

What is the Most Urgent Problem Facing America Today? SEE PAGE 38

HEARST'S INTERNATIONAL COMBINED WITH



# Es mopolitan

July 35¢



Sinclair Lewis

Robert Carson

Sophie Kerr

Gladys Hasty Carroll

Elisabeth Sanxay Holding

Lawrence Williams

*Tick-Tock... Tick-Tock... FOR 6 LONG YEARS!*



*BACK AGAIN... Kentucky's Finest Straight Bourbon!*

Six (yes 6!) patient years of aging have mellowed Old Charter to the peak of richness and flavor. It's the whiskey that *didn't* watch the clock! Taste it and you'll be convinced. For Old Charter is Kentucky's finest straight bourbon.

THIS WHISKEY IS 6 YEARS OLD - STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY - 46 PROOF - BERNBEIN DISTILLING COMPANY, INC., LOUISVILLE, KY.

**OLD CHARTER**



ALL PRE-WAR WHISKEY



Hold on, hon...  
your bath's not done  
until you Mum!

...you just washed away past perspiration--  
now guard your future freshness



True, glamour does *begin* in the tub. But, while your bath gives you a fresh lease on loveliness, it can't safeguard your *future* charm.



Mum



Product of Bristol-Myers

checks perspiration odor

1. **Safe for charm.** Mum checks under-arm odor, gives sure protection all day or all evening.
2. **Safe for skin.** Snow-white Mum is gentle, harmless to skin . . . forms no irritating crystals.
3. **Safe for clothes.** No harsh ingredients in Mum to rot or discolor fine fabrics. Economical, Mum doesn't dry out in the jar. Quick, easy to use, even after you're dressed.

So, after you wash away *past* perspiration, *complete* your bath with Mum. That's the safe, sure way to prevent risk of underarm odor *to come*. With Mum, you *stay* sweet, nice to be near, all day or evening.





TAKE TO THE BOATS, BOYS!...  
*here she comes!*

Is that the kind of treatment a  
pretty girl should get  
when she's off on  
her vacation and  
ready for romance?

Not if she's a bright girl, it isn't!

But Ginny isn't very bright about some things . . .  
her breath, for example.

She has a little touch of halitosis (bad breath) from  
time to time, and the boys have already spotted it.  
She's elected herself to the "Suicide Club" . . .  
social suicide, that is. She'll miss many a good time,  
sit out many a dance, watch the moon rise alone  
... and wonder why.

You, yourself, may not realize when you have halitosis  
(unpleasant breath)\*. So the smart thing to do  
is to be extra careful about offending this way. And  
by being "extra careful" we mean using Listerine  
Antiseptic night and morning, and especially  
before any date where you want to be at your best:

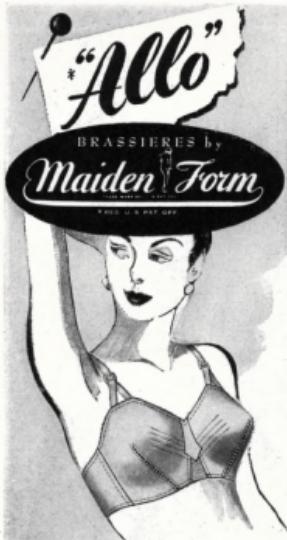
Almost instantly Listerine Antiseptic makes  
your breath fresher, sweeter, less likely to offend.  
Start the day and go to your date with a  
wonderful feeling of greater assurance and fresh-  
ness. Make Listerine Antiseptic a "must" every day.  
It helps you to be at your best always.

LAMBERT PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY, St. Louis, Missouri



\*While some cases of halitosis are of systemic origin, most cases, say some authorities, are due to the bacterial fermentation of tiny food particles clinging to mouth surfaces. Listerine Antiseptic quickly halts such fermentation, then overcomes the odors fer-  
MENTATION CAUSES.

FOR ORAL HYGIENE LISTERINE ANTISEPTIC



"Allo" is Maiden Form's specialized design for heavy bosoms . . . created with just enough extra fullness through the breast sections for correct support and comfort. At the same time, this brassiere gives definite separation and minimizes the apparent size of the breasts. In Jove Bengaline . . . \$1.75.

Maiden Form's



This brassiere superbly supports and controls the average bosom and that "in-between" type, the just slightly larger-than-average bosom. Shown here with a 2-inch diaphragm band for additional support; featured in Nylon-Marquette with Nylon Taftex back and band, \$2.00; in Jove Bengaline, \$1.75; Rayon Satin, \$2.00; Nylon Marquette with Pure Silk back and band, \$2.50; and all Pure Silk, \$3.00.

*"There is a Maiden Form for Every Type of Figure!"*

Send for free Style Folders: Maiden Form Brassiere Company, Inc., New York 16, N. Y.



**Feeling** a little bit bored with all those young ladies from the New York model agencies who have been posing for him lately, Coby Whitmore decided to invade the West for this month's *Cosmopolitan* cover girl. For moral support, he brought with him our art director, Edmond Witals. They spent a couple of rough days searching the wild and woolly desert at Palm Springs, leaving not a single parasol or beer bottle unturned. We are reproducing here at the right some pictures, taken by the official photographer of the expedition, which speak for themselves with a slight stutter.

The only cover girl they found at Palm Springs, however, was all tied up posing for a picture for the cover on a box of rat poison. After giving the matter serious thought, Whitmore decided to pass her up because she did not feel at ease sitting for a portrait unless she had crossbones under her chin. So our heroes plunged further into the West until they finally reached that last outpost of civilization, the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer lot. There they found a girl who looks as though she may go places in the movie business. Take another close look at our front cover this month and see if you don't agree. (Her name's on our contents page.)

**Twentieth Century-Fox** has paid Igor Gouzenko seventy-five thousand dollars for the screen rights to "I Was Inside Stalin's Spy Ring," the story of his exposé of Soviet espionage in North America which appeared in *Cosmopolitan* last winter and spring. And T. F. Ahearn, President of the Ottawa Electric Railway



Witals and Whitmore (the ones with dark glasses) start searching the West for a cover girl.



"Don't sign anything. Instead of a cover girl, it might be a real estate woman with a lease."



"She must be behind this bush. I'll flush her out, Ed, while you start mixing the paint for me."

Company in Canada, has established an annuity fund which will pay Gouzenko one hundred dollars a month for twenty years in gratitude for the service which the former Red Army intelligence clerk performed for Western democracy. We were telling our wife about this at dinner the other night. She lifted an eyebrow as she reached for the butter. "When Stalin hears about it," she remarked, "he'll probably want to tell us all he knows about Soviet spies, too."

**We will try** anything to get good light fiction these days. Take "Paradise, U.S.A." on Page 32, for example. The editors saw an illustration which Stephanie Harris had painted merely as a sample of the kind of work she wanted to do. We liked it. We asked Robert Carson if he couldn't write a humorous story to go with it. He did and we liked that, too. So we are publishing them both together this month . . . Martha Foley's forthcoming "The Best American Short Stories—1947" will include Lawrence Williams's "The Hidden Room" and John Richard (Cont. on page 14)

# They called her Flora, the "Flutter-By"



WHENEVER FLORA...



MET A MAN...



HER HANDS BEGAN TO FLUTTER...



LIKE A BUTTERFLY'S WINGS!



IN FACT, HER HANDS WERE HARDLY EVER STILL, UNLESS SHE WAS ALONE, OR...



SITTING ON THEM! FOR FLORA WAS AFRAID SOME MALE MIGHT SEE (OR FEEL) HOW DRY AND ROUGH THEY WERE!



NATURALLY, THIS HURT FLORA'S CHANCES, BECAUSE MEN LIKE TO HOLD HANDS!



THEN DORA TOLD FLORA ABOUT A NEW AND DIFFERENT HAND LOTION! THE BEFOREHAND LOTION...TRUSHAY!



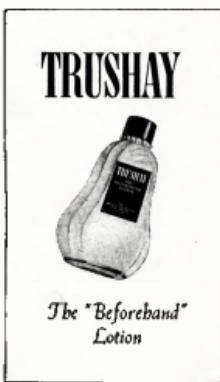
SO FLORA SMOOTHED CREAMY FRAGRANT TRUSHAY ON HER HANDS BEFORE SHE DID DISHES...BECAUSE TRUSHAY GUARDS HANDS EVEN IN HOT, SOAPY WATER!



AND BEFORE SHE DID LIGHT LAUNDRY FLORA PROTECTED HER HANDS WITH "OIL-RICH" TRUSHAY - TO HELP PREVENT SOAP AND WATER'S DRYING DAMAGE!



NOW (AS YOU CAN SEE) FLORA HAS GOOD REASON TO THANK TRUSHAY'S SPECIAL BEFOREHAND PROTECTION AND ITS WONDERFUL SOFTENING HELP!



PRODUCT OF BRITOL-HYDRO



P. S. Trushay's grand for softening hands at any time! Wonderful, too, for rough, dry elbows and heels...as a powder base...before and after exposure to weather. Trushay contains no alcohol, is not sticky. Begin today to use Trushay!

## Meet "DEAR RUTH"



Whose love letters should have been mailed in asbestos envelopes...



...Whose sister got her engaged to five men at once.



Broadway roared at her for 680 performances, Chicago laughed for 13 months, Los Angeles hugged her for 252 Days. Now it's a wonderful movie and the whole wide world can love "Ruth" too.

• Paramount presents

**WILLIAM HOLDEN  
JOAN CAULFIELD**

"*Dear Ruth*"  
in

**BILLY DE WOLFE  
EDWARD ARNOLD  
MONA FREEMAN**

Mary Philips • Virginia Welles • Kenny O'Morrison  
Produced by PAUL JONES  
Directed by WILLIAM D. RUSSELL  
Screen Play by Arthur Sheekman • Based on the Play by Norman Krauss

*It  
was this way, Judge*



A Minneapolis man was arrested for failing to stop when his wife jumped out of their car while it was moving and became entangled with the rear bumper. "You might have seriously injured or even killed your wife," the prosecuting attorney said. "As soon as you saw what was happening, why didn't you halt the car immediately?" "I didn't want to risk stopping too suddenly," the man replied. "It's hard on the tires."

A man and woman, accused of brewing opium in a large vat in the cellar of their New York home, said they had often noticed the strange mixture boiling down there, but they had presumed one of their neighbors had borrowed the cellar space to stir up a few gallons of perfume.

"Why were you drinking?" a San Diego judge asked.  
"I was celebrating my divorce, Your Honor," the defendant replied.  
"When were you divorced?"  
"Twenty-five years ago."  
"Ten dollars. Next case."

In Columbia, South Carolina, a shoplifter insisted he was more surprised than anyone else to discover that his coat pockets contained a bottle of perfume, five watches, eight expensive cigars and two hairbrushes.

"Do you actually expect me to turn you loose?" the judge asked.  
"Sure wish you would, Your Honor. I'd like to help the police find the thief who hid all that stuff in my pockets."

A salesman in Saskatchewan had a simple explanation to give the hotel clerk who followed him down the main street, accusing him of stealing one of the hotel's water pitchers. "I'm not stealing it," the salesman yelled back, running to catch his early morning train. "My false teeth are frozen in this durn jug!"

A hearse driver, picked up in London for speeding, offered a startling—but true—excuse.  
"I was on my way to a burial at sea," he said, "and I was in a hurry to catch the tide."

Arrested in Manhattan as a pickpocket, a man immediately pleaded guilty but insisted that it was his first difficulty with the law. Police, making a routine check, discovered that his claim wasn't precisely accurate. The records indicated he had been picked up seventy-five times before on the same charge.

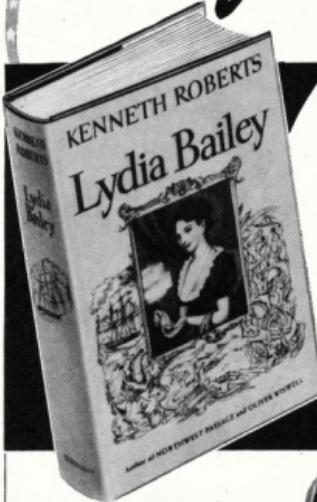
"Well," commented the defendant casually, when shown the thick folder containing information about his previous convictions. "I guess everybody has his own particular pattern cut out for him. This seems to be mine."

The divorce court was hearing a case involving a Los Angeles couple who had been married just a few days earlier. The wife said her husband had insisted that they get married right away. As soon as she had consented, he had phoned for the preacher to come right out. The second the ceremony was over, he grabbed her hand and raced down the street with her to a nearby bar where he yelled to the bartender, "See! I told you I'd marry her! Give me the five dollars."

*By Myrick Land*

# Both OF THESE NEW BEST-SELLERS for only \$2<sup>00</sup>

TO NEW MEMBERS OF  
THE LITERARY GUILD



## LYDIA BAILEY

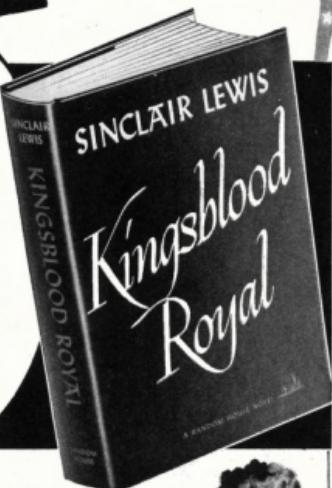
BY KENNETH ROBERTS

Seldom has literary history seen such magnificent reading as "Lydia Bailey"! Such an exciting blend of romance and history, action and intrigue, high humor and fascinating experience! This great novel by the world-famous author of "Northwest Passage" is so crammed with violence and tender love and fantastic adventure that reading it is almost living its turbulent action! Publisher's price, \$3.00.



HERE is the most remarkable offer we have ever made—to induce you to join the Literary Guild Book Club *now!* The two best-sellers shown here would cost \$6.00 in the publishers' editions, but as a new member of the Guild you may have a copy of Kenneth Roberts' magnificent "Lydia Bailey" absolutely FREE as our Membership Gift to you—and you pay only the Guild price of \$2.00 for Sinclair Lewis' sensational "Kingsblood Royal." Thus you get two smash hits for \$2.00—and as a new Guild member you will continue to save money on the new books you buy, receive bonus books free, and enjoy the many other advantages membership offers. Read, below, how the Guild operates; then mail coupon for your two books!

SEND NO MONEY—  
JUST MAIL COUPON



## KINGSBLOOD ROYAL

BY SINCLAIR LEWIS



If you suddenly found you were *not what you thought you were*—would you bury your secret—or tell it to your neighbors at frightful risk to your family? One of our greatest writers—author of "Arrowsmith," "Babbitt," "Main Street"—now tells the amazing story of red-haired young Capt. Neil Kingsblood—and the unthinkable thing which *couldn't* happen—but did! Publisher's price, \$3.00.

## HOW TO SAVE UP TO 50% ON OUTSTANDING NEW BOOKS

### What the Guild Does for You

It costs nothing to join the Literary Guild Book Club—the *largest book club in the world*. There are no fees or membership dues of any kind.

Each month you will receive a copy of "Wings"—the attractive and readable book review magazine which describes the forthcoming Guild selection.

From this description you decide whether or not you wish to receive the book selected. If *not*, you simply return the form provided for that purpose; otherwise, the new book will come to you automatically immediately upon publication. In this way you *will not miss reading* the new Club selections you want while they are *brand new*.

### Free Bonus Books

To retain your membership in the Guild it is not necessary to accept a book each month—only four selections during the entire year. And you pay only \$2.00 (plus postage and handling charge) for each instead of the publisher's regular retail price of \$2.50 to \$3.50.

In addition to these big savings, for each four Guild books you purchase you will receive, as a *free bonus*, a copy of one of the

beautifully printed, handsomely bound "Collector's Library" volumes which sell at retail for \$5.00 each—books you will be proud to place in your permanent home library.

### Free Membership Gift Book

By joining the Guild now you *will no longer miss reading* the *new books* you want and you will save up to 50% of the retail price. You will receive "Wings" every month to keep you informed of the best new books of all publishers; and you will receive at once, without charge, your copy of Kenneth Roberts' "Lydia Bailey."

Furthermore, as a new member you will receive a copy of Sinclair Lewis' "Kingsblood Royal" for only \$2.00 instead of the publisher's price of \$3.00—and this purchase will count towards the "Collector's Library" bonus books mentioned above.

### Send No Money—Mail Coupon Now

In spite of greatly increased cost of book manufacture, by joining the Guild now your new membership can be accepted at once, and you will be guaranteed against any increase in price on Guild selections for a year. Send no money—but mail the coupon NOW.

### Mail This Coupon

**FREE: "LYDIA BAILEY" and "KINGSBLOOD ROYAL" for only \$2.00**  
Literary Guild of America, Inc., Publishers  
Dept. 7C, Garden City, N. Y.

Please enroll me as a Literary Guild Book Club subscriber and send me at once "Lydia Bailey" as a gift. Also send me as my first selection "Kingsblood Royal," for which you will bill \$2.00 plus postage.

With these books will come my first issue of the Brochure "Wings," telling about the forthcoming Literary Guild selection which will be offered for \$2.00 (plus shipping charge) to subscribers only. I agree to pay the full price of the publisher's edition, I am to have the privilege of notifying you in advance if I do not wish to purchase any Guild selection. The purchase of books by the Literary Guild is a *privilege* on my part; I do not have to accept a book every month—only four during the year—to fulfill my membership requirement. I am to receive a bonus book for every four selections I buy.

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Miss \_\_\_\_\_

Street and No. \_\_\_\_\_

(Please Print)

City. \_\_\_\_\_

Zone No. \_\_\_\_\_

State. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation. \_\_\_\_\_

Age. \_\_\_\_\_

Under 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Price to Canada, \$2.00; 105 Bond St., Toronto 2, Can.

LITERARY GUILD OF AMERICA, INC., Publishers, Garden City, N. Y.



*The  
Cosmopolitan  
of the Month*



# ezra f. scattergood

No one man is completely responsible for the extensive development, since the turn of the century, that has turned Los Angeles from a small town into one of the world's biggest and most unusual cities. But probably nobody has contributed more to the creation of this phenomenal Western metropolis than Ezra Frederick Scattergood. Like many Angelinos, Scattergood is not a native. The son of a New Jersey Quaker farmer, he left his position as a professor of engineering at Georgia Tech to go to California for his health "most fifty years ago. He fell in love with the then small community of Los Angeles. Visualizing the importance of electrical power in its future, he decided to devote his engineering talent to the city government.

Scattergood served with enthusiasm as chief electrical engineer and general manager of the Los Angeles Bureau of Power and Light from 1909 until 1940. During those years he played a major role in the campaign to build the Hoover Dam, which not only supplies the bulk of electrical power for Los Angeles but has also boomed industry throughout the entire Pacific Southwest. In 1944, the University of California at Los Angeles conferred upon him an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, hailing him as "an able engineer applying the results of advanced research and professional skill with civic devotion to community development."

Today, at seventy-six, Scattergood still serves the Power and Light Bureau as advisory engineer, still works ten hours a day, sometimes seven days a week. His two favorite phrases are "balanced economy" and "orderly thinking." He hasn't had a vacation in forty years and, if his wife and daughter would permit it, he would bring work home every night. Scattergood is sure that his favorite city will some day be the largest in the world, and he hopes to be there when the census count gives it the championship.

*the new Rave Color...* Raving Beauty.

Lavish it on your lips and your fingertips. It's Peggy Sage's new dewy, dreamy rose. Beautiful on, beautiful to everybody.

You've never never seen anything like it. You'll rave.

He'll rave. They'll all rave. What more can any girl ask?

Shimmer Lipstick, \$1.00\*. Shimmer-Sheen or Regular Nail Polish, 60¢\*



**PEGGY SAGE**

*Raving Beauty*



Salons:  
New York: 50 East 57th Street  
London: 130 New Bond Street  
Paris: 7, Place Vendôme

©Peggy Sage, Inc. 1947



OLD ITALIAN LACE BY JOSEPHINE REINHOLD, CHICAGO 1948 COURTESY OF MARY HUNTER

*Something borrowed, something blue,  
something old, something new... WALLACE  
STERLING*

Have a wedding beamed with every lovely old tradition. And have a dowry to gladden a lifetime... of incomparable Wallace Sterling. Wallace Silversmiths have excelled at their craft for over a century. In no other sterling will you find "third-dimension beauty", the carved-in-full contour beauty expressed in the famous Wallace patterns above. Left to right: Grand Colonial, Sir Christopher, Stradivari, Grande Baroque, Rose Point. Six-piece place settings (the ideal wedding gift) include luncheon knife, luncheon fork, cream soup spoon, teaspoon, salad fork, butter spreader; about \$25 to \$30. Wallace Silversmiths, Wallingford, Conn. • Since 1835 • R. Wallace & Sons of Canada, Ltd., Toronto, Ontario

Ask for  
Wallace Sterling  
Silver Polish  
— saves time  
and effort.

THE CHOICE YOU MAKE ONCE FOR A LIFETIME... THAT'S WHEN NOTHING LESS THAN THE FINEST, WILL SATISFY

# Some of the People



## We Are Gathered Together on This Occasion

As the most thrilling fragment of poetry in the language, we nominate three lines which will be used often on the fourth of this month, by many speakers, from many platforms, in each of our states and our territories. Against a background of hanging firecrackers, dancing heat waves, bands and holiday joy, all listeners will share the throat-tightening impact of the well-beloved challenge:

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,

Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!

The familiar words are equally compelling whether declaimed by an orator or recited by a child. Why don't the Eskimos make any effort to leave the howling iciness of the Arctic and move into some really comfortable suburb, like Evanston, with automatic noiseless heat and indirect lighting? Why don't the jostled slum dwellers consider for a moment the attractive privacy of a million square miles of plains and deserts? Why does a New Yorker experience a terrific wrench if required to move ninety miles to Philadelphia? (And even, we are told, vice versa?) It is patriotism in its most unspoiled and elemental form—a deep conviction that wherever you happen to be when you are young is the best old place of all.

These days, many folk say patriotism causes war. They like to point out that the unspeakable aggressors also believe themselves to be "patriotic." But it would require a miracle to eradicate love of homeland from the human heart, and it would be an inferior-type miracle at that. Wars could doubtless be prevented if the entire race were given a mild form of anemia, but that doesn't sound like a right idea either.

Instead, let's continue to be nuts about good old Brooklyn, Dallas, or San Bernardino, and let's concentrate on trying to get at least a little wiser and a little kinder soon. (Can all you other fellows and girls hear us, up to twelve and a half thousand miles away?)

## Romance of Numbers

For her birthday he gave her several ounces of Chanel No. 5 and anxiously awaited the onslaught of her raptures.

She opened her enormous blue eyes wide. "Number 5," she said. "Why is it always Number 5? What happened to 1,2,3,4 and 6? Didn't they smell so good?"

"Hmmm," he said, not knowing the answer. "Numbers are like that. One's the fundamental number, but it's lonely. Two's company, three's a crowd, four is a quartette. Five is Chanel. Six is starting in the first grade. Seven is the number of angels which can dance on the point of a pin, so the medieval philosophers said. Eight is Ada from Decatur, nine is baseball, ten is decimals and all that. Eleven is football and twelve should be the foundation of our numbering system, but it's too late now, so it's just a jury. Thirteen's supposed to be unlucky, except when it's a baker's dozen. Fourteen's when some boys get spots on their faces, fifteen's when some girls get pretty. Sixteen's an unwieldy dinner party. Seventeen belongs to Booth Tarkington. Eighteen is the age of consent and nineteen the age of regret. Twenty is vingt, and I wonder why if they mean twenty they don't just say twenty which is so simple. Twenty-one is for winning at handball, rackets, ping-pong, badminton, squash and the card game called Twenty-One and for voting. I could probably keep this up for ever, but I wouldn't want to bore you the way I did with my little gift."

"No, I (Continued on page 136)

# HEADACHE

UPSET  
STOMACH  
JUMPY  
NERVES

TAKE FAMOUS  
BROMO-SELTZER

# RELIEF!



**Headache, upset stomach, jumpy nerves...** all may hit at the same time. So take Bromo-Seltzer for quick help. It fights ordinary headaches 3 ways:

1. Relieves pain of headache
2. Relieves discomfort of upset stomach
3. Quiets jumpy nerves.

which may team up for trouble. **Simply** put teaspoonful in a glass and add water. Bromo-Seltzer effervesces with split-second action. Caution: Use only as directed.

**Get Bromo-Seltzer** at your drugstore fountain or counter today. Compounded in four convenient home sizes by registered pharmacists.



For **FAST** headache help  
**BROMO-SELTZER**

A PRODUCT OF EMERSON DRUG COMPANY SINCE 1887



BY JACK GOODMAN AND FRED SCHWED, JR.

# fireworks

*in*

# *black*



ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY LUHRE



Helmut Dantine

Richard Conte

Al Capp

by hindy gould

**H**elmut Dantine, who was making his second appearance as a judge at our Male-Tested-Fashions party at the Stork Club, turned to Al Capp, the Li'l Abner cartoonist, and asked, "What's the matter, Mr. Capp, you look confused?"

"Confused! I'm flabbergasted! What am I doing here?"

"You're here to pass judgment on women's fashions," Richard Conte told him. Conte has twice appeared at our shows and recently made a newswheel with us depicting MTF in action, so he's an expert.

"But what do I know about clothes?" asked Mr. Capp.

"Haven't you been dressing Daisy Mae down for years?" joined in Brian Donlevy, who had arrived late, full of apologies. He had been debating, he told us, whether to bring his small daughter, Judith Ann, over to the Stork or stick it out and wait for the baby sitter to arrive. We were sympathetic.

The men crowded around the table marked JUDGES, and we were ready for the day's fashion offering—black dresses—sheer, cool crepes to wear in town during the summer months. We explained that as usual the clothes would be shown in groups of four. The first group would be basic black dresses. The second, the kind of dark (Continued on page 166)

## What's Going On (Continued from page 4)

Humphries's "Michael Finney and the Little Men." Both of those stories were selected from *Cosmopolitan*. . . . Robert van Gelder's mention of Laura Z. Hobson's son Mike, in his interview with the author of "Gentleman's Agreement" on Page 18, reminds us of Mike's own definition of prejudice. Mrs. Hobson asked the boy if he knew the meaning of the word. Mike nodded. "Prejudice," he said, "is when you don't like somebody before you've even met him" . . . We have just purchased a book-length novel by another writer who is currently basking in fame. The title: "The Circus in the Attic." The author: Robert Penn Warren, winner of the 1946 Pulitzer Prize with his "All the King's Men." "The Circus in the Attic" will appear as a complete book-length in September.

**Audrey De Graff**, author of "The Enchantress," the serial which starts on Page 44, says that she started writing at the age of eight when she became a contributor to Aunt Jean's Page for Children in the Brooklyn Eagle. "After that," she says, "life was never interesting unless there was a copybook filled with a plot that kept thickening and thickening. I finally published four novels under pen names. I thought they dealt with grim reality, but the publishers looked upon them as light fiction."

Now Miss De Graff considers her career as an author secondary to her work as the mother of three boys. "Their interests are mine," she says, "and



Audrey De Graff

they are certainly unpredictable. I am forever getting mixed up in things like the search for the weird animal who lurks behind the clothes closet door on rainy mornings."

**July is rather** an easy month for Miss Dorothy Hudson, a calm and efficient lady who holds down one of the toughest and most complicated jobs at *Cosmopolitan* without giving anybody the impression that it is tough or complicated. For Miss Hudson, July comes early in May. When the rest of the world gets around to writing July at the top of its checks and love letters, Miss Hudson is up to her elbows in problems connected with September.

All this is a coy build-up to letting you know that Miss Hudson has charge of *Cosmopolitan's* Advertising Make-up Department where, magazine production being what it is, everything has to be done at least two months before the date of publication. Upstairs here in the editorial department, because the writing and pictures arrive in less finished form, we have to start worrying about an issue one month earlier than Dorothy.

July—or, we should say, May—is comparatively an easy month for Miss Hudson and her three very capable assistants, Connie Donovan, Lillian Breen and Theresa Dulko, because the July issue is a slim one as far as advertising goes. Advertisers feel that people aren't going to do much heavy shopping in the hot weather. August is a light issue for advertising, too, for the same reason. So is January, a bad shopping month because Christmas has wrecked everybody's pocketbook. This doesn't mean, of course, that Dorothy spends those three months doing crossword puzzles during office hours. She still puts in eight solid hours a day, but she doesn't knock herself out as she does with the April, October and November issues—the biggest months for ad business.

Dorothy has to know about every advertisement as soon as the *Cosmopolitan* salesman signs the contract with the advertiser. She receives the written copy and the illustration and layout for each ad and makes sure that it

OPEN-AIR ramps, toes or heels...in *RHYTHM STEP*

dark-for-Fall, wonderful-for-now! Yes, and with those

3 invisible Rhythm Treads to make *RHYTHM STEPS*

more than just lovely shoes

For the names of your nearest stores,  
write

JOHNSON, STEPHENS  
& SHINKLE  
SHOE CO.  
St. Louis

*RHYTHM STEP* shoes

WALK THE *Rhythm Step Way*

- Heel Cushioned
- Arch Buoyed up
- Strain Eased here

gets set in the type and size that the advertiser wants. If the ad concerns a new and unknown product, she also makes sure that it is genuine.

And then she has to decide where to place it in the pages of the magazine.

You just can't put an advertisement into any space that seems to fit it. If two ads for rival nail polishes appear on the same page or on facing pages, for example, Miss Hudson is liable to hear about it. When it can be done, she also tries to please certain advertisers who prefer certain spots in the magazine. Some of them like to appear next to a column in the back of the issue where one story ends and the continued part, or runover, of another story begins. Others appreciate it if their ad is placed next to a full page of editorial text. Most advertisers, fortunately, don't care a hoot where their ad appears in the magazine as long as it does appear somewhere. Dorothy regards such people with deep affection.

Until we talked with Miss Hudson, we always thought that advertisers preferred the pages up here in the front of the magazine, before you reach the articles and stories. They don't, as a rule. For some reason, book companies and book clubs like to advertise in the front of the issue, but most of the others like to be behind the Campbell Soup ad which always opens the back-of-the-magazine advertising section. We asked Miss Hudson why Campbell Soup has held that first position in *Cosmopolitan* and other national magazines for so many years. She said she didn't have the slightest idea. "Campbell Soup was there when I came here," she said, "and I guess they'll be there when I leave, whenever that will be." Further investigation disclosed that the soup people simply grabbed that page when it was available back in December, 1912, and have held onto it ever since.

A few days before *Cosmopolitan* goes to press, Dorothy completes her monthly jigsaw puzzle and has a pretty clear idea of what ads will appear on what pages all the way through the whole magazine. Then she reaches for the telephone and calls Louella Still, our editorial make-up chief, to find out what stories and articles are running next.



Dorothy Hudson

to the various ads. Her findings are sometimes surprising. A few months ago, for instance, she discovered an article entitled "Is Gambling a Disease?" right smack beside an advertisement for playing cards. Miss Hudson and Miss Still put their heads together and did a little quick reshuffling. "We straighten those things out without any trouble," says Dorothy. "They just make the job interesting."

THE END

# How safe a driver are you?



## Are your driving habits good habits?

Driving a car can be a pleasure or a tiresome ordeal. It depends on how you drive.

If you make it a habit to keep your mind on your driving, to keep your car under control, and to observe traffic rules, you'll get a lot more enjoyment from your motoring. You'll get places just as fast as the thoughtless, "me first" motorists, and you'll have a lot better chance of avoiding accidents.

Make it a habit, too, to keep your car in good running condition. Brakes, steering mechanism, lights, and tires especially should be checked regularly.



## When you have to stop, can you do it in time?

Chances are you can't stop as quickly as you think you can.

Traveling at only 20 miles an hour, your car will go at least 22 feet while you move your foot from the accelerator to the brake. Even under the best road conditions and with good brakes, it will take another 21 feet—or a total of 43 feet—before you can stop.

This stopping distance increases with your speed. At 40 miles an hour it is 128 feet; and at 60 miles an hour you'll travel 254 feet before you can stop. The National Safety Council is the authority for these figures.



## How should you drive at night?

Driving after dark requires special care, for you can't see very far ahead.

Suppose your headlights suddenly show a barrier 150 feet ahead on the road, and you're driving 50 miles an hour—you are *outdriving your headlights*, for at that speed you can't stop in less than 186 feet.

Try to avoid looking directly at approaching headlights. Lower your own lights, don't take the chance that a "light-blinded" motorist will run into you. Watch your side of the road for pedestrians or parked cars.



## How can you help avoid accidents?

It's only common sense to adjust your driving to suit adverse weather and road conditions.

Be prepared for emergencies such as blowouts or sudden skids, and know what to do when they occur. Keep alert for the actions of other drivers or pedestrians.

And remember—a survey reported by the National Safety Council shows that drivers who have been drinking are 3 to 4 times as likely to be involved in an accident as those who haven't.

To help you get more pleasure from your motoring, send for your free copy of Metropolitan's booklet, **77-B, on safe driving.**

COPYRIGHT 1949—METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

### Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (A MUTUAL COMPANY)

Frederick H. Eakin, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
Larry A. Lincoln, PRESIDENT  
1 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK 10, N. Y.



TO VETERANS—IF YOU HAVE NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE—KEEP IT!

# For Every Purpose and Every Purse



Emerson Radio Compacts, Portables, Phonoradios, Electric Phonographs, Pocket Receivers, Recorders, Consoles

For every room in the home — BETTER Style, Tone, Performance and Value — by the World's Largest Maker of Small Radio.

There, in one sentence, are the reasons why more than SEVEN MILLION wise buyers chose Emerson Radio.

Call on your nearest dealer now.

## THE NEW 1947 Emerson Radio



Emerson Radio 3-Way Portable Model 536. AC-DC and battery operation. Sure, clear reception everywhere with superb tone. Six tubes, plus rectifier.

Less batteries. **\$39.95**

New 1947 Models start at \$19.95

EMERSON RADIO & PHONOGRAPH CORP. • NEW YORK 11, N. Y.  
World's Largest Maker of Small Radio

TO  
YOUR  
GOOD HEALTH



### WHAT'S NEW IN THE FIELD OF MEDICINE

**BY PROPER DIET** expectant mothers can avoid toxemia, the pregnancy disturbance that often leads to nausea, vomiting and convulsions. Toxemia has been eliminated in pregnancy cases by using a high-protein, low-calory diet and restricting to sixteen pounds the total weight gain before delivery.

**STOMACH-ULCER** hemorrhages and bleeding caused by other stomach and intestinal troubles can be stopped simply by swallowing thrombin, a clotting agent extracted from blood. It has eliminated the need for operations in patients where bleeding could be controlled by no other method.

**GANGRENE** now can be miraculously halted by ascorbic acid (synthetic vitamin C) and a chemical called histidine. When five veterans faced leg amputations because of gangrene, the treatment saved their blackened, shriveled limbs and quickly returned them to normal. Six other veterans are recovering from the painful blocked circulation which causes gangrene. The new technique relieves pain in a few hours, clears up the gangrene in a day or two. Doctors hope the method may revolutionize treatment of diseases caused by impaired blood circulation such as angina pectoris, high blood pressure, kidney disease and paralytic stroke.

**VITAMIN C** is now being used, too, to prevent the dangerous shock condition which frequently follows operations and accidents. Five hundred milligrams before and after fifty major abdominal operations produced excellent results. The same dose given one hour before tooth extraction prevented shock and postoperative weakness. It increased shock resistance and improved the condition of thirty-five patients who had had accidents in coal mines.

**DOCTORS** finally are able to make a more thorough diagnosis of glaucoma, the disease which causes more blindness than any other eye ailment, through use of a midget device, the gonioscope. Fitted into the eye like a contact lens, the instrument lets the doctor see around the eye cornea and into those channels where the disease occurs.

**PEOPLE IN RURAL** areas, where pasteurization facilities are lacking, may soon benefit from a new and simple chemical method of sterilizing milk. Experiments have shown that a small amount of hydrogen peroxide, in powder or tablet form, provides perfect sterilization for three days, yet does not affect taste.

**THE WHOOPING** of whooping cough has been halted and the duration of the disease has been shortened materially with streptomycin. Tests with twenty-five children (still more are needed) show that if treatment is started before whooping begins (about ten days after onset), the disease can be controlled without any whooping. If caught in the first week of whooping, chances are good for controlling it within ten days. The drug seems more effective than sulfa drugs, penicillin and even the recently developed special whooping-cough serum.

*Medicines mentioned in this column should be used only  
on the advice of a physician*

By LAWRENCE GALTON

THE THRILLING STORY  
OF OLD CALIFORNIA'S  
MOST ROMANTIC DAYS !

The tough-shooting, hard-fighting times of  
pioneer California. Days filled with adventure  
... Nights filled with excitement...Hearts  
filled with glorious love!



HEAR THE  
NEW SCORE  
BY RUDOLF  
FRIML

Nelson Eddy  
Glona Massey

in

# NORTHWEST OUTPOST

A story of rough-riding men...heart-stealing women!

with

JOSEPH SCHILDKRAUT

ELSA LANCHESTER • HUGO HAAS • LENORE ULRIC

And Introducing The American G. I. Chorus

Lyrics by EDWARD HEYMAN

Directed by ALLAN DWAN



A REPUBLIC PICTURE

Screen Play by ELIZABETH MEEHAN and RICHARD SALE

Original Story by ANGELA STUART

Adaptation by LAIRD DOYLE

*Interview  
with  
a best-selling  
author:*



Photo by Halman

# LAURA Z. HOBSON

I visited Laura Z. Hobson during the week when her novel, "Gentleman's Agreement," completed its climb to the top of the best-seller list. As we sat down, Mrs. Hobson remarked that the unexpected financial success of the book had removed the second of two barriers which had been obstructing her efforts to become a novelist.

"At first when I wanted to write," she said, "I couldn't do it because I could not endure working alone. I had to have company. Even when I was sick, I would jump up and go to the office, just to have people around me. Three years with a psychoanalyst cured that. But then I had money troubles. Now they're gone, too. And I know that I can go on writing novels. It's a wonderful, wonderful feeling."

Mrs. Hobson figures that "Gentleman's Agreement," a warm comment on certain aspects of anti-Semitism, which was serialized in *Cosmopolitan* before it appeared in book form, will bring her about a quarter of a million dollars.

"I'm putting locks and chains on it," she says. "I'm not buying a mink coat or a country house. I want security so that I can be certain of writing with absolute incorruptibility. I wrote 'Gentleman's Agreement' that way—with no idea that it would be popular—and I want to write my future work that way, too."

Mrs. Hobson, a tall, good-looking woman, lives in an apartment overlooking Park Avenue with two adopted sons who seem to be exceptionally friendly and happy children. While we talked she told me that, in her opinion, it must be very dull these days to be a white Protestant American.

The popular success of this *Cosmopolitan* serial came as a big surprise to its author.

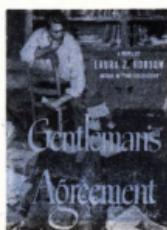
"It's more exciting to be Jewish or Negro," she said. "We who are of the minority wake up every morning, not just looking forward to another day but knowing that we have another fight on. The stakes are the future of this country. I tell you—and I'm positive that I'm right—that if this habit of discrimination against minorities isn't checked, you're going to lose the freedoms that you're proud of. You're going to see terrible changes in what you, perhaps, call 'the American way of life'—a phrase that I don't find quite pretty because the American way of life is not so damned wonderful for a lot of us who are Americans—and you'll be left with two alternatives—Communism or Fascism. They are the logical ends of discrimination. That has been proved."

She views herself as a "fighting liberal" possessed by a "crusading neurosis." As she talks, chips seem to appear on the shoulders of her Bergdorf suit.

She refers to criticism of her ideas as "socks." "He hauled off and socked me because I'm not a Zionist," she says, "so of course I socked him right back."

A woman wrote Mrs. Hobson that her first thought upon reading "Gentleman's Agreement" was "How I love that Laura Hobson." But she went on to ask, with apologies, if Mrs. Hobson was Jewish. Mrs. Hobson replied that she couldn't help regretting that her correspondent "should have had the need to go on and ask the damn question—the very one you and I detest so when employers, Army officials, colleges or resorts ask it. You said you liked my book for not letting anybody get away with anything, so I have to say that I feel that anybody, Gentile or Jewish, who asks the question just keeps the disease of prejudice alive by doing one more bit of pigeonholing according to labels and tags."

Mrs. Hobson was offended when an *(Continued on page 76)*



by Robert van Gelder



## Cooling idea

IT WAS 7 years ago that America's most famous cake of ice made its first appearance.

Here it is once again, to remind you that a Four-Roses-and-ice-and-soda is *still* the most gloriously cool and refreshing drink you could ask for on a warm mid-summer afternoon!

And we're certain you'll thank us for this cooling reminder, once you savor the matchless flavor

and mellow smoothness of a Four Roses highball.

For there's no other whiskey with quite the distinctive flavor of Four Roses.

Try a Four-Roses-and-soda before this day is over—won't you?

— — —  
Fine Blended Whiskey—90.5 proof.  
40% straight whiskies 5 years  
or more old; 60% grain neutral  
spirits.

**FOUR  
ROSES**



Frankfort Distillers Corporation,  
New York



GET IN THE SWIM!

# "fresh up" with Seven-Up!



SHARE WORK . . . SHARE FUN—BE A "FRESH UP" FAMILY!

Discover, as all "fresh up" families do, the extra special fun in doing things together. And discover, too, the deep-down enjoyment of a "fresh up" with 7-Up. It's America's home drink. Clean-tasting . . . completely wholesome . . . a real thirst-quencher—that's 7-Up.

Be a "fresh up" family. And as you live your happy lives together let crystal-clear 7-Up add to the fun. Order where you see those eye-catching 7-Up signs.



COPYRIGHT 1947 BY THE SEVEN-UP COMPANY

YOU LIKE IT...IT LIKES YOU!



REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

# a noted professional photographer's favorite color photo



By R. C. Proctor

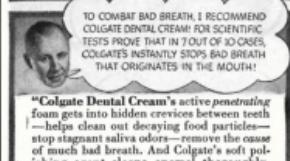
For over ten years I have been a sort of one-man promotion organization for the fantastic plant family of Cactaceae. I have collected and grown cactus plants to study their development, and I have photographed thousands of them in the open desert. Cactus photography is a year-round hobby. Late spring and summer, when the cacti reveal their showy multi-hued flowers, are the best seasons for color photography; but in winter I enjoy exploring the desert for new forms.

Of all my cactus pictures I am particularly fond of this one. The symmetrical arrangement of the spines and the crowning rush of gay red flowers that reflect the added brill-

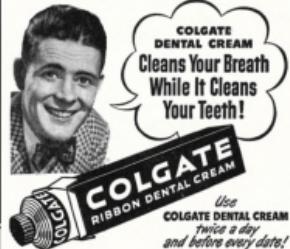
liance of the Arizona sunshine make the barrel cactus (or *Parodia wittmackii*, if you prefer) the perfect photographic model. During August and September, the highways leading into Tucson, Arizona, are brilliant with their red, yellow, pink and orange flowers.

This picture was taken with an Anniversary Speed Graphic camera, Rodenstock Triar 145 lens, on a tripod for critical focusing through the ground glass. The light reflected by the shiny green surface of the plant boosted the needle of the Weston light meter to 400. The exposure was made on  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  Kodachrome daylight-type film at f/11 for 1/10th of a second.

*Met Her on Sunday—  
Lost Her on Monday!*



"Colgate Dental Cream's active penetrating foam gets into hidden crevices between teeth—helps clean out decaying food particles—stop stagnant saliva odors—remove the cause of much bad breath. And Colgate's soft polishing agent cleans enamel thoroughly, gently and safely!"



# Doctors Prove 2 out of 3 Women can have

# Lovelier Skin in 14 days!



"My spring cleaning included my complexion!" says Beatrice Molinari of San Francisco. "I was dying to find something to help my skin, but my mirror told me my complexion was as oily and coarse-looking as ever. Actually *dingy*!"



"Then I heard about the Palmolive Plan over the radio. It told how 36 doctors—leading skin specialists—tested this Plan on 1285 women and proved it can bring lovelier complexions to 2 out of 3 . . . in only 14 days. I decided to try the Plan!"

"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 Palmolive's full beautifying effect.

Just 14 days after I started the Palmolive Plan, my complexion was fresher, brighter—noticeably finer looking, too!"

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



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!

For tub and shower, get the big, fluffy Bath Size Palmolive—enjoy Palmolive's soft, lovely lather all over!

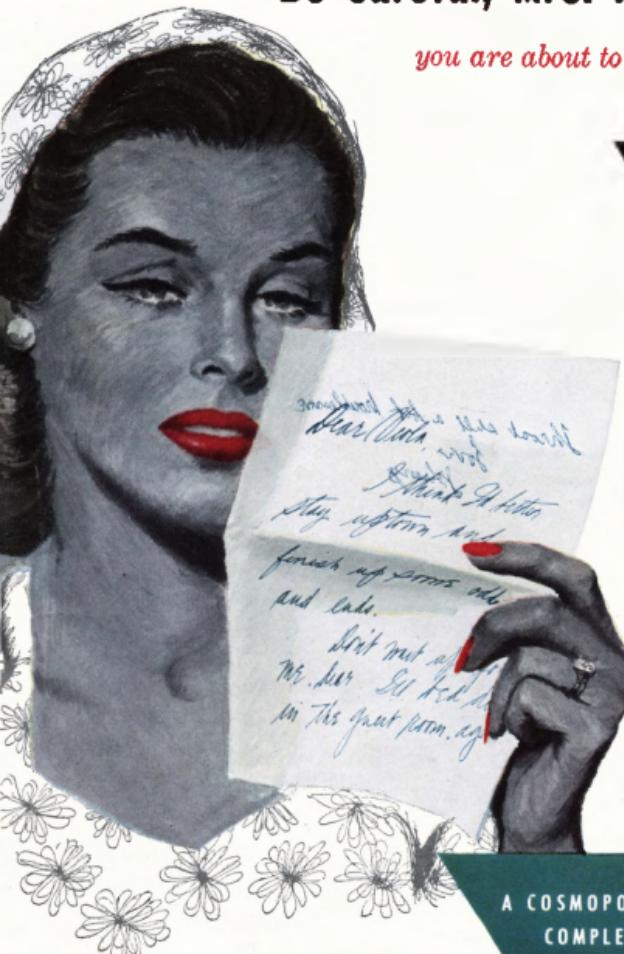


DOCTORS PROVE

PALMOLIVE'S BEAUTY RESULTS!

# Be careful, Mrs. Williams

*you are about to lose your husband*



by elisabeth sanxay holding

ILLUSTRATED BY BARBARA SCHWIMM

▼ Before Viola had taken off her hat, Mr. Prince, editor-in-chief of Our States, came into her office.

"You're looking very fine today," he said benignly.

"I feel very fine," Viola said, smiling at him in the mirror; a tall girl, taller than Prince, straight and slender and splendidly alive, with a fine color in her cheeks, a high-bridged nose, arched dark brows.

"Like Marie Antoinette," Johnny had said the first time she had worn this new black suit, nipped in at the waist, a white scarf high around her throat. "Like a marquise, you look. I like having a marquise for a wife."

That had been last Friday, when they had managed to meet for lunch.

"But we're both wearing a white scarf," Viola had cried. "I didn't notice you putting yours on this morning, Johnny."

"You don't look at me nearly enough," Johnny had said. "Anyhow, it's a sign. A good sign."

They had both been pleased beyond reason about the white scarves; it had been, somehow, one of their very best lunches together. She smiled again, remembering it. And then, something came like a little cloud across her mind, a little shadow.

Naturally I hate to think of

A COSMOPOLITAN  
COMPLETE  
SHORT NOVEL





Viola said,  
"You're typical  
of the sort of woman  
men fall for—  
temporarily."

Johnny having a cold, she told herself. But I needn't be silly about it. He said he was much better this morning. He ate a good breakfast. I'm not going to be silly.

And I'm not going to admit that little doubt, that faint stir of uneasiness.

It was really only sensible of him to sleep in the guest room, she told herself. It's the decent, considerate thing to do if you're getting a cold. Or think you're getting a cold.

"I've been mulling over this thing, Viola," said Mr. Prince. "Hartwell's the logical one to be moved."

"Oh!" Viola said, in dismay.

Our States was expanding; they were starting a South American edition, and a new editor was coming in, with two assistants. They could not rent any more space, for love or money, and for weeks a little turmoil had been going on, endless discussions about who must be moved where.

"But I thought it was all arranged for Miss Ripton to move in with Fredericks," said Viola.

"I've been thinking it over," said Mr. Prince. "Fredericks has a great many people coming in to see him. No . . . Hartwell's the logical one. He doesn't come in every day; sometimes only twice a week. He doesn't have many people to see. No. He'll have to be co-operative about this."

Not yet had Gibson Hartwell been co-operative, ever, about anything. He made an asset of his ill-humor and his bitter tongue. His insults were celebrated; his book reviews were admired, and dreaded, for their pitiless wit. Mr. Prince was perfectly well

aware of Hartwell's value to the magazine, but he disliked him very much, and he was afraid of him.

But not Viola. She was silent for a moment, thinking fast.

"Mr. Prince," she said. "I'll move in with Gibby."

"Nothing of the sort!" said Prince. "You need an office to yourself."

"I can manage."

"You know how—trying he can be."

"I'll manage," said Viola.

"Well, of course, he does get on with you much better than with anyone else," said Prince. "If you think you could stand it, Viola, it would be a solution."

"I'll manage," she said again.

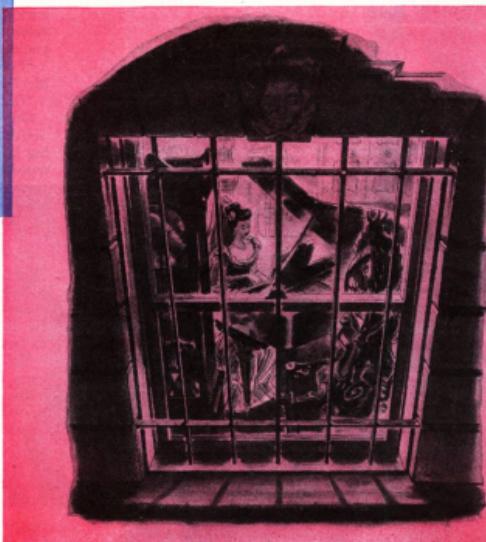
For it was unbearable to think of Gibby's being turned out of his queer, fussy little office, with all his books, and his bowl of goldfish. And somehow his disagreeableness made it worse.

"Let's do it now, before (Continued on page 153)



★  
They drape the dead father's coat on the extra chair and have dinner served to him.

★  
Miss Helene, wearing Spanish gown of the 1880's sang Spanish songs all day long.



The reporter  
who discovered Langley Collyer  
back in 1938 describes  
some of the other strange recluses  
who hide from the world  
in the center of its most crowded city

I met my first hermit when I was a child in Colorado. He lived in a log cabin in the Rockies and the miners circulated fascinating stories about him, but he died without telling us whether they were true. I didn't meet my second hermit until after I began to work as a reporter on the New York Evening World. She was Ella Wendel, the lady who refused to sell the back yard of her Fifth Avenue mansion, although it was valued at a million dollars, because her poodle liked it. Whenever one of her sisters died, she inherited more money. Once I went to her summer home in Tarrytown to ask her what she intended to do with her latest inheritance. I met her as she was wheeling the poodle out through the front door in a baby carriage. When she saw me she screamed and ran back into the house with the carriage and the poodle, slamming the door behind her.

That did not lessen my curiosity about hermits. In the summer of 1938, I encountered another one on East 128th Street in Harlem after interviewing the father of a murderer. That neighborhood was pretty wild.

The father of the murderer kept a watchdog which he had to chain before he could talk with me, and when I left him he cautioned me to walk on the

well-lighted main thoroughfares, like Fifth Avenue, on my way back to the subway station.

While I was standing on the corner of East 128th Street, waiting for the traffic lights to change, I noticed a decaying brownstone house at 2078 Fifth Avenue which had been apparently vacant for some time. Its windows were boarded and its storm doors closed. I stopped a passing Negro woman and asked her why the house was empty.

"That house ain't empty, honey," she said. "Langley Collyer, the spooky man, lives there. Some folks say he's got his dead Ma in the front parlor. His brother, Homer, may be dead in there, too. Langley never comes out before midnight. He owns seventeen pianos and he carries his money in a carpetbag."

That was enough for me. After I had written my interview with the father of the murderer, I returned to Harlem in a taxi and waited in it near the Collyer house. At midnight, Langley slipped cautiously out of his basement gate.

All that summer I made futile attempts to talk with Langley. His doorknob had been missing for years, but I banged on the drainpipes, rattled the basement gate and slipped numerous notes under the front door. I found out later that he hardly ever opened his mail.

By Helen Worden

ILLUSTRATED BY JACK BURR

# THE Hermits OF MANHATTAN

On a hot August afternoon I discovered Maurice Collyer, a real estate man, morosely whamming the drainpipe. He wanted to offer Langley \$28,900 in cash for a piece of property owned by the Collyer brothers.

I didn't see Langley again until one day in 1939 when the New York Edison Company, with the help of the police, entered his house and removed a gas meter which had not been used for fifteen years. Jacob Iglitzen, the neighborhood druggist, kept me posted on his movements.

"I'm a very busy man," Langley told Iglitzen one midnight. "I have my home and my blind and crippled brother to care for during the day. I shop in the evening."

His shopping consisted of working a garbage route, begging for stale bread and meat scraps and picking up oranges in the Harlem public market. He dragged the stuff home in a wooden box which he pulled along the sidewalks with a piece of rope.

In November, 1942, the Bowery Savings Bank tried to evict the Collyers and foreclose a mortgage on their house. Langley did not know about the impending foreclosure because, as usual, he had not opened his mail. The sheriff's men, blocked by the barricaded doors, entered a parlor (Continued on page 118)

★  
She let no one but the waltz enter her apartment. The windows had not been washed since 1912.



*a cosmopolitan novelle by*

**Lawrence Williams**

ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER BAUMHOFER

# *a* **dangerous** *man*



Walter Williams  
Baumhofer

*The man you see below  
is James P. Brown,  
the mayor of a small town.  
He is not afraid of John Fallon,  
but Mrs. Brown is afraid.  
She has good reason to be . . .*



**J**

John Fallon's immediate reaction to his dreams was one of irritation. He was irritated at himself for dreaming so inconsequently; it seemed to him to be a waste of his valuable time. He was an extremely practical man, and it would have pleased him to have had practical dreams, constructive dreams from which he might perhaps retain something useful to apply to his waking life. Had there been only one of his dreams, Fallon would have regarded it as an interval of ordinary relaxation, much like taking his wife to the theater or like playing cards for an evening with the governor of the state, but when he had three of the dreams in the course of a week he was professionally irritated.

His will was strong, as many people had learned, and he willed that he would dream his particular dreams no longer, that there would be no fourth. He fought against the fourth dream, which he dreaded would come to him, like a man fighting for his life. But John Fallon's will seemed for some reason not to function in this respect, and he dreamed the dream. It was exactly as he had known it would be. It was, of course, the last.

Fallon reached his office at ten o'clock as usual on Tuesday morning, read part of his mail, made three brief telephone calls, and at ten fifteen his secretary admitted his two visitors.

From the way the two men sat in their chairs across the desk from John Fallon, it was apparent that they were in the presence of an Important Man. Their attention was a shade too eager, their nods of agreement a shade too ready. They held their bodies in attitudes of studied relaxation, listening, puffing John Fallon's expensive cigars. And yet these two were also Important Men. They were quoted often in the press as Spokesmen, Party Spokesmen. But they were not, as they fully understood, as important men in the Party as Fallon. No one in the state was as important in the Party as John Fallon.

On the opposite side of the desk, Fallon swung his bulky body back and forth in a swivel chair, talking quietly. He wasn't smoking one of his expensive cigars himself, for he had promised his mother that he would never smoke, and as everyone knew, John Fallon kept his promises. Instead, he fingered an exquisitely worked silver letter opener which had been given to him as a remembrance by the governor of the state shortly after Election Day several years earlier. "I want to start a snowball rolling down a steep hill," he was saying. "I want it to grow and gather weight as it rolls until it's a very big snowball—big enough to crush a man, to crush a dangerous man, to crush Brown. Does that sound ruthless to you?"

Both men made immediate sounds of protest. The older of the two, a handsome, gray-haired man in a neatly tailored pin-striped suit, leaned forward in his chair and said, "Of course, it's not ruthless, John. If it were, you wouldn't do it. That goes without saying."

Fallon smiled a little at his letter opener. "No, Geiger," he said. "It is ruthless, you see. Does that shock you? To me, it seems that the degree of ruthlessness in my proposal is beside the point. I think we should ask (Continued on page 125)

This Englishman bitterly resents government control of medicine.



European

**a** noted American expert on foreign affairs

fears that Britain will drop its present Labor government

and turn toward some form of left-wing totalitarianism,

breaking its alignment with the United States



**C**an the present Labor government remain in power in Great Britain? And if it fails, what will take its place?

These two questions are of great importance for all Americans. The Attlee cabinet will not stand until the next British elections in 1950 unless it begins to keep some of the promises it made to the voters two years ago. At the moment, it does not seem as though enough of those promises will be kept. And there is a growing danger that if the present British government fails, its liberal democracy may be replaced by extreme left-wing totalitarianism.

The safety of the United States depends upon the triumphant vindication of our form of democratic government in the eyes of the world. A blow against democracy in Britain will weaken our safety. In fact, democracy in Britain today is as much of a bulwark for our security in the postwar world as the military resistance of Britain was a ram-part of our military security during the Hitler blitzkrieg.

Modern history records no other such rapid deterioration in the might of a great power, which has been undefeated in war, as that which Great Britain suffered between 1919 and 1947.

At the close of the First World War, Britain still retained the position of predominance which she had enjoyed since the Napoleonic era. Her imperial dominion had been increased rather than diminished by the Treaty of Versailles. Her naval strength was subordinate to that of no other power. No other nation threatened her safety. There existed no

apparent reason why London should not be restored to its traditional position as the financial and commercial center of the globe.

Today, as a result of her resistance in the two World Wars, and as a result of the collapse of world economy during the years between the wars, Britain finds herself drained of her resources. The British people are suffering greater restrictions upon their individual liberty and greater hardships in their daily lives than those of the war years. Their government is canalizing all of the nation's energy into the task of increasing exports to an extent sufficient to pay for the imports of food and of raw materials upon which the very life of the British people depends.

Yet even so, Britain, on March thirty-first of this year, showed a deficit of more than two and a quarter billion dollars for the preceding fiscal year—a sum equivalent to fifteen percent of the national expenditures. The announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a budgetary surplus is anticipated next year does not change the situation. For if this surplus materializes, it will only be due to "windfalls," such as sales of war stores. American credit is being devoted to keeping up minimum imports.

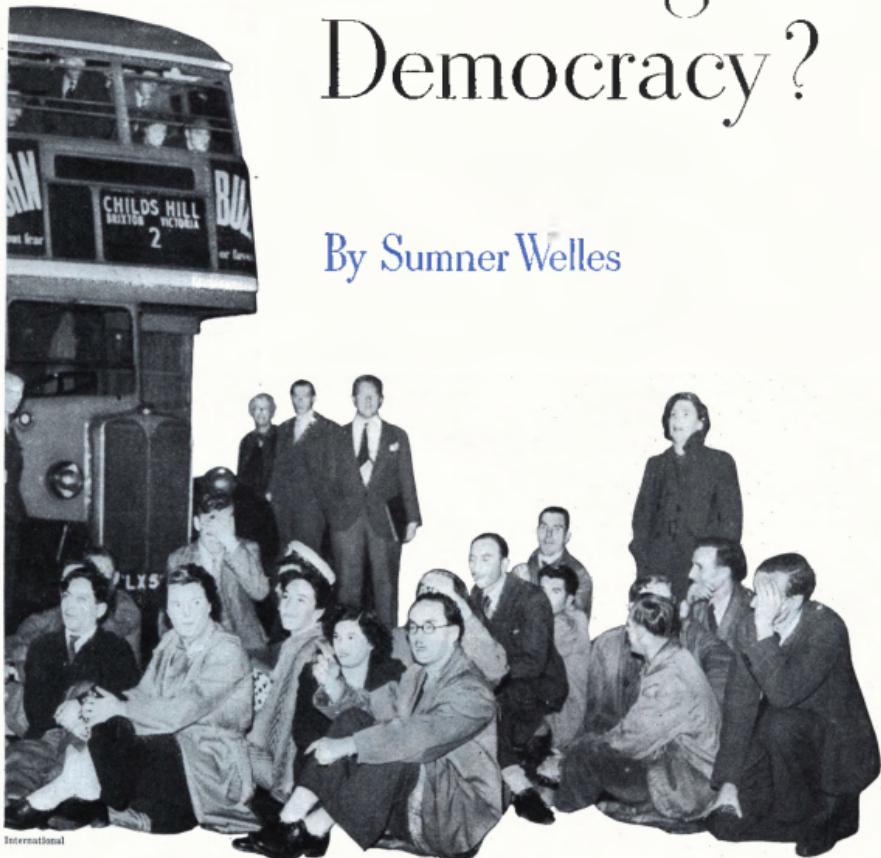
Under such conditions the liquidation of the British Empire was of course inevitable. India and Burma will soon be relinquished; the protectorates in the Middle East must rapidly be abandoned; all but a few crown colonies and some strategic bases must now be given up. It is also (Continued on page 174)

\*  
Housing is even more costly than it is in America.



# Is England Deserting Democracy?

By Sumner Welles



International

Episodes of unrest, like the housing-squatters' strike, have plagued Attlee's government.

*He said:*

*"Lend me a hundred dollars; I want to court you."*

*She said:*

*"Shouldn't we make it five hundred? I'm tough to court."*

She knew exactly what was going to happen. The tears of pain in her eyes were swelled by ones of self-pity. She was going to die. That was only fitting and proper. You had to pay for what you got.

Just before they put the mask on her face, she caught a glimpse of Dr. Riley. His manner was serene, and he looked casual even in his surgical gown and rubber gloves. That was Doc Riley for you, casual because he didn't have sense enough to be concerned. A general practitioner in a little town, a combination boy-scout leader and veterinarian. If she were in a hospital in New York, with an anesthetist and a specialist in difficult deliveries and a pediatrician waiting to grab the kid and a bill for several thousand dollars forthcoming, they wouldn't be so darned casual. But this was better. It finished things off properly. The gods needed appeasing.

The mask smelled horribly of rubber and metal and reminded her of when she'd had impacted wisdom teeth removed. Her stomach knotted automatically. She breathed deeply of the gas, concentrating so hard she scarcely felt the rhythmic pain. There wasn't a whole lot more time, and she had to remember everything and savor it, in case memory did not exist where she was going.

In the spring, in New York—last spring that was, not this spring—a somewhat spoiled girl named Judy Norris went to a cocktail party. It was raining but warm, a sticky day lacking empty cans. Ordinarily she wouldn't have gone, but she'd had several drinks beforehand, and suddenly the party seemed fun. The apartment was crowded and hot. The hostess, an otherwise blameless rich married woman, was proud of the celebrities she could get, and all at once Judy hated her, so she drank an Old-fashioned too rapidly and was nasty to several people. Finally she sat down in a corner, ate crackers (Continued on page 88)

ILLUSTRATED BY STEPHANIE

Paradise  
U-S-A



Judy said indignantly,  
"Are you asking  
an expectant mother  
to do the cooking,  
sewing  
and cleaning?"



By Robert Carson



Lorraine Boe



*She was a fugitive from fear. She fled until she found someone  
who showed her what courage really was*

# *the* ~~crisis~~

**S**he had been driving too fast. She realized that when she saw the rough stone wall whip by in a gray blur, and the scattered bushes of forsythia rush past like one straight yellow flame. She lifted her foot from the gas pedal, and slowly the world took reasonable shape and form again. Her hands, clammy and sweating, relaxed on the wheel; the car rolled gently to a halt.

The windows were open, and the early spring morning came in as softly as a ghost. She glanced about her with dazed eyes. The rolling lawns were to her right, such a slick young green they looked as though they had been painted on the earth. The mild air had a sleepy sweetness, and in the air, rising and descending like playing dolphins, were the fat bronze-throated notes of a bell.

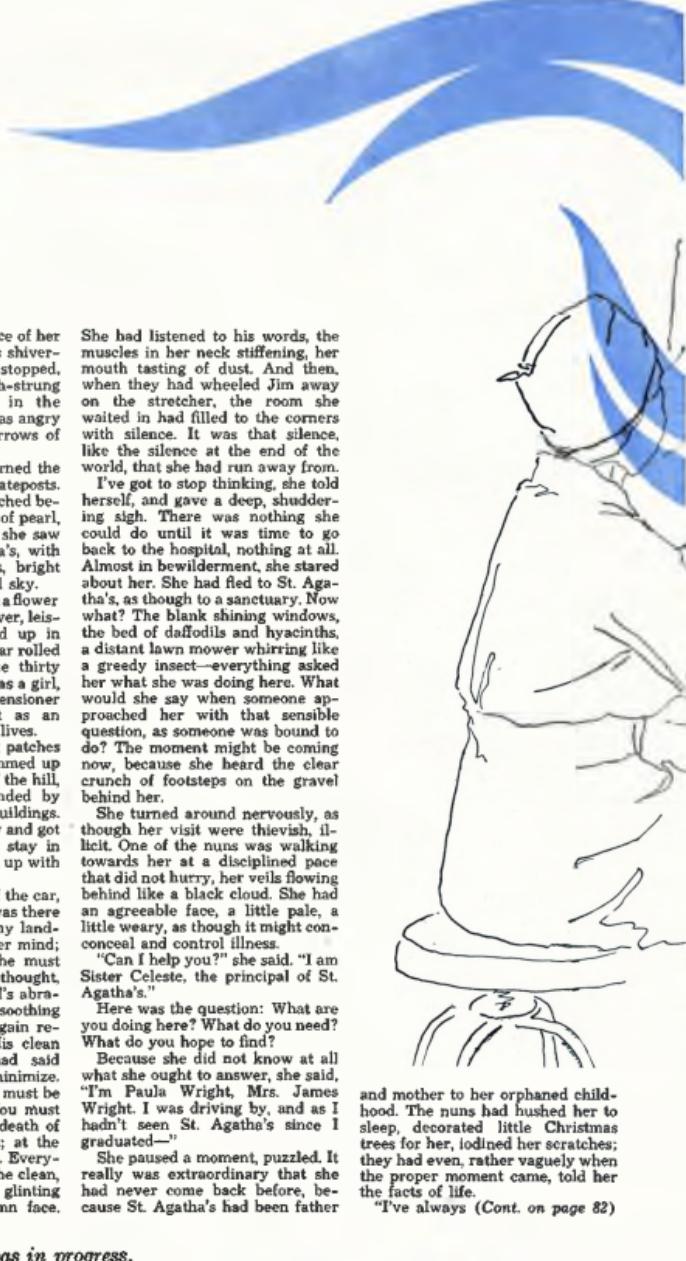
Here I am, she thought. It was all suddenly familiar to her again: the craggy stone wall, the curving lawns, the lemon-colored forsythia, and the beautiful swimming notes of the bell. She took out a handkerchief and dried her cold damp hands. The car had stopped just short of thick stone gateposts; on one post was a copper plaque, polished to a sheet of gold. Its bold script read: *St. Agatha's Academy for Young Ladies.*

"Full circle," she said to herself; "a full circle as round as an O."

She hadn't seen St. Agatha's since her graduation day, when she was seventeen, when her fledgling courage could have slain dragons. Now she was forty-seven, which was another thing, and so frightened that the hands she had wiped dry a moment ago, were wet again; all down

**By Loretta Burrough**

ILLUSTRATED BY LUCILLE BEE



her body, under the elegance of her expensive clothes, was this shivering sweat of fear. The bell stopped, and she heard the high-strung quarreling of sparrows in the bushes; they sounded just as angry at one another as the sparrows of thirty years before.

She shifted gears and turned the smart car between the gateposts. The white gravel road stretched before her, rising like a road of pearl, and at the top of the hill, she saw the windows of St. Agatha's, with the cross above the roofs, bright gold against the blue April sky.

An old man was digging in a flower bed beside the road; bent over, leisurely with age, he looked up in vague curiosity as the big car rolled by. The old man was like thirty years ago, too; when she was a girl, there had always been a pensioner at the school, indifferent as an island in the sea of young lives.

Past spectacular flashing patches of the Hudson, the car hummed up the long drive to the top of the hill, where it stopped, surrounded by the dove-colored school buildings. She turned the ignition key and got out quickly, as though to stay in the car were to stay locked up with

But when she was out of the car, the fear was still there. It was there in the shadows of the sunny landscape, in the shadows of her mind; it was there in the air she must breathe. Jim won't die, she thought, and repeated it like a child's abracadabra—Jim won't die—soothing herself with it until she again remembered the surgeon. His clean eyeglasses glinting, he had said kindly, plainly, "I won't minimize. It's extremely serious. You must be prepared for anything." You must be prepared even for the death of your husband, that meant; at the moment, love is of no avail. Everything was in the hands of the clean, calm surgeon, with the glinting eyeglasses, the long, solemn face.

She had listened to his words, the muscles in her neck stiffening, her mouth tasting of dust. And then, when they had wheeled Jim away on the stretcher, the room she waited in had filled to the corners with silence. It was that silence, like the silence at the end of the world, that she had run away from.

"I've got to stop thinking," she told herself, and gave a deep, shuddering sigh. There was nothing she could do until it was time to go back to the hospital, nothing at all. Almost in bewilderment, she stared about her. She had fled to St. Agatha's, as though to a sanctuary. Now what? The blank shining windows, the bed of daffodils and hyacinths, a distant lawn mower whirring like a greedy insect—everything asked her what she was doing here. What would she say when someone approached her with that sensible question, as someone was bound to do? The moment might be coming now, because she heard the clear crunch of footsteps on the gravel behind her.

She turned around nervously, as though her visit were thievish, illicit. One of the nuns was walking towards her at a disciplined pace that did not hurry, her veils flowing behind like a black cloud. She had an agreeable face, a little pale, a little weary, as though it might conceal and control illness.

"Can I help you?" she said. "I am Sister Celeste, the principal of St. Agatha's."

Here was the question: What are you doing here? What do you need? What do you hope to find?

Because she did not know at all what she ought to answer, she said, "I'm Paula Wright, Mrs. James Wright. I was driving by, and as I hadn't seen St. Agatha's since I graduated—"

She paused a moment, puzzled. It was extraordinary that she had never come back before, because St. Agatha's had been father

and mother to her orphaned childhood. The nuns had hushed her to sleep, decorated little Christmas trees for her, iodined her scratches; they had even, rather vaguely when the proper moment came, told her the facts of life.

"I've always (Cont. on page 82)

*While the operation was in progress,*

*Paula felt that the world seemed to contain nothing but herself and her sorrow.*



# What is the most urgent problem facing America today?



COSMOPOLITAN PUT THIS QUESTION  
TO TWELVE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS—  
FIVE EXPERIENCED PARTY LEADERS AND  
SEVEN YOUNG WAR VETERANS WHO  
ARE SERVING THEIR FIRST TERMS  
IN WASHINGTON.  
HERE ARE THEIR ANSWERS:

## JOSEPH W. MARTIN, JR., 62,

of Massachusetts, Republican, Speaker of the House of Representatives: Restoration of orderly government is our most urgent problem, for that matter the most urgent problem of the world today. Millions are still displaced, hungry and dazed by the horrible disaster which wrecked their lives and laid waste their lands. These millions turn to the beacon of freedom and security, which, thank God, still burns brightly here. We have a duty to stand as an example of national strength and freedom. Government control over the private affairs of the people must end before peace and order can come to us again.





### JOSEPH R. McCARTHY, 37,

Republican, first-term senator from Wisconsin: Balancing the present inconsistency between our wage scales and the cost of living is our most urgent problem. We have sixteen million industrial workers and forty million nonindustrial workers, such as grocery clerks, schoolteachers and farmers. Raising industrial wages without aiding the larger nonindustrial group will bring greater dislocation to our economy. Today, the only wage increase our economy can stand is in the forty-million group. Then, if strikes can be avoided, a resultant increase in production and reduction of prices will follow, forestalling a depression.



### ROBERT A. TAFT, 57,

Republican, serving his second term as senator from Ohio: Our basic problem, in both the urgent and long-range sense, is that of preventing depressions so that substantially full employment may be maintained. No problem is more vital to our welfare, to the very existence of our way of life or the peace of the world. It involves studies of price levels and wage levels and their relation to each other, methods of preventing monopoly control in industry and labor from distorting prices and wages, spending for consumption and for capital investment plus studies of individual and corporate savings and of many other economic forces bearing on a stable economy.

## ... Some congressmen find it at home



### JOHN F. KENNEDY, 30,

Democrat, first-term representative from Massachusetts: We are confronted with many exacting problems, but the most important, from a long-range view, is the great housing shortage existing in this country. Congress must act to provide housing for a great percentage of our veterans and to institute a broad program of public housing that will aid low-income groups who, before the war, lived in houses that were mostly substandard. The simple fact is that the building industry cannot build homes for prices that veterans and others in the low-income brackets can pay; therefore federal, state and local governments are under great obligation to render aid.



### WALTER F. GEORGE, 69,

Democrat, senator from Georgia since 1922: Our most urgent problem is whether management and labor can realize that our only salvation is to produce here the goods and services needed not only by our own people but also by all the peoples of the world. That means an agreement whereby production can be carried on without interruption until peace and the world economy are restored. This cannot be done through legislative action, although some remedies of abuses may be enacted. Such an agreement is fundamental. It will shape our own salvation and determine whether the world is going to pot.



## What is the most urgent problem facing America today?

### DONALD L. JACKSON, 37,

Republican, first-term representative from California: The atom and its control dwarfs all other problems. Great clouds of flame, smoke and debris over New Mexico, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Bikini formed the question for all civilization to answer. We can pass through one of two doors—leading the world to either a day of enlightenment or a day of stark disaster. An atomic-bomb race may well write finis to our civilization. We cannot enter upon a mutual suicide pact with the other nations of the earth, nor can we, in the present state of unrest, cede our deadly knowledge without assurance that the atom will be made the servant of mankind—not its master.



... but for others the peace of the world is the biggest worry of the moment.



### ARTHUR H. VANDENBERG, 63,

Republican, senator from Michigan since 1928: Peace at home and abroad is the most urgent problem facing the American people today. We must find a way to stabilize labor-management relationships at home so high and uninterrupted production can sustain high wages and low prices. On the other hand, we must persistently hunt for collective peace and security in the world—not only to stop another war but also to remove the burden of armaments from national economies of all concerned. There are other problems. We must sustain Western Democracy against Eastern Communism, at home and abroad. But the firmest answer is my first one—PEACE.

### TOM CONNALLY, 69,

Democrat, senator from Texas since 1929: The most urgent problem facing the American people today, in my judgment, is the establishment of world peace. Until this is accomplished, the world will remain in a state of uncertainty and insecurity. The governments and peoples of the devastated areas will be unable to readjust their economy and become once more self-sustaining until treaties are signed and hatreds are buried. There can be no lasting prosperity for America with a great portion of the world unable to produce, unable to purchase and depending upon us for the necessities of life.





### JOHN BELL WILLIAMS, 28,

Democrat, first-term representative from Mississippi: Lack of national unity is our most urgent problem. A united America is invincible against foreign threats; hence foreign threats to our national security are hardly as ominous as those which work from within. Many "social" and "economic reform" groups ostensibly "crusade" for overhauling of our social and economic system. These organizations of deceit—boasting many patriotic but misled Americans—are actually Communist and Fascist fronts, or are infiltrated with "subversives." Our future depends upon the eradication of these weevils. These groups pit race against race, class against class . . .



### CLAUDE I. BAKEWELL, 34,

Republican, first-term representative from Missouri: World peace is the most urgent problem facing us. It will not be attained until peace treaties are signed, the United Nations proves to be an effective, workable organization, and people of the former Axis powers are started on the road to regeneration. Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, suffering in post-war devastation and starvation, are fertile fields for alien "isms." America must remain strong militarily, our foreign policy must transcend partisan politics and as important as all, we must be strong domestically with a sound policy of economy, prudence and thrift.



### GEORGE A. SMATHERS, 33,

Democrat, first-term representative from Florida: After two world wars within a generation, our greatest problem is world peace. Both wars resulted from rampant ambition and greed. Because of our hatred of war we tried to ignore or appease those evil forces. Today, forces of oppression and aggression, this time under a new flag and another name, are again on the move. We ultimately must defend ourselves against their encroachments. Shall we again resort to appeasement and isolation, or shall we take a firm stand against aggression now—while there is still the possibility of averting war? That is the problem of our civilization.



### OLIN E. TEAGUE, 37,

Democrat, serving his first full term as a representative from Texas: What to do with the world leadership which has been thrust upon us is the most urgent problem facing the American people today. We did not seek this leadership, and it is doubtful if the average American cared whether the United States was the leader, but I believe the nation stands today at a crossroads. We must accept this responsibility or see our opportunity pass to a less desirable leader. God-fearing, God-loving peoples everywhere are praying that Americans accept it. We must be as great in peace as we were in war.

