl friends. It's her birthday."

Bernard Baruch says, "I don't go to first nights any more. But I'm going to this one." And he was there, third row, on the aisle.

There they were, those people of the first-night audience waiting to accept or reject a musical play twenty years old.

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Here were blood, lust, love, passion. Here were warmth, enchantment, laughter, music. It was Anodyne. It was Lethe. It was Escape. It was the Theatre.

The So-Called Loves of John Dunning

(Continued from page 59)

around the table to stand behind her. He lifted the long dark hair that covered her shoulders and leaned down to kiss the back of her neck. "You are a jewel," he whispered. "You need a velvet setting."

Kay rose, smiling, and kissed him lightly on the cheek. At her touch he felt a sudden sharp longing to hold her in his arms. Impulsively, a little awkwardly, he put his arms about her waist and drew her close. "Let me give it to you, Kay."

He felt clumsy, self-conscious, gawky as a schoolboy.

Kay ducked her head, avoiding his kiss, and laughed. "Give me what, Johnny?" "The velvet setting."

She turned away from him and walked slowly into the library.

"I can do it, Kay. I can give you all the things you ought to have." He tried to keep his voice low and casual as he followed her, but it began to rise, to take on a note of haste and desperation. "And I can give you love. I love you, Katherine."

He grasped her arms from behind and pulled her back against him. She let her head fall back against his shoulder.

They were standing before the big square mirror that hung over the mantelpiece. Kay's eyes met his in the glass, and she raised her hand to touch his cheek. She said, "I like you a lot. But not that way." Her smile was apologetic.

Dunning had a theory about love-making. When discussing the subject with his friends, as he often did, he was always amazed at their emphasis on love talk, on carefully selected words and phrases. Dunning knew that speeches meant little. Silver-tongued oratory, the sort the Casanovas of the world were popularly thought to employ, he found amusing. "Silver tongue, my grandmother!" he would protest. "No woman was ever talked into wanting a man."

Proceeding on that basis, he made no more pretty speeches to Kay. He simply turned her about, so she faced him, and took her into his arms.

He kissed her lightly. She did not resist but smiled at him. "You're an angel."

The second kiss was more demanding: he held her tightly. After a long moment he released her and whispered, "Kay—darling—I've got to have you, I've got—"

It was then that she laughed. The laughter came slowly at first, in broken gasps. Then it overcame her completely, and she threw back her head and gave herself up to it. Tears sprang into her eyes, and she wiped them away with the back of her hand. "Forgive me, darling," she gasped. "Please forgive me, but you—you're so—" Words failed her and she

sank into a chair, arms hanging limp over the sides. "You're so *cute*, darling, and so—" She looked up at him. "So *corn-y*. It's delicious!"

He watched her, his face blank.

Kay laughed on, seemingly helpless to stop. "Forgive me, Johnny," she begged, "please do forgive me. Oh, dear!" She drew in her breath in a long, laughing sigh. "Don't be offended, Johnny, but you were—too—priceless!"

He turned away and walked slowly, cautiously, as a drunken man walks, into the hallway, then to the elevator door.

Kay came running after him, her face sober at last. She cried out, "Come back here, Johnny! Wherever *are* you going?"

He spoke with quiet venom as the elevator descended. "Go to hell," he said.

For the first time in twenty years John Dunning walked down Fifth Avenue hatless, gloveless and canoeless. It had stopped raining, but a light wind had risen, bringing with it a sharp forewarning of winter. Passers-by turned up their coat collars against it, but Dunning did not even put his bare hands into his pockets. He didn't feel the wind.

He didn't know how far he had walked—it seemed miles—before he came to the first lighted shop window. It held a display of infants' wear. He paused in front of it, searching for some one thing on which to fasten his attention. Most prominently displayed, in the center of the window, was a christening dress, a dainty, white, delicately embroidered garment with a pink ribbon bow tied on the left shoulder. He chose that, concentrated on it with a frantic intensity. He counted the scallops across the bottom of the dress. Sixteen. Eight across the front, eight across the back. He recounted them: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven . . . He felt his mind pulling away from them stubbornly, and shifted his attention to the ribbon bow on the shoulder. He noted carefully the way it was tied. Mentally he untied the bow, retied it, untied it again, while a small part of his mind told him he'd never in all his life, forget the pink bow and the sixteen scallops. They would come back and haunt him, when he least expected it.