ANN stood in a long white slip before her dresser brushing her hair, pushing the long part straight across the back and jamming little combs into it behind her left ear. This would be just the night for one lock to want to work loose and go streaming down.

She could hear Dave splashing in the shower. He was humming. He sounded happy enough. But he wasn't going to like it when he found that the shirt she had laid out would be hard to button at the neck. The weight put on in the Army had made him a full size larger. Nothing he had owned when he went away fitted him now, and a colonel is used to clothes which fit, and it had been impossible to find a new dress shirt anywhere. It was hard for Dave to adjust to civilian scarcities. He saw no excuse for them. He would begin talking about the unfairness of the wage-price scale again. She sighed, combing curls over her finger on the top of her head.

She could hear Dave Junior getting the car out of the garage, racing the engine irritably before the door. He had not been very gracious about letting Ann and Dave have the car tonight. He wanted it himself.

"Whose car is it?" Dave had demanded a little while ago.

"Darling," Ann had smiled, "it has been his—to all intents and purposes—for the past two years. He's washed it and polished it and oiled it and babied the tires, learned to drive it, done all the errands with it. Now he has a girl, and of course he thinks the car is his to have fun with at night. I know it isn't sweet of him. But you can't expect that kind of sweetness from a seventeen-year-old son. Besides, next year—if he still wants to enlist—he may not be where he can have the car at all—or any car—"

That silenced Dave. He did not like looking forward for Dave Junior any better than Ann did. Perhaps not so well, for he knew more of what the boy might be going into . . . Still, she wished it had not been necessary to bring up the subject. She wondered if men, coming home, felt that their wives now thought first—always—of their children's happiness, fearing only the future, forgetting that husbands have already earned the happiness children have still to earn, forgetting the risks already run, the fears patiently and bravely conquered. It was not true, but it might seem so. A woman looked in all directions at once and felt like a stag at bay. She called on her husband for understanding and self-sacrifice more often than on anyone else because where else was she so likely to find it? Perhaps that was not fair to him, but to whom is life fair?

She could hear Bud in wry argument with his best friend on the telephone. Those two were all but inseparable, yet, so far as Ann knew, they agreed on absolutely (Continued on page 148)



#### Which is Better—

*the mellow satisfaction  
that comes with middle age  
or the misty,  
sweet-smelling springtime of youth?  
Here is a story  
that may change  
your point of view*

By Gladys Hasty Carroll

ILLUSTRATED BY WESLEY SNYDER



tonight  
is  
ours

Walter Singletary



*There she sat—bored, brittle, impatient—waiting to take Christy's father away from her mother.*



# the e nchantress

part one of a two-part novel by **Audrey De Graff**

**t**he vicious thing about Tabithia

was that even when she grew tired of her admirers  
she never really discarded them.

*She never quite let them go*

Christina Claiborne awoke somewhat belatedly in the third-floor bedroom of a stone-front house in the East Eighties. Her eyes came to rest on the old carved furniture that had once belonged to her mother, and she allowed a certain comfort she derived from the sight of it to steal over her for a moment, like a soft down quilt pulled gently over a sleeping child. She wanted to snuggle under it and dream childish dreams again. Then she remembered, and, with remembering, cast it all away from her: the thoughts, the comforts, the memories. This was morning in September, when the course of her life was going to be decided: whether she went to college or whether she got married. It was something to think about.

She got right out of bed and pinned her blond hair up tightly on her head. She did this without looking in the mirror, without turning her head for arch glances at herself. Self-contemplation and wonderment were for those who were unsure of themselves, and Christy Claiborne, at eighteen, was sure of nothing on earth except herself.

She went into the shower and held her uplifted face and the slight, perfectly formed body beneath the spray. Whether she went to college or whether she married Chet Howard was not half so important as the fact that, in either case, she would be leaving this house and Gladys forever. Gladys was her stepmother.

As though it were a signal of her new freedom, she turned the shower on to cold and gave a little gasp and shiver of delight as it flowed over her. She held her face up into it, reveling in it for a moment; then, just as suddenly, she shut it off and stepped out of her glass box, reaching for one of the big soft towels. She had to shake her head and blink twice before she realized there were no towels there.

Darn! It wasn't like Katie to slip up on things. Even with the sudden death of Christy's father, the funeral, everything different in general, Katie had looked out for her. Now the towels. They were very special ones that she had bought for herself, and like everything for herself, the finest and best and plenty of them;

not because she wanted them much, even cared at all whether she had them, but because it had annoyed Gladys when she went over the hills and because Gladys had never dared to complain to her husband.

Like a sprite, Christy took big dancing strides across the blue rug of her bedroom, opened the door to the hallway and pursed her lips in a shrill whistle, her particular call for Katie.

"I'm coming, coming, coming," Katie was puffing up the staircase, carrying a breakfast tray.

"Towels, Katie, towels; you forgot my towels."

"I forgot nothing," Katie was red-faced, plain, and cross. There had been four generations of Katie's since the original one had come from England with her mistress, Katie, the fourth, had a permanent, short skirts, and nail polish to match her lipstick; the modern trend had crept into her attitude and her speech. But at heart she was completely the loyal family servant.

"I put the towels out myself when I did the bathroom. Late, on account of the funeral," she added.

"Well, there's only one little hand towel here now. Come, see . . . I'm practically dry though, so it doesn't matter."

"Just a minute," Katie set down the breakfast tray and went to the end of the hall to the linen closet. She came back bearing two ordinary bath towels. "The pastels are missing," she announced. "Your father's scarce in his grave and she seizes the towels, so you have to jump around to dry or come to her begging."

Christy wriggled around with the towel a bit and pulled on some underwear. She and Katie exchanged looks of understanding. There was nothing absurd to either of them in the picture of Gladys Claiborne stealing bath towels, so long had they attributed every conceivable annoyance to her essential meanness. "I wouldn't put it past her," Christy remarked, dismissing the matter. She snapped off her white rubber cap and worked with the hairbrush a moment. "However things turn out, we're not worrying about bath towels, are we, Katie? Guess I'll wear my brown suit."

"Your fur?" Katie asked.

"No, just my brown hat. There." She fastened the skirt zipper. "Anything good on that tray?"

"Not now," Katie told her doily, "unless you like cold bacon."

There was no thought of getting anything more, and actually the coffee was still hot in the silver pot and the toast warm. Christy ate contentedly, Katie, tidying up the room, asked, "What will you be doing?"

"It all depends on the will. If father left me this house, I'll have the great pleasure of speaking to Gladys about other arrangements."

"Likely he left it to her. What would he be leaving a house to an eighteen-year-old girl for? What I'm thinking is, if he left you her for a guardian, what then?"

"I don't think he named her as guardian," Christy said confidently. "He must have known how we felt about each other. But do you know, Katie"—she set down her cup—"in all these years ever since my mother died and I came back here to live, there's never been anything said. Not one single word. Not a word. Maybe he never knew I hated her."

Katie's hand, smoothing the bedspread, paused, her pale blue eyes stared wonderingly. "Maybe," she repeated awesomely, "maybe."

Christy sipped her coffee again. "In that case, I'll marry Mr. Howard, Katie."

■ "And if it isn't her for guardian; if it's someone else?"

"Then I'll go on to college, as I planned. I'd be there now, if this hadn't happened. It's just a miracle we hadn't called the express to get the trunks."



Christy knew  
that Tucky must have love

to turn to—

the love his mother  
didn't give him.

"Sounds to me," said Katie, "like you're simply dying to marry Mr. Howard."

"I'm very fond of Chet," Christy said musingly, "very fond indeed."

She brought herself back to Katie with a quick smile. "Well, I'm on my way. Where's my hat?" She leaned to the mirror to adjust it smartly.

"Try a little lipstick," Katie suggested.

"I'll do," Christy told her. "Anyone who likes me can like me"—she stepped back and added carefully to her image—"as I am."

"You're smart, I suppose, and different." Katie was wistful. "But you could be pretty."

Christy turned from the mirror and picked up her gloves. "Someday I will be," she promised glowingly; "someday when all this is over and I've really started my life. Perhaps, at college, I'll have a friend who will ask me home with her. Why, Katie, it might be this Thanksgiving, or any week end this fall; parties somewhere, dances. And then, Katie, I can wear all those gowns I bought, the ermine jacket Daddy gave me last birthday, Mother's jewelry . . ."

Christy's eyes were lost in dreams. Katie remarked practically, "Myself, I don't see, why you didn't do it before."

"I couldn't." Christy came out of the dream. "I'm the sort of person who must have everything or nothing at all. When I have a good time, I want it to be a good time, real enjoyment, without ugly things in the back of my mind, like Gladys, and what she did to my mother; and father, and the way he let us down." She went on talking to Katie, as though she were some friendly, disembodied spirit who would understand everything and never repeat it.

"I've just been waiting to begin," Christy thought aloud. "I haven't lived at all yet. And when I do begin, it's going to be wonderful, (Continued on page 97)



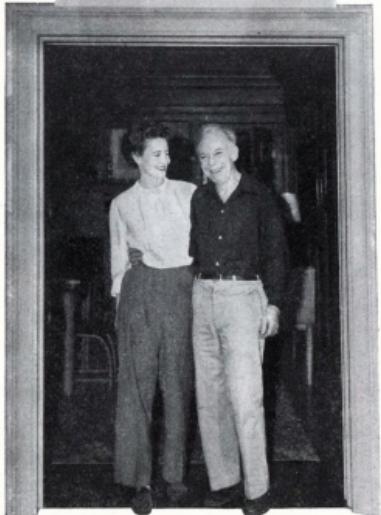
# That Marrying Manville Man



Tommy  
now lives rather quietly  
with Number Eight—  
when he isn't  
putting her in jail—  
but sometimes he calls  
the police, the fire  
department and the  
newspapers and threatens  
to take on a  
Number Nine

By Dickson Hartwell

BEWARE  
MARRYING MANVILLE  
LIVES HERE



airplane to bring one girl to New York from Hollywood; spending more than \$10,000 for full-page newspaper ads for a lawyer and secretary and then throwing 150,000 replies into wastebaskets; paying \$3,100 to bring a luscious secretary by special train from Louisville to New York; ordering orchids by the score, fur coats by the half dozen, and champagne for everybody within hailing distance in night clubs. And, at fifty-three, though he has the appearance of an unsuccessfully reconditioned Model-T, when the mood strikes him, Manville is still caring to go.

Manville's spending orgies sometimes have been exaggerated. On a toot in New York he has spent \$4,000 in a single night. Evenings which cost him \$1,000 were once common, with dinner for four at \$100, theater tickets at scalper's prices, \$150 (Manville insisted on front-row seats and also bought seats for as many as seven bodyguards spotted throughout the audience) and night-club checks, limousine hire and tips adding up to \$750.

Manville likes to think that such sprees help the country by keeping money in circulation. They are not entirely meaningless—they buy Manville the notoriety and good times he craves and, like a good purchasing agent, he can always remember what he spends. One of his most notable series of extravagances is credited with breaking the demands of Wife Number Four for a divorce settlement of \$1,000,000. When a stalemate in negotiations became obvious and it appeared that the case might drag on indefinitely, Manville started tossing money around like a successful counterfeiter. He got a new

**O**ne of the most celebrated of the money-scattering Broadway playboys, Thomas Franklin Manville, is now leading a quiet life. He lives in a small apartment over his garage, rises at six thirty in the morning, does all his own cooking and housework, mows his own lawn, washes his automobiles and even observes traffic laws.

As he puts it, Manville is "not operating" at the moment. In 1944 he auctioned off the furnishings of his twenty-eight-room stone-and-shingle house, Bon Repos, at Mamaroneck. The sale brought in approximately seventy thousand dollars. More than one thousand women bid wildly for Manville souvenirs, paying \$60 for a pair of garbage cans, \$195 for a toy train and \$60 for a broken doghouse.

With him in his present modest setting, when he isn't putting her in jail, is his eighth wife, the former Georgina Campbell, an Englishwoman to whom he has been married about nineteen months, an endurance record for Manville marriages of the past ten years.

But to everyone who knows Manville, a period of quiet is merely the lull which heralds a storm. It is his habit to erupt suddenly and, when he does, things happen. The Mamaroneck police are alerted, ambulance bells jangle at near-by New Rochelle Hospital, and city editors experience a familiar nausea.

On his various outbursts and marriages, Manville has tossed around the income on \$8,750,000 and a \$2,000,000 trust fund: chartering a twenty-one-seat



All is fairly calm with the eighth Mrs. Manville, top of page.  
Not so in 1942 when Tommy carried  
Billy Bozo across the threshold.

Bonnie Edwards, the fifth  
Mrs. Manville, lasted seventeen days.



A stormy four years was the tenure  
of Marcelle Edwards at Bon Repos.



Avenne Taylor lost out when she  
went high-hat on Tommy.



and bigger yacht, bought two additional expensive automobiles, showered gems and jewels lavishly, handed out tips that bug-eyed blasé headwaiters and charteved a special seven-car train. Because of Manville's flair for publicity, every dollar spent seemed like ten, and it appeared for a time as if he were going to dissipate his entire fortune rather than give any part of it to his wife. The opposition grew concerned. Suddenly Wife Number Four's lawyer, who had declared himself set for an indefinite seige, came up with a settlement proposition. Manville accepted. His down-the-drain expenses for a month of wild spending were \$60,000. That, he points out, was a trifle. "I saved about \$750,000," he says, "and that ain't hay."

The relationship which Manville enjoys with his home town of Mamaroneck and the near-by City of New Rochelle is not that of the average citizen. He is the recipient of unusual tax-paid services. He is an honorary deputy sheriff of Westchester County, and to prove it he carries a gold police shield, suitably inscribed and decorated with a large diamond. He is also honorary fire chief of Mamaroneck. In this capacity he can and does have a fire engine sent to his place merely by asking for it.

At the police department there is no lack of attention to his desires. He has permits for three pistols and for a siren on one of his three automobiles. He likes to go places with either a radio-car or motorcycle-police escort, and sometimes, desiring to give circumstance to an excursion, he will also request a fire engine as well. On a foot around town not long ago, Manville was accompanied by a police squad car, two motorcycle policemen and a fire engine. Manville is generous in showing his appreciation for such service. But the report that he gives each cop and fireman a necktie at Christmas was probably circulated in irony.

The police and fire departments, however, cannot fully meet the capricious needs of the Manville menage. He also solicits unusual services from the New Rochelle Hospital. Occasionally guests at Bon

Repos embarrass him by suffering an indisposition, such as overindulgence in alcohol. Then he summons an ambulance from the hospital and orders the offending guest removed. Sometimes, though, he is confronted with a guest who merely annoys him and is not in the least indisposed. Then, too, he buzzes the hospital and an ambulance comes quickly. Under threat of medical removal, the guest usually prefers a cab and gets one.

Manville sometimes uses this ambulance service in reverse. Once, when he telephoned a friend to ask him to join a party, the friend's wife said her husband was in bed with a cold. Within a few minutes an ambulance screamed up to the man's house. He was removed from his bed to a stretcher and whisked to Bon Repos. "Ha!" Manville laughed. "You thought you could put me off that way, didn't you?"

The master of Bon Repos is slightly stooped and stocky, five feet nine inches tall and weighs about 160 pounds. He affects pearl-gray Tuxedos with deep purple lapels and midnight-blue and black shirts. Though sun and sun lamp keep him ruddy, his joking references to himself as "grandpappy" are oddly appropriate. But he is spry withal, and his restless energy has worn out many a husky bodyguard detailed to accompany him on his New York blowouts. Silence distresses him, and he likes phonograph records played incessantly. When he used to occupy the main house at Bon Repos, a battery of record players, controlled from his office, bedside and dining-room table, ground out music all day long. There were loudspeakers everywhere in the house, and the sound system covered the four acres of ground as well, including a croquet court where Manville plays assiduously but without noteworthy skill.

The Bon Repos mansion also had a special telephone system with twenty phones and a device whereby Manville could, and did, eavesdrop on the conversations of his guests. The kitchen range had eight gas burners and four ovens, and the smaller of two refrigerators was seven feet tall.

The air-conditioned, pine- (Continued on page 131)



As Number Two, Lois McCoin was part of a peace treaty with father.



Sunny Ainsworth took too long in the powder room.

★  
Mr. Manville  
at Bon Repos displays  
his collection  
of matrimonial  
photos.





*By Louis Bromfield*

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM LOVELL

# COLORADO



*Conclusion of a tempestuous novel  
of love and action in the frontier days*

Nobody ever quite understood what it was that set off the chain of events which led to what became known in the history of Silver City as the Battle of the Ballots, an event remembered to this day by the old timers; an event which has become a legend for citizens who were not even alive at the time it happened. Mrs. Hirshbein, poring over her astrological charts afterward in her bedroom, above the fire-singed Emporium, could find nothing to explain the explosion. She finally gave out the opinion that the whole thing was caused by spots on the sun.

The Professor died quietly late one afternoon, with Bridget sitting in a chair by the side of his bed while Madge waited belowstairs with the doctor and the nurses. The old man clung to her hand as if in all his wandering, unstable, fruitless life she were the only thing in which he had ever found any satisfaction. A little before he died he regained enough clarity to recognize her, but he never regained the power of speech.

Tears came into Bridget's eyes, not at the fact of his dying, but that the old skull-duggery and humbug were gone from him. There was something gentle and childlike about him. It had been there always, and at times during their life together the quality had revealed itself. Now as he lay dying she knew that this quality always had been the very essence of the old man and that all the rest—the pretense, the hypocrisy, the impersonations, had been no more than the shell which had grown around him as a result of the humiliations and failures of life.

He died very quietly. He simply closed his eyes and stopped breathing. Gently she laid his hands across his chest and went downstairs. To the doctor and nurse she said, "I think you'd better go up." And then in Madge's arms she began to cry.

They buried him two days later in the little graveyard beside the rushing river bordered by cottonwood trees.

The only (Continued on page 141)

When she was sure the rider was Dick and help was at hand, Bridget's courage flared and she seized the reins.



Who shall say whether he was traitor or hero,  
caught as he was in the gale of the world?

Now, thinking over the whole business, it is curious how and when and where I met him. To say that I was a soldier at the time would be going a little too far. I was a clerk in the intelligence section of our outfit, and I was where all good intelligence clerks and general officers should be—about fifty miles behind the lines. True, in going about this pleasant little French town, I wore a steel helmet and I carried a carbine, but I was merely obeying a general order and never had occasion to make use of either. As a matter of fact, this day when I crossed the square, I had just been taking some snapshots of the local cathedral, and I was going to the little film store to have them developed.

I had passed the carts and stalls set up in the square, with their wares of berets and souvenirs, and was opposite the combined city hall-police station-FFI headquarters when a man in a civilian suit, with an FFI brassard over the coat sleeve, came rushing out of a doorway and accosted me. He asked me if I spoke French, and when I replied that I did he asked me to be gracious enough to follow him into the police station.

There were a few desks in the room. Behind one sat a young woman secretary hacking away at a typewriter. Behind another was a dark-mustached young man of about thirty, clad in a blue uniform, and I could see from the sleeve insignia that he was a captain. Seated at the side of the desk was a big American Army major. The French captain got up and shook hands with me. He said that his name was Bovet and wanted to know whether I spoke French. I said that I did.

"Good," he said. "Very good. You see, sergeant, the major does not. He is here to see me about a man we have just picked up for the murder of an American colonel the other day. Will you please explain to him that we think this is the man, but we are not yet sure? We have been questioning him thoroughly all night, and we will question him tonight again—also very thoroughly. Tell him it is only a matter of a few hours."

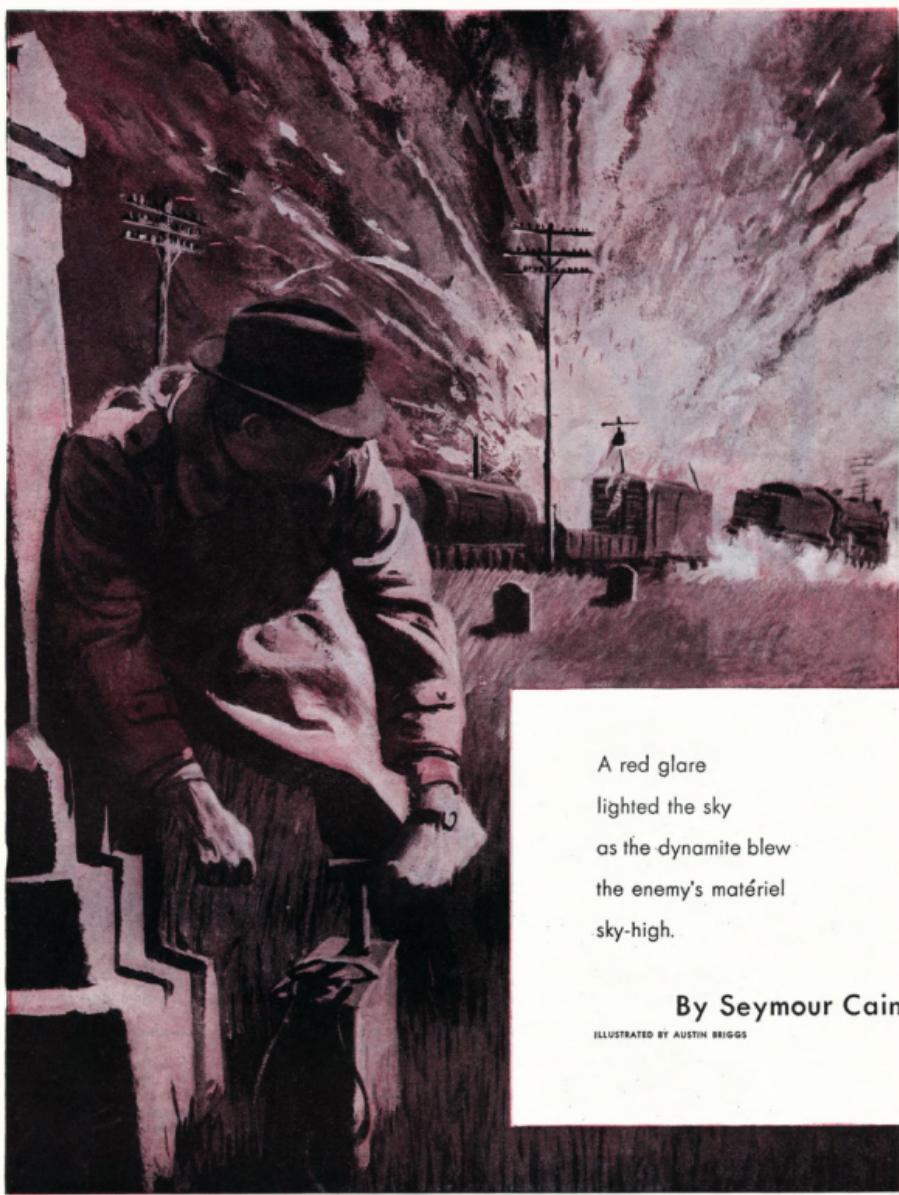
The major listened to me for a few minutes, and then waved his big hands in assent.

"Okay," he said. "Okay. Now ask him what they will do with him if he is the guilty man."

To this Bovet replied, "If he is guilty we will

## The Payment

ARTHUR FREUD



A red glare  
lighted the sky  
as the dynamite blew  
the enemy's matériel  
sky-high.

**By Seymour Cain**

ILLUSTRATED BY AUSTIN BRIGGS



turn him over to your forces to be shot, if you wish."

I told this to the major, and I could see that he didn't like the idea very much. I didn't like it very much myself. We probably were both thinking that the French ought to deal with their own traitors and bury their own dead. However, the major made an appointment for the following day and left.

The man with the FFI brassard touched me on the arm. "Would you like to see this fellow?" he said. "I can take you to the jailhouse."

"Yes," I said. "That sounds interesting. My name is Robert Edmunds."

"And mine is Jacques Charnier," he said, shaking my proffered hand.

56

We went down the side of the square, up a side street, past the big hospital and the cathedral, down a steep slope, to a big gray-white stone building. There was an FFI man on guard. Apparently he knew Charnier, for he let us pass through the big iron-barred gates.

Our man was in a cell by himself. Talking to the fellow was rather disappointing. He was a small ratlike creature with prominent cheekbones, and he looked as if he had had a hard night; besides, I don't think he was overjoyed at the sight of an American uniform. After listening to a few monosyllabic replies I gave it up as a bad job and presented him with a

In one thing Jacques was lucky: He had a charming little wife who loved him dearly.

half-used package of cigarettes. Charnier and the guard gave me a look that implied I was guilty of a breach of good taste, but I didn't feel too embarrassed about it. Perhaps he had murdered the colonel, but he was a man, and he probably had only a few hours to live. Was it wrong, I thought, to give a condemned man a few cigarettes?

I felt the same a few days later when I read in the local papers the notice of his execution.

After we came out of the jail I invited Charnier into a cafe off the square for a few aperitifs, and he accepted. Over our drinks we grew quite friendly and told each other about our pasts and our present duties.

**H**e was rather reluctant to speak about his resistance activities, but I was able to worm out of him that he had been in the movement since the earliest days and had killed his quota of Germans and done his share of sabotage. During peacetime he had been an engineer and had traveled all over France building bridges and aqueducts, and I could see where his civilian experience had been of use to him in his wartime trade.

I realized that he was not like the young fellows in the FFI with whom I had previously come in contact. In the first place, he was a lot older—he must have been around thirty-eight—with a wife and two children and a settled, secure civilian past. "The air of command" is an idle phrase. What he had, I would say, was the air of responsibility, of resourcefulness, of coolness during times of stress. And, although he was of a normal height—about five ten—he gave one an impression of great size. Perhaps it was the width of his shoulders or the big capable hands or the large face with the big set features.

Afterwards he insisted I come home with him for supper. It was impossible to shake him off, and I soon found myself at his side, letting the knocker fall on the white door of a neat modest-looking home.

**G**iven a woman is usually annoyed when a man brings home an unexpected guest for dinner, but Annette Charnier didn't seem upset at all and welcomed me most warmly.

She was a pretty little thing. She was just about thirty then, with beautiful dark eyes and soft brown hair caught into a bun at the nape of the neck and a trim yet sensuous little body. I fell in love with her at first sight. Jacques realized this and used to tease me about it, especially in her presence, as he knew I was embarrassed easily.

The little girls took after her. Georgette was eight

and Marie ten, and they seemed cut from the same stem—brown-haired, dark-eyed, sweet and gentle.

We all had a good time that first night. It was a fine dinner, from the hot savory onion soup, through the salad of country-fresh vegetables, to the roast rabbit, taken from the brood that they kept in little cages out in the back yard. The red wine made me congenial and talkative, and I translated all the jokes I knew from American into French and they loved them all. I found that humor is not necessarily limited by national boundaries, and nothing I said, no matter how outrageous, could seem to shock them. I was, after all, in the heart of French civilization.

By the end of the evening the little girls had taken me into their hearts as their own special American friend, and before they went to bed they pinned a couple of their religious medals on my shirt and gave me some snapshots of themselves.

**W**hen I left that night I had to promise to come again the next night—"had to," I say, but of course I wanted to desperately. In this exile of foreign soldiering I had found a family and a home.

After that it was dinner five or six evenings a week and usually an aperitif with Jacques in the café during the afternoons. His job with the provisional local administration was only a minor one, and he had a lot of free time on his hands. Within a week's time I had settled down into something like the role of uncle to the little girls and of brother-in-law to Annette and Jacques Charnier.

If today I speak a good and pure French, it is only due to Jacques's efforts, for he was a pertinacious and thorough teacher. Always he was correcting me, always he was showing me how what seemed to me grammatically correct French syntax was not "good" French. Once I wrote a letter to a girl in another part of France. It was just a short note, about twenty lines in all, but he spent an hour and a half editing, inserting, deleting, explaining and making clear, until, I am sure, the note the girl finally received was one of the masterpieces of French prose literature.

Yes, in my rootlessness, in my exile, in my alienation, I had found a settled piece of ground, a place to hang my hat, a house I could call home. But, strangely enough, I always had an uncertain feeling when with Jacques. It was not that way with Annette and the kids. With them everything was security and perfect sympathy and understanding. But there was always something withdrawn about Jacques Charnier, always something about him that seemed to be private, secret and enclosed, (Continued on page 115)

*Cosmopolitan's*

# Movie Citations of the Month

**By Louella O. Parsons**

Movie Pictures Editor, International News Service

**Ladies and Gentlemen!** The Parsons Bazaar of Picked Pictures Is Now Open. Step right this way, Ladies and Gentlemen, for we have Good Goods to Offer this Month.

What will you have, fair Ladies and Gentlemen? Would you like to recapture the crystalline emotions of your childhood at the time when you really believed in Santa Claus? Would you like to re-experience the true spirit of Christmas, even though the Fourth-of-July firecrackers are popping all around you as you read this?

Do you prefer to come along with me and witness one of the most courageous social documents of our time—one that with no mincing of words faces the current problems of adultery and divorce?

Or do you want to romp through our movie past, in glorious Technicolor, guided by a golden girl with a brassy voice and a personality warm as July sunshine?

Or is it your desire to be chilled while you're thrilled with the brutality of men against men, of law against disorder, of the cop against the criminal, and all this portrayed with a force that is as ruthless as its characters?

I can offer you any or all of these widely contrasting experiences this month. Ladies and Gentlemen, and very happy I am about it, too.

I say, as you are probably saying, it's about time that Hollywood turned up with some supershows. I admit that all the June movies were a bit dubious, but there's no summer complaint about this July crop.

Personally, my favorite picture of the month is "The Miracle on 34th Street."

It's 34th Street in New York City to which the title refers. Specifically, it's Macy's department store—the biggest store in the country—where all the action is shot. The gentleman who beamingly performs the miracle is a little white-bearded, twinkling-eyed character called Kris Kringle. What he'll bring you is not only a gift of chuckling entertainment, but the restoration of your faith—in people and kindness and the spirit of true generosity.

I wrote here, some months ago, about the benefits that the strike of set designers in our studios had actually given Hollywood. As the months have passed, these benefits have become even more pronounced. Since fake backgrounds can't be (Continued on page 78)



✓ **BEST COMEDY ROLE**—Betty Hutton's performance in "The Perils of Pauline."



✓ **BEST PERFORMANCE**—Ann Sheridan's portrayal of the wife in "The Unfaithful."



✓ **BEST PRODUCTION** of the month is "The Miracle on 34th Street," a dramatic comedy based on Macy's Christmas parade and featuring Natalie Wood and Edmund Gwenn.



✓ **BEST DIRECTOR** honors go to Jules Dassin for his suspense build-up in "Brute Force," with Burt Lancaster.

**A subtle and unusual story about the twilight world  
of childhood and a little boy who wanted desperately to be kin to somebody**

**H**e was idling down Piedmont street, stepping on every line in the sidewalk. If he missed one, didn't step on it, he'd die before he got to the corner.

At the corner he was still alive, and so he paused for a moment, stuck his big toe in the soft tar that filled the crack between the asphalt street and the concrete curb, then ran across.

"I'll count every line on this block." It was just lately he'd started talking to himself, like Crazy Mattie, the vegetable woman who stopped in the middle of the street sometimes to talk to herself, and to dead people, and to God. "I'm not crazy. I just haven't got anybody to talk to . . . four, five, six . . ." One day, about a week after the Fourth of July, he'd counted sixty-three lines, and that was a lot for a boy who just weighed forty-eight pounds. He could have counted more, but old Miss Hallie Thompson who was as deaf as a giraffe had hollered from her porch, "How's your Grandmother? How's your Grandmother? How's your Grandmother?" He couldn't tell whether she heard his answer or not. She just nodded and went back to reading her newspaper. It looked like an ordinary newspaper to him, but everybody said she read Lips.

He lost count again this afternoon, thinking about Miss Hallie reading Lips. He took out of his pocket the black carbon stick from a flashlight battery and drew a long thin lip on the sidewalk. Then he turned sideways and drew another, smaller, fatter lip in the other direction. It looked like a T but not very much like one. Then he spelled out, in regular letters, his name—Ted—the way Miss Clark, his first-grade teacher, who had a one-legged canary at home, had taught him.

He stood up and hopped on one leg to the top of the hill on Piedmont street. He jumped up on a wall under an oak tree and sat down to cool between two roots that made a regular little nest. When he had caught his breath he jumped up and began clucking like a hen: "Oh, cluck cluck cluck, look what I did Cluck cluck cluck . . ." He couldn't cluck like Red Andrews, but he could crow better. He let out a healthy crow for the city rooster, then cupped his hands over his mouth and crowed again for the country rooster who was answering from way off.

Down at the bottom of the hill, across from the lumber yard where he was headed to play in the sawdust pile, and next to the filling station where Jake, the Purple-Heart man, worked, a trailer was parked. It hadn't been there yesterday, and now all of a sudden here it was. Just like that. Ted ran down the street and coasted, with a screeching of brakes, to a stop across the street from the trailer.

Three men were out in front, two of them seated on boxes, watching the third one placing bottles on shelves at the end of the trailer. A faded sign above the trailer door said in red letters: "Dr. Brown's Bigword Bigword Tonic!"

Warily Ted crossed over, pretending he was going to the filling station. But then when the men didn't notice him, he edged up closer to the group (one of them was Jake) and looked at the bottles. There were flat ones filled with red-brown (Continued on page 94)

*by max steele*

ILLUSTRATION BY PETER BORKFELD

# THE P e s c u e

Jake kept shaking him and asking, "Did the snake bite you? Did he?"





Oh! what a painful

lesson this always is to learn

even when the teacher is a beautiful girl!

# mantrap

From the workshop window Kevin saw Mrs. Emmers coming down her terrace, past the swimming pool, straight in his direction, and he wondered resentfully what the old battle-ax—she was at least forty—wanted now.

He really must tackle Uncle Hiffy again on the project of moving the shop off the Emmers line back into the Mead garden. Uncle Hiffy had said no six times, but seven was Kev's lucky number.

Mrs. Emmers spoke through the window, her voice quick and brittle. "Kev, be a lamb and meet the six-fifteen for me, will you? Ann's bringing a girl for the week end, and the Kinnells are coming, and Arthur's gone downtown for the lobsters. Take the station wagon—you'll have to hurry."

Not a request, just an order to a half-wit, thought Kev.

She went on, "Heavens, you're grimy! What are you messing with today?" She didn't wait for an answer but tapped away on her high-soled sandals and did not see the face Kevin made.

But he didn't rebel. His overalls and shirt were grimy as Eve Emmers had said, but he thought: The heck with it! He put into the rack the flagon of oil he was testing and loped over to the Emmers garage. He hated the station wagon because Arthur, the Emmers chauffeur, neglected it. Kevin lis-

tened scornfully to the engine's grind. His own dizzy rattletrap buzzed like a contented honeybee.

The train was pulling in, but he didn't get out; let them carry their own bags! Just another bunch of the Emmerses' crummy friends. And Ann. He didn't like Ann. The younger Emmers daughter Gobi—actually named Geraldine—was a good egg. Ann was nineteen, two years older than Kev, and she treated him just as her mother did, never seeing him unless she wanted something.

He watched them coming with high detachment, appraising them. The Kinnells were old doddanders, as old as the Emmerses. Ann was just Ann, shrill, stuck-up, silly. But Kev's eyes widened when he saw the girl walking beside Ann. He was a hard realist about girls, but this one was something.

Ann began bossing as usual. "Sit in back, Mrs. Kinnell—you too, Marla—Kev, this is Marla Sharod—Mr. Kinnell in the middle with me . . ."

Kev hopped out and threw the bags on the middle seat. "You and Mr. and Mrs. Kinnell all get in back, Ann. Here, Marla, in front . . ." He pushed them around firmly.

Now he could really see her. He had never seen such white skin! Her hair was dark, her round eyes blue, her lashes and brows were very dark, almost black. She had a smile no

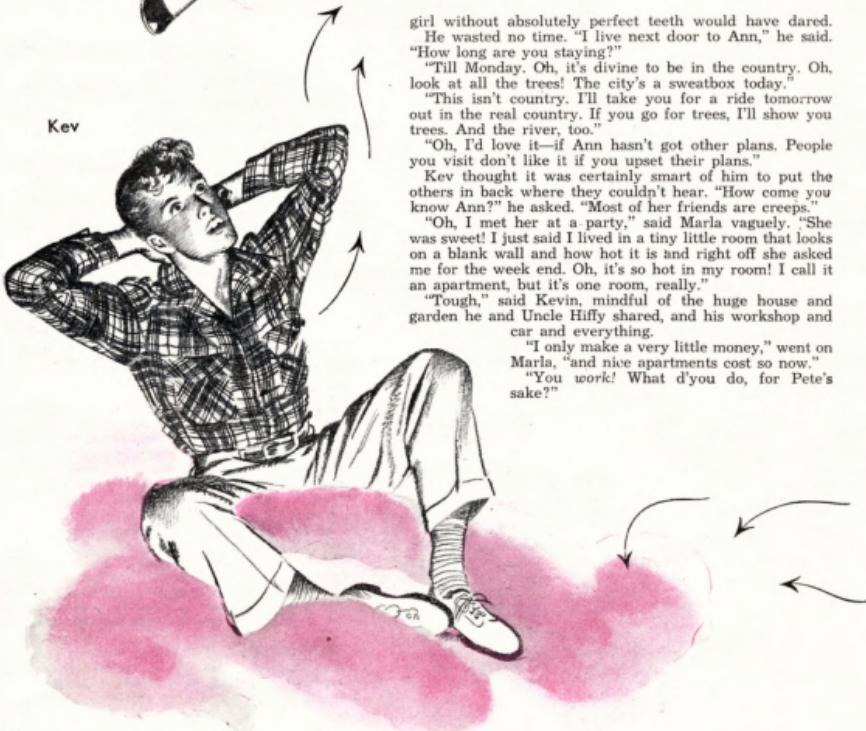
by  
**Sophie Kerr**

ILLUSTRATED BY JON WHITCOMB

Maria



Kev



girl without absolutely perfect teeth would have dared. He wasted no time. "I live next door to Ann," he said. "How long are you staying?"

"Till Monday. Oh, it's divine to be in the country. Oh, look at all the trees! The city's a sweatbox today."

"This isn't country. I'll take you for a ride tomorrow out in the real country. If you go for trees, I'll show you trees. And the river, too."

"Oh, I'd love it—if Ann hasn't got other plans. People you visit don't like it if you upset their plans."

Kev thought it was certainly smart of him to put the others in back where they couldn't hear. "How come you know Ann?" he asked. "Most of her friends are creeps."

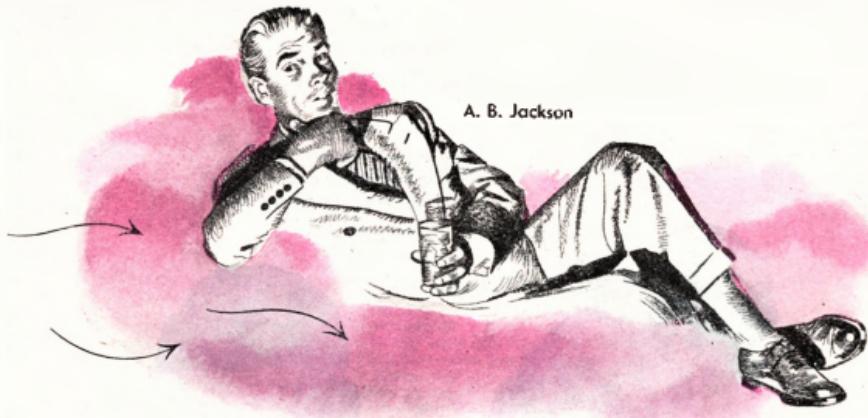
"Oh, I met her at a party," said Marla vaguely. "She was sweet! I just said I lived in a tiny little room that looks on a blank wall and how hot it is and right off she asked me for the week end. Oh, it's so hot in my room! I call it an apartment, but it's one room, really."

"Tough," said Kevin, mindful of the huge house and garden he and Uncle Hiffy shared, and his workshop and car and everything.

"I only make a very little money," went on Marla, "and nice apartments cost so now."

"You work! What d'you do, for Pete's sake?"

A. B. Jackson



"Oh, I'm a dress model, size ten, misses. For a manufacturer. We're laid off between seasons. Sometimes I get a photograph job to help out."

"You're one of those slick girls that go around with a sandbox and snoot everybody? I thought they made gobs of money."

"I never could get into the big agencies; I don't know why: I've tried and tried—but you know—sometimes people are jealous—and not kind. I think people ought to be kind, don't you? That's why I liked Ann right off; she's so kind."

Kev thought Ann was anything but kind, but he had no chance to say so for Marla lowered her voice and asked an odd anxious question. "Has Ann's family got a good many servants?"

"Why—they've got a cook and a couple of maids and a laundress and a chauffeur; that's all I guess; and one of the maids is part-time," said Kev, surprised.

Marla looked troubled, but they had reached the house and Mrs. Emmers came out and shouted around, calling the Kinnells darling. She and Ann were screamers. Kevin didn't see how Mr. Emmers stood it. She screamed at him now, "Kev, won't you carry up the bags? Then stop at the pool and have a drink."

"Sorry, I'm busy. And you (Continued on page 137)

Gobi but definitely worshipped

Kev, who was in a dream-cloud over

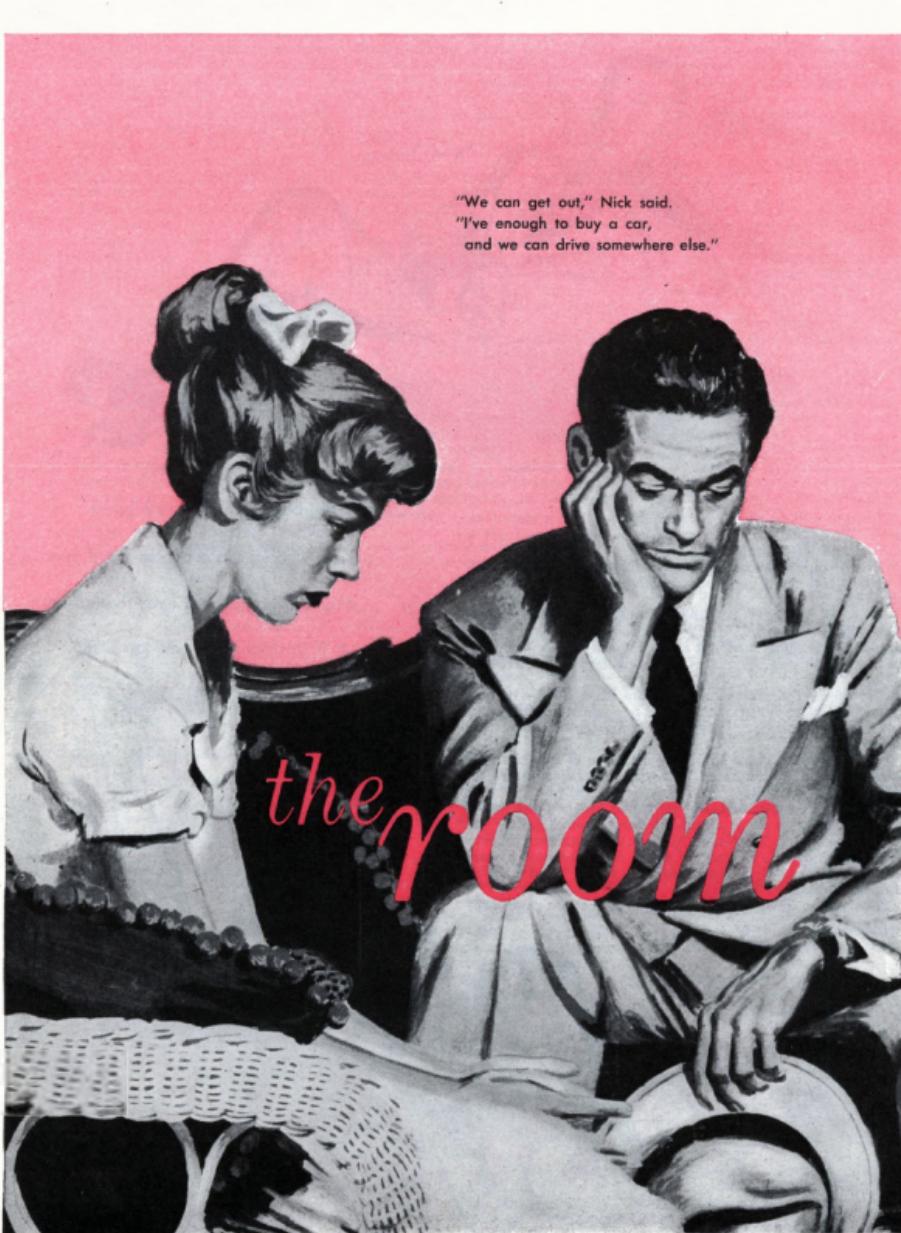
Marla, who had her eyes riveted on

A. B. Jackson, who was too wise.



Gobi

—John Watson—



"We can get out," Nick said.  
"I've enough to buy a car,  
and we can drive somewhere else."

# the room



*"It's not life that matters; it's the courage  
you bring to it." Strange how often it's the woman  
who has to point that out to the man*

Now it was ten o'clock in the evening. Here, on top of the hill, the wind was strong and steady and smelled of the sea. The yellow house stood at the top of the hill. The street ended below the house at a concrete wall. The hill dropped bare and sharp down from the wall, leveling out far below at the boulevard that skirted the water front.

It was very quiet. You could hear the clank of chains from the ships in the harbor, and the rusty-hinge sound of a windlass. To the right the lights of the Oakland bridge were strung in a double line across the bay. On the lower level, distance-small, sped a commuters' train, like a long insect.

Across the bay were the hills of Oakland and Berkeley, and behind them the higher, empty hills, blue-white in the moonlight. The city lights appeared to twinkle. There were many lights, and it was like lying on your back and looking at the sky.

The yellow house was the last house on the hill, and stood higher than the others. It was a very old-looking house. It was of two stories, and appeared to be leaning forward, about to plunge into the harbor below.

A taxicab came up the street and gave a little jump as it breasted the crest of the hill and stopped in front of the yellow house. A man and a girl got out. They reached back into the cab and pulled out three suitcases, and the driver got out and opened the rear trunk and took out another bag. The man paid the driver who then made a U-turn and disappeared over the crest of the street.

The man picked up three of the suitcases, tucking one of them under his arm; the girl picked up the other one and they started up the steps toward the yellow house.

You could see the girl in the moonlight. She was rather small, and the most beautiful thing about her was her hair. It was dark and piled high on her head. She was wearing a white raincoat, and below the raincoat you could see that she had lovely legs. The man was a big dark fellow

BY *allan paris*

ILLUSTRATED BY LARRY HARRIS

and he carried the three bags easily. As they went up the steps he appeared to walk crab-wise, turning toward the girl and looking anxiously into her face. Neither of them said anything.

The man put down the bags, took a key from his pocket and opened the street door of the yellow house. They went inside and down the hall a few feet and paused before a door. The man unlocked the door and reached inside and switched on the light. The girl put down her bag and put her arms about the man's neck. He lifted her and carried her from the hall into the room.

In the center of the room was a double bed with a faded quilt on it. At one side of the room was a cheap maple bureau with four drawers. The mirror was not a part of the bureau. It was a round mirror with a small crack at the bottom, and it had an old-fashioned oak frame; the top leaned against the wall. On the opposite side of the room was a sofa that had seen much better days. A door in the center of another wall led to a closet. The bathroom was down the hall.

On the floor was a blue rug, worn in the center, and gray in color where it was worn. The wallpaper featured large green flowers. A *Currier and Ives* print hung on the wall. There were two chairs: one, straight-backed, facing a desk; the other, an old-fashioned, wicker affair on rockers, facing the window. The window was small and looked out on the grocery across the street. The shade was dark green, and at the moment it was half-drawn. The curtains were white except at the bottom, where they were beginning to turn yellow.

he man called Nick Wallace put the girl down, stepped into the hall and came back carrying the bags. The girl called Phyllis was standing at the window.

Nick put the bags down and advanced toward her. He stood behind her and said, "I'm terribly sorry."

The girl turned and looked up into his face. She said, "It's all right, Nick. It isn't bad at all."

"You don't have to be brave."

"It's all right, Nick," she said. "Really it is."

"Go ahead; cry if you want to."

"Nick," she said, and put her hand against his mouth. "Please, Nick." "I warned you not to expect much," he said. "I hated to bring you here. I dreaded it."

"Nick," she said. "Nick, darling."

"I should have waited," he said, "until I could get something better. But I couldn't wait any longer. I was so damn lonely."

"Do you know how much I love you?" she said.

"Tell me."

"So much that it frightens me. I don't know whether people should love like that. I love you so much that it scares me a little."

"That's how I feel too," Nick said.

"This is home," Phyllis said. "Wherever we are together, that's home."

"I'm so damn ashamed," Nick said.

"Oh, Nick," she said, and put her arms about him. "Don't ever say that again."

"Ah, love, if I were king," Nick whispered. "What treasures to your feet I'd bring. Here is my treasure, Phyllis. With green walls and a view of a grocery store."

"Stop it!" Phyllis said. "Stop it, Nick!"

"All right," Nick said. "I'll stop."

Phyllis said, "Do you love me Nick?"

"What a silly question."

*Say it.*

"I love you terribly," Nick said.

After a while Phyllis said, "Shall we unpack tonight?"

"Tomorrow is Sunday," Nick said.

"You can unpack tomorrow."

"Yes, tomorrow is Sunday," Phyllis said.

At noon, someone knocked at the door. Nick opened it, and it was Mrs. Willis.

"Oh," Nick said. "Phyllis, this is Mrs. Willis, our landlady. Mrs. Willis, this is my wife."

"How do you do?" Phyllis said.

Mrs. Willis nodded. She ducked her head and peered about the room. "Lot of baggage," she sniffed.

"Yes," Nick said, "quite a bit."

"No cooking," Mrs. Willis said.

"You understand no cooking."

"Yes," Nick said.

"No drinking. No smoking either. Clouds up the curtains."

"Yes," Nick said.

"You both work?"

"Yes," Nick said. "We both work."

Mrs. Willis hesitated and then clamped her jaws together, the cheek muscles bulging to resemble acorns. "I run a respectable place," she said loudly. She paused again, and then thrust her narrow, turkey head forward defiantly. "You sure you're married?"

Nick sucked in his breath. Phyllis, standing next to him, her hand on his arm, felt the muscles in his arm tighten convulsively. She stepped quickly over to a bag and took the marriage license out and extended it to Mrs. Willis.

Mrs. Willis glanced at it. "Seems all right," she said. The muscles in her jaw relaxed. "Didn't mean no harm," she muttered.

"Of course, Mrs. Willis," Phyllis said. "It's perfectly all right."

"Well, all right," Mrs. Willis said.

When she had gone Nick went

over and sat down heavily on the bed.

Phyllis sat down beside him and put her head on his shoulder. She could feel him trembling. "Now, Nick," she said.

Nick closed his hand into a fist and kneaded it into the palm of his other hand.

"Nick," Phyllis said. "Nick, darling. Now, Nick."

He got up suddenly and walked over to the window and then turned and faced Phyllis. "You know what it is, don't you?" he said. "Here's the way it is. Everybody wants power. Most people never have any. But they want it. So, Mrs. Willis gets a little power. This house is her Third Reich. She is the Fuehrer here."

Phyllis went over to him and put her arms about his waist.

"Nick, baby. It's not that bad."

"Oh, yes, it's that bad. It is very bad indeed."

"Darling," Phyllis said, "you'll feel better after breakfast."

He looked down at her in astonishment. "Do you think it's that simple?" he said. "Just something that a nice breakfast will put right?"

"Darling, she didn't mean any harm."

"The bride," Nick said bitterly, "was welcomed at her new home by an accusation that she was . . ."

"Oh, Nick," Phyllis laughed, "if you could see your face!"

"Come here," Nick said. He sat down on the sofa and held out his hand, and Phyllis came over and sat in the chair facing him.

"For a long time now," Nick said. "I never have thought of myself alone. Whenever I think of the future, I think of things we could do together. It's always you and me together."

"I know how it is," Phyllis said. "I never think of places I'd like to go any more," Nick said. "Whenever I think of places you're always there with me."

"I know, Nick," she said. "I don't want to do anything any more unless you're with me," Nick said.

"Yes, Nick," Phyllis said. "How would you like to leave here?" Nick said abruptly.

"What do you mean?" "Leave San Francisco. Go away." "I'll go anywhere with you."

"Look," Nick said. He jumped to his feet and went over to his coat and took out a small notebook. He came back and sat down on the sofa and opened the notebook to a page of figures.

"I've thought about it a long time," Nick said. "I admit that this room has got the Indian sign on me. Not this (Continued on page 165)

HERE IS THE SEVENTH IN A SERIES OF FICTION DIVIDENDS  
—A REPRINT OF A STORY THAT FIRST APPEARED IN COSMOPOLITAN YEARS AGO.  
A STORY THAT HAS WON ITSELF A PERMANENT PLACE IN AMERICAN FICTION'S  
HALL OF FAME. READ IT AND COMPARE IT WITH TODAY'S BEST SHORT STORIES

# Sinclair Lewis

## A LETTER FROM THE QUEEN

Doctor Selig was an adventurer. He did not look it, certainly. He was an amiable young bachelor with thin hair. He was instructor in history and economics in Erasmus College, and he had to sit on a foolish little platform and try to coax some fifty young men and women, who were interested only in cuddling and four-door sedans, to become hysterical about the law of diminishing returns.

But at night, in his decorous boarding house, he sometimes smoked a pipe, which was viewed as obscene in the religious shades of Erasmus, and he was boldly writing a book which was to make him famous.

Of course everyone is writing a book. But Selig's was different. It was profound. How good it was can be seen from the fact that with only three-quarters of it done, it already had fifteen hundred footnotes—such lively comments as "*Id. J.A.S.H.S., VIII, 234 et seq.*" A real book, nothing flippant or commercialized.

It was called "The Influence of American Diplomacy on the Internal Policies of Pan Europa."

"Pan Europa," Selig felt, was a nice and scholarly way of saying "Europe."

I would really have been an interesting book if Doctor Selig had not believed that all literature is excellent in proportion as it is hard to read. He had touched a world romantic and little known. Hidden in old documents, like discovering in a desert an oasis where girls laugh and fountain chatter and the market place is noisy, he found the story of Franklin, who in his mousy fur cap was the Don Juan of Paris, of Adams fighting the British Government to prevent their recognizing the Confederacy, of Benjamin Thompson, the Massachusetts Yankee who in 1791 was chief counselor of Bavaria, with the title of Count Rumford.

Selig was moved by these men who made the young America more admiring than she is today. And he was moved and, in a most unscholarly way, he became a little angry as he reviewed the story of Senator Ryder.

He knew, of course, that Lafayette Ryder had prevented war between England and America in the first reign of Grover Cleveland; he knew that Ryder had been Secretary of State, and Ambassador to France, courted by Paris for his wisdom, his manners, his wit; that as Senator he had fathered (and mothered and wet-nursed) the Ryder-Hanklin Bill, which had saved our wheat markets; and that his two books, "Possibilities of Disarmament" and "The Anglo-American Empire," were not merely glib propaganda for peace, but such inspired documents as would have prevented the Boer War, the Spanish-American War, the Great War, if there had been in his Victorian world a dozen men with minds like his. This Selig knew, but he could not remember when Ryder had died.

Then he discovered with agast astonishment that Senator Ryder was not dead, but still alive at ninety-two, forgotten by the country he had helped to build.

Yes, Selig felt bitterly, we honor our great men in America—sometimes for as much as two months after the particular act of greatness that tickles us. But this is a democracy. We mustn't let anyone suppose that because we have given him an (undesired) parade up Broadway and a (furiously resented) soaking of publicity on March first, he may expect to be taken seriously on May second.

The Admiral Dewey whom the press for a week labeled as a combination of Nelson, Napoleon and Chevalier Bayard, they later naged to his grave. If a dramatist has a success one season, then may the gods help him, because for the rest of his life everyone will attend his plays only in the hope that he will fail.

But sometimes the great, glad-happy hordes of boosters do not drag down the idol in the hope of finding clay feet, but just forget him, with the vast, contemptuous, heavy indifference of a hundred and twenty million people.

So felt Doctor Selig, angrily, and he planned for the end of his book a passionate resurrection of Senator Ryder. He had a shy hope that his book would appear before the

## SINCLAIR LEWIS

In a recent *Cosmopolitan* article, Lewis dismissed himself as a "careful chronicler of domestic rows" and thereby defied all literary criticism since 1920. Winner of the Nobel Prize in literature in 1930, Lewis has been placed among the most important novelists of this century. The author is presently at work on the screen version of *CASS TIMBERLANE*, his recent best-seller.



Senator's death, to make him happy.

Reading the Senator's speeches, studying his pictures in magazine files, he felt that he knew him intimately. He could see, as though the Senator were in the room, that tall ease, the contrast of long thin nose, jolly eyes and vast globular brow that made Ryder seem a combination of Puritan, clown and benevolent scholar.

Selig longed to write to him and ask—oh, a thousand things that only he could explain: the proposals of Lionel Sackville-West regarding Colombia; what Queen Victoria really had said in that famous but unpublished letter to President Harrison about the Newfoundland fisheries. Why couldn't he write to him?

No! The man was ninety-two, and Selig had too much reverence to disturb him, along with a wholesome suspicion that his letter would be kicked out by the man who had once told Gladstone to go to the Dickens.

So forgotten was the Senator that Selig could not, at first, find where he lived. "Who's Who" gave no address. Selig's superior, Professor Munk, who was believed to know everything in the world except the whereabouts of his last-season's straw hat, bleated, "My dear chap, Ryder is dwelling in some cemetery! He passed beyond, if I remember, in 1901."

The mild Doctor Selig almost did homicide upon a venerable midwestern historian.

At last, in a bulletin issued by the Anti-Prohibition League, Selig found among the list of directors: "Lafayette Ryder (form. U. S. Sen., Sec'y State), West Wickley, Vermont." Though the Senator's residence could make no difference to him, that night Selig was so excited that he smoked an extra pipe of tobacco.

He was planning his coming summer vacation, during which he hoped to finish his book. The presence of the Senator drew him toward Vermont, and in an educational magazine he found the advertisement: "Sky Peaks, near Wickley, Vt., woodland nook with peace and a library—congenial and intellectual company and writers—tennis, handball, riding—nightly Sing round Old-time Bonfire—fur-bung, low rates."

That was what he wanted: a nook and a library and lots of low rates, along with nearness to his idol. He booked a fur-bung, for the summer, and he carried his suitcase to the station on the beautiful day when the young fiends who through the year had tormented him with unanswerable questions streaked off to all parts of the world and for three tremendous months permitted him to be a private human being.

When he reached Vermont, Selig found Sky Peaks an old farm, redecorated in a distressingly tea-roomy fashion. His single bungalow, formerly an honest corncrib, was now

painted robin's-egg blue with yellow trimmings, and christened "Shelley." But the camp was on an upland, and air sweet from hayfield and spruce grove healed his lungs, spotted with classroom dust.

At his first dinner at Sky Peaks, he demanded of the host, one Mr. Idle, "Doesn't Senator Ryder live somewhere near here?"

"Oh yes, up on the mountain, about four miles south."

"Hope I catch a glimpse of him some day."

"I'll run you over to see him, any time you'd like."

"Oh, I couldn't do that! Couldn't intrude!"

"Nonsense! Of course he's old, but he takes quite an interest in the country-side. Fact, I bought this place from him and—Don't forget the Sing tonight."

At eight that evening Idle came to drag Selig from the security of his corncrib just as he was getting the relations of the Locarno Pact and the Versailles Treaty beautifully coordinated.

It was that kind of Sing. "The Long, Long Trail," and "All God's Chillun Got Shoes." (God's Chillun also possessed coats, pants, vests, flappers and watermelons, interminably.) Beside Selig at the camp fire sat a young woman with eyes, a nose, a sweater, and an athletic skirt, none of them very good or particularly bad. He would not have noticed her, but she picked on him:

"They tell me you're in Erasmus, Doctor Selig."

"Um."

"It's a fine school, isn't it? Real character-building."

"Um."

"Real attention to character. And after all, what benefit is there in developing the intellect if the character isn't developed to keep pace with it? You see, I'm in educational work myself—oh, of course nothing like being on a college faculty, but I teach history in the Lincoln High School at Schenectady—my name is Selma Swanson. We must have some good talks about teaching history, mustn't we!"

"Um!" said Selig, and escaped, though it was not till he was safely in his corncrib that he said aloud, "We must not!"

For three months he was not going to be teacher, or hear the horrors of character-building. He was going to be a great scholar. Even Senator Ryder might be excited to know how powerful an intellect was soothed itself to sleep in a corncrib four miles away!

He was grinding hard next (*Continued on page 73*)

### *Letter from the Queen*

By Sinclair Lewis

*Selma Swanson*



*Cosmopolitan* readers first saw "A Letter from the Queen" in the December, 1929, issue of the magazine. The pages reproduced here were illustrated by Marshall Frantz.

# Why do families go for this Noodle Soup?



## Because it's BEEF through and through!

### BROTH—

*Simmered from Lean Beef*

### NOODLES—

*Steeped in the Beef Broth*

### BEEF—

*Pieces Generous and Tender*



Lasso in hand  
I take my stand;  
Then twirl my loop  
'Round Campbell's Soup!



LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL



No Wonder It's a Popular Favorite!  
Have You Tried It?

Still among the newest of the "21 Kinds", this hearty soup continues to "go places". People enjoy Campbell's Beef Noodle Soup thoroughly. With their very first taste they know it's Beef as they like it—an invigorating beef stock, golden egg noodles steeped in the beef stock, tender pieces of beef. That's why more and more say—"More!" Think of it as a main-dish soup and call on it often.

*Campbell's* BEEF NOODLE SOUP

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*World's favorite for nearly a century*

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afternoon when his host, Iddle, stormed in with: "I've got to run in to Wickley Center. Go right near old Ryder's. Come on! I'll introduce you to him."

"Oh no, honestly!"

"Don't be silly. I imagine he's lonely. Come on!"

Before Selig could make up his mind to get out of Iddle's tempestuous flurries and walk back, they were driving up a mountain road and past marble gateposts into an estate. Through a damp grove of birches and maples they came out on meadows dominated by an old brick house with a huge porch facing the checkered valley. They stopped with a dash at the porch, and on it, Selig saw an old man sunk in a canvas deck chair and covered with a shawl. In the shadow the light seemed to concentrate on his bald head, like a sphere of polished bellum, and on long bloodless hands, lying as in death on shawl-draped knees. In his eyes there was no life nor desire for it.

Iddle leaped out, bellowing, "Afternoon, Senator! Lovely day, isn't it? I've brought a man to call on you. This is Mr. Selig—one of our colleges. I'll be back in an hour."

He seized Selig's arm—he was abominably strong—and almost pulled him out of the car. Selig's mind was one wretched puddle of confusion. Before he could dredge any definite thought out of it, Iddle had rattled away, and Selig stood below the porch, hypnotized by the stare of Senator Ryder—too old for hate or anger, but not too old for slow contempt.

Not one word Ryder said.

Selig cried, like a schoolboy unjustly accused:

"Honestly, Senator, the last thing I wanted to do was to intrude on you. I thought Iddle would just introduce us and take me away. I suppose he meant well. And perhaps subconsciously I did want to intrude! I know your 'Possibilities of Disarmament' and 'Anglo-American Empire' so well—"

THE Senator stirred like an antediluvian owl awakening at twilight. His eyes came to life. One expected him to croak, like a cynical old bird, but his still voice was fatiduous:

"I didn't suppose anyone had looked into my books since 1910." Painful yet gracious was the gesture with which he waved Selig to a chair. "You are a teacher?"

"Instructor in a small Ohio college. Economics and history. I'm writing a monograph on our diplomacy, and naturally—There are so many things that only you could explain!"

"Because I'm so old?"

"No! Because you've had so much knowledge and courage—perhaps they're the same thing! Every day, literally, in working on my book I've wished I could consult you. For instance—Tell me, sir, didn't Secretary of State Olney really want war with England over Venezuela? Wasn't he trying to be a tin hero?"

"No!" The old man threw off his shawl. It was somehow a little shocking to find him not in an ancient robe laced with gold, but in a crisp linen summer suit, with a smart bow tie. He sat up, alert, his voice harsher. "No! He was a patriot. Sturdy. Honest. Willing to be conciliatory but not flinching. Miss Tully?"

At the Senator's cry, out of the wide fanlighted door of the house slid a trained nurse. Her uniform was so starched that it almost clattered, but she was a peony sort of young woman, the sort who would insist on brightly mothering any male, of any age, whether or not he desired to

be mothered. She glared at the intruding Selig; she shook her finger at Senator Ryder, and simpered: "Now I do hope you aren't tiring yourself, else I shall have to be ever so stern and make you go to bed. The doctor said—"

"Drat the doctor! Tell Mrs. Tinkham to bring me down the file of letters from Richard Olney, Washington, for 1895—O-l-n-e-y—and hustle it!"

Miss Tully gone, the Senator growled, "Got no more use for a mutton than a cat for two tails! It's that mutton-headed doctor, the old fool! He's seventy-five years old, and he hasn't had a thought since 1888. Doctors!"

He delivered an address on the art of medicine, with such vigorous blasphemy that Selig shrank in horrified admiration. And the Senator didn't abate the blazing crimson of his oration at the entrance of his secretary, Mrs. Tinkham, a small, narrow, bleached, virginal widow.

Selig expected her to leap off the porch and commit suicide in terror. She didn't. She waited, she yawned gently, she handed the Senator a Manila envelope, and gently she vanished.

The Senator grinned. "She'll pray at me tonight! She daren't, while you're here. There! I feel better. Good cussing is a therapeutic agent that has been forgotten in these degenerate days. I could teach you more about cussing than about diplomacy—to which cussing is a most valuable aid. Now here is a letter that Secretary Olney wrote me about the significance of his correspondence with England."

It was a page of history. Selig handled it with more reverence than he had given to any material object in his life.

He exclaimed, "Oh, yes, you used—of course I've never seen the rest of this letter, and I can't tell you, sir, how excited I am to see it. But didn't you use this first paragraph in—it must be about page 276 of your 'Anglo-American Empire'?"

"I believe I did. It's not my favorite reading!"

"You know, of course, that it was reprinted from your book in the 'Journal of the American Society of Historical Sources,' last year?"

"Was it?" The old man seemed vastly pleased. He beamed at Selig as at a young but tested friend. He chuckled. "Well, I suppose I appreciate now how King Tut felt when they remembered him and dug him up... Miss Tully! Hey! Miss Tully, will you be so good as to tell Martens to bring us whisky and soda, with two glasses? Eh? Now you look here, young woman; we'll fight out the whole question of my senile viciousness after our guest has gone. Two glasses, I said!... Now about Secretary Olney. The fact of the case was . . ."

Two hours later, Senator Ryder was still talking, and in that two hours he had given Selig such unrecorded information as the researcher could not have found in two years of study.

Selig had for two hours walked with presidents and ambassadors; he had heard the dinner conversation of foreign ministers, conversation so private, though world-affecting, that it never had been set down, even in letters. The Senator had revealed his friendship with King Edward, and the predictions about the future World War the king had made over a glass of mineral water.

The mild college instructor who, till this afternoon, had never spoken to anyone more important than the president of a prairie college, was exalted with a

feeling that he had become the confidant of kings and field marshals, of Anatole France and Lord Haldane, of Sarah Bernhardt and George Meredith.

He had always known but till now he had never understood that in private these great personages were plain human beings, like Doctor Wilbur Selig of Erasmus. It made him feel close to King Edward to hear (though the Senator may have exaggerated) the king could not pronounce his own name without a German accent; it made him feel a man of the world to learn the details of a certain not very elevating party at which an English duke and a German prince and a Portuguese king, accompanied by questionable ladies, had in bibulous intimacy sung to Senator Ryder's leadership the lyric, "How Dry I Am."

During that two hours, there had been ten minutes when he had been entirely off in a Conan Doyle spirit world. His notion of prodigious alcoholic dissipation was a bottle of home-brewed beer once a month. He had tried to mix himself a light whisky and soda—he noted, with some anxiety about the proper drinking-manners in diplomatic society, that he took approximately one-third as much whisky as the Senator.

But while the old man rolled his drink in his mouth and shook his bald head rapturously and showed no effect, Selig was suddenly lifted six million miles above the earth, through pink-gray clouds shot with lightning, and at that altitude he floated dizzily while below him the Senator discoursed on the relations of Cuban sugar to Colorado beets.

And once Iddle blatted into sight, in his dirty flannel, suggested taking him away, and was blessedly dismissed by the Senator's curt, "Doctor Selig is staying here for dinner. I'll send him back in my car."

DINNER . . . Selig, though he rarely read reading, had read in some novel about "candle-flames, stilled in the twilight and reflected in the long stretch of waxed mahogany as in a clouded mirror—candles and roses and old silver." He had read, too, about stag horns and heraldic shields and the swords of old warriors.

Now actually the Senator's dining room had neither stag horn nor heraldic shield nor sword, and if there were still candle-flames, there was no mahogany to reflect them, but instead a silver stretch of damask. It was a long room, simple, with old portraits against white panels. Yet Selig felt that he was transported into all the romance he had ever read.

The dinner was countrylike. By now, Selig expected peacock's tongues and caviar; he got steak and cantaloupe and corn pudding. But there were four glasses at each plate, and along with water, which was the familiar drink at Erasmus, he had and timidly tasted sherry, Burgundy and champagne.

If Wilbur Selig of Iowa and Erasmus had known anything, it was that champagne was peculiarly wicked, associated with light ladies, lewd talk and losses at roulette invariably terminating in suicide. Yet it was just as he was nibbling at his very first glass of champagne that Senator Ryder began to talk of his delight in the affairs of Anglo-Catholicism.

No. It was none of it real.

If he was exhilarated that he had been kept for dinner, he was ecstatic when the Senator said, "Would you care to come for dinner again day after tomorrow? Good. I'll send Martens for you at seven-thirty. Don't dress."

In a dream phantasmagoria he started

home, drives by Martens, the Senator's clausur-butler, with unremembered traits that had puzzled him in writing his book made clear.

When he arrived at the Sky Peaks camp, the guests were still sitting about the chilled camp fire.

"My!" said Miss Selma Swanson, teacher of history. "Mr. Idle says you've spent the whole evening with Senator Ryder. Mr. Idle says he's a good person—used to be a great politician."

"Oh, he was kind enough to help me about some confused problems," murmured Selig.

But as he went to bed—in a reformed corner!—he exulted. "I'll bet I could become quite a good friend of the Senator! Wouldn't that be wonderful!"

**LAFAYETTE RYDER**, when his visitor—a man named Selig or Selim—was gone, sat at the long dining table, with a cigarette and a distressingly empty cognac glass. He was meditating. "Nice easy young chap. Provincial. But mannerly. I wonder if there really are a few people who know that Lafe Ryder once existed."

He rang, and the crisply gay Miss Tully, the nurse, waited inside the dining room, bumbling. "So we're all ready to go to bed now, Senator."

"We are not! I didn't ring for you; I rang for Martens."

"He's driving your guest."

"Bumfud! Send in cook. I want some more brandy."

"Oh, now, Daddy Ryder! You aren't going to be naughty, are you?"

"I am! And who the deuce ever told you to call me 'Daddy'?"

"You did. Last year."

"I don't—this year. Bring me the brandy bottle."

"If I do, will you go to bed then?"

"I will not!"

"But the doctor—"

The doctor is a misbegotten hound with a face like a fish. And other things I feel cheerful tonight. I shall sit up late. Till All Hours.

They compromised on eleven-thirty instead of All Hours, and one glass of brandy instead of the bottle. But, vexed at having thus compromised—as often, in ninety-odd years, he had been vexed at having compromised with Empire—the Senator was (said Miss Tully) very nasty.

"I swear," said Miss Tully afterward, to Mr. Tinkham, the secretary, "if he didn't go to hell, I'd leave that horrid old man tomorrow. Just because he was a politician or something, once, to think he can sass a trained nurse!"

"You would not!" said Mrs. Tinkham. "But he is nasty."

And they did not know that, supposingly safe in his four-poster bed, the old man was being awake, smoking a cigarette and reflecting:

"The gods have always been much better to me than I have deserved. Just when I thought I was submerged in a flood of women and doctors, along comes a man for companion, a young man who seems to be a potential scholar, and who might preserve for the world what I tried to do. Oh, stop pitying yourself, Lafe Ryder! I wish I could sleep."

Senator Ryder reflected, the next morning, that he had probably caused too much fun young Selig. But when Selig came again for dinner, the Senator was gratified to see how quickly he was already fitting in a house probably more elaborate than any he had known. And quite easily he told of what the Senator accounted his unenvied farm boyhood, his life in a state university.

"So much the better that he is naive,

not one of these third-secretary cubs who think they're cosmopolitan because they went to Groton," considered the Senator. "I must do something for him."

Again he lay awake that night, and suddenly he had what seemed to him an inspired idea.

"I'll give young Selig a lift. All this money and no one but hang-jawed relatives to give it to! Give him a year of freedom. Pay him—he probably earns twenty-five hundred a year; pay him five thousand and expenses to arrange my files. If he makes good, I'll let him publish my papers, after I pass out. The letters from John Hay, from Blaine, from Choate! No set of unpublished documents like it in America! It would make the boy!"

"Mrs. Tinkham would object. Be jealous. She might quit. Splendid! Lafe, you arrant old coward, you've been trying to get rid of that woman without hurting her feelings for three years! At that, she'll probably marry you on your dying bed!"

He chuckled, a wicked low delighted sound, the old man alone in darkness.

"Yes, and if he shows the quality I think he has, leave him a little money to carry on with while he edits the letters. Leave him—let's see."

It was supposed among Senator Ryder's lip-licking relatives and necessitous hangers-on that he had left off the Ryder fortune perhaps two hundred thousand dollars. Only his broker and he knew that he had by secret investment increased it to a million, these two years of dark, invalid life.

He lay planning a new will. The present one left half his fortune to his university, a quarter in the town of Wickley for a community center, the rest to nephews and nieces, with ten thousand each for the Tully, the Tinkham, Martens, and the much-hugged doctor, with a grave proviso that the doctor should never again dictate to any patient how much he should smoke.

Now to Doctor Selig, asleep and not even dream-warmed in his absurd carriage, was presented the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars, the blessings of an old man, and a story of historical documents which could not be priced in soin.

In the morning, with a headache, and very strung with Miss Tully about the taste of the aspirin—he suggested that she had dropped it in arsenic—the Senator reduced Selig to five thousand, but that night it went back to twenty-five.

How pleased the young man would be!

**DOCTOR WEASEL SELIM**, on the first night when he had unexpectedly been bidden to stay for dinner with Senator Ryder, was as stirred as by—What would most stir Doctor Wilbur Selig? A great play? A raise in salary? An Erasmus football victory?

At the second dinner, with the house and the hero less novel to him, he was calmly happy, and zealous about getting information. The third dinner, a week after, was agreeable enough, but he paid rather more attention to the squab in casserole than in the Senator's revelations about the Baring panic, and he was a little annoyed that the Senator insisted (so selfishly) on his staying till midnight, instead of going home to bed at a reasonable hour like ten—with, perhaps, before retiring, a few minutes of clint with that awfully nice, bright girl, Miss Selma Swanson.

And through that third dinner he found himself reluctantly critical of the Senator's morals.

Hand it here was a man of good family, who had had a chance to see all that was noblesse and best in the world, and why

did he feel he had to use such bad language, why did he drink so much? Selig wasn't (he proudly reminded himself) the least bit narrow-minded. But an old man like this ought to be thinking of making his peace; ought to be ashamed of cursing like a stableboy.

He reproved himself next morning. "He's been mighty nice to me. He's a good old coot at heart. And of course, a great statesman."

But he snapped back in irritation when he had a telephone call from Martens the chauffeur: "Senator Ryder would like you to come over for tea this afternoon. He has something to show you."

"All right, I'll be over."

Selig was curt about it, and he raged. "Now, by thunder, of all the thoughtless old codgers! As if I didn't have anything to do but dance attendance on him and amuse him! And here I'd planned to finish a chapter this afternoon! Course he does give me some inside information, but still—as if I needed all the little-tattle of embassies for my book! Got all the stuff I need now. And how am I to get over there? The selfish old hound never thinks of that! Does he suppose I can afford a car to go over? I'll have to walk! Got half a mind not to go!"

The bulkiness with which he came to tea softened when the Senator began to talk about the Queen Victoria letter.

**HISTORIANS** knew that during the presidency of Benjamin Harrison, when there was hostility between America and Britain over the seizure by both sides of fishing boats, Queen Victoria had written in her own hand to President Harrison. It was believed that she deplored her royal inability to appeal directly to Congress, and suggested his first taking the difficulty up with Congress. But precisely what was in this unsatisfactory letter, apparently no one knew.

This afternoon Senator Ryder said proudly, "I happened to have the original of the letter in my possession."

"What?"

"Perhaps some day I'll give you a glimpse of it. I think I have the right to let you have it."

Selig was electrified. It would be a sensation—he would be a sensation! He could see his book, and himself, on the front pages. But the Senator passed on to a trivial, quite improper anecdote about a certain Brazilian ambassador and a Washington milliner, and Selig was irritable again. Darn it, it was indecent for a man of over ninety to think of such things! And why the deuce was he so skittish and secretive about his old letter? If he was going to show it, why not do it?

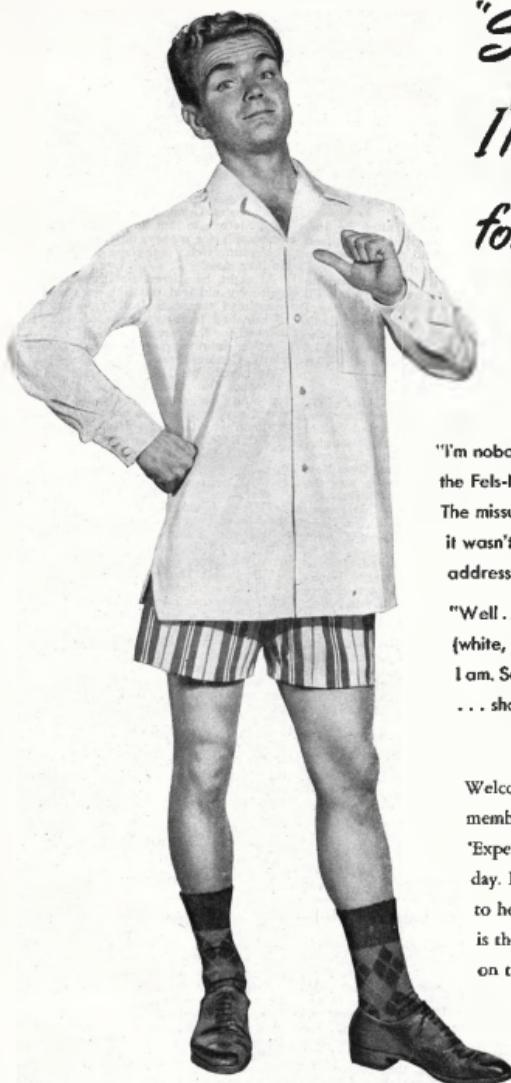
So, perhaps, Doctor Selig of Erasmus was not quite so gracious as a Doctor Selig of Erasmus should have been when, at parting, the old man drew from under his shawl a worn blue-gray pamphlet and piped:

"I'm going to give you this, if you'd like it. There's only six copies left in the world, I believe. It's the third one of my books—privately printed, and not ordinarily listed with the others. It has, I imagine, a few things in it the historians don't know: the real story of the Paris commune."

"Oh, thanks," Selig said brusquely and, to himself, in the Senator's car, he pointed out that it showed what an egotistic old codger Ryder was, to suppose that just because he'd written something, it must be a blooming treasure!

He glanced into the book. It seemed to have information. But he wasn't stirred, for it was out of line with what he had decided were the subjects of value

*"SURE  
I'll be a Model...  
for Fels-Naptha"*



"I'm nobody's pin-up boy—but any time I can do the Fels-Naptha folks a favor—count me in. The missus says I'm a fast man with a shirt and if it wasn't for Fels-Naptha Soap, her permanent address would be R. D. 1, Laundry Tub Row.

"Well . . . she keeps me stocked with clean shirts (white, that is) and she's ready to step whenever I am. So if I'm the type you're looking for . . . shoot! It's on the house."

\* \* \*

Welcome, Brother! You are now entitled to membership in the Fels-Naptha Boosters Club. 'Experience' meetings held every week on wash day. Be sure to bring the 'missus'. We want to hear her own report on Why Fels-Naptha is the Best Laundry Soap on the Market.



**Fels-Naptha Soap**

*BANISHES "TATTLE-TALE GRAY"*

to Doctor Selig and, therefore, of general interest.

After tea, now, it was too late for work before dinner, and he had Ryd's chauffeur set him down at Tredwell's General Store, which had become for members of the Sky Peaks camp a combination of department store, post office and cafe, where they drank wild toast in lemon juice.

Miss Selma Swanson was there, and Selig laughingly treated her to chewing gum, Attaboy Peanut Candy Rolls, and seven fishhooks. They had such a lively time discussing that funny Miss Elking-ton up at the camp.

When he started off, with Miss Swanson, he left the Senator's book behind him in the store. He did not miss it till he had gone to bed.

Two days afterward, the Senator's chauffeur again telephoned an invitation to tea for that afternoon, but this time Selig snapped, "Sorry! Tell the Senator I unfortunately shan't be able to come!"

"Just a moment, please," said the chauffeur. "The Senator wishes to know if you care to come to dinner tomorrow evening—eight—he'll send for you."

"Well—Yes, tell him I'll be glad to come."

After all, dinner here at Sky Peaks was pretty bad, and he'd get away early in the evening.

He rejoiced in having his afternoon free for work. But the confounded insistence of the Senator had so bothered him that he banged a book on his table and strolled outside.

The members of the camp were playing One Old Cat, with Selma Swanson, very jolly in knickerbockers, as cheerleader. They yelped at Selig to join them and, after a stately refusal or two, he did. He had a good time. Afterward he pretended to wrestle with Miss Swanson—she had the supplest waist and, seen close up, the moistest eyes. So he was glad that he had not wasted his afternoon listening to that old bore.

The next afternoon, at six, a splendid chapter done, he went off for a climb up Mount Poverty with Miss Swanson. The late sun was so rich on pasture, pine clumps and distant meadows, and Miss Swanson was so lively in tweed skirt and brogues—but the stockings were silk—that he regretted having promised to be at the Senator's at eight.

"But of course I always keep my promises," he reflected proudly.

They sat on a flat rock perched above the valley, and he observed in rather a classroom tone, "How remarkable that light is—the way it picks out that farmhouse roof, and then the shadow of those maples on the grass. Did you ever realize that it's less the shape of things than

the light that gives a landscape beauty?" "No, I don't think I ever did. That's so! It's the light! My, how observant you are!"

"Oh no, I'm not. I'm afraid I'm just a bookworm."

"Oh, you are not! Of course you're tremendously scholarly—my, I've learned so much about study from you—but then, you're so active—you were just a circus player! One Old Cat yesterday. I do admire an all-round man."

At seven-thirty, holding her firm hand, he was saying, "But really, there's so much I lack that—But you do think I'm right about its being so much manlier not to drink like that old man? By the way, we must start back."

At a quarter to eight, after he had kissed her and apologized and kissed her again, he remarked, "Still, he can wait a while—won't make any difference."

At eight: "Golly, it's so late! Had no idea. Well, I better not go at all now. I'll just phone him this evening and say I got balled up on the date. Look! Let's go down to the lake and dine on the wharf at the boathouse, just you and I."

"Oh, that would be grand!" said Miss Selma Swanson.

**LAFAYETTE RYDER** sat on the porch that, along with his dining room and bedroom, had become his entire world, and waited for the kind young friend who was giving back to him the world he had once known. His lawyer was coming from New York in three days, and there was the matter of the codicil to his will. But—the Senator stirred impatiently—this money matter was grubby; he had for Selig something rarer than money—a gift for a scholar.

He looked at it and smiled. It was a double sheet of thick bond, with "Windsor Castle" engraved at the top. Above this address was written in a thin hand: "To my friend L. Ryder, to use if he ever sees fit. Benj. Harrison."

The letter began, "To His Excellency, the President," and it was signed "Victoria R." In the few lines between inscription and signature there was a new history of the Great Victoria and of the nineteenth century—Dynamite does not come in large packages.

The old man tucked the letter into a pocket down beneath the rosy shawl that reached up to his gray face.

Miss Tully rustled out, to beg, "Daddy, you won't take more than one cocktail tonight. The doctor says it's so bad for you!"

"Hey! Maybe I will and maybe I won't. What time is it?"

"A quarter to eight."

"Doctor Selig will be here at eight. If Martens doesn't have the cocktails out

on the porch three minutes after he gets back, I'll skin him. And you needn't go looking for the cigarets in my room, either! I've hidden 'em in a brand-new place, and I'll probably sit up and smoke till dawn. Facts doubt if I shall go to bed at all. Doubt if I'll take my bath."

He chuckled as Miss Tully wailed, "You're so naughty!"

The Senator need not have asked the time. He had groped down under the shawl and looked at his watch every five minutes since seven. He inwardly glared at himself for his foolishness in anticipating his young friend, but—all the old ones were gone.

That was the devilishness of living so many years. Gone, so long. People wrote idiotic letters to him, still, begging for his autograph, for money, but who save this fine young Selig had come to him? . . . So long now!

At eight, he stirred, not this time like a drowsy old owl but like an eagle, its lean head thrusting forth from its pile of hunched feathers, ready to soar. He listened for the car.

At ten minutes past, he swore, competently. Confound that Martens!

At twenty past, the car swept up the driveway. Out of it stepped only Martens, touching his cap, murmuring, "Very sorry, sir. Mr. Selig was not at the camp."

"Then why the devil didn't you wait?"

"I did, sir, as long as I dared."

"Poor fellow! He may have been lost on the mountain! We must start a search!"

"Very sorry, sir, but if I may say so, as I was driving back past the foot of the Mount Poverty trail, I saw Mr. Selig with a young woman, sir, and they were talking and laughing and going away from the camp, sir. I'm afraid—"

"Very well. That will do."

"I'll serve dinner at once, sir. Do you wish your cocktail out here?"

"I won't have one, Send Miss Tully."

When the nurse had fluttered to him, she cried out with alarm, Senator Ryder was now down into his shawl. She bent over him to hear his whisper:

"If it doesn't keep you from your dinner, my dear, I think I'd like to be helped up. I bed, I don't care for anything to eat. I feel tired."

While she was anxiously stripping the shawl from him, he looked long, as one seeing it for the last time, at the darkening valley. But as she helped him up, he suddenly became active. He snatched from his pocket a stiff double sheet of paper and tore it into fragments which he fiercely scattered over the porch with one sweep of his long arm.

Then he collapsed over her shoulder.

**THE END**

## Interview with a Best-Selling Author: Laura Z. Hobson (Continued from page 18)

actor-producer stopped at her table in a Hollywood restaurant not long ago to tell her how much he had enjoyed her novel.

"It was so vulgar; all it meant to him was a Success, with a great big S."

But the crusader, of course, does not choose ease. "I was talking to Mike, my son, who is ten years old, and I told him something about the book (he hasn't read it—he's too young). I said to him, 'You know, Mike, you're a Jew, too, and a lot of people may "do" things to you because of that; but they aren't good people and what they do is wrong.' He thought a little while and then he said, 'Mother, do you mind about that?' And I thought a little while and said, 'No, Mike, I don't mind; I don't mind a fight.' One lesson I want him to learn early is that you don't have to be polite to anti-Semites."

She discovered this rule for herself, she said, back in the 1930's. "I was married to Thayer Hobson, whose brother is an Episcopal bishop. We were at a dinner party with comparative strangers. Someone said that fellow Hitler had something, and someone else said, yes he had, and then the line came along, 'Some of my best friends are Jews—' I knew that I was going to do something, that perhaps I'd be very angry, that certainly I wasn't going to be polite. I said, 'Some of my best friends are Jews, too, including my mother and father.'

"That was when I learned that you don't need to be polite to anti-Semites. I'm not. Before that, I don't know that I had been very much affected. During my analysis the analyst said, 'I don't understand it that among your insecurities none

are based on your being Jewish.' And none were, perhaps because of special circumstances in my upbringing.

"My father was a Russian Jew. When he was a student at the University of Odessa, he became a leader of what we now would call the student underground. He was arrested and tortured. He was beaten with a knout. I can never forget the bad nightmares that he'd have about every two weeks, and how we hated to go in and take him by the shoulder to wake him, because then he'd always think, when he felt our hands on his shoulders, that he was to be beaten again with a knout. He broke jail with the help of the other members of his organization, and he got away on a forged passport and got to a ship and to this country."

"His name was Zametkin; I hang onto



HE WAS  
EVERYTHING  
THAT MOST  
WOMEN DESIRE!

From out of the past,  
came the ghosts of the  
women he had spurned...  
to be deadly witnesses  
at his trial of life!



ROBERT YOUNG \* SUSAN HAYWARD  
JANE GREER in  
**They Won't Believe Me!**

with RITA JOHNSON \* TOM POWERS  
Directed by IRVING PICHEL \* Produced by JOAN HARRISON  
Screen Play by JONATHAN LATIMER \* Based on the Story by GORDON McDONELL

THE SHOCK OF  
A LIFETIME  
AWAITS YOU IN  
THE STARTLING  
CLIMAX!



it and use the Z as my middle initial. He started working in a shop on the East Side, a button shop, but within three weeks he had another job teaching English to foreigners. That was all a long time ago. My mother was the daughter of a prosperous Russian Jewish bourgeois family. My father became the editor of *The Jewish Daily Forward*, and my mother became a columnist, writing about child training, and household management, for *The Jewish Day*.

"But my parents were extremely anxious that we should not grow up in any atmosphere save the most American that they could find. They were both madly in love with America, as, I think, so many foreigners are.

"We lived for a time in East New York, but then moved, when I was quite young, to Jamaica, Long Island. There were a few little incidents in Jamaica. I was called a 'sheeny' once by the little girl who was my best friend. But when my twin and I wanted to go to the Grace Episcopal Church, I remember the very pretty dresses that my mother sat up half the night making for us so that we could be proud. My parents knew—well, they knew that it wouldn't pan out. We were eleven years old then, and they might have said, 'Wait until you're sixteen,' but they were too wise to do that. We went to the Grace Episcopal Church for about a year and a half.

"I started college at Hunter and hated it. I went to Cornell to finish. I would have had a Phi Beta Kappa—my grades were high enough—but that was the year they decided to clean up the Phi Beta Kappa chapter at Cornell, and to elect athletes and big men on the campus rather than the little greasy grinds from New York, which was just a way of saying it. Professor Lane Cooper, a great man, to my mind, turned in his Phi Beta Kappa key that year. And of course, my best friend there had the probably pretty mean job of telling me that I would have made the sorority that I wanted, except that I wasn't 'uh...uh...uh...eligible.'

"All this I suppose went into 'Gentleman's Agreement.' But I hadn't realized that I knew so much about being Jewish until I started to write the book."

While at Cornell Mrs. Hobson worked as a mannequin. Since then, she said, she has earned every dollar by writing. For some years, the writing was advertising copy.

"Some of the first money I earned went for a thirty-dollar hat. You can't imagine what that meant to anyone who had been brought up as I had been, when the greater part of the family income was sent to aid Socialist prisoners in Russia and the Socialist movement here. My father was a Socialist, not a Communist.

Perhaps because of him I never fell for Communism."

Advancing as an advertising writer she became copy chief of promotion for the Luce magazines.

"I tell people I left *Time-Life* and the copy-chief job because I wanted to write.

"I had written a good many short stories in my off time and had sold them, and I had saved twenty-four thousand dollars, so I felt that I could take a while and write more stories. I didn't have much luck with them though, for the reason, I think, that I was trying to write the straddle story—my mind was half on selling it and making the money, and half on making it good and pleasing myself. You can't write good stories that way.

"I decided to write a novel, one that I really wanted to do. It was 'The Trespassers.' I borrowed money to see me through. Everyone was very enthusiastic about 'The Trespassers' before publication, and I know it had some good things in it, but instead of being the big hit I'd counted on, it was just moderately successful.

"It gave me enough to go on with for a while, selling about twenty-two thousand copies, and altogether bringing me about ten thousand dollars. The short stories weren't going, and I had to do something fast, so I went out to Hollywood to look around and see what I could pick up there, if anything. I had the idea of maybe moving in and making a good bit of money, and then coming back to New York and doing another book. It wasn't so simple. My agent got me a job at six hundred dollars a week and told me, 'Please, don't say anything about the salary to anyone.' He felt disgraced.

"I worked there for four weeks, and everyone praised me—nothing but praise; everyone said I was really fine. I worked on a comedy, and they were talking to me about a seven-year contract that went up to, oh, terrific amounts, and I didn't want to sign it because the first option went for forty weeks, and I thought in twenty weeks I could get out—I didn't want to stay any longer. So I got my agent to draw up a contract of twenty weeks for the first option period, and that very day the assignment I was on was finished, and I was out. All the talk about me taking a seven-year contract and me not wanting it—nobody would give me any contract, nobody wanted me at all.

"It was while I was out there that I got the idea for 'Gentleman's Agreement.' But I had to be staked. I took out an old play that I'd written in about 1930—my only try at playwriting—and in a week end wrote it up as a movie original. It sold—sold for ten thousand dollars. That made me a free woman.

"Lee Wright, my editor at my publishing house, never pushed me. I could call her at ten at night and talk out prob-

lems I had with the plot and get them straightened—she's wonderful. When the book was finished, I had my great break. The editors of *Cosmopolitan* felt it was the kind of fiction they wanted. With the money from *Cosmopolitan*, I headed for Bermuda and spent three months rewriting and tightening the book version."

Her work on "Gentleman's Agreement" has been repaid by many satisfactions, one of them being the belief that the snowballing success of her story of a journalist who masquerades as a Jew must mean that there exists in this country a real hunger for discussion of bigotry. "Gentleman's Agreement" has brought its author hundreds of letters, most of them favorable. The letters and post cards that are most offensive are anonymous.

**DARRELL ZANUCK** is making an unlimited budget picture based on the book which Moss Hart is dramatizing. "I said, 'Why, Mr. Zanuck, that will mean that ninety million people in America will see this picture.' And he said, 'Sure, ninety million here, and how about the people in England, and France—all over the world?'

"He told me that he had to make this a box-office smash if he touched it at all, because if the picture failed at the box office and went, as 'Wilson' did, very well in New York and Chicago, but not well in the small places, he would set Hollywood back twenty years in honest dealing with the problem of prejudice."

The disadvantages of being the author of such a book, so far as Mrs. Hobson is concerned, are fairly minor. She figures that for about two years now, wherever she goes, whomever she talks to, she'll be considered an expert on anti-Semitism, and, while she welcomes a chance to talk about it, she likes a change of subject.

"What we've got to do," she insists, "is fight, if we're going to keep America as it was meant to be. People say to me, 'But look, Laura, would you go into Darien, Connecticut, and try to buy a house?' And I say, 'No, I wouldn't.' And then they say, 'Well, I've got a house at Darien. Should I give up my house because they won't sell to Jews there?' And I say, 'No. But I do think that if you own a house at Darien, Connecticut, then maybe you should find me, or someone like me, and rent it to me. And if you have a few friends up there who feel as you do, then maybe they'd rent. And then there'd be a fight. Whether I win or lose, I think they'd know that they'd been in a fight.'

"What did I try to do with the book? I think a woman who wrote to me put it in two wonderful sentences. She says, 'Villains aren't really frightening. It's the millions of nice people who do, and allow, villainous things.' I think that's the gist of what I was trying to say."

**THE END**

## Cosmopolitan's Movie Citations of the Month (Continued from page 58)

built, our producers have been forced to seek genuine ones.

The result has given films so much more reality, has dug up so many new actors, particularly the character people, has imparted so much over-all vitality to productions, that I doubt if set building will ever be restored to what it was.

"The Miracle on 34th Street" is the newest example of these benefits.

You come into "The Miracle on 34th Street" on last Thanksgiving Day in the streets of New York. You see the genuine Macy parade about to begin. The clowns, the calliopes, the vast balloons, the Santa Claus sleigh and his many reindeer are waiting there, up near Central Park.

In the midst of it, beautiful and worried Maureen O'Hara is trying to line up

everything. She's an efficient girl, but there is one headache. That's in the head of the hired Santa Claus, and no wonder—for this Santa has been taken very drunk.

In from a genuine New York side street, wanders the little, white-bearded, twinkling-eyed man. Maureen hires him when he says he knows exactly what to do with the Christmas parade. It starts up Fifth Avenue as the tired Maureen wends her way home. She has no intention of watching it. She's a realist, with a battered heart, who has a small daughter to support. She works for Macy's, staging Christmas shows, but as for Christmas spirit, you can have it, covered with dollar signs, as far as she is concerned.

But arriving home, she finds her child (Natalie Wood) visiting handsome John

Payne in his apartment across the hall. The two are watching the parade while they discuss Jack and the Beanstalk. Natalie is above believing in any character like Jack. That's what her Mamma has taught her.

But the miracle starts happening as Maureen calls on John and the parade passes by. The happy sentiment that Kris generates (he's faultlessly portrayed by veteran actor Edmund Gwenn who really did ride—for this role—in last winter's Macy march) is gaily balanced against the worldliness of everyone he encounters.

Besides the beautiful Maureen, there is, for example, Gene Lockhart who, when Kris is brought up before him, has to rule there is no Santa Claus. (He doesn't, because he wants to get re-elected).

*The First  
and Last Word  
in Scotch*



**HAIG & HAIG**  
*The Oldest name in Scotch*

IT HAD TO BE BETTER TO ENJOY SUCH  
UNIVERSAL PREFERENCE FOR 320 YEARS

There are the horrified Macy officials, who nearly explode when they hear Kris advise real New York mothers to take their children to other stores for certain toys. (The officials see the light, later, when they discover this is good business.)

The whole picture is this chucklesome blend so that at the end, you, like small Natalie Wood, will enter into the land of imagination and good will toward men. Kris explains this land to the little girl.

He says, "The streets are lined with buildings that haven't been built. The houses are filled with gadgets that haven't been invented and music is played that is still to be written. It's wonderful."

"The Miracle on 34th Street" is a wonderful picture, and I herewith give it the *Cosmopolitan Citation* as the best picture of the month—and through it, I give you readers a Christmas present in July.

IT HAS become a cliché to read the stories of wives who take back erring husbands.

"The Unfaithful" takes the other side of this situation. By way of a murder mystery, it asks if a husband should forgive his wife's adultery. The treatment of this theme in "The Unfaithful" is as blunt as the question it asks—and its solution is as adult as the solution of this problem should always be—but very seldom is.

The setting is Beverly Hills and, as in "The Miracle on 34th Street," only real streets and buildings are used. The beautiful house that serves as the residence of Ann Sheridan and Zackary Scott, as Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hunter, is actually the residence of Jerry Wald, producer of "The Unfaithful."

The production starts with deceptive quietness—even if it does open on murder. Ann Sheridan drives home from a party. As she opens her front door, an unseen man accosts her, forces her into the hallway, slams the door. You see the shadows of a struggle. Then the lights go out and when next you enter into the room, it is day, and a man is lying dead under a sheet. Ann has killed him.

In self-defense, she says. At first you, like Lew Ayres (as her friend the divorce lawyer, Larry Hannaford), believe that. Her husband, Zackary Scott, comes home from a business trip and does everything he can to help her. John Hoyt, as Police Lieutenant Reynolds, seems to accept her story. But Marta Mitrovich, as Mrs. Tanner, wife of the dead man, turns in violent hatred on Ann, whom she has never met. The case is practically closed, however, when an antique dealer, Stephen Geray, phones Ayres. He has a bust made by the dead man, Michael Tanner, that he feels Ayres will want to buy. The price for this very ordinary piece of work by a very ordinary sculptor is ten thousand dollars.

Ayres is shocked when, upon investigation, he finds this bust is a perfect likeness of Ann, signed by the dead man, whom she has testified she has never seen before.

From this moment, the tension begins tightening. Bit by bit, the truth comes out. The awful poignance of the situation begins to tear at your heart.

Don't miss this most honest picture. Everything about it is truthful, in strong but good taste, straight from its unaltering story, its eloquent direction by Vincent Sherman, its distinguished camera work by Ernest Haller, its musical score by Max Steiner.

Its playing is fine, fine, fine. Lew Ayres is both sympathetic and cynical as the divorce lawyer who hates divorce. Zackary Scott is believable and compelling as the wronged husband. Stephen Geray as the blackmailer is so cunningly sinister that you long to kill him personally. Martha Mitrovich got her break as "Mrs.

Tanner" due to Jerry Wald's superstition that he must have one new player in an important role of each of his pictures in order to bring himself good luck. He'll have it all right, with this production, and Hollywood will have a most effective young character player in Miss Mitrovich.

As for Ann Sheridan, who has been out of luck with her recent movies, "The Unfaithful" should bring her back to the high road of success, which is where she belongs. Her personal beauty, her natural sincerity, her intense emotions have all registered in the demanding role of "Chris Hunter."

I'm delighted to give her the *Cosmopolitan Citation* for the best performance of the month of July, 1947.

**SWINGING** away from the intensity of "The Unfaithful," "The Perils of Pauline" belongs to the movies' era of beautiful nonsense. This highly modern, slickly expert reproduction of Hollywood's days of innocent infancy is wild and wacky, rich with moments of burlesque. It has songs and dances, crazy excitement and a slappy sort of nostalgia. Carrying it all with a sort of airy explosiveness is Betty Hutton.

Watching it, you'll laugh till your sides ache. Three years ago, when Buddy de Sylva was head of Paramount, he had the idea of making this production. He started it, and the result proves how smart his idea was.

To me, this life of Pearl White brought back such memories. Pearl, the original "stunt star" long before such things as "doubles" were discovered, was the first girl I ever saw smoke a cigarette. I was deeply shocked.

She came to Chicago where I was then working—and where pictures were then shooting just as they were in New York—and she wore a blond wig. When I met her again, a few days later, she had on a black wig. She boasted to me, over our formal dinner table, that she had wigs in every color and she wore them as the mood seized her. My, how sophisticated I thought that! It's wonderful, isn't it, looking back on yourself, and realizing you were so young and impressionable.

I was neither when, years later, I encountered the retired Pearl White in Paris. Her lovely figure had gone the way of too much French pastry, her lovely skin the way of too much French wine. But there was still a vividness about her, a bounce and a *je ne sais quoi*.

The story here presented doesn't stay entirely true to the facts—but who cares? It's a saga of an unrequited love—or at least, the love of a madcap girl for a pretty chilly gent. He fancies himself as a serious actor, but he goes down as she climbs toward stardom. There is the usual conflict of heart versus Hollywood, and Cupid scores again in the fade-out.

But this flimsy little plot is the least important element in "The Perils of Pauline." There's Billy de Wolfe, being perfectly killing as a terrible ham. There are the original Keystone cops, rioting about in those very funny early "silent" scenes. John Lund is the heart throb. I simply can't see him as a galloping gift to women—but Paramount assures me that his fan mail indicates that the younger generation feels that way about him.

Dominating every moment of the proceedings is Betty Hutton as Pearl. She blasts her way through numbers like "Daddy, Don't Preach to Me, Preach to Me, Preach to Me." She weeps over John Lund's superciliousness. She is barely rescued from onrushing trains, buzz saws and sneering villains. She loves; she loses; she wins. And every moment of the time, she looks more beautiful than you ever saw her before—and is completely convincing.

So what can I do? I just hafta break down my usual rule and make two awards for best performances this month. I herewith give Betty Hutton a *Cosmopolitan Citation* for the best musical-comedy performance of the month.

"**BRUTE FORCE**" is the most accurately pictured in years. And it was produced by our own Mark Hellinger of the Hearst newspapers. That's just what it is—brutal, and so powerful it will knock you on your ear. It has the most icy-blooded action the screen has revealed since "Mutiny on the Bounty." "Mutiny" was the picture that first demonstrated that cruelty, beatings and outright sadism pay off at the box-office wicket.

This is the prison-break story to end all prison-break stories. It stars Burt Lancaster who scored so sensational in Hellinger's smash success, "The Killers." He will score more sensational in this because he has been better handled and he has greater opportunities. He is a battling, brawling, muscular gangster who's gone stir-crazy, and he is pitted against a cunning, cold keeper, Hume Cronyn, who delights in driving men so crazy that they kill themselves.

The story starts when Lancaster has just been let out of solitary. An informer to Cronyn has sent him there. Lancaster comes back to his four cell mates, clamoring for revenge, plotting escape.

Charles Bickford, an intelligent "trusty," warns Lancaster there is no escape. But when Cronyn begins closing in on them, even the trusties decide to go in on this million-to-one chance.

The crackbrained scheme is to escape by way of a drain pipe into the river. First, they kill the informer—in a terrible manner that looks much too accidental. Then, when their plans are completed, they discover they have another informer in their midst. But it is too late to turn back.

Each man, driven by the dream of the woman who waits "outside" for him, braces himself to face the machine-gun bullets he knows are ready to strike him.

It happens—and it creates one of the most unforgettable film scenes ever made.

Talk about "escapism" for you, the watcher. This is "escapism" like a shot in the arm, like a hole through your head. The final fight between the dying Lancaster and the malignant Cronyn makes the famous "Spoilers" fight—from which all our others have spawned—look like a cambric tea party between pantywaists.

Actually, this is a wicked picture, for its criminals have been washed with sentiment, so that you pity them while you hate the keepers. In the end, you rejoice that Cronyn is thrown into the prison-yard fire by Lancaster. And you weep that "nobody gets away" as the other prisoners mourn. That ain't right.

Along with Lancaster's, every performance in "Brute Force" is notable. Cronyn, Bickford, in the fat supporting roles—Howard Duff, Sam Levene, John Hoyt, Vince Barnett and Jeff Corey in the smaller ones—all are masterly. Four tiny bits are played by four stellar girls—Yvonne de Carlo, Ann Blyth, Ella Raines and Anita "The Face" Colby. (Incidentally, that's what Anita is here; she never once opens her mouth.) But you don't need to worry about the girls' presence. This is a man's picture, by men, for men.

Young Jules Dassin directed it, and I give him the *Cosmopolitan Citation* for the best direction of the month. This is because of the terrible, accelerated tempo at which he keys the action, the grim mounting fury which he spurs on in his actors. It's a very great job Mr. Dassin has done—and I look forward to watching his work in the future.

THE END

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FLORISTS' TELEGRAPH INTERNATIONAL, 149 Michigan Ave., Detroit 26, Mich.

## The Crisis

(Continued from page 36)

meant to come back, but I married so soon after I left school."

Loving Jim had left no room for anything else. With him, and then the children, she had never had the time, or the need, and St. Agatha's had simply become a memory rippling with sunshine.

"I was Paula Curtis," she said, "when I was here over thirty years ago."

She was so wretched now she could hardly believe she had really been that young happy girl. Very dimly she could see someone, shining and dancing, and that was all.

"The world changes so," she said quietly. "I wondered if St. Agatha's had changed too."

Sister Celeste looked interested. "It never seems to change to us—the girls' faces are different, that's all. But of course, after thirty years, there are new things." Her hand flew back deftly and caught her billowing veil. "I have a free hour, and I'd enjoy showing you around, if you'd like."

"Oh, yes," Paula said, "thank you."

It would be good to go about for an hour, docile as a puppy, at somebody's heels; she needed to stop thinking, to stop staring at her watch—she needed to be guided and still. She took a long breath of the soft, earthy air; she shut her mind off, as though she shut a door, and began to walk with Sister Celeste towards the main building.

**I**T MIGHT have been any fine April day of her girlhood, because, really, everything was the same. Firm-footed ivy still washed the walls with green; there was the old look of orderly and immaculate peace, from flower beds to chimney tops—even the pale clouds seemed to flow across the roofs with gentleness; nothing was changed.

"Sister Honoria was principal when I was here," Paula said. "Is she still at St. Agatha's?" Paula remembered her as merry, autocratic, strong, like a peasant, she had loved good food and good times.

"Sister Honoria? Honoria?" Sister Celeste opened the great oak door and waited to let Paula go through, then closed it behind them. They were in the cool, lofty hall of the main building; there was an immaculate gloss all about them, and a clean, penetrating odor of wax polish. Paula, standing there, remembered one by one where all the doors led to: the cloak room, the stiff parlors where you saw your visitors, the dining room, the assembly hall, the chapel. She listened. The classrooms were on the upper floors, and from them, down the stairs, came a young and busy sound, like the noise of a well-functioning beehive.

"Sister Honoria," Sister Celeste repeated, standing in a thoughtful attitude, her hands tucked into her loose sleeves. "Yes," she said, "I remember now. She died long ago—before I came here. Oh, long ago."

"Died long ago," Paula said to herself. The people of St. Agatha's, not being made of stone and wood, were subject to death. If she asked for Sister Boniface, whose lovely features she had never forgotten, perhaps the same sorrowful echo would come back. A picture took shape in her mind for a moment, like a flash of sunlight—Sister Boniface standing by the blackboard, her outer sleeves pushed to her shoulders, her dark, clear eyes full of amusement. "Now girls, now brave little soldiers," she was saying, "courage!" It had been some horrible problem of geometry, and they had all been half in love with her, in the innocent, silly fashion of young girls. No, she would not risk

the question; if Sister Boniface was dead, she did not want to know it.

Sister Celeste was looking at her expectantly. "What shall I show you?" she asked. "The gymnasium and swimming pool, of course—they're new since your time. And the dormitories have all been remodeled. But I imagine you would really like to see everything!"

Paula looked at her watch; it did not seem possible, but only ten minutes had gone sluggishly by. Very clearly, she recalled the surgeon's slender, beautiful hands. Oh, there's nothing I want to see, she thought; it was a mistake to come here, a foolish thing. But Sister Celeste was playing her courteous role with grace, and she must try to play hers too.

"Whatever you have time for," Paula said. "It's kind of you to bother."

"Not at all," Sister Celeste said, leading the way with a swoop of her sleeve like the dart of a great blackbird. Her leather slippers rustled like dry leaves along the floor; the beads that she wore, dangling from her belt, clicked and chattered. "The swimming pool first," she said. "St. Agatha's is very proud of its swimming pool."

With an effort that grew more racking by the moment, Paula looked at it all—the swimming pool, its dreamlike blue water shimmering under the lights; the gymnasium, a bedlam of hearty girls; the dining room, full of ghosts of food-past and food-to-come; the empty assembly hall in which their voices ricocheted from the walls. She saw the classrooms, too; their wriggling, amoebalike life, hushed to a moment's curious interest by her presence, went on again in a bubbling fermentation when the doors shut her out once more.

It's been a pilgrimage to monuments, she thought, when they had returned to the main floor; it was good it was over. The walls and the structure of St. Agatha's had remained the same, but the faces she had remembered, the voices she had heard, all were gone. "Thirty years make many changes," she said quietly. "There's no one left that I remember."

"Well," Sister Celeste said, placing her hands in her loose sleeves again, "thirty years! People die, and those who haven't died have been transferred. That's in our Rule, you know. We aren't left anywhere long enough to put down roots, make strong human affections." She looked at Paula, her dark eyes thoughtful. "It's just as well, perhaps. I've been here four years, and I'm fond of St. Agatha's—but next year, they'll move me on, before I become part of the ivy."

A sudden anguish seized Paula, a pain savage and beyond pity, like a ripping claw. For a moment she thought she would burst into tears, or that her heart would stop beating, but it did not. Sister Celeste had not even noticed anything. "It's a good rule for anyone," Paula said, "not to put down roots, not to find strong human affections."

"But what would become of the world?" Sister Celeste asked with a little laugh. She turned then, because a girl had come down the hall and was waiting, effacing herself, a few feet away; there was a bit of paper in her fingers—a nun's message, Paula recognized, written on a folded square, the corner creased neatly down.

Sister Celeste, reading it, looked troubled, since Paula had not been correctly dismissed, graciously ushered out. "It's some school business. I'm so sorry."

"Not at all," Paula said. "If I may, I should like to go into the chapel for a while. I can leave from there without bothering you any more."

With smooth words, even though a little hurried, Sister Celeste glided off.



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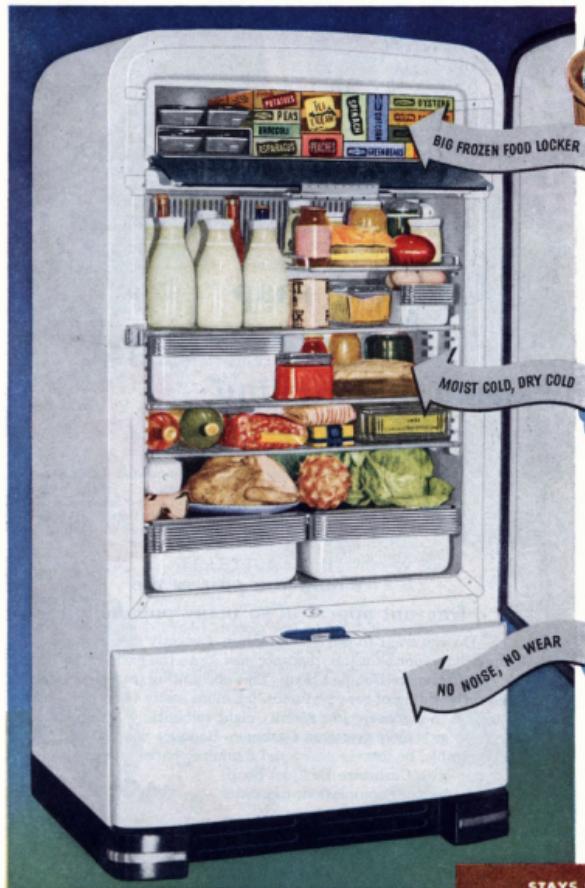
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watched them go away—the girl, whose hair was the bright color of Iceland poppies, the nun in her dark swinging robes; for a while, she could hear the tap of the girl's shoes, the rustle of Sister Celeste's slippers, and then there was nothing but the muffled buzzing from the classroom above. She had never felt so alone in her life, so entirely alone, shut out, locked out. She pressed her fingers to her head, because it ached. Well, she thought, I did say I was going to the chapel.

THE chapel had not changed; she remembered the stained-glass windows, with their sorrowful patient saints, the swords, the doves. She knelt down in a front pew. There was the faint hissing of steam from a radiator, like the voice of a sleepy bird; the blood-red light of the sanctuary lamp pulsed soundlessly as though it breathed.

With some vague idea that you should pray barehanded before God, when you had a desperate prayer to make, barehanded as you had come into the world, she drew off her gloves. The light through a saint's yellow glass robe touched her left hand, her wedding ring. She knelt, staring with heavy eyes at the stormy fire in the diamonds as the light caught them, until the smooth beautiful hand with the manicured nails became suddenly frightening to her, because it looked so unprepared. She jerked on her gloves again and quickly left the chapel.

Almost running, she hurried down the long panelled hall outside the chapel; the heavy door at the end of it swung open to her touch, and she found herself outdoors again, with St. Agatha's ivied walls behind her. She faced the disciplined flower beds, the gravelled walks, the scrubbed white stone benches of the back gardens. Two girls were lazily throwing a tennis ball to each other; sitting on one of the benches like a bent black crow, was a sister. The sunshine poured down, washing the gardens with heat and light.

In spite of the sun's heat on cheek and shoulder, Paula was very cold. Shivering, she went slowly along the gravel path, feeling it crunch under her feet like bits of ice. Where shall I go now? she was thinking. What shall I do now? Without looking at them, she walked past the girls throwing the ball; they were both singing softly, out of respect to the bent old nun half asleep on her bench, but even so, the young voices were gay and foolish, like flying sparks. Paula walked faster, to get that airy, joyful chirping out of her ears.

As she came near, the old sister, drowsing in her huddled robes on the white stone bench, glanced up at her. Paula bowed and went on by; then her foot steps slowed. There had been something in the look of the nun's dark eyes, the shape of cheek and mouth, something that plucked a string of recognition in Paula's memory. Impulsively she turned back to the bench.

"You're Sister Boniface, aren't you?" she said. She sat down beside the nun. "Surely you're Sister Boniface?"

Sister Boniface had been lovely thirty years ago; she had had one of those pure and perfect faces that can never be forgotten. Time had blurred the wonder of coloring and shape, but still the ghost of magic looked back at Paula, unmistakably. She will remember me, Paula thought; after all, there is someone here who remembers me.

"You are Sister Boniface," Paula said. "I'm Paula Wright—I was Paula Curtis when I was here at St. Agatha's. You taught me mathematics." She took the thin, veined hand in hers; it was warm from the sun, and she pressed it, as though physical contact would bring back memory into the dark, questioning eyes.

"Do you remember me, Sister Boniface? Do you remember me at all?"

The nun's hand moved in hers, as though it was uncomfortable. "Gently, child," she said. "I'm old—my hands hurt, from arthritis." She gazed down at her fingers, the small, spindled-shaped fingers, almost with anger. "They won't move to bed and give in to it, but I won't." No? And then, as though she had suddenly recalled Paula's presence, she said kindly, "Of course I remember you—very well indeed."

Paula loosened her fingers. It had been a gentle lie. She meant nothing whatever to Sister Boniface. Paula Curtis was only one of that sea of crowding young faces that had beaten like surf against the nun's feet and had been forgotten long ago as an individual wave is forgotten.

"And what are you doing back at St. Agatha's, after all these years?" Sister Boniface asked politely.

Paula was silent. It was the second time someone had wondered what she was doing here. I am running away, she thought. She looked about her at the green ivied walls and the soft clouds floating above them like pillows of down. "My husband is being operated on, a very dangerous, four-hour operation. I couldn't endure the waiting at the hospital."

Because she had been perfectly happy here, she had fled back to St. Agatha's like a bruised and wailing child, and it was no good; St. Agatha's had long ago gone on about its business—not even Sister Boniface remembered her.

She looked down at her watch. The operation was no more than half over. If Jim were still alive, if he still breathed, he drifted silent as a log beneath the deep green sea of ether; under the glaring lights of the operating room, his eyes were shut—no thoughts, of love or anything, moved in his head. She stared about her at the shining silent gardens with a sort of desperation. Was there really nowhere to go, nothing to do? The girls who were throwing the tennis ball were still singing, shrill and senseless as birds.

"I love him," she said. She clenched her cold, uneasy hands upon her lap. Wanting to explain him to Sister Boniface, to explain what loving him was like, she found she could not.

Sister Boniface sighed. "I will pray for your husband," she said.

That is all very well, Paula thought. Oh, yes, that is all very well; that is good for you. In a moment she would have to get up and go, because she could not endure sitting here any longer; the soft peace that hung over the garden like a haze pricked and tickled at her nerves. Like a whip, laid mercilessly over her shoulders, she could feel rising once more in her that headlong impulse to flight that had driven her to St. Agatha's. She must run somewhere; she must do something in these hours of waiting, because she was beginning to think again that Jim might even now be dead.

The tennis ball the girls had been throwing bounced on the path, and rolled, round and white, to a stop a little distance away from her. Paula looked at it a moment dazedly, and then she started to get up to retrieve it and throw it back to them.

"No," Sister Boniface said, in a voice that was almost angry. "Let me, please!"

Astonished, Paula stopped and stared at her. Why should this old ill nun care to return a tennis ball, and care so vehemently? Why, when it was obviously a racking martyrdom just to straighten her bones to raise them from the bench? Paula, hand outstretched to help her, withdrew it again. The misery of thought that had been circling about her head all

morning, lifted for a moment. As though the needless and incomprehensible thing the nun was attempting to do was something she must understand, Paula watched her.

Sister Boniface was getting to her feet very slowly. The discomfort, the physical battle that it meant, showed in the sharpened line of her jaw, the puffing effort with which she breathed; it made her face, an aged loveliness in repose, now almost ugly. With a look at Paula that said, "Do not touch me; do not help me," she straightened her knotted body, the dark robes flapping slowly into place. Eyes fixed intently upon the tennis ball, she shuffled towards it.

Paula, who could have thrown it back moments ago, stood there watching her; this pointless pain, this achievement of nothing, bewildered her. The girls waited too, patiently, and as though it were something to which they were accustomed, for which they knew their cues.

Will she not even let me pick the ball up for her? Paula wondered, but there was a fiery light in the old sister's eyes that restrained her; it was as though the nun were shut up in a consuming struggle between the flesh and the spirit that would shatter at an interfering touch.

Sister Boniface stood above the ball and looked at it a moment, as if it represented to her mind some lion-hearted antagonist; then she stooped above it, her knees bending a little, her hand shaping slowly, with difficulty, into the cup that should hold it. Her mouth tightened, rigid with strain, but the groping clumsy fingers knotted around the ball at last, and she began to straighten herself once more, her disheveled robes floating about her. When she was upright again, she paused to rest for an instant, and Paula could see that the hand that clutched the ball so fiercely, was shaking. Then Sister Boniface drew her arm back and flung the ball. It was a straight, good throw; the ball sailed almost to the girls' feet.

"Thank you, Sister!" one of them shouted, picking it up.

**SLOWLY**, Sister Boniface returned to the bench, sitting down upon it with the same elaborate and painful patience with which she had lifted herself from it. She looked up at Paula. Her face was white, and there were pale hollows of sweat under her eyes, and beads of sweat on her upper lip; it was plain that her body was repaying her savagely for having stretched it on the rack. But the eyes that gazed at Paula were as clear and bright as jewels; they were full of a hot triumphing, an immortal pride.

Paula stared down at the exhausted body, the exulting eyes that dominated its ruin, its woe. She could hear bells chiming in the school, an urgent sound that seemed to hurry her. The hot April morning was passing on, but still she stood there, silent, looking down into bright undefeated eyes.

"Is it so?" she said quietly, at last. The words she was searching for eluded her, slippery, difficult. "That it doesn't matter—the terrible things that happen to us—they don't matter? Only—inside us—that we face them and are brave, that matters?"

But the light was dying out of Sister Boniface's eyes, and she was beginning to look a little sleepy. She folded her hands on her black-robed knees, and let herself sag into a comfortable position in the sun. "What did you say, child?" Paula leaned above her. "I'm going back to the hospital now," she said. She touched the folded hands, remembering to be gentle. "Good-by, and thank you, Sister Boniface."

THE END

decorated with soggy caviar, and wondered frantically where she could go.

A tall young man with a crew haircut and a tired expression came and sat next to her. Somebody had taken over the grand piano, and a girl was singing songs in French. Paul Terris remarked that he was Paul Terris.

"Pretty soon they'll want me to sing too," Judy said. "I'm Judy Norris, and I won't do it."

"Judy Norris? I've heard that name."

"I invented the electric light."

"That was Alexander Graham Bell," Paul said, "and he wasn't in the habit of getting loaded at parties. Didn't I see you in a musical comedy once?"

"It was Edison, and shut up."

"Yes, I know I did. You danced and sang off key in a very brassy, unusual voice. Are you still around Broadway?"

"Get me a drink, sonny," Judy said. "An Old-fashioned. If I wet my whistle, I can talk to you."

He wouldn't obey her, and they had some sort of argument, the point of which was not very clear to Judy. But she enjoyed wrangling with him, since he was one of those large, patient men whose goats are hard to get. Eventually he made her understand that he thought she should eat, and that he was willing to buy the meal.

"To sober me up, I presume," Judy said.

"No, because you're so lovely. I enjoy looking at you."

"All right," Judy said. "And I may yet invent the electric light."

THEY escaped unnoticed by their hostess, and Judy threw her wrecked hat down the hallway and joined Paul in the elevator.

His height attracted the attention of a passing cabby. . . . Presently Judy found herself in a dingy restaurant on Third Avenue, eating beef stew and drinking coffee.

"I used to have a studio near here," Paul said, "and this joint was practically my club."

"I'm a painter."

"Oh," Judy said. "I was afraid you might be a dance instructor, or take photographs of children and dogs. What do you paint?"

"Pictures."

"What kind?"

"They're sort of hard to explain."

"I suppose you want to do a portrait of me."

"Nó," Paul said.

"Come now," Judy said reasonably. "Don't be shy. I once paid a man a thousand dollars for one. I forget his name. If I happen to remain in this good mood, and you aren't coy, maybe I'll give you a commission."

"No," Paul said. "Your face is beautiful, but it's rather empty. Do you want a piece of lemon cream pie?"

WHEN they left the restaurant, he asked her address, used a magic whistling through his teeth that may have been the mating call of unoccupied cabs, and took her home. He seemed to assume he was coming up to her apartment, and Judy was sick of arguing with confident men in the lobby; she let him tag along. The apartment had eleven rooms, and one of the maids was still awake and let them in. Picking a straight-backed chair, Paul straddled it and rested his chin on his arms. He looked quite content and in no need of conversation or active romance. Judy waited until her teeth were on edge.

Then she said, "Let's have a drink." "I never take anything except a little wine at dinner," Paul replied.

"That's a fascinating custom," Judy said, "but I think I'll have a drink."

She did, and it only increased the tiresome, undeviating pressure in her head. Her guest wasn't helping the pain much.

"Listen," she said, "I have a pain in the head and neck called migraine. They don't know what it comes from. If I sit still and don't talk I suffer more, so let's go to a night club or the newsreel theater or you go home. Huh?"

"I'll go home. Are you working now?"

"No. I was in a musical, but it folded after a couple of months."

"I want to court you for a few days," Paul said, "and I'm a trifle strapped until the first of the month. Will you lend me a hundred dollars until then?"

Somehow Judy wasn't surprised. She tried to make up her mind to get rid of him, but her head ached. Not having the cash on hand, she found her checkbook and had him spell out his last name.

"This is so romantic," she said, "that I won't request you to leave your watch. Shouldn't we make it five hundred? I'm tough to court."

"I can't afford five hundred."

He took the check, waved it dry, and gently kissed her good night. Talk was not his specialty; he simply started to leave after that.

"When am I seeing you and my century?" Judy asked, and was a little amazed at herself.

"Sometime tomorrow. I'll give you a ring."

She undressed, thought how worried and unhappy she was, swallowed the sleeping pill, smoked the exact two cigarettes, and went to sleep.

HE CALLED at noon the next day, as she was eating breakfast. She explained what she was doing.

"Good," he said. "I won't have to buy you lunch. Meet me at Fifty-Ninth and Fifth at one o'clock."

The sun was shining as she walked over to Fifth Avenue. He stood on the corner, towering above the run of humanity, serene in a shabby tweed suit and an old hat. She wore a Clementine original in green wool and an emerald clasp and had a five-thousand-dollar mink coat thrown over her shoulders and a metallic taste in her mouth; and suddenly he made her awfully unhappy and confused. All the streets and shops and traffic and even the bright sun represented a desperate battleground to her, a disordered scene where she had climbed to fame and fortune of a kind by biting and scratching and never relaxing her vigilance, a place of traps and lurking disasters that she didn't have time to see in correct focus. But Paul, with a borrowed hundred dollars and a pervasive air of seediness, was pleased and at peace. She was unkind to him as a consequence of this, and silent in the bus that appeared as promptly for him as the taxis the previous night.

He conveyed her to the Metropolitan Museum, which she remembered dimly from childhood. The only reason she walked around with him was because she felt the exercise would be good for her. Occasionally he removed a block of sketching paper from his pocket and drew an object that interested him.

"Shall I explain it to you?" he said. "They have signs on the stuff," Judy said. "I can read."

Later they went out and walked too far in Central Park. Judy was wearing

medium heels, and her legs began to ache. Yet she kept up with him out of curiosity. He seemed interesting in a dull way. She admired his knack of finding oddities—fat ladies with minute dogs, kids in flocks who were doing mysterious rites and talked with a funny intensity and then abruptly let out a mass scream and fled, and an old man who appeared to be on terms of great intimacy with several hundred pigeons.

Several times Judy was allowed to sit down while Paul recorded some detail. She wanted to take off her shoes, but she was afraid her feet would swell too much to get the shoes on again. Finally Paul was through.

He rose to his full height and whistled shrilly, and a cab which had apparently been stalking them rushed obediently up. That incident caused Judy obscure anger.

DINNER was in a white-tiled, brilliantly lighted restaurant on Sixth Avenue, and Paul advised against cocktails and suggested the dollar-and-a-quarter table d'hôte dinner with wine. Being fatigued and sleepy from the exercise and open air, Judy didn't argue. She was not annoyed by being invited to the common side of New York. That was an old gag, the rich, spoilt members of motion pictures always fell for it. A few enterprising men had even tried the routine on her up to and including Coney Island. She had worked hard and sacrificed everything else for good clothes, lodging, entertainment and food and drink, and it didn't enchant her to lower her standard of living. But, of course, this big man—this debtor—was different. He was unsmilingly doing what appeared best to him.

They walked across to her apartment later, and Judy wondered gloomily if he had taken the location of the restaurant into consideration beforehand. She calculated that he had spent not over five dollars on the entire day. At that rate, he could court her indefinitely on what he had borrowed.

"Where do you live?" she asked.

"I have a house in New Jersey. In New York I stay at a hotel 'way downtown. You wouldn't like it."

"I'll bet it's cheap."

"Yes, it is," Paul said. "Good night, Judy."

They were in the lobby of her apartment house, and he kissed her with a kind of careless indifference to which it was hard to offer objection. Anyway, she was loafing at the moment, and kissing him helped to pass the time. This was only for laughs.

It was far earlier than she ordinarily went to sleep, so she wandered through the rooms, gazing at the pictures, rearranging the flowers, hitting a few chords on the piano. To her astonishment, sleepiness overcame her. She got into bed, poured a glass of water, reached automatically for the pill bottle, and then stayed her hand. Her head didn't ache, and it occurred to her that she would not need any help tonight. Switching off the lamp, she turned over, closed her eyes and slept dreamlessly all night.

IN THE morning she had to see her agent and listen to a producer outline her new musical. Being frightened by her previous failure, she couldn't decide on the piece. She lunched with her lawyer, who was doing his best to help her avoid high-bracket taxation. The image of Paul remained in her mind through this, but he was unreal when contrasted with these realities. Nevertheless, he was waiting for



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her on a couch in the lobby of the apartment house. She sat down beside him wearily and recounted her affairs.

"Are you going to do the musical?" Paul said.

"I don't think so. It doesn't sound good enough. I can't afford two failures in one season."

"What will you do?"

"I don't know," Judy said. "I might go to California or Europe, only it makes me nervous to travel. Or I could go to a place in Virginia and rest, except the resort is quiet and drives me nuts. If I stay here I'll keep meeting show-business characters in Twenty-one and the Stork, and one of them will put me to work. My agent feels I ought to knock off a couple of night-club engagements."

"Your head will ache."

"Oh, sure—but that's inevitable."

"Not necessarily," Paul said. "Why don't we get married?"

"Thanks awfully," Judy said. "You mustn't feel the hundred bucks obligates you."

"I love you." He sounded as if he were giving the correct time.

"I'm sorry; I'm far too busy. And you wouldn't be happy for long. I'm temperamental, and I get mean unless everything goes perfectly."

"It might go perfectly."

"What does?" Judy said. "Besides, we have nothing in common but my dough and the fact that we're both on holiday. Just relax, kid."

"Come on with me," Paul said.

INEVITABLY, they walked—to the Museum of Modern Art. Judy had never been more bored. Other than those exhibited in movie houses, she was devoid of interest in pictures. Paul was silent and absorbed. He appeared to like to have her with him, but he didn't want to be bothered by her. The lack of stimulation worked spectacularly on Judy; she felt calm, healthy and even a trifle optimistic.

Later they went over on Fifty-Seventh Street to a gallery run by a man named Simmons. He was Judy's agent and Paul's dealer. There was respect and affection in Simmons's attitude, but he wished Paul would try being more representational and do a few still lifes for the suburban trade.

"He's gone almost completely abstract," Simmons said to Judy. "I can imagine what that's doing to his sales."

"Are you kidding?" Judy said. "I don't even know what the word means."

Simmons had a couple of Paul's canvases, both small, which he displayed for her. He explained the subtle balancing of color and design, the single-minded quest for abstract form.

Judy observed with astonishment that he grew rather excited and enthusiastic during the lecture. So far as she was concerned, the titles were ridiculous and the paintings terrible. One was twelve hundred and fifty dollars, the other a thousand. Either could have been done, she suspected, by a nearsighted child of eight painting without his glasses. I really have to get rid of him, she thought, and it ought to remain dully beautiful with us. When they're that big, they need more food than ordinary people. She also thought there was no sense to wasting a perfectly good two-fifty. She had a sister-in-law in Cincinnati who would appreciate a real oil painting from New York.

"I'll take the one for a grand," she said.

Simmons was too dumbfounded to speak. Before buck fever seized him, Paul intervened. She wasn't permitted to buy any of his pictures. Simmons grabbed his hair.

"But I love it," Judy said, and managed to give the false line a fairily sincere

reading by virtue of her stage training. "She loves it, Paul!" Simmons said.

"We're getting married," Paul said.

"Oh," Simmons said. "Oh. My very best wishes, Miss Norris."

"Thank you," Judy said, and shook hands with him. Abruptly she was sorry for everybody there, including herself. I'm not going to marry him, of course, but let's all pretend for a minute that life is really is amusing without a drink in your hand. Games are fun."

"Oh," Simmons said. "Well, Paul—"

Paul shook hands with him anyhow. "She's only nervous," he said. "I'll do a nice head of her eventually."

"Of course you will," Judy said. "We won't worry about it, will we?"

"No," Paul said.

"No, no," Simmons said.

As she expected, Judy ate a cheap meal in a restaurant unknown to the columnists, and drank a glass of very good Upper New York State Burgundy. Then she

## To Subscribers Desiring Change of Address

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entertained the abstractionist in her apartment by playing the piano and singing. He roused himself from a doze and remarked that her voice was far from true.

"It might interest you to know," she said, "that at times I sing two thousand a week for singing slightly off pitch."

"It's not your voice," he said. "You're wonderful to look at."

"There's no use my getting sore," Judy said.

Presently he left. She kissed him good night to break the monotony. He looked unexpectedly pleased, and her conscience awakened. In her time she'd kissed a good many people, mostly professionally and without serious intent; but she could see that he regarded the meeting of lips as something close to a sacrament. Very shortly she'd have to bail out of this, long before he was hurt; say, at around forty-five dollars of her money.

She slept soundly all night, without benefit of barbiturates, and was worried in the morning. A new angle on the underwritten romance became evident to her. The guy was dangerous in an ineffectual way. He made her feel so good. She had no migraine; her muscles were relaxed; she was fresh out of immediate apprehensions. J. Norris lacking murderous tensions was a J. Norris on the skids.

He came early, waited until she was dressed, and had breakfast with her. Instead of drinking a glass of orange juice and a cup of black coffee, she had toast and cereal, eggs and bacon.

"I thought we'd go out to the Brooklyn Zoo," Paul said. "Kids and animals are great fun."

"Now, wait a minute," Judy said. "Where did you ever pick up the peculiar idea that you could go through life having fun at practically no expense? I'm going to have to talk to you."

She did, but the conversation grew confused. She said she was an Ohio girl, the daughter of a song-and-dance act that gave up vaudeville and the ghost in Cincinnati and turned honest. Something was in her blood; at an early age she went out to avenge her parents by dancing in a chorus line in a night club and painfully learning to drown out the conversation with her voice. There was a hard way and an easy way, and she'd taken the hard way. It was very slippery on top. Life, when confronted with furs and jewels, was not any cinch. Some women worried . . .

"All right," Paul said. "Don't get excited."

"I'm getting older," Judy said. "I can't stand the idea of failure, even when I know it's inevitable. I'm tired and discouraged and morose. I was married to an actor once—we were both infatuated with him, but my infatuation didn't last. Marriage doesn't work with my kind. You can understand that, can't you?"

"Uh-huh," Paul said.

"Okay," Judy said. "Go away. Walk in the park by yourself. Go to the zoo alone. And keep the change."

"All right," Paul said, and started for the door.

"Wait a minute," Judy said. "I'll get my hat and go with you. But only this one last time. Marriage is out, see?"

"Yes," Paul said.

FOUR days later they were married downtown by a judge who was a friend of her lawyer's. The bride was attired in another original hot off Clementine's drawing board, and the groom had a clean white shirt with a frayed collar to go with his tweeds. They were attended by the bride's apprehensive agent, her lawyer, and a stray producer who was trying to curry her favor. It was raining as they emerged from the judge's chambers man and wife, but a taxi was right there waiting. Paul gave the driver the address of a near-by garage.

"Hey," Judy said. "I've talked with my travel man. What do you say to Phoenix, Arizona? In the spring—"

"I can't afford it."

"I can."

"We're going to New Jersey," Paul said firmly.

His car had first seen the light of day in 1931, and looked its age. The gloom and hollowness of the Holland Tunnel echoed in Judy.

"I don't want to be indiscreet on my bridal day," she said, "but precisely how do you earn a living, Rembrandt?"

"I paint," Paul said. "I was hurt in the war, and every month the government gives me disability pay."

"Can I see your scars?"

"Pretty soon."

"It's not too bad," Judy said. "At least I have a reason for marrying you. To see your scars."

"Maybe you'll think of another one after a while."

"If you say two can live as cheaply as one, I'll—"

"I won't," Paul said.

Beyond the tide flats and the railroad yards and the factories and the drifting smoke the country grew greener and softer. Judy soberly examined the town of Burdon, New Jersey. It was not elaborate.

"We're a couple of miles from here," Paul said, and headed out a side road.

"I noticed a pool hall on the main street," Judy said. "A few games of snooker may get me through the money-month."

The house was two-story, of sandstone, with overhanging eaves and a wide front porch. Above the driveway entrance was

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DARE  
LIVE  
IT...



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RED ROSES MEAN  
THE *other* LOVE!



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DARE  
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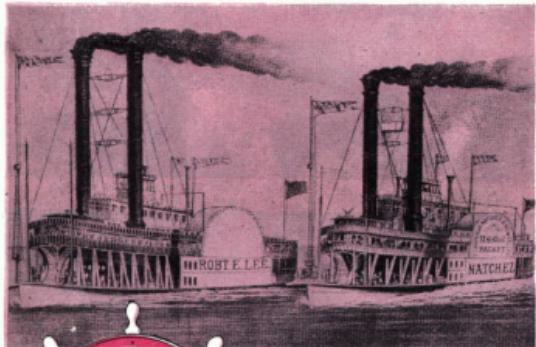
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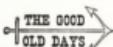


Greatest reception in St. Louis history was accorded the winner.

In all the history of boat racing, there have been few contests to equal in color and drama the famous run up the Mississippi of the Natchez and the Robert E. Lee in 1870.

The Natchez was launched in 1869, expressly to better its speed and comfort the Robert E. Lee which had ruled the river since its debut in 1866. The proprietor of one of the finest saloons in New Orleans, Johnny Hawkins, suggested the match race to St. Louis for a side bet of ten thousand dollars.

John W. Cannon, the Lee's skipper, prepared for the race by removing all expendable equipment that would catch wind, declining to take aboard freight or local passengers enroute and arranging to refuel on the run in midstream. Captain Thomas P. Leathers of the Natchez made no special preparations whatever, and this overconfidence, many believed, lost him the race. The Lee hacked out of the Canal Street Wharf at five o'clock on the afternoon of June 30, the Natchez five minutes later. Though the boats ran in sight of each other as far as Vicksburg, Mississippi, it was no contest. The stripped-down Robert E. Lee glided into St. Louis on July 4 at 11:25:14 A.M., three and a half hours ahead of the Natchez.



BY HANS SCHOENFELD

a dilapidated wooden sign with cut-out letters which read: PARADIS.

"Paradis," Judy said. "What's that mean?"

"Paradise," Paul said. "The man who built the place named it that, and one letter has fallen off. He was considered eccentric in the neighborhood."

"You think you're not?" Judy said.

**P**ARADISE was old, roomy and sturdy, but evidently furnished by someone who had given a junkman *carte blanche*. The iron stoves with isinglass windows, their belies glowing with coals, gave Judy a distinct turn. No servants lined up to pull their forelocks and curtsey for the new lady of the manor.

"A fellow lives with me," Paul said. "A sculptor."

"Will he object to me?" Judy asked.

"No," Paul said.

**J**UDY's husband worked in a rickety shack with huge windows, and the barn was a studio for the sculptor. He was a small, bald man, by name Peter Grovesnor, and seemed quite old until the marble dust was brushed out of his beard. He stopped hacking at a former piece of Vermont and shook hands with Judy.

"My wife, Judy," Paul said, in what he regarded as complete explanation.

"This is a great and welcome surprise, my dear," Peter said. "And don't worry—I'll continue to do my share of the housework."

"Thank you, Peter," Judy said. "I intended to ask you about that."

That night Peter cooked the dinner. They ate on the table in the large kitchen, which had a gassing cistern pump at the end of the drainboard. Peter was excellent on fried ham and sweet potatoes, and Paul, Judy discovered later, was not bad with pies, cakes, game and bacon and eggs. She calculated that if she could only stay this hungry, she might not die.

"We call ourselves the apostles," Peter remarked. Many years in America hadn't entirely eradicated his English accent, and he could still twinkle. "Peter and Paul. A little joke, you see."

"You ought to be on the radio," Judy said.

Paul's and Judy's bedroom was upstairs, at the front of the house, small, low-ceilinged, with gay wallpaper. Paul started a fire in the tiny corner fireplace, and the reflections of the flames danced upon the walls and the crazy quilt adorning the four-poster bed. Then Paul smiled and took her in his arms and after that—to coin a word—it was paradise.

**J**UDY brooded for three days about her wedding ring, which was of platinum set with small diamonds, and rather elegant. Finally she questioned her husband. He got a little flushed.

"I had a wrist watch, a pretty good one like fliers use, with lots of gadgets. I traded it to a man in a pawn shop on Third Avenue for the ring." He swallowed with difficulty, and added, "I love you."

"Say no more," Judy said. She blinked hard. "That's plenty."

She took to wearing slacks and tying her hair up in a scarf and visiting the landing five acres. Sitting in the barn watching Peter make big ones into little ones was pleasant. It never occurred to Judy that Peter was highly regarded by a number of museums at home and abroad; she valued him for his information on the other apostle.

"Paul was very badly wounded in the war, you know," Peter said, in the midst of crosshatching. "Probably you've noticed. Spot called Guadalcanal. I believe. Almost lost his right arm. Had to teach



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himself to paint all over again with his left hand. Determined fella, your husband."

"I've noticed that," Judy said.

"Michelangelo and other sculptors of antiquity and the Renaissance," Peter said, "attacked their subjects in virgin stone, without preliminary models or plotting. I try to do the same . . . One spoils a bit of marble that way, though. Often ponder on it."

"Let's talk about Paul," Judy said. So they did.

WHEN a month had gone by, Peter brought up the subject of Judy sharing in the household duties. "She's a guest yet," Paul replied.

"Rather," Peter said. "No offense. But it does cut into my work, coming in to fix her breakfast at eleven on my days."

"I'll do it from now on," Paul said.

"The thing to do, boys," Judy said, "is get a new contrivance of which you may not have heard called a maid and—"

"No," Paul said. "I still owe her hundred dollars."

The white of the shadbush and blood-root blossoms decked the hills. There was a smell of real spring in the air. Judy sat bemused while Paul painted on an easel under the trees. She had long since abandoned sleeping pills, cocktails, pressure and having her nails done, and sometimes she speculated on whether her mind had abandoned her. But it was nice, even if it couldn't last. She read the newspaper and occasional letters and listened to the radio. People still inhabited New York.

Then the serpent entered Paradise in the form of her agent and a desperate, successful writer. She entertained them in the living room, serving a bottle of elderberry wine of local manufacture and disregarding their incredulous looks. Her agent said—incorrectly—that the honeymoon was over. He said they were going to forget her where it counted if she continued this rural charade. He said she couldn't afford any more love. The writer said he had a great property for her. They both said they loathed the wine and the fact that she had no telephone.

Judy might have resisted the temptation, except that her business manager sent her a statement showing that she had over two hundred thousand dollars in assets.

Then she forgot the scent of the wild azaleas and the peace and contentment and the gentle assurance given her by Paul and thought of the future and a career and the old hurt of life ungrasped. Her husband listened gravely while she proposed a wonderful studio in New York, her apartment that was eating its head off and doing nothing, and perhaps a chance for him to paint in the West Indies if she did a show. He shook his head, refused to elaborate, and made her mad. They had a quarrel conducted entirely by Judy. She slept with her back to him that night.

In the morning she said she had to go to New York for a few days to settle outstanding business affairs. She saw the paleness of his face, but he didn't protest. He drove her to the station, paid her one hundred dollars, and failed to kiss her good-by. An active traveling-salesman type on the train tried to pick her up until he noticed she was crying.

NEW YORK was warm and noisy. The theatrical season was nearly over, and Judy was out of the habit of having a couple of drinks and singing at parties. She hired new maids, stayed in her apart-

ment, and was sick. One day Peter showed up, in a neat blue suit, with his beard freshly dusted.

"Sorry to disturb you," he said, "but my dear girl—"

"What's the matter with him? Is he hurt?"

"Drunk. And not working."

"Where?"

"I left him on Third Avenue."

"Follow me, men," Judy said.

He was still in the same joint, watching a baseball game on a television set. She was stunned at how very haggard and drawn he was.

"Go away," he said. "Damn you, Peter."

"Listen," Judy said, "you're a fool—"

"Go away. I've discovered I can use my right hand for drinking. It's wonderful."

The guy in the television set hit a home run. Judy had to wait.

"This is going to sound like an anti-climax now, I know," she said eventually, "but I think I am going to have a baby. Your thoughts, brother."

That ended the difficulty. The three of them returned to the apartment, gave the maids a month's pay apiece, subtle to a grateful man who almost wept over the phone, and drove to Paradise.

Nothing much happened after that, other than Judy was terribly happy and sick every morning for a while. She visited Doc Riley in his horsehair-and-antimacassar office in Burdon. He assured her, following the examination, that she really was going to become a mother.

"It might interest you to know," Judy said, "that I was married once before, and examined by the biggest specialist in New York. He said I should never have a child—that it'd kill me."

"Is that what you wanted to hear at the time?"

"Well . . . yes."

Doc Riley said: "Come back in a month, Mrs. Terris, if you haven't died."

ONE historic day Paul had to go to Princeton and be nice to a man who had bought a picture. Judy was lying on a couch in the living room, deep in a volume concerning the care and feeding of infants. Entering with his shirttail hanging out, Paul exhibited several missing buttons, socks that indecently exposed his feet, and unpressed pants. He stated that the time had come. Peter, wandering in from the kitchen, to announce lunch, expressed agreement.

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," Judy said indignantly. "I'm in a delicate condition, if you'll pardon the expression. Would you have an expectant mother cooking, sewing and cleaning?"

"Yes," Paul said.

"Rather," Peter said.

"When lovely woman stoops to folly," Judy said, "somebody always kicks her in the pants."

The apotropaes taught her to cook and mend, and she found she needed no instruction on the vacuum cleaner. It wasn't bad when she got used to it. When they found she was not complaining too vociferously, they even tried to let her do all the housework. But she wouldn't stand for that. She knew her rights at Paradise.

IN THE fall the vines and shrubs displayed their vivid berries and the trees turned orange and gold in the thinning sunlight. Judy was invited to a tea at the Episcopal rector's house. The occasion

inexplicably excited both Paul and Peter, and they passed on the respectability of her costume and begged her not to swear or recount theatrical experiences. She did beautifully at the party, considered the tea rather strong, and thought the women comforting. Practically everyone was a veteran of the maternity wards.

The snow came, and Paul took Judy out to the rickety shack, heated only by an oil stove, and began to paint her portrait. He did it straight and richly and lovingly, because it was hers and should comply with her tastes. The picture grew as surely as the child was growing in her, in a manner she could understand. When it was done, tears filled her eyes.

"That's not me," she said. "That's what I should have been."

"No, I'm infallible," Paul said. "That's you, and you're beautiful."

She should have held a cup that was overflowing, but the portrait curiously confirmed the presentiment which had been gathering strength in her. The apprehensions, the dreadful fears of failure and insecurity, were back. It was a long pursuit, but the things finally had her: she had been happy and free of them for a time, a blessed time, and now she'd have to pay up. Everything had a price. The bill for her emancipation was about to be presented.

It started in the midst of a snowstorm. Paul drove her to the hospital in the old car, kissed her with cold lips, said he guessed he'd do just a lick or two more on a canvas he was fussing with, and went away. Judy tried to smile at Doc Riley, decided she hated him, and prepared to die . . .

"I'm sorry," Judy said in her mind to Paul. "Awful sorry. I did you a dirty trick, hanging around and loving you and pretending to be a real wife. You've got to believe that I never wanted anything else, though. If I had it to do again, I'd do exactly the same. I'd rather live with you for a year in that awful house and try to have your baby than to live to be a hundred any other way. Keep the picture, Paul, and don't forget me for a while . . . Paul . . . Paul . . ."

WHEN the smell of the mask was gone, Judy felt wonderful. She put on powder and lipstick, and the nurse tied a ribbon in her hair.

Doc Riley arrived, smiling a trifle sardonically, and Judy examined the red, wrinkled, homely, lovely baby.

"Six pounds, eleven ounces," the nurse said. "The first one is usually a boy."

"Everybody has given me the impression," Judy said, "that this is a tough trick to pull off. What's so tough about it?"

"Listening to the conversation of the mother," Doc Riley said.

Paul came in. He had a box of candy that he presented with a trembling hand. She kissed him. They looked at each other shily.

"How do you feel?" he asked.

"Swell," Judy said. "Paul, I—ah—have so much to tell you."

"Go ahead."

"I—ah—never mind."

"Judy," Paul said.

"Yes?"

"Nothing."

"Listen," Judy said, "we might as well face it—we'll never be able to say the things we really feel to each other. We'll just have to feel them. Okay?"

"Yes," Paul said.

THE END

In "The Two of Them," an August short story, William Brandon gives you the history of two sisters, one of whom was evil and got what she deserved—you'll have to decide which one

Very  
personally  
yours



*Away you go* and your heart has wings — that carry you back to your very first ride on a dashing pink-and-gold charger! How you gripped those reins, wide-eyed . . . remember? Flying to a wonderland so *very personally yours*?

You've never outgrown your gift for keeping life gay with ~~many~~ interests. You've learned many ways to outwit care . . . never forgetting that problem days need be no problem, with Kotex — the napkin made to stay soft while you wear it.

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stuff, and then there were big fruit jars with look-like strips of dough swimming in them.

"What's those things?" His shyness was no match for his curiosity.

"Worms," Jake said. "Out of little boys like you."

Ted looked quickly away so that he wouldn't have a bad dream about them tonight and be fussed at in the morning.

"And this is Worm Medicine," the man with the bottle said. "Dr. Brown's Invigorating Resuscitating Tonic. Finest of its kind."

"Do they like it?" He was fascinated by the idea and planned immediately to watch the worms take the medicine even if it gave him bad dreams.

"Certainly. Sold three bottles to the mayor yesterday."

Ted looked back at the bottles. The big one in the bottle by itself must be the mayor. "What's his name?"

The two seated men laughed. The other, the red-faced, ugly man put the last bottle on the shelf. "Do you think I'm lying to you?" He glared at Ted. "You think I remember the names of all my customers? From the looks of those skinny legs I'd say you need some of this tonic. Tell your mother and father."

"Look behind you, boy!" Jake hollered.

Ted jumped around. There was no lion behind him, only a box covered with screen.

"Nothing but a box," he said.

"Yeah, but look in the box."

He hesitated, then cautiously approached. He looked down into the box. The late-afternoon light coming through the screened top and one screened side was dim, so he dropped down on his knees to see in. There, near a saucer of

water, in the one crack of sunlight, a toad sat blinking.

"What'd ya see?"

"A little ole frog."

"What else?" Jake asked.

"Nothing. A saucer and water."

Jake walked over to the box and squinted. He took the boy's head firmly in his big finger tips and turned it toward the opposite corner. "Over there."

"Oh," the boy whispered when he saw the snake. Without moving he was in a deep forest, and there were no men around, no trailer, and no screen between himself and the snake that was looking right at him.

"Two-foot rattle with three rattles," the medicine man said, but his voice did not reach into the deep forest where the child knelt motionless staring at the snake. Sometimes the snake faded into the trees, and the boy would have to squint his eyes to bring it back into view.

The sandy swish of car tires passing on the street filtered through the trees and became running water in the forest stream. The snake would brighten until every dark band on his back glowed, then slowly fade again into the darkness. The voices of the men talking were not loud enough to come through the murmuring of the wind in the trees, and the boy would have stayed in the forest forever if the toad had not jumped against the screen.

Ted looked up at the men who were no longer watching him. "Do they like each other?" He didn't see how anybody could like the snake.

"Just like you like ice cream," Jake answered.

"He's going to eat him?" There was an anxious note in the boy's high thin voice.

"Certainly," the medicine man said. "That's what I put him in there for."

The toad jumped again.

"He wants out."

The men went on talking to each other, and no one answered. The boy looked at the box, hoping there was some little hole or little secret door the frog could hop through when the snake wasn't looking. The only way out was through the top, at one corner where the screen had not been tacked down but was merely fastened over the edge with a bent nail.

The toad sat next to the screen now, blinking, his soft underside, chin and stomach, heaving in and out like the vacuum cleaner when it's cut on and off real fast.

"Froggy. Froggy." Ted's voice was so high it was almost a whisper. "You're afraid, aren't you, froggy?"

The toad didn't answer, not so you could hear; but the boy could see by its expression; the way its mouth turned down like a pipe smoker's, the way it wouldn't look at the snake, the way it was panting—in all these ways the boy could see that it was scared.