He walked on. A car driving slowly past had its radio going, and music came from it. A piano. A few bars of Fantasie Impromptu reached his ears. He clutched at them, held them close in his thoughts after the car and the music had gone. Fantasie Impromptu. Chopin. Chopin, playing his heart out for Poland, Paderewski, Poland under Hitler.

He felt tears well up in his eyes and roll down his cheeks, hot on his wind-chilled skin. I am crying, he thought. Crying, for Frédéric Chopin. For Poland.

With the tears, his defenses crumbled. Katherine's laughter came back to taunt him and could not be turned away. He quickened his step, dried his eyes—furtively—for two women were passing and one of them looked at him strangely. He turned into a side-street grill with a bar. "Double bourbon," he told the bartender. While he waited he studied his own reflection in the bar mirror. He took careful note of the receding hair line, the slight pouchiness under the eyes, the deep semicircular lines that ran from nose to mouth. He took every defect he could find and stabbed himself with it.

With the drink he grew even more violently masochistic. He brought back the hour with Katherine, felt all over again the hurt of her laughter and her words. Little phrases tortured him. His own: "Kay, darling, I've got to have you . . . I love you . . . Let me give it to you, Kay, the velvet setting . . . I love you, Katherine." God!



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Hers: "You're so cute darling and so corny . . . Please do forgive me You were too priceless." He held the picture before his eyes and, mentally writhing, made himself look at it.

After that he felt better—strangely, comfortingly empty, devoid of emotion of any kind. Something like peace came into him, raised his chin, straightened his shoulders. He left the bar and went outside to signal a taxi.

In the taxi he looked at his watch and found that he had been gone from home for two hours. It seemed an eternity. Kay would, of course, be gone. He must remember to send flowers tomorrow and a note of apology. Make it short, as impersonal as possible, the sort of letter

that would write finis, politely but firmly, to an unpleasant chapter.

At home he got into a dressing gown. He washed his face and combed his wind-tossed hair. Then, armed with a whisky and soda and a cigarette, he resumed the slow pacing of the library he had interrupted earlier in the evening.

Kay was a very foolish girl, he decided. She was, possibly, even a little dumb.

Yes. And undeniably bad-mannered. He began to wonder why he had been so attracted to the girl in the first place.

For the first time in hours he smiled, thinking of her stricken face when she had realized her awful mistake and followed him into the hall. Poor Kay. May-be this would teach her a lesson.

He walked over to his writing desk and picked up a telephone directory. Idly, he ruffled the pages, then spread the book open on the desk. He frowned as he glanced down the page that started with Gumm Albert, and ended with Gusoff Louis. There was no Gunn Willi listed. But it didn't matter. He knew her address; it was too late to call tonight anyway. He'd call in person, or send a note.

Perhaps she hadn't seen the Frick collection of paintings. An art student would be interested in that. They would visit it someday soon. Afterward he would take her to dinner. And then—his fingers drummed on the desk top as he wondered what would please her most. A concert, perhaps?

New Gold for Old Diamonds (Continued from page 55)

considered extravagance—and probably it would have been in view of the amount usually offered.

When Lou Perini, one of the three wealthy Boston contractors who now own the Braves, heard last season that the Cards were about to put Mort Cooper, their pitching ace, on the market, he went out to the airfield, climbed into his private plane and was off for the Gateway to the Great Southwest. Guido L. Rugo and Joseph Maney, Perini's associates, are go-getters too. To prove it, they got Billy Southworth as the Braves' new manager at the end of the 1945 campaign.

With Tom Yawkey's millions behind them, the Boston Red Sox have nothing to fear yet from the intramural competition they'll be getting in stiffer doses from now on. Although Ted Williams, John Pesky, Bobby Doerr, Dominick DiMaggio, Tex Hughson and a raft of other players are back from the service, Yawkey has added more punch to his club by purchasing Rudy York, the half-breed Cherokee, from the Tigers. The situation is so rooseate that conservative manager Joe Cronin is claiming the pennant for the Red Sox.

Should the long-suffering fans of the Philadelphia Phillies soon be relieved of some of their chronic baseball headaches, they can thank the Yanks, because their rescue from the diamond's "ough of Despond" can be traced to a visit a nine-year-old lad made to the spring training camp of the New York American League club at St. Petersburg, in the late 1920's.