"Let's get him out!" He had to say it three times before the men quit talking. "Let's get the frog out!"

"How?" the medicine man asked.

"He's afraid. Get him out!"

"How?" the man asked in a flat tone.

"You get him out!"

"Not me. Not with that snake in there. You get him out."

The two men laughed, and Jake smiled. "Can I have him if I get him out?"

"Sure. Sure." The medicine man winked at Jake. "Tell you what. I'll get the frog out for you if you'll help me."

"All right," the boy said, excitement

Heat  
Eat  
Enjoy



Just like magic

ising in his voice. He stood up and walked toward the medicine man.

"All you have to do is hold the snake back while I get the frog."

"Noooo," Ted stopped. He hadn't noticed before that the sun was gone and only the sunset glow remained in the sky.

"Why not?"

"Cause, I got to go home." He started toward the street. "I'll be back tomorrow."

He ran up the hill, turning his head every few seconds to watch his dim shadow slanting across the street and racing with him against darkness. Already the sidewalk was losing its heat, and he ran faster. "Lickety-split. Lickety-split all the way home."

He stopped in the side yard, pushed back the tiger lilies (that didn't look like tigers after all of his waiting for them to bloom) and washed his hands at the garden spigot. He dried them on his pants as he slipped across the side porch and into the lighted dining room where his grandmother, aunts and uncles were already seated at the table.

After supper, after his bath, alone upstairs in bed, he had a thousand ways of going to sleep. Usually he thought about something sad, like the thing he had learned this summer: that everyone in the house, all his aunts and uncles, were more kin to his grandmother than he was; that they were all more kin to each other than they were to him. Or he thought about Jake with a belly full of lead waiting for them to come along with a stretcher, and a red cross, and a purple heart. When he thought of things like that he wanted to go to sleep and would not fight the growing heaviness in his eyelids. Tonight he thought about the frog that was kin to nobody in the world.

It was sitting behind the saucer with one eye open watching the snake. It wanted to close both eyes and go to sleep but was afraid to. He held his head behind the pillow and peeped with one eye at the gray square light of window. He let both eyes shut and saw the snake crawling up the stairs. It made a dry, scraping noise as it crawled. The noise was the pecan tree brushing against the window screen, but it was also the snake crawling.

He opened his eyes now and blinked. He drew his knees up against his chest and waited. He was breathing slow and deep like the vacuum cleaner as the snake crawled down the hall and into the room. He raised his head from behind the pillow. The pecan tree was no longer scraping; only the sound of the snake filled the room with its rattling and hissing that was not close or far but all around him. The snake was crawling around under the bed looking for him. Then he heard—his body tensed for there was no mistake—the snake wrapping itself around the leg of the bed. Through the dark, through the pillow and mattress he could see its head sliding up the post.

If he screamed for help the snake would strike. He slid down in his bed farther and farther, pulling the sheet up over him as he moved. He stopped to listen. Once more he pushed his foot down to move farther away when it struck the cold, round body of the snake.

"Granny! Granny! Granny!" He screamed it again and again, not hearing the footsteps on the stairs and in the hall. When he opened his eyes, the light was on and his grandmother was pulling the sheet from over him. The iron bedrail was still there. The snake was gone.

"You play too hard, and you get too tired. That's why you have all these bad dreams. Today you're to get all your playing done before noon, and after lunch you're not to go out of this yard."

They were on the north side of the

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jewels in her ears. She was sitting waiting, her sharp chin thrust forward, her little dark eyes glinting with impatience, humorous boredom, her little nose breathing in the air of this street with arrogance and contempt.

Everything that was twelve years old in Christy Clairoborne died in that moment, and the thing that took its place was the feeling that was Gladys. She watched her father come out of the house; the chauffeur open the door for him; Gladys smile up at him with amused understanding as he sat beside her and they rode away.

Her mother had died that night, and Christy went to live with her father . . .

When her father died, she went in and looked at him and felt no grief. Only now, as she walked along the street to keep her engagement with Chester Howard, did she breathe deeply and freely, and her eyes brightened with zest and hope. It was all over. Now she could begin her life.

It was a little after ten thirty when she opened the door of Howard and Marchbanks and was asked to wait just a minute. Mr. Howard would be right with her. It seemed a little strange to be asked to wait for Chet, whom she had come to consider as her personal property. The Howards lived next door to them summers, at their pleasant shore home on Long Island. During the Clairoborne's first summer there, Chet, then in law school, had taught Christy to play tennis to swim and to ride. Even when his mother invited young people to dinner, Chet would wave to her and ask her to come along. "He has a nose for business," Gladys commented. But the summer she was sixteen and Chet got his wings, Christy knew it wasn't that. Sunning themselves on the dock under a lazy August sky, he told her what she'd always known and always accepted. He loved her, he knew she was young, that she hadn't had a chance yet; he was only telling her now because he was going away.

"I can't love yet," Christy said. "I can't love anyone yet." She didn't explain. She thought it would be nice then to love Chet, but she was sorry he had told her. When she loved someone, she would love completely, the way she would live. Right now she was so absorbed by her hatred of Gladys that she had no capacity for more than this faint affection. No, the love of her life must be something new, different; something that Gladys hadn't touched.

Many things had happened to Chet. Christy had followed the course of them with concern, alarm, and at times her prayers. Now he was back, safe, discharged and taking his father's place in the law firm of Howard and Marchbanks. He was the nicest person she knew. If necessary, she would marry him and make him a very good wife.

"All right, Miss Clairoborne. You can go in now." Christy rose and went inside.

Chet Howard came from behind a massive glass-topped desk to greet her. He was what any girl might wish for, she knew, dark, rather good-looking, and kind.

"Morning, darling. You look nice and bright. I wish all my clients were you."

There was a file open on the desk. Christy, noting it, asked eagerly, "There's just one thing that's important, Chet. Is Gladys my guardian?"

He smiled, shook his head. "No," he assured her. "What's wrong, we're having nightmares?"

"For years." She dropped into the deep leather armchair, her fingers closed tightly over her brown alligator bag. This was

the beginning, this very moment of that life she had been waiting for. Even this foretaste was a bit intoxicating, dizzying. She looked at Chet, loving him as she was loving this moment. She heard her heart in her voice saying, "I don't care who else it is. That was all I wanted to know. Now, I'm all set for Vassar. My trunks are packed, my bags. May I call Katie?"

"Sure, sure thing. Help yourself. There's just one little thing. It will work out . . ."

"What?" she asked sharply.

"Someone slipped along in here. Your father made a will. He left both houses, in fact his entire estate, to Gladys. He explained this; he intended to leave you your money free and clear, with no strings attached. It was to be in your name, in the bank."

"Yes?"

"It isn't there."

"Just what do you mean, Chet?" This was so sudden that the power of money was still in her voice, but the situation was clear enough so that awareness of its loss sent some of her impetuosity bounding back to her. If Chet heard the reverberations, he ignored them. "I mean your father never got around to doing it. He died suddenly. He never opened the account for you. You have, I believe, a savings account."

"About four hundred dollars," Christy said faintly. "But Chet, why? I mean what about my mother's money?"

"I'm coming to that. When your mother married your father, she just simply gave him all she had. It was in one account, in his name. Even after the divorce, she just kept on sending him her bills."

"I know about that," Christy said dully.

"It surprises me that your mother never wanted a settlement."

"She thought she could bring him back to her," Christy said, more to the situation than to Chet, "but, you see, it didn't do any good at all. And now, that, too, belongs to Gladys?"

"It's not like that," Chet said patiently. "You see, your mother's estate dwindled. You've been expensive. Very." He moved a sheaf of bills on his desk, and she knew, in a wave of humiliation, that Gladys must already have discussed the matter with him. "These run into several thousand; there's just about that much."

"At least they'll be paid," she reminded gently. "And at least I can look right."

"That's not the point." He was still kind, or was he? "The thing is," he swirled his chair towards the window, back to her again, "the thing is, what are you going to do?"

THE smile faded from her lips; her heart and her throat contracted in a sudden spasm of pain. But she was safe; she hadn't let him know. She had come so close. It had been in her smile, in her voice, her eyes: "I'll settle for you." But he hadn't read it; she was safe. She could get out of here somehow, with the remnants of dignity . . . So Gladys had been right after all. Chet did have a nose for business. When her father lived, when he would have started her handsomely, then she was beloved. But now—now, when she didn't inherit . . .

At that moment an inner door opened, an older man stepped in. "Excuse me, Chet, I didn't know . . . Oh, Miss Clairoborne! How do you do, my dear? Have you been over this?"

Briefly Chet explained the situation to Mr. Marchbanks. Christy sat in the chair that was too big for her, her knees pressed together to keep them from knocking, her hands tight on the alligator purse, her lips firm.

For a moment Mr. Marchbanks said nothing; then he asked, "What had you planned to do, Christina?"

"I've been accepted at Vassar, but of course I can't go now." She wanted to say, "I'll get myself a job, but she couldn't say it. They both knew her background, her unfitness. It would sound too heroic."

"You really wanted to go to college?"

"Yes, to study. It's the thing I like best." How empty she sounded, a voice with no brain behind it. She rushed on desperately. "And to get to know people on my own age."

One of Chet's eyebrows flew upward. He said nothing. Mr. Marchbanks quite frankly stared at her. "Do you really want an education—enough to work for it?"

"Of course."

"When can you go?"

"It isn't when," she rebuked: "it's how."

"Come into my office a minute, Christina; we'll see."

She followed him woodenly, closed the door behind her, left Chet staring after her. She could feel his look, and, feeling, she knew she was going to grasp at anything Mr. Marchbanks had to offer her, anything that would take her away from the appraisal in Chet Howard's eyes. And, after she got away, she would probably have to hide from her own appraisal, a girl who thought she was smart and who had outsmarted herself.

Mr. Marchbanks had picked up his private telephone. "Will you get me Dr. Elliott Brewster, Warren University, Warrentown?"

While he waited, he said, "This will be a little different from anything you've ever known together now and strange, a matter of fact . . . Yes? Hello, Hello, Elliott. Philip Marchbanks speaking . . . Fine. And Tabitha and the children . . . Say, Elliott, the last I heard, there was a scholarship available. Fine. I have a candidate. No doubt of that she's been accepted at Vassar, but due to a financial adjustment, she's making a change. Now about her keep, any places open? Right. She'll be up this afternoon. She's Christina Clairoborne, of this city. I'll send her direct to you. Thank you, Elliott."

"All set," he smiled, "you're a freshman at Warren University; your train leaves at twelve ten."

"But—I mean—it's so hard to get in. I mean . . ."

Mr. Marchbanks smiled. "There are four yearly scholarships. They've always been held open for people with unusual records. This is my alma mater, you know. You don't hear of it so much, but quite a few of us came from there. Now, about your baggage . . ."

Christy wasn't quite sure what she was doing when she called Katie. She said awesomely, "I'm going to college, Katie. I'm leaving right away. Can you bring my bag down to Grand Central? Meet you by the clock. You can send my trunks later. Hurry, won't you?"

CHET went to the station with her. "You and I didn't get a chance to talk," he complained.

"Was there anything to say?"

"That's what I'm wondering. I hope you know what you're doing," he added gloomily. "Marchbanks is a sentimental old fool about that college he went to. Worked his way through, or something."

"How?" Christina wanted to know. "He lived with some town family, did the chores. That's what you're in for."

"Chores?"

"No. Minding children, doing dishes, being someone's maid and rushing off to classes in between. It's not like anything you've ever known."

"Then I'll love it." She said it so emphatically that he cast a long look at her and said nothing.

Katie was waiting. Chet got the ticket. Katie's eyes streamed tears as she relin-

quished the suitcases and pressed a small drugstore parcel into Christy's hand. "It's the best I could buy," she wept. "You write to me now."

Christy promised and pushed through the crowd with Chet. "There are nothing but coaches on this," he said darkly. "It begins this minute, little one. I can't help you."

"It's quite unnecessary," she said crisp-  
ly, "for you to feel anything at all. I know exactly what I'm doing."

He settled her next to the window, put her bag up on the rack and leaned down to whisper, "Any time you can't take

"I can," she interrupted sharply. Even if he had finished that remark, it was too late. His moment had come and gone up there in the office. But probably he was just going to say, "I'll find something for

No. Chet, standing there beside her, was already part of the past. She even smiled at him. At the smile, he bent down and kissed her, and there was forgiveness in her voice when she told him good-bye. She could afford to forgive him because, against any reasons she could bring forth, she was suddenly glad it was to be like this.

**SHE** closed her eyes as the train pulled out, and she didn't open them until the city was left behind. But with the first turn of the wheels she thought: a new life—Warren University, Elliott, Tabitha and the children. A new life, not like anything you've ever known before. The years with Gladys were over at last; now she could begin to live. She opened her purse for Katie's parting gift. Lipstick, compact. She examined them both, squinted her eyes before the mirror and dabbed awk-  
wardly at her lips.

"You're getting too much on," said a voice beside her. It was a low, mocking voice; it belonged to a weathered-looking young man with the deepest blue eyes she had ever seen.

Christy paused, lipstick and compact in hand, to consider him. His hair lay in flat dark curls against his head; his features were strong, well-cut. He was not of her world, she knew that instantly, and a glance at the clothes he wore confirmed it. They were quite right, and he wore them well. But he hadn't always had the right clothes. That was it; he hadn't always been right. The lipstick on her lips began to feel gummy and, on an impulse, she wiped it all off with her handkerchief.

"You don't put quite so much on to start with and then you blot it off," he said.

She opened her mouth to say something, then turned back to the window again. If she said anything to him at all, it must be the right thing. He must think she was very naive and inexperienced, not to know about make-up. If she hadn't been in such a hurry to begin the new life, she wouldn't have been experimenting on the train. It would sound queer indeed if she said, "I've been keeping myself as plain as possible because I hadn't started to live yet." Of course she wouldn't say that, and of course she didn't care what he thought anyhow.

She turned toward him again. He wasn't smiling or mocking now; he was just looking at her, and the line of his lips and the expression in his eyes made her forget for the second that you must be on your guard against the world. She smiled.

He smiled too. "I believe the dining car leaves this train at Albany. Will you have lunch with me?"

"Why, thank you. No, no, thank you." Of course she couldn't go. Who did he think he was anyway?

"I was afraid of that," he said sorrow-



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fully. "You see, I saw your young man bid you good-by."

"He's not my young man," she said firmly. "He's—my lawyer."

He whistled softly. "Not a bad profession. Selling was my line. Aluminum pans, cooking utensils. Well, sorry you won't join me, S'long."

She didn't say anything. She watched him go down the aisle towards the diner. He was tall; he had very broad shoulders. She couldn't imagine him at all with aluminum pans. She certainly didn't care what he thought, only she wished she hadn't said something foolish. If there was another empty seat, she'd move to it. But there wasn't.

**SHE TURNED** to the window again, watching streets, houses, bits of woodland fly past her. Her spirits lifted. She would rather be here, in the murk of the day coach, than face Gladys once more. Supposing she was going to mind children and do dishes, supposing she was going to live in a funny little house with unknown people—at least, would be her life. Gladys was gone forever.

"Is this seat taken?"

Christy turned suddenly. A girl stood in the aisle. She wore a suit and no hat. She had dark hair that hung luxuriously about her shoulders, a flower pinned in it at one side. There was rather cheap prettiness about her that seemed at peace with her absurdly soft voice.

Christy said, "Not just this minute, no," sit down, on an impulse. "Why don't you sit down?"

"Well, I will for a minute. Everything else seems taken. I was seeing the conductor about my ticket, and I guess I missed out."

Christy turned back to the window, not to be rude and disinterested, but because silence and reserve were habitual.

She heard the girl rattling some paper and in another moment asking her, "Would you like one of my sandwiches?"

Christy said thank you and took one.

"It costs so much to eat in the diner," the girl said, "and it's a long ride to Warrenton."

"Is that where you're going?"

"My husband's in college there," the girl said. "I saved up enough while he was away so that I could join him. We have a small apartment and I hope to get a part-time job."

"I'm going to work," Christy confided suddenly, "for my room and board at the university."

"Oh, are you? Then we'll be friends. I'm Serena St. John. My husband is David St. John. Perhaps you've heard of him?"

Christy shook her head.

"He has an orchestra; rather he did."

"He doesn't any more?"

"He was a prisoner in Japan for two years; he was a flier."

"Oh," Christy looked at her wonderfully. Her voice seemed no longer soft, but strange and ethereal. Her eyes had a light in them as though she were a spirit, not a person; a spirit that had lived for two years in a Japanese prison with the man she loved. Christy knew that and understood it, but she wondered why she did. Because she had never really loved Chet; never. Just my own self, she thought. I only cared because he had said he loved me. I'd like to have someone else, though. I'd like to be like this girl, Serena.

"Who's your family?" Serena asked her.

"My name's Claiborne," Christy said, "from New York."

"I didn't mean that. I meant the family you'll be working for."

"I don't know yet. The person who arranged my scholarship called a Mr. Brewster."

"He's the dean, or an assistant to the

dean. Mr. Brewster. Well, they'll have a place for you."

"I don't expect much college life," Christy said.

"It's fun just to watch it," Serena assured. "Of course, I'm not a student, so I just tag along with David."

Habit was strong. Christy wasn't used to people who tagged along. So, in accordance with what she knew, she summed up Serena: pretty, naive, and unimportant. She smiled a little half smile and turned back to the window.

The train jerked and came to rest for a moment on the siding. Christy still kept her face to the window. For about fifteen minutes she had a ringside seat, watching the bit of life visible from the rear of a row of wooden flats. People were moving into a lower flat, or moving out, Christy couldn't tell which. There was furniture bunched on the walk by the back door, and packing cases. A slim young woman, neatly dressed, came out of the house with boxes of rubbish, which she piled in the yard. Then she swept off the porch and put that trash on the pile too. She bent and put a match to it, picking up a straggling scrap here and there. It blazed high. Christy watched her, poking the last bits of trash into the fire. The woman was moving in, she decided, starting out fresh, burning up the past.

That's what she'd like to do herself—build a great big bonfire and burn up all the eighteen years that lay behind her.

She turned back to the girl beside her. Serena said, "I hope you'll come see me in Warrenton."

"Thank you," Christy said stiffly. Serena looked at her curiously; then she came to her own conclusions. "Don't be lonely, will you?"

Christy was speechless; her eyes blazed for a second. She, Christy Claiborne, being patronized by this—this . . . Don't be lonely, indeed! She'd be lonely if she wanted to. She probably would, she always had been. She turned to the row of back yards, to the woman who was poking the fire. It had nearly died down now; there was nothing much left of it. Like her life, all that was over and done with. Now she need only be lonely if she wanted to be. There was friendship here if she wished, a very, very unimportant little friendship with someone who would never matter in the least, a girl who didn't dress correctly, who told her affairs to strangers on a train, who . . . Serena smiled, and her eyes seemed to seek Christy's with reassurance, as though she believed in something.

Christy looked at her thoughtfully for a moment. Then suddenly she smiled too, and held out her hand. "Let's be friends."

The rest of the ride didn't seem so long after that. Once Christy saw the young man of the aluminum pans coming down the aisle. She kept right on chatting with Serena, aware that he had slowed down a bit, but that he didn't stop. He kept right on going. No more than he should do, of course, and Serena, knowing nothing about him, paid no heed.

**I**T WAS just before six o'clock when the train drew in at Warrenton. Serena picked up her bag and Christy, with a little difficulty, got hers down from the rack. She kept looking for a porter, but none appeared. She even glanced about for the aluminum-pan man, thinking he might help out.

"David will be here," Serena said; "he'll take your bag too."

"There'll be someone to meet me," Christy said confidently. "Perhaps that Dr. Brewster will send someone."

There were people on the platform, but no one seemed to be looking for a Miss Claiborne. Christy wondered about a cab,

but Serena said, "No, don't. Here's David, he'll . . . Oh, darling!"

Christy dropped her bag in astonishment. She simply stood and stared. He was tall and dark, fine-featured, his mouth a rich sensitive line across his face, his eyes big and dark and burning with that same light that was in Serena's. They rested on the slender dark girl, lovingly, glowingly; and, oblivious to the world, he closed her in his arms and kissed her.

Christy's very life seemed to stop for a minute and begin again. They love each other, she thought, really and truly. That is beautiful; that is right. That is what I must have, too, that or nothing.

"David, this is Christy Claiborne. She's going to work here. Let's take her up to the college."

"Hello, Christy."

They shook hands. David took the bags, and Christy didn't protest. There was no question of a cab, it seemed. They'd walk. "It's a pretty town," Serena pointed out. "The trees are so lovely, and the lawns."

"A little out of date," said Christy. "I mean, the houses being so near the street, and porches."

"Friendly houses," David explained, "just a step to say hello. This one here is ours."

They stopped while he put Serena's small bag on the porch. It was a wing of the house, one story high. There couldn't be much of it. It looked ordinary, far too ordinary for either of them.

"We don't lock up," David said. "You just open the door and shout."

After a moment Christy understood that this was an invitation, and she murmured, "Thank you," trying to imagine that she would ever do that.

"We'll take you right up to the college," Serena said, "so you'll know where you're staying. The offices close at six."

**T**HEY TURNED down an elm-shaded walk. Big brick buildings loomed up at the end, old buildings that had been there for many years. Students still ambled slowly across the lawns, and couples loitered down the walks. From a source unseen came the sound of a tinny piano, playing a provoking tune. It didn't offend, Christy thought. It sounded like a distant carrousel in a park. That's the way all of this seemed right now, like a carnival, like something that had nothing to do with the life she had known, with Gladys, the third-floor rooms and Katie. This was her new life, and it was rather nice to start it to merry, tinkling music.

They turned a corner and went into the main building. David opened the office door marked "Registrar."

"Hi there, Susan," he called to the middle-aged woman at the desk. "New student, name of Miss Claiborne . . . Well, so long, Christy. We'll be seeing you."

Christy thanked them both. She noticed, as they left, that David held Serena's hand. It was all so different from anything she had ever seen in her life.

**T**HE WOMAN addressed as Susan said she was Miss Marbury and asked Christy to sit down. She took out a large application blank. "You can tell me the answers," she said. "We'll speed this up; it's nearly closing time . . . Let's see, you're a special student?"

"Oh, no, I'm going to take the regular course."

Miss Marbury looked up, frowned. "Registration has been closed since last March," she said tersely.

"My lawyer made all the arrangements this morning," Christy said coldly.

After a moment, Miss Marbury pushed in a plug at her desk. "Dr. Brewster? Do

you know anything about a Miss Claiborne. . . . Oh! I see." Miss Marbury smiled and stood up. "Come with me, Miss Claiborne. Dr. Brewster will see you. You're very fortunate," she added, "to have trustee sponsorship." She opened the door in the rear of the office as she spoke.

Christy understood it all in a flash. Mr. Marchbanks must be paying for her; they were making a place for her because of him. Like charity. Well, she'd have none of it; she'd tell them.

"I won't trouble you further," she said to the head bent over the desk. "Had I fully understood the situation, I would never have made the trip at all. I've no use for pulling wires. I refuse to be a puppet myself, and I've no use for anyone else who is."

Miss Marbury quietly closed the door. Dr. Brewster said, "Won't you sit down, Miss Claiborne?"

Christy discovered she was very glad of the chair. She wasn't at all certain that she wasn't going to cry. What could she do now? She'd burned her bridges; she couldn't even face Katie. Katie would be kind, but that funny little glint would come in her eyes. And Gladys? Chet? . . . No, she couldn't go back.

"Don't be lonely."

"Just open the door and shout."

Serena and David, two people she hadn't known for twenty-four hours. But their eyes wouldn't glint. It was all right now; she wasn't going to cry. The bad moment was over.

DR. BREWSTER put down his pen, looked up and smiled. He was young—thirty-six perhaps; he was handsome; his eyes were big and blue; they were smiling and kindly and very knowing. His voice was smooth, charming. "I wonder if you will tell me your secret, Miss Claiborne?" he asked.

"What secret?"

"You said you refuse to be a puppet, to move when someone pulls a string."

Christy hesitated; a glow of color stole up her cheeks. Gladys, her father, her teachers, Chet. Hadn't she jumped for them? She had had to.

"To a certain extent," she began, "I've had to. But never in my mind."

"That's it. We all have to jump, you see. You're not the only one. Take me. I have the board of trustees, my family, neighbors. And I jump. It doesn't bother me. You see I have also my daemon . . . He paused, waiting.

"The stoics," she said quietly.

He nodded. "Spirit, mind, soul, heart—it has so many names. I rather like daemon, and mine, I assure you, is quite, quite free. And yours?"

She surprised herself. "Mad, resentful, angry, any wrathlike adjective you can think of."

"The words that come to my mind are brave and young," he said gently.

She dropped her eyes. His kindness hurt.

"I'm honest," she said. "You may not like me, but I tell the truth."

"I think you will like you very much indeed. I've found a place for you to live and to work your way. You needn't suspect any wire-pulling in this one. The Brewsters need student help badly. It's been a matter of principle to put myself last on the list, so we're going to be mighty grateful for you. It's nearly dinnertime, so let's go home."

The trolley platform had stopped as they started out across the campus. Silence and dusk were settling down around them. With no question of dignity, Dean Brewster carried her bag. He seemed to tower above her as she walked along beside him, and as she looked up at him a sense of his rightness was suddenly paramount,

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as though he had a right world, as though he offered it to her, if she had the vision to see it. I see it right now, she thought; I see it clearly. Maybe because it's twilit and everything is still.

"We're taking the short cut," he told her. "The house is just through the hedge."

She could see it now, a big gray house, an old-fashioned house. There were lights on. The unreality vanished; life was there waiting for her to come and begin it. Who lived there? What were they like? Fragments of the morning's telephone conversation drifted back to her: Hello, Elliott . . . And how are Tabithia and children? Tabithia, Tabithia, she repeated to herself, and wondered what sort of woman had won this man.

They went through a gap in the high privet hedge, up a narrow walk to a side doorway. Elliott Brewster put his shoulder against the door, turned to smile down at her encouragingly. "Here we go."

CHRISTY's first impression on stepping into the small square hallway was that a theater curtain had been raised on an opening scene of a play. A pig-tailed girl was talking on the telephone, and bits of a low-toned earnest conversation registered on one part of Christy's mind, while another part of it flew ahead to the long living room, at once beautiful and shabby, and then to a dim square of the front hallway, where a slender figure in a black riding habit was seeing someone out the door. Her features were not distinct in the half light, but she was arresting, important; her voice rich and carrying. "Please run along now. You'll never be ready for this evening. I won't myself. Elliott's just come. Have you got the *Sibelius*?"

The girl at the telephone was saying, "I want to very much. I'll ask Mother. Now you hold on a second." The sturdy figure dashed from the telephone. "Hi, Daddy," she whispered as she hurried past. "Mother, Mother, it's Mary Elizabeth Sheldon and she wants to know if I'm going to the Junior Assembly this year."

Christy could see the woman better now. She came into the living room, stood at the piano, hurriedly sorting some music. She had short chestnut curls, pinned back from her face with combs, worn no style at all except that it framed her face. Her chin was proud, her mouth curved and beautiful, her nose small and firm. She looked up, gave a deep fleeting smile to her husband, a flash of a glance at Christy. "I've been sending Gregor home for half an hour, and now he's forgotten his music . . . What did you say, Priscilla?"

She stood, holding the music against her, looking down at her child. Priscilla repeated her question about the Junior Assembly. "No, you may not," her mother said with finality.

"Why not?" Priscilla asked.

"Because you are very awkward and ungainly at this point. The most expensive evening frock in the world, which you can't have anyhow, couldn't hide all your defects. It would be a foolish waste of money. You wouldn't get a thing out of it except an inferiority complex."

"When can I start not being inferior?" Priscilla demanded.

"That's your problem."

Priscilla went back to the telephone, and her mother took the music to the front door. When she had closed it, she came towards them. "Now!" she said, "hello Elliott, and I see you've brought me a student." She turned her attention to Christy, gave her a moment the complete focus of wide blue eyes. She was quite the most unusual and amazingly beauteous person Christy had ever seen. She had the quality of a portrait; Lady in a Riding Habit. She was the title of a book: simply "Tabithia."

"Miss Christina Claiborne," the dean was saying.

"How do you do, Christina?" she spoke clearly. Her voice had depth.

Christina said, "How do you do?" and returned her gaze. And then, strangely, it was happening all over again. She was at home, confronting Gladys. Her feelings for this woman were already made; she had only put them aside a few hours. They came rushing out, sweeping over her, arming her senses for battle, warning her: Look out, Look out.

It must be the trip, Christy thought wildly, all that's happened to me so suddenly. I must be overtired. She's nothing like Gladys. Gladys looked like a pretty pig; this woman's lovely, she's beautiful, she's a stranger. I couldn't know, not instantly.

There were heavy steps, then, on the front porch, a heavy knocking on the door. Then, without ceremony, the door burst open, and he stood there, the young man of the train, of the clothes he wasn't accustomed to, of the aluminum-pant part.

"It's Johnny," cried Priscilla, "Johnny!" Elliott Brewster rushed forward and shook his hand, and Tabithia stood there murmuring, "Why, Johnny." She gave him both her hands then, and smiled deeply in his eyes.

"Hello, Tribby," he said, his voice not low, but just for her. His eyes searched hers. She lifted her lips and kissed him. Then he caught sight of Christy. He was amused. "Well?" His voice was a question and Tabithia said, "Oh yes, this is Christina. She's going to work her way . . . Priscilla, take her bag up and show her the house, will you?"

Christy turned, her face flaming, her heart pounding. So that was the setup; that was the woman Dean Brewster had married, cold, clever, and beautiful, with everyone worshiping her. He himself enslaved, to the point that she could accept tribute before his very eyes; Priscilla adoring, so that she accepted an inferiority complex without mourning, and Johnny, whoever he was, charmed to his finger tips. And none of them even guessed her; no, not one of them. But I know, Christy thought, because I knew Gladys.

She picked up the bag by the side door and looked inquiringly at Priscilla. Johnny jumped forward. "Here, I'll take that up for you. Follow me. I know the house."

PRISCILLA tagged after Johnny, and Christy followed them both up a short enclosed stairway by the telephone. This led to a wing of the house. There were two bedrooms, a bath, and finally, at the end of the corridor across the back of the wing, one large bedroom. Priscilla pulled on the light, and Johnny set down the bag. Two student beds loomed up, with book shelves at the headboard, a flat-topped desk between the windows, a bureau and some chairs. All of it was painted white, and blue-flowered curtains hung at the windows.

Christy felt strange and alone. She watched Johnny put an arm around Priscilla and ask, "Hasn't changed, has it, pumpkin?"

"No. How could it? But you did."

"I did!" He widened his eyes in mock surprise.

"I don't know quite how," she said slowly. Then quickly, "Why didn't you wear your uniform?"

Johnny grinned. "Look, why don't you help Miss Claiborne unpack," he suggested. "She's new, you know, and she'll need someone to look after her. I'm leaving her in your care."

"Surely," Priscilla agreed, "but where are you going to live, Johnny?"

"Me? I have a room. A room in town, right on Main Street. I don't have to work any more, just study. My uncle's paying my way, Uncle Sam. You'll be seeing me. By, Miss Claiborne."

Christy had been standing in the middle of the room, listening, watching, wondering about them. Now she came to abruptly and managed a dull "Good-by."

He turned in the doorway. "And don't take life too seriously," he added. "If you begin to feel grim, just give me a ring, and I'll take you in hand. My name is Gaylord, and the phone number is seven."

"Just seven?" she exclaimed.

"That's right, S'long, babe." Presumptuous person, Johnny Gaylord. Babe indeed! But the slope-roofed room was a pleasanter place because he had been here.

CHRISTY turned to Priscilla. "When would be the best time to see your mother, so she can tell me what my duties are?"

"I don't think we'd know," Priscilla said. "If she thinks of anything, she'll tell you. Tonight there's a concert, so she'll only have time on her hands."

"Does she sing?" Christy asked, laying aside her hat and coat, opening her bag.

"No, she plays the cello. There's a college orchestra. That man who was leaving when you came in is Gregor Kashmire. He's going to conduct. He's leaving after tonight, going to New York, I guess. He gave a music course at the summer session."

Christy was not interested in Gregor, though she had a sudden vision of Tabithia Brewster playing the cello. "I'm going to get some of this travel dust off me," she said.

"I'll unpack!" Priscilla began to set brushes and combs on the top of the bureau. "What adorable slippers," she commented. "What a beautiful robe. Oh, my goodness, aren't you lucky?"

Christy paused, en route to the bathroom, to look at Priscilla with the soft blue robe, the matching slippers, her eyes wide with fascination. She thought of her trunks, probably already on their way, and of what they contained. She had a small fortune in clothes, and how incongruous they would be in this plain room, in this simple university town, for a girl who was going to be someone's maid. A maid with a beaver coat, an ermine jacket, and her mother's and grandmother's jewels!

Christy scrubbed her face, combed her hair and put on a fresh blouse. A very pleasant aroma of cooking came up the stairway, the sound of dishes and cutlery. She knew instinctively that the woman in the black riding habit was not responsible for them. Priscilla, following her thought, said, "Come on. I'll take you to Granny. She'll tell you what to do."

Christy followed her down a back staircase and stepped into a large, old-fashioned kitchen. A thin, white-haired woman was moving things at the stove, and a little boy of about five, the image of Tabithia Brewster, sat at a center table, drawing pictures.

"Granny and Tuck, this is Christina Claiborne," Priscilla said.

Granny turned instantly from the stove, wiped her hands on her apron and came over to shake hands. She wore strong glasses. Behind them her eyes were too large, but kindly.

"How do you do, Christina? We're not about ready to sit down. You forgot everything until later. Then you can help me clear up." She spoke nicely. She wasn't an ordinary person. She turned to the child. "Tucky, aren't you going to say hello to Christina?"

"Hello, Tucky," Christy tried.

Tucky didn't answer. He might have

been deaf, so completely did he ignore her. "He's a little stupid," Priscilla explained.

"I am not stupid," roared Tucky, roused to action. He sprang at his sister, belabored her with his fists, his eyes blazing.

Priscilla slapped him, and he kicked her hard, before retiring to a spot beneath the kitchen table, out of reach.

"Priscilla, I'm ashamed of you," Granny said. "Why can't you leave him alone?"

"Why can't he be like other people?" the girl countered. "Any other boy would say hello. But not our dear little Tucky. He'll never do anything like anybody else. He's got to be strange. And me, I have to spend every waking moment trying not to be strange. Of all the ironies, life is the worst."

"Well, ring the chimes, please," Granny said, and Priscilla moved into the hall again and sounded them.

The dining room could have been beautiful. Indeed, in the candlelight, it looked so. The furniture was old and charming, the half light giving an air of luxury that wore off gradually when Christy became aware of the worn table linen, the odd dishes and the rugless floor. There were places set for everyone, including Granny and Tuck. Elliott Brewster kissed the old lady's cheek and held her chair for her. Tabithia did not appear. Priscilla kept up a steady stream of chatter about the Junior Assembly and an evening gown. Tucky kicked the chair and table leg throughout the meal. No one spoke to him about it or urged him to eat. He made pellets out of a piece of bread and snapped them across the table at Priscilla, who paid no attention. Tiring of this, he aimed one at Christy. It hit her on the forehead and rolled off into her plate. She stopped eating them and sat staring at Tuck, who proceeded to curl his lips over and flutter his eyes back so that only the whites of them showed.

"Johnny Gaylord looked fit and fine," Granny commented.

"He's had his ups and downs," Elliott told her.

"He gets five hundred a year now," Priscilla offered.

"I'm glad. He deserves it," Granny said. "In all the years I've lived in a college town, I've never seen a boy have as little work and as hard as he did." She turned to Christy. "He knocked at our door, asking me if he could get the dinner for me in his aluminum pans. He stayed nearly four years, until he went to war."

"Oh," Christy ventured, "I thought he sold pans to work his way through."

"Not at all," Elliott explained. "He didn't even know this was a college town. He came from a farm somewhere in the Middle West. The depression had brought him and he was trying to get him. He and Granny got to talking, and she discovered that he had always wanted to study."

"Daddy," interrupted Priscilla, "would you say he was your friend or mother's?"

"Priscilla has a nice, neat cubbyhole of a mind," Granny explained. "Everything filed away." So Gregor is leaving for New York. What on earth is Tibby going to do about the orchestra, Elliott?"

"She can't do anything," he answered easily. "unless she finds another Gregor."

"What I keep wondering," Priscilla ventured, "is why, when he's so remarkable, he ever spent the summer here at all."

"It's a nice place to spend a summer," Granny said. "And I guess your mother charmed him into coming when she met him in New York that time."

"Is Gregor a musician of note?" Christy asked, which was her way of saying she'd never heard of him.

"Of course," said Priscilla.

Tabithia is the moving spirit of all the



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# The LEFT-HANDED DICTIONARY

sections

# N.O.

by Ted Taylor  
and Leonard Louis Levinson

**NEUTRALITY** Not taking sides in public.

**NEWSPAPER** A device for amusing one half of the world with the other half's troubles.

**NOISE** Audible grime.

**NOM DE GUERRE** A fighting name.

**NOM DE PLUME** A writing name.

**NOOSE** A tie that binds.

**NORMAL** Having the usual eccentricities.

**NOTARY** One who takes in swearing for a living.

**NUDIST** One who has acquired nothing since birth except nerve.

**NUMB** A sensation you feel when you don't.

**O.K.** Yes in two words.

**OBES** Over three hundred pounds.

**OCCUPATION** The principal thing one engages in to avoid thinking.

**ODD** Uneven.

**OCTOGENARIAN** A man who makes the same mistakes he did at seventy.

**ODOR** A bad smell.

**ODOUR** A nice smell.

**OMNIBUS** A four-wheeled vehicle for two-legged cattle.

**OMNISCIENT** Knowing all—like your wife or the Quiz Kids.

**OPERA** Music set to melodrama.

**OPINION** The thought of the month.

**OPPORTUNIST** One who opens the door before Opportunity can knock.

**OPPORTUNITY** Something that goes without saying.

**OPTIMISM** The belief that all peas are sweet peas.

**OPTIMIST** An anti-skeptic.

**ORATORY** An appeal to the emotions by deep breathing.

**ORIGINAL** Copied unconsciously.

college music." Granny said. "She has a dream of a college symphony, and the summer session with Gregor attracted unusual talent. Tonight is the result of the summer's work. It's unfortunate they can't go on . . . Now let's hurry and clear this away, so you can dress and go to the concert too. I heard rehearsal this morning, so I'll stay with Tucky. Priscilla, you lend me a hand."

"May I go with Christina?" Priscilla asked. "She won't have anyone to go with."

"Yes, I suppose so."

There was a general exodus. Granny paused long enough to hold a glass of milk to Tucky's lips, and he rewarded her by drinking it and kissing her cheek.

"Maybe he'll starve himself to death," Priscilla whispered hopefully to Christy. "Priscilla!" said Granny sharply.

"He's a miserable being," the child said firmly. "He gives pleasure to no one on earth. Except, maybe you . . . Where's Mother's tray?"

Granny was fixing it. It was a delicate silver oval, polished and gleaming. It held a perfect bunch of purple grapes and a glass of some chilled fruit drink.

"Let Christina take it up, and you hurry with the scraping off of the plates."

CHRISTINA took the silver tray, and, being admonished to go up the front way, she walked through the dining room to the hall and up a flight of stairs. There was a spacious upper hallway, with doors opening into big, old-fashioned bedrooms. On the left was a closed door, with a crack of light showing beneath it.

Christy, thinking of Katie, knocked on the door.

"Yes?" For a moment Christy forgot the comeliness of Tabithia. Just her voice was enough. It was a curious, impelling voice and it cast Christy, momentarily, into the role of service, as though, not only in this life, but in countless other lives, she had borne silver platters of fruit to someone more fortunate than herself.

Before she could answer, the door was flung open and Tabithia stood there, silhouetted against the light of the room behind her. She was bare-footed and wore a rather faded blue cotton housecoat. Her hair was pinned tightly on the top of her head, and she had the rosy glow of a pretty child freshly emerged from his evening tub. Her eyes, wide and blue and trusting, looked at Christy as though she had forgotten her. Then she smiled in recognition. "Oh, thank you. Will you put it there on the desk?" Disarming, lovely, utterly adorable. Gladys, in like attire, would be a slattern.

A gown lay across the bed, a pale blue satin gown with a wide gold-lace collar. Christy had never seen anything like it in her life.

"Do you like it?" Tabithia asked, following her glance.

"It's most unusual," Christy said politely.

"Yes." Tabithia was eating her grapes. She spoke matter-of-factly. "I designed it and made it myself. I make all my clothes. That is, the very few I have."

"Perhaps clothes aren't important to you," Christy said.

"On the contrary, they are very important. Not only to me, but to everyone. Sometimes this year, I'll take time to sketch you and design some for you. We'll find you and amaze ourselves." She smiled then.

It was not like the smile she had sent to Johnny Gaylord; this was an impersonal, dismissing smile, as though Tabithia Brewster could call you into being at will, flash you in and out of existence as the fancy struck her. All the

latent hatred in Christy Claiborne stirred and smoldered. She felt thick in her thumbs and ankles, as though she should bob a curtsey and back out of the room. To offset this feeling she made no reply at all and hurried away.

Like a puppet on a string, she thought. But, remembering Elliott Brewster's words, she knew that she must be able to bear a tray to Tabithia, be smiled upon and dismissed, without her spirit being touched at all. And she knew that she could do it; she could do anything she willed to do. She was strong.

THE dishes were half done when she returned to the kitchen. Granny was washing and Priscilla was drying furiously, taking three plates at once and whacking them as she worked. "Seize a towel," she said to Christy, "or else we'll never finish in time. Granny, I crave a gown."

"You're only thirteen, or is it twelve?" Christy said mildly.

"I know, but times have changed, and twelve is just the age. All the Junior Assembly is my age."

"What's the Junior Assembly?" Christy asked.

"It's the dancing class. Junior Assembly is the freshmen and sophomores; Senior Assembly is the juniors and seniors. Don't you think I'm old enough?" The child's eyes, behind their glasses, fixed themselves on Christy with disconcerting honesty.

Christy said, "You're just the right age." It was as though she had answered Tabithia Brewster, repaid her for her dismissing smile.

The dishes were finished at last. She ran up the side stairs with Priscilla and freshened up again. The child came to the doorway, a navy blue reefer over her arm. Christy still wore the brown suit. She turned to Priscilla for comment.

"You look fine," Priscilla said. She stood beside Christy at the mirror. "What is wrong with me?" she demanded.

"Here." On an impulse, Christy pulled off the glasses, loosened the pigtail and ran her comb through the lovely fair hair. "It's too long," she said, "but maybe it will look right tied back. Do you have a narrow ribbon, black velvet?"

"I'll get a piece in Mother's room," Priscilla said, and ran down the hall to the main part of the house. She was gone quite a while. Christy waited nervously. Priscilla had probably encountered her mother, who was rebraiding her hair and giving her indignant messages for "that girl."

Eventually Priscilla came back. "Look," she cried, "look what I did. I was all this time gathering up the cut hair."

The child was enchanting. She had snipped off her hair to shoulder length, like Christy's and tied it with the black velvet ribbon. Her eyes were dancing, and she had, indeed, within the space of a few minutes, acquired considerable charm. Tabithia Brewster, with her flair for designing clothes, finding people, amazing them had preferred to lock her daughter into the awkward age. Christy's spirit seethed; she needed Priscilla's quick, "Come on, we'll be late," to remind her of the concert.

They went out the side door and started off for the lawns and gardens, revisiting the paths that Christy and Dean Brewster had followed earlier in the evening. The campus had come alive again. It murmured, murmured with a low insistent living sound that broke forth occasionally in a calling voice, laughter.

CHRISTY followed Priscilla into Warren Hall, where the concert was to be held. They went up narrow curved stairs and

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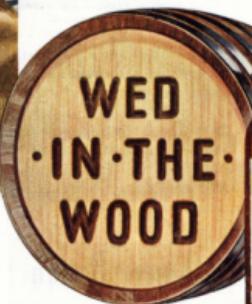
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found two seats in the front row of the side balcony. Girls in evening dress were ushering. They were smooth, finished-looking girls. Christy was surprised at that; she had expected them to look provincial.

Priscilla identified the different ones. The redhead in the blue gown was Anna Davis—Theta; the blond girl in black, Mavis Harmon—Tri Delta; the cute little brown-haired girl in the nondescript brown dress was Kinnay Compton. She was wonderful in dramas and was going on the stage.

Christy listened idly. She was not very curious about these people; she was not going to know them well, hardly at all, in fact. She couldn't be sure why, except she had never known anyone well. She wondered whether these students ever went home for week ends, took friends with them, had good times . . . She leaned forward for a further look at Kinnay Compton.

**DEAN BREWSTER** and his party had entered, and Kinnay rushed up to show them to their seats. She smiled at Elliott Brewster and, when she stood at the aisle, waiting for them to find their places, he stopped a moment to say something to her. Kinnay lifted her chin bit, a very small gesture, almost none at all, and Christy Clairoborne found herself gripping the rail in front of her, hungry for every bit of this byplay. Because suddenly the girl in the brown dress was just exactly the person she herself would like to be, and it was a very ordinary brown dress.

"There goes Johnnie," Priscilla said, and Christy leaned forward again. She was a little sick at the sudden lift of her heart at the sight of him, handsome in evening clothes called forth. He smiled at the redhead Theta by the doorway, then single out Kinnay, in her brown dress. She stood there, looking up at him, her eyes following the play of expression on his face with interest, amusement. Then she shifted the bunch of programs and held out her hand. They walked down the aisle together. Kinnay showed him to a seat near the side, turned down the one beside it and left her bag there.

Christy felt bereft, forlorn. Johnny was of no consequence, she reminded herself, and then remembered immediately what he had said of her to Priscilla, "I'm leaving her in your care." The most ordinary remark. Christy kept turning it over and over in her mind till it meant something very special indeed, till she felt possessed and cherished and vaguely comforted, till Kinnay Compton, going to sit beside him, didn't matter at all.

She said to Priscilla, "Does your friend Johnny Gaylord sort of play the field?"

Priscilla looked at her. "Oh, you mean because he introduced himself to Kinnay? No, Johnny never had a girl. You like him yourself, don't you?"

Christy bit her lip, immediately aware that she had made a mistake. But she was spared the embarrassment of an answer because, just then, the orchestra came in. Some of the girls were pretty, others not. But only one person was outstanding—Tabitha Brewster, in her self-designed gown, her throat white and beautiful above the gold lace, her chestnut curls entwining in the light, her features fine and lovely as she bent over the strings of the cello and tried them for pitch.

"Your mother's very pretty," Christy said to Priscilla, hoping to make amends for her last speech.

"Yes, she is," said Priscilla. "Here comes Gregor."

Gregor came in, bowed, lifted his baton. Christy and Priscilla leaned forward in their seats, caught in the spell of the moment, the scene, the magic of sound.

The memory of this particular evening remained in detail in Christy's mind forever. It was not only the fine music and her tiredness, but the difficult transition from one life to another. There was an intermission while coffee was served in the green room. The balcony people weren't supposed to go in, Priscilla explained, on account of not being dressed. So they watched the others come, laughing and talking, up the narrow staircase, gay, easy, picturesque. Priscilla left her to speak to someone, and, alone, Christy watched Johnny and Kinnay walking slowly up the aisle. In a moment they'd be in the balcony. She could almost count their steps.

"Not all alone, Christy?"

Christy wheeled about. It was David St. John, handing her a small coffee cup. "Serena will be here in a moment. Mrs. Grayser, she's our landlady, is introducing me to some people. She loves it."

Christy thanked him for the coffee and sipped it slowly, summoning some small talk, conscious of the while of the stir of interest his presence here had caused, thankful for the coffee and for his attention, glad that nearly everyone coming in and out of the green room must see them. Chimes signaled that the recess was over. Christy took the cup from her. "This is a good show. I'd have loved even a small part of it . . . You know."

"Yes, I do know," Christy assured him. "Serena made us about your music."

He made way for Priscilla. "Come down to the house," he urged, "tonight or any time."

Christy smiled to herself when he was gone. She liked David.

"I didn't know you knew the apostle," Priscilla said.

"Apostle?"

"St. John, the Divine," Priscilla explained.

The orchestra had filed back again, the instruments were being tuned, the music began. Tabitha Brewster lifted her chin and moved her bow across the strings of the cello. Christy looked at the audience. Serena and David followed every move of the graceful white arms; Johnny seemed to have forgotten Kinnay Compton, he sat transfixed, watching Tabitha. Besides herself, there seemed to be only one person who was not caught in Tabitha's spell. That was Dean Brewster. He sat watching Johnny Gaylord.

**CHRISTY** awoke in midmorning of the next day to find she had slept surprisingly well. The sloped-roof room and the student bed already seemed familiar. She took her time about getting up, hearing no one and deciding that they were all sleeping late. Perhaps she was supposed to start breakfast. It might be as well to find out, preferable to risking a call-down from Mrs. Brewster.

When she went downstairs Granny was in the kitchen. She had evidently just come in from church, for she wore a dark dress and hat and was folding a pair of white gloves into her bag. "I saved you breakfast," she said. "I knew you were tired. Don't eat too much, though—dinner's at one, sharp."

Christy looked at the clock. Eleven-thirty. She poured herself coffee and began on the breakfast left waiting on the kitchen table. "Does everyone else sleep till noon?" she asked.

"Oh, no. Elliott always goes to his library up at college; the children are at Sunday School. Tibby takes Ebony for an early ride before church. She'll be late getting back, though; she sees so many people."

"Is Ebony her horse?"

"Yes, and he's a wild one. Too much horse for most people, but Tibby manages

him. Now you can set the dining-room table. The silver is in the drawer, and we'll use a fresh cloth."

Christy set the table. Granny had dinner in the oven, and she gave directions as she stepped briskly about. "Right after dinner I go out again. Sunday's a day I take pretty much for myself. For supper, everyone feeds for himself. Soon's you've done the dinner dishes, you're free to do what you like. Just take Tucky with you."

Christy nearly dropped a dish. "Tucky?" she repeated.

"He'll be all right when he gets to know you. Priscilla hasn't the patience to deal with him."

Christy longed to ask, "What about his mother?" but that, apparently, was not to be considered at all.

Dinner was uneventful. It was Christy's duty to remove the dishes, but Priscilla helped, and that robbed the task of its sting. Then, when an embarrassing moment came, Priscilla asked, "Has Johnny gone all out for Kinnay Compton?"

"What on earth makes you ask that?" her mother demanded.

"I mean because of last night."

"I'm sure I don't know," Tabitha said coldly. Her eyes became hooded, sullen, her voice frosty. "Johnny's been through college, through the war. I doubt if anyone a schoolgirlish as the Compton child would have any appeal for him."

That's for my benefit, Christy thought. Retaliation, probably, for Priscilla's new hairdo. Tabitha had made no comment on her daughter's altered appearance.

**DINNER** over, the family dispersed, and Christy was left with the dishes which she washed slowly and clumsily. It took her until four o'clock. When finally she was through she turned to Tucky, who was playing on the floor.

"What am I supposed to do with you?" she asked the child crossly.

Tucky didn't answer.

"Come on," she said, with no enthusiasm, "wash your hands, and I'll take you for a walk."

"No."

Christy sighed. "All right, don't then. I'm going upstairs. You be quiet."

She sought her room again. It was almost a shock to find her bed still unmade. She pulled the covers up before she dropped down on it from sheer exhaustion. She had just closed her eyes when Tucky came in.

"I'm ready," he announced.

"Ready for what?" she demanded.

"For the walk."

"I'm not. Go away."

"Where?"

"Anywhere. I don't care. Leave me alone. Go find your mother."

"I don't want to."

"Why not?"

"I don't know, I just don't."

A sharp retort rose to Christy's lips, but, on impulse, she sat up and looked at Tucky again. He was almost beautiful she thought, and he looked as though he'd been slapped. That was absurd, but still he looked that way, and the look penetrated her tiredness as she turned towards the wall and Tucky wandered away.

Rest, however, eluded her. She had to think of Tucky. She ought to find him and amuse him. But what did you do with kids anyhow?

I never knew many, she thought. I never seemed to be one, just an extra sort of creature hanging around, trying to fathom grown-up problems. Tucky seemed that way, too, though there was no reason for it. Unless it was a reason she didn't know, unless it had something to do with Tabitha Brewster.

Christy got up and smoothed down her

clothes. She went to the doorway. "Tucky," she called. There was no answer, so she tried the kitchen staircase, and then the one that led to the side door. "Tucky, Tucky, where are you?"

"Here."

"Where?"

There was no further answer. She ran down to the kitchen, opened the door of Granny's bedroom, looked under the dining-room table and finally went through the front hall to the stairs. There sat Tucky, halfway up, listless and weeping, watching her.

He didn't speak. Christy looked about her quickly. They were here alone, she and Tucky, and something was wrong, quite dreadfully wrong, with this house. It was the same feeling she had sensed when she met Tabitha Brewster the night before.

It was the same feeling she had had most of her life, on the unhappy pilgrimages with her mother, during the long years with Gladys. Something not as tangible as danger, but something evil and suffocating, something wrong at the core of life. She knew it and Tucky knew it; alone here in the heart of a house, they saw it in each other's eyes, a bewildered child and a hard, disillusioned young girl. It wasn't anything you could put into words, but Christy stretched out her arms, and Tucky, with face alight, came flying.

She could feel his madly beating heart, the strange intensity of his hands clutching. "It was over there," he whispered, "right over there. It was going to get me."

"What was?"

"I—don't know."

"Nothing's there, Tucky; nothing's going to get you."

"Not ever?"

"Never, Tucky, never. I promise you."

The fall weather deepened, then lingered, in Warrenton. Christy grew used to the routine, jumping out of bed when the alarm rang, dressing quickly, running downstairs to get Tucky out of his cot in Granny's bedroom, settling him on the idea of washcloth and toothbrush. This, like breakfast, had not been outlined as her responsibility, but she had an uncomfortable suspicion that Tucky would be allowed to get up when he pleased, eat indifferently, or not at all. Tucky's storms were family legend; to avoid them he must not be crossed. There were no storms for Christy; Tucky smiled for her and did as he was told. He sensed her firmness and responded to the extent of eating breakfast with her at the kitchen table and going back to his inevitable crayon and notebook when she left to attend classes.

College was no longer strange. Christy knew its buildings, its professors, its students and their Greek affiliations, but their easy camaraderie was impossible for her. She expected to be left out, and she was.

A conversation overheard in the cloakroom gave her pause for thought.

"I think we should ask Claiborne for lunch."

"Well, I don't." The reply was emphatic.

"After all, we don't really know her. She could be nice."

"But she's not. She's too darn cold."

Christy walked out of the cloakroom, her throat swelling with anger. Cold! Just because she didn't sell herself, just because she didn't try. People like Serena St. John tried to be friendly, tried to be kind. And succeeded, Christy added.

The St. Johns' rooms, on Main Street, were a haven of comfort for Christy. She spent as much time away from the deans as possible, doing her studying in the

college library, and, during those hours when she was free, wandering down to town with her. Serena always had her bright smile, a warm welcoming ring in her voice. Serena was the perfect antidote for Tabitha.

It was surprising how little Christy actually saw Tabitha. With luck, it was only at dinner. The wing rooms, the side staircase, were blessings in this respect. In the beginning she assumed that Tabitha slept all morning. It was not until she awoke too early once herself and went for a solitary walk that she knew differently. Rounding a turn in the narrow roadway, she had to step aside quickly for a spirited black horse whose rider was Tabitha. Tabitha had not noticed her that morning. She had zipped past, her cheeks flushed with pleasure, her eyes glowing. She must have known she swept by someone, the girl thought; she must have known it was Christina Claiborne.

Christy, remembering the incident as she left the cloakroom, hated her again more thoroughly than she had done before. Tabitha! Just the sound of her name and sickness stole over her, greater than any feeling ever engendered by Gladys.

In the corridor someone took her arm with a familiar gesture.

"Hello," she said, without turning to smile.

Johnny Gaylord asked, "How's life at the deans'?"

"You should know." That was true, she thought. Not only had Johnny lived there himself, but he walked down from college sometimes with Elliott Brewster, and they sat in the dean's study, off the front hallway. Their voices rose and fell in friendly discussion; then dinner would be ready and Johnny would leave.

He said now, "Yes, I know, but that's my life. I'm talking about yours."

Christy ignored this and Johnny continued. "Ah, I forgot. Your life is a secret. Even from yourself," he added. "Here's where I leave you, babe. Philosophy with Elliott Brewster."

"Is good?"

"He's the reason I came to Warrenton again. Wait for me after class. I'll walk home with you."

Christy went on her own way to the library. Perhaps she'd wait and perhaps she wouldn't. There was nothing binding, surely, in a premonitory command. He wasn't fooling her, either. He hadn't come back because of Elliott Brewster; he had come back because of Tabitha. She hadn't forgotten that first evening. "Hello, Tibby," holding both her hands, and the way Tibby's eyes had followed him as he carried Christy's bag upstairs. And the byplay of the concert. There was no misreading any of it. Johnny Gaylord's interest in her was only that she might provide an extra opportunity for him to come to the deans and feast his eyes on Tibby.

Anger tore through her as she sought a dim cubicle of the library and turned on the light. The light surprised a companion, David St. John, standing by the window, staring out.

"I'm sorry." She kept her voice down. "I didn't see you."

He smiled. "I'm just thinking," he told her, "and it's time I stopped."

"Not getting anywhere?" she challenged. He shook his head, took the chair beside her, pulled it close to hers and opened his book. The gesture pleased her. He and Serena both had this manner of deep familiarity, putting an arm around yours, touching your hair, even kissing you good-by. The word "demonstrative" had once crossed Christy's mind, but she had long since forgotten it. She felt a spontaneous affection for David, perhaps a feeling she had caught from Serena, but

she warmed to his presence with a gentle protectiveness and was glad his chair was close to hers. She bent her head over her own book and began taking notes. David reached out and tapped her hand. "Do you believe this?" he whispered.

She leaned towards him and read:

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

David drew his pencil beneath "unconquerable." Christy raised her eyes to him and made a small gesture of affirmation. David said, "Come on home for lunch with me. Serena's making something good."

Christy's eyes brightened to a smile. With David, with Serena, the world was all right. Their house was her sanctum. She went back to her notes again. Now she could ignore Johnny Gaylord.

He was on the library steps, though, when she came out with David. "Sorry," she told him, "I'm not going your way."

"I'm going yours," he returned unperturbed. He fell in step beside them. David extended a lunch invitation. Johnny accepted, and presently they all trooped into the house on Main Street.

THE young St. Johns had only one good piece of furniture, David's piano. But there was sunlight streaming in through the windows; there was Serena, who loved it all. She came out to greet them, a kiss for David, a squeeze of the hand for Christy and Johnny.

"I'll help," Christy offered.

"But it's all done," Serena assured them. "Just two more places."

"I'll get the plates."

"Right there on the shelf."

Johnny reached for them ahead of Christy, and they had a moment alone by the china cupboard. "Treat me with respect, now," he warned. "I've come up in the world."

"Where are you now?" she asked lightly.

"Faculty, freshman math. High-school math actually; an extra course they're giving for people who've been out of school a long while."

"That's me," David told him. "I was worse than rusty; I was stale."

"How wonderful for you." Serena was dishing out spaghetti from a huge pot on the stove. "Does that put you on the payroll, Johnny?" She was apt to think of things like that. Christy noticed.

"It does, you know," said Johnny, and, meeting Christy's eyes, he added, "It will be the sweetest money I ever touched."

They sat down at the center table in the kitchen, a traditional eating spot in Warrenton. Johnny took upon himself the task of cutting French bread and pouring milk.

"I love this place," Serena said. "I could live here all my life. You're lucky, too, Christy, to get such a nice family to live with. Dr. Brewster makes me feel good just to pass him on the street and have him smile at me. He's like something out of the past, somehow."

"Mrs. Brewster, too," David decided. "I keep trying to place her in history."

"The face that launched a thousand ships," Christy remarked. She didn't mean it kindly, but everyone, including Johnny, thought she did.

"Tibby's modern enough," Johnny said. "She belongs to the present, make no mistake about that, and she's quite real."

"Real enough to hear David play his compositions?" Serena asked eagerly.

"She'd love it," Johnny decreed.

Serena asked, "When? Could you arrange it? Do you know her that well?"

Johnny took another helping of spaghetti.

"Say, who ever put Tibby Brewster in

an ivory tower? You don't need to arrange anything; just stop by and see her. I've got an afternoon class today, but Christy can take you up."

Christy opened her mouth to protest, but one glance at Serena's dreaming eyes silenced her.

THAT was how she came to go back to the cleaners with Serena and David, pause to ask Granny for Mrs. Brewster, find Tabitha in the long, shabby living room, polishing the brass andirons. She rose as they came in, her hands grimy with work, holding an old polishing cloth. The chestnut curls were pinned up on her head; her eyes were the blue of the apron she wore; her lips twinkled into a smile.

"Mrs. Brewster," Christy said, "these are my friends, Serena, and David St. John. David writes music."

"And how marvelous of you both to come into my life while I'm submerged in ugly chores. Please sit down . . . David, did you bring your music?"

"No, I—" David's eyes were worshipping—"I wasn't sure . . . but I don't need it."

He went to the piano. Tabitha twisted her cloth about her fingers and dropped down on the fireside hassock. It was a little-girl pose. Surely she was demure and guileless. Surely she had never galloped past Christy in the lane without bothering to notice her. Christy and Serena sat primly on the sofa. David began to play. Christy looked to Tabitha to see how it all impressed her. She herself wasn't sure whether David's music was good or not; she knew only that it stirred her.

When he had finished, Tabitha said, "That's interesting. It has a different quality, I like it." She spoke honestly, in short clipped phrases, as though trying to decide about it too. "Tell me, where did you study?"

"I didn't, much. I was picking out tunes by ear when I was a kid, and my mother sent me to a school of popular music."

"Not ten easy lessons?" Tabitha asked.

"Twenty, to be exact. I can swing pretty well." He smiled to her, flung back his head reminiscently. The tune was "Night and Day" and suddenly Christy could see David St. John and his orchestra of the Blue Skies Supper Club. "That went all right," David was saying, "but after the war I couldn't go back to it. I wanted other things. It's funny, too, because I never used to like school. Now I can't learn enough, fast enough. And, while I'm learning, this comes to me. That's all."

"That's all," said Tabitha softly. "That's everything."

"You would know," he said gratefully.

"Me? Yes, I would know. But I can only play what others have written. How would love to try your music. Will you bring it to me?"

Serena's eyes never ceased gleaming. Her hand pressed Christy's in a thrill of happiness. "He's a genius, really," she whispered, "and now the world will know him."

The world! Christy's thoughts came back to the long, shabby room, to Tabitha, beautiful in disarray, to David, young, eager, his restless fingers moving on the keyboard, his dark eyes enraptured. But, this wasn't the world. What made Serena think so, and David? She looked from one to the other of them again. Their eyes were still raw.

He's blinded, she thought—caught up in the web of Tabitha. "Excuse me," she said suddenly. "I promised to take Tucky for a walk."

In the hallway, by the side door, she nearly collided with Johnny, who was coming in.

"Did you find Tibby?" he asked.  
"Yes, they're all dazzling each other in

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there. I'm going to take Tucky out now."

She reached to the hall rack for his coat and cap. Doing that, another coat was brushed off its hook and fell to the floor, a jacket of Tabithia's, black velvetine, faced with bright red plaid, one of her individual creations. Johnny recovered it, shook the dust off it and touched the lapels.

It was a little thing. He might just be a careful person. But it was Tibby's coat, an old one she kept hanging there. Johnny knew it well, remembered it with tender-ness, touched it reverently.

His eyes met Christy's. She said coldly, "They're all in there, waiting for you."

"That's too bad." His coldness matched hers, warned her not to comment on what she had seen. Then, without warning, he lifted her chin and kissed her lips. "Because I came to go for a walk with you and Tuck," he explained.

**TUCKY BREWSTER** drew pictures all the time. He spent hours on one page, his fingers cramped tightly about a pencil or crayon, while he made innumerable de-tails. If anyone came along, he hid the drawings hurriedly.

Christy remarked to Granny one evening while they were doing the dishes, "I think something should be done about Tucky. He's definitely a child with an emotional burden."

Granny turned from the dishpan. "Look here, Christina, you've picked up a lot of psychological jargon, and you don't know how to apply it. Tucky has a brilliant father, a talented mother. He's an individual, that's all. He simply isn't a run-of-the-mill child."

"He's an unhappy child," Christy argued.

"No, he's not. He has too vivid an imagination, and sometimes he gets frightened."

"He shouldn't." Christy sounded positive and hopeless. Granny looked at her and sighed. "I'd forget Tucky if I were you and look to yourself."

Christy retreated into quick silence and reached for another plate.

"You're the one with an emotional burden," Granny told her. "You're the one who's unhappy. You ought to be out and in things up at college, having fun."

Christy made no comment. Priscilla whisked through the kitchen quickly, so as not to be pressed into service, and Tabithia came to the doorway with pen and paper and asked Granny about the marketing for the next day. She was wearing another of her creations, a light brown, wool, well cut, well fitted. She wrote quickly, efficiently, giving the matter of food her whole attention.

"I think that's all," she said finally, "but I'll leave the list here. Look, Granny, right here on the table, and, if you think of anything more, you can add it." She looked up at them all, and, for the first time in that interval, she smiled. She didn't smile easily, Christy thought, but her smile was quick and trans-forming.

It gathered Granny into the warmth of her presence, cherished her for a bit, made her quite content to spend her old age in the deary kitchen and to share her first floor bedroom with her difficult grandson.

Tabithia gave her smile to Christy after that. "Thank you for bringing your friend to me. His work is very unusual. He's bringing a score down with him this evening, and we're going over it together."

Christy refused the garnering smile. "It was Johnny Gaylord's idea," she an-swered, in a tone so carefully shaded that it could have been disinterested, rebuke, or modesty. Tabithia could recognize any one of these and find herself mistaken. She wisely chose none of them. The front

door knocker sounded just then, and she went to answer it.

**GRANNY** went up to get Tucky out of his tub, and Christy stayed behind to put away the dishes. It was David who had sounded the front-door knocker. He was alone, apparently; she heard only the two voices, then Tabithia tuning her cello. When the music began, Christy lingered over her task, listening, wondering, think-ing: How like Serena not to have come, to have kept herself in the background at this time.

The kitchen door opened without warning and Johnny Gaylord stood there. "Hi," he said, "come on out. I've got something to show you." He looked suddenly younger than his years, boyish with ex-citement.

"Turn on the porch light so you can see." Then he snapped it on himself and Christy, folding her arms about her to shut out the evening chill, came out to view a secondhand car of uncertain vintage. Johnny passed his hand lovingly over the hood. "What's the matter with that, eh?"

"It's—it's—" Words stuck in Christy's throat and, looking into his eager eyes, she felt a twist of pity for him. He must have had so little, she thought, so very little. "It's out of this world," she managed.

"Get your coat. I'll be starting her up. Sometimes she doesn't start right off."

Christy ran up the wing stairs and came down with a jacket. The music of David and Tabithia made her go on tip toe, it had a plaintive note, an undertone of sadness, and a shiver of uneasiness stole over her. Outside, the low throb of the motor and Johnny Gaylord, waiting for her, seemed unexpectedly pleasant. She got in beside him.

"I see she starts."

"Yes." Johnny gave his full attention to backing around and turning out of the driveway. "Fellow I bought her from called her the Rattletrap. She does make a bit of noise."

"Never mind," Christy soothed, "we'll get a bottle of champagne to launch her officially."

"We'd get ginger ale, except I don't waste things. Which reminds me of something."

"What?" They were driving along nicely now, through the town, out one of the side streets, towards the highway. She was appreciating for the first time in her life what having a car and going for a ride could mean to people, a very small pleasure, but a very real one. "What reminds you of what?" she asked.

"You're getting off on the wrong foot," Johnny said.

"Why?"

"When Kinny Compton asked you to lunch at the Theta house, you're reported to have said you weren't interested in societies."

"That's true. What's wrong with it?"

"You were only asked to lunch."

"I see. But did Kinny tell you this?"

"No, Tibby."

"Tibby!"

"Tibby's a Theta, and she suggested you to the girls. They had to tell her what happened."

"Tibby!" she repeated. "I can't understand why she would take any interest in me."

"As a matter of fact, I called her up and suggested it to her."

"You did?" she blazed. "Well, please leave my affairs alone. I like them just as they are. Why on earth should you even dream . . ."

Johnny drove the car into a near-by lane and stopped. He drew her over to him. She stared angrily ahead, but she didn't draw away. "I dream," Johnny told her, "because of that day on the train.

when I watched you daubing on lipstick all wrong. When you first turned to look at me, before you went Duchess of Dusen-berg on me, you had a light in your eyes, the kind of light I've been looking for."

She remembered that, meeting his eyes suddenly, remembered a nostalgic se-curity she might have known once and forgotten. She remembered, too, how just his presence in the slope-roofed room on the first strange evening had eased its terrible strangeness; how a little phrase of his, turned over and over in her mind, had seemed to make a place for her in this odd new life. She had only to tilt her head the least little bit and his lips would find hers; everything that was aching and lonely in the tight shell of herself would drift away forever. That was what he meant to her, but she sat staring stilly ahead of her, her eyes and her thoughts narrowed on one small thorn, Tibby Brewster.

When she didn't answer, Johnny said, "I'll save that, then. Only I wanted to make sure you had some fun. This kind of fun, I mean. Life's a serious business. I'm sort of a serious guy and, after you marry me . . ."

Christy laughed unbelievably, but with an undertone of pleasure. "After I what?"

"You heard me. See that?" He leaned forward and patted the cut-out of an airplane stuck to the windshield. "I put that there to stand for my plane. When I started out on every one of those mis-sions, I used to say to myself, 'You've got to get back, because she's waiting for you.' She was someone I hadn't met yet, some little girl somewhere, someone I'd always been looking for. That's how I knew you on the train."

"That's how you didn't know me," she broke in. "If you did, you wouldn't be saying this. Maybe I have a dream, too, and maybe it has nothing to do with you."

"You can tell me," he argued.

"No, I can't."

"Why?"

She turned to him then, met his eyes, large and close to her own. "I don't really know you, Johnny. I mean, very well."

"That's right, you don't." The closed door again. She felt the rebuff and moved away.

She hadn't meant to retreat so far, not to anger and disinterest. She softened her voice a bit. "There's one thing you can tell me though. What's the matter with Tucky Brewster?"

"Wrong with Tucky Brewster?" he re-peated.

"I mean, he's unhappy."

"But that's absurd. Of course, he's not my idea of a kid; still there is nothing there to make him unhappy."

"He's unhappy, and he's frightened. No one does anything about it, because he has terrible temper tantrums. Priscilla says. It all adds up to something wrong."

"A child is sometimes unhappy," Johnny said thoughtfully. "if there's an inimical person about. But there just isn't in that family. Elliott Brewster is the whitest man living, Granny's a gem, Priscilla's a grand little girl."

"And Tabithia?" she suggested.

"All the world loves Tibby."

There was finality in that, nothing more to say. Christy clenched her fingers. She wanted to say, "I don't; I hate her. And if you think for a minute I'm interested in anyone she's tired of, you're mistaken." Wisdom forced silence and she thought it, instead. Finally she asked, "Johnny, do you believe there are some people who are more finely attuned than others, who have lived through something themselves so that their senses are sharpened for what other people are feeling?"

"Yes. I believe that. Serena and David

are like that; it's part of their charm. Why?"

"Because," Christy tread softly here, the first Sunday I was in Warrentown, late in the afternoon, I was alone in the house. I went to find Tucky. I went about calling him, and at last I found him sitting alone, halfway up the front staircase. He looked at me and I at him, and it seemed as though this house was alive and speaking to us. Johnny, you've lived there, too. You must know. Tell me, what is wrong in that house?"

For a moment Johnny just sat looking ahead; then, without answering, he started up the car and drove slowly homeward. Tears of humiliation gathered in Christy's eyes. Johnny couldn't see them, but he reached out and put his hand over hers.

Two tears had been forced back by the time Christy stepped into the dark loneliness of the kitchen. She closed the door noiselessly, hoping to slip up the side stairs unnoticed. The first sound that met her ears was a low, deep sob from the darkness of Granny's bedroom. This was Granny's church night. Tucky was alone.

But no, he wasn't—a voice came drifting out, covering the sob, Tabitha's voice, low, clear, decisive. "Go back to sleep at once, Tucky. I've told you there is nothing in this room to harm you, nothing."

A note or two from the piano indicated that David was still there, waiting, impatient at the interruption, or ill at ease being left alone in the deanery living room.

"Come, Tucky, don't be frightened. I've told you there's nothing. Try to tell me what it is. Surely you can tell your mother. She loves you better than anyone in the world, you know."

It was the most human note Christy had ever heard in Tabitha's voice. She wasn't telling him, really, of her love; she was pleading for his, and, in her pleading, there was frustration and hopelessness. Tucky continued to cry, and his mother murmured, "Darling, my heart, what is it you want? Won't you tell me?"

"Go away," screamed Tucky; "go away."

Tabitha came and stood for a moment in the doorway of Granny's room. She didn't see the girl who watched her. Her shoulders drooped dejectedly, she looked back, uncertain whether she ought to go or stay.

Then she walked resolutely across the kitchen and, when she reached the lighted frame of the doorway, she was no longer defeated. The music started again and Tucky Brewster sobbed bitterly into his pillow.

Christy came and knelt beside him. "What's the matter, Tuck?" she asked reasonably. But he had been crying too long for this. It was a moment before he recognized her and, when he did, he clutched her fearfully.

"Come, I'll sing you a song." She began an old French lullaby and the tune, the strange words, silenced and fascinated him. She knelt by him, singing, until he slept, and it was there that Granny found them when she came a while later.

"He was frightened," Christy whispered. "You shouldn't have turned off the light," Granny reproached her.

"I didn't. It was dark, and he was crying when I came in."

"Oh, dear," Granny fussed, "I wish Tibby wouldn't do that. Heroic measures are all wrong with him."

Christy made no comment. She said good night and went up the back stairs. "Darling, my heart," Tibby had called him, but Tucky had answered, "Go away" and Tibby Brewster, for the space of a moment, had been quite utterly defeated.

I ought to feel a triumph in this, Christy



... may I  
suggest you  
ask for this  
precious pre-war  
Bottled in Bond  
Kentucky bourbon now?

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since 1873



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BERNHARD DISTILLING COMPANY, INC., LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY



## IT'S A LIVING THE *Stand-by*

**Notice to all Broadway stars—A stand-by is a person who knows your part in the show, and wishes you well anyway**

For seven hundred and fifty dollars a week, Mary Jane Walsh does nothing.

In fact, when she first got the job almost a year ago, the hardest part of it was to find something to do. But with all that money and free time, she soon prepared a list of things—she-never-got-to-do and arranged to do them all. It's true Miss Walsh had to put in a little work to get the job. She is an actress, and she worked for three weeks learning the part of Annie Oakley in "Annie Get Your Gun." She went through several rehearsals; then she started drawing her pay check.

Ethel Merman is the current Broadway "Annie." If you're going to say, "Ah ha, Mary Jane Walsh is Ethel Merman's understudy," you're wrong. Understudies have to go to the theater every night, and understudies don't get paid seven hundred and fifty dollars a week. Miss Walsh's job is so different that she even had to coin a name for it. A recognized Broadway star in her own right—she played the feminine lead opposite Danny Kaye in the stage version of "Let's Face It"—and an actress who usually has someone understanding her, Miss Walsh couldn't properly be asked to understand someone else. So Richard Rodgers of the Rodgers-Hammerstein team which produced the show put it to Miss Walsh something like this: "We've got about three hundred thousand dollars invested in 'Annie,' and we've got to have someone of talent who is trained just to be ready in case Ethel Merman can't go on. It's a form of insurance. But we don't want some young hopeful waiting for her big opportunity. The part requires a trained professional who can sing, act and speak lines. And she needn't wait in the wings; she can be at home or at another theater. We don't care. Just so she's ready. Will you take the job?"

Miss Walsh accepted, but she insisted on a different label for the job, since she didn't think it would be wise professionally to go back to understanding, no matter what the salary. "I'm a stand-by," she said, and the deal was closed.

Once she was "ready," Miss Walsh set out to do some of the things on her list. Since most of her experience and training had been in musical comedy, she began taking lessons from a top drama coach to broaden her ability. She started taking regular workouts and massage. She took up golf. She accepted a few radio jobs and practiced microphone technique. And she went to all the plays on Broadway, revisiting those she liked. At any of the Rodgers-Hammerstein shows, she soon began to walk in like a member of the family to catch a favorite scene or number.

"If I just sat at home waiting to go on," she says, "I would end up hoping that a sandbag fell on Ethel—even though she's a good friend of mine. In fact, she's one of the healthiest friends I've got."

thought. It sort of serves her right. Only I don't. Because, no matter how I hate her, I'd like Tucky to love his mother.

ON DAYS when she had no late afternoon classes, Christy took Tuck for walks, or, if the day was blowy, down to see Serena. Sometimes Serena wasn't there, and they waited until she came in, amusing themselves with the piano or looking through the magazines.

On the afternoon after Tucky's night flight, they sat at the piano and strummed through David's current composition. Tucky sat on the bench beside her, swinging his legs and watching her play.

"Play both hands," he commanded. "Only one hand's here," she explained. "But play both."

Serena came in just then, her dark hair blown about her face, her eyes shining, her arms full of fall leaves. "I'm going to make a bouquet," she explained. "A great big huge one. David's asked people for cocktails. I want to sit on the sittin'-room table. You must stay," she invited.

"I have Tuck."

"He can stay. He can have a nice glass of milk, can't you, Tuck?"

"I'll help you fix things, anyway," Christy offered.

They got out the glasses and dusted them. Serena, glancing at the clock, hurried some canape mixtures from the ice box, gave Christy cheese to cut and rushed off to change for the party. When she came back she was wearing the inevitable black dress, fitted tightly across her childish bosom, her dark hair sweeping her shoulders, her mouth a scarlet dash across her face. Christy's eyes traveled down to the skirt that was too short, spoiling the line of Serena's really fine legs.

So all wrong, Christy thought dismally, so terribly wrong. It's a wonder David doesn't notice it.

"Where did you meet David?" she asked abruptly.

"At the Blue Skies," Serena told her. "I was in the revue. I had a song I wanted to sing. It took me forever to meet David and ask him to hear my singing. That began it. I guess he liked me better than my singing. Anyhow, we were married, and then the war . . ." Her voice trailed off. "Here he is now—and there's someone coming up the walk. Will you take these out of the oven in about a minute?"

Christy and Tuck watched the melting cheese, listening to the voices of the newly arrived. When it was ready she arranged the hot squares, then looked through the side window to see who else was coming. Johnny Gaylord and Kinny Compton were getting out of the rattletrap. Kinny's coat was open, her tailored beige dress, her low-heeled shoes, were exactly right; so was her walk, her easy manner.

And, suddenly, Christy couldn't go in with the cheese canapes. With Johnny here, the party would drift kitchenward. She couldn't bear for him to find her here with Tuck, for Kinny to trail after him with her genial, "Hello, Chris."

Kinny was all right, she was kind; but she was a sad and stirring reminder of what Christy would like to be and was not. And Johnny! Cast-off disciple of Tabitha Brewster's. He'd settle for a dream girl; he'd settle for Christy Clai-

borne. She heard their voices now, Kinny's with its curious resonance, Johnny's deep and pleasing.

"Come on, Tuck," she whispered, "we've got to go home." She grasped Tucky's hand and went out the back door.

"We didn't have anything to eat," Tucky observed.

"No," she said wryly, "we didn't." And

by Robert L. Schwartz

that's the way it would be, she thought; the way it had always been. Some people had life; others watched it. She was one of the watchers, always waiting for the right moment to come, the right place, the right people, before she began to live for herself.

Not until this afternoon had she felt that these things might never be.

**MAVIS** Granny's right, she thought, as she went in the house and began to take off Tucky's hat and coat and hang them on the old-fashioned hatrack in the side-hall. Maybe I should look to myself. She caught her reflection in the hatrack mirror: her fair hair wind-tossed; her small face, stern and unhappy, a band of freckles across the bridge of her nose.

She thought ruefully of the trunks of clothes in the dimly lit storeroom, for the most part still unpacked. What would Warrentown think of these gowns, of the beaver hat, the ermine jacket, the copper-brown riding habit? She paused on that thought. Tahitha Brewster wasn't the only person in **Warrentown** who could ride with elan. Christina Calhoun had learned how to ride well because it was part of the currency of her world. It would be easy to—or would it? Would Johnny Gaylord care what a girl wore, what sort of figure she cut? Why did she want Johnny anyway?

The door opened then to admit Dean Brewster, his overcoat buttoned against the wind. He hung his hat on the rack and smiled at Christy. "How are you?" he asked, "I hardly ever see you any more, except at meals, when you don't say a word."

"I'm fine, thank you." She was at once both at ease and a bit shy with him. He was the one person here, or anywhere else for that matter, who would know what her thoughts were about. She wanted to keep him here talking, have him hand her back her sense of values.

He had hung up his coat and was reaching for his brief case.

She rushed on. "About the meals . . . No expression of surprise crossed his face, he waited for her to go on, and an unaccustomed flood of color crept warmly about her throat, her cheeks.

"I mean, I wonder if Mrs. Brewster would mind if I ate with Tucky in the kitchen. We have our breakfast there, and he always eats well. He's so bright and quick, I think the excitement of the dinner table upsets him."

"You are probably right." For a moment it seemed as though his eyes gazed into hers, and for that moment a feeling of fright possessed her. It was as though some dreadful unspoken knowledge lay between them. An inimical person, Johnny Gaylord had said, and the only person it could be was Tahitha. Tucky resented his mother. She was the one who was throwing his life askew. Unnatural, but true.

And Elliott Brewster knew this to be so, knew it and was powerless. "I feel quite sure," he said, "that Mrs. Brewster will agree with you when you mention it to her. It's very thoughtful of you, Christina," he added his smile to that. It took away any relish the rest of his speech might have conveyed.

Of course she had no right to speak to him about Tuck without first consulting the child's mother. She knew that, had known it when she started to speak. It had been an excuse to keep him here. Well, the incident had served to take the sting out of the cocktail party, anyway.

She went up and knocked on Tahitha's door. It opened instantly. Tahitha was changing from her riding clothes. The black fitted coat lay across the bed, the

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## The Payment

(Continued from page 57)

where my entrance was barred. It was nothing definite I could lay my finger on, but I could feel it in a sudden look, in a second's silence, in a twitch of the lip or a gesture of the hand. I felt that there was something dark and troubled in this man, but it only made me love him more, for I decided that this something hidden was one of the factors making for his wide and deep humanity.

It was another of my friends in town who gave me the clue. André Guibert was not a friend like Jacques, with whom I wined and dined every evening, but he was someone upon whom I could count for a pleasant sympathetic little chat any time I happened to enter his bookstore. He had a little shop off the main square, and he impressed me the first time I entered his place to buy a few of the little paper-bound five-franc French classics.

He was a plump, large, middle-aged man, with graying hair and walrus mustache, and he was overjoyed and full of respect at my choice in reading matter. The whole purchase could not have amounted to more than fifteen or twenty francs, but he treated me as if I were a prince of the blood royal—a simile he wouldn't have cared for very much. For what I found likable, and also amusing, about him was that he was right out of the Jacobin period. The philosophes, the breakers of new ways in men's thoughts, les vrais démocrates—they brought forth his greatest and most fervent praise. He was a very emotional man, and he poured out all of his feeling on these great glowing ideas. He was also an honest man. There were still some titles of the Vichy period on his shelves—the town had not long been liberated—and when he saw me looking at one of those volumes he would shake a reproving finger and say with a spitting disgust, "Pas bon. Don't buy that Vichy rot." He found it more impelling to be true to his beliefs than to make a sale, and I liked him for that.

ONE afternoon when I stopped in his shop and browsed over some new titles he had just received from Paris, he came up to me and started to talk of trifles. Then suddenly he said, "I see you are much with Monsieur Charnier."

"Yes," I said. "He is very kind. All the Charniers are very kind. I like them."

"I am glad you are his friend," he said. "There are some who don't like him."

"No," I said. "Why not? What's the matter?"

"Oh," he said, his walrus mustache shaking in righteous rage, "these fools, these stupid little people. Ah, what canaille a revolution throws up!"

"What have they got against him?"

"Oh they say he betrayed the cause once."

"Why, that's absurd," I said. "Anyone can see what a fine decent fellow he is."

"Certainly," he said. "Anyone but these fools. Why, in the Revolution he would have been a great hero—a Danton, a St. Just, a Robespierre—but these fools look upon him as a criminal. Did you see the big bridge over the river? You sent six flights of bombers and failed to destroy it. Jacoux knocked it out in five minutes one night."

I knew about the bridge, and I knew our planes had failed to damage it much. Demolition had done the job, and if it was sabotage it was a wonderful piece of work, for it was a heavy sturdy concrete structure, resting on solid abutments.

"And yet they say he betrayed the cause?"

"Oh, one time those Vichy swine

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## kills Athlete's Foot

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This is a picture, much magnified, of the parasitic growth which causes Athlete's Foot, made *before* contact with Absorbine Jr. This growth lives on stale perspiration, dead skin . . . causes the pain and misery of Athlete's Foot.

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# Absorbine Jr.



picked him up and took him to their dungeons for questioning. He was gone a long time, and when he returned his face and his body bore the marks of what he had been through. But his spirit unbroken, and he swore they had got nothing out of him. However, a few days before he came back the top five leaders of the resistance in this town had been picked up in their homes. They were executed the same night. Naturally Jacques Charrier became the suspected man, and he was brought up for trial by the committee. But these fools could prove nothing against him—why, his whole record spoke out for him!

"After he was acquitted, after he was reinstated he became the heart of the resistance movement in this town—*ya*, in the whole region. He did impossible things, and he did them all well. He is one of the true great heroes of the resistance. And yet some of these callow *young whippersnappers*—who could never tell you in a million years who said, 'L'audace, l'audace, toujours de l'audace'—they try to build themselves up by tearing him down. He has been cleared a thousand times, but, you know, give a dog a bad name..."

When I walked back to camp that afternoon, clutching the books I had just bought, I went with a heavy heart, but it was lightened by a carefree feeling, for I knew now what the secret darkness was in the soul of Jacques Charrier. Now I could share it with him. Not that I ever mentioned it to him. I thought it better not to. But I showed him by my respect and my veneration and my complete trust where he stood in my estimation, and I'm sure he realized what I was trying to convey.

We still had left some good times together, the five of us. There were the nightly dinners, and the afternoon après-tifis, and sometimes a picnic in the woods outside of town with the whole family—Jacques and I lying there easily in the grass, smoking and drinking and talking, the girls running around among the trees, and Annette sitting quietly, sewing.

I SHALL never forget that last night. It was now getting darker, and the sun went down early. I found my way down the street by flashlight to the white house of the knocker. Under my arm I had two dolls I had picked up on a trip to Paris the day before. They were very expensive, but they were beautifully made and dressed, and I hadn't been able to resist buying them for the two little girls.

I let the knocker fall. This time it was not answered so quickly as usual, with Georgesette or Marie running to the door and kissing me. I let the knocker fall a few more times. After a long wait Annette Charrier finally came to the door. She stood looking at me with an abashed, doleful expression on her face, not asking me to come in. The smile faded from my lips, and I stood there awkwardly for what seemed an eternity. At last she plucked me by the arm and muttered, "Yes, come in, dear Hubert; come in."

When I got in and saw the table was not yet set, I knew there was something wrong. At this hour everything was usually ready; the girls were bustling around trying desperately to make themselves useful to their mother, and Jacques was already sitting in his chair at the head of the table, smoking a cigarette and reading the Paris newspapers. But this time the girls were sitting silent and wonder-eyed on the dining-room chairs, and Jacques was nowhere to be seen. There was no festive air tonight. I felt foolish holding the two dolls in my arms. It didn't seem the proper moment to

give them to the girls, so I set them down on the mantelpiece. Then I turned to Annette. "What's wrong?" I said.

"Wrong?" she said in a lifeless voice. "Everything's wrong." She stood there in front of me staring right through me. "Annette?" I said. "Tell me, tell me."

"Jacques was picked up by the *Deuxième Bureau* an hour ago on the charge of giving information to the enemy."

"Oh, my God!" I said. "Why that's absurd!"

"Yes," she said, "it's absurd, of course. It is an old name from long ago, about the five chiefs."

"But he was cleared!" I shouted, as if I were arguing with her. "I know the story. He was cleared, and he was freed."

The *Deuxième Bureau* says it has new evidence. And the *Deuxième Bureau* is—the *Deuxième Bureau*."

I looked around at the kids and at the empty room that once had held so much for me. "I'll do what I can do," I said. "Do you need anything?"

"No," she said. "Now I need nothing. Meret, meret, dear Hubert."

I kissed her on the cheeks and left the house. I walked at a furious pace, my mind racing amid a tumult of thoughts, hopes, aspirations and despairs inflamed and desperate for action. I didn't know what I could do, but I felt as if I could start a war or revolution that night. I ran into André Guibert's fat figure in the equine. I grabbed him roughly by the arm. "Have you heard?" I bellowed. "Yes," he said. "These stupid little people!"

"Who should I see?" I said. "Who will have charge of the case?"

"Why, the commandant, of course."

I mastered an impudent gibe and caught a ride back to camp. There I barded the officer of the day, a young blood lieutenant and, using the pretext of a sick and dying friend, I wheedled him into writing me out a trip ticket for a jeep and loaning me a bottle of cognac.

I shut the jeep down the road at sixty miles an hour, past the town and over to the estate where the commandant's battalion was quartered. It was an EPI unit recently mustered into the regular army, and I had had previous acquaintance with the commandant, having done some personal business with him for the *colonel commanding* our outfit.

"Urgent business," I said to the armed guard at the gate.

"I waved me indifferently by. "Urgent business," I said to the noncommissioned at the desk in the lobby.

I entered with him taking in the bottle of cognac and making his own inward comments on the urgent business of commandants, but he also waved me negligently by. I ran up the stairs and burst into the *commander's* office. His adjutant was with him, but when I indicated a desire to be alone he left at once.

The commandant was reluctant to speak about this affair. He was not a regular army man. He was a fellow in his forties who had been given this command far from action and was still a bit insecure about his rank. But after two or three glasses of cognac, he began to loosen up.

"I can't tell you anything," he said. "It's the *Deuxième Bureau*. It's their affair."

"But, good heavens, man! You know something about the resistance movement in these parts. What sort of a man was Charrier?"

"Of the best. A good soldier. Utterly fearless. Of the highest competence. A good organizer. A fine leader of men."

"Well then, you can see how absurd it is."

"The *Deuxième Bureau* never makes a mistake."

"Oh, bleus!" I said. "Do you really believe that?"

He shrugged his shoulders, moved his hands palm upward, and jutted out his underlip. "Look," he said. "You are sergeant. I am commanding. We both take orders. What kind of an army would we have if everyone questioned orders?"

"The hell with your orders!" I said. "I'm going to tear this town and this whole country wide open until I get this thing straightened out."

"Ah, youth! youth!" he said, giving me a paternal smile.

I gave him the *mot de Cambresis*. It was the only sufficiently expressive French word I knew. I said it to his plottishness, to his unimaginativeness, to his dull routine. I said it to my doubts and my fears and the slipping feeling in my heart. My violence impressed him, and he looked at me in amazement.

"Why get so excited?" he said. "What's one man's life? Today they fought a big battle up in the north and thousands of men were killed—French, English, Americans, Germans. One man's life isn't that important."

"One man's life is always important," I said.

He looked at me and shook his head disapprovingly.

"I'd like to see the prisoner," I said. "He's not my prisoner—yet. You'll have to see Captain Bovet on that."

I put on my helmet and got up to leave.

"Better take the cognac, young fellow," he said. "You've been wasting it on the wrong man."

I blushed and smiled my only smile of the night. I picked up the bottle and rushed down to the jeep.

When I came in Bovet was sitting alone at his desk reading a novel by Colette. He drank my cognac, all right, but he said he wouldn't let me see the prisoner. "Is he being held incommunicado?"

A painful expression came into his face, and he didn't answer me. "Did you a good turn once, Bovet?" I asked.

He thought that over for a while. Then he reached for paper, pen and rubber stamp. I said what I wanted to see the prisoner alone. He stood up and for a moment, as if what he had to say were too delicate to be put into words. I unslashed my carbine and laid it on the desk, together with the extra ammunition clip which I carried in the pocket of my field jacket. I unbuckled my belt and slid off my combat knife. Then I took the pass and left.

I PARKED the jeep in the jailhouse courtyard and walked down the corridor. The guard was the same as the one who had let us in before. He knew what I wanted without my telling him. He gave me a friendly pat on the shoulder and closed the iron door behind him.

I don't know why, but the whole temper and spirit of the evening vanished at once and was replaced by a nameless dread. Certainly it wasn't the jail—they kept the place fairly clean and decent. It may have been all that cocaine working on my overwrought nervous system. It may have been that the fears and misgivings and doubts which, in the upper world, had been kept below, now pushed their way to the surface in this underworld. There was a smell in my nostrils as of death and decay, and sharp pains shot up through my skull. I had a moment of dizziness, and I gripped the bars of the cell.

When I recovered I saw Jacques sitting there on his bunk smiling at me. It was the same cell formerly occupied by the poor devil who had been shot for the

murder of the American colonel. I offered Jacques a cigarette and watched him as he lighted it. He looked serene, unworried and at home. He seemed to belong in this place.

"I was expecting you, Robert," he said. "How does it go, Jacques?" was all I could say.

He smiled sardonically and looked around the cell—the slop pail, the wooden stool, the small barred window.

"Good," he said. "This is the best jail I have been in yet. Certainly it is far better to be imprisoned by one's friends than by one's enemies."

I looked away from his eyes, and then I looked back at him. He gave me a shrewd, searching glance. "Yes," he said. "I am the man. The one who in a very bad quarter of an hour threw away the lives of five comrades."

"It's not true!" I said. "You don't know what you're saying. It's impossible. It's mad."

"Nothing is impossible," he said.

"But you must have some defense," I said. "Surely you must. You're not going to let your life slip away like that."

"Five men were killed, and someone must pay. Besides, I've had so many close calls that it doesn't matter so much now. I hate death; I fear it as much as the next man, but it's something I know; it's an old enemy."

"Well, then," I said hesitantly, "why didn't you let them kill you?"

"Ah!" he said, and the lines in his face seemed to grow deeper. "That is an easy thing to say, but you forget they did not want to kill me. They were not beasts, those fellows. What they wanted was information, and don't they say something about dead men telling no tales? Yes, Robert, the human body is a wonderful thing, and it has many, many parts, and each part is more tender and more weak and more cowardly than the next."

I shuddered and swallowed a bit of the cognac. I handed him the bottle, but he motioned it away.

"But, Jacques," I said, "it doesn't make sense. Why didn't you make a clean breast of it when you came back? Why didn't you let them read you out of the party? Why deny everything and then keep on with it? Why go out on all those dangerous missions? I can't understand; I can't understand."

"Ah, yes, there was the real weakness; there was the real sin. I couldn't face it—the disgrace, being named as a traitor and pushed out of the movement, even if I wasn't shot. And I thought I could still do many good jobs—that was the way I would repay. I thought also that now I was beyond all temptations; now it could never happen again. And it's a very curious thing, Robert, but it was true. I was a better fighter afterwards than before. Imagination couldn't make a coward of me. Now I knew everything they could do. You know, it took them three weeks to break me, twenty-one days, each of twenty-four hours. One learns a lot in five hundred hours. After that I was probably the most incorruptible, the most fearless, the coolest-headed resistant in all France."

"There was a story in Herodotus," I said, "about the only man to come back from Thermopylae. After that his life was a living disgrace. But he became the most gallant of warriors, and he died gloriously on the field of battle. It is said, however, that the people did not consider his conduct bravery, but rather an effort at atonement to the gods."

"Yes," he said. "I know the story. But one does not think of Herodotus or Thucydides, or of Charles Martel or Joan of Arc, at times like these. It is not like the novels and the plays you read. It is

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living life in all its details. How much dynamite and where to place it and how long a fuse? And will this thin university student have enough control over his nerves to make a go of it, or that hasty peasant lad enough quickness of mind not to bungle the whole business? And how fast will the staff be going and at what time precisely will it arrive at a certain spot, and how many guns will be required to dispose of it? And what to do if everything goes wrong, and it is necessary to beat a hasty retreat? These are the living things for men like us. The true myths will come afterwards."

"Yes," I said. "I suppose that's how it was."

"Yes, and it was not always the finest and the clearest who made the best workers. Sometimes it was just the type who was out for the sensation and the adventure who gave the best performance. Look at André Guibert."

"Guibert adores you," I said.

"Ah, yes! To him I am a great hero of the French Revolution, because he is a great patriot of the French Revolution, the greatest and the finest in the whole region. And yet who was it who railroaded him out of resistance activity? Me. And why? Because he was a clumsy duffer who would have had us all killed. I had him placed in charge of publication of resistance literature in the town. He thought it was a promotion. We had no resistance literature in this town."

"Poor André!"

"Yes, poor André. A great heart but a shortsighted mind."

"Ah, L!" I said. "I was going to smash all the pillars, and fight your fight against the whole world. I would have made it an international incident."

"Ah!" He smiled sardonically again. "That would have been a wonderful thing. You would have been Zola hurling his 'accuse', you would have been the crowds around the embassies crying for the freedom of Sacco and Vanzetti; you would have been Justice, alive and triumphant throughout the land. Ah, yes, that would have been a wonderful thing! Certainly, we have both missed a marvelous experience."

"Oh, Jacques," I cried. "Jacques, you're not being fair! You're not being fair at all!"

It was unendurable to be seen through so easily, and yet I knew that underneath all the attitudinizing there was a solid kernel of right impulse.

"No," he said. "You're right, Robert. I'm not. You have a good heart. And I have wronged you. Because I was a hero to you, and now I have destroyed that image. I have left you with nothing, nothing at all."

"All right," I said. "Now I am thinking of Annette and the kids. I make ninety-six American dollars a month. I could easily split that with them—later on, I mean."

"That is thoughtful of you, Robert, and very kind, but it won't be necessary. In

the resistance one always had to be prepared. I have a tidy sum frozen in a New York bank. It will take care of the girls, give them a dowry for marriage, and provide for my wife after that."

"There doesn't seem to be anything more to say."

"No, it's all over now."

"I'll send you my cigarette rations," I said.

"That will be good of you."

I turned to knock for the guard.

"Robert."

I turned back to look at Jacques. He was standing up and gripping the bars of the cell.

"We are still two good friends," he said. "Why should we stand here now, the last time we shall meet, asking heartless questions and making harsh replies? You can't understand what this friendship has meant to me. To me you were the uncorrupted image of my past. In these last few weeks you have linked me once again to my old normal life. You gave me a home, too, in my exile. And I'd like you to go away without the bitter taste of disillusion in your mouth. When you walked in here tonight you were still a boy, coming from a world of blacks and whites. Now you are going back a man, a very confused man, into a world where traitors are heroes and heroes are traitors."

"Look at me, Robert! Do I look like a man who was made for crouching beside lonely country roads waiting for German staff cars in order to murder the occupants just to procure their weapons? Do I look like a man who was made to blow up bridges, and all that silly sort of thing? No, I am a simple ordinary man. If these things had never been, if the world had taken a different turning, I should have lived out my days a typical petit bourgeois to a brach in the bank, a calm occasional trip to a bistro, a妻, good food, good wine, the plain joys of family life. That is what I was made for. All my life was a preparation for that. I was no athlete, no knight in shining armor; I was no killer-man. But the times changed, and I was assigned a different role. What would be the use of complaining now? As soon complain of a change in the weather."

"Yes, you may say, but I could have ignored it all and lived a normal life. Nobody put a pistol to my head. I was no strippling lad athirst for adventure. You've seen Leon Bourget taking his pompous walks about the town. A proper, frock-coated, honest man! Never lifted his finger in the resistance. Never became implicated in the collaboration. Just went around leading his usual existence. Now that it is all over he is all rig-it! No one waves a reproving finger at him."

"But it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter at all. I know, and you may as well know too, that action implies jeopardy. That action implicates all. That if you meddle in this world you must expect it to burn both your body and your soul. This is the cost of action. This is the payment for

a life. And let there never be any regrets."

His words kept humming through my mind all the way back to camp, and during the succeeding days, and when I read the news of the trial. It was a short formal proceeding, there being no defense; but some account must have been taken of circumstances for the sentence was one of simple death by shooting, with no confiscation of property. So they must have thought it all out and decided that leniency would be sentimental, but that this man was no traitor—therefore, a soldier's death and no harm to his family.

The execution took place in the provincial capital, and I got up early that morning and, watching the sun come into my tent, forced myself to participate in that final scene. Sitting there on my cot, fifty miles away, amid the snores and sleepy mumblets of a dozen comrades, the whole picture came vividly to my mind—the early sun cutting across the cobblestones of the courtyard, the man standing at the stake, the squad of riflemen coming in, the sharp commands and the answering volley, and then the young subaltern leaning over, trigger finger squeezing, mercifully making sure.

I WENT to see Annette and the kids a few days later. They were packing up to go to her mother's in the Midi. I stammered and stammered and hemmed and hawed some business about the kids needing security and a father, and then finally got to the point.

Annette thereupon proceeded to give me a severely practical lecture on how I had to return to America someday and continue my career, and how I couldn't afford to make the mistake of a marriage with an older woman who had two children.

Just as I was about to leave she said to me, "You know, Robert, I knew about it all the time."

"You knew?" I said incredulously. "And you kept up such a good front?"

"It was better for all that way. Yes, a woman can tell about the man she lies beside at night. He was never the same after that. There was something broken and all hardened over inside of him. That is why I do not cry too much about this death by shooting. He had already died in the torture chambers. But let there be no regrets."

I kissed her and the kids good-by for the last time, and I walked back to camp, trying to acquire the fortitude of her words. "Let there be no regrets," I kept saying to myself, "let there be no regrets." But it was no good. It didn't work. For I came from a world of the happy ending—she in his arms, and all's right with the world—and twenty-five years of that could not be wiped away by a few, stolic words in a few twisted moments. It would take time. It would take lots of time. Lots and lots of time.

THE END

### The Hermits of Manhattan (Continued from page 27)

window and tunneled through the debris.

They were stopped by Langley's voice coming from behind an upright piano. The Collyer lawyer, John R. McMullen, was called for help. He explained the situation to his invisible client who immediately passed over the top of the piano a check for the necessary seventy-five hundred dollars.

After that Langley appeared in the news occasionally, usually because of a tax bill he had disregarded. Then, last March, Homer's body was discovered in the house, and Langley—the object of a nineteen-day manhunt in eight states—

became the most renowned hermit of our generation.

The police finally found him, crushed by one of the ingenious booby traps of junk and debris which he had constructed, only a few feet from the spot where Homer had died. In fact, Langley had died before his helpless brother who, consequently, had starved to death.

Why did the Collyer brothers live that way? I put that question to many people during the years I worked on the story. No one could give me an entirely satisfactory answer.

Some of the neighbors said that Langley

had barricaded the doors and windows and contrived the murderous booby traps of scrap iron and lumber inside the house because he had lived in fear of intruders ever since his mother, years ago, had been hit by a stone thrown from the street while she sat at an upstairs window.

Others said that Langley had retreated from life because he had failed in an attempt to become a concert pianist. But this did not account for Homer who was just as much of a recluse.

McMullen, their lawyer, said, "Their father and mother were cousins." New York, the largest and busiest city

in the world, would seem to be the last place in the world to find such crowd-hating eccentrics as Langley Collyer. You would expect that a New Yorker, feeling the first twinges of distaste for the company of his fellow men, would get out of town as soon as possible and seek a lonely spot away from it all. But it does not seem to work that way, for Manhattan Island is full of hermits.

MISS Mary B. Powers, a millionaire recluse shut herself up in The Seymour, a mid-town New York hotel, twenty-five years ago. Last March it was disclosed by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court that she had decided to accept a twenty-five-thousand-dollar dividend check which the Glen Alden Coal Company of Scranton had been trying to give her for fifteen years. Reporters, catching Ralph P. Lohak, manager of the Seymour, in a talkative mood, learned that she lived in seven rooms and three baths on the fifth floor, for which she paid thirty dollars a day. They also learned that she never read a newspaper, had no radio and refused to let anyone but a room-service waiter inside her apartment. The windows in her apartment hadn't been washed since 1922.

When she reluctantly cashed her dividend check through an emissary of the Fifth Avenue Bank, there was more publicity. Shortly afterward the management reported that she had left the hotel after dark in a huff.

"She came to us silently," said Mr. Lohak, "and just as silently disappeared into the night."

Recently, about half past nine in the evening, I had occasion to be on the fifth floor of The Seymour. There, gliding toward me, came Miss Powers. She had never left the hotel. Her pallid face was pierced by sharp black eyes; her wispy gray hair was partially concealed by the oddest millinery I've ever seen. It might have been a nightcap; it could have been a beret. It hung over her left ear and was made of a gray, brown and black partridge-toned material to match her floor-length, old-fashioned street dress. She stalked the corridor, her thin, clawish hands folded across her stomach.

"Could you tell me where Room Fifty-nine is?" I asked.

"The number you are seeking is at the end of the corridor," she said coldly, in a flat, high-pitched voice. Then she slipped behind a screen placed before a door on the Forty-fifth-Street side of the hotel. I glanced back as I rang the bell of the room I had been hunting. In her doorway, silently staring at me like an Edgar Allan Poe apparition, stood Miss Powers. There was no response to my ring so I turned to join her. She disappeared through her door. But as I reached her suite, she again popped her head out at me.

"Miss Powers," I began, "what makes you—" Before I could complete my question she withdrew, shutting the door swiftly in my face.

"You won't see her again for a long while now," said another tenant. "She doesn't like questions."

Only three other people have talked to Miss Powers in recent years. They are the representative of her bank, the waiter, and a doctor who visits her once a year.

AS PECULIAR as Miss Powers, yet with perhaps a few more tangible clues to the motives for their mysterious lives, were the Herzog sisters, recluse tenants of a five-room suite at Le Marquis on East Thirty-first Street. Louis XIV elegance—crystal chandeliers, lacy wrought-iron balconies and hand-blown glass door-knobs—distinguished it from other side street hotels. But then, the Herzog girls



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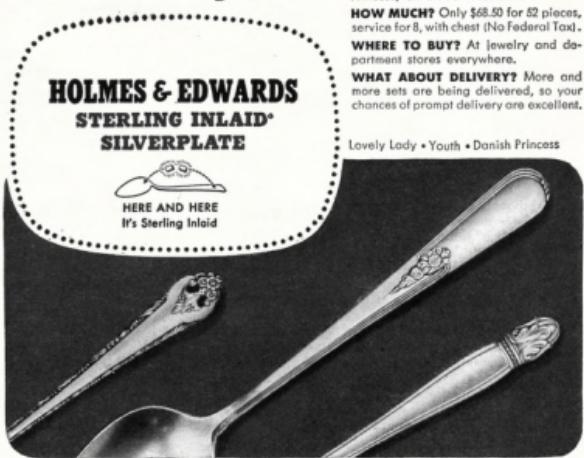
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were different too. Escorted by a Western Union messenger, they tripped into the hotel one spring evening back in 1914 and asked for the manager, Walter Lee.

Lee was having dinner. Would they wait?

No. It was important. A clerk led them to his table. Everybody stared—ghosts out of Godey's Lady Book rustling across the dining-room floor accompanied by a Western Union messenger.

Could they have a five-room apartment on the American plan with meals left at the door?

Yes, Two-B at three hundred dollars a month (these were pre-World War I rates). But where did the messenger fit into the picture?

The sisters blushed. He was their chaperon. Their mother had warned them never to venture out after dark unescorted. The elder sister, Miss Helene, explained that they had been staying at the Park Avenue Hotel. It was to be torn down the following week. They wanted to be near their old home, 45 East 31st Street, where they had been so happy with their father, mother and brother,

who were now dead. They would take the Le Marquis apartment that night, and their belongings could be called for in the morning. The belongings proved to be twenty-two trunks, seventeen suitcases, two pianos and twenty clocks. The trunks were arranged in aisle formation in three of the rooms. Ten of the clocks were placed in the bedroom; the other ten and the two pianos went into the living room. After that the manager was sent for. Would he order iron bars fitted on the windows? And could the windows be painted black? They would pay well for the improvements. Also they wanted nothing brown in their rooms. They shuddered at the mere mention of the word.

The manager thought their requests were odd, but he agreed. As the cost was being discussed, the telephone rang in the bedroom—a call for him. Miss Helene barred the way. "Oh, Mr. Lee," she said. "A lady's bedroom is sacred."

When he was telling me the story Lee laughed and said he beat a retreat from the suite. That was the last time he and the sisters met.

Billy Curley, the bell captain, delivered their meals. Michael Moran, described as

their former coachman, called occasionally and, at stated intervals, the sisters conferred with James P. Birch, manager of the Corn Exchange Bank branch at Fourth Avenue and 29th Street. These were their only contacts with the world. Why?

Hotel employees recalled gossip of a process server, disguised as a waiter, who had barged into their bedroom at the Park Avenue Hotel and served them with a summons instead of dinner. For what suit? No one knew.

There was also gossip of Michael Moran having driven them to court in their closed brougham with curtains drawn. What were they concealing? Michael Moran professed to know nothing. "People like to spin stories," he said. And he said no more.

Shortly after Birch became manager of the bank branch, a Western Union messenger brought him a note asking him to call at Le Marquis that day at three o'clock. It was signed in a neat, spinstersharp hand—Helene Herzog.

"You'll have to go to their suite," the desk clerk at the hotel told Birch that afternoon.

"I won't. It's against banking rules. They'll see me in the lobby or not at all."

After a long wait the sisters, looking like lavender and old lace, floated down to greet him. Helene was less than five feet tall. She wore a black wig, her small face was heart-shaped, her dark eyes button-bright and she talked rapidly. Beatrice said little, drooped slightly and was inclined to plumpness. She complained that she never had much appetite. Neither sister had been outdoors for ten years.

Why? Birch wanted to know.

"We have chosen this mode of life as a memorial to our mother."

Was this an explanation or a blind? There were those barred and blackened windows, rumors of the old law suit and that strange prejudice against brown.

Their manner of doing business was perverse. For example, the silk center offered them sixty thousand dollars, cash, for their former home. It blocked the unfinished ell of the new silk headquarters at Thirty-first Street and Fourth Avenue. The house was boarded up, and they had not been in it for years. Yet, when Birch relayed the offer, the Herzogs dismissed it. "We are not interested," Miss Helene said.

Shortly afterwards thieves ransacked the house. In reporting the robbery, the police told of finding Spanish doubloons scattered through the rooms. Where did they come from?

The Herzogs cautiously exchanged letters with the company which had insured the house against burglary and put in a claim for five thousand dollars. But, since the company had no inventory of the contents of the house, they offered a nineteen-hundred-dollar settlement. They agreed, however, to increase the settlement if the sisters, themselves, would go to the house and itemize the losses. They refused. Were they afraid to return to their old home?

Subsequently, more burglars carted off what was left in the house. The city condemned the property and demolished the house. Today the space for which they were offered sixty thousand dollars is a vacant lot partially occupied by a fruit stand.

As the years passed, they stopped seeing Birch. Billy Curley continued to leave meals outside their door. They tipped him generously, paid their rent each month in cash and gave the impression of wealth.

One morning Billy brought down the news that Beatrice had died suddenly in the night. Michael Moran, the former coachman, was found working as super-

## My Luckiest Day

RISE STEVENS



I was seventeen at the time, and I was managing to make a living as a member of the chorus which backed up the singing star of a well-known radio program. Then one day the star fell ill and, like something right out of a fairy tale, I was chosen to substitute for her.

I tasted my first success that night. People flocked backstage to congratulate me, and I was certain I had "arrived."

But the next day I was fired. Although no one told me why, I later understood that, on the basis of that substitute performance, I was considered dangerous to the status of the famous star.

This blow, however, proved to be the turning point of my career. If I had been fired for incompetence, that would have been something else again—but to lose out because I was more than competent!

I was fighting mad and more determined than ever to make a success of my singing.

I managed to get a job with the Opéra Comique at the Heckscher Theatre in New York; I accepted a scholarship at Juilliard; I entered the Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air; I even worked as a waitress on a ship for transportation to Europe and further study.

I made my operatic debut in Prague, then sang in Vienna, Cairo, Alexandria, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro.

When I finally came back to America, it was to make my debut on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.

Then came the movies—"The Chocolate Soldier," "Going My Way," and "Carnegie Hall."

I also became star of a Sunday show over the Columbia Broadcasting system and began to make recordings.

To be fired may sometimes be a disgrace—but sometimes it may be a blessing.

The day I was fired turned out to be my luckiest.

intendent in a Fourth Avenue loft building. He took charge of their affairs. There was no funeral. Helene didn't budge out of the suite.

From year to year I tried to find some clue to her strange doings. On one of my visits to Le Marquis, Billy Curley said, "Miss Helene will be quiet for a long while; then she'll play nothing but Spanish tunes for a whole day or night. She wears a Spanish lace evening gown of the 1880's—an artificial red rose stuck in her black wig, and her lips painted bright crimson. Other times she sits all day long staring at stereopticon views of South America." How did all this tie up with the Spanish doubloons?

On a cold morning early in January, 1945, Billy knocked at her door and heard no answer. He reported this to the new manager, Louis Mintz. They phoned the police who took the door down. There, with her red rose stuck in her black wig and her black-lace dress draping her tiny body, lay Miss Helene in the last stages of pneumonia.

Squeezing the arm of a young detective as he helped a Bellevue ambulance surgeon put her on a stretcher, she gasped, "You've come . . ." Curley recalled that the detective was dark, like a Spaniard.

She died owing the Lebus cham, then owners of Le Marquis, eighteen hundred dollars in back rent. She left no will or assets other than the twenty-two trunks, seventeen suitcases, twenty clocks, two pianos and, of all things, fifty lipsticks.

The Public Administrator moved the trunks and other items to a city warehouse with the information that they contained little but moth-eaten furs and gowns of the eighties. No cemetery-lot certificate could be found, and there was no one who remembered where Beatrice had been buried. Mr. Lebus saved Helene from Potters' Field. She was buried in Silver Mound Cemetery.

Up to her death, she hated the color brown.

"I knocked at her door one morning when I happened to be wearing a brown suit," recollected Mintz. "She opened the door a crack, then screamed, 'Go away, you're wearing brown!'"

What secret involving that hatred was buried with her?

Nor all recluses are as anonymous as Miss Powers and the Herzogs. When Mrs. Stoddard Shaw moved to the Dorset, she advertised it. Her plum-colored brougham and fine pair of matched bay horses waited outside the hotel each day from nine in the morning until seven at night, coachman in livery on the box, silver harness shining, everything in readiness for the drives she never took. In her seven years' tenancy of the five-room duplex apartment, she never left the hotel and never saw anyone but Albert, a waiter. Maids, bath maids, housemen, window cleaners, painters and the various other workers luxury hotels employ were not allowed to cross her threshold. She paid twelve thousand dollars a year for privacy, and she intended to have it. She wouldn't even admit the owner, Walter Redell.

So you can imagine the excitement when word grapevined through the hotel one day that she was giving a dinner party. The first intimation of this innovation was the arrival of an ancient white-haired dowager, wearing a pearl dog-collar, who swept up to the desk and demanded Mrs. Stoddard Shaw.

Through the house phone everybody in the lobby could hear Mrs. Shaw yell, "Don't come up yet!"

This went on until the lobby became crowded with old men with white walrus mustaches and gold-headed canes and old

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ladies wearing black-velvet neckbands—all of them waiting for Mrs. Shaw's call.

Then a most horrible odor wafted through the upper floors of the hotel. Mrs. Shaw called for Albert, and he raced upstairs. Holding a damp towel to his nose, he charged into her duplex. A cloud of smoke was coming from an electric stove. She had put five wild ducks from Shafter's, New York's fanciest butcher, into the oven with their feathers on. After Albert extinguished the blaze, she phoned the desk. "Tell my guests the dinner has been called off," she said.

She died not long ago. The management entered her apartment for the first time in seven years. Dust half-a-foot thick blanketed furniture, rugs and trunks. From a side wall, which she had ordered Albert to paint blue, the paint fluttered down like shredded paper. The grimed windows were locked tight.

Redell says it took one entire month to clean and redecorate the apartment. In the process many old photographs of Mrs. Shaw, taken when she was young, were uncovered. Her beauty piqued his curiosity. Why had she chosen this life?

He learned from friends and distant relatives that she had lost a son whom she adored. Grief made her shut herself away from the world. That was one explanation. Another was that she was obsessed with a fear of being kidnapped and held for a ransom. This last story was strengthened by the fact that she left a sizable fortune.

#### Recluses are not necessarily old.

There are the two young Misses Grant, who haunt Henri Bendel's, the West Fifty-seventh Street specialty shop where you meet most of Newport. The girls are sisters—they can't be more than thirty—whom dress and look like Ella Wendel. They wear long veils and won't stay in the shop if there are any other customers on the floor. For six years after their mother's death they wore black crepe. Now they have gone into gray—pink sailor hats; hair drawn back in tight little wads; high-necked, long-sleeved dresses.

They volunteer as the reason for their retirement. "We have dedicated our lives to the memory of our mother. We never go any place—just sit at home behind drawn blinds and talk of her."

For many years Bendel had another recluse customer, Mrs. Thomas J. Walsh, an original resident of the Hotel Gotham, who drove to the shop in a limousine with its shades pulled down. She would not get out of the car. Miss Eva, Bendel's prize saleslady, used to carry clothes, hats and furs down to the sidewalk and fit them on Mrs. Walsh inside the darkened automobile. But relations between Bendel and Mrs. Walsh were broken on a particularly busy day when she parked in front of the shop for a try-on. Miss Eva appeared, crying. "Bendel's doesn't sell clothes on the curb." That was the last she or Bendel's heard of Mrs. Walsh.

ANOTHER Gotham recluse is Mrs. Jameson Lee Finney. The few who occasionally glimpse her flitting through the lobby wonder about this diminutive old lady in the high-faced, black, French-heeled shoes and the early twentieth-century clothing. She never talks and invites nobody to her one room which has two locks on its door.

I found a probable answer to her withdrawal from life in the theatrical files of the New York Public Library.

Half a century ago many a New York debutante would have given her soul to exchange places with Emily Jex. She was beautiful in an Oriental way, rich (the family home was an entire floor at the Plaza), and the handsomest man on

Broadway, Jameson Lee Finney, a matinee idol, was in love with her. He had wavy dark hair, a luxuriant mustache and an unforgettable voice. There was only one drawback, a disappointing mother, who took Emily on a trip to Europe to make her forget Finney. They saw Paris. They bought the latest clothes. They visited the Riviera. Then Emily went to England in July for a quiet week end with friends. When she returned to her mother in France, they continued their tour. At the end of the summer Broadway heard strange news. Jameson Lee Finney had been killed in a fire at the Carlton in London. His tragic death revealed that he had been secretly married there on July 12, 1911, to Emily Jex.

Perhaps that was the reason for Mrs. Finney's subsequent retreat from life.

It is those who escape from a life they have never lived who are the puzzles. Take the Leary sisters. Their house, a brownstone front on East Sixty-third Street, is opposite the Barbizon Hotel for women. Blank, curtainless, unwashed windows face the street. There is a hole where the doorbell should be. Occasionally, in the third-floor bay window, you may distinguish, through the dust of years, a woman bending over a table. This is Miss Louise, the younger of the pair. Anna, the elder, is rarely seen.

The day I beat on the door Miss Louise opened it. She said afterward she didn't know why. The Barbizon doorman told me I was lucky. Once, he said, a woman came to the Leary house and knocked and knocked. She went away, returned and beat on the door again. The third time she returned with a bag of potatoes and threw them one by one at the windows. Still there was no response. As far as the doorman knows, she never came back.

Miss Louise had pleasant blue eyes, social small talk and a plump but graceful figure. The only odd thing about her was her manner of dress. She wore her white hair twisted in a casual knot on top of her head, a meal sack of a black Mother Hubbard dress, and her feet were bare.

She explained that she was about to take a foot-bath when I knocked. We stood at the front door for the better part of two hours, she bare-footed, while I tried to coax her into letting me see the rest of the house. The place was crammed with furniture; mirrors turned against the walls, some piled on top of each other, chairs, tables, sofas, rolls of rugs, draperies, paintings, bureaus, everything you can think of jammed together.

"Most of this was our aunt's," she said briefly. "We didn't like her, so we never did anything about all this. Just let it be as it was brought to us."

Who was their aunt?

"The Countess Annie Leary."

Annie Leary was a Papal Countess. Her Fifth Avenue mansion, her dinners and her tiaras provided many a column for the society editors. Some of them estimated her fortune at twenty million dollars. She gave New York the Christopher Columbus monument in Columbus Circle. Her father, John Leary, was hatter for the first John Jacob Astor.

I remembered that Anna, Miss Louise's sister, had been her principal heir.

"We didn't ask Aunt Annie to leave us anything," snapped Miss Louise.

A Brooklyn relative of the sisters gave me the answer. "To understand the Leary girls you must know their past," he said. "When their grandfather, my great-grandfather, died, he left his fortune to his unmarried daughter, Annie. The rest of his children got nothing. One of them was the father of the Leary sisters; one was my grandmother. Money would have meant a lot to the father of Annie

and Louise. Their mother was very sick. This unfair division of the fortune embittered the girls. They hated the Learys. The Countess Annie never had much time for them during her life but, paradoxically, when she died, she left them everything. It was too late. Their old resentment, stronger than ever, prevents them from enjoying their inheritance."

And there is a box—Number Five, Section Five—at the Polo Grounds which is never occupied. Whenever some hopeful Giants fan tries to rent it for a double-header, the answer is, "Sorry, sold."

Then the arguments start. "But it's always vacant."

The management explains that the same party has had it for years. It doesn't say that the party is a hermit!

The hermit is Mrs. Jay Coogan, owner of the land on which the Polo Grounds is built. In the lease is a clause that gives her perpetual right to Box Five.

Thirty-two years ago she and her daughter, Jessie, moved to a three-room apartment on the Madison Avenue side of the Biltmore Hotel. The white face of Jessie sometimes peers wistfully from one of the windows. The mother is never visible. Doormen and bellboys say that the women have not put foot outside their suite for years. In the past, according to a newsdealer in the Grand Central Station, the two of them, shrouded in black clothes of the early twentieth century, fitted by his stand every night at six. It was after two a.m. when they returned. Where they went, what they did, no one knew. Some people said they paid mysterious visits to the family estate office in New York's first skyscraper, the old Coogan Building at 55 West 26th Street. I asked a former tenant about this.

"Mrs. Coogan never answered my letters," he said. "I wanted a few minor repairs done. I had been a tenant for thirty years. After my fifth letter she sent word by Mike, the janitor, that she would meet me in her office at nine o'clock that night. She was there all right—in the dark, wouldn't turn the lights on. Argued in utter blackness for over an hour. You might say I've talked to her, but I've never laid eyes on her. I moved out after that."

I asked him if he had ever seen Jessie. "I don't know," he said. "She may have been in that dark office that night. If she was, she didn't speak."

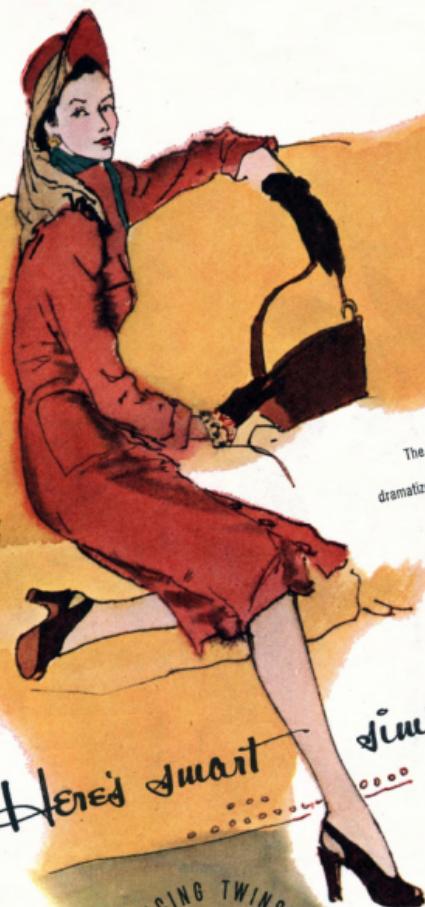
What is their reason for retreat from society?

I believe the key to the mystery is Whitehall, a deserted Newport mansion. Like its overgrown gardens, the mansion still has some of the beauty which attracted Mr. and Mrs. Coogan when they purchased it from Pierre Lorillard. Mr. Coogan had been a nominee for Mayor of New York City. He was also a Democrat, a William Jennings Bryan voter and a friend of Richard Croker, Tammany boss. This record belied his Harvard beard, conservative clothes and his passion for coaching.

Old Newport recalls Mrs. Coogan as tall, slender, black-haired, with regular features and spirited blue eyes. She had inherited from her mother, Sallie Gardner Lynch, more than three million dollars' worth of New York real estate, including the Polo Grounds and Manhattan Field. With some of the income from all this, she staged a debut for Jessie at Whitehall in 1915. Three hundred invitations went out. A brigade of chefs and waiters moved in the day of the party. There was a special dance orchestra. Gowns fit for a queen and a princess were designed for Mrs. Coogan and for Jessie. That night Whitehall blazed with light. It was June. The smell of the sea min-

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gled with the fragrance of roses. A full moon bathed the great white-pillared entrance. At ten o'clock the musicians started tuning up, the butler stationed himself at the door to announce the guests while Mrs. Coogan and Miss Jessie waited expectantly in the ballroom.

Ten-thirty came and went; eleven, eleven-thirty, twelve o'clock. Not a single guest appeared at the door.

Mrs. Coogan may have been descended from a Gardiner, but she was married to a Tammanyite. Small matter that Cornelius Vanderbilt's grandfather had been a Staten Island ferryboat captain, Mrs. Herman Oelrich's father a miner, or Colonel Astor's grandfather a fur-trader. The climb up the social ladder had been hard for them, and they would make it hard for Mrs. Coogan. So said one camp in explaining the fiasco of the party. Another group offered a more direct explanation. They claimed Newport simply didn't know the Coogans.

The next morning, her arms around Jessie, Mrs. Coogan left Whitehall and never returned. She left the doors and windows open so the winds and rains might sweep through the house. She left costly rugs on the floors, rich draperies hanging at the windows and expensive china, crystal and silverware on the table.

"Whitehall can rot on its foundations, she was said to have shrieked, "before I or any of my family ever return."

That October Mr. Coogan died. The same year Mrs. Coogan and Jessie retreated to the Biltmore. For thirty-two years the vacant and run-down Whitehall has annoyed Newport. For thirty-two years Mrs. Coogan has consistently paid the taxes and refused all offers to sell the property to someone who would restore its beauty. In most wars, even the winner loses. That might well be said of Mrs. Coogan and Newport.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER combinations are a familiar pattern among recluses. In August, 1942, an obscure sidestreet hotel near Times Square was raided. Along with some half-dozen other reporters and news photographers, I covered the raid.

Police-patrol cars and a riot squad attract crowds anywhere, even in a neighborhood that is used to such things. By the time I arrived, more than one thousand curious passers-by and local residents had gathered to watch the parade to the station house. The hotel guests—girls who hid their faces with handkerchiefs, men who yanked their hats down over their eyes—piled into the police wagon. A couple of patrolmen were interviewing the manager. "We got all your guests that time," remarked one.

The manager grinned. "No, you didn't." "What?"

"You missed two hermits."

The police listened indifferently. They were more concerned with the type of guests who were on the way to the station house.

On September second, the Emigrant

Savings Bank, assignee of property which included the hotel, obtained a judgment against the lessees for non-payment of rent. The police returned.

Now the hotel was to be closed. The hermitic wretches have to leave. The manager identified them as Senora José Romero, widow of a Cuban sugar planter, and her daughter, Senorita Acacia Romero. Edouard Portales of the Cuban Consulate was summoned to the hotel. After much conversation in Spanish between him on one side of the door and Acacia on the other, he shrugged his shoulders. "It is a very difficult situation," he explained. "The mother and daughter refuse to move. They say it will confuse the father. We will have to cable Señor Juarez, their estate manager."

He wouldn't elaborate. The hotel employees, however, were happy to talk. Bit by bit, over a period of five years they have been filling in the story for me. It is still not finished.

In the autumn of 1924 José Romero, his wife, Michaela, and their eighteen-year-old daughter, Acacia, came from Cuba for a visit to New York. They took a suite at the hotel and were free with their tips. Suddenly the Señor contracted pneumonia and died within twenty-four hours. Hysterically, the mother and daughter kneeled beside his body in a frantic effort to revive him. Only after the manager threatened to call the police did they permit the undertaker to remove his body.

In 1936 the hotel closed its dining room. The following night the bell-captain hurried across the street to another hotel to order three dinners and a big, expensive black cigar.

"That's the kind you used to buy for Señor Romero," remarked the bartender. The bell captain nodded. "It's for him."

"He's been dead twelve years!"

"Maybe he is and maybe he isn't. Acacia calls down every night for three dinners and a big black cigar to be left outside the door."

The corner news dealer added his share to the story. He'd never seen the inside of their suite, but a customer of his had observed, through the half-opened door, a man's coat draped over the back of a chair. Before he could spy further, the door was slammed shut.

A plumber, called to repair a leak in the Romero bathroom, told of the two women standing with their faces against the wall while he worked. He had only been admitted after desperate pleading on the part of Portales who had been hurriedly called from the Consulate. The plumber also noticed a man's coat on a chair drawn up to a table set for three.

The next time I passed the hotel, I saw that it was being boarded up and going out of business. I went inside and asked about the Romaneros.

"They moved last night to another hotel, five doors down," said the room clerk.

"How?"

"Over the rooftops. The buildings are

the same height. We had to get Juarez, the superintendent of their Cuban sugar plantation and Portales to convince them Father would follow them. They were led from their rooms at dusk and brought across the roofs. We sent their luggage—two trunks and a lot of suitcases—by hand-truck through the street."

Neither the manager of the new hotel nor its employees had seen the Romaneros. Portales and Juarez made the arrangements. A check for eight hundred dollars was to be paid to the hotel each month. The hotel would disburse it—three hundred dollars for rent, the balance for food, tips and incidentals. The bell captain, Jack, a retired actor, would carry the Romaneros' meals to them. And the cigar?

"I suppose that will be continued too," said the manager.

I have kept in touch with Jack. The situation today is about the same as it was in 1942. Every evening around eight o'clock, the switchboard phone rings. "Alla," says Acacia. "Wat time ees ee?" Eight o'clock. Varee well. "Ave thee boy bring up the three dinnares."

At ten o'clock each evening Jack drops La Prensa, the Spanish newspaper, before the Romaneros' door. It, and he, are their only immediate contacts with the outside world. Occasionally they open the door for an elderly Spanish doctor or Juarez, their plantation manager, or Portales.

Jack describes the mother as tiny, bird-like, weighing less than ninety pounds. Her hair is snow white, her eyes burning black. She speaks nothing but Spanish. The daughter is a tall, slender brunette, with expressive brown eyes and elaborately coiffured hair on which she spends hours each day. Late at night, the guests at the hotel hear her singing. She sometimes sighs and remarks to Jack, "I've given up my whole life for Mama. She's been such a good mother. I'm all she has left."

And what about the man's coat they drap over the back of the chair at meal-time?

"It's the father's," said Jack. "They believe he is with them—in spirit. They also believe his spirit takes hidden sustenance from the food."

Have hermits a right to their queer lives?

In Philadelphia, not long ago, they sent Anna Quinn, a hermit, to a hospital for observation because, authorities said, they didn't want another Collyer incident.

In Chicago, they did the same thing with two old misers who lived in a hovel. The tangled affairs of the Collyer brothers have already cost New York many thousands of dollars.

"I hope I never have another case like that," the Public Administrator told me recently. "Hermits are a nuisance. There should be a law against them."

THE END

ourselves instead whether the means are justified by the ends. Are ruthless means ever justified, do you think?"

"Why, naturally they are, John," Geiger said. "I mean, they certainly are if they accomplish a worthy end. In the case of this fellow Brown, it seems to me there's no question about it."

"And you, Harry?" Fallon indicated the younger man with the point of his letter opener.

Harry O'Neill, a tall, alert young man, nodded his head positively. "I certainly agree with everything you've said, John, everything," he said. "It'll be to our thin

fellow Brown cut down to his size just as much as you would. He's not a good man for the Party, no good at all. But don't you think you're overestimating his influence in the state, John? After all, he's just a mayor of a small town."

Fallon looked up sharply. "Have you ever heard him talk?"

"Well, no, John," Harry said. "I guess I—"

"Do it," Fallon interrupted. "Do it, and then you'll know what you're talking about. I've made it my business to hear him—twice. I know how he runs his town. I know how many children he has and

what he eats for dinner. I know his ambitions."

"I heard Brown speak once several years ago," Geiger said, "and I agree with John. It was just an extemporaneous speech at the railway station in his town as he was leaving for the state convention, but while he was talking you could have heard a pin drop. He's a little fellow, too—hardly comes up to John's shoulder—and he speaks very quietly. Since I've had my newspapers in this state, and, before, I guess you can imagine how many political speeches I've had to listen to, but Brown's was a novel experience. All he did was

that he hoped someday the nation and the whole world could be governed in the same spirit that his town is governed. And the curious thing is that while you're listening to him you almost believe he's talking sense. I remember looking around me at the other people in the crowd, and there was hope in their faces. There was a look on their faces that any political man would give his eye teeth to put there. And yet, you know, he didn't make any promises to his people, didn't mention the Party, didn't even mention himself, as I remember it." Geiger, the newspaper publisher, shook his head in a puzzled way. "He's a funny little man," he said. Then he added quickly, "An inherently dangerous man to the Party, as John says."

Fallon rose from his chair, and as he spoke, his voice, level and even in tone, increased in intensity with the power of his conviction, and his heavy face grew flushed. "Brown is dangerous," he said, "not 'inherently.' Geiger. He's dangerous now—to the Party, to me, to you. He only belongs to the Party because his father belonged to it, but he's not a Party man. He thinks his kind of government is bigger than the Party. He thinks the world has changed and that men like us, like me, are outmoded. We had a smoothly running machine in that town, and Brown has broken it down, completely ruined it!"

Fallon picked up the letter opener again and jabbed at his blotter with its point. "He's made city improvements over there," he continued, "streets, a playground, new school, bigger fire department, new library. I don't know what all—and he refused to take any advantage of it for the Party. He wouldn't consult my boys in his town, not Brown. He even had the effrontery to throw Ed Sweet off the city council because Ed tried to show him the right way to do things. He's got the people over there thinking politics is their business, not ours. He has men on his city council from both parties, women, even independents. Then he runs some sort of completely uncontrolled, lunatic meeting every week where he lets everyone from the school kids to the bankers to the fruit vendor get up and tell him how to run his own town. And he wants a bigger job! He might—he might even want 'the big job.'"

A vein in Fallon's forehead began to throb violently, and he pressed his fingers against it as though to still it. "Brown has got his people over there talking about running him for lieutenant governor in the fall election," he went on after a moment. "They think the state needs him, or some such rubbish. Get that. Running him on our ticket! He'd never be nominated, of course. I'd see to that. But Brown doesn't care about parties. He's just as likely to run for the other party, if they'd have him, or he might even run on his own independent ticket. And he's got a chance; I admit that. They like him; they like him too much. He's got to be stopped! And he's going to be stopped." Fallon took a capsule from a small brown bottle on his desk and swallowed it quickly with a gulp of water. It seemed after a moment to ease the pulsing vein in his forehead, and he sat down again behind his desk, apparently composed, his face once more an impenetrable mask.

"He'll be stopped, John," Geiger said. "Don't worry about that. I'll map out a policy for the papers right away. We'll figure out a dozen ways to light into Brown."

Fallon nodded. "I want a really full-dress job, Geiger. Gather your material; do it carefully, do it well, so that once the snowball is started it will finish Brown forever, do you understand? I'll tell you when to start."

"Right, John."

"And you, Harry," Fallon continued, pointing his letter opener again at O'Neill. "You think I'm exaggerating this fellow Brown's power, his threat to us." A note of harshness crept into his voice. "Maybe you don't know enough about politics for your job, O'Neill. You're smart, you're a clever publicity director, but you don't know enough, you haven't enough knowledge. Let me tell you something about Brown's city, the little city you don't think counts for so very much. It's a key city. It swings its county. Its county can swing this state. In 1916 this state swung the federal election. Think about that for a while, O'Neill."

Harry O'Neill laughed nervously. "You certainly know your facts, John," he said. "I wouldn't argue with you for a minute. Anyway, you've got me wrong. I'm just as anxious to get things moving on this Brown business as you are. How do you want me to start?"

"Contact every one of your district key Party men in the state," Fallon said in a businesslike voice. "Tell them what we're going to do about Brown, but tell them to keep it to themselves for the time being. Let them wait, and when I give Geiger his lead, let them take their lead from his papers. When that time comes I want them to talk to their people, to talk systematically against Brown. They'll know what line to follow from the press attack. I want all of them, down to the lowest ward heeler, to talk until Brown couldn't be elected dogcatcher."

"Right, John," Harry O'Neill said.

"Then that's all for the moment."

Geiger and O'Neill rose simultaneously and moved toward the door. O'Neill turned in the doorway, smiling engagingly. "I'd sure hate to be in Brown's shoes right now," he said. "It doesn't pay to be a traitor to the Party when you're around, John. But, as Honest Abe said: 'We'd better all hang together or we'll probably all hang separately.'"

Fallon shook his head from side to side, smiling indulgently, almost paternally. The matter of Brown had been forgotten. "Harry, you're hopeless," he said. "I can stand your misquoting if I must, but it wasn't even Lincoln who said that. Franklin said it."

"Ben Franklin?" said O'Neill incredulously. "That's funny, I could have sworn it was Lincoln. Say, how do you happen to know so many things like that, anyway, John? You always seem to know what someone said or did or when he did it."

FALLON looked steadily at the younger man for a moment before he spoke as a professor might pause before answering a student in order to give his answer greater weight, and when he spoke at last his words seemed to carry an implied rebuke. "I'm a student of political history, Harry," he said slowly. "I've worked to become one because I believe in history. I learn about the present from what happened in the past. History even tells me what to expect of the future. History gives me power. You'll find that everything that has ever happened has followed a loose pattern of cycles, if you bother to give yourself the knowledge to recognize the similarities. I haven't faith in much, as I guess you know, Harry, but I have faith in history."

O'Neill frowned conscientiously. "I can certainly see what you mean, John," he said. "It's important all right. History repeats itself. Right? I'm not going to stick my neck out by trying to tell you who said that."

Fallon smiled almost imperceptibly. "You're safe, Harry. No one knows who said it. Plutarch paraphrased it, among a good many others."

"Is that right?" O'Neill said. "Maybe I'd better brush up a little on my history."

"Maybe," said Fallon, without expression. He turned back to his desk. "You two had better get started on this Brown business. Thanks for coming over, Geiger. Close the door on your way out, Harry."

The two visitors left the office quietly.

IT was the night after this first interview that John Fallon had his first dream. He had spent the evening going over some Party reports in the library of his handsome suburban home, and he retired early.

Once in bed he fell asleep almost instantly, for it was one of his minor conceits that he was able to discipline his mind absolutely. He permitted himself no reflection on the happenings of the day. The affair of Brown, the dangerous mayor who was to be eliminated, did not cross his consciousness, nor did Party business of any other sort. Fallon thought only of sleep, as he had trained himself to do, and almost instantly it came to him.

In the dream into which he fell it seemed to John Fallon that he walked alone along a dark alley between two buildings, and that the ground underfoot was cobbled and splashed with mud. He felt a sudden concern for his shoes and, glancing down, he saw that he wore not shoes but glistening black boots, perfectly fitted to his calf. In some curiosity, he examined himself more closely, and it was his immediate impression that he must be on his way to a masquerade ball of some sort, for he was dressed from head to foot in the costume of another time. His suit was black, and unfamiliarly tailored about the tails and collar; his waistcoat was of silk brocade, embroidered in intricate pattern, and over all he wore a gray Inverness cape with a carbuncle collar. He could feel that he wore a broad-brimmed felt hat and that his hair beneath it was almost long enough to brush the collar of his coat. In his hand he carried a short riding stick of black Malacca.

Like most dreamers, Fallon knew that he dreamt, and in the clear objectivity of his practical mind he quickly identified the historical period of his dress, much as he would have done had he been looking at a picture. Fallon, however, was irritated by his appearance. So frivolous an affair as a masquerade ball was the last thing he would have attended awake. Dressing up in rented costumes had always struck him as a particularly odious occupation, and he couldn't imagine what he was doing in one. He continued on down the alley, stepping gingerly among the puddles, and when he reached the lighted street at its end he saw that the street was filled with people moving through the night.

He stood at the entrance of the alley for a moment, looking about him, and it came to him all at once that the men and women who hurried past him were dressed in the same fashion as himself. He saw that the cobbled street was crowded with horse-drawn carriages and booted riders; that the shadowed street seemed so particularly dark because it was lighted only by infrequently spaced gas street lights; that he, Fallon, was not, in fact, on his way to attend a costume ball, but that he had unaccountably in his dream slipped backward through time and become a part of long-recorded history.

In his dream this fact did not strike John Fallon as especially curious, for with the sleeper's gift he accepted the unreasonable. It was something else which troubled him. He was acutely conscious of an inner compulsion to fulfill some responsibility which lay in his mind. He could feel the immediate urgency of the matter keenly, but for some reason he

couldn't remember what it was. It seemed to him that it was a meeting of some sort which vitally concerned him—a pre-arranged, secret meeting with others which he must attend at all costs, but where it was to be or where or with whom, he could not for the life of him remember.

As he stood at the entrance to the alley trying desperately to recall what it was he must do, he took a silver cigar case from the pocket of his embroidered waist-coat, selected a slim, tapering cigar and lighted it nervously. As he did so, he seemed suddenly and without warning to remember his compelling rendezvous, and hurried down the shadowed street.

That was all. There was no more to the dream.

For it was then that Fallon woke and found that he had been lying in a particularly awkward position and that he had kicked most of the covers off his body. He rearranged himself more comfortably and settled back to wait for sleep to come to him again.

He gave his dream no consideration whatever except to observe that it was meaningless and had disturbed his rest, and he was two thirds asleep when he remembered a detail of the dream which brought him awake again for a moment. What he remembered was that he had taken a cigar case from his pocket and lighted a cigar. John Fallon, awake in his bed, knew that he had never owned a cigar case, knew that he had never smoked a cigar, and this detail of his dream puzzled him. Why, he wondered sleepily, had his subconscious inserted this patent inaccuracy into his dreams? There was, he felt, only one possible answer to the thing. He simply had not been dreaming about himself. The man in his dream was a stranger, who neither looked nor felt nor behaved like him. Fallon dismissed the matter. He rolled over onto his side and yawned noisily into the darkness of the bedroom.

Just before he fell asleep again, however, he found that he couldn't help but reflect that it was a curious phenomenon that the man in his dream had seemed to be himself, that the man in his dream had thought with the mind of John Fallon.

It pleased him that he dreamt no more that night.

AT THE forty-five the following morning Fallon put through a telephone call from his office to Smith Geiger, the publisher.

Geiger's voice, as he answered Fallon's question, had a hesitant, slightly apologetic quality. "We're having just a little trouble over here on this Brown business, John," he said. "It's not serious, of course, but our preliminaries may take a little longer than we anticipated."

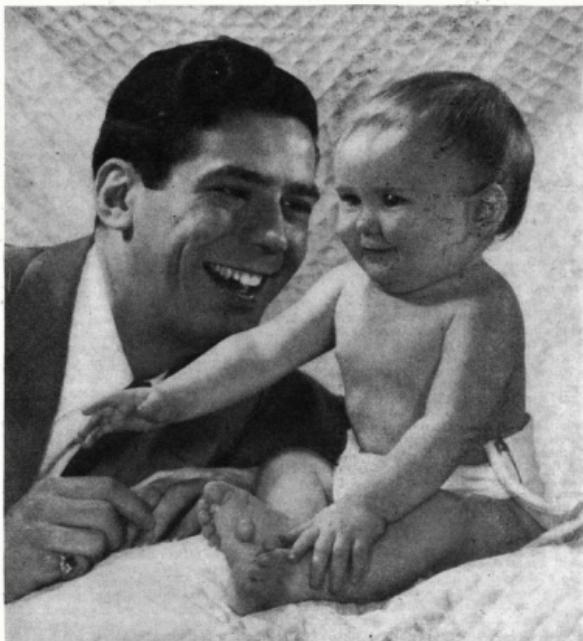
"Why?" Fallon asked flatly.

"Well, John, I've had three men working through our morgue over here ever since I left you yesterday," Geiger said. "I have a report here, and we have a pretty complete history on Brown, but it—I'm afraid it's not exactly the sort of thing we were looking for. Naturally, we'll find—"

"What does the report say?" Fallon interrupted.

Geiger's hesitation wouldn't have been perceptible to a less attentive listener. "Well, it seems, John," Geiger said, "that Brown's record is a fairly tough one to attack from our—from the Party point of view. That is, it's a little tough to get something down in black and white, something a good editorial writer can get his teeth into. For example, there's no evidence of misappropriation of city funds, no loaded bids from the local contractors for city work. My boys even found that local contractors will do his

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work cheaper because they've come to Brown's kind of government. Brown's county tax rate is lower than the state average; his educational rating is higher. I don't know, John. I don't want any libel suits. It's not easy. I've never run into exactly this sort of trouble before. The way his city is run is certainly unconventional, and you know, John, that I find it just as detestable as you do, but it's—well, it's simply not illegal. Everything that's done in Brown's town, however crazy it may be, is done with the majority approval of the citizens." Geiger stopped uncertainly.

**F**ALLON, alone in his office, dropped his silver letter opener onto his desk with a sharp clatter. "So you're a newspaper man, are you, Geiger?" he said harshly. "I was under the impression that newspapermen were celebrated for their ingenuity, for resourcefulness."

"Now wait, John. We're just getting started."

"You say you can find no basis for criticizing Brown's administration," Fallon continued. "Did it ever occur to you, Geiger, that there is no one, absolutely no one living in this country today who isn't vulnerable to some sort of public attack, who cannot be crushed if necessary? Take my word for it, and don't be ridiculous."

"What about Brown's personal life? Is that totally spotless, too? Has he never been seen in the company of some woman other than his wife? Has he never taken a drink? Has he never made a promise he didn't keep? Of course, he's done one or all of those things because no man could live to his age of forty-odd without doing them. It isn't the fact that matters, Geiger. It's your handling of the fact. Try the other-woman angle. Nothing will kill a man so fast in a town like Brown's as a scandal with a woman. And don't try to tell me it's 'impossible'!"

"No, not impossible, John," Geiger said. "I didn't know that was the sort of thing you meant."

"If you haven't any memory," Fallon went on quickly. "Two years ago Brown took a delegation to the state convention. I know because I saw him there. There was a woman with him, a particularly attractive woman, not his wife. Who was she?"

"Oh, that," Geiger said. "I've found out all about that convention. The woman was just one of Brown's delegates. She's a happily married woman who just happens to be interested in civic matters. There's nothing in that, John."

"How do you know what's in it?" Fallon snapped. "They stayed at the same hotel, didn't they?"

"Well, yes, John. But so did Brown's entire delegation."

"Didn't Brown register for the woman?"

"Yes, but he registered for all his delegates in one blanket registration, the way it's generally done. They were all in two adjoining suites in the hotel, and Mrs. Jarvis?"

"Mrs. Who?"

"Mrs. Jarvis. Mary Jarvis, That's the name of the woman."

Fallon rested the cool receiver of the telephone against his temple for a moment as though he were making an effort to remember something. Then he spoke slowly. "Is Mrs. Jarvis?" he asked, "any relation to the Jarvis who's a contractor in Brown's town—the man who just got the city contract for Brown's new municipal auditorium?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact," Geiger said. "Mrs. Jarvis is the wife of the contractor."

"Well?" Fallon said irritably. "Doesn't that fact suggest anything to you? Doesn't it strike you as something more than a coincidence that Brown should award a

big local contract to the husband of the woman with whom he once shared a hotel suite—once that we know of, that is? Is there any way to prove that that contract wasn't a means of keeping Jarvis quiet? Is there, Geiger?"

There was a moment's pause before Geiger replied, then he said, "I see what you mean, John."

"All right. Now, use your head and let me know as soon as you have some really useful facts." Fallon hung up abruptly.

**T**HAT evening John Fallon attended the theater with his wife and another couple. The play was a farce comedy, a protracted series of entertaining improbabilities which made Fallon restive. The play did not weary him so much because of its superficiality, but because it was not contrived with enough ingenuity to fool him. It offered no challenge to his wits. He anticipated the outcome of every scene before it was half played, and when the final curtain fell he felt that two and a half hours had been thrown away. This was an opinion which he was later forced to revise, however, for his attendance at the play served at least to explain the dream which came to him that night, a dream which might otherwise have troubled him.

In this second dream it seemed to Fallon that he had slipped back again across time and that he was once more in the body of the man who thought and felt like himself, yet who could not possibly be himself. Tonight, however, he was not alone, nor was there anything secretive about his actions. On the contrary, he seemed to be standing on a raised platform in an auditorium, speaking impassioned words to a listening multitude. There were others on the platform about him, but their faces were unfamiliar to him. There was something unnatural, something masklike about their faces. Suddenly Fallon finished his speech, and from the crowd before him came a great ovation, a clapping of hands, a stamping of feet, a great cheer sung loud and long. It was then that Fallon made a discovery. It was to him all at once what he was doing there. He was, in his dream, no political orator or platform speaker but an actor who stood upon a stage in a theater, costumed for a part and ranting with the hollow passion of make-believe. Suddenly he saw clearly a falseness in everything about him which he hadn't noticed before—a rock of *paper-mâché* beside his foot, some cut-out trees, green and lifelike on one side, dusty, virgin canvas on the other; the putty noses and crepe hair which adorned the faces of those about him, his fellow actors.

And Fallon turned soberly in his dream and bowed across the gas footlights, accepting familiarly, as though it were his due, the adulation of an audience which John Fallon could never have seen.

It was, of course, the most natural thing in the world that upon rising the next morning Fallon should attribute the wholly unsuitable circumstances of his dream to the fact that he had attended the theater on the previous evening.

When he reached his office in the morning Fallon decided not to call Geiger again, but to let the publisher call him. Instead, he called a man on Geiger's staff, a man named Stark to whom Fallon gave rather impressive presents at Christmastime and who had often proved useful to him. "What progress is Geiger making on this Brown business?" he asked Stark.

Stark was a little man on Geiger's staff whose opinion was infrequently solicited by his superiors on matters of any importance, and, in consequence, he took considerable pleasure in his extracurricular job as Fallon's informer.

"I was just about to call you on that, Mr. Fallon," he said eagerly. "I should call the progress wholly satisfactory."

Stark made his report quickly and efficiently as though he had rehearsed it. Geiger had sent two men and a photographer to the state capitol, a woman reporter and a photographer to Brown's town; an editorial writer had been assigned exclusively to Brown's case.

"I believe Mr. Geiger plans to call you with a complete outline of his editorial campaign tomorrow, Mr. Fallon," Stark concluded. "He's worked fast, I'll say that for Mr. Geiger. Anyway, he's made the rest of us on his staff work fast. There's one other thing, Mr. Fallon. I don't know whether it's important or not."

"Yes?"

"Brown knows what's being planned."

"Yes. That was inevitable."

"Then it's not important?"

"It's not in the least important, Mr. Stark," Fallon said. "Whether he knows or not is of no particular interest to me. Brown's knowing will not affect his ultimate fate one way or the other."

Stark sounded relieved. "That's all right, then," he said. "May I ask if Mrs. Fallon is feeling well?" Stark had once been introduced to Mrs. Fallon and he never failed to inquire after her.

"She's very well . . . Thanks for your help."

"It's always a pleasure, I assure you, Mr. Fallon. As I believe I have told—"

"Fine," said Fallon. "Thanks again. Good-by." He jiggled the hook on his telephone and got his secretary. "It's just possible that a man named Brown may call to see me this afternoon," he said. "I don't want to see him under any circumstances."

"Mr. Brown has already been here, Mr. Fallon," his secretary said. "He's just gone. He couldn't wait. He said he had to get back, but he left you a note."

"Did he, indeed," said Fallon without expression. "Kindly bring me the note."

As Fallon read the penciled note, written in a strong, angular hand, the vein in his temple began to pound again.

Dear Mr. Fallon,

If the people who elected me to my present office should see fit, in their ultimate wisdom, to keep me indefinitely in the background, I am quite prepared to submit to their decision, because it would be the decision of the majority. But it is *their* decision, Mr. Fallon, and not yours. Their decision I will accept with as much grace and as little disappointment as I can summon. But your decision to force your will upon them by eliminating me, I will not accept. So long as I live, I will fight such decisions.

Respectfully yours,

James P. Brown.

There was an echo of familiarity in the words, faint, intangible, yet violently disturbing to Fallon. He was himself unable to account for the sudden rage which came over him. He crushed Brown's note in his hand, hurled it into his wastebasket and put through a call to Harry O'Neill.

"We're ready to start on Brown any time you are, John," O'Neill said. "Every key Party man in the state is just waiting for your go-ahead. They know the kind of thing you want them to do."