Herb Pennock, most graceful southpaw ever to send a horse-hide curving over the plate, lived in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, good fox-hunting country frequented by the du Ponts and other landed proprietors from near-by Wilmington, Delaware. One of his neighbors was nine-year-old Bobby Carpenter, who managed to remain a normal American boy despite the kings' ransoms to which he was related. Bobby loved all sports, particularly baseball, and Herb Pennock, whom he had met, was his idol. Herb took Bobby to training camp with him when Ruth and Meusel were still around.

That visit made Bobby want to own a big league baseball club more than anything else in the world and now he does. The Phillies belong to him lock, stock and cellar, and who do you think is his general manager? Herb Pennock, of course. With the du Pont bank roll behind him, Bobby can now combine his favorite business with his perennial pleasure by building a winning ball club for Philadelphia—and near-by Wilmington. Able, likable Herb Pennock already has made great headway by organizing a farm system which will soon be yielding crops for the mother club.

Young Horace Stoneham, the late Charley's son, has been held in check by conservative influences in the directorate since he inherited his father's baseball holdings in The New York Giants. But now matured and no longer restrained from spending money where he thinks it's needed, Horace has come up with the purchase of Walker Cooper from the St. Louis Cards for \$175,000.

Walker, the catching half of the Cardinals' now split brother-battery, was still in the Navy when Horace bought him with the help of a new, liberal holder of Giant money-bags, Edgar J. Feeley.

The acquisition of Clint Hartung, who is being called the rookie of 1946, is further evidence of the Giants' intention to let no buck remain unspent that will strengthen their forces in the triangular battle for metropolitan patronage. The Giants gave Minneapolis \$25,000 and four players for Hartung, who is supposed to be faster than Felner and is said to hit a ball as far as Ruth.

A thriving farm system which has brought out unsuspected administrative talents in Carl Hubbell is counted on to keep the Giants in the running against the highest-pressure competition in any major-league city.

The Giants are regaining some of the ground they lost to the two rival metropolitan clubs when the late Charley Stoneham decided that farm clubs were strictly for members of the Grange. Charley had maintained an open mind on the subject until he was persuaded to put a team in Bridgeport. Then, one day, he came storming into John McGraw's office, brandishing a bill.

"Here's a farm system for you!" he fumed. "One of those left-handed shortstops is billing me for six baby's milk bottles his wife had to buy! You can give Bridgeport back to the Pequot Indians!"

Not until after old Charley died in 1936 did the Giants make any further baseball agricultural experiments.

The widow's might and mite have been the smoke in Pittsburgh fans' eyes ever since shrewd old Barney Dreyfus called it a career and willed the Pirates' franchise to his wife. She ran the club through her son-in-law, Bill Benswanger and Sam Watters, a long-time associate of her husband, and ruled it with a firm but frugal hand.

Although Pittsburgh is usually a contender, the weakness of remote-control management has become increasingly evident in recent years. Other managers, trying to dicker with Frank Frisch, found he was hamstrung when it came to making deals because he had to talk things over with Benswanger and Watters who in turn couldn't do anything until they had seen Mrs. Dreyfus. By the time all that seeing had been done, usually

something more attractive had bobbed up.

Trying to eliminate this bottleneck, the Pirates have drafted smart Ray Kennedy from Newark, of the Yankees' farm chain, as their new business manager.

A situation akin to that at Pittsburgh has existed in Chicago's South Side, where the White Sox have been putting up a losing battle with the Cubs for the Windy City's favor. Mrs. Grace Comiskey, widow of the late White Sox president, Charles Comiskey, holds the club stock in trust for her seventeen-year-old grandson, Charles 3d. Harry Grabiner, her business manager, was slow to act without Mrs. Comiskey's approval, and she was slower.

Jimmie Dykes, the uninhibited, cigar chewing, profane manager of the Sox, gave the widow Comiskey the broadest hint possible that things weren't to his satisfaction when he brazenly picked the Yankees to win the pennant at the start of the 1945 campaign and relegated the Sox to the lower regions. Jimmy was right about his own team, but the Yanks were lucky to make first division.