"Tell them they won't have to wait long," said Fallon. "It will be very soon, probably tomorrow. Stay in your office where I can reach you." He hung up quickly, and reached for the little brown bottle on his desk; he had to ease the throbbing vein in his head.

**T**HAT night, as his third dream came to him, Fallon felt in that part of him which knew he dreamt, a sense of outraged

privacy, as though a familiar but unwelcome guest had forced his way into his house. But, of course, Fallon's outrage was ineffectual, and this third dream seemed to be even more gifted with the breath of life, less dreamlike than the other two had been.

He dreamt that he walked again along the dark, cobbled alley and that he was dressed as he had been before, in the gray Inverness cape with its caracal collar and in knee boots of gleaming black. He walked hurriedly tonight with his head down, as though he wished to avoid the notice of passers-by, but someone stopped him all the same, and spoke to him. It was a man, a smiling, genial man, a few inches shorter than himself, who laid his hand upon his arm.

"Good evening, John," the stranger said. And in his dream John Fallon felt a quick start of fear run through him, for he had not supposed the dream creatures from this other time would know his name. "We've missed your playing," the stranger continued. "You mustn't stay off the boards so long again, John. It's not fair to those of us who like our Richards spiced and our Romeos manly. Come, say

*It won't be long.*"

"Not long," Fallon heard himself say, "much sooner than you think, perhaps. Now I must hurry. Forgive me. I have a—an appointment."

At this the stranger laughed, and said, "Not all Juliets are to be found upon our stages, eh, John? Don't let me detain you. Keep your appointment, and tell the lady for me that her taste in Romeos is excellent."

Then Fallon said a peculiar thing in his dream. "I will tell her," he said, "since you've guessed my cause for haste. My face said more than I guessed, apparently. Good-bye for the present." It was a peculiar thing to say because Fallon was keenly aware in his sleeping mind that he was speaking a calculated lie, that he was hurrying to a rendezvous of a very different sort.

As he moved quickly along the alley away from the stranger, faster and faster, almost running at last, darkness seemed to engulf him altogether, and Fallon awoke, shivering in his bed in the first gray piercings of daylight. He lay rigid and still for a while, thinking about his dream. His logical mind, his entire nature rebelled violently against attaching significance to it or to the others, and when certain implications forced their way into his intelligence he hurled them out again angrily. "Damned nonsense!" he whispered. "Ridiculous nonsense!"

Still, Fallon didn't try to go back to sleep again, although his body ached with fatigue. These recent nights in which he had his dreams, for some reason had brought him sleep without rest, as though his physical body had been forced to follow the devious course of his dreaming mind. Fallon rose, bathed and shaved, and spent an unusual amount of time in dressing himself. When he had finished he saw by his bedside clock that it was still not yet six o'clock. He decided to go for a walk before the rest of the household was awake. The air, he told himself, would do him good, refresh his mind. What he refused to tell himself, although the knowledge pressed relentlessly against his mind, was that he hadn't the courage to face the sleep his body so desperately needed, the courage to face the dream that sleep might bring.

When Fallon returned that afternoon from a business luncheon, both Geiger and O'Neill were waiting for him in his private office. "Well?" he said abruptly.

Geiger zipped open an expensive pig-skin brief case and took out a sheaf of

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typed pages. "I have a complete layout on this Brown business," he said. "If you approve, John, we can go ahead."

When Geiger paused as though he expected an answer of some sort, Fallon snapped his fingers. "Well, well, what have you got?" he said irritably. "I'm not a mind reader."

"All right, John, all right," Geiger continued. "The setup is this. On the first day we run a banner line exposé news story on page one, and a lead editorial commenting on the story; a follow-up story will be in all the late editions hinting at more to come. The—"

"Read me the banner line on the news story," Fallon interrupted.

Geiger cleared his throat. "Mayors Buy Romance With Town Funds," he read.

Fallon pulled his lower lip for a moment, staring at the ceiling. Presently he said, "Change 'Town Funds' to 'Taxpayer's Money.' Some people don't seem to know they're the same thing . . . What's the lead on the editorial?"

Geiger made a penciled notation, then read from another sheet. "The shocking scandal revealed today involving Mayor James P. Brown, sometimes referred to in the past as the perfect mayor, is understandably being viewed by the citizens of Brown's community as a vicious stab in the back. Their seriously misplaced trust and confidence in Brown and his administration . . .

"That's all right," Fallon interrupted. "What sort of documentation have you?"

"We're rather proud of our quick work on that, John," Geiger said. He flipped through the contents of his brief case, summing up in a businesslike fashion the nature of each item as he dropped it on Fallon's desk. "Photostat of the hotel registry showing Brown's signature and suite number. Sworn testimony of two bellhops who saw Mrs. and Mrs. Jarvis enter the room together and didn't see them leave again. A photograph of Brown and Mrs. Jarvis seated at a night-club table together drinking champagne. That's been cut down from a banquet photograph, John. We have a chap in the office who does very clever work of that sort. Then, here's doctor's testimony that Brown's wife was sick in bed at the time of Brown's escapade . . . You get the implication."

And here's a copy of Brown's letter to Mrs. Jarvis' husband awarding him the work contract. I think that's fairly complete for the present, John. Naturally, we have any number of earlier pictures of all parties concerned for follow-ups, feature stories and so on."

**JOHN FALLOON** studied each item of evidence with meticulous care. He was engaged in rereading the editorial and making marginal notations when Harry O'Neill spoke for the first time since the beginning of the interview. There was an only partially concealed nervousness in the young man's voice. "John, I've been thinking a good deal about this business," he said, "and I think—rather, don't you think we may be going to unnecessary lengths to handle this fellow Brown? I mean, we're involving the—uh—the reputations of a good many other people, too, like Mrs. Brown and Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis and their children. All I mean is, couldn't we find some way, perhaps a less—a less personal way . . ." O'Neill stopped speaking with an embarrassed little gesture.

Fallon waited until he was sure that O'Neill had no more to say, then he spoke quietly, almost gently, almost like a father. "You have a very good job in the Party for a man of your age, Harry," he

said. "You have every opportunity ahead of you. There's nothing to hold you back, so far as I know. Don't waste your chance, Harry boy, please don't waste it."

O'Neill dropped his eyes from Fallon's face after a moment. "Sure, John," he said. "That's right."

At once Fallon gathered up all the material on his desk and returned it to the newspaperman. "Good," he said. He stood up, pressing the fingers of his right hand against his temple. "Start tomorrow, then. Start everything moving at once tomorrow with the force of a giant wave that no power on earth can stop. Thank you for your help, both of you."

**FALLOON** stood for a time at the door after his visitors had gone, staring absently at the polished panels, exhaustion weighing down his big body. The buzzer on his desk sounded, but he pretended not to hear it. He wanted to have no more Party business for the moment. He left the office quietly by his private entrance, beckoned for his car and asked to be driven directly to his home.

The servant who opened his front door informed him that Mrs. Fallon had gone to a neighboring suburb to visit her sister who was ill and that she was not to be expected home until late. Fallon was annoyed at the information. He didn't want to spend the evening alone.

He ate dinner from a silver tray in the majestic solitude of his library, then took up a novel and in the next four hours he read it through from cover to cover.

Fallon's body cried out with weariness. His eyes burned in their sockets, but he shook his head roughly, for he would not sleep. He began to read another novel.

At eleven there was a discreet knock on the library door, and Fallon called out eagerly, hoping to see his wife, but it was only the butler to tell him that Mrs. Fallon had just called to say that she would be home late, until her sister and would not be home until the morning. Fallon dismissed him and returned to his book. He read words, pages, chapters, forcing his mind savagely upon their meaning, but when he approached the story's end and one of the characters was identified as the murderer, Fallon could not remember who the character was or what part he had played in the story.

He threw the book down on his desk without finishing its last pages. His desperate fatigue seemed for some reason to have settled in the pit of his stomach, forming a tight, aching knot there. Presently his heavy head slumped forward uncontrollably onto his chest. Fallon snapped it erect again viciously, forcing his eyes to open unnaturally wide. He rose, poured himself half a tumblingful of brandy and drank it in two gulps. It seemed at first to settle him, and he drank a second, taking the bottle with him back to his chair. The liquor sent a blissful drowsiness through him which frightened him into momentary wakefulness. Then it reached out for him again, covering him like a soft, black curtain.

It was four twenty in the morning when Fallon slipped into sleep, and even as he slept he fought sleep, for he moaned quietly from time to time and once he tried to cry out. But the rest of the household slept, and there was no one to hear him.

Once again Fallon was in the cobbled, shadowed alley, breathing once more the air of a lost time. Tonight he moved quickly toward the lighted street, with conscious purpose, with decision, and as he walked he saw that his boots were spurned tonight.

At the place where the alley met the street he paused for a moment, waiting; then a quiet signal sent him on again, down the nearly abandoned street. There was a sudden turn, a door—and he was at once part of a joyous, laughing multitude which seemed to ignore him altogether, which seemed to see nothing but the antics on the gaudy, brilliant stage.

In his chest, as he dreamt, John Fallon felt a wild excitement surge up as he moved forward past the crowd, for it seemed to him that he had suddenly found the meaning of his dreams. He knew each turning, each step and board in this building as he did his name, and in a moment he had reached the place he sought. It was a door, a small, unguarded door which he opened with great care, making the handle turn silently.

Beyond the door four people sat—two men, two women—and in the half gloom Fallon recognized the particular head he had chosen. It was a long, angular head, whose features seemed to have been formed with axe strokes. It stood to Fallon three-quarters back, bearded, rather like an inverted portrait, the back of the head shaggy with black, graying hair, the tall man seated in a rocking chair.

From the pocket of his Inverness cape Fallon quickly took a short Derringer pistol, his hand shaking as he handled it. Then, as he watched for a broken second, the shaggy head raised up in sudden laughter, rich, warm laughter—and Fallon pulled the trigger.

The head fell back, dropped further back slowly, grotesquely, after the first violent impact. There was no outcry. The head simply fell back.

There followed a series of tumultuous sounds which Fallon's intelligence couldn't decipher, for his dream had become suddenly a common dream, the dream of a common sleeper. He was falling, falling through from a great height. It was the sort of dream he had had many times before. Then suddenly, he stopped falling, landed, it seemed, upon his knee in an agony of pain unknown in his experience. The pain shot through his leg like a monstrous knife, tearing through him. It was then that John Fallon awoke in his chair and saw that the sun was already three hours into the day.

"No!" he shouted into the silent house. "No!" He jerked himself out of his chair and started toward the telephone on the table across the room. Before he reached it, it rang. He picked it up, lifting it to his ear from habit. "Yes?" he said.

It was Harry O'Neill. "Look, John," O'Neill said excitedly. "I wanted to tell you as soon as I could. Everything's set. It's going beautifully."

"Is it?" said Fallon vaguely.

"The papers are on the street. Every one of our boys in the state is talking about Brown. He's through, John. So far as we're concerned, Brown is dead. He died politically a few minutes ago. John . . .

Fallon set the instrument on his desk absently and returned to his chair. He sat quietly for a moment, thinking about nothing in particular, then the vein in his head recommenced its throbbing. He reached for his little brown bottle and swallowed a capsule. He waited for a time and when nothing happened he took two more. He lay back in his chair and closed his eyes. He waited patiently for the relief which he knew must come. It had always come to him in the past. Yet, it was odd that now the throbbing was stronger, that it seemed as though the vein would burst apart in his head.

**THE END**

## That Marrying Manville Man

(Continued from page 50)

paneled apartment over the garage, where he now lives, has two bedrooms, a kitchen and a combination dining and living room. It is furnished principally with clocks of all sizes and types, and Manville, a punctual man, takes a keen interest in their accuracy.

MANVILLE's principal claims to fame are his eight marriages, but he is far from leading the field. A comparatively unknown Reno barber, Arthur Du Pont, has twelve marriages on his record. And not a newspaper editor in New York can remember the name of the woman in that city who recently got her seventeenth divorce. But Manville's marriages have usually been juicy affairs, and he has been sufficiently enterprising to see that the press was informed of every detail.

Though he has been marrying for thirty-six years, Manville got off to a slow start because of vast family complications, and married only twice in his first eighteen years as a husband. In the next eighteen years, he averaged a new marriage every three years, but now that he has the hang of the thing, he is doing better. Beginning with 1942 he has averaged almost one wife a year. Since the end of the depression he has also formally announced his engagement to at least twenty other girls who somehow didn't quite make the grade.

The requirements for marriage to Manville aren't difficult. No bookworm himself—he reads newspapers mainly to learn what, if anything, has been said about him, and he rarely opens any of the cheap editions of light fiction he orders in batches of fifty of one hundred volumes—Manville has not set inordinately high academic standards for his wives. But in a physical sense, they usually weren't dull at all. Several were judged outstanding by Earl Carroll and the late Florenz Ziegfeld. On the other hand, they weren't always as striking or as luscious as they have been described.

Wife Number One (1911-1925), Florence Huber, for example, is invariably referred to as a *Follies* girl, though there is no record that she worked for Ziegfeld. She was an entertainer in a quiet spot which Manville patronized as a precocious youth.

The marriage occasioned some excitement. At seventeen, Tommy was growing his fourth mustache, had shaved for five years and had developed an interest in the opposite sex which prompted rumors disquieting to his rather conservative father. In June, 1911, the senior Manville heard Tommy was planning to skip to England and marry a French actress, a story which Manville claims he planted to get his father out of the country. To prevent the rumored wedding his father caught the first steamer for Liverpool. While he was at sea, Tommy and his first bride were married in New York. Powerless in mid-Atlantic, his father scared his anger by wireless. Fearful that he would have this New York marriage annulled, Tommy and his wife applied for another license in Maryland and Pennsylvania and were refused. They tried in Jersey City and were informed that a Tommy brazenly announced that as fast as his father annulled his marriage, he'd be on the state he'd marry in another. The newlyweds were house-sitting at the Waldorf when the elder Manville returned. He registered at the Belmont and sent for them. The interview was stormy. "You've made your bed," he finally told them. "Now go lie in it."

Tommy screwed up his thin, faunlike



## "Our marriage was all thorns . . ."

Ned was habitually bristling like a cactus, over nothing at all . . . was seldom his sweet, loving self any more. What had happened to our perfect marriage? Why, this: I only thought I knew about feminine hy-

giene. I didn't realize that careless now-and-then care could spoil one's married happiness . . . until my doctor enlightened me. Yes—then, he recommended using "Lysol" brand disinfectant for douching—always.



## "Now it's love in bloom"

Happiness is, to the heart, as sunshine to a flower . . . and we're so happy again now! Ever since I began following my doctor's advice on feminine hygiene—always use "Lysol" for douching. No more salt,

soda or other homemade solutions for me! Not when far more effective "Lysol"—a *real germ-killer*—is so easy and economical to use. As the doctor said, "Lysol" is a thorough yet gentle cleanser . . . and it works!

More women use "LYSOL" for Feminine Hygiene than any other germicide . . . for 4 reasons

Reason No. 2: NON-CAUSTIC . . .

GENTLE . . . "Lysol" douching solution

is non-caustic, non-injurious to delicate

membrane—not harmful to vaginal

tissue. Try the easy-to-follow "Lysol" way!

Never douche thoroughly with entire "Lysol" solution . . . always

For Feminine Hygiene use *Lysol*, always!



face and retaliated with an obscure threat to expose his father. "I've got the goods on you," he said vaguely.

"Go as far as you like," the elder Manville invited, and the meeting broke up.

The couple went as far as 620 Riverside Drive where they rented an unpretentious flat and made a brave show before the reporters.

"You see, Father hasn't shown the proper spirit toward us," Tommy explained to the press. "He is stubborn. Tommy then recalled that he had served as a manual laborer in Idaho three years earlier and added, "So if Dad cuts me off, I could work for a living," and called to his bride, "couldn't I?" Mrs. Manville at that moment was wearing a lace-trimmed apron in the kitchen.

"Yes," she called back.

It was an appealing picture, and the newspapers made the most of it.

Although the elder Manville continued Tommy's allowance of \$125 a month, the young couple found it hard going. Soon they moved to a sparsely furnished room at 257 West Fifty-fifth Street. His mother supplied a brass bedstead, a white enamel dresser, a mahogany table and other furniture, and they settled down to win paternal approval. Manville worked as an automobile salesman and as a fifteen-dollar-a-week laborer in the West Coast plants of his father's company. Manville, Senior, meanwhile made a standing offer of fifty thousand dollars to Florence. If she would give up her husband. To Tommy a break meant forgiveness—and money.

The young couple held out for about two years. In 1913, Florence, a pretty picture of disillusionment, announced she was going into the movies. "If only I could make my voice heard through the country," she said, "I'd sound a warning to all girls—never, never marry a rich man's son."

As a part of his reward for submitting to this breakup, Tommy's father gave him a check for ten thousand dollars. "I decided I needed a little recreation," he recalled some years later, "and I went out on a five-day party. Imagine my surprise when I woke up at the end of it to find myself back with my wife."

But this reconciliation was temporary. His father promptly cut him off a second time. Florence filed another separation suit—for a consideration—and father and son were reunited. The divorce wasn't arranged until April, 1922. Florence was paid fifteen thousand dollars and all expenses. In 1930, she sued, claiming she had been promised fifteen thousand dollars a year for life. She didn't get it.

**WIFE Number Two (1925-1930)—Lois McCollin**—always described as Manville Senior's efficient private secretary, was really a minor clerk in the Johns-Manville company. Manville married her as part of a peace-treaty bargain with his father in order to insure his inheritance. In September, 1925, the elder Manville told Tommy he believed he would die within two weeks and insisted that Tommy marry Lois, "a nice steady girl," if he wanted to share the estate. They were married September thirtieth. Nineteen days later Tommy's father died. Wife Number Two draws a \$19,200 yearly payoff.

**WIFE Number Three (1931-1931)—Avonne Taylor**—was Manville's first show-girl wife. They were together as man and wife for twenty-eight days. Manville complained that she went high-hat on him and said "lift" for "elevator," "chemist" for "druggist," "demitasse" for "coffee" (even at breakfast) and "filet mignon" for "beefsteak."

**WIFE Number Four (1933-1937)—Marcelle Edwards**—was an Earl Carroll alumna who in 1931 earned the title of Miss Broadway and an ermine coat. Unlike most of his other wives, Marcelle did not lapse into obscurity on leaving Manville with a two-hundred-thousand-dollar settlement. She promptly married a wealthy New York Stock Exchange member, Jay F. Carlisle, Jr. Later she became the bride of a West Coast real estate operator named Walter McGowan.

Marcelle also earned the title of "Sweetheart of the Mamaroneck Police Department," for during the four years of her tenancy at Bon Repos she was well acquainted with the department. She and Manville had no less than twenty turbulent and acrimonious partings and reconciliations. Not all of these required the "Bedroom Detail" from the Mamaroneck police, but they were called in to quell minor disturbances which never got to the courts though invariably they got to the police.

At two o'clock one morning, for example, Patrolman Philip Millheiser found the Manvilles chasing one another through the house. At intervals they sat down to rest. During such a truce Manville called on Millheiser to arrest Marcelle.

"On what grounds?" asked the policeman.

"She threatened me," Manville said.

As Manville seemed able to protect himself from his diminutive wife, Millheiser demurred. For five hours, he reported later, he tried to find out what was the matter. When finally he started to leave the house, Manville called an ambulance. "Take her away," he told the attendant. "She's sick." Marcelle looked about as sick as an angry cougar. At dawn the policeman and the attendant finally left, still bewildered.

At another time Patrolman George Blennis, in answer to a frantic call, was dispatched to save Manville from Marcelle and heard the following dialogue:

Manville: She's trying to frame Manville. She's trying to frame Manville. She's hit herself so she can sue me for damages. But Manville won't hit a woman, not even his wife.

Marcelle: Oh, I love him, I hate him, I love him. I think he's the dearest man in the world.

It went on for hours.

Once, when wife Number Four was bothering him most, Manville decided to get rid of her. While she was in her room at Bon Repos, Manville telephoned newspapers and press associations to send reporters and photographers to witness the ejection. He also notified his personal army, the Mamaroneck Police Department, to deploy some troops in Bon Repos to provide local color.

As each newspaperman entered the house he was handed a bottle of twelve-year-old whisky. The bottle was the type known as "pinch," that is, shaped like a triangle, with its sides pinched in. Such a bottle cannot be carried in a pocket, so the reporters inferred that Manville expected them to polish it off before leaving. A number of them were loath to disappoint their host. As there were present, in addition to Manville who acted as ringmaster, more than a score of press representatives, a coterie of police, a bevy of Manville's blond secretaries, as well as Wife Number Four herself, there were, as a witness later remarked, certain overtones of pandemonium.

Finally the press had taken dozens of pictures and baited Manville into saying things that would make headlines, a process not unlike coaxing a debutante into accepting a flask of Chanel No. 5. The secretariate was exhausted. Manville was apparently sated. The police were

about ready to put the finger on Wife Number Four and remove her, protesting, from the premises when a tardy photographer rushed in. He had missed everything. Please, he implored, would Manville pose for just one picture to save his job—kissing the wife good-by.

Manville called to his wife to come and kiss him. He was seated in an overstuffed chair, and she leaned over it and engaged him in a kiss. In a few seconds the photographer had taken the picture, and everybody stood around waiting for the Manvilles to break it up. Instead Manville pulled Wife Number Four closer to him. Five more minutes passed before he paused for station identification. "Good night, gentlemen," he said, waving his dismissal at the newspapermen and police. "Get the hell out and leave Marcelle and me alone."

**WIFE Number Five (1941-1942)—Bonita (Bonnie) Edwards**—stayed with Tommy for seventeen days. Manville met Bonnie, a twenty-two-year-old George Jessel protégée, on Saturday, November 15, 1941, at a night club in New York called the Hurricane. Tuesday morning he telephoned her and proposed. That afternoon they were married in Connecticut.

**WIFE Number Six (1942-1943)** was Wilhelmena (Billy) Boze. Said Manville, "I met her at the Savoy-Plaza and proposed fifteen minutes later." When he did so he was under the impression that she was the daughter of a South Carolina lumber king.

The wedding was eventful. Manville had wired the living room to record the proceedings. Mayor Stanley W. Church of New Rochelle was to officiate. Just as the ceremony was about to begin, someone remembered that Bon Repos was in Mamaroneck, outside the good mayor's jurisdiction. With three motorcycle police as an escort—to disperse boredom among the citizens—the eight-car party streamed to New Rochelle's City Hall where the ceremony was performed in the mayor's chambers. Then the clamorous entourage rushed back to Bon Repos for a repeat to get it on wax. There were thirty-one guests at the wedding. Of these twenty were newspapermen.

But Billy took too long to order dinner in a restaurant and Manville, whose patience is limited, sent her packing to the Savoy-Plaza. Elapsed time—two months.

**WIFE Number Seven (1943-1943)** was Marie (Sunny) Ainsworth. Just before they were married in New York City's Supreme Court Building by Justice Louis A. Valente, Manville gallantly reminded Sunny, "This is your last chance to walk out. Do you want to run?" She coyly said no. When reporters asked her to describe her wedding dress for them she did and added, "I'm wearing rubber bands to keep my nylon stockings up." Sunny was eighteen. She was first married at fourteen and again at sixteen. At the time she married Manville she had a four-year-old daughter named Kathleen.

The marriage took place at one thirty p. m. In nine thirty that evening the bride and groom were at a night club called La Rue. Sunny went to the powder room, Manville now relates, staying long enough to provide legal grounds for desertion. So he flounced out—for good. Elapsed time—eight hours.

Sunny's appearance in Nevada a few days later caused the ordinarily callous Reno Journal to observe editorially, "Tommy Manville is making a mockery of Nevada's friendly courts . . . using them as a tool of his high-priced sport." Reno was upset. The revolutionary sug-

gestion was advanced that Sunny be sent home still married unless she could prove her charges. But sound business ultimately triumphed over Nevada idealism, and Manville got her divorce.

**Wife Number Eight (1945- )** — Georgina Campbell—who calls Manville “Muscles”—is a former columnist for the *Hobart News*. A Broadway actress noted by very few hubbies. As a *cynical friend* commented, “At least she knew what she was getting into.”

So it may not have been any surprise to her when on their first wedding anniversary, Manville exhibited an unmistakable symptom of his boredom. He had called on a charge of disorderly conduct by the same police-court judge who had married them.

During one of several separations, when she was staying in a luxurious rest home near Mamaroneck, Manville went calling on her one evening in the company of his bodyguard, a newspaper reporter, a few bottles of champagne and whisky and a revolver. He had intended to throw a party and generally disrupt the rest home, just to show his dissatisfaction for his wife. But he was charmed by the owners of the home, and the party became a mild and devious affair. In the middle of it Manville said to his wife, “Darling, I love you; let’s go home.” They did.

**THIS marriage is an example of his more obscure whims.** Georgina agreed to interview him for *The Hobart News*. Manville agreed to meet her at a New York restaurant after dinner, rather than risk running to sit through a meal with her. It turned out to be a “psychic,” which is Manville’s for unattractive female. She proved interesting, and Manville and bodyguard-buddy Francis Waterbury toured the town with her, ending up in Greenwich Village at two in the morning. The next day Miss Campbell left for Hollywood by bus, with the intention, she had confided to friends, of marrying Mike Romanoff, who now operates a high-class casting place in Beverly Hills. She sent Manville a clipping of her *Hobart News* story which described him as having “clear-cut features, intelligent mein, and a clear pinkish skin tipped by a wavy crest of prematurely gray hair. This,” her story continued, “gives him a cherubic appearance annulled by wicked hazel eyes.”

A happy lack of reserve, modesty and inhibition combine to make him an assimilated, indeed brilliant conversationalist. He has a quick temper . . . a mind as fast and as keen as the flick of a whip . . .

Manville showed the clipping, which he thought was excellent, to a reporter who read it and said, “That’s a hell of a good story. One of the best ever written about you. That girl knows her stuff.”

Manville reacted like a man suddenly discovering that he had passed up a bargain in diamonds. “Do you suppose I ought to marry her?” he asked.

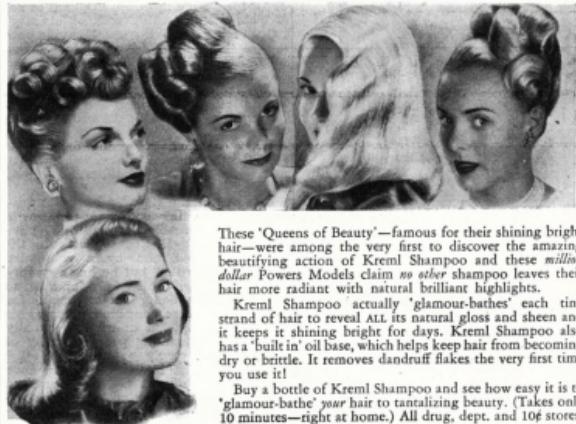
The reporter put on the brakes. “Hey, I only said she could write.”

“Well, if she’s that good, maybe I better marry her.” Manville said reaching for a phone. He got Miss Campbell on the wire in California and said, “This is Tommy Manville. That story you wrote about me is wonderful. Will you marry me?”

“Yess,” said the forthright Miss Campbell.

A few days later at Grand Central Station, where he had arranged to meet her, Manville suddenly realized that he couldn’t remember what his fiancee looked like. He had vague but inaccurate notions about the color of her hair. The rest, except for certain physical confirmations which he remembered very well, was practically a blank. He missed

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her when she got off the train. Later reporters located her and brought them together. They embraced at some length.

**T**HERE has been considerable speculation as to why Manville marries the women he does. If his self-confidence where women are concerned seems immoderate, it is based on some thirty-six years during which most of the women he has wanted apparently have not been disposed to reject his attentions. In describing his magnetism for the opposite sex, Manville once wrote, "The hand of any society bud might have been mine for the asking. But as a kid I shunned all these crème de la crème ladies. My vision was not blurred by any of the flossy and artificial colorings which often befog the ordinary rich man's son."

What did Manville really desire? He supplied the answer. "I always wanted to marry the girl who would make a good mother."

It is one of the singular Manville misfortunes that his consistent efforts to make a good mother of some girl have been unavailing. He not only deserves the nickname given him by a columnist, "What-a-Manville," but he has a quality of devotion, too, which he is anxious to give almost anybody. But his genius for impulsive and irresponsible antics and his belligerent suspicion of motives usually succeeds in alienating people worthy of that devotion.

Manville once had loyalty and love from his magnificent German shepherd dog, Taps. Taps's devotion to him was remarkable even to wool-witted hangers-on at Bon Repos, and Manville, a capable handler of dogs, returned the affection.

"If Manville ever loved anything," a former guest said recently, "he loved that dog."

Yet the one time when Taps grew resentful at being reprimanded with a kick, Manville telephoned the police. "Vicious dog at my place," he reported. "Come up and take him away." That was the end of Taps.

Except for the fortune left him by his father, Thomas F. Manville, Senior, Manville has benefited less from his relationship to his family than most American boys. He traces his lineage back to Geoffrey de Mandeville, a descendant of the Norman conqueror who was granted a simple gold and crimson coat of arms in 1144, one of the oldest in English heraldry. The name was streamlined to Manville by his grandfather, who shortly before Tommy was born, April 9, 1894, had organized in Milwaukee the Manville Covering Company. Manville's father and his two uncles developed and successfully marketed roof-covering products and Manville's Sheep Wool Cement, an insulation for boilers. In the East, the W. H. Johns Company was operating a similar business using asbestos discovered in Quebec in 1881. The sales setup of the Manvilles and the production facilities of the W. H. Johns Company suggested to astute financiers a merger which was consummated in 1901. Manville's father wound up as head of the W. H. Johns-Manville Company which critics promptly dubbed the asbestos trust. It proved most profitable, and when he died, October 19, 1925, Manville Senior left a net estate of \$22,179,049.

**M**ANVILLE's mother, who died in 1941, was no ordinary person. After Manville and his sister, Lorraine, came into their inheritance in 1925, they each contributed three thousand dollars a month to her support. With this allowance, augmented by emergency grants to meet recurring debts, she was able to live in a luxurious suite in the Savoy-Plaza in New York

where she maintained twenty-one dogs, with a kennel for each animal, specially waterproofer floors and artificial trees for sniffing purposes. In this suite she also housed a collection of two hundred exotic Oriental birds which flew about the apartment, alighted in the trees and gave considerable uneasiness to guests seated beneath them.

Manville's mother and father separated at a time when young Tommy was unhappily struggling with the complexities of a formal education. Under the arrangement, Tommy's mother was custodian of Lorraine, and Tommy was handed over to his father who hoped—with understandable reservations—that Tommy would one day succeed him as head of Johns-Manville.

But in order to be with his mother and to get away from school, which he hated, Tommy ran off to Boise City where she was getting her painless Idaho divorce. Later he returned to New York and found his father in a forgiving mood. This gave Tommy an idea for a plan of operation which he worked with success and which kept him in funds and forgiveness.

Living home with his father, who was sometimes firm and at other times indulgent, Tommy would glide along until the elder Manville got a spell of "spare the rod and spoil the child." Then he would go to his mother. When, after a time, she too took recourse in discipline, he would return to his father and temporary forgiveness, ready cash and freedom.

"It was," a psychiatrist said recently, "precisely the right environment to develop something spectacular—... it did."

Manville's relationship to sister Lorraine, now the wealthy and social thrice-married Mrs. Cornelius Dresehlby, has been stormy or pleasant, depending on Manville's chameleonic temper. With irreverent affection he calls her Dresehlpass and sometimes enjoys discussing her at length to her considerable disadvantage.

During his tempestuous periods Manville's sister finds him unbearable. At other times they are as friendly as different tastes permit, and with her husband, a former Dutch diplomat for whom she renounced United States citizenship, she is an occasional visitor at Bon Repos. A gentleman of impeccable manners and established reserve, Dresehlby is an unfuffed target for Manville's humor. Though he professes to dislike him intensely, friends believe Manville secretly cherishes a high regard for his brother-in-law.

**M**ANVILLE carries only crisp, new money and, when in the mood, will leave as a tip any used bills returned with his change. Reports of his prodigious tips are not always accurate. However, en route by train to a Kentucky Derby, Manville took a guest to the dining car for breakfast. He gave the steward a fifty-dollar bill for a table for two and a twenty-dollar bill to each of two waiters who sweated themselves into a lather trying to serve him. The check for the breakfast was \$1.95.

Although he willingly spends large sums for his amusement or glorification, he bitterly resents being overcharged. Once, at a night-club party at which he lavishly purchased expensive champagne, he was charged seven dollars for a Coke for a guest who was on the wagon. Manville thought that the charge was exorbitant, that he was being robbed, and stalked out of the place never to return.

Some of his largess is unusual. Before the war, while washing a new three-thousand-dollar automobile, he nicked his finger on a tiny piece of metal under the fender. He drove the car to town, got

out and approached the first man he saw, an apartment-house janitor.

"Will you give me a dollar for that automobile?" he asked.

The man, popeyed, did a double-take and said, "Sure." The transfer was made, and the janitor, William Burns, resigned his job, drove the car to the dealer, sold it back and, with the capital thus gained, opened a plumbing business in which he has since prospered.

Manville is impulsively generous. A Mamaroneck policeman was painfully troubled with his teeth. Manville sent him to a dental surgeon and paid all the bills. Recently, despite her current husband's protest, he hospitalized and paid several thousand dollars for treatments for Wife Number Six. He once paid the full cost of an appendectomy for a night-club hat-check girl. When one of his favorite reporters failed to show up at Bon Repos to cover a story, Manville inquired about his absence and learned the man was in bed with sinus trouble. Within an hour the reporter was visited by a leading nose and throat specialist who explained that Manville was paying for a complete treatment.

Manville is a sucker for crippled pimpmasters and considers a two-dollar bill only a nominal handout for a legless supplicant. He will cross the street to give money to one who doesn't see him first. His Christmas list is very long. One year it included fifteen limousines.

Manville believes the administration of organized philanthropy costs too much, and his contributions to recognized charities are so insignificant that leading fund-raising firms do not bother to list him in their files.

In 1944 Manville wrote a will disposing of his estate after his death through three trust funds established to provide scholarship incomes for the study of medicine at Columbia University, Cornell University Medical College and New York Medical College.

An individual student may receive a maximum of three thousand dollars disbursed in six-hundred-dollar installments over a period of five years. When the provisions of his will were announced, interest in marrying him was said to have dropped with a thud that rattled Broadway show windows.

Manville's "contributions" to the legal profession in fee payments have been considerable. Broadway characters estimate that he has paid one firm more than a million dollars, which is unlikely. His legal expenses for one major law suit were \$123,000, and he paid out \$61,000 in fees getting his divorce from Wife Number Four.

Although a great many of Manville's friends deplore the large sums he spends on lawyers, and sometimes advise him to refuse to pay their bills, Manville usually pays, though, figuring that he is legally bound to do so. Once he was goaded into protest of a seventy-five-hundred-dollar bill for a trifling service involving only several telephone calls, and he succeeded in getting the charge reduced to five thousand dollars. "It was still a hundred times too much, but Tommy was triumphant," a friend said afterwards. "He bragged about it for weeks."

However, Manville's long and expensive training has made him adept in negotiations involving marital settlements. The outlawing of breach-of-promise suits probably benefited him more than the Wagner Act has aided labor. His wives are now required to relinquish claims on his money before he marries them. But this does not eliminate protracted settlement negotiations. Meeting with his attorneys, Manville will listen carefully to an out-

line of strategy. "But in the end," one of them observed, "the decision on what to do will be Manville's. He makes up his own mind."

Ordinarily Manville's proposals of marriage are not to be taken seriously. He makes scores of women to marry him in the same spirit that other men say, "How beautiful you look, my dear." It's merely a passing compliment. When he wants to be especially flattering he makes a public announcement about his marriage intentions.

Ten young women progressed some distance in sturdy efforts to become Wife Number Five, for example, but not one of them reached the altar or even a justice of the peace, though all of them were named by Manville, at one time or another, as the girl he was planning to marry.

The young lady who came the longest distance, and lasted the shortest time, was a helpless Hollywoodian named Elinor Troy, a tall, willowy, redheaded, occasional movie player.

Miss Troy made her bid in the fall of 1939. The newspapers were full of Hitler's war against Poland, France and England and Manville, ignored by headline writers, was unhappy. To get some of the spotlight back where he thought it belonged, Manville put in a telephone call to Elinor in Los Angeles. She was her roommate told him, at a neighborhood movie. Manville called the movie house, had her ferreted out of the audience and told her to go to the airport where there would be a plane waiting to bring her to New York. They would be married in Virginia, he said. A special plane chartered at a cost of three thousand dollars and loaded with champagne, orchids and Miss Troy arrived at Newark Airport on October 21, 1939. Manville, no longer bored and attended by a covey of reporters, whisked her in his cream-colored limousine to the Waldorf-Astoria, but not before she had said to reporters, "Yes, we're going to be married."

Manville, who insists on amending his own wedding plans, issued a correction—"I just want Elinor to do the town with me. The real news was her birth rate."

At the hotel Miss Troy found one corner of her suite stacked from floor to ceiling with dozens of boxes of orchids. "Oh, Tommy, you wonderful thing!" she said. "I told them to send up a lot of orchids," Manville, "but I told them several

times to stop. Three days later, on October twenty-fourth, at a party at the Waldorf, Manville announced their wedding plans. Two days later they retired to Bon Repos where Elinor discovered Yvonne Arden, a British-born radio singer who had been announced as Wife Number Five six months previously. Elinor objected strenuously to Miss Arden's presence, and Manville sent Elinor packing. But instead of denouncing Miss Troy as a jealous witch and maybe spoiling her future chances of matrimony, Manville generously attributed her departure to housekeeping inexperience. "Troy," he told reporters, "didn't know enough to turn on the gas to boil water."

MANVILLE, incidentally, although not an expert chef, is good at such dishes as fried chicken, lamb chops and steak. He can concoct a sauce for vegetables of butter, cream and seasoning that has real merit. Since he closed the main house and moved into the apartment over his garage, he has done all his own cooking and cleaning, including washing the dishes, pots and pans. He thoroughly enjoys these small tasks, and he is an immaculate housekeeper. In his big house, he once had a staff of seven maids whom he



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bounded constantly. In days when servants were easier to secure, an unemptied ash tray in the Manville living room was cause for instant dismissal, not of the individual offender, but of the entire staff. His five-car garage is spotless. Any automobile that has been in use, however slightly, is always immediately washed or cleaned.

An expert typist and a painstaking bookkeeper, Manville maintains his own tax records. His expert tax advisers have for years tried unsuccessfully to find an error in his accounts.

THE craving for excitement which stimulates most of Manville's adventures seldom arises during his frequent periods of complete abstinence. His favorite drink is Scotch, and throughout the years he has developed a capacity which, while not infinite, is vastly enduring. But Manville has the will power to go on the wagon whenever he chooses. Last summer, for example, he didn't drink for five months, and the quiet in Mamaroneck could have been cut with a knife. Once he was sober for three years.

Nowadays, Manville doesn't see many people. Occasionally he has two or three acquaintances in to dinner, and on week ends they sit with him in his private,

twenty-five-seat theater, watching double features of the latest movies which he runs off himself on two sixteen-millimeter sound projectors.

Those of his associates who know him well say that today Manville is virtually friendless and that he seems restless and dissatisfied. Occasionally he talks about a Wife Number Nine.

But Wife Number Eight dismisses this as just so much talk. She recently wrote a long letter on the subject to Henry McLeome, the newspaper columnist.

Every now and then (she wrote), Tommie arranges for various women to bid for his hand. He does this partly to "stame" me, as he puts it, and partly to satisfy his unfortunate craving for publicity. Naturally, he feels said in again offering himself the marriage, but all the same, he knows very well there isn't the slightest chance that he and I will be divorced.

Strange as it may seem to persons who do not know Tommy, I married him because I loved him, and I am staying married for the same reason. In spite of his egom, jealousy, temperament, tempers and drinking bouts, he is a lovable person.

A few days ago I was back with

Tommy, listening to his plans for a trip to Paris he wanted to take. Neither he nor I can help the fact that sometimes he gets bored, and when he is bored he drinks; and when he drinks helzapoppin' and only a woman of strength and determination can afford to be near him at such times . . .

I am at present awaiting trial on my fourth arrest on information (inaccurate, in this instance) sworn to by Tommy in a moment of temper. I do not crave such publicity. There is nothing in my family background which makes me relish the thought of prison, and I have already spent two nights in theink, because Tommy was mad when he refused to leave our home in New Rochelle when he ordered me to do so.

Tommy is a good deal "honester" than the man who falls in love, marries, falls out of love and starts playing around. When Tommy falls out of love, he prefers to get another wife . . . He and I have scrapped on and off for fifteen violent months . . .

But I am not mistaken in my conception of Manville as basically a good and sweet person.

**THE END**

## Some of the People (Continued from page 11)

think it's fascinating," she said. "Do you really know any more?"

"Well," he answered sulkily, "zero's nothing at all, minus one is one less. The square root of minus one is imaginary and the square root of minus two is utterly unimaginable but very useful. They used it, among other things, to construct the atom bomb."

It was exciting to him to watch that beautiful face, constructed originally only to be admired and envied, now deployed for pondering deeply. As the arched, plucked, blond brows arched even more deeply in thought, his irritation melted rapidly.

Clearly, all this lovely woman had needed was the gentle touch of intellectual stimulation.

"Then why is Seven-Up?" she asked earnestly.

### Original Occupant

A group of eager tourists visited an Indian pueblo in New Mexico. The men wore Western-style hats, bought the previous day, and the women wore expressions of eager compassion. Eventually they pushed inside the doorway of an adobe dwelling and peered at the active life within. This consisted of an aged squaw operating a sewing machine expertly.

"My goodness," said one of the amateur anthropologists, "wherever do you think she learned how to run a sewing machine?"

"I learned it ever so long ago," explained the aborigine, in the kindly manner of the dean of women at Bryn Mawr. "As I recall, it was about the same time that I learned one does not enter other people's homes without being invited."

### Verbs:

A couple of commuters were whooping it up, nastily, about a mutual friend who had come up fast. Too fast. He'd joined the fox-hunting set, and now his everyday conversation was studded with maddening references to the sport.

"I knew that guy when he didn't have the price of a subway fare," said one. "And now all he talks about is riding to bounds."

"His best friend wouldn't tell him, even

if he had a best friend left," said the other. "What he's got is tally-hosis."

### Unread-book Review

This is a book review of a book we haven't read. The book is called "Modern Woman—The Lost Sex" (477 pages, \$3.50, Harper & Bros.) by Ferdinand Lundberg and Marylyn F. Farnum, M.D. (a woman who is clearly not so lost than an intelligent collaborator can find her).

This book is causing a lot of discussion among the heavyweight class of discussers, but we are not going to read it. In the first place, there's that 477 pages. We can be plenty critical of modern woman ourselves, especially when we have a hang-over or a modern woman around, but we don't believe there's anything like 477 closely printed pages the matter with her. Then there's that \$3.50. We've got \$3.50, but it happens to be earmarked for the purchase of a half-dozen short-stemmed roses for a certain imperfect woman.

The dust jacket of the book exhibits a small, beautiful etching of a nude woman. She seems sad, but she's lovely, and she's wordlessly and gracefully contradicting all that closely reasoned text we haven't read.

The whole idea of studying through a big book on this subject is obviously silly, because it so happens that we know exactly what is wrong with modern women. And we didn't amass our knowledge on this subject up at the Public Library. Well, not in the reading room.

The following, in a good deal less than 477 pages, is what is the matter with modern women, and like as not it is also what used to be the matter with Neanderthal, Cro-Magnon, Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Byzantine, Elizabethan, Renaissance and Victorian women:

The pretty ones, from an early age, receive an amount of attention, consideration and even worship usually far more than they rate on the basis of character, brains and disposition. The less pretty ones are often very, very nice, but they are not pretty. As a result, the pretty ones tend to become unbearable from too much attention, and the other ones tend to become unbearable because of too little attention.

2. They louse up poker games and other manly occupations by introducing "variations." They also do this to sandwiches, salads, desserts, cocktails, vacations and other people's lives.

3. Few women like to say a definite yes or no, but many of them like to say all the other words, whether they fit into the conversation or not.

4. They do all the worrying and their men, by listening, get all the stomach ulcers.

5. They read stuff like this and, instead of profiting by it, write long, devastating letters telling what's wrong with men (there's much more wrong with men, but that isn't the point under discussion).

6. They can't make up their minds on unimportant matters, so they ask you what you think. This solves the problems—they promptly do the opposite. On important matters, they don't ask anybody.

7. Not nearly enough of them are in raptures about US. This is probably covered very technically and intimately in this book we're reviewing, but it's been their primary defect ever since the earliest misogynist, and the condition can be improved only by widespread education.

### Fusion

The salesgirl in the toy shop was pretty, or it probably wouldn't have happened. Our man had gone in just with the idea of getting some suitable gift for an energetic citizen of six. When the girl asked if he had any particular sort of toy in mind, he should have said no, because he hadn't. But he decided to impress her with his sense of humor.

"How about?" he said waggishly. "one of these *Destructo Sets*?" I understood they have the ingredients for making a tiny little atomic bomb—cute as all get out—and it says on the box—"Now you, too, can blow up your own home town."

The girl tapped her teeth thoughtfully with a pencil and murmured, "Sounds like the mechanical games section. Follow me"—and started off briskly.

"Oh, no—I didn't really mean . . ." he called out unsteadily. He left right away and came and told us the whole thing, still trembling.

**THE END**

know I don't touch the stuff." Who did she think he was, her errand boy?

He drove the station wagon furiously into the garage and went back to his workshop. From there he could see them around the pool with drinks, and he wished he had a bottle of pop. Then he saw Uncle Hiffy cross the lawn and join them. Uncle Hiffy was magnificent in a Palm Beach suit and a blue shirt, and he'd been to the barber and had a haircut and shave. It pleased Kevin when he saw Uncle Hiffy settle down beside Marla; she'd have no complaints about Uncle Hiffy not being kind.

Gobi Emmers sneaked in beside him with four cold open bottles complete with straws. "Here, ape-man," she said. "I couldn't take that gang so I ducked."

Gobi was a skinny thing, bands on her teeth, hair in a mess, her slacks all dirty as Kev's overalls.

"Hi, repulsive," he said. "What sends?"

Gobi settled on the bench beside him, and they went to the pool. "Dinner and bridge tonight; lunch at twelve tomorrow, poker party at the Beach Club tomorrow night. My dad dahling daddy is trying to ease this Kinnell into some racket or other; he told Evie to shoot the works."

"You oughtn't to call your mother Evie."

Gobi made a vulgar noise. "Uncle Hiffy's as beautiful as a dream, isn't he?" she said. "He's coming to dinner. That gal Ann brought along sure looks as if she needed vitamins. Take me to the movies tonight, will you? There's a murder mystery, good and bloody."

"Okay. You come over and eat with me. I know they're not going to let you come to the table."

"It's a date. I'll go clean up, and you better do some heavy bathing. You smell of oil."

"You're no rosebud. And put on a dress. I won't go out with you if you've got on slacks."

"You should've been an old maid," said Gobi, departing amicably.

KEVIN locked the workshop and went into the house, which was well painted and appointed without, but within had sunk into that comfortable homely hugger-mugger only possible to a place inhabited by two men and staffed by two more.

As he shivered in an icy shower Kevin heard Uncle Hiffy roaring for him. "Put on your white pants and blue coat," he called. "Josh Vail has dropped off at Evie's dinner party, and I said you'd fill in."

"No dice," Kevin called back. "Gobi's eating here, and we're set for a movie. And even if I wasn't going anywhere, I wouldn't spend the evening in that hole."

Uncle Hiffy reached the bathroom door. "It's a must, Kev. We can't let Jim and Evie down. I'll make good anything you lose tonight."

Kevin howled with rage. "Have I got to play bridge too? They'll be sor-ry!"

"No funny business now. You're first-rate when you concentrate."

"I don't like the Emmersees—except Gobi. And they don't like me."

"If people only asked people they liked to their parties, hospitality would be very limited. I promised you'd come. You'll like that girl Ann brought along. She's a cute pigeon."

Kevin thought: She's not a cute pigeon; she's beautiful.

Uncle Hiffy knew the brief battle was won. "And for pity's sake put something on your hair to make it look human."

We'll go over about eight." He turned his good-looking grayish well-groomed self toward the stairs, and when Kevin came down scowling he found Uncle Hiffy in the dining room sipping iced tea and watching Gobi Emmers eat.

"So you stood me up," said Gobi.

"Blame your mother and me," said Uncle Hiffy. "He didn't surrender without a fight. Let me look at you, Adonis. Have you no cleaner white pants?"

"Who's going to check on my pants?" asked Kevin.

"That Maria girl Ann dug up is a strange character," said Gobi. "Acts scared. . . . Kev, your hair looks terrible."

"Leave me alone. If Marla's scared it's because she got a good look at your family."

Uncle Hiffy set down his glass. "We'll be on our way. Gobi, if you see any books you want to read, you read them here and don't go off with them."

"I bet you've locked up the ones I want to read," said Gobi.

"I'm sorry for your suffering, Kev," said Uncle Hiffy when they were outside. "Here's a consolation prize." He handed his nephew a ten-dollar bill.

"Not enough. Trapped and sold down the river, that's me."

They sauntered on, the tall man, the tall boy. Kevin remarked suddenly. "You know, Mrs. Emmers says the way you brought me up is complete ineffectual absurdity."

"I'll bet she can't spell the words," said Uncle Hiffy.

"And she says you try to be a guardian angel."

"Gobi tell you?"

"Yes sir." "Skip it. They're neighbors." But Uncle Hiffy's arm rubbed against Kevin's for an instant. He added. "You don't need a guardian, you've got a level head, fellas." It made Kevin feel wonderful.

THE party flowed through the windows onto the terrace; there seemed to be fifty people, not sixteen.

Kevin stayed in the background until he saw Maria Sharon, frail and delicious in shimmering fluffy white. He inched up beside her.

"Hi," he said. "How you-all this evenen, lil' missy?"

"Oh, I'm so glad you're here!" she said. "Oh, I don't know what's going to happen to me tonight."

"Relax," advised Kevin. "I don't like the Emmersees, but they're not criminals."

"But they're so rich! Look, you said they have five servants. I asked you because I knew I'd have to tip when I left—but first I'll have to give them a dollar apiece at least. And now they're going to play bridge for money! I've got my ticket back and eight dollars, but I need that to eat on next week. What'll I do? I always lose at cards."

She was just a poor little lost soul who trusted him to rescue her. He drew out the bill. "You take that. They won't play for more than a tenth, and I'll play at your table and look after you."

She palmed the money into her little evening bag, with amazing deftness. "It's only a loan," she whispered. "I'll pay you back the first minute I can. Oh, I knew you were kind the minute I saw you."

It made him feel old and easy like Uncle Hiffy. "That's perfectly all right. Uncle Hiffy said he'd pay for me if I lost."

"Oh, that's your uncle? He was here for cocktails. Oh, he looks awfully kind, too."

Kev felt better and better, he was al-



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most glad he had come. "Uncle Hiffy's swell. . . Say, want to go for that drive tomorrow morning?"

"I'd adore to. You're sweet to ask me."

He had never been called sweet before, and ordinarily he would have hooted, but not tonight.

After dinner there was no dawdling over coffee. The Kinnells were avid bridge players and, as this party was to make them happy, Eve Emmers shepherded her guests to the tables with dispatch. Marla got A. B. Jackson, a friend of Uncle Hiffy's, and Ann Emmers took on Kevin with open annoyance on both sides.

Kevin knew A. B. Jackson's brilliant and reckless play from sessions at home, and he didn't like it. In the first rubber A. B. had six no trump, and he and Marla went down two tricks doubled and vulnerable. Just about what Kevin expected. A. B. and Marla finished the rubber far in the red, and Kevin was glad he'd loaned Marla that tenner. He was glad too when they changed partners, and he stiffened to make it up to her.

But it was no use; their luck was out; they held the poorest of cards, and in spite of his caution Ann and A. B. won a twenty-three-hundred rubber.

"I'm so sorry," said Marla humbly to Kevin. "It was my fault. I'm terrible."

She wasn't any help, Kevin knew that, but it only increased his pity for her and made him more determined to help her.

They limped through two more rubbers, and by some very smart bids Kevin managed to reduce their losses so that at the end Marla owed only seven dollars and thirty cents.

**KEV** FELT fine when he saw her pay up with his ten. He blandly called on Uncle Hiffy for his own debt and then drew Marla over to the table of drinks. "I could use a drink," he said. "How about you?"

Marla took a Scotch and soda much too strong for her, Kevin thought, but he meditated indulgently that she probably wasn't used to whisky and didn't know what she was doing. "If it hadn't been for you I'd not have a penny left," she said. "And I don't know when I can pay you back. It's the slack season, and I don't get much work."

"Never mind about the money," he said grandly. "What time shall we start tomorrow?"

"Oh—maybe I can't go; Ann says we're going to the beach."

"Nobody goes to the beach on Sunday before half past twelve, and that gives us lots of time. How about maybe ten thirty?"

Uncle Hiffy came along and suggested that he and Kev go home. As they walked across the dark and dewy lawns Kevin burst out with, "It's not decent to invite a girl who works for her living and get her in a game and take her money! Just like Ann Emmers. Selfish stuf!"

"So Marla's a working girl," mused Uncle Hiffy. "Her dress and her perfume were expensive."

Kev ranted vehemently about Marla and her job and how other girls were jealous; he threw in some hot shots about A. B. Jackson's bridge game and finished by wanting to know what women's dresses and perfume cost.

Uncle Hiffy sighed and said nothing but, "Well, it had to happen sometime, I suppose."

"What d'you mean?" growled Kev.

"I dunno yet," said Uncle Hiffy. Then he chuckled. "I took Kinnell for thirty-five bucks, and he didn't like it. Blamed it on his cards. Emmers didn't like it either. I believe I'll split with you. It'll just about cover that electric jig saw you've been needling me about." One of

the bills had been torn. There was a strip of mending tissue across it.

"Gee, thanks! That'll be a big help in the workshop." He wasn't easy in his mind though. "You didn't like Marla?" he asked with anxiety.

"I dunno yet," repeated Uncle Hiffy, yawning. "You go to bed."

**I**N the morning Kevin washed and polished his car into near-respectability. After that he pottered about in the workshop, but he couldn't get down to anything solid because he had to keep clean, and also he was watching for Marla. After eons of waiting he saw her walk down to the pool, so he dashed out and called, "Hi, come on over."

She looked more beautiful than ever, and he didn't even mind that she had on slacks. On her, he thought, slacks actually looked human.

"Had your breakfast?" he asked.

She smiled and her round blue eyes grew rounder. "There's nobody up yet over there. It doesn't matter; lots of mornings I don't eat."

"You come with me," he commanded. "Those Emmerses make me sick."

He led her into the dining room, poured orange juice and coffee, put bread in the toaster and started strips of bacon in the electric grill. He watched her eat.

"You were so nice to me last night," Marla said. "Oh, I'll never forget it. They're going to play poker tonight because Mr. Kinnell likes poker better than bridge. I just dread it. I know I'll lose again."

"Tell 'em you don't know how to play, and they'll give you out—but quick."

"Oh, I couldn't do that. I don't know how to play. But I always lose. I just dread it," she repeated forlornly. "I had a hunch I'd better not come with Ann, but I didn't have a single date this week end, and it's so grim in the city when you haven't any dates. And she was so kind to ask me."

Kevin looked past her and saw Uncle Hiffy standing in the hall in his dressing gown. He made a gesture for silence and disappeared.

"Let's hop it," said Kev. "Unless you'd like another cup of coffee."

He explained about his car. "It does look sort of queer, but it runs like a streak. You don't mind its having no top, do you?"

"Oh, I guess I can tie my scarf over my hair. I should think your uncle might give you a nice little sedan."

Kevin whooped. "I wouldn't trade this job for a million sedans. I built this one."

"Oh, you didn't! Cars have to be built in factories."

"I built that right in Uncle Hiffy's garage out of stuff I latched on to in junk yards mostly. It can do twenty-three miles to a gallon!"

They went through town and down the boulevard a few miles and turned into a green quiet way among small farms and orchards and woodlands, and at last they reached the river and took the winding road along its bank. "Oh, it's divine!" said Marla. "It's simply divine! Oh, I wish we might ride on like this forever."

Something strange constricted Kevin's throat and breast, and he couldn't look at her. He managed to choke out, "I w-wish so too," but in such a low voice that she couldn't have heard, for she made no reply.

After a while she said, "I ought to have left word where I was going."

"That's all right. Uncle Hiffy saw us go; he'll tell the Emmerses."

"Oh, where was he? Oh, I'd have liked to talk with him again, he's nice."

"He was looking out his window. Yeah, Uncle Hiffy's swell. He and I get along great." He took a shy sidelong look and

saw how the air had blown delicate color into her cheeks. "Jeeps, you're pretty!"

"Oh, it doesn't get a girl anything, just being pretty," said Marla. "You have to push and pull and beat people down to get along." Her tone saddened. "A girl has to be awfully smart and keep her eye on the main chance every second. That's a strain—see what I mean?"

"It must be," Kev said sympathetically.

Marla went on, "I do wish I didn't have to go back to the Emmerses'. It gives me the shivers about playing poker tonight. I've already borrowed from you—you were so kind—I wouldn't like not to play; it might get around that I wasn't fun on week ends. There were lots of people at that party where I met Ann, and if she tells them—and maybe I shouldn't say so, but I think she's the kind who'd tell things about another girl—"

"But what does it matter?" asked Kevin, puzzled and unsure.

"Oh, a girl has to keep in circulation all the time; if she drops out she's done for. Besides Ann's lending me a bathing suit when we go to the beach, so I have to join in with everything. But what I'll do if I lose, I just dread to think."

"Uncle Hiffy gave me half his winnings last night. I'll give it to you just in case you have bad luck tonight—"

"Oh, no, No, indeed. I couldn't let you give it to me, but if you'd be an angel and loan it to me, well then—maybe I'd have some luck. I mean, if you go into a game broke you always come out broker, but if you start with money—oh, everybody knows money always attracts more money. You're too sweet to me; you are, really! I'll pay you back the very first instant I can, and if I don't lose all of it I'll pay back what I have left before I go home. Wasn't it lucky your uncle was so generous!"

"Uncle Hiffy's a prince."

Marla gave him a deep look, a lovely look. "You're a prince, too, I'd say."

That look made Kev forget all about the electric jig saw; for what was any gadget in comparison to being a prince to Marla!

**T**HE money went into her pocket as deftly as last night's ten had gone into her bag. "You're so kind," she murmured. Then, "I suppose we ought to turn back. Are you going to the beach?"

Sunday morning at the beach with the dreary crowd had been Kevin's pet hate. Today he said eagerly, "Sure I'm going; I wouldn't miss it."

"Is your uncle going?"

"I dunno. He keeps no tabs on me, nor on him. I guess he'll go."

"Ann says he's a settled bachelor. But he isn't old!"

"He's old all right; he's forty-two."

"Mr. Jackson's a bachelor, too, isn't he? He seems awfully nice. We were talking a little after you left last night."

"He ought to be ashamed to speak to you. All those wild bids!"

Marla disregarded these strictures on A. B. Jackson's faults. She leaned back and hummed a tune. "Oh, I do wonder how now," she said. "Now I can play poker and not be scared. I'm sure to have luck now."

"You ought always to have luck," declared Kevin ferociously. "It's a shame that you have to worry about a little money."

"Oh, life's like that. I mean, there's always something to worry about. Either you have a tiresome date, or you have a lovely date and some other girl goes to work on him and you lose him, or you need a new hat, or the landlord bothers you, or you don't get a job you expected, or else you do get it and they hold up

your pay—I don't know how I stand it." "Haven't you got any family—or any home to go to?"

Marla drooped all over. "I've got a home all right, but I can't go there; my family don't understand me; they don't even try!"

"Jeeps, that's rotten. Think of not understanding you!"

Marla changed the subject. "You've been so kind to me, lending me more money and taking me for this divine ride. Look, don't tell your uncle I borrowed it, will you? Don't tell anybody! I'd be so embarrassed if people knew. It's just between us, isn't it?"

"Of course I won't tell. Don't you worry."

"Oh, you are sweet!" She put her hand on his, and the rest of the way home he drove in a rosy daze akin to mild intoxication.

**UNCLE HIFFY** was reading the paper when he came in. Kevin said, "Thought I'd go down to the beach with you. Don't you think we ought to start?"

"Plenty of time. Want the funnies or the science notes?"

"Noke. Look, Uncle Hiffy, you going to sit at that poker game tonight?"

"I'm asked. But I don't care much for poker unless it's stag."

"That's what I want to talk to you about. Marla's got the jitters because she thinks she's sure to lose, and I thought maybe you'd look out for her a little."

"You can't do anything much for anybody in a poker game, fellas, not even for yourself. I'm not slick enough to deal her foolproof hands, you know. Why does she play if she's afraid of losing?"

"She's scared they'll think she's a poor sport if she backs out."

Uncle Hiffy threw down the paper. "Oh, well, let's go and have our swim before it's crowded. And tell Marla not to worry about something that hasn't happened."

As Uncle Hiffy and Kevin departed beachwards they saw some of the Emmer's party on the terrace, apparently waiting to start. Marla was not there.

"Wonder what happened?" said Kevin. "Maybe Ann wouldn't lend her a bathing suit."

"Say," said Uncle Hiffy, folding himself into Kevin's car, "you're working up quite an interest in this Marla. What about it—is she a dream-boat or a swoon-queen or something?"

"She's different. Most girls can lick you at tennis or pretty nearly, and handle a boat and drive a car, and take you at rummies. They know all the answers; they get around, but—"

"Marla doesn't get around? I'd've said she was doing all right."

"Noke; you're way off. She—well, she has it tough. Jeeps, Uncle Hiff, you only have to look at her to see how helpless she is! What's the matter with you? I thought you knew all about women."

"I guess I'm slipping. Old age is getting me."

"Don't you like Marla, Uncle Hiffy?"

"I don't know her well enough to say. I suppose I'm a little surprised at the effect she's had on you. You usually go for the kind you just described, younger and kind of hefty and bouncy and keen on sports—more Gobi's style."

"Gobi! That brat! I take her around with me the way you'd take another fellow. Gobi's not a girl! Gobi's nothing but an—extension of my activities. Marla's not any older, but she's different."

"Dark-haired little beauties are apt to bring out the protective instinct of the youthful male—I grant you that. Sometimes it's their line."

Kevin raised his voice in anger. "You talk about Marla as if she was a tramp!"

"Nuts!" said Uncle Hiffy calmly. "You never heard me speak disrespectfully of a woman in your life. You're the one who calls names—Evie Emmer's is an old bat-axe, and Ann's a so-and-so; Gobi, that inoffensive child who is devoted to you, is a brat. And you thought up those epithets, not I. Quit hectoring me."

They had a fine swim and were back on the beach before the Emmer's party arrived. A. B. Jackson was with them, attached to Marla like a barnacle. Kevin hoped she'd give the old curio a quick brush-off, but she was very sweet and polite to him; now and then she'd smile at Kevin, and it was super when she did.

She looked detectable in Ann's blue swim suit, but she couldn't swim—just paddled about in the shallows and ran in if a big roller threatened.

Kevin stayed beside her, but A. B. Jackson stayed on her other side, grabbing her in such a ridiculous way that Kevin finally went back to the beach.

Gobi came loping along an unpleasing sight with her body fat and skin burned black. "Hi," she yelled, "race you out to the second bar and back!"

She went out by half a length and gloated. "I knew I could! There's somep wrong with your crawl, Slats!"

"I didn't expect myself," said Kevin. "And besides my displacement is twice yours, which makes it easier for me."

"You and your old physics! The matter with you is you've gone all soppy over that Marla. It's ridiculous! She's old enough to be your mother." She laughed too loudly.

"You don't know any more about biology than you do about physics. She's no older than I am."

"She's twenty-three," snapped Gobi. "Go on, ask her if she isn't. She's over there by herself; ask her right now."

**MARLA** was alone. A. B. Jackson had disappeared, and she was sitting alone in the shade of the lifeguard boat. Kevin dropped down flat beside her and shut his eyes in ecstasy.

"Oh, hello!" she said sweetly. "I was talking to your uncle just now; he's awfully kind. He's just like you that way. I'd have to say I'd broken a tooth and gone home last night if it hadn't been for you, and if I'd gone I'd've missed our lovely drive and this divine beach."

"You ought to learn to swim," said Kevin, purring within. "Let me take you out between the bars and teach you. It's still as a milpond out there."

"Oh, heavens, no!" she cried. "I'd get salt water under my cap, and then I'd have to go to the hairdresser the first thing when I got back, and he costs so terribly! I never go till I simply have to, and I can't go to a cheaper place. A girl gets no chances in a cheap place."

"Chances for what?" asked Kevin doubtfully.

"Oh, all the big hairdressers know what's going on, and they'll tell you when there's a job you might land—if they like you and think you'll do them credit, I mean: modeling jobs, hostess jobs—oh, lots of things."

"I hate the way you have to live; it sounds so awful."

Marla laughed aloud as she had done in the car. "Oh, you really are priceless! Of course a girl gets in jams, and sometimes I do wish I had more nerve and push, but it's all so exciting. You never know when you'll get your big break. That's why you have to be so careful." She touched his wet head with her soft little hand. "Kev, you didn't tell your uncle that you lent me that money, did you?"

He roused indignantly. "Of course not,



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I didn't tell anybody, not a soul. Why—did he say something?"

"No—oh, but he did mention the poker tonight."

"Aw, I asked him to look out for you. I said that you were afraid you'd lose."

"Oh, that's that," he said. "That's all right. I understand now. I'd be awfully ashamed if he knew I'd borrowed from you. Twice! But I'll pay you back if I have to do it a penny at a time. That's the way I make my money, in pennies." Her tone changed. "Are you going to Mr. Jackson's cocktail party this afternoon?"

"For Pete's sake—old A. B. throwing a party? That's comic! No, he didn't ask me." He tried to be careless, but he wasn't.

"He asked me—Ann and me, I mean. Ann says he's got a lovely big house."

"It's awful stodgy, his house; his party'll be stodgy too. Why don't you give it a miss, and we'll go sailing?"

"Oh, I have to go. Ann expects me to. A girl has to think about what her hostess wants her to do."

He gazed at her, dazzled. She was so beautiful! Gobi was an idiot to say she was twenty-three; she didn't look more than sixteen. "The sun makes you look like one of these barley-sugar lollipops," he stammered. "You haven't b-browned up a bit."

"I soaked myself in preventive lotion. Oh, I'd simply die if I got tanned. It would be worse than getting salt water in my hair."

ALL HE wanted to do, ever and always, was to hear her voice going on and on and to look up at her lovely features. And then her scent—like flowers. He heard himself saying, "Uncle Hiffy says you've got expensive perfume."

"I should hope! A girl who uses cheap scent is just definitely stupid. Perfume's a big part of the effect, you know."

Kev didn't know, but it didn't matter. Nothing mattered except that he was near her.

"I'll drive you to town tomorrow morning if you want," he said.

Marla's eyes were wavy. "I'll let you know," she said. "I have to go in pretty early; there might be word about some photographs of the winter models, or some other work. Ann said she might be going in when I did, too."

"Can't you duck Ann and let me take just you?" said Kevin. "I can go as early as you want; six o'clock, any time."

"I'll phone you sometime tonight. I'll know then. Oh, you're so kind!"

Even Emmers gathered up her party, and when Marla had gone, Kevin lay still in his tranced dream. Uncle Hiffy closed him, and he gathered up his towel and robe and they started home.

Kev said just one thing when they got out of the car. "You hit it about her perfume; she says it's expensive."

Uncle Hiffy didn't answer.

At lunch Kevin asked, "You going to A.B.'s party? He didn't ask me."

"I think it's for the Kinnells and the older crowd."

"He asked Marla."

"Suppose I phone and tell him I'm bringing you?"

"I don't want to go that way; I think he might have asked me." He got up and stood uncertainly. "Look, Uncle Hiff—how old do you think Marla is?"

"It's hard to tell; maybe twenty—maybe twenty-five."

"You're nuts. She couldn't be that old."

"She may be older in experience than in years," said Uncle Hiffy, troubled.

"Yeah, that's it. She has a hard time."

He went on to the workshop. He might, he thought, finish up a couple of oil tests. He fiddled with the flasks but finally put

them back in the rack. It was very hot in the little room and he had risen early, so at last he stretched out on the bench and sleep overtook him.

When Uncle Hiffy was ready to go to the Jackson party, he came down to the workshop and stood in the doorway, looking with affection and pity at the young defenseless face and the sprawling saggery boy's figure.

"Damn sex!" muttered Uncle Hiffy as he went away. "A kid with a real brain—a good kid I could wring her neck."

IT WAS late when Kevin woke and went into the deserted house. He knew he must stay there and wait for that message from Marla telling him her decision for the morning.

He moaned about the house restlessly. Out on the sun porch it was dark, and the air was fresh from the garden, so he slouched into a big chair and went back over the day, item by item: Marla's profile beside him in the car, her deep sweet upward look at him, her naming him a prince; her sag when she spoke of her family. Then there was the beach and her curving delicate slimness, her tiny feet, the touch of her hand on his head.

He remembered nothing to displease, nothing to question or criticize, nothing he would have changed. He forgot that the phone did not ring. He was high in an innocent shining chaos of desire that had taken no real shape; of tenderness without direction, of boy's first love without reason, foolish, sublime.

Gobi's voice brought him down with a bump. "Kev, you in there?" she called. She stumbled into the dark house. "Kev?"

"I'm out here," he said crossly. "What you want?"

She had on a white dress, stockings, slippers. Her hair was combed, the rough ends curled and tucked under.

"Jeeps, it's cool out here," she said. "I don't want anything special. I was lonesome." She sat down close to him. "I'm sorry I was nasty down on the beach."

"That's all right. I didn't mind."

"You could've beat me swimming if you'd tried."

"Of course I could." His eyes, accustomed to the darkness, could see her clearly now. "What's all the rigging for?" he asked.

"I wanted to show off," said Gobi honestly. "I wanted Ann and that Marla to see I wasn't a slurp. How do I look?"

"Why you look nice," he said, surprised that it was so.

"How's about sailing tomorrow?"

He replied before he thought. "Okay—unless I have to drive to town."

"The radio says clear tomorrow with light winds, just right for sailing. Jeeps, I'll be glad then these icky people clear out. Ann's going too. She and Marla are going together on the nine-twelve. Those gruesome Kinnells are going on the eight-thirty-two, thank goodness."

Kev was stunned. So he wasn't to take Marla to town! She'd settled it with Ann and hadn't phoned. Then he reassured himself; there was plenty of time yet to hear from her. Oh, yes, plenty and plenty. She'd promised; she wouldn't let him down. Only he was let down. Terribly.

Gobi got up. "I'm going," she said. "I'm glad you thought I looked nice. And I'm glad you were here tonight for I felt low—I kind of—kind of depend on you, believe it or not. G'night. Be seeing you."

Kevin got up, his thoughts wavering away from Marla over to Gobi. Gobi wasn't a bad little egg, and it was decent of her to own up that he could beat her swimming—as of course, he could. But Marla—somehow he couldn't get back into that earlier rapture. . . . She might have phoned . . . she had promised . . .

He heard Uncle Hiffy coming in, and with him A. B. Jackson, no less.

"Tim dry as an old bone," said A. B. "Got any ginger ale—something to get the taste of that dinner out of my mouth?"

"I'll find something," said Uncle Hiffy. "Wait a minute."

The pantry door creaked. A. B. called through it jovially. "Kinnell and Emmers are sure as a couple of carbuncles. Eve's sure, too. They're all poor losers. Mrs. Kinnell cleaned up, though, and you and I didn't do so bad. Say, Hif, did that little brunet number give you her hard-luck story and snaffle any cash out of you beforehand?"

Uncle Hiffy had come back; ice and glasses clinked. "No," said Uncle Hiffy. "Of course she knew you were a sucker. What did she like you for?"

A. B. chuckled. "Oh, not much; only twenty. I left sort of to Diana for her losing at bridge last night, so I came through. She gave me the old routine—just a loan and you're so awfully kind. Not very original."

"No," said Uncle Hiffy. "She's not very original. You going to see her in town?"

"Great guns, no!" said A. B., still chuckling. "She's the kind could make you big grief if she really got her claws into you." He banged down his glass. "Slong. Thanks for the drink."

"Thanks for the lift home," said Uncle Hiffy. "Slong."

When Kevin heard A. B. Jackson slam the front door he went in. Uncle Hiffy turned. "What's the matter?" he asked. "You sick?"

"A. B. Jackson is a liar—and a heel! And you—you let him say things about her, Uncle Hiffy—"

Uncle Hiffy put his hand in his pocket and brought out folding money. He separated one mended bill. "I gave you that for your jag saw," he said. "She lost ten dollars and paid up with that."

"I gave—I loaned it to her because she needed it. She was so scared to play; she was so—" The words died on his lips.

"It's no use, Kev; you know better," said Uncle Hiffy.

Kev dropped beside the table, put his head down on his arms, hiding his face. Uncle Hiffy went on, his voice slow, casual, leveling down the emotional height of the moment. "She's not a bad character, Kev; she's just light stuff. She's not a square, I know. There've always been women like her; they're man's vanity and get what they can that way. A man mustn't take them seriously, that's the point. If he does, he may get hurt."

Kev's head did not lift. Uncle Hiffy started to go upstairs. "You'll take it in your stride," he said, still casually. "You were sorry for her; you loaned her some money she won't pay back. But it wasn't too high a price to pay for learning this particular routine, as A. B. calls it. You'll be on to it when you meet it again. . . . Put the lights out when you come up, will you? Good night, fella."

AT THE head of the stairs the indifference lifted off Uncle Hiffy's face. He went into his room but stood just inside the door, taut, listening.

Kev raised his head at last. It was queer; he wasn't thinking of Marla now, but of that brat Gobi. Gobi wasn't light stuff; Gobi was a square shooter every time. She said—she said she depended on him. He pushed back his chair, clicked the electric switch.

Uncle Hiffy threw up his head and snapped his fingers noiselessly in joyous relief. The boy was coming upstairs, not hesitantly, not discouragedly. He was walking like a man, resolved and steady.

THE END

mourners were Bridget and Madge, following the hearse in Madge's victoria, both dressed in black, Madge wearing more crepe than had ever been seen before in Silver City. The sermons were read by Father O'Malley, the little old Irishman who was priest of the tin-roofed adobe church where the railroad workers went to Mass. It was an unorthodox proceeding on the part of the old priest, but it was not the first unorthodox action of a Roman Catholic priest in that frontier country.

Madge paid for a Mass and insisted upon paying half the price of the tombstone. They ordered one of white marble, inscribed simply "Alonzo da Ponte, born January 23, 1833 at Trieste, Austria. Died November 3, 1881, Silver City, Colorado. Home at Last After the Long Journey." It had been a long, disreputable voyage from Trieste to Silver City. Bridget wasn't even certain that Alonzo da Ponte was his real name, but she thought that probably God would know who the tired old man was when he arrived at the gates of heaven.

For two nights she did not sing on the stage of the gambling room, and on the third night, when she came off the stage, she found Buck waiting for her in Madge's gold room. He stood, sullen and awkward, leaning against the upright gilt piano. He was, as usual, dressed up in his ill-fitting store clothes, and at first sight she was glad to see him.

He said, "I was right sorry to hear about the old man a-dyin'," and moved across the room toward her. It was then that she noticed something peculiar about him, that he walked unsteadily and that his eyes were bloodshot, his jaw thrust forward in an ugly way. She thought:

Madge doesn't know he's up here. He must have come up the outside stairway. "Thank you," she said.

Then she noticed that craftily he had maneuvered his big body between her and the door to the hall.

"But that ain't all, Miss Nicety-Nice." She didn't answer him, and suddenly she was afraid.

"Now the old man is dead, I guess you can marry me right off," he said.

She managed to put the gilt table between herself and him. "I'm not marrying anybody!"

"It ain't gonna do you any good to get behind that there table, and it ain't any good tryin' to yell because Madge isn't hear you. That there door behind you is locked, and I'm gonna lock this one."

He turned quickly, locked the door by which she had come in and put the key in his pocket.

"Now, Miss Nicety-Nice, we're gonna settle this. You've been teasin' me long enough. Buck Meaney ain't used to bein' teased by wimmin. Wimmin don't fool around Buck Meaney."

She saw now that he was not only drunk; he was a little crazy. He wasn't any longer the big, awkward brute who had won the kind of pitying affection she might have had for a bad boy. This was the real Buck Meaney, and he didn't make a pretty specimen. She was frightened, but she wasn't as frightened as she was angry. She picked up a vase off the table and said, "You keep away from me, you dirty ape!"

He started toward her, and she slipped to the other side of the table. In his drunkenness he had forgotten the bell rope. Her only chance was to get to the rope, pull it and then get back behind the

table again. She moved a little in the opposite direction, hoping to lure him far enough away so that she could reach the rope. The feint worked for a moment, but then he saw what she was up to and acted quickly with all the craft of a half-mad drunk. He got to the bell rope first and jerked it off the wall.

"And you ain't gonna use that either." Then he took off his coat and threw it on the floor. "Now Miss Dove of Tralee, we're gonna see who's boss around here."

This time as he came toward her, he simply picked up the big table and threw it into the corner. At the same moment she let fly with the vase. It struck him on the head and broke. The blow stunned him for a moment. He put his hand to his head, and it came away covered with blood.

A maniacal look came into his eyes, and he started toward her. "You think you can knock out Buck that way? That's the kind of thing Buck likes. If that's what you want, you're gonna get it."

As he came toward her she dodged and, like a cornered mouse, started running along the wall of the room. Twice she managed to escape him, and as he started toward her for the third time she turned quickly and dived headlong into the Turkish Cozy Corner. As she landed, the whole thing came down on top of her in a mass of draperies, spears, shields, tassels and pampas grass. A moment later she felt Buck's big, hairy hands groping for her, and she managed to roll out of his way, wrapping herself more and more tightly in draperies. She could hear his drunken cursing, and once she felt his hot breath on her face, but the more they struggled in the complicated wreckage the safer she became. In a



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minute or two she was swathed like a mummy from head to foot.

Then, just as she became so entangled that she could no longer move, she became aware that he wasn't there any longer. Faintly she could hear sounds of violence and crashing, but they were not near her. They were somewhere else in the big room. As she managed to disentangle herself sufficiently to achieve vision with one eye, she witnessed an awesome spectacle.

The door leading to the balcony had been shattered, its paneling splintered from top to bottom, and in the middle of the room two big, black, hairy men were fighting. One was Buck, his face covered with blood; the other was old P.J., panting and puffing, his coat torn half off his back. It was a terrible fight in which slugging, scratching, biting and eye-gouging all played a part.

Bridget watched fascinated. She saw Buck take a gigantic swing which landed on the corner of P.J.'s heavy jaw. The old man's head swung back; he fell to the floor and lay still. Buck aimed a half-hearted drunken kick at the prostrate body, pushed the long black hair out of his eyes and began to swear. At the same moment Madge appeared in the shattered doorway. She was in full evening dress, very décolleté, with the diamond butterfy in her hair—and carrying a shotgun.

She raised the gun and pressed it right at the middle of Buck's abdomen. The sight of the gun and the pressure of the muzzle against his middle seemed to sober him up. Out of long habit, he raised his hands, covered with blood, over his head. "Now!" said Madge. "Get out of here! Keep them hands up and back out that door!"

Slowly Buck obeyed her. He backed through the shattered door, along the balcony and slowly down the stairs. Madge following with the muzzle of the gun still pressed against his belly. By the time the pair had reached the bottom of the stairs, their progress had been noted by a half-dozen gamblers and three or four drunks at the bar. The progress backward continued across the big room between the tables, and bit by bit all play stopped so that the customers might watch the Hoots and jeers arose, and when they reached the swinging door, Madge gave an extra hearty poke with the gun barrel and sent Buck backward into the street.

Then, turning, she swung the shotgun under her arm, as if she were returning from a quail hunt, and made her way back through the cheering drunks and gamblers, up the stairway and back into the gold room.

BRIDGET, having meanwhile disentangled herself from the Cozy Corner, was bending over P.J. She had loosened his collar and was bathing his face with cold water. Madge laid the shotgun on a chair and knelt beside P.J., slapping his face violently. In a moment he opened his eyes and sat up, looking about him. Then he said, "Where is he?" Groggily he got to his feet and said, "I'll beat the hell out of him. Where is he?"

But Madge led him over to a chair. "There now," she said. "Sit there, and I'll get you some brandy."

She took a bottle from the cupboard and poured him a glass filled to the brim. "It's all right," she said. "I threw him out. He ain't likely to come back here again. If he does he'll get a bellyful of buckshot."

Then she turned to Bridget who was sitting on a chair now, white and shaking. "You were smart, honey, to go for the Cozy Corner."

Then she noticed the crowd standing in

the doorway and said, "Get the hell out of here, all of you!" She picked up the shotgun again and the crowd of mocking, leering faces disappeared; then she shut what remained of the shattered door. She didn't want them to see the shame of an old man whose own son had beat him up. P.J. sat there drinking the brandy and shaking his head in a dazed way like an old bull who has been driven out of the herd. It had happened at last, and soon everybody in Silver City would know it—after having chastised his sons for years, the rule of the titanic old man was over. "That's right buckeroo!" said Madge, like a mother addressing a naughty child who had hurt himself. "Drink it right down!"

Then she turned to Bridget. "A little of this wouldn't hurt you, honey," she said and poured out a glass. "I guess it was lucky we came along when we did. When I found the door locked, I knew something was wrong. So P.J. just smashed it open."

Then she noticed Buck's coat and ten-gallon hat and crossing the room she picked them up and walked to the window. With one hand she opened it and with the other she threw the coat and hat into the street.

AT SEVEN the next morning P.J. made his way back up the hill to the Castle. One eye was blacked, and there were long scratches down one side of his face where the drunken Buck's fingers, attempting the eye-gouging technique, had slipped.

Ellie-May said, "Good morning, P.J.," casually, as she had done every day for years, but a second look at her followed him into his room. He sat down heavily on the bed as she closed the door behind her. He sat there like a discouraged, broken man, and she said, "Well, what have you been into now?"

He looked at her out of his one good eye. "It was your son who done this, Ellie-May."

"Which one?" she asked.

"Buck."

"Well, he's the biggest. He's the most like you. I felt this was comin' on for a long time. You can't go on treatin' big men like they were still in diapers. Where did it happen?"

"At the Eldorado," said P.J. "He had locked that little girl singer in a room. I had to break down the door, and when I saved the girl and tried to shoot him out, he hit me." There was almost a whimper in his voice.

Considering the story for a moment, Ellie-May began to fill in the gaps out of experience, and she came very close to the truth. She couldn't see P.J. in the role of the White Knight saving the lady no matter how hard she tried. She knew instinctively that this was a fight over a woman and that P.J. had been licked.

"Everybody in Silver City knows about it," said P.J. "There was a lot of 'em lookin' in. They're all goin' around this morning saying, 'Dja hear? Buck Meaney beat up his old man last night!'"

"Who got rid of him?" asked Ellie-May, following the line of the story like a prosecuting attorney.

"Madge," he said. "With a shotgun." "She didn't shoot him, did she?"

"No. Just paraded him out the door with the muzzle stuck in his belly."

Ellie-May considered this for a moment and then said, "Well, Buck must have looked awful foolish. It looks to me like you came off about even." Then, as usual, she embraced action rather than talk. She said, "Get off your clothes and go to bed, and I'll get some beefsteak for your eye."

"A fine thing to happen!" he mumbled. "And election day only day after tomorrow."

"Well, I guess you won't want to be

seen around between now and then. The less you're seen the less talk there'll be. Now you get off your clothes and get into bed."

She left him then and went down to the kitchen. She wasn't upset by the scandal. Gossipy was unimportant save that it might diminish P.J.'s prestige and contribute to the defeat of his candidate and the wrecking of his power. But, after all, she was hoping for just that. She had even been working for it, with the help of her little black notebook. She wouldn't need to tell any of Henry's men about the brawl. Undoubtedly the news was already spreading all over the state. What mattered to her was a very simple thing. It was that in the old man sitting on the edge of the big walnut bed, she had seen for a moment something of the young man she had married, the man who had come to her with his discouragements and troubles, the man she had fallen in love with and married, the man who was a little like a small boy. That was the P.J. she had loved before the intoxication of success and power had turned him into a crook and a bully.

When she returned with the beefsteak he was in bed, smoking a cigar. At sight of him she repeated what she had said a thousand times in the last few years, "You're gonna fall asleep and set fire to yourself out of these times. Now set up and hold still while I fix your eye."

She was leaning over him tying a knot in the bandage when the explosion occurred.

IT CAME first as a distant tremor and mounted quickly into a rumbling violence which rattled the windows and shook the pictures on the wall. The bandage slipped from her hand, and P.J.'s head struck the solid walnut top of the bed. For a second they were silent and then through the window Ellie-May saw where the explosion had come from. At a spot about halfway up the mountains there rose a great, billowing cloud of white and gray smoke. Ellie-May cried, "It's at the mine."

P.J. sat up quickly. "The mine!" Then he put one leg out of bed and stood up in his nightshirt. "I gotta get up there," he said.

She moved toward the door and stood with her back to it. He was already pulling on his trousers. "You ain't goin' up there," she said quietly.

He paused with one leg thrust into the trousers, and she continued, "If that's what I think it is you ain't goin' near the mine. They'd kill you on sight."

"Kill me?"

"They've been gettin' madder and madder because you wouldn't spend the money to put the mine in shape. I knew it was goin' to happen, and now it's happenin'!! Unless you want to get killed you stay right in this room."

"I ain't afraid!" said P.J.

"It ain't a question of your bein' afraid," said Ellie-May. "It's just a question of you gettin' the daylight beat out of you. D'you want that to happen right on top of this other thing? Are you crazy?"

Slowly he let the trousers fall to the floor. Then he moved slowly to the window and looked out. Fire had quickly followed the explosion, and flames were leaping higher and higher. There was a new sound now. It was a confused shouting that came from the town itself. Ellie-May, at the other window, saw people running out of houses and bars and lunchrooms. They were jumping on ponies or driving off in buckboards, all headed toward the road leading to the mines.

Presently she turned away from the window. "Now get back to bed, P.J. and stay there. Let me get that beefsteak back on your eye. I've got to get down to

the Emporium Millie and I have a job to do."

Like a little boy we got back into bed. She fastened the piece of steak firmly over the bruised eye and hurried out to get the horses and every available vehicle ready to transport the injured and dead

IT WASN'T only that Ellie-May was at heart a good politician; she also had great talents as an executive and organizer, and she and Millie Hirshbein represented all the organization there was to cope with a disaster such as that which fell upon Silver City that bright November morning.

The disaster had come at the worst time, when the morning shift was going to work. Something had set off the explosions in the main building, where the dynamite never should have been stored. Fire followed the explosion.

Once Ellie-May discovered the magnitude of the disaster from the stream of wounded and dying already coming down the mountain, one thing became clear—she and Millie could not manage things alone. She had speculated sometimes upon just whom she would call for help if a disaster occurred, and always she had arrived at the same conclusion—Madge! She could handle men better than any man or woman in the town, and she had had long and thorough practice in handling hysterical women. Now, Ellie-May saw, was the time to call on Madge.

She sent Millie armed with bandages and salves up to the mines, and then, without hesitation, went up the covered stairway.

She found Madge in the process of changing from a dressing gown trimmed in marabout into a durable heavy brown cloth. The two women did not even trouble to exchange good mornings.

"You'd better go right up to the mine and help out Millie," said Ellie-May. "That's where the confusion is. It'll need some boosin' up there, and Millie is goin' to have her hands full just handagin'."

"Sure," said Madge. "That's what I had in mind." She put a snood over her brazy yellow hair, fastened a holster and revolver around her waist and she was ready.

"I can use the downstairs here," said Ellie-May, "and the upstairs too."

"Sure," said Madge. "Use it any way you want." She started out the door and then turned. "The old man had better keep out of sight," she said.

"Yes, I've taken care of that," said Ellie-May. "It's up to you to see to what Millie wants. I'll take care of things down here."

"You can count on me," said Madge, and went down the stairs.

At the hitching rail, two or three ponies still stood, unclaimed. Selecting the sturdiest of the three, Madge set off at a gallop along Eudora Street.

ELLIE-MAY found Mrs. Birdwell and the old porter and a couple of hysterical girls and bartender and set them to work turning the Eldorado into an emergency station. The whole thing she put in charge of Mrs. Birdwell. Then she thought of the Opera House. There was a lot of room there, and for once that big warehouse could be of some use.

Until well into the afternoon they were busy laying out the dead and carrying down the wounded, and after the first emergency was met, new tasks arose. There was a train coming from Denver with doctors and nurses and supplies. There was the question of food. When the worst was over, Ellie-May set up an office at one of the counters near the door of the Emporium. Madge took over the

offices of sheriff, and Bridget became a kind of messenger. Millie was everywhere with water and drugs and bandages.

It was only then, after the first of the confusion had been reduced to a semblance of order, that it occurred simultaneously to Ellie-May and Madge that the next day was Election Day, and that plenty of trouble could be expected. And so, late that night after the Denver doctors had begun to take over, they organized a committee of vigilantes. And Madge's army set to look for the sheriff. He was P.J.'s man, and like P.J. he was hiding out for fear of being mobbed.

It was Madge with her intimate knowledge of Silver City who selected the committee. She chose tough ones she could count on, a score of them—bartenders, cowhands and prospectors—and set them to work. When she gathered them together she delivered a kind of address.

She said, "Now, men, you know there's gonna be plenty of brawlin' and fightin' round here. Things has got to be kept in order and it's up to you. There's a lot of hurt and dyin' people around here, and we can't have any more trouble. The elections has got to be held because they're sacred. If you want any instructions you'll find me at the old stomin' ground. Now go out and do your duty, and if anybody gets too ornery, just shoot. Don't try to kill 'em! Just put 'em out of action. There's a lot of good men who get ornery as hell on Election Day."

THE sun had fallen behind the great mountains and the whole valley was already slipping into the shadows on the evening of Election Day when Dick's pony turned down from the high ranges. Dick had been riding all day in the hope of getting to Silver City before nightfall, but the pony had gone lame late in the afternoon and all hope of hurrying him had to be abandoned.

Dick had made up his mind and now was impatient to carry through his decision. He was headed straight for the Eldorado. He meant to find Bridget and ask her at once to marry him.

From the beginning he had planned not to get to Silver City until sundown. That had been Henry Caldwell's advice. Henry said there would be trouble between his supporters and the cohorts of P.J., how bad he did not know, but if P.J.'s outfit felt the election was going against them, they would resort to every kind of measure—even to stealing the ballot boxes. Under the circumstances young Dick had better keep out of the way while the balloting was in progress.

Despite the advice of Henry Caldwell, love and the hot young blood of youth kept driving Dick on, until the pony went lame. Now, as he rode slowly along the edge of the rushing river in the early dusk, he knew that he would not arrive until well after dark.

As he reached the lower end of the canyon where the trail past the mine led into Silver City, he became aware of a strange, rose-colored glow in the sky. It resembled one of the famous Colorado sunsets at that point before the color changes imperceptibly into the deep transparent blue of night in the high mountains. But this rosiness was not so much beautiful as terrifying, for the sunset was not in the west, but in the east, and presently Dick thought there was a great fire somewhere. It must be in Silver City.

He made a good time as he was able until he reached the point where the trail bounded a shoulder of the mountain and Silver City came into view. Here and there a building was burning, but the fire which illuminated all the sky came from one place halfway up the slope above

the town. He knew now what it was. The high flames, leaping from the windows, illuminating and silhouetting the whole crumpling structure of the Castle.

Dick dismounted, tossed the reins over the pony's head and started running the two miles or more that separated him from the stricken town.

THE fights began almost at once after the polls had opened. In the beginning they were mostly small disorders which involved fists and eye-gouging but no shooting. The opponents knew each other on sight, and the followers of Henry Caldwell kept a close watch on P.J.'s faction. Both had headquarters in the town, Henry Caldwell's faction basing on the second story of the building across the street from Mrs. Sower's Boardinghouse and Grand Hotel. P.J.'s from long-established headquarters near the depot. From the very first it was clear that P.J.'s faction was going to be outvoted in the balloting, a fact which only made them uglier. Throughout the morning and until well into the afternoon, things were kept under control largely by the constant patrolling of Madge and her vigilantes.

But there was one element on which none of them had counted, and this was an element which was not permitted to vote—the miners. About two hundred of them were unhurt but in a desperate mood.

For hours after the disaster they had remained scattered and half dazed, some of them looking for friends, some of them drinking in the cheap saloons. And as they found comrades, burned, disfigured and injured, they drank more and more; then they gathered into little groups and began talking violence. They had been used to this now, a do-it-yourself casting out of foreigners who in this new world had to accept whatever treatment was given them. But rebellion had been smoldering for a long time, and the disaster seemed to bring everything to a head. Things reached a climax about the middle of the afternoon of Election Day when one little knot of miners joined another group and then that group joined still another and grew into a mob.

The first clash came in front of the headquarters of P.J.'s faction near the depot when a gang of miners broke all the windows and smashed in the door. By the time they got in the place was empty, for the cohorts of P.J. knew real trouble when they saw it and made their way to safety out of the back door. Down by the river they held a conference and decided that instead of taking to the mountains they would go back and fight. By the time they returned to the headquarters, all the furniture including big framed photographs of P. J. Meany and Wentworth Talmadge had been dumped into the street and the wooden building was going up in flames.

In front of the building where Eudora Street turned off of Depot Square, a mob was gathered about a bonfire. Above it, swung from a telegraph pole, was a dummy figure made of a suit of store clothes stuffed with straw, wearing a placard with the legend: "P. J. Meany."

At sight of this, P.J.'s little army retreated and set up a new course—stealing the ballot boxes and burning them. At the first polling place they ran into opposition from Henry Caldwell's supporters and gun fighting broke out.

It was about this time that Madge appeared at Ellie-May's headquarters in the Emporium. She swung down off her horse and ran up the steps.

She found Ellie-May in the little room where Cyril had tried on the cowhand's clothes that changed his whole life. Inside

the room she closed the door behind her and asked, "Where's P.J.?"

"Up to the Castle!" said Ellie-May.

"Well, you'd better get the old buzzard out of there and quick! They'll be goin' up there next, and if they catch him they're likely to hang him to the nearest lamppost. Get him into one of the bushes and drive him out of town."

"Anybody'd recognize him. You can't hide him."

"Well, get him out, Ellie-May. In another hour, there won't be any holdin' 'em. Get goin'! I've got things to do! They're not goin' to burn down the El Dorado if I have to shoot 'em!"

Then she left the room and hurried out to her pony.

For a moment Ellie-May stood there, trembling a little from excitement. Then she tied her bonnet under her chin and set out for the Castle on foot as fast as she could go. Gettin' P.J. out of town wasn't going to be easy. Because the mountains rose almost straight up behind the Castle he couldn't take to the woods in that direction. She'd have to get him through the town itself, and the town was in the hands of the half-crazed miners and Henry Caldwell's cohorts.

Then just as she reached the portecochere, panting with fatigue, an idea came to her and instead of going into the Castle she went around it to the stables to tell one of the men to hitch a horse to a phaeton.

But she found the stables empty. Not to be defeated, she harnessed to the phaeton "Old Doc," a horse who was a pensioner, put up the top and drove to the hitching rail by the back door of the Castle. There she tied him and ran into the Castle. It too seemed to be empty as she climbed the stairs and felt her way in the darkness along the big hallway. When she got to Eudora's room, she turned in and struck a match from the box she had picked up in the kitchen on the way upstairs. She didn't want to light one of the lamps for fear of attracting attention to the Castle so, holding the match with one hand, she opened the door of Eudora's closet and selected an old velvet dressing gown and a shawl.

Then, as the match burned itself out, she made her way along the dark hallway. P.J.'s room was in darkness, but the sound of his gruff voice came to her from the bed. "Who's there?"

"It's me—Ellie-May. Get out of that bed quick and put on these things."

"What's the matter? What are you talkin' about?" said the voice.

"Don't argue with me. All hell's breakin' loose in town. They're burnin' you in effigy down there, and they'll come up here after the real thing. I ain't foolin', P.J. There ain't nothing can stop 'em!"

"I ain't gonna run away!"

She took the big hairy hand and tried to pull him up. "If you don't wanna get killed, get up out of here!"

P.J. sat up. "I ain't gonna go!" She knew he was still sulking over the humiliation of Buck, over the humiliation of not being able to stride up and down the streets of Silver City the way he used to do. Election Day.

"Listen!" she said. "You hear that?"

The sound of yelling voices, smashing windows and an occasional gunshot arose from the town. She heard the bedsprings creak as P.J. got out of the bed.

Together they moved toward the window, and what she saw was worse than anything she had anticipated. Up the road from the town a mob was moving toward the Castle. They carried election-parade torches and bits of flaming wood, and by the light of the torches P.J. and Ellie-May saw that the big ringleader was carrying about forty feet of rope.

"Come on, you fool; get out of here!"

The sight had put the fear of God into P.J. He said, "All right. Let's git!" and followed her quietly through the hall, down the back stairs and out the back door to where Old Doc stood patiently harnessed to the rail.

The rosy glow from the fires illuminated the figure of the old horse and the phaeton. "Here!" she said. "While I unhitch the horse, you sit on and put the shawl over your head. We gotta drive through the town and anybody'd recognize you right off and grab you."

"I ain't gonna dress in no woman's clothes," he said stubbornly. She knew that for him this was the ultimate and final humiliation, and she used strong language. She said, "Mebbe you'd rather be hangin' by a rope, a-chokin' and riddled like a sieve."

The wild sound of the mob advancing on the other side of the Castle added weight to her words, and while she unhooked Old Doc, P.J. accepted the final indignity. He slipped his arms awkwardly into the velvet dressing gown. "Now put that shawl over your head," said Ellie-May. Thus attired he climbed into the phaeton. Ellie-May took up the whip from the socket and brought it down over the rump of Old Doc so fiercely that the old horse sprang into a gallop. She steered him behind the stables and out back of the corral where they would be invisible to the approaching mob. She headed by a back lane for the river, and the first and most perilous stage of the journey was over. At least they had escaped the mob whose purpose was unmistakable.

As she let Old Doc slow down she said, "If we meet anybody, you're gonna be Eudora. If they stop us, just pull the shawl over your face, put your hands up and be cryin'."

To avoid the town Ellie-May had to take a course through the alley by the Opera House. It seemed safe enough for most of the rioting seemed to be taking place along Eudora Street. They were emerging from the alley into the outskirts of the town when they came suddenly upon a dozen rioters.

One of them grabbed Old Doc by the bridle, and two others came up to the side of the phaeton and peered in.

"Where are you goin'?" asked one of them in a drunken voice.

"We're just a couple of women tryin' to get out of town," said Ellie-May.

"Whose wimmin'?" asked the drunken voice.

"The Mrs. Meaney, and this here is my daughter, Eudora. She's poor, and I'm tryin' to get her out of here on account of her nerves." Then she turned to the figure by her side with its face buried in the shawl, sobbing. "There now, Eudora," she said. "Don't take on so. These gentlemen ain't gonna harm a lady."

"Naw!" said a voice. "We ain't gonna hurt no ladies."

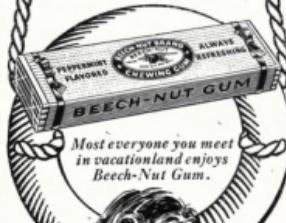
Then another voice said, "No bum around here is gonna lay hands on Ellie-May so long as I'm around—not after what she done for us yesterday."

He was a big Irishman, and he was very drunk, but he was in a chivalrous, protective mood and belligerent about it. He pushed aside the two men who had been peering into the phaeton. He took one careful look at Ellie-May and said, "Yeah, that's her all right! Nobody's gonna touch a hair of her head while I'm around." Then he patted the sobbing, shawl-enshrouded figure gently on the velvet-covered knee. "There now, little girl," he said. "You and your maw just drive right along." Then he bellowed, "Leave go of that bridle, you buzzard," and removing his hat, made a low bow . . .

They were out of the town among the

## Beech-Nut Gum

Everywhere it goes the assurance of Beech-Nut for fine flavor goes with it



cottonwood trees when at last Ellie-May spoke. She said, "It was mighty lucky Eudora grew up to be such a big girl!"

P.J. didn't say anything.

A hundred yards further down the road, Ellie-May pulled in the old horse and said, "I'm goin' back to the Emporium. You get goin' and don't stop goin' till you get to Denver."

She left him there and set out for the Emporium on foot. As she reached the first turn she saw that they had escaped not a second too soon. The Castle was afire, and the flames were coming out of the windows as high as the third floor in the battlemented west turret.

Meanwhile the drunken band that had held up the phaeton had made their way up to Eudora Street. They were considerably puzzled when they broke into the Grand Hotel to find Eudora herself seated in a room on the second floor, watching the burning Castle through a telescope. They were either scared or attributed the apparition to their drunken condition. In awed silence they went away, leaving her to the enjoyment of the grandiose spectacle.

It was very likely the presence of the injured miners at the Eldorado that preserved the establishment from looting and possible destruction. They lay in rows on the floor of the gambling room and in some of the rooms upstairs. Millie Hirsch being divided her time between the Eldorado and the Opera House, and when she was at the Opera House she left Bridget in charge at the Eldorado. Before long Millie discovered that the girl had a great many of the good qualities of Ellie-May with some of the good ones of Madge thrown in. She was calm and efficient, never lost her head and managed to keep the girls of the chorus in order through the worst of the disaster, even slapping one of the hysterical ones back to sanity.

During the two days and one night of rioting that followed the mine disaster, Madge dropped in now and then to see how things were getting on, and her presence served to calm and reassure the suffering men. Madge probably should have been a general or a revolutionist, for it was in this atmosphere of disaster and rioting that her best qualities came out. The more excitement, rioting, disorder, the calmer and more capable she became.

Late on Election Day, she dropped in for a special reason which concerned Bridget. She found the girl lying on her own bed, sleeping for the first time in thirty-six hours. For a moment she stood looking down at her, uncertain whether to wake her or not, even for the most important of news, but at last she spoke gently so as not to startle her.

The girl awoke quickly, sat up and asked, "What is it? What's the matter?"

"It's nothing serious. It's good news! I just seen a man that came over the mountains from Henry Caldwell. Henry sent a message by him."

The girl looked up at her with a puzzled expression. "Henry Caldwell?" she asked.

"Yes, Henry Caldwell. Young Dick's father!"

The remark only appeared to increase the girl's bewilderment, until Madge explained. "Sure, he's young Dick's father. Any bunkhouse would know that. I thought you'd like to know that Dick wasn't no relative of the Old Buzzard. That's private, of course, between you and me!"

"You mean—?"

"That's what I mean. Ellie-May ain't as big a fool as meek as some people think. But what I wanted to tell you was that young Dick is on his way here. and he's gonna ask you to marry him."

It was then, from the look on the girl's

face, which nothing could have suppressed, that Madge really discovered what she wanted to discover. You couldn't have that look without being in love.

"How does Henry Caldwell know?" Bridget asked.

"He talked it all out with Dick. He just wanted you to know so you'd be ready for it when it came and not make any mistakes. If you ask me, sister, you're doin' all right when you get that boy. What d'you think?"

"I think yes."

And then out of the weariness of immediate experiences and out of the long and lonely past, she began to cry. It was a pathetic kind of weeping, wholly uncontrollable, yet filled with happiness. And after a moment Madge began to cry too, and in a strange way it was the same kind of weeping, for her own past and

### "Colorado" has been purchased by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and will one day be seen as a movie

for the years ahead and for the disaster and the men below stairs. It was the kind of weeping in which women indulge together upon cosmic occasions like weddings and births and funerals. Clinging to each other they wept for many minutes, and presently Madge asked, "D'you feel better now, honey?"

"Yes," said Bridget, sniffing.

"I always says there's nothin' like a good cry. I feel a lot more calm myself." She stood up.

Bridget took her hand and said, "Thanks, Madge!" That was all she was able to say.

"It wasn't nothin'," said Madge. "Now get back to sleep."

After she left Bridget lay awake for a long time simply because happiness would not permit her to sleep, but in the end sheer physical weariness won out, and she fell once more into a doze.

How long she slept she did not know, but she was awakened by what at first seemed to be a nightmare.

Standing above her were two figures. They both wore black ten-gallon hats, and their faces were covered by bandanna handkerchiefs. One of them, the black-eyed one, held a gun; the other, who had a flowing red beard that projected far below the handkerchief, carried a length of rope. For a second she did not know whether she was awake or asleep and dreaming, and then one of the men—the one without the beard—said, "Now, don't make any trouble, lady. We're going to take you away." She started to open her mouth to scream but no sound came out.

The man with the black eyes said, "We ain't gonna hurt you." Then he turned to his companion, "Grab her hands, Jake." And quickly, before she could even struggle, they had tied her wrists and ankles tightly with bandanas. Another bandana covered her mouth.

"There," said the dark man. "Truss her up a bit, gentle-like. She's too pretty to hurt."

They had just trussed her up loosely with a length of heavy rope when Minnie, one of the girls from the chorus, appeared in the doorway. The room was dark save for the glow of the fire outside, and Minnie couldn't see very clearly what was going on.

She called out, "Mademoiselle!" and then the man with the red beard grabbed her and put his hand over her mouth. She fought like a wildcat, but it wasn't any good. In less than a minute they had trussed and gagged her and placed her on the floor.

Then the dark man said, "Come on, let's get out of here! Take her feet! I'll take her head!"

As the man with the red beard bent over, he said, "What about the other one? We gonna take her too?"

The dark man said, "Forget her! We got enough trouble with this one." And in a hurt voice, the bearded one said, "I was only thinking about the other boys."

"Come on! Out we go!"

Then feet first they carried Bridget down the outside stairway and quickly across the three feet of sidewalk which separated the bottom of the stairway from a waiting buckboard attached to a pair of ponies. They laid her gently in the bottom of the buckboard and pulled over her a tarpaulin, smelling strongly of sheep. They climbed in and drove off at top speed down Eudora Street.

As he neared the town young Dick advanced with caution. After the experience with the rock on the same road, he had no intention of exposing himself again to attack. The cowhand's clothes were a partial disguise, especially in the darkness, but to protect himself further he pulled the brim of the worn ten-gallon hat lower over his eyes.

As he neared Depot Square he saw crowds about the embers that were all that was left of P.J.'s political headquarters. The light from the isolated fires, and the great flames from the burning Castle, added their light to that of a full moon rising above the cottonwoods.

He made his way cautiously as far as the Eldorado, and there he disappeared up the private stairway to Madge's apartment. In the gold room one oil lamp was lighted; the room was empty. And then in the doorway of Madge's bedroom, he noticed something wriggling on the floor. It was a woman—trussed and gagged.

Quickly he bent down and freed her. She was hysterical, and for several minutes he could get from her nothing that made sense. Then suddenly she said, "They've kidnaped Mademoiselle! Go after 'em quick!"

His heart missed a beat, and then he shook her and asked, "Who kidnaped her? What are you talking about?"

"Shorty did! The handkerchief fell off his face when I was fightin' with him. And I seen him plain as anything. It was Shorty and a fella with a red beard!"

"How long ago?"

"It must have been about an hour."

"Where'd they go?"

"How do I know? I was tied up here on the floor."

A whole stampede of thoughts went through his brain. Then, sobering a little, he tried to think where Shorty would go. There was only one place. He wasn't a town dweller; he was afraid of towns, even of Silver City. He was certain to head straight for the sheep range.

He had been holding the hysterical girl by both arms. Suddenly he freed her and said, "Tell Madge what's happened! Tell her I'm heading out the river road for the sheep trail."

Then he dashed down the stairs three steps at a time. All four of being recognized or shot at had gone out of him now, and he started toward the Grand Hotel. There stood an old cow pony, tied to a cottonwood tree, its head lowered. Untying it, he swung himself aboard and lashed the old pony into a gallop. In a little while he passed the last house on the river road and was in the valley that led up to the sheep range.

In the beginning the idea had come to Shorty by accident, born perhaps of the long and lonely brooding which had marked the whole of the time he spent

among the sheep high on the range. When he came down to visit, Jake, the man with the red beard, had come with him. They had visited early and had a good deal to drink. During the afternoon they had enjoyed themselves smacking windpipes and helping to burn the edges of P.J.

Then they had some more to drink, and Jake's imagination, a sluggish affair which only began to operate under the stimulus of a quart or two of rotgut, began ponderously to function. As for Shorty, it wasn't only that he was stupid; he was drunk as well.

Jake said, "What about going around to the Eldorado?" But Shorty countered with, "Madge would throw me out! She ain't havin' me there any more."

"Madge hain't there!" said Jake. "She's sorta ridin' round the town."

Then they drank some more and Jake said, "Looks to me like a good opportunity to lay hands on that there girl."

"What girl?" asked Shorty vaguely.

"That girl that redsy ain't allowed to teeth . . . that girl you been talkin' about in your sleep all summer." Shorty didn't answer him, and Jake's stimulated imagination brought forth another pearl. "Ef'n you'd get her alone sed let her get acquainted with you, you might get somewhere with your courtin'."

Again Shorty didn't answer him. He was breeding now.

"Some whiskey," said Jake, "like bein' carried off. It kinda sets 'em up!"

Then for the first time, Shorty spoke. It seemed to his dull brain that Jake's idea was a good one. Mebbe he hadn't made the right approach to a girl like that.

"How would you do it?" "One more drink!" said Jake to the bartender of the Gates Ay Saloon.

"I don't want no trouble," said the bartender. "This here one is sure the last."

"Sure," said Jake. And then he resumed his conversation with Shorty. "I'd get a length of rope and truss her up and carry her off!"

"Here's your drink," said the bartender. "Put it down. I want to close up."

"Sure," said Jake.

They raised their glasses and downed their drinks at a single gulp. Then Jake looked at Shorty and said, "That taste funny to you?"

"No," said Shorty, "I didn't taste nothing."

He was planning now about the buckboard and the rope.

Jake stood up. "Come on," he said. "Let's go ahead."

Now, three hours later, they were driving along the road in the moonlight, not feeling too well. Bridget, freed from the tarpaulin, was sitting up between them. She still had her ankles and wrists bound and the handkerchief tied over her mouth. A little earlier they had snatched and taken off the gag, but the flow of language and abuse that came out immediately started and sobered them.

Jake said, "That ain't no way for a lady to talk, and I ain't again' to listen to it," and they gazed her again, not tightly but enough so that Jake couldn't hear what she was saying. All that could come from under the handkerchief was an indistinct and angry murmur.

Meanwhile Shorty kept saying, "I don't aim to do you no outright harm, lady. I just want to get acquainted better, and Jake here and me couldn't figure out no better way." Then with a kind of bearlike tenderness, he said, "You're gonna have a nice house up here, right in a field full of pretty daisies, and then we'll get acquainted slow-like. I ain't the hurryin' kind. I kinda think you'll like it. And

then after you get used to me, we kin get married."

They had gone this way for about fifteen or twenty miles in the moonlight, lashing the ponies to a smart trot until they got well away from the town, when Jake began to gulp and hiccup.

"What's the matter?" asked Shorty. "You ain't sick, are you?"

"No, I ain't real sick, but I don't feel so good."

And then a little farther on, after they had passed Bullykinle Trading Post, Shorty began to gulp and hiccup too, and all conversation came to an end. For a long time they rode in silence save for the clop of the ponies hoofs and the angry mumble from under the handkerchief that covered Mademoiselle's mouth.

Shorty began to shiver and pulled the worn buffalo robe higher over the knees of the three of them. Jake leaned over the side and heaved, and after a little while Shorty said, "You take the lines a spell, Jake," and he, in turn, was sick.

After a long time Jake said, "I ain't been so sick since I had cholera morbus when I was a kid. I knowed that drink didn't taste right."

Then both of them were silent, wilted and sick. The reins hung on the dashboard, and the ponies slowed down to a walk.

BENEATH the old buffalo robe, Bridget's hands were working swiftly and deftly. Slowly she worked one hand free and then the other. After a glance at the huddled, miserable figures on both sides she cautiously began to work on the knot that bound her ankles. Once or twice Jake or Shorty stirred, and she quickly abandoned her efforts, but each time they stirred only to lean over the side of the buckboard and be sick. Jake kept grunting and muttering about how he'd been given a horse pill or a dose of sheep dip.

Bridget heard the sound of the hoofs first. They came faintly but distinctly in the still, clear air of the mountain night. For a moment she was uncertain whether the sound was born of her imagination or whether it came in reality out of the night. Then suddenly there was no longer any doubt. The sound was that of hoofbeats coming nearer and nearer. She went to work again on the knot, and Jake said, "Hark, Shorty! There's someone acomin' on a horse."

Shorty brought the heavy whip down over the rumps of the steaming ponies and lashed them into a gallop.

Bridget, straining every nerve, listening and tugging at the knot, heard the sound of the hoofbeats gaining on them. As they reached the rise, she looked behind and below and discerned in the moonlight the black figure of a horse and a man.

She thought: It's Dick! Who else would be trying to catch us? And her fingers tugged harder at the knot.

Then one of the tired ponies stumbled and the three of them were pitched forward in their seats against the dashboard. The tired animal regained its feet and went on and Jake, his beard whipping in the wind, called out, "Whip 'em up! He's a-gainin', Shorty!" And beneath the buffalo robe the knot gave way, and Bridget's feet were freed.

The horse and rider were close behind them now, and Jake had taken out his revolver and was aiming drunkenly.

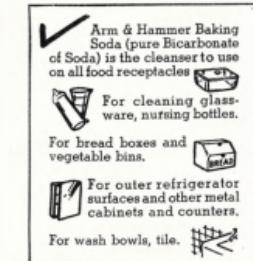
Bridget snatched the buggy whip from Shorty's hand and brought it quickly and firmly down on Jake's head. The revolver dropped from his hand, and he pitched out of the buckboard to the side of the road. Shorty seemed scarcely to notice what had happened, and with a second blow she felled him too. As he pitched

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forward against the dashboard she seized the reins and drew in the ponies.

The rider, hatless, his blond head shining in the moonlight, was suddenly at her side, swinging out of the saddle into the buckboard. He cried out "Bridget! Bridget! It's me!" And at the same time she pulled the gag out of her mouth and suddenly, without knowing how, she was in his arms, and he was crushing her against him.

The ponies stopped, heaving and panting, and Dick said, "Are you all right?"

She began to cry uncontrollably. "I'm all right!" she managed to say at last. "Oh, Dick! I thought you weren't coming!"

He kissed her silently and then holding her head close against his, he said, "I'm here, honey! I'm never going to leave you again!"

When she had stopped crying, she began to talk, pouring out the whole story.

"It doesn't matter now," she said. "We're going back now! I'm going to look after you always and forever!"

Then they remembered Shorty still huddled against the dashboard. Dick shook him violently but got no response. It was difficult to tell whether Shorty was unconscious or merely drunk.

Dick said, "Wait till I get the pony I stole and hitch him to the back."

The tired pony was easy enough to catch. Dick knotted his bridle to the back of the buckboard, climbed in and, taking up the reins, turned the buckboard around and drove back to where Jake lay beside the road, groaning. Dick pulled up the ponies, got out and laid the unconscious Shorty beside him on the grass.

He poked Jake with his foot and said, "If you want the buckboard, you'll find it tied in front of the Emporium in Silver City. It's a nice, moonlight night. I hope you two enjoy the hike back. If you weren't so drunk and I had the time to wake you, I'd beat the hell out of both of you."

Then he climbed into the buckboard and settling Bridget close beside him with her head on his shoulder, pulled up the buffalo robe and tucked it about her. Picking up the reins, he clucked to the ponies, and they moved off at a slow walk.

There wasn't any hurry now for Dick had found what he wanted, and Bridget was safe where she had always wanted to be.

Now and then he kissed her, thinking it improbable that any such happiness could ever have been known to any other man since the beginning of time.

And after a long time there appeared far down the valley in the direction of Silver City a deep, rosy glow which painted the tops of the mountains a faint pink. This time it wasn't the glow of the burning Castle. The fires in Silver City had burned themselves out. It was the glow of sunrise, of a new day being born.

WELL, that is the story of Silver City and the Meaneys. Henry Caldwell got elected all right. Dick became his secretary, and together they did a lot to clean up the corruption for which old P.J. had been responsible. Dick made his own career in politics and got to be a senator in Washington. He's still living there now. He's quite an old man, and Bridget is quite a hostess, entertaining ambassadors and senators and congressmen. She is also quite a character, and the legend that has grown up about her is all the gambling, high-singing, wild women of the Eldorado who have become an asset rather than a liability. If you are "anybody" in Washington, you'll be invited sooner or later to the Meaneys' big house on Connecticut Avenue. A large part of every summer old Dick Meany and his wife spend at the big house they have built on the site of the cottage, high up in the pine woods on the edge of the cattle-range country.

The Senator Meaneys have four sons and three daughters, for it seems Madeleine got what she wanted when she married Dick—a home, a fireside, domesticity and a lot of children. So far as anyone knows, Dick never looked at another woman. And they have fourteen grandchildren. One boy was killed as a Navy flier during the war.

P.J., after a quiet old age, largely spent in traveling under the domination of Ellie-May, died in 1912. Ellie-May continued for a long time to enjoy the success both of young Dick and of Henry Caldwell. Bright and birdlike and filled with common sense, she remained the friend of ambassadors and senators until the end which came when she died in her sleep at ninety-three in the big house on Connecticut Avenue.

Out in Colorado the Meaneys became known as the Black Meaneys and the Blond Meaneys. The Black Meaneys, everyone said, were always ornery and no good. Shorty went on herding sheep and never married. Toward the end of his life he grew queerer and queerer and died at last alone in a cabin with only a tame coyote as a companion.

Buck finally married a big, raw-boned Mormon girl. Their offspring are scattered over the ranching country, but they have been virtually lost and forgotten.

Blackie took heavily to drink and died of cirrhosis of the liver at the age of forty-five.

Eudora and Cyril were known as the "in-between" Meaneys. Their marriage was a success, and Eudora had six children including two sets of twins.

Cyril turned out to have a first-rate head for business, and Eudora became more and more political-minded as time went on, with plenty of money to back up her ambitions. After women got the vote she became chairman of the State Republican Committee, but she lost the job eventually out of unpopularity because of her "bossy" ways. She displayed a great interest all her life in prison reform and spent much time in visiting penitentiaries, reform schools and jails, possibly a hang-over from the days when she corresponded with convicts and sent them Biblical texts embellished with garlands of forget-me-nots and roses.

As for Silver City, the Battle of the Ballots marked probably the high point of its growth and glory. From then on it went downhill more and more rapidly as the mines were worked out and the main lines of the railroads passed it by. Today it is a dead city inhabited by a handful of old-timers or eccentrics who found in its decaying bars and boarding houses a suitable and sympathetic background.

Once a year, however, it comes back to life when an army of highbrows descends upon it from all parts of the nation. Then the Opera House is opened again for performances and the oil lamps of the Eldorado are lighted again and whisky and beer flow across the bar. The gold room with the Turkish Cozy Corner and the rose petal bedroom have long since fallen into decay.

The blackened ruins of the Castle have taken on the look of an authentic European ruin of the Middle Ages. By day the coyotes hide among the great tumbled blocks of granite, and at night they come out to raise their voices toward the brilliant unchanged skies and howl, perhaps over the desolation which is all that is left of the vanished orneriness, the vice, the color and the tawdry splendor that was once a part of Silver City and an authentic part of the frontier history of a great nation.

THE END

The first installment of "The Sealed Verdict" by Lionel Shapiro appears in the August issue. A tender love story with war-crime trials for background, we believe this novel will be one of the most widely read and discussed books of the year

Tonight Is Ours (Continued from page 42)

nothing, and their association was one long interchange of insults.

"That's a corny idea . . . I wouldn't be caught dead . . . Yeah, says you! . . . She didn't either . . . You're nuts . . . Come on, come on. Quit stalling . . . Well, hurry up. I can't stand here all night. Got a radio program . . . Say, check your own answers before you bother me. Pull your own weight, can't you? . . ."

Dave Junior was headstrong, moody, irresponsible, girl crazy, but he was handsome, popular, enthusiastic and heartbreakingly lovable. Bud was brilliant, steady, self-controlled, but he was cold, egocentric, uncommunicative and secretive. Which boy should a mother worry about more?

Ann sighed again . . . She could hear her youngest, Mary

Ann, saying in a high treble to the high-school girl who was giving her supper in the kitchen, "I don't like your bacon. I like Mummie's bacon. I don't want any more. Give me my dessert now!"

Ann thought: Maybe we shouldn't have had Mary Ann. Maybe I was too old. A woman my age should have constant help with a small child. Mary Ann's too dependent on me, too used to me. The others were the same way, but I was younger then. I went up to fixing their suspenders before I left and seeing that they sat up straight they should and putting them to bed, so that all I needed was a sitter. Now I'm—I'm really not up to it. I have to let Rose manage as best she can, and that means Mary Ann won't be managed . . . Of course I

didn't realize how difficult it was going to be to get household help—nor how ill we could afford it after the war."

Dave came out of the bathroom with his suspenders dangling and a towel draped around his neck. His hair was wet and dark. His skin was still tan, as if the sun of the Pacific isles had shone on him only yesterday.

Ann thought: He looks so young. So much like Dave Junior. Dave Junior is his father all over again. They ought to understand each other, but they don't. Bud is Dave's favorite. Parents ought not to have favorites, but we're human beings too . . . I must look ten years older than Dave. He got younger every year he was away, and I aged two. I aged for both of us. I wonder if he minds this white wing in my hair. I wonder if he minds that no

one could tell now he has been a colonel. I wonder how he feels about having exactly the same job he had when he went away, at the same pay, with all our expenses up. Who is to blame for that? Not the company, Dave says he says it is barely out of the red, all things are. But anyhow, it's not your fault, Dave. Don't think it is, Dave! Don't think I think it is!

She smiled at him, reaching into the glove box for her dress. "Feel like having fun, Dave?"

**Everything depended on that.** If he felt like having fun, she could have it, and so would she. If he didn't feel like it, somehow dreamt up beneath—or maybe above—the blue heavens would be good enough.

"Fun," he mumbled. He was in motion, getting into the shirt. It cracked and cracked. His fingers fumbled with the top buttons.

"Let me help," she said quickly.

She was reaching up—tall as she was, she had to reach up in Dave—carefully keeping one finger inside the band to soften the impact of the tug she had to make, when the door opened with a ceremony whatever and eleven-year-old Katrin burst into the room.

"Mom, where on earth—oh, that's right! You're going out!"

Dave glared at her. "Yes. We are. And so are you. Out of this room. Quick, or I'll take you by the scruff of your neck—"

But Katrin, all teeth and legs and bouncing braids, had pounced on Ann's dress, which lay across the bed.

"Mom-mid! Are you really going to wear that awful old rag? Why, it's five years old if it's a day! I didn't know this was a dress-up night. Dad, why do you let her? Why didn't you make her get a new one? This looks as if it came out of a missionary barrel! I mean, really!"

She held it up with one hand, wrinkling her nose. There was nothing redeeming about Katrin's appearance. Ann had hoped, but for the present the poor child was too thin, her mouth was big, her nose was big, and she was always caving apart in the middle. Yet she half-announced perfectly good dark blue crepe with the floppy rose on the side, and regarded it with all the fine scorn of a Powers model looking at something her grandmother had run up for her on a two-pedaled sewing machine. "Don't be silly," Ann began. "And don't wrinkle it—"

"Your mother, Miss Katrin," said Dave easily, "could have had a new dress if she wanted it. Could be she wanted something else. Or more. Anyway, she doesn't need it. It makes no difference what your mother wears. It never did. Nobody ever noticed—till you. Now you hear me tell you to get out! And before you open anybody's bedroom door again, knock!"

This was his best colonel's voice. Katrin rolled her eyes and went.

Dave said loudly, "Lord, it's good to be alone!"

Ann was not sure whether these words implied "with you," but she thought they did, and with this thought she was vaguely pleased; still Katrin's banishment was on her mind. It was not easy to know whether the child was hurt. She adored her father. That was why, Ann realized, Katrin had suddenly become so critical of her, so *world-wise*, sophisticated, why she was *so* *world-wise* bursting in upon their quiet moments. It had not been like that while Dave was away. All those years Katrin had been withdrawn like Bud, but gentle and sweet and willing, even anxious, to be guided by Ann. Now she was suddenly filled with a desire to be noticed as a person in her own right, to get into the current of all kinds of emotions; she

was consumed by an unconscious jealousy.

Ann thought: I must try to explain this to Dave. But not now. It will be asking more of him. Intelligence, forbearance, understanding, tenderness. He will give it when he knows. But I won't ask him again.

She had finished with the button.

"You tight," he complained, thrusting out his chin.

She kissed him liability. "I know it, dear. You got so big. And there isn't a new dress shirt in town."

She was afraid this would set him off, but the kiss, perhaps, had gentled him.

All he said was, "Damned nuisance."

As they drove out into the highway, a few minutes later, they waved to the twins. Pete and Paul. One was boasting the other into the branches of the cut-leaf maple tree, and in this light, it was impossible to say which one was up and which down.

Dave cleared his throat and said, "You didn't stop in to say good night to Mary Ann. How's that? You always made a point of not leaving the others when they were little, without their knowing it."

Before he had finished, he was angry with himself for having said anything at all. He had made up his mind before he came home that he would not comment unfavorably on anything Ann had done while he was away, and that he would never again interfere between her and the children. She had been responsible, alone, for them for over four years, without self-pity or complaint. She had done all the watching and worrying, kept them fed, clothed, schooled, healthy. She had been both mother and father. Now that he was back, he would play his part, but he would never presume to make suggestions to one who had done all she had done. That had been his resolution, and he had kept it until now.

He had observed that Dave Juniper was in need of discipline but had not spoken of it to Ann. He only tried to apply his own idea of discipline when he and Dave Juniper were alone; he thought this had worked out well. They were very friendly when they were alone together, each respecting the other. It was only when they were with Ann that Dave let the boy's natural innocence pass, and as the boy overstepped and knew it and showed his share in curious way. That had got over that. Maybe it was good for a seventeen-year-old to be a little spanked by his mother and merely kept in line by his father.

He thought Bud had been neglected, but this was nobody's fault. Ann had been obliged to cut her measure short here and there, and Bud, apparently the least demanding, had been the obvious choice. But Bud needed affection. It was his very need of what he had come to think he could not have which made him speak as he did, turned his face grim, and tied him to his radio. Dave could fix all that. Not right away. It would take time, but he was working on it.

Katrin was something else again. Katrin was a girl. Dave did not know much about eleven-year-old girls; just one thing he was sure of, about them. That was that, if they were normal, they looked forward to a happy marriage and instinctively felt that unless their parents were happily married, they were not likely to be. This much, at least, he could do for Katrin. Now that he was back he could show her what a good marriage was like and show her, too, that for her father her mother was the only woman in the world. Later he might think of something else he could do.

But now, after all this contral, all these



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quiet weeks, why had he broken out about Mary Ann? She had been born shortly after he left for the Pacific. She was still a baby, practically a stranger to him, the least important of them all. Ann knew all about her. He knew nothing.

He said, "Not that it's any of my business—"

Ann said quickly, "Oh, of course it is, Dave. You don't realize what a relief it is to have you here to help think what's best for the children! But about Mary Ann—well, she's a new generation, sort of. The rules we brought the others up by don't hold with her. She told me the other day that what she minded most about my going away was my saying good-bye to her; that if I would go without saying it, she would mind much less. Can you imagine?"

Dave chuckled. "Very sensible, I call it," he said. He thought to himself: I'd better get acquainted with that infant. She may be somebody too.

He was going to say this, but it occurred to him that Ann must get tired of thinking about the children. He said instead, "What was that you mentioned a while ago—fun?"

"He wants to talk about something else," Ann said to herself. "It must seem to him I'm always thinking about the children, and trying to get him to. Well, I won't do it tonight."

She said aloud, "That was the word. What do you think—are we going to have it, or aren't we?"

Dave turned out his underlip, considering.

Could it be called fun to go to an alumni dinner, almost twenty years after graduating from a little coeducational Eastern college? What would it be like, standing around a public room in a city hotel; sitting at long tables, listening to speeches? Should one try to recapture something of those crazy bright fall nights when football victories were celebrated by snake dances, by bonfires, by putting a cow in the belfry; those cold, gleaming days of winter carnival; the misty, sweet-smelling springtimes when he and Ann, in identical plaid lumber jackets flying open in the wind, wandered hand in hand about the little campus and sat in sunny doorways? No, that could not be done; best not to try . . .

What then? Look for familiar faces, and failing that, listen for familiar names? Put on a cordial expression, shake hands warmly, ask, "What are you doing now, Bill?" And tell what he was doing? What was he doing? "Oh, I'm back at the plant," was all he could say. Did it not sound like much. Perhaps it wasn't much. Certainly not worth going into, trying to explain what it meant—that he liked that plant, that he felt he belonged there, that while he was away all he had lived and fought for was to get back to it, and to Ann and the children. He wondered whether any of them would know or remember that he had done well in the Army. Probably not. The war was over now . . .

What kind of people go to alumni dinners, anyway? The few who have been startlingly successful, he supposed, and like to contrast their present status with the past; and the many who have made so little of their lives that they still cling to the college, trying to secure themselves in the folds of its wisdom, its stability, its life, its future, trying to drink from its breast like overgrown children improperly weaned. He and Ann were not of either of these groups. They never had been to an alumni dinner before, though they had faithfully kept up their association dues and made the usual donations.

Why were they going now?

Oh, yes. Because Lester Floyd was president of the city alumni association this year, and he had written personally to Dave and Ann, asking them to come to this once; saying he had not seen them since they had all three been graduated together, that the years were going by . . .

When Ann read the letter aloud one night, after she came down from putting Mary Ann to bed, Dave must have been in a sentimental mood. He had remembered trotting around the track with Lester for hours, getting ready for the cross-country run, and the cinders Lester's feet threw up, spraying his fellow runner's ankles. Good old Les.

"Well, why not?" he had asked lightly.

"Oh, would you, Dave?" Ann had exclaimed, surprised and apparently pleased. "There's a postscript. He says Brooke Sherwood is going to be there. To speak. I'd love to see what she really looks like."

Brooke Sherwood was Hersey College's Number One Celebrity. A few years after her graduation, she had not only made a name for herself on the stage but had gone on to become a very sudden and brilliant new star of the screen.

Ann seemed much interested in her. Although Ann was far from being a fan, she said she had seen all of Brooke's pictures. Dave had seen none of them. Movies had no appeal for him. He wondered what Brooke Sherwood meant to Ann.

Did she perhaps look back sometimes at her own college days when she, too, had been prominent in dramatics? If she did, was it simple nostalgia, or did it cross her mind that if she had not wandered with him hand in hand about the campus, sat with him in sunny doorways, let him hold her so close, dancing, that the dean of women sent them a message—if she had not been married at her commencement, she too, might have seen her name in lights?

Ann Garland. That was a pretty name. It had not needed changing, either for art's sake or by marriage. Brooke Sherwood had been christened Bertha Sheppard.

"Okay," Dave had said. "We'll be there, too."

Now he put his hand over Ann's and grinned at her sideways. "A night out with you is always fun," he said. "In or out, for that matter."

But why entangle themselves in memories of old dreams? Why weigh themselves down with comparisons? Why spend the night in a crowd?

"Look," he suggested suddenly. "We don't have enough chances to be alone. Let's cut the dinner and go to some nice place all by ourselves."

Ann was shocked. "We've paid for these dinners, Dave!"

"Call it a contribution."

"If you're that reckless, let's go on to this tonight, and to someplace by ourselves next week. It doesn't seem far to the city now that we're started. We should go in after dinner."

"Promise?"

"Promise." They could already see the lights of the great bridges looping the river. Their suburban house in their suburban village—*their life there*—was at the far end of the highway behind them, connected with them only by a dark thread. Slender skyscrapers, punctured by bright pinholes, seemed to bend forward and beckon to them.

Now they could hear a strumming pulsation ahead, like the beat of a Gargantuan heart.

Dave tucked her hand in Dave's arm and rested her head on the back of the seat, sighing blissfully. "Darling, I love this. Such a little while ago I didn't dare let

myself even think about it, for fear I would scare it away. Forever."

Dave pressed her hand against his side. He thought: Everything's all right.

But a few minutes later she said, "I do want to see Brooke Sherwood. And hear her. She is all really beautiful, Davie. Even on the screen. But there's something about her. I've never been able to decide just what. Maybe we'll find out tonight."

"Yes, I'd nut," Dave said. "You care, I don't. Professional actresses are away out of my line."

"So there are," Ann said slowly. "You were furious when I used to say that was what I wanted to be, weren't you?"

"What else?" Dave asked, "would anybody expect of a guy? I wanted to marry you, remember?"

"Actresses get married."

"How soon?" demanded Dave. "How often? For how long?"

"Depends on the actress, Davie. And the man she marries."

"Hm! Well, leave it that I was in no mood for stiff competition. Sorry?"

"No, dear."

He could afford to be generous. "Of course if I'd let you, you'd have been as big a shot as Brooke. Don't imagine I've forgotten how you played Nora in 'The Dull House'."

"If you haven't, you're the only one."

"Who else counts?"

"Nobody, Davie."

"Yeah. Well. That's what I wanted. And that's what I got."

They had crossed the river and joined the speeding parade along the boulevard.

Dave asked, "Is Brooke married? If so, how many times?"

"I've never heard that she is married."

"See what I mean?" crowed Dave. "When you were that long out of college we had two kids already yet; maybe three. Now it's—where, six?"

"Anybody could do that," Ann said.

"Not with me, they wouldn't," Dave retorted.

Ann laughed, burrowing her chin into his shoulder, then straightened. She put up her hands to be sure she had not ruffled the sleekness of her hair. He had to keep his mind on the traffic. They did not speak again until he checked his coat at the hotel. Then, beside a palm, he put his hands on her narrow shoulders.

"Look here," he said, low. "We were kids a long time ago. We had ideas. Some of 'em worked out, and some of 'em didn't. The ones that did aren't the kind that glitter in a place like this. You aren't a star of stage and screen. Maybe that's not bad. I couldn't buy you orchids to wear—not and be in my right mind at the moment. Katrin says even your dress isn't much. That's the kind of clambus I've turned out to be. Maybe that's the bad . . . But here we are, nineteen years after. What do you say—do you want to go in or don't you? Speak now or—"

Ann tipped her head back a little to look full at him. "I'm going in with the king," she said. "You don't need a crown, darling."

"Thanks, Your Majesty." "That's naming me queen?"

"What else?"

King's mistresses are more admired lately."

"Wasn't there once a book called 'Maid, Wife or Matress'?"

Suddenly a voice behind them exclaimed, "What's all this? Damned if it isn't Dave Saunders and Ann Garland, still playing the same tune!"

"We ought to be good at it by now," Dave grumbled.

"You are," declared the voice roundly. "Finest performance. Closing scene!"

"On the first act," Dave said, turning. "See his face lighted up. This was

Charlie Osgood who had graduated the year before them. Charlie who had been Dave's predecessor as president of the College Council. C. J. Osgood who owned a chain of broadcasting stations; one of whom enjoys contrasting their present status with that of Charlie. Charlie was very far from playing the same old tune. It must seem a long time ago that he sang hash in the community. But his handclap was warm, and the twinkle in his dark eyes took a fellow back . . .

"Glad to see you, Charlie. It's been a long time. Hear a lot about you, but never see you. Ann and I don't get to these meetings as often as we should."

Ann wanted to say promptly, "Dave's been overseas so long kept us out of touch."

But Big Business Charlie, whose figure showed plainly that he had never worn a uniform, was already speaking.

"None of us do. Makes you wonder who keeps these affairs going. This is the first I've been in years."

"Who brought you tonight?" asked Ann innocently.

Charlie chuckled. Why, he seemed twenty years older than Dave!

"What brought us all, I guess," he boomed. "Glamour! Eh, Dave?"

Dave shrugged. "Speak for yourself, Chuck. It didn't bring me. I brought it."

"I know," Charlie nodded, his eyes sliding over Ann, noting she was sure, the white wing in her hair and the cut of her blue crepe. "You always had all the luck, Dave. Don't rub it in."

"You both still sing pretty words," Ann smiled. "Seriously, Charlie, you must have business reasons for wanting to meet Brooke. Through probably you already know her."

Charlie's eyes narrowed. He said, "Oh, yes. I know her. But not well enough, if you get what I mean. I see her whenever I can. Haven't made much impression yet, I must admit, but I'm still hopeful. So long as there isn't anybody else . . . She'll always talk with anybody from college. Very loyal, you know. Gorgeous girl, really. And one of the best, if you know what I mean. Hersey girl born and Hersey girl bred, still, in spite of where she's got to . . . Let's go in, shall we? She may be here already."

Obviously impatient, he led the way into a crowded room. "There she is," he exclaimed. "There's Brooke."

But Dave knew Ann had seen her first. His gaze followed hers, and his impression became as much like hers as a man's could be; not at all like Charlie's.

He said in Ann's ear, "I see what you mean."

BROOKE SHERWOOD stood with her back very straight against a pillar upholstered in rose-colored fabric. She was so short that she had to tip her head back to talk to the men and women who surrounded her, though at that she seemed to be standing on her toes. She wore a pale green, crisp frock, as plain as Ann's, and long white gloves. Her hair was pale gold, cut short; her eyes dark; her face pointed, sager, not pretty, but heartbreakingly young.

"Come along over and meet her," Charlie said.

But before even he could push his way through the tight circle, Lester Floyd, with a flower on his black lapel, was pinning a corsage on Brooke's shoulder, and leading her ceremoniously into the dining room.

"She rates orchids," Dave said. "Brown ones. Never liked 'em."

"I hope she does," Ann answered. Somehow she was suddenly remembering Katrin . . . Her daughter, Katrin, of the uneven features, thin, always coming



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apart in the middle, but so eager to know, to be noticed . . . to love and be loved . . .

The Saunderses lost Charlie in the general exodus. They found places at one of the long tables slung the side of the room, among total strangers, and sat down quietly, ate quickly, speaking casually to their neighbors.

"What was your class? We were 'twenty-seven."

The girl with the flowing ruddy locks, beside Dave, said, "I graduated in 'forty-four. Two years after Brooke."

Dave followed her gaze across the corner toward the head table and was puzzled to see that Brooke Sherwood was looking at him. He turned away his eyes. When he looked again, she was looking at Ann and speaking to Les. As Dave watched, Les bent forward, a grin spread over his face, and he waved at the Saunderses.

"Ann," Dave muttered, "I think Miss Sherwood knows you."

"Oh, no, dear. How could she?"

But Ann glanced over and suddenly smiled as she smiled at Katrin across a classroom when she visited school. Warmly, reassuringly, proudly. And Brooke Sherwood's smile answered as Katrin's always did—quick, delighted, grateful. The two smiles were like flags flashing signals.

"She must know you, Ann," Dave insisted.

"It isn't that," Ann answered, her eyes still on Brooke.

"What is it then?"

But Ann could not tell him. It was only something she felt. She supposed Brooke felt it too. Les might have told Brooke that Ann was an old Hersey girl; he might, in a few words, have told her that once Ann had been rather as Brooke was only a few years ago. Perhaps Brooke might be remembering the same campus paths, sunny doorways, chapel dink, singing nights that Ann was remembering. In a way they walked together there as contemporaries, as friends, even as they sat, separated, at these long tables, without ever having spoken to each other.

It was more than that, too.

It was Ann telling Brooke, "I'm glad you've done it. I wanted to do it, but I didn't. I'm glad you did it. It was for me, too. Thank you, darling. But don't go on doing it too long, will you? It must be wonderful to do. It will be wonderful to have done. But it isn't enough. You know that, don't you, Brooke? You know there's something better still, for a woman. Something that is best of all, for a woman. You won't miss that, will you, Brooke? You're much too real—real!"

And it was more still. More than Brooke could possibly know.

It was Ann, the mother, saying in wonder and thankfulness, "You may be Katrin. I think you are Katrin. As Katrin will be someday. And if you can do it, and not miss the best, Katrin can do it, too, and not—not get lost . . ."

THOUGH Ann went through appropriate motions, the dinner—to her—was only a dinner. She was vaguely aware that other people around her were eating.

Once she felt the pressure of Dave's fingers on her own under the cloth. She heard his voice say in her ear, "Ann, I never saw you so beautiful."

She murmured gratefully, "Oh, Dave!"

But she would not look at him. Her eyes were full of tears. And how could she ever have explained them?

The climax of the evening—the intended climax—came a little later.

Dave found out why Les had sent them

a special invitation. It was not wholly because he wanted to see them again. It was because Brooks had been brought there to make an Important Announcement.

She was fulsomely introduced. She stood up and was applauded. She looked over at Ann and Dave, smiled at them, Ann smiled back steadily, her eyes shining. Dave found Ann's hand again. He did not know what it was all about, but he was still thinking that he had never seen Ann so beautiful.

Brooke was speaking now.

She said that, as all the alumni association members knew from having received ballots, Hersey alumni all over the country had been voting for the two graduates of the college—one man and one woman—considered most successful . . . She said she had been asked to make the announcement of the results because both her candidates had been elected, and because she was to be in town that night . . .

Two people who were still part of the campus tradition thought they had been graduated nearly twenty years . . .

A man who at his commencement was voted the most popular and the second-best athlete, and the woman chosen the same year as the prettiest and most prominent . . . The only man of his class to volunteer for service in the recent war, the first colonel on the Hersey roster. The only woman graduate of Hersey who had six children in a period of history when many hesitated to have even one . . . She said, "Young men and women studying on our campus, and those still to come, must now see clearly what Hersey graduates recognize as true success in life . . ." A Hersey couple who have lived nearly twenty years together, obviously still in love, good citizens, good alumni, bringing up five children who are already registered at Hersey and a sixth whose name is expected by the registrar any day . . . She said . . . She said . . .

She said, "Ann Garland and David Saunders of the Class of Twenty-seven, will you please stand up? And may we all shake your hands?"

In the confusion which followed, Dave was sure only that Ann was with him at first, serene, graceful, enchanting, buoying him up . . . then that for a while she was not there, and he floundered in waves of congratulations, going down fighting, but going down—down—until she was back again, putting him on his feet with her voice and her smile, saying all the right words . . .

AND now here they were, alone in the car. But he hadn't started it yet. He hadn't remembered how. And Ann was crying.

"Why," he demanded, "are you doing that?"

"Oh, just—just because I'm so glad!"

"Glad about what?" Tossing it off. "All that fuss?"

"No . . . About Brooke. She's going to be married. She told me. To a—boy who was in her class. That's why she's—come home."

Dave took out his handkerchief and wiped her eyes. "So," he said, "Brooke's going to be married. And that's off our mind."

He got the engine started, and knocked his hat back a little, grinning around and down. "Now where'll we go? Seems tonight is ours. Anywhere you say."

"Oh, Dave. Anywhere you say."

"No. You say."

"Well—home?"

That was a woman for you. He let out a long breath, and the wheels moved.

"You know what? That's what I hoped you'd say."

THE END

Gibby comes in then," she suggested. "I think he'd prefer to be consulted, Viola."

"He'd just refuse," said Viola. "But if he finds it done, I think he'll quiet down."

"Well, if anyone can manage him, you can," said Prince.

His faith in her, his admiration warmed her heart. She liked him; she liked everyone in the office; it was a wonderful place to work in, so friendly, so exciting. I will manage Gibby, she thought.

The porter and the office boy moved her desk; under her direction they put it into a corner, so that when she sat at it, her back would be turned to Hartwell.

"You won't get any daylight there," Molly Stern said.

"I don't care," said Viola.

She had some letters to dictate that morning, but she did not bring the secretary she shared with Fredericks into Gibby's office. That would irritate him if he walked in. She did her dictating in the anteroom.

"And, Josephine," she said, to the buxom, red-haired receptionist, "for heaven's sake, don't put any calls for me on Gibby's wire. I'll take my calls out here. For a few days, anyhow."

"Forever," muttered Josephine. "I know him."

"Let's go out to lunch now," Molly Stern said. "If we get to Nicollo's before twelve, we might possibly get a table without waiting."

Fredericks, the Art Editor, went with them; they hurried across Fifth Avenue in the bright October sun, to the little restaurant in the West Forties.

"I haven't any money," Fredericks said. "Who can lend me some?"

"Not I!" said Molly. "I only have just enough for myself."

"I can," said Viola.

"How do you always manage to have enough cash?" Molly asked.

"Because she's an organized person," Fredericks said. "I like to watch her work. All very deft and purposeful, and no dithering."

It's nice to be liked, Viola thought. It's good for you, too. It makes you want to be nicer.

They did get a table; they ordered their lunch, and sat talking, friends perfectly easy together.

"I'm going to bat for that Arizona article," Viola said. "I think it's terrific."

"I think Mr. Prince is right," said Molly Stern. "We've had too many articles about Indians this year."

"We could stand one more. We could do a lot more thinking about our Indians."

"They're not my Indians," said Molly. "How is heavenly Johnny, Viola?"

Again there was a little cloud across the sun, a little shadow on the happy day. "I'm afraid he's getting a cold," Viola said.

Molly and Fredericks both laughed.

"What's so funny?" Viola asked.

"Your face!" said Molly. "You couldn't bear to hear Johnny sneeze, could you?"

"All right!" said Viola. "He hasn't had one single cold since we got married." She knocked on the table three times.

"Keep it up!" said Fredericks. "Give him vitamins, and Peppyzip for breakfast, and make him wear rubbers."

They always teased her about Johnny, but very kindly, and she didn't mind. She was proud of Johnny, proud of their happiness, their wonderful life together.

"I bet Gibby'll put you out," said Fredericks.

"I bet he won't," said Viola. "If you study Gibby, you can handle him."

"I hate him," said Molly candidly. "I

don't believe in the great myth that he has a heart of gold under his nasty manners."

"He does some awfully nice things," said Viola. "Kind things."

But she was more nervous than she liked to admit about Gibby. As soon as they got back to the office she asked Josephine, "Mr. Hartwell in yet?"

"Not yet," said Josephine.

The little office was very crowded, with the two desks; it was stuffy, too, and she opened the window at the top, but only a little. Wally and David, the goldfish, must not be chilled. Then she sat down to work, on an article Mr. Prince had brought from one of his favorites, a formidable woman in Pennsylvania, who wrote about coal-miners with great passion and little accuracy. The article would have to be cut by seven or eight pages, and there were many points to be checked.

If only Gibby will be reasonable, she thought. If only he won't yell when he comes in . . . He's sure to be in sometime today, because it's his deadline, and he's never late. Once I get him quieted down, I can go home.

And again it was as if a cloud drifted across the sun. Johnny's cold . . . she thought. He did seem better this morning. He ate a good breakfast. He seemed all right. But last night . . .

"I think I'm getting a cold, Viola," he had said. "I'd better sleep in the guest room."

Before she turned out her light, she had gone to look at him, and he had been reading in bed, in his blue and white striped pajamas. He had not heard her, in her slippers, and she had stood for a moment looking at him, with a sort of delight, at his sharp, pale profile, alert as a cat's; his sandy hair looked silver in the lamplight.

Everything about him delighted her, his looks, all his ways. She liked the way he had made the guest room into his own; his purple dressing gown over the back of a chair, his wallet, key ring, notebook in a symmetrical line on the chest of drawers; his clothes all put away.

"Johnny . . . she had said, and he had glanced up with his quick smile. "How are you feeling, darling?"

"Oh, so-so," he had answered.

"What can I get you, Johnny? A hot whisky lemonade?"

"Not a thing thanks, dear. Better not take me, Viola. No use taking a chance."

But she had kissed him, on the temple, where his short hair felt like plush.

"You'll call me if you want anything."

"You bet, honeychile. 'Night, Viola!"

"Night, Johnny darling," she had said. "I'll leave my door open, so I can hear you."

She had gone to bed then, and to sleep, almost at once. But something had wakened her; she had opened her eyes and sat up. A sound was it? Maybe Johnny called, she thought, and went up in an instant, and out in the dark hall. A line of light showed under his closed door.

"Why did he do that?" she had cried to herself, hurt, startled, almost frightened. But she had learned long ago, almost as a baby, to be controlled, to be reasonable. She frowned over her own dismay. Maybe there was a draft with the door open, she told herself, and went back to bed. Only then she had missed him. For nearly two years there had not been a night without him in the same room, and she missed him dreadfully. But he's only in the next room! she told herself. He's right here.

Only he had not been there. She put out her hand and touched the hard, flat pillow on his bed, and she missed him.



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critics of his day, but all his criticism was of principle, of technique, and never personal. He had had an incredible number of friends; people had willingly made the trip to the little house on Staten Island where he had welcomed them; a portly man with a neat white beard and merry dark eyes. He had liked Gibby.

"I had more time," she said. "I'd make you sorry for those words. I could talk about Indians. I could tell you an Indian legend, very long and mixed up. But I've got to go now. Gibby. Coming?"

"No," he said, "I'll stay and have another drink."

Thanks for the cocktail, Gibby."

"Thanks for your company," he said.

She took a taxi home, because it was a little late, and she was in a hurry to see how Johnny was. She opened the door of the apartment with her latchkey, and Mary, the maid, came out of the kitchen.

"Mr. Williams stopped by, ma'am," she said. "He left a note."

She handed Viola the note, which she took into the bedroom to read.

Dear Viola:

I think I'd better stay uptown and finish up some odds and ends. Don't wait up for me, dear. I'll bed down in the guest room again. Throat still a bit troublesome.

Love,  
Johnny

Still in her hat and coat, she stood looking down at the twin beds, so smoothly made under the white and yellow spreads. On a table between them was the lamp with the fluted silk shade of buttercup yellow; there was the book she was reading. But not Johnny's things.

Johnny's gone, she said to herself.

MARY was an excellent cook; the dinner was good. "You've got to eat," Viola told herself. "You've got to get hold of yourself. Johnny's been away for dinner before, I have myself."

Then, too, she was ashamed to let Mary see her sitting alone at the table and not eating. As if I were miserable, she thought. Well, I'm not miserable. Or if I am, it's nonsense. She brought a book to the table; she read it; she ate.

Mary, a stout, and comely woman of middle age, was pleasant, as always; but she showed no inclination to talk. She had a dignified reticence about her personal life, and she encouraged no confidences. Viola rose; she went to the end of the long room and sat down under a lamp, and tried to go on reading. Mary was clearing away the dishes; she folded the tablecloth, put down the flap of the gate-leg table, and retired into the kitchen, closing the door after her.

Why should she be shut in there by herself, while I sit here reading? Viola thought. Why can't I dry the dishes for her?

Because Mary wouldn't like that. Because it wouldn't do. Because things aren't like that. I might call up somebody. I might ask somebody over. But not if Johnny's coming home not feeling well. Maybe he's much worse than he wants me to know. Maybe he knows he's going to be laid up, and he's trying to straighten things out in the office. Maybe some doctor told him he'd have to stop working.

She and Johnny had always been so healthy that she had almost forgotten about sickness.

No use trying to read. She laid down the book, and sat still, cold with fear. Johnny's been to see a doctor, she thought. And the doctor's told him something dreadful. His heart . . . ? I've got to ring up his office and just see . . . Suppose he's unconscious there, all alone?

I mustn't do that. He'd hate that. I mustn't think this way. Johnny and I

just aren't like that. We don't fuss. If there's anything wrong with Johnny, he'll tell me. If ever there's anything wrong, we'll go through it together.

The casement rattled; the wind was rising. It's getting colder, she thought. I hope Johnny . . . Stop this. Johnny knows how to look after himself.

Certainly his mother had never done much looking after him or his brother Alex. She was a successful commercial artist; a thin, cool, aloof woman, with a wry wit. She looked after herself, and wanted nothing from her sons.

Mary was coming out of the kitchen now, and Viola took up her book. Mary must see her peacefully reading. Not worrying. Not cold and stiff, and listening. "Good night, ma'am."

"Good night, Mary. It was a wonderful dinner."

In this remodeled house on East Eleventh Street, there were four stories, and two apartments on each floor; there were people overhead, people under her, people beside her. Then why didn't someone whistle, or sing, or run up the stairs? It was only nine o'clock. What was the matter with everybody?

The window rattled; in the street below a car went by with a rush. If Johnny doesn't feel well, he'll take a taxi home, she thought. And just as she thought that, she heard the siren of a police car; she sprang to her feet as it went screaming past the house. "An accident?" she asked herself. "A taxi accident?"

Get hold of yourself. What's the matter with you? Take a nice hot bath and get into bed. She put pine bath salts into the tub, and that was a lovely fragrance. Like the Berkshires, she thought. That vacation Johnny and I had there . . . I lived twenty-four years before I ever set eyes on Johnny, yet all the things I remember seem to be things with Johnny in them.

She lay back in the warm, fragrant water, making a conscious effort to relax. Then a patter of rain came against the window, and she began to cry.

Why, you idiot! You silly, childish idiot! Suppose Johnny should come home and find you crying? For nothing. Because Johnny's got a cold, and it's raining?

When she got out of the tub, the room seemed very cold. She rubbed herself dry, put on her nightdress and terry robe, and went into the bedroom. She had brought home from the office a copy of a new magazine, a rival magazine. "I'd like you to look this over, Viola," Mr. Prince had said. "I'd like a report from you."

Nearly ten o'clock. She stopped before the mirror set in the bedroom door, and looked carefully at herself, tall in the snow-white robe, a rose color in her cheeks, russet hair, a wide, lovely mouth, those arched dark brows that gave a look of vivacity to her face in any mood. A pretty girl. A successful girl.

Could Johnny possibly be changing? she thought, I don't mean turning against me, or not loving me any more. I mean, just less interested. You read articles about that. Well, what do you do about it?