However, at the end of the season, Leslie O'Connor, right-hand man to the late Commissioner Landis throughout his regime, took over Grabiner's job, and throwing off the restraint which his old position had called for, has surprised the baseball world which long had regarded him as a fossil. His priceless contacts in the Commissioner's office are bound to make him most useful to the White Sox. There is talk even that the Comiskey purse strings will be loosened when Leslie gets to work.

The Chicago Cubs, well heeled with P. K. Wrigley's money, can compete with the wealthiest of the opposition.

St. Louis may achieve the status of a two-park major-league city under the era of big spending now opening. Sam Breadon, on the greatest selling spree of his notable career as a peddler of baseball stars, is saving the money being handed to him for players in \$175,000, \$60,000 and \$30,000 wads. He says the Cardinals soon will have their own park, seating 40,000, in downtown St. Louis.

Sam is an amazing character. Not the least exotic feature of him is his accent. People accepting him as a Middle Westerner are shocked when they meet him for the first time.

"We're in thoid place now, but we'll be foist before long" Sam will say in pure New Yorkese, that four decades in Missouri haven't been able to eradicate. Sam didn't exactly parlay a peanut into a pennant monopoly and a fortune, but that description is close enough. The World's Fair found him in St. Louis in 1904 without a job. He opened a peanut and popcorn stand on a street corner—

(Continued on page 210)

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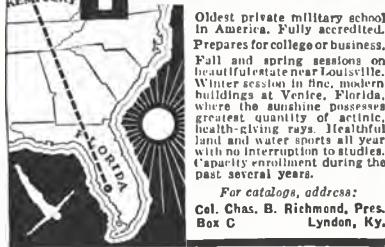
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B, C

(Continued from page 204)
and got a financial start. Meantime Sam is carrying on at Sportsman's Park with Eddie Dyer, a new manager.

For years the Cards and Browns have been sharing Sportsman's Park, which is "quite a fur piece" from the business section. When the National Leaguers move downtown, the Browns will have to step on it if they hope to attract a paying clientele to their suburban hideaway. That's where Richard C. Muckerman comes in. Technically, he came in last summer when he bought a controlling interest in the Browns from Don Barnes, the Loan Ranger. Muckerman's family is in the ice business, third of its kind to be identified with the Browns. His first announcement as a club owner said it was up to St. Louis fans to decide whether they want two major-league teams. This may be interpreted as a threat to move the franchise elsewhere. There are several cities which are keen for major-league status.

Detroit, probably the only single-club major-league city that could support another team, will go all out with Walter O. Briggs' millions in the postwar spending spree. To that end, Jack Zeller, who didn't believe in farm systems, was replaced by George Trautman, progressive president of the American Association. Trautman will see that the Briggs' millions are spent where needed, to give Detroit the best there is in baseball.

Cincinnati, smallest major-league city in point of population, has demonstrated, under the progressive regime of Powel Crosley, Jr., what can be done with live promotional methods in a limited field. Irked by the frequent boasts of Los Angeles and San Francisco that they should be in the big league instead of Cincinnati and Washington, Warren Giles, General Manager of the Reds, delved into his record books recently and came up with the announcement that the Cincinnati club, in the nine seasons from 1937 through 1945, has paid visiting clubs \$11,000 more than the Reds have collected from them on the road; has averaged gate receipts of \$614,000 per season; has in some years outdrawn even the Yankees at home and, in 1939, led the sixteen major-league cities in attendance. Cincinnati, home of the first professional baseball club and cradle of major-league night baseball, will be kept in the van of baseball progress if the Crosley fortune can do it.

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Connie Mack, of the Philadelphia Athletics, now eighty-three and living for too many years in the past, can't adjust himself to the tempo of the present, much less the future. It would be sacrilegious to think of anyone else but the venerable patriarch of the McGillicuddy Clan running the Athletics—but until sacrilege is committed, the salvation of Philadelphia's American League fans cannot be effected.

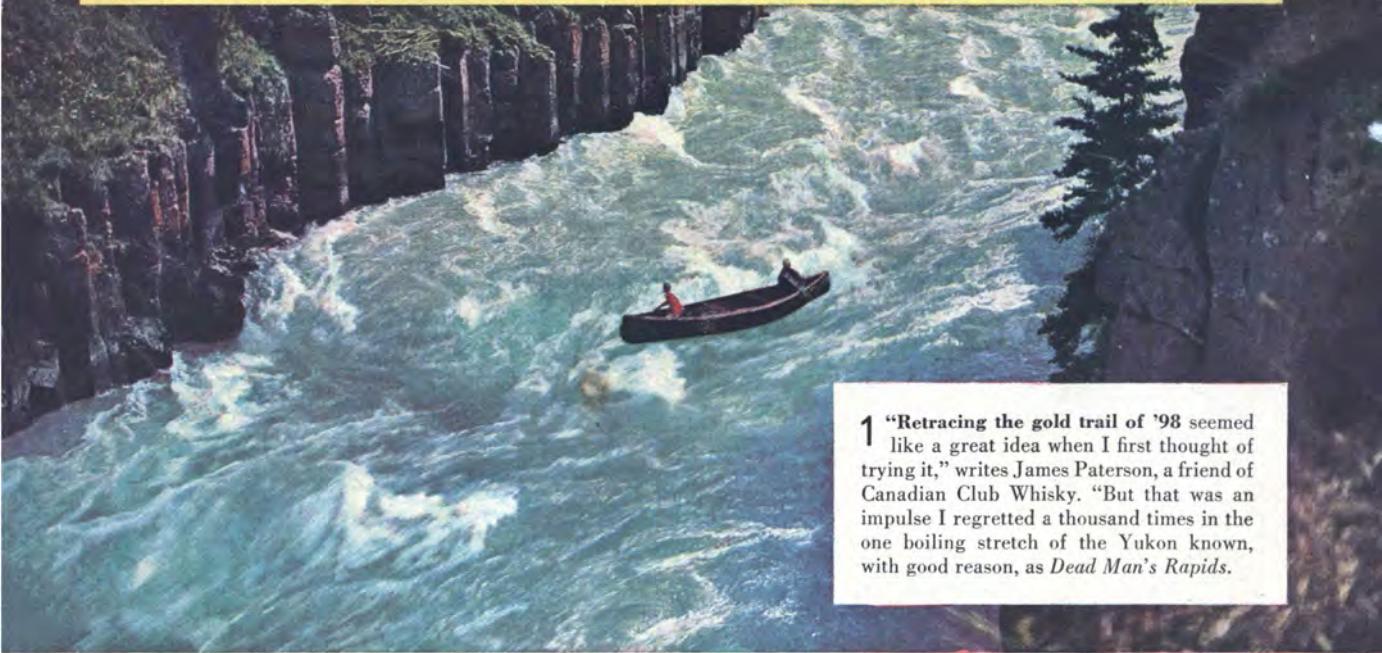
As for Clark Griffith, seventy-six-year-old Washington magnate who goes in for cut-rate Cubans, marked-down Mexicans and vegetating Venezuelans, he long ago decided that the best way to improve Latin American relations was to sign them up for the Washington baseball club. As long as this formula and Clark Griffith hold out, the only big spending in Washington will be done by Congress.

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Shooting "Dead Man's Rapids"-ON THE YUKON



1 "Retracing the gold trail of '98 seemed like a great idea when I first thought of trying it," writes James Paterson, a friend of Canadian Club Whisky. "But that was an impulse I regretted a thousand times in the one boiling stretch of the Yukon known, with good reason, as *Dead Man's Rapids*."



2 "It all began when I was coming into Whitehorse aboard the big Pan American Clipper. For below us, alongside glistening modern stern wheelers, was the hulk of the famous old Yukoner."



3 "Visiting the sorry remains of this once palatial vessel, it was easy to visualize the hordes that once trod her decks—men frenzied with the hope of riches, and others whose hopes had been fulfilled."



4 "Later that day, during a tractor tour of the Alcan highway, my romancing over the glamor of those old times led me to accept a dare to try the toughest part of the gold-seeker's trail."



5 "Well, we did it—somehow—to the accompaniment of more thrills than I'd ever known. But the most welcome thrill came at my host's cabin back near town . . . a whisky whose unmistakable flavor identified it as—*Canadian Club*!"

Even these days travelers tell of being offered Canadian Club all over the earth—often from a cherished pre-war supply. And why this whisky's worldwide popularity? Canadian Club is *light* as scotch, *rich* as rye, *satisfying* as bourbon—yet there is no other whisky in all the world that tastes like Canadian Club. You can stay with Canadian Club all evening long—in cocktails before dinner and tall ones after. That's why Canadian Club is the largest-selling imported whisky in the United States.

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