She had never thought much about herself. She had always been popular, always successful; she took it for granted. She liked people and they liked her; why not? She had gone to a small private school on Staten Island, and every year she had got a prize for something; her father had been pleased by that. At seventeen she had gone to college, and he had been still more proud of his daughter; not only a brilliant student, but always, unfailingly popular. "You have a talent for getting on with people, Viola."

A month after her graduation she had gone to work for Our States, in a nameless job, doing a little filing, learning to operate the monitor board, typing, read-

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ing proof, taking a manuscript home now and then, to write a report on it. She had been eager to learn, glad to help.

"We didn't really need anyone, at that time" Mr. Prince had told her later. "but Mr. Watchman and I felt that we couldn't afford to lose you."

She was an assistant editor now, and valuable in many ways, but above all for her handling of authors. "Let Viola talk to So-and-So," Mr. Watchman would say. "She can make him understand about the changes we want." "That woman's here again; let Viola talk to her." "Let Viola talk to Gibby."

I don't want to think about Gibby, she told herself. I'm fond of him—in a way. Maybe because Father liked him. But he's spiteful; he can be very petty. I'd better stop thinking about anything, and look over this magazine for Mr. Prince.

"Oh!" she said, aloud, as she was getting into bed. She went into the guest room, and turned down the bed; she got out Johnny's pajamas, dressing gown and slippers; she pulled down the shades.

She heard his key in the lock, and she went out into the hall. If he were ill, if he looked strange . . .

"Oh, hello, Viola!" he said.

The collar of his overcoat was turned up; as he took off his hat, she saw raindrops glistening on his face. He's not sick, she thought. He's fine.

"Hello, Johnny!" she said, and turned away, back to the bedroom, closing the door after her.

She lay back on the pillows, holding the magazine open before her. But her hands were not steady; her eyes saw nothing. He's not sick, she thought. He looks fine. Let him come and tell me about his cold. It's not true. And I'm going to let him see I don't believe it.

Oh, no! No! That's not the way to handle Johnny. Or anyone else. I'll just nice to him. I won't ask any questions at all, when he comes to say good night.

She lay back on the pillows, waiting, listening. She heard him go along the hall to the bathroom; she heard him go back to the guest room. And close the door.

He'll come, she told herself. He'll certainly come to say good night.

She waited. Then she got up, and cautiously opened the door. There was no light shining under Johnny's door. He's not coming, she thought. He's not even going to call out good night.

Then I'll go to him. Why not, when I love him so? I want to know how he's feeling.

She went along the hall, barefoot, and stood outside his door. And she could not knock; she could not call out to him, in the blank, dark silence. She went back to her bed and lay there thinking of all the questions she had not asked him: Where have you been? Why have you left me like this? What has happened to us?

It was like a fever. She could not read; she could not rest; she could not endure to put out the light. The rain dashed against the window; she sat up in bed, her heart beating fast, and she did not know if it were anger, or pain, or a great fear that so shook her.

It was still raining when she waked in the morning. Johnny, she thought. Is he really sick?

But then she heard the shower begin to run. She got up and started to dress; when she heard him go back to the guest room, she went to the bathroom to wash; and the separation, the silence, were like a nightmare. It was their way to be exuberant in the mornings, whistling, singing, calling out to each other.

All right! she said to herself. So something's changed. She put on the yellow

brunchcoat he liked, and went into the kitchen to start the breakfast. She felt miraculously calm. She moved back and forth, setting the table with the Wedgewood set, just for two, that Aunt Gina had given them; the coffee was percolating, the bacon was broiling when Johnny came to the door.

"Hello, dear!" she said. "How are you feeling?"

"Well, the throat's not so good."

He was wearing his black and white checked dressing gown and a white muffler round his neck; he looked very elegant, and a little theatrical, and he looked very uneasy. When she saw that, something rose in her heart, a sort of triumph. Because he was guilty.

"Do we have to keep up this sore throat business, darling?" she said.

"What d'you mean, Viola?" he asked.

"Isn't it a little childish?" she asked.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"You haven't any sore throat, Johnny," she said. "Or any cold coming on."

"I certainly have," he said. "—"

He was more than uneasy now; he was frightened. And she had full control of the situation; she felt cool, strong, triumphant.

"Johnny," she said, "we've always been honest with each other. Let's always go on that way. Before we got married—remember?—we agreed that we'd tell each other, frankly if—anything changed."

"Well, nothing's changed," he said. "Except that I've got a sore throat."

"There's another woman, isn't there?"

"No!" he shouted. "Why don't you let me alone?"

"You were with her last night, weren't you?"

"I had dinner with her," he said. "And that's all."

His words were like a blow so violent that she was stunned. It's true, she thought. I didn't make it up. It's true.

She turned off the percolator, and put two slices of bread into the toaster. She could move; she could speak. Only she could not feel.

"Do you want to marry her, Johnny?" she asked.

"No!"

"Please don't shout, Johnny. Can't we be—a little civilized about this?"

"No!" he said. He ran his hand down the back of his smooth fair head. "I mean, yes," he said. "I did have dinner with her. But that's all."

"I'm afraid it isn't all, Johnny. You see, you didn't feel you could tell me the truth about it."

"Well, no," he said. "Maybe I didn't."

And you shut yourself away from me. That's the worst. You shut yourself into that other room, as if you were afraid of me. As if you couldn't stand me.

That was the worst, and that was what she could not mention.

"Viola," he said, "look here! I'll give you my word not to see her again, ever. If that's what you want."

So you think I could look at you, and wonder if you were thinking of her, an' wanting to be with her? I won't have that.

"That's not what I want, thanks."

"Then what do you want?"

Tell me you don't care about seeing her again. Tell me it wasn't anything real.

"I mean," he said, "you come first. You know that."

"First?" she said. "That's nice, Johnny. The chief favorite—in the hard."

Hm, nice, new, ruddy, the dead white now. "I'm sorry," he said. "I didn't mean it that way. I mean—compared to you—this other thing—simply doesn't count."

"It counted enough for you to lie about it."

"I'm sorry," he said, with a humility

that seemed to pierce to her numb heart. For Johnny wasn't a humble person. He was proud, and debonair, and very sure of himself, and she did not want to see him as he was now.

"Well," she said, with a fair assumption of lightness, "it was a pretty difficult situation for you."

The toast jumped up in the toaster; she took it out and buttered it.

"You'd better eat your breakfast, Johnny, while it's hot."

He looked at her sidelong, not understanding what that tone meant.

"I don't know what came over me," he said. "Just one of those things. A—brainstorm."

"It can't have been so very sudden," said Viola. "You had lunch with her quite a while ago."

"That was business," he said quickly.

"Business?" she repeated.

She was not going to ask what sort of business; it was for him to explain. And he said nothing. She poured a cup of coffee for him, and he sat down at the table; she sat opposite him. There was a familiar ring at the doorbell downstairs.

"The mail," she said. "I'll get it."

"I'll get it," he said.

But she was ahead of him; she opened the door, and ran down the two flights of stairs. Mrs. Keene, the owner of the house, stood in the lower hall, looking through a sheaf of mail, picking out her own.

"Three for you, Mrs. Williams," she said.

There was a square blue envelope, addressed to Mr. J. Morgan Williams. Nobody ever addressed Johnny like that. He never used his middle name, even to sign checks.

That's her special name for him, Viola thought. She doesn't want to call him what I call him. . . . Morgan. . . .

This was real. The pain of the fear, that had before been confused as a nightmare were clear now in the daylight. This letter was real, something she could see and hold in her hand.

"This is the pay-off," she said to herself, mounting the stairs. They were the only words that suited her. This is the pay-off.

Johnny was sitting at the table, drinking his coffee; she sat down opposite him and laid the letters out before her, with the blue envelope on top.

But suppose he doesn't recognize her writing? Suppose she's never written to him before, and he didn't expect this? If I give it to him, maybe he'll be surprised. Maybe he'll read it, and then hand it to me. Maybe he'll explain . . .

"More coffee, Johnny?"

"No, thanks. I'd better be getting along."

He pushed back his chair, and rose.

"For me, isn't it?" he said, and leaning over, he picked up the blue envelope.

"Johnny?" she said.

He stopped in the doorway and turned back. "Yes?" he asked politely.

"I think I'll go and visit Aunt Gina for a while," said Viola.

"Oh, don't bother," he said. "Alex can put me up. I'll go there this afternoon."

VIOLA finished her dressing in haste. Johnny was shut into the guest room again; maybe he too was hurrying, and it was somehow of the utmost importance to leave the apartment before he did. She put on a brown dress; she tied a scarf round her hair; she had just sat down to put on her rubbers when she heard the front door close.

He was gone. She lighted a cigarette and smoked it to the end; then she put on her raincoat and went leisurely down the stairs and out into the rain. No chance of a taxi in this weather; she took a Fifth Avenue

bus uptown. I'm going to put this out of my mind, she told herself.

It was surprisingly easy not to think of it. She looked out of the bus window with an impersonal interest in the familiar route, and, as she drew nearer to the office, she began to think of the day before her. There was the magazine Mr. Prince had given her, still unread.

At ten o'clock she would have to see a literary agent. At eleven, she would have to tell a young writer that they would not give him an advance on his three projected articles on the Dakotas. He was a nice boy, and he needed the money; his articles were almost certain to be accepted. But whenever he got an advance, he took it easy.

She went quickly through her mail; then she took up the rival magazine. She made notes about it, criticisms, suggestions; two pages, that looked like the result of a careful study. It was very quiet in Gibby's office, and even with the window open it was dusty and stuffy.

She had lunch with Mr. Prince's secretary, who had interesting things to tell her about the editor of the South American edition and his staff. When she got back, Hartwell was in his office, with two other men; they were all smoking and talking and they had taken her chair from her desk. Gibby pretended not to see her; he went on talking to his visitors.

She went into Fredericks' office to borrow a chair, and he had people in there. In the end, she got a chair from the anteroom and carried it along the corridor herself. She was angry. I like a man to have some manners, she said to herself. It was hard to work with all this talking going on.

"My dear fellow," Gibby was saying, "I'm not interested in an artist's intention. If my cook, for example, brings me a pie, I don't care what sort of pie she intended to make. I judge the pie that is set before me. Moreover, I have no 'constructive criticism' to offer her as to how she might make a better pie. I simply give my opinion of what she has offered."

It was nearly four when they all went out. Viola brought in her portable typewriter and began to type, fast, copying her notes for tomorrow's editorial meeting. Back came Gibby.

"When I bring people in here," he said, "you expect to be introduced."

"No, I don't, Gibby."

"You expect a chair to be given to you. You expect your cigarette to be lighted for you."

"Gibby, I don't."

"I know what you do," he said. "You sit there . . . You open your purse, and you take things out of it . . . You disturb me very much."

"Sorry, Gibby!"

"I'll take you out for a drink."

"I'd love it, Gibby, but I can't today. I've got to get home."

"To Johnny," he said.

Yes she thought. He'll be there, and we'll talk things over, and it will be all right.

She had never been in such a hurry to get home; she went up the stairs so quickly that she was out of breath when she reached her door. "He won't be home yet," she told herself. "Unless he left his office early. He might have done that."

She opened the door with her key.

"Good evening, Mary!" she said, stopping in the doorway of the kitchen.

"Good evening, ma'am."

"Something smells good!"

"We've got a roast of veal, ma'am."

The guest-room door was open, and he was not there; not in the bathroom, not in the bedroom, not in the living room. He would come at half past six. She changed her dress and sat down in the



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Sliced tomato mustard  
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1 can ham melted  
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Serve on lettuce with French dressing.



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bedroom with a new novel in her hand. He loved this apartment so; even more than she did. She had been a little surprised by his earnest interest in the furnishings, before they were married; they had picked out everything together; together they had decided where every chair and table was to stand. He had even been interested in the curtains. I never had much of a home before, he had told her. With Mother, naturally, the studio was the chief thing, and the rest of the house wasn't important. Half past six was when he would come back to his home.

At ten minutes to seven she went to the kitchen.

"Mr. Williams wasn't sure if he could manage to get home to dinner, Mary," she said. "We won't wait."

It's really happened, she thought. He really did just... talk out like that.

The one really vital thing was not to let Mary suspect anything. At seven o'clock Viola sat down at the table; she had brought her book along. Just like last night, she thought. And, tomorrow? Anger made her cheeks burn and made her breathing quicker. He's done this to me, she thought. Just walked out and left me to explain to Mary. And to everyone else. Everyone in the office. To Gibby. Oh, yes! Johnny's left me, that's all.

She sat in the blue chair by the lamp, her chair, that was. Johnny's chair was upholstered in a brown and dull blue brocade he had chosen himself. He's gone, she thought. He's really gone.

"How can Mary take so long with the dishes?" she cried to herself. "I can't do anything with her here. If she'd only go."

She could hear Mary moving about behind the closed door; such leisurely steps; she could hear the clink of silver put into a drawer, the sound of running water; the metallic clang of the dishpan being put away. Oh, if only she'd go!

"Good night, ma'am," said Mary from the hall.

"Oh, good night, Mary! It was a wonderful dinner."

And now she was gone, and Viola rose. And what was it that she had so desperately wanted to do? Nothing. There was nothing she could do. If your husband simply walks out on you, what can you do about it? Ring up his brother, and see if Johnny's there?

What has Johnny told Alex? But maybe Alex knew, long ago, about the other woman. Maybe lots of people knew. J. Morgan Williams. Morgan's her special name for him. Maybe he's with her now. "But I'm all alone!" she cried aloud. "Johnny's gone! I can't stand it!"

There was nothing to do. It was as if life itself had stopped. If only I'd brought home some work . . . Shall I call up someone—anyone? Ask someone over?

Now, look here! Stop being so frantic. What you want is to get Johnny back, and you can't do anything about it tonight. But tomorrow you can . . . I really made him go. It's really my fault. I said I was going to Aunt Gina's. And he thought I'd rather have him go.

He doesn't know how much I want him back. He thinks I'm furious about that woman, that letter. But I'm not. Johnny, I'm not. She doesn't matter. Nothing matters but our life together. Our love. Johnny, I made you go. I don't care about pride, Johnny. I'll take the first step. I'll ask you to come back.

Oh, let it be tomorrow quick, so that I can ask you to come back . . .

WHEN the postman rang the next morning, Viola did not bother to go down for the mail. She ate her breakfast, finished dressing, in a quiet and almost cheerful mood. "This is just silly," she told herself.

"This can't go on, and I won't let it. I'll call him up at nine . . ." Johnny, I thought you'd come home last night. I missed you, darling. Be home to dinner?

When she went downstairs, there were letters on the console table, and it was a shock to see one for herself, addressed in Johnny's writing. It was frightening. She was clumsy about opening the envelope.

Dear Viola:

I have sent a check to your bank to cover the rent, and so on. If anything else comes up, be sure to let me know. J.

She moved backward, so that she could lean against the wall, looking and looking at the letter. Not 'love'; only 'J.' He wrote as if the situation were a settled thing. As if it were finished . . .

"No!" she told herself. "It's my fault. I was the one who talked about going away. And I'll take the first step."

But the fear she had felt at the sight of the envelope addressed in his hand was still with her. This mustn't go on, she thought, not even for one more day. For if it did, it would become real. It wasn't quite real yet. If she spoke to him on the telephone, and heard his voice, the fear would dissolve.

As soon as she entered the office, she was caught up in a whirl of things to be done; it was nearly ten o'clock before she could get to a booth in the lobby.

"I'd like to speak to Mr. Williams, please," she said.

"Mr. Williams isn't in the office," said the receptionist. "Can I take a message?" "What time do you expect him in?"

"He won't be in today," said the receptionist. "Do you wish to leave a message?" "No, thanks," said Viola.

She hung up the instrument and began to look in the directory for Alex's number. Johnny must be sick, she thought. I've got to find out.

But there was no answer from Alex's apartment.

Sheer panic overwhelmed her then. I don't know where Johnny is. Suppose he's in a hospital, ill? Suppose something's happened? I've got to find him. Even if I can't see him, I've got to know where he is.

She called his office again, and asked for his secretary.

"Do you expect Mr. Williams in tomorrow?" she asked.

"Who's calling, please?" asked the girl. "It's his cousin."

"Mr. Williams will be in tomorrow," said the girl. "May I take a message?" "No, thanks," said Viola. "I'll call again."

He's gone away with that woman, she thought. Maybe he never went to Alex's at all. He went to her. He's with her now. I've got to find out who she is.

And then what? Call her up and make a ridiculous, disgraceful scene? She didn't kidnap him. He went of his own free will. What's the wise thing to do? The thing that will be best—in the long run?

She went to the office again, and Mr. Jackson, the literary editor, was a little annoyed with her.

"Lewis and Masters have called up twice," he said. "Where is that Iowa article?"

"Oh, I'm sorry! It's right in my desk," Viola said. "Are we going to buy it?"

"No. You might write a letter to Lewis and Masters. Explain that the delay was because we were considering it very carefully. Tell them we'd like to see something else by that author."

"You can do your work," Viola told herself. "Never mind how you feel. You can go on." But she could not face that empty apartment again.

"Johnny's away," she said, to Molly

Stern. "Come and stay all night with me, won't you? We'll eat dinner out, and maybe go to a movie."

Then she telephoned to Mary, to say no one would be home to dinner. Mary must know there was something wrong. And soon other people would know.

I'll write to Johnny, she thought, and she could not wait till evening. She had to begin at once, sitting at her desk.

Dear Johnny:

Thanks for sending along a check. But isn't it time . . .

The telephone rang; someone came in to see her. Mr. Prince sent for her. Gibby didn't come in the afternoon, and that was a blessing, but she had no time for her letters. At half past five she left the office with Molly; they went to a restaurant in the Village.

Molly was a good companion for a time like this; a pretty girl, lively and cheerful and clever. She and Viola had worked side by side for nearly three years, and they had plenty to talk about.

"I'm afraid I can't go to a movie," Molly said. "Mr. Prince wants me to listen to a broadcast at nine o'clock. He's really serious about us getting on the air."

An old friend; a very nice girl. Yet, as soon as they set foot in the apartment, Viola wished her gone. Again she had that feeling that if only she were alone, she could do some undefined but vitally important thing.

Molly turned on the radio and sat down in Johnny's chair. And that was too much; Viola went into the bedroom. Almost at once the telephone rang.

"Viola?" asked Johnny's voice.

"Just a moment!" she said, and went to close the door. "Yes, Johnny? How are you, Johnny?"

"Fine, thanks," he answered, politely. "Look, Viola. If it's convenient for you, I'd like to come over now and get some of my things."

With Molly here? Let Molly see you coming—to take away your things? I shouldn't have brought her. If she wasn't here, I could talk to him . . .

"Oh, Johnny!" she said. "I've got company here now. Could you make it another time?"

"Certainly!" he said with the same politeness. "I won't keep you any longer."

"Johnny?"

"Yes?"

"Why don't we have lunch together tomorrow?"

"I'm sorry, but I couldn't make it tomorrow, Viola. Suppose I call you Saturday morning?"

So another day, another night, perhaps a week end, meant nothing to him? He was in no hurry to see her.

"Terribly sorry, Johnny, but I'm going out of town tomorrow for the week end."

"I see! Monday, then?"

"Call me Monday!" she said gaily. "By, Johnny!"

"Good-by, Viola."

A TREMENDOUS burst of clapping came over the radio, and an orchestra began to play a waltz that everyone would remember. "Oh, get out!" she cried in her heart to poor Molly. "If you hadn't been here, he'd have come, and I'd have kept him, somehow. Go away! I can't talk to you. I can't even stand seeing you—in his chair. Go away, and let me alone!"

Friday, Saturday, Sunday. And maybe always. Could your life go to pieces like this, so quickly, so easily?

No, she told herself. I won't let it. That woman can't mean so much to him. He can't have forgotten all our happy times together. He's infatuated with her, that's all. It will pass.

But every day of separation made it

more dangerous. Every day of his absence broke a link of the chain, made it easier for him to stay away. The home they had built together was growing cold.

She had to go out to Molly; she had to be civilized. They talked for an hour or so; they made sandwiches and drank cold ginger ale; they went to bed.

I've learned one thing, Viola told herself, lying in the dark. Maybe it's the only thing I have learned, but I'm sure now of this, if two people have to live each other are angry, or hurt, or do it to separate. Better to quarrel bitterly. That comes to an end.

The worst thing is to go away from each other. And that was my idea. I told him I was going away. He wouldn't have said it. He wouldn't have gone. It's my fault. And I've got to get him back.

HER Aunt Gina was delighted to have her for the week end.

"There are other people coming," she said, on the telephone, "but there's always room for you, chickabiddy."

Gina Lawrence was her father's sister, a stout little woman of sixty, always dowdily dressed with gray hair combed back from her forehead into a knot on the top of her head. But she was something more than that. She was a widow now, after thirty years of serene happiness with Endicott Lawrence, the historian. She had a comfortable income; she had innumerable friends, and she entertained them with good food, good drinks, and a warm loving-kindness. When you were with her you felt welcome and valuable.

She drove to the station in her ramshackle old car to meet Viola.

"But didn't Gibby come out on the train with you?" she asked.

"No, I didn't know he was coming at all," Viola answered.

"Well, he likes to be late," said Gina Lawrence. "It dramatizes him."

"He likes to be rude," said Viola. "You're the only person in the world he's never rude to."

"He doesn't need to be rude to me," said Mrs. Lawrence. "He knows I'll pay attention to him anyhow." She turned the car into the driveway. "Your Johnny's never rude, is he?"

"I never saw him rude," said Viola. "I saw him knock a man down once, on a Staten Island ferry, but he was quite polite, even about that."

If anyone were insolent or annoying, Johnny only grew more and more formal. Up to a certain point.

"I'm a calculating sort of guy," he had explained to Viola. "I don't get mad until I'm ready. Y'see, I went to boarding school when I was six. I was small for my age; the smallest kid in the school, and I had to learn to hold my own. I couldn't do it by fighting everybody. I had to learn to pick my fights with care."

She never liked to think of that Johnny, sent away to school at six, that Johnny who was so little, and had had to be calculating. Her own childhood had been so entirely happy. Did that, perhaps, make her unable to understand something in him? Something which this other woman saw—and recognized?

Dinner was an excellent meal; the company was entertaining; there was the atmosphere Gina knew how to evoke, a friendliness that affected even Gibby. He arrived when they were all at the table, and he apologized very nicely to Mrs. Lawrence before he sat down in the vacant chair beside Viola.

"No Johnny?" he asked.

"He couldn't get away."

"That's good."

"Nobody else thinks so," said Viola.

"You wouldn't know," said Gibby. "No-

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body but me would tell you, but maybe plenty of people are as bored as I am with the spectacle of your calm, creamy happiness."

I wish I hadn't come, Viola thought. I don't want to talk to anyone. I don't want to see anyone. I want to be alone. You think it's going to take your mind off things to see other people. But it doesn't.

She talked to an elderly musician; she was gay and amusing; she made him laugh. And she wanted Johnny to see her being amusing. But later, alone in her room, it was worst of all. What was the sense of a party if you couldn't talk it over with Johnny? Did you notice Alice Ames making a play for Gibby? . . . That was a good way to serve shrimps, wasn't it, Johnny? . . . Johnny, everyone loved your joke about the horse in the bar.

It can't be over. Not really. Johnny couldn't just forget me, even if he is infatuated with that woman.

And what kind of woman is she? If I knew that, perhaps I could understand. If I knew what there was in her that's different from me . . . If I knew how she'd got him . . .

I find her, somehow. I've got to see her.

ON SATURDAY Gina took her house guests to lunch at the country club, and they stayed there most of the afternoon. Viola played ping-pong; she took a stroll with the elderly musician; she was gay and lively all the time. Too gay; it seemed to her that everyone must notice the impatience that was so near the surface.

After dinner she got her first chance to do what she had planned to do the night before. She managed to get Gibby alone in a corner of the big drawing room.

"Why did you tell me about seeing Johnny having lunch twice with some woman, Gibby?" she asked.

"Out of spite," he answered. "Malice."

"But why did you think I'd care?"

"I could only know you might," he said. "I've often thought, Viola, that if you had one, chumping big failure in your life, you'd be much improved."

"Thanks, Gibby, dear. Sweet of you."

"You're very welcome, dear Viola."

"Who was the woman, Gibby?"

"I don't know who she was. Very intense, trying, gazing into Johnny's eyes. Oh, he gazed, too. He did, indeed."

"Still, gazing is hardly enough to make me about."

"It's an excellent preliminary. It's the way I always start, myself."

"Haven't you any idea who she is?"

"None."

She rose, and he sat looking up at her.

"If ever you're really fed up with Johnny," he said, "you can take me on, if you like."

"Don't tempt me so," said Viola.

The other house guests were staying until Monday morning, and Viola had meant to do so herself. But it had become intolerable. She had to get home, to be alone, entirely alone.

Gibby was going back to town, too; they took a train together, late in the afternoon. It was very crowded, and they could not sit together; Gibby went off to another car, and she was glad of that.

Johnny said that his lunch with that woman was business. Could she be someone in his office? Would Alex know? But I couldn't ask Alex; he'd never answer, if I did. He'd never give Johnny away.

Then why shouldn't I ask Johnny himself? That's the civilized thing to do. We promised to tell each other, if ever we changed. I just want to know who that woman is . . .

The train was roaring through the tunnel now, and Gibby made his way back

to her. "Shall we dine together?" he asked.

"Gibby, I'd love to, but—"

"But I understand perfectly," he said. He got her bag for her, and they stepped out onto the platform together. And Johnny was just getting out of the car ahead.

He saw them; he came toward them,

"Hello," he said.

"Hello," she answered.

"I take your bag," Johnny said.

"Thanks, but Gibby's got it."

"Well, run," said Johnny. "It's right there, behind you."

A high singer against Gibby ruse in her. "Why didn't he sing?" she cried to herself. "What does he mean by going off like this, without a word?" Making me one more of fortune."

All right. I'm not foolish. If Johnny can be so debonair, as can I.

"Have a nice week end, Johnny?"

"Pretty good, thanks. I went out to the Lymans."

"Never heard of them," said Viola.

"I've mentioned Flomax Lyman to you several times."

"Sorry, but I don't remember any Flomax Lyman."

This was wrong; altogether wrong.

"Did you have a good time?" he asked.

"I suppose you've been to Aunt Gina's."

"Of course! Where else would you go, you poor, forlorn creature, except to visit an aunt?"

They went through the gates together.

"I'll see you home, Viola," Johnny said.

She did not like the way he said it. Being subtle, she thought.

"Well, thanks, Johnny," she said. "but I'm not going straight home. I'm going to stop off at a little party."

I'm lying, she thought, appalled. Telling cheap, silly lies, to build myself up.

"Have you time to step across the street for a drink?" asked Johnny.

"Why, yes, I think so," she answered.

THEY WENT to a hotel bar where they had been before, two or three times; they sat down side by side on a leather divan. "What'll you have, Viola?"

"Just ginger ale, thanks, Johnny."

"Saving up for your party?" he asked, with a smile.

And she could not read his smile. Mocking, was it? Or just amused? Did he know that there wasn't any party?

"Well, it's not that," she said. "I'm tired. It's been a pretty strenuous week end."

"It has? I thought Aunt Gina always kept things pretty tranquil."

"This was a personal thing," she said. "Don't go on, she told herself. You've said enough. Stop now."

She glanced at Johnny, and he was not looking at her; he was looking across the room.

"I met a man who wants to be my next husband," she said.

She would have given anything in the world to unsay her words. So cheap, so contemptible, she thought. But they were spoken.

She began to talk quickly and gaily. Her cheeks were burning, her hands were cold. She told Johnny about a dating father who had brought his twin daughters to the country club to play ping-pong, exasperating everyone. She made him laugh.

And she didn't want him to laugh.

"Afraid I'll have to get along now, Johnny," she said. Tell me not to go. Tell me to stay, and I'll stay."

But he put her and her bag into a taxi.

"What address?" he asked.

She was sitting in the cab, and he stood at the open door. Johnny, come with

me! Let's talk, really talk to each other. Johnny, I'm sorry . . .

"I think I'll just go home, after all, Johnny," she said.

"Okay!" said Johnny, and he gave the driver the address. "Good night, Viola."

"Johnny!" she cried. But not aloud.

THE apartment was empty as a discarded shell on a lonely beach. There was no anger in her now; no bitterness.

She lay in bed, in her dressing gown, with the lamp burning, and she knew what she wanted to say to Johnny. "Johnny, I love you, and I'd be happy if you'd come back. But if you don't want to come back, tell me."

"I think I could stand anything, if it could be clean and honest. I think I could. Only not this. Not to sit beside you, and feel that there's no understanding between us. It used to be enough for us just to look at each other, in a crowd of people. And tonight—there wasn't anything."

She went to sleep with her resolution made; she waked in the morning in the same mood. At nine, she phoned the office.

"Josephine," she said, "will you tell Mr. Prince that I've been—delayed? I'll be a little late."

It was a raw, gray day. She put on a black skirt, a white satin blouse with long sleeves and a bow at the neck; she put on her fur jacket and a white turban. There were letters for her on the hall table, and two for Johnny; she put them all into her purse, and went out of the house. She got a taxi, and she gave the driver the address of Johnny's office.

He was owner and chief editor of Williams' Journal, founded by his father, a trade journal for the china and glassware trade. He was devoted to it; he fought to keep it going through strikes and shortages; he was proud of it. He even cherished the crowded, old-fashioned offices in the West Thirties.

Viola had been there only twice; she did not believe in wives getting into their husbands' offices. When she came in this morning, the receptionist did not know her.

"Who shall I say is calling?" she asked.

"Tell Mr. Williams it's someone from Our States magazine," said Viola, and she heard the girl relay the message.

Johnny came out at once, and the look on his face was not curiosity; certainly not eagerness. It was plainly alarm.

"Oh, hello!" he said. He held out his hand. "Come into my office, won't you?"

She noticed that he took care not to use her name; he was embarrassed as well as alarmed. Does he think I've come here to make a scene? she thought. He might know me better than that.

His office was a good-sized room, but crowded to the point of discomfort and remarkably ugly, with mustard-colored walls and a worn brown rug on the floor. There was a big green filing cabinet, a big desk with a swivel chair; there were built-in shelves stacked with magazines and papers; on a table by the window there was an array of china. The chair facing his desk was occupied by a bristled board on which was painted, in bold colors, a picture of a prancing bull surrounded by counters of china and glass. He took this up, and set it on top of the shelves.

"What's that, Johnny?" she asked, only to ease this miserable moment.

"Oh . . . Just an idea a fellow had. Sit down, Viola. Cigarette?"

"Thanks."

There was a silence. He was leaving it to her to start, and that, she thought, was natural enough. She had come here; it was for her to say what the reason was. "I thought—" she began.

"What is it, Mrs. Buckley?" Johnny asked.

A pretty little blonde had come into the office.

"It's the Gilfield Associates on the telephone, Mr. Williams," she said.

"All right! Put them on here," he said.

"Excuse me just a moment, Viola."

It was a good long moment. This was, obviously, one talk in a series; the Gilfield Associates wished to make a survey for him, visiting his subscribers, distributing free copies of the journal to non-subscribers, tabulating and analyzing everyone's reactions. They were trying to high-pressure Johnny, and it couldn't be done. He was interested, though. Viola sat watching him, with a queer, unresolvable pain to see him so familiar. Long lean fingers were twirling a pencil.

"Well, yes," he said. "Wait a moment, will you?" He pressed the buzzer on his desk, and Mrs. Buckley came in. "What time can I see this Chadwick this afternoon?" he asked.

"Not till half past four, Mr. Williams."

He spoke into the telephone again.

"Say, four thirty, then . . . Fine. Yes . . . Good-bye!"

This was an idiotic thing to do, Viola thought. I ought to have known better than to come here, to his office.

She wanted to establish a mood at least a little more intimate.

"Oh, you managed to get another of those nice gray shirts?" she said.

"Well, no," he said. "This is the original. I stopped in Saturday morning to get some of my things."

"Oh, did you?" she said.

And that makes it final. You're moving out. What am I going to do? Beg you to come back?"

Yes! If I have to. If that's the only way.

The telephone rang, and Johnny answered it.

"Miss James? . . . Tell them no."

An anxious voice, strangely harsh, came squawking through the telephone. Mrs. Buckley came in again.

"Excuse me!" she murmured, and leaning across Viola, she took a folder out of one of the desk drawers. When she tried to stand upright, her hair caught in the buckle of Viola's belt; she had to stay bent over double while Viola unfastened her belt. It was ridiculous and humiliating and unbearable.

"No," Johnny said again. "That's final."

He hung up and turned again to Viola, who was refastening her belt.

"It's very nice to see you," he said.

"I brought your mail," she said, taking his letters out of her purse. "Mrs. Buckley is new, isn't she, Johnny?"

"Oh, she's been here about three months. She's a nice girl, but she won't last. Got a husband in Japan, in the Army; she'll quit as soon as he gets back."

She's not the one, Viola thought.

"Johnny," she said, "I think we ought to have a talk."

"It's up to you, Viola," he said.

That new and dreadful anger began to rise in her again, but she forced it down.

"Well, not entirely, is it?" she said, smiling a little. "After all, we can't go on like this, Johnny."

"I'll do whatever you say."

"It would be nice to know what you prefer, Johnny."

"It's up to you."

He sat looking straight before him, his face pale and blank; he was still twirling the pencil. And she made her throat tight.

"I'll," she said, "I guess you'll just have to suit yourself, Johnny."

"What is it, Mrs. Buckley?" he demanded impatiently.

"Mr. Duval is here."

"Ask him to wait for a while."

"But he says he's taking the plane back



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to France this afternoon, and he——" "All right. Tell him to sit down, and I'll be with him presently."

Viola rose. Her anger was engulfed now in panic. No, no, no! Not like this. It can't be this way.

"Johnny," she said, "come to dinner?"

"You mean——meet you somewhere?"

"No," she said. "I mean at home."

"You mean——tonight?"

Their eyes met, and a strange, absurd embarrassment seized her; her cheeks flushed hot. She flipped over the pages of his desk calendar.

"Well, not tonight," she said. "I might have to work. No . . . I'll mark it down for you. So that you won't forget."

"Oh, by all means!" he said coldly.

Her hand was not steady as she drew a V on the bottom of the page that was headed Wednesday. She held out her hand, and as he took it, she smiled. But he did not. He held her hand tight, and then let it go.

"Thank you," he said.

Her knees felt weak as she left the office; she felt altogether weak, shaken, longing to cry. He's coming home, she thought. The instant I mentioned it, he said yes. He said thank you. So it's practically all over. He doesn't need to explain, ever. I don't really care about that woman. He went into a tailspin, the way men do, that's all.

But why did I say Wednesday? Why not tomorrow? Why not tonight? Now there's all that time . . . How can I wait till Wednesday? What can I do?

What can I do? I've got a job; that's what I can do. I'd better get there quick, too. It's a busy day. That's a good thing. Only Johnny's busy, too. He has much more responsibility than I have. He just won't have any time to think about me.

THE office was almost unbearably stuffy, and, to make it worse, Gibby was smoking a pipe.

"Hail to thee, blithe spirit!" he said. "I must be rather a relief to you, Viola."

"Well, I wouldn't want to deny it, Gibby. But why?"

"Because I'm not taken in by your girlish gaiety. Because I don't think you have the ideal life. I know damn well you're miserable, and completely baffled." Viola sat down and lighted a cigarette. "What am I supposed to be baffled about?"

"You're not a fool," he said. "You must have known you were giving yourself away when you asked me those questions about Johnny's lunch date."

"I was curious, naturally."

"So last night," he went on, ignoring her words, "I went, hoping for the worst, to the restaurant where I'd seen him before. And there he was. Viola! There he was. With the smoldering brunette."

"Heavens!" said Viola amably. "I'll really have to ask Johnny about this."

"All right!" said Gibby. "You're what's known as a good sport. I think it's a puerile and boring thing to be. But so long as you can admire yourself . . . Now I'll have to get on with these galleys."

Viola had work to do, too; plenty of it. That was good medicine when your hands were shaking, when something in you fluttered frantically, when you wanted to throw something at Gibby, shout at him, smash something. Or lay your head on the desk and cry and cry, and not care who saw you.

THE next day she made an appointment at a beauty salon for five thirty; she had a shampoo, a set, and a manicure; then she went to a restaurant near home for a solitary dinner. It's queer, she thought. The longer I live alone, the more I seem to want to be alone. I don't want to call up anybody, or see anybody. I wonder if

it's often like that with other people?

Or was it love that did that to you? So that, longing for one special person, no body else was acceptable, or even bearable? So that it was far better alone in the apartment than with company.

"But I won't give up!" she told herself. "This isn't going to last. Tomorrow when he comes, and we talk things over . . ."

She had had two chances to talk things over with Johnny, and both times there had been a barrier between them, something cruelly artificial and cold.

But not tomorrow. I'll make it right tomorrow.

The next morning she left the office at half past nine and went down to the lobby to telephone to Mary.

"Mr. Williams will be home to dinner tonight," she said. "So, I thought we'd have something he likes."

"Yes, ma'am," said Mary.

What did Mary think of all this? Never mind. She would ask no questions, show no curiosity or surprise.

"I thought shrimp cocktails," said Viola, "and then a nice sirloin steak, and mashed potatoes and a green salad. And for dessert——"

"Mr. Williams likes my apple pie."

"I know. Let's have it, Mary."

At lunchtime she went to a Fifth Avenue store, to look at housecoats.

"I think this is the most alluring number we've got," the saleswoman told her. "At eighty dollars?" said Viola, laughing.

"Just step into a fitting-room and try on," said the saleswoman.

It was black chiffon, with a long, full skirt and a snugly fitted bodice cut very low, with a butterfly bow of lace, that had a bow of dusty pink velvet in its center. It made Viola look taller and slighter, with a tiny waist; her skin looked dazzling.

I never looked like this before, she thought. Alluring.

Well, isn't that rather a cheap idea? I mean, if I want really to talk to Johnny, talk frank and honestly, do I want to come out in a thing like this?

She looked again at her image in the mirror. Yes! She thought. Yes, I do! Eighty dollars is outrageous, but I'll buy it.

In the middle of the afternoon a sudden thought came that disturbed her profoundly. I don't remember saying anything about time, she thought. Suppose Johnny gets there early? If he's there when I get home, I just wouldn't have the nerve to go and put on that negligee. Too crude. No. I've got to be there first.

She thought of asking Mr. Prince if she could leave a little early. But she remembered that she had come in late on Monday, and it didn't seem fair. If I leave at half past five, sharp, she thought. If I can get a taxi without any delay . . .

This is silly. Johnny practically never gets home until after I do. Only, he might feel that this was sort of special . . .

She tried to get on with her work, but she was nervous, almost feverish with worry. I want to be all ready when he gets there. I want to have cocktails made, and little canapés. I never told Mary a word about canapés. Have we got anything in the house to make canapés?"

"Mary," she said, "have we got anything in the house to make canapés?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Mary.

"Shall I help you?"

"No, thank you, ma'am. I've got plenty of time."

"Then I'll just slip on a housecoat."

"Yes, ma'am," said Mary.

But Mary could not stop. "It's a lot more restful to get on a housecoat," she said.

"Yes, ma'am," said Mary.

I'm being ridiculous, Viola thought, and went into the bedroom. She unpacked the negligee, and pushed the box far back under the bed. I don't want Johnny to know I bought this specially, she thought. He might just as well think I've had it for quite a while.

But Mary would know. Oh, let her know! There's no crime in trying to look nice, or even alluring. Only, I don't think that's the way I want to get Johnny back. By competing with that other woman. That smoldering brunette. I think I'd rather have things—well—on a different plane. Maybe I won't wear this, after all.

But she looked lovely in it, so tall and slight, the color warm in her cheeks. I will wear it! she thought. She put on her best perfume too, standing before the mirror, a little excited by her new beauty, a little ashamed of her deliberate allurements. And she was still embarrassed to appear before Mary.

It had to be done, though. She went into the kitchen to mix the cocktails, and when they were ready, Mary had a plate of attractive canapés ready.

It was well after six now; at any minute the doorbell would ring. Or would he use his latchkey? That would be better; much better. That would be like coming home; not like a visitor. There was a faint spicy smell in the air from the fresh-baked apple pie; one of the most homelike smells there is, she thought.

She turned on the radio, getting dinner music, gay and gentle. I'll wait in the bedroom, she thought, as if I'd been resting, and when he comes, I'll come out.

At half past six something strange and dreadful happened to her; her throat tightened until she could scarcely breathe; she felt dizzy and faint. She lay on the bed, and in a few moments it had passed. Twenty to seven. Quarter to seven. He's not coming, she told herself. She had known that at half past six; she was utterly certain of it now. Ten minutes to seven: five to seven. They always had dinner at seven.

She reached for the telephone and took it up, but without dialing.

"Oh, Johnny?" she said, speaking loudly and clearly. "Just a moment . . ." She rose and opened the door, and came back to the telephone. "Oh, what a shame! We were having such a nice dinner tonight . . . But, of course, if it's business . . . All right, dear!"

She hoped Mary had heard that. She went to the kitchen.

"Mr. Williams is detained in his office," she said, "and he doesn't know when he'll get home. Isn't that provoking? Better not put on the steak, Mary. When he does come, we'll eat out."

"Yes, ma'am," said Mary.

It was, Viola thought, the very perfection of good manners to behave as Mary did, to show no surprise, no interest, even; to take everything so quietly.

"Cook some steak for yourself, Mary."

"Thank you, ma'am, but if you don't mind, I'll just go along home, soon as I've cleared up."

Viola went back to the bedroom, and took off the negligee; she pulled out the box and crumpled the filmy thing into it; she kicked the box far under the bed again. She put on a black dress, and her black pumps, and waited, for a long time, until Mary came out of the kitchen.

"Good night, Mary!"

"Good night, ma'am!"

Viola went into the kitchen, left beauti-

fully neat, still redolent of the apple pie. She emptied the cocktails down the sink, and threw the canapés into the garbage pail. Then she dialed Alex Williams' number.

"Oh, Alex? This is Viola. Is Johnny there?"

"Why, no," Alex answered. "He's out. Can I—"

"Do you know where he went?"

"Why, no, I don't. Viola."

"I want to reach him," said Viola. "What time did he go out, Alex?"

"He hasn't been in at all this evening, Viola. Can I take—"

"Thank you," she said, and hung up.

She called Johnny's office, on the chance that he was still working. But the number did not answer. She sat for a moment, her brows drawn together; then she dialed Gibby's number.

"Gibby?"

"What is it? I'm eating my dinner."

"What was the name of that restaurant? I've forgotten."

"What restaurant? What are you talking about?"

"Where you saw Johnny," she said.

"My God!" he said, and began to laugh.

"I'm pretty sick of your boorishness," said Viola. "Just answer, will you please?"

"You mean you're on the warpath? You?"

"Can you stop cackling, and answer?"

"Cackling?" he repeated sharply.

"That's the word," said Viola. "You're cackling, like a spiteful old maid. Will you please give me the name of that restaurant?"

"Robinot's, on West Fifty-third," he said curtly, and hung up.

VIOLA leaned back in the taxi and lighted a cigarette. There are just two explanations, she told herself. One is, that he forgot. And I'll never forgive that. The other is, that she got hold of him, and wouldn't let him come. If that's it, I simply despise him. And I hate her.

Oh, if only I find them in the restaurant! Oh, please let it be like that! If I can just walk in . . . Johnny'll be terrified—and she won't be any too pleased. I shan't make any scene. I know exactly what I'll say.

"Really, this is getting rather absurd, don't you think? Naturally, I've known all about it for ages, but I thought it was just one of those things."

"That's what it is, Viola," Johnny would say.

No. Leave Johnny out of this. You can't put words into his mouth. You can just decide what you're going to say.

"So long as you two are so wrapped up in each other, I'm stepping out of the picture. I suppose I'll go to Reno—unless my lawyer can arrange without that."

"Oh, no, you don't!" Johnny would say. "You've got to give me another chance."

Stop. Leave Johnny out of it. You don't know how he feels. You just decide what you're going to say.

She had never before felt so completely sure of herself, so intensely alive, so triumphant. I'm not a bit angry any more, she thought. I don't really hate that woman. I simply despise her. And I'm simply disappointed in Johnny—for being so weak. I shan't pretend I won't be glad to see them both pretty uncomfortable, when I walk in. But that's all. I don't want to do them any harm. They're just two shallow, selfish, unimportant people. I've got plenty of friends; I've got Aunt Gina; I've got my job. I admit I'm disappointed in Johnny, but it certainly isn't going to crush me. I intend to get over it.

The taxi stopped before a tidy little restaurant with a red marquee and two fir trees in red tubs beside the entrance. She paid the driver and got out.

A doorman opened the door for her, and she entered. The air was thick with smoke; a Hungarian Rhapsody was coming through Musak, a little muffled.

"How many, Madame?" the head waiter asked.

"I'm looking for someone, thank you," she said.

"Good evening, Viola!" said Gibby, rising from a table near the door.

"Oh, hello, Gibby!" she said.

"After our telephone conversation," he said. "I was quite sure I'd see you here this evening. Sit down, Viola."

"No, thanks," she said absently.

"They're here, you know," said Gibby.

And then she saw them. They were at the far end of the room, both in profile to her. She gave Johnny no more than a casual glance; it was the woman she wanted to study.

She was a handsome woman, very dark, with olive skin and clear features. A wide-brimmed white hat left much of her rich dark hair uncovered; she wore a white dress. She was handsome, and she was exotic and arresting.

Viola forgot Gibby; she went straight across the room. They were looking at each other; they did not see her even when she stood beside them. This was the moment. This was the greatest, most wonderful moment in her life.

"Hello, Johnny!" she said gaily.

He turned his head, and he looked just as she had expected and wanted him to look. Appalled. He rose.

"Viola," he said, very low.

"Introduce your friend, Johnny," said Viola. "I'd like to have a drink with you."

Johnny stood before her, very straight, looking over her shoulder. And he said not a word.

"Then I'll introduce myself," said Viola, laughing gaily. "I am Johnny's wife, you know."

The other woman glanced up; their eyes met. They looked and looked at each other, and something happened to Viola.

"No," she said. "You needn't introduce her, after all, Johnny, I don't care to know her."

"What do you mean by that?" demanded the other.

"I'm really not interested in her," said Viola to Johnny. "New York is simply full of these spectacular, intense women, always running around with someone else's husband."

"Why do you say spectacular?" asked the other.

"A cave woman," said Viola, still addressing Johnny. "Pure Hollywood, only rather out-of-date."

"I'm not going to sit here to be insulted!" cried the other.

"Oh, I'm sure you don't need to!" said Viola, politely. "I'm sure you could be insulted anywhere, with that make-up and—"

"Viola," said Johnny, in a low, desperate voice. "Viola. Please! Sit down."

"With her? No, thanks, Johnny."

"Morgan!" said the other. "Take me home, please."

"Morgan," said Viola, laughing again. "Viola!" said Johnny. "Please . . . People are looking."

"I don't care," said Viola. "Why should I? I really think the whole thing is funny. You—and this preposterous cave-woman."

"Morgan," said the other. "Are you going to let this go on?"

"Waiter!" said Johnny. "Another chair, please."

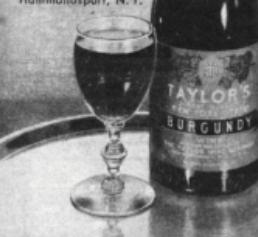
The waiter brought a chair.

"I'm not going to sit down," said Viola. It really was a scene; people really

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were watching them, and Viola was glad. She laughed again.

"Morgan," said the other, "I think she's been drinking."

"Oh, no! Certainly not," said Johnny. "Then you're out of your mind," said the other. She and Viola were looking at each other now, speaking directly to each other.

"Oh, I'm quite sane," said Viola. "I'm simply amused. You're so typical of the sort of woman men fall for—temporarily."

"You don't seem to have been so very successful in holding your husband," said the other.

"Liza?" said Johnny, "I'll put you in a tax."

"No, you won't," said the other, pushing back her chair and rising. "You really won't have the least trouble in getting rid of me." She cracked up her coat, and Johnny stepped forward, to help her on with it. "Morgan," she said, "honestly, I'm sorry for you, with that dreadful shrew of a wife. Making a scene, in a public place."

She unpinched her corsage and threw it down on the table.

"Give it to her, Morgan," she said. "I don't imagine she's had very many in her life."

Viola threw the roses at her; they hit her on the chin, and dropped to the floor. She pushed them aside with her foot, and went across the room toward the door. "Good God!" said Johnny. "Viola, sit down."

"I won't," said Viola. "I'm going home."

"Viola, at least wait until—"

"Until you're sure your cavewoman is well away? I won't."

"Viola, I haven't paid—"

She turned and walked off. She knew that people were looking after her, and let them look. She was tall and good-looking and she walked well.

"Viola," said Gibby, still seated near the door. "I'll see you home."

"No," she said. "No, thanks."

"As you please," he said. "I've been watching . . . With considerable surprise. Frankly, I didn't think you capable of such an exhibition."

"I don't care what you think," said Viola.

"Perhaps you can understand now why I've never married," he said. "Women—all women—"

"Hooley!" said Viola, and went on out.

IN THE street, under the marquee, the other woman was standing, and Viola stood directly beside. They glanced at each other, and then away.

The doorman was blowing his whistle, but the cabs all went by; the two women were still standing there side by side when Johnny came out. He stood behind them, and none of them said a word.

Then a cab stopped; the other woman got into it, and it drove off.

"Taxi, sir?" the doorman asked Johnny.

"Yes, please," said Johnny.

Another cab came at once, and they got into it; Johnny gave the address of the apartment house.

"Viola," he said, "why did you do this?"

"I got rather bored, waiting for you."

"But you knew I was coming tomorrow."

"Tomorrow? We'd arranged it for tonight."

"Excuse me, it was for Thursday."

"No," said Viola. "It was Wednesday. Tonight. I suppose you forgot about it."

"I did not. You wrote it on my calendar.

You wrote V."

"I wrote it under Wednesday," she said.

"Maybe you think you did. But you're misinformed."

"Nope," said Viola.

"Now, look here!" said Johnny. "Do you think I'd be likely to make a mistake about that?"

"You did," said Viola. "I can read. I read Wednesday on the top of that calendar page."

"I see," said Johnny, in cold triumph. "But that calendar happens to show two days at once, and you wrote that V on the bottom sheet, under Thursday."

There was a moment's silence.

"Well, possibly I did," said Viola. "Maybe I did make a mistake."

"There's no 'maybe' about it, Viola."

"Anyhow, I don't care," said Viola. "And certainly it didn't bother you. You went rushing off to your cavewoman."

"Viola, I asked her out tonight to tell her I wasn't going to see her again, ever."

"I don't believe it," said Viola.

"You know damn well I'm not a liar."

"You are a liar," said Viola. "All that about getting a cold, and a sore throat?"

"Well, good God!" he said. "I was so—

"You were able to tell me lies. Cruel lies."

"Cruel? Don't you understand?"

"Certainly I understand," said Viola. "You wanted to shut yourself up alone, to dream about your cavewoman."

"Now, look here! I did that—out of respect for you. I—well, I admit I went to lunch in her apartment, and—I kissed her."

"And you nearly died of remorse. For one kiss."

"I admit there was—a little necking—"

"Necking!" Viola repeated. "What a ridiculous, disgusting word for a grown man to use!"

"Well, it's what I mean. I mean—that's all there was to it."

"It's enough," said Viola.

"I know it," he said, with a sudden and surprising humility. "I don't know how it happened . . . The first few times I saw her, it was simply about an article she was writing for us at Limoges. She's lived in France quite a lot—"

"Typical!" said Viola.

"Well, the thing is . . . I took her out to lunch, and then she invited me to lunch. She's been having a bad time of it. She had to divorce her husband, and his mother took all her furniture—"

"And you're sorry for her."

"Well, yes," he said. "I was."

"So you walked out on me. Desereted me."

"Now, look here! That's a little too much. I wasn't feeling very—pleased with myself that morning. I wanted to tell you the whole thing. But—I didn't know how to. You just seemed—amused. Then you said you were leaving me. Going to Aunt Gina's. All right, I didn't see why you should be turned out of your home, simply to get rid of me. It seemed to me that I was the one to go."

"So you went rushing to your cavewoman."

"I did not! I went to Alex's. I tell you that nothing's happened."

"That's what you think," said Viola.

"Well, something's happened to me, all right. If you could leave me like that—if you could stay away that long, you can stay away for good."

"Look here! I tried to come back. I called up and asked you if I could come

over, and you said no, you were having a party. I felt pretty sure about that."

"I wasn't having a party. I never said so."

"That's what I understood," he said.

"You certainly enjoyed yourself out at Aunt Gina's," he went on. "You told me about this man who'd been making love to you—"

"He did not make love to me!"

"You said this fellow asked you to marry him. If that's not making love, what is?"

"It's different," said Viola briefly.

"When you came into my office Monday morning," he said, "well, I'll tell you what I thought. You seemed so damn happy and hearty . . . Personally, I thought you were getting on pretty well without me."

"So that's what you thought? Just because I tried to be civilized and—"

"I thought you were getting on fine without me. I thought you were pretty well stopped caring about me. I—didn't know what to do—how to reach you. I—it seemed like—the end of everything."

The cab turned the corner of the familiar street.

"Viola, he said. "I was wrong. I'm sorry. I'm so damn sorry . . . I was a fool. Because now I know you do care."

"And how do you know?" she asked.

"The way you came into that restaurant. You cared enough to make a scene—"

The cab stopped before the house, and they both got out.

"Good night!" said Viola.

"Oh, no, you don't!" said Johnny. "You do care."

"I lost my temper, that's all. I had dinner all ready for you, and you didn't come, and I lost my temper. That's all. It wasn't love!"

"Oh, yes, it was!"

"I say no! I hate myself for making that scene. And—I hate you!" she said.

"Good!" he said. "I like to hear you say that."

"You mean you like me to—vulgar and furious and—uncivilized?"

"Yes!" he said almost shouting it. "All these last days, I've felt—frozen. You seemed so—darn self-sufficient. I couldn't kid myself that you needed me. The way I need you, always."

"Johnny, you fool!" she said unsteadily.

"But when you came into the restaurant . . . I was frightened. It was awful! But it was—" he paused—"it was the best thing that ever happened in my life."

He took her arm, and she came along with him. He opened the street door with his key, and they went up the stairs, and he opened their own door. He went in first, and turned on the lamps; he stood looking at the room with a half-smile.

"Mary made an apple pie for you," she said. "Would you like some?"

"Sure!" he said. "But—"

"Wait!" she said. "Wait here."

"Viola . . . ?"

She went into the bedroom, locking the door so that he could not follow. She got out the negligee from under the bed, and put it on, giving herself only a casual glance in the mirror. There were tears on her cheeks, but she did not bother about them. She unlocked the door and went back into the living room.

"Oh, baby!" cried Johnny. "Where have you been all my life?"

"You'd be surprised," said Viola.

They had never talked to each other like that before. It wasn't civilized. It was awful. It was wonderful.

THE END

Here is an editorial guarantee—Martin Goldsmith's book-length novel "The Last Minute Miracle" will keep you chuckling in spite of anything the grim August heat may do to your disposition

room specifically. All of the rooms like it."

"Yes?" Phyllis said.

"I've got it figured out," Nick said. "What we need is two thousand dollars. We can make a thousand down payment on a little house in Mill Valley, and the other thousand will buy some furniture."

"I'd like that," Phyllis said.

Nick said, "I've got five hundred dollars in the bank. If we pinch pennies we can save seventy-five dollars a month. At that rate it would take us almost two years to save the fifteen hundred more we need. But we're not going to do that."

"Go ahead, Nick," Phyllis said.

"All right. The other day I saw a 1931 automobile in a used-car lot for two hundred and fifty dollars. We buy it and get out of here."

"Where do we go?" Phyllis said.

"I don't know, East, I guess. We keep going until I find a good job and a decent place for us to live."

"I see," Phyllis said.

"We can't stay here," Nick said. "Two years of it. I know what these rooms can do to you. They crush you. You get to feeling that the walls are closing in on you. We can't let that happen to us."

**PHYLIS** got up and went over to the window. She was silent a few moments and then said, "I just had a silly idea. I wonder what some pioneer ancestors would have done, just married and starting out together."

"Cut down a tree, I suppose," Nick said. "I suppose the husband would have gone out and cut down a tree and begun building a cabin. You want me to cut down a tree?"

"I was just thinking."

"I imagine they would have done what we are going to do," Nick said. "Get in their covered wagon and look for a better land."

"I'm not as sure there's a better land any more," Phyllis said.

"There must be a better deal for us than this," Nick said.

"No," Phyllis said, "I don't think there is anything better for people like us. People without money."

"We'll find it," Nick said.

"You know what we're doing?" Phyllis said. "We're running away."

"Phyllis," Nick said sharply, "we're leaving this town and this room."

"If you say it like that," Phyllis said, "of course we'll go. I couldn't get along without you. But I think we ought to talk about it a bit."

"Go ahead and talk," Nick said.

"Please, Nick," she said softly, "please let's not leave."

"You're afraid. Is that it, Phyllis?"

"No. Not afraid in the sense of being afraid to take a chance. I'm afraid for you."

"Afraid that I will fail. Is that what you mean?"

"If we leave, Nick, you will have failed already."

"You call leaving this failure?" Nick said, jerking his arm at the room with a sharp, violent gesture.

"Yes, I would," Phyllis said. "I know how you feel, darling. You're humiliated at having to bring your bride to a rooming house. But don't you see that it's not your fault? If we had been married at another time, say six years ago, we could have had a little apartment, or maybe even a small house. It's not your fault that we can't. I don't know whose fault it is. A world I never made, somebody says wrote. But we can't run away from it. There's no place to run, Nick."

"This miserable sweetheart of a world," Nick said.

"I think we should stay," Phyllis said. "He avoided her eyes.

"Look, darling," she went on swiftly, "you say that if we're careful with our money, in two years we can get a place of our own. We both have jobs, and you've told me yourself that in time your job will amount to something. All we need is a little patience."

"It's a swell world," Nick said. "A beautiful, lovely world."

"It's a nasty world," Phyllis said. "I know how you must feel, sweet. You come back from three dreadful years in the Army and have to bring your bride to a rooming house. I think that young people probably never have lived in a more difficult time. In the old days if things got too tough you could just pack up and leave for somewhere else. But there isn't any somewhere else any more."

"Two years is a long time," Nick said. "An awfully long time."

"That thing I said about the pioneers," Phyllis said. "Maybe it wasn't an silly. It's kind of the same. Every month that we put seventy-five dollars in the bank it's another tree cut down for our home." She leaned forward and stretched out her hand. "Don't you see, Nick?" she said sagerly.

Nick looked up. "Do you really think we should stay, Phyllis?"

"Yes," Phyllis said. "I think we should."

"It wouldn't be easy for you," Nick said. "We'd have to eat in cheap restaurants. Not go anywhere. Maybe a movie once a week. You wouldn't have any clothes."

"I've got plenty of clothes," Phyllis said. "I won't need a thing. A pair of stockings now and then."

"I never cared much for drinking anyway," Nick said. "Never could drink. I won't miss it."

"I'll give up smoking," Phyllis said. "That will save a little. We can't smoke here anyway. And I can work some overtime. They're always after us to work overtime. They pay time and a half for overtime."

"I might get a raise in about a year," Nick said. "The old man likes me. Wouldn't be a big raise, but it would help."

"You're awfully smart, Nick. And it's a big company. You'll do very well. I know."

"It might not take two years," Nick said. "Maybe we could swing it in a year and a half."

"We'll be so busy we won't notice the time," Phyllis said. "You'll see."

"I guess it won't be too bad," Nick said. "This room I mean. It's clean, anyway."

"It's very clean," Phyllis said. "Mrs. Willis is very neat. Did you notice how neat and clean she looked?"

"As a matter of fact, she did, didn't she?"

"Your face when she asked if we were really married," Phyllis said. "If you could have seen your face!"

"Yeah!" Nick laughed. "I'll bet I'll bet it was really something!"

"Nick," Phyllis said.

She was standing near the window. He went over and stood beside her.

"Look, Nick," she said excitedly. "If you stand over here, way over to one side of the window, you can see the Golden Gate bridge. See a little bit of the bridge and a little of the bay and the hills beyond. Look, Nick! Isn't it lovely?"

"Well," Nick said. "I'll be damned!"

THE END

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## WHERE TO BUY Male-Tested Fashions

shown on pages

12 and 13

**a** The dress Brian Donlevy would like to take home—if he wore 'em. A soft black crepe with accordian pleated ruffles edging the square neckline, the side seam and the waist. Dark stripes of the side and hem, short sleeves, and a rose tucked at the waist for a touch of color. Clair O'Brien designed it for Joanne, Jr., in Rosewood fabric. Sizes 7 to 15. About \$25.

**b** Coming or going—an eye-catcher. A black crepe dress with elbow-length sleeves and the new rounded silhouette. The Peter Pan collar (with its little front ruffles) is tucked in, and the swarth swan-like black taffeta, which is also swathed gracefully around the waist into a winged bustle in the back. Designed by Helena Barbieri, of Young American Deb. In Burlington Mills fabric. Sizes 7 to 15. About \$35.

**c** To keep you cool and pretty. Crestee has designed a trim black sheer dress of Duplex crepe with a mandarin collar, tucked in, and a daringly inserted at the yoke forms the top of the tiny sleeves. The long torso waistline and self-belt accent the soft lines of the bodice and tiered pleats. An Eddie Rubenstein Original. In sizes 7 to 17. About \$23.

**d** The perfect dress for dancing and dreaming by Helena Barbieri, of Young American Deb. The top, with its graceful neckline and elbow-length sleeves, is a black sheer of Duplex crepe—the full full skirt of black lace. All tied up like the pretty package it is with a shiny black satin ribbon and bow at the waist. In sizes 7 to 15. About \$40.

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## Male-Tested Fashions

(Continued from page 13)

city dress that can be worn from nine A.M. on. The third would be a group of cocktail dresses and the fourth, short evening dresses.

Helmut Dantine offered congratulations at this point, contending that so few women realize black is psychologically good for summer, especially in the city.

Conversation at the judges' bench got off to quite a start when the models began to pass in review.

**BRIAN DONLEVY:** What makes those girls just out so at the sides—or am I getting too personal?

**HINDA GOULD:** That's the new rounded look. Don't you like it?

**DONLEVY:** I think it's terrible.

**RICHARD CONTE:** My gosh, is all that padding?

**AL CAPP:** It's either padding or the model's straight from my strip. I like black very much, but it would be more attractive if it were relieved by color.

**HELMUT DANTINE:** I never analyze women's clothes. I either like them or I don't. And the simpler the better. I like these.

**DONLEVY:** I'm not analyzing, but I know I don't go along with that rounded look.

A two-piece black suit with shiny, black jet buttons is very well received by one of the judges who said he liked its extreme simplicity. Richard Conte, however, sailed into him with a long speech. There was too much material for a summer dress, and it was too overstuffed to be really simple. He favored a willow crepe with taffeta trim which he felt was Edwardian in feeling.

**HELMUT DANTINE:** I agree with Conte. I especially like the front of that dress, but that fin—what is the technical term for that bunchiness in the back—a bustle? Couldn't it be stitched down?

**CAPP:** You can call me an old reactionary, but I like black with color.

Conte and Dantine were persuasive and were able to convince the remaining judges that the "Edwardian" frock was not rounded but molded. Al Capp cast his vote for it, but he wanted to see a colorful hat worn as an accessory.

The next group caused discussion but brought a unanimous choice.

**CAPP:** They are a most interesting group. They are all simple, yet elegant. I can't quite decide, however, between the dress with the all-over tucking and the blue collar, and the one with the pleated trim and a rose at the waist. Soft blue with black is marvelous!

**CONTE:** I am inclined to agree with you, Al. But couldn't the same effect be achieved if a girl wore pale blue gloves or a touch of blue in a hat with that dress with the all-over tucking and the blue collar, and the one with the pleated trim and a rose at the waist. Soft blue with black is marvelous!

**DONLEVY:** I am very happy to see no bustles. I feel that the dress with the plating, either with the rose or with blue accessories, would be beautiful.

**CAPP:** I think something could be learned about the male attitude by the unanimous choice of the dress with the rose. It is the most coquettish. Roses are sort of generally provocative.

**DANTINE:** What is the price of that dress, Hinda?

**HINDA GOULD:** About twenty-five dollars.

**CAPP:** That cinches it. It is not only good-looking, but it is a marvelous value.

The next mannequin hardly had her foot out the door when—

**CAPP:** These dresses better stay out of the office. My gosh! Satin and lace ought

never to see daylight! But they're lovely.

DONLEVY: Well, they're not intended for anything but cocktails or terraces.

CONTE: You're right, Brian. I like a woman to wear clothes like these when we're going out on the town, and I'm not dressing.

DANTINE: Would a woman appear in a dress that plain without adding something to it?

DONLEVY: I think any black dress is wonderful because a woman can add her own accessories.

HINDA GOULD: What would you like to see on that dress, Mr. Dantine?

DANTINE: A bauble or some kind of trim. I like it simple, but I do believe that any woman would add a touch of color—jewelry or accessories.

An all-satin dress caused a near fracas. The judges, with the exception of one, believed satin was too severe a material for anything but the most formal evening occasions. They thought it was entirely too "costume" for daytime use.

CAPP: I think the satin dress can't help but be effective. There are some clothes that just are sexy looking. But for that very reason they're not always as attractive as something like "Miss Lacy" here (imitating a full hem-skirted dress over a slim crepe sheath) which, in my opinion, is in better taste. If I were drawing a siren in my strip, I'd have her wear a dress like the satin one. The reader would get the idea instantly. But, ultimately, that soft lacy job would be the most damaging.

CONTE: I'd like to add that it is a fallacy to assume that men like clothes that look seductive. Perhaps in private they do, but when they are out in public anything obvious—too startling or too attention-getting—is distasteful.

DANTINE: It is so difficult to detach the woman who wears the dress from the dress. Once you are too aware of the dress, it loses its purpose. Only when a gown is subordinate to the personality of the lady wearing it, is the lady well-dressed. Can the models change dresses?

The two girls returned after switching gowns. The effect, the judges decided, was very much the same.

DONLEVY: Satin can never be simple, no matter who is wearing it. It's too exciting a fabric.

CAPP: I am going to take issue with you fellows on simplicity. I am all for simplicity, but I do think it can be overdone. The coward's way out is to be simple and never take a chance on decoration.

DONLEVY: Well, let's not quibble. Is it or isn't it the lace job?

CHORUS: It is!

We hurried the next group on as we had been at this for nearly two hours. But it wasn't necessary to speed things up, for in split-second timing the judges abandoned three out of four of what we called our "black-tie group." Their choice, they agreed, had everything. It was ladylike but not quaint, it was elegant but not gaudy, it was festive but not overdone and it was pretty but not smart.

Like the spots on a leopard, there are certain male characteristics which never seem to change. In fifteen months (that is MTF's age) we have listened while some 110 male celebrities have talked about women's fashions. Each time we are told that nothing is as potent a factor in dressing as simplicity—that women are far too concerned with what is fashionable and give too little thought to what is individually becoming—that color is pretty, but black with color is fireworks!

THE END



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## Is England Deserting Democracy? (Continued from page 30)

inconceivable that Britain can for more than a brief period continue to meet the expense resulting from its participation in the occupation of Germany and of other areas in Central and Southern Europe.

The causes of this catastrophic change in Great Britain's position are not hard to find. They are the utter blindness to the realities in international life of successive British cabinets during the two decades after the First World War; the inability of British industry to modernize its equipment and to adapt its methods to meet the competition of mass production in the world markets; the supplanting of liberal trade policies by cartels and preferential systems; and the refusal of Great Britain and of the other major powers to prevent the gradual weakening and ultimate death of the old League of Nations during the period between the last two wars.

The one chance that Great Britain has to continue as a major power lies in the possibility that peace settlements may be rapidly concluded and that a peaceful world can thereafter be constructed. The Pax Britannica so long maintained by British armed power, and by the financial resources which made the exercise of that power possible, has come to its end. Unless the British people can recapture their earlier position as the world's chief trading nation they cannot maintain even their present living standards. Britain's survival as a world power is today contingent upon the ability of the United Nations to construct a peaceful and prosperous world in which international commerce can resume.

To the more farsighted in Britain it is of course plain that the attainment of this essential objective will not depend primarily upon the policies pursued by the British government. Its achievement will be largely contingent upon the solution of the American-Soviet differences. For only then will the foundation be laid upon which the United Nations can be strongly built and upon which a peaceful and prosperous world can once more come into being. But the average Englishman looks to his government for extrication from his increasingly serious predicament.

The present Labor government was swept into office in the summer of 1945. A large majority of the British people showed that they believed that the Labor Party was better fitted than the Conservative Coalition to meet the internal crisis which was facing them at the end of the war. They were convinced it was more likely that Labor could find the way to provide adequate housing, to check inflation, to offer economic security to the individual, to prevent a fatal clash between industry and labor, to make some such panacea as the Beveridge Plan really work, and above all else to give assurance that the masses of the British people need not again confront such tragedies as those of the depression years of the 1930's.

In the general elections of 1945 the independent or so-called "floating" vote went to the Labor Party. While it totaled barely one and a half million votes, it represented approximately the balance between the Conservatives and the Laborites. The votes cast by the Liberals, although more than anticipated, resulted in the election of only a handful of members to the House of Commons. The showing of the Communists was negligible. Under the British system of computing electoral representation, the Labor

government received a majority in the House of Commons which should insure its control of the government until the next general elections, scheduled normally to be held three years from now. Yet there are already many indications to the contrary.

The Labor Party is made up of a conglomeration of political groups that are divergent in origin. As its name implies, it is composed primarily of representatives of the working classes, and particularly of members of the trade unions. But the policies of the party have, to a considerable degree, been molded by a far smaller number of professionals and intellectuals. Some of these have drifted to Labor from the radical wing of the Liberal Party. Others, who in earlier days included such figures as George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells and Sidney and Beatrice Webb, were among the founders of the Socialist Fabian organization. An increasingly large number represent those elements of the younger generation who can see no hope of national regeneration in the policies of the two older parties—the Conservatives and Liberals.

The success of the Labor government depends upon its ability to retain the support of the independent voters, to wean the bulk of the Liberals away from their former loyalties and to avoid any split within the ranks of labor itself. This can be accomplished only if at least some of the promises held out to the voters in 1945 are made good. So far few have materialized.

Prime Minister Attlee has been compelled to face bitter personal conflicts within his cabinet, as in the case of the persistent feud between Mr. Bevin and Mr. Morrison.

He has been forced to confront still more serious clashes among his Parliamentary supporters which arise from profound differences as to policy.

In the realm of domestic policy the Prime Minister and a majority of the members of his cabinet believe that Britain can evolve a moderate form of state socialism that can solve modern economic and social problems, and yet attain this objective without impairing the democratic rights and liberties which the British people have won as a result of the popular struggle in which they have persisted during many centuries. In the field of foreign policy, he and such of his colleagues as, for example, Mr. Bevin, Mr. Dalton, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander believe that Great Britain cannot submit to Soviet hegemony over Central Europe, the Mediterranean or the Near East, and that consequently the closest kind of co-operation with the United States and with the democracies of Western Europe is imperative until the peace settlements are concluded and the United Nations can commence to function effectively.

It is on these issues that an ever-widening cleavage is taking place within the ranks of the Labor Party.

The left wing of the Labor Party is composed of groups headed by younger intellectuals in the House of Commons such as R. H. S. Crossman and G. E. C. Wigg, of trade union members who feel that the present government is not moving sufficiently fast nor sufficiently far, and by extremists like Konni Zilliacus who studiously follow the Communist Party line. All of these are clamoring for the repudiation of the cabinet's foreign policy. It is these same elements that reject the tra-

ditional British principle, "The better the economic plan, the fewer the controls," and are demanding an internal policy of over-all nationalization and of total regimentation.

There are many indications that the left wing of the Labor Party is constantly gaining recruits, and that the independent voters are withdrawing their support from the government. If this cleavage persists, and if the government cannot secure political support from other sources, the present Attlee cabinet cannot stand. In that event what are the alternatives?

There are two. Notwithstanding the denials from both Labor and Conservative headquarters, if the world situation continues to be as grave as it is today, and if Britain's economic situation continues to deteriorate, a national coalition government, similar to that established in the war crisis of 1940 by Winston Churchill, may yet be formed to meet a new national emergency, only this time under a Labor Prime Minister. It would be composed of the chief figures in the present Attlee Cabinet, together with some of the more progressive of the Conservative and Liberal leaders.

If the voters reject the solution afforded by a national coalition, power would then pass into the hands of the left-wing Laborites. They could call for the co-operation of the British Communist Party, which is ably organized and directed by Harry Pollitt. Britain would then drop her American alignment. She would embark upon a form of socialism ostensibly national, and designed to meet the peculiar prejudice of the British people.

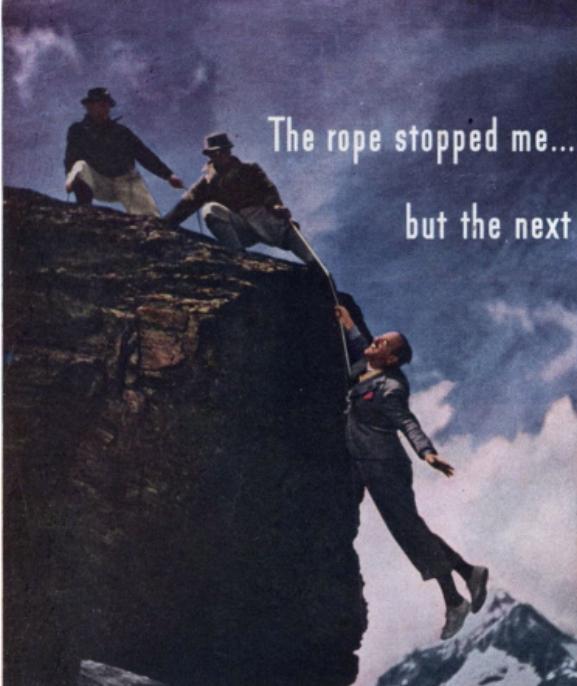
However, the policy of such a "popular front" would undoubtedly favor the creation of a Communist-dominated Europe and bring about the establishment of a British state based upon political, social and economic authoritarianism.

If Mr. ATTLEE and his colleagues can yet successfully solve the more desperate of the difficulties which their fellow countrymen face, the Labor Party may be its sole initiator showing the rest of the world that the social and economic problems of the twentieth century can in reality be solved in the liberal tradition of our Anglo-Saxon form of individual freedom.

But that does not seem to be in the cards. The short-range prospect is altogether dark. The British have no longer any ground for hope that the present crisis can give way within any brief period to a brighter future. There is apparent in England, as there is throughout Western Europe, an increasing and fatalistic discouragement on the part of the masses of the population, and a willingness to try almost any expedient in exchange for the assurance that they can thereby obtain physical and economic security.

We must not forget that the British people have never yet failed to meet the test in the times of their greatest adversity and their greatest national peril. But it would now seem as if only a popular effort, aroused by a national government capable of undertaking a campaign of inspired moral leadership in the great tradition of the younger Pitt, of Gladstone and of John Bright, and most recently of Winston Churchill, can check the growing trend toward the substitution of some form of totalitarianism for Britain's liberal democracy.

THE END

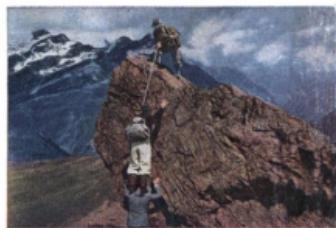


The rope stopped me...

but the next

man fell a  
mille

1 "The Swiss call the Mittenhorn just a 'primitve' mountain," writes Arnold Gingrich, well-known author and a friend of Canadian Club Whisky, "so it sounded safe to me. But on the way up I discovered that one side of this mountain drops off nearly 5,000 feet to a glacier. Near the top, dizzy and winded, I slipped... and did over the cliff!"



2 "I tried not to look down. There I was, far above the glacier, mighty glad that I was tied mountaineer-fashion to my two friends who had braced themselves the instant I slipped. Inch by inch, they hauled me to safety."

3 "Getting up nerve enough to go on took me a good ten minutes. My friends put me in the rear—the 'safest' position. But after my slip, that didn't seem nearly safe enough. Later, another climber above us slipped the same way and was killed."

4 "At last we reached the top. I looked at the peaks around us, breathed a sigh of relief. I didn't relax long. Coming down is even rougher on the nerves than going up. You can see how far you'd fall if you slipped!"

5 "The Canadian Club highballs we enjoyed later were the most memorable I've ever tasted. Canadian Club seemed one of the finer things in life that day! P.S. That's the Matterhorn in the background. You can have it. That's Canadian Club on the table. I'll take that... any day!"

6 "Switzerland is only one of many lands where I've found Canadian Club just as renowned as it is at home," writes Mr. Gingrich. Canadian Club is light as scotch, rich as rye, satisfying as bourbon. That's what made Canadian Club the largest-selling imported whisky in the United States.



